



PET COMMON WRITING MISTAKES 3

Do I need to + verb or a verb + -ing after this verb?

1. Circle the correct alternatives below.

Example: I hope to hear / hearing from you soon.

1. We spent the whole day to prepare / preparing for the party.
2. I'm looking forward to meet / to meeting you at the airport.

We use to + verb after some verbs but a verb + -ing after others. You have to learn which form follows each verb. Here are some verbs which intermediate learners often make mistakes with:

Use to + verb after: ask (somebody), decide, forget, help (somebody), hope, invite, learn, need, plan, wait, want, would like

Use a verb + -ing after: enjoy, fancy, finish, look forward to*, recommend, spend, suggest, think about/of*

* Note: verbs with prepositions (to, of, about etc.) are always followed by verb + -ing.
(In Exercise 1, Question 2 (I'm looking forward to meeting you at the airport), to is part of the verb.)

2. Five of the sentences below contain mistakes made by intermediate students in Cambridge exams. Two sentences are correct (✓). Find and correct the mistakes.

to ask

Example: I forgot ~~asking~~ you about your family. How are they?

1. I suggest meeting you at seven o'clock in front of the theatre.
2. I'm thinking of to buy a new desk and lamp.
3. I've already decided to buy something new for my bedroom.
4. If you want to coming, please let me know as soon as you can.
5. Last week I invited her going to the cinema.
6. We really enjoyed to be together.
7. I would like to learn dancing.

3. Complete the sentences below by putting the verb in brackets into the correct form (to + verb or a verb + -ing) in each gap.

Example: What things do you help your family ...to do... (do) in the house?

1. What do you fancy (do) next weekend?
2. How are you planning (spend) your next holiday?
3. What programmes do you enjoy (watch) on television?
4. What are you looking forward to (do) in the future?