**Present Participles and Gerunds**

A present participle is a verb form which, in English, ends in -ing: singing, eating, receiving. In Spanish, a present participle is regularly formed as follows:

**drop the ar of an -ar ending verb**, like *cantar*, **and add -ando**: *cantando*/singing

**drop the er of an -er ending verb**, like *comer*, **and add -iendo**: *comiendo*/eating

**drop the ir of an -ir ending verb**, like *recibir*, **and add -iendo**: *recibiendo*/receiving

In English, a gerund also ends in -ing but there is a distinct difference in use between a gerund and a present participle. When a present participle is used as a noun it is called a gerund; for example: *Reading is good.* As a present participle: *The boy fell asleep while reading.* In the first example (*Reading is good.*), reading is a gerund because it is the subject of the verb “is.” In Spanish, however, we must not use the present participle form as a noun to serve as a subject; we must use the infinitive form of the verb: ***Leer*** *es bueno.*

**Common Irregular Present Participles**

**Infinitive Present Participle Infinitive Present Participle**

*caer/to fall ca****y****endo oír/to hear o****y****endo*

*construir/to construct constru****y****endo pedir/to ask (for) p****i****diendo*

*corregir/to correct corr****i****giendo poder/to be able; can p****u****diendo*

*creer/to believe cre****y****endo reír/to laugh riendo*

*decir/to say; tell d****i****ciendo repetir/to repeat rep****i****tiendo*

*despedirse/to say desp****i****diéndose seguir/to follow s****i****guiendo*

*good-bye*

*divertirse/to enjoy div****i****rtiéndose sentir/to feel s****i****ntiendo*

*oneself*

*dormir/to sleep d****u****rmiendo servir/to serve s****i****rviendo*

*ir/to go* ***y****endo traer/to bring tra****y****endo*

*leer/to read le****y****endo venir/to come v****i****niendo*

*mentir/to lie m****i****ntiendo vestir/to dress v****i****stiendo*

*morir/to die m****u****riendo*

**Uses of the Present Participle**

1. **To form the progressive tenses:**

The present progressive is formed by using *estar* in the present tense plus the present participle of the main verb you are using.

***Estoy hablando.*** *I am speaking.*

The past progressive is formed by using *estar* in the imperfect indicative plus the present participle of the main verb you are using.

***Estaba hablando.*** *I was speaking.*

2. **To express vividly an action that occurred (preterite + present participle):**

*El niño* ***entró llorando*** *en la casa. The little boy came crying into the house.*

3. **To express the English use of “by” + present participle in Spanish, we use the gerund form, which has the same ending as a present participle.**

***Trabajando*** *se gana dinero. By working, one earns (a person earns) money.*

***Estudiando*** *mucho, Pepe recibió By studying hard, Joe received good grades.*

*buenas notas.*

No preposition is used in front of the present participle (the Spanish gerund) even though it is expressed in English as “by” + present participle.

In Spanish we use al + infinitive (not + present participle) to express “on” or “upon” + present participle:

***Al entrar*** *en la casa, el niño comenzó Upon entering the house, the little boy began*

*a llorar. to cry.*

4. **To form the perfect participle:**

***habiendo*** *hablado having talked*

--The present participle is invariable in form. It never shows agreement in number or gender.

--In Spanish, the progressive is used to stress the ongoing nature of an event or a condition. An event expressed with the progressive is actually in progress.

--When object or reflexive pronouns are used with the progressive, they may either by attached to the participle or precede the conjugated verb. The present participle thus combines with pronouns in the same manner as with the infinitive. When pronouns are attached to the participle, a written accent is required to maintain the stress on the same syllable of the participle.

--Remember that the simple present tense in Spanish often expresses the equivalent of the English progressive, especially in the case of verbs of motion such as ir and venir.

***Voy*** *a cruzar la calle. I’m going to cross the street.*

***Salgo*** *mañana para San Germán. I’m leaving tomorrow for San Germán.*

***Vuelve*** *ahora a la casa de Ángela. She’s returning to Ángela;s house now.*

***Estamos*** *sentados allí. We are sitting (i.e., we are seated) over there.*