

# 6

## *Sum: Future and Imperfect Indicative; Possum: Present, Future, and Imperfect Indicative; Complementary Infinitive*

### *FUTURE AND IMPERFECT INDICATIVE OF Sum*

As we return to the irregular verb **sum, esse**, the best procedure for learning the future and imperfect tenses is again simply to memorize the paradigms below; these forms are more regular than those for the present tense, however, each formed on the stem **er-** and with the familiar present system personal endings (**-ō/-m, -s, -t, -mus, -tis, -nt**).

	Future Indicative	Imperfect Indicative
Sg.	1. <i>ērō, I shall be</i>	<i>éram, I was</i>
	2. <i>éris, you will be</i>	<i>érās, you were</i>
	3. <i>érit, he (she, it, there) will be</i>	<i>érat, he (she, it, there) was</i>
Pl.	1. <i>érimus, we shall be</i>	<i>erāmus, we were</i>
	2. <i>éritis, you will be</i>	<i>erātis, you were</i>
	3. <i>érunt, they (there) will be</i>	<i>érant, they (there) were</i>

## IRREGULAR Possum, Posse, Potuī: To Be Able, Can, Could

The very common verb **possum**, **posse**, **potuī**, is simply a compound of **pot-**, from the irregular adjective **potis** (*able, capable*; cp. “potent,” “potential”) + **sum**. Before forms of **sum** beginning with **s-**, the **-t-** was altered or “assimilated” to **-s-** (hence **possum** from **\*potsum**); otherwise the **-t-** remained unchanged. The irregular present infinitive **posse** developed from an earlier form which followed this rule (**potesse**).

	Present Indicative	Future Indicative	Imperfect Indicative
	<i>I am able, can</i>	<i>I shall be able</i>	<i>I was able, could</i>
Sg.	1. p <sup>o</sup> s-sum	p <sup>o</sup> t-erō	p <sup>o</sup> t-eram
	2. p <sup>o</sup> t-es	p <sup>o</sup> t-eris	p <sup>o</sup> t-erās
	3. p <sup>o</sup> t-est	p <sup>o</sup> t-erit	p <sup>o</sup> t-erat
Pl.	1. p <sup>o</sup> s-sumus	pot-érimus	pot-erāmus
	2. pot-éstis	pot-éritis	pot-erātis
	3. p <sup>o</sup> s-sunt	p <sup>o</sup> t-erunt	p <sup>o</sup> t-erant

For both **sum** and **possum** it may be helpful to note the similarity of the future and imperfect endings, **-ō/-is/-it**, etc., and **-am/-ās/-at**, etc., to the first and second conjugation future and imperfect endings, **-bō/-bis/-bit**, etc., and **-bam/-bās/-bat**, etc., which were introduced in the previous chapter.

## COMPLEMENTARY INFINITIVE

**Possum**, exactly like the English *to be able* or *can*, regularly requires an infinitive to complete its meaning. Hence we have the term “complementary” infinitive, which simply means “completing” infinitive, a point that is emphasized by the spelling: complementary in contrast to complimentary. You have already seen the complementary infinitive used with **dēbeō**, and you will find it employed with other verbs.

*Our friends were able to overcome (could overcome) many dangers.*

Amīcī nostrī poterant superāre multa perīcula.

*My friend is not able to remain (cannot remain).*

Amīcus meus nōn potest remanēre.

*You ought to save your money.*

Dēbēs cōservāre pecūniam tuam.

Note that a complementary infinitive has no separate subject of its own; its subject is the same as that of the verb on which it depends.

