

# Verb + -ing or to ... 1 (remember/regret etc.)

A

Some verbs are followed by -ing and some are followed by to ... :

Verbs usually followed by -ing:

admit	fancy	postpone
avoid	finish	risk
consider	imagine	stop
deny	keep (on)	suggest
enjoy	mind	

For examples, see Unit 53.

Verbs usually followed by to ... :

afford	fail	offer
agree	forget	plan
arrange	hope	promise
decide	learn	refuse
deserve	manage	threaten

For examples, see Unit 54.

B

Some verbs can be followed by -ing or to ... with a difference of meaning:

## remember

I **remember doing** something = I did it and now I remember this.

You **remember doing** something *after* you have done it.

- I know I locked the door. I clearly **remember locking** it.  
(= I locked it, and now I remember this)
- He could **remember driving** along the road just before the accident, but he couldn't remember the accident itself.

I **remembered to do** something = I remembered that I had to do it, so I did it.

You **remember to do** something *before* you do it.

- I **remembered to lock** the door, but I forgot to shut the windows.  
(= I remembered that I had to lock it, and so I locked it)
- Please **remember to post** the letter.  
(= don't forget to post it)

## regret

I **regret doing** something = I did it and now I'm sorry about it:

- I now **regret saying** what I said. I shouldn't have said it.
- It began to get cold and he **regretted not wearing** his coat.

I **regret to say / to tell you / to inform** you = I'm sorry that I have to say (etc.):

- (*from a formal letter*) We **regret to inform** you that we cannot offer you the job.

## go on

**Go on doing** something = continue with the same thing:

- The president paused for a moment and then **went on talking**.
- We need to change. We can't **go on living** like this.

**Go on to do** something = do or say something new:

- After discussing the economy, the president then **went on to talk** about foreign policy.

C

The following verbs can be followed by -ing or to ... :

**begin start continue intend bother**

So you can say:

- It has **started raining**. *or* It has **started to rain**.
- John **intends buying** a house. *or* John **intends to buy** ...
- Don't **bother locking** the door. *or* Don't **bother to lock** ...

But normally we do not use -ing after -ing:

- It's **starting to rain**. (*not* It's starting raining)

**56.1 Put the verb into the correct form, -ing or to ... . Sometimes either form is possible.**

- 1 They denied stealing the money. (steal)
- 2 I don't enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ very much. (drive)
- 3 I don't want \_\_\_\_\_ out tonight. I'm too tired. (go)
- 4 I can't afford \_\_\_\_\_ out tonight. I don't have enough money. (go)
- 5 Has it stopped \_\_\_\_\_ yet? (rain)
- 6 Our team was unlucky to lose the game. We deserved \_\_\_\_\_ . (win)
- 7 Why do you keep \_\_\_\_\_ me questions? Can't you leave me alone? (ask)
- 8 Please stop \_\_\_\_\_ me questions! (ask)
- 9 I refuse \_\_\_\_\_ any more questions. (answer)
- 10 One of the boys admitted \_\_\_\_\_ the window. (break)
- 11 The boy's father promised \_\_\_\_\_ for the window to be repaired. (pay)
- 12 If the company continues \_\_\_\_\_ money, the factory may be closed. (lose)
- 13 'Does Sarah know about the meeting?' 'No, I forgot \_\_\_\_\_ her.' (tell)
- 14 The baby began \_\_\_\_\_ in the middle of the night. (cry)
- 15 Julia has been ill, but now she's beginning \_\_\_\_\_ better. (get)
- 16 I've enjoyed \_\_\_\_\_ you. I hope \_\_\_\_\_ you again soon. (meet, see)

**56.2 Here is some information about Tom when he was a child.**

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 He was in hospital when he was four. | 4 Once he fell into the river.      |
| 2 He went to Paris when he was eight.  | 5 He said he wanted to be a doctor. |
| 3 He cried on his first day at school. | 6 Once he was bitten by a dog.      |

He can still remember 1, 2 and 4. But he can't remember 3, 5 and 6. Write sentences beginning He can remember ... or He can't remember ... .

- 1 He can remember being in hospital when he was four.
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_

**56.3 Complete each sentence with a verb in the correct form, -ing or to ... .**

- 1 a Please remember to lock the door when you go out.  
 b A: You lent me some money a few months ago.  
 B: Did I? Are you sure? I don't remember \_\_\_\_\_ you any money.
- c A: Did you remember \_\_\_\_\_ your sister?  
 B: Oh no, I completely forgot. I'll phone her tomorrow.
- d When you see Steve, remember \_\_\_\_\_ him my regards.
- e Someone must have taken my bag. I clearly remember \_\_\_\_\_ it by the window and now it has gone.
- 2 a I believe that what I said was fair. I don't regret \_\_\_\_\_ it.  
 b I knew they were in trouble, but I regret \_\_\_\_\_ I did nothing to help them.
- 3 a Ben joined the company nine years ago. He became assistant manager after two years, and a few years later he went on \_\_\_\_\_ manager of the company.  
 b I can't go on \_\_\_\_\_ here any more. I want a different job.  
 c When I came into the room, Liz was reading a newspaper. She looked up and said hello, and then went on \_\_\_\_\_ her newspaper.

