

GRAMMAR

B2

Gerunds and infinitives
@mariaenglishlessons



INTRODUCTION TO GERUNDS AND INFINITIVES

What are Gerunds?

A gerund is the -ing form of a verb that functions as a noun in a sentence. Gerunds can be used as the subject, object, or complement of a sentence.

Examples:

- Subject: Swimming is a good way to stay fit.
- Object: She enjoys reading books in her free time.
- Complement: His favorite hobby is cooking.



INTRODUCTION TO GERUNDS AND INFINITIVES

How to Form Gerunds:

- Simply add -ing to the base form of the verb.
 - Play → Playing
 - Run → Running
 - Eat → Eating



WHAT ARE INFINITIVES?

An infinitive is the base form of a verb, often preceded by the word to. Infinitives can function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.

Examples:

- Subject: To learn a new language is challenging.
- Object: I want to visit Japan someday.
- Adjective: She has a lot of work to do.
- Adverb: He left early to catch the bus.

WHAT ARE INFINITIVES?

How to Form Infinitives:

- Use to + base form of the verb.
 - To play
 - To run
 - To eat

USAGE RULES FOR GERUNDS
AND INFINITIVES

Verbs Followed by Gerunds

Some verbs are followed by gerunds. Here are some common examples:

- Enjoy → I enjoy traveling.
- Avoid → She avoids eating junk food.
- Consider → He considered moving to another city.
- Finish → They finished preparing the presentation.
- Mind → Would you mind opening the window?

General Rule: When the verb is about an activity or the action itself is the focus, use a gerund.

Example Explanation:

- "She enjoys playing tennis." [Focus is on the activity of playing tennis].

USAGE RULES FOR GERUNDS
AND INFINITIVES

Verbs Followed by Infinitives

Some verbs are followed by infinitives. Here are some common examples:

- Want → She wants to learn Spanish.
- Decide → They decided to cancel the trip.
- Plan → He plans to study abroad next year.
- Hope → We hope to meet you soon.
- Promise → She promised to call later.

General Rule: When the verb expresses a desire, intention, or plan, use an infinitive.

Example Explanation:

- "He decided to leave early." (Focus is on the intention or decision to leave).

Some verbs can be followed by either gerunds or infinitives, but the meaning may change.

Examples:

- Remember:
 - Gerund: I remember meeting him last year. (The memory of meeting him is in the past)
 - Infinitive: Remember to meet him at 5 PM. (The act of meeting him is in the future)
- Stop:
 - Gerund: She stopped smoking. (She quit the habit of smoking)
 - Infinitive: She stopped to smoke. (She paused another activity to smoke)

VERBS THAT CAN BE
FOLLOWED BY EITHER
GERUNDS OR INFINITIVES

VERBS THAT CAN BE
FOLLOWED BY EITHER
GERUNDS OR INFINITIVES

- Try:
 - Gerund: He tried running to get fit. (He experimented with running as an activity)
 - Infinitive: He tried to run faster. (He made an effort to run faster)

SPECIAL CASES: GERUNDS VS.
INFINITIVES AFTER CERTAIN
VERBS

Verbs with No Change in Meaning

Some verbs can be followed by either gerunds or infinitives without a significant change in meaning.

- Begin:
 - She began reading.
 - She began to read.
- Start:
 - It started raining.
 - It started to rain.

SPECIAL CASES: GERUNDS VS.
INFINITIVES AFTER CERTAIN
VERBS

Verbs with Little to No Change in Meaning but Different Structures

Some verbs like "like," "love," "hate," and "prefer" can be followed by both forms with little change in meaning, but often gerunds are used for general preferences and infinitives for specific instances.

- General Preference (Gerund): I love reading novels.
- Specific Instance (Infinitive): I would love to read that book next.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

Form

- Gerunds: The -ing form of a verb used as a noun.
 - Example:
 - Swimming is a great exercise.
 - He enjoys reading.
- Infinitives: The base form of a verb, usually preceded by to.
 - Example:
 - I want to swim.
 - She decided to read.

Tip: If you see a verb with -ing acting as a noun, it's a gerund. If you see to followed by a verb, it's an infinitive.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

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Usage as Parts of Speech

- Gerunds always function as nouns in a sentence.
 - Examples:
 - Subject: Running is good for your health.
 - Object: They enjoy dancing.
 - Object of Preposition: She is interested in learning new languages.
- Infinitives can function as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.
 - Examples:
 - Noun: To travel is my dream. [subject]
 - Adjective: She has a lot of work to do. [modifies "work"]
 - Adverb: He went outside to smoke. [explains why he went outside]

Tip: If it functions like a noun, look for whether it's describing an action as a general idea [gerund] or as a specific purpose or intention [infinitive].

