

Verbes + à/de + l'infinitif

- Remember that when verbs are followed by an infinitive, some need **just the infinitive**, others need **de + infinitive**, and others need **à + infinitive**. Make a point of noting down from your reading and listening which construction particular verbs take when used with an infinitive. Look at these examples:

- Elle **veut aller** à la mer. *She wants to go to the seaside.*

- Nous **avons décidé de rester** à l'hôtel. *We decided to stay in a hotel.*

- Il **a commencé à fumer** il y a un mois. *He began to smoke a month ago.*

- Look through the list below (that list is **not** complete).

Verbs just followed by the infinitive:

- Aimer** to like to
- Aller** to go
- Compter** to intend to
- Devoir** to have to
- Espérer** to hope
- Oser** to dare to
- Pouvoir** to be able to
- Préférer / aimer mieux** to prefer
- Savoir** to know
- Sembler / paraître** to seem to
- (Il) vaut mieux** it is better / preferable to
- Vouloir** to want to
- Falloir** to be necessary

Verbs followed by **de**:

- Accepter de** to agree to
- Arrêter / cesser de** to stop doing
- Choisir de** to choose to
- (Se) contenter de** to merely do
- Décider de** to decide to
- Entreprendre de** to undertake to
- Envisager de** to think of
- (S')efforcer de** to strive to
- Essayer de** to try to
- Éviter de** to avoid doing...
- Manquer de** to fail to / to nearly do
- Menacer de** to threaten to
- Mériter de** to deserve to
- Offrir de** to offer to
- Oublier de** to forget to
- Permettre de** to allow to
- Refuser de** to refuse to
- Risquer de** to be liable to
- (Il) s'agit de** it's about
- (Il) suffit de** it is enough to

Verbs followed by **à**:

- (S') amuser à** to while away the time doing...
- Apprendre à** to learn to
- Avoir tendance à** to tend to
- Avoir de la peine / de la difficulté / du mal à** to have difficulty in doing...
- (Se) borner à** to limit oneself to doing
- Chercher à** to try to
- Commencer à** to begin to
- Continuer à** to continue to
- Consister à** to consist in doing...
- Hésiter à** to hesitate to
- Passer son temps à** to spend time doing...
- Penser à** to think about doing...
- Perdre son temps à** to waste time doing...
- (Se) préparer à** to prepare to
- Renoncer à** to give up doing...
- Réussir à** to succeed / manage to



Exercice 1

Fill in the gaps with *à* or *de*, or nothing:

1. Tu dois faire attention quand tu traverses la rue.
2. Il vaut mieux commencer tout de suite.
3. J'apprends conduire depuis une semaine.
4. N'hésite pas m'appeler si tu as des problèmes.
5. Pense apporter ta tente !
6. Il faut commencer penser aux problèmes d'environnement.
7. Essaie..... être au cinéma à l'heure...
8. Evite parler en classe.
9. N'oublie pas finir tes devoirs.
10. Il suffit écouter ce que dit le professeur.

Exercice 2

Translate into French :

1. I hope to go to college next year.
2. He refuses to take his medication.
3. John, you must listen!
4. She spends her time watching tv.
5. They seem to be tired.
6. You (vous) tend to go to bed early.
7. You (tu) can't speak to this person.
8. We have to go back to school now.
9. I forgot to post the letter.
10. They hesitate to buy a house.

