



The gerund can be used instead of the infinitive when the action is being considered in a general sense, but it is always safe to use an infinitive. When we wish to refer to one particular action we must use the infinitive:

He said, 'Do come.' It was impossible to refuse. But it is not always easy to refuse invitations can be replaced by Refusing invitations is not always easy. Here the action is considered in a general sense, and either gerund or infinitive is possible. (See also 258.)

F An it + infinitive construction may be preceded by believe/consider/ discover/expect/find/think (that) and wonder (if):

He thought (that) it would be safer to go by train. After find used in this way we can omit that + the verb be, i.e. we can say:

He found (that) it was easy to earn extra money or

He found it easy to earn extra money.

He will find (that) it is hard to make friends or

He will find it hard to make friends. This is sometimes also possible with think:

He thought it safer to go.

After other verbs, however, the student is advised not to omit the be. (For similar gerund constructions, see 258.)

G The perfect infinitive can also be used as the subject of a sentence:

To have made the same mistake twice was unforgivable.

Similarly with it first:

It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all.

241 The infinitive as object or complement of the verb

A The most useful verbs which can be followed directly by the infinitive are:

agree**	be determined**	pretend*	aim	endeavour	proceed	appear*
fail	promise* arrange* *	forget*	prove* ask*'	guarantee*	refuse	
attempt	happen*	remember*	bother	hesitate	resolve**	care (negative)
hope	seem* choose	learn*	swear* claim**'	long	tend	
condescend	manage	threaten*	consent	neglect	trouble (negative)	
decide**	offer	try (= attempt)	decline	plan	undertake*	demand**
prepare	volunteer	determine**	be prepared	vow		

" See D, \*\* see F.

Auxiliary verbs

be dare have must ought will can do may need shall used

(For verbs taking object + infinitive, see 244. For verbs taking infinitive or gerund, see chapter 25.)

The following phrases can also be followed by an infinitive:

be about make up one's mind\* (= decide) be able + afford occur\* + to + object

do one's best/ set out do what one can take the trouble make an/every effort

turn out\* (= prove to be) \* See D.

Examples of A and B

She agreed to pay £50.

Two men failed to return from the expedition.

I managed to put the fire out.

They are preparing (= getting ready) to evacuate the area.

We are not prepared (= willing) to wait any longer.

The tenants refused to lease.

Prices always tend to go up.

She volunteered to help with Meals on Wheels.

He is just about to leave, (on the point of leaving)

We can't afford to live in the centre.

He didn't bother/trouble to answer personally. Opposite of the above:

He took the trouble to answer personally.

Starred verbs or expressions can also be used with a that-clause (see 346);

/ promise to wait = I promise that I will wait.

He pretended to be angry = He pretended that he was angry. occur (used mainly in negative and interrogative) requires an introductory it both with an infinitive and a that construction;

It didn't occur to me to ask him for proof of his identity. (I didn't think of doing this.)

It occurred to me that he was trying to conceal something. (The idea came to me.)

appear, happen, seem, turn out, when used with a that construction, also require an introductory it:

/(turned out that his 'country cottage' was an enormous bungalow

but

His 'country cottage' turned out to be an enormous bungalow.

(infinitive construction)

But a verb + infinitive does not necessarily have the same meaning as the same verb used with a that-clause- With learn, forget and remember the meaning will be different;

He learnt to look after himself.

He learnt (= was told) that it would cost £100.

He forgot to leave the car keys on the table. (He didn't leave them.)

He forgot that his brother wanted to use the car. remember could be used similarly with the opposite meaning. agree/decide + infinitive expresses an intention to act.

agree that. . . expresses an opinion. decide that. . . expresses a conclusion or a decision not necessarily

leading to action.

F Verbs with two stars take an infinitive or a that. . . should construction, that. . . should is particularly useful in the passive (see 302).

They decided/agreed to divide the profits equally. They decided that the profits should be divided equally. I arranged to meet/for Tom to meet them. I arranged that Tom should meet them. I arranged that they should be met.

G The continuous infinitive is often used after appear, happen, pretend, seem:

/ happened to be looking out of the window when they arrived.

He seems to be following us.

It is also possible after agree, arrange, decide, determine, hope, manage, plan and the auxiliary verbs (see 254).

H The perfect infinitive is possible after appear, hope, pretend, seem and the auxiliary verbs (see 255).

242 Verb + how/what/when/where/which/why + infinitive

A The verbs most frequently used in this way are ask, decide, discover, find out, forget, know, learn, remember, see (= understand/perceive), show + object, think, understand, want to know, wonder:

He discovered how to open the safe.

I found out where to buy fruit cheaply.

I didn't know when to switch the machine off.

I showed her which button to press.

She couldn't think what to say.

(Note that this construction is not usual after think in the simple present or past, but can be used after other tenses of think, or after think as a second verb, as in the last example above.)

B whether + infinitive can be used similarly after want to know, wonder:

/ wonder/wondered whether to write or phone and after decide, know, remember, think when these verbs follow a

negative or interrogative verb:

You needn't decide yet whether to study arts or science. He couldn't remember whether to turn left or right.

C ask, decide, forget, learn, remember can also be followed directly by the infinitive (see 241). But the meaning is not necessarily the same-learn how + infinitive = 'acquire a skill':

She learnt how to make lace

though if the skill is a fairly usual one, the how is normally dropped;

She learnt to drive a car. learn + infinitive (without how) can have another meaning:

She learnt to trust nobody =

She found from experience that it was better to trust nobody.

Note also:

/ decided to do it = I said to myself. 'I'll do it.'

I decided how to do it = I said to myself, 'I'll do it this way.'

I remembered to get a ticket. (I got a ticket.)

/ remembered where to get a ticket. (I remembered that the tickets could be obtained from the Festival Office.)

The infinitive after verb or verb + object

The most important verbs which can be used in either of these ways are ask, beg, expect, would hate, help, intend, like (= think wise or right), would like (= enjoy), would love, mean, prefer, want, wish:

He likes to eat well.

He likes his staff to eat well.

I want to ride. I want you to ride too.

**ask and beg**

ask + infinitive has a different meaning from ask + object + infinitive:

/ asked to speak to Mrs Jones =

I said, 'Could I speak to Mrs Jones?' but

/ asked Bill to speak to her •=

I said, 'Bill, would you speak to her?' With beg there is a similar difference, though beg is not often followed directly by the infinitive:

/ begged (to be allowed) to go = I said, 'Please let me go.'

I begged him to go = I said, 'Please go.' ask and beg can be followed by that. . . should (see 235).

expect + infinitive and expect + object + infinitive can have the same meaning:

I expect to arrive tomorrow =

I think it is likely that I will arrive tomorrow.

I expect him to arrive tomorrow =

I think it is likely that he will arrive tomorrow. But very often expect + object + infinitive conveys the idea of duty;

He expects his wife to bring him breakfast in bed at weekends. (He thinks it is her duty to do this.)

expect can also be followed by that + subject + verb. Here there is no idea of duty.

For examples of care, hate, like, love and prefer used with infinitives or gerunds, see 294-8. . . intend, mean, want can also be followed by gerunds (see 266).

#### 244 The infinitive after verb + object

A The most important of these are:

advise forbid make (b) show how allow force oblige teach/teach how bribe  
hear (b) order tell/tell how command implore permit tempt compel induce  
persuade train enable instruct remind urge encourage invite request warn entitle  
let (b) see (b) watch (b) feel (b)

(b) here means 'bare infinitive'. (See 246.) advise, allow and permit can also be used with gerunds. (For verbs of knowing and thinking, see 245.)

B Examples of verb + object + infinitive:

These glasses will enable you to see in the dark.

She encouraged me to try again.

They forbade her to leave the house or

She was forbidden to leave the house, (more usual)

Nothing would induce me to do business with them.

They persuaded us to go with them.

They are training these dogs to sniff out drugs.

C show/teach/tell + how

show used with an infinitive requires how:

He showed me how to change a fuse. tell how 4- infinitive = 'instruct':

He told me how to replace a fuse. (He gave me the necessary information or instructions.) But tell + object + infinitive = 'order':

He told me to change the fuse = He said, 'Change the fuse.'

teach how:

We can teach someone (how) to swim, dance, type, ride etc.:

He taught me how to light a fire without matches. how is possible, but when the skill is a fairly usual one the how is normally dropped: He taught me to ride. teach + object + infinitive (without how) can also mean to teach or train someone to behave in a certain way:

He taught me to obey all commands without asking questions.

D remind, show, teach, tell can also be followed by that:

He reminded me that the road was dangerous. He showed me that it was quite easy. Note that tell + that does not have the same meaning as tell + infinitive:

He told (= ordered) me to go. He told (.= informed) me that I was late.

- E **request** can also be followed by that + should. This construction is chiefly used in the passive:

*He requested that the matter should be kept secret.*

## 245 The infinitive after verbs of knowing and thinking etc.

- A **assume, believe, consider, feel, know, suppose, understand** can be followed by object + **to be**:

*I consider him to be the best candidate.*

But it is much more common to use that + an ordinary tense:

*I consider that he is the best candidate.*

With think, estimate and presume the object + infinitive construction is extremely rare, a that-clause being normally used instead:

*I think that he is the best player.*

*They estimate that this vase is 2,000 years old.*

- B When, however, these verbs are used in the passive they are more often followed by an infinitive than by the that construction:

*He is known to be honest = It is known that he is honest.*

*He is thought to be the best player = It is thought that he is . . .*

*This vase is estimated to be 2,000 years old.*

- C Note, however, that suppose when used in the passive often conveys an idea of duty:

*You are supposed to know the laws of your own country = It is your duty to know/You are expected to know . . .*

- D The continuous infinitive can also be used:

*He is thought to be hiding in the woods.* (People think he is hiding.)

*He is supposed to be washing the car.* (He should be washing it.)

- E When the thought concerns a previous action we use the perfect infinitive:

*They are believed to have landed in America.* (It is believed that they landed.)

**suppose** + perfect infinitive may or may not convey an idea of duty.

*They are supposed to have discovered America* means 'It is thought that they did'.

But *You are supposed to have read the instructions* would normally mean 'You should have read them'.

(For infinitive constructions after passive verbs, see also 306.)

