

# Gerund vs Infinitive

# Verb + -ing (enjoy doing / stop doing etc.)

Look at these examples:

- I **enjoy reading**. (*not* I enjoy to read)
- Would you **mind closing** the door?  
(*not* mind to close)
- Chris **suggested going** to the cinema.  
(*not* suggested to go)

After **enjoy**, **mind** and **suggest**, we use **-ing** (*not* to ...).

Some more verbs that are followed by **-ing**:

stop	postpone	admit	avoid	imagine
finish	consider	deny	risk	fancy

- Suddenly everybody **stopped talking**. There was silence.
- I'll do the shopping when I've **finished cleaning** the flat.
- He tried to **avoid answering** my question.
- I don't **fancy going** out this evening. (= I'm not enthusiastic about it)
- Have you ever **considered going** to live in another country?
- They said they were innocent. They **denied doing** anything wrong.

The negative form is **not -ing**:

- When I'm on holiday, I enjoy **not having** to get up early.



We also use **-ing** after:

**give up** (= stop)

**put off** (= postpone)

**go on** or **carry on** (= continue)

**keep** or **keep on** (= do something continuously or repeatedly)

- I've **given up reading** newspapers. I think it's a waste of time.
- Catherine doesn't want to retire. She wants to **go on working**. (or ... to **carry on working**.)
- You **keep interrupting** when I'm talking! or You **keep on interrupting** ...

With some verbs you can use the structure *verb* + somebody + **-ing**:


- I can't **imagine George riding** a motorbike.
- You can't **stop me doing** what I want.
- Did you really say that? I don't **remember you saying** that.
- 'Sorry to **keep you waiting** so long.' 'That's all right.'

Note the passive form (**being done/seen/kept** etc.):


- I don't **mind being kept** waiting. (= I don't mind **people keeping** me ...)

**53.1** Complete the sentences for each situation using **-ing**.


1 What shall we do?  We could go to the zoo.

2 Do you want to play tennis?  No, not really.

3 You were driving too fast.  You're right. Sorry!

4 Let's go swimming.  Good idea!

5 You broke the DVD player.  No, I didn't!

6 Can you wait a few minutes?  Sure, no problem.

She suggested going to  
the zoo

He didn't fancy .....

She admitted .....

She suggested .....

He denied .....

They didn't mind .....

Complete each sentence with one of the following verbs (in the correct form):

answer  
lose

apply  
make

be  
pay

forget  
read

listen  
try

live  
use

1 He tried to avoid *answering* my question.

2 Could you please stop ..... so much noise?

3 I enjoy ..... to music.

4 I considered ..... for the job, but in the end I decided against it.

5 Have you finished ..... the newspaper yet?

6 We need to change our routine. We can't go on ..... like this.

7 I don't mind you ..... my phone, but please ask me first.

8 My memory is getting worse. I keep ..... things.

9 I've put off ..... this bill so many times. I really must do it today.

10 What a stupid thing to do! Can you imagine anybody ..... so stupid?

11 I've given up ..... to lose weight – it's impossible.

12 If you gamble, you risk ..... your money.

# Verb + **to** ... (**decide to** ... / **forget to** ... etc.)

offer	decide	hope	deserve	promise
agree	plan	manage	afford	threaten
refuse	arrange	fail	forget	learn

After these verbs you can use **to** ... (*infinitive*):

- It was late, so we **decided to take** a taxi home.
- Simon was in a difficult situation, so I **agreed to help** him.
- How old were you when you **learnt to drive**? (or learnt **how to drive**)
- I waved to Karen, but **failed to attract** her attention.

The negative is **not to** ... :

- We **decided not to go** out because of the weather.
- I **promised not to be** late.

We also use **to ...** after:

**seem    appear    tend    pretend    claim**

For example:

- They **seem to have** plenty of money.
- I like Dan, but I think he **tends to talk** too much.
- Ann **pretended not to see** me when she passed me in the street.

There is also a *continuous* infinitive (**to be doing**) and a *perfect* infinitive (**to have done**):

- I **pretended to be reading** the paper. (= I pretended that I **was reading**)
- You **seem to have lost** weight. (= it seems that you **have lost** weight)
- Joe **seems to be enjoying** his new job. (= it seems that he **is enjoying** it)

Complete the sentences for these situations.

1



They decided to get married

2



She agreed .....

3



He offered .....

4



They arranged .....

5



She refused .....

6



She promised .....



# Verb + **-ing** or **to ...** 1 (remember/regret etc.)

Some verbs are followed by **-ing** and some are followed by **to ...**.

Verbs usually followed by **-ing**:

admit	fancy	postpone
avoid	finish	risk
consider	imagine	stop
deny	keep (on)	suggest
enjoy	mind	

Verbs usually followed by **to ...** :

afford	fail	offer
agree	forget	plan
arrange	hope	promise
decide	learn	refuse
deserve	manage	threaten

Some verbs can be followed by **-ing** or **to ...** with a difference of meaning:

## remember

I **remember doing** something = I did it and now I remember this.

