

CHAPTER 12

“Perfect System Active of All Verbs; Principal Parts”

VERBS: PRINCIPAL PARTS

Let's pretend you're native French speakers learning English and you want to look up the English equivalent of the French verbs “voir”, “avoir”, “prendre”, and “regarder”. Turn to your French-English dictionary and you find this:

*voir: “to see”, pret. “saw”, pt. “seen”
avoir: “to have”, pret. “had”, pt. “had”
prendre: “to take”, pret. “took”, pt. “taken”
regarder: “to look”*

What's all this about? Why are there three entries for the first three verbs? Wouldn't it have been enough for the dictionary just to have listed the infinitive “to see” for “voir”, “to have” for “avoir”, etc.? Of course not; and why not? Consider our verb “to see”? What tenses of the verb are formed from the stem indicated in the infinitive “to see?” Let's list a few.

<i>Present Simple:</i>	<i>“I see”</i>
<i>Present Progressive:</i>	<i>“I am seeing”</i>
<i>Present Emphatic:</i>	<i>“I do see”</i>
<i>Imperative:</i>	<i>“See”</i>
<i>Future Simple:</i>	<i>“I will see”</i>
<i>Future Progressive:</i>	<i>“I will be seeing”</i>

Imperfect:	"I was seeing"
Present Conditional:	"I may see"

You can see that if you know a few basic tricks, you can use the infinitive form "to see" as the basis for several tenses and moods in English. "To see" provides the raw material. But there are tenses English uses that are not formed from the infinitive "to see". How about the preterit (the simple past tense)? Can you form the simple past from "to see"? No, English uses another form of the verb to form this tense, and unless you know what that form is, you can't use the verb "to see" in the preterit tense. Therefore, the dictionary must give you the form English uses: "saw". So the second entry in the dictionary for the English verb "to see" is the preterit form. Look at the second entries for "to have" and "to take". Their preterits are "had" and "took". Do we get any other tenses from this form of the verb? No, just one: the preterit tense.

Look at the third entry, "seen". For what tenses, voices and moods does English use this form? A lot of them. Here are some:

Present Passive:	"I am seen"
Perfect Active:	"I have seen"
Pluperfect Active:	"I had seen"
Perfect Passive:	"I have been seen"
Future Perfect Active:	"I will have seen"
Future Perfect Passive:	"I will have been seen"
Past Conditional:	"I might have seen"

With the three forms given in the dictionary, you have all the raw material from which you can build every possible tense, mood,

voice and number of the verb “to see”. Therefore, to know an English verb thoroughly, and to be able to use it in all its possible applications, you must know all three of its basic forms. Once you know them, you simply apply the rules for the formation of the different tenses, voices, and moods. We call these three forms the principal parts of the verb. English verbs have three principal parts: the infinitive, the preterit, and the perfect participle.

Fine, now look at the verb “to look”. Why aren’t there two more principal parts listed after the infinitive? Well, what are the next two principal parts? The verb goes: “to look”, “looked”, and “looked”. As you can see, the second and third principal parts are derivable from the first principal part: you simply add “-ed” to the “look”. There are hundreds of verbs in English that work this way. Their second and third principal parts are simply the first principal part with the suffix “-ed”. Verbs which operate like this are called “regular” (or weak). If a verb is regular, you don’t need to be given the second and third entries separately. That is, once you know the first principal part, you know the next two, and thus have all the basic material you need to form all the possible tenses, moods and voices of the verb. On the other hand, verbs whose principal parts are not readily derivable from the first principal part are called “irregular” (or strong) verbs.

So what have I convinced you of so far? All possible tenses, voices and moods of an English verb are reducible to three different principal parts. If a verb is irregular (strong), you must learn the principal parts by memory, but if it is regular (weak), you can easily derive the second two principal parts from the first.

I'll go even further. The verb systems of all languages operate this way. To work with the verb, to know it completely, you must know its principal parts. Then you have to know what to do with them; you have to know the rules and the laws of the grammar of the language. But first you have to have the basic materials laid out in front of you, and that means knowing the principal parts of the verb you're working with.

