

A bleating baby.

Those of you who follow my podcast probably remember that I live in a rural area. Our house is located towards the outskirts of a small community. Our neighbors tend to have lots of trees, vegetable gardens, and animals. Across the road from us is a horse. Around the corner are two mules (which are like donkeys), and right next door we have chickens and goats. So, you can imagine that in this neighborhood there are lots of interesting noises and smells. There is a new set of noises and smells now, to add to those that we are used to. A baby goat was born a few weeks ago, right next door. Cheri, the lady who breeds them, invited us over to take a look. She has always kept animals and bred them for shows, and as a general hobby. The goats live in a triangular shelter that has a heat lamp, and they have an area to run around in. They are black and white, plump and playful. We were all very excited to see this newborn. The children desperately wanted to hold it, but it was still a bit too young. It was the size of a very small dog, and bleated beautifully. I was surprised how agile and strong it was for its age. The family next door also has bred doves and wiener dogs. Animal shows take place throughout the spring and summer months, so our neighbors travel a lot to different towns to show off their animals. And we have the advantage of seeing the newborns, as we live so close. Until recently, they also had a miniature pony, but they sold it to someone who has more land. An animal like that needs room to run around. Sometimes I feel like we have a bit of a farmyard here, with our dogs, fish, and bearded dragon. Animal breeding is taken quite seriously around here. I know of many people who have farms of different types. My husband's cousin has a large cattle farm, and requires good quality horses and cattle dogs. Goats, of course, are great waste disposal machines for a large vegetable garden. And, after consuming the waste vegetable matter, they produce wonderful manure. For a gardener like myself, that stuff is priceless. I'm planning on beginning work in my vegetable area, and I could really do with some manure. Once I take out the weeds, and aerate the soil, that precious stuff needs to be mixed in. I might just ask my neighbors if they have any that they can spare.

Grammar notes.

Using 'used to' and 'to get used to':

1. We used to go to the beach every weekend; now we only go once a month.
2. She used to sing, but now she prefers to dance.
3. I used to have to get up really early. Now, with my new job, I can get up at eight o'clock.
4. I can't get used to the time difference; when we reset our clocks, it takes me days to adjust.
5. We got used to our new car quickly because it was more comfortable than our last.
6. You have to get used to practicing, otherwise you won't improve.

