A **non-finite verb** is a verb form that does **not** act as the main verb of a clause and does **not** change according to the **tense**, **number** (singular/plural), or **person** of the subject. Instead, it functions as a **noun**, **adjective**, or **adverb**.

There are three types of non-finite verbs: **Infinitives**, **Gerunds**, and **Participles**.

1. Infinitives

An infinitive is the base form of a verb (V1), usually preceded by **to**.

A. Types of Infinitives

Type	Structure	Example
Simple (To-Infinitive)	to + V1	*"She wants **to join** the Air Force."*
Bare Infinitive	V1 (without *to*)	*"Let him **speak**."*
Continuous Infinitive	to be + V-ing	*"He seems **to be working** hard."*
Perfect Infinitive	to have + V3	*"He claimed **to have met** the General."*
Passive Infinitive	to be + V3	*"This order needs **to be obeyed**."*

B. Functions of a To-Infinitive

- **As a Noun (Subject or Object):**
    - *"**To err** is human."* (Subject)
    - *"He decided **to resign**."* (Object)
- **As an Adjective (Modifies a noun):**
    - *"I have no time **to waste**."* (Modifies *time*)
    - *"Give me some water **to drink**."* (Modifies *water*)
- **As an Adverb (Shows purpose or modifies an adjective):**
    - *"We eat **to live**."* (Modifies the verb *eat* — shows purpose)
    - *"This box is too heavy **to lift**."* (Modifies the adjective *heavy*)

C. Rules for Bare Infinitives (High-Yield Exam Rules)

Do **not** use **to** before the verb in the following cases:

1. **After Modal Verbs** (*can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would*):
    - *Correct:* "You must **obey** the rules." *(Not: must to obey)*
    - *Exception:* **Ought to** and **used to** take *to*.
2. **After Verbs of Perception** (*see, hear, watch, feel, notice*) and **Causatives** (*make, let, bid*) in **Active Voice**:
    - *"I saw him **cross** the road."*
    - *"The officer made the cadets **run** five kilometres."*
    - *Passive Voice Trap:* In **Passive Voice**, these verbs (except *let*) **take to**:
        - *"The cadets were made **to run** five kilometres."*
        - *"He was seen **to enter** the room."*
3. **After Phrases:** *had better, would rather, would sooner, rather than, sooner than*:
    - *"You had better **leave** now." (Not: had better to leave)*
    - *"I would rather **die** than **surrender**."*
4. **After 'Need not' and 'Dare not'** (when used as modals):
    - *"You need not **worry**." / "He dare not **oppose** his father."*
5. **After 'But' and 'Except'** when preceded by a form of *do*:
    - *"He does nothing but **complain**."*

D. Split Infinitive Rule

Avoid placing an adverb between **to** and **V1** in formal and exam English.

- *Incorrect:* "You are requested **to kindly grant** me leave."
- *Correct:* "You are requested **kindly to grant** me leave."

2. Gerunds (V1 + ing as a Noun)

A **gerund** looks like a continuous verb (V-ing), but it functions strictly as a **noun**. It is also called a *verbal noun*.

A. Functions of a Gerund

- **Subject of a verb:** *"**Smoking** is injurious to health."*
- **Object of a verb:** *"She enjoys **playing** chess."*
- **Object of a preposition:** *"He was punished for **telling** a lie."*
- **Complement of a verb:** *"My favourite hobby is **travelling**."*

B. Crucial Exam Rules for Gerunds

1. **Always Use a Gerund After Prepositions:**

Whenever a verb comes immediately after a preposition (*in, on, at, for, of, from, by, without, before, after*), it must be in the **V-ing** form.

- *"He left without **saying** goodbye."*
- *"She is fond of **reading** novels."*

2. **The to + V-ing Trap (Very Important for NDA/Competitive Exams):**

Usually, to is followed by V1. However, in certain fixed phrases, **to acts as a preposition**, so it **must** be followed by a **Gerund (V-ing)**:

- *look forward to, accustomed to, addicted to, used to (with be/get), with a view to, devoted to, prone to, averse to, object to, in addition to.*
- *Incorrect:* "I look forward to **meet** you."
- *Correct:* "I look forward to **meeting** you."
- *Correct:* "He is addicted to **gambling**."
- *Correct:* "She went to Delhi with a view to **preparing** for UPSC."

