

## B1 TEENS

# Guilty Pleasures

Secret enjoyments and mastering gerunds and infinitives

B1 Intermediate | Grammar | Reading | 40 min

## ★ Lesson Objectives

- ✓ Read about guilty pleasures and social pressure
- ✓ Learn vocabulary for habits, enjoyment and embarrassment
- ✓ Use gerunds (-ing) and infinitives (to + verb) after specific verbs
- ✓ Know which verbs take gerund, infinitive, or both
- ✓ Discuss personal guilty pleasures without judgement
- ✓ Write about things you enjoy, avoid or can't stop doing

## 1 Before You Read

- ▶ What is a 'guilty pleasure'? Can you give an example?
- ▶ Is there a song, show or food you secretly love but are embarrassed about?
- ▶ Why do people feel guilty about enjoying certain things?

## 2 Reading: Nothing to Be Ashamed Of

### Nothing to Be Ashamed Of

Everyone has at least one guilty pleasure -- something they enjoy doing but feel slightly embarrassed about. Maybe you secretly enjoy watching children's cartoons. Perhaps you can't stop eating cereal at midnight. Or maybe you love listening to a pop song that your friends would laugh at. A recent survey of 5,000 teenagers found that 89% admitted to having at least one guilty pleasure, but most avoided talking about it in public.

So why do we feel guilty? Psychologist Dr. Hana Kimura, who specialises in teenage behaviour, says it's mostly about social pressure. "Teenagers desperately want to fit in. They tend to pretend to like the same things as their friends, and they avoid admitting that they enjoy anything considered 'uncool.' But this creates stress, because you spend energy hiding who you really are." According to Dr. Kimura, the healthiest thing

is to stop worrying about what others think and start accepting your own tastes.

We asked teenagers around the world to share their guilty pleasures anonymously. Lucas, 15, from Brazil: "I enjoy reading romantic novels. I avoid mentioning it because my friends would make fun of me." Amina, 14, from Morocco: "I can't help singing along to nursery rhymes. I pretend to hate them, but I really miss being a little kid." Takumi, 16, from Japan: "I love watching cooking shows. I keep watching them even though I never actually cook. I don't feel like stopping."

The concept of guilty pleasures raises interesting questions about judgement. Reading comics was once considered childish -- now it's a billion-dollar industry. Playing video games used to be a waste of time -- now professional gamers earn millions. Dancing alone, singing in the shower, collecting stickers, rewatching the same film twenty times -- millions of people enjoy doing these things but refuse to admit it.

Dr. Kimura has a simple message: "Life is too short to pretend you don't enjoy things. If something makes you happy and doesn't hurt anyone, there's nothing to feel guilty about. I always advise my patients to stop judging themselves and to start celebrating what makes them unique. Your guilty pleasures aren't weaknesses -- they're part of who you are."

### 3 Vocabulary

Word	Definition	Example
<b>guilty pleasure</b>	something you enjoy but feel embarrassed about	"Reality TV is my guilty pleasure."
<b>embarrassed</b>	feeling ashamed in front of others	"Embarrassed to admit I love that song."
<b>admit</b>	say something is true, reluctantly	"Admitted to watching cartoons."
<b>confess</b>	reveal something personal/secret	"Confessed he loves pop music."
<b>pretend</b>	act as if something is true when it isn't	"Pretend to hate that show."
<b>fit in</b>	be accepted by a group	"Teenagers want to fit in."
<b>judgement</b>	opinion formed about someone	"Stop passing judgement."
<b>ashamed</b>	feeling bad or guilty	"Nothing to be ashamed of."
<b>refreshing</b>	pleasantly different	"Their honesty was refreshing."
<b>taste</b>	personal preference	"Everyone has different tastes."
<b>unique</b>	one of a kind; special	"Your tastes make you unique."
<b>weakness</b>	fault or area of vulnerability	"Chocolate is my weakness."
<b>social pressure</b>	influence to behave a certain way	"Social pressure makes us hide."
<b>anonymously</b>	without giving your name	"Shared answers anonymously."

Word	Definition	Example
<b>celebrate</b>	show happiness; honour something	"Celebrate what makes you different."
<b>make fun of</b>	laugh at unkindly	"Friends would make fun of me."

Collocations: guilty pleasure • feel embarrassed • fit in with • make fun of • pass judgement  
 • be ashamed of • social pressure • can't help (doing)

## 4 Grammar: Gerunds and Infinitives

verb + gerund: "I enjoy reading." / "I avoid mentioning it." / "I can't help singing."

verb + infinitive: "They want to fit in." / "I pretend to hate them." / "I advise patients to stop."

