

PARTICIPLES

A participle is a form of a verb used as an adjective. The participle may be active or passive, but will always agree in number, case, and gender with the noun that it modifies.

The active participle has a present tense meaning:

Active: The man saw the *running* horse / *Vir equum currentem vidit.*

The passive participle has a past tense meaning:

Passive: The man saw the *captured* slave / *Vir virum captum vidit.*

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

Because the participle retains verbal force, it may govern a direct object:

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

Formation:

1) **Present Active Participles** form off the first principle part of the verb, adding -ns to the stem. They decline as a third declension adjective of one termination. They are all i-stems.

<i>amans - loving</i>	<i>amantes / amantia</i>	<i>dicens - saying</i>	<i>dicentes / dicentia</i>
<i>amantis</i>	<i>amantium</i>	<i>dicentis</i>	<i>dicentium</i>
<i>amanti</i>	<i>amantibus</i>	<i>dicentibus</i>	<i>dicentibus</i>
<i>amantem / amans</i>	<i>amantes / amantia</i>	<i>dicentem / dicens</i>	<i>dicentes / dicentia</i>
<i>amanteli</i>	<i>amantibus</i>	<i>dicentibus</i>	<i>dicentibus</i>

In the case of -io verbs of the Third Conjugation, -ie- will appear: *capiens, capientis*

2) **Perfect Passive Participles** are the fourth principal part of the verb. As passives, they cannot take a direct object. There are regularly found in the ablative absolute construction. They decline as first and second declension adjectives.

visus, visa, visus - having been seen. *dictus, dicta, dictum* - having been said

The Perfect Passive Participle is used regularly in the Ablative Absolute construction:

His verbis dictis, vir discessit. With these words having been said, the man left.

3) **Future Active Participles** (the Future Active Periphrastic), are formed from the fourth principal part of the verb, adding -turus, -tura, -turum to the base. They are used to express action in the near future.

amaturus, -a, -um: about to love, going to love. They are often found in future indirect speech constructions.

Donum tibi daturus sum - I am going to give you gifts.

4) **Future Passive Participles** (the Future Passive Periphrastic) are verbal adjectives of the 1st and 2nd declension. They express both futurity and passivity: *e.g.*, *amandus, a, um* - having to be loved).

They can be used as pure adjectives with the notion of obligation, necessity, or propriety:

Marcus, vir laudandus, advenit. Marcus, a praiseworthy man, has arrived.

Or they can be used as the verb in complete and independent sentences:

Carthago delenda est: Carthage is having to be destroyed (must be destroyed).

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. The proper understanding of