## 246 The bare infinitive after verbs and expressions

- A **can, do, may, must, shall, will**:

*They could do it today. I may as well start at once.*

*He will probably object.*

**need** and **dare**, except when they are conjugated with **do/did** or **will/would**;

You needn't say anything but You don't need to say anything. I dared not wake him but I didn't/wouldn't dare (to) wake him. In theory the to is required in the last example but in practice it is often omitted. The theory is that if dare and used are treated as auxiliaries, they take the bare infinitive like most auxiliaries. If they are treated as ordinary verbs, with do/did etc., they take the full infinitive like ordinary verbs,

C feel, hear, see and watch:

/ heard him lock the door. I saw/watched him drive, off. But see and hear in the passive take the full infinitive:

He has been seen to enter the office. He was heard to say that. . . But feel, hear, see and watch are more often used with present participles;

I heard them shouting. (See 273.)

D let takes the bare infinitive in both active and passive. But let in the passive is often replaced by another verb; They let me know . . . would be replaced in the passive by / was

told . . . and They let him see the documents by He was allowed to see them. The infinitive/infinitive phrase after let is sometimes dropped to avoid repetition: She wants to go out to work but he won't let her (go out to work). let is used without an object in the expression:

Live and let live. (For let us/let's used for imperatives and suggestions, see 281, 289.)

**E make**

make in the active takes the bare infinitive:

He made me move my car. But in the passive it takes the full infinitive:

/ was made to move my car.

Sometimes the infinitive after make (active) is dropped to avoid repetition.

Why did you tell him? ~ He made me (tell him)! An infinitive after make (passive) can be represented by its to:

/ was made to (tell him).

**F would rather/sooner, rather/sooner than (see 297-8):**

Shall we go today? - I'd rather wait till tomorrow. Rather/Sooner than risk a bad crossing, he postponed his journey.

**G had better (see 120):**

'You had better start at once,' he said.

**H help may be followed by a full or bare infinitive:**

He helped us (to) push it.

**I If two infinitives are joined by and, the to of the second infinitive is normally dropped:**

I intend to sit in the garden and write letters. I want you to stand beside me and hold the torch.

**but and except take the bare infinitive when they follow do + any thing/anything/everything:**

He does nothing but complain. My dog does everything but speak. Can't you do anything but ask silly questions? There's nothing to do but wait.

**The to is optional in sentences such as:**

The only thing to do/we can do is (to) write to him or All we can do is (to) write to him.

**The infinitive represented by its to**

An infinitive can be represented by to alone to avoid repetition. This is chiefly done after such verbs as hate, hope, intend, would like/love, make (passive), mean, plan, try, want, after the auxiliaries have, need, ought, and with used to, be able to and the be going to form:

Would you like to come with me? ~ Yes, I'd love to.

Did you get a ticket? ~ No, I tried to, but there weren't any left.

Why did you take a taxi? ~ I had to (take one). I was late.

Do you ride? ~ Not now but I used to.

He wanted to go but he wasn't able to.

Have you fed the dog? — No, but I'm just going to.

**Split infinitives**

It used to be considered bad style to split an infinitive (i.e. to put a word between the to and the verb), but there is now a more relaxed attitude to this.

really is often placed after the to in colloquial English:

It would take ages to really master this subject

, instead of... really to master, which sounds rather formal.

: Some other degree adverbs such as completely, entirely, (un)duly can be

„ treated similarly, i.e. we can say:

(a) to completely cover the floor instead of

; (b) to cover the floor completely

(a) to unduly alarm people instead of

(b) to alarm people unduly. But it is safer to keep to the conventional order, as in (b) above.

' The infinitive used as a connective link

. The infinitive is used after only to express a disappointing sequel;

He hurried to the house only to find that it was empty =

He hurried to the house and was disappointed when he found that it was empty.

He survived the crash only to die in the desert =

He survived the crash but died in the desert.

**B The infinitive can also be used as a connective link without only, and without any idea of misfortune:**

He returned home to learn that his daughter had just become engaged.

But this use is mainly confined to such verbs as find, hear, learn, see, be told etc., as otherwise there might be confusion between an infinitive used connectively and an infinitive of purpose,

250 The infinitive used to replace a relative clause

A The infinitive can be used after the first, the second etc., the last, the only and sometimes after superlatives (see 77):

He loves parties; he is always Ike first to come and the last to leave.

(the first who comes and the last who leaves)

She was the only one to survive the crash, (the only one who survived)

Infinitives used in this way replace subject pronoun + verb. Compare with infinitive used to replace object pronoun + verb, as in B below, Note that the infinitive here has an active meaning. When a passive sense is required a passive infinitive is used;

He is the second man to be killed in this way. (the second man who was killed)

the best play to be performed that year (the best play that was performed that year) Compare this with:

the best play to perform (the best play for you to perform/the play you should perform)

B 1 The infinitive can be placed after nouns/pronouns to show how they can be used or what is to be done with them, or sometimes to express the subject's wishes (see 77):

/ have letters to write, (that I must write)

Does he get enough to eat?

Have you anything to say? (that you want to say)

AT THE CL'STOMS: / have nothing to declare, (that I need to declare)

a house to let (a house that the owner wants to let)

Similarly with infinitives + prepositions:

someone to talk to a case to keep my records in cushions to sit on a glass So drink out of a tool to open it with a table to write on

2 Use of passive infinitive

There is plenty to do =

(a) plenty of things we can do, i.e. amusements, or

(b) plenty of work we must do,

In the there + be + noun/pronoun + infinitive construction, when there is an idea of duty, as in (b) above, a passive infinitive is possible:

There is a lot to be done. But the active infinitive is more usual.

The infinitive after certain nouns

A number of nouns can be followed directly by the infinitive. Some of the most useful are:

ability demand failure request ambition desire offer scheme anxiety  
determination plan willingness attempt eagerness promise wish decision effort  
refusal

His ability to get on with people is his chief asset.

He made an attempt/effort to stand up.

Failure to obey the regulations may result in disqualification.

Their offer/plan/promise to rebuild the town was not taken seriously.

She was annoyed by his unwillingness to do his share of the work.

The infinitive after too, enough and so ... as

too + adjective/adverb + infinitive too + adjective 4- infinitive

(a) The infinitive can refer to the subject of the sentence. It then has an active meaning;

You are too young to understand. (You are so young that you cannot understand,)

He was too drunk to drive home. (He was so drunk that he couldn't drive home.)

(b) The infinitive can also refer to the object of a verb. It then has a passive meaning:

The plate was so hot that we couldn't touch it could be expressed:

The plate was too hot to touch, (too hot to be touched) Note that it, the object of touch in the first sentence, disappears in the infinitive construction, because the infinitive, though active in form, is passive in meaning. Sometimes either an active or a passive infinitive may be used:

This parcel is too heavy to send/to be sent by post. But this is not always possible, so students are advised to stick to the active infinitive, for + noun/pronoun can be placed before the infinitive in this construction:

The case was too heavy (for a child) to carry =  
The case was too heavy to be carried by a child.

(c) The infinitive can refer similarly to the object of a preposition:

The grass was so wet that we couldn't sit on it. The grass was too wet (for us) to sit on. The light is so weak that we can't read by it. The light is too weak to read by.

2 too + adjective + a + noun + infinitive

He ivas too shrewd a businessman to accept the first offer = As a businessman he was too shrewd to accept the first offer. He is too experienced a conductor to mind what the critics say = As a conductor he is too experienced to mind what the critics say.

The infinitive here always refers to the subject of the sentence as in 1

above. A passive infinitive is also possible:

He was too experienced a conductor to be worried by what the, critics said.

3 too + adverb + infinitive

it is too soon (for me) to say whether the scheme will succeed or wit. He spoke too quickly/or me to understand, (for me is necessary here.) She works too slowly to be much use to me.

B Adjective/adverb + enough + infinitive

1 Adjective + enough + infinitive

(a) As with the too construction, the infinitive can refer to the subject of the verb:

She is old enough to travel by herself.

He was tall enough to see over the heads of the other people.

(b) Or it can refer to the object of a verb:

The case is light enough for me to carry =

The case is so light that I can carry it.

After a few minutes the coffee was cool enough (for us) to drink.

(c) It can refer to the object of a preposition:

The ice was thick enough to walk on. The light was strong enough to read by.

2 enough may be used as pronoun or adjective:

He doesn't earn enough (money) to live on.

We haven't enough time to do it properly.

She had enough sense to turn off the gas. have + enough 4- abstract noun here is sometimes replaceable by have + the + noun:

She had the sense to turn off the gas.

He had the courage to admit his mistake.

I hadn't the patience to listen to any more. But the is optional before time here:

We haven't (the) time to do it properly.

3 Adverb + enough + infinitive:

He didn't jump high enough to win a prize. He spoke slowly enough for everyone to understand.

C so 4- adjective + as + infinitive:

He was so foolish as to leave his car unlocked. This is an alternative to the enough construction in B1 above, but not that He was foolish enough to leave his car unlocked can mean either he did it or that he was capable of doing it, but He was so foolish as to leave etc. implies that he actually did so.

The so ... as construction is not very often used as shown above, but it is quite common as a request form:

Would you be so good as to forward my letters? =

Would you be good enough to forward my letters? There is no difference in meaning here between the two forms. It is important not to forget the as. (For other adjective + infinitive constructions, see 26-7.)

Introductory or final infinitive phrases

Certain infinitive phrases can be placed at the beginning or sometimes at the end of a sentence and are then similar to sentence adverbs (see 40):

To be perfectly frank, you're a bad driver. To be honest. I just don't like him. To be fair (to him), he wasn't entirely to blame. To cut a Song story short, we said 'No!' To tell you the truth, I've never met him or I've never met him. to tell you the truth.

The continuous infinitive

Form to be + present participle: He seems to be following us.

Use The continuous infinitive can be used:

After the auxiliary verbs:

They'll be wondering where you are.

