

I. A gerund is the “ing” form of a verb used as a noun. It is used in the same ways as a noun. Gerunds can be used as a subject or an object.

EX: Playing tennis is fun.

Playing is the gerund. It is the subject of the sentence.

We enjoy playing.

Playing is the gerund. It is the object of the sentence.

Exercise: Read the sentence. Underline the gerund. Tell if it is the subject or object of the sentence.

1. Walking is good exercise.
2. Smoking is expensive.
3. I don't like writing.
4. My favorite hobby is reading.
5. I avoid flying because I am afraid.
6. We put off telling mother about Bob's death.
7. I finished mowing the yard.
8. This shirt needs washing.
9. Your hair needs cutting.
10. We started eating dinner before they arrived.
11. Cooking is my favorite pastime.
12. Learning about other cultures is important.
13. Eating vegetables is good for you.
14. Finding a parking space is hard.
15. I enjoy drinking coffee.

II. Don't confuse gerunds with the “ing” form of the verb used in present continuous tense.

EX: I am playing tennis tomorrow.

Playing is not a gerund. It is part of the verb “am playing”.

We are watching TV.

Watching is not a gerund. It is part of the verb “are watching”.

Exercise: Read the sentence. Tell if the “ing” word is a verb in the present continuous tense or a gerund.

1. He is reading a book.
2. Reading books is fun.
3. Studying English is a necessity.
4. She is riding the bus tomorrow.
5. I hate riding the bus.
6. All of the children are helping the teacher.
7. She is calling their parents.
8. Linda loves spending money on clothes.
9. Speaking a foreign language is difficult.
10. The teacher is getting angry.
11. We avoid making the teacher angry.
12. I began learning English in high school.
13. They considered moving to New York.
14. The man continued talking even though they told him to be quiet.

15. I don't mind helping.
16. She is always saying hurtful things.
17. Finding friends in a new country is hard.
18. Moving to New York was the best thing that ever happened to me.

III. Gerunds can also be objects of the preposition in a prepositional phrase.

EX: Sara had a good reason for being late. I thanked her for volunteering.
 We talked about going to Canada. I'm used to sleeping with the window open.

IV. Gerunds can occasionally be used as adjectives.

EX: I heard some surprising news. The crying baby had a wet diaper.
 The burning log fell off the fire. I heard some surprising news.

Exercise: Read the sentence. Underline the gerund. Tell if the gerund is used as an adjective or object of the preposition.

1. He delights in having his coffee first thing every morning.
2. She is afraid of speaking in public.
3. I lost my running shoes.
4. It was an amazing film.
5. He loves to paint the setting sun.
6. That horse is capable of winning the race.
7. We were excited about going to Africa.
8. She is interested in becoming a doctor.
9. The banker was guilty of stealing money.
10. It was a comforting service.
11. Those were exciting times.
12. The roller coaster was a thrilling ride.

In small groups: Complete these preposition combinations with the appropriate preposition and gerund. The first two are done for you.

1. Alice isn't interested in (look) looking for a new job.
2. Henry is excited about (leave) leaving for India.
3. You are capable _____ (do) _____ better work.
4. I have no excuse _____ (be) _____ late.
5. The rain prevented us _____ (complete) _____ the yard work.
6. Anthony is always complaining _____ (have) _____ a headache.
7. I apologized to him _____ (tell) _____ a lie.
8. Everyone participated _____ (search) _____ for the lost child.
9. Jess had a good reason _____ not (go) _____ to class yesterday.
10. I believe _____ (be) _____ honest at all times.