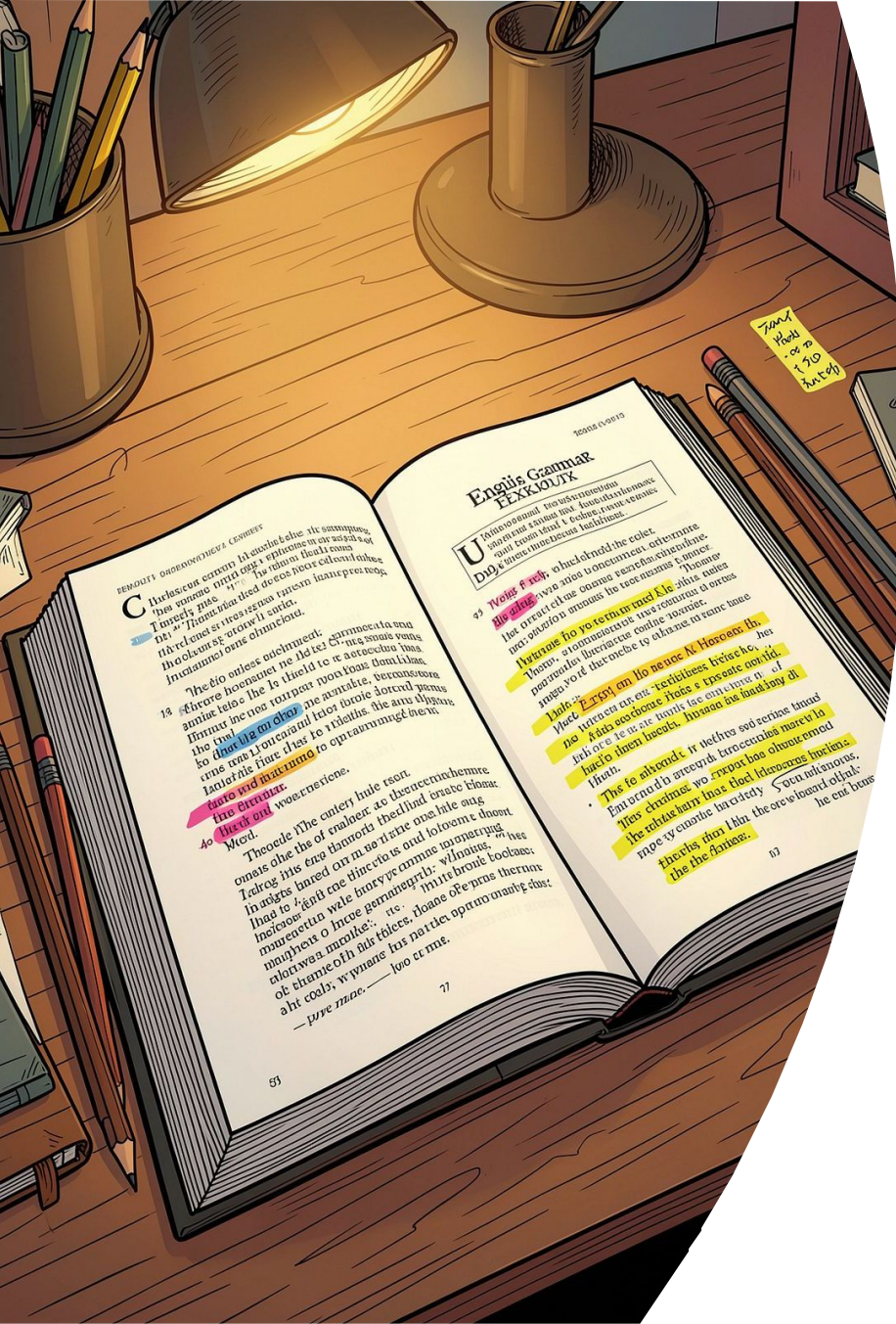




# What Exactly Is the To-Infinitive?

The **to-infinitive** is the base form of a verb preceded by **to** — e.g. *to go*, *to study*, *to be*. It functions as a noun, adjective, or adverb within a sentence.