He may/might be watching TV. ~ He can 't/couldn 'l be watching TV. There are no programmes today because of the strike. (negative deduction)

He must be coming by bus. (deduction)

You shouldn't be reading a novel. You should be reading a textbook. After appear, happen, pretend, seem:

'•' • He appears/seems to be living in the area =

It appears/seems that he is living in the area. : He appeared/seemed to be living in the area = It appeared/seemed that he was living in the area. I happened to be standing next to him when he collapsed = '••' It happened that I was standing next to him when he collapsed. '

He pretended to be looking for a book = He pretended that he was looking for a book.

;After hope and promise and, but less usually, after agree, arrange, ^tecide, determine/be determined, plan, undertake:

'i... / hope/hoped to be earning my living in a year's time = t; .' hope I will/I hoped I would be earning etc.

determine/be determined, plan could replace hope above with slight changes of meaning:

I promised to be waiting at the door when he came out. agree, arrange, decide, determine/be determined, plan, undertake could be used instead of promise above with slight changes of meaning. 4 After believe, consider, suppose, think etc. in the passive:

Be is believed to be living in Mexico. (See 3&6.)

## 255 The perfect infinitive

### A Form

to have + past participle: to have worked, to have spoken

B Use with auxiliary verbs

1 With was/were to express an unfulfilled plan or arrangement

(see 114):

The house was to have been ready today, (but it isn't)

2 With should, would, might and could to form the perfect conditional

(see 223):

/// had seen her ! should have invited her.

3 With should or ought to express Unfulfilled obligation; or, in the negative, a wrong or foolish action (see 143):

He should have helped her. (but he didn't) / shouldn 't/oughtn 't to have lied to him. (but I did)

4 With should/would like to express an unfulfilled wish (see 296 D):

He would like to have seen it. (but it wasn't possible) or

He would have liked to see it.

i.e. we can put either verb into the perfect infinitive without changing the meaning,

5 With could to express past unused ability or past possibility:

/ could have made a lot of money, (but I didn't) He could/might have phoned her. (Perhaps he (has) phoned.) (See also 134, 138.)

6 With might/could to indicate that the speaker feels upset or indignant at the non-performance of an action:

He might/could have told me! = I am annoyed that he didn't tell me. (See 285 D.)

7 With may/might in speculations about past actions:

He may/might have left =

It is possible that he (has) left. (See 133.)

You might/could have been killed'

8 With can't/couldn't to express negative deduction (see 159):

He can't/couldn't have moved the piano himself. We knew he couldn't have paid for it, because he had no money-

With must to express affirmative deduction (see 156):

He must have come this way: here are his footprints.

With needn't to express an unnecessary past action (see also 152-3):

You needn't have hurried. Now we are too early. You needn't have cooked it. We could have eaten it raw.

With certain other verbs With appear, happen, pretend, seem

Note the difference between present and perfect infinitives here:

Present infinitive:

He seems to be a great athlete = It seems that he is . . . He seemed to be a great athlete = It seemed that he was . . .

Perfect infinitive;

He seems to have been . . . = It seems that he was . . . He seemed to have been . . . = It seemed that he had been . . .

i.e. the action of the perfect infinitive is an earlier action; it happens

before the time of the main verb. Other examples:

/ happened to have driven that kind of car before = It happened that I had driven that kind of car before. He pretended to have read the book = He pretended that he had read it.

With the following verbs in the passive voice: acknowledge, believe, consider, find, know, report, say, suppose, think, understand:

He is understood to have left the country. (See 306.)

The perfect infinitive is possible but less usual with claim, expect, hope, promise:

He expects/hopes to have finished by June = He expects/hopes that he will have finished by June.

## 256 The perfect infinitive continuous

Form to have been + present participle:

He seems to have been spying/or both sides.

Use

It is used chiefly after auxiliary verbs and after appear and seem, but , it can also be used after happen, pretend and the passive of believe, know, report, say, understand:

He says he was talking to Tom. ~ He couldn't have been talking to Tom. Tom wasn't there.

I was following Peter closely. ~ You shouldn't have been following him closely: you should have left a good space between the two cars.

He appears to have been waiting a long time =

It appears that he has been waiting a long time.

He pretended to have been studying =

He pretended that he had been studying.

## 24 The gerund

### 257 Form and use

The gerund has exactly the same form as the present participle: running, speaking, working etc. It can be used in the following ways:

(a) as subject of a sentence: Dancing bored him. (see 258)

(b) as complement of a verb: Her hobby is painting.

(c) after prepositions: He was accused of smuggling. (259)

(d) after certain verbs (261, 266)

(e) in noun compounds: a 'diving board (a board for diving off). The gerund here carries the main stress, (See 16.)

### 258 The gerund as subject

As already seen in 240 E, either infinitive or gerund can be the subject of a sentence when an action is being considered in a general sense. We can say:

It is easier to read French than to speak it or

Reading French is easier than speaking it. The gerund, like the infinitive (see 240 F), can be the subject of a clause placed after believe, consider, discover, expect, find, think, wonder etc. After find we can omit that and the verb be, i.e. we can say:

He found that parking was difficult or

He found parking difficult. But it is safer not to omit be after the other verbs. Note the possible difference between gerund and infinitive here:

He found parking difficult would mean that he usually/always found it difficult. He found it difficult to park could refer to one particular occasion. It could also mean that he always found

it difficult, but it is more usual to express this idea by a gerund. The gerund is used in short prohibitions:  
No smoking. No mailing. No fishing. But these cannot be followed by an object, so prohibitions involving an object are usually expressed by an imperative:  
Do not touch these wires. Do not feed the limis. Gerunds are used in the saying Seeing is believing.

## 259 Gerunds after prepositions (see also 98)

When a verb is placed immediately after a preposition the gerund form must be used:

What can you do besides typing?

I have no objection to hearing your story again.

Touch your tws without bending your knees'.

He is good at diving. She is fond of climbing.

I'm not keen on gambling. I'm too afraid of losing,

He was fined for being drunk in charge of a car.

I'm against saying anything/I'm for saying nothing.

I'm tired of arguing. I'm fed up waiting, (colloquial)

This is a tool for opening tins. Do you feel like going out?

After swimming I felt cold.

She disapproves of jogging.

What about leaving it here and collecting it later?

He is thinking of emigrating.

I'm sorry for keeping you waiting.

They escaped by sliding down a rope.

We had difficulty in finding a parking place.

You should be ashamed of yourself for behaving so badly.

In spite of starting late he arrived in time.

Aren 't you interested in making money?

There's no point in waiting.

A number of verb + preposition/adverb combinations ('phrasal verbs') take the gerund. The most common of these are be for/against, care for, give up, keep on, leave off, look forward to, put off, see about, take to. (For go on, see 363.)

*I don't care for standing in queues.*

*Eventually the dogs left off barking.*

*I am looking forward to meeting her.*

*He put off making a decision till he had more information.*

*He took to ringing us up in the middle of the night.*

## 260 The word to

This word often causes confusion as it can be either (A) a part of an infinitive, or (B) a preposition.

to placed after the auxiliary verbs be, have, ought, used and after ' going (in expressions such as 'the be going to form') is part of the infinitive of the following verb and is only added to remind students that the preceding verb takes the full infinitive, i.e. the infinitive with to. to is often placed after hate, hope, intend, would like/love, mean, plan, try, want and some others (see 247) to avoid repetition of an infinitive already mentioned:

Did you buy cheese? ~ No, I meant fo (buy some) hut the shop was shut.

B Otherwise to placed after a verb will probably be a preposition and will be followed by noun/pronoun or gerund. Note these expressions: look forward to, take to, be accustomed to. be used to:

I am looking forward to my holidays/to next weekend/to it.

I am looking forward to seeing you.

I am used to heat/hard work/bad food/noise/dust.

! am used to standing in queues/to it. Be careful not to confuse I used to/he used to etc., which expresses a past habit or routine (They used to bum coal; now they bum fuel oil only), with I am used to/he is used to etc., which means 'I am/he is

accustomed to/familiar with':

/ am used to the cold. (It doesn't worry me.)

He is used to working at night. (He doesn't mind it.) (See 162.) A good way of finding out whether a to is a preposition or a part of an infinitive is to see if it is possible to put a noun/pronoun after it. For example a noun/pronoun could be placed after I am accustomed to:

I am accustomed to it/the dark. This to therefore is a preposition, and verbs used after to must be gerunds.

## 261 Verbs followed by the gerund

A The most important of these are:

admit"	keep(= continue)	anticipate*	loathe	appreciate	mean* (=
involve)	avoid	mind(= object)	consider*	miss defer	pardon
delay	postpone deny*	practise	detest	prevent	dislike
propose* (= suggest)	dread	recollect*	enjoy	remember* (= recollect)	
escape	resent excuse	resist fancy* (= imagine)	risk finish		
save (sb the trouble of)	forgive	stop(= cease)	imagine'	suggest*	involve
understand*					

\*See B.

The gerund is also used after the expressions can't stand (= endure), can't help (= prevent/avoid), it's no use/good and after the adjective worth.

Other constructions with the above verbs

Starred verbs can also take that-clauses (see 346).

For suggest and propose (= suggest), see 289.

mean/propose (= intend) take the infinitive (see 269).

For hate, like, love, prefer, see 295.

For other verbs taking gerund or infinitive, see chapter 25.

dread + infinitive is used in 'dread to think':

I dread to think what this will cost.

Examples of verb + gerund sentences:

He admitted taking the money. Avoid over-eating.

Would you consider selling the property?

He detests writing letters.

She dreads getting old. Do you enjoy teaching?

He narrowly escaped being run over.

Fancy meeting you':

Puffing in a new window will involve cutting away part of {he roof.

He kept complaining. He didn't want to risk getting wet.

If we buy plenty of food now it will save shopping later in the week.

I can't understand his/him leaving his wife.

I couldn't help laughing. It's no good/use arguing.

Is there anything here worth buying?

## 262 Verbs + possessive adjective/pronoun object + gerund

If the verb or verb + preposition is followed directly by the gerund, the gerund refers to the subject of the verb:

*Tom insisted on reading the letter.* (Tom read it.)

But if we put a possessive adjective or pronoun before the gerund, the gerund refers to the person denoted by the possessive adjective/pronoun:

He insisted on my/me reading it. (I had to read it.)

