



# 64 Shortening infinitives

As well as ellipsis and substitution, you can also shorten (or “reduce”) infinitives to prevent repetition. This will help you to sound more natural when speaking.

-  **New language** Reduced infinitives
- Aa Vocabulary** Music and performance
-  **New skill** Avoiding repetition

## 64.1 KEY LANGUAGE REDUCED INFINITIVES

You can use “to” on its own rather than repeat the entire infinitive verb. You can only do this if the meaning remains clear.

**Let's go to see that new DJ tonight.**



I don't really want **to** [go to see the new DJ].

If the previous sentence or clause contains the verb “be,” then you must use to “be” in the next clause or sentence.

**She was** really critical of the new album.



It's difficult not **to be** [critical of it].  
The singing is awful!



## 64.2 CROSS OUT ALL OF THE WORDS THAT YOU CAN LEAVE OUT

I want to get the best tickets for the show, but can't afford to ~~get them~~.

- 1 I tried to contact Max about the concert tickets, but wasn't able to contact him.
- 2 My brother often forgets our dad's birthday, but this year he's promised not to forget.
- 3 Georgia was enjoying the performance. At least, she seemed to be enjoying it.
- 4 Ian is going to the new nightclub, but I don't really want to go to there.
- 5 The festival tickets cost a lot more than they used to cost.
- 6 I want to come with you, but I won't be able to come with you.



### 64.3 KEY LANGUAGE DROPPING THE ENTIRE INFINITIVE CLAUSE



You can leave out the entire infinitive clause, or just keep “to” after some verbs, such as: “agree,” “ask,” “forget,” “promise,” “start,” and “try.”

Chris is going to come to the show. He {promised [to come]  
promised to [come]} .

You can also leave out the entire infinitive or use “to” after some nouns, such as: “chance,” “plans,” “promise,” “idea,” and “opportunity.”

I haven’t seen this band before. I’d love the {chance [to see them]  
chance to [see them]} .

It is also possible to do this after certain adjectives, such as: “delighted,” “afraid,” “willing,” and “determined.”

I want to perform on stage, but I’m {afraid [to perform on stage]  
afraid to [perform on stage]} .



### 64.4 LISTEN TO THE AUDIO AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS



Two students are talking about learning to play musical instruments.

Luca has a double bass in his case.

True ☐ False ☒

1 Luca says the cello is harder to play than the guitar.

True ☐ False ☐

2 Tanya plays the trumpet now.

True ☐ False ☐

3 Luca will be joining a new orchestra next week.

True ☐ False ☐

4 Luca was confident about his orchestra audition.

True ☐ False ☐

5 Tanya is a member of the college orchestra.

True ☐ False ☐

6 Tanya cannot audition again.

True ☐ False ☐

7 Tanya and Luca have played together before.

True ☐ False ☐

## 64.5 KEY LANGUAGE VERBS WITH COMPLEMENTS

You cannot leave out the entire infinitive after verbs that need complements (phrases that complete their meaning), such as: "advise," "afford," "be able," "choose," "decide," "expect," "hate," "hope," "love," "need," and "prefer." After these, you must keep the "to."

**We want to see a band tonight,  
but we really can't afford to.**



## 64.6 FURTHER EXAMPLES VERBS WITH COMPLEMENTS



I tried to get to the front of the crowd, but I **wasn't able to**.



I had piano lessons as a child, but I didn't **choose to**.



You could bring some snacks along, but you don't **need to**.



I have never been to the opera, but I would **love to**.



## 64.7 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE WORDS IN THE PANEL

I asked my sister to sing with me and she said she'd be delighted.

- ① I would like to read music, but it will be a long time until I'm \_\_\_\_\_ to.
- ② Don't forget that it's supposed to rain tonight. Try to leave before it \_\_\_\_\_.
- ③ Some people aren't nervous about performing, but I'm too \_\_\_\_\_ to.
- ④ Some artists don't like to have family in the audience on the first night, but I \_\_\_\_\_ to.
- ⑤ It's such a shame. I would absolutely love to see him sing, but cannot \_\_\_\_\_ to.
- ⑥ I've seen other artists who love talking to the audience, but I \_\_\_\_\_ to.
- ⑦ You don't need to worry. I will come along to all of your recitals. I \_\_\_\_\_.

afford    starts    ~~delighted~~    promise    afraid    prefer    hate    able



## 64.8 KEY LANGUAGE "WANT" AND "WOULD LIKE"



You normally keep the "to" rather than drop the entire infinitive after "want" or "would like."

He asked if I wanted to go, and I said I **would like to**.

In "if" clauses, however, you can often use "to" on its own or drop the whole infinitive after "want" or "would like."

You can come with us if you **{ want want to }**.

You must keep the "to" if the clause is negative.

Don't go to the concert if you **don't want to**.



### 64.9 MARK THE SENTENCES THAT ARE CORRECT

Thanks for the offer! I would really like to. ☒  
Thanks for the offer! I would really like. ☐

- 1 I asked him to come, but he didn't want. ☐  
I asked him to come, but he didn't want to. ☐
- 2 You can have one if you want. ☐  
You can have one if you do. ☐
- 3 You can stay, but I don't really want to. ☐  
You can stay, but I don't really want. ☐
- 4 If you're free to meet, I would still like to. ☐  
If you're free to meet, I would still like. ☐
- 5 You can call me "Sam" if you want to call. ☐  
You can call me "Sam" if you want. ☐



### 64.10 RESPOND TO THE AUDIO, SPEAKING OUT LOUD

Will you record my performance tonight?

Yes, I promise. (promise)

1 Are you going to sell your CD collection?

No, \_\_\_\_\_ (decide)

2 Will you practice every day?

Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ (try)

3 Would you like to come to the concert?

Yes, but \_\_\_\_\_ (afford)

## 64 CHECKLIST



Reduced infinitives ☐

Aa Music and performing ☐



Avoiding repetition ☐