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Infinitive or -ing forms?

INFINITIVE AND -ING FORMS

-ing forms as nouns

When we want to use a verb as a subject or object of a sentence, we use an -ing form.

Having something like that on your travels has to be good.

We didn't do **programming** in our IT classes at school.

-ing forms after prepositions

When a verb follows a preposition, we use an -ing form.

What's wrong **with using** your own voice?

We were all involved **in organising** the event.

I'm really looking forward **to going** to the gadget fair in San Francisco.

-ing forms as adjectives

We can use some -ing forms as adjectives.

What's more **embarrassing** ...

It's a very **exciting** development.

-ing forms and continuous tenses

Remember we also use an -ing form to make continuous tenses.

Someone's **following** you. (present continuous)

I **was talking** to him the other day and he said he'd bought a new car. (past continuous)

Have a rest. You've **been playing** that game for three hours! (present perfect continuous)

Infinitive with to for purpose

We use an infinitive with to to explain the reason or purpose for doing something.

You can use your phone **to lock** or **unlock** it from anywhere.

I need to go to the bank **to sort out** a problem.

I made a recording of my own music **to give** to friends.

-ing form or infinitive with to?

Both -ing forms and infinitive with to can follow verbs with no preposition. There are no rules for which form goes after which verbs. It's just the way it is.

Imagine walking at night. (imagine + -ing form)

It's an app that **allows you to speak** in a foreign language. (allow + object + infinitive with to)

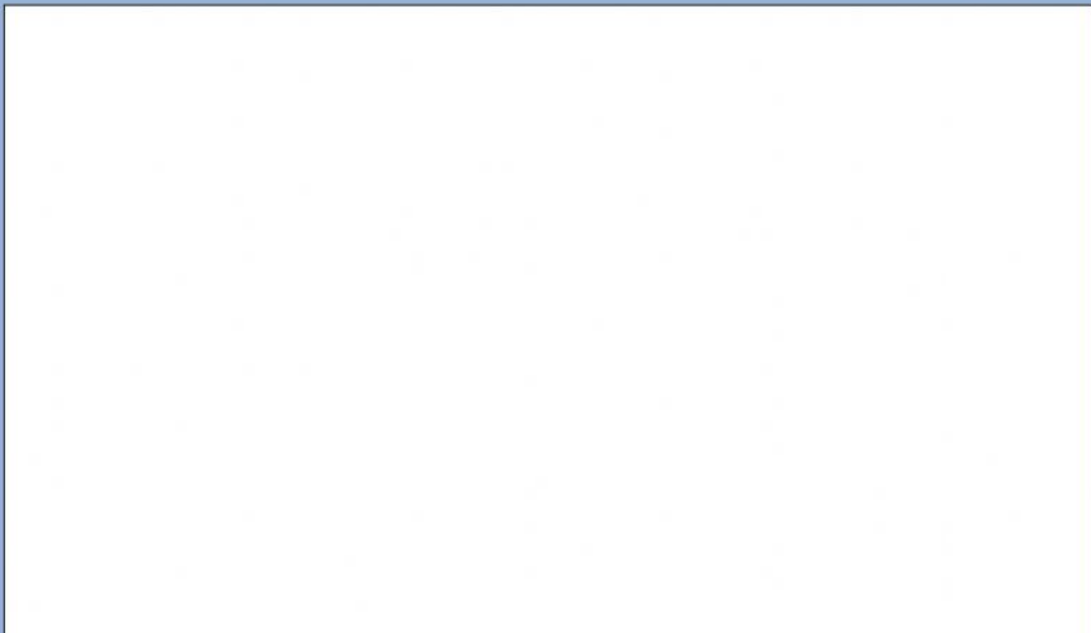
Other verbs followed by an -ing form:

be caught	can't stand	fancy	feel like
keep	involve	mind	miss
recommend	risk	spend	suggest