You **remember doing** something *after* you have done it.

- I know I locked the door. I clearly **remember locking** it.  
(= I locked it, and now I remember this)
- He could **remember driving** along the road just before the accident, but he couldn't remember the accident itself.

I **remembered to do** something = I remembered that I had to do it, so I did it.

You **remember to do** something *before* you do it.

- I **remembered to lock** the door, but I forgot to shut the windows.  
(= I remembered that I had to lock it, and so I locked it)
- I must **remember to pay** the electricity bill. (= I must not forget to pay it)

## regret

I **regret doing** something = I did it and now I'm sorry about it:

- I now **regret saying** what I said. I shouldn't have said it.
- Do you **regret not going** to college?

I **regret to say / to tell you / to inform** you = I'm sorry that I have to say (etc.):

- (*from a formal letter*) We **regret to inform** you that your application has been unsuccessful.

## go on

**Go on doing** something = continue with the same thing:

- The president paused for a moment and then **went on talking**.
- We need to change. We can't **go on living** like this.

**Go on to do** something = do or say something new:

- After discussing the economy, the president then **went on to talk** about foreign policy.

The following verbs can be followed by **-ing** or **to ...** with no difference of meaning:

**begin   start   continue   intend   bother**

So you can say:

- It **started raining**. *or* It **started to rain**.
- Andy **intends buying** a house. *or* Andy **intends to buy** ...
- Don't **bother locking** the door. *or* Don't **bother to lock** ...

But normally we do not use **-ing** after **-ing**:

- It's **starting to rain**. (*not* It's starting raining)

Put the verb into the correct form, **-ing** or **to ...** .

- 1 They denied stealing the money. (steal)
- 2 I don't enjoy ..... very much. (drive)
- 3 I can't afford ..... out tonight. I don't have enough money. (go)
- 4 Has it stopped ..... yet? (rain)
- 5 We were unlucky to lose the game. We deserved ..... . (win)
- 6 Why do you keep ..... me questions? Can't you leave me alone? (ask)
- 7 Please stop ..... me questions! (ask)
- 8 I refuse ..... any more questions. (answer)
- 9 The driver of one of the cars admitted ..... the accident. (cause)
- 10 Mark needed our help, and we promised ..... what we could. (do)
- 11 I don't mind ..... alone, but it's better to be with other people. (be)
- 12 The wall was quite high, but I managed ..... over it. (climb)
- 13 'Does Sarah know about the meeting?' 'No, I forgot ..... her.' (tell)
- 14 I've enjoyed ..... to you. I hope ..... you again soon. (talk, see)

# HOMework

Put the verb into the correct form, to ... or -ing. (See Unit 53 for verbs + -ing.)

- 1 When I'm tired, I enjoy watching television. It's relaxing. (watch)
- 2 I've decided ..... for another job. I need a change. (look)
- 3 Let's get a taxi. I don't fancy ..... home. (walk)
- 4 I'm not in a hurry. I don't mind ..... . (wait)
- 5 Tina ran in a marathon last week, but she failed ..... . (finish)
- 6 I wish that dog would stop ..... . It's driving me crazy. (bark)
- 7 Our neighbour threatened ..... the police if we didn't stop the noise. (call)
- 8 We were hungry, so I suggested ..... dinner early. (have)
- 9 Hurry up! I don't want to risk ..... the train. (miss)
- 10 They didn't know I was listening to them. I pretended ..... asleep. (be)

Complete each sentence with a verb in the correct form, -ing or to ... . Sometimes either form is possible.

- 1 a Please remember to lock the door when you go out.  
b A: You lent me some money a few months ago.  
B: Did I? Are you sure? I don't remember ..... you any money.  
c A: Did you remember ..... your sister?  
B: Oh no, I completely forgot. I'll phone her tomorrow.
- d When you see Steve, remember ..... hello to him from me.  
e Someone must have taken my bag. I clearly remember ..... it by the window and now it has gone.
- 2 a I believe that what I said was right. I don't regret ..... it.  
b I knew they were in trouble, but I regret ..... I did nothing to help them.  
c It started to get cold, and he regretted not ..... his coat.
- 3 a Ben joined the company nine years ago. He became assistant manager after two years, and a few years later he went on ..... manager of the company.  
b I can't go on ..... here any more. I want a different job.  
c When I came into the room, Lisa was reading a newspaper. She looked up and said hello, and then went on ..... her newspaper.
- 4 a If the company continues ..... money, the factory may be closed.  
b Julia has been ill, but now she's beginning ..... better.  
c The baby started ..... in the middle of the night.