

6 Worksheet on Grammar – The ‘-ing-Form’

Text: Alexander Chancellor, “The Queen is Dead...”, from: Martin Arndt/Karl Sassenberg, *Australia and New Zealand - Down Under On Top*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2011), pp. 44f.

A THE ‘ING-FORM’ – GENERAL INFORMATION

In the text the author uses various types of ‘-ing-forms’. The ‘-ing-form’ can be used like a noun, like an adjective or like a verb. The traditional (Latin-oriented) grammar distinguishes between the ‘-ing-form’ as a **Gerund** and the ‘-ing-form’ as a (Present) **Participle**.

- “Overspeeding is forbidden.” (= the ‘-ing-form’ as a **Gerund**) / “I don’t like working in the garden.” / “I admit telling her.” / “I avoid speaking to him.” / “I enjoy dancing.”
- “She is working as a teacher now.” (= the ‘-ing-form’ as a **Participle**)

Many grammarians do not like the expression ‘**Gerund**’, because sometimes there is no clear distinction between a **Gerund** and a (Present) **Participle**.

Remember:

- Not all words ending in ‘-ing’ are, strictly speaking, ‘-ing-forms’, e.g. nouns like “the building”.
- The Gerund is a noun in the form of the Present Participle of a verb.

B GRAMMAR FILE 1

The **Gerund** can be put into

- the Passive Voice: “I like being driven in a Porsche.”
- the Perfect Tense: “He is glad about having been in time.”
- the Passive Voice of the Perfect Tense: “He denies having been driven by his friend.”

The ‘-ing-form’ as a **Gerund** can be

- the subject of a sentence: “Marketing is a very inexact science.” / “The marketing of the product will continue for a few months yet.” / “Reading poems is his hobby.” / “Speaking to an audience is always stressful.” / “Swimming in cold water can be

healthy.“ (In German it is often translated with the Infinitive: “In kaltem Wasser zu schwimmen, kann gesund sein.“)

- the object of a sentence: “Do you like diving?” / “I enjoy playing tennis.” (= the ‘-ing-form’= the Gerund after certain verbs; see below)
- used after prepositions: “Instead of feeling sorry for yourself, do some work for charity.” / “He is interested in doing sports.” / “After discussing the topic with her, I’ve changed my mind.” / “Before leaving, you need to speak to Oscar.” / “I am afraid of using a plane.” / “There is still hope of improving your knowledge of grammar.” / “The player apologized for being unfair.” / “I am looking forward to meeting you soon.” “to”: a preposition! (LONGMAN Dictionary of Contemporary English [LDCE]: “look forward to doing s.th.”)
- used after certain expressions like “it’s hopeless“, “to be busy“, “can’t help“, “it’s no use“, “there’s no denying“
- used, having a subject on its own: “His mother dreamt of him passing the exam“ (informal). / “His mother dreamt of his passing the exam“ (formal). / “His mother dreamt about her son passing the exam“ (informal). / “His mother dreamt about her son’s passing the exam“(informal)
- in the Present, Perfect, Passive and in the negative: “I like shooting.“ (Present) / “He does not like being seen in her company.“ (Passive) / “He was charged with having committed arson.“ (Perfect) / “He complained of having been tortured by the police.“ (Perfect Passive)

Verb + ‘-ing-form’ or ‘to’-Infinitive

- The **Gerund** *must* be used after certain verbs like: to admit / to appreciate/ to avoid / to carry on (= to continue) / to consider / to delay / to deny / to detest / to dislike / to enjoy / to fancy / to finish / to give up (= to stop) / to go on (= to continue) / to imagine / to include / to involve / to keep on (= to do s.th. continuously) / to like / to mind / to miss / to postpone / to practise / to put off (= to postpone / to resent / to risk / to stop / to suggest.
- Some verbs can also be used with the Infinitive without a difference in meaning like: to begin / to love / to prefer / to start.
- Some verbs can be used with the Infinitive, but have a different meaning, e.g.: “I remember listening to a Beatles record“=“I remember that I listened to...” versus “I remember to write a letter“=“I remember that I will (have to) write a letter.“ / “I regret saying what I said.“ / “! regret to say that I missed the bus.“ Gerunds are generally used to describe an actual, vivid, or fulfilled action whereas Infinitives are better used to describe potential, hypothetical, or future events, e.g.: “I’ll never forget meeting the President.“ / “I mustn’t forget to do the homework.“

