
Catherine's Grammar Explanation: To, for, so that

Jackie and Elena are preparing for a weekend break. What are they taking, and why?

Jackie: *Have we got everything we need for our trip?*

Elena: *Yes Jackie, we've got some water to make tea, I'm bringing some pots and pans for cooking, and I'm taking some extra blankets so that we don't get cold.*

Hi Selman! That's pretty good! Jackie and Elena are taking some water to make tea, some pots and pans for cooking, and some extra blankets so they don't get cold.

In English, when we want to talk about purpose, or the reason why we do things, we can use *to*, we can use *for* and we can use *so that*.

Firstly we can use *for* with an -ing verb. Here's Elena:

Elena: *I'm bringing some pots and pans for cooking...*

She uses *for* with an -ing verb to say why she's bringing the pots and pans. Listen again:

Elena: *I'm bringing some pots and pans for cooking*

Secondly, we can use an infinitive with 'to'

Elena: *we've got some water to make tea...*

In this sentence, she uses an infinitive – *to make* – to say why they are taking the water. Listen again:

Elena: *we've got some water to make tea*

A third way to talk about reason or purpose is with *so that*. Here's Elena:

Elena: *I'm taking some extra blankets so that we don't get cold.*

Did you get it? *So that* is followed by a subject - *we* - and verb – *don't get* – to tell us why she's taking the extra blankets.

Ok, let's recap. To talk about reason or purpose, we can use *for* with an -ing verb for objects, or for actions, we can either use *to* with an infinitive or *so that* with a subject and verb.

Ok, that's all from me. Good luck with your grammar challenge!

Grammar Tables: To, for, so that

To talk about purpose, or the reason why we do things, we can use *for + verb-ing*, we can use the *infinitive with to*, and we can use *so that + subject + verb*.

Action or event	'for' + verb-ing
I'm bringing some pots and pans	for cooking.
I've got special glasses	for reading small print.
A thermos flask	is for keeping hot food hot.

Action or event	Infinitive with 'to'
We've got some water	to make tea.
I went to the shops	to buy some milk.
I worked very hard	to get a promotion.

Action or event	'so that' + subject + verb
I'm taking some extra blankets	so that we don't get cold.
I chained my bicycle to the fence	so that it wouldn't get stolen.
I worked very hard	so that I would do well in the exam.