Useful verbs and expressions which can take either construction are:

<i>dislike</i>	<i>propose</i>	<i>understand</i>
<i>dread</i>	<i>recollect</i>	<i>approve/disapprove of</i>
<i>fancy</i>	<i>remember</i>	<i>insist on</i>
<i>involve</i>	<i>resent</i>	<i>it's no good/use</i>

<i>like (negative)</i>	<i>save</i>	<i>object to</i>
<i>mean</i>	<i>stop</i>	<i>there's no point in</i>
<i>mind</i>	<i>suggest</i>	<i>what's the point of</i>

*He disliked working late.*  
*He disliked me/my working late.*  
*I object to Raving twice for the same thing.*  
*I object to his/him making private calls on this phone.*  
*He resented being passed over for promotion.*  
*He resented my/me being promoted before him.*

(For mind, see 263; for suggest and propose, see 289.)

- C excuse, forgive, pardon and prevent are not followed directly by the gerund but take either possessive adjective/pronoun + gerund or pronoun + preposition + gerund:  
 Forgive my/me ringing you up so early.  
 Forgive me/or ringinyou up so early.  
 You can't prevent his/him spending his own money.  
 You can't prevent him/row spending his own money.  
 appreciate usually requires a possessive adjective or passive gerund:  
 I appreciate your giving me so much o/your time. I appreciate being given this opportunity.
- D Possessive adjective and pronoun object compared  
 In formal English the possessive adjective is used with the gerund. But in informal English we very often use the pronoun. The student therefore has a choice of forms, but is recommended to use the pronoun.  
 With stop meaning 'prevent' the pronoun is more usual than the possessive adjective:  
 I can 'I stop him writing to She papers.  
 E Nouns with gerunds  
 In very formal English the possessive case is used:  
 I do not remember my mother's complaining about it. But it is much more usual to omit the 's:  
 I don't remember my mother complaining.

## 263 The verb mind

- A This verb is used chiefly in the interrogative and negative:  
 Would you mind waiting a moment? I dm't mind walking.
- B It can be followed directly by a gerund, or by a noun/pronoun or possessive adjective + gerund;  
 I don't mind living here. (I live here and don't object to it.)  
 I don't mind his/him living here. (He lives here and I don't object to this./I don't object to his/him living here.)  
 He didn 't mind leaving home. (He left home quite happily.)  
 He didn't mind Ann leaving home. (Ann left home and he was quite happy about it. See 262 E for case of noun.)
- C would you mind? is one of the most usual ways of making a request:  
 Would you mind not smoking? (Please don't smoke.)  
 Would you mind moving your car? (Please move it.) Note the change of meaning when a possessive adjective precedes the gerund:  
 Would you mind my moving your car? = Would you object if I moved your car? (This is not a request but a poiite query.)
- Do you mind if I move it? is a possible alternative to Would you mind my moving U? but Do you mind my moving it? may mean that the action has already started.  
 mind can never be followed by an infinitive,  
 The personal pronoun object can be used with gerunds instead of a possessive adjective (see 262 D),  
 The perfect gerund (having worked, having spoken etc.)

This can be used instead of the present form of the gerund (working, speaking etc.) when we are referring to a past action:

He was accused of deserting his ship or

He was accused a/having deserted his ship. The perfect gerund is fairly usual after deny:

He denied having been there. Otherwise the present form is much the more usual.

The passive gerund

Present: being written Past: having been written

He was punished by being sent to bed without any supper.

I remember being taken to Paris as a small child.

The safe showed no signs of having been touched.

## 25 Infinitive and gerund constructions

### 266 Verbs which may take either infinitive or gerund

<i>advise</i> (see 267)	<i>need</i> (267)
<i>agree</i> (269)	<i>permit</i> (267)
<i>allow</i> (267)	<i>prefer</i> (295)
<i>begin</i> (267)	<i>propose</i> (269)
<i>can/could bear</i> (267)	<i>recommend</i> (267)
<i>cease</i> (267)	<i>regret</i> (268)
<i>continue</i> (267)	<i>remember</i> (268)
<i>forget</i> (268)	<i>require</i> (267)
<i>hate</i> (295)	<i>start</i> (267)
<i>intend</i> (267)	<i>stop</i> (270 B)
<i>like</i> (295)	<i>try</i> (270 C)
<i>love</i> (295)	<i>used to</i> (270 D)
<i>mean</i> (269)	<i>want</i> (267)

Note also *be ashamed (of)/afraid (of)/sorry (for)*, 271; *care (for)*, 294, 295; *go on*, 270.

### 267 Verbs taking infinitive or gerund without change of meaning

- A **begin, start, continue, cease**
- B **can't bear**
- C **intend**
- D **advise, allow, permit, recommend**
- E **it needs/requires/wants**

- A *With begin, start, continue, cease either infinitive or gerund may be used without any difference in meaning, but the infinitive is more usual with verbs of knowing and understanding and the verb matter:*  
I began working./I began So work. He continued living/to live above the shop. But:  
/ am beginning to understand/see/realize why he acted as he did. It ceased to matter whether or not he sold his work. She never ceased complaining/to complain about prices.

After **can/could bear** (chiefly used in the negative) either gerund or infinitive can be used: *I can't bear waiting/to wait*; but when the infinitive refers to a deliberate action the expression implies that the subject's feelings prevent(ed) him from performing the action;  
*I couldn't bear to tell him.* (so I didn't)

After **intend**, an infinitive:

#### I intend to sell it

is more usual than a gerund:

*I intend selling it.*

The infinitive is necessary when we have **intend + object**. This is found only in formal English:

*I intend him to take over the department.*

With **advise, allow, permit, recommend**

If the person concerned is mentioned we use the infinitive:

*He advised me to apply at once.*

*She recommends housewives to buy the big tins.*

*They don't allow us to park here.*

But if this person is not mentioned, the gerund is used:

*He advised applying at once.*

*She recommends buying the big tins.*

*They don't allow parking.*

The gerund after **allow** and **permit** cannot have an object, so if we want an **allow/permit + verb + object** construction, we must use the infinitive and mention the person concerned:

*They allowed their tenants to use the garage.*

- E **it needs/requires/wants** can be followed either by the gerund or by the passive infinitive, the gerund being the more usual:

*The grass wants cutting or The grass needs to be cut.*

268 **regret, remember, forget**

A **regret, remember, forget** are used with a gerund when the action expressed by the gerund is the earlier action:

I regret spending so much money = I'm sorry I spent so much money. (spending is the first action, regret is the second.)

*I remember reading about the earthquake in the papers. (reading is the first action, remember is the second.)*

**remember** can be followed by possessive adjective/object + gerund:

*I remember his/him telling me about it.*

*I remember my father's) telling me about it.*

**forget** + gerund is possible only when **forget** is in the negative. It is often used after **will never forget**:

*I'll never forget waiting/or bombs to/all = I'll always remember waiting for bombs to fall.*

B When regret, remember, forget themselves express the earlier action they are followed by an infinitive;

/ regret to say that you have failed your exam. (regret is the first action, to say is the second,)

regret here is normally followed by a verb such as say, inform, tell. It is normally used only in the present tense. remember can be used in any tense:

/(; remember to ring Bill. (remember is the earlier action.) forget is used similarly:

/ often forget to sign my cheifues.

I remembered to lock/I didn't forget to lock the door. (I locked it.) Conversely:

I didn't remember/I forgot to lock it. (I didn't lock it.)

C regret, remember, forget can also be followed by a noun/pronoun or a that-clause.

remember and forget can also be followed by noun clauses beginning how, why, when, where, who etc.:

/ can 'f remember when I saw him last.

I've forgotten where I Rut it.

269 agree/agree to, mean, propose

A agree and agree to (preposition)

agree takes the infinitive. It is the opposite of refuse + infinitive:

When I asked them to wait, Tom agreed to wait a week but Bill refused to wait another day.

agree cannot take a noun/pronoun object. The opposite of refuse + object is accept + object: He refused any reward. She accepted the post. agree to (preposition) can be followed by possessive adjective + gerund:

He agreed to my leaving early on Friday. (I asked if I could leave early on Friday and he said that I could- The opposite here would

be He wouldn 't agree to my leaving early etc.) agree to can be followed by noun/pronoun object;

He agreed to the change of plan/to this/to that.

B mean meaning 'intend' takes the infinitive:

/ mean to get to the top by sunrise.

mean meaning 'involve' (used only with an impersonal subject) takes the gerund:

He is determined to get a seat even if it means standing in a queue all night.

propose meaning 'intend' usually takes the infinitive:

{propose to start tomorrow. propose meaning 'suggest' takes the gerund:

I propose waiting till the police get here. (For propose + that. . . should, see 289.)

go on, stop, try, used (to)

go on = 'continue' and is normaUy followed by a gerund. But it is used with an infinitive, usually of a verb like explain, talk, tell, when the speaker continues talking about the same topic but introduces a new aspect of it:

He began by showing us where the island was and went on to tell us about its climate.

Compare He went on talking about his accident, which implies that he had been talking about it before, with He went on to talk about his accident, which implies that he had been speaking perhaps about himself or his journey but that the accident was being introduced for the first time.

stop (= cease) is followed by the gerund: Stop talking. It can be followed by object + gerund: I can't stop him talking to the press.

A possessive adjective would be possible here but is very seldom used. stop (= halt) can be followed by an infinitive of purpose;

/ stopped to ask the way. (I stopped in order to ask the way.)

try usually means 'attempt' and is followed by the infinitive:

They tried to put wire netting all round the garden. (They attempted to do this,)

The sentence doesn't tell us whether they succeeded or not. try can also mean 'make the experiment' and is then followed by the gerund:

They tried putting wire netting all round the garden. This means that they put wire netting round the garden to see if it would solve their problem (presumably they were trying to keep out rabbits and foxes). We know that they succeeded in performing the main action; what we don't know is whether this action had the desired effect, i.e. kept the foxes out.

Subject + used + infinitive expresses a past habit or routine:

/ used to swim all the year round. (At one time I swam all the year round,) (See 162.)

But subject + be/become/get + used + to (preposition) is followed by noun or pronoun or gerund and means 'be/become/get accustomed (to)':

/ am used to heat/to living in a hot climate. (I have lived in a hot climate for some time so I don't mind it.) (See 163.)

