
The Gerundive

THE GERUNDIVE is among the most interesting features of Latin because it's another type of word that doesn't exist in English. It thus allows things to be done in Latin that aren't quite possible for us. A quick overview to start will make the specifics easier to understand when we reach them.

A gerundive is a form into which a verb can be converted (just as it can be turned into a participle). Most often a gerundive means that a nearby noun should receive the action that the verb describes, or is fit for receiving it. In English, turning the verb *love* into the adjective *lovable* is similar to what a gerundive can do in Latin. But a gerundive often has a further overtone of obligation—not just that the noun is *fit* for loving (or honoring, or destroying, or whatever), but that it *should* or *must* be loved (or honored, or destroyed).

The explanation just given is how gerundives always work in the nominative case and how they sometimes work in the other cases. But a gerundive can do more. Sometimes it describes the purpose for which something was done—not saying that a noun is *to be destroyed*, but saying instead that something was done *in order to destroy* the noun. Gerundives can be used this way in the genitive, dative, or accusative cases, each with different details. Or a gerundive in the ablative case can express the means by which something was done.

In those last uses, the gerundive effectively replaces a *gerund*. As we've seen before, sometimes in English a verb is turned into a noun with *-ing* on the end: we came for the sake of *honoring* (or *denouncing*) the king. *Honoring* and *denouncing* aren't participles in that context because they don't serve as adjectives; they don't modify anything. Those are just the names of activities. They're called gerunds, and Latin has them, too. They're covered in the next chapter. The point for now is that Latin gerundives can sometimes serve the same basic purpose as gerunds. If you wanted to turn that sentence about honoring the king into Latin, you'd probably

express it by turning the verb *to honor* into a gerundive—for instance, *rēgis honōrandī causā vēnimus*. We'll see more examples later.

Formation

In the first, second, and “normal” (non *-iō*) third conjugations, the gerundive is formed by taking the infinitive, dropping its *-re* ending, and adding *-ndus*, *-nda*, or *-ndum* to create the nominative singular forms. In *-iō* third-conjugation and fourth-conjugation verbs, the *-ndus*, *-nda*, *-ndum* ending is preceded by the two vowels *ie*: *-iendus*, etc. Then, whatever the conjugation of the verb, you swap in all the same endings you would use for 1/2 adjectives.

Amō, amāre, amāvī, amātum (1): to love ...

becomes *amandus/amanda/amandum*: lovable, (a thing) to be loved (thus the name *Amanda*, which is the feminine gerundive).

Videō, vidēre, vidī, vīsum (2): to see ...

becomes *videndus/videnda/videndum*: (a thing) to be seen.

Dicō, dicere, dixī, dictum (3): to say ...

becomes *dicendus/dicenda/dicendum*: (a thing) to be said.

Fugiō, fugere, fugī, fugitūrus (3, *-iō*): to flee ...

becomes *fugiendus/fugienda/fugiendum*: (a thing) to be fled.

Audiō, audire, audīvī/audiī, audītum (4): to hear ...

becomes *audiendus/audienda/audiendum*: (a thing) to be heard.

Notice one more feature of the gerundive's formation: the vowel before the ending gets shortened if it was long in the infinitive. For example, *amāre* becomes *amandus*. Put more simply, the vowel before *-ndus* is always short.

In the third and fourth conjugations, alternative forms exist with a *u* instead of the *e* before *nd*. Thus the gerundive of *dicō* can also be *dicundus/dicunda/dicundum*, the gerundive of *fugiō* can also be *fugiundus/fugiunda/fugiundum*, and that of *audiō* can be *audiundus/audiunda/audiundum*. These are older forms, but they still coexisted with the newer ones in the classical period.

The gerundive is easy to spot because of the *-nd-* that's always in the ending—and easy to remember, because that same feature exists in the word *gerundive* itself.

Gerundives as Adjectives

Gerundives can do lots of things. For openers, here's a gerundive serving as an adjective:

Abominandus scarabaeus. —ERASMUS, *Adagia* (1536)

An abominable dung beetle. (More literally: A dung beetle to be abominated.) (A way to speak of the worst sort of person.)

Abōminandus/abōminanda/abōminandum is the gerundive (to be abominated) of abōminor, abōminārī, abōminātus sum (1, deponent): to seek to avert (an omen); abominate, detest, loathe. **Scarabaeus**, scarabaeī (2m): dung beetle.

This example shows how a gerundive can simply describe things. Calling the beetle *abominable* is a literal enough reading, too. *Lovable* can convey, in English, a blend of *fit for being loved* and *who/which ought to be loved*; *abominable* does the same for abomination. Notice that the gerundive agrees with the noun that it modifies. If you were talking about squashing such a dung beetle, both words would become accusative: you'd squash the *abōminandum scarabaeum*.

Deponent Verbs

Deponent verbs usually have passive-looking forms with an active sense. The gerundive is an exception. Its meaning is passive even when the verb from which it's made is deponent, as shown by that last illustration.

The Passive Periphrastic

A gerundive can be paired with *est* or *sunt* (or some other version of *esse*—to be). Together the words mean that a certain thing *must* be done. Two simple examples:

Carthago delenda est. —CATO THE ELDER (attributed)

Carthage must be destroyed. (More literally: Carthage is to be destroyed.) (Cato is said to have ended every speech, no matter what the topic, with some version of this line.)

Carthāgō, Carthāginis (3f—also spelled *Karthāgō*: the letter *k* is rarely used in Latin, but occasionally appears as an alternative to *c* before the vowel *a*): Carthage. **Dēlendus/dēlenda/dēlendum** is the gerundive (to be destroyed) of *dēleō*, *dēlere*, *dēlēvī*, *dēlētum* (2): to destroy. **Est**: is.

Fortunae sunt committenda omnia. —CICERO, *Letters to Atticus* 10.2.2

Everything has to be committed to fortune. (More literally: All things are to be committed to fortune.)

Fortūnae is the dative singular form of *fortūna*, *fortūnae* (1f): fortune. **Sunt**: (they) are. **Committenda** is the neuter nominative plural form of *committendus/committenda/committendum*, the gerundive (to be committed or entrusted) of *committō*, *committere*, *commisī*, *commissum* (3): to commit, entrust. **Omnia** is the neuter nominative plural form of *omnis/omnis/omne* (3): every; all; (n. pl. used substantively) all things, everything.

