

# Participles

Like English, Latin has a set of verbal adjectives, i.e., adjectives formed from a verb stem, called “participles.” Regular transitive verbs in Latin have four participles, two of them in the active voice (the present and future), and two in the passive (future and perfect); they are formed as follows:

	Active	Passive
<i>Pres.</i>	present stem + <b>-ns</b> (gen. <b>-ntis</b> )	_____
<i>Perf.</i>	_____	partic. stem + <b>-us, -a, -um</b>
<i>Fut.</i>	participial stem + <b>-ūrus, -ūra, -ūrum</b> <sup>1</sup>	pres. stem + <b>-ndus, -nda, -ndum</b>

It is important to know the proper stem for each participle as well as the proper ending. Note that the present active and the future passive are formed on the present stem, while the perfect passive and future active are formed on the so-called “participial stem” (found by dropping the endings from the perfect passive participle, which is itself most often a verb’s fourth principal part: i.e., **laudāt-** from **laudātus, -a, -um**). This pattern can perhaps best be recalled by memorizing the participles of **agō**, in which the difference between the present stem and the participial stem is sufficient to eliminate any confusion. It is also helpful to note that the base of the present participle is marked by **-nt-**, the future active by **-ūr-**<sup>1</sup>, and the future passive, often called the “gerundive,” by **-nd-**.

<sup>1</sup> The ending of the future active participle is very easy to remember if you keep in mind the fact that our word *future* comes from **futūrus, -a, -um**, the future (and, incidentally, the only) participle of *sum*.

## TRANSLATING PARTICIPIAL PHRASES AS CLAUSES

Participial phrases are used much more frequently in Latin than in English, which prefers clauses with regular finite verbs. In translating from Latin to idiomatic English, therefore, it is often preferable to transform a participial phrase (especially if it sounds stilted in English) into a subordinate clause.

In doing so you need to consider 1) the relationship between the action in the phrase and the action in the clause to which it is attached, so that you can then choose an appropriate subordinating conjunction (especially “when,” “since,” or “although”), and 2) the relativity of participial tenses, so that you can then transform the participle into the appropriate verb tense.

Thus the example given earlier, **patrem in casā videntēs, puella et puer ad eum cucurrerunt**, can be translated *seeing their father in the house, the girl and boy ran up to him* or, more idiomatically, *when they saw their father in the house, the girl and boy ran up to him*. Likewise **Graecī nautae, vīsī ā Polyphēmō, timuerunt** is better translated *when they had been seen* [time prior to main verb] *by Polyphemus, the Greek sailors were afraid* than the more literal *having been seen by Polyphemus, the Greek sailors were afraid*. Consider these further examples:

**Māter, filium amāns, auxilium dat,** *since she loves her son* [lit., *loving her son*], *the mother gives him assistance*.

**Pater, filiam vīsūrus, casam parābat,** *since he was about to see his daughter, the father was preparing the house*.

**Puella, in casam veniēns, gaudēbat,** *when she came into the house* [lit., *coming into the house*], *the girl was happy*.

## VOCABULARY

**arx, ārcis, f., citadel, stronghold**

**dux, dūcis, m., leader, guide; commander, general** (duke, ducal, ducat, duchess, duchy, doge; cp. **dūcō**)

**ēquus, -ī, m., horse** (equestrian, equine; cp. **equa, -ae, mare**)

**hāsta, -ae, f., spear** (hastate)

**īnsula, -ae, f., island** (insular, insularity, insulate, isolate, isolation, peninsula)

**lītus, lītōris, n., shore, coast** (littoral)

**mīles, mīlitis, m., soldier** (military, militaristic, militate, militant, militia)

**ōrātor, ōrātōris, m., orator, speaker** (oratory, oratorio; cp. **ōrō**, Ch. 36, **ōrātiō**, Ch. 38)



numquam)

**ēducō** (1), *to bring up, educate* (education, educator, educable; do not confuse with **ēducō**, *to lead out*)

**gaúdeō**, **gaudēre**, **gāvīsus sum**, *to be glad, rejoice* (gaudeamus; cp. **gaudium**, **-iī**, *joy*, as in **Latīna est gaudium!**)

