

## Verb + -ing or to ... 2 (try/need/help)

## A Try to ... and try -ing

**Try to do** = attempt to do, make an effort to do:

- I was very tired. I **tried to keep** my eyes open, but I couldn't.
- Please **try to be** quiet when you come home. Everyone will be asleep.

**Try** also means 'do something as an experiment or test'. For example:

- These cakes are delicious. You should **try** one.  
(= you should have one to see if you like it)
- We couldn't find anywhere to stay. We **tried** every hotel in the town, but they were all full.  
(= we went to every hotel to see if they had a room)

If **try** (with this meaning) is followed by a verb, we say **try -ing**:

- A: The photocopier doesn't seem to be working.
- B: **Try pressing** the green button.  
(= press the green button – perhaps this will help to solve the problem)

Compare:

- I **tried to move** the table, but it was too heavy. (so I couldn't move it)
- I didn't like the way the furniture was arranged, so I **tried moving** the table to the other side of the room. But it didn't look right, so I moved it back again.

## B Need to ... and need -ing

**I need to do** something = it is necessary for me to do it:

- I **need to get** more exercise.
- He **needs to work** harder if he wants to make progress.
- I don't **need to come** to the meeting, do I?

Something **needs doing** = it needs to be done:

- My phone **needs charging**.  
(= it needs to be charged)
- Do you think this jacket **needs cleaning**?  
(= ... needs to be cleaned)
- It's a difficult problem. It **needs thinking** about very carefully. (= it needs to be thought about)



## C Help and can't help

You can say **help to do** or **help do** (with or without **to**):

- Everybody **helped to clean** up after the party. *or*  
Everybody **helped clean** up ...
- Can you **help me to move** this table? *or*  
Can you **help me move** ...

**I can't help doing** something = I can't stop myself doing it:

- I don't like him, but he has a lot of problems. I **can't help feeling** sorry for him.
- She tried to be serious, but she **couldn't help laughing**.  
(= she couldn't stop herself laughing)
- I'm sorry I'm so nervous. I **can't help it**.  
(= I can't help **being** nervous)



She couldn't help laughing.



# Exercises

**571** Make suggestions. Use **try** + one of the following:

- phone his office      restart it      ~~change the batteries~~  
turn it the other way      take an aspirin

- 1 The radio isn't working.
- 2 I can't open the door. The key won't turn.
- 3 The computer isn't working properly.
- 4 Fred isn't answering his phone. What shall I do?
- 5 I've got a terrible headache. I wish it would go.

Have you tried changing the batteries?

Try .....

Have you tried .....

You could .....

Have you .....

**572** For each picture, write a sentence with **need(s)** + one of the following verbs:

- ~~clean~~    cut    empty    paint    tighten



- 1 This jacket is dirty. It needs cleaning.
- 2 The room isn't very nice. It .....
- 3 The grass is very long. ....
- 4 The screws are loose. ....
- 5 The bin is full. ....

**573** Put the verb into the correct form.

- 1 a I was very tired. I tried to keep (keep) my eyes open, but I couldn't.
- b I rang the doorbell, but there was no answer. Then I tried ..... (knock) on the door, but there was still no answer.
- c We tried ..... (put) the fire out but without success. We had to call the fire brigade.
- d Sue needed to borrow some money. She tried ..... (ask) Gary, but he was short of money too.
- e I tried ..... (reach) the shelf, but I wasn't tall enough.
- f Please leave me alone. I'm trying ..... (concentrate).
- 2 a I need a change. I need ..... (go) away for a while.
- b My grandmother isn't able to look after herself any more. She needs ..... (look) after.
- c The windows are dirty. They need ..... (clean).
- d Your hair is getting very long. It needs ..... (cut).
- e You don't need ..... (iron) that shirt. It doesn't need ..... (iron).
- 3 a They were talking very loudly. I couldn't help ..... (overhear) what they said.
- b Can you help me ..... (get) the dinner ready?
- c He looks so funny. Whenever I see him, I can't help ..... (smile).
- d The fine weather helped ..... (make) it a really nice holiday.



## A

## Like / love / hate

When you talk about repeated actions, you can use **-ing** or **to ...** after these verbs.

So you can say:

- Do you **like getting** up early? *or* Do you **like to get** up early?
- Stephanie **hates flying**. *or* Stephanie **hates to fly**.
- I **love meeting** people. *or* I **love to meet** people.
- I don't **like being** kept waiting. *or* ... **like to be** kept waiting.
- I don't **like friends calling** me at work. *or* ... friends **to call** me at work.

but

- (1) We use **-ing** (*not to ...*) when we talk about a situation that already exists (or existed).

