



Mini-lesson 47: Infinitives vs. Gerunds

Objective

To help learners understand the difference between **infinitives** and **gerunds**, and when to use each after specific verbs, expressions, and prepositions.

Explanation

An **infinitive** is the base form of a verb preceded by **to** (e.g., *to eat, to go*).

A **gerund** is the **-ing** form of a verb used as a **noun** (e.g., *eating, going*).

Some verbs are followed by gerunds:

- enjoy, finish, avoid, suggest, mind, keep, consider

Examples:

- I enjoy **reading**.
- She suggested **going** to the museum.
- He avoided **talking** about politics.

Some verbs are followed by infinitives:

- want, need, decide, hope, learn, plan, agree

Examples:

- I want **to leave** now.
- We decided **to stay** at home.
- She agreed **to help** me.



✓ A few verbs can be followed by both, but with a change in meaning:

- remember, stop, try, forget

Examples:

- I remembered **to lock** the door. (I did it.)
- I remember **locking** the door. (I have a memory of it.)
- I stopped **smoking** cigarettes. (I don't smoke anymore)
- I stopped **to smoke** a cigarette. I stopped what I was doing to have a cigarette)

✓ After prepositions, use a gerund, not an infinitive.

Examples:

- I'm interested **in learning** Italian.
- She left **without saying** goodbye.



Practice Exercise

Part A: Choose the correct form (gerund or infinitive)

1. I forgot (bring / to bring) my ID.
2. She enjoys (cook / cooking) for her family.
3. They agreed (join / joining) the club.
4. He kept (talk / talking) during the movie.
5. We decided (go / going) by train.
6. She avoided (make / making) eye contact.
7. I hope (visit / visiting) you soon.
8. He suggested (meet / meeting) at the café.
9. I need (study / studying) more.
10. Are you interested in (travel / traveling)?

Part B: Fill in the blanks with the correct gerund or infinitive.

11. He plans _____ (move) to Canada.
12. I can't stand _____ (be) late.
13. We finished _____ (paint) the room.
14. She promised _____ (call) me.
15. I'm thinking about _____ (get) a dog.
16. They offered _____ (help) us with the work.
17. He stopped _____ (smoke) last year.
18. He stopped _____ (buy) some milk.
19. Do you want _____ (go) out tonight?
20. She admitted _____ (cheat) on the test.



✓ Answer Key

Part A

1. to bring
2. cooking
3. to join
4. talking
5. to go
6. making
7. to visit
8. meeting
9. to study
10. traveling

Part B

11. to move
12. being
13. painting
14. to call
15. getting
16. to help
17. smoking
18. to buy
19. to go
20. cheating

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