

## immediately

380

× They want me to phone them immediately the baby will be born.

✓ They want me to phone them immediately the baby is born.

⇒ 25

## importance

381

× Why do they attach such a great importance to the matter?

✓ Why do they attach such great importance to the matter?

**Importance** is an uncountable noun and is not used with **a/an**. ⇒ 2.1

## important

382

× Winning has never been important for me.

✓ Winning has never been important to me.

If we care about something, it is **important to** us: 'What the critics say is not **important to** some writers, but it is to me.' 'Our friendship is very **important to** me.'

## in

383

1

× I visit my parents about two or three times in a year.

✓ I visit my parents about two or three times a year.

× There should be a tutorial at least once in every two weeks.

✓ There should be a tutorial at least once every two weeks.

When we mention frequency we do not use **in**. Compare: '**In the last six months**, he has made three trips to London.'

2

× I am going to Athens in 20th December.

✓ I am going to Athens on 20th December.

Something happens **on** a particular date or day: '**on Tuesday**', '**on 22nd June**'.

⇒ 549.1

3

× In the following morning he came to see me again.

✓ On the following morning he came to see me again.

We do something '**in** the morning/afternoon/evening' but '**on** the following morning/afternoon/evening'. Note the alternative: 'The following morning he came to see me again.' This is slightly less formal.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>4 × I'm planning to visit England in the beginning of February.</p> | <p>✓ I'm planning to visit England at the beginning of February.</p> |
|--|--|

We do something **in** a particular month but **at the beginning/end** of a particular month. Compare: 'I'm planning to visit England **in February**.'

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|---|---|
| <p>5 × It was the happiest time in my life.</p> | <p>✓ It was the happiest time of my life.</p> |
|---|---|

After a superlative ('the **happiest** time'), we normally use **of** + period: 'the **busiest** day **of the week**', 'the **coldest** night **of the year**'.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>6 × Unemployment is a major problem in these days.</p> | <p>✓ Unemployment is a major problem these days.</p> |
|---|--|

We do not use **in** (or any other preposition) before **these days** and **nowadays**. However, compare: '**In those days** my hair was very long.'

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>7 × I live in 40 Alexandra Street.</p> | <p>✓ I live at 40 Alexandra Street.</p> |
|---|---|

When there is a number before the name of a street, road, etc., we use **at**. Compare: 'She lives **in** Lime Tree Avenue.' 'She lives **at** 35 Lime Tree Avenue.'

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>8 × You could smell the paint in the whole building.</p> | <p>✓ You could smell the paint all over building.</p> |
|---|---|

When we want to say that something is found/done/known in all the parts of a building, area, country, etc., we normally use **all over** or **throughout**: 'These plants are found **all over** Japan.' 'His books are enjoyed by children **throughout** the world.'

## inconvenience

384

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>× We wish to apologize to local residents for any inconveniences caused.</p> | <p>✓ We wish to apologize to local residents for any inconvenience caused.</p> |
|---|--|

When it refers to problems or difficulties in general, **inconvenience** is an uncountable noun. Compare: 'Heavy traffic congestion was just one of several **inconveniences** caused by the road works.'

## increase

385

× There has been an increase of the number of people who suffer from heart disease.

✓ There has been an increase in the number of people who suffer from heart disease.

We talk about an **increase in** something, NOT **of**: 'These improvements have led to an **increase in** life expectancy.'

## indeed

386

× We knew little indeed about where we were going.

✓ We knew very little indeed about where we were going.

When we use **indeed** at the end of a phrase, the phrase must begin with **very**: 'Thank you **very much indeed**.' 'I had a **very good time indeed**.'

## indirect objects

387

1

× At bedtime, I always read to the children a story.

✓ At bedtime, I always read the children a story.

× I gave to the man all the money that was in my pocket.

✓ I gave the man all the money that was in my pocket.

When the indirect object comes before the direct object, we do not normally use **to** or **for**. Compare:

He gave + the money + **to Trevor**. (DIRECT OBJECT + INDIRECT OBJECT)

He gave + **Trevor** + the money. (INDIRECT OBJECT + DIRECT OBJECT)

I've got + some flowers + **for her**. (DIRECT OBJECT + INDIRECT OBJECT)

I've got + **her** + some flowers. (INDIRECT OBJECT + DIRECT OBJECT)

For two exceptions to this rule ⇨ 280.1, 762.3

2

× I hadn't seen my aunt for a long time and decided to pay a visit to her.

