

Participles and Participial Phrases

A **participle** is a verb form that often acts as an **adjective** in a sentence. Participles and participial phrases (participles + all closely associated words) can modify nouns, noun phrases, or pronouns.



Present participles always end in **-ing**.

Luisa was greeted with the sound of barking dogs as she entered the shelter.

The participle *barking* modifies the noun *dogs*.

Hoping to rescue her first pet, Luisa walked the aisle between the cages.

The participial phrase *hoping to rescue her first pet* modifies the noun *Luisa*.

Past participles usually end in **-ed**, just like the simple past tense of regular verbs.

The zoo works to help endangered animals throughout the world.

The participle *endangered* modifies the noun *animals*.

Impressed with the zoo's work, the philanthropist made a generous donation.

The participial phrase *impressed with the zoo's work* modifies the noun phrase *the philanthropist*.

Past participles made from irregular verbs may be unchanged from the base verb, or they may end in **-d**, **-t**, **-en**, or **-n**.

Fallen leaves covered the path to the duck pond near the community center.

The participle *fallen* modifies the noun *leaves*.

Wooden benches built by a local craftsman dotted the edge of the pond.

The participial phrase *built by a local craftsman* modifies the noun phrase *wooden benches*.

In each sentence, highlight the **participle** or **participial phrase** that is acting as an adjective. Then, underline the part of the sentence that the participle or participial phrase is modifying.

- 1 The lawyers called expert witnesses to testify about evidence gathered from the crime scene.
- 2 The jurors listened carefully to the arguments of the prosecuting attorneys.
- 3 Jeffrey walked gingerly across his freshly swept floor, careful not to leave a trail of footprints.
- 4 He opened the windows to air out the unpleasant smell of burnt toast and stale coffee.
- 5 Besieged by reporters, the former mayor waded through the crowd to her vehicle.
- 6 She had called the press conference to eliminate lingering doubts about her Senate candidacy.
- 7 In 1969, a spark from a train ignited industrial waste floating on Ohio's Cuyahoga River.
- 8 News of the blaze caught the attention of Americans already infuriated by environmental degradation.
- 9 Nestled in the Canadian Rockies, Alberta's Abraham Lake is the site of a unique winter phenomenon.
- 10 Bubbles of methane, frozen beneath the water's surface, form beautiful patterns within the icy lake.