

The Gerund Phrase

5h. A **gerund phrase** consists of a gerund and any modifiers or complements the gerund has. The entire phrase is used as a noun.

EXAMPLES **Holding a class election** taught us much about politics. [subject of the verb *taught*]
 When did the candidates begin **campaigning for the class offices**? [direct object of the verb *did begin*]
 Carrie's passion is **rock climbing**. [predicate nominative identifying the subject *passion*]
 Javier gave **fishing for bass** another chance. [indirect object of the verb *gave*]
 Election officials made an error in **counting the votes**. [object of the preposition *in*]

EXERCISE A Underline the gerund phrase in each of the following sentences.

Example 1. Jim's tiny handwriting is sometimes difficult to read.

1. The vibrating of the tire caused the car to shake.
2. The noise you heard is the soft chirping of a baby bird.
3. Sally is an expert at identifying Grecian artifacts.
4. Playing the piano well is a difficult skill to learn.
5. Jason's method of fly-fishing for trout is unique but effective.

EXERCISE B Underline the gerund phrase in each of the following sentences. Then, above each gerund phrase, write *S* for *subject*, *PN* for *predicate nominative*, *DO* for *direct object*, *IO* for *indirect object*, or *OP* for *object of a preposition*. If a sentence does not contain a gerund phrase, write *none* after the sentence.

Example 1. The slow rocking of the boat made Daniel seasick.

6. Javier wants to write an essay about the art of playing video games.
7. The swerving car avoided the fallen tree lying in the road.
8. Julie's favorite pastime is running along the trails near the park.
9. Having defined goals will help you plan your future.
10. Katy's favorite weekend activity is sleeping late on Saturday mornings.
11. The class used up half an hour by asking the guest speaker questions about comets.
12. The chef gave cooking the stew the attention it deserved.
13. Try flying the kite one more time before the wind dies down.
14. Terra dreams of flying a helicopter for a television news station.
15. Our baseball team is playing out of town this week.

The Gerund

5g. A **gerund** is a verb form ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun.

EXAMPLES **Skiing** is my favorite sport. [subject of the verb *is*]
 My hobby is **fishing**. [predicate nominative identifying the subject *hobby*]
 Sam enjoys rock **climbing**. [direct object of the verb *enjoy*]
 We should give **snorkeling** a try. [indirect object of the verb *should give*]
 Saul has shown great interest in **skating**. [object of the preposition *in*]

Do not confuse a gerund with a present participle used as part of a verb phrase or as an adjective.

EXAMPLES The rabbit was sitting by the edge of the running stream. [*Sitting* is part of the verb phrase *was sitting*. *Running* is a participle modifying *stream*.]

EXERCISE A Underline the gerund in each of the following sentences.

Example 1. The key to playing guitar is finger dexterity.

1. Becoming a doctor takes years of serious study.
2. Kino's specialty is cooking mushrooms and onions.
3. The subtle squeaking of the door hinges told Mira that her sister was home.
4. Carla decided on writing about famous women in history.
5. Mr. Riley enjoys the crackling of a campfire on a winter's evening.

EXERCISE B Underline the gerund in each of the following sentences. Then, above each gerund, write S for subject, PN for predicate nominative, DO for direct object, IO for indirect object, or OP for object of a preposition. If a sentence does not contain a gerund, write *none* after the sentence.

Example 1. Laurie loves ^{DO}running early in the morning.

6. Traveling to new and interesting places is fun.
7. The smiling child amused his parents.
8. Give playing golf another chance.
9. The powerful writing made the novel exciting to read.
10. Carla was talking in a low whisper to her best friend.
11. Cecil's favorite hobby is building scale models of World War II airplanes.
12. The key to fishing is patience.
13. Fielding a pop fly on a sunny day can be a tricky play.
14. Pam is studying for her French exam.
15. Marie's favorite event is swimming.

Gerunds and Gerund Phrases A

5g. A **gerund** is a verb form ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun.

EXAMPLES **Spelunking** is a wonderful adventure. [subject of the verb *is*]

We could hear the distant **rumbling** of thunder. [direct object of the verb *could hear*]

We should give **rafting** another try. [indirect object of the verb *should give*]

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EXAMPLES One of the president's duties is **serving as commander in chief**. [predicate nominative identifying one of the president's duties]

The settlers cleared part of the land by **burning down the forest**. [object of the preposition *by*]

EXERCISE A Underline the gerund in each of the following sentences.

Example 1. The sharp clanging of the bell alerted the students.

- Jackie saved money for the trip by grooming horses at a local stable.
- Training a pet to obey simple commands can be difficult.
- Jerry's phobia is speaking to large crowds.
- Sarah believes in saving money for the future.
- The annoying rooster enjoys crowing outside my window.

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Example 1. ^STraveling to distant places is easier today than it was two hundred years ago.

- Flying in an airplane sounds dangerous, but it is actually quite safe.
- A far more dangerous activity is driving a car.
- Some drivers endanger others as well as themselves by recklessly disobeying traffic laws.
- David's family is taking a train to New York this summer.
- For our next vacation we may give riding on a train a try.
- Watching the countryside roll by from the window of a train would be fun.
- My sister votes for driving to Seattle, Washington, in an RV.
- Preston heard the crashing of the surf.
- Traveling across the country takes a lot of time.
- Wherever we go on our vacation, my aunt is coming with us.

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Gerunds and Gerund Phrases B

5g. A **gerund** is a verb form ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun.

EXAMPLES **Playing** chess well requires concentration. [subject of the verb *requires*]
My sister Tyra has started **collecting** rocks. [direct object of the verb *has started*]

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EXAMPLES Before Martin became a journalist, he had given **becoming an English teacher** serious thought. [indirect object of the verb *had given*]
When did Tori Murden fulfill her dream of **rowing solo across the Atlantic Ocean**? [object of the preposition *of*]

EXERCISE A Underline the gerund in each of the following sentences.

Example 1. The rumbling of Joe's stomach told us it was time to eat.

1. Larry was intent on watching every movie in our video collection in one weekend.
2. My sister is responsible for cleaning the garage.
3. Deanna's powerful speaking caused the audience to erupt in applause.
4. The difficult aspect of the workout program is getting up at four in the morning.
5. The cacophonous clanking of the car's engine could be heard from blocks away.

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Example 1. ^S
The barking of the menacing dog caused the cat to flee from the yard.

6. Theresa began her report on Medieval Europe with an interesting question.
7. When he was five, the musical prodigy started playing the piano.
8. Plato gave fishing for rainbow trout another chance.
9. Jack's parents supported his dream of winning a gold medal.
10. The charging rhinoceros on the video frightened the kindergartners.
11. Among other sports, Li enjoys snorkeling in the ocean.
12. The teacher noted that Paul has a love of reading poems and writing them.
13. His strongest event in the track meet was running hurdles.
14. At sunrise the girls began raking the golden leaves.
15. One popular hobby is collecting baseball cards.