

- as the subject of a sentence

The infinitive can be used as the subject of a sentence, but this happens mainly in formal language or dictionary definitions and quotes:

To learn how to use this application is easy.

To explore the Web is time-consuming.

To err is human.

In everyday informal English, we often use *it* as a 'preparatory subject' at the beginning of the sentence and move the infinitive clause to the end of the sentence:

It is easy to learn how to use this application.

It is time-consuming to explore the Web.

It is human to err.

1 Complete the sentences using the words in brackets. Do not change the order of the words given, but add extra words where necessary.

- I wish (give/opportunity) to learn the basics of computer programming before I finish school.
- You need to learn the entire multiplication table by heart (as/move) on to more challenging tasks.
- There is no (reason/buy/he) the latest, state-of-the-art high-powered race motorcycle.
- (apply/they/new) acquired knowledge to practical problems was not an easy thing to do.
- Considering the damage to the vehicles, we were fortunate (no/suffer) more serious injuries.
- Everybody (seem/have) problems with computers these days.

2 Complete the second sentence using the word in capitals so that it has a similar meaning to the first. Use between three and five words in each gap.

- I think Robert's answer was the right answer to the last equation. **APPEARS**
Robert's answer the right answer to the last equation.
- They approached the task of developing new software with a lot of eagerness. **EAGER**
They new software.
- I asked our new classmate to become my friend on Facebook, but she refused, which made me very upset. **REFUSAL**
Our new classmate's on Facebook upset me a lot.
- My younger brother always buys an updated version of the FIFA football game before his friends do. **FIRST**
My younger brother is always an updated version of the FIFA football game.
- Since they want to attract tech-savvy customers, fast-food chains are exploring technologies including self-service kiosks, tablets and 3D printing. **ORDER**
Fast-food chains are exploring technologies including self-service kiosks, tablets and 3D printing tech-savvy customers.
- You haven't seen my mobile anywhere, have you? **HAPPEN**
You don't my mobile anywhere, do you?

Sentence modifiers

Commenting with sentence adverbs and adverbial expressions

Comment adverbs and adverbial expressions modify entire clauses rather than single verbs, adjectives or adverbs. We use them to reflect the speaker's/writer's attitude towards the information in a statement by adding a comment on the content.

We can use comment adverbs and adverbials at the beginning, middle or end of the sentence. In conversation, they often come at the beginning or end. In writing, they are often separated off by a comma, especially in initial or end position. The adverbs *definitely*, *possibly* and *probably* tend to come in the middle.

Comment adverbs and adverbial expressions can have different functions:

Function	Comment adverbs/ adverbial expressions	Examples
to indicate your attitude/reaction to an action or event	annoyingly, curiously, (un)fortunately, happily, hopefully, interestingly, regrettably, sadly, strikingly, surprisingly, thankfully, understandably, wrongly	Interestingly , the first ever portable MP3 player was developed with funding from the German government. Fortunately , we've all passed our IT Fundamentals exam.
to soften the message or make it less definite, to reduce the effect of a statement	admittedly, apparently, arguably, in a way (spoken), likely, maybe (spoken), possibly, potentially, presumably, probably, sort of (spoken), to some extent	<i>If the result looks too good to be true, it probably is.</i> Apparently , robins are very aggressive, contrary to popular opinion. In a way , I'm sorry I didn't take the job, it might have been interesting.
to emphasise what you want to say or to say something is obvious	certainly, clearly, crucially, definitely, doubtless, evidently, indeed, obviously, of course, plainly, surely, undoubtedly, without doubt	Surely , we can't just stand back and let this happen? There must surely be some explanation. I was, of course , not very surprised when it turned out my grandmother had no clue how to use her new notebook.
to correct a falsehood or misunderstanding	actually, as a matter of fact, in actual fact, in fact, in reality, in truth	Are you disappointed? No, I'm rather glad, actually . In fact , I am not a computer geek at all!