B GRAMMAR FILE 2

The 'ing'-form' as a (Present) **Participle** is used

- to express the idea that something is happening at or around the very moment of speaking (In English, "now" can mean: this second, today, this month, this year, this century, and so on.) (= progressive forms)
- to express the continuous (progressive) aspect (even of past forms like "He was swimming", past perfect forms like "He had been playing golf" or future forms like "He will be taking part in the competition.")
- to express a fixed plan in the near future (e.g.: "I'm going to Egypt next week.")
- to describe temporary actions
- to describe trends
- to describe repeated actions which are irritating to the speaker (often in connection with adverbs like "always", "constantly", "forever")
- especially with certain signal words like: "**now**", "**at the moment**", "**still**", "**at present**"
- as a Predicative Adjective (e.g. "The news is disturbing.")
- as a Participial Adjective (e.g.: a "sleeping dog" / "The Beatles were cheered by thousands of screaming fans.")
- after certain verbs (especially those of sensory perception: e.g. "I saw her standing there.") – the Infinitive expresses that the complete action is perceived
- to replace a Relative Clause (e.g.: "The man talking to her is her new boss.")
- to shorten a Subordinate Clause (Time, Reason) (e.g.: "Feeling tired, he went to bed early." / "Having already seen the play twice, she did not want to go to the theatre again." / "Opening the gate, the man entered the compound." / "Talking to her friend she forgot to do the homework." / "Being a teacher, he could easily answer the question.")
- to express attendant circumstances (e.g.: "He ran out of the garage, forgetting to turn off the lights.")
- having a subject of its own (e.g.: "The interview having come to an end, the journalist went back to his office."). – Often the Participle is preceded by "with".

C QUESTIONS AND TASKS

1 See text "The Queen is Dead..."

A Where and why does the author use the Present Progressive?

B Where does the author use the Present Participle to replace a Subordinate Clause (here: a Relative Clause)?

C Where does the 'ing'-form' function as the subject of the sentence?

D There is also a Compound Participle (noun + participle; adjective + participle; adverb + participle): Where?

2 Why is the Gerund used in the following sentences? What is its function?

- A Jogging keeps me in shape.
- B The college recommends sending applications early.
- C He won the game by scoring during the overtime period.
- D Her most important achievement was winning the national championship.

3 What is the difference between the following sentences?

- A I was irritated by Bill's constant interrupting.
- B I was irritated by Bill, constantly interrupting.

- A The guitarist's finger-picking was extraordinary.
- B The guitarist, finger-picking, was extraordinary.

4 Choose the correct verb form (Infinitive or Gerund). Consult your dictionary (LDCE).

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| A Please avoid | (hit) the printer if it does not work. |
| B We cannot risk | (lose) this customer. |
| C He decided | (look) for a new job. |
| D He remembered | (drive) too fast that day. |
| E Please remember | (water) the spider plant. |

5 In the following abridged interview with Brian Johnson and Angus Young from the Australian band AC/DC (Source: <http://www.torontosun.com/2011/05/06/cdn-exclusive-the-acdc-interview>) some words/forms have been omitted. Fill in the empty spaces.

