'to'-infinitives

Verbs with *to*-infinitives

We use the *to*-infinitive **after certain verbs** (verbs followed by *to*-infinitive), particularly verbs of **thinking** and **feeling**:

choose	*hate*	*like*	*prefer*
decide	*hope*	*love*	*remember*
expect	*intend*	*mean*	*want*
forget	*learn*	*plan*	*would like/love*

*They **decided to** start a business together.*
__Remember to__ turn the lights off.

and verbs of **saying**:

agree	*promise*	*refuse*	*threaten*

*We **agreed to** meet at the cinema.*
__Promise to__ call me every day.

Some verbs are followed by a **<u>direct object</u>** and then the *to*-infinitive:

advise	*intend*	*remind*	*would like/love*
ask	*invite*	*tell*	*would prefer*
encourage	*order*	*want*	
expect	*persuade*	*warn*	

*He encouraged **<u>his friends</u> to** vote for him.*
__Remind <u>me</u>__ to give Julia a call.

Infinitive of purpose

We also use the *to*-infinitive **to express purpose** (to answer *why?*):

*He bought some flowers **to give** to his wife.*
*He locked the door **to keep** everyone out.*

We can also express purpose with **in order to** and **in order not to**:

*We started our journey early **in order to** avoid the traffic.*
*They spoke quietly **in order not to** wake the children.*

or **so as to** and **so as not to**:

*We started our journey early **so as to** avoid the traffic.*
*They spoke quietly **so as not to** wake the children.*

Adjectives with *to*-infinitives

We use the *to*-infinitive after certain adjectives:

able	*due*	*likely*	*prepared*
unable	*eager*	*unlikely*	*willing*
anxious	*keen*	*ready*	*unwilling*

*Unfortunately, I was **unable to work** for over a week.*
*I'm really tired. I'm **ready to go** to bed.*

Sometimes the *to*-infinitive **gives a reason** for the adjective:

amazed	*glad*	*proud*	*sorry*
delighted	*happy*	*relieved*	*surprised*
disappointed	*pleased*	*sad*	*unhappy*

*We were **happy to come** to the end of our journey.*
(= We were happy because we had come to the end of our journey.)
*John was **surprised to see** me.*
(= He was surprised because he saw me.)

We often use *it + be* followed by an adjective to give opinions:

clever *difficult* *easy*	*foolish* *hard* *kind*	*nice* *possible* *impossible*	*right* *wrong* *silly*

It's **easy to play** the piano, but it's very **difficult to play** well.
He spoke so quickly that it was **impossible to understand** him.

We use the *to*-infinitive with these adjectives to give opinions about people:

clever *foolish*	*kind* *nice*	*right* *wrong*	*silly*

She was **right to complain** about that hotel.
You were **clever to find** the answer so quickly.

We use the preposition **for** to show who these adjectives refer to:

difficult	*easy*	*hard*	*possible*	*impossible*

It was **difficult <u>for us</u> to hear** what she was saying.
It is **easy <u>for you</u> to criticise** other people.

With the other adjectives, we use **the preposition of**:

It's **kind <u>of you</u> to help**.
It would be **silly <u>of him</u> to spend** all his money.

Nouns with *to*-infinitives

We use the *to*-infinitive as a **postmodifier** (see noun phrases) after **abstract nouns** like:

ability *attempt*	*desire* *failure*	*opportunity* *refusal*

chance	need	wish

*They gave him **an opportunity to escape**.*
*He was annoyed by **her refusal to answer**.*
*I have **no desire to be** rich.*
*There is **no need to shout**.*

We often use the *to*-infinitive as a postmodifier after **indefinite pronouns**:

*When I am travelling I always take **something to read**.*
*I was all alone. I had **no one to talk to**.*
*There is hardly **anything to do** in most of these small towns.*