

ADVERBIAL PARTICIPIALS and their PHRASES

○ USAGE:

“Seeing a deer, I stopped my car.”

In conversation, people don't usually use participial phrases as they sound rather formal. In **casual speech**, we would more likely say:

“I saw a deer on the road and I stopped my car.”

In **writing**, they are very economic, and show sophistication and skill when used well.

○ TERMINOLOGY:

Since the **Dependent Adverb Clause** is reduced and no longer expresses a **subject**, it is no longer a clause. It is now a **phrase**.

Since the verb is reduced to either an **-ed** or **-ing participle** and is no longer conjugated or truly showing tense, we have “**Participial phrase**” or just “**Participial**”.

These “**adverbial phrases**” are different from **adjective** clauses and phrases.

(**While I was**) walking down the street,

I saw my friend (**who was**) running across the street.

Dependent Adverb Clause

Dependent Adjective Clause

1. usually precede but can follow
2. always non-restrictive
3. embed meaning
4. can produce dangling errors

1. Always follow a noun/pronoun
2. Restrictive & non-restrictive
3. Do not embed meaning

Since the **subject** is not expressed, it **must be the same** as the subject expressed in the main clause; otherwise, the modifying phrase is **DANGLING**.

Remember the rule: “missing subject IS next subject.”

= (since **I** was) Discussing participial phrases, **I** wrote an example of one.

= The **student** was working on his grammar, (as **he** was) trying to remember rules.

≠ (the **student** was) Feeling sleepy, the student's **sentence** came out incorrect.

○ STRUCTURE:

Since the verb is not fully conjugated, participials are tenseless and require context. The **verb tense** of the sentence is shown in the **main clause**.

Written as an example, this sentence { *showed*
shows
will show } a participial phrase.

Participial phrases have **three** forms, and they can show **negativity** and take on **adverbs**.

1) Active Participles

Working on his grammar, he **got** tired.

Walking home, he **thinks** of another way.

Not *hearing* the news, he **won't** know until tomorrow.

Sometimes *on hearing* sad news, he **would begin** to sing.

Without *knowing* the answer, he **got** it right anyway.

2) Passive Participles

Given the key to the door, he **let** himself in.

Built for speed, this car **will tear** up the road.

Not *heard* coming in, he **went** to bed undisturbed.

Always *told* to smile, he rarely **showed** his sadness.

Used sparingly, whisky can help his mood.



3) Perfect Participles

Perfect participials can be **either** active or passive, and the “having” denotes **completion**. Remember that only **transitive** verbs can make passive participials.

- Passive: *Told* everyday he was improving at English, he never **gave** up.
Perfect Passive: *Having been told* to come early, he still **came** late
Perfect Active: *Having **already** known* of problem, she **arrived** well prepared.
Perfect Passive: *Having been known* by all, her name **lived** on for many decades.
+ Negative: **Not** *having known* she was going to be there, he **showed** up with his girlfriend.
+ Adverb: *Having **always** heard* he was trouble, she **left** quickly.

o EMBEDDED MEANING: Deleting or Retaining Conjunctions

When: Active & Passive Participials may retain “when” to imply a more general condition.

- | | |
|---|--|
| Seeing the news, she cried. | She cried when she saw the news. |
| When seeing the news, she cried/cries. | When ever she sees the news, she cried/cries. |
| When told to be on time, he is. | When used safely, the product is a wonder. |

After: Perfect Participials show completion but may retain “after” for emphasis.

- Having learned he was a liar, I ignored him.
After having learned he was a liar, I *began* to ignore him.

Because, Since, As: These conjunctions are not necessary when **Participials** show **conditions, reasons, causes, or results**.

- Since** he had been sick for weeks, he had a lot of work to catch up on.
Having been sick for weeks, he had a lot of work to catch up on.

- Because** he had heard that the movie was excellent, Johnny went to see it.
Having heard that the movie was excellent, Johnny went to see it.

- Johnny was surprised by the custom **as** he came from a traditional family.
Having come from a traditional family, Johnny was surprised by the custom.

Since can also be a preposition. Note in the third example, the “knowing” is a gerund and **not** a reduced adverb phrase.

- Since** moving to Alaska, he has missed his family greatly.
Since knowing the truth, he no longer speaks of it.

cf. Since knowing the truth **was** ill advised, he didn’t believe him.

While conveys different meanings for **perfect** (*even though*) **active** (*at the same time*).

- While** having known him for years, I only just realized that he is a liar.
While working on my homework, I got stuck on a word.

Before conveys different meanings when preceding or following the verb.

- Before** being invited to the festival, he had never even heard of the event.
Having been invited **before** to the festival, he was very excited to attend again.

o RETAINING PREPOSITIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| Instead of walking away, she stood strong. | On hearing the news, he wept. |
| Without knowing what to do, he froze. | Upon knowing the truth, he shivered. |

o PARTICIPIAL PREPOSITIONS – see [grammarist](#) for more.

Certain Participials have become frozen over time and no longer necessarily create dangling modifiers. These Participials include: according to, assuming, barring, considering, during, given, provided.

