

12

Perfect Active System of All Verbs

You are already familiar with the formation and translation of the present, future, and imperfect tenses, the three tenses that constitute the present system, so-called because they are all formed on the present stem and all look at time from the absolute perspective of the present. In Latin, as in English, there are three other tenses, the perfect (sometimes called the “present perfect”), the future perfect, and the pluperfect (or “past perfect”), which constitute the “perfect system,” so-called because they are formed on a perfect (active or passive) stem and look at time from a somewhat different perspective.

Learning the forms for these three tenses in the active voice (the perfect passive system is taken up in Ch. 19) is a relatively easy matter, since verbs of all conjugations follow the same simple rule: perfect active stem + endings.

PRINCIPAL PARTS

To ascertain the perfect active stem of a Latin verb you must know the principal parts of the verb, just as you must similarly know the principal parts of an English verb if you want to use English correctly.¹ As you have

¹ In fact the principal parts of an English verb to some extent parallel those of a Latin verb:

- | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| (1) Present Tense: | praise | lead | take | see | sing | be/am |
| (2) Past Tense: | praised | led | took | saw | sang | was |
| (3) Past Participle: | praised | led | taken | seen | sung | been |

Note that, since the pres. indic. and the pres. inf. are normally identical in English, only one form need be given. Note also that the past participle is really a past passive participle like the Latin *laudātum*.

seen from your vocabulary study, most regular Latin verbs have four principal parts, as illustrated by **laudō** in the following paradigm:

1. Present Active Indicative: *laúdō, I praise*
2. Present Active Infinitive: *laudāre, to praise*
3. Perfect Active Indicative: *laudāvī, I praised, have praised*
4. Perfect Passive Participle: *laudātum, praised, having been praised*

The principal parts of the verbs which have appeared in the paradigms are as follows:

Pres. Ind.	Pres. Inf.	Perf. Ind.	Perf. Pass. Partic.
laúdō	laudāre	laudāvī, <i>I praised</i>	laudātum, <i>having been praised</i>
móneō	monēre	mónuī, <i>I advised</i>	mónitum, <i>having been advised</i>
ágō	ágere	ēgī, <i>I led</i>	āctum, <i>having been led</i>
cápiō	cápere	cēpī, <i>I took</i>	cáptum, <i>having been taken</i>
aúdiō	audīre	audīvī, <i>I heard</i>	audītum, <i>having been heard</i>
sum	esse	fūī, <i>I was</i>	futūrum, <i>about to be</i>
póssum	pósse	pótuī, <i>I was able</i>	———

The first two principal parts, necessary for conjugating a verb in the present system, have been dealt with extensively already. As the first person singular of the perfect active indicative, which always ends in **-ī**, a verb's third principal part is analogous to its first (which is, of course, the first person singular of the present active indicative and regularly ends in **-ō**). The fourth principal part, while given in its neuter form in this book, is for regular transitive verbs the perfect passive participle, a fully declinable verbal adjective of the **-us/-a/-um** variety (**laudātus, -a, -um**, etc.—some uses of participles will be explained in Chs. 19 and 23–24). Verbs lacking a perfect passive participle substitute the accusative supine (see Ch. 38), and some verbs like **sum** and other intransitives substitute a future active participle (e.g., **futūrum = futūrus, -a, -um**), while others like **possum** have no fourth principal part at all.

THE PERFECT ACTIVE STEM

While the first and second principal parts for regular verbs follow a very consistent pattern, there are no simple rules to cover the many variations in the third and fourth principal parts (though, as we have seen, most first conjugation verbs, marked by a [1] in the vocabularies, do follow the **-ō/-āre/-āvī/-ātum** pattern of **laudō**, and many second and fourth conjugation verbs follow the patterns of **moneō** and **audiō**); hence, as pointed out earlier, it is crucial to memorize all the principal parts in the vocabulary entry for each verb by both *saying them aloud* and *writing them out*. Your knowledge of English will help you in this memorization, since there are many derivatives from both the present stem and the perfect participial stem, as you have already discovered (e.g., “docile” and “doctor,” “agent” and “action,” etc.).