3. **Possessive Adjective Before a Gerund:**

A noun or pronoun placed directly before a gerund must be in the **possessive case** (*my, your, his, her, our, their, Rohan's*), not the objective case (*me, him, them*).

- *Incorrect:* "I do not like **him** coming late."
- *Correct:* "I do not like **his** coming late."
- *Correct:* "She objected to **my** going there."

4. **Verbs Always Followed by a Gerund (Never Infinitive):**

avoid, enjoy, mind, finish, deny, admit, suggest, postpone, delay, risk, keep, practise, can't help, worth.

- *"He avoided **meeting** me." (Not: avoided to meet)*
- *"Would you mind **closing** the window?" (Not: mind to close)*
- *"This book is worth **reading**."*

3. Participles (Verbs as Adjectives)

A **participle** is a verbal adjective—it has the characteristics of both a **verb** and an **adjective**.

A. Types of Participles

1. **Present Participle (V1 + ing):**

Expresses an **active** or **ongoing** action.

- *"A **rolling** stone gathers no moss."* (Describes *stone*)
- *"**Hearing** the noise, the boy woke up."* (Two actions happening almost simultaneously)

2. **Past Participle (V3):**

Expresses a **completed** action or a **passive** state.

- *"A **burnt** child dreads the fire."* (Describes *child*)
- *"**Driven** by hunger, he stole a piece of bread."*

3. **Perfect Participle (Having + V3 / Passive: Having been + V3):**

Shows that the **first action was completely finished** before the second action began.

- *"**Having finished** his homework, he went out to play."*
- *"**Having been defeated** twice, he decided to change his strategy."* (Passive)

B. The Dangling / Misrelated Participle (Major Spotting Error Trap)

A participle must have a **clear subject of reference** in the main clause. If the subject of the main clause is **not** the doer of the participle's action, the sentence becomes grammatically wrong (and often absurd).

- *Incorrect:* "**Walking** in the park, a snake bit him."

(This implies the snake was walking in the park!)

- *Correct:* "**While he was walking** in the park, a snake bit him."
- *Incorrect:* "**Being** a rainy day, we stayed indoors."

(This implies 'we' are a rainy day!)

- *Correct:* "**It being** a rainy day, we stayed indoors."
- *Incorrect:* "**Entering** the room, the light was very dim."
- *Correct:* "**Entering** the room, **I** found the light very dim."

4. Key Distinctions & Meaning Traps

A. Gerund vs. Present Participle

Both end in -ing. Use their **function** to tell them apart:

- **Gerund = Noun** (Answers *"what?"*):
    - *"**Swimming** is good exercise."* (What is good exercise? *Swimming.*)
    - *"A **walking** stick"* = A stick **for walking** (**Gerund**).
- **Present Participle = Adjective** (Describes a noun's action/state):
    - *"Look at the **swimming** boy."* (Which boy? The one who is swimming.)
    - *"A **walking** man"* = A man **who is walking** (**Participle**).

B. Verbs That Change Meaning (Gerund vs. Infinitive)

Some verbs can take both a gerund and an infinitive, but the **meaning changes completely**:

Verb	With Gerund (V-ing)	With Infinitive (to + V1)
Stop	To quit an activity completely. *"He stopped **smoking**."* (He quit.)	To pause one action in order to do another. *"He stopped **to smoke**."* (He paused walking to have a cigarette.)
Remember	To recall a past event. *"I remember **locking** the door."* (I locked it earlier, and I recall it.)	To not forget a duty/task. *"Remember **to lock** the door."* (Don't forget to do it.)
Forget	To lose memory of a past event. *"I will never forget **meeting** him."*	To fail to do a required task. *"He forgot **to post** the letter."*
Try	To experiment with a method.	To make an effort to do something difficult.

Verb	With Gerund (V-ing)	With Infinitive (to + V1)
	*"Try **restarting** the laptop."*	*"He tried **to lift** the heavy trunk."*