

■ 31.2.4 lassen

Die Kinder **lassen** ihn nicht *The children don't let him sleep.*

31.3 The infinitive with or without zu

■ 31.3.1 If **helfen**, **lehren**, **lernen** are followed by the infinitive alone, **zu** is omitted:

Ich **helfe** aufräumen. *I'll help tidy up.*
Er **lernt** schwimmen. *He is learning to swim.*

If the verb is followed by more than just an infinitive, both uses are found, with or without **zu**:

Wir **helfen** dir, das Zimmer *We'll help you to tidy up*
aufzuräumen. *your room.*
Wir **helfen** dir das Zimmer *We'll help you tidy up*
aufräumen. *your room.*

■ 31.3.2 After **bleiben** followed by a verb of place there is no **zu**:

Er **blieb** einfach **sitzen**. *He just remained seated.*
Sie **bleibt** noch ein Jahr *She will continue to live*
dort **wohnen**. *there for another year.*

In all other contexts **bleiben** is always used with **zu**:

Das **bleibt** abzuwarten. *That remains to be seen.*
Es **bleibt** noch viel **zu** tun. *There remains a lot to be done.*

■ 31.3.3 The verb **brauchen** is often used without **zu** in colloquial German. However, formal German still prefers the infinitive with **zu**.

Da brauchen wir erst gar *It's hardly worth even starting*
nicht **anfangen**. *this.*
Die Kündigung braucht *Notice does not have to be*
nicht vor dem ersten April *given until 1st April.*
zu erfolgen.

31.4 The infinitive with passive sense

After certain verbs the infinitive has a passive sense, although its form is active. The most common of these verbs are **bleiben**, **sein** and **es gibt**:

Das **bleibt** abzuwarten. *That remains to be seen.*
Mein Auto **ist** zu verkaufen. *My car is for sale/to be sold.*
Es **gibt** viel zu sagen. *There is much to be said.*

31.5 Other uses of the infinitive

■ 31.5.1 All infinitives may be used as nouns, their gender always being neuter. Most infinitival nouns express the action of the verb and equate to an English '-ing' form.

Das **Laufen** war sehr *The jogging was very*
anstrengend. *exhausting.*
Beim **Lesen** trinke ich *I like to drink a glass of wine*
gerne ein Glas Wein. *when I'm reading.*

A few infinitival nouns have additional meanings, e.g.:

das Essen *eating, meal*
das Leben *living, life*

■ 31.5.2 Infinitives are often used in written instructions, or on public notices giving commands (see also 33.2):

Karotten **schälen** und *Peel and dice the carrots.*
würfeln.
Einfahrt **freihalten** *Keep entrance clear*