

Using like

Like is one of those verbs that are not normally used in continuous forms.

'What do you think of the cake?' 'I like it.' (NOT I am liking it.)

Like cannot normally be used without an object.

'Do you like ballet?' 'Yes, I like it.' OR 'Yes, I do.' (NOT Yes, I like.)

The degree modifier very much cannot come between like and its object.

I very much like her. OR I like her very much. (BUT NOT I like very much her.)

Like can be followed by an -ing form or an infinitive. There is usually some difference. The -ing form is used mostly to talk about enjoyment whereas the infinitive is used mostly to talk about choices and habits.

In American English, the infinitive is used in both senses.

I like reading detective novels. (more typically GB)

I like to read detective novels. (more typically US)

Would like

The structure would like + infinitive is often used as a polite way of saying 'want'. It is common in requests and offers. Note that the -ing form cannot be used in this structure.

I would like something to drink, please. (NOT I would like something drinking, please.)

'Would you like to dance?' 'Yes, OK.'