

You can use **'prefer to (do)'** or **'prefer -ing'** to say what you prefer in general:

- Study the differences in structure after **prefer**. We say:

- Ann **prefers to live** in the country **rather than** (live) in a city.

We use 'would prefer' to say what somebody wants in a particular situation (not in general):

- We say 'would prefer to do' (*not* 'doing'):

- I'd prefer to stay at home tonight rather than go to the cinema.

Would rather (do) = would prefer (to do). After **would rather** we use the infinitive *without* **to**.

Compare:

- The negative is 'I'd rather not (do something)':

- ‘Do you want to go out this evening?’ ‘I’d rather not.’

Study the structure after would rather:

- I'd rather stay at home tonight **than** go to the cinema.

When you want somebody to do something, you can say 'I'd rather you **did** something':

- In this structure we use the *past* (**came, did** etc.), but the meaning is present or future, *not* past.

Compare:

- but* ● I'd rather you **cooked** the dinner now. (*not* 'I'd rather you cook')

The negative is 'I'd rather you **didn't**...':

- I'd rather you **didn't** tell anyone what I said.
- 'Do you mind if I smoke?' 'I'd rather you **didn't**.'

EXERCISES

58.1 Which do you prefer? Write sentences using 'I prefer (something) to (something else)'. Put the verb into the correct form where necessary.

- 1 (drive / travel by train) ... I prefer driving to travelling by train.
- 2 (tennis / football) I prefer
- 3 (phone people / write letters) I to
- 4 (go to the cinema / watch films on TV)

Now rewrite sentences 3 and 4 using the structure 'I prefer (to do something)...'.

- 5 (1) ... I prefer to drive rather than travel by train.
- 6 (3) I prefer to
- 7 (4)

58.2 Write sentences using I'd prefer... or I'd rather... + one of the following:

eat at home ~~get a taxi~~ go alone go for a swim listen to some music
stand think about it for a while wait a few minutes ~~wait till later~~

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|---|------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Shall we walk home? | (prefer) | I'd prefer to get a taxi. |
| 2 | Do you want to eat now? | (rather) | I'd rather wait till later. |
| 3 | Shall we watch TV? | (prefer) | |
| 4 | What about a game of tennis? | (rather) | |
| 5 | Shall we leave now? | (rather) | |
| 6 | Do you want to go to a restaurant? | (prefer) | |
| 7 | I think we should decide now? | (rather) | |
| 8 | Would you like to sit down? | (rather) | |
| 9 | Do you want me to come with you? | (prefer) | |

Now write sentences using **than** and **rather than**.

- 10 (get a taxi / walk home) I'd prefer to get a taxi rather than walk home.
- 11 (go for a swim / play tennis) I'd rather
- 12 (wait a few minutes / leave now)
I'd rather
- 13 (eat at home / go to a restaurant)
I'd prefer
- 14 (think about it for a while / decide now)
I'd rather

58.3 Complete the sentences using **would you rather** I... .

- 1 Are you going to cook the dinner or would you rather I cooked it?
- 2 Are you going to tell Ann what happened or would you rather
- 3 Are you going to do the shopping or
- 4 Are you going to answer the phone or

58.4 Use your own ideas to complete these sentences.

- 1 'Shall I tell Ann the news?' 'No, I'd rather she didn't know.'
- 2 Do you want me to go now or would you rather I here?
- 3 Do you want to go out this evening or would you rather at home?
- 4 This is a private letter addressed to me. I'd rather you read it.
- 5 It's quite a nice house but I'd rather it a bit bigger.
- 6 'Do you mind if I turn on the radio?' 'I'd rather you I'm trying to study.'