

Tenses of the Infinitive

(active) (passive)
Present: (to) play, (to) be played

Present Continuous: (to) be playing

(active) (passive)
Perfect: (to) have played, (to) have been played

Perfect Continuous: (to) have been playing

- The Present Infinitive refers to the present or future. *He expects to meet his sister soon.*
- The Present Continuous Infinitive expresses an action happening now. *She seems to be studying hard.*
- The Perfect Infinitive is used to show that the action of the infinitive happened before the action of the verb. *Jason claims to have been the best student in class.*
- The Perfect Continuous Infinitive is used to emphasise the duration of the action of the infinitive, which happened before the action of the main verb. *She seems to have been crying all night. Her eyes are red.*

The **infinitive without to** is used:

- after modal verbs. *Marguerite can speak English with a very good accent.*
- after the verbs **let, make, see, hear and feel**. *They made him confess the truth. BUT we use the to-infinitive after be made, be heard, be seen, etc (passive form). He was made to confess the truth.*
Note: When **see, hear and watch** are followed by an **-ing form**, there is no change in the passive. *He saw me standing outside the bank. I was seen standing outside the bank.*
- after **had better** and **would rather**. *You had better go to sleep now if you want to wake up early tomorrow.*
- **help** can be followed by either the **to-infinitive** or the **infinitive without to**. *I helped her (to) do the dishes.*

-ing form

The **-ing form** is used:

- as a noun. *Talking while sitting an exam is not allowed.*
- after certain verbs: **admit, appreciate, avoid, continue, deny, fancy, go** (for activities), **imagine, mind, miss, quit, save, suggest, practise, consider, prevent**. *He suggested taking a break.*
- after **love, like, enjoy, prefer, dislike, hate** to express general preference. *I enjoy cycling a lot. BUT for a specific preference (would like/would prefer/would love) we use a to-infinitive. I would love to learn how to dance.*
- after expressions such as **be 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, have difficulty (in), have trouble, etc**. *There is no point in asking to borrow his car; he will never give it to you!*
- after **spend, waste or lose** (time, money, etc). *We lost a lot of money trying to invest it in the stock market.*
- after the preposition **to** with verbs and expressions such as **look forward to, be used to, in addition to, object to, prefer (doing sth to sth else)**. *David prefers playing football to watching it.*
- after other prepositions. *I was thinking of having my hair dyed black.*
- after the verbs **hear, listen to, notice, see, watch and feel** to describe an incomplete action. *I saw Elaine walking out of the door.* (I only saw part of the action.)
BUT we use the **infinitive without to** with **hear, listen to, notice, see, watch and feel** to describe the complete action. *She heard Alan say nasty things about her.* (She heard the whole story.)

Difference in meaning between the to-infinitive and -ing form

Some verbs can take either the **to-infinitive** or the **-ing form** with a change in meaning.

- **forget + to-infinitive** = (not) remember. *She forgot to close one of the windows before she left the house.*
forget + -ing form = not recall. *I'll never forget travelling to Turkey.*
- **remember + to-infinitive** = not forget. *Did you remember to send him an email?*
remember + -ing form = recall. *I remember watching that film.*
- **mean + to-infinitive** = intend to. *He wants you to know he's very sorry and that he never meant to hurt your feelings.*
mean + -ing form = involve. *If I go on holiday to the Bahamas, that will mean sunbathing for many hours every day.*
- **regret + to-infinitive** = be sorry to (normally used in the present simple with verbs such as **say, tell, inform**). *We regret to inform you that your credit card has expired.*
regret + -ing form = feel sorry about. *I regret not telling my boss the truth.*
- **try + to-infinitive** = do one's best, attempt. *I tried to dissuade him from resigning but he didn't listen.*
try + -ing form = do something as an experiment. *Why don't you try putting on less make-up?*
- **stop + to-infinitive** = stop briefly to do something else. *She stopped to buy groceries on her way home.*
stop + -ing form = finish, give up. *She stopped watching horror films because they made her feel scared.*

- 8 A: Don't be late for work tomorrow.
B: I promise. I be there on time.
- 9 A: The meeting starts at 11 am.
B: Can you tell them I be a little late?
- 10 A: I don't know how to use this computer.
B: I show you if you like.
- 11 A: Why do you need all these eggs?
B: I make a cake.
- 12 A: Oh no! I left my umbrella at home!
B: Don't worry, I give you mine.
- 13 A: Look at those dark clouds.
B: It looks like it rain.
- 14 A: I hear you're going to York University in September.
B: Yes, I study law.
- 15 A: Are you joining us this evening?
B: No. I study in the library with Paul.

20 Put the verbs in brackets into the appropriate future forms.

- A A: What 1) (do) tonight?
B: I 2) (tidy) my room.
A: What time 3) (finish)?
B: I 4) (finish) by nine o'clock, I hope.
A: Shall we go to the cinema then? The film starts at 9:30.

- B The latest fad diet from Hollywood 1) (arrive) in Britain next week. This diet, the authors claim, 2) (help) you lose up to 5 kilos in just one month. Furthermore, they guarantee that by the end of the month you 3) (reduce) your stress levels by 50% and you 4) (feel) 100% fitter. The book 5) (be) available in bookshops next week.

