

INFINITIVES

Infinitives are the basic forms of verbs and they are most often used with **TO**:

- He wants **to discuss** this with you.
- They're going **to ban** smoking in public places.

To make them **negative**, it's common to put **NOT** before **TO** (or before the infinitive if it's used **without TO**).

- He hopes **not to miss** the bus tomorrow. (**NOT** He hopes **to don't miss** the bus tomorrow)
- He decided **not to do** it.
- Try **not to broach** taboo topics during formal gatherings, as they can lead to discomfort and misunderstandings.
- Let's **not talk** about it.

A "split infinitive" occurs when an adverb or **NOT** comes between **TO** and the infinitive:

- She decided **to not eat** sweets for a month.
- During sensitive discussions, it's essential **to not bring** up taboo topics that might lead to discomfort or conflict.
- In diplomatic conversations, it is advised **to not touch** upon subjects considered taboo.

In the past, people thought split infinitives were wrong, but that's not completely true. Split infinitives are quite prevalent in English, especially in informal contexts. Some people still don't like them, though :)

1 ORDER THE WORDS TO MAKE SENTENCES:

1. inquire age not someone's directly better to about It's.

2. private matters her about not He to ask decided.

3. ideologies talk political controversial Let's about not.

4. weight on someone's comment to not better It's.

5. sensitive incident mention to not promised She the.

6. during It's best to conversations finances ask personal not about.



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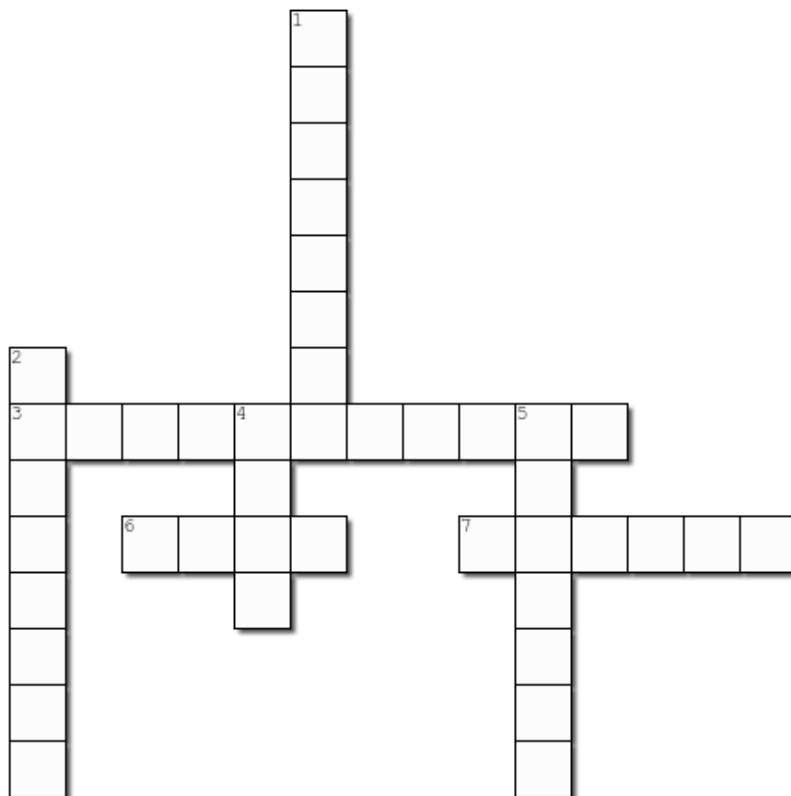
7. beliefs practices or others' try to on not comment religious You should.

8. legal not their mention to important it's troubles.

9. inquire past traumas about Let's not their.

10. public talk advisable about not problems to in family It's.

2 COMPLETE THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE:



Across

- 3. a day when we remember or celebrate something important that happened on that day in a previous year
- 6. is something gets out of, it becomes difficult to control
- 7. a husband or wife

Down

- 1. not behaving in a way that is as calm and wise as people expect from someone of your age
- 2. criticize (someone) behind their back
- 4. give free expression to a strong emotion
- 5. a good understanding of someone and an ability to communicate well with them



TABOO TOPICS

3 MARK THE EXPRESSIONS BELOW IN THE FOLLOWING WAY:

Q if they are polite ways of asking personal questions

R if they are ways of responding to personal questions

1. I hope you don't mind me asking, but ...
2. I'd rather not answer that (if you don't mind).
3. I know this is a bit nosey, but
4. Mind your own business!
5. Why do you ask?
6. Can I ask you a personal question?
7. That's rather a personal question.
8. I know this is a bit personal, but...
9. I'm afraid that's really none of your business.

4 LOOK AT THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

Decide who has the right to ask you these questions. It may be a particular person, for example, a doctor, a priest, a police officer, a partner/lover. It might be anybody or it might be nobody. Write anyone, a particular person or no one next to each question.

- How old are you?
- How much do you weigh?
- How tall are you?
- How much do you earn?
- Have you got a boy/girlfriend?
- Are you married?
- Were your parents married?
- Have you ever taken drugs?
- Are you planning to start a family?
- Who did you vote for at the last election?
- Have you got a criminal record?
- Are you gay?
- How much was your car?
- What religion are you?
- How do you feel about abortion?

Work in pairs. Ask your partner the questions. Use the expressions in EXERCISE 3 to help you ask and answer the questions.



TABOO TOPICS

5 DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- When you fill out a form, are you happy to give this information:
Your age? Your marital status? Your income?
- Are there any other questions you don't like answering?
- Why are some topics considered off-limits to talk about? What makes them uncomfortable?
- Do you think it's okay to talk about anything, or should there be limits on certain subjects? Why?
- How has the internet changed what we can openly discuss? Are there things we can talk about online that we can't in person?
- Can you think of things that used to be secrets but are now openly talked about? Why do you think this changed?
- Is it important to talk about feelings even if they're uncomfortable, like sadness or fear? Why or why not?
- Should we be allowed to make jokes about serious topics?
- Do you have different rules about what you can talk about with your friends compared to your family? Why?
- How do older people and younger people see taboo topics differently?
- Why is it often considered impolite to talk about personal finances and money matters? How does this silence affect our understanding of financial issues?
- Should salaries and income be open for discussion in workplaces? What benefits or drawbacks might this have?
- Why is politics often avoided in casual conversations? How can we foster constructive dialogues around political differences? What are the consequences of avoiding political discussions?
- Can discussing religion openly lead to increased tolerance and acceptance of diverse belief systems?
- How can parents create an open and comfortable environment that encourages their children to discuss difficult or sensitive subjects?

