

Lesson 19 Gerunds

Before we leave noun boxes, we need to look at two "verbals." Verbals look like verbs, but they go in the same places that noun boxes can go. Most grammar books call the -ing verbals "gerunds" and the "to Vb" verbals infinitives, so we will use these terms.

Introduction to gerunds and infinitives

- An **infinitive** (Vinf) is the "to Vb" form. We will talk about infinitives in the next lesson.
- A **gerund** (ger) is an -ing word that does **not** have an X-Word (am is are was were)

NOTE: you might see a **d-t-n verbal** sometimes. The are usually used as Describers. We won't discuss these in this book, but if you see a d-t-n in "the wrong place" that's what it is.

Dt Ds *

The **surprised** students saw their teacher in the back of a police car.

Examples Infinitive, X+ Ving, four uses of Gerunds.:

- | | | |
|--|----------|--|
| Infinitive → | Vinf | He started to smoke when he was 15. |
| Ving→ | X Ving | Charlie is smoking a cigarette. |
| Gerund as subject→ | ger | Smoking can kill you. |
| Gerund as describer→ | Dt ger * | There isn't any smoking area in our school. |
| Gerund after preposition | ger | Charlie's doctor scolded him <for smoking . |
| Gerund as an object
(after certain verbs) → | ger | He should stop smoking . |



What is a gerund?

If you remember from lesson 3, we learned about the special relationships that exist between X-Words and verb forms. In that lesson, we saw that **Ving always appears with an X-Word from the be family** (*am, is, are, was, were*).

But you have probably seen in your reading and elsewhere that **sometimes the Ving appears alone**.

- **Form:** *A Gerund is the Ving without an X-Word.*
- **Use:** *Gerunds can be used any way that main words (nouns) are used.*
A gerund can be a subject, an object (⚠ after some verbs, but not all), a describer, or the main word in a preposition.
- **Feel:** *Gerunds have a verb-like quality. They look and "feel" like verbs, but they are not.**

Here again are four examples of gerunds along with their use in the sentence:

We will look at each of these uses.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Subject→ | 1. Jogging is good exercise. |
| After a preposition→ | 2. Peter grew stronger by jogging every day. |
| After a verb→ | 3. He enjoys relaxing on the weekends. |
| As a describer→ | 4. Peter spent the hot afternoon in the swimming pool . |

Gerund phrases

In English, a gerund may be alone or it may accompany a word or a group of words to form a gerund phrase.

Example:

Gerund: Exercising doesn't have to take up much of your time.

Gerund phrase: Eating good food is a good way to stay healthy.

Don't confuse a gerund phrase with a gerund + prepositional phrase:

Gerund + prepositional phrase: Traveling by train is a good way to tour.

* because gerunds don't have an X-Word, they don't show number (singular or plural) or tense (present or past)

1. Gerunds as the main word of the Subject

Both **gerunds** and **gerund phrases** may be the **main word of the subject** of a sentence.

Examples of gerunds as subjects:

Smoking is bad for your health.

Hiking < in | the mountains is a pleasant way to get exercise.

When a **gerund phrase** appears in the subject, the entire gerund phrase is considered the main word.

Examples of gerund phrases as subjects:

Riding horses is her favorite hobby.

Being active helps your body and your spirit.

Look at the verbs in the examples. **Gerunds take a singular verb / X-word**
 (is, was, has, does, VxS)
 (like all other nouns, gerunds can match up with had, did, VxD,
 can, could, will, would, shall, should, must, might, may.)

2. Gerunds as Describers

Like other nouns, gerunds can be used to describe things.

^{Ds} ^{*}
Writing class is fun! It is ^{Dt} ^{Ds} ^{*} an **exciting** class!

Jun takes ^{Ds} ^{*} **singing** lessons. Joy sat <in ^{Dt} ^{Ds} ^{*} the **waiting** room > at the doctor's office.



3. Gerunds in prepositional phrases

We have seen that a **gerund can be the main word in the subject** of a sentence. In this lesson we'll see that **gerunds can also be the main word in a prepositional phrase**.

Do you remember the definition of a **prepositional phrase**? A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun box. Gerunds are often used as the main word of the noun box that comes after a preposition..

Gerunds are often used as the main word of a prepositional phrase.

Look at the gerunds (**fighting** and **going**) in these examples:

Pr *

I am tired <of | **fighting** > with her.

Pr *

We are thinking <about | **going** > to Atlantic City.

☠ **NEVER** use an **infinitive** after a preposition.

4. Using gerunds after Verbs

After some verbs in English we can place an **infinitive** or a **gerund** when we want a "verb-like-act-word." Most of these verbs are about *emotions, feelings, or communication*. They usually answer "what?" and go in the object (What?) slot. Some of these verbs take a gerund, some take an infinitive, and some take either a gerund or infinitive.

