

TUTORIAL

Gerunds are verbs with an –ing ending that live the exciting life of a noun, which is why they are sometimes referred to as verbal nouns.

Gerunds can act as the subject, direct object, subject complement, or object of a preposition.

BOWLING might get rid of your boredom.
Gerund
as subject

They just don't appreciate my **YODELING**.
Gerund phrase
as direct object

Your dog's favorite thing is **BARKING**.
Gerund as
subject complement

The company fired him for **LYING**.
Gerund as object
of a preposition

If it acts like a noun, you'll have to treat it like a noun. That means that if there's ever a noun or pronoun appearing alongside a gerund, it must be in a form that will allow it to modify another noun. It must be in the possessive case.

Let's make a comparison using another noun: yard.

What pronoun case would you use? The objective or base form of a noun?

- Geoffrey yard
- Him yard
- Me yard
- Them yard

No! That would sound absurd! You would use the possessive case!

- Geoffrey'**S** yard
- **HIS** yard.
- **MY** yard.
- **THEIR** yard

The gerund acts as a noun, so you'll have to treat it as a noun and use the possessive case whenever a noun or pronoun precedes it.

- They don't need to hear **YOUR squabbling**.
- **YOUR ranting** only makes it worse.
- **HIS skipping** school is the worst part!

Possessives and Gerunds