

# THE INFINITIVE

**An infinitive** is a verb form that can be used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. Most infinitives begin with *to*.

**EXAMPLES:**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Noun</b>      | <b>To graduate</b> is her primary goal.                         |
| <b>Adjective</b> | This is the coat <b>to buy</b> .                                |
| <b>Adverb</b>    | I may travel to Egypt next summer <b>to visit</b> the pyramids. |

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**EXERCISE A:** Underline the INFINITIVES in each of the following sentences.

1. Was Paul really prepared to leave?
  2. The team's first wish for the final game of the season is to win.
  3. To visit the pyramids in Egypt would be exciting.
  4. Carefully built to last, that old dock will be there for years to come.
  5. The girl wanted nothing except to succeed in the class.
  6. To have finished early would have required more help.
  7. Is it true that to question is an indication of intelligence?
  8. The neatly chopped tomatoes are ready to go into the salad.
  9. It is the end of December. Has it started to snow yet?
  10. To see and to hear are highly developed senses in many animals.
  11. To forgive is sometimes difficult.
  12. To learn facts, some people use mnemonics, or memory devices.
  13. My wish, to visit the Grand Canyon, has happened.
  14. I only desired one thing, to forgive you and to forget our differences.
  15. Their war aims, to kill the people and to destroy the nation, were not accomplished.
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**NOTE: The noun infinitive** can be: a subject (To eat is fun.); a direct object (I like to eat.); a predicate nominative (A fun thing is to eat.); an appositive (My hope, to travel, never happened.); an object of a preposition (I want nothing but to save.)

**EXERCISE B:** Find the NOUN INFINITIVE in each of the following sentences. Then, explain how each noun infinitive is used.

1. To restore old cars is expensive.

**Noun Infinitive:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Used as:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. We need to take them by surprise.

**Noun Infinitive:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Used as:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. The team's desire is to win.

**Noun Infinitive:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Used as:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. The Jazz's hope is to win the championship.

**Noun Infinitive:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Used as:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. To skate was his only desire.

**Noun Infinitive:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Used as:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ANSWERS:

### EXERCISE A:

1. to leave
2. to win
3. to visit
4. to last
5. to succeed
6. to have finished
7. to question
8. to go
9. to snow
10. to see / to hear
11. to forgive
12. To learn facts
13. to visit
14. to forgive / to forget
15. to kill / to destroy

### EXERCISE B:

|    | Noun Infinitive          | Used as              |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | to restore old cars      | Subject              |
| 2. | to take them by surprise | Direct Object        |
| 3. | to win                   | Predicate Nominative |
| 4. | to win the championship  | Predicate Nominative |
| 5. | to skate                 | Subject              |