## VOCABULARY

- déa**, -ae, f., dat. and abl. pl. **deābus**, *goddess*, and **déus**, -ī, m., voc. sg. **deus**, nom. pl. **dī**, dat. and abl. pl. **dīs** (the plurals **deī** and **deīs** became common during the Augustan Period), *god* (adieu, deify, deity)
- discípula**, -ae, f., and **discípulus**, -ī, m., *learner, pupil, student* (disciple, discipline, disciplinary; cp. **discō**, Ch. 8)
- ínsídiæ**, -ārum, f. pl., *ambush, plot, treachery* (insidious)
- líber**, **líbrī**, m., *book* (library, libretto); not to be confused with **líber**, *free*
- tyránnus**, -ī, m., *absolute ruler, tyrant* (tyrannous, tyrannicide)
- vítium**, -iī, n., *fault, crime, vice* (vitiate, vicious; but not vice in vice versa)
- Graécus**, -a, -um, *Greek*; **Graécus**, -ī, m., *a Greek*
- perpétuus**, -a, -um, *perpetual, lasting, uninterrupted, continuous* (perpetuate, perpetuity)
- plénus**, -a, -um, *full, abundant, generous* (plenary, plenteous, plentiful, plenitude, plenty, replenish, plenipotentiary)
- sálvus**, -a, -um, *safe, sound* (cp. **salveō**)
- secúndus**, -a, -um, *second; favorable* (secondary)
- véster**, **véstra**, **véstrum**, *your* (pl., i.e., used in addressing more than one person, vs. **tuus**, -a, -um), *yours*
- que**, enclitic conj., *and*. It is appended to the second of two words to be joined: **fāma glōriaque**, *fame and glory*.
- úbī**: (1) rel. adv. and conj., *where, when*; (2) interrog. adv. and conj., *where?* (ubiquitous)
- íbi**, adv., *there* (ib. or ibid.)
- nunc**, adv., *now, at present* (quidnunc)
- quārē**, adv., lit. *because of which thing* (**quā rē**), *therefore, wherefore, why*
- póssum**, **pósse**, **pótuī**, *to be able, can, could, have power* (posse, possible, potent, potentate, potential, puissant, omnipotent)
- tólerō** (1), *to bear, endure* (tolerate, toleration, tolerable, intolerable, intolerance; cp. **tollō**, Ch. 22, **ferō**, Ch. 31)

## PRACTICE AND REVIEW

- Oculī nostrī nōn valēbant; quārē agrōs bellōs vidēre nōn poterāmus.
- Sine multā pecūniā et multīs dōnīs tyrannus satiāre populum Rōmānum nōn poterit.
- Nōn poterant, igitur, tē dē poenā amīcōrum tuōrum herī monēre.
- Parvus numerus Graecōrum crās ibi remanēre poterit.
- Magister puerōs malōs sine morā vocābit.

6. Fīliae vestrae dē librīs magnī poētae saepe cōgitābant.
7. Quandō satis sapientiae habēbimus?
8. Multī librī antīquī propter sapientiam cōnsiliumque erant magnī.
9. Glōria bonōrum librōrum semper manēbit.
10. Possuntne pecūnia otiumque cūrās vītae hūmānae superāre?
11. Therefore, we cannot always see the real vices of a tyrant.
12. Few free men will be able to tolerate an absolute ruler.
13. Many Romans used to praise the great books of the ancient Greeks.
14. Where can glory and (use **-que**) fame be perpetual?

### SENTENTIAE ANTĪQUAE

1. Dionysius tum erat tyrannus Syracūsānōrum. (Cicero.—**Dionysius, -iī**, a Greek name.—**Syracūsānus, -ī**, a *Syracusan*.)
2. Optāsne meam vītam fortunamque gustāre? (Cicero.—**optāre**, to wish.—**gustāre**, to taste.)
3. Possumusne, Ō dī, in malīs insidiīs et magnō exitiō esse salvī? (Cicero.—Can you explain why the nom. pl. **salvī** is used here?)
4. Propter cūram meam in perpetuō periculō nōn eritis. (Cicero.)
5. Propter vitia tua multī tē culpant et nihil tē in patriā tuā dēlectāre nunc potest. (Cicero.—**dēlectāre**, to delight.)
6. Fortūna Pūnicī bellī secundī varia erat. (Liv. —**Pūnicus, -a, -um**, *Punic, Carthaginian*.—**varius, -a, -um**, *varied*.)
7. Patria Rōmānōrum erat plēna Graecōrum librōrum statuārumque pulchrārum. (Cicero.—**statua, -ae**, Eng.)
8. Sine dīs et deābus in caelō animus nōn potest sānus esse. (Seneca.)
9. Sī animus infirmus est, nōn poterit bonam fortunam tolerāre. (Publilius Syrus.—**infirmus, -a, -um**, *not strong, weak*.)
10. Ubi lēgēs valent, ibi populus liber potest valēre. (Publilius Syrus.—**lēgēs**, nom. pl., *laws*.)