Verb + Gerund (-ing)	Verb + Infinitive (to)	Both (meaning changes)
enjoy reading	want to go	stop smoking (quit) / to smoke (pause)
avoid talking	decide to leave	remember locking (recall) / to lock (don't forget)
can't help laughing	hope to travel	try eating (experiment) / to eat (effort)
keep watching	agree to help	forget meeting (no memory) / to meet (didn't do)
miss being	refuse to admit	
mind waiting	pretend to like	
admit doing	learn to cook	

### ⚠ Common Mistakes

~~I enjoy to read books.~~ → I enjoy reading books. (enjoy + -ing)

~~I want going home.~~ → I want to go home. (want + to + verb)

~~I can't help to laugh.~~ → I can't help laughing. (can't help + -ing)

## 5 Match the Halves

#	Beginning	Ending
1	I enjoy listening	to cheesy pop music.
2	She avoids talking	about her love for cartoons.
3	He wants to learn	how to bake cakes.
4	I can't help watching	cute animal videos.
5	They decided to share	their guilty pleasures.
6	She pretends to hate	reality TV.
7	I miss being	a kid with no worries.
8	He keeps buying	snacks even when not hungry.
9	We agreed to stop	judging each other.
10	I don't mind admitting	that I love cooking shows.

## 6 Comprehension Quiz

**1. What % of teenagers have a guilty pleasure?**

Answer: 89%

**2. Why do teens feel guilty (Dr. Kimura)?**

Answer: Social pressure to fit in

**3. What is Lucas's guilty pleasure?**

Answer: Reading romantic novels

**4. Dr. Kimura's message?**

Answer: Stop judging yourself, celebrate what makes you unique

**5. 'I enjoy \_\_\_\_.' Which form?**

Answer: reading (-ing)

**6. 'She wants \_\_\_\_.' Which form?**

Answer: to go (infinitive)

**7. 'Stopped smoking' vs 'stopped to smoke'?**

Answer: Quit vs paused in order to smoke

**8. Which is WRONG?**

Answer: I enjoy to play football.

## 7 Fill in the Blanks

**Word Bank:** watching • to learn • singing • to admit • eating • to stop • talking • to share

1. I enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ old cartoons late at night.

2. He wants \_\_\_\_\_ how to play guitar.

3. She can't help \_\_\_\_\_ along to pop songs.

4. He refuses \_\_\_\_\_ that he likes romantic films.

5. I keep \_\_\_\_\_ snacks when I'm not hungry.

6. We decided \_\_\_\_\_ judging each other.

7. She avoids \_\_\_\_\_ about her hobby at school.

8. They agreed \_\_\_\_\_ their guilty pleasures.

Answers: 1. watching • 2. to learn • 3. singing • 4. to admit • 5. eating • 6. to stop • 7. talking • 8. to share

## 8 Speaking & Writing

### ◆ Discussion Questions

What's your biggest guilty pleasure?

Why do some hobbies become 'cool' over time?

Do you ever pretend to like something just to fit in?

Is there a food you can't stop eating?

'There are no guilty pleasures -- only pleasures.' Agree?

### ◆ Example Dialogue

A: I enjoy watching cooking shows even though I never cook.

B: I can't help singing nursery rhymes! I keep doing it without thinking.

A: I avoid telling people I love collecting stickers.

B: Why? I don't mind admitting my guilty pleasures.

A: You're right. I should stop worrying about what people think.

B: I refuse to feel ashamed of things that make me happy.

### ✍ Writing Task

Write 80-120 words. Use at least 5 verbs with gerund or infinitive:

Option A: Describe your guilty pleasures. What do you enjoy? What do you avoid telling people?

Option B: Write about social pressure. Do teens pretend to like things to fit in?

## 9 Gerund or Infinitive? – The Game

Interactive game available online. Choose the correct form after each verb in 10 sentences!

#	Sentence	Answer
1	I enjoy ___ (watch) TV late at night.	watching
2	She wants ___ (go) to the cinema.	to go
3	He avoids ___ (eat) fast food.	eating
4	I decided ___ (tell) the truth.	to tell
5	They keep ___ (make) the same mistake.	making
6	We agreed ___ (share) our secrets.	to share
7	I can't help ___ (laugh) at that video.	laughing
8	She pretends ___ (be) cool.	to be
9	I miss ___ (be) a child.	being
10	He refused ___ (admit) his guilty pleasure.	to admit

## 10 Review Checklist

- ✓ I can understand a text about guilty pleasures and social pressure
- ✓ I can use vocabulary for habits, enjoyment and embarrassment
- ✓ I know which verbs take gerund (-ing) and which take infinitive (to + verb)
- ✓ I understand verbs that change meaning with gerund vs infinitive
- ✓ I can discuss personal preferences without judgement
- ✓ I can write about things I enjoy, avoid or can't stop doing

## Congratulations!

You have completed this lesson: Guilty Pleasures