



## Verb + -ing or infinitive 1

### A Verb + -ing

- Some verbs are followed by an *-ing* form. Some of the commonest verbs follow below:  
*As manufacturers **consider automating** their distribution channels, they should not lose sight of the effectiveness of personal contact.* (IndustryWeek website)

*Auto manufacturers are concerned consumers will **postpone buying** cars until after next July, when the current 22% sales tax on autos is expected to fall.* (Business Review Weekly website)

*Van der Hoeve, CEO of Royal Ahold, **spends 50 per cent of his time travelling and getting onto** the sales floor as much as possible. As he explains: 'I usually get a good feel for the store as I walk around'.* (Eurobusiness website)

saying and thinking	admit*, consider*, deny*, describe, imagine*, mention*, suggest*
liking and disliking	dislike, enjoy, fancy, (not) mind*
phrasal verbs	carry on, give up, keep on, put off
phrase with can't	can't bear, can't help, can't resist, can't face, can't stand
other common verbs	avoid, delay, finish, involve, keep, miss, postpone, practise, risk
common phrases	It's not worth ..., spend/waste time/money ... It's no use/good ..., There's no point (in) ...

- Some of the verbs in the list can also be followed by a noun. These include: admit, deny, imagine, suggest, dislike, enjoy, fancy, keep, mind, practise.  
*The Minister **admitted taking** a bribe.* and *The Minister **admitted his mistake.***  
*What do you **fancy doing** this evening?* and *I **fancy** a nice, cold beer.*  
The group of verbs with can't can also be followed by a noun.  
*I **can't bear** avant-garde jazz.*
- We use *mind* in questions and negative sentences.  
A: *Do you **mind waiting** a moment?*  
B: *No, I **don't mind.***
- Go* and *come* plus *-ing* form are often used for sports and outside activities.  
*I often **go skiing** in the winter.*  
*Do you want to **come shopping** with me?*
- Some verbs and verb phrases have *to* as a preposition. These include: look forward to, object to, be used to, get used to, respond to. Prepositions are always followed by the *-ing* form.  
*I'm **looking forward to seeing** you next week.* (NOT ~~to see~~)  
*After a few months in the UK I **got used to driving** on the left.* (NOT ~~to drive~~)

### B Verb + to + infinitive

- Some verbs are followed by *to* + infinitive.  
*'PCCW has openly stated that it **wishes to become** the biggest broadband player in Asia,' says Richard Ferguson, a telecom analyst in Hong Kong. 'That means it cannot **afford to stand still.**'* (Asiaweek website)  
*'And by working together with the guys at IBM, Kodak and so on, we're actually **managing to improve** the local supply base for all of us,' says Jaime Reyes, head of Hewlett-Packard's printer operations.* (Global Business Magazine website)

plans and decisions	aim, arrange, choose, decide*, intend, plan*, prepare
expectations	demand*, deserve, expect*, hope*, want, wish*, would like
promises and refusals	fail, guarantee, offer, promise*, refuse, threaten
other common verbs	agree*, can/can't afford, learn*, manage, pretend*, seem*, tend, train, wait

- Note that verb + *to* + infinitive is also used in these cases:
  - To explain why we do something (the 'infinitive of purpose')  
*I'm calling **to find out** if you stock spare parts.* (NOT ~~for to find out~~)
  - After a question word  
*Can you show me **how to get on** to the Internet on this computer?*
  - With *used to*, *be going to*, *be able to*, *be allowed to*, *have to*, *need to* and *ought to*.

### C Verb + object + to + infinitive

- The following verbs are followed by an object + *to* + infinitive.  
*advise\*, allow, ask, cause, encourage, expect, forbid, force, help, invite, order, pay, prefer, persuade, remind\*, teach\*, tell\*, train, want, warn\**  
*Russia will **ask the Paris Club of creditors to postpone** the signing of bilateral agreements on the repayment of debt.* (Delovoj Peterburg website)  
*Li also **persuaded four banks, including HSBC Holdings and Bank of China, to lend** him \$11 billion, a record in Hong Kong.* (Asiaweek website)

### D Make and let

- After *make* and *let* we use the bare infinitive without *to*.  
*I **made** them **check** everything very carefully.* (NOT ~~I made them to check~~)  
*They **let** us **have** all these free samples.* (NOT ~~They let us to have~~)

### E Verb + that clause

- The verbs marked with an asterisk\* in sections A, B and C can also be followed by a *that* clause. In everyday speech we can leave out the word *that*.  
*I suggested **speaking** to Eliza about it.* *I suggested **(that) we could** speak to Eliza about it.*  
*We decided **to cancel** the meeting.* *We decided **(that) we would cancel** the meeting.*  
*They told us **to wait.*** *They told us **(that) we should wait.***

## 19 Practice

### Exercise 1 A B

Underline the correct words.

