★ ALL STARS ★
TO VS. FOR EXPLAINED!

To become an effective communicator, your grammar doesn't have to be perfect. However, some mistakes can lead to misunderstandings. If you are not sure about when to use TO or FOR, follow these basic rules:

If there is a verb, keep it in the infinitive and add the preposition **TO** before that verb.
It is common (and even better) to use the **TO-INFINITIVE** in most cases.

- *I CAME HERE TO TALK TO YOU.*
- *I STUDY EVERY DAY TO IMPROVE MY ENGLISH.*

When there is a noun, it is better to use **FOR.**

- *HE CAME FOR THE RESULTS.*
- *I DID THIS FOR THE TEAM.*

Then, when we define something or we give reasons or purposes we also use **FOR + ing**.

- *THE SECURITY GUARDS ARE FOR KEEPING THE AREA SAFE.*
- *THIS INITIATIVE IS FOR SAVING THE FORESTS.*

Can I replace the structures?

Yes, you actually can! However, remember the basic rules about using verbs and nouns with to and for respectively.

- *USE THIS GUIDE FOR WRITING A PERFECT EMAIL. (OK)* *USE THIS GUIDE TO WRITE A PERFECT EMAIL. (BETTER)*
- *THIS TOOL IS USED FOR DEBUGGING THE SYSTEM. (OK)* *THIS TOOL IS USED TO DEBUG THE SYSTEM. (BETTER)*

WHEN SHOULD I USE TO?

Destinations **From.... To...** **Time**

We use TO when we indicate the destination, and usually there is movement involved.

- *Our CEO is going to Rome tomorrow.*
- *We'll head to the headquarters in a second.*
- *I am traveling to our branch in Bristol next month.*

In the structure "from ... to ..."

- *It's about 5km from my house to the university.*
- *I work from 5 to 9.*

To tell the time (usually in the UK)
it is very common to express how many minutes there are left until you reach the next hour, once it is 30 minutes after o'clock.
Examples:

- *5:40 – it's twenty to six.*
- *8:50 – it's ten to nine.*

Find a list of verbs that usually go with TO and a list of common expressions in the last page.

WHEN SHOULD I USE FOR?

Benefits **Favours** **Reasons** **Time periods** **Scheduling**

Expressing the benefits of something

- *Getting this certificate will be good for your career.*
- *Fruits and vegetables are good for your health.*

Doing a favor

- *He picked up the mail for me.*
- *I didn't know how to write the letter and she did it for me.*

Giving a reason, so you can replace it with "for the reason of"

- *He was fired for being late. (= He was fired for the reason of being late.)*
- *She was punished for disclosing important information. (= She was punished for the reason of disclosing important information.)*

For periods of time ("for how long?")

- *I have worked here for 5 years.*
- *We were negotiating for 3 hours.*

Scheduling something for the future

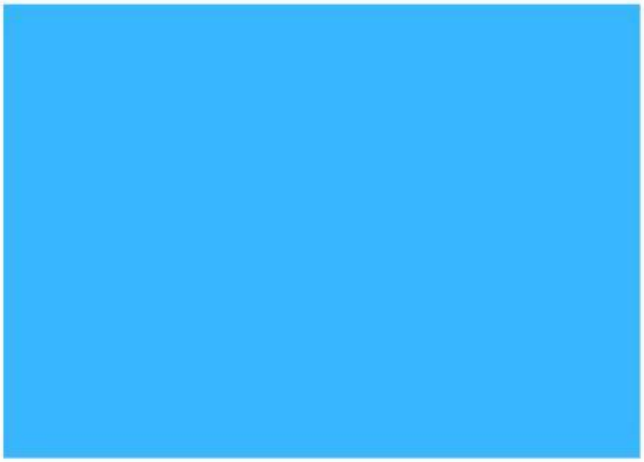
- *I set up our interview for May 4.*
- *I will schedule our next session for next Tuesday.*

Find a list of common expressions with FOR in the last page.

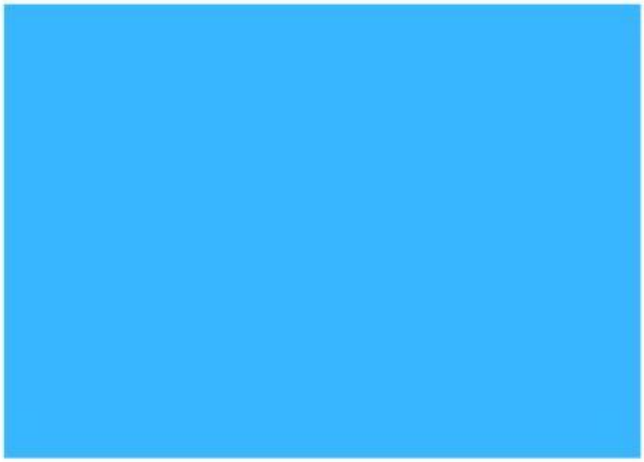
LIVEWORKSHEETS

WATCH AND LEARN!

