

PARTICIPLES

General: When we take a verb and make an adjective out of it, we have constructed a *verbal adjective or participle*:

The *shouting* woman departed.
The men saw the *destroyed* town.

A participle, like any other adjective, must agree with the noun it modifies in gender, number and case. But the participle also has attributes of tense and voice: “shouting” is present active; “destroyed” (i.e., “having been destroyed”) is perfect passive.

Because the participle, although an adjective, retains verbal force, it may take a direct object:

We saw Hercules drinking the wine: *Vidimus Herculem vinum bibentem*.

Formation:

	Active	Passive
Present:	<i>amāns, amantis</i> (loving)	-----
Perfect:	[Deponent Verbs only]	<i>amātus, -a, -um</i> (having been loved)
Future:	<i>amātūrus, -a, -um</i> (about to love)	<i>amandus, -a, -um</i> (having to be loved)

Present Active Participle: Add **-ns** to the present stem (**-ntis** for genitive singular) and decline like third declension adjectives of one termination. In the case of i-stem verbs, **-ie-** will appear: *capiēns, capientis*.

If used as an attributive adjective, the present participle will have **-ī** in the ablative singular. *ab amanti fēminā*, by the loving wife.

If used as a substantive (noun), the present participle will have **-e** in the ablative singular. *ab amante*, by a lover.

Perfect Passive Participle: This is the fourth principal part of the verb, declined as an adjective of the 1st and 2nd declension.

Future Active Participle: Take the fourth principal part of the verb, drop the **-us** and add **-ūrus, -a, -um**. Then decline as a 1st and 2nd declension adjective.

Future Passive Participle: Add **-ndus, -a, -um** to the present stem. Then decline as a 1st and 2nd declension adjective. In i-stem verbs, **-ie-** will appear: *audiendus, -a, -um; sentiendus, -a, -um*.

Uses of the Participle:

The tense of a participle is always *relative* to that of the main verb. A *present* participle refers to action contemporaneous with that of the main verb (whether the main verb is past, present or future). A *perfect* participle refers to action prior to that of the main verb. A *future* participle refers to action subsequent to that of the main verb. A proper understanding of Latin participles must always bear in the mind their *tense* and *voice*.

Present active participle: contemporaneous action, active voice.

Fēmina clāmāns eum vidit.

The shouting woman saw him.

Shouting, the woman saw him.

When she was shouting, the woman saw him.

Perfect passive participle: prior action, passive voice.

Fēmina territa clāmāvit.

The having-been-frightened woman shouted.

The woman, having been frightened, shouted.

The frightened woman shouted.

When she had been frightened, the woman shouted.

Future active participle: subsequent action, active voice.

Fēmina dictūra virum vidit.

The about-to-speak woman saw her husband.

The woman, about to speak, saw her husband.

About to speak, the woman saw her husband.

When the woman was about to speak, she saw her husband.

Future passive participle (gerundive): subsequent action, passive voice.

Librōs legendōs in mēnsā posuit.

He placed having-to-be-read books on the table.

He placed books to be read on the table

He placed books which should be read on the table.

The Perfect Active Participle of Deponent Verbs: A perfect active participle (having seen, having done, having left, etc.) is a critical syntactical component. It's absence in Latin for regular verbs is made up for by the frequent use of the perfect participle of deponent verbs (which by nature must be active), the use of the ablative absolute, and the use of *cum* clauses. Take care to translate the perfect participle of a deponent verb *actively* (*locutus*, having said; *hortatus*, having encouraged; *secutus*, having followed, etc.).

Notes: 1) Latin participles are often best rendered in English as subordinate clauses (i.e., temporal, causal, concessive, conditional). The *context* must decide.

2) The future passive participle (gerundive) often carries the notion of obligation, necessity, or propriety.