

FCW 7.1

The title of this chapter is “Life’s Too Short”. The phrase “life’s too short” is an expression meaning that human time is limited, so we should not waste it on trivial matters, negative emotions, or things that do not bring us happiness or fulfillment. It often precedes the mention of the activity to be avoided, for example: “Life’s too short to worry about what others think.”

The vocabulary in this chapter is related to sport, so let’s begin by identifying the items in the image.

Identify the equipment in pictures a-o, and name each sport. There is one example.

a) ice skates / skating

- b) _____ / _____
- c) _____ / _____
- d) _____ / _____
- e) _____ / _____
- f) _____ / _____
- g) _____ / _____
- h) _____ / _____
- i) _____ / _____
- j) _____ / _____
- k) _____ / _____
- l) _____ / _____
- m) _____ / _____
- n) _____ / _____
- o) _____ / _____



Now, to practice speaking, I would like you to answer these questions orally.

- a) What sports do you really enjoy watching?
- b) Is there a sportsperson or team who you particularly like watching?
- c) Which sport can't you stand watching?
- d) Which sports have you either taken up or given up recently?
- e) Which do you prefer - watching a sport live or watching it on TV?
- f) Are there any sports you like doing on holiday?

This chapter reviews the use of gerunds and infinitives. Remember, a gerund is the -ing form of a verb—e.g., *playing*, *dancing*, *eating*—that functions as a noun. NOT all -ing forms are gerunds. An -ing form might be a present participle (used in the continuous tenses) or an adjective. **Look at the following sentences. What is the -ing form in these sentences—a gerund, the present participle or an adjective?**

- a) I pulled on the **climbing** rope to show I was safe.
- b) Anna was **running** along the track when she tripped and fell.
- c) **Snowboarding** is a very popular sport.

OK. The sentences above show the various uses of the *-ing* form. Now, look at the sentences below. These sentences all contain the *-ing* form used as gerunds. **Match the sentences 1-5 with the description a-e.**

- 1) I enjoy going **swimming**.
- 2) After **learning** to ice skate, I'm going to learn to play ice hockey.
- 3) I want to take up **rowing**.
- 4) **Climbing** is a fairly safe sport nowadays.
- 5) It's not worth **going** to watch our local football team because they always lose!

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) follows a preposition | d) is the subject of the sentence |
| b) follows an expression | e) follows a verb |
| c) follows a phrasal verb | |

Look again at the descriptions. They are the rules for using gerunds. Gerunds:

- are used after prepositions, including phrasal verbs (which are verbs + prepositions),
- can be used as the subjects or objects of a sentence, essentially to name an activity,
- follow expressions, and
- follow certain verbs.

Watch out for verbs followed by “to” as a preposition. Common ones are “to look forward to doing” and “to object to doing”. (They are frequently tested in the exam.) The final use is also a tricky one. Which verbs require a gerund to follow? There are exceptions, but a good rule of thumb is that gerunds follow verbs that express a feeling or an opinion, for example: *enjoy watching...*, *miss seeing...*, *suggest going...*, *recommend buying...*

Let's contrast this with the use of infinitives. An *infinitive* is *to + base form of a verb*—for example, *to play*, *to dance*, *to eat*. (Note that infinitives are usually used with “to”, but not always.) This is different from Latin-based languages, where the infinitive is just one word: *jugar*, *bailar*, *comer*. Look at the following sentences, which show the most common uses of the infinitive. **Match the sentences 1-6 with the description a-f.**

- 1) I'm going to the pool **to have** my swimming lesson.
- 2) I want **to enroll** for netball practice next term.
- 3) They are unlikely **to hold** the Winter Olympics in Britain.
- 4) They let me **do** the judo classes even though I had never done judo before.
- 5) You must not **run** with the ball in some sports.
- 6) We encouraged them **to run** faster by cheering loudly.