- C This time next week I 1) (relax) on a beach in Thailand and I 2) (forget) all my problems at work. I 3) (sunbathe), the kids 4) (swim) and we 5) (have) lots of fun. I just can't wait.

- D A: I 1) (have) a party on Sunday. Would you like to come?
B: I'd love to but I can't. I 2) (fly) to Madrid.
A: What 3) (do) tomorrow, then?
B: I think Jane 4) (come) to see me in the afternoon.
A: Really? How long has she been here?
B: Well, by the end of this week she 5) (be) here for a month.

Infinitive

The **to-infinitive** is used:

- to express purpose. *Magda took a taxi **to go to work this morning**.*
- after certain verbs (agree, appear, decide, expect, hope, plan, promise, refuse, etc). *They agreed **to go to the party together**.*
- after **would like, would prefer, would love**, etc to express a specific preference. *I would love **to watch a film with you**.*
- after adjectives which describe **feelings/emotions** (happy, sad, glad, etc); express **willingness/unwillingness** (willing, eager, reluctant, etc); refer to a **person's character** (clever, kind, etc) and the adjectives **lucky** and **fortunate**. *I was very sad **to hear that Tom didn't pass his driving test**.*
Note: With adjectives that refer to character we can also use an impersonal structure. *It wasn't nice of you **to say these things about me**.*
- after **too/enough**. *He is too young **to go motorcycling**.*
- to talk about an unexpected event, usually with **only**. *He finally caught a taxi **only to find that he had forgotten his wallet**.*
- with **it + be + adjective/noun**. *It wasn't difficult **to talk her into it**.*
- after **be + first/second/next/last** etc. *She was the **first person to support the scheme**.*
- after verbs and expressions such as **ask, learn, explain, decide, find out, want, want to know**, etc, when they are followed by a question word. *He finally decided **what to do**.*
Note: **why** is followed by **subject + verb, NOT** an infinitive. *I know **why this was kept secret from me**.*
- in the expressions **to tell you the truth, to be honest, to sum up, to begin with**, etc. ***To tell you the truth**, I wasn't sure I wanted to take the job.*
Note: If two **to-infinitives** are linked by **and** or **or**, the **to** of the second infinitive can be omitted. *I would like **to go and tell her that I am very angry with her**.*

21 Fill in the correct form of the infinitive. Use the correct tenses.

- 1 I regret (tell) Laura off.
- 2 I'm finding the work difficult but my colleagues appear (cope) easily.
- 3 Many people claim (see) UFOs.
- 4 Helen was only pretending (do) her homework; she was reading comic books instead.
- 5 He is too tired (go) to the gym today.
- 6 He was supposed (study) for the exams but instead he was playing football with his friends.
- 7 He appears (recover) from his recent illness.
- 8 They made him (pay) for the damage.
- 9 Julie seems (lose) her car keys.
- 10 The new restaurant is supposed (open) next month but they are still looking for a chef.
- 11 Jim has decided (accept) the job offer.
- 12 She promised (help) us with the wedding preparations.
- 13 She is planning (leave) Madrid on Monday.
- 14 We had better (run) or we will be late.
- 15 He was very angry earlier but he seems (calm down) now.

22 Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the infinitive or the -ing form. Use the correct tenses.

- 1 A: I'm getting colds and headaches on a regular basis.
B: You'd better (go) to the doctor.
- 2 A: Do you know any good ways (reduce) stress levels?
B: Why don't you try meditating?
- 3 A: I can't lose any weight so I've decided (join) a slimming club.
B: Good idea! I lost a lot of weight when I joined one.
- 4 A: Josh wasn't at the lesson today and the teacher was very angry.
B: He'd better (have) a good excuse or he'll be in trouble.

- 5 A: What was your cooking holiday in Thailand like?
B: Great! It was really interesting (cook) with lots of new ingredients.
- 6 A: He's put on so much weight since his holidays.
B: Yes. I should (tell) him when I saw him yesterday.
- 7 A: What happened to Sarah? She looks very upset.
B: Well, she arrived home yesterday only (find) that her house had been broken into.
- 8 A: You look exhausted!
B: I've just worked 15 hours without (take) a break!
- 9 A: Would you like to go to a Chinese restaurant tonight?
B: Not really. I would rather (go) to an Italian restaurant.
- 10 A: What's that man doing?
B: He seems (look) for something in his briefcase.
- 11 A: Is Tom in his office?
B: Yes, I can hear him (talk) on the phone.
- 12 A: Do you want to rent 'Sleepless in Seattle' tonight?
B: No, I can't stand (watch) romantic films.
- 13 A: What time do you have to be home on Saturday nights?
B: My father lets me (stay) out until twelve o'clock on Saturdays.

23 Put the verbs in brackets into the infinitive or the -ing form.

- 1 A: I'll never forget (meet) David Beckham.
B: Yes, but you forgot (get) his autograph, didn't you?
- 2 A: The letter says that the manager regrets (inform) you that your application was not successful.
B: Now I regret (apply) for that position in the first place.
- 3 A: Did you remember (return) the DVDs we rented?
B: I remember (take) them with me but I think I left them in my briefcase.
- 4 A: I've been trying (get) in touch with Sharon all day.
B: Why don't you try (call) her on her mobile?
- 5 A: I meant (tell) you there's a good film on TV tonight.
B: I won't watch it if it means (stay up) late.

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