

Unit 67

-ing clauses - 'Feeling tired, I went to bed early.'

a A *clause* is a part of a sentence. Some sentences have two clauses:

- **Feeling tired**, I went to bed early.

In this sentence, 'I went to bed early' is the *main clause*.
Feeling tired is the *-ing clause*.

b When two things happen at the same time, you can use **-ing** for one of the verbs. The main clause usually comes first:

- She was sitting in an armchair **reading** a book. (= she was sitting and she was reading)
- I ran out of the house **shouting**. (= I was shouting when I ran out of the house)

We also use **-ing** when one action happens during another. Use **-ing** for the longer action. The longer action is the second part of the sentence.

- Jim hurt his arm **while playing** tennis. (= while he was playing)
- Be careful **when crossing** the road. (= when you are crossing)

c When one action happens before another action, you can use **having** (**done**) for the first action:

- **Having found** a hotel, they looked for somewhere to have dinner.
- **Having finished** our work, we went home.

You could also say **After -ing**:

- **After finishing** our work, we went home.

If the second action happens immediately after the first, you can use the simple **-ing** form (**doing** instead of **having done**):

- **Taking** a key out of his pocket, he opened the door.

These structures are used mainly in written English.

d You can also use an **-ing** clause to explain something or to say why someone did something. The **-ing** clause usually comes first:

- **Feeling** tired, I went to bed early. (= because I felt tired)
- **Being** unemployed, he hasn't got much money. (= because he is unemployed)
- **Not having** a car, she finds it difficult to get around. (= because she doesn't have a car)
- **Having already seen** the film twice, I didn't want to go to the cinema. (= because I had already seen it twice)

These structures are used more in written than in spoken English.