

Finite and Non-finite verbs

In this article, we learn what Finite and Non-finite verbs are and what the difference between Finite and Non-finite verbs. After that, we study finite and non-finite verb explanation in detail with examples, we also discuss types/kinds of non-finite verb. At the end of the article, 10 questions exercise/worksheet given for practice help you to understand the topic better.

What is the difference between Finite and Non-finite verbs?

These verbs which can either be the main verb of a sentence or the one that is used as an *adjective* or *nouns* as well.

Finite verbs are a broad category of verbs which are subject to change (s) in the number and/or person of the subject, and the **tense of the verb**.

Whereas, **Non-Finite verbs** refer to the verb forms which remain unaltered notwithstanding the change (s) in the tense and/or the subject (number/person).

For example:

1. These boys *like* to sing. (**Finite Verb**)
2. He invited his friends *to like* his post on Facebook. (**Non-finite verb**)

Finite and Non-finite verbs explanation

There are two kinds of verbs in English grammar.

1. Finite Verb
2. Non-Finite Verb

Finite Verb

Definition: A verb which shows time or a verb which is limited by number, person, and gender of the subject is **known as a Finite verb**.

Examples:

1. Neha *writes* letters.
2. They *write* letters.
3. We have *written* letters.
4. I shall *write* letters.

In the given examples, the verb '*write*' has been changed according to the *number, person, and tense of the subject*. So the various forms of the verb '*write*' are **examples of Finite Verbs**.

Note: *All lexical verbs including 'be' and its forms are Finite Verbs.*

Non Finite Verbs

Definition: A verb that does not show time or a verb which is not limited by *number, person, and tense of the subject* is **known as a Non-Finite verb**.

Examples:

1. Raman tries to *sing*.
2. We try to *sing*.

Performdigi

3. They try to *sing*.
4. They will try to *sing*.
5. I have tried to *sing*.

In the given examples the verb '*sing*' has remained unchanged inspite of the *changes in number, person, and tense of the subject* and therefore the verb '*sing*' is a **Non-Finite Verb**. But the verb '*try*' had changed according to the changes in the *person, number, and tense of the subject*. Hence it is a **Finite Verb**.

Types of Non-Finite Verbs.

There are three kinds of Non-Finite Verbs in English

1. Infinitive
2. Gerund
3. Participle

Infinitive

It is formed by placing '*to*' before the root verb.

Example: She wants *to reach* home quickly. (as object)

To + verb forms are infinitives.

Root Verb	Infinitive
write	to write
speak	to speak
love	to love
give	to give
play	to play

Gerund

It is formed by adding '*ing*' to the root verb.

Example: *Reading* is a pleasure for some people.

In the above sentence, the word reading is a **gerund** as they function as nouns in their respective sentences.

Performdigi

Root Verb	Gerund
write	writing
speak	speaking
love	loving
give	giving
play	playing

Participle

It is formed by adding 'ing' to the root verb.

Example: The *dying* man called his sons to him.

In the sentence, the word '*dying*' function as an adjective for they qualify their respective nouns *man* hence they are called **participles** (ing/V3 form of the verb).

Root Verb	Participle
read	reading
smoke	smoking
wait	waiting
make	making
laugh	laughing

Difference between Gerund and Present Participle?

The **gerund** and the **Present participle** have the same form but **gerund** is a **verbal noun** and the **Present Participle** is a **verbal adjective**.

Examples:

Performdigi

1. *Reading* increase our knowledge. (**gerund**)
2. *Reading the newspaper*, he sat in the chair. (**participle**)

In the first sentence, '*reading*' is a **gerund** because it is the subject of the verb 'is'.

But in the second sentence, '*reading the newspaper*' is a **participle** because it qualifies the pronoun '*he*' as an **adjective**.

Exercise or Worksheet

Question 1. I think most of our friends prefer _____ (**take**) their own decisions rather than _____ (**Depend**) on their parents.

Questions 2. She couldn't stop herself from _____ (**dance**) on the grooving music.

Questions 3. He helped the children _____ (**plant**) saplings.

Questions 4. They saw the children _____ (**cross**) the road.

Questions 5. Riya's favorite pastime is _____ (**watch**) old movie.

Questions 6. Let me _____ (**think**) of an idea _____ (**carry**) out our works smoothly.

Questions 7. It is a great joy _____ (**live**) your old moments again _____ (**watch**) these photographs.

Questions 8. I know you are _____ (**have**) lots of fun with your friends.

Questions 9. My friend always volunteers _____ cake on a party (**baking/to bake**)

Questions 10. Don't waste my time _____ about your neighbours. (**Complaining/to complain**)

