

## 14. The director and the old man

### verb + infinitive



A Hollywood director was making a film in India. For the film, he **needed to have** clear blue skies, so the weather conditions were very important to him. One evening, after filming all day he saw a very old man, sitting with his legs crossed on the ground.

‘It’s going to rain for three days. On the fourth day, the sun will shine again,’ the ancient man said wisely.

The next day it rained heavily and there was no filming that day or for three days afterwards. On the morning of the fourth day, as the old man predicted, the sun was shining down and conditions were perfect for filming. That evening, when the director was walking past, the old man said,

‘There’s going to be a big storm tomorrow.’

Sure, enough, the next day there was a big storm, just as the man said.

After a week of making perfect predictions, the director **decided to use** the old man’s wisdom and pay him to work as a weather man for the film crew. The old man **agreed to tell** the director what the weather was likely to do. This worked very well for the next few weeks of filming. Every day the old man told the director what the weather would be the next day, and the director paid him well for the valuable information. One day, however, the old man **failed to arrive** on the set. The next day the director sent for him and said,

‘Your predictions are very important to me and to my work. I’m shooting a big scene tomorrow and I have to know what the weather is going to be like.’

The old man shrugged his shoulders.

‘Sorry,’ he said, ‘I can’t help you today. My radio’s broken.’

### Grammar: verb + infinitive

Some verbs are often followed by the infinitive form. Many of these verbs are in some way connected to the future. Here are some of the most commonly-used verbs which follow this pattern.

|               |                 |             |                |              |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| <b>need</b>   | <b>decide</b>   | <b>plan</b> | <b>promise</b> | <b>fail</b>  |
| <b>refuse</b> | <b>threaten</b> | <b>aim</b>  | <b>hope</b>    | <b>offer</b> |

*I **need to have** good weather.*

*I **plan to shoot** an important scene tomorrow.*

*The man **promised to predict** the weather.*

*The old man **failed to arrive** on the set.*

*The director **offered to pay** him.*

The nouns based on these verbs are also often followed by the infinitive form.

*We made **an arrangement** with the guide **to show** us around the city.*

*The director made **an offer to pay** him.*

**Choose a verb from the list to complete the sentences. Change the form of the verb where necessary.**

**hope      promise      refuse      offer      threaten**

1. 'I'm not going to pay you any more money and that's final.'  
He \_\_\_\_\_ to pay us anymore money.
2. 'Keep away from me. I'll call the police.'  
She \_\_\_\_\_ to call the police.
3. 'I'll pay you back on Monday. You can trust me on this!'  
He \_\_\_\_\_ to pay me back on Monday.
4. 'If you like, I can help you with the project.'  
He \_\_\_\_\_ to help us with the project.
5. 'With any luck, we can finish the work by next week.'  
We \_\_\_\_\_ to finish the work by next week.

**Complete these sentences with a gerund or infinitive form of the verb.**

6. The director made a decision **continuing / to continue** filming.
7. After two weeks of **waiting / to wait**, the letter finally arrived.
8. The accident was caused by the failure **repairing / to repair** the bridge.
9. Your refusal **listening / to listen** to anyone else is your worst fault.
10. The weather was perfect for **going / to go** to the beach.

## Vocabulary exercises

**Match the broken sentences.**

- |                                              |                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. When I asked him the time he shrugged...  | A. on the set half an hour late.                         |
| 2. Karen sat down on the sofa and crossed... | B. a scene up a mountain.                                |
| 3. Last week the film crew shot...           | C. his shoulders and didn't answer.                      |
| 4. The leading actor arrived...              | D. the weather conditions accurately for that afternoon. |
| 5. The television forecast predicted...      | E. her legs before she replied.                          |

**Complete these sentences with *make* or *do*.**

6. The director decided to \_\_\_\_\_ the film in Canada.
7. It's not easy to \_\_\_\_\_ a prediction about Hollywood successes or failures.
8. I think this film is going to \_\_\_\_\_ very well in the box office.
9. I think we need to \_\_\_\_\_ some work with vocabulary.
10. I don't want to \_\_\_\_\_ any mistakes.