

Gerunds: Fixed Expressions & Evaluation

INTERMEDIATE

Focus: there's no point in, it's no use, it's no good, it's worth doing, worth seeing, it's worth it, have trouble + -ing, have difficulty + -ing, have a problem + -ing, spend time doing

In English, certain fixed expressions are always followed by the **gerund** (verb + **-ing**). You cannot use the infinitive (to + verb) with these phrases.

1. Futility and Uselessness

We use these phrases to say that an action will not bring a good result or is a waste of time.

- **Structure:** *It/There is* + **phrase** + **verb-ing**
- **There's no point in:** *There is no point in **crying**.* (It doesn't help.)
- **It's no use:** *It's no use **asking** him.* (He won't agree.)
- **It's no good:** *It's no good **worrying** about the past.*

2. Evaluating Value (Worth)

We use **worth** to recommend something or evaluate if an action justifies the effort.

- **Structure A:** Subject + *be* + **worth** + **verb-ing**
 - *This movie is **worth watching**.*
- **Structure B:** *It* + *be* + **worth** + **verb-ing** + (Object)
 - *It is **worth visiting** the museum.*
- **Note:** We can also say simply "It's worth it" if the context is clear.

3. Difficulty and Problems

We use these expressions to talk about hard tasks. We do **not** use the preposition "to".

- **Structure:** Subject + *have* + **expression** + **verb-ing**
- **Have trouble:** *I have trouble **sleeping**.*
- **Have difficulty:** *She had difficulty **finding** the house.*
- **Have a problem:** *We had a problem **installing** the software.*
- **Note:** In negative sentences (*have no trouble*), it means it was easy.

4. Time and Status

We use **spend** (or **waste**) to talk about how we use our time.

- **Structure:** Subject + *spend/waste* + (time expression) + **verb-ing**
- *He **spends** two hours **playing** video games.*
- *Don't **waste** time **complaining**.*

Practice Exercises

Instruction: Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verbs provided in parentheses. Pay close attention to the grammar cues (subject, tense, negation, or question form).

1. This book is excellent. It is definitely _____ (worth / read).
2. _____ (you / have / trouble / hear) me clearly right now?
3. There _____ (be / no point in / get) angry about small mistakes.
4. She _____ (spend / a lot of time / study) for her history exam last week.
5. It _____ (be / no use / try) to fix this phone; it is completely broken.
6. The instructions were clear, so we _____ (not / have / difficulty / build) the shelf.
7. That new art gallery _____ (be / worth / visit) if you are in the city center?
8. It _____ (be / no good / talk) to him while he is watching TV.
9. How much time _____ (you / spend / practice) the piano every day?
10. I _____ (have / a problem / access) my email account yesterday morning.
11. It _____ (not / be / worth / drive) there because the traffic is terrible.
12. _____ (be / there / any point in / wait) for them, or should we leave now?
13. He usually _____ (have / trouble / wake up) early in the winter.
14. Don't _____ (waste / time / argue); let's just solve the problem.
15. The mechanic said the car _____ (be / not / worth / repair) because of the cost.

Answer Key

1. **worth reading**
2. **Do you have trouble hearing**
3. **is no point in getting**
4. **spent a lot of time studying**
5. **is no use trying**
6. **didn't have difficulty building** (or *did not have difficulty building*)
7. **Is that new art gallery worth visiting**
8. **is no good talking**
9. **do you spend practicing**
10. **had a problem accessing**
11. **isn't worth driving** (or *is not worth driving*)
12. **Is there any point in waiting**
13. **has trouble waking up**
14. **waste time arguing**
15. **is not worth repairing** (or *isn't worth repairing*)