

UNIT 56 Infinitive or -ing? (1) – like, would like etc.

a)

like	hate	enjoy	can't bear
dislike	love	mind	can't stand

These verbs and expressions are often followed by **-ing**:

- I **enjoy** being alone.
- Ann **hates** flying.
- Why do you **dislike** living here?
- Tom **doesn't mind** working at night.
- I **don't like** people shouting at me.

After **love** and **can't bear**, you can use **-ing** or **to + infinitive**:

- I **love** meeting people. or I **love to** meet people.
- She **can't bear** being alone. or She **can't bear to** be alone.

b) Like

Often it doesn't matter whether you say 'I like **doing**' or 'I like to do'. For example, you can say:

- I **like** getting up early. or I **like to** get up early.

We usually say 'I like **doing**' when 'like' means 'enjoy':

- Do you **like** cooking? (= do you enjoy it?)
- I **don't like** driving. (= I don't enjoy it.)

When 'like' does not mean 'enjoy', we use 'I like to do'. **I like to do something** = I find it is good or right to do something:

- I **like to** wash my hair twice a week. (This doesn't mean that I enjoy it; it means that I think it is a good thing to do.)
- Tom **likes to** do the washing-up immediately after the meal.

c) Would like is followed by **to + infinitive**:

- I **would like to** be rich.
- **Would you like to** come to a party?

Notice the difference in meaning between **I like** and **I would like**. **I would like** is a polite way of saying **I want**. Compare:

- I **like** playing tennis. (= I enjoy it in general)
- I **would like to** play tennis today. (= I want to play)

See also Unit 31d.

We also use **to + infinitive** after **would love/hate/prefer**:

- **Would you prefer to** have dinner now or later?
- I'd **love to** be able to travel round the world.

d) You can also say 'I would like to **have done** something' (= I regret that I didn't or couldn't do something):

- It's a pity we didn't visit Tom. I **would like to have** seen him again.
- We'd **like to have** gone on holiday but we didn't have enough money.

The same structure is possible after **would love/hate/prefer**:

- Poor old Tom! I **would hate to have** been in his position.
- I'd **love to have** gone to the party but it was impossible.

UNIT 56 Exercises

56.1 Answer these questions using the verbs given.

Examples: Why do you never fly? (hate) I hate flying.
Why does Tom go to the cinema so often? (like) He likes going to the cinema.

- 1 Why do you always wear a hat? (like) I
- 2 Why does Ann watch television so often? (enjoy) She
- 3 Why do you never go to the cinema? (not/like)
- 4 Why does Jack take so many photographs? (like)
- 5 Why don't you work in the evenings? (hate)

56.2 This time put the verb into the correct form, -ing or to + infinitive.

Examples: I enjoy being (be) alone.
Would you like to come (come) to a party?

- 1 Do you mind (travel) such a long way to work every day?
- 2 Ann loves (cook) but she hates (wash) up.
- 3 I can't stand people (tell) me what to do when I'm driving.
- 4 I don't like that house. I would hate (live) there.
- 5 Do you like (drive)?
- 6 When I have to catch a train, I'm always worried about missing it. So I like (get) to the station in plenty of time.
- 7 I very much enjoy (listen) to classical music.
- 8 I would love (come) to your wedding but it just isn't possible.
- 9 Sometime I'd like (learn) to play the guitar.

56.3 Now you have to make your own sentences. Say whether you like or don't like the things in brackets (...). Choose one of these verbs for each of your sentences:

(don't) like love hate enjoy don't mind can't stand

Example: (reading) I like reading very much.

- 1 (playing cards) I
- 2 (learning languages)
- 3 (visiting museums)
- 4 (lying on the beach in the sun)
- 5 (shopping)

56.4 Now you have to write sentences like those in section d.

Example: It's a pity I couldn't go to the wedding. (like)
I would like to have gone to the wedding.

- 1 It's a pity I didn't meet Ann. (love) I would love
- 2 I'm glad I didn't lose my watch. (hate) I
- 3 I'm glad I wasn't alone. (not/like)
- 4 It's a pity I couldn't travel by train. (prefer)
- 5 It's a pity I didn't see the film. (like)