

stop doing or stop to do?

Two meanings of stop

Activity or purpose?

Stop + -ing: cease the named activity at that point; this need not mean forever. Stop + to + verb: interrupt another activity for the purpose of doing the named action. It does not say whether the first activity resumes. Decide which action ceases and which action is the purpose.

During a game we stopped to check the score. We stopped cheering means the cheering ceased.

drive—driving; get petrol;
smoke—smoking; do—doing homework;
run—running; answer the phone;
stop—stopped.

A. Reconstruct the sequence

Write a past sentence with stop, showing both the interrupted activity and its purpose.

Marta interrupts her drive at a petrol station and gets petrol. No later journey is shown.

B. Preserve the facts

Repair the message. Add a short clause identifying what the facts leave unknown.

Luca smoked for twenty years. In May the smoking ceased; no permanent change is stated. Message: "After twenty years, Luca stopped to smoke in May."

C. Two situations

Write one sentence per situation: one with stop + -ing, one with stop + to + verb.

(1) Elena ends her homework session before dinner, with work left. (2) Elena interrupts her run and answers the phone. No later action is shown.

Check time frames, purpose and unsupported claims.