✓ I hadn't seen my aunt for a long time and decided to pay her a visit.

If one of the objects is a pronoun, the pronoun normally goes immediately after the verb: 'I think I'll send + **it** + to your parents.' 'Why don't you give + **him** + your address.'

With expressions such as **pay (someone) a visit**, **give (someone) a chance**, **make (someone) an offer**, **tell (someone) the truth**, the direct object nearly always goes last: 'Why didn't you **tell** + them/your parents + **the truth**?'

3

× He has bought a very expensive diamond necklace for his wife.

✓ He has bought his wife a very expensive diamond necklace.

When the direct object is much longer than the indirect object, we put the indirect object immediately after the verb (without **to/for**). Compare: 'We sent + a letter + to all the customers on our mailing list.' 'We sent + all our customers + a letter explaining the reasons for the price increases.'

In any sentence, short/simple units normally come before long/complex units. This principle of sentence arrangement is known as 'end-weight'.

4

× What a lovely dress! Did someone make you it?

✓ What a lovely dress! Did someone make it for you?

When both the direct object and indirect object are pronouns, we normally separate them by using **to** or **for** with the indirect object and putting it last:

When did you lend + it + **to him**?

She has offered to write + it + **for me**.

I wouldn't tell + this + **to everyone**.

### indirect/reported speech: commands

388

× I told the driver let me out at the traffic lights.

✓ I told the driver to let me out at the traffic lights.

× She warned him don't go near the dog.

✓ She warned him not to go near the dog.

Imperative forms ('let', 'don't') are not used in indirect speech. Compare:

**Turn** right at the bank.

He told me **to turn** right at the bank.

**Don't bother** sending me an invitation.

She told me **not to bother** sending her an invitation.

When we report a command or warning, we use (**not**) + **to**-infinitive.

### indirect/reported speech: questions

389

1

× Can you remember what was she wearing?

✓ Can you remember what she was wearing?

× She asked me where did I learn to speak English.

✓ She asked me where I learned to speak English.

When a **wh**-clause is part of another clause, the subject of the **wh**-clause is placed before the verb. Compare:

Where **has she** gone?

He wants to know + where **she has** gone.

What time **is it**?

Do you know + what time **it is**?

We do not use **do** as an auxiliary verb. Compare: 'Where **does he** work?' 'Do you know + where **he works**?'

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | × He asked me in what I was interested. | ✓ He asked me what I was interested in. |
|---|---|---|

A preposition ('in') normally goes at the end of a **wh**-clause, not before the **wh**-word: 'She wants to know + **what** all the fuss is **about**.' 'He asked me + **who** I was waiting **for**.'

The preposition may come before the **wh**-word only in very formal styles: 'I would like to know **to whom** the letter should be addressed.'

## indirect/reported speech: reporting verbs

390

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|---|---|--|
| 1 | × The doctor reassured that my problem was not serious. | ✓ The doctor reassured me that my problem was not serious. |
|---|---|--|

After some reporting verbs, we have to mention the 'hearer'. This group includes *advise, assure, convince, inform, notify, persuade, reassure, remind* and *tell*.

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|---|--|---|
| 2 | × She said the doctor that she was unable to sleep.<br>× She replied me that there was no hot water. | ✓ She told the doctor that she was unable to sleep.<br>✓ She replied that there was no hot water. |
|---|--|---|

After some reporting verbs, we do not mention the 'hearer'. This group includes *argue, deny, enquire, insist, reply* and *say*.

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 3 | × She informed to her boss that she needed a larger office.<br>× I asked to the air hostess if there were any empty seats. | ✓ She informed her boss that she needed a larger office.<br>✓ I asked the air hostess if there were any empty seats. |
|---|--|--|

After *ask, assure, convince, inform, persuade, promise, remind* and *tell*, we do not use **to** before the 'hearer'.

