

The Infinitive

The infinitive is the base form of a verb. It is often preceded by the word to. Infinitives often appear after other verbs.

The rain **began to fall**.

Sally and I **agreed to meet** this afternoon.

I've **arranged to see** the doctor at 3 o'clock.

I **hope to visit** Disneyland someday.

I **like to ride** my bike in the street.

My parents have **decided to buy** a new car.

Paul is **learning to swim**.

I didn't **mean to upset** you.

Some verbs have an object before the infinitive. In these examples the objects are printed in colour.

1. Simon asked **me to help** him.
2. The teacher told **us not to run** in the corridor.
3. Susie persuaded her **friends to play** on the team.
4. The manager allowed the **staff to leave** early.

Infinitives often appear after adjectives. In these examples the adjectives are printed in colour.

1. **The boys were afraid to cross the busy road.**
2. I'm very **pleased to see** you again.
3. This problem will be **difficult to solve**.

4. The shelf is too **high to reach**.
5. Don't you think it's **rude to ignore** the new girl in class?
6. The experiment was **interesting to watch**.
7. You're **welcome to come** with me.

You can also use infinitives after some nouns and pronouns to say what you are using something for.

1. Take a **book to read**.
2. I phoned for a **taxi to take** us to the airport.
3. Has everyone got **something to drink**?
4. I've got lots of nice **clothes to wear**.
5. Find a space on the **floor to sit** in.

Infinitives sometimes follow words like how, what, which and where.

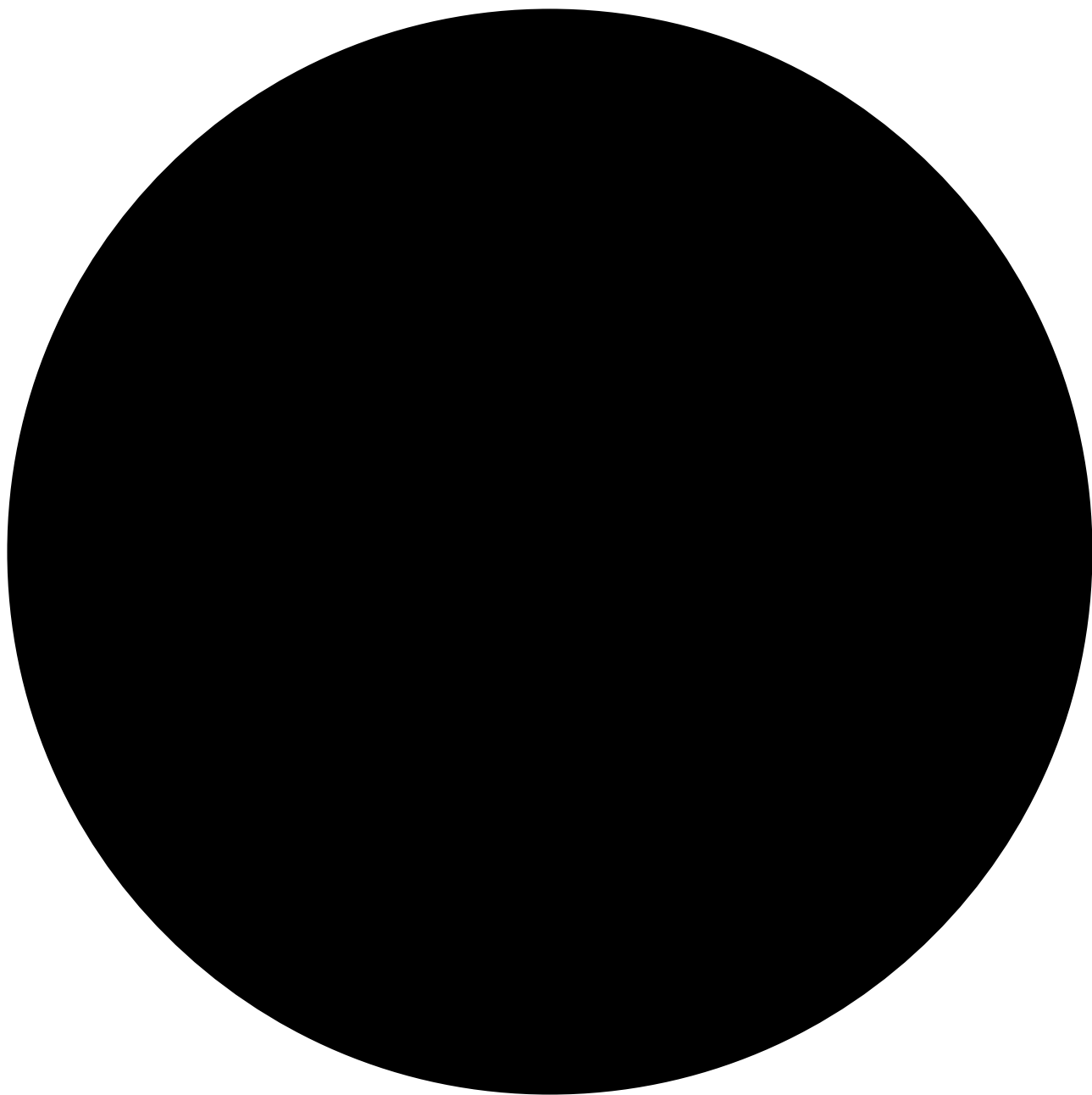
1. My brother is learning **how to cook**.
2. I can't decide **which to choose**—the ice cream or the pudding.
3. I don't know **what to say**.
4. Sally can't remember **where to hang** her coat.

