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The *gerund* always has the same function as a *noun* (although it looks like a *verb*). Like a noun, it can perform different functions in a sentence.

The gerund as the subject

- **Hunting** lions is dangerous.
- **Flying** makes me nervous.
- **Eating** people is wrong.

The gerund as the object

Gerunds and gerund phrases can act as *direct objects* when used with another verb. Direct objects answer the question 'what?':

- Mary loves **skating**. (*Mary loves what? Mary loves skating.*)
- I enjoy **running** every morning.
- Tom doesn't like **getting up** early.
- Ann enjoys **shopping**.

Sometimes, gerunds and gerund phrases are used as *indirect objects*. Indirect objects are used with a verb and a direct object (another noun). They often answer the question 'to what?':

- I will give **dancing** my best shot. (*give my best shot to what? To dancing.*)
- Jack made **running** his priority.
- Jeremy gave **skiing** a try.

The gerund as the subject complement

Gerunds can be used after linking verbs ('to be', *modal verbs*, the verbs 'to feel', 'to seem', 'to mean' etc.) and complement the subject of the sentence.

- *Seeing is **believing**.*
- *The most important thing is **learning**.*
- *His mistake was **talking** too much.*
- *Being a student sometimes means **spending** long ours with books.*

The gerund after prepositions

The gerund must be used when a verb comes after a [preposition](#). This is also true of certain expressions ending in a preposition, for example the expressions ‘*in spite of*’ and ‘*there’s no point in*’.

- *He is good at **singing**.*
- *She avoided him by **walking** on the opposite side of the road.*
- *There’s no point in **waiting**.*

Watch this video about different functions of gerund in a sentence:

See also:

[Gerund: Overview](#)