In these cases the gerundive conveys a thought about what needs to happen. The formal term for this is the *passive periphrastic*. As we saw in the previous chapter, *periphrasis* means *roundabout way of speaking*, which is how you might think of these patterns: they express a single idea by combining two words (like *dēlenda est*) instead of using a single verb on its own. Sometimes, as we'll see, the gerundive is used this way to describe something that had to be done in the past; in that case the word *est* (or other form of *sum*) is replaced with an equivalent in some past tense, such as *erat* (*he/she/it was*). The form of *sum* can also be in the future tense if one is talking about something that *will* have to be done. (*Carthāgō dēlenda erit* = *Carthage will have to be destroyed*.)

When the person who has to do the thing is named (Carthage must be destroyed by *you*), it's customary to put the doer in the dative case—the “dative of agent,” as it's called. So *by you* would be *tibi* (the dative form of *tū*). It denotes the person *for whom* the need exists (to do whatever is to be done). In cases where that might cause grammatical confusion, the ablative case with the preposition *ab* can be used to describe the doer instead. That happens notably when the gerundive also has an indirect object. For example, if you wanted to say *something must be given to you by me* in Latin, it would be confusing to have both *tibi* and *mihi* in the dative. So a clearer translation would be *aliquid tibi ā mē dandum est*.

Other Uses

As noted earlier, a gerundive sometimes acts like a gerund in the genitive, dative, accusative, and ablative cases. More specifically, a gerundive in agreement with a noun or pronoun can be used instead of a gerund with

a direct object. This will be easier to understand once we've seen more about the gerund in the next chapter. As an immediate example, though, a gerundive can describe the purpose of an act. That's commonly expressed by putting the gerundive and its (pro)noun after the preposition *ad*:

Ad interficiendum me venit. —LIVY, *History of Rome* 40.8.2

He came in order to kill me.

Interficiendum is a gerundive formed from *interficiō, interficere, interfēcī, interfectum* (3, -iō): to kill. There's no easy way to read it here as we've been treating gerundives so far—as meaning *to be killed*. You might construe it hyperliterally as *he came to me-to-be-killed*. But it's easier to just know that *ad*, coupled with a gerundive, means *for the purpose of (killing)* or *in order to (kill)*. Notice that from a grammatical standpoint, the pronoun *mē* is the object of the preposition *ad*. *Mē* isn't the object of the gerundive; it's *modified* by the gerundive. (Since a gerundive is passive, it can't have a direct object.) That's why *he came to me-to-be-killed* is more literally accurate than *he came to kill me*.

The Future Passive Participle

The gerundive is sometimes called the *future passive participle*. That way of speaking isn't necessarily wrong, but it's imprecise and can be misleading. True, a gerundive can be considered a participle; it's a verb turned into a modifier, and that's an adequate definition of what participles are. And it is indeed passive. And yes, the obligation will usually have to be carried out in the future (relative to the main verb). But if you call the gerundive a future passive participle, it's natural to think of the resulting word as similar to a future active participle, except passive. It isn't. A future active participle refers to what someone *will* do; a gerundive refers to what *must* or *should* or *needs to* be done. Its thrust is obligation rather than futurity. If you describe someone as *auditūrus*, you're saying that he's about to hear. If you describe him as *audiendus*, you're not saying that he's about to be heard; you're saying he *should* be heard.

For all that, though, *must* and *will* do sometimes get blurred. Horace wrote that the road of death is *calcanda* (to be trodden) only once (*Odes* 1.28.16). *Calcandus/calcanda/calcandum* is the gerundive of *calcō, calcāre, calcāvī, calcātum* (1): to trample, tread, set foot on. He means that the road must be trodden by everyone at some point once and for all: there's

no going back once you're dead. In this case there's no great difference between saying we *must* tread that road and saying we *will* tread it.

Cases where *must* and *will* overlap in this way caused the gerundive, over time, to sometimes be used as a true future passive participle meaning *about to/going to be X'd*—but only in later Latin. Writers after the third century AD might use a phrase like *homō audiendus* to mean *a person about to be heard* (rather than *a person who should be heard*). But you won't see Cicero writing that way. And in any era, the use of the gerundive to convey obligation was always most common.

Illustrations

Gerundives in the nominative case will be illustrated at some length. In the other cases, there usually are typical uses of gerundives and then others that arise less often. The illustrations here will focus on the typical.

→→ *Nominative Singular*

First, a couple of cases where the gerundive serves as a simple adjective.

Modo nempe horrendus ab astris descendit vos usque fragor.

—STATIUS, *Thebaid* II.88-89

Just now a dreadful crash descended from the stars to your world. (More literally: Indeed, just now a crash to-be-shuddered-at descended from the stars all the way to you.)

Modo (adv.): only, just; just now, just lately, recently. **Nempe** (particle): indeed, certainly, of course. **Horrendus**/horrenda/horrendum is the gerundive (to be shuddered at) of horreō, horrēre, horruī, — (2): to tremble or shudder at; be frightened at. **Ab/ā** (prep.): (away) from; by (takes the ablative). **Astris** is the ablative plural form of astrum, astrī (2n): star. **Dēscendit** is the third person singular perfect form of dēscendō, dēscendere, dēscendī, dēscēsum (3): to descend. **Vōs** is the accusative form of vōs: you (pl.). **Ūsque** (more often adv., but here prep.): all the way (to); right up to; until. **Fragor**, fragōris (3m): a breaking; crash.

Nullum est minimum contemnendum bonum. —SENECA, *Epistles*

II.8.12

There is no such thing as a very small and despicable good. (Alt.: There is no tiny and contemptible good. More literally: There is no very little, to-be-despised good.)

Nūllus/nūlla/nūllum (1/2, irreg.): no, not any. **Est**: there is. Minimus/minima/**minimum** (1/2): smallest, least; very little—the superlative form of parvus/parva/parvum (1/2): small, little. Contemnendus/contemnenda/**contemnendum** is the gerundive (to be despised) of contemnō, contemnere, contempsi, contemptum (3): to despise, hold in contempt, regard as unimportant. **Bonum**, bonī (2n): good; benefit; (in pl.) possessions.

Now some examples of the passive periphrastic, in which the gerundive is coupled with a form of the verb *to be*; the whole phrase means that something *must* or *should*, etc., be done. Sometimes the most natural translation calls for a nonliteral, active naming of the person who should do the act described; in other words, *this is to be done* is better translated as *you* (or *I* or *we*, etc.) *must do this*. That point will sometimes produce significant differences between the literal and idiomatic translations, as in the first example here.

