

## What Are Participles? – Meaning and Definition

A participle refers to the modified form of a verb that in some cases, shows characteristics of both verbs and adjectives. Participles are mainly used in sentences to form the past and perfect tenses.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a participle is defined as “a word formed from a verb, ending in -ing (= the present participle) or -ed, -en, etc.”, and according to the Cambridge Dictionary, it is defined as “a form of a verb, often ending in “-ed” or “-ing” and used with auxiliary verbs to make verb tenses, or to form adjectives”. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a participle as “an English verbal form that has the function of an adjective and at the same time shows such verbal features as tense and voice and capacity to take an object”. “A participle”, according to the Collins Dictionary, “is a form of a verb that can be used in compound tenses of the verb. There are two participles in English: the past participle, which usually ends in ‘-ed’, and the present participle, which ends in ‘-ing’.”

## Types of Participles – Forming and Using Them

If you have already been accustomed to using the English language regularly, you should be already making use of participles. Whatever be the case, learning how exactly they are formed and the ways in which they can be used will allow you to speak and write error-free sentences. There are two main types of participles and they are,

- The Present Participle and
- The Past Participle

### The Present Participle

The present participle is mainly used to form continuous/progressive tenses such as the present continuous tense, the past continuous tense, the future continuous tense, the present perfect continuous tense, the past perfect continuous tense and the future perfect continuous tense. It is used along with the ‘to be’ and ‘have’ form of verbs. They also function as adjectives when used before a noun. The Oxford Learner’s Dictionary

defines a present participle as “the form of the verb that in English ends in -ing and is used with the verb to be to form progressive tenses such as I was running or sometimes as an adjective as in running water”.

Forming a present participle does not take much effort as all you have got to do is add ‘ing’ to the end of the main verb. In most cases, you can simply add ‘ing’, but there are times when you will have to remove the ‘e’ before adding ‘ing’ for words ending in ‘e’. There are, however, exceptions in this. Like this, monosyllabic words with a single consonant ending will require you to double the last consonant before adding ‘ing’ and words ending in ‘ie’ will have a change of spelling. Let us look at some examples to understand this better.

### **Example 1 – Adding ‘ing’ to verbs**

- Mourn – Mourning
- Stand – Standing
- Fill – Filling
- Check – Checking
- Collect – Collecting

### **Example 2 – Removing ‘e’ and Adding ‘ing’**

- Prove – Proving
- Care – Caring
- Receive – Receiving
- Bake – Baking
- Make – Making

### **Example 3: Removing ‘ie’ and Adding ‘y’ + ‘ing’**

- Die – Dying
- Tie – Tying
- Lie – Lying

### **Example 4: Doubling the Last Consonant and Adding ‘ing’**

- Sit – Sitting
- Run – Running
- Shop – Shopping

- Swim – Swimming
- Skip – Skipping

### **Example 5: Retaining the 'e' and Adding 'ing'**

- Dye – Dyeing
- Agree – Agreeing
- See – Seeing
- Binge – Bingeing
- Canoe – Canoeing

### **Example 6: Doubling the Last Consonant of the Second Syllable (Stressed) in Disyllabic Words**

- Begin – Beginning
- Refer – Referring
- Admit – Admitting
- Occur – Occurring
- Prefer – Preferring

## **The Past Participle**

The past participle is also used as adjectives when it precedes the noun. Otherwise, they work together with other helping verbs to form the perfect tenses – the present perfect tense, the past perfect tense and the future perfect tense. In perfect continuous tenses also, you will see the past participle form of the verb 'be' (been) being used. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary, a past participle is defined as "the form of a verb that in English ends in -ed, -en, etc. and is used with the verb have to form perfect tenses such as I have eaten, with the verb be to form passive sentences such as It was destroyed, or sometimes as an adjective as in an upset stomach".

In order to be able to use the past participles effectively, you should first know how they are formed. Formation of past participles happens in various ways. Go through the following examples to understand.

### **Example 1: Adding 'ed' to the End of the Verb**

- Strand – Stranded

- Check – Checked
- Bail – Bailed
- Turn – Turned
- Listen – Listened
- Wash – Washed
- Suggest – Suggested

### **Example 2: Adding 'd' to the End of the Verb**

- Receive – Received
- Like – Liked
- Apologise – Apologised
- Change – Changed
- Love – Loved
- Remove – Removed

### **Example 3: Adding 'ied' to Verbs Ending in 'fy', 'ry' and 'ly'**

- Worry – Worried
- Bury – Buried
- Try – Tried
- Cry – Cried
- Carry – Carried
- Supply – Supplied
- Apply – Applied
- Imply – Implied
- Justify – Justified
- Amplify – Amplified

### **Example 4: Adding 'n' to Monosyllabic Words Ending in 'ow'**

- Grow – Grown
- Sow – Sown
- Throw – Thrown

### **Example 5: Changing 'i' to 'u' for Monosyllabic Words**

- Sing – Sung
- Sink – Sunk
- Stick – Stuck

- Ring – Rung
- Sting – Stung

### **Example 6: Doubling the Last Consonant and Adding 'ed'**

- Clip – Clipped
- Slip – Slipped
- Focus – Focussed
- Drip – Dripped
- Refer – Referred
- Stop – Stopped
- Grab – Grabbed
- Drop – Dropped
- Tip – Tipped
- Skip – Skipped

### **Example 7: Irregular Verbs**

- Teach – Taught
- Think – Thought
- Bring – Brought
- Fall – Fallen
- Buy – Bought
- Steal – Stolen
- Eat – Eaten
- Tell – Told
- Begin – Begun
- Slide – Slid
- Read – Read
- Speak – Spoken
- Lead – Led
- Wake – Woken
- Find – Found
- Give – Given

Check out the article on irregular verbs for more examples.

## **Examples of Sentences Using Participles**

Now that you know how participles are formed, take a look at the following examples to see how they are used.

## Using Present Participles as Adjectives

- I forgot my **running** shoes.
- Did you buy **washing** soap?
- Did you add **baking** soda to your cake batter?
- I think the **washing** machine has a problem.
- Remya used the **sealing** tape to close the holes for the time being.

## Using Present Participles to Form Continuous Tenses

- Are you **taking** the medicines regularly?
- We are **making** progress.
- They will be **leaving** in some time.
- How long have you been **waiting** for me?
- I have been **trying** to find a solution to this.

## Using Past Participles as Adjectives

- He has a **broken** rib.
- The **frightened** little girl ran to her mother.
- My brother loves **roasted** meat.
- Your sister seems to be the most **loved** person here.
- I bought a pair of **coloured** sunglasses for my brother.

## Using Past Participles to Form Perfect Tenses

- I would have **loved** to see you on my birthday.
- She has **worked** so hard for this day.
- The children had **expected** a few games today.
- Nobody knew who had **taken** the bag.
- We have **packed** sandwiches for the trip.

## Check Your Understanding of Participles

Go through the following sentences and identify the participles.

1. It is better to drink boiled water to avoid getting sick.
2. I got a missed call from my mom.
3. Remya and Ajith have moved to Abu Dhabi.
4. It has been raining all day.
5. We were watching F.R.I.E.N.D.S. yesterday.
6. My sister is baking cookies for the birthday party.
7. When are you coming home?
8. There is packaged water for everyone.
9. All of us have finished my assignment.
10. Did you buy shaving cream?