

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

A Afraid to (do) and afraid of (do)ing

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; we can choose to do them or not:

- ☐ This part of town is dangerous. People are **afraid to walk** here at night.
(= they don't want to walk here because it is dangerous – so they don't)
- ☐ James was **afraid to tell** his parents what had happened.
(= he didn't want to tell them because he knew they would be angry or worried)

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 path was icy, so we walked very carefully. We were **afraid of falling**.
(= it was possible that we would fall – *not* we were afraid to 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 (do)ing and interested to (do)

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

- ☐ Let me know if you're **interested in joining** the club. (*not* to join)
- ☐ I tried to sell my car, but nobody was **interested in buying** it. (*not* to buy)

We use **interested to** ... to say how somebody reacts to what they **hear/see/read/learn/know/find**.

For example, 'I was **interested to hear** it' = I heard it and it was interesting for me:

- ☐ I was **interested to hear** that Tanya left her job.
- ☐ Ask Mike for his opinion. I would be **interested to know** what he thinks. (= it would be interesting for me to know it)

This structure is the same as **surprised to** ... / **glad to** ... etc. (see Unit 65C):

- ☐ I was **surprised to hear** that Tanya left her job.

C Sorry to (do) and sorry for/about (do)ing

We use **sorry to** ... to say we regret something that happens (see Unit 65C):

- ☐ I was **sorry to hear** that Nicky lost her job. (= I was sorry when I heard that ...)
- ☐ I've enjoyed my stay here. I'll be **sorry to leave**.

We also say **sorry to** ... to apologise at the time we do something:

- ☐ I'm **sorry to phone** you so late, but I need to ask you something.

You can use **sorry for** or **sorry about** (doing something) to apologise for something you did before:

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

You can also say:

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

D We say:

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

For examples, see Units 54–55 and 62.