271 be afraid (of), be sorry <for>, be ashamed (of)

A be afraid of + gerund or gerund + noun/pronoun

Here the gerund usually expresses an action which the subject fears may happen. It is normally an involuntary action:

He never swam far out. He was afraid a/getting cramp.

She avoids lonely streets. She is afraid of being mugged.

She didn't tell him because she was afraid of upsetting him. be afraid + infinitive means that the subject is/was etc. too frightened to perform the action. This is obviously a deliberate action:

He was afraid to jump. (so he didn't jump)

She was afraid to protest, (so she kept quiet) be afraid can also be followed by a that-clause.

This can express a fear:

I'm afraid (that) he'll blame me/or this. But, especially in the first person, it can express (usually fairly mild) regret:

I'm afraid (that) we haven't any tickets left. (For I'm afraid so/not, see 347.)

B be sorry for + gerund means 'apologize/regret'. The gerund usually refers to a previous action but can refer to an immediately following action;

I'm sorry for making such a noise last night.

I'm sorry for disturbing you. (now) But I'm sorry to disturb you would be more usual here. be sorry + infinitive can express regret or sadness:

I'm sorry to hear that you've been ill. (See also 26 F.) When the action expressed by the infinitive is involuntary, the two actions are almost simultaneous:

/ was sorry to see him looking so ill. (When I saw him ... I was sorry.)

When the infinitive refers to a deliberate action, be sorry is the earlier of the two actions and is then very similar to regret (see 268 B):

I'm sorry to inform you that there has been an accident. be sorry that... is also possible. Note that I'm sorry that usually expresses genuine regret, but that with I'm sorry to say that or I'm afraid that the regret may be very faint, even perfunctory.

C be ashamed of + gerund or be ashamed of yourself etc. for + gerund The gerund here refers to a previous action:

You should be ashamed of lying to him

You should be ashamed of yourself for lying to him. In be ashamed + infinitive, the infinitive usually refers to a subsequent action:

I'm ashamed to tell you what this carpet cost. would be ashamed + infinitive often implies that the subject's feelings (will) prevent him from performing the action:

I'd be ashamed to ask for help. (so I won't/wouldn't ask)

The participles

The present (or active) participle

Form The infinitive + ing, e.g. working, loving, sifting.

Use

To form the continuous tenses (see 164, 178 etc.):

He is working. You 've been dreaming. As adjectives (see 17):

running water floating wreckage

dripping taps leaking pipes

Here there is equal stress on participle and noun. Compare with gerund + noun combinations (see 16).

After have + object (see 121):

He had me swimming in a week.

We have people standing on our steps all day.

I won't have him cleaning his bike in the kitchen.

A present participle can sometimes replace a relative pronoun + verb (see 77):

a map that marks/marked political boundaries =

a map marking political boundaries

people who wish/wished to visit the caves =

people wishing to visit the caves

children who need/needed medical attention =

children needing medical attention

Present participles/participle phrases such as adding/pointing out/ reminding/warning can introduce statements in indirect speech;

He told me to start early, reminding me that the roads would be crowded. (See 324 C.)

The above uses have already been dealt with. The present participle can also be used:

After verbs of sensation (see 273).

After catch/find/leave + object (see 274).

After go, come, spend, waste, be busy (see 275).

Present participles can sometimes replace subject + verb in other main or subordinate clauses other than those mentioned above (see 276-7).

273 Present participle after verbs of sensation

A The basic verbs of sensation see, hear, feel, smell, and the verbs listen (to), notice and watch can be followed by object + present participle:

/ see him passing my house every day.

Didn't you hear the clock striking?

I felt the car skidding.

She smelt something burning and saw smoke rising.

I watched them rehearsing the play. The action in the present participle may be either complete or incomplete: / saw him changing the wheel could mean that I watched the whole action or that I saw only part of it.

B see, hear, feel and sometimes listen (to), notice and watch can also be followed by object + bare infinitive:

We saw him leave the house.

I heard him make arrangements for his journey. The infinitive implies that the action is complete. I saw him change the wheel means that I saw the whole action.

C Comparison of the two forms

The participle is the more generally useful as it can express both complete and incomplete actions. But the infinitive is useful when we want to emphasize that the action is complete- It is also neater than the participle when there is a succession of actions:

/ saw him enter the room, unlock a drawer, fake out a document, photograph it and put it back.

D In the passive the full infinitive is used after verbs of the senses:

He was heard to say that the minister had been bribed.

274 catch, find, leave + object + present participle

A catch/find:

/ caught them stealing my apples. (I found them doing this.)

If she catches you reading her diary, she'll be furious. The action expressed by the participle is always one which displeases the subject. With find there is no feeling of displeasure:

I found him standing at the door ==

/ saw him standing/He was standing at the door when I arrived. With find the object could be inanimate:

He found a tree lying across the road.

B leave can be used with a participle:

/ left him talking to Bob = He was talking to Bob when I left.

go, come, spend, waste, be busy

go and come

go and come can be followed by the participles of verbs of physical activity and the verb shop:

They are going riding/skiing/sailing. Come dancing. I'm going shopping this afternoon. (For go and come followed by infinitives of purpose, see 335.)

spend/waste + an expression of time or money + present participle:

He spends two hours (a day) travelling. He doesn't spend much time preparing his lessons. We wasted a whole afternoon trying to repair the car. He spent a lot of money modernizing the house.

be busy + present participle; She is/was busy packing.

A present participle phrase replacing a main clause

The participle constructions in A and B below are chiefly used in written English.

When two actions by the same subject occur simultaneously it is usually possible to express one of them by a present participle. The participle can be before or after the finite verb:

He rode away. He whistled as he went. = He rode away whistling. He holds the rope with one hand and stretches out the other to the boy in the water = Holding the rope with one hand. he stretches etc.

When one action is immediately followed by another by the same subject the first action can often be expressed by a present participle-The participle must be placed first:

He opened the drawer and took out a revolver = Opening the drawer he took out a revolver. She raised the trapdoor and pointed to a light of steps = Raising the trapdoor she pointed to a flight of steps. We take off our shoes and creep cautiously along the passage = Taking off our shoes we creep cautiously along the passage. It would seem more logical here to use the perfect participle and say Having opened. Having raised. Having taken off, but this is not necessary except when the use of the present participle might lead to ambiguity. Eating his dinner he rushed out of the house would give the impression that he left the house with his plate in his hand. Here, therefore, it would be better to say Having eaten his dinner . . .

When the second action forms part of the first, or is a result of it, we can express the second action by a present participle:

She went out, slamming the door.

He fired, wounding one of the bandits.

!fell. striking my head against the door and cutting it. (Here we have three actions, the last two expressed by participles.)

The participle need not necessarily have the same subject as the first verb:

The plane crashed, its bombs exploding as it hit the ground.

277 A present participle phrase replacing a subordinate clause

These constructions are chiefly found in written English.

The present participle can replace as/since/because + subject + verb, i.e. it can help to explain the action which follows:

Knowing that he wouldn't be able to buy food on his journey he took large supplies with him = As he knew etc.

Fearing that the police would recognize him he never went out in daylight = As he feared etc.

Note that being at the beginning of a sentence will normally mean 'as he is/as he was':

Being a student he was naturally interested in museums =

Because/As he was a student etc. It could not mean 'while he was a student'. The subject of the participle need not be the same as the subject of the following verb:

The day being fine, we decided to go swimming. In cases like this the participle must follow its noun/pronoun. Being fine the day, we decided ... is incorrect, but Being athletic, Tom found the climb quite easy is all right, as Tom is the subject of both the participle and the following verb. It is possible to use two or more participles, one after the other:

Realizing that he hadn't enough money and not wanting to borrow

from his father, he decided to pawn his watch.

Not knowing the language and having no friends in, the town., he found it hard to get work.

278 The perfect participle (active)

A Form

having + past participle, e.g. having done. having seen.

B Use

The perfect participle can be used instead of the present participle in sentences of the type shown in 276 B (i.e. where one action is immediately followed by another with the same subject):

Tying one end of the rope to his bed, he threw the other end out of the window =

Having tied one end of the rope to his bed, he threw the other end out of the window.

The perfect participle emphasizes that the first action is complete before the second one starts, but is not normally necessary in combinations of this kind, except when the use of the present participle might lead to confusion. Reading the instructions, he snatched up the fire

extinguisher might give the impression that the two actions were simultaneous- Here, therefore, the perfect; participle would be better:

Having read the instructions, he snatched up the fire extinguisher. The perfect participle is, however, necessary when there is an interval of time between the two actions:

Having failed twice, he didn't want to try again. It is also used when the first action covered a period of time:

Having been his own boss for such a long time, he found it hard to accept orders from another.

The past participle (passive) and the perfect participle (passive)

Form

The past participle of regular verbs is formed by adding ed or d to the infinitive, e.g. worked, loved.

For the past participle of irregular verbs, see chapter 39.

Use

As an adjective:

stolen money a written report fallen trees broken glass Hired drivers blocked roads.

To form the perfect tenses/infinitives and participles and the passive voice:

he has seen to have loved it was broken

The past participle can replace a subject + passive verb just as the present participle can replace subject + active verb:

She enters. She is accompanied by her mother. =

She enters, accompanied by her mother.

He was aroused by the crash and leapt to his feet =

Aroused by the crash, he leapt to his feet.

The bridge had been weakened by successive storms and was no longer safe =

Weakened by successive storms, the bridge was no longer safe or

Having been weakened etc. (see below).

As he was convinced that they were trying to poison him, he refused to eat anything =

Convinced that they were trying to poison him, he refused to eat anything.

The perfect participle passive (having been + past participle) is used when it is necessary to emphasize that the action expressed by the participle happened before the action expressed by the next verb:

Having been warned about the bandits, he left his valuables at home.

{He had been warned etc.}

Having been bitten twice, the postman refused to deliver our letters unless we chained our dog up. (He had been bitten etc.)

A participle is considered to belong to the noun/pronoun which precedes it:

Tom, horrified at what he had done, could at first say nothing. Romeo, believing that Juliet was dead, decided to kill himself. A man carrying a large parcel got out of the bus. Note that the participle may be separated from its noun/pronoun by a main verb:

Jones and Smith came in, followed by their wives. She rushed past the policeman, hoping he wouldn't ask what she had in her suitcase.