It's been nearly a year since the Black Ice tour ended. In hindsight, how do you think it went?
 JOHNSON: Fast. It didn't seem like it in the middle, then all of a sudden we were saying goodbye on the tarmac. I was in shock for over two weeks. I _____ (to sit) around back home, _____ (to twiddle) about with the wife looking at us. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know how to live a normal life anymore!
 YOUNG: I stayed in bed for about a week, but then I just took the guitar down in the studio and started _____ (to hammer) away on that. *How far along are you in the process of making another album?*
 YOUNG: It's just a matter of _____ (to take) the best -- and probably because we're brothers, we can easily say, 'That's good, that's crap, that's good ... ' *The band's 40th anniversary _____ (to come up) in 2013. What _____ (to get)?*
 JOHNSON: Fireworks!

6 Shorten the following sentences by using a Participle.

- A People *who live* in the country really need their cars.
- B Liz hurt her arm *while she was playing* tennis.
- C *While I was walking* home that afternoon, I wondered what I was going to say to her.
- D The fans had come early, *because they were hoping* to see the band arrive.
- E *Because he is a doctor*, he knew what to do at the scene of the accident.

7 Combine the sentences by using a Participle.

- A They watched the three workmen. The workmen pulled down the house.
 B When we left our house, we saw an accident.
 C Many people who live in this town are Afro-Americans.
 D When we looked up in the sky, we saw three kites flying in the air.
 E There are so many people ill at work. There is much more to do than usual.

8 Decide whether to use the Gerund or the Infinitive with 'to'. You may have to add a preposition. Consult your dictionary (LDCE).

- A Go on (to read) the text. (Lies den Text weiter.)
 B I (to mean) to phone your mother, but my mobile didn't work. (= Ich wollte deine Mutter anrufen, aber mein Handy war defekt.)
 C Stop (to read) the text. (Hör auf, den Text weiter zu lesen.)
 D I remember (to lend) someone my calculator, but I don't know who!
 E Please remember (to study) for the test on Friday.
 F When I was younger I used (to drive) very fast!
 G I'm not very good (to play) chess.
 H Are you interested (to come) to the cinema with me tomorrow?

9 Fill in the missing form of the verb. The text is the end of the short story *With Hook and Line* written by Louis Beck (source: <http://www.classicreader.com/book/3796/1/>)

"In conclusion, let me advise anyone who _____ [to contemplate] a visit to Australia, and means _____ [to devote] any of his time to either river or lake _____ [to fish] to take his rods with him; all the rest of his tackle he can buy as cheap in the colonies as he can in England. Rods are but little used in salt water _____ [to fish] in Australia, and are terribly expensive to buy. Those who do use a rod are usually satisfied with a bamboo – a very good rod it makes, too, although inconvenient to carry when _____ [to travel] – but the generality of people use hand lines. And the visitor must not be persuaded that he can get really good river-fishing without _____ [to go] some distance from Sydney or Melbourne. That there is some excellent sport to be obtained in Port Jackson in summer is true, but it is lacking in a very essential thing – the quietude that is dear to the heart of every true fisherman."

10 Choose the correct answer for each gap below.

A Nate deserved _____ [to win] the prize for _____ [to write] that amazing short story about _____ [to travel] through Peru. I don't understand _____ [he; not to receive] the award.

B I can't believe you wanted _____ [to go] _____ [to fish], and you forgot _____ [to bring] a fishing pole. How did you expect _____ [to catch] any fish? Were you just going to sit in the river _____ [to catch] fish with your bare hands? You would have had a hard time _____ [to do] that!

C Vince is determined _____ [to save] enough money to travel to South Africa next year. If he avoids _____ [to waste] his money and manages _____ [to save] what he needs _____ [to make] the trip, he may be able _____ [to leave] in June.

D When Sam mentioned _____ [to want] _____ [to go] swimming, Nina warned him _____ [not to go] into the river. She explained that the national park administration did not allow _____ [visitors; to swim] for several reasons. The number one reason for _____ - (not; to permit) visitors _____ [to swim] was the large number of crocodiles in the park.

E The Oscar-winning actor avoids _____ [to talk] to his fans and refuses _____ [to give] his autograph. Moreover, he has difficulty _____ [to give] interviews and seems _____ [to have] problems with other people.

(Martin Arndt)