- We can't afford to miss/missing this opportunity.
- Do you fancy to go/going for a drink after work?
- Are you waiting to use/using the phone?
- It's not worth to spend/spending any more time on this.
- We decided to close down/closing down the factory in Belgium.
- You promised to deliver/delivering by April, and it's now May.
- I considered to call/calling him, but I decided it was better to write.
- If we don't decide soon, we risk to lose/losing the whole contract.
- She agreed to prepare/preparing some figures before the next meeting.
- I'm sorry, there seems to be/being a misunderstanding here.
- Is Mr Messier busy? OK, I don't mind to wait/waiting for a few minutes.
- He refused to sign/signing the contract until he'd spoken to his boss.
- May I suggest to postpone/postponing the meeting until next week?

### Exercise 2 A B

Complete these sentences with the verbs from the list below. Choose either the *-ing* form or *to + infinitive*.

**give** write fly receive make recognise advertise help think speak

- They agreed to give us thirty more days to pay the invoice.
- He pretended ..... me, but I don't think he knew who I was.
- There's no point ..... this brand on TV, it would cost too much.
- We're expecting ..... some more stock early next week.
- I'll join you later. I need to finish ..... this report.
- I learnt ..... Portuguese when I worked in Brazil.
- I work in public relations. My job involves ..... contact with the media.
- I can't help ..... that something is going to go wrong.
- I can't afford ..... business class all the time.
- I can't promise ..... you with this problem, but I'll do my best.

### Exercise 3 C

Complete the following sentences with verbs from the list below. Include an object in every case.

**advise** remind persuade expect help encourage force

- I'm sorry I missed work yesterday. The doctor advised me to stay in bed.
- I tried to ..... come with us tonight, but he said he was busy.
- Could you ..... call Head Office later? I might forget.
- If you employ a secretary, it will ..... deal with all the paperwork.
- She hasn't called yet, but I ..... contact me some time today.
- I didn't feel very confident, but she ..... apply for the job.
- The fall in demand has ..... make some of our best workers redundant.

### Exercise 4 A B C

28 Complete the mini-dialogue by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form, using *-ing* or *to + infinitive*.

- ISABEL: Oh, no, not again.  
 FERNANDA: What's wrong?  
 ISABEL: My computer's crashed. It keeps (1) doing (do) it. I have to save my documents every few minutes or I risk (2) ..... (lose) all the work I've just done.  
 FERNANDA: Have you got enough disk space?  
 ISABEL: Yeah, I have. I really don't know what's causing it (3) ..... (crash) so often. Look, you're good at computers. What do you advise me (4) ..... (do)?  
 FERNANDA: Well, I don't know. I haven't been trained (5) ..... (fix) them. You'll have to ask an IT technician (6) ..... (come) and have a look at it.  
 ISABEL: Hah. You know, there's no point (7) ..... (call) a technician - they'll be ages and I ... I really can't afford (8) ..... (wait) all day for someone to come, I'm really busy.  
 FERNANDA: Why don't you phone the helpdesk then? They'll advise you what (9) ..... (do) over the phone.  
 ISABEL: Oh, yeah. I suppose so.  
 FERNANDA: And if you're really that busy, have you considered (10) ..... (ask) Sophie to help you, she hasn't got a lot of work at the moment.  
 ISABEL: Oh, hasn't she? That's great. I'll ask her (11) ..... (type) up this report. Thanks.

### Exercise 5 A B

Complete this email that circulated in a company that makes mobile phones. Choose a verb from the list below and use the correct form, *-ing* or *infinitive* with *to*.

**interview** be pay pretend receive refer show take talk worry

<b>From:</b>	Peter Halonen, Director	<b>To:</b>	All staff in Production department	<b>Sent:</b>	6 December ...
<b>Subject:</b>	Visit by journalist about health risks from mobile phones		<b>Cc:</b>		
<b>Message:</b>	<p>A journalist from the magazine Technology Review wants (1) <u>to interview</u> someone from Production about health risks for mobile phone users from radiation. It will involve (2) ..... to him over lunch one day next week. He's offered (3) ..... Any volunteers?</p> <p>In my opinion it's not worth (4) ..... too much about this as the latest research shows that the risks seem (5) ..... minimal. But on the other hand it's no good (6) ..... there's no problem at all. I would suggest simply (7) ..... to the recent report from the National Safety Board.</p> <p>Anyway, he's kindly agreed (8) ..... us the article before it's published, and he's promised (9) ..... a balanced view. I look forward to (10) ..... your comments on this matter asap.</p> <p>Peter</p>				



## Verb + *-ing* or infinitive 2

### A Verb + *-ing* or infinitive: change in meaning

Some verbs can be followed by *-ing* or *to* + infinitive and the meaning of the verb changes.

