

GERUNDS & INFINITIVES

B1-B2 | Common verb patterns

1 The two forms

GERUND = verb + -ing

Reading is useful. / I enjoy reading.

Many verbs are followed by one form. Learn the pattern with the verb.

INFINITIVE = to + base verb

To travel is exciting. / I want to travel.

2 Verbs normally followed by the infinitive

VERB + TO + BASE VERB

e.g. decide to leave

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| • afford | • expect | • manage | • promise |
| • agree | • fail | • offer | • refuse |
| • choose | • hope | • plan | • seem |
| • decide | • learn | • prepare | • want |

3 Verbs normally followed by the gerund

VERB + -ING

e.g. enjoy reading

- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| • admit | • deny | • keep | • recommend |
| • avoid | • enjoy | • mind | • suggest |
| • consider | • finish | • miss | • dislike |
| • delay | • imagine | • practise | • risk |

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B1-B2 | Verbs that can use both forms

4 Verbs followed by either form

Some verbs can be followed by a gerund or an infinitive.

An asterisk () means that the meaning can change with the form you choose.*

A Usually little or no change in meaning

GERUND OR INFINITIVE

e.g. begin working / begin to work

- | | | | |
|------------|--------|----------|---------|
| • begin | • hate | • love | • start |
| • continue | • like | • prefer | |

B Meaning can change

GERUND OR INFINITIVE *

read the meaning carefully

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------|
| • forget* | • mean* | • remember* | • try* |
| • go on* | • regret* | • stop* | |

C What the asterisk means

- | | | |
|------------------|--|--|
| stop* | -ing: quit an activity: stop smoking | to + verb: pause another activity: stop to smoke |
| remember* | -ing: recall a past action: remember meeting her | to + verb: not forget a duty: remember to call |
| try* | -ing: experiment: try restarting it | to + verb: make an effort: try to restart it |
| regret* | -ing: be sorry about the past: regret saying it | to + verb: formal news: regret to inform you |

Other starred verbs can also change meaning. Check a dictionary or grammar guide when you meet them.