If there is no noun/pronoun in this position the participle is considered to belong to the subject of the following main verb:

Stunned by the blow, Peter fell heavily. (Peter had been stunned.) Believing that he is alone, the villain expresses his thoughts aloud. If this principle is disregarded confusion results.

Waiting for a bus a brick fell on my head makes it appear that the brick was waiting for a bus, which is nonsense. A participle linked in this way to the wrong noun/pronoun is said to be 'misrelated'. The above sentence should be rewritten As I was waiting for a bus a brick fell on my head.

Other examples of misrelated participles:

When using this machine it must be remembered . . . Correct form:

When using this machine you must remember . . .

Believing that I was the only person who knew about this beach, the sight of someone else on it annoyed me very much. Correct form:

As I believed I was the only person etc. or

Believing that I was the only person on the beach, I was annoyed by the sight of someone else.

Commands, requests, invitations, advice, suggestions

Commands expressed by the imperative The second person imperative

This has the same form as the bare infinitive:

Hurry! Wait! Stop! For the negative we put do not (don't) before the verb:

Don't hurry!

The person addressed is very often not mentioned, but can be expressed by a noun placed at the end of the phrase:

Eat your dinner, boys. Be quiet, Tom. These nouns can be placed before the verb, but this is much less usual.

The pronoun you is rarely used unless the speaker wishes to be rude, or wishes to make a distinction, as in:

You go on. I'll wait.

do can be placed before the affirmative imperative:

Do hurry. Do be quiet. This do could be persuasive, but could also express irritation.

The first person imperative

Form

let us (let's) + bare infinitive:

Let us stand together in this emergency. For the negative we normally put not before the infinitive:

Let us not be alarmed by rumours. But it is possible in colloquial English to put don't before let's:

Don't let's be alarmed by rumours. By let us (let's) the speaker can urge his hearers to act in a certain way, or express a decision which they are expected to accept, or express a suggestion (see 289).

The third person imperative

Form

let him/her/it/them + bare infinitive (see also 322):

Let them go by train.

This is not a very common construction in modern English. It would be more usual to say:

They are to/must go by train.

The negative imperative, let him/her/them + negative infinitive, is not used in modern English.

Instead, we would use must not or is/are not to:

They must not/are not to go by air.

## 282 Other ways of expressing commands

A Subject + shall for third person commands (in written English)

shall can be used in very formal written regulations which will normally remain in force for some time. These are very often in the passive (see also 234):

The Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected annually.

(club regulations)

A record shall be kept of the number of students attending each class,

(college regulations)

B Subject + will, mainly for third person commands:

When the alarm rings passengers and crew will assemble at their boat stations, (notice on board ship)

This is a formal, impersonal, peremptory type of command, implying that the person giving the order is quite certain that he will be obeyed. It is used chiefly in written instructions by people who have some authority, e.g. captains of ships, officers of the services, headmasters of schools, trainers of sports teams etc.:

The team will report to the gymnasium for weight-lifting training. Note that if we move the will and place it before the subject, we turn the command into a request. It is possible to use you will for spoken commands:

You will not mention this meeting to anyone. But it is more usual and more polite to use must: You must not mention this meeting to anyone.

C Commands are often expressed as obligations by must:

You must not smoke in the petrol store. Passengers must cross the line by the footbridge.

Dogs must be kept on leads in this area.

D Instructions or orders can be conveyed by the be + infinitive construction:

You are to report for duty immediately. The switchboard is to be manned at all times.

E Prohibitions may be expressed in written instructions by may not;

Candidates may not bring textbooks into the examination room.

### 283 Requests with can/could/may/might I/we

A can/could/may/might I/we + have + noun/pronoun

can is the most informal:

(a) 'Can I have a sweet?' said the little boy. can I/we, when used by adults, sounds more confident than could I/we. could I/we is the most generally useful form:

(b) Could I have a cup of tea? Could I have two tickets, please?

may and might are more formal than could, but possible in both spoken and written English:

(c) May/Might I have a copy of the letter? These requests are usually reported by ask (+ indirect object) +•• for + object:

The little boy asked (me) for a sweet.

He asked for a copy of the letter. But (c) above could also be reported;

He asked if he might have a copy of the letter.

B can/could/may/might I/we + verb

For the difference between them, see A above.

These could be requests for permission (see 131), but with certain verbs, e.g. see. speak (to), talk (to), they can be ordinary requests:

May/Could I see Mr Jones? = I would like to see Mr Jones. This type of request is reported by ask to see/to speak to etc.:

I asked to see Mr Jones.

Do not put a noun/pronoun after ask, as this would change the meaning (see 243 B).

In colloquial English ask for +•• name etc. would also be possible, especially when reporting a telephone conversation:

CALLER: Could I speak to the secretary, please? =

She asked/or the secretary/to speak to the secretary.

C could/might I/we requests can be preceded by do you think/

I wonder(ed)/was wondering if. These prefixes make the requests more diffident:

; wonder/was wondering if I could have tomorrow off?

Do you think I could speak to the secretary? Note the change from interrogative to affirmative verb (see 104).

### 284 Requests with could/will/would you etc.

For starred forms, see K below,  
A **could you\*** is a very useful request form:

## Could you please show me the way?

**possibly** can be added to show that the speaker is asking for something extra:

*Could you possibly lend me £500?*

**couldn't** expresses the speaker's hopes for a more favorable answer than has just been indicated;

I can't wait. ~ Couldn't you wait five minutes?

**you couldn't. . . could you?** can be used to express a not very hopeful request;

*You couldn't wait five minutes, could you?*

*You couldn't give me a hand with this, could you?*

(The speaker doesn't really expect a favourable answer in either case.)

B will/would you\* (please):

Will/Would you please count your change? would you (please) has the same meaning as could you. will you is more authoritative and therefore less polite. will/would you can be placed at the end of the phrase:

Shut the door, will you?

But this form can only be used in very friendly relaxed situations- Used otherwise, it would sound very rude. will/would can also be used for third person requests:

Would Mrs Jones, passenger to Leeds, please come to the Enquiry Desk?

Will anyone who saw the accident please phone this number . . . ?

(police announcement)

C you'll. . . won't you? is a persuasive type of request used mainly among friends:

You'll write to me. won't you?

D would you mind\* + gerund (see 263):

Would you mind moving your car?

E perhaps you would implies confidence that the other person will perform this service. It would not be used at the beginning of a conversation or letter, but would be possible later on:

Perhaps you would let me know when your new stock arrives = Please let me know when your new stock arrives.

F if you would is a useful request form. It is used in spoken English for routine-type requests which the speaker is quite sure will be obeyed:

If you'd fill up this form/take a seat/wait a few minutes, (in an office) If you'd sign the register/follow the porter, (in a hotel)

just can be added to show that the action required is very easy:

If you'd just put your address on the back of the cheque, (in a shop)

G would you like to . . . ? is also a possible request form:

Would you like to take a seat? = Please take a seat.

H I should/would be very grateful if you would is a formal request form found chiefly in letters but possible in speech:

I should be very grateful if you would let me know if you have any vacancies.

I Would you be good/kind enough to keep me informed? Would you be so kind as to keep me informed?

J I wish you would can be a request form. It sometimes implies that the other person should be helping or have offered to do it (see 301):

I wish you 'd give me a hand.

K Starred would and could forms may be introduced by phrases such as do you think? I

wonder(ed) if, I was wondering if (see 104):

Do you think you could lend me £500?

## 285 Requests with might

A you might can express a very casual request;

You might post these/or me.

But it can only be used in friendly relaxed situations, otherwise it would sound rude.

B With a certain intonation and a strong stress on the important word might can express a reproachful request: You might ^help me with stress on help might imply 'Why aren't you helping me?/You should be helping me'.

C might can also be used with other persons to express this sort of irritation: He might 'pay us.' with stress on pay could mean 'We are annoyed that he doesn't pay/hasn't paid us'.

D might + perfect infinitive can express irritation at or reproach for the non-performance of an action in the past: You might have 'told us with stress on told could mean 'You should have told us',

#### 6 Invitations

A will you have/would you like + noun:

Will you have a drink? (sometimes shortened to Have a drink.)

Would you like a coffee? Note that do you want is not an invitation. (For want and would like. see 296.)

In indirect speech we use offer + indirect object (= person addressed) + noun:

She offered me a drink/a coffee.

B will/would/could you? would you like to?

Will you have lunch with me tomorrow?'is informal, but Would/Could you have lunch with me? or Would you like to have lunch with me? can be used in both informal and formal situations. These invitations would be reported by invite/ask + direct object + to + noun, or invite/ask 4- direct object + infinitive:

He invited me to lunch/to have lunch with him.

C Answers to invitations

Offers of a drink/a cigarette etc. are usually answered:

Yes, please or No, thank you.

Invitations with would you/could you/would you like are usually answered:

I'd like to very much/I'd love to or

I'd like to very much but I'm afraid I can't. wouldn't like, of course, would not be possible. An invitation and answer might be reported:

He invited us to dinner/to a party/to spend the weekend with him and we accepted/but we refused/but we had to refuse because . . .

D When the speaker doesn't really expect: his offer/invitation to be accepted he can say:

You wouldn't like another drink, would you? (Perhaps the speaker would like another drink himself, and wants an excuse. He doesn't really expect that his friend will accept, though.)

You wouldn't like to come with me, would you? (Again he doesn't really expect an acceptance.)

## 287 Advice forms

A must, ought to and should can be used for advice:

You must read this book. It's marvellous.

You should grow your own vegetables.

You ought to plant some trees.

In indirect speech must, ought to and should here can remain unchanged or be reported by advise 4- object:

He advised me to plant trees.

B you had better + bare infinitive (see 120):

You'd better take off your wet shoes. You 'd better not wait any longer. had better can be used with the third person:

He'd better stop taking those pills.

C if I were you I should/would:

If I were you I 'd buy a car.

This is often shortened to I should/would with a slight stress on the I; i/'d buy a car.

In indirect speech If I were you I should/would . . . is reported by advise + object:

He advised me to buy a car.

D I advise/would advise you + infinitive:

I (would) advise you to apply at once or I advise/would advise + gerund:

I('d) advise applying at once.

