

THE FLATMATES

Language point:
Verb patterns



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BBC Learning English – The Flatmates

The Flatmates – Verb patterns

You can see this language point online at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/flatmates/episode30/languagepoint.shtml>

Sometimes in a sentence, one verb follows another. For example, I want to buy an electric car. The **first verb** is 'want', the **second verb** is 'buy'.

In sentences like this, there are different possible patterns. For example:

(a) I want **to buy** an electric car.

(b) I hate **driving**.

In sentence A, the first verb is followed by **an infinitive**.

In sentence B, the first verb is followed by **a gerund (-ing) form**.

The verb patterns are dependent upon the first verb. There are **several different types of pattern**. When you learn a new verb, you need to learn the verb pattern. Unfortunately, some verbs have more than one possible pattern! Sometimes, if a verb has two patterns, each pattern can have a different meaning or use.

Here are examples of some of the patterns:

Verb + to + verb:
These verbs all use this pattern: want, hope, decide, agree I want to work with Dr. Laver. Tim hopes to leave the stockroom soon. Helen decided to go out with Michal. Alice might agree to change wards.

Verb + verb+ing:
These verbs all use this pattern: enjoy, mind, consider I enjoy working on the emergency ward. Alice doesn't mind working with children. Tim is considering changing his job.

Verb + preposition + verb +ing
These verbs all use this pattern: specialise, think He specialises in helping children. Michal is thinking about cooking dinner.

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Verb + object + verb:

These verbs all use this pattern: let, make

Dad **let me keep** the cat.

She **made me say** sorry.

Verbs with two patterns and different meanings:

These verbs have two possible patterns, and there is a difference in meaning between the patterns: like, hate, regret

I **like to swim** every day = I think it is a good idea to do this

I **like swimming** every day = I enjoy the activity. It gives me pleasure

I **hate to tell** you this = I am sorry to tell you this

I **hate flying** = I do not like this activity

I **regret to tell** you this - I am sorry to tell you this

I **regret leaving** London - I left London in the past, and I am sorry that I did that

Vocabulary:

maternity (adj):

about pregnancy and childbirth

specialise (v):

to study or work in depth in a particular area or subject

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