## indirect/reported speech: tenses

391

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | × She told me that she is looking for the museum.<br>× Mrs Lee wondered where her son has gone.<br>× He thinks that output levels were likely to decline over the next twelve months. | ✓ She told me that she was looking for the museum.<br>✓ Mrs Lee wondered where her son had gone.<br>✓ He thinks that output levels are likely to decline over the next twelve months.<br>✓ He thought that output levels were likely to decline over the next twelve months. |
|---|---|--|

If someone says 'I want to go home', we can report their words in two different ways:

PATTERN A

She **says** that she **wants** to go home.

PATTERN B

She **said** that she **wanted** to go home.

When we report what someone says immediately after they say it, we normally use Pattern A. In this pattern, the reporting verb is in the present tense ('says') and the verb in the reported clause ('wants') is in the same tense as in the direct speech ('want').

When we report what someone says some time after they say it, we normally use Pattern B. In this pattern, the reporting verb is in the past tense ('said') and we change the tense used by the original speaker. The tense used in direct speech is placed 'one step back' in time:

DIRECT SPEECH

I **am** late.

I **'m** going home.

I **haven't** seen him before.

Where **has** he gone?

INDIRECT SPEECH

She said she **was** late.

She said she **was** going home.

She said she **hadn't** seen him before.

She wondered where he **had** gone.

If the reporting verb is in the past tense, the tenses used by the original speaker normally have to be changed.

Note however that if the reported statement is still true at the time when it is reported, there is a choice of tense in the reported clause: 'She **told** me that she **has/had** two brothers.'

2

× The air hostess told the man to call her if he would feel ill again.

✓ The air hostess told the man to call her if he felt ill again.

If the reporting verb is in the past tense ('told'), a present simple tense in direct speech ('Call me if you **feel** ill ...') normally becomes a past simple tense in indirect speech (if he **felt**).

3

× I decided that once I would have finished secondary school, I would go to university.

✓ I decided that once I had finished secondary school, I would go to university.

If the reporting verb is in the past tense ('decided'), a present perfect tense in direct speech (e.g. 'Once I **have finished** ...') normally becomes a past perfect tense in indirect speech ('once I **had finished** ...').

4

× She apologized and said that she won't do it again.

× She wanted to know when she can go home.

✓ She apologized and said that she wouldn't do it again.

✓ She wanted to know when she could go home.

If the reporting verb is in the past tense ('said', 'wanted to know'), a modal verb is normally changed to its past form:

## DIRECT SPEECH

I **can** see her.  
 When **can** I go?  
 I'll see you later.  
 I **won't** do it again.  
 I **may** be late.

## INDIRECT SPEECH

He said he **could** see her.  
 She wanted to know when she **could** go.  
 He said he **would** see me later.  
 She said she **wouldn't** do it again.  
 He said he **might** be late.

5

× She threatened that if he does not leave her alone, she would call the police.

✓ She threatened that if he did not leave her alone, she would call the police.

When we report a conditional sentence, we use the normal sequence of tenses.  
 Compare:

She says that if she **has** the time, she **will come**.

She said that if she **had** the time, she **would come**.

She said that if she **had had** the time, she **would have** come. ➡ 163

## inferior

392

1

× There is no reason at all for you to feel inferior than him.

✓ There is no reason at all for you to feel inferior (to him).

When it is necessary to mention a person or thing after **inferior**, we use a to-phrase, not **than**. ➡ 764

2

× Some women feel more inferior if they do not have a career.

✓ Some women feel inferior if they do not have a career.

**Inferior** has a comparative meaning already and is not normally used with **more**. ➡ 15.4

## infinitives: form

393

1

× It cost the government \$15 million to build the school.

✓ It cost the government \$15 million to build the school.

× I didn't want his mother to misunderstood me.

✓ I didn't want his mother to misunderstand me.

The present infinitive (often referred to simply as 'the infinitive') is the base form of a verb. This is the form that we look up in a dictionary, e.g. **be, go, build, misunderstand**.

Like all infinitive forms, the present infinitive is often used with the infinitive marker **to**: **to be, to go, to build**, etc.

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|---|---|
| <p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× The train <b>should arrive</b> at 8.25, but it was almost an hour late.</li> <li>× Because the ball had burst, the air pressure <b>may be</b> too great.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The train <b>should have arrived</b> at 8.25, but it was almost an hour late.</li> <li>✓ Because the ball had burst, the air pressure <b>may have been</b> too great.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

When we refer to something that happened or was expected to happen *before now* (i.e. before the moment of speaking), we use a perfect infinitive ('have arrived', 'have been'), NOT a present infinitive ('arrive', 'be'). Compare: 'The letter should **arrive** tomorrow.' 'The letter should **have arrived** yesterday.'