E why don't you . . . ? can be either advice or suggestion:

Why don't you learn to play your guitar? Why don't you take a holiday? When this is advice it is reported by advise + object:

He advised me to take a holiday.

F it is time you +- past tense:

/; ;s time you bought a new coat. (See 293.) This would be reported:

He said it was time I bought a new coat.

Advice with may/might as well + infinitive

This construction can express very unemphatic advice:

You may/might as well ask him =

If would do no harm to ask him.

She said I might as well ask him. This form can be used with the third person:

He may as well come with me and the speaker may use it of himself:

As there isn't anything more to do, I may as well go home early.

Suggestions First person suggestions with let's or shall I/we

let's + infinitive:

Let's paint it ourselves. shall we is sometimes added:

Let's get the paint today, shall we? shall I/we + infinitive:

Shall we invite Bill?

Suggestions with let's or shall we can be answered affirmatively by yes, let's. let's not could be used jokingly as a negative answer:

Let's take the tent. ~ Let's not! Or it can introduce a negative suggestion:

Let's not start too early. don't let's could also be used here:

Don't let's start too early.

First and second person suggestions

why don't we/you + infinitive or why not + infinitive/expression of time or place;

Why don't we meet and discuss it?

Why not meet and discuss it?

Where shall we meet? ~ Why not here? ~ Why not at the hotel? In colloquial English what's wrong with/what's the matter with + noun could also be used:

What's wrong with the hotel? what/how about + gerund/noun:

Where shall we sleep?

What about renting a caravan?

What about a bed and breakfast place? suppose I/we/you + present or past tense:

Suppose you offer/offered to pay him?

C First, second or third person suggestions with suggest or propose

suggest (+ possessive adjective) + gerund, or suggest that + subject + present tense/should.

propose is used in exactly the same way but is slightly more formal than suggest.

In the active, suggest + should + infinitive is more formal than suggest + a present or past tense.

/ suggest (your) selling it.

We suggest that you should sell it. (formal)

I propose that the secretary sends in/should send in a report, (formal)

I propose that a report (should) be sent in. (formal) that. . . should is necessary in the passive.

With should be it is possible in formal English to omit the should, leaving the be alone, as shown above.

D Suggestions in indirect speech

Suggestions can be reported by:

suggest/suggested (+ possessive adjective) + gerund, or suggest that + subject + present tense/should, or suggested that + subject + past tense/should, or suggest (any tense) + noun/pronoun:

Tom suggests/suggested (our) having a meeting.

Ann suggests that he sells/should sell his house.

Ann suggested that he sold/should sell it.

Mr Jones suggested a meeting. (For suggestions with let's, see also 322.)

## The subjunctive

### Form

The present subjunctive has exactly the same form as the infinitive; therefore the present subjunctive of to be is be for all persons, and the present subjunctive of all other verbs is the same as their present tense except that s is not added for the third person singular:

The queen lives here. (simple present tense)

Long live the queen! (subjunctive)

(, The past subjunctive has exactly the same form as the simple past • except that with the verb be the past subjunctive form is either . I/he/she/it was or I/he/she/it were. In expressions of doubt or

unreality were is more usual than was:

He behaves as though he were the owner. (But he is not the owner.)

In conversation, however, was is often used instead of were (see also 225).

Past subjunctives are often known as 'unreal pasts'.

### Use of the present subjunctive

The present subjunctive is used in certain exclamations to express a wish or hope, very often involving supernatural powers:

(God) bless you! God save the queen!

Heaven help us! Curse this fog!

Come what may, we'll standby you! Notice also the phrase if need be, which means 'if it is necessary':

If need be we can always bring another car.

It is sometimes used in poetry, either to express a wish or in clauses of condition or concession:

STEVENSON: Fair the day shine as it shone in my childhood. (May the day shine/I hope it will shine.)

SHAKESPEARE: If this be error, and upon me proved ... (if this is error)

BYRON: Though the heart be still as loving . . . (though the heart is)

As seen in 235 certain verbs are followed by should + infinitive constructions. When the infinitive is be, the should is sometimes omitted:

He suggested that a petition {should} be drawn up. The infinitive thus left alone becomes a subjunctive.

## 292 as if/as though + past subjunctive

The past subjunctive can be used after as if/as though to indicate unreality or improbability or doubt in the present (there is no difference between as if and as though):

He behaves as if he owned the place. (But he doesn't own it or probably doesn't own it or we don't know whether he owns it or not.)

He talks as though he knew where she was. (But he doesn't know or he probably doesn't know or we don't know whether he knows or not.)

He orders me about as if I were his wife. (but I am not) The verb preceding as if/though can be put into a past tense without changing the tense of the subjunctive:

He talks/talked as though he knew where she was. After as if/as though we use a past perfect when referring to a real or imaginary action in the past:

He talks about Rome as though he had been there himself. (But he hasn't or probably hasn't or we don't know whether he has or not.) Again, the verb preceding as if/though can be put into a past tense without changing the tense of the subjunctive:

He looks/looked as though he hadn't had a decent meal for a month.

## 293 it is time + past subjunctive (unreal past)

it is time can be followed by the infinitive:

It's time to start or by for + object 4- infinitive:

/( 's time for us to go or by subject + a past subjunctive:  
/( 's time we went. It's time we were leaving. There is a slight difference in meaning between the forms. it is time + infinitive merely states that the correct time has arrived; it is time + subject + past subjunctive implies that it is a little late. high can be added to emphasize this idea:  
/t's high time we left. it is time + I/he/she/it cannot be followed by were:  
It's time I was going. (For past subjunctives/unreal pasts in conditional sentences, see 222; after would rather/sooner, see 297; after wish + subject, see 300; in indirect speech, see 310.)

care, like, love, hate, prefer,  
wish

care and like care is chiefly used in the negative and interrogative.  
care for + noun/gerund is very similar to like + noun/gerund. We can say:  
(a) Does/Did Tom care for living in the country? or Does/Did Tom like living in the country?  
(b) You don't care for science fiction, do you? or  
You don't like science fiction, do you? (b) above could be answered:  
/ don't care for it or / don't like it much or Oh yes, I like it.  
(care would not be possible here.) care in the interrogative sometimes carries a hint of doubt:  
Does Ann care for horror movies? (The speaker thinks that she probably doesn't, or is surprised that she apparently does.) The feeling of doubt is more noticeable with would you care (for). . . ?  
would care and would like  
would care for + noun and would care + infinitive are similar to would like + noun/infinitive. But would care (for) is not normally "used in the affirmative, and offers expressed by would you care (for), . . . ? are less confident than would you like . . . ? offers:  
(a) TOM: Would you care for a lift, Ann? (Perhaps his car is uncomfortable and she likes comfort.)  
(b) TOM: Would you care to see my photos, Ann? (He isn't sure that she'll want to see them.) A favourable answer to (b) above would be:  
'\*/ I'd like to see them very much.  
'As in the affirmative, would like replaces would care.  
'Similarly in negative statements:  
I wouldn't care to live on the 35th floor ~ Oh, I'd rather like it. .would care for/would like can sometimes be used with gerunds. , <See 295 B.)  
would have cared (for) and would have liked  
Both here refer to actions which didn't take place:  
ANN: I'd have liked to go with Tom. 0 wanted to go but didn't get my wish. See also 296 D-care could not be used here.) BILL: But he walked all the way! You wouldn't have cared for/have liked that, would you? or Would you have cared for/have liked that?

D Do not confuse care as used above with care for (= look after) and care (about):  
1 care for (= look after) is used chiefly in the passive:  
The old people were cared for by their families.  
2 care (about) (= feel concerned) is used chiefly in the negative and interrogative.  
I don't care (about) appears similar to I don't mind, which can often be used instead:  
It will be very expensive. - I don't care/mind or  
/ don't care about/mind the expense or  
/ don't care/mind what it costs.  
But note that I don't care (about) = 'I am indifferent (to)' while I don't mind = 'I don't object (to)', i.e. 'He/It doesn't worry/upset/ annoy me.'  
I don't mind is much more polite than I don't care, which often sounds arrogant and selfish. In the negative interrogative either can be used:  
Don't you care/mind what happens to him?  
Didn't you care/mind what happened? But in the ordinary interrogative there is more difference between the two;  
Do you care? •= Are you concerned?/Do you feel concern? while Do you mind? usually means Do you object? (See also 263.)

295 care, like, love, hate, prefer

A When used in the conditional, these verbs are usually followed by the infinitive:

Would you care/like to come with me? (Would it please you to come with me?)

I'd like to (come) very much or I'd love to (come).

I'd hate to spend Christmas alone. Here we are thinking of a particular action in the future.

B But would care for, would like can be followed by gerunds when we are not thinking of a particular action but are considering the subject's tastes generally. Note also that here would care for/would like are replaceable by would enjoy:

She would like/would enjoy riding if she could ride better. I wonder if Tom would care for/would enjoy hang-gliding. hate and prefer can be used similarly but are less common.

C When used in the present or past tenses, care for, like (= enjoy), love, hate and prefer are usually followed by the gerund:

He doesn't/didn't care for dancing.

They love/loved wind-surfing.

He prefers/preferred walking to cycling.

But the infinitive is not impossible and is particularly common in American English:

They love/loved to run on the sands.

' Note however that like can also mean 'think wise or right', and is then always followed by the infinitive:

She likes them to play in the garden. (She thinks they are safe there.)

/ like to go to the dentist twice a year. (I think this wise.) . Compare this with I like going to the dentist, which implies that I enjoy my visits. Similarly / don't like to go = 'I don't think it right to go' while I don't like going == 'I don't enjoy going'.

Notice also another difference between these two negative forms-1 don't like to go usually means 'I don't go' (because I don't think it right). / don't like going usually means 'I go, although I don't enjoy it'. Similarly / didn't like to open the letter means 'I didn't open it because I didn't think it right to do so' but / didn't like opening the letter means 'I opened it reluctantly'.

E enjoy and dislike are always followed by noun/pronoun or gerund.

I would like and want

{ Sometimes either would like or want can be used:

1 In requests and questions about requests (but would not like is not used here: see B1 below):

CUSTOMER: I'd like some raspberries, please or

/ want some raspberries, please.

