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Basics. Needn't Have vs. Didn't Need To

Hard | B2 | Upper Intermediate | Auxiliary verb | Infinitive | Modal verb | Negation | Participle | Past tense | Verb | Perfect tense

1. Help Chef Gordon review his disastrous weekend catering events by choosing the correct phrases to complete his rant.

"I spent five hours roasting a turkey, but it turned out everyone at the party was vegetarian. I _____ that massive bird! Luckily, the hosts told me well in advance that they were providing their own beverages, so I _____ any expensive wine for the guests."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

A) needn't have cooked
B) didn't need to cook
C) shouldn't cook

Blank 2

A) didn't need to buy
B) needn't have bought
C) mustn't buy

2. Choose the right phrase for this awkward birthday party moment.

Oh no, you _____ that giant inflatable dinosaur for Leo! I already bought him the exact same one yesterday, and there is absolutely no room in his apartment for two of them.

Select one.

A) needn't have bought
B) didn't need to buy
C) haven't needed to buy
D) don't need to buy

3. Read the party host's complaint: "The guests brought their own instruments, so the DJ I paid for just sat there all night."

Select ALL the sentences that logically and grammatically follow this situation.

Select all that apply.

A) I needn't have hired a DJ.
B) I didn't need to hire a DJ, though I already had.
C) I didn't need to hire a DJ, so I saved my money.
D) I needn't hire a DJ.

4. Help the relieved student finish their diary entry.

When the professor emailed on Friday afternoon to cancel the final essay, I was absolutely thrilled. I _____ the whole weekend trapped in the library, so I packed my bags and went to the beach instead!

Select one.

A) needn't have spent
B) shouldn't have spent
C) didn't need to spend
D) hadn't needed spending

5. Chef Luigi is staring at a mountain of 50 peeled garlic cloves. The recipe only called for two! Select ALL the grammatically correct statements Luigi can make to express his wasted effort.

Select all that apply.

- **A)** I needn't have peeled all this garlic!
- **B)** I didn't need to peel all this garlic, but I did!
- **C)** I needn't to peel all this garlic!
- **D)** I didn't need have peeled all this garlic!

6. Complete the conversation between two hungry college students by choosing the best verb forms.

Sarah: "Wow, you _____ a massive five-course meal for our study group! We already grabbed pizza on the way here!"
Mark: "Oh, well, more for me! At least I _____ the kitchen beforehand, since my roommate miraculously scrubbed it this morning."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** needn't have cooked
- **B)** didn't need to cook
- **C)** mustn't have cooked

Blank 2

- **A)** didn't need to clean
- **B)** needn't have cleaned
- **C)** shouldn't have cleaned

7. Complete the weary traveler's diary entry by choosing the correct modal phrases for each blank.

"I sprinted all the way to the boarding gate, sweating and panting, only to look at the screen and find out the flight was delayed by three hours. I _____! On the bright side, my lovely friend offered me a ride to the airport this morning. Because of her kindness, I _____ for a ridiculously expensive taxi."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** needn't have rushed
- **B)** didn't need to rush
- **C)** mustn't have rushed

Blank 2

- **A)** didn't need to pay
- **B)** needn't have paid
- **C)** couldn't have paid

8. Help the exhausted employee finish their dramatic office rant.

"I stayed awake until 4 AM perfecting those presentation slides, only to find out the boss is on vacation. I absolutely _____! On the bright side, I _____ a suit today anyway, so at least I'm suffering in my comfortable sweatpants right now."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** needn't have bothered
- **B)** didn't need to bother
- **C)** mustn't have bothered

Blank 2

- **A)** didn't need to wear
- **B)** needn't have worn
- **C)** couldn't have worn

9. Help the exhausted college student complain about their finals week by choosing the correct phrases for each gap.

"The professor explicitly told us on Monday that chapter five was excluded from the test. Because of that clear warning, we _____ those complicated formulas, and we happily skipped them. However, I stayed up until 3 AM reading chapter six, only to discover on test day that it was an open-book exam! I _____ so much sleep over it."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

A) didn't need to memorize
B) needn't have memorized
C) mustn't memorize

Blank 2

A) needn't have lost
B) didn't need to lose
C) shouldn't lose

10. Complete the frustrated host's realization.

I _____ all afternoon making this elaborate five-course meal! My guests just texted me to say they stopped for pizza on the way here and are completely full.

Select one.

A) didn't need to cook
B) needn't have cooked
C) couldn't have cooked
D) wouldn't need to cook

11. Complete the student's diary entry about a lucky break. Select ALL the options that logically and grammatically fit the blank to mean she *knew* the exam was canceled beforehand, so she *did not* study.

I checked my email on Friday and saw the exam was canceled! Therefore, I _____.

Select all that apply.

A) needn't have studied
B) didn't need to study
C) didn't have to study
D) needn't to study

12. Choose the correct phrases to complete the party guest's funny confession.

"I crawled through your garden like a secret agent to avoid waking your guard dog. I _____ around in the mud, considering he was staying at the vet overnight! Also, I was quite relieved I _____ a present, since the invitation explicitly said 'no gifts'."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

A) needn't have crept
B) didn't need to creep
C) haven't needed to creep

Blank 2

A) didn't need to buy
B) needn't have bought
C) mustn't have bought

13. Complete the secret agent's mission debrief.

I came prepared with all my gadgets to bypass the laser grid, but I _____ the vault's passcode after all. Before I even typed a single number, I noticed the villain had simply left the heavy steel door wide open!

Select one.

A) needn't have hacked
B) mustn't have hacked
C) wasn't needing to hack
D) didn't need to hack

14. Help the over-prepared traveler reflect on his trip to the Sahara Desert. Select ALL the sentences that correctly express that he *actually packed* the umbrellas, even though it was a complete waste of space.

Select all that apply.

- **A)** We needn't have packed all these umbrellas.
- **B)** We didn't need to pack all these umbrellas, but we did.
- **C)** We didn't need to pack any umbrellas, so we left them at home.
- **D)** We hadn't needed to pack umbrellas.

15. Read the traveler's hilarious text message to their friend and select the correct option for each blank.

"I dragged three heavy winter coats all the way to the Bahamas just in case. I really _____ them, considering it was 90 degrees the whole time! Luckily, I _____ for excess baggage on the flight over because the airline agent took pity on me."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** didn't need to pack
- **B)** needn't have packed
- **C)** hadn't needed to pack

Blank 2

- **A)** didn't need to pay
- **B)** needn't have paid
- **C)** haven't needed to pay