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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 hours 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](#)