

Emphatic 'do'

The following revisions are taken from an essay by an Indonesian-speaking postgraduate student of Local Government:

Original	Revision
A macro-economic argument for central government involvement is that overall spending by local government does affect the level of aggregate demand in the economy.	A macro-economic argument for central government involvement is that overall spending by local government affects the level of aggregate demand in the economy
This does not mean that local government is powerless, but it means that the centre is the senior and unquestionably dominant partner .	This does not mean that local government is powerless, but it does mean that the centre is the senior and unquestionably dominant partner.

The **Emphatic Do** quite often causes difficulties for learners of English. Those difficulties can best be avoided by thinking of it as having a **contrastive** meaning, as shown by the following citations

1. It is absurd that we don't have Muslim state schools when we **do have** Catholic and Jewish ones.
2. The latest opinion polls, released by the BBC in Wales in March, do not predict landslide victories for Plaid Cymru, but they **do show** growing support.
3. Compared with BT's 30 million exchange lines, the cable companies are apparently faced with impossible odds. However, they **do have** some advantages.
4. ALK herself has no religion now; she has, she says, "a deep distrust for all institutions". But she **does say** that she most certainly believes in God.
5. Hogg's UK retail operation was perceived in insurance circles as having the edge over Bain, even though the latter **does have** some very large clients.
6. I am often a bit taken aback by what the tabloid papers say but I **do like** the Mail, because it is quite fair.
7. They do not demonstrate that all health promotion in general practice is ineffective, but they **do show** that using a nurse in a clinic setting with no GP involvement is not an effective way of organising health promotion.
8. Experienced secretaries say they do not want to do just shorthand and typing. They may not want to be in management but they **do want** to make their job more interesting by taking on some administration, some personnel work, some research.

After looking at some citations such as those above, it was clear to the student why the 'emphatic do'

- was inappropriate in the first context, since there is no contrast (i.e. no implication in the context or expectation that local government spending does **not** affect the level of aggregate demand).

- was appropriate in the second context, since here there **is** a contrast ('This **does not mean** X, but it **does mean** Y.').

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