**osténdō**, **osténdere**, **osténdī**, **osténtum**, *to exhibit, show, display* (ostentation, ostentatious, ostensible, ostensive; cp. **tendō**, *stretch, extend*)

**pétō**, **pétere**, **petīvī**, **petītum**, *to seek, aim at, beg, beseech* (appetite, compete, competent, impetuous, petition, petulant, repeat; cp. **perpetuus**)

**prémō**, **prémere**, **préssī**, **préssum**, *to press; press hard, pursue*; **-primō** in compounds as seen in **opprimō** below (compress, depress, express, impress, imprint, print, repress, reprimand, suppress)

**ópprimō**, **-prímere**, **-préssī**, **-préssum**, *to suppress; overwhelm, overpower, check* (oppress, oppression, oppressive, oppressor)

**vértō**, **vértēre**, **vértī**, **vérsūm**, *to turn; change*; so **āvertō**, *turn away, avert*, **revertō**, *turn back*, etc. (adverse, advertise, avert, averse, convert, controversy, divers, diverse, divorce, invert, obverse, pervert, revert, subvert, subversive, transverse, verse, version, animadvert)

## PRACTICE AND REVIEW

1. Aliquid numquam ante audītum cernō.
2. Illum ōrātōrem in mediō senātū iterum petentem finem bellōrum ac scelerum nōn adiūvistis.
3. Certī frūctūs pācis ab territō vulgō atque senātū cupiēbantur.
4. Quī vir magnanimus aliās gentēs gravī metū servitūtis liberābit?
5. Nēmō fidem negligēns timōre umquam carēbit.
6. Illa fēmina fortunāta haec cōnsilia contrā eōs malōs quondam aluit et salūtis commūnis causā semper labōrābat.
7. Illam gentem Latīnam oppressūrī et dīvitiās raptūrī, omnēs virōs magnae probitātis premere ac dēlēre prōtinus coepērunt.
8. Tollēturne fāma huius medicī istīs versibus novīs?
9. At vīta illīus modī aequī aliquid iūcundī atque fēlicis continet.
10. Quō diē ex igne et ferrō atque morte certā ēreptus es?
11. We gave many things to nations lacking hope.
12. Those ten men, (when) called, will come again with great eagerness.
13. Through the window they saw the second old man running out of his neighbor's house and away from the city.
14. He himself was overpowered by uncertain fear because he desired neither truth nor liberty.



## SENTENTIAE ANTĪQUAE

1. Vīvēs meīs praesidiīs oppressus. (Cicero.—**praesidium**, -iī, *guard*.)
2. Illī autem, tendentēs manūs dextrās, salūtem petēbant. (Livy.—**tendō**, -ere, *to stretch, extend*.)
3. Tantalus sitiēns flūmina ab ōre fugientia tangere dēsīderābat. (Horace.—**sitire**, *to be thirsty*.)
4. Signa rērum futūrārum mundō ā dīs ostenduntur. (Cicero.)
5. Graecia capta asperum victōrem cēpit. (Horace.—**victor**, -tōris, here = Rome.)
6. Atticus Cicerōnī ex patriā fugientī multam pecūniam dedit. (Ne-  
pos.—**Atticus**, a friend of Cicero.)
7. Sī mihi eum ēducandum committēs, studia eius fōrmāre ab īfantiā  
incipiam. (Quintilian.—**fōrmāre**.—**īfantia**, -ae.)
8. Saepe stilum verte, bonum libellum scrīptūrus. (Horace.—**stilum**  
**vertere**, *to invert the stilus* = to use the eraser.)
9. Cūra ōrātōris dictūrī eōs audītūrōs dēlectat. (Quintilian.)
10. Mortī Sōcratis semper illacrimō, legēns Platōnem. (Cicero.—**Sōcra**-  
**tēs**, -cratis.—**illacrīmāre**, *to weep over*.—**Platō**, -tōnis.)
11. Memoria vītāe bene āctae multōrumque bene factōrum iūcunda  
est. (Cicero.)
12. Quī timēns vīvet, liber nōn erit umquam. (Horace.—**quī**, as often, =  
**is quī**.)
13. Nōn is est miser quī iussus aliquid facit, sed is quī invītus facit. (Sen-  
eca.—**invītus**, -a, -um, *unwilling*; the adj. here has adverbial force, as  
it commonly does in Latin.)
14. Verbum semel ēmissum volat irrevocābile. (Horace.—**semel**, adv.,  
*once*.—**ē-mittere**.—**volāre**, *to fly*.—**irrevocābilis**, -e.)

