

rather - prefer

"would rather" and "would prefer" are used to express our preference (now), and mean the exact same thing. They are however, used a little different.

"would rather" - "'d rather"

"would prefer" - "'d prefer"

We went jogging yesterday, today I **would rather go** swimming. / I'd **rather go** swimming.
We went jogging yesterday, today I **would prefer to go** swimming. / I'd **prefer to go** swimming.

would rather + infinitive without to

I'd rather have coffee

would rather . . . than

It's very early in the day – I'd **rather have** a coffee,
than a beer

would prefer + to + infinitive OR noun

I'd prefer to have coffee

I'd prefer coffee (noun, no verb)

would prefer . . . rather than (nouns)

or

would prefer . . . instead of (nouns)

It's very early in the day – I'd **prefer a coffee**,
rather than a beer

It's very early in the day - I'd **prefer a coffee**,
instead of a beer.

would prefer . . . rather than (verbs)

or

would prefer . . . instead of (verbs)

It's very early in the day – I'd **prefer to have** a coffee,
rather than a beer

It's very early in the day - I'd **prefer to have** a coffee,
instead of a beer.

Past tense - would rather

when we speak about other people's actions, even
though that action may be in the present or future

I'd **rather you ate** some fruit, instead of junk and sweets
all the time.

I'd **rather she** started cooking, she's been watching TV all
day.

rather - prefer

General preferences use prefer OR would rather ***not would prefer***

Prefer and would rather have the same meaning

I prefer music to films.

I would rather sing than dance.

After **would rather** we use the **infinitive without to**

I'd rather use a keyboard than write with a pen.

I'd rather go on holiday than stay here all Summer.

After **prefer** we use the verb in the **-ing** form.

I prefer using a keyboard to writing with a pen.

I prefer going on holiday than staying here all Summer.

We say prefer . . . to, but would rather . . . than

I prefer walking to driving.

I'd rather walk than drive.

1. Practise

Choose the best answer to fill the gap

1. I prefer juice _____ tea.
 2. I don't feel like the movies again. I'd rather _____ to the cinema.
 3. Although I enjoy beaches, I think I prefer _____ in the mountains
 4. I'd rather write him an email _____ things over the phone.
 5. I prefer planes _____ trains.
 6. I'm not a big fan of trains; I prefer _____ by boat.
 7. If I had a choice I think I'd rather _____ Egypt.
 8. They'd rather have lunch inside, but I'd prefer _____ outside in the garden.
1. a. to b. than c. from
 2. a. to b. go c. going
 3. a. walk b. walking
 4. a. than discuss b. to discussing
c. to discuss
 1. a. from b. than c. to
 2. a. travelling b. travel
 3. a. live in Israel than in b. live in
Kuwait to c. to live in Oman than
 1. a. eat b. eating c. to eat

2. Write your own

1. I'd _____
2. You'd _____
3. He'd/She'd/It'd _____
4. We'd _____
5. They'd _____
6. You'd (plural) _____

rather - prefer (preference)

hate, like, love and prefer with an -ing form or with a to-infinitive:

I hate to see food being thrown away.

I love going to the cinema.

I prefer listening to the news on the radio than watching it on TV.

He prefers not to wear a tie to work.

In American English, the forms with to-infinitive are much more common than the -ing form.

The small difference between the two forms:

-ing form emphasises the **action** or **experience** and suggests **(non)enjoyment**

I like making jam

He likes telling jokes

They don't like sitting for too long

We prefer walking to driving

to-infinitive gives more emphasis to the **results** of the **action** or **event** and expresses **habits or preferences**.

I like to make jam every year.

I prefer to sort out my tasks first.

If you prefer not to go hiking there are some easy trails to walk

3. Practise

1. I'd prefer a movie _____ a concert.
rather than
to
that
from

2. He'd prefer to keep his job _____ fired.
to being
rather than being
before to be
rather than be

3. I _____ to go on a cruise.
would rather
rather
would prefer to'd
prefer

4. I prefer running _____ .
rather than to swim
to swimming
than swimming
to swim

5. I'd prefer _____ just a salad.
have
having
to have
to having

6. She'd prefer to work night shifts _____
work
at the weekends.
that
than
to
rather than

7. I'd rather she _____ something different.
study
studied
to study
would study

Remember

- *rather than + infinitive without to*
- *would rather + infinitive (without to)*
- *(would) prefer + rather than or instead of = choices*
- *(would) prefer + noun or to + infinitive = specific preference*
- *would rather + than (+noun/infinitive) for affirmative sentences*
- *would rather + or (+noun/infinitive) with for questions.*
- *when to is a preposition, we use a verb + -ing form.*
- *would rather + subject + past simple to refer to the present or future.*

4. Practise

- 1 She would _____ to stay with me rather _____ stay in a hotel.
- 2 I would _____ talk to you in private.
- 3 They prefer fishing _____ hunting.
- 4 I _____ living in a small village to living in a big city.
- 5 I'd prefer to travel all year _____ than travel only once.
- 6 I'd rather you _____ (talk) to him first.
- 7 Would you rather _____ (finish) this later?
- 8 I'd _____ to drink water _____ than wine
- 9 I'd _____ you took her to the hospital.
- 10 I prefer sitting in the back to _____ (sit) in the front.