LATIN VERBS: PRINCIPAL PARTS

Latin verbs have three principal parts (three different stems), but by convention we say that they have four. Up to this chapter, I've been misleading you slightly by calling the basic verb form of the present and future tenses the "stem". That was justifiable when, so far as you knew, there was only one stem for verbs. But now you must realize that the word "stem" is no longer limited to just one possible part of the verb. The stem with which you are so familiar is really only the first principal part. Let's look again at the first principal part.

What tenses do we get from the first principal part? You know two of them already. The first principal part is the stem from which Latin forms the present, future, and the imperfect tenses (you haven't had the imperfect tense yet, except in the verb "sum" and "possum"). And remember, you use the infinitive -- the second principal part -- to tell you what the stem of the first principal part is. Here are the formulae for the present and future tenses.

PRESENT: first principal part + no tense sign+

personal endings

FUTURE: first principal part + tense sign+personal endings

Take a couple of minutes to review these forms. Write out the present and future tenses, and then the imperative mood, of the paradigms of the four conjugations (including the third i-stem verb):

I II III i IV

laudo, -are moneo, -ere duco, -ere capio, -ere audio, -ire

PRESENT TENSE

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-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
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FUTURE TENSE

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IMPERATIVES

This, then, is the big picture of the sum total of your knowledge of Latin verbs. All the tenses and moods you know are based on the first principal part of the verb -- the first entry you see in the dictionary. As I said before, there is one other tense based on this stem, the imperfect, and you'll be getting it soon enough. For reasons which you needn't worry about yet, we call all the tenses derived from the first principal part of the verb the tenses of the "present system". So we say that the first principal part is the root of the present system of the Latin verbs. Now on to some new territory.

THE PERFECT SYSTEM OF LATIN VERBS

As you saw, English verbs have three roots from which different voices, moods and tenses are derived. A Latin verb uses its first principal part to form the present system: the present, future, and imperfect tenses. And this would have suited the Romans just fine, if their language had had only three tenses, but it has six (one less than English). We divide the tenses into two major systems: the present system (which you know), and the perfect system (which you are about to learn). The perfect system uses the remaining two principal parts -- the third and the fourth -- as its base. For this chapter, we're going to be concerned only with the tenses formed off the third principal part.

1. The perfect system is composed of three tenses: the perfect; the pluperfect, and the future perfect.
 - A. The perfect tense is used in Latin just as we use our preterit and our perfect tenses: "I saw" or "I have seen".
 - B. The pluperfect tense is used to talk about an action which has taken place before another action in the past. In English, we use the preterit of the auxiliary verb "to have" with the past participle (the third principal part) of the verb: "I had seen". E.g., "Before you came to the door, I had already seen your face through the window."
 - C. The future perfect tense is used to talk about an action which will have taken place before another event in the future. In English we use the future of the auxiliary verb "to have" with the past participle of the verb: "I will have seen".

The perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect tenses in the active voice only are formed from the third principal part. The perfect system passive, as you will see in a few chapters, uses the fourth principal part, not the third. Let's look first at the perfect tense active.

The perfect tense is formed exactly according to the formula for the formation of the tenses you already know. It's made up of personal endings which are then added to a stem. The differences are (1) that the perfect tense uses the third principal part in place of the first and (2) that the perfect tense uses a different set of personal endings. The personal endings the perfect tense uses are:

1st	-i	I
2nd	-isti	you
3rd	-it	he, she, it

1st	-imus	we
2nd	-istis	you
3rd	-erunt	they

You can see how some of these endings resemble the endings used in the present system, but they all must be memorized as entirely discrete items. They're actually very handy. For example, if you see a conjugated verb which ends in "-isti", "istis", or "-erunt", you'll know right away that you've got a perfect tense and that the stem which the ending is attached to is the third, not the first, principal part.

Okay, so where are we now? To form the perfect tense, Latin uses these perfect personal endings and puts them onto the third

principal part of the verb. So let's have a look third principal parts of verbs.

This may sound like small consolation, but in the perfect system, the distinctions between the different conjugations melt away. You undoubtedly remember all the differences between the conjugations in the present system: each conjugation has a different stem vowel and, what's even worse, the first and second conjugations form their futures entirely differently from the third and fourth conjugations. But in the perfect system, once you get to the verb's third and fourth principal parts, you needn't worry any longer whether the verb is a first, second, third, third-i, or fourth conjugation. The fourth conjugation will not form, say, its future perfect differently from the first or second conjugations. All the conjugations obey exactly the same rules in the perfect system. But getting to the third principal part is the first thing you've got to think about.