Other verbs followed by an infinitive with to:

agree	arrange	ask	decide
deserve	fail	hope	intend
learn	manage	persuade	plan
promise	refuse	threaten	want

Watch the video:



7 Look at these extracts from the podcast. Complete rules 1–6 with a–f below.

- 1 We use the *-ing* form in these extracts because ...
Having something like that on your travels has to be good.
... what's more embarrassing – the translation or *saying* your mate's mum is 'nice'?
- 2 We use the *-ing* form in these extracts because ...
Good for scaring your little brother ...
What's wrong with using your own voice?
- 3 We use the *-ing* form in this extract because ...
... what's more **embarrassing** ...?
- 4 We use the *-ing* form in these extracts because ...
Someone's following you – a robber or worse.
... some creep's **considering** robbing me ...
- 5 We use the infinitive with *to* in this extract because ...
You can use the app on your phone to lock or unlock it from anywhere.
- 6 We use the *-ing* form and the infinitive with *to* in these extracts because ...
You don't think he might be more tempted to rob me?
Imagine walking home at night ...
It's an app that allows you to speak in a foreign language you don't know.
... some creep's **considering** robbing me ...

- a it's part of a continuous tense.
- b some *-ing* forms are adjectives.
- c we want to use a verb as a subject or object of a sentence. (It's like a noun.)
- d we always use an *-ing* form of the verb after a preposition. (It's like a noun.)
- e some verbs are always followed by an *-ing* form and others are always followed by an infinitive with *to* – that's just the way it is!
- f we want to explain the purpose or reason for something.



8 Decide if the sentences below are correct or incorrect. If there is a mistake, correct it.

- 1 I should get a new computer because it keeps to crash.
- 2 They should bring out an app to do my school assignments automatically.
- 3 To make your own films is much easier with this new software because the user interface is really clear.
- 4 I saved so much money after buying this gadget that measures how much electricity is being used in the house.
- 5 I never turn down the heating for to save energy.
- 6 We're all guilty of to damage the planet in some way.
- 7 People need to get used to not drive everywhere. They should walk more.
- 8 I took the laptop back to the shop and luckily they agreed to exchange it.

9 Complete the sentences so they are true for you. Use an *-ing* form or an infinitive with *to*. Then work in pairs and compare your ideas.

- 1 They should invent a machine ...
- 2 I think ... is OK for women, but not for men.
- 3 I'm hoping ... sometime in the future.
- 4 I keep ...
- 5 I think ... is better for you than ...
- 6 I spend most of my weekends ...
- 7 I've arranged ... at the weekend.

Exercise 1

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs.

- 1 _____ computer games can be very educational. (play)
- 2 I was involved in _____ the website at work. (develop)
- 3 They should invent a robot _____ your pets while you're away. (look after)
- 4 The company finally agreed _____ me a refund for the faulty gadget. (give)
- 5 The app allows you _____ if any of your friends are nearby. (find out)
- 6 I can't stand people _____ with their smartphones while they're _____ to me. (mess around, talk)
- 7 I was thinking of _____ Computer Engineering there, but I failed _____ the grades I needed. (study, get)
- 8 You should get a cover for your phone _____ it _____ damaged. (prevent, get)

Exercise 2

Choose the correct option.

- 1 My job involves *travelling* / *to travel* a lot.
- 2 Do you fancy *going* / *to go* out somewhere this evening?
- 3 Sorry, I've arranged *meeting* / *to meet* a friend.
- 4 I'd rather stay in. I don't feel like *going* / *to go* out.
- 5 He played well. He didn't deserve *losing* / *to lose*.
- 6 I asked her very politely *emailing* / *to email* me a response, but I still haven't heard back from her.
- 7 I avoid *talking* / *to talk* to him as much as I can.
- 8 Unless you want to risk *losing* / *to lose* your work, you should set your computer to save **automatically**.

Exercise 3

With your group, talk about gadgets or apps that you think are rubbish. Explain why. Don't forget to use infinitive or *-ing* forms while speaking.