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|---|---|
| <p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× The police made everyone <b>to leave</b> the building immediately.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The police made everyone <b>leave</b> the building immediately.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

⇒ 839.2

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|---|---|
| <p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× She felt that she <b>could never to go</b> home again.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ She felt that she <b>could never go</b> home again.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

A modal verb (e.g. *could, may, must, should, will*) is followed by a bare infinitive (NOT a *to*-infinitive).

⇒ 495.2

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× I advised her <b>to not drink</b> it.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ I advised her <b>not to drink</b> it.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

We put **not** and **never** in front of the **to** of a *to*-infinitive (NOT after it).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>× What you must never do is <b>to give</b> them your home address.</li> <li>× All I could do was <b>to cry</b>.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ What you must never do is <b>give</b> them your home address.</li> <li>✓ All I could do was <b>cry</b>.</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

To emphasize an action, we sometimes use the structure: **what/all** + subject + **do + be** + infinitive clause. Compare:

She closed all the windows.

What she **did** was **(to) close all the windows**.

They put letters into envelopes.

All they **do** is **(to) put letters into envelopes**.

Normally, the infinitive clause may begin with either a bare infinitive ('close') or a *to*-infinitive ('to close'), although a bare infinitive is more common. When we use **do** after **must, should, can, will**, etc., only a bare infinitive is possible: 'What you **shouldn't do** is **give** him your address.' 'All I **could do** was just **sit** and **wait**.'



7

- ! She invited me to sit down and to have something to drink.
- × Interviewees should be encouraged to relax, talk freely about themselves, and to ask the panel questions.

- ✓ She invited me to sit down and have something to drink.
- ✓ Interviewees should be encouraged to relax, talk freely about themselves, and ask the panel questions.

⇒ 178.5–6

**infinitives: use****394**

1

- × I look forward to see you again.
- × Instead of to buy books, I borrow them from the library.

- ✓ I look forward to seeing you again.
- ✓ Instead of buying books, I borrow them from the library.

After a preposition, we use the *-ing* form of a verb (NOT the infinitive).

⇒ 837

2

- × I'll be lucky if I ever succeed to achieve my ambition.
- × I enjoy to speak foreign languages.

- ✓ I'll be lucky if I ever succeed in achieving my ambition.
- ✓ I enjoy speaking foreign languages.

For information about verb + verb patterns, ⇒ 839

3

- × After the second punch, he was incapable to stand up.

- ✓ After the second punch, he was incapable of standing up.

For information about adjective + verb patterns, ⇒ 20

4

- × The forests are in danger to be destroyed.
- × I had great difficulty to make him understand me.

- ✓ The forests are in danger of being destroyed.
- ✓ I had great difficulty in making him understand me.

For information about noun + verb patterns, ⇒ 534

5

- × To see the baby born is something I shall never forget.
- × Clean your teeth regularly is very important.

- ✓ Seeing the baby born is something I shall never forget.
- ✓ Cleaning your teeth regularly is very important.

In subject position, we normally use an *-ing* clause, not a *to*-clause: '*Cutting the grass* is not my idea of relaxing.' '*Moving the piano* is not going to be easy.'

When a **to**-clause appears in subject position, it normally refers to something that has not actually happened: '*To ignore the invitation* would be rude, wouldn't it?' A bare infinitive clause ('*Clean* your teeth regularly') can never be the subject of a sentence.

6

× My favourite pastime is play chess.

✓ My favourite pastime is playing chess.

× Their only regret was to not have children.

✓ Their only regret was not having children.

We do not normally use a bare infinitive clause ('play chess') after **be**. In this position, we tend to use either a **to**-clause or an **-ing** clause: 'My one ambition is *to retire at the age of forty*.' 'My one regret was *retiring at the age of forty*.'

When we are talking about an action which is in progress or which has already taken place, an **-ing** clause is more usual.

inform

395

1

× We would be grateful if you could inform us your decision at the earliest opportunity.

✓ We would be grateful if you could inform us of your decision at the earliest opportunity.

We **inform** someone **of** something.

2

× I am pleased to inform that your application has been approved.

✓ I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved.

