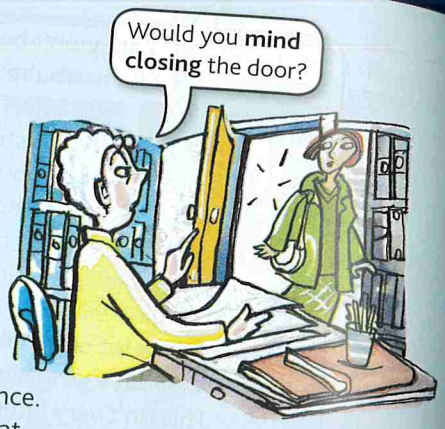
Unit 53

Verb + -ing (enjoy doing / stop doing etc.)

A

Look at these examples:

- I **enjoy reading**. (*not* I enjoy to read)
- Would you **mind closing** the door? (*not* mind to close)
- Chris **suggested going** to the cinema. (*not* suggested to go)



After **enjoy**, **mind** and **suggest**, we use **-ing** (*not* **to** ...).

Some more verbs that are followed by **-ing**:

stop	**postpone**	**admit**	**avoid**	**imagine**
finish	**consider**	**deny**	**risk**	**fancy**

- Suddenly everybody **stopped talking**. There was silence.
- I'll do the shopping when I've **finished cleaning** the flat.
- He tried to **avoid answering** my question.
- I don't **fancy going** out this evening. (= I'm not enthusiastic about it)
- Have you ever **considered going** to live in another country?
- They said they were innocent. They **denied doing** anything wrong.

The negative form is **not -ing**:

- When I'm on holiday, I enjoy **not having** to get up early.

B

We also use **-ing** after:

give up (= stop)
put off (= postpone)
go on *or* **carry on** (= continue)
keep *or* **keep on** (= do something continuously or repeatedly)

- I've **given up reading** newspapers. I think it's a waste of time.
- Catherine doesn't want to retire. She wants to **go on working**. (*or* ... to **carry on working**.)
- You **keep interrupting** when I'm talking! *or* You **keep on interrupting** ...

C

With some verbs you can use the structure *verb* + somebody + **-ing**:

- I can't **imagine George riding** a motorbike.
- You can't **stop me doing** what I want.
- Did you really say that? I don't **remember you saying** that.
- 'Sorry to **keep you waiting** so long.' 'That's all right.'

Note the passive form (**being done/seen/kept** etc.):

- I don't **mind being kept** waiting. (= I don't mind **people keeping** me ...)

D

When you are talking about finished actions, you can say **having done/stolen/said** etc. :

- They admitted **having stolen** the money.

But it is not necessary to use **having** (done). You can also say:

- They admitted **stealing** the money.
- I now regret **saying** (*or* **having said**) what I said.

E

After some of the verbs on this page (especially **admit/deny/suggest**) you can also use **that** ... :

- They **denied that** they had stolen the money. (*or* They **denied stealing** ...)
- Chris **suggested that** we went to the cinema. (*or* Chris **suggested going** ...)

Suggest → Unit 34 **Being done** (passive) → Unit 44B Verb + **to** ... → Unit 54 Verb + **to** ... and **-ing** → Units 55C, 56–58 **Remember / regret / go on** → Unit 56B **Go on / carry on / keep on** → Unit 141A

Unit 54

Verb + to ... (decide to ... / forget to ... etc.)

A

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

After these verbs you can use **to** ... *(infinitive)*:

- It was late, so we **decided to take** a taxi home.
- Simon was in a difficult situation, so I **agreed to help** him.
- How old were you when you **learnt to drive**? (*or* learnt **how** to drive)
- I waved to Karen, but **failed to attract** her attention.

The negative is **not to** ... :

- We **decided not to go** out because of the weather.
- I **promised not to be** late.

After some verbs **to** ... is not possible. For example, **enjoy/think/suggest**:

- I **enjoy reading**. (*not* enjoy to read)
- Andy **suggested meeting** for coffee. (*not* suggested to meet)
- Are you **thinking of buying** a car? (*not* thinking to buy)

For verb + **-ing**, see Unit 53. For verb + preposition + **-ing**, see Unit 62.

B

After **dare** you can use the infinitive with or without **to**:

- I wouldn't **dare to tell** him. *or* I wouldn't **dare tell** him.

But after **dare not** (*or* **daren't**), you must use the infinitive without **to**:

- I **daren't tell** him what happened. (*not* I daren't to tell him)

C

We also use **to** ... after:

seem **appear** **tend** **pretend** **claim**

For example:

- They **seem to have** plenty of money.
- I like Dan, but I think he **tends to talk** too much.
- Ann **pretended not to see** me when she passed me in the street.

