

GERUNDS AND INFINITIVES



Gerunds (doing, seeing, going, etc.) and infinitives (to do, to see, to go, etc.) are words that are derived from **verbs** but function as other parts of speech (mostly **nouns**). Using them correctly can be troublesome because some verbs are followed by infinitives, some by gerunds, and some by either. The following lists should prove helpful.



Verbs Followed by Infinitives

attempt	hope	plan
choose	intend	pretend
decide	learn	promise
expect	mean (intend)	want
fail	need	wish

*e.g., I **expected to finish** the exam in two hours, but I failed to keep track of the time.*

Verbs Followed by Gerunds

appreciate	enjoy	quit
avoid	finish	recall
consider	involve	recommend
deny	keep	resent
dislike	mind	risk

*e.g., He **denied being** at the scene of the accident and resented having to deny his responsibility.*

The following verb phrases are also followed by gerunds:

have difficulty	spend time	waste time
have trouble	spend money	waste money
have a problem/problems		waste energy

*e.g., I don't want to **waste time going** to a movie that I'm not interested in.*

Verbs Followed by Infinitives or Gerunds (where choice does not affect meaning)

begin	love	like
hate	start	propose
prefer	try	

*e.g., Let's **begin to think** about the assignment.*

*e.g., Let's **begin thinking** about the assignment.*

Verbs Followed by Infinitives or Gerunds (where choice does affect meaning)

mean
intend
go on

remember
forget
regret

stop
try

For these verbs, the infinitive looks to the **future**, while using the gerund looks to the **past**.

*e.g., I have to **remember to buy** bread.*

In this case, to buy looks to the future.

*e.g., I **remember buying** bread.*

In this case, buying the bread happened in the past.