## LAOCOON SPEAKS OUT AGAINST THE TROJAN HORSE

Oppressī bellō longō et ā deīs aversī, ducēs Graecōrum, iam post decem annōs, magnum equum ligneum arte Minervae faciunt. Uterum multīs mīli-  
tibus complent, equum in lītore relinquunt, et ultrā īnsulam proximam nāvi-  
gant. Trōiānī nūllās cōpiās aut nāvēs vident; omnis Trōia gaudet; panduntur  
portae. Dē equō, autem, Trōiānī sunt incertī. Aliī eum in urbem dūcī cupi-  
unt; aliī eum Graecās īnsidiās appellant. Prīmus ibi ante omnēs, dē arce  
currēns, Lāocoōn, sacerdos Trōiānus, haec verba dīcit: “Ō miserī cīvēs, nōn  
estis sālī! Quid cōgitātis? Nōnne intellegitis Graecōs et īnsidiās eōrum? Aut  
inveniētis in istō equō multōs mīlitēs ācrēs, aut equus est machina bellī, facta

## *Ablative Absolute; Passive Periphrastic; Dative of Agent*

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The participles which you learned in the last chapter were employed by the Romans in two very common constructions introduced below, the “ablative absolute” and the “passive periphrastic.”

### **ABLATIVE ABSOLUTE**

The ablative absolute is a type of participial phrase generally consisting of a noun (or pronoun) and a modifying participle in the ablative case; somewhat loosely connected to the rest of the sentence (hence the term, from **absolūtum**, *loosened from, separated*) and usually set off by commas, the phrase describes some general circumstances under which the action of the sentence occurs.

Rōmā vīsā, virī gaudēbant, *Rome having been seen, the men rejoiced.*

As typified by this example, the ablative absolute always is self-contained, i.e., the participle and the noun it modifies are both in the same phrase and the noun of the ablative absolute phrase is not referred to at all in the attached clause. In other types of participial phrases (such as those seen in



Ch. 23), the participles modify some noun or pronoun in the attached clause; compare the following example, which has an ordinary participial phrase, with the previous example:

*Rōmam videntēs, virī gaudēbant, seeing Rome, the men rejoiced.*

In this instance the participle modifies the subject of the main clause, and so an ablative absolute cannot be used.

Like other participial phrases, the ablative absolute can be translated quite literally, as in **Rōmā vīsā**, (*with*) *Rome having been seen*. Often, however, it is better style to transform the phrase to a clause, converting the participle to a verb in the appropriate tense, treating the ablative noun as its subject, and supplying the most logical conjunction (usually “when,” “since,” or “although”), as explained in the last chapter; thus, a more idiomatic translation of **Rōmā vīsā, virī gaudēbant** would be *when Rome was (had been) seen, the men rejoiced*. Compare the following additional examples:

**Hīs rēbus auditīs**, coepit timēre.

*These things having been heard, he began to be afraid.*

Or in much better English:

*When (since, after, etc., depending on the context) these things had been heard, he began . . .*

*When (since, after, etc.) he had heard these things, he began . . .*

**Eō imperium tenente**, ēventum timeō.

*With him holding the power,*

*Since he holds the power,*

*When he holds the power,*

*If he holds the power,*

*Although he holds the power.*

*I fear the outcome.*

In the ablative absolute, the ablative noun/pronoun regularly comes first, the participle last; when the phrase contains additional words, like the direct object of the participle in the preceding example, they are usually enclosed within the noun/participle “frame.”

