

Infinitive or -ing form?

Some verbs and adjectives can be followed by either an -ing form or an infinitive. In some cases, there is a difference of meaning.

Love, like, hate and prefer

Both -ing forms and infinitives can be used after the words love, like, hate and prefer without a great difference of meaning.

I like walking in the rains. OR I like to walk in the rains.

I hate getting up early in the morning. OR I hate to get up early in the morning.

On Sundays, I prefer staying in bed. OR On Sundays, I prefer to stay in bed.

Infinitives are preferred after expressions like would like, would prefer, would hate and would love.

I would like to tell you something. (More natural than 'I would like telling you something.')

Begin and start

Both -ing forms and infinitives can be used after begin and start with little difference of meaning.

He began playing cricket when he was three. OR He began to play cricket when he was three.

And then she started talking about her illnesses. OR And then she started to talk about her illnesses.

After the continuous forms of begin and start, infinitives are preferred.

I am beginning to learn Spanish. (NOT I am beginning learning Spanish.)