

Phrases

A phrase is a group of words that functions in a sentence as a single part of speech. A phrase doesn't have a subject or a **verb**, so it cannot stand alone as an independent unit. Phrases help you express yourself more clearly.(You use phrases to add details).

1. Prepositional Phrases:

A prepositional phrase is a group of words that begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun. This noun or pronoun is called the “ **Object of the preposition**“.

Eg: by the wall in the desert below sea level

Put the books **on the desk**.

2. Adjectival Phrases:

When a prepositional phrase serves as an adjective, it is called: **An Adjectival Phrase**.

An Adjectival Phrase, as with an adjective, describes a noun or pronoun.(To find out if a prepositional phrase is functioning as an Adjectival phrase, see if it answers these questions: **Which one?** OR **What kind?**)

Eg: The clown **with the mask** terrifies the children.

The cost **of the jeans** was surprisingly high.

3. Adverbial Phrases:

When a prepositional phrase serves as an adverb, it is called: **An Adverbial Phrase**, In these cases, it describes a **verb**, **an adjective**, or **an adverb**. (To find out if a prepositional phrase is functioning as

an Adverbial phrase, see if it answers these questions: **Where?**
When? **In What manner?** **To What extent?**).

Eg: The OM played **at Velodrome Stadium.**

The game lasted **into the fourteenth inning.**

4. **Appositives and Appositive Phrases:**

An Appositive is a noun or a pronoun that renames another noun or pronoun. Appositives are placed directly after the nouns or pronouns they identify. Appositive phrases are nouns or pronouns with modifiers.

Eg : Appositive

- Lisa, **a friend**, should have understood my fear.
- Lisa, **a dear old friend**, should have understood my fear.

An Appositive Phrase

5. **Verbal Phrases:**

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

Verbals come in three varieties:

Participles, gerunds and infinitives. Each type has a different function in a sentence.

5.1 **Participle Phrases:**

A participle is a form of a verb that functions as an adjective. There are two types of participle:

- **Present Participles** end in” **ing**”
- **Past Participles** end in “ **ed, t , or en** “

Eg: The **wailing** cat disturbed the neighbors.

Annoyed, the customer stalked out of the store.

Participle Phrases contain a participle modified by an adverb or adverbial phrase. They always function as an **Adjective**.

A participle phrase can be placed before or after the word it describes.

Eg: **Walking carefully**, I avoided the spilled juice.

Nina, **bothered by the mess**, cleaned it up.

5.2. **Gerund Phrases:**

A gerund is a form of a verb used as a noun. Gerunds can function as **subjects**, **direct objects**, **indirect objects**, **object of the preposition**, **predicate nominative** and **appositives**.

(The predicate nominative is the noun following a **linking verb** that restates or stands for the subject.

Typically, a predicate nominative has the same value or grammatical weight as the subject.

[In the following examples, the predicate nominative is **bold** and the **subject** is underlined.]

- At the end of the tournament, Tiger Woods was the **leader**.
 - The subject and the predicate nominative are essentially the same thing.)

➤ **Gerunds always end in ING.**

➤ **Gerunds always act as nouns.**

Eg: In adult education the Kitters discovered **dancing**.

A gerund can be part of a phrase:

Eg: Jill's morning program includes **exercising for a full hour**.

5.3. Infinitive Phrases:

The infinitive is a form of the verb that comes after the word **to** and acts as **a noun**, **adjective** or **adverb**. An infinitive phrase contains modifiers that together act as a single part of speech.

Eg:

- His goal, **to get promoted before age 30**, didn't seem realistic.
Infinitive adjectival phrase.
- ▶ He helped **to build the roof**. (noun Obj)
 - ▶ Let me show you the best way **to paint the door**. (adjective)
 - ▶ The officer returned **to help the inspectors**. (adverb)

NB:

- **Participles function as adjectives.**
- **Gerunds function as nouns.**
- **Infinitives function as nouns (Subject or Object), adjectives or adverbs.**