

EXPRESSING PURPOSE: 'TO' VS. 'FOR'

Complete Grammar Lesson & Cultural Vocabulary Guide

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Learning Objective: Master how to explain the reasons behind actions and the functions of objects using *to* and *for* accurately in both writing and speaking.

1. The Core Grammar Framework

We use both **to + infinitive** and **for + noun** to talk about the purpose of an action or the reason why we do something. While they share a similar meaning, their grammatical rules are strictly structured.

Structure	Grammar Rule	Examples
To + Infinitive	Used when the purpose is an action (followed immediately by a base verb).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">I went to the store to buy some vegetables.I studied hard to pass the exam.
For + Noun	Used when the purpose is a thing or an event (followed immediately by a noun phrase).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Let's go to the pub for a drink.We climbed to the top for the views.

Direct Comparison:

- I went to the shop **to buy** some milk. (*Action / Verb*)
- I went to the shop **for** some milk. (*Object / Noun*)

2. Vocabulary Integration (Sudanese Culture & Daily Life)

The following 15 vocabulary words illustrate contextual use cases. Notice that every definition strictly follows the rules of expressing purpose:

- Jalabeya:** A traditional loose-fitting garment worn **to stay** cool in the hot desert climate.
- Rakuba:** An outdoor shaded wooden structure built **for relaxation** during warm afternoons.
- Karkadeh:** Dried hibiscus flowers brewed **to make** a refreshing crimson herbal tea.
- Jabana:** A traditional clay coffee pot utilized **for brewing** spiced Sudanese coffee.

5. **Agashe**: A seasoned, thin-sliced grilled meat dish prepared **to satisfy** hungry street-food lovers.
6. **Kisra**: A thin, fermented sorghum flatbread baked **for accompanying** traditional stews.
7. **Gorgor**: A hand-woven wicker sifter used **for separating** chaff from organic grain.
8. **Mish**: A spicy, garlic-infused fermented yogurt dip made **to add** zest to everyday meals.
9. **Toub**: An elegant, long fabric wrap worn by women **for formal** social events and public outings.
10. **Henna**: A natural plant paste applied intricately **for decorating** the skin during weddings.
11. **Souq**: A lively commercial marketplace organized **for trading** daily commodities and meeting friends.
12. **Boutique**: A small specialized retail shop visited **to purchase** modern or tailored clothing lines.
13. **Tailor**: A professional craftsman hired **to stitch** custom garments or mend delicate fabrics.
14. **Asida**: A dense, hearty porridge prepared **for nourishing** large gatherings during festive seasons.
15. **Hosh**: A spacious open-air home courtyard ideal **for hosting** family events under the stars.

3. Structural Nuances & Common Errors

Nuance A: The "For + -ing" Trap

Never use *for + -ing* to explain why a person does an intentional action or errand. You must use *to + infinitive* instead.

Incorrect: Fatima went to the boutique **for buying** a new toub.

Correct: Fatima went to the boutique **to buy** a new toub.

Incorrect: I work hard **for improving** my English.

Correct: I work hard **to improve** my English.

Nuance B: Describing Object Functions

When you are explaining the universal function or purpose of an **object** (what an item is designed to do), both **for + -ing** and **to + infinitive** are grammatically correct and interchangeable.

- This machine is used **for cleaning** cars. = This machine is used **to clean** cars.

- A **jabana** is an object used **for brewing** coffee. = A **jabana** is used **to brew** coffee.
- A **gorgor** is a tool designed **for separating** grain. = A **gorgor** is a tool designed **to separate** grain.

4. Lesson Story: A Gathering in the Hosh

Read the narrative below to observe how purpose markers behave naturally within context.

Yesterday was a beautiful, bustling day in our village. Early in the morning, my father walked to the local **tailor to** collect his newly ironed white **jalabeya**. He needed it **for** a big family celebration happening later in the evening. Meanwhile, my mother and sisters hurried down to the central **souq to** buy supplies. They stopped by a small clothing **boutique for** some bright silk threads, and then went to the market stalls **for** fresh food ingredients.

By afternoon, our home's open **hosh** was full of life. My aunt sat under the cool **rakuba to** avoid the burning sun while applying intricate **henna** patterns onto the hands of the guests. In the kitchen, grandmother used a traditional woven **gorgor for** sifting flour. She needed the flour **to** bake fresh, thin **kisra** and **to** mix a huge pot of **asida** porridge. To make the meal even better, she prepared a side bowl of spicy **mish to** add some extra flavor.

As evening fell, everyone sat down **to** enjoy the feast. We even bought seasoned street **agashe for** the children. After dinner, my mother brought out a traditional clay **jabana**, which is widely used **for** brewing rich, aromatic coffee, alongside a giant pitcher of sweet **karkadeh to** cool everyone down.

5. Independent Practice Exercises

Complete each sentence below by writing either **to** or **for** in the blank spaces. Check your answers in the key on the next section.

1. Huda went to the fashion boutique _____ a beautiful new **toub**.
2. My grandmother uses a traditional gorgor _____ separate her grains cleanly.
3. We always serve fresh kisra bread _____ accompanying our rich stews.
4. The family walked to the local street market _____ some delicious evening agashe.
5. This specific clay jabana is perfectly designed _____ brewing local coffee.
6. My father sits in the shaded rakuba every single afternoon _____ read his newspaper.
7. We prepared a massive tray of asida porridge _____ feed all the wedding guests.

8. The women gathered in the open hosh _____ a long chat and some afternoon tea.
9. They boiled the red karkadeh leaves _____ make a sweet, icy drink.
10. Amir called a master tailor _____ stitch his Eid jalabeya.

6. Answer Key & Structural Breakdown

1. **for** — followed by the noun phrase "*a beautiful new toub*".
2. **to** — followed directly by the base action verb "*separate*".
3. **for** — describes the structural tool function/purpose of an object ("*for accompanying*").
4. **for** — followed by the noun phrase "*some delicious evening agashe*".
5. **for** — specifies the designed object capability or function ("*for brewing*").
6. **to** — followed by the base action verb "*read*".
7. **to** — followed by the base action verb "*feed*".
8. **for** — followed by the noun phrase phrase "*a long chat*".
9. **to** — followed by the base action verb "*make*".
10. **to** — followed by the base action verb "*stitch*".