

## Participle clauses with adverbial meaning 1

Reminder → J6–J10

**A** We can use **present participle (-ing)** and **past participle (-ed)** clauses with an adverbial meaning. (See also Unit 59.) They often give information about the timing, causes, and results of the events described:

- Opening her eyes*, the baby began to cry. (= When she opened her eyes ...)
- Faced with a bill for £10,000*, Ivan has taken an extra job. (= Because he is faced ...)
- Looked after carefully*, the plant can live through the winter. (= If it is looked after ...)
- Having finished the book*, I had a holiday. (perfect; = When / Because I had finished ...)
- The fruit was expensive, *being imported*. (simple passive; = ... because it was imported)
- Having been hunted close to extinction*, the rhino is once again common in this area. (perfect passive; = Although it had been hunted close to extinction ...)

**B** The implied subject of a participle clause (that is, a subject known but not directly mentioned) is usually the same as the subject of the main clause:

- Arriving at the party*, we saw Ruth standing alone. (= When **we** arrived ... **we** saw ...)

However, sometimes the implied subject is not referred to in the main clause:

- Having wanted to drive a train all his life*, this was an opportunity not to be missed.

In careful speech and writing we avoid different subjects for the participle and main clause:

- Turning round quickly, the door hit me in the face. (first implied subject = 'I'; second subject = 'the door')

would be better as:

- When I turned round quickly, the door hit me in the face.

**C** In formal English, the participle clause sometimes has its own subject, which is often a pronoun or includes one:

- The collection of vases is priceless, **some being over 2000 years old**.
- Her voice breaking with emotion**, Vasiliki spoke about her father's illness.

We use the present participle (-ing) clause to talk about something happening at the same time as an event in the main clause, or to give information about the facts given in the main clause.

**D** When we use **not** in a participle clause it usually comes before the participle. However, it can follow the participle, depending on meaning:

- Not understanding** the rules, I found the cricket match boring. (= because I didn't understand the rules)
- Hoping not to be recognised*, I chose a seat in a dark corner. (= I hoped that I wouldn't be recognised)

**E** We use a clause beginning with **having + past participle** rather than a present participle if the action in the main clause is the consequence of the event in the participle clause:

- Having broken** her leg the last time she went, Giorgia decided not to go on the school skiing trip this year. (or **After breaking** her leg ...; *not Breaking* her leg ...)

We can use either a **present participle (-ing)** clause or a **having + past participle** clause with a similar meaning when the action in the participle clause is complete before the action in the main clause begins. Compare:

- Taking off** his shoes, Ram walked into the house. (*Having taken off ...* has a similar meaning) *and*
- Running** across the field, I fell and hurt my ankle. (= While I was running ...; 'Having run ...' would suggest that I fell *after* I had run across the field)

## Exercises

58.1 Rewrite the sentences beginning with one of the clause forms from sections A and D opposite.

A & D

- 1 When she saw the dog coming towards her, she quickly crossed the road. Seeing the dog coming towards her, she quickly crossed the road.
- 2 As she was dressed all in black, she was almost invisible in the starless night.
- 3 As I don't have a credit card, I found it difficult to book an airline ticket online.
- 4 Antonio spent a lot of time filling in job application forms because he was unemployed.
- 5 Because I was walking quickly, I soon caught up with her.
- 6 The house was built of wood, so it was clearly a fire risk.
- 7 I was eager to catch the bus in good time because I had been told off the day before for arriving late.
- 8 She didn't know where the theatre was, so she asked for directions at the hotel reception.
- 9 As she was a nurse, she knew what to do after the accident.
- 10 He had spent his childhood in Oslo, so he knew the city well.

58.2 If the implied subject of the two clauses is the same write S and if it is different write D. Rewrite the D sentences to make them more acceptable. B

- 1 Waiting for the bus, a car went through a puddle and splashed water all over me.
- 2 Known mainly as a writer of novels, Rashid has now written a successful biography.
- 3 Keeping a careful eye on the spider, Suzanne hurried out of the bathroom.
- 4 Looking down from the hill, the town spread out before us towards the coast.
- 5 Feeling rather sick, the boat ploughed through the huge waves.
- 6 Found only in the Andes, the plant is used by local people to treat skin diseases.

58.3 Write not in the more appropriate place in each sentence. D

- 1 ..... wishing ..... to boast, she said nothing about her success.
- 2 ..... pretending ..... to notice that people were staring at me, I carried on looking on the floor for my lost contact lens.
- 3 ..... determined ..... to be beaten, she put all her energy into the serve.
- 4 ..... feeling ..... well, she went home early.
- 5 ..... bothering ..... to put on his coat, he left the house.
- 6 ..... trying ..... to cry, she waved to Harun as the train pulled out.

58.4 Join these sentences using **having + past participle** or the **-ing** form of the first verb. Which sentences can have either form? E

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 I moved house recently.                                     | a I decided to cancel the order.                  |
| 2 I looked over my shoulder.                                  | b I felt I needed to change my life.              |
| 3 I walked through the tunnel.                                | c I could see Ida running after me.               |
| 4 I waited six weeks for the washing machine to be delivered. | d <del>I don't yet have internet access.</del>    |
| 5 I suffered from depression myself as a teenager.            | e I was able to understand most of what she said. |
| 6 I parked the car about a kilometre from the stadium.        | f I banged my head on the low roof.               |
| 7 I reached my mid-thirties.                                  | g I could understand how Nathan was feeling.      |
| 8 I learned some Swahili as a child.                          | h I walked the rest of the way.                   |

1 + d Having moved house recently, I don't yet have internet access.