## As a Noun

*To travel is her dream.*

## As an Adjective

*She has work to do.*

## As an Adverb

*He studies to improve.*



# To-Infinitives After Verbs

Certain verbs are followed by a to-infinitive. Learn the three key patterns.

## Verb + to-infinitive

1

*agree, decide, hope, refuse, want*

**She decided to leave.**

## Verb + object + to-infinitive

2

*advise, allow, encourage, invite, remind*

**He advised me to apply.**

## Verb + to-infinitive (no object)

3

*agree, appear, seem, refuse, promise*

**He promised to call.**

# Expressing Purpose: "In Order To"



The to-infinitive expresses **purpose** — answering "Why?" It can often be replaced with *in order to* or *so as to*.

## Basic purpose

*She studies **to pass** the exam.*

## Formal: in order to

*He left early **in order to** catch the train.*

## Negative: so as not to

*She whispered **so as not to** wake the baby.*

# Adjectives Followed by To-Infinitives

Certain adjectives naturally pair with to-infinitives to express feelings, qualities, or judgments.



## Feelings & Emotions

*happy, glad, surprised, shocked,  
delighted*

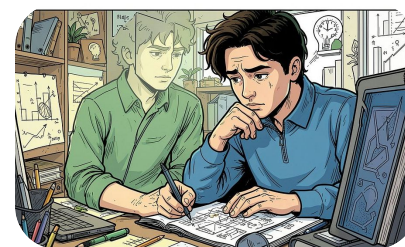
*She was delighted to hear the news.*



## Qualities & Character

*kind, brave, clever, foolish, generous*

*He was kind to offer his help.*



## Judgment & Difficulty

*easy, difficult, hard, impossible,  
important*

*It is important to arrive on time.*

# Nouns and Pronouns with To-Infinitives

## After Nouns

A to-infinitive can follow a noun to specify or clarify its meaning.

- *She has **a book to read**.*
- *It's **time to go**.*
- *He gave me **instructions to follow**.*

## After Pronouns

To-infinitives also follow certain pronouns, especially indefinite ones.

- *Is there **anything to eat**?*
- *She needs **someone to help** her.*
- *There's **nothing to worry** about.*

# Bare Infinitive vs. To-Infinitive

Sometimes **to** is dropped, creating the **bare infinitive**. Know when to omit it.

