

The Participle

5e. A **participle** is a verb form that can be used as an adjective.

(1) Present participles end in *-ing*.

EXAMPLES Our soccer team had a **winning** season. [*Winning* modifies *season*.]
Shivering with cold, we decided to go indoors. [*Shivering* modifies *we*.]
 I found three kittens **sleeping** in the flower bed. [*Sleeping* modifies *kittens*.]

(2) Most past participles end in *-d* or *-ed*. Some are irregularly formed.

EXAMPLES We visited a Spanish mission **established** in the 1600s. [*Established* modifies *mission*.]
 The **swollen** river overflowed its banks. [*Swollen* modifies *river*.]

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

ADJECTIVE We found Ms. Jacobs **working** in her garden.

VERB PHRASE Ms. Jacobs **was working** in her garden.

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, circle the noun or pronoun that the underlined participle modifies. Then, above the participle, write *present* for *present participle* or *past* for *past participle*.

Example 1. The ^{*past*} broken glass is on the floor.

1. Clara likes to eat canned peaches.
2. Clapping wildly, the fans welcomed the band.
3. Theresa watered the blossoming flowers.
4. The child's forgotten toys lined the bottom of the toy chest.
5. Decorated with care, the float was popular at the parade.

EXERCISE B Underline the participle in each of the following sentences. Then, above the participle, write *present* for *present participle* or *past* for *past participle*.

Example 1. The painting, ^{*past*} purchased at a garage sale, was worth one million dollars.

6. The book, chosen for its unusual characters, was a class favorite.
7. Feeling confident, Larry volunteered to list all of the state capitals.
8. Dale watched the kitten playing with his shoe.
9. The students planning the field trip decided to take a trip to Washington, D.C.
10. Janet discovered a treasure map on the piece of yellowed paper.

The Participial Phrase

5f. A **participial phrase** consists of a participle and any modifiers or complements the participle has. The entire phrase is used as an adjective.

EXAMPLES **Reaching for a bagel**, she knocked over her glass of milk. [The participial phrase modifies the pronoun *she*.]

Aunt Molly sent me a baseball glove **autographed by my favorite player**. [The participial phrase modifies the noun *glove*.]

A participial phrase should be placed as close as possible to the word it modifies. Otherwise, the phrase may appear to modify another word, and the sentence may not make sense.

MISPLACED Many holiday decorations adorned the gift shop made of papier mâché.

CORRECTED Many holiday decorations **made of papier mâché** adorned the gift shop.

EXERCISE A Underline the participial phrase in each of the following sentences. Then, circle the noun or pronoun that the participial phrase modifies.

Example 1. Appreciated for his contribution, Alfred was awarded a trip to Paris.

- The mascot, known to the students as Sparky, entertained the crowd.
- Walter, running with speed and purpose, passed the other joggers.
- Seeing the bump in the road, Nell swerved to avoid it.
- Dressed in style, Blake left his house and headed for the school dance.
- The mayor has a building named in her honor.

EXERCISE B Use each of the following participial phrases in a sentence. Be sure to place each phrase as close as possible to the noun or pronoun it modifies.

Example 1. looking down at his shoes

Looking down at his shoes, Bart noticed that they were untied.

6. feeling tired

7. dressed in shorts and a T-shirt

8. hiding under the bed

9. damaged by the rain

10. signed by President Abraham Lincoln
