

Present Participles

> Formation

The present participle is formed by adding the ending "**--ing**" to the infinitive (dropping any silent "e" at the end of the infinitive):

to sing --> **singing**
to take --> **taking**
to bake --> **baking**
to be --> **being**
to have --> **having**

> Use

A. The present participle may often function as an **adjective**:

That's an **interesting** book.
That tree is a **weeping** willow.

B. The present participle can be used as a **noun** denoting an activity (this form is also called a **gerund**):

Swimming is good exercise.
Traveling is fun.

C. The present participle can indicate **an action that is taking place**, although it cannot stand by itself as a verb. In these cases it generally modifies a noun (or pronoun), an adverb, or a past participle:

Thinking myself lost, I gave up all hope.
Washing clothes is not my idea of a job.
Looking ahead is important.

D. The present participle may be used with "**while**" or "**by**" to express an idea of **simultaneity** ("**while**") or causality ("**by**") :

He finished dinner **while watching** television.
By using a dictionary he could find all the words.
While speaking on the phone, she doodled.
By calling the police you saved my life!

E. The present participle of the auxiliary "have" may be used with the past participle to describe **a past condition resulting in another action**:

Having spent all his money, he returned home.
Having told herself that she would be too late, she accelerated.

TEST

A) Find the gerund: 1. to give | 2. to walk | 3. to sit | 4. to help

B) Fill in the blanks with **BY** or **WHILE** + a present participle. Use one of these verbs: to look, to watch, to work

1. He passed his exam _____ very hard.
2. He did his homework _____ TV.
3. They found the way to our house _____ at their map.

ANSWERS A) 1. giving | 2. walking | 3. sitting | 4. helping

B) 1. by working hard | 2. while watching TV | 3. by looking at their map