

prevent

stop

avoid

To stop something from happening or someone from doing something.

[+ noun/pronoun]

- Label your suitcases to prevent confusion.
- The police seem to be powerless to prevent these attacks.

Prevent somebody/something (from) doing something

[(from) + -ing verb]

- His disability prevents him (from) driving.
- We were prevented from entering the site.

Important :

In everyday English, people usually say **stop somebody/something (from) doing something** rather than **prevent somebody/something (from) doing something**:

To prevent someone from doing something:

[+ noun/pronoun]

- If she really wants to leave, I don't understand what's stopping her.
- Great efforts are being made to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Stop somebody/something (from) doing something

[(from) + -ing verb]

- This barrier is to stop people from coming in without a ticket.
- The rain didn't stop us from enjoying the trip.
- "I won't stop you from leaving, if that's what you want to do."

To prevent something from happening or to not allow yourself to do something to stay away from someone or something

Avoid someone /something

- He's been avoiding me all week.
- I left early to avoid the rush hour.
- Efforts are being made to avoid war at all costs.
- We must find a way to avoid similar problems in future.

Avoid doing something

- He tried to avoid paying his taxes and was taken to court.
- I try to avoid supermarkets on Saturdays - they're always so busy.

Meaning to find a way not to do something.

Get out of doing something is more common than **avoid** in everyday spoken English.

- He tried to avoid paying his taxes and was taken to court.
- He tried to get out of paying his taxes and was taken to court.