Finite and non-finite Verbs

Finite verbs

Present Simple: I type    I speak
Present Continuous: I am typing    I am speaking
Past Simple: I typed    I spoke
Present Perfect: I have typed    I have spoken

Non-finite verbs

Present Participle: Typing speed    Speaking engagement
Perfect Participle: Having typed    Having spoken
Past Participle: Typed letters    Spoken commentary
Gerund: Typing can be difficult. Do you find speaking stressful?
Infinitive: To type is a real skill. They want you to speak.

Non-finite verbs are not limited by subject, person, number or tense

The Present Participle is formed by adding the suffix – ing. It functions as an adjective.

His typing speed was less than ideal.
The speaking engagement was for next Friday afternoon.

The Perfect Participle is formed by combining with the past participle:

Having typed the letter, he went home.
Having spoken her mind, she felt more at ease.

The Past Participle without an auxiliary, functions as an adjective:

Typed letters don’t always look better than hand-written ones.
Most sports shows have a spoken commentary with them.

The Gerund is merely the present participle that functions as a noun.

Typing is something I don’t do as well as I should.
I find speaking stressful.
The Infinitive

To type is a real skill.
To win the prize is my dream.
This is the best software package to improve productivity.
They want you to speak.

Careful:

You will need to limit your workload (infinitive).
I will work to the limit of my power. (prepositional phrase)

Exercises:

Having looked over the papers, she looked out of the window.
He asked me to go later.
Walking through the park is my favourite activity.
My walking shoes are extremely comfortable.

Present Participles (–ing form) can be used as an adjective.

This is an interesting book. (This book interests me)
John has become very boring. (John now bores us.)
An astounding number of men stay bachelors. (The number astounds us.)
A charming house on the outskirts of town. (The house charms us.)
There is nothing very surprising in this. (Nothing in this surprises us.)
When Bernhard moans, he’s much more convincing. (When he moans, he convinces us much more.)
Oil and gas drillers are doing a booming business. (The business of oil drillers is booming.)
I love the noise of falling rain. (I love it when rain falls.)
I don’t like screaming children. (The Children who are screaming)
Exercises:
1. The film wasn't as good as we had expected. It was ________________________.
2. Diana teaches young children. She likes it, but she finds it ____________________.
3. It’s been hot all week. I hate this weather. It’s ______________________________.

Present Participles ( –ing form) can be combined with adverbs in compound structures

An adequately functioning computer. (A computer that functions adequately.)
Pro-active performing staff (Staff who perform pro-actively)
Quick-growing trees (These trees grow quickly)
Slow-moving produce (This produces moves slowly)

Exercises:
1. This class is expanding rapidly.  This is a __________________________
2. Our stomachs are aching badly. We have ___________________________________
3. This exercise is exhausting me thoroughly. This is a _____________________________

Present Participles ( –ing form) with an object can be used as an adjective. Note the word order.

Tamil-speaking Sri Lankans (These Sri Lankans speak Tamil)
A rabbit-hunting woman. (A woman who hunts rabbits.)
Is that oven self-cleaning? (Does that oven clean itself?)

Exercises:
1. She likes to think of herself as someone who occasionally eats meat. She is a __________.
2. This sort of work destroys your soul. It’s ________________________________.
3. I'm not sure if I know what you mean. This could consume a lot of my time.
   It could be ________________________.

Verbs + ing forms
After some verbs, an –ing form is necessary:

stop  delay  fancy  consider  admit  miss  involve
finish  postpone  imagine  avoid  deny  risk  enjoy
practise  detest  dislike  dread  envisage  hate  miss
recall  resent  regret  risk  propose  give up  put off
carry on  go on  keep / keep on

After some expressions, an –ing form is necessary:

It’s no use  it’s no good  there’s no point in  it’s (not) worth  have difficulty
A waste of money  spend/waste time

Examples with passive:

She fears that patients would resent being interviewed by a medical computer.

He loves being looked at by others.

Verb-like -ing forms

Agent (subject) of gerund is also the subject of the verb in the sentence.