## Verb + -ing or to ... 2 (try/need/help)

### A Try to ... and try -ing

Try to do = attempt to do, make an effort to do:

- I was very tired. I **tried to keep** my eyes open, but I couldn't.
- Please **try to be** quiet when you come home. Everyone will be asleep.

Try also means 'do something as an experiment or test'. For example:

- These cakes are delicious. You should **try one**. (= you should have one to see if you like it)
- We couldn't find anywhere to stay. We **tried** every hotel in the town, but they were all full. (= we went to every hotel to see if they had a room)

If try (with this meaning) is followed by a verb, we say try -ing:

- A: The photocopier doesn't seem to be working.
- B: **Try pressing** the green button.  
(= press the green button - perhaps this will help to solve the problem)

Compare:

- I **tried to move** the table, but it was too heavy. (so I couldn't move it)
- I didn't like the way the furniture was arranged, so I **tried moving** the table to the other side of the room. But it still didn't look right, so I moved it back again.

### B Need to ... and need -ing

I need to do something = it is necessary for me to do it:

- I **need to take** more exercise.
- He **needs to work** harder if he wants to make progress.
- I don't **need to come** to the meeting, do I?

Something needs doing = it needs to be done:

- The batteries in the radio **need changing**.  
(= they need to be changed)
- Do you think my jacket **needs cleaning**?  
(= ... needs to be cleaned)
- It's a difficult problem. It **needs thinking** about very carefully. (= it needs to be thought about)



### C Help and can't help

You can say help to do or help do (with or without to):

- Everybody **helped to clean up** after the party. *or*  
Everybody **helped clean up** ...
- Can you **help me to move** this table? *or*  
Can you **help me move** ...

I can't help doing something = I can't stop myself doing it:

- I don't like him, but he has a lot of problems. I **can't help feeling** sorry for him.
- She tried to be serious, but she **couldn't help laughing**.  
(= she couldn't stop herself laughing)
- I'm sorry I'm so nervous. I **can't help it**.  
(= I can't help being nervous)

# Exercises

# Unit 57

57.1 Make suggestions. Each time use try + one of the following suggestions:

- phone his office      move the aerial      ~~change the batteries~~  
 turn it the other way      take an aspirin

- 1 The radio isn't working. I wonder what's wrong with it.  
 2 I can't open the door. The key won't turn.  
 3 The TV picture isn't very good. What can I do about it?  
 4 I can't contact Fred. He's not at home. What shall I do?  
 5 I've got a terrible headache. I wish it would go.

Have you tried changing the batteries?

Try .....

Have you tried .....

Why don't you .....

Have you .....

57.2 For each picture, write a sentence with need(s) + one of the following verbs:

- ~~clean~~    cut    empty    paint    tighten



- 1 This jacket is dirty. It needs cleaning.  
 2 The room isn't very nice. ....  
 3 The grass is very long. It .....  
 4 The screws are loose. ....  
 5 The bin is full. ....

57.3 Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 a I was very tired. I tried to keep (keep) my eyes open, but I couldn't.  
 b I rang the doorbell, but there was no answer. Then I tried ..... (knock) on the door, but there was still no answer.  
 c We tried ..... (put) the fire out but without success. We had to call the fire brigade.  
 d Sue needed to borrow some money. She tried ..... (ask) Gerry, but he was short of money too.  
 e I tried ..... (reach) the shelf, but I wasn't tall enough.  
 f Please leave me alone. I'm trying ..... (concentrate).  
 2 a I need a change. I need ..... (go) away for a while.  
 b My grandmother isn't able to look after herself any more. She needs ..... (look) after.  
 c The windows are dirty. They need ..... (clean).  
 d Your hair is getting very long. It needs ..... (cut).  
 e You don't need ..... (iron) that shirt. It doesn't need ..... (iron).  
 3 a They were talking very loudly. I couldn't help ..... (overhear) what they said.  
 b Can you help me ..... (get) the dinner ready?  
 c He looks so funny. Whenever I see him, I can't help ..... (smile).  
 d The fine weather helped ..... (make) it a very enjoyable holiday.

## A

## Like / love / hate

When you talk about repeated actions, you can use -ing or to ... after these verbs.