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

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Common Verbs that Use Each Form

- Gerunds are often used after verbs that indicate a general activity or enjoyment:
 - Examples: enjoy, avoid, suggest, finish
 - I enjoy playing football.
 - She avoids talking to strangers.
- Infinitives are commonly used after verbs that express intention, desire, or future action:
 - Examples: want, decide, plan, hope
 - I want to learn Spanish.
 - They decided to move abroad.

Tip: If the verb expresses a preference or action that is liked, use a gerund. If the verb expresses a plan or desire, use an infinitive.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFINITIVES AND GERUNDS

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Verbs that Can Be Followed by Both (With Meaning Changes)

- Some verbs can take either a gerund or an infinitive, but the meaning changes:
 - Remember:
 - Gerund: I remember meeting him before. (The meeting happened in the past; it's a memory.)
 - Infinitive: Remember to meet him at 5 PM. (You need to meet him in the future.)
 - Stop:
 - Gerund: She stopped smoking. (She quit smoking completely.)
 - Infinitive: She stopped to smoke. (She paused another activity to smoke.)

Tip: For verbs like remember, stop, try, think about whether the action is in progress or completed (gerund) versus an intention or purpose (infinitive).

HOW TO DIFFERENTIATE
THEM IN SENTENCES

1. Look for Verbs Requiring One Form:

- Certain verbs always take gerunds [e.g., "enjoy," "avoid"] or infinitives [e.g., "want," "decide"].

Memorize these common verbs to know which form to use.

2. Check the Role in the Sentence:

- If the -ing form acts like a noun, it's a gerund. If the verb form follows to, it's likely an infinitive.
- Example: "She likes dancing." [Gerund as an object]
- Example: "She wants to dance." [Infinitive showing desire]

HOW TO DIFFERENTIATE
THEM IN SENTENCES

1. Identify Prepositions:

- After a preposition, use a gerund.
- Example: "They are excited about traveling."
- Exception: Infinitives often come after adjectives or certain expressions [e.g., "It's important to eat healthy"].

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HOW TO DIFFERENTIATE
THEM IN SENTENCES

Aspect	Gerund(-ing form)	Infinitive (to+form)
Form	Verb -ing (playing)	To + verb (to play)
Function	Noun (subject, object, complement)	Noun, adjective, adverb
Used after	Verbs : like, enjoy, avoid, finish	Verbs like: want, decide plan
Examples	I enjoy reading	I want to read
After prepositions	Always gerund (interested in learning	Rarely used (Exception: to do something)

COMMON MISTAKES
AND TIPS

Mistake: Mixing Up Gerunds and Infinitives

Incorrect: I enjoy to play football.

Correct: I enjoy playing football.

Tip: Remember, verbs like "enjoy," "mind,"
"avoid," and "finish" are followed by gerunds.



COMMON MISTAKES
AND TIPS

Mistake: Using Gerunds After Verbs That
Require Infinitives

Incorrect: She decided going home early.

Correct: She decided to go home early.

Tip: After verbs like "decide," "want," "hope,"
and "plan," use an infinitive.



COMMON MISTAKES
AND TIPS

Overusing "to" with Gerunds

Incorrect: He is interested in to learn French.

Correct: He is interested in learning French.

Tip: After prepositions (e.g., "in," "on," "at"),
use a gerund.



PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise 1: Fill in the blanks with the correct form (gerund or infinitive).

1. She enjoys _____ [cook] Italian food.
2. They decided _____ [take] a trip next weekend.
3. He avoided _____ [talk] about the issue.
4. We hope _____ [see] you at the party.
5. I remember _____ [see] that movie last year.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise 2: Choose the correct form (gerund or infinitive) to complete the sentence.

1. I stopped _____ (buy/buying) groceries on the way home.
2. He tried _____ (to fix/fixing) the car, but it didn't work.
3. She prefers _____ (to walk/walking) rather than drive.

PRACTICE EXERCISES

Exercise 3: Rewrite the sentences using the correct form.

1. I can't imagine _____ [to live] in another country.
2. They agreed _____ [signing] the contract yesterday.
3. He suggested _____ [to go] for a walk.