Cavendus dolus est. —SALLUST, *Fragments of the Histories* Macr.84

You must guard against deception. (More literally: Deception is to be guarded against.)

Cavendus/cavenda/cavendum is the gerundive (to be guarded against) of caveō, cavēre, cāvī, cautum (2): to beware, guard against. **Dolus**, dolī (2m): deception, trickery. **Est**: is.

Mutandus locus est. —HORACE, *Epistles* 1.15.10

My course must be altered. (More literally: The location is to be changed. He's trying to pick a resort, and is saying that he shouldn't go to the usual one.)

Mūtandus/mūtanda/mūtandum is the gerundive (to be changed) of mūtō, mūtāre, mūtāvī, mūtātum (1): to change. **Locus**, locī (2m): place, location. **Est**: is.

Non est emolliendus animus. —SENECA, *Epistles* 51.8

The soul is not to be pampered.

Nōn: not. **Est**: is. **Ēmollendus**/ēmollienda/ēmollendum is the gerundive (to be softened or weakened) of ēmollīō, ēmollīre, ēmollīvī/ēmollīi, ēmollītum (4): to soften, weaken, enervate. **Animus**, animī (2m): mind, soul.

Seianus rogandus erat. —SENECA, *Consolation to Marcia* 22.6

He had to make his plea to Sejanus. (More literally: Sejanus was to be asked. Sejanus was an influential praetorian prefect under the Emperor

Tiberius, and one of the colorful villains of early imperial history. Here Seneca is describing someone honorable—Marcia's father—who refused to make appeals to Sejanus and preferred to starve himself to death.)

Seiānus, Seiānī (2m): Sejanus. **Rogandus**/roganda/rogandum is the gerundive (to be asked, to be begged) of rogō, rogāre, rogāvī, rogātum (1): to ask, beg, inquire. **Erat**: (he) was—the third person singular imperfect form of sum, esse, fui, futūrus (irreg.): to be.

Laudandus erit tibi Antonius. —SENECA THE ELDER, *Suasoriae* 6.1

You will have to praise Antony. (More literally: Antony will be to be praised by you.)

Laudandus/laudanda/laudandum is the gerundive (to be praised) of laudō, laudāre, laudāvī, laudātum (1): to praise. **Erit**: (he) will be—the third person singular future form of sum, esse, fui, futūrus (irreg.): to be. **Tibi**: (by) you—the dative form of tū: you (the dative of agent). **Antōnius**/Antōnia/Antōnium (1/2): a family name, here referring to the famous Mark Antony.

Morte magis metuenda senectus. —JUVENAL, *Satires* 11.45

Old age should be feared more than death. (More literally: Old age (is) to be feared more than death. He's talking about what should be feared by people who live extravagantly and squander their wealth early.)

Morte is the ablative singular form of mors, mortis (3f): death. **Magis** (adv.): more; rather. **Metuendus**/**metuenda**/metuendum is the gerundive (to be feared) of metuō, metuere, metuī, metūtum (3): to fear. **Senectūs**, senectūtis (3f): old age. This is another case where the verb (*est*) has to be inferred—an especially common pattern in poetry, of which this is a specimen.

Accusanda est apud nos, damnanda. —SENECA, *On Anger* 3.5.3

It must be arraigned before us and condemned. (More literally: It is to be accused before us, (it is) to be condemned. The *it* is anger: *ira*, *irae* (1f).)

Accūsandus/**accūsanda**/accūsandum is the gerundive (to be blamed, to be accused, to be called to account) of accūsō, accūsāre, accūsāvī, accūsātum (1): to blame; accuse. **Est**: it is. **Apud** (prep.): at, near; with, among; in front of, in the presence of; at the house of (takes the accusative). **Nōs** is the accusative form of nōs: we (us). **Damnandus**/**damnanda**/damnandum is the gerundive (to be condemned, convicted, sentenced) of damnō, damnāre, damnāvī, damnātum (1): to condemn, convict; disapprove.

The neuter nominative singular form is common, notably in impersonal passive constructions (we'll see a few).

Nunc est bibendum. —HORACE, *Odes* 1.37.1

Now is the time to drink. (More literally: Now one must drink; now drinking needs to happen.)

Nunc (adv.): now; as it is. **Est**: it is. **Bibendus/bibenda/bibendum** is the gerundive (to be drunk) of *bibō, bibere, bibī, bibitum* (3): to drink.

De gustibus non est disputandum. —ADAGE

There is no disputing matters of taste. (More literally: About tastes it is not to be disputed. The expression is probably of medieval origin. It's sometimes reordered as *de gustibus non disputandum est*.)

Dē (prep.): from, down from; about, concerning (takes the ablative). **Gustibus** is the ablative plural form of *gustus, gustūs* (4m): taste (the figurative sense found here is nonclassical). **Nōn**: not. **Est**: it is. **Disputandus/disputanda/disputandum** is the gerundive (to be disputed) of *disputō, disputāre, disputāvī, disputātum* (1): to argue, debate, dispute.

Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi. —HORACE, *The Art of Poetry* 102–03

If you would have me weep, you must first feel grief yourself. (More literally: If you wish me to weep, it is first to be suffered by you yourself. Advice for poets.)

Sī (conj.): if. **Vīs** is the second person singular form of *volō, velle, voluī*, — (irreg.): to wish, want. **Mē** is the accusative form of *ego*: I (me). **Fleō, flēre, flēvī, flētum** (2): to weep. **Dolendus/dolenda/dolendum** is the gerundive (to be suffered) of *doleō, dolēre, doluī, dolitum* (2): to hurt, suffer, feel pain; grieve for. **Est**: it is. **Primum** (adv.): first. **Ipsī** is the m/f/n dative singular form of *ipse/ipsa/ipsum* (adj.): himself/herself/etc.; in person; the very. **Tibi**: to/for you—the dative form of *tū*: you. *Ipsī tibi* is an example of the dative of agent, so it can be translated with *by*....

Quod erat demonstrandum. —USEFUL EXPRESSION

That which was to be proven. (Abbreviated Q.E.D., and traditionally put at the end of a mathematical proof or philosophical argument to state that it is complete.)

