

Help Centres – English Support



Gerunds and Infinitives

The Basics

GERUND: **BASE VERB + -ING** (*dancing, walking, eating*)

INFINITIVE: **TO + BASE VERB** (*to laugh, to jog, to read*)

Both gerunds and infinitives are verbs acting as nouns in a sentence. They can occur in different places within a sentence.

3 Common Gerund Rules

- 1. Gerund as Subject:** Use gerunds when you are using an action as your subject before a main verb.
 - **Swimming** *is* my favourite summer activity.
 - **Reading** *helps* you learn English.
- 2. Gerund as Object:** Gerunds can come after the main verb, and it takes time to learn which verbs take a gerund or infinitive. Some common verbs that have a gerund after them are *enjoy, keep, and suggest*.
 - I *enjoy* **eating** turkey at Christmas.
 - I *keep* **forgetting** to mute my phone during class.
- 3. Gerund as Object of Preposition:** After a preposition, use a gerund.
 - I am dreaming *about* **travelling** the world.
 - I'm interested *in* **learning** about your job.

3 Common Infinitive Rules

- 1. Infinitive as Object:** Infinitives can be used after the main verb and it takes time to learn which verbs take an infinitive or gerund. Some common verbs that take an infinitive are *need, want, promise, and choose*.
 - We *need* **to spend** more time together.
 - I *promise* **to call** you after school.

2. Infinitive as Object Complement: When the object of the main verb is a noun or pronoun, use an infinitive after it.

- I asked *my teacher* **to help** me with the assignment.
- My friend reminded *me* **to study** for the test.

3. Infinitive after Adjective: After adjectives that express feelings or emotion, use an infinitive. The common pattern for this sentence is: **subject + to be + adjective + infinitive**. Some common adjectives before an infinitive are *excited, happy, surprised, and angry*

- It is *exciting* **to watch** my daughter play basketball.
- I am *happy* **to spend** time with you.

Practice

Complete the sentences with either the gerund or infinitive form of the verb provided.

1. I would like you _____ (come) to the movie with me tonight.
2. I am excited _____ (see) my cousins this weekend.
3. John enjoys _____ (dance) to loud music in his living room.
4. Simon was upset _____ (find) out that his flight was cancelled.
5. Are you interested in _____ (become) a teacher?
6. (Hike) _____ is my favourite outdoor activity.
7. My mom asked me _____ (read) a story to my younger brother.
8. I dislike _____ (wait) for the bus in the rain.
9. We hope _____ (visit) Spain in the summer.
10. Maya is planning on _____ (start) university next year.