

〜ておく

do in advance

Romaji: **te oku**

〜ておく means doing something now so that things are ready later — “do in advance”, “get it out of the way”, “leave it done”. 会議の前に資料を読んでおきます is “I’ll read the documents before the meeting.” Attach おく to the て-form. It adds foresight that a plain verb has none of: 読みます says you will read, 読んでおきます says you are reading now because it will save trouble later. In conversation it contracts to 〜とく.

構文 CONSTRUCTION

Verb (て-form) + おく

明日の分を準備しておきます。 — I’ll get tomorrow’s ready in advance.

Past 〜ておいた — “I’d already taken care of it”

席を予約しておきました。 — I went ahead and booked a table.

Casual contraction 〜とく ・ 〜といた

買ったといたよ。 — I got it for you already.

Second sense: leave something in a state

ドアは開けておいてください。 — Please leave the door open.

例文 EXAMPLES

① ^{かいぎ} 会議の^{まえ}前に^{しりょう}資料を^よ読んでおきます。
I’ll read the documents before the meeting.

② レストランを^{よやく}予約しておきました。
I went ahead and booked the restaurant.

③ ^{まど} 窓は^あ開けておいてください。
Please leave the window open.

注意点 NUANCES

- ▶ The pattern is about preparation, not about the action. Said to a colleague, 言っておきます means “I’ll make sure they hear about it” — the telling is groundwork for something later.
- ▶ Its other sense, leaving something as it is, uses exactly the same form: 電気をつけておく (“leave the light on”). Context does all the separating, and both readings are common.
- ▶ 〜ておいてください is friendly but assumes the other person takes the job on. It reads closer to “get that sorted, would you” than to a neutral please.
- ▶ 〜ておいてよかった (“glad I did that beforehand”) is one of the most useful set phrases built on this form, and a natural way to talk about a near miss.

やってみよう YOUR TURN

List three things you will do today so tomorrow is easier, each with 〜ておきます. Then name one thing you were glad you had done in advance last week, using 〜ておいてよかった.