Same time

Carol’s in the bar having a drink.
A man ran out of the house shouting.
Don’t just stand there doing nothing.
Steve hurt his arm playing tennis.
Be careful when crossing the road
He had been up all night, attending a dying man.
They ran screaming out of the room.
A little girl walked past, her doll dragging behind her on the pavement.
A little girl walked past, dragging her doll behind her on the pavement.
A car roared past with smoke pouring from the exhaust.
Strolling in nonchalantly, she failed to notice the time on the clock on the wall.
Sometimes used with verbs of reporting.

I saw a small girl standing in the goldfish pond.
I saw him walking down the street.
She heard me reading aloud my vocabulary.
Liz felt something touching her on the back.
Tim smelt something burning.

Succession of events
After finishing her work, she went home.
After scanning the article, she was able to answer the multiple-choice questions.
After talking to you I always feel better.

Cause/Effect
Feeling tired, I went to bed early.
Being French, it’s surprising that she’s such a terrible cook.
Having so little time, there was not much that I could do.
Training funds being available, she was able to improve her knowledge of spreadsheets
Nobody having any more to say, the meeting was closed.
Not knowing what to do, I telephoned the police.
With Peter working in Geelong, and Lucy travelling most of the week, the house seems pretty empty.

Instead of relative clauses
Who’s the fat man sitting in the corner?
There’s a woman crying her eyes out over there.
Anyone touching that wire, will get a shock.
There’s Neville, eating as usual.
Who’s the girl dancing with your brother?

But: Who’s the girl your brother’s dancing with?

Referring to objects, even indirect objects:

I watched the match because I knew some of the people playing.

I don’t like children screaming.

I found him sitting at a table covered with papers.

We can offer you a job cleaning cars.

After conjunctions and prepositions.

She’s been quite different since coming back from Singapore.

On meeting each other, Australian people often shake hands.

They left without saying goodbye.

Misrelated participles

My wife had a long talk with Sally, explaining why she didn’t want the children to play together.

Like adverbs?

Generally speaking, men can run faster than women.

Considering everything, it wasn’t a bad holiday.

I thought it pointless starting before nine o’clock.
**Perfect Participles**

Having found a hotel, we looked for somewhere to have dinner.

Having finished her work, she went home.

Having lost all of my money, I went home.

Having failed my medical exams, I took up teaching.

After having annoyed everybody he went home.

Having driven five hours to the meeting, Don learnt that it had been postponed.

Having been invited to the party, we could hardly refuse to go.

All the money having been spent, we started looking for work.

Having been hunted close to extinction, the rhino is once again common in this area.

Having been declared insane, he was confined for four months in a prison hospital.

She’s angry about not having been invited to the party.

**Past participles**

Past Participles (–ed form) can be used as an adjective. These are derived from passive constructions.

The upstairs toilet window is still broken. (The window was broken by someone)

The house looked abandoned. (The house had been abandoned by its occupants.)

We cannot refuse to teach children the required subjects. (The subjects are required by the school.)

She says she’s got a broken heart. (Her heart was broken by someone.)

A lost dog. (The dog was lost by someone.)

The recovered animals will be released. (The animals were recovered by someone.)

He was driven home in an armoured car. (The car was armoured. It had been armoured by a vehicle security firm.)

**Compound structures**

Government-inspired rumours (These rumours have been inspired by the government.)

Home-made cake (This cake was made at home.)
A recently-built house. (This house was recently built.)
The above-mentioned point (This point was mentioned above.)
I like highly-motivated students.
It was a richly-deserved honour.
She had a very laid-back manner.

After nouns (or pronouns) – these are similar to reduced relative clauses:

I got the only ticket left.
Most of the people invited to the reception were old friends.
We couldn’t agree on any of the problems discussed.
The people questioned gave very different opinions.
Most of those questioned refused to answer.
Those selected will begin training on Monday.
Half of the people invited to the party didn’t turn up.

Clause-like structures

Rejected by all his friends, he decided to become a monk.
Used economically, one tin will last for six weeks.
Served with milk and sugar, it makes a delicious breakfast.