There is also a *continuous* infinitive (**to be** do**ing**) and a *perfect* infinitive (**to have** done):

- I **pretended to be reading** the paper. (= I pretended that I **was reading**)
- You **seem to have lost** weight. (= it seems that you **have lost** weight)
- Joe **seems to be enjoying** his new job. (= it seems that he **is enjoying** it)

D

After some verbs you can use a question word (**what/whether/how** etc.) + **to** ... .
We use this structure especially after:

ask **decide** **know** **remember** **forget** **explain** **learn** **understand** **wonder**

We **asked**	**how**	**to get**	to the station.
Have you **decided**	**where**	**to go**	for your holidays?
I don't **know**	**whether**	**to apply**	for the job or not.
Do you **understand**	**what**	**to do**?	

Also
show/tell/ask/advise/teach somebody **what/how/where** to do something:

- Can somebody **show me how to use** this camera?
- Ask Jack. He'll **tell you what to do**.

Verb + **-ing** → Unit 53 Verb + object + **to** ... (**want** etc.) → Unit 55
Verb + **to** ... and **-ing** → Units 55C, 56–58

Unit 55

Verb (+ object) + to ... (I want you to ... etc.)

A

want	**ask**	**help**	**would like**
expect	**beg**	**mean** (= intend)	**would prefer**

These verbs are followed by **to** ... *(infinitive)*. The structure can be:

verb + **to** ... *or* *verb* + *object* + **to** ...

- We **expected to be** late. / We expected **Dan to be** late.
- **Would** you **like to go** now? / Would you like **me to go** now?
- He doesn't **want to know**. / He doesn't want **anybody to know**.

Do not say 'want that':

- Do you **want me to come** with you? (*not* Do you want that I come)

After **help** you can use the infinitive with or without **to**. So you can say:

- Can you help me **to move** this table? *or* Can you help me **move** this table?

B

tell	**remind**	**force**	**encourage**	**teach**	**enable**
order	**warn**	**invite**	**persuade**	**get** (= persuade)	

These verbs have the structure *verb* + *object* + **to** ... :

- Can you **remind me to call** Sam tomorrow?
- Who **taught you to drive**?
- I didn't move the piano by myself. I **got somebody to help** me.
- Joe said the switch was dangerous and **warned me not to touch** it.

In the next example, the verb is *passive* (**I was warned** / **we were told** etc.):

- **I was warned not to touch** the switch.

You cannot use **suggest** with the structure *verb* + *object* + **to** ... :

- Jane **suggested that I ask** your advice. (*not* Jane suggested me to ask)

C

After **advise** and **allow**, two structures are possible. Compare:

verb + **-ing** (without an object) / *verb* + *object* + **to** ...

- I wouldn't **advise staying** in that hotel. / I wouldn't **advise anybody to stay** in that hotel.
- They don't **allow parking** in front of the building. / They don't **allow people to park** in front of the building.

Study these examples with (**be**) **allowed** (*passive*):

- Parking **isn't allowed** in front of the building. / You **aren't allowed to park** in front of the building.

D

Make and **let**

These verbs have the structure *verb* + *object* + *infinitive* (without **to**):

- I **made him promise** that he wouldn't tell anybody what happened. (*not* to promise)
- Hot weather **makes me feel** tired. (= causes me to feel tired)
- Her parents wouldn't **let her go** out alone. (= wouldn't allow her to go out)
- **Let me carry** your bag for you.

We say '**make** somebody **do**' (*not* to do), but in the *passive* we say '**made to** do' (with **to**):

- **We were made to wait** for two hours. (= They **made us wait** ...)

Suggest → Units 34, 53 | **Tell/ask somebody to ...** → Unit 48D | Verb + **-ing** → Unit 53
Verb + **to** ... → Unit 54 | Verb + **to** ... and **-ing** → Units 56–58 | **Help** → Unit 57C

Unit 56

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)
- I must **remember to pay** the electricity bill. (= I must not forget to pay 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.
- Do you **regret not going** to college?

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 your application has been unsuccessful.

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** ... with no difference of meaning:
begin **start** **continue** **intend** **bother**

So you can say:

- It **started raining**. *or* It **started to rain**.
- Andy **intends buying** a house. *or* Andy **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)

Verb + **-ing** → Unit 53 Verb + **to** ... → Units 54–55 Other verbs + **-ing** or **to** ... → Units 57–58

Unit 57

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 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 get** 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:

- My phone **needs charging**.
  (= it needs to be charged)
- Do you think this 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)



She **couldn't help laughing**.

Verb + -ing → Unit 53 Verb + to ... → Units 54–55 Other verbs + -ing or to ... → Units 56, 58

Unit 58

Verb + -ing or to ... 3 (like / would like etc.)

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** (= I **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 shame we didn't see Anna 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 David! I **would hate to have been** in his position.
- **I'd love to have gone** to the party, but it was impossible.

Enjoy/mind → Unit 53 **Would like** → Units 37E, 55A **Prefer** → Unit 59

Exercise

58.1 Write s of thes

like

1 (fly)
2 (pla
3 (be
4 (go
5 (co

58.2 Make possi

1 Pa (h
2 Ja (s
3 Jo (h
4 I (
5 R (
6 D (
7
8

58.3 Co fo

1
2
3
4
5
1

58.4

→ Add