

The qualifying infinitive may be used:

1) to qualify a noun like an adjective

Give me something to drink.

Give me a chair to sit.

It was a sight to see.

This is a thing to admire.

2) to qualify a verb like an adverb

I came to see you.

We are going to play the match.

It is going to rain.

3) to qualify an adjective like an adverb

The book is nice to read.

This picture is beautiful to look at.

4) to qualify a sentence

To tell the truth, you are a fool.

To be frank, I don't like him.

When the infinitive is used to qualify a noun, verb or adjective, it is called a qualifying infinitive or gerundial infinitive.

Adjectives / adverbs and the qualifying infinitives are compared below.

That was a beautiful sight. (Here the adjective beautiful qualifies the noun sight.)

That was a sight to see. (Here the infinitive to see qualifies the noun sight.)

He came quickly. (Here the adverb quickly modifies the verb came.)

He came to see us. (Here the infinitive to see modifies the verb came.)

This kind of tea is very good. (Here the adverb very modifies the adjective good.)

This kind of tea is good to drink. (Here the infinitive to drink modifies the adjective good.)