

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

A When one verb follows another verb, the structure is usually *verb + -ing* or *verb + to...*. Compare:

<p>verb + -ing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They denied stealing the money. • I enjoy going out. <p>Often we use -ing for an action that happens <i>before</i> the first verb or at the same time:</p> <p>stealing ← denied ↖ enjoy ↗ going ↘</p>	<p>verb + to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They decided to steal the money. • I want to go out. <p>Often we use to... for an action that <i>follows</i> the first verb:</p> <p>decided → to steal want → to go</p>
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This difference is often helpful (see Section B) but does not explain all uses of **-ing** and **to...**

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

remember

<p>I remember doing something = I did it and now I remember this. You remember doing something <i>after</i> you have done it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm absolutely sure 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 happened, but he couldn't remember the accident itself. 	<p>I remembered to do something = I remembered that I had to do it, and so I did it. You remember to do something <i>before</i> you do it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I remembered to lock the door when I left but I forgot to shut the windows. (= I remembered that I had to lock the door and so I locked it) • Please remember to post the letter. (= don't forget to post it)
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regret

<p>I regret doing something = I did it and now I'm sorry about it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I now regret saying what I said. I shouldn't have said it. 	<p>I regret to say / to tell you / to inform you = I'm sorry that I have to say (etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>(from a formal letter)</i> We regret to inform you that we are unable to offer you the job.
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go on

<p>Go on doing something = continue doing the same thing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minister went on talking for two hours. • We must change our ways. We can't go on living like this. 	<p>Go on to do something = do or say something new:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After discussing the economy, the minister then went on to talk about foreign policy.
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C begin start intend continue bother

These verbs can be followed by **-ing** or **to...** with little or no difference in meaning. 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')

EXERCISES

55.1 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 haven't got enough money. (go)
- 5 Has it stopped yet? (rain)
- 6 Can you remind me some coffee when we go out? (buy)
- 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 Ann was having dinner when the phone rang. She didn't answer the phone; she just carried on (eat)
- 13 'How did the thief get into the house?' 'I forgot the window.' (shut)
- 14 I've enjoyed you. (meet) I hope you again soon. (see)
- 15 The baby began in the middle of the night. (cry)
- 16 Julia has been ill but now she's beginning better. (get)

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

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

55.3 Complete these sentences with a suitable 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 Mandy, remember her my regards, won't you?
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 *(after a driving test)* I regret that you have failed the test.
- 3 a Keith joined the company 15 years ago. He was quickly promoted and became assistant manager after two years. 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 to me, and then went on her newspaper.