Participle clauses after conjunctions and prepositions.

Once deprived of oxygen, the brain dies.
**Gerunds**

A gerund is a verbal form that ends in *-ing* and functions as a noun. Since a gerund functions as a noun, it occupies some positions in a sentence that a noun ordinarily would, for example: subject, direct object, subject complement, and object of preposition.

Gerund as subject:
- *Travelling* might satisfy your desire for new experiences.
- The study abroad program might satisfy your desire for new experiences.

Gerund as direct object:
- They do not appreciate my *singing*.
- They do not appreciate my assistance.

Gerund as subject complement:
- My cat's favourite activity is *sleeping*.
- My cat's favourite food is salmon.

Gerund as object of preposition:
- The police arrested him for *speeding*.
- The police arrested him for criminal activity.
A Gerund Phrase is a group of words consisting of a gerund and the modifier(s) and/or (pro)noun(s) or noun phrase(s) that function as the direct object(s), indirect object(s), or complement(s) of the action or state expressed in the gerund, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gerund Phrase</th>
<th>Subject of the sentence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding a needle in a haystack would be easier than what we're trying to do.</td>
<td>Finding (gerund) a needle (direct object of action expressed in gerund) in a haystack (prepositional phrase as adverb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope that you appreciate my offering you this opportunity.</td>
<td>my (possessive pronoun adjective form, modifying the gerund) offering (gerund) you (indirect object of action expressed in gerund) this opportunity (direct object of action expressed in gerund)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newt's favourite tactic has been lying to his constituents.</td>
<td>lying to (gerund) his constituents (direct object of action expressed in gerund)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You might get in trouble for faking an illness to avoid work.</td>
<td>faking (gerund) an illness (direct object of action expressed in gerund) to avoid work (infinitive phrase as adverb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being the boss made Jeff feel uneasy.</td>
<td>the boss (subject complement for Jeff, via state of being expressed in gerund)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Punctuation**

A gerund virtually never requires any punctuation with it.

**Points to remember:**
1. A gerund is a verbal ending in *-ing* that is used as a noun.
2. A gerund phrase consists of a gerund plus modifier(s), object(s), and/or complement(s).

**Exercise on Gerunds:**
Underline the gerunds or gerund phrases in the following sentences and label how they function in the sentence (subject, direct object, subject complement, object of preposition).

1. Swimming keeps me in shape.
2. Swimming in your pool is always fun.
3. Telling your father was a mistake.
4. The college recommends sending applications early.
5. He won the game by scoring during the overtime period.
6. Her most important achievement was winning the national championship.
7. Going to work today took all my energy.
8. Fighting for a losing cause made them depressed.
**Infinitives**

The infinitive may function as a subject, direct object, subject complement, adjective, or adverb in a sentence. Although an infinitive is easy to locate because of the *to* + verb form, deciding what function it has in a sentence can sometimes be confusing.

- *To wait* seemed foolish when decisive action was required. (subject)
- Everyone wanted *to go*. (direct object)
- His ambition is *to fly*. (subject complement)
- He lacked the strength *to resist*. (adjective)
- We must study *to learn*. (adverb)

**An Infinitive Phrase** is a group of words consisting of an infinitive and the modifier(s) and/or (pro)noun(s) or noun phrase(s) that function as the actor(s), direct object(s), indirect object(s), or complement(s) of the action or state expressed in the infinitive, such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We intended <em>to leave early.</em></td>
<td>Functioning as direct object of the verb <em>intended.</em> to leave (infinitive) early (adverb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a paper <em>to write before class.</em></td>
<td>Functioning as an adjective modifying <em>paper.</em> to write (infinitive) before class (prepositional phrase as adverb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phil agreed <em>to give me a ride.</em></td>
<td>Functioning as the direct object of the verb <em>agreed.</em> to give (infinitive) me (indirect object of action expressed in infinitive) a ride (direct object of action expressed in infinitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They asked <em>me to bring some food.</em></td>
<td>Functioning as the direct object of the verb <em>asked.</em> me (actor or &quot;subject&quot; of infinitive phrase) to bring (infinitive) some food (direct object of action expressed in infinitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone wanted <em>Carol to be the captain of the team.</em></td>
<td>Functioning as the direct object of the verb <em>wanted.</em> Carol (actor or &quot;subject&quot; of infinitive phrase) to be (infinitive) the captain (subject complement for <em>Carol</em>, via state of being expressed in infinitive) of the team (prepositional phrase as adjective)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Actors: In these last two examples the actor of the infinitive phrase could be roughly described as the "subject". It is a bit misleading to use the word subject, however, since an infinitive phrase is not a full clause with a subject and a finite verb. Also notice that when it is a pronoun, the actor appears in the objective case (me, not I, in the fourth example). Certain verbs, when they take an infinitive direct object, require an actor for the infinitive phrase; others can’t have an actor. Still other verbs can go either way, as the charts below illustrate.