Verb	Gerund or infinitive?	Examples:
like	gerund or infinitive	V/XS ger She likes eating chocolate. V/XS Vinf She likes to eat chocolate.
quit	gerund	Vp ger He quit talking when the boss came into the room.
want	infinitive	V/XS Vinf Paul wants to get a better job.



NOTE:

- **Any** verb can be used as a *gerund*, it is the choice of verbs **before** the gerund that is limited.
- The **form** of the verb does not matter.
*She finished **writing** her paper. She has to finish **writing** her paper.
 She might finish **writing** her paper. She will finish **writing** her paper.*

Verbs that can come in front of Gerunds

Example: The teacher admitted **being** too lazy to grade papers.

VxD Ger What?

admit	defer	escape	mind	recall
appreciate	delay	favor	miss	recommend
avoid	deny	fear	postpone	regret
can't help	dread	finish	practice	resent
complete	endure	imagine	put off	resist
consider	enjoy	keep	quit	risk
				suggest



Lesson 19 Exercise 1 *Gerunds as subjects*

Directions: fill in the blank spaces below with a gerund or gerund phrase to correctly complete the idea of the sentence.

- 1 _____ is against the law.
- 2 _____ too much alcohol can kill you.
- 3 _____ in elections is every citizen's responsibility.
- 4 _____ a new language takes a lot of patience.
- 5 _____ annoys me.
- 6 _____ is embarrassing.
- 7 _____ takes a lot of money.

Lesson 19 Exercise 2 *More Gerunds as subjects*

Write two sentences using a gerund or gerund phrase as the subject.

1. _____
2. _____

Lesson 19 Exercise 3 *Gerunds after Prepositions*

In each of the sentences below, change the word in parentheses into its gerund form and place it in the main word position of the prepositional phrase.

1. You should be careful <about | _____ > your personal information
(give out)
online.
2. Please turn off the lights <after| _____ > the room.
(leave)
3. She asked for information <about| _____ > for the next semester.
(register)
4. The boy's mother tried to prevent him <from| _____ > himself.
(hurt)
5. The priest talked the man <into| _____ > his crime to the police.
(confess)



6. Thanks <for| _____ > me.
(help)
7. He is in danger <of| _____ >the course.
(fail)
8. We were planning <on| _____ > home tonight.
(stay)
9. His illness kept us <from| _____ > on vacation.
(go)
10. I would like to apologize <for| _____ > late.
(arrive)

Lesson 19 Exercise 4 *More Gerunds after Prepositions*

Try to fill in the blanks with gerunds on your own.

1. You should wash your hands <before| _____ >.
2. I am trying to decide <between| _____ > or _____ to the party.
3. They were exhausted <after| _____ > all night.
4. As a child, I was afraid <of| _____ > in a totally dark room.
5. He reminded me of the law <about| _____ > in elevators.

Lesson 19 Exercise 5 *Gerunds that follow certain verbs*

These sentences with the verb "like" are followed by infinitives. Write the sentences again, changing the infinitive to a gerund.

1. Dogs like to chase squirrels. _____
2. Squirrels like to eat nuts. _____

Now change the gerunds in these sentences to infinitives.

1. Cats like chasing mice. _____
2. Mice like eating cheese. _____



Lesson 19 Exercise 6 *More Gerunds that follow certain verbs*

Directions: Write answers to the following questions using gerunds or gerund phrases.

Example: What do you recommend seeing in New York?

I recommend seeing the museum of natural history.

1. What do you *enjoy* doing on weekends?

2. What do you *avoid*?

3. What do you *suggest* doing on a nice day?

4. What do you *fear*?

5. What do you *dislike* most about school.

6. What *can't* you *help* doing when you are studying?

Lesson 19 Exercise 7 *Even more Gerunds that follow certain verbs*

Write four sentences with gerunds using verbs from the list.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____



Lesson 19 Exercise 8 *What is the -ing word's job?*

Decide how the -ing word is used in these sentences as a Ving , as subject, as the main word of the prepositional phrase, or as a Descriptor. Circle your choice.

1.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	She was trying to get his attention.
2.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	Studying a language takes a lot of time.
3.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	That is an interesting question.
4.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	After 6 miles, John was tired of walking .
5.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	He is hoping to leave work early today.
6.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	Seeing movies is one of my favorite pastimes.
7.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	The speeding car hit a tree.
8.	Ving	Gerund-subject	Gerund-preposition	Descriptor	A big part of being successful attitude.

Lesson 19 Exercise 9 *Mixed*

Write three sentences as indicated.

1. (Use a gerund as main word in subject)

2. (Use a gerund as main word in a prepositional phrase)

3. (Use a Ving)

4. (Use a gerund after a verb)

