

Is it before the main verb?

Does it describe a real action?

Use a gerund.

Example: Reading is a lot of fun.

Does it describe a general or future action?

Use an infinitive.

Example: To help is important.

Is it after the main verb?

Does it appear on the "Verbs Followed Only by Gerunds" list?

Use a gerund.

Example: He suggested returning home.

Does it appear on the "Verbs Followed Only by Infinitives" list?

Use an infinitive.

Example: He offered to return home.

If it doesn't appear on any of the two lists...

Does it describe sports or recreational activities?

Use a gerund.

Example: Let's go shopping.

Does it appear after a preposition?

Use a gerund.

Example: I am thinking about changing my job.

Does it appear after the words: have/spend/waste?

Use a gerund.

Example: We had fun playing with the kids.

Does it show the intention or purpose?

Use an infinitive.

Example: He came to help.

Does it show the reason?

Use an infinitive.

Example: I was happy to see her.

If it doesn't fall into neither of these categories...

Does it describe a real action?

Use a gerund.

Example: I jog daily, and I like jogging very much.

Does it describe a general or future action?

Use an infinitive.

Example: I usually don't jog, but I like to jog when I get the chance.