

# Infinitive / -ing form

## Tenses of the Infinitive

### Active Voice

### Passive Voice

Present	(to) offer	(to) be offered	offering	being offered
Pres. Cont.	(to) be offering	---	---	---
Perfect	(to) have offered	(to) have been offered	having offered	having been offered
Perf. Cont.	(to) have been offering	---	---	---

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The Present Infinitive refers to the present or future. *I'd like to go for a walk.*

The Present Continuous Infinitive is used with appear, claim, seem, pretend, must, can't, happen, should, would etc to describe an action happening now. *He must be working in the garden now.*

The Perfect Infinitive is used with appear, happen, pretend, seem etc to show that the action of the infinitive happened before the action of the verb. *He claims to have met the Queen. (First he met the Queen, then he claimed he had met her.)* It is also used with modal verbs should, would etc (see p. 46).

The Perfect Continuous Infinitive is used with appear, seem, pretend etc to put emphasis on the duration of the action of the infinitive, which happened before the action of the verb. *She looks tired. She seems to have been working all morning.* It is also used with modal verbs (see p. 46).

The Present Gerund (-ing form) refers to the present or future. *She enjoys dancing.*

The Perfect Gerund (-ing form) shows that the action of the gerund has happened before the action of the verb. We can use the Present Gerund instead of the Perfect Gerund without a difference in meaning. *He denied having stolen the money. OR He denied stealing the money.*

## Subject of the Infinitive / -ing form

The subject of the infinitive or of the -ing form is omitted when it is the same as the subject of the verb. *They want to buy a new house. She left without saying goodbye.*

When the subject of the infinitive or of the -ing form is different from the subject of the verb then an object pronoun (me, you, him, her, us, you, them) or noun is placed before the infinitive or the -ing form. The subject of the gerund can also be a possessive adjective (my, your etc), the possessive case or a noun.

*I want him to leave now. (= He should leave.) BUT I want to leave now. (= I should leave.)*

*I remember his/him/Tom's/Tom complaining about the poor service in this hotel.*

## The to-infinitive is used:

1. to express purpose  
*She went out **to buy** some milk.*
2. after certain verbs (advise, agree, appear, decide, expect, hope, promise, refuse etc)  
*He promised **to be** back at 10 o'clock.*
3. after certain adjectives (angry, happy, glad etc) *She was glad **to see** him.*
4. after question words (where, how, what, who, which, but not after "why")  
*Has she told you where **to meet** them?  
but: I don't know why he left so early.*
5. after would like/would love/would prefer (to express specific preference)  
*I'd love **to go** for a walk.*
6. after nouns  
*It's a pleasure **to work** with you.*
7. after too/enough constructions  
*He's **too short to reach** the top shelf.  
He isn't tall **enough to reach** the top shelf.*
8. with it + be + adjective (+ of + object)  
*It was nice of him **to remember** my birthday.*
9. with "only" to express unsatisfactory result  
*He called me **only to say** that he would be late.*

## The infinitive without to is used:

1. after modal verbs (must, can, will etc)  
*You must **be** back at 12 o'clock.*
  2. after had better/would rather  
*I'd rather **have stayed** in last night.*
  3. after make/let/see/hear/feel + object  
*Mum **let** me **watch** TV. I **made** him **apologise**.*
- BUT: in the passive form: be made/be heard/be seen + to -infinitive**  
*He was **made to apologise**.*