Quī/quae/quod (rel. pron.): who, which, that, what (that which ...). **Erat**: (it) was—the third person singular imperfect form of *sum, esse, fuī, futūrus* (irreg.): to be. **Dēmōnstrandus/dēmōnstranda/dēmōnstrandum** is the gerundive (to be proven) of *dēmōnstrō, dēmōnstrāre, dēmōnstrāvī, dēmōnstrātum* (1): to show, demonstrate, prove.

Non fuit negandum. —CICERO, *Letters to Atticus* 9.18.1

I could not refuse. (More literally: It was not to be refused.)

Nōn: not. **Fuit**: it was—the third person singular perfect form of *sum, esse, fui, futurus* (irreg.): to be. **Negandus/neganda/negandum** is the gerundive (to be denied, to be refused) of *negō, negāre, negāvī, negātum* (1): to deny; refuse.

Fatendum erit. —QUINTILIAN, *The Orator's Education* 5.11.4

This will have to be admitted.

Fatendus/fatenda/fatendum is the gerundive (to be admitted) of *fateor, fatērī, fassus sum* (2, deponent): to admit, confess. **Erit**: it will be—the third person singular future form of *sum, esse, fui, futurus* (irreg.): to be.

→> *Genitive Singular*

Gerundives outside the nominative case often replace gerunds—that is, nouns that are made from verbs and have an *-ing* on the end in English. An example:

Alia belli gerendi via nulla est. —LIVY, *History of Rome* 25.38.21

There is no other way of conducting the war. (More literally: There is no other way of war-to-be-waged.)

Alius/alia/aliud (1/2, irreg.): other, another. **Bellum, belli** (2n): war. **Gerendī** is the m/n genitive singular form of *gerendus/gerenda/gerendum*, the gerundive (to be waged) of *gerō, gerere, gessī, gestum* (3): to bear, carry; carry on, transact, conduct, do, accomplish; wage (war). **Via, viae** (1f): way, road. **Nūllus/nūlla/nūllum** (1/2, irreg.): no, not any. **Est**: there is.

Our interest is in the gerundive phrase *belli gerendī*. Note these points about it:

First, the gerundive—*gerendī*—formally modifies the noun *belli* (*war-to-be-waged*). But practically speaking, *belli* is translated as if it were the *object* of the verb from which the gerundive is made: *waging* (gerundive) ... *war*. In other words, the action in the sentence is *waging*, but that action is embedded in an adjective (the gerundive—*gerendī*).

Second, observe that the noun modified by the gerundive (or, in any event, paired with it) goes into the case that would be that of the gerund if a gerund were being used. So while *war* might seem to be an

object that could be put into the accusative case (which it would be if a gerund were used instead of a gerundive) it stays in the genitive case with the gerundive to which it's matched.

Third, the gerundive is expressed in English most naturally not as *to be conducted* but as if it were simply the gerund *conducting*: a noun made from the same verb.

Another example of the same pattern:

Saepe impetum cepi abrumpendae vitae. —SENECA, *Epistles* 78.2

I often entertained the impulse of ending my life. (More literally: I often entertained the impulse of life-to-be-broken-off.)

Saepe (adv.): often. **Impetum** is the accusative singular form of *impetus*, *impetūs* (4m): impulse; attack, assault. *Capiō*, *capere*, **cēpī**, *captum* (3, –iō): to take, seize, capture; of mental operations: to form, entertain, conceive. **Abrumpendae** is the feminine genitive singular form of *abrumpendus/abrumpenda/abrumpendum*, the gerundive (to be broken off) of *abrumpō*, *abrumpere*, *abrūpī*, *abruptum* (3): to break off; break, rupture; cut short. *Vīta*, **vītae** (1f): life.

Abrumpendae is the gerundive. But again it gets translated like a gerund (*ending*, rather than *to be ended*).

Gerundive phrases in the genitive case can also describe the purpose of an action. The gerundive is then accompanied (usually followed) by *causā* or *grātiā*, as in these examples:

Menapii legatos ad eum pacis petendae causa mittunt. —CAESAR,
The Gallic War 6.6.2

The Menapians send envoys to him for the sake of seeking peace. (More literally: The Menapians send envoys to him for the sake of peace-to-be-sought.)

Menapii, *Menapiōrum* (2m): the Menapians (a people of northern Gaul). **Lēgātōs** is the accusative plural form of *lēgātus*, *lēgātī* (2m): ambassador, envoy. **Ad** (prep.): to, toward; according to (takes the accusative). **Eum**: him—the masculine accusative singular form of *is/ea/id* (pron.): he, she, it; this, that. *Pāx*, **pācis** (3f): peace. **Petendae** is the feminine genitive singular form of *petendus/petenda/petendum*, the gerundive (to be sought) of *petō*, *petere*, *petivī/petiī*, *petitum* (3): to ask; seek; attack. **Causā** is the ablative singular form of *causa*, *causae* (1f): cause, reason; in abl. *causā* preceded by gen.: for

the sake (of). **Mittunt** is the third person plural form of *mittō*, *mittere*, *mīsī*, *missum* (3): to send.

Legatos ad Caesarem sui purgandi gratia mittunt. —CAESAR, *The Gallic War* 7.43.2

They send ambassadors to Caesar in order to clear themselves. (More literally: They send ambassadors to Caesar for the sake of themselves-to-be-cleared—i.e., clearing themselves).

Lēgātōs is the accusative plural form of *lēgātus*, *lēgātī* (2m): ambassador, envoy. **Ad** (prep.): to (takes the accusative). **Caesarem** is the accusative singular form of *Caesar*, *Caesaris* (3m): Caesar. **Suī**: of themselves—the genitive form of the reflexive pronoun). **Pūrgandī** is the m/n genitive singular form of *pūrgandus/pūrganda/pūrgandum*, the gerundive (to be cleared) of *pūrgō*, *pūrgāre*, *pūrgāvī*, *pūrgātum* (1): to clean, cleanse, purge, clear. (The genitive forms of personal pronouns—including the reflexive—are combined with m/n singular forms of the gerundive no matter the gender and number of the people referred to.) **Grātiā** is the ablative singular form of *grātia*, *grātia*e (1f): favor; gratitude, (in plural) thanks; in abl. *grātiā* preceded by gen.: for the sake (of). **Mittunt** is the third person plural form of *mittō*, *mittere*, *mīsī*, *missum* (3): to send.