Once you know a verb's principal parts, finding the perfect active stem is easy: simply drop the final **-ī** which characterizes the third principal part of every verb. The stems for the sample verbs in the preceding list are: **laudāv-**, **monu-**, **ēg-**, **cēp-**, **audīv-**, **fu-**, and **potu-**. The following paradigms show you the endings for the three perfect system tenses.

Perfect Active Indicative

	<i>I praised, have praised</i>	<i>I led, have led</i>	<i>I was, have been</i>	Endings
Sg.	1. laudāv-ī	ēg-ī	fū-ī	-ī
	2. laudāv-istī	ēg-istī	fu-istī	-istī
	3. laudāv-it	ēg-it	fū-it	-it
Pl.	1. laudāvimus	ēgimus	fūimus	-imus
	2. laudāvistis	ēgistis	fuistis	-istis
	3. laudāvērunt	ēgērunt	fuērunt	-ērunt, -ēre ²

Pluperfect Active Indicative

	<i>I had praised</i>	<i>I had been</i>	Future Perfect Active Indicative <i>I shall have praised</i>	<i>I shall have been</i>
Sg.	1. laudāv-eram	fū-eram	laudāv-erō	fū-erō
	2. laudāv-erās	fū-erās	laudāv-eris	fū-eris
	3. laudāv-erat	fū-erat	laudāv-erit	fū-erit
Pl.	1. laudāverāmus	fuerāmus	laudāverimus	fuērimus
	2. laudāverātis	fuerātis	laudāveritis	fuēritis
	3. laudāverant	fuerant	laudāverint	fuērint

The perfect endings (**-ī**, **-istī**, **-it**, etc.) are quite new and must be memorized. The pluperfect is in effect the perfect stem + **eram**, the imperfect of **sum**. The future perfect is in effect the perfect stem + **erō**, the future of **sum**, except that the third person plural is **-erint**, not **-erunt**.

USAGE, TRANSLATION, AND DISTINCTION FROM THE IMPERFECT

The perfect tense, like the imperfect, is sometimes translated as a simple past tense, hence both **puer amicum monuit** and **puer amicum monēbat** may in certain contexts be translated *the boy warned his friend*. But whereas the imperfect tense is like a video of the past, the perfect tense (from **perficiō**, **perficere**, **perfēcī**, **perfectum**, *to finish, complete*) is rather like a snapshot: with the imperfect the action is viewed as going on, repeated, or habitual, so a more exact translation of **puer amicum monēbat**, depending upon the

²The alternate ending **-ēre** (**laudāvēre**, **ēgēre**, **fuēre**), while fairly common, especially in Lat. poetry, appears only once or twice in this book.

context, might be *the boy was warning/kept warning/used to warn his friend*. Conversely, the more static perfect tense looks back at an action as a single, completed event (*he warned his friend once*), or as an event that, although completed, has consequences for the present; in this latter case, you should regularly translate using the auxiliary “has/have” (*he has warned his friend, and so his friend is now prepared*).

The pluperfect (from **plūs quam perfectum**, *more than complete*, i.e., time “prior to the perfect”) and the future perfect are employed generally as they are in English and, like the perfect tense, generally look at the consequences of completed actions. Consider these English sentences, illustrating the pluperfect, perfect, and future perfect, respectively, and note the use of the English auxiliary verbs “had,” “has,” and “will have” (the past, present, and future tenses of the verb “to have”): “he had studied the material and so he knew it well”; “he has studied the material and so he knows it well”; “he will have studied the material and so he will know it well.” You can see from these examples how the three perfect system tenses parallel the three tenses of the present system; in the latter we simply look at events of the past, present, or future, while in the former we look at events of the past, present, or future and consider the impact of previously completed actions on those events.