GREENGROCER: I'm afraid I haven't any. Would you like some strawberries?

CUSTOMER: No, I don't want any strawberries, thanks, (wouldn't like is not possible.) I would like is usually more polite than I want.

would you like? is much more polite and helpful than do you want? would you like? can imply a willingness to satisfy the other person's wishes, do you want? doesn't imply this. Someone dealing with a customer or client, therefore, will normally use would you like?:

CALLER: I'd like to/want to speak to Mr X, please. TELEPHONIST: Mr X is out. Would you like to speak to Mr Y?

2 When we are not making requests, but merely talking about our wishes, we can use either would like or want in affirmative, interrogative or negative. There is no difference in meaning, though / want usually sounds more confident than / would like and / want is not normally used for unrealizable wishes:

/ would like to live on Mars.

B would like and want are not interchangeable in the following uses:

1 In invitations we use would you like? not do you want?

Would you like a cup of coffee? Would you like to come to the theatre? do you want? used here would be a question only. not an invitation.

2 wouldn't like and don't want are different.

don't want = 'have no wish for', but wouldn't like = 'would dislike'.

wouldn't like cannot therefore be used in answer to invitations or offers, as it would be impolite. Instead we use don't want or some other form:

Would you like some more coffee? - No. I don't want any more,

thanks or No, thanks.

C In the past the two forms behave differently. In indirect speech want becomes wanted, but would like remains unchanged:

Tom said, 'I would like/want to see it' =

Tom said he would like/wanted to see it. But if we don't use a reported speech construction we have to say Tom wanted to see it. (We cannot use would like here, as Tom would like to see it has a present or future meaning.)

D would like has two past forms: would like + perfect infinitive or would have liked + infinitive/noun/pronoun. These forms express unrealized wishes only:

I'd like to have gone skiing or

I'd have liked a day's skiing. (But I didn't get my wish.)

## 297 would rather/sooner and prefer/would prefer

There is no difference between would rather and would sooner, but would rather is more often heard.

A would rather/sooner is followed by the bare infinitive when the subject of would rather/sooner is the same as the subject of the following action:

Tom would rather read than talk.

1 would rather/sooner + infinitive can be used instead of prefer + gerund for present actions:

Tom prefers reading to talking.

Note: would rather + infinitive ••• than + infinitive, but prefer + gerund + to + gerund, prefer can also be followed by a noun, but would rather always requires a verb;

He prefers wine to beer =

He would rather drink wine than beer.

I prefer tennis to golf =

I'd rather play tennis than golf.

Some statements with prefer + noun have no exact would rather equivalent: He prefers dogs to cats and He would rather have dogs than cats are not exactly the same.

would rather + infinitive cannot express preferences in the past, so the past equivalent of Tom would rather read than talk would be Tom preferred reading to talking/liked reading better than talking. But see 4 below.

would rather + infinitive can also be used instead of would prefer + infinitive:

I'd rather fly than go by sea/I'd prefer to fly. Note that with would prefer, only the preferred action is mentioned;

see above. If, therefore, we want to mention both actions we must use would rather.

Similarly with nouns:

Would you like some gin? — I'd prefer a coffee or

I'd rather have coffee than gin.

Both would rather/sooner and would prefer can be followed by the perfect infinitive:

We went by sea but I'd rather have gone by air/I'd prefer to have gone by air. (I wanted to go by air, but didn't get my wish.)

This is somewhat similar to would like + perfect infinitive, which expresses an unfulfilled wish. (See 296 D.)

Subject + would rather/sooner is followed by subject + past tense (subjunctive) when the two subjects are different:

Shall I give you a cheque? ~ I'd rather you paid cash. Note the use of would rather + subject + didn't for a negative preference:

*Would you like him to paint it? - No, I'd rather he didn't (paint it).*

Ann wants to tell Tom, but I'd rather she didn't (tell him).

**prefer**, however, like **like**, can take object + infinitive:

*I'd prefer you to pay cash.*

*I'd prefer him not to paint it.*

*I'd prefer her not to tell Tom.*

## 298 More examples of preference

*I like hot weather better than cold = I prefer hot weather to cold = I'd rather/sooner have hot weather than cold.*

*I like skiing better than skating = I prefer skiing to skating = I'd rather/sooner ski than skate.*

*I liked playing in matches better than watching them = I preferred playing matches to watching them.*

(**would rather/sooner** could not be used here.)

- C *Would you like to start today or would you rather wait/would you prefer to wait till tomorrow? ~ I'd rather go today (than wait till tomorrow). I'd rather not wait. Or I'd prefer to start today. I'd prefer not to wait. I'd rather deliver it by hand than post it. He says he'd rather go to prison than pay the fine.*

*I'd rather pay his fine for him than let him go to prison.*

**rather than** . . . **would** + infinitive is possible in formal English:

*Rather than let him go to prison I would pay his fine myself.*

- D *Do you want Ann to repair it herself ~ I'd prefer her to ring/I'd rather she rang the electrician or I'd rather she didn't try to repair it herself.*  
*They want to camp in my garden but I'd rather they didn't. I'd rather they camped by the river.*  
*He usually has a pub lunch, but she 'd prefer him to come home for a meal/she 'd rather he came home for lunch. She 'd rather he didn't spend money in pubs.*

### 299 **wish, want and would like**

**wish, want and would like** all mean 'desire'.

**wish** is the most formal. For **want** and **would like**, see 296.

- A **wish** can be followed directly by an infinitive or by object + infinitive:

*Why do/did you wish to see the manager? ~ I wish/wished to make a complaint.*

*The government does not wish Dr Jekyll Hyde to accept a professorship at a foreign university.*

In less formal language we would use **want** or **would like**:

*I would like/want to speak to Ann.*

*I wanted to speak to Ann.*

*She doesn't/didn't want the children to stay up late.* (If we used **like** here instead of **want**, it would mean that she doesn't/didn't approve of the children staying up late.)

- B **want** and **would like** can be followed directly by nouns:

*I want/would like a single room.*

*He wanted a single room.*

**wish** has a more restricted use:

We can wish someone luck/success/a happy Christmas etc.;

*He said, 'Good luck!' = He wished me luck.*

We can also send someone 'good/best wishes':

*With all good wishes, yours, Bill* (at the end of a letter)

*Best wishes/or the New Year* (on a New Year card)

Except in greetings of this kind, **wish** is not normally followed by a noun object.

**wish + for** can be followed by a noun/pronoun, but usually implies that the subject has little hope of obtaining his wish. It is chiefly used in exclamations:

*How he wished for a drink! (Presumably he had no hope of getting one.)*

*What he chiefly wished for was a chance to explain.* (It seems unlikely that he was going to get this chance.)

### 300 **wish + subject + unreal past**

**wish (that)** + subject + a past tense (subjunctive; see 290 B) expresses regret about a present situation:

*I wish I knew his address = I'm sorry I don't know his address.*

*I wish you could drive a car = I 'm sorry you can't drive a car.*

*I wish he was coming with us = I'm sorry he isn't coming with us.*

**wish** can be put into the past without changing the subjunctive:

*He wished he knew the address = He was sorry he didn't know the address.*

Unreal past tenses do not change in indirect speech:

*'I wish I lived nearer my work,' he said = He said he wished he lived nearer his work.*

**B** **wish (that) + subject + past perfect (subjunctive)** expresses regret about a past situation:

*I wish (that) I hadn't spent so much money = I'm sorry I spent so much money.*

*I wish you had written to him = I'm sorry you didn't write to him.*

wished can replace wish without changing the subjunctive:

*I wished I hadn't spent so much money = I was sorry I had spent so much money.*

These verbs will be reported unchanged:

*'I wished I had taken his advice,' she said = She (said she) wished she had taken his advice.*

**C** **if only** can be used in exactly the same way. It has the same meaning as **wish** but is more dramatic:

If only we knew where to look for him!

If only she had asked someone's advice!

### 301 **wish (that) + subject + would**

A **wish + subject + past tense** can express regret for a present situation, as shown in 300 above:

*I wish that he wrote more regularly = I'm sorry he doesn't write more regularly.*

**B** **wish + subject + would** can be used similarly, but only with actions which the subject can control, i.e. actions he could change if he wished.

wish + would here can express interest in the subject's willingness/unwillingness to perform an action in the present. This is usually a habitual action.

/ wish he would write more often =-

I'm sorry he isn't willing to write more often.

I wish he would wear a coat = I'm sorry he refuses to wear a coat. The subject of wish cannot be the same as the subject of would, as this would be illogical- We cannot therefore have I wish +- I would.

C wish + subject + would can also be used to express dissatisfaction with the present and a wish for change in the future:

/ wish he would answer my Utter. (I have been waiting for an answer for a long time.)

/ wish they would change the menu. (I'm tired of eating sausages.)

I wish they would stop making bombs. But the speaker is normally not very hopeful that the change will take place, and often, as in the third example above, has no hope at all. As in B above, wish + subject + would here is restricted to actions where change is possible, and wish and would cannot have the same subject.

When there is a personal subject, the action is in the subject's control and the idea of willingness/unwillingness is still present, but wish + subject + would here can sometimes be used with inanimate subjects:

/ wish it would stop raining. I wish the sun would come out.

I wish prices would come down. I wish the train would come. wish + subject + would here is rather like would like, but would like is not restricted to actions where change is possible and does not imply dissatisfaction with the present situation. Also the would like construction does not imply any lack of hope:

/ would like Jack to study art. (I want him to study art/I hope he will study art.)

/ I wish Peter would study art. (Peter has presumably refused to do this.)

D I wish you would is a possible request form. Here there is no feeling that the person addressed will refuse to perform the request, but there is often a feeling that this person is annoying or disappointing the speaker in some way: I wish you would help me often implies 'You should have offered to help me', and I wish you would stop humming/interrupting/asking silly questions would imply that the speaker was irritated by the noise/the interruptions/the

silly questions. However, the expression I wish you would can be used in answer to an offer of help, and does not then imply any dissatisfaction:  
Shall I help you check the accounts? ~ I wish you would. (I'd be glad of your help.)  
E if only + would can replace wish + would in B and C above. It cannot be used for requests as in D. if only is more dramatic than wish: If only he would join our party!