→ Dative Singular

Gerundive phrases in the dative case most often express the function or purpose of a person or thing (often with verbs of choosing or the like—e.g., *I picked a spot for (doing so-and-so)*). Notice again that the gerundives in these cases act like gerunds. They flow into English with an *-ing* ending, and the nouns with which they agree are, in effect, objects of the action they describe.

Diem praestituit operi faciundo. —CICERO, *Against Verres* 2.1.148

He appointed a day for doing the work. (More literally: He appointed a day for the work-to-be-done.)

Diem is the accusative singular form of *diēs*, *diē* (5m/f): day. **Praestituit** is the third person singular perfect form (or maybe the historical present) of *praestituō*, *praestituere*, *praestituī*, *praestitūtum* (3): to determine, appoint. **Operī** is the dative singular form of *opus*, *operis* (3n): work; need. **Faciundō** is the m/n dative singular form of *faciundus/faciunda/faciundum* (also *faciendus*), the gerundive (to be done) of *faciō*, *facere*, *fēcī*, *factum* (3, *-iō*): to do; make.

Triumviri Rei Publicae Constituendae. —name of the Second Triumvirate

Triumvirate for Organizing the Republic. (More literally: Triumvirs for the Republic-to-be-Organized. The alliance between Octavian, Mark Antony, and Marcus Lepidus, 43 B.C.)

Triumvirī is the nominative plural form of *triumvir*, *triumvirī* (2m): *triumvir*, member of a triumvirate (literally *a man (out) of three: trium*—the m/f/n genitive form of *trēs/trēs/tria* (3): three—and *vir* fused into one word). **Reī** is the dative singular form of *rēs*, *reī* (5f): thing; matter, affair. **Pūblicaē** is the feminine dative singular form of *pūblicus/pūblica/pūblicum* (1/2): public, belonging to the state or community. Together these words make *rēs pūblica*: the republic, the state. **Cōstituendae** is the feminine dative singular form of *cōstituendus/cōstituenda/cōstituendum*, the gerundive (to be established or organized) of *cōstituō*, *cōstituere*, *cōstituī*, *cōstitutum* (3): to establish, organize.

Scit se esse oneri ferendo. —SENECA, *Epistles* 71.26

He knows he can bear the burden. (More literally: He knows himself to be (suitable) for carrying the burden/(up) to carrying the burden. Even more literally: for/to the burden-to-be-carried.)

Scit is the third person singular form of *sciō*, *scīre*, *scīvī/scīi*, *scītum* (4): to know. **Sē**: himself—the accusative form of the reflexive pronoun. **Esse**: to be. **Onerī** is the dative singular form of *onus*, *oneris* (3n): burden. **Ferendō** is the m/n dative singular form of *ferendus/ferenda/ferendum*, the gerundive (to be carried or borne) of *ferō*, *ferre*, *tulī*, *lātum* (3, irreg.): to carry, bear; endure. We have an idiomatic construction here: *esse* with a gerundive phrase (or gerund) in the dative means *to be able to ... (do whatever action is conveyed by the gerundive), be up to ..., be capable of ...*

→→ *Accusative Singular*

Accusative forms of the gerundive are often found in indirect statements (I think *that X must be done*, etc.). This is the passive periphrastic turned indirect. As usual in indirect statements, the subject will be in the accusative and the verb in the infinitive. The gerundive will agree with the subject and so will be accusative, too. The verb will be an infinitive form of *sum*, such as *esse* (to be) or *fuisse* (to have been). Sometimes the infinitive is made explicit (as with *esse* in the first example below); sometimes it's left implied (as in the next few afterwards).

Adiciebat contrahendam materiam esse luxuriae. —SENECA, *Epistles*

108.18

He thought we should curtail the sources of our luxury. (More literally: He added the source of luxury to be to be curtailed—i.e., he added that the source of luxury was to be curtailed.)

Adiciēbat is the third person singular imperfect form of *adiciō, adicere, adicē, adiectum* (3, -iō): to throw (at); attach; add. **Contrahendam** is the feminine accusative singular form of *contrahendus/contrahenda/contrahendum*, the gerundive (to be curtailed) of *contrahō, contrahere, contrāxī, contractum* (3): to draw together, draw in, contract; restrict, restrain, curtail, lessen; collect. **Māteriam** is the accusative singular form of *māteria, māteriaē* (1f): material, matter; source. **Esse**: to be. *Luxuria, luxuriae* (1f): luxury, extravagance, excess.

Scito te interficiendum. —1 KINGS 2:37

Know that thou shalt be put to death. (More literally: Know you(rself to be) to be killed.)

Scītō is the singular future imperative form of *sciō, scīre, scīvī/sciī, scītum* (4): to know (the future imperative of this verb is generally used instead of the present one, which rarely occurs). **Tē** is the accusative form of *tū*: you. **Interficiendum** is the m/n accusative singular form of *interficiendus/interficienda/interficiendum*, the gerundive (to be killed) of *interficiō, interficere, interfēcī, interfectum* (3, -iō): to kill.

Statuit expectandam classem. —CAESAR, *The Gallic War* 3.14.1

He decided he must wait for the fleet. (A little more literally: He decided the fleet was to be awaited. Still more literally: He decided the fleet (to be) to be awaited.)

Statuit is the third person singular perfect form of *statuō, statuere, statuī, statūtum* (3): to set up; decide. **Expectandam** is the feminine accusative singular form of *expectandus/expectanda/expectandum*, the gerundive (to be awaited) of *expectō, expectāre, expectāvī, expectātum* (1—also *expectō*): to wait (for), await; expect; look forward to. **Classem** is the accusative singular form of *classis, classis* (3f): fleet.

Veniam et inpunitatem dandam puto. —CICERO, *Philippics* 8.32

My view is that they should be granted pardon and immunity. (A little more literally: I think pardon and immunity are to be given. Still more literally: I think pardon and immunity (to be) to be given.)

Veniam isn't a verb here; it means *pardon*: the accusative singular form of *venia*, *veniae* (1f). **Et** (conj.): and. **Inpūnitātem** is the accusative singular form of *inpūnitās*, *inpūnitātis* (3f—also *impūnitās*): impunity, immunity. **Dandam** is the feminine accusative singular form of *dandus/danda/dandum*, the gerundive (to be given) of *dō*, *dare*, *dedī*, *datum* (1, irreg.): to give. **Putō**, *putāre*, *putāvī*, *putātum* (1): to think, regard, suppose.

