

# Verb combinations

*j*

Verbs are often followed by another verb.

I **enjoy reading**.                      You **deserve to get** promotion.  
I **didn't choose to do** this job.      She **denies selling** secrets.  
I **don't want to go**.                      He **doesn't recall meeting** him.

It can be difficult to know whether the second verb is a to-infinitive or ends with *-ing*.

## Verb + verb + *-ing*

The *-ing* form focuses on:

a) an action or state before the action of the first verb:

She **admitted taking** a bribe.  
He **misses seeing** his wife and children.  
She **finished doing** her accounts yesterday.

b) the activity itself. The second verb functions like a noun:

I **dislike travelling**.  
She **recommends selling** the shares now.  
They **have postponed launching** the new model.

Some common verbs that are followed by *-ing* forms:

admit	appreciate	contemplate	give up	involve
deny	enjoy	consider	carry on	mean
look forward to	mind	justify	can't stand	remember
anticipate	resent	warrant	detest	recollect
risk	recommend	delay	miss	
jeopardise	suggest	put off	avoid	

## Practice

Verb + verb + *-ing*

## I Match the sentence halves.

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 I'm looking forward to                          | a) signing anything like that.        |
| 2 I don't remember                                | b) talking for half an hour.          |
| 3 He's decided to give up                         | c) increasing our debt-equity ratio.  |
| 4 Borrowing any more money would involve          | d) smoking cigars for health reasons. |
| 5 She loves the sound of her voice and carried on | e) seeing you in Milan soon.          |

## 2 Using the word in brackets, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first

- a) Travelling doesn't bother me as long as there are no delays, (mind)  
I don't .....
- b) In my job I have to meet many people, (involve)  
My job .....
- c) I certainly did not pass on any trade secrets, (deny)  
I firmly .....
- d) There's a danger we will lose business to our competitors, (risk)  
We .....
- e) I think it would be a good idea to get in touch with the commercial attache, (suggest)  
She .....
- f) We fully expect to double our turnover in the next two years, (anticipate)  
We .....
- g) He was late so I didn't see him. (miss)  
He was late so .....
- h) Why on earth did you spend so much on entertainment? (justify)  
How can you .....

[ Verb combinations

### Verb + fo-infinitive

The to-infinitive form focuses on

a) a purpose:

She **wishes to ask** you a favour.

She **intends to complain**.

They've **decided to go ahead** with the idea.

b) a future situation:

They are **planning to launch** a takeover bid.

I've **arranged to see** the financial people tomorrow.

I **expect to see** them in Taiwan shortly.

Some common verbs that are followed by to-infinitive forms:

intend	attempt	promise	plan	guarantee	claim
mean	try	undertake	arrange	offer	pretend
want	hope	forget	seem	fail	
wish	expect	remember	appear	neglect	

### Verb + object + fo-infinitive

When we want to talk about two actions performed by different people, the verbs are separated by an object:

He didn't want me to attend the meeting. (NOT \*He didn't want that I attend ...)

They don't allow you to smoke at work. (NOT \*They don't allow that...)

A laptop enables people to work on a plane. (NOT \*A laptop enables to work...)

Some common verbs used with an object and a to-infinitive clause:

advise allow ask cause challenge choose defy enable encourage  
expect forbid force help inspire instruct intend invite lead leave  
mean oblige order pay permit persuade prefer programme recruit  
remind teach tell train trust urge use warn

**Practice****A Verb + to-infinitive**

Using the word in brackets, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first

- 1 I have every intention of complaining, (intend)  
I fully .....
- 2 Send them the samples they requested - don't forget, will you? (remember)  
Please .....
- 3 We will provide a 24 hour-a-day-hot line, (undertake)  
We .....
- 4 I anticipate receiving an answer soon, (expect)  
I .....
- 5 If you like we can send a replacement, (offered)  
They have .....
- 6 She should have told them of the potential problem, (neglected)  
She .....
- 7 I'm not sure, but I think there is a bug in the program, (appears)  
There .....
- 8 She says she has the necessary authority, (claims)  
She .....

**B Verb + object + to-infinitive**

The words in the following sentences are in the wrong order. Rewrite them in the correct order.

- 1 me she to in myself taught believe
- 2 dirty they me to their do work paid
- 3 he perform a certain programmed robot to number tasks the of
- 4 federation the the rates cut Minister to interest urged employers'
- 5 the from expertise to enabled joint benefit our us partner's venture

## Verb combinations

### Verb + object + verb + *-ing*

- 1 Some verbs are used with an object and a second verb ending in *-ing*

Verbs used in this way include:

catch describe discover feel find hear imagine  
keep leave like listen to notice observe prevent (from)  
save see send set show watch

Her comment set me thinking.

Outsourcing would save you spending money on permanent staff.

The white knight prevented the company from being taken over.

- 2 Verbs of perception

*Not all of the action is seen or heard*

I saw a man stealing some clothes from a store.

He watched the crowd leaving the stadium.

I heard a door banging repeatedly.

*All of the action is seen or heard*

I saw a man steal some clothes from a store.

He watched the crowd leave the stadium.

I heard a door bang once and then nothing.