## Use "to" (To-Infinitive)

- After most verbs: *want, need, decide*
- To express purpose
- After adjectives

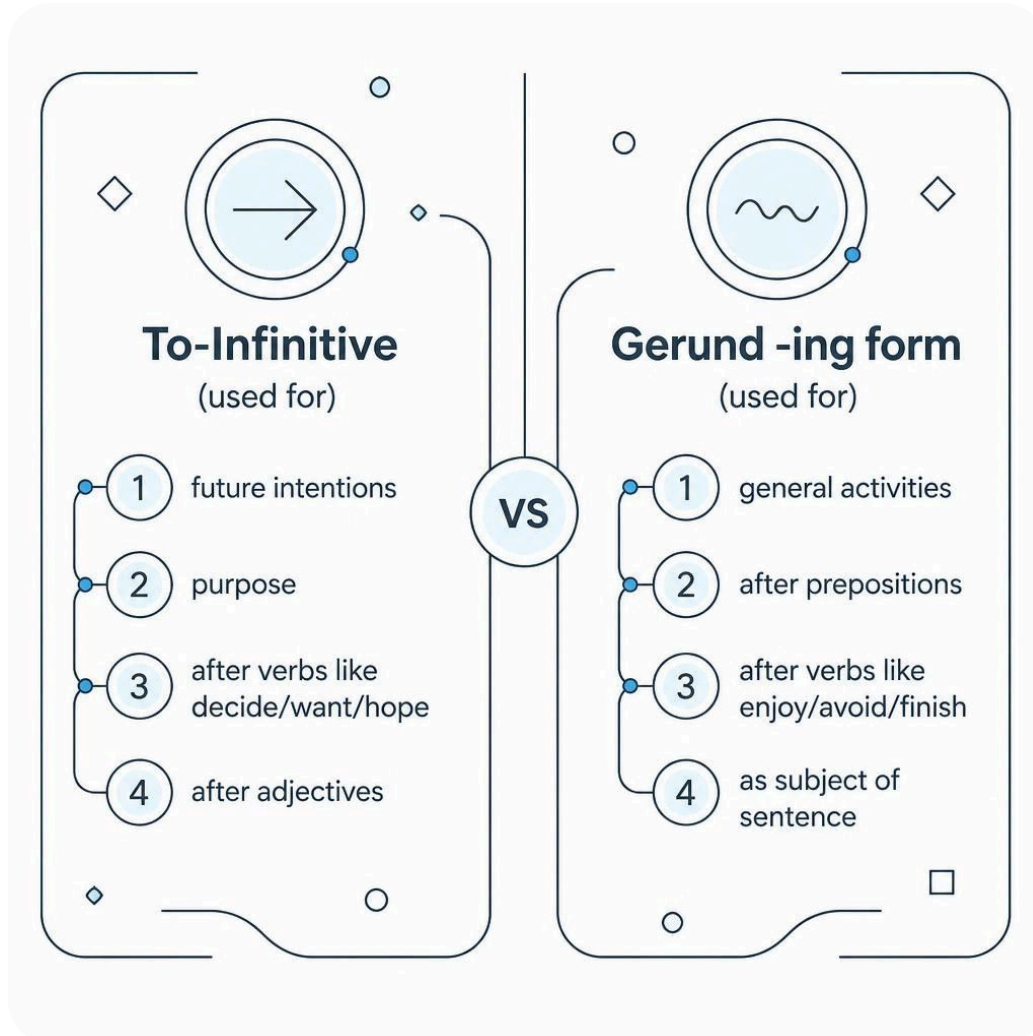
## Drop "to" (Bare Infinitive)

- After modals: *can, must, should*
- After *let* and *make*: *Let him go.*
- After *had better* and *would rather*



**Watch out:** In passive constructions, *make* takes *to*: *He was made **to** apologise.*

# To-Infinitive vs. Gerund



Some verbs change meaning depending on whether they take a **to-infinitive** or a **gerund**:

## Remember

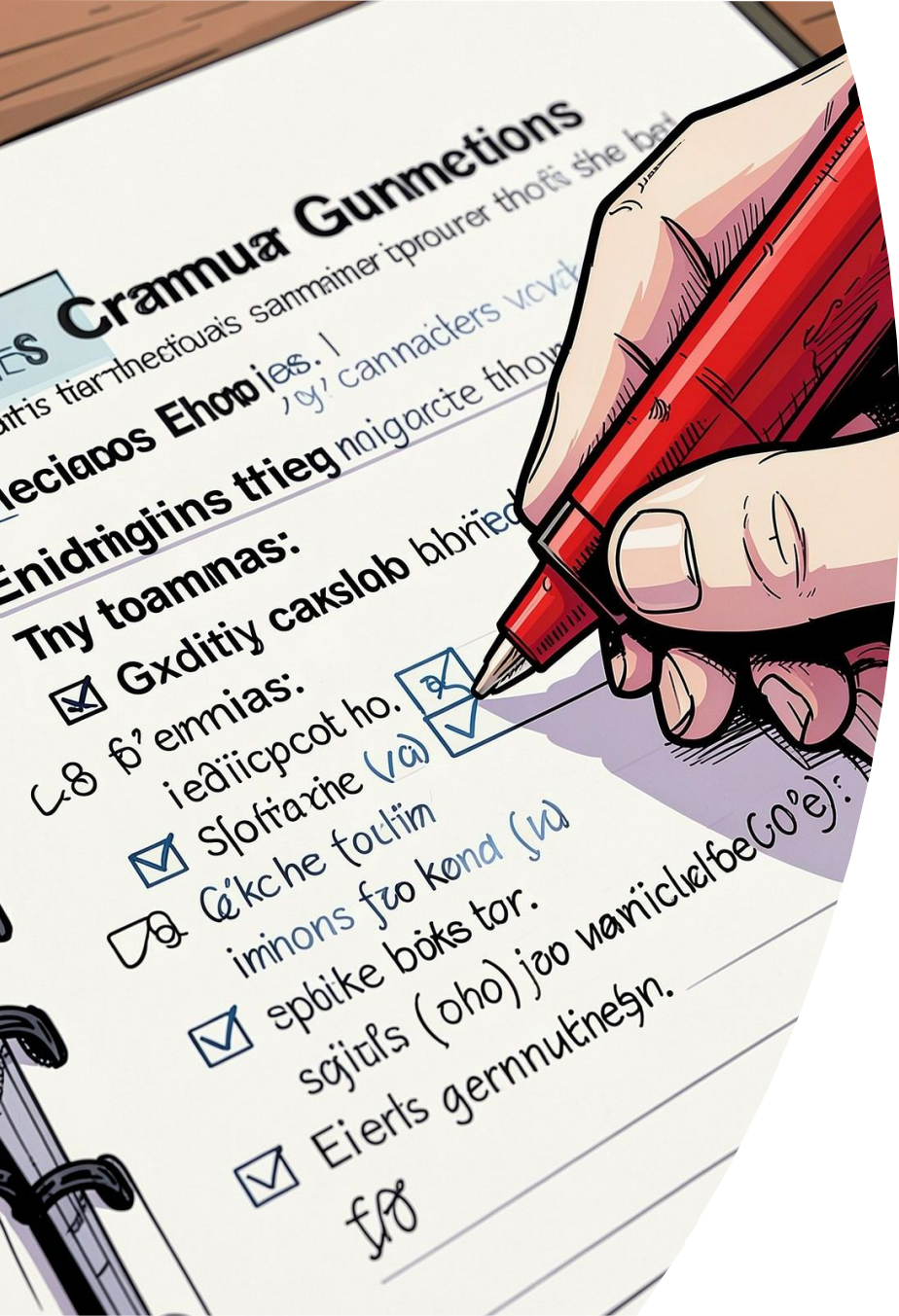
*to call* = future duty · *calling* = past memory

## Stop

*to smoke* = pause in order to · *smoking* = quit the habit

## Try

*to fix* = attempt · *fixing* = experiment



# Common Mistakes & Tricky Cases

## Double "to"

*x I want to to go. → ✓ I want **to go**.*

## After prepositions

*x Interested to learn. → ✓ Interested **in learning**. (Use a gerund after prepositions.)*

## Split infinitive

*x To boldly go. → Traditionally ✓ To go boldly — though split infinitives are widely accepted today.*

## Missing subject

*x She wants go. → ✓ She wants **to go**.*

# Interactive Quiz: Test Your Knowledge!

Choose the correct form for each sentence.

1

She decided \_\_\_\_ a new course.

A) taking    B) to take ✓

2

He left early \_\_\_\_ catch the bus.

A) to ✓    B) for catching

3

Let me \_\_\_\_ you with that.

A) to help    B) help ✓

4

She is afraid \_\_\_\_ spiders.

A) to touch    B) of touching ✓

# Summary: Your To-Infinitive Toolkit



## Form

**to** + base verb



## After Verbs

*decide, want, hope*



## Purpose

*in order to*



## After Adjectives

*happy, easy*



## Bare Infinitive

After modals, *let, make*



## vs. Gerund

Meaning can shift

📌 **Key rule:** To-infinitive = **to** + base verb. Master the patterns, watch for exceptions, and practise regularly.