**Note: help is followed by a to-infinitive or an infinitive without to.**

*She helped me **(to) wash** the dishes.*

## The -ing form is used :

1. as a noun  
***Eating** vegetables is good for your health.*
2. after certain verbs (admit (to), avoid, consider, continue, delay, deny, enjoy, escape, excuse, fancy, finish, forgive, imagine, involve, keep (= continue), look forward to, mention, mind, miss, object to, postpone, practise, prevent, report, resist, risk, save, stand, suggest, understand etc)  
*He admitted **(to) stealing** the painting.*
3. after love, like, dislike, hate, enjoy, prefer (to express general preference)  
*He likes **cooking** (in general).*  
\* Note: like + to - inf = it's a good idea; it's useful  
*I like **to eat** a healthy breakfast. (specific preference)*
4. after I'm busy, it's no use, it's (no) good, it's (not) worth, what's the use of, can't help, there's no point (in), can't stand, be/get used to, be/get accustomed to, have difficulty (in)  
*It's no use **complaining**.*
5. after "go" for physical activities  
*They **go skiing** every winter.*
6. after spend/waste time  
*He wasted his time **playing** video games.*
7. after prepositions  
*He entered **without knocking** at the door.*
8. after see, hear, listen, watch to express an incomplete action, an action in progress or a long action  
*I saw Kate **painting** the kitchen. (I saw Kate in the middle of painting. I saw part of the action in progress. I didn't wait until she had finished.)  
BUT: see, hear, listen, watch + infinitive without to to express a complete action, something that one saw or heard from beginning to end  
I watched Kate **paint** the kitchen. It took her two hours. (I saw the whole action from beginning to end.)*

**Note: If two infinitives are joined by "and", the "to" of the second infinitive can be omitted.**

*I want **to eat** something and **have** a rest.*

## Verbs taking to-infinitive or -ing form without a change in meaning

### 1. begin, start, continue + to-inf. or -ing form.

However, we never have two -ing forms together.

She began **dancing/to dance**.

**But:** *It's beginning **to get** cold.*

**Not:** *It's ~~beginning getting~~ cold.*

### 2. advise, allow, permit, recommend, encourage when followed by an object or in passive form take a to-infinitive. They take the -ing form when not followed by an object.

He **doesn't allow us to smoke** here.

They **aren't allowed to smoke** here.

They **don't allow smoking** here.

### 3. it needs/it requires/it wants + -ing form "It needs" can also be followed by a passive infinitive.

The house **needs/requires/wants painting**.

The car **needs repairing/to be repaired**.

## Verbs taking to-infinitive or -ing form with a change in meaning

### 1. forget + to-inf = not remember

*I'm sorry, I **forgot to buy** milk.*

**forget + ing form** = forget a past event

*He'll never **forget flying** over the Alps.*

### 2. remember + to-inf = remember to do sth

***Remember to turn off** the cooker before leaving.*

**remember + -ing form** = recall a past event

*I don't **remember staying** in this hotel before.*

### 3. go on + to-inf = finish doing sth and start doing sth else; then

*After finishing the report, she **went on to type** some letters.*

**go on + -ing form** = continue

*She **went on talking** for hours.*

### 4. mean + to-inf = intend to

*He **means to find** a job abroad.*

**mean + -ing form** = involve

*Finding a job **means attending** many interviews.*

### 5. regret + to-inf = be sorry to

*I **regret to tell** you that there is no money left in your account.*

**regret + -ing form** = have second thoughts about sth one has already done

*I **regret buying/having bought** this dress; it doesn't look nice on me.*

### 6. try + to-inf = do one's best, attempt

*The firemen are **trying to put out** the fire.*

**try + -ing form** = do sth as an experiment

*Why don't you **try adding** some sugar to the sauce? It might taste better.*

### 7. want + to-inf = wish

*I **want to spend** my holidays in Spain.*

**want + -ing form** = need sth done

*This room **wants painting** again.*

### 8. stop + to-inf = pause temporarily

*She **stopped to get** some petrol before continuing on her journey to Leeds.*

**stop + -ing form** = finish; end

***Stop talking**, please!*

### 9. be sorry + to-inf = regret

*I'm **sorry to hear** they fired him.*

**be sorry for + -ing form** = apologise

*I'm **sorry for being/having been** unfair to you.*

### 10. be afraid + to-inf (the subject is too frightened to do sth)

*I'm **afraid to climb** up that tree. (I don't want to do it.)*

**be afraid of + -ing form** (the subject is afraid that what is described by the -ing form may happen)

*She won't climb up the tree; she **is afraid of falling**. (She is afraid because she might fall.)*