



Participle clauses

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Participle clauses enable us to say information in a more economical way. They are formed using present participles (going, reading, seeing, walking, etc.), past participles (gone, read, seen, walked, etc.) or perfect participles (having gone, having read, having seen, having walked, etc.).

We can use participle clauses when the participle and the verb in the main clause have the same subject.

For example : Waiting for Ellie, I made some tea. (While I was waiting for Ellie, I made some tea.)

Participle clauses are mainly used in written texts, particularly in a literary, academic or journalistic style.

Present Participle Clauses

Here are some common ways we use present participle clauses.
Note that present participles have a similar meaning to active verbs.

To give the result of an action	To give the reason for an action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bomb exploded, destroying the building. Not having an invitation, I couldn't get into the party. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing she loved reading, Richard bought her a book. Not wanting to hurt his feelings, I avoided the question.
To talk about an action that happened at the same time as another action	To add information about the subject of the main clause
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing in the queue, I realised I didn't have any money. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Starting in the new year, the new policy bans cars in the city centre.

Past Participle Clauses

Here are some common ways that we use past participle clauses.
Note that past participles normally have a passive meaning.

With a similar meaning to an if condition	To give the reason for an action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed with soda, the cocktail tastes even better (=if it is mixed with soda...) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worried by the news, she called the hospital (=because she was worried...).
To add information about the subject of the main clause.	
Filled with pride, he walked towards the stage.	

Perfect Participle Clauses

They show that the action they describe was finished before the action in the main clause.
Perfect participles can be structured to make an active or passive meaning.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having got dressed, he slowly went downstairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having finished their training, they will be fully qualified doctors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having been made redundant, she started looking for a new job. 	

Participle Clauses After Conjunctions And Prepositions

It is also common for participle clauses, especially with -ing, to follow conjunctions and prepositions such as before, after, instead of, on, since, when, while and in spite of.

- Before cooking**, you should wash your hands. / **Instead of complaining about it**, they should ...
- On arriving at the hotel**, he went to get changed. / **While packing her things**, she thought ...
- In spite of having read the instructions twice**, I still couldn't understand how to use it.

Dangling Participles - What They Are And How To Avoid Them.

A dangling participle is a participle (usually at the beginning of a sentence) apparently modifying a word other than the word intended: e.g., "Walking through the kitchen, the smoke alarm was going off."

The sentence above literally means that the smoke alarm was walking through the kitchen.

We can avoid the dangling participle by placing the subject after the participle phrase, as in the following sentence:
"Walking through the kitchen, **I heard** the smoke alarm going off." (=I was walking through... when I heard...)