



# C2 GRAMMAR

# DANGLING MODIFIERS

Cambridge English  
**C2 Proficiency**  
**Key Word Transformation**  
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## C2 PROFICIENCY

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# Key Word Transformation exercises

**A misplaced or dangling modifier** is a grammatical mistake that occurs when a word, phrase, or clause meant to modify a specific element in the sentence is not properly connected to it. As a result, the modifier appears to modify the wrong word, leading to confusion or ambiguity. The term "dangling" implies that the modifier is left disconnected or "hanging" without a clear reference in the sentence.

**How to correct dangling modifiers:** You can either rewrite the main clause so that it begins with the subject being modified or include the subject in the introductory phrase, leaving the main clause as it is. See some examples below.

<b>PRESENT PARTICIPLE or PARTICIPLE PHRASE</b>	
Present participles are formed by adding '-ing' to the base form of the verb.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ Wanting to take a nap, the light was so irritating.            This sentence suggests that the light wanted to take a nap.</p>	<p>✓ Wanting to take a nap, I found the light so irritating.</p>

<b>PAST PARTICIPLE or PAST PARTICIPLE PHRASE</b>	
Past participles are formed by adding '-ed,' '-d,' or '-t' to the base form of a regular verb.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ Trained in psychology, his approach focused on finding the cause of her anxiety.            This implies that his approach, not him, was trained in psychology.</p>	<p>✓ Trained in psychology, he focused on finding the cause of her anxiety.            ✓ Because he was trained in psychology, his approach focused on finding the cause of her anxiety.</p>

<b>PERFECT PARTICIPLE</b>	
Perfect participle is formed by adding 'having' to the past participle form.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ Having been late three days in a row, her boss fired her.            This sentence suggests that her boss was the one who had been late three days in a row.</p>	<p>✓ Having been late three days in a row, she was fired by her boss.            ✓ Because she had been late three days in a row, her boss fired her.</p>

<b>INFINITIVE PHRASE</b>	
Infinitive phrases are phrases that consist of the particle 'to' and a verb.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ To avoid an accident while driving at night, the headlights should always be on.            Are the headlights looking to avoid an accident while driving at night?            The sentence as written implies they are.</p>	<p>✓ To avoid an accident while driving at night, you should always keep the headlights on.</p>

<b>ADJECTIVE PHRASE</b>	
An adjective phrase is a group of words that functions as an adjective and modifies a noun or pronoun in a sentence.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ Young and stupid, the money he was given was spent carelessly.            As you can see 'young and stupid' is an adjective phrase, but it is no clear who it is referring to.</p>	<p>✓ Young and stupid, he spent the money he was given carelessly</p>

<b>REDUCED ADVERBIAL CLAUSE</b>	
Adverbial clauses modify the main verb of the independent clause by answering one of four questions: where, when, how, and why. A reduced adverb clause is an adverb(ial) clause that has been shortened to a phrase, usually by omitting its subject and a form of 'be'.	
DANGLING	CORRECTED
<p>✗ While waiting for the bus, my phone rang.            Was the phone waiting for the bus?            The sentence above as it is written suggests it was.</p>	<p>✓ While waiting for the bus, I heard my phone ring.            ✓ While I was waiting for the bus, my phone rang.</p>