

Supposed to, would rather, had better

1. Supposed to

Supposed to is used to speak of things that are expected of you (or not). If you are **supposed to do** something, then it is what is **expected of you**.

She's supposed to be home by now. Where is she? (*She's later than expected.*)

You can also be **supposed to be doing** something. This means that you are not doing what is expected or you are doing something else instead.

Why are you still reading? You are supposed to be sleeping.

It is also used to express what the **general opinion** of something is.

This restaurant is supposed to be excellent. (*people say it is*)

In its negative form it often means “**prohibited**”.

You are not supposed to walk your dog in the children's play area.

People are not supposed to smoke in enclosed public spaces.

You are not supposed to be watching TV. You are supposed to be at school!

2. Would rather

Would rather is used to speak of things you prefer (or don't). This is used to express a **preference** for something other than what you are doing or what somebody suggests you do.

I'm supposed to dig the garden but I'd rather sit in the sun and read a book.

I'd rather stay home alone than visit your mother.

In its negative form it expresses what you **prefer not to do**.

I'd rather not tell you until I'm 100% sure.

I'd rather you didn't talk when I'm listening to the news.

3. Had better

Had better is used to speak of things that are in your best interest. This is used to give yourself or others **strong advice** on what the **best thing** to do is.

We had better go to bed now if want to get up at 4 o'clock.

He had better bring my car back in one piece.

You had better make an appointment with the doctor.

In its negative form it is used more as a **warning** not to do something.

I had better not be late tomorrow. There's an important meeting.

She had better not tell him what I said.

They had better not come without calling first.

That had better not be the last bus or we'll have to walk home.