Verbs that take infinitive objects without actors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>agree</th>
<th>begin</th>
<th>refuse</th>
<th>decide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fail</td>
<td>hesitate</td>
<td>hope</td>
<td>intend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>neglect</td>
<td>offer</td>
<td>plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prefer</td>
<td>pretend</td>
<td>promise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remember</td>
<td>start</td>
<td>try</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:

Most students plan to study.
We began to learn.
They offered to pay.
They neglected to pay.
She promised to return.

In all of these examples no actor can come between the italicized main (finite) verb and the infinitive direct-object phrase.

Verbs that take infinitive objects with actors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>advise</th>
<th>allow</th>
<th>convince</th>
<th>remind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>encourage</td>
<td>force</td>
<td>hire</td>
<td>teach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instruct</td>
<td>invite</td>
<td>permit</td>
<td>tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implore</td>
<td>incite</td>
<td>appoint</td>
<td>order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

He *reminded* me to buy milk.
Their fathers *advise* them to study.
She *forced* the defendant to admit the truth.
You've *convinced* the director of the program to change her position.
I *invite* you to consider the evidence.

In all of these examples an actor is required after the italicized main (finite) verb and before the infinitive direct-object phrase.

**Verbs that use either pattern:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ask</th>
<th>expect</th>
<th>(would) like</th>
<th>want</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Examples:

I *asked* to see the records.
I *asked* him to show me the records.
Trent *expected* his group to win.
Trent *expected* to win.
Brenda *likes* to drive fast.
Brenda *likes* her friend to drive fast.

In all of these examples the italicized main verb can take an infinitive object with or without an actor.

**Punctuation:**

If the infinitive is used as an adverb and is the beginning phrase in a sentence, it should be set off with a comma; otherwise, no punctuation is needed for an infinitive phrase.

- *To buy a basket of flowers*, John had to spend his last dollar.
- *To improve your writing*, you must consider your purpose and audience.
Split infinitives:

Split infinitives occur when additional words are included between to and the verb in an infinitive. Many readers find a single adverb splitting the infinitive to be acceptable, but this practice should be avoided in formal writing.

Examples:
I like to on a nice day walk in the woods. * (unacceptable)
On a nice day, I like to walk in the woods. (revised)
I needed to quickly gather my personal possessions. (acceptable in informal contexts)
I needed to gather my personal possessions quickly. (revised for formal contexts)

Exercise on Infinitives:

Underline the infinitive phrase and label the way it is used in the sentence, adding any punctuation as needed.

1. I want to go.
2. I want you to go home.
3. We want to see the play.
4. To see a shooting star is good luck.
5. To fight against those odds would be ridiculous.
Now underline the infinitive phrase and label how it is used in the sentence.

6. To design a new building for them would be challenging.
7. I want him to be my bodyguard.
8. Jim is expected to program computers at his new job.
9. They will try to build a new stadium in ten years.
10. To distill a quart of moonshine takes two hours.
11. The president wants to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
12. She has the money to buy it.
13. We demonstrated to attract attention to our agenda.
14. I do not like to give poor grades.
15. The dogs were taught to stand, to sit, and to bark on command.
16. To be great is to be true to yourself and to the highest principles of honor.
17. To see is to believe.