THE FIRST CONJUGATION

Remember the verb "to look" in English? "To look" is a regular verb in English, which means that its second and third principal parts are formed by adding "-ed" to the first principal part: "to look", "looked", and "looked". Because it's regular, the French dictionary didn't list the second and third principal parts separately. Anybody with any business looking up English verbs in the first place should at least know how regular verbs work. It's only when the second and third principal parts aren't regularly formed that they need to be listed. The first conjugation in Latin forms its principal parts by predictable and regular modification of the first principal part. Like this:

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laudo

laudare

laudavi

Let's go slowly. First off, the dictionary lists the first principal part in the first person singular. (There is a good reason for this, as you'll see next semester.) So you see "laudo" instead of "lauda-". To see the stem vowel, and hence to see the conjugation, you must look to the second principal part, where the stem vowel is revealed by dropping off the infinitive ending "-re". In the same way, the third principal is listed in the dictionary in the first person singular perfect tense; that is, with the "-i" of the first person singular. To see the stem, you must drop off the "-i". So the true stem of the third principal part is "laudav-". As you can see from this example, the third principal part of the verb "laudo" is just the stem of the first principal part -- "lauda-" plus "v". And all first conjugation verbs form the third principal part in just this way. First conjugation verbs are therefore "regular" in the system of principal parts. If you recognize a verb is first conjugation from its first two dictionary entries, you now can derive the third principal part on your own without having to be given it by the dictionary. Write out the second and third principal parts of some of the first conjugation verbs you already know:

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amo

cogito

tolero _____

supero _____

As you can see, there's really nothing to this. Once you know that a verb is first conjugation, you can easily derive its principal parts. For this reason, a dictionary need tell you only a verb is first conjugation, and from there you'll be able to derive the other parts on your own. It's the same as with regular English verbs. Given the first part, you know the other two (provided that you remember your grammar!). A Latin dictionary tells you that a verb is first conjugation by simply putting a (1) (or (I)) directly after the first entry. For example, "certo (1)". This tells the verb is first conjugation, and with that knowledge alone you know the rest of the principal parts: "certare, certavi".

Now let's put the third principal part to work. And remember, these are the rules which will govern the use of the third principal parts of all the conjugations, first through fourth. Use the first conjugation verb "laudo (1)" as your paradigm.

PERFECT TENSE

Remember that to form the perfect tense of a verb you use the stem of the third principal part (what's left after you drop the "-i") to which you add the perfect personal endings.

3RD P.P. + PERS. END. = CONJUGATED FORM

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

PLUPERFECT TENSE

Another tense of the perfect system of tenses (tenses which use the third and fourth principal parts of the verb) is the pluperfect tense. To form the pluperfect tense, you use the imperfect tense of the verb "sum" for the personal endings which then attach to the third principal part.

3RD P.P. + PERS. END. = CONJUGATED FORM

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

The future perfect uses the future of the verb “sum” as the personal endings (with the exception of the third person plural where it is “-erint” instead of the normal future form “-erunt”).

3RD P. P. + PERS. END. = CONJUGATED FORM

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

1st _____ + _____ = _____

2nd _____ + _____ = _____

3rd _____ + _____ = _____

Simple. And fairly logical, too. The third principal part already contains within it the notion of past tense. To make it even more past, you add the inflected forms of the imperfect of the verb “sum” as the personal endings. Thus the name: “plu” (more) “perfect” (completed). For the future perfect, you throw the idea of a completed action into the future by adding the inflected forms of the future of the verb “sum” as the personal endings. The exception in the third person plural is actually fairly easy to account for. You remember the future third person plural of “sum” is “erunt”. But if Latin had used this form, and not “erint”, the third person plural future perfect would have been dangerously close to the third person plural perfect: “laudaverunt”.

Now you have it. You know all the rules for forming the entire perfect system active of any Latin verb. Once you know the third principal part, you simply apply these formulae and away you go. Let's trudge on now to the second conjugation verbs. There's a lot of regularity there too as far as the formation of the third principal part goes. But the ugly specter of irregularity (and hence the need for rote memorization) starts creeping in.