**REMEMBER AND FORGET** We use *remember/forget doing* for memories of the past (the action happens before the remembering). We use *remember/forget to do* for actions someone is/was supposed to do (the remembering happens before the action).

<i>I definitely <b>remember posting</b> the letter.</i>	post	←	remember
<i>I must <b>remember to post</b> the letter.</i>	remember	→	post
<i>I'll never <b>forget flying</b> into Taipei airport.</i>	flying	←	forget
<i>Sorry, I <b>forgot to turn off</b> the lights.</i>	forget	→	turn off

**REGRET** We use *regret doing* when we are sorry about something that happened in the past.

*I **regret saying** no to the job in Paris.*

We use *regret to inform/to tell* when we are giving bad news.

*I **regret to inform** you that we are unable to ...*

**TRY** We use *try doing* when we do something and see what happens. We use *try to do* when we make an effort to do something, but don't necessarily succeed.

*I'll **try talking** to him and maybe he'll change his mind.* (I'll do it and see what happens)

*I'll **try to talk** to him but I know he's very busy today.* (I may not be successful)

*Last September, Breuer **tried to negotiate** a cost-cutting merger of Deutsche's and Dresdner's retail operations. However, he was unsuccessful.* (BusinessWeek Online website)

**STOP** We use *stop doing* when we end an action. We use *stop to do* when we give the reason for stopping.

*We **stopped buying** from that supplier.* (now we don't buy from them)

*I **stopped to buy** something for my wife.* (I stopped in order to buy something)

**MEAN** We use *mean doing* when one thing results in or involves another. We use *mean to do* to express an intention.

*Globalisation **means being** active in every major market.* (= involves)

*I **meant to phone** you, but I forgot.* (= intended)

**GO ON** We use *go on doing* when we continue doing something. We use *go on to do* when we move on to do something else.

*They **went on trading** even though they were nearly bankrupt.* (= did the same thing)

*After leaving IBM he **went on to start** his own company.* (= did something else)

### B Verbs of perception

Verbs of perception include: *feel, hear, listen to, notice, see, watch*. These verbs can be followed by an object + *-ing* or a bare infinitive (without *to*) and the meaning of the verb changes.

If we see or hear only part of the action, or it continues, we use the *-ing* form. If we see or hear the whole action from beginning to end, we use the bare infinitive without *to*. Compare:

*I **saw her giving** her presentation.* (I saw part of the presentation)

*I **saw her give** her presentation.* (I saw the whole presentation)

*I **heard the machine making** a strange noise.* (I heard the noise and it continued)

*I **heard the machine make** a strange noise.* (I heard the noise and it stopped)

### C Verb + *-ing* or infinitive: little change in meaning

Some verbs can be followed by *-ing* or *to* + infinitive and there is little change in meaning.

These include: *begin, continue, intend, start*.

*What do you **intend doing/to do** about it?*

*In the second quarter, when the market **began to go down**, we **began selling**, dropping our equity position in the fund to around 70% and holding the remainder in cash. This way, I was able to minimize the impact of the downturn.* (Asiaweek website)

*The number of German jobless **continued to fall** in February.* (Wall Street Journal website)

We do not usually have two *-ing* forms together.

*It **was starting to get** dark.* (NOT ~~starting getting~~)

*The business community is again **starting to pay** very close attention to the country's economic health.* (Global Business Magazine website)

The verbs *like, love, prefer, hate* can be followed by either form. *To* + infinitive suggests something is a good/bad idea. The *-ing* form shows your feelings.

*I **like to do** my tax returns early, but I **don't like doing** them.*

When we use the modal *would* with these verbs we must use *to* + infinitive.

*I'd **prefer to do** it myself, if you don't mind.*

*Like* followed by *to* + infinitive can mean that we do something because we think it is a good idea, even though we don't enjoy it.

*I **like to write** several drafts before I write the final report.*

### D Passive forms: *-ing* or infinitive

Unit 19 gave lists of verbs that are followed by either an *-ing* form or *to* + infinitive. Only the active forms were given.

The passive form of 'verb + *-ing*' is verb + *being* + past participle.

*If the share price falls any more we **risk being taken over** by a larger company.*

The passive form of 'verb + *to* + infinitive' is verb + *to be* + past participle.

*I think I **deserve to be given** a pay rise.*

## 20 Practice

### Exercise 1 A

Underline the correct words.

- 1 I'm sorry I forgot to call/calling you, but I was really busy.
- 2 I stopped in Paris for a few days to meet/meeting Henri.
- 3 We've stopped to meet/meeting so often. It was a waste of time.
- 4 Learning a language means to be/being interested in the culture as well.
- 5 I meant to make/making some more photocopies, but I didn't have time.
- 6 Please remember to speak/speaking to Josie when you see her.
- 7 I don't remember to say/saying anything like that.
- 8 I tried to open/opening the window, but it was too high to reach.
- 9 I tried to open/opening the window, but it was still too hot in the room.
- 10 I'll never forget to give/giving my first presentation to the Board.
- 11 Don't forget to look at/looking at the audience when you speak.
- 12 We regret to announce/announcing the death of our founder, Mr Obuchi.
- 13 I regret to quit/quitting my MBA course.
- 14 The new product is doing really well. I think we should go on to sell/selling it for another six months at least.
- 15 First I'll say a little about the history of the company, then I'll go on to describe/describing our new range of products.

### Exercise 2 B

Match the situations a)–d) to the sentences 1–4 below.

- a) I heard part of your conversation.
- b) I saw your whole presentation.
- c) I saw the whole tour.
- d) I passed them in the corridor.

- 1 Sorry to interrupt, but I heard you talking about e-books.
- 2 I heard you talk about e-books at the Internet seminar.
- 3 I saw Barbara showing the visitors round the factory.
- 4 I saw Barbara show the visitors our new production line.

### Exercise 3 D unit 19

Complete the sentences with *being* or *to be*.

- 1 I enjoy being taken out for expensive meals.
- 2 The Minister denied ..... given a bribe.
- 3 The Minister refused ..... questioned about the bribe.
- 4 I expect ..... asked some tough questions after my presentation.
- 5 Do you mind ..... picked up at the airport by a taxi?
- 6 How awful! Imagine ..... asked to give a presentation on a topic like that!

### Exercise 4 A C

29 Complete the mini-dialogue with the correct form of the verb in brackets. On two occasions both forms are possible.

- THOMAS: Hi, Carla. I've been meaning (1) to speak (speaking/to speak) to you all day. We're trying (2) ..... (booking/to book) a table at that new Chinese restaurant tonight. Would you like to come too?
- CARLA: Oh, thanks, I'd really like to, but I was intending (3) ..... (starting/to start) work on my monthly sales report tonight.
- THOMAS: Really? Wouldn't you prefer (4) ..... (coming/to come) out with us? Just this once?
- CARLA: Of course I want (5) ..... (going/to go) out with you tonight, but I really have to get this report done. I'm sorry it means (6) ..... (missing/to miss) dinner with you guys tonight.
- THOMAS: Well, perhaps next time then.
- CARLA: Yeah. And next time don't forget (7) ..... (giving/to give) me as much notice as possible beforehand so I can keep the evening free.
- THOMAS: Oh, the trouble with you, Carla, is that you never stop (8) ..... (working/to work). You should remember (9) ..... (having/to have) some fun sometimes.
- CARLA: Look, Thomas, you know I'd really love (10) ..... (joining/to join) you, but I just ...
- THOMAS: Well, if you go on (11) ..... (working/to work) like you do at the moment, you'll start (12) ..... (getting/to get) really stressed, and then you'll regret (13) ..... (missing out/to miss out) on your social life. It happened to a friend of mine – in the end he went on (14) ..... (having/to have) a nervous breakdown.
- CARLA: Oh, come on. Stop (15) ..... (being/to be) so dramatic. I don't enjoy (16) ..... (taking/to take) work home, it's just that I like (17) ..... (finishing/to finish) my reports on time.

### Exercise 5 A unit 19

Complete this letter by putting the verbs in brackets into the correct form, *-ing* or *to + infinitive*.

Dear Audio World

I am writing to complain about the poor service that I received when I was in your store last week. Recently you decided (1) to remove (remove) listening facilities in your stores, and your sales staff encouraged customers (2) ..... (take) home their choice of CDs without (3) ..... (hear) them first. You invited us (4) ..... (return) any CDs that we did not like, as long as we kept the receipt as proof of purchase. In my opinion this was an excellent policy as it allowed customers (5) ..... (risk) (6) ..... (buy) things that were a little different.

A consequence of your policy is that customers will buy more CDs, and this means (7) ..... (return) more that they don't like. In fact last week I brought back eight CDs, from the fourteen I had bought on the previous visit. Your salesman refused (8) ..... (accept) such a large number, and accused me of (9) ..... (take) the CDs home just (10) ..... (copy) them. I strongly objected to (11) ..... (be) treated like this as I had remembered (12) ..... (bring) the receipts with me and my actions were within the terms of your guarantee.

I can't help (13) ..... (think) that you will lose a lot of business if your staff go on (14) ..... (behave) in this way, and I advise you (15) ..... (train) your staff (16) ..... (deal) with customers in a more polite manner.

Yours sincerely  
Ian Carr