

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.

- The vibrating of the tire caused the car to shake.
- The noise you heard is the soft chirping of a baby bird.
- Sally is an expert at identifying Grecian artifacts.
- Playing the piano well is a difficult skill to learn.
- 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 ^Srocking of the boat made Daniel seasick.

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

- Becoming a doctor takes years of serious study.
- Kino's specialty is cooking mushrooms and onions.
- The subtle squeaking of the door hinges told Mira that her sister was home.
- Carla decided on writing about famous women in history.
- 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.

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

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

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

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