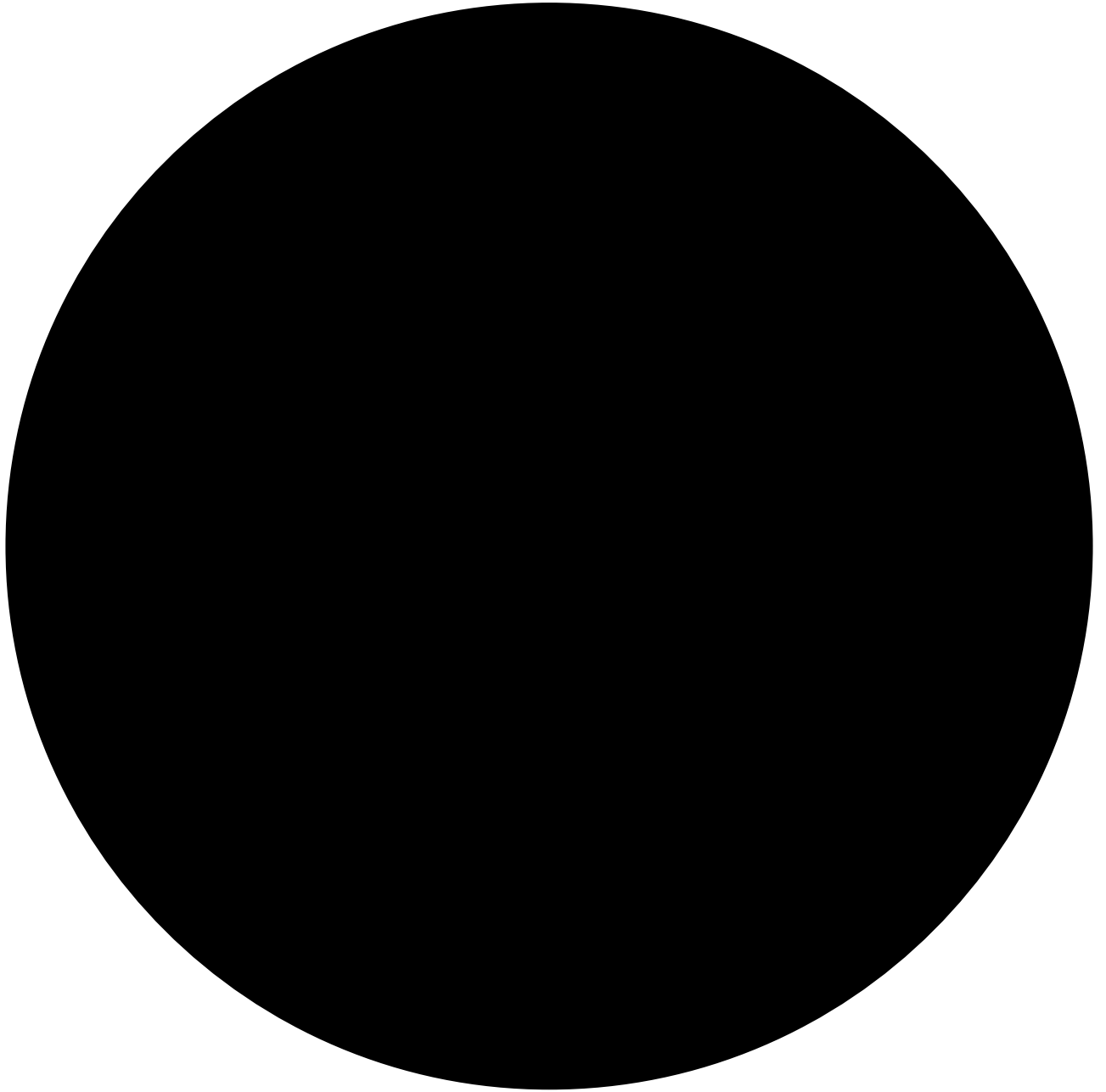
1. I **can swim**.

Infinitives are also used after helping verbs such as will, can, should, may and must. After these helping verbs use infinitives without the word to.

2. We think she **will win** the race.
3. You **must try** harder.
4. Do you think we **should wait**?

5. **May I come in?**





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