For example:

- Paul lives in Berlin now. He **likes living** there. (He **likes living** in Berlin = He lives there and he likes it)
- Do you **like being** a student? (You are a student – do you like it?)
- The office I worked in was horrible. I **hated working** there. (I worked there and I hated it)

- (2) There is sometimes a difference between **I like to do** and **I like doing**:

**I like doing** something = I do it and I enjoy it:

- I **like cleaning** the kitchen. (= I enjoy it)

**I like to do** something = I think it is a good thing to do, but I don't necessarily enjoy it:

- It's not my favourite job, but I **like to clean** the kitchen as often as possible.

Note that **enjoy** and **mind** are always followed by **-ing** (*not to ...*):

- I **enjoy cleaning** the kitchen. (*not* I enjoy to clean)
- I **don't mind cleaning** the kitchen. (*not* I don't mind to clean)

## B

## Would like / would love / would hate / would prefer

**Would like / would love** etc. are usually followed by **to ...** :

- I'd **like** (= I **would like**) to go away for a few days.
- Would you like to come** to dinner on Friday?
- I **wouldn't like to go** on holiday alone.
- I'd **love to meet** your family.
- Would you prefer to have** dinner now or later?

Compare **I like** and **I would like** (I'd like):

- I **like playing** tennis. / I **like to play** tennis. (= I like it in general)
- I'd **like to play** tennis today. (= I want to play today)

**Would mind** is always followed by **-ing** (*not to ...*):

- Would you mind closing** the door, please?

## C

I would like **to have done** something = I regret now that I didn't or couldn't do it:

- It's a shame we didn't see Anna when we were in London. I **would like to have seen** her again.
- We'd **like to have gone** away, but we were too busy at home.

You can use the same structure after **would love / would hate / would prefer**:

- Poor David! I **would hate to have been** in his position.
- I'd **love to have gone** to the party, but it was impossible.



**58.1** Write sentences about yourself. Say whether you like or don't like these activities. Choose one of these verbs for each sentence:

like / don't like      love      hate      enjoy      don't mind

- 1 (fly) I don't like flying. or I don't like to fly.
- 2 (play cards) .....
- 3 (be alone) .....
- 4 (go to museums) .....
- 5 (cook) .....

**58.2** Make sentences from the words in brackets. Use **-ing** or **to ...**. Sometimes either form is possible.

- 1 Paul lives in Berlin now. It's nice. He likes it.  
(he / like / live / there) He likes living there.
- 2 Jane is a biology teacher. She likes her job.  
(she / like / teach / biology) She .....
- 3 Joe always has his camera with him and takes a lot of pictures.  
(he / like / take / pictures) .....
- 4 I used to work in a supermarket. I didn't like it much.  
(I / not / like / work / there) .....
- 5 Rachel is studying medicine. She likes it.  
(she / like / study / medicine) .....
- 6 Dan is famous, but he doesn't like it.  
(he / not / like / be / famous) .....
- 7 Jennifer is a very careful person. She doesn't take many risks.  
(she / not / like / take / risks) .....
- 8 I don't like surprises.  
(I / like / know / things / in advance) .....

**58.3** Complete each sentence with a verb in the correct form, **-ing** or **to ...**. In one sentence either form is possible.

- 1 It's good to visit other places – I enjoy travelling.
- 2 'Would you like ..... down?' 'No, thanks. I'll stand.'
- 3 I'm not quite ready yet. Would you mind ..... a little longer?
- 4 When I was a child, I hated ..... to bed early.
- 5 When I have to catch a train, I'm always worried that I'll miss it. So I like ..... to the station in plenty of time.
- 6 I enjoy ..... busy. I don't like it when there's nothing to do.
- 7 I would love ..... to your wedding, but I'm afraid it isn't possible.
- 8 I don't like ..... in this part of town. I want to move somewhere else.
- 9 Do you have a minute? I'd like ..... to you about something.
- 10 If there's bad news and good news, I like ..... the bad news first.

**58.4** Write sentences using **would ... to have (done)**. Use the verbs in brackets.

- 1 It's a shame I couldn't go to the party. (like) I would like to have gone to the party.
- 2 It's a shame I didn't see the programme. (like) .....
- 3 I'm glad I didn't lose my watch. (hate) .....
- 4 It's too bad I didn't meet your parents. (love) .....
- 5 I'm glad I wasn't alone. (not / like) .....
- 6 It's a shame I couldn't travel by train. (prefer) .....