VOCABULARY

adulēscēns, adulēscētis, m. and f., *young man or woman* (adolescent, adolescence, adult; cp. **adulēscēntia**)

ānnus, -ī, m., *year* (annals, anniversary, annuity, annual, biennial, perennial, centennial, millennium, superannuated)

Āsia, -ae, f., *Asia*, commonly referring to Asia Minor

Caésar, Caésaris, m., *Caesar* (Caesarian, Caesarism, kaiser, czar, tsar)

māter, mātris, f., *mother* (maternal, maternity, matriarchy, matrimony, matricide, matriculate, matrilineal, matrix, matron)

médicus, -ī, m., and **médica, -ae**, f., *doctor, physician* (medic, medical, medicate, medicine, medicinal)

pāter, pátris, m., *father* (paternal, paternity, patrician, patrimony, patron, patronage, patronize, patter, padre, père; cp. **patria**)

patiēntia, -ae, f., *suffering; patience, endurance* (patient, impatient; cp. **patior**, Ch. 34)

prīncípium, -iī, n., *beginning* (principal, principle; cp. **prīnceps**, Ch. 28)

acérbus, -a, -um, *harsh, bitter, grievous* (acerbity, exacerbate)

prō, prep. + abl., *in front of, before, on behalf of, for the sake of, in return for, instead of, for, as*; also as prefix (pros and cons, pro- as a prefix)

díū, adv., *long, for a long time*

nūper, adv., *recently*

āmittō, -mittere, -mīsi, -missum, *to lose, let go*

cádō, cādere, cécidī, cāsūrum, *to fall* (cadence, case, casual, cascade, chance, accident, incident, decadence, decay, deciduous)
créō (1), *to create* (creation, creativity, creature, procreate)

PRACTICE AND REVIEW

1. Vōs nōbīs dē voluptātibus adūlēscēntiae tum scrīpsistis.
2. Ratiōnēs alterīus filiae herī nōn fuērunt eaedem.
3. Nēmō in hanc viam ex utrā portā fūgerat.
4. Illī autem ad nōs cum medicā eius nūper vērērunt.
5. Illī adūlēscētēs ad nōs propter amīcitiā saepe veniēbant.
6. Eundem timōrem in istō cōnsule sēnsimus.
7. Post paucās hōrās Caesar Asiā cēpit.
8. Illa fēmina beāta sōla magnam cupiditātem pācis sēnsit.
9. Potuistisne bonam vītā sine ūllā libertāte agere?
10. Vēritās igitur fuit tōtī populō cāra.
11. Neuter medicus nōmen patris audīverat.
12. That friendly queen did not remain there a long time.
13. Our mothers had not understood the nature of that place.
14. However, we had found no fault in the head of our country.
15. They kept sending her to him with me.

SENTENTIAE ANTĪQUAE

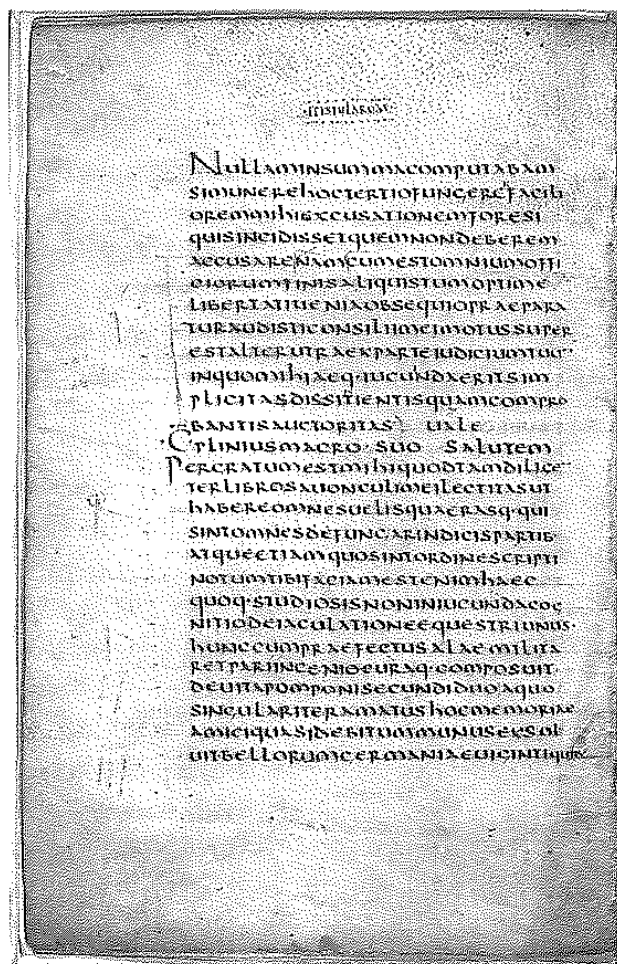
1. In prīncipiō Deus creāvit caelum et terram; et Deus creāvit hominem. (Genesis.)
2. In triumphō Caesar praetulit hunc titulum: “Vēnī, vīdī, vīcī.” (Suetonius.—**triumphus**, -ī, *triumphal procession*, here celebrating his quick victory at Zela in Asia Minor in 47 B.C.—**praeferō**, -ferre, -tulī, -lātum, *to display*.—**tītulus**, -ī, *placard*.)
3. Vīxit, dum vīxit, bene. (*Terence.)
4. Adūlēscēns vult diū vīvere; senex diū vīxit. (Cicero.—**vult**, irreg., *wishes*.—**senex**, **senis**, m., *old man*.)
5. Nōn ille diū vīxit, sed diū fuit. (*Seneca.)
6. Hui, dīxistī pulchrē! (*Terence.—**hui**, interj., comparable to Eng. “wheel!”—**pulchrē**, adv. from **pulcher**; advs. were commonly formed from adjs. in this way. See Chs. 26–27, and cp., e.g., **vērē** from **vērus**, **liberē** from **liber**, and the irregular **bene** from **bonus**.)
7. Sophoclēs ad summam senectūtem tragoediās fēcit. (*Cicero.—**Sophoclēs**, -clis, the famous Athenian playwright.—**summus**, -a, -um, *extreme*.—**tragoedia**, -ae, *tragedy*.)
8. Illī nōn solum pecūniam sed etiam vītā prō patriā prōfūdērunt. (Cicero.—**prōfundō**, -ere, -fūdī, -fūsum, *to pour forth*.)
9. Rēgēs Rōmā ā prīncipiō habuērunt; libertātem Lūcius Brūtus Rōmānīs dedit. (Tacitus.—**ā** + abl., *from*.)