⇒ 390.1

information

396

1

× This report is based on informations received from teachers and pupils.

✓ This report is based on information received from teachers and pupils.

**Information** is an uncountable noun and does not have a plural form.

2

× We have just received a new information.

✓ We have just received some new information.

**Information** is not used with **a/an**. However, we can say '*a piece of new information*'.

⇒ 2.1-2

## -ing forms

397

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1</p> <p>× These scientists <b>doing</b> some very important research.</p> <p>× Advertisers sometimes <b>trying</b> to deceive the public.</p> | <p>✓ These scientists are doing some very important research.</p> <p>✓ Advertisers sometimes try to deceive the public.</p> |
|---|---|

The subject of a main clause is followed by a finite verb. An **-ing** form is non-finite. It cannot follow the subject of a main clause unless it is used with one or more auxiliary verbs. Examples:

SUBJECT	VERB PHRASE				OBJECT
	FINITE	NON-FINITE			
	drives				a white Mercedes.
His wife	was	<i>driving</i>			
	has	been	<i>driving</i>		
	would	have	been	<i>driving</i>	

An **-ing** form may be used without an auxiliary verb only in subordinate clauses. Examples:

**Sitting at the back of the hall**, we couldn't hear anything.

We saw his wife **sitting in a white Mercedes**.

The girl **sitting next to me** suddenly started to scream.

**Sitting on the floor** can be very uncomfortable.

I don't like **sitting on the floor**.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>2</p> <p>× As soon as the little girl <b>seeing</b> me, she ran away.</p> <p>× If you <b>going</b> to the market, can I come with you?</p> | <p>✓ As soon as the little girl saw me, she ran away.</p> <p>✓ If you are going to the market, can I come with you?</p> |
|---|---|

When a subordinate clause has a subject ('the little girl', 'you'), the following verb is normally finite. Compare:

When **travelling** by train, she takes very little luggage.

When **she travels** by train, she takes very little luggage.

Before **coming** to England, he lived in Sweden.

Before **he came** to England, he lived in Sweden.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>3</p> <p>× Some students cannot afford <b>paying</b> these prices.</p> | <p>✓ Some students cannot afford to pay these prices.</p> |
|---|---|

⇒ 839.1

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>4</p> <p>× I'll be ready for leaving by five o'clock.</p> | <p>✓ I'll be ready to leave by five o'clock.</p> |
|--|--|

⇒ 20

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 5 | × In San Antonio I didn't have the chance of speaking much English. | ✓ In San Antonio I didn't have the chance to speak much English. |
|---|---|--|

⇒ 534

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 6 | × If you need someone helping you, I shall be free all day tomorrow. | ✓ If you need someone to help you, I shall be free all day tomorrow. |
|---|--|--|

When we mention an imaginary situation or a future event (i.e. an event which has not happened at the moment of speaking), we normally use a **to**-infinitive. Compare: 'There is someone **to see** you, Mr Evans.' 'There is someone **seeing** Mr Evans at the moment.'

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 7 | × Comparing with other countries in the region, ours is very small. | ✓ Compared with other countries in the region, ours is very small. |
|---|---|--|

When a participle clause has a passive meaning, it begins with a past participle (-ed). Compare: '**Used properly**, the camera will last a lifetime.' (PASSIVE) '**Using a telephoto lens**, she managed to get a good close-up.' (ACTIVE)

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | × I hope that you will all enjoy your visiting.<br>× He is not allowed to go out without his parents' consenting. | ✓ I hope that you will all enjoy your visit.<br>✓ He is not allowed to go out without his parents' consent. |
|---|---|---|

We do not normally use an **-ing** form as a noun when there is a noun with the same meaning available. Compare: 'The owner of the restaurant invited us to the **reopening**.' There is no noun with which 'reopening' could be replaced.

For more information about **-ing** forms, ⇒ 626,627

## ingredient

398

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| × What are the main ingredients to a happy marriage? | ✓ What are the main ingredients of a happy marriage? |
|--|--|

Something is an **ingredient of** something else, (NOT **to**): 'The basic **ingredients of** success are ambition and determination.'

## injure

399

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | × While I was coming down the ladder, I fell and injured. | ✓ While I was coming down the ladder, I fell and injured myself. |
|---|---|--|

⇒ 838.2