### Verb + infinitive without *to*

A few verbs used in second position do not take *to*. These are *let*, *make* and *have* (in the sense 'cause to happen'):

We let them have a 10% discount. (NOT \*let them to have)

Don't make me laugh. (NOT \*make me to laugh) .

Could you have Mrs Smith bring in the coffee now? (NOT \*have Mrs Smith to bring)

### Verb + *it* + object clause

When the object of a verb is a clause, *to*-infinitive or *-ing* structure, we use *it* after the verb to introduce the clause:

I find it impossible to understand their culture.

The government regard it as unnecessary to harmonise taxation.

She feels it is necessary to send a copy to absolutely everyone.

He found it worthwhile visiting the overseas subsidiaries.

## Practice

## A Verbs of perception

There was a break-in at the headquarters of a company and the nightwatchman has made a statement to the police saying what he saw and heard.



Complete the statement using these verbs.

have go through feel beat move whisper come lie shout

I have worked as a nightwatchman here for six years and there has never been any trouble. But on the night in question at about 3am I was looking at the closed circuit TV screens in my room and saw someone ..... about in one of the offices. So I took my torch and went to investigate. I decided not to take the lift because an intruder would hear it ..... so I walked upstairs as quietly as I could. I stopped on the second floor and listened to my heart ..... I took out my revolver and took off the safety catch. At that moment I imagined myself ..... a gun battle and I couldn't prevent myself from ..... afraid. I imagined myself ..... in a pool of blood in the deserted building. Then I continued up to the third floor and walked down the corridor. I could hear two people ..... to each other. I walked on, and through an open door I observed two masked men ..... the contents of the CEO's desk. Then after about 30 seconds - but it seemed like an eternity - I heard someone ..... something for a split second, then everything went blank.

## B Verb patterns

Correct the errors in these sentences.

- 1 I find impossible to work with him.
- 2 They made us to work extremely hard in my previous job.
- 3 She never let me to take any decisions.
- 4 Could you have Mr Clarke to prepare some statistics?
- 5 She's finding difficult to get used to the climate.
- 6 I feel is necessary to delegate more of the work.

## I Verb combinations

### Verb + *for* + to-infinitive

Some verbs are followed by the preposition *for* and its object, then an infinitive:

He **arranged for** his secretary *to drive* him to the airport.

I **waited for** him *to get back* in touch.

They **called for** the Union *to reconsider*'tis strike action.

These verbs can be used in this way:

appeal apply arrange ask call opt

pay plead vote wait wish yearn

### Verb + possessive + verb + *-ing*

It is possible to introduce a possessive pronoun or a genitive between the first and second verb.

Thus *Please forgive me for asking* can be reformulated more formally as *Please forgive my asking*.

Other verbs that follow this pattern are:

That would **entail** our making a concession.

This will **save** our wasting time.

They have **suggested** his going to the symposium.

He's looking **forward to** our coming.

'I don't **mind** your being killed, but I object **to** your being taken prisoner.' (Lord Kitchener to the Prince of Wales, on his asking to fight during the 1914-18 war)

### Special cases

Certain verbs are followed by either an infinitive or another verb + *-ing*, but the choice leads to a change in the meaning:

I will never **forget** meeting Princess Diana. (= I will always remember)

I sometimes **forget** to wear my badge. (= fail to remember)

I **mean** to see her later this week. (= I intend to)

I could get a better job but it would **mean** moving (= involve)

He was an alcoholic but **stopped** drinking. (= ceased)

He **stopped** to have a drink on the way back home. (= in order to)

She **remembered** to turn off her headlights. (= she didn't forget)

She **remembers** turning off her headlights. (= she has a clear memory of this)

Why don't you **try** giving the staff greater autonomy? (= experiment and see what happens)

He **tried** to learn car maintenance but gave up. (= attempted / made the effort)

## Practice

### A Verb + **for** + to-infinitive

Match the sentence halves in order to make logical sentences.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 The opposition party has called for         | a) the company to increase its share capital.  |
| 2 The conference organiser has arranged for   | b) the spare parts to arrive.                  |
| 3 The production manager has been waiting for | c) the prime minister to resign.               |
| 4 The shareholders voted for                  | d) her to go to an American university.        |
| 5 Her father paid for                         | e) the delegates to stay in a four-star hotel. |

### B Special cases

Use the correct form of the verb in brackets to complete these extracts.

The German Chancellor intervened yesterday in a dispute with the energy industry over plans to stop

(use) nuclear power.

In 1996 five big US networks donated airtime to political candidates for the first time but a survey of registered voters showed that most of them did not remember ..... (see) the broadcasts.

Apparently, the commissioner meant ..... (inform) the investigators of the secret payments into a special fund but was persuaded not to do so.

Embarrassment yesterday as the wife of the prime minister attended the presentation of a football trophy. Unfortunately someone forgot ..... (tell) the photographers and the event had to be reprogrammed.

It could be that there is no crisis of faith in managers. It may simply be that suddenly everyone wants to be a management consultant or, failing that, an investment banker. If all those MBAs really do mean ..... (work) for McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group, Goldman

Sachs and all the rest, good luck to them. But if they believe that being a consultant or investment banker will mean ..... (have) a balanced life with plenty of time for family and friends, they may be in for a rude shock.