Nuala's Grammar Explanation:

**Used to / didn’t use to**

We heard a form of “used to” three times there. When we want to talk about the past and things that we did regularly, things that were habits, we say "used to" followed by the base form of the verb, which is the infinitive without ‘to’. That’s ‘used’ u – s – e – d ‘to’ t – o.

Listen to Tim:

Tim: I used to smoke 20 a day.

By saying "used to" Tim is telling us about the past, about his habit (his smoking) and that he doesn't smoke any more. We use "used to" to talk about discontinued past habits; that’s things that we did before but which we don't do now. Listen again:

Tim: I used to smoke 20 a day.

Elena, on the other hand, told us about something she didn't do when she was younger.

Elena: I didn't use to walk anywhere.

The negative form is ‘not’ + ‘use’, that’s u – s – e, followed by the base form. Listen again:

Elena: I didn’t use to walk anywhere.

So, to recap then: when you want to talk about things you did regularly in the past but which you don't do now, you say "used to" followed by the base form.

She used to smoke.

They used to eat meat.

In the negative, it's "didn't use to" followed by the base form.

She didn't use to walk anywhere.
Extra information

Because both positive form "used" and the negative "use" are both followed by "to" some learners find it difficult to hear when there's a "d" there and when there isn't. It makes it easy to say though – you just run the words together – "used to smoke" or "didn't use to exercise" rather than saying them separately – "used...to...smoke"

**Used to** and **didn't use to** are only used to talk about past habits. There is no present form. (To talk about present habits we can use the present simple). When using these structures there is often two parts to the sentence, something about the past and something about the present, for example:

**I used to** drive to work but now I go by car.
**I didn't use to** like coffee but I love it now.

| Positive sentences | I used to smoke 20 cigarettes a day.  
I used to eat loads of junk food. |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| Negative sentences | I didn't use to do any exercise.  
I didn't use to swim very well. |
| **All pronouns take**  
**used to / didn't use to** | I  
You  
She  
He  
It  
We  
They  
used to  
don't use to  
| eat a lot of sweets.  
eat meat.  
live in the city.  
have long hair. |