

Gerunds and Gerundives:

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Special Notes on the Gerund:

The Gerund is a verbal noun. Therefore it has only one gender, neuter. Romans used the infinitive as the verbal noun for the subject and object of finite verbs: thus they say “superāre difficile est – “To win is difficult.” or “It is difficult to win.” English, on the other hand, also uses the gerund as subject, so we can say “Winning is difficult.” The Romans would not use such a construction.

In the same way the Romans used the infinitive, not the gerund, as the object of many verbs. Thus “amō superāre” “I like to win” rather than “I like winning” So the gerund has only these forms:

Nominative	XXXXXXX	<u>amāre</u> , the infinitive, is used in its place
Genitive	amandī	
Dative	amandō	
Accusative	amāndum	used with prepositions like <u>ad</u> , and <u>per</u> <u>amāre</u> , the infinitive, is used in its place as direct object
Ablative	amandō	

Special Notes on the Gerundive:

The gerundive is an adjective. In fact it is the future passive participle. As such it has all endings of the the first and second declension. So if you see –nd- followed by any first or second declension ending except –ī, –ō or –um, you can be sure it is the gerundive. If it does have one of those endings, try it as the gerund first. If it does not work as a gerund, try it as a gerundive.

Special Uses of the Gerundive:

1. The Gerundive is often used by Latin in place of a gerund with an object. Thus they say “librīs scribendīs” literally “by books to be written” as equivalent to “by writing books.”
2. The combination of a form of the verb esse, with the gerundive is called the Passive Periphrastic. It implies necessity or obligation. Both the gerundive and the form of esse are translated as they usually are. The only trick is that the agent is expressed by the dative, not by ab plus the ablative. Thus “fābula mihi narranda est” means “The story is to be told by me.” or “The story must be told by me.”