### "I DO NOT LOVE THEE, DOCTOR FELL"

Nōn amo tē, Sabidī, nec possum dīcere quārē.

Hoc tantum possum dīcere: nōn amo tē.

(\*Martial 1.32; meter: elegiac couplet. **amo**: final -ō was often shortened in Latin poetry.—**Sabidius, -iī**.—**nec** = **et nōn**.—**dīcere**, to say.—**hoc**, *this*, acc. case.—**tantum**, adv., *only*.)

### THE HISTORIAN LIVY LAMENTS THE DECLINE OF ROMAN MORALS

Populus Rōmānus magnōs animōs et paucās culpās habēbat. Dē officiīs nostrīs cōgitābāmus et glōriam bellī semper laudābāmus. Sed nunc multum otium habēmus, et multī sunt avārī. Nec vitia nostra nec remedia tolerāre possumus.

(Livy, from the preface to his history of Rome, *Ab Urbe Conditā*; see Introd.—**nec . . . nec**, conj., *neither . . . nor*.)

## ETYMOLOGY

Eng. “library” is clearly connected with **liber**. Many European languages, however, derive their equivalent from **bibliothēca**, a Latin word of Greek origin meaning in essence the same thing as our word. What, then, do you suppose **biblos** meant in Greek? Cp. the *Bible*.

### *In the readings*<sup>1</sup>

2. option, adopt.—gusto, disgust. 5. delectable, delight. 10. legal, legislative, legitimate, loyal.

French **y** in such a phrase as **il y a** (*there is*) may prove more understandable when you know that **y** derives from **ibi**.

The following French words are derived from Latin as indicated: **êtes** = **estis**; **nôtre** = **noster**; **vôtre** = **vester**; **goûter** = **gustāre**. What, then, is one thing which the French circumflex accent indicates?

## LATĪNA EST GAUDIUM—ET ŪTILIS!

**Salvēte, discipulī et discipulae! Quid hodiē agitis, amīcī? Cōgitātisne dē linguā Latīnā?** Well, I assume by now that your etymological sense will tell you that **lingua Latīna** means . . . *the Latin language* or just “Latin,” your favorite subject. Now that you’ve developed a taste for the language, I know that you study with great “gusto”! (If you missed that bit of etymologizing, see S.A. 2 above.) The new Vocab. item **deus** turns up in the expression **deus ex machinā**, *god from a machine*, which refers (in drama and other contexts) to any person or mechanism that performs an amazing rescue from some seemingly hopeless dilemma.

Do you know that **sub** is a preposition meaning *under*, as in “subterranean,” under the **terra**, *earth*; if so, you can laugh at this old favorite: **semper ubi sub ubi!** (Good hygiene and prevents rash!) And speaking of **ubi**, it asks the question that **ibi** answers; a compound form of the latter constructed with the intensifying suffix **-dem**, *the same* (see Ch. 11 for a similar use of **-dem**), **ibidem**, gives us **ibid.**, *in the same place cited*, just one of many Latin-based abbreviations commonly employed in English. Here are some others:

cf. = **cōfer**, *compare*

cp. = **comparā**, *compare*

e.g. = **exemplī grātiā**, *for the sake of example*

et al. = **et aliū/alīae**, *and others* (of persons)

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of brevity this phrase will henceforth be used to direct attention to words etymologically associated with words in the sentences indicated.

etc. = **et cētera**, *and others* (of things)

i.e. = **id est**, *that is*

n.b. = **nōtā bene**, *note carefully* (i.e., pay close attention)

v.i. and v.s. = **vidē infrā** and **vidē suprā**, *see below* and *see above*

**Semper ubi sub ubi** AND the scholarly **ibid.** both in the same lesson?  
Well, that's what the title means: **Latīna EST gaudium—et ūtilis! Valēte!**



*Paquius Proculus (?) and wife*  
*Wallpainting from Pompeii, house at region VII.ii.6, 1st century A.D.*  
*Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy*