

### Grammar and Style Tips: Dangling Modifiers

Below are examples of a common error: dangling modifiers. To be correct, the subject of the sentence needs to be the agent—doing the action—of its modifying phrase. As these are written, the subject could not possibly be doing or have done these things. Usually writers dangle their modifying phrases because they're attempting to be concise. It's good to aspire to conciseness in writing, but not at the cost of clarity. Suggest ways to fix the dangling modifiers below (you may have to revise the sentences pretty extensively).

For more information, go to  
[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_dangmod.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_dangmod.html).

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Born Zhao Zhenkai on August 2, 1949, in Beijing, his pseudonym, Bei Dao, literally means “Northern Island” and was suggested by a friend as a reference to the poet’s provenance from northern China as well as his typical solitude. (The **pseudonym** was not **born**.)

Erected c. mid 1790s by his daughter and son-in-law, the Governor retired here during the last years of his life. (The **Governor** was not **erected** by his daughter and son-in-law.)

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Decorated in an inviting rustic style, guests can unwind in front of the massive, stone fireplace.

Entering the doctor’s office, a skeleton caught her attention.

Having studied economics for many years, fiscal policy is paramount in my approach to problems.

Being in a delapidated condition, I was able to buy the house very cheap.

Wondering irresolutely what to do next, the clock struck twelve.

As a mother of five, with another on the way, my ironing board is always up.

Sculpted by wind and water for over 70 million years, visitors will be amazed at the awesome arches and breathtaking sandstone cliffs that are visible along the route.

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