

## VERBALS

Verbals are verb forms that function as nouns, adjectives or adverbs. There are two types: *Infinitives and gerunds.*

### INFINITIVES

#### I. Functions of the infinitives (Infinitives phrases)

##### A. Verbals can function as nouns:

1. When it functions as a noun, it can be the **subject** of the sentence:

*To listen is essential for this job.*

2. When it functions as a noun, it can be a **subject complement**:

*My job is to supervise the syntax learners.*

3. When it functions as a noun, it can be a **direct object**:

*He hopes to study.*

##### B. As an adjective:

- *Mr. King is the man to ask for.*
- *This is the last time to do it.*
- *We need someone to translate this article.*

##### C. As an adverb: We can have two cases.

###### 1. Modifying and adjective:

*She's happy to help.*

###### 2. Modifying a verb:

*Many young students go abroad to study.*

##### D. Parenthetical expressions:

*To tell the truth, I don't like your idea.*

#### II. Sometimes the infinitive can have a subject: Sometimes, you can put a subject next to the infinitive.

*I want to succeed*

(The infinitive here is the **direct object** of the sentence)

*I want **Peter/him** to succeed*

(Here, if you want to replace a noun by using a pronoun, such as Peter, can only use **object pronouns such as “him”**, and NOT subject pronouns.

These sentences are other examples of infinitives with pronouns. Notice that we use the preposition “for” and that it is necessary:

*For us to learn is important.* (Preposition is needed)  
*For them to understand is necessary.* (Preposition is needed)

**III. Too / enough:** It is also possible to use infinitives with these words.

*It's **too** expensive to buy it.*

*I haven't got **enough** money to buy it.*

## GERUNDS AND GERUND PHRASES

It's a verbal that functions ONLY as a noun and it can go in any position. Gerunds require the -ING form, but they are different from the progressive aspect and the adjectives with the present participle -ING.

*Listening requires patience.* (Subject of the sentence)

*He enjoys working here.* (Direct Object of the sentence)

*My aunt's hobby is sewing.* (Subject Complement)

*Bill's job, designing houses, is hard.* (Appositive)

*Everything depends on making a good impression.* (Object of a preposition. In this case, the preposition is "on")

*The officer considered the offense speeding.* (Object Complement)

**I. Gerunds can be countable or uncountable nouns**

*Teaching is only demonstrating that it is possible. Learning is making it possible for yourself.* (Uncountable)

*The teachings of Mao were well published in the 60's.* (Countable noun)

*Writing is a challenging art.* (Uncountable)

*I have collected all his writings.* (Countable noun)

**II. You can use gerunds after a preposition or an adverb.**

After taking the exams, she left. (The preposition is "after")

Never drink while driving. (The adverb is "while")

**III. Gerunds function in any position and they can have relationship with the subject of the sentence (being indicated by possessive -s or possessive pronouns)**

*I don't like your arriving later.*

(DIRECT OBJECT and the possessive pronoun is “you”) (Very formal and not used in informal speech)

What do you think of Obama’s winning the election?

(OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION and the possession is indicated by the “possessive - s”)

I love Faulkner’s writing.

(It is part of the DIRECT OBJECT and the possession is indicated by the “possessive - s”)

**IV. Don’t mix infinitives with gerunds. You shouldn’t do this:**

*~~I like to dance and fishing.~~*

**Instead of that, do this:**

*I like dancing and fishing.*

OR

*I like to dance and to fish.*