

# Gerunds and Infinitives

Gerunds and infinitives are verb forms that function as nouns in a sentence, naming an action or activity rather than a person, place, or thing. Some verbs are followed by gerunds, and some are followed by infinitives. These verb forms are not rule-based but are learned through listening and reading.

## Gerunds

These can be identified from the addition of -ing at the end of the word. Gerunds can also be identified with the “to be” rule: A verb ending in -ing acts as a gerund if it does **not** follow a “to be” verb (is, am, are, was, were).

### Examples:

“She really enjoys **swimming**.”

“**Arguing** with one another will not solve anything.”

### “To be” Rule:

“I **am cooking** for my roommates tonight.” (Not a gerund, because it follows “am”.)

“They spent the whole day **watching** movies.” (Gerund, because it follows the verb “spent”.)

## Spelling

Depending on the base verb, gerunds are spelled differently.

### Examples:

- In most cases, -ing is added to the end of the base verb
- With words ending in -e, remove the “e” and add -ing.
- With words ending in -ie, change it to a “y” and add -ing.

Base Verb	Gerund (Present Participle)
sing	singing
have	having
lie	lying

## When to Use Gerunds

Gerunds can be used in various ways.

1. After other verbs: “I **love reading** in the park.”
2. After prepositions: “**Between studying** and **working**, his schedule was packed.”
3. As the subject of the sentence: “**Hiking** can be difficult depending on the location.”

## Infinitives

These are identified by the addition of the word “to” before the base verb. They provide context to the main verb by acting as different parts of speech such as nouns, adjectives, or adverbs.

### Examples:

Noun (Subject) “**To study** is important.”

Noun (Direct Object) “Instead of driving, she **wanted to walk**.”

Adjective (Modifier) “I have a few **cards to sign** for Mother’s Day.”

Adverb (Showing Purpose) “I **visited Germany to see** the castles.”

## Bare Infinitives

Bare infinitives omit the “to” that comes before the base verb. They can commonly follow a *modal verb*: can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would.

### Examples:

“I **will help** you with that later this afternoon.”

“They **can meet** us for coffee.”

## When to Use Infinitive Verbs

Infinitives can be used in various ways.

1. After other verbs: “Don’t forget **to study** before the exam.”
2. After adjectives: “He’s really fun **to watch** when he performs.”
3. For showing purpose: “She went to the library **to find** resources for her essay.”