Watch the following scenes and complete the sentences below using the video's information. Base your choices on the rules presented in the previous page:



- *Lisa wrote a letter ..... Nelson.*
- *Lisa wrothe a letter ..... having a crush on Nelson.*
- *Lisa wrote a letter ..... express her feelings.*
- *Lisa asks Milhouse ..... send the letter ..... her.*
- *Milhouse gives the letter ..... Nelson.*
- *Nelson punches Milhouse ..... having a misunderstanding.*
- *Milhouse is taken ..... the hospital.*



- *Sylvia and Yetta bring a chest ..... the nursery.*
- *They bring a chest ..... Fran's house.*
- *Did Yetta wrote love letters ..... Fran's grandfather?*
- *Yetta met her lover while her future husband was waiting ..... her.*
- *Richard came over ..... talk ..... Yetta.*
- *Yetta put off the wedding ..... her not being sure of her feelings.*
- *She looked for her lover ..... five years.*
- *Yetta forgot ..... send the letters ..... Richard.*



CONFUSING CASES - TO OR FOR?

There are some situations where the difference between to and for is not so clear. We'll look at them and give some tips to make your life easier.

EXPRESSING GOALS

If you want to express a goal, and you are using a verb, then you should use **TO** + **INFINITIVE**

- *I got this certification to increase my chances of being promoted.*

Note: It is also possible to use **FOR** to express a goal. However, it doesn't always work, so if you have doubts, always use **TO + INFINITIVE.**

Careful: **Never** use FOR + infinitive!

- *I went to the office ~~for talk~~ with my boss.*
  I went to the office to talk with my boss.

PEOPLE AND PRONOUNS

Should you say *"I sent this letter to you"* or *"I sent this letter for you"*? The answer is – both are possible, depending on what you mean.

'I sent this letter to you' means that, hopefully, you will receive my letter, because you are the recipient.

'I sent this letter for you' means that I did you a favor and took the letter to the mailbox, but the recipient is a third person.

So remember these two rules:

#1 If there is a transfer of something to someone TO

#2 If the person will benefit from a service or a favor FOR

LIVEWORKSHEETS

USE TO WITH THE FOLLOWING VERBS

If you are using the following verbs, you will need the preposition to:

advise: I advise you to start as soon as possible.
agree: Anna agreed to help me with the report.
allow: We are not allowed to disclose any information.
appear: The forecast appeared to be better for the next quarter.
begin: He began to give his presentation a bit later than expected.
choose: I chose to stay in the company.
claim: She claimed to know more than the rest of the team.
continue: She continued to talk.
decide: We decided to go ahead with the deal..
demand: He demanded to speak to Ms. Liu.
deserve: He deserves to go to jail.
expect: We expect you to be transparent with us.
fail: He failed to get enough money to pay for the new project.
happen: She happened to be away during the negotiations..
hesitate: Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.
hope: I hope to live up to your expectations.
intend: We intend to visit your offices next month.
invite :They invited us to visit their new office.
learn: I learned to speak Japanese when I was a kid.
manage: We managed to raise enough money for the project.
need: We need to find a better solution.
offer: He offered to take on all the responsibilities.
plan: We plan to launch the product by the end of the year.
pretend: He's just pretending to have many offers on the table.
promise: They promised to comply with all the new regulations.
refuse: They refused to adapt to our policies.
seem: It seems to be a tough market.
swear: She swore to tell the truth.
teach: She taught me to write better emails.
tend: He tends to speak too fast when he is nervous.
threaten: He threatened to leave the company.
want: We want to finish this section by tomorrow.
wish: I wish to stay.
would: like We would like to start now.
would prefer: I would prefer to do it on my own.

USE TO WITH THE FOLLOWING EXPRESSIONS

to some extent	Everyone will have to compromise to some extent
to date	I wrote to him two months ago, but I haven't received any response to date.
to excess	They both spend to excess.
to my surprise	to the surprise of her colleagues, she resigned.
to my credit	to her credit, she had never betrayed them.
to my face	I can't believe he lied to my face.
to this day	The tradition continues to this day.
to the detriment of	He puts all his time into his career, to the detriment of his personal life.
to the satisfaction of	We want to solve the problem to the satisfaction of all the employees.

USE FOR WITH THE FOLLOWING EXPRESSIONS

for good	permanently
for a living	as a profession
for sale	intended to be sold
for sure	definitely
for now/for the time being	until some other arrangement is made
for a while	for a period of time
for free	with no charge
for the record	so that the true facts are recorded or known
for the best	considering all the circumstances, it is the best thing that could have happened
for this reason	therefore
for all I care	I do not care
for all I know	I do not know, but it is possible
for chicken feed	for almost no money

LIVEWORKSHEETS