THE SECOND CONJUGATION

Many, very many, second conjugation verbs form their third principal part regularly off the first principal part. Like this:

moneo	monere	monuī
doceo	docere	docuī
timeo	timere	timuī
terreo	terrere	terruī

If we look into this more closely, we can see that the third principal of these verbs is formed simply by adding “-v-” to the stem of the first principal part, just as it’s done for first conjugation verbs. But when the “-v-” of the third principal part comes up against the “-e-” of the stem of a second conjugation verb, the result is one, solitary “-u-”. So for the verb “moneo”, the third principal is “monevi” which becomes “monuī”. So also with many second conjugation verbs. The third principal part is formed regularly.

Now, as I said, many second conjugation verbs form their principal parts just this way, and if you remember this, you won’t be confronted with such a daunting list of forms to memorize. There is some order to it. But there are enough verbs differing from this regular pattern that you can’t take for granted that you can deduce the principal parts from the first for every second conjugation verb. The dictionary can’t simply put a (2) next to the first entry and leave it up to you to derive the rest of the parts. The dictionary must give you the parts as separate entries. Here are the second conjugation verbs you’ve had so far. You can see that the rules work fairly well, but there are deviations.

1	11	111
debeo	debere	debui
doceo	docere	docui

<i>habeo</i>	<i>habere</i>	<i>habui</i>
<i>valeo</i>	<i>valere</i>	<i>valui</i>
<i>video</i>	<i>videre</i>	<i>vidi</i>
<i>remaneo</i>	<i>remanere</i>	<i>remansi</i>

Let's consolidate our ground now by doing a few exercises.

Produce the following forms, and try to do it from memory at first.

1. *They will have had.* _____
2. *I had seen.* _____
3. *You (pl.) remained.* _____
4. *We will have called.* _____
5. *She will be strong.* _____
6. *You (s.) have tolerated.* _____
7. *They had taught.* _____
8. *You (pl.) had had.* _____
9. *We have loved.* _____
10. *They thought.* _____

THE THIRD CONJUGATION (including the i-stems)

Now you have to batten down the hatches; all hell is about to break loose. The third conjugation is where irregularity is the norm. You must simply learn the principal parts of third conjugation verbs outright, but, as I will try to show you, reason isn't completely banished from the third conjugation. Our minds can get a toe-hold in here, too, and impose some order. Some classifiable things happen to third conjugation verbs as they form their principal parts.

A. Reduplication of Initial Consonant

Often the third principal part of a third conjugation will begin by doubling the initial consonant of the first principal part and putting an “-e-” or “-i-” in between the two of them:

<i>pellō</i>	<i>pellere</i>	<i>pepulī</i>
<i>dīscō</i>	<i>dīscere</i>	<i>dīdīcī</i>
<i>dō</i>	<i>dare</i>	<i>dēdī</i>

B. The Aoristic (or Sigmatic) Perfect

Many verbs add an “-s-” to the end of the first principal part to produce the third principal part. Often the “-s-” is hidden in an “-x-” or another consonant which comes about from the collision between the “-s-” and the consonant at the end of the verb.

<i>mīttō</i>	<i>mīttēre</i>	<i>mīsī</i>
<i>dīcō</i>	<i>dīcere</i>	<i>dīxī</i>
<i>scrībō</i>	<i>scrībēre</i>	<i>scrīpsī</i>
<i>vīvō</i>	<i>vīvere</i>	<i>vīxī</i>

C. Change in the Medial Vowel and Loss of Stem Nasal

Very often a vowel in the first principal part which is near the end of the verb will change in the third principal part: it will lengthen from a short to a long vowel; or it will grade, often from an original “-a-” to a long “-e-”.

Nasals, “-m-” or “-n-”, in the first principal part may also be dropped in the third principal part.

ago	agere	egi
facio	facere	feci
fugio	fugere	fugī
vinco	vincere	vici

By now you must be wondering why I’m troubling you with all these patterns. Isn’t it enough to have to memorize the principal parts without being burdened with all this? Well, yes, you are going to have to memorize the principal parts of the verbs you’re given in the vocabulary, that’s true. But, there are more words out there in Latin than you can easily memorize before you begin to read Latin. For much of your reading, you’re going to have to rely not on pre-memorized vocabulary items, but on your powers of deduction. Suppose you see this form in your text: “receptant”.