10. Sub Caesare autem libertatem perdidimus. (Laberius.—*perdō, -ere, -didī, -ditum, to destroy, lose.*)
11. Quandō libertās ceciderit, nēmō liberē dīcere audēbit. (Publilius Syrus.)

**PLINY WRITES TO MARCELLINUS ABOUT THE DEATH OF
FUNDANUS' DAUGHTER**

Salvē, Marcellīne! Haec tibi scrībō dē Fundānō, amīcō nostrō; is filiam cāram et bellam amīsīt. Illa puella nōn XIII annōs vīxerat, sed nātūra eī multam sapientiam dederat. Mātrē patremque, frātrem sorōremque, nōs et aliōs amīcōs, magistrōs magistrāsque semper amābat, et nōs eam amābāmus laudābāmusque. Medicī eam adiuvāre nōn poterant. Quoniam illa autem magnōs animōs habuit, morbum nimis malum cum patientiā tolerāvit. Nunc, mī amīce, mitte Fundānō nostrō litterās dē fortunā acerbā filiae eius. Valē.

(Pliny, *Epistulae* 5.16; see L.I. 40.—**XIII annōs**, for 13 years, acc. of duration of time, Ch. 37. Minicius Fundanus was a consul in A.D. 107; his daughter's funerary urn and the following epitaph were found in the family's tomb outside of



Page from manuscript of Pliny's *Epistulae*
(*Epist. III.4.8–9 and III.5.1–3*)
6th century A.D., Italy
The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

Rome: D[īs] M[ānibus] Miniciae Marcellae Fundānī f[ī]liae; v[ī]xit[] a[nnōs] XII m[ēnsēs] XI d[īēs] VII.—The bracketed text was abbreviated in the original inscription.—The **dī mānēs** were the *spirits of the dead*, who protected the deceased.—**mēnsēs**, *months*.—**dīēs**, *days*.)

DIAULUS STILL BURIES HIS CLIENTS

Nūper erat medicus, nunc est vespillo Diaulus.

Quod vespillo facit, fēcerat et medicus.

(*Martial 1.47; meter: elegiac couplet.—**vespillō**, **-lōnis**, *m.*, *undertaker*.—Diaulus' name is delayed for suspense.—**quod**, *what*.—**et** = *etiam*.)

