



learning target

Aim of this topic is to speak about "infinitive + to" -structures.

German	English
Es ist schön, dich zu kennen .	It's nice to know you.
Ich bin hier, um sie zu sehen .	I'm here to see her.
Sie ist gegangen, ohne ein Wort zu sagen .	She is gone without saying a word.

rules

The "infinitive + to" -structure is a kind of "attachment" of the main sentence to provide additional information or to complete the idea of the main sentence.

The use of the "infinitive + to" -structure is in German and English almost the same. There are some little differences, however.

"Infinitive + to" -structures of "normal" verbs

The "infinitive + to" -structure of "normal" verbs is just added to the main sentence:
main sentence + (object) + "zu" + verb

examples:

- Sie hat keine Zeit **zu lernen**. (She has no time to learn.)
- Ich bitte dich **zu gehen**. (I ask you to go.)
- Tom versucht **zu singen**. (Tom tries to sing.)

"Infinitive + to" -structures of separable verbs

In "Infinitive + to" -structures of separable verbs the "zu" goes between the prefix and the stem:
main sentence + (object) + prefix+zu+stem

examples:

- Sie hat kein Geld **einzukaufen**. (She has no money to shop.)
- Ich bitte dich **wegzugehen**. (I ask you to go away.)
- Tom versucht **fernzusehen**. (Tom tries to watch tv.)



The introducing preposition: "um", "ohne" and "anstatt"

By now we just spoke about the simple infinitives.

More often, however, the infinitive structures start with one of the three propositions:

- **um** (=in order)
- **ohne** (=without)
- **anstatt** (=instead)

When do you have to start an "infinitive + to" -structure with "um"?

You have to start the "infinitive + to" -structure with "um" whenever it expresses a purpose - that means whenever you could add in English "in order".

examples:

- Ich bin hier, **um** dich zu sehen. (I'm here [*in order*] to see you.)
- Cathy lernt sehr viel, **um** das Examen zu bestehen. (Cathy studies a lot [*in order*] to pass the exam.)
- Er kommt zu dir, **um** dir zu helfen. (He comes to you [*in order*] to help you.)

As you can see in the examples above you would leave out "in order" in English. It sounds a bit odd.

In German, however, you must use "um".

"ohne" and "anstatt"

The use of "ohne" and "anstatt" is easy and becomes clear if you read the examples.

examples:

- Ich gehe nicht nach Hause, **ohne** dich zu küssen. (I won't go home *without* kissing you.)
- Sie ist gegangen, **ohne** ein Wort zu sagen. (She is gone *without* saying a word.)
- Sie haben den Kuchen gegessen, **ohne** uns zu fragen. (They ate the cake *without* asking us.)

examples:

- Sie macht oft Quatsch, **anstatt** zu lernen. (She makes often nonsense *instead* of learning.)
- Ich schicke eine E-mail, **anstatt** dich anzurufen. (I send an e-mail *instead* of calling you.)
- Er benutzt ein Deo, **anstatt** sich zu duschen. (He uses a deodorant *instead* of taking a shower.)

The comma placement

If there is more than just the "infinitive + to" -structure after the main sentence, then put a comma after the main sentence.

examples:

- Es ist schön **zu lesen**. (only "infinitive + to" -structure => no comma)
- Es ist schön, ein Buch zu lesen. (more than just the "infinitive + to" -structure => comma)