

# Independent work

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NON-FINITE

FORMS OF

THE VERB

# The **verb** is a grammatical class of words

- It denotes **situations** and establishes the relation between the situation reported and the extralinguistic reality.
- Therefore the verb is central in expressing the **predicative function** of the sentence.

# Verb morphology

- English verbs can be categorized in a number of different ways.
- On the basis of their function in the verb phrase we can distinguish between **main verbs** and **auxiliaries**.

# Main verbs

- We can recognize five different forms of the main verb:

the base form	
the present participle	the present tense
the past participle	the past tense

# The base form

- There is no difference in the form between the **infinitive**, the **present tense** (not 3<sup>rd</sup> p. sg.), and the **imperative**
- They are all examples of the base form of the verb (i.e. no suffixes added). They can only be differentiated by the syntactic context in which they occur.
- Finiteness: the infinitive is a **non-finite** form, whereas the other forms are **finite**.



# Which are the non-finite forms of the verb in English?

- The infinitive
- The participles (-ing participle, -ed participle)
- The gerund

# Non-finite Verb Forms

- The infinitive, the –ing participle and the gerund express the verbal categories of aspect and voice.
- Their grammatical paradigms comprise different forms



# The infinitive

- There are two types of infinitive:
  - the to-infinitive
  - the 'bare' infinitive
- When do we use the infinitive with to?
- When do we use the infinitive without to?

- Will you **leave** on your own accord?  
(bare infinitive)
- They asked him **to leave**.  
(*to*-infinitive)
- We **leave** as soon as I find the tickets.  
(present tense, not 3rd p. sg. subject)
- **Leave** the room immediately! (imperative)

It is used after the following verbs: see,  
hear, feel, watch, make, let, bid

- Example: I heard her speak to her son.  
I saw him enter the house.  
They made us believe they words.  
He let them go to the expedition.

It is used after modal verbs

# Infinitive

## Active:

Simple

to speak

Progressive

to be speaking

Perfect

to have spoken

Perfect Progressive

to have been speaking

## Passive:

Simple

to be spoken

Progressive

to be speaking?

Perfect

to have been spoken

Perfect Progressive

to have been being spoken?

# Role in the sentence

- The present infinitive - subject.

**Example:** To confess immediately would be best.

- The present infinitive as an adverbial modifier - at the beginning or at the end of the sentence.

**Example:** We drank wine to relieve the boredom.



- The present infinitive has the function of the object.

**Example:** I don't want you to leave me.

- The continuous infinitive is used when we want to show the continuation of the action expressed by the infinitive.

**Example:** He is thought to be hiding in Mexico.

- The perfect infinitive is used with can't, couldn't  
must, may, should, could, would like, etc.

**Example:** He cannot (couldn't) have lifted the box.  
She may have turned up. I could have crossed that river.



# How many different participles are there in English?

## **-ing participle**

Active:

Simple

speaking

Perfect

having spoken

Passive:

Simple

being spoken

Perfect

having been spoken

## **-ed participle**

This participle does not express any of the verbal categories. It has **only one form: spoken**.

# The present participle

- The present participle is formed by adding the suffix *-ing* to the base form of the verb.
- If the vowel of the last syllable in the stem is short and stressed, a single final consonant is doubled:

forget – forgetting

wrap – wrapping,

bid – bidding

beg – begging

run – running

rip - ripping

- The Present participle - an adjective (modifier of nouns).

**Example:** playing children, running water.

- The Present participle can be a modifier of verbs. (it describes the condition in which the agent is performing the activity)

**Example:** The children came running. I prefer to eat sitting.

- The Perfect participle is used when it is necessary to emphasize that the action expressed by the Participle happened before the action expressed by the next verb. In this case it plays the function of adverbial modifier.

**Example:** Having finished his essay, the student attended to the experiment.

- It can function also as a post-modifier within a noun phrase.

**Example:** A cat fed on smoked salmon will start demanding champagne.

## Example:

- \* I'm knowing the Beethoven trios intimately.
- Knowing the Beethoven trios intimately helps a lot.
- Nonfinite -ing participles cannot be correlated with the progressive.
- The reason for this is that there are verbs which cannot take progressive aspect and yet do appear in non-finite -ing participle clauses.

# Gerund

- **The paradigm of the gerund coincides formally with the paradigm of the –ing participle.**
- The gerund can be used as a subject or object of the sentence.

**Example:** Reading is useful. Many people enjoy reading.

- The gerund can function as a complement of a preposition.

**Example:** She is fond of climbing.  
He was hopeless at writing letters.



# Gerund

- The gerund is used after certain verbs - stop, finish, prevent, avoid, admit, deny, recollect, delay, postpone, enjoy, fancy, imagine, suggest, keep (=continue), understand, mind (=object), consider, miss, anticipate, etc.
- and after the expressions – can't stand, can't help, it's no use, it's no good, it's worth.



- The gerund is treated like a substantive , because it can be used as a subject, object or the object of a preposition; it can form plural, it can enter into compounds in various ways.

**Example:** a wedding-ring, blotting-paper.

- A gerund differs from a substantive in the following respects, according to **Jespersen**: it has perfect and a passive, also a perfect passive; it can take an object; it can be freely combined with adverbs.

**Example:** The librarian doesn't allow talking here.

# conclusion

- A nonfinite verb is a verb that **does not function as the predicate** verb in a clause. While some nonfinite verbs take the form of past or present participles, they are generally not inflected—that is, they **DON'T HAVE**

- mood
- tense
- number
- aspect
- gender(person)

