

## Verbs followed by *-ing* forms or *to*-infinitives

The general rule (which is not hard and fast) is that verbs which refer forward in time are followed by the *to*-infinitive and those which refer back are followed by *-ing* forms.

For example:

*I remembered talking to him*

in which *talking* comes after *remembering* and

*I remembered to talk to him*

in which *remembering* comes before *talking*.

Sometimes, referring back in time also means referring to previous experience so, for example:

*I can't bear waiting in queues*

means that the speaker has previous experience of waiting in a queue but

*I don't want to wait in a queue*

refers only to the future and signals nothing about the speaker's experience.

Followed by <i>to</i> -infinitives			Followed by <i>-ing</i> forms	
†advise	†encourage	prepare	acknowledge	loathe
(can) afford	endeavour	†press	admit	*love
agree	elect	pretend	adore	mention
aim	expect	proceed	appreciate	(don't) mind
†allow	fail	promise	avoid	miss
appear	forbid	*propose	(can't) bear	‡pardon
apply	†force	refuse	celebrate	*prefer
arrange	happen	†remind	complete	‡prevent
†ask	hasten	†request	consider	postpone
attempt	help	resolve	defer	practise
be bound	hesitate	seek	delay	put off
*begin	hope	seem	deny	quit
care	instruct	*start	detest	recall
cease	*intend	strive	dread	recollect
chance	invite	struggle	enjoy	regret
choose	learn	swear	escape	*remember
claim	long	†teach	‡excuse	require
commence	manage	†tell	‡explain	resent
†compel	mean	†tempt	fancy	(can't) resist
condescend	need	tend	favour	resume
consent	neglect	threaten	finish	risk
contrive	†oblige	trouble	*forget	shun
*continue	offer	undertake	‡forgive	(can't) stand
dare	omit	volunteer	give up	stop
decide	†order	wait	hate	suggest
decline	†permit	want	(can't) help	tolerate
demand	†persuade	wish	(can't) imagine	*try
deserve	plan	would like / love	leave	‡understand
determine			*like	

Items marked \* may be used with either form, sometimes with a change in meaning as in e.g.:

*Try taking an aspirin for your headache (experiment)*

*I tried to convince her (attempt)*

Items marked † are usually used with a direct object as in, e.g.:

*I persuaded them to come*

Items marked ‡ are usually used with a possessive determiner before the gerund as in, e.g.:

*I can't understand their leaving early (informally, the object pronoun, e.g., them)*