

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.

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. ^S
The slow rocking 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 you throw it away.
- Terra dreams of flying a helicopter for a television news station.
- Our baseball team is playing out of town this week.