



6TH EDITION, REVISED

# WHEELOCK'S LATIN

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Revised by Richard A. LaFleur

*The  
Classic  
Introductory  
Latin Course,  
Based  
on Ancient  
Authors*

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# 1

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## ***Verbs; First and Second Conjugations: Present Infinitive, Indicative, and Imperative Active; Translating***

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### **VERBS**

One might properly consider the verb (from Lat. **verbum**, *word*), which describes the subject's activity or state of being, to be the most important word in a sentence, and so we may best begin our study of Latin with a look at that part of speech (the other parts of speech in Latin are the same as those in English: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections).

In Latin as in English, verbs exhibit the following five characteristics:

**PERSON** (Lat. **persōna**): who is the subject, i.e., who performs (or, in the passive, receives) the action, from the speaker's point of view; 1st person = the speaker(s), *I, we*; 2nd = the person(s) spoken to, *you*; 3rd = the person(s) spoken about, *he, she, it, they*.

**NUMBER** (**numerus**): how many subjects, singular or plural.

**TENSE** (*tempus, time*): the time of the action; Latin has six tenses, present, future, imperfect, perfect (or present perfect), future perfect, and pluperfect (or past perfect).

**MOOD** (*modus, manner*): the manner of indicating the action or state of being of the verb; like English, Latin has the indicative (which "indicates" facts) and the imperative (which orders actions), introduced in this chapter, and the subjunctive (which describes, in particular, hypothetical or potential actions), introduced in Ch. 28.

**VOICE** (*vōx*): an indication, with transitive verbs (those that can take direct objects), of whether the subject performs the action (the active voice) or receives it (passive).

### CONJUGATION

To conjugate (Lat. *coniugāre, join together*) a verb is to list together all its forms, according to these five variations of person, number, tense, mood, and voice. If asked to conjugate the English verb *to praise* in the present tense and the active voice of the indicative mood, you would say:

	Singular	Plural
1st person	I praise	we praise
2nd person	you praise	you praise
3rd person	he (she, it) praises	they praise

The person and the number of five of these six forms cannot be determined in English without the aid of pronouns *I, you, we, they*. Only in the third person singular can you omit the pronoun *he (she, it)* and still make clear by the special ending of the verb that *praises* is third person and singular.

### PERSONAL ENDINGS

What English can accomplish in only one of the six forms, Latin can do in all six by means of "personal endings," which indicate distinctly the person, the number, and the voice of the verb. Since these personal endings will be encountered at every turn, the time taken to memorize them at this point will prove an excellent investment. For the active voice they are:

#### Singular

1st person  
2nd person  
3rd person

-ō or -m, which corresponds to *I*.  
-s, which corresponds to *you*.  
-t, which corresponds to *he, she, it*.

**Plural***1st person***-mus**, which corresponds to *we*.*2nd person***-tis**, which corresponds to *you*.*3rd person***-nt**, which corresponds to *they*.

The next step is to find a verbal “stem” to which these endings can be added.

## **PRESENT INFINITIVE<sup>1</sup> ACTIVE AND PRESENT STEM**

The present active infinitives of the model verbs used in this book for the first and second conjugations are respectively:

*laudāre, to praise**monēre, to advise*

You see that **-āre** characterizes the first conjugation and **-ēre** characterizes the second.

Now from the infinitives drop the **-re**, which is the actual infinitive ending, and you have the “present stems”:

*laudā-**monē-*

To this present stem add the personal endings (with the few modifications noted below), and you are ready to read or to say something in Latin about the present: e.g., **laudā-s**, *you praise*; **monē-mus**, *we advise*.

This leads to the first of many paradigms. “Paradigm” (pronounced *pá-radí-me*) derives from Greek **paradeigma**, which means *pattern, example*; and paradigms are used at numerous points throughout the chapters and in the Appendix to provide summaries of forms according to convenient patterns. Of course, the ancient Romans learned the many inflected forms from their parents and from daily contacts with other people by the direct method, as we ourselves learn English today. However, since we lack this natural Latin environment and since we usually begin the study of Latin at a relatively late age under the exigencies of time, the analytical approach through paradigms, though somewhat artificial and uninspiring, is generally found to be the most efficacious method.

In the process of memorizing all paradigms, be sure always to say them *aloud*, for this gives you the help of two senses, both sight and sound; speak-

<sup>1</sup> The *infinitive* (**infinitus, infinitivus**, *not limited*) simply gives the basic idea of the verb; its form is “not limited” by person and number, though it does indicate tense and voice.

ing and listening to the language, to its basic sounds and rhythms, will be an enormous aid to acquiring mastery.

## PRESENT INDICATIVE ACTIVE OF *Laudō* & *Moneō*

### Singular

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>laudō, I praise, am praising, do praise</i>                | <i>moneō, I advise, etc.</i>             |
| 2. <i>laudās, you praise, are praising, do praise</i>            | <i>moneēs, you advise, etc.</i>          |
| 3. <i>laudat, he (she, it) praises, is praising, does praise</i> | <i>monet, he (she, it) advises, etc.</i> |

### Plural

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>laudāmus, we praise, are praising, do praise</i>  | <i>monēmus, we advise, etc.</i>  |
| 2. <i>laudātis, you praise, are praising, do praise</i> | <i>monētis, you advise, etc.</i> |
| 3. <i>laudant, they praise, are praising, do praise</i> | <i>mōnent, they advise, etc.</i> |

Note that Latin has only these present active indicative forms, and so simple or progressive or emphatic translations are possible, depending on context; e.g., *mē laudant, they praise me* or *they are praising me* or *they do praise me*.

Remember that the accent marks are provided in the paradigm only for convenience; they follow the strict rules for accentuation explained in the Introduction, and need not be included in your own conjugation of Latin verbs (unless you are asked to do so by your instructor).

The macrons, however, must be included, and the vowel sounds they indicate must be taken into account in memorizing the paradigm and in conjugating other first and second conjugation verbs. Notice that the stem vowel has no macron in certain forms (e.g., *moneō, laudant*); you should learn the following rule, which will make it easier to account for macrons that seem to disappear and reappear arbitrarily:

Vowels that are normally long are usually shortened when they occur immediately before another vowel (hence *moneō* instead of *\*monēō*<sup>2</sup>), before *-m*, *-r*, or *-t* at the end of a word (hence *laudat*, not *\*laudāt*), or before *nt* or *nd* in any position (hence *laudant*).

In the case of first conjugation, or *-ā-* verbs (by contrast with the second conjugation, *-ē-* verbs), the stem vowel is not merely shortened but disappears entirely in the first person singular, through contraction with the final *-ō* (hence *laudō*, not *\*laudāō*).

<sup>2</sup> The asterisk here and elsewhere in this book indicates a form not actually occurring in classical Latin.



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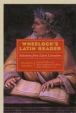
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