ETYMOLOGY

Further examples of the help of English words in learning principal parts of Latin verbs are:

Latin Verb	Pres. Stem in Eng. Word	Perf. Partic. Stem in Eng. Word
videō	provide (vidēre)	provision (vīsum)
maneō	permanent (manēre)	mansion (mānsum)
vīvō	revive (vīvere)	victuals (vīctum)
sentiō	sentiment (sentīre)	sense (sēnsum)
veniō	intervene (venīre)	intervention (ventum)
faciō	facile (facere)	fact (factum)

The connection between Latin **pater** and **patria** (*father-land*) is obvious. However, although English “patriarch,” “patriot,” and “patronymic” have in them a stem, **patr-**, which is meaningful to one who knows the Latin words, nevertheless these English words are actually derived from Greek, in which the stem **patr-** is cognate with the same stem in Latin; cp. Greek **patēr**, *father*; **pátrā** or **patrís**, *fatherland*; **patriá**, *lineage*.

In the readings

2. prefer, prelate.—title, titular. 8. confound, confuse, effuse, effusive, fuse, fusion, refund, refuse, transfusion. 10. perdition.

LATĪNA EST GAUDIUM—ET ŪTILIS!

Salvēte, discipulae discipulīque cārī! As we saw in S. A. 2 above, Caesar is said to have proclaimed **vēnī**, **vidī**, **vīcī** in propagandizing his victory at Zela—a good example of the perfect tense, a “snapshot” of the action whose rapid conclusion the general wanted to emphasize. There are now some 20th-cen. variants on this boast: from the mall-masters, **VENI, VIDI, VISA**, “I came, I saw, I bought everything in sight!” and from the vegetarians, **VENI, VIDI, VEGI**, “I came, I saw, I had a salad.” Are you groaning?!!—but remember, **patientia est virtūs**, and there may yet be worse to come: meantime, **rīdēte** (from **rīdēre**, *to smile*) **et valēte!**

Chapter 12 **discussion**

PRACTICE AND REVIEW

1. You then wrote to us about the pleasures of youth.
2. The other daughter's reasons yesterday were not the same.
3. No one had fled into this street from the other gate.
4. But those men came to us recently with his doctor.
5. Those youths used to come to us often on account of friendship.
6. We sensed the same fear in that consul.
7. After a few hours, Caesar captured Asia.
8. That blessed woman alone has felt a great longing for peace.
9. Have you been able to lead a good life without any liberty?
10. Therefore truth was dear to the entire populace.
11. Neither doctor had heard the father's name.
12. Regina illa amica ibi non diu remansit.
13. Matres nostrae naturam illius loci non intellexerant.
14. Nullam autem culpam in patriae capite nostrae inveneramus.
15. Eam mecum ad illum mittebant.

SENTENTIAE ANTIQUAE

1. In the beginning, God created the sky and the earth; and God created man.
2. In the triumph, Caesar displayed this placard: "I came, I saw, I conquered."
3. He lived well, while he lived.
4. A young man wishes to live long; an old man has lived long.
5. That man did not live for a long time, but he was for a long time.
6. Hurray, you have spoken finely!
7. Sophocles made tragedies to extreme old age.
8. They poured forth not only money but also their life for the fatherland.
9. Kings held Rome from the beginning; Lucius Brutus gave freedom to the Romans.
10. However, we lost our freedom under Caesar.
11. When liberty will have fallen, no one will dare to speak freely.

Chapter 12

PLINY WRITES TO MARCELLINUS ABOUT THE DEATH OF FUNDANUS' DAUGHTER

Hello, Marcellinus! I write these to you concerning Fundanus, our friend; he has lost his dear and pretty daughter. That girl had not lived for 13 years, but nature had given her much wisdom. She always loved her mother and father, her brother and sister, us and other friends, and her teacher; and we used to love and praise her. The doctors were not able to help her. But since that girl had great courage, she tolerated an illness too evil with patience. Now, my friend, send our Fundanus a letter about his daughter's bitter fortune. Good-bye.

DIAULUS STILL BURIES HIS CLIENTS

Recently he was a doctor, now Diaulus is an undertaker.
What he does as undertaker, he had done even as doctor.

