

THE GERUND

Recognize a gerund when you find one.

Every gerund, without exception, ends in **ing**. Gerunds are not, however, easy to identify. The problem is that all present **participles** also end in **ing**.

So what is the difference?

Gerunds function as **nouns**. Thus, gerunds will be **subjects, subject complements, direct objects, indirect objects, and objects of prepositions**.

Present participles, on the other hand, complete progressive verbs or act as **modifiers**.

Read these examples of gerunds:

Since Francisco was five years old, **swimming** has been his passion.

Swimming = subject of the **linking verb has been**.

Francisco's first love is **swimming**.

Swimming = subject complement of the linking verb **is**.

Francisco enjoys **swimming** more than spending time with his girlfriend Diana.

Swimming = direct object of the **action verb enjoys**.

Francisco gives **swimming** all his energy and time.

Swimming = indirect object of the action verb **gives**.

When Francisco wore dive fins to class, everyone knew that he was devoted to **swimming**.

Swimming = object of the preposition **to**.

These **ing** words, on the other hand, are examples of *present participles*:

One day last summer, Francisco and his coach were **swimming** at Daytona Beach.

Swimming = present participle completing the past progressive verb **were swimming**.

A great white shark ate Francisco's **swimming** coach.

Swimming = present participle describing **coach**.

Now Francisco practices his sport in safe **swimming** pools.

Swimming = present participle describing **pools**.

