

Verbs that Change Meaning with Infinitive or Gerund

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Are you still struggling to remember after which verb or phrase to use an infinitive or gerund? In a small number of cases you can use both infinitive and -ing after some verbs, but did you know that there is a group of verbs that change meaning with infinitive or gerund? In this lesson, we will look at eight such verbs:¹

- Remember
- Forget
- Regret
- Go on
- Need
- Try
- Stop
- Mean

REMEMBER

Remember to do

Meaning: Something you want to remember before you do the action.

Ex: *Don't worry, I'll remember to pick you up on my way to work.*

Remember doing

Meaning: Something you remember after you did the action.

Ex: *I remember my grandma telling us stories before bed.*

FORGET

Forget to do

Meaning: refers to something you intended to do but didn't remember.

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Ex: *I forgot to turn off the light before I left for work.*

Forget doing

Meaning: refers to something that you've done and can remember doing it.

Ex: *Clive couldn't forget camping on the Mediterranean coast with his friends last summer.*

REGRET

Regret to do

Meaning: being sorry about something (usually in formal cases)

Ex: *We are sorry to inform you that your application was rejected.*

Regret doing

Meaning: you wish you had (not) done something.

Ex: *I regret not going to university.*

GO ON

Go on to do

Meaning: two actions are happening one after another.

Ex: *After she graduated from college, she went on to work for a newspaper.*

Go on doing

Meaning: an action is being continued.

Ex: *Even though we couldn't hear him because of the noise, he went on talking.*

NEED

Need to do

Meaning: the subject does the action

Ex: *I need to clean my apartment.*

Need doing

Meaning: there is a passive meaning.

Ex: *My apartment needs cleaning.*

TRY

Try to do

Meaning: make an effort to do something.

Ex: *I'll try to fix it, but I'm not sure if I'll be able to.*

Try doing

Meaning: when you experiment with doing something.

Ex: *Adam tried adding some salt, but the soup was still bland.*

STOP

Stop to do

Meaning: interrupt one action in order to do something else.

Ex: *I stopped to tie my shoelaces.*

Stop doing

Meaning: give up doing something.

Ex: *Mildred stopped eating sugar because she wants to lose weight.*

MEAN

Mean to do

Meaning: have an intention to do something.

Ex: *I meant to repair my motorbike this afternoon but I changed my mind.*

Mean doing

Meaning: something needs to be done in order to get results.

Ex: *You haven't finished your homework yet? It means calling your parents!*