As seen in the following examples, even two nouns, or a noun and an adjective, can function as an ablative absolute, with the present participle of **sum** (lacking in classical Latin) to be understood:

**Caesare duce**, nihil timēbimus.

*Caesar being the commander,*

*Under Caesar's command,*

*With Caesar in command,*

*Since (when, if, etc.) Caesar is the commander,*

*we shall fear nothing.*



## THE PASSIVE PERIPHRASTIC CONJUGATION: GERUNDIVE + *Sum*

Despite its horrendous name, the passive periphrastic conjugation is simply a passive verb form consisting of the gerundive (i.e., the future passive participle) along with a form of *sum*.<sup>1</sup> The gerundive, as a predicate adjective, agrees with the subject of *sum* in gender, number, and case, e.g., *haec fēmina laudanda est*, *this woman is to be praised*.

The gerundive often conveys an idea of necessary, obligatory, or appropriate action, rather than simple futurity, and this is the case in the passive periphrastic construction. Hence *id faciendum est* means not simply *this is about to be done*, but rather *this has to be done*; *hic liber cum cūrā legendus erit*, *this book will have to be (must be) read with care*.

Just as Latin uses the auxiliary *sum* in its various tenses in this construction, English commonly uses the expressions “has to be,” “had to be,” “will have to be”; “should,” “ought,” and “must” are other auxiliaries commonly used in translating the passive periphrastic (cp. *dēbeō*, which, as you have already learned, is also used to indicate obligatory action).

## THE DATIVE OF AGENT

Instead of the ablative of agent, the dative of agent is used with the passive periphrastic. A literal translation of the passive periphrastic + dative of agent generally sounds awkward, and so it is often best to transform such a clause into an active construction; consider the following examples:

*Hic liber mihi cum cūrā legendus erit*, *this book will have to be read by me with care* or (better) *I will have to (ought to, must, should) read this book with care*.

<sup>1</sup> The word “periphrasis” (adj. “periphrastic”) comes from the Gk. equivalent of Lat. *circumlocutiō*, a roundabout way of speaking, and simply refers to the form’s construction from a participle plus *sum* as an auxiliary (even “did sing” in Eng. is a periphrastic for “sang”); the entire perfect passive system is similarly “periphrastic,” consisting of *sum* + the perfect passive participle rather than the gerundive (be careful not to confuse the two: the pass. periphrastic will always contain an *-nd-* gerundive).



Illa fēmina omnibus laudanda est, *that woman should be praised by all or everyone should praise that woman.*

Pāx ducibus nostrīs petenda erat, *peace had to be sought by our leaders or our leaders had to seek peace.*

## OCABULARY

**Carthāgō, Carthāginis**, f., *Carthage* (a city in North Africa)

**fābula**, -ae, f., *story, tale; play* (fable, fabulous, confabulate; cp. **fāma**)

**imperātor, imperātōris**, m., *general, commander-in-chief, emperor* (cp. **parō, imperium, imperō**, Ch. 35)

**impērium, -iī**, n., *power to command, supreme power, authority, command, control* (imperial, imperialism, imperious, empire)

**perfūgium, -iī**, n., *refuge, shelter* (cp. **fugiō**)

**sērvus, -ī**, m., and **sērva, -ae**, f., *slave* (serf, servant, servile, service; cp. **serviō**, Ch. 35)

**sōlācium, -iī**, n., *comfort, relief* (solace, consolation, inconsolable)

**vūlnus, vūlneris**, n., *wound* (vulnerable, invulnerable)

**re-** or **red-**, prefix, *again, back* (recede, receive, remit, repeat, repel, revert)

**ut**, conj. + indic., *as, just as, when*

**pōsteā**, adv., *afterwards* (cp. **post**)

**accipiō, -cīpere, -cēpī, -cēptum**, *to take* (to one's self), *receive, accept* (cp. **capiō**)

**excipiō, -cīpere, -cēpī, -cēptum**, *to take out, except; take, receive, capture* (exception, exceptionable)

**recipiō, -cīpere, -cēpī, -cēptum**, *to take back, regain; admit, receive* (recipe, R<sub>x</sub>, receipt, recipient, receptacle, reception)

