

Infinitive and gerund

Infinitive

Definition

An infinitive is the basic form of a verb not associated with a subject or tense.

Construction

Affirmative: 'to' + bare infinitive

to go

Negative: 'not to' + bare infinitive

not to go

'to don't go' ❌

Note that the bare infinitive is the infinitive without 'to': (not) go

Uses

As a subject	As a complement	As an object
To be on time is important.	The important thing is to be on time.	We need to be on time.
Not to be on time is impolite.	The important thing is not to be late.	We promised not to be late.

Note that as a subject, the gerund is more common than the infinitive.

Gerund

Definition

A gerund is a noun formed from a verb - it is the name of an activity or a state.

Construction

Affirmative: bare infinitive + 'ing'

going

Negative: 'not' + bare infinitive + 'ing'

not going

Note that we sometimes have to double the last letter of the verb or remove the 'e' at the end. Here are some examples:

swimming
travelling
shopping

hiking
dancing
filing

Uses

As a subject	As a complement	As an object
Being in this team has lots of advantages.	What I like about this job is being in a small team.	I love being in this team.
Cycling is good exercise.	My favourite sport is cycling .	I enjoy cycling .
Not having any free time is terrible.	The best thing about my job is not having a long journey to work.	I hate not having enough free time.

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