

# 51 Infinitives and participles

Infinitives and participles are forms of verbs that are rarely used on their own, but are important when making other forms or constructions.

See also:

Present continuous 4

Present perfect simple 11

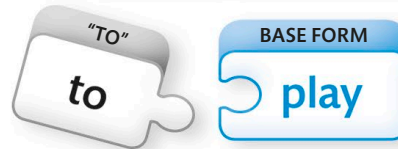
## 51.1 INFINITIVES

The infinitive is the simplest form of the verb. English verbs have two types of infinitive.

Sometimes the infinitive is formed with "to" plus the verb. This is sometimes known as a "full" or "to" infinitive.



When the infinitive is formed without "to," it is known as the base or simple form, or the bare infinitive.



## 51.2 PRESENT PARTICIPLES AND GERUNDS

Present participles and gerunds are formed by adding "-ing" to the base form of the verb. They are spelled the same, but they perform different functions in a sentence.

**Present participles** are most commonly used with auxiliary verbs to form continuous tenses.



PRESENT CONTINUOUS



The present participle is being used to make the past continuous.

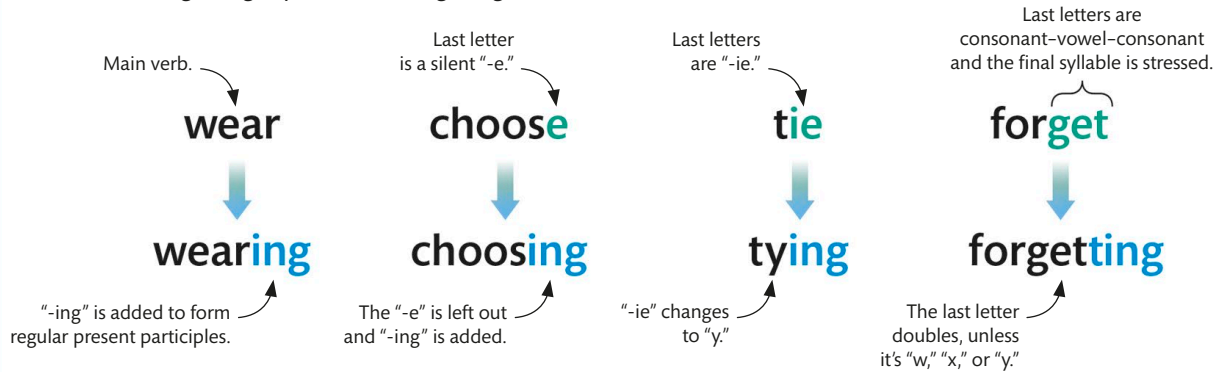
**Gerunds** are verbs that are used as nouns. They are sometimes known as verbal nouns.



"Playing" is a gerund here. Along with "tennis," it forms the subject of the sentence.

## 51.3 PRESENT PARTICIPLE AND GERUND SPELLING RULES

All present participles and gerunds are formed by adding “-ing” to the base form of the verb. The spelling of some base forms changes slightly before adding “-ing.”



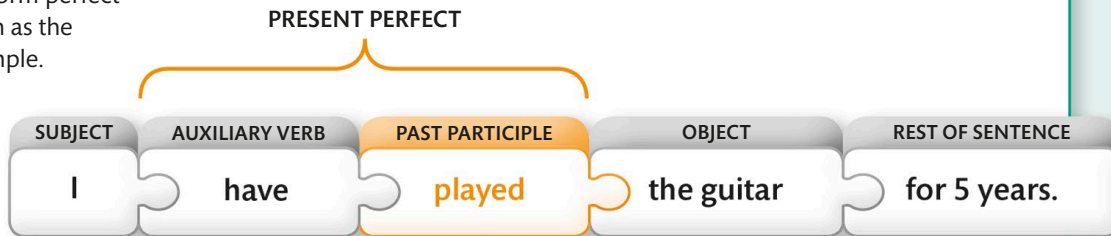
### FURTHER EXAMPLES

This section provides further examples of present participles and gerunds, each accompanied by an icon and a note explaining the spelling rule:

- Whispering:** Icon of two people. Sentence: "They're **whispering** to each other." Note: "The last letter is not doubled because 'per' is not stressed."
- Enjoying:** Icon of a person relaxing on a lounge chair under an umbrella. Sentence: "I'm **enjoying** my vacation." Note: "The last letter of the verb doesn't double if it's 'y.'"
- Swimming:** Icon of a person swimming. Sentence: "She's **swimming** in the ocean." Note: "The last letter is doubled because the pattern is consonant-vowel-consonant."
- Making:** Icon of a person at a counter. Sentence: "He's **making** a cake." Note: "The '-e' is dropped from the verb."
- Walking:** Icon of a person walking with a backpack. Sentence: "Connor went **walking** in the hills."
- Lying:** Icon of a man and a woman. Sentence: "Paul was told off for **lying**."
- Riding:** Icon of a person riding a horse. Sentence: "Sarah loves **riding** her horse."
- Clapping:** Icon of an audience. Sentence: "The audience started **clapping**."
- Wasting:** Icon of a person at a desk with a wastebasket. Sentence: "Stop **wasting** so much paper!"
- Looking:** Icon of a person at a computer. Sentence: "She started **looking** for a new job."
- Sitting:** Icon of children sitting on the floor. Sentence: "The children were **sitting** on the floor."
- Choosing:** Icon of a person at a desk. Sentence: "I'm **choosing** the new intern."

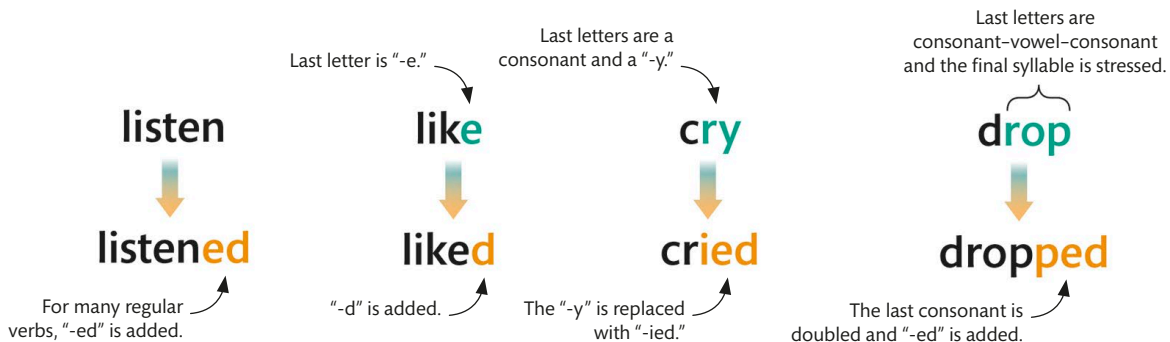
## 51.4 PAST PARTICIPLES

Past participles are used with auxiliary verbs to form perfect simple tenses, such as the present perfect simple.



## 51.5 SPELLING RULES FOR PAST PARTICIPLES

Regular past participles are made with the base form of the verb plus “-ed.” The spelling of some of these base forms changes a bit before adding “-ed.”



## FURTHER EXAMPLES



I should have **covered** my work. Susanna has **copied** all my answers.



You haven't **passed** the exam this time, but at least you have **improved**.



I had **planned** to take the kids to the beach, but the weather's terrible.



By this time next week, I will have **finished** all of my assignments.



My boss has **asked** me to come in early again tomorrow. I'm so tired!

## 51.6 IRREGULAR PAST PARTICIPLES

Many verbs in English have irregular past participle forms. They often look quite different from their base form.

I **buy** new clothes every month.

I have just **bought** a new coat.

PAST PARTICIPLE



### FURTHER EXAMPLES

BASE FORM	PAST PARTICIPLE	SAMPLE SENTENCE
be	been	You're late. Where have you <b>been</b> ?
become	become	This has <b>become</b> a real problem.
begin	begun	The class has already <b>begun</b> , so be quiet.
choose	chosen	Which subjects have you <b>chosen</b> to study?
do	done	My son has <b>done</b> a lot for the local community.
feel	felt	I haven't <b>felt</b> very well for over a week now.
know	known	Sonia would have <b>known</b> how to solve this problem.
find	found	The police have <b>found</b> the suspect.
forget	forgotten	My husband has <b>forgotten</b> our anniversary again.
go	gone	Helen has <b>gone</b> to Peru. She'll be back next week.
have	had	You look so different! Have you <b>had</b> a haircut?
make	made	I have <b>made</b> a cake for your birthday.
say	said	Jerry has <b>said</b> he'll be making a presentation.
see	seen	After this evening, I'll have <b>seen</b> this show six times.
sing	sung	This will be the first time she's <b>sung</b> in public.
tell	told	Has anyone <b>told</b> you the news? Kate's pregnant!
understand	understood	Has everyone <b>understood</b> the instructions?
write	written	I sent the email as soon as I had <b>written</b> it.