**pēllō, pēllere, pēpulī, pūsum**, *to strike, push; drive out, banish* (compel, compulsion, compulsory, dispel, expel, impel, propel, repel, pelt, pulsate, pulse)

**expēllō, -pēllere, -pulī, -pūsum**, *to drive out, expel, banish* (expulsion)

**nārrō** (1), *to tell, report, narrate* (narration, narrative, narrator)

**quaérō, quaérere, quaesīvī, quaesītum**, *to seek, look for, strive for; ask, inquire, inquire into* (acquire, conquer, exquisite, inquire, inquest, inquisition, perquisite, query, quest, question, request, require)

**rīdeō, rīdēre, rīsī, rīsum**, *to laugh, laugh at* (deride, derisive, ridicule, ridiculous, risibilities; cf. **rīdiculus**, Ch. 30, **subrīdeō**, Ch. 35)

## ACTICE AND REVIEW

1. Igne vīsō, omnēs virī et uxōrēs territae sunt et ultrā urbem ad lītus īnsulae nāvigāvērunt, ubi perfugium inventum est.

2. Populō metū oppressō, iste imperātor nōbīs ex urbe pellendus est.



3. Ōrātor, signō ā sacerdotē datō, eō diē revēnit et nunc tōtus populus Latīnus gaudet.
4. Gēns Rōmāna versūs illius scrīptōris magnā laude quondam recēpit.
5. Laudēs atque dōna huius modī ab ōrātōribus dēsīderābantur.
6. Imperiō acceptō, dux magnanimus fidem suam reī pūblicae ostendit.
7. Aliquis eōs quīnque equōs ex igne ēripī postea iusserat.
8. Cernisne omnia quae tibi scienda sunt?
9. Ille, ab arce urbis reveniēns, ab istīs hominibus premī coepit.
10. Cupiō tangere manum illius mīlitis quī metū caruit atque gravia scelera contrā rem pūblicam oppressit.
11. Iste dux prōtinus expulsus est, ut imperium excipiēbat.
12. Illae servae, autem, perfugium sōlāciumque ab amīcīs quaerēbant.
13. Cornū audītō, ille mīles, incertus cōsiliī, cōpiās ad mediam īnsulam vertit.
14. When the common danger had been averted, two of our sons and all our daughters came back from Asia.
15. Our hopes must not be destroyed by those three evil men.
16. Since the people of all nations are seeking peace, all leaders must conquer the passion for (= of) power. (Use an ablative absolute and a passive periphrastic.)
17. The leader, having been driven out by both the free men and the slaves, could not regain his command.

### SENTENTIAE ANTĪQUAE

1. Carthāgō dēlenda est. (Cato.)
2. Asiā victā, dux Rōmānus fēlīx multōs servōs in Italiā mīsīt. (Pliny the Elder.)
3. Omnibus ferrō mīlitis perterritīs, quisque sē servāre cupiēbat. (Caesar.)
4. Quidquid dīcendum est, līberē dīcam. (Cicero.—līberē, adv. of līber.)
5. Haec omnia vulnera bellī tibi nunc sānanda sunt. (Cicero.—sānāre, to heal.)
6. Nec tumultum nec hastam mīlitis nec mortem violentam timēbō, Augustō terrās tenente. (Horace.—tumultus -ūs, disturbance, civil war.—violentus, -a, -um.—Augustus, -ī.)
7. Tarquiniō expulsō, nōmen rēgis audīre nōn poterat populus Rōmānus. (Cicero.)
8. Ad ūtilitātem vītae omnia cōsilia factaque nōbīs regenda sunt. (Tacitus.—ūtilitās, -tātis, benefit, advantage.)

### DĒ CUPIDITĀTE

Homō stultus, “Ō cīvēs, cīvēs,” inquit, “pecūnia ante omnia quaerenda est; virtūs et probitās post pecūniam.”