So you can say:

- Do you like getting up early? *or* Do you like to get up early?
- Stephanie hates flying. *or* Stephanie hates to fly.
- I love meeting people. *or* I love to meet people.
- I don't like being kept waiting. *or* ... like to be kept waiting.
- I don't like friends calling me at work. *or* ... friends to call me at work.

*but*

(1) We use -ing (*not to ...*) when we talk about a situation that already exists (or existed).

For example:

- Paul lives in Berlin now. He likes living there. (He likes living in Berlin = He lives there and he likes it)
- Do you like being a student? (You are a student – do you like it?)
- The office I worked in was horrible. I hated working there. (I worked there and I hated it)

(2) There is sometimes a difference between I like to do and I like doing:

I like doing something = I do it and I enjoy it:

- I like cleaning the kitchen. (= I enjoy it.)

I like to do something = I think it is a good thing to do, but I don't necessarily enjoy it:

- It's not my favourite job, but I like to clean the kitchen as often as possible.

Note that enjoy and mind are always followed by -ing (*not to ...*):

- I enjoy cleaning the kitchen. (*not* I enjoy to clean)
- I don't mind cleaning the kitchen. (*not* I don't mind to clean)

## B

## Would like / would love / would hate / would prefer

Would like / would love etc. are usually followed by to ... :

- I'd like (= would like) to go away for a few days.
- Would you like to come to dinner on Friday?
- I wouldn't like to go on holiday alone.
- I'd love to meet your family.
- Would you prefer to have dinner now or later?

Compare I like and I would like (I'd like):

- I like playing tennis. / I like to play tennis. (= I like it in general)
- I'd like to play tennis today. (= I want to play today)

Would mind is always followed by -ing (*not to ...*):

- Would you mind closing the door, please?

## C

I would like to have done something = I regret now that I didn't or couldn't do it:

- It's a pity we didn't see Val when we were in London. I would like to have seen her again.
- We'd like to have gone away, but we were too busy at home.

You can use the same structure after would love / would hate / would prefer:

- Poor old David! I would hate to have been in his position.
- I'd love to have gone to the party, but it was impossible.

58.1 Write sentences about yourself. Say whether you like or don't like these activities. Choose one of these verbs for each sentence:

like / don't like    love    hate    enjoy    don't mind

- 1 (fly) I don't like flying. or I don't like to fly.
- 2 (play cards) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 (be alone) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 (go to museums) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 (cook) \_\_\_\_\_

58.2 Make sentences from the words in brackets. Use -ing or to ... . Sometimes either form is possible.

- 1 Paul lives in Berlin now. It's nice. He likes it.  
(he / like / live / there) He likes living there.
- 2 Jane is a biology teacher. She likes her job.  
(she / like / teach / biology) She \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Joe always carries his camera with him and takes a lot of photographs.  
(he / like / take / photographs) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 I used to work in a supermarket. I didn't like it much.  
(I / not / like / work / there) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Rachel is studying medicine. She likes it.  
(she / like / study / medicine) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Dan is famous, but he doesn't like it.  
(he / not / like / be / famous) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 Jennifer is a very cautious person. She doesn't take many risks.  
(she / not / like / take / risks) \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 I don't like surprises.  
(I / like / know / things / in advance) \_\_\_\_\_

58.3 Complete each sentence with a verb in the correct form, -ing or to ... . In one sentence either form is possible.

- 1 It's good to visit other places – I enjoy travelling.
- 2 'Would you like \_\_\_\_\_ down?' 'No, thanks. I'll stand.'
- 3 I'm not quite ready yet. Would you mind \_\_\_\_\_ a little longer?
- 4 When I was a child, I hated \_\_\_\_\_ to bed early.
- 5 When I have to catch a train, I'm always worried that I'll miss it. So I like \_\_\_\_\_ to the station in plenty of time.
- 6 I enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ busy. I don't like it when there's nothing to do.
- 7 I would love \_\_\_\_\_ to your wedding, but I'm afraid it isn't possible.
- 8 I don't like \_\_\_\_\_ in this part of town. I want to move somewhere else.
- 9 Do you have a minute? I'd like \_\_\_\_\_ to you about something.
- 10 If there's bad news and good news, I like \_\_\_\_\_ the bad news first.

58.4 Write sentences using would ... to have (done). Use the verbs in brackets.

- 1 It's a pity I couldn't go to the wedding. (like) I would like to have gone to the wedding.
- 2 It's a pity I didn't see the programme. (like) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 I'm glad I didn't lose my watch. (hate) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 It's a pity I didn't meet your parents. (love) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 I'm glad I wasn't alone. (not / like) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 It's a pity I couldn't travel by train. (prefer) \_\_\_\_\_