

못 -게 하다

stop someone from doing

The causative -게 하다 with 못 inside it. Says one person prevented another from acting — by physically stopping them, not merely by telling them not to.

How it attaches

Situation	Form	Example
Preventing	못 + verb + -게 하다	못 가게 했어요
Formal alternative	-지 못하게 하다	가지 못하게 했어요
Making, letting	-게 하다	자게 했어요
The person affected	을/를 or 에게/한테	동생을 못 가게 했어요
Noun + 하다 verbs	못 splits them	공부 못 하게 했어요
Telling, not preventing	-지 말라고 하다	가지 말라고 했어요

Notes

The base construction is -게 하다, which means making or letting someone do something: 동생을 자게 했어요 (I let my brother sleep). Putting 못 in front of the verb turns it into prevention: 못 자게 했어요 (I kept him from sleeping).

The person being prevented takes 을/를 or 에게/한테. The longer -지 못하게 하다 means the same thing and reads as more formal.

Against -지 말라고 하다, the difference is real. 가지 말라고 했어요 means someone told you not to go; 못 가게 했어요 means they actually stopped you. English "wouldn't let me go" matches the second.

Examples

- 부모님이 저를 못 가게 하셨어요.
My parents wouldn't let me go.
- 시끄러워서 아이를 못 자게 했어요.
The noise kept the child from sleeping.
- 경찰이 사람들을 들어가지 못하게 했어요.
The police prevented people from entering.
- 비 때문에 아이들을 밖에서 못 놀게 했어요.
The rain meant we couldn't let the children play outside.
- 선생님이 시험 중에 말을 못 하게 하셨어요.
The teacher didn't allow talking during the exam.
- 의사가 술을 못 마시게 했어요.
The doctor told me not to drink.

Compared with

-지 말라고 하다

Telling versus stopping. If the person could still have gone, it was a request; if they could not, it was prevention.

가지 말라고 했어요. (they told me not to) / 못 가게 했어요. (they wouldn't let me)

-게 하다

Without 못 the construction means making or allowing. Both readings exist and context decides which.

자게 했어요. (I let him sleep) / 못 자게 했어요. (I kept him awake)

시키다

시키다 also means making someone do something, but it takes a noun rather than a verb.

공부하게 했어요. / 공부를 시켰어요.

Watch out

✗ 선생님이 시험 중에 말을 하게 못 했어요.

○ 선생님이 시험 중에 말을 못 하게 하셨어요.

못 goes in front of the verb being prevented, inside the construction — not in front of 하다 at the end.

✗ 부모님이 저를 가지 말라고 못 하게 하셨어요.

○ 부모님이 저를 못 가게 하셨어요.

Do not combine the two constructions. Either they told you not to go, or they stopped you.

✗ 아이가 밖에서 못 놀게 했어요.

○ 아이를 밖에서 못 놀게 했어요.

The person being prevented is the object of 하다, so they take 을/를 rather than 이/가.