

To . . . (afraid to do) and Preposition + -ing (afraid of -ing)

A

Afraid to do and afraid of doing

I am **afraid to do** something = I don't want to do it because it is dangerous or the result could be bad. We use **afraid to do** for things we do intentionally:

- A lot of people are **afraid to go** out at night. (= they don't want to go out because it is dangerous – so they don't go out)
- He was **afraid to tell** his parents about the broken window. (= he didn't want to tell them because he knew they would be angry)

I am **afraid of something happening** = it is possible that something bad will happen (for example, an accident). We do not use **afraid of -ing** for things we do intentionally:

- The sidewalk was icy, so we walked very carefully. We were **afraid of falling**. (= it was possible that we would fall)
- I don't like dogs. I'm always **afraid of being** bitten. (*not* afraid to be bitten)

So, you are **afraid to do** something because you are **afraid of something happening** as a result:

- I was **afraid to go** near the dog because I was **afraid of being** bitten.

B

Interested in doing and interested to do

I'm **interested in doing** something = I'm thinking of doing it, and I'd like to do it:

- I'm trying to sell my car, but nobody is **interested in buying** it. (*not* to buy)

We use **interested to** especially with hear/see/know/read/learn. I was **interested to hear** it = I heard it and it was interesting for me:

- I was **interested to hear** that Diane got a new job.
- Ask George for his opinion. I would be **interested to know** what he thinks.

This structure is the same as **surprised to / delighted to**, etc. (see Unit 62C):

- I was **surprised to hear** that Diane got a new job.

C

Sorry to do and sorry for doing

We usually say **sorry to . . .** to apologize when (or just before) we do something:

- I'm **sorry to bother** you, but I need to talk to you.

We use **sorry to hear/read**, etc., to show sympathy with somebody (see Unit 62C):

- I was **sorry to hear** that Jessica lost her job. (= I was sorry when I heard)

You can use **sorry for (doing something)** to apologize for something you did before:

- I'm **sorry for shouting** at you yesterday. (*not* sorry to shout)

You can also say:

- I'm **sorry I shouted** at you yesterday.

D

Note that we say:

I want to (do) / I'd like to (do)	<i>but</i>	I'm thinking of (doing) / I dream of (doing)
I failed to (do)	<i>but</i>	I succeeded in (doing)
I allowed them to (do)	<i>but</i>	I stopped/prevented them from (doing)

For examples, see Units 51–52 and 59.

Exercises

63.1 Read the situation and use the words in parentheses to make sentences.
Use *afraid to ...* or *afraid of -ing*.

- The streets aren't safe at night.
(a lot of people / afraid / go / out) *A lot of people are afraid to go out.*
- I don't usually carry my passport with me.
(I / afraid / lose / it) _____
- The ocean was very rough.
(we / afraid / go / swimming) _____
- We rushed to the station.
(we / afraid / miss / our train) _____
- In the middle of the movie there was a particularly scary scene.
(we / afraid / look) _____
- The glasses were very full, so Rosa carried them very carefully.
(she / afraid / spill / the drinks) _____
- I didn't like the look of the food on my plate.
 - (I / afraid / eat / it) _____
 - (I / afraid / get / sick) _____

63.2 Complete the sentences using one of these verbs:

buy get go hear read start

- I'm trying to sell my car, but nobody is interested *in buying* it.
- Julia is interested _____ her own business.
- I was interested _____ your letter in the newspaper last week.
- Bill wants to stay single. He's not interested _____ married.
- Please tell me what you think. I'm always interested _____ your opinion.
- There's a party tonight, but I'm not interested _____.

63.3 Complete the sentences using the verb in parentheses.

- I'm sorry *for shouting* _____ at you yesterday. (shout)
- Sorry _____ you, but do you have a pen I could borrow? (bother)
- Sorry _____ late last night. I didn't realize what time it was. (be)
- I'm sorry _____ what I said yesterday. I didn't really mean it. (say)
- "I just got my exam results. I failed." "Oh? I'm sorry _____ that." (hear)

63.4 Complete the sentences using the verb in parentheses.

- We wanted *to leave* _____ the building. (leave)
 - We weren't allowed _____ the building. (leave)
 - We were prevented _____ the building. (leave)
- Eric failed _____ the problem. (solve)
 - Amy succeeded _____ the problem. (solve)
- I'm thinking _____ away next week. (go)
 - I'm hoping _____ away next week. (go)
 - I'm looking forward _____ away next week. (go)
 - I'd like _____ away next week. (go)
- Lisa wanted _____ me lunch. (buy)
 - Lisa promised _____ me lunch. (buy)
 - Lisa insisted _____ me lunch. (buy)
 - Lisa wouldn't dream _____ me lunch. (buy)