Verbs followed by '-ing' or by 'to' + infinitive 1+2

1 Do you know when to use -ing and when to use to + infinitive after a verb?

Look at these examples to see how the verb forms are used.

I enjoy learning languages.
I want to learn a new language.

Read the explanation to learn more.

Grammar explanation

A verb can be followed by another verb. The second one usually needs to change into the -ing form or the to + infinitive form. Which form you need depends on what the first verb is.

Verbs followed by the -ing form

When *enjoy*, *admit* and *mind* are followed by another verb, it must be in the *-ing* form.

I enjoy **travelling**.

He admitted **stealing** the necklace.

I don't mind **waiting** if you're busy.

Other verbs in this group include avoid, can't help, consider, dislike, feel like, finish, give up, miss, practise and suggest.

Like and *love* can be followed by the -*ing* form and the *to* + infinitive form. They are both correct.

Verbs followed by *to* + **infinitive form**

When want, learn and offer are followed by another verb, it must be in the to + infinitive form.

I want **to speak** to the manager. She's learning **to play** the piano. He offered **to help** us wash up.

Other verbs in this group include afford, agree, ask, choose, decide, expect, hope, plan, prepare, promise, refuse and would like.

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2 Do you know the difference between *stop doing something* and *stop to do something*?

Look at these examples to see how these verb patterns work.

The bus stopped picking up the children. The bus stopped to pick up the children.

Verbs followed by '-ing' or by 'to' + infinitive 1+2

I want to try studying with a friend to see if it helps us stay more motivated. I'm trying to study but it's impossible with all this noise.

Read the explanation to learn more.

Grammar explanation

Some verbs have a different meaning depending on whether they are followed by an -ing form or to + infinitive.

stop

Stop + -ing means the action is not happening any more.

I've stopped buying the newspaper because now I read the news online.

Stop + to + infinitive means that someone or something stops an activity so that they can do something else.

He **stopped** the video **to ask** the students some questions.

try

Try + -ing means that you are trying something as an experiment, especially as a possible solution to a problem, to see if it works or not.

Have you **tried turning** the computer **off and on** again?

Try + to + infinitive means that something is difficult but you are making an effort to do it.

I'm trying to learn Japanese but it's very difficult.

remember/forget

Remember + -ing and forget + -ing refer to having (or not having) a memory of something in the past.

I remember watching this film before.

I'll never forget meeting you for the first time in this café.

Remember + to + infinitive and forget + to + infinitive refer to recalling (or not recalling) that there is something we need to do before we do it.

Please remember to buy some milk on the way home.

He forgot to lock the door when he went out.

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