

**Advanced 2**  
**Unit 3, Language Focus 2**  
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**The Difference between Gerunds and Present Participles**

Both gerunds and present participles are formed by adding -ing to a verb, but they serve different functions in a sentence.

**Gerund**

A gerund acts as a noun. It can be the subject, object, or complement in a sentence. Here are some examples:

**Subject:** **Swimming** is fun.

**Object:** She enjoys **reading**.

**Subject Complement:** My favorite hobby is **drawing**.

**Object of a preposition:** They talked about **going** to the park.

**Present Participle**

A present participle functions as a verb in continuous tenses. It can also play a role as an adjective or an adverb in the sentence. Here are some examples:

**Continuous Tense:** She is **running**.

**Adjective:** The **running** water was cold.

**Adverbial Phrase:** **Running** through the park, he found a lost dog.

In summary, if the -ing form acts like a noun, it's a gerund. If it acts like a verb, an adjective or an adverb, it's a present participle.

**Gerund** = Verb + -ing Functioning as a Noun

Examples:

**Swimming** is my favorite sport.

Swimming ⇒ Noun ⇒ Gerund

**Swimming in this river** is dangerous.

Swimming in this river ⇒ Noun Phrase ⇒ Gerund Phrase

**Present Participle** = Verb + -ing Functioning as an Adjective or an Adverb

Examples:

*Swimming along the river*, Michael injured his leg.

Swimming along the river ⇒ Adverb Phrase ⇒ Present Participle Phrase

*This sport is very exciting*.

exciting ⇒ Adjective ⇒ Present Participle

**Source:**

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