

TO THE TEACHER

Infinitives

Infinitives are, of course, the to + Vb form. They are one of the three kinds of VERBALS along with -ing verbals (gerunds) and DTN verbals (usually describers). Verbals are verb-like words doing unverbby things.

Confusion

There may be some confusion in students whose native languages use infinitives like English uses Vb. → I can to go.

That's why we have the rule "**never an infinitive after an X-Word**"

An infinitive's basic jobs

1) An Adverbial that answers Why?

An infinitive does the job of a noun. It often answers the question "Why?"

Why did she swallow the spider? She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.

2) An infinitive might also answer the question What? That is, it acts like the object. This is when it comes after some, but not all, verbs.

A. I want...

B. What do you want?

A. I want to be alone.

3) or sometimes it might describe a noun that comes in front of it.

This is a machine to tighten your abs.



The most common verbs that take infinitives as objects are *begin, happen, know, how, need, seem, want, and would like*. They are in bold in Lesson 20.

Practice:

Write a statement on the board.

Keji would like to buy a car.

Have volunteers write a question beginning with What.

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What would Keji like?

Erase to buy a car and have a student fill in the blanks with an infinitive.

Keji would like ~~to buy a car~~

Keji would like ____ .

Then erase would like and have a student substitute a verb.

Keji would like to eat some chocolate.

Keji _____ to eat some chocolate.

Keji needs to eat some chocolate!

Make a what question, and so forth.

What does Keji need?