

Gerunds and Infinitives

A. Infinitives

An infinitive is “to” + the base form of the verb (“to go,” “to be,” “to have”). We usually use infinitives after a verb. Look at the following examples:

SUBJECT	VERB	INFINITIVE	COMPLEMENT
I	need	to call	an ambulance.
The police officer	hopes	to catch	the criminal.
We	plan	to buy	a new smoke detector.

We often use an infinitive after the following verbs:

begin	expect	like	plan	start
continue	forget	love	prefer	try
decide	hope	need	promise	want

Infinitives do not have endings. They do not show tense. Only the first verb shows a tense:

They began to use CPR on the victim as soon as they arrived.
He forgot to call the paramedics.

B. Gerunds

A gerund is a form of a verb that acts like a noun (a thing). We make a gerund by putting “ing” on the end of a present tense verb:

Gerunds can be the subject or the object of a sentence.	<i><u>Jogging</u> is a popular exercise for many people. (Subject of the sentence)</i> <i>The students finished <u>reading</u>. (Object of the sentence)</i>
Gerunds can have their own objects	<i>The students finished <u>reading</u> their books.</i>
We use gerunds after all prepositions except the preposition “to.”	<i>We are tired from working all day.</i> <i>They thought about opening the window for the fireman.</i>

<p>We use gerunds after these verbs: <i>enjoy, mind, stop, consider, appreciate, finish</i></p>	<p><i>I enjoy listening to music at work</i></p> <p><i>I don't mind stopping at Pat's on the way to work.</i></p> <p><i>I considered waiting for her, but I decided to leave.</i></p> <p><i>I appreciated getting a card from you last Christmas.</i></p>
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C. Infinitives and Gerunds

We use some verbs before both infinitives and gerunds:

<p>Use both infinitives and gerunds with these verbs: <i>begin, cease, continue, hate, intend, like, love, neglect, prefer, start</i></p>	<p><i>He began <u>listening</u>.</i> <i>He began <u>to listen</u>.</i></p> <p><i>They love <u>to study</u> English.</i> <i>They love <u>studying</u> English.</i></p> <p><i>I intend <u>to pass</u> the test.</i> <i>I intend <u>passing</u> the test.</i></p> <p><i>We prefer <u>to take</u> the train.</i> <i>We prefer <u>taking</u> the train.</i></p> <p><i>She neglected <u>to pay</u> her bills on time</i> <i>She neglected <u>paying</u> her bills on time.</i></p> <p><i>He ceased <u>coming</u> to the family reunions after his wife died.</i> <i>He ceased <u>to come</u> to the family reunions after his wife died.</i></p>
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