



A verbal is a verb form used as a different part of speech.

Verbal phrase: A verbal is not a verb; it is a former verb doing a different job. **Gerunds**, **participles**, and **infinitives** are the three kinds of verbals. Gerunds are nouns made of verbs, participles are adjectives made of verbs, and infinitives are nouns or modifiers made of verbs. In other words, when we change a verb into a different part of speech, we call it a **verbal**. Verbals are nouns, adjectives, or adverbs made out of verbs.

A verbal can be a single word, or it can join with other words to become a verbal phrase. As an example, if I take the verb *was running* and saw off the helping verb *was* so that I only have *running* left, I can use this ex-verb as a noun. I can say ***Running** is good exercise*. In that sentence the subject *Running* is a verbal, a gerund. It is not yet a verbal phrase. I can make it a verbal phrase by adding words to it: *Running on the trail is relaxing to me*.

Verbals are fun because they are so creative and energetic. Verbals are not verbs in sentences; they are ex-verbs, but they still have a verby quality, a verbiness, that gives them energy and force. Verbals are still verby enough that they can have their own objects, even when they are being used as nouns! Example: *Washing the dishes is my least favorite chore*. The gerund phrase *Washing the dishes* is the subject of the sentence. Notice that *dishes* is the object of the noun/gerund *Washing*. If the object of the verbal is a personal pronoun, it must be an object pronoun and not a subject pronoun because **an object is an object**:

Right: ***Observing you and me was his motive***.

Wrong: ***Observing you and I was his motive***.

The key is to remember that a phrase acts **as a single part of speech**; this means that it can also be **a single part of sentence**. In other words, an entire phrase might be the subject of the sentence. It might be the direct object. We have to think of the group of words as one word.

People sometimes think verbals are difficult to learn, but there are only three kinds, and each one can be defined in a single sentence. They are far simpler than team sports or complicated games. The difficulty is a myth, an illusion. Concentrate, and you will learn them quickly.