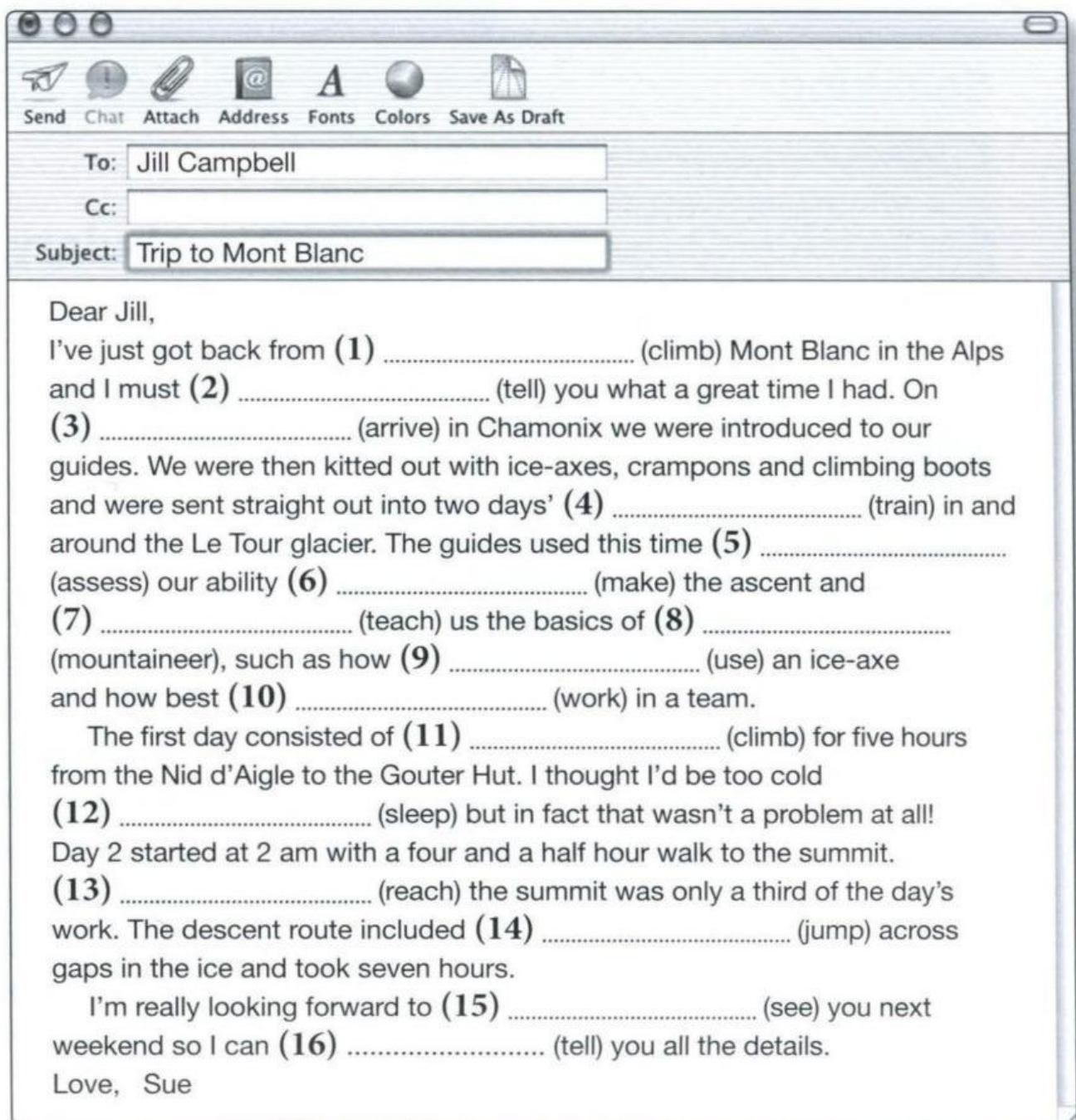
- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) follows an adjective | d) follows a modal auxiliary |
| b) follows a main verb | e) is used to express purpose |
| c) has an infinitive without 'to' | f) follows the object of a verb |

Infinitives are used:

- after common adjectives
- after modal auxiliary verbs
- are used to express purpose (as *para* is used in Spanish)
- after the object of a verb
- after certain verbs.

Which verbs require an infinitive to follow? Again, there are exceptions, but where gerunds follow verbs that express a feeling or an opinion, infinitives follow verbs that express decisions or expectations, for example: *decide to go...*, *plan to buy...*, *expect to see...*, etc.

Practice using gerunds and infinitives. **Read through this email and put the verbs in brackets in the correct form.**



The screenshot shows an email client window with a toolbar at the top containing icons for Send, Chat, Attach, Address, Fonts, Colors, and Save As Draft. The email header shows 'To: Jill Campbell', 'Cc:' (empty), and 'Subject: Trip to Mont Blanc'. The body of the email is as follows:

Dear Jill,

I've just got back from (1) (climb) Mont Blanc in the Alps and I must (2) (tell) you what a great time I had. On (3) (arrive) in Chamonix we were introduced to our guides. We were then kitted out with ice-axes, crampons and climbing boots and were sent straight out into two days' (4) (train) in and around the Le Tour glacier. The guides used this time (5) (assess) our ability (6) (make) the ascent and (7) (teach) us the basics of (8) (mountaineer), such as how (9) (use) an ice-axe and how best (10) (work) in a team.

The first day consisted of (11) (climb) for five hours from the Nid d'Aigle to the Gouter Hut. I thought I'd be too cold (12) (sleep) but in fact that wasn't a problem at all! Day 2 started at 2 am with a four and a half hour walk to the summit. (13) (reach) the summit was only a third of the day's work. The descent route included (14) (jump) across gaps in the ice and took seven hours.

I'm really looking forward to (15) (see) you next weekend so I can (16) (tell) you all the details.

Love, Sue

Here is one final exercise. **Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given.** Do not change the word given. You must use between two and five words, including the word given.

- 1) The newspapers said that Pete had pushed the other player.

ACCUSED

The newspapers the other player.

- 2) The pitch isn't dry enough to play on.

TOO

The pitch play on.

- 3) It wasn't easy for me to learn how to paraglide.

DIFFICULTY

I how to paraglide.

- 4) 'I wouldn't go diving by yourself, if I were *you*:' the instructor said.

ADVISED

The instructor diving by myself.

- 5) I prefer to go on walking holidays than lie on a crowded beach.

RATHER

I walking holidays than lie on a crowded beach.