Part 2
Gerunds and Infinitives Following Verbs as Their Objects

More Difficult Points -- A General Principle
(This is just a principle. There are a lot of exceptions.)

• The gerund often expresses something real, vivid, or completed.
[An action is being performed (or an event is going on) at the same time as the
time of the main verb or has already happened (or completed) before the time of
the main verb.]

Correct Incorrect

Peggy enjoys running. *Peggy enjoys to run.
I’ve finished doing my homework. *I’ve finished to do my homework.

• The infinitive very often expresses the idea or the possibility of an
action occurring.
[The action is imagined or is in the future.]

Correct Incorrect

I want to go there. *I want going there.
He decided to quit his job. *He decided quitting his job.

• Certain verbs are followed by either an infinitive or a gerund without
any difference in meaning.

❖ She likes skiing. She likes to ski.
❖ It began raining. It began to rain.

• Some other verbs are followed by both of them, but the meaning
changes. The general principle applies to those verbs well.

❖ I remember turning the light off.
❖ (I turned off the light and remember that action. Turning the light off happened before
remembering.)

❖ I always remember to turn off the light before I leave home.
❖ (I always remember that I have to turn off the light before doing it.)

❖ He won’t forget visiting the museum last summer.

❖ He doesn’t forget to hand in his homework on time.

❖ I regret firing my secretary last week.

❖ I regret to inform you that you failed the exam.