

Unit 65

Had better do something

It's time someone did something

a Had better do something

The meaning of **had better** (**I'd better**) is similar to **should**. '**I'd better do something**' = I should do something or it is advisable for me to do something; if I don't do this, something bad might happen:

- I have to meet Tom in ten minutes. **I'd better go now** or I'll be late.
- 'Shall I take an umbrella?' 'Yes, **you'd better**. It might rain.'
- We've almost run out of petrol. **We'd better stop** at the next petrol station to fill up.

The negative form is **had better not** (**'d better not**):

The form is always **had better** (usually **'d better** in spoken English). We say **had** but the meaning is present or future, not past:

- **I'd better go to the bank this afternoon.**

Remember that **had better** is followed by the infinitive without **to**:

- **It might rain. We'd better take an umbrella.** (*not 'better to take'*)

b It's time ...

You can say '**it's time** (for someone) **to do something**':

- **It's time to go home.**
- **It's time for us to go home.**

There is another structure. **It's time someone did something**:

- **It's nearly midnight. It's time we went home.**

We use the *past* (**went**) after **It's time someone ...**, but the meaning is present or future, not past:

- **Why are you still in bed? It's time you got up.** (*not 'time you get up'*)

We use the structure **It's time someone did something** especially when we are complaining or criticising or when we think someone should have already done something:

- **It's time the children were** in bed. It's long after their bedtime.
- **You've been wearing the same clothes for ages. Isn't it time you bought some new ones?**
- **I think it's time the government did something about pollution.**

We also say || 'It's **high time** || someone **did something**.'
|| 'It's **about time** ||

This makes the complaint or criticism stronger:

- **You're very selfish. It's high time you realised** that you're not the most important person in the world.
- **It's about time Jack did** some work for his examinations.