

Verbals

Infinitive

An **infinitive** is a verbal usually beginning with *to*. It is used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb.

Infinitives have two forms. Most often the word **to** precedes a verb. Occasionally, **to** is omitted. Enclosed in the box are some common infinitive uses.

Noun

as Subject:

To swim well takes lots of practice.

To swim is the **subject** of this sentence.

as Direct Object:

The puppy wants to play.

to play is the **direct object** of this sentence.

as Predicate Nominative:

The plan is to come early.

to come **restates** the subject of this sentence.

as Appositive:

My intent, to solve the problem, is not misguided.

to solve **restates** the subject of this sentence.

Adjective:

The best movie to see is playing at The Bijou.

The noun subject *movie* is modified by the **adjective** *to see*.

Adverb:

She strained to hear the speaker.

The verb *strained* is modified by the **adverb** *to hear*.

Mary was happy to see you again.

The adjective *happy* is modified by the **adverb** *to see*.

The fruit is ripe enough to eat.

The adverb *enough* is modified by the **adverb** *to eat*.

Review of the Parts of a Sentence.

An adjective is a word that describes a noun or a pronoun by answering the questions *what kind, how many, or which one*. It sometimes precedes the noun it modifies; but, when using an infinitive or participle phrase, the adjective most often follows the word it modifies.

An adverb describes a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. It answers the questions *how, when, where, and to what extent*. An infinitive adverb often answers the question *why*.

Exercise A. Underline the noun infinitive in each of the following sentences. Tell if it is the subject **(S)**, direct object **(DO)**, or if there is no noun infinitive.

1. To get a job is my summer goal. **(S)**
2. I want to believe in you.
3. I'm trying to listen!
4. I have to ask a question.
5. To cooperate requires communication.
6. Do I have to dance?
7. I'll count to ten.
8. What do you want to be when you grow up?
9. To teach is difficult, but challenging.
10. Jenny asked to leave at noon.

Exercise B. Underline the adjective infinitive, and circle the noun it modifies.

1. The book to read again is *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain.
2. The fudge to eat is my mother's.
3. The guy to beat in the swim meet is Jackson.
4. The worst thing to do is to do nothing.
5. Now's the time to shine!
6. The kids have a secret to keep.
7. It's time to begin the program.
8. Grandpa still has enough energy to climb that hill.

Exercise C. Underline the adverb infinitive. Circle the word modified, and indicate if it is an adjective, verb, or adverb.

1. Barbara was happy to return to work. Adj
2. John stayed to find out his grades. _____
3. She listened intently to hear the high notes. _____
4. Is Herbert ready to go? _____
5. Judy studied hard enough to pass chemistry. _____
6. I was sad to see her cry. _____
7. I've been exercising lately to strengthen my biceps. _____
8. It is too dark to walk in the park alone. _____

Exercise D. Underline the infinitives in the following sentences. Tell if the infinitive is a subject (**S**), direct object (**DO**), adjective (**Adj**), or adverb (**Adv**) in the space provided.

1. I want to be alone. **DO**
2. Bob hurried to finish his homework. _____
3. Mother decided to take a ceramics class. _____
4. To win feels great. _____
5. Sally plans to attend. _____
6. She studied hard to earn her diploma. _____
7. This crossword is hard to do. _____
8. To complain was a mistake. _____
9. Children need something to do all the time. _____
10. Mary bought a special dress to wear. _____
11. Are you trying to scare me? _____
12. Your house is difficult to find at night. _____

