

Language practice

Finite and infinitive forms of the verb

The **finite**, or main form of the verb, has a subject, a tense and can be singular or plural. For example:

Mum **says** hello.

Stella **was** in the water.

Infinitive verbs are the base form of the verb, for example **go**, and **to go**. Infinitive verbs have **no tense, number or subject**.

You use the infinitive form without *to* after a **modal verb**. For example:

I *will* **write** a novel one day. Dad *could* not **pull** Stella out of the water.

You use the infinitive form with *to* after some verbs. For example:

Mum was trying **to bring** the boat close **to** Stella.

You can begin some sentences with an infinitive. For example:

To become a good writer, you need **to write** every day.

1. Copy these sentences into your exercise book. Underline the main verbs and circle the infinitive verbs.
 - a) The family decided to sail around the world on a yacht.
 - b) Last summer, I learned how to sail.
2. Begin the following sentences with *to* and the infinitive verb. The first one has been done for you.
 - a) It takes a lot of courage to sail around the world. *To sail* around the world takes a lot of courage.
 - b) He climbed to the top of the hill to get a better view of the island.
 - c) It takes strength, training and skill to become a good sailor.
 - d) Some young South Africans have joined Izivunguvungu to learn how to sail.