Okay, you recognize the “-ant” ending as the third person plural pluperfect. From this realization you can make another deduction. If you’re in the perfect system, then the “-ant” was attached to the third principal part of the verb, and you know that the first entry in a dictionary is the first principal

part, not the third. This could be a problem. Can you look up “been” in the dictionary in English? No, of course not. That’s because “been” is a principal part of “to be” and it’ll be listed under “to be”. So how are you going to look up “recep-”? You’ll never find it just like that in a dictionary. You must recreate the first principal part of the verb to look it up. What are you going to do?

Think a little. What else can you deduce about this verb? For one, it’s not a first conjugation verb. They all look like “-av-” in the third principal part. So you won’t find it under “recepō, -are”. It could be a second conjugation verb, even though most of those have third principal parts ending in “-u-”: like “habui” and “docui” from “habeo” and “doceo”. Still, it might be worth a shot; so you look up “recepō”, expecting to see “recepere” and “recepī” listed as its principal parts after it. (Don’t forget, what you’re looking for is a verb whose third principal part is “recepī”.) But there is no “recepō, -ere, -cepī”. Then in bitter frustration you forget my stern warning not to go browsing in the dictionary, and you look at all the entries beginning with “recep-” hoping to find that third principal part “recepī”. But you fail.

Now you start thinking to yourself. “Suppose this is a third conjugation verb? Sometimes strange things happen to verbs as they go from the first to the third principal part. Is there any evidence of reduplication? No. Any hidden -s- sound at the end that throwing off my search? No. What’s left? Grote once said something about the medial vowel changing, so I’ll try that. I look up r-e-c-?-p-. Because that -e- could have been something else in the first principal part, I’ll stay flexible on it: the verb could be recap- or recip-.”

Leave yourself some intelligently limited flexibility. Now you find it, “recipio, -ere, -cepi”. You see, this works sometimes. That’s why I showed you the major patterns of variations.

FOURTH CONJUGATION

The formation of the third and fourth principal parts of a fourth conjugation verb is quite straight forward. There are enough irregular forms to warrant separate listing in the dictionary -- they aren’t all regular derivatives from the first principal part as in the first conjugation -- but many verbs do have regular principal parts. Here are a few fourth conjugation verbs.

<i>sentio</i>	<i>sentire</i>	<i>sensi</i>
<i>venio</i>	<i>venire</i>	<i>veni</i>
<i>invenio</i>	<i>invenire</i>	<i>inveni</i>
<i>audio</i>	<i>audire</i>	<i>audivi</i>

MORE DRILLS

Try to memorize the third principal parts of the verbs in the list Wheelock gives you on pages 55-6. Here they are again in a little more manageable form. Fill in the blanks using the vocabulary list on pp. 56-7, but try to do as much from memory as possible. Then you can use this list as a study sheet. Cover up the Latin, and try write out the complete entry for each verb. A complete entry now is all four principal parts. You’ll have to do it several times for these forms to stick, but these verbs are

absolutely essential for the rest of your study, and a little effort now will greatly simplify your work in the future. You must know these words and form from English to Latin. (You don't have to memorize the fourth principal parts yet. You should just know that they are out there.)

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to love _____

to think _____

to wander _____

to save _____

to overcome _____

to endure _____

to call _____

ought _____

to teach _____

to have _____

to give _____

be strong _____

to see _____

to remain _____

to drive _____

to send _____

to write _____

to live _____

to feel _____

to come _____

to do _____

to conquer _____

to flee _____

to take _____

to lead _____

to be _____

to be able _____

TRANSLATE INTO LATIN

1. *"I came, I saw, I conquered (don't use supero (1))".*

2. *I will have begun.* -----

3. *She had taught.* -----

4. *They lived.* -----

5. *We had.* -----

6. *You (pl.) have written.* -----

7. *They sent.* -----

8. *They have been.* -----

9. *We have found.* -----

10. *He had fled.* -----

11. *You couldn't see us.* -----

12. *You (s.) had seen.* -----

13. *They came.* -----

14. *She remained.* -----

15. We felt. _____

VOCABULARY PUZZLES

deus, -i (m) The short “-e-” of the stem causes the word some grief in the plural:

Nom. *dī* (instead of *dei*)

Gen. *deorum*

Dat. *dīs* (instead of *deīs*)

Acc. *deos*

Abl. *dīs* (instead of *deīs*)

01/05/93