

“Verb+to” or “Verb+ing”

- 1 Look at these sentences:
My sister promised to help me.
John doesn't want to wait.

We use to + infinitive after some verbs, e.g.:

afford	dare	decide	
deserve	want	hope	
learn	mean	offer	+ to +
pretend	promise	refuse	INFINITIVE
seem	plan	agree	
arrange	have (= 'must')		

- 2 Look at these sentences:
Have they finished painting the garage?
We enjoy sitting in the garden.

We use an -ing form after other verbs, e.g.:

avoid	dislike	enjoy	
finish	give up	imagine	+ -ing
keep	practise	stop	

- 3 Look at these sentences:
Jenny likes to stay at home.
Jenny likes staying at home.

These verbs can usually take an -ing form or to + infinitive with no difference in meaning:

begin	continue	hate	intend
like	love	prefer	start

But after would hate, would like, would love or would prefer, we use to + infinitive:
Would you like to go for a walk?
I'd love to visit Australia.

- 4 We can use an -ing form or to + infinitive after these verbs, but the meaning is different:

try remember forget

- ▶ *I tried to lift that heavy stone.* (= make an attempt: I made an attempt to lift the stone.)
- If you can't read where you are, try sitting nearer the window.* (= Test something out: sit nearer the window and see if you can read there.)
- ▶ *Remember to go to the bank.*
 (= Remember that you must go to the bank.)
She remembers going to the bank.
 (= She remembers that she went to the bank.)
- ▶ *Don't forget to phone Mrs Grey.*
 (= Remember that you must phone Mrs Grey.)
I'll never forget seeing that castle.
 (= I saw that castle, and I'll always remember it.)

Practice

- A Put in the correct form of the verb in brackets ().

- ▶ Paul dared *to argue* (argue) with the police.
- ▶ I can't imagine *living* (live) in the country.
- 1 We've decided (go) to the beach.
- 2 I stopped (play) tennis when I got married.
- 3 I meant (buy) some butter, but I forgot.
- 4 Did you promise (take) the children to the zoo?
- 5 Have the men finished (repair) the roof yet?
- 6 I'd love (visit) China.
- 7 You shouldn't avoid (talk) about your problems.
- 8 Peter refused (help) us.
- 9 Would you prefer (pay) now or later?
- 10 I couldn't afford (live) in London.
- 11 Why does Peter keep (talk) about his mother?

B Complete this conversation between Janet and Sharon with the correct form of the verbs in brackets ().

Janet: What do your children (▶) *want to do* (want/do) when they leave school?

Sharon: Well, Ann (▶) *enjoys writing* (enjoy/write), so she's (▶) *hoping to work* (hope/work) for a newspaper. But I don't know about Paul. He (1) (give up/study) months ago. He seems to (2) (enjoy/do) nothing now. He doesn't (3) (deserve/pass) his exams. And he (4) (refuse/listen) to us, when we tell him to (5) (keep/study).

Janet: With our children, in the past, if we (6) (offer/help) them, they always (7) (promise/study) hard. Nowadays if they (8) (want/talk) to us, that's fine, but I've learnt to (9) (stop/ask) them questions. I suppose they (10) (dislike/listen) to my suggestions. They (11) (seem/think) that they don't (12) (need/study) hard, but one day they'll (13) (have/find) a job.

C Use an *-ing* form, or *to + infinitive*, of the word in brackets () to complete each sentence.

▶ You say that I've met Janet, but I can't remember her.

I can't remember *meeting* (meet) Janet.

1 Please remember that you must buy some stamps.

Please remember (buy) some stamps.

2 We wanted to open the door, but we couldn't.

We tried (open) the door.

3 John met Madonna once. He'll never forget it.

John will never forget (meet) Madonna.

4 Sheila intended to phone Peter, but she forgot.

Sheila forgot (phone) Peter.

5 Jenny had a headache. She took an aspirin, but it didn't help.

Jenny tried (take) an aspirin for her headache.

6 I have a special soap that will probably get your hands clean.

Try (wash) your hands with this special soap.

7 It will not be easy to do all the work today.

We'll try (finish) the work before tonight.

8 I stayed in Jane's flat while she was on holiday. I remembered that I had to feed her cats every day.

I remembered (feed) Jane's cats every day while she was on holiday.

9 Remember that you must invite Mary to the party next week.

Don't forget (invite) Mary to the party next week.