A gerundive in the accusative case can also serve as yet another way to express purpose (it's used that way in a wider range of contexts than the dative gerundive is). Here the gerundive is paired with *ad*. Together they roughly mean *in order to do* (*whatever action is in the gerundive*).

Quis stabit ad videndum eum? —MAL. 3:2

Who shall stand to see him?

Quis/quis/quid (interrog. pron.): who? what? **Stābit** is the third person singular future form of *stō*, *stāre*, *stetī*, *statum* (1): to stand. **Ad** (prep.): to. **Videndum** is the m/n accusative singular form of *videndus/videnda/videndum*, the gerundive (to be seen) of *video*, *vidēre*, *vīdī*, *vīsum* (2): to see. **Eum**: him—the masculine accusative singular form of *is/ea/id* (pron.): he, she, it; this, that.

Hannibalem ad oppugnandam Romam miserunt. —LIVY, *History of*

Rome 31.31.12

They sent Hannibal to attack Rome.

Hannibalem is the accusative singular form of *Hannibal*, *Hannibalis* (3m): Hannibal. **Ad** (prep.): to. **Oppugnandam** is the feminine accusative singular form of *oppugnandus/oppugnanda/oppugnandum*, the gerundive (to be attacked) of *oppugnō*, *oppugnāre*, *oppugnāvī*, *oppugnātum* (1): to attack. **Rōmam** is the accusative singular form of *Rōma*, *Rōmae* (1f): Rome. **Misērunt** is the third person plural perfect form of *mittō*, *mittere*, *mīsī*, *missum* (3): to send; throw.

Non sequeris turbam ad faciendum malum. —EX. 23:2

Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil.

Nōn: not. **Sequeris** is the second person singular future form of *sequor*, *sequī*, *secūtus sum* (3, deponent): to follow. **Turbam** is the accusative singular form of *turba*, *turbae* (1f): crowd. **Ad** (prep.): to. **Faciendum** is the m/n accusative singular form of *faciendus/facienda/faciendum*, the gerundive (to be done) of *faciō*, *facere*, *fēcī*, *factum* (3, -iō): to do; make. **Malum** is the accusative singular form of *malum*, *malī* (2n): evil; trouble, misfortune; misdeed; disease.

Ad discendam avaritiam convenimus? —SENECA, *Epistles* 110.15

Did we gather merely to learn what greed was? (A little more literally: Did we gather to learn greed?)

Ad (prep.): to. **Discendam** is the feminine accusative singular form of *discendus/discenda/discendum*, the gerundive (to be learned) of *discō, discere, didicī, discitūrus* (3): to learn. **Avāritiam** is the accusative singular form of *avāritia, avāritiae* (1f): greed. **Convēnimus** is the first person plural perfect form of *conveniō, convenīre, convēnī, conventum* (4): to come together, meet, gather, assemble.

→→ *Ablative Singular*

Gerundive phrases can be used in the ablative case with the usual prepositions or without them (we'll see an example of the latter pattern under the ablative plural heading). First, a case where a gerundive serves as an adjective in the familiar way:

A filio abdicando victus es. —SENECA THE ELDER, *Controversies*

10.2.7

You have been defeated by a son who deserves disinheriting. (More literally: You have been defeated by a son-to-be-disinherited (or a disinheritable son).)

Ab/ā (prep.): from; by (takes the ablative). **Filiō** is the ablative singular form of *filius, filii* (2m): son. **Abdicandō** is the m/n ablative singular form of *abdicandus/abdicanda/abdicandum*, the gerundive (to be disinherited) of *abdicō, abdicāre, abdicāvī, abdicātum* (1): to resign; renounce; disinherit. **Victus es** is the second person masculine singular perfect passive form of *vincō, vincere, vīcī, victum* (3): to conquer, defeat; win.

And now some ablative examples in which the gerundive amounts to a gerund (a verb turned into a noun with an *-ing* ending) followed by a direct object:

Clausula est difficilis in tradenda provincia. —CICERO, *Letters to Atticus*

6.3.3

The conclusion is difficult in the matter of handing over the province. (More literally: The conclusion is difficult in the province-to-be-handed-over.)

Clausula, *clausulae* (1f): conclusion. **Est**: is. **Difficilis/difficilis/difficile** (3): difficult. **In** (prep.): (with abl.) in; (with acc.) into. **Trādendā** is the feminine

ablative singular form of *trādendus/trādenda/trādendum*, the gerundive (to be handed over) of *trādō, trādere, trādidī, trāditum* (3): to hand over; surrender; deliver; hand down; relate. **Prōvinciā** is the ablative singular form of *prōvincia, prōvinciae* (1f): province.

Adstricti sunt in continendo patrimonio. — SENECA, *On the Shortness of Life* 3.1

Men are thrifty in guarding their private property. (More literally: They're restrained in family-property-to-be-held-together.) (... but less so in guarding their time.)

Adstricti is the masculine nominative plural form of *adstrictus/adstricta/adstrictum* (1/2), the perfect passive participle (restrained, tightened) of *adstringō, adstringere, adstrīxī, adstrictum* (3—also *adstringō*): to tie up, bind; restrain; tighten. **Sunt**: they are. **In** (prep.): (with abl.) in; (with acc.) into. **Continendō** is the m/n ablative singular form of *continendus/continenda/continendum*, the gerundive (to be held together) of *contineō, continēre, continuī, contentum* (2): to hold together; keep; restrain; contain. **Patrimōniō** is the ablative singular form of *patrimōnium, patrimōniū* (2n): estate, inheritable assets.

Vidisti quam abhorrerem ab urbe relinquenda. — CICERO, *Letters to Friends* 2.16.3

You saw how much I disliked the idea of abandoning the capital. (More literally: You saw how I shuddered away from the city-to-be-abandoned.)

Vidisti is the second person singular perfect form of *videō, vidēre, vīdī, vīsum* (2): to see. **Quam** (interrog. adv.): how (much)? **Abhorrerem** is the first person singular imperfect subjunctive form of *abhorreō, abhorrēre, abhorruī*, — (2): to abhor, shudder at; it often takes the preposition *ab* as the link to what is abhorred. **Ab/ā** (prep.): (away) from; by (takes the ablative). **Urbe** is the ablative singular form of *urbs, urbis* (3f): city. **Relinquendā** is the feminine ablative singular form of *relinquendus/relinquenda/relinquendum*, the gerundive (to be abandoned) of *relinquō, relinquere, reliquī, relictum* (3): to abandon, relinquish, leave behind.

→ *Nominative Plural*

Ante ad mortem quam ad vitam praeparandi sumus. — SENECA, *Epistles* 61.4

We must make ready for death before we make ready for life. (More literally: We are to be prepared for death earlier than for life.)

Ante ... quam: before, earlier than—**ante** (adv.): before, earlier, previously; **quam** (rel. adv.): as; than. **Ad** (prep.): to; for (takes the accusative). **Mortem** is the accusative singular form of *mors, mortis* (3f): death. **Vitam** is the accusative singular form of *vīta, vītae* (1f): life. **Praeparandī** is the masculine nominative plural form of *praeparandus/praeparanda/praeparandum*, the gerundive (to be prepared) of *praeparō, praeparāre, praeparāvī, praeparātum* (1): to prepare. **Sumus:** we are.

Excludendae sunt. —SENECA, *Epistles* 72.11

They should be shut out. (More literally: They are to be shut out. He's talking about trivial occupations—*occupātiō, occupātiōnis* (3f)—that gobble up our time.)

Exclūdendae is the feminine nominative plural form of *exclūdendus/exclūdenda/exclūdendum*, the gerundive (to be shut out) of *exclūdō, exclūdere, exclūsī, exclūsum* (3): to shut out; exclude. **Sunt:** they are.

Scelera enim sceleribus tuenda sunt. —SENECA, *On Mercy* 1.13.2

For crimes must be safeguarded by crimes.

Scelera is the nominative plural form—and **sceleribus** is the ablative plural form—of *scelus, sceleris* (3n): crime. **Enim** (particle): for. **Tuenda** is the neuter nominative plural form of *tuendus/tuenda/tuendum*, the gerundive (to be defended, kept up) of *tuor, tuērī, tuitus sum* (2, deponent): to look at; watch over, protect, preserve, defend. **Sunt:** (they) are.

→→ *Genitive Plural*

Fortitudo contemptrix timendorum est. —SENECA, *Epistles* 88.29

Bravery is a scorner of things which inspire fear. (More literally: Bravery is a scorner of things-to-be-feared.)

Fortitūdō, *fortitūdinis* (3f): bravery; strength. **Contemptrīx**, *contemptrīcis* (3f): despiser, scorner (female). **Timendōrum** is the m/n (here n) genitive plural form of *timendus/timenda/timendum*, the gerundive (to be feared) of *timeō, timēre, timuī, —* (2): to fear, be afraid. **Est:** is.

Est autem fides sperandarum substantia rerum. —HEB. 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things to be hoped for. (Alt.: Now faith is the assurance that what we hope for will come about.)

Est: is. **Autem** (particle): on the other hand, but, however; and, moreover, now. **Fidēs**, *fideī* (5f): faith (in Christian contexts); loyalty, trustworthiness (in

other settings). **Spērandārum** is the feminine genitive plural form of spērandus/spērandā/spērandum, the gerundive (to be hoped for) of spērō, spērāre, spērāvī, spērātum (1): to hope (for). **Substantia**, substantiae (1f): substance; essence, that of which a thing consists. **Rērum** is the genitive plural form of rēs, reī (5f): thing; matter, affair.

The genitive plural, like the singular, can be coupled with *causā* or *grātiā* to describe a purpose:

Haec faciunt recipendorum suorum causa. —CAESAR, *The Gallic War*
7.43.3

This they did to recover their kith and kin. (More literally: They do these things for the sake of recovering their own.)

Haec: these (things)—the neuter accusative plural form of hic/haec/hoc (pron.): this; he, she, it. **Faciunt** is the third person plural form of facio, facere, fēcī, factum (3, -iō): to do; make. **Recipendorum** is the m/n (here m) genitive plural form of recipendus/reciperanda/reciperandum, the gerundive (to be recovered) of recipērō, recipērāre, recipērāvī, recipērātum (1): to regain, recover. **Suorum**: (of) theirs/their own—the m/n (here m) genitive plural form of suus/sua/suum (1/2): their (own) (the reflexive possessive pronoun); on its own in the masculine plural, the word commonly indicates one's family or friends, followers, men, slaves, etc.—people connected with one in one way or another. **Causā** is the ablative singular form of causa, causae (1f): cause, reason; in the ablative *causā* preceded by a genitive: for the sake (of).

→ Dative Plural

Fabius comitia censoribus creandis habuit. —LIVY, *History of Rome*
24.11.6

Fabius held elections for appointing censors.

Fabius/Fabia/Fabium (1/2): Roman family name, here of a Roman consul. **Comitia** is the accusative plural form of comitium, comitiī (2n): (in singular) place of assembly for legislative and judicial purposes; (in plural only) assembly for elections, election. **Cēnsōribus** is the dative plural form of cēnsor, cēnsōris (3m): censor. **Creandis** is the m/f/n dative plural form of creandus/creanda/creandum, the gerundive (to be created or appointed) of creō, creāre, creāvī, creātum (1): to beget; create; cause; appoint, elect. **Habuit** is the third person singular perfect form of habeō, habēre, habuī, habitum (2): to have; hold.

Hora momentumque temporis evertendis imperiis sufficit. —SENECA,
Epistles 91.6

An hour, an instant of time, suffices for the overthrow of empires!

Hōra, hōrae (1f): hour. **Mōmentum**, mōmentī (2n): movement; moment; influence, weight, importance. **–que** (enclitic conj.): and. **Tempus**, **temporis** (3n): time. **Ēvertendīs** is the m/f/n dative plural form of ēvertendus/ēvertenda/ēvertendum, the gerundive (to be overturned) of ēvertō, ēvertere, ēvertī, ēversum (3): to overturn; destroy. **Imperiīs** is the dative plural form of imperium, imperiū (2n): power, authority; command; empire. **Sufficit** is the third person singular form of sufficiō, sufficere, suffēcī, suffectum (3, –iō): to suffice, be sufficient.

→ *Accusative Plural*

Censuit ad unum omnes interficiendos. —LIVY, *History of Rome* 9.3.7

He recommended that all, to the last man, be slain. (More literally: He judged all (to be) to be killed to a man (most literally: to one man).)

Cēnsuit is the third person singular perfect form of cēnsēō, cēnsēre, cēnsuī, cēnsūm (2): to express as one's opinion; judge; recommend. **Ad** (prep.): to (takes the accusative). **Ūnum** is the m/n (here m) accusative singular form of ūnus/ūna/ūnum (1/2, irreg.): one. **Omnēs** is the m/f accusative plural form of omnis/omnis/omne (3): all; every. *Ad ūnum omnēs* is an expression that means something like *every last one*, or *all to a man*. **Interficiendōs** is the masculine accusative plural form of interficiendus/interficienda/interficiendum, the gerundive (to be killed) of interficiō, interficere, interfēcī, interfectum (3, –iō): to kill.

Fugienda petimus. —SENECA, *Phaedra* 699

We seek what should be shunned. (More literally: We seek the things-to-be-fled.)

Fugienda is the neuter accusative plural form of fugiendus/fugienda/fugientum, the gerundive (to be fled) of fugiō, fugere, fūgī, fugitūrus (3, –iō): to flee, run away. **Petimus** is the first person plural form of petō, petere, petivī/petiī, petitum (3): to seek; desire; ask.

Tu vero metuenda declina. —SENECA, *Epistles* 98.7

By all means avoid what is frightening. (More literally: You, by all means, avoid the things-to-be-feared.)

Tū: you—making the subject of the imperative more emphatic: *you avoid* as an instruction. **Vērō** (particle): truly, indeed; on the other hand, but, however; and, moreover. **Metuenda** is the neuter accusative plural form of metuendus/

metuenda/metuendum, the gerundive (to be feared) of metuō, metuere, metuī, metūtum (3): to fear. **Dēclīnā** is the singular imperative form of dēclīnō, dēclīnāre, dēclīnāvī, dēclīnātum (1): to avoid.

Ad phrases to express purpose.

Stat ad iudicandos populos. — ISA. 3:13

He standeth to judge the people.

Stat is the third person singular form of stō, stāre, steti, statum (1): to stand.

Ad (prep.): to. **Iūdicandōs** is the masculine accusative plural form of iūdicandus/iūdicanda/iūdicandum, the gerundive (to be judged) of iūdicō, iūdicāre, iūdicāvī, iūdicātum (1): to judge. **Populōs** is the accusative plural form of populus, populī (2m): people; nation; public.

Ad Syracusas obsidendas venit. — LIVY, *History of Rome* 24.39.11

He came to Syracuse for the siege. (More literally: He came in order to besiege Syracuse/for besieging Syracuse.)

Ad (prep.): to. **Syracūsās** is the accusative form of Syracūsae, Syracūsārum (1f, plural only): Syracuse, the foremost Greek city on the island of Sicily.

Obsidendās is the feminine accusative plural form of obsidendus/obsidenda/obsidendum, the gerundive (to be besieged) of obsideō, obsidēre, obsēdī, obsessum (2): to besiege. **Vēnit** is the third person singular perfect form of veniō, venīre, vēnī, ventum (4): to come.

→ Ablative Plural

(Good diction) tamen augetur legendis oratoribus et poetis. — CICERO, *On the Orator* 3.39

(Good diction) is nevertheless increased by reading the orators and poets. (More literally: ... is nevertheless increased by the orators-and-poets-to-be-read.)

Tamen (adv.): nevertheless, yet, still. **Augētur** is the third person singular passive form of augeō, augēre, auxī, auctum (2): to increase. **Legendis** is the m/f/n ablative plural form of legendus/legenda/legendum, the gerundive (to be read) of legō, legere, lēgī, lēctum (3): to read. **Ōrātōribus** is the ablative plural form of ōrātor, ōrātōris (3m): orator. **Et** (conj.): and. **Poētis** is the ablative plural form of poēta, poētae (1m): poet.

Advocat consilium de oppugnandis Argis. — LIVY, *History of Rome* 34.26.4

He called a meeting to discuss an assault on Argos. (More literally: He calls a meeting about Argos-to-be-attacked.)

Advocat is the third person singular form of *advocō, advocāre, advocāvī, advocātum* (1): to call, summon. **Cōnsilium** is the accusative singular form of *cōnsilium, cōnsiliū* (2n): council, meeting; plan, intention; advice, counsel. **Dē** (prep.): from, down from; about, concerning (takes the ablative). **Oppugnandis** is the m/f/n ablative plural form of *oppugnandus/oppugnanda/oppugnandum*, the gerundive (to be attacked) of *oppugnō, oppugnāre, oppugnāvī, oppugnātum* (1): to attack, assault. **Argīs** is the ablative form of *Argī, Argōrum* (2m): Argos.

Probat rem senatus de mittendis legatis. — CAESAR, *The Civil War*

1.33.1

The Senate approves his proposal about the sending of envoys. (More literally: The Senate approves the matter about envoys-to-be-sent.)

Probat is the third person singular form of *probō, probāre, probāvī, probātum* (1): to approve; test; prove. **Rem** is the accusative singular form of *rēs, reī* (5f): thing; matter, affair. **Senātus**, *senātūs* (4m): senate. **Dē** (prep.): from, down from; about, concerning (takes the ablative). **Mittendis** is the m/f/n ablative plural form of *mittendus/mittenda/mittendum*, the gerundive (to be sent) of *mittō, mittere, mīsī, missum* (3): to send. **Lēgātis** is the ablative plural form of *lēgātus, lēgātī* (2m): envoy, ambassador, deputy.

Admirabiles in nectendis machinis Aegyptii. — ERASMUS, *Adagia*

(1536)

The Egyptians are wonderful at weaving schemes. (More literally: Wonderful in schemes-to-be-woven, the Egyptians.)

Admirābilēs is the m/f nominative plural form of *admīrābilis/admīrābilis/admīrābile* (3): admirable, wonderful, astonishing. **In** (prep.): (with abl.) in; (with acc.) into. **Nectendis** is the m/f/n ablative plural form of *nectendus/nectenda/nectendum*, the gerundive (to be woven/devised) of *nectō, nectere, nexī, nexum* (3): to weave; connect; devise. **Māchinis** is the ablative plural form of *māchina, māchinae* (1f): machine; scheme, plan. **Aegyptiī** is the masculine nominative plural form of *Aegyptius/Aegyptia/Aegyptium* (1/2): Egyptian.