

Like, start, etc

1. Like, love, prefer and hate

After **like**, **love**, **prefer** and **hate**, we can use either a to-infinitive or an ing-form. The meaning is the same.

*Mrs Miles likes to do/likes doing parachute jumps.
She loves to look/loves looking down at the fields below.
We always prefer to stay/prefer staying in small hotels.
I hate to stand/hate standing up while I'm eating.*

But compare these two meanings of the verb **like**:

Like doing

Like usually takes an ing-form when we use it to talk about hobbies and interests.

*Claire likes riding.
I don't like swimming much.*

Like to do

Like takes a to-infinitive when it means that we prefer to do something (even though we may not enjoy it) or when we describe a habit.

*I like to check my work carefully before I hand it in.
When I pour tea I like to put the milk in first.*

2. Would like, etc

After **would like**, **would love**, **would prefer**, and **would hate**, we use a to-infinitive but not usually an ing-form.

*I'd like to do a parachute jump one day.
My sister would love to work as an artist.
Mark would prefer to drive rather than take the train.
I'm glad I live here. I'd hate to live in a big city.*

Compare **would like** and **like**:

I'd like to lie on the beach today. It's too hot to anything else.

I'd like means 'I want', but it is more polite.

I like lying on the beach. I always spend my holiday sunbathing.

I like means the same as 'I enjoy'.

3. Start, intend, etc

We can use either a to-infinitive or an ing-form after these verbs: *begin*, *bother*, *continue*, *intend*, *propose*, *start*. The meaning is the same.

*People began to leave/began leaving the theatre before the end of the play.
Rachel didn't bother to do/bother doing the washing-up.
Do you intend to make/intend making a complaint?*

We do not usually have two ing-forms together:

It was starting to get dark. NOT ~~It was starting getting dark.~~