

Verbs followed by an infinitive: decide, hope, promise

CEFR B1 · 20 questions · A4 / US Letter

Many common verbs take to plus the base verb after them: decide, hope, promise, want, need and plan. Some also need a person before the infinitive.

The rule

The infinitive after the verb

- The pattern is verb plus to plus base verb: "She decided to leave."
- The to belongs to the second verb, not the first.
- These verbs do not take -ing: "She decided leaving" is wrong.
- Learn the verbs as a group and repeat the pattern aloud.

The core infinitive group

- Decide, plan and arrange: "We arranged to meet at six."
- Hope, expect and intend: "I hope to see you soon."
- Promise, agree and offer: "He promised to call."
- Want, need and would like: "I want to learn."

Verb plus person plus infinitive

- Ask, tell and advise take a person first: "She asked me to wait."
- Want and need also take a person: "I want you to listen."
- Remind, warn and encourage: "He reminded me to bring the keys."
- The negative infinitive after these verbs is not to, as in "warned us not to go".

The bare infinitive after make, let and help

- Make and let take the base verb with no to: "She made me laugh."
- In the passive, make takes to: "I was made to wait."
- Help takes both forms: "She helped me carry the bags."
- Hear and see take the bare infinitive for a complete action: "I saw him leave."

Infinitive or gerund?

- Some verbs take both with little change: "like to swim" and "like swimming".
- Remember, stop and try change meaning with the pattern.
- After prepositions, always use the gerund, not the infinitive.

- After adjectives such as happy and easy, the infinitive is usual: "I am happy to help."

Questions

Write your answer on the line under each question. Check your work with the answer key on the last page.

1. She decided ___ early.

2. We arranged ___ at six.

3. I hope ___ you soon.

4. He promised ___ at eight.

5. She asked me ___ outside.

6. I want you ___ carefully.

7. He reminded me ___ the keys.

8. She made me ___.

9. They let us ___ another night.

10. I am happy ___.

11. We plan ___ a new website.

12. The teacher advised us ___ every day.

13. He agreed ___ with the plan.

14. She offered ___ us home.

15. Do you expect ___ the exam?

16. I would like ___ a coffee.

17. They warned us ___ near the cliffs.

18. My parents encouraged me ___ medicine.

19. I forgot ___ the door.

20. She needs ___ some rest.

Answer key

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1. **to leave** — Decide takes the infinitive to leave.
2. **to meet** — Arrange takes the infinitive to meet for a plan.
3. **to see** — Hope takes the infinitive to see.
4. **to call** — Promise takes the infinitive to call.
5. **to wait** — Ask takes a person plus the infinitive to wait.
6. **to listen** — Want takes a person plus the infinitive to listen.
7. **to bring** — Remind takes a person plus the infinitive to bring.
8. **laugh** — Make takes the bare infinitive laugh, with no to.
9. **stay** — Let takes the bare infinitive stay, with no to.
10. **to help** — An adjective such as happy takes the infinitive to help.
11. **to build** — Plan takes the infinitive to build.
12. **to practise** — Advise takes a person plus the infinitive to practise.
13. **to go** — Agree takes the infinitive to go.
14. **to drive** — Offer takes the infinitive to drive.
15. **to pass** — Expect takes the infinitive to pass.
16. **to have** — Would like takes the infinitive to have.
17. **not to go** — The negative infinitive is not to go, with not before to.
18. **to study** — Encourage takes a person plus the infinitive to study.
19. **to lock** — Forget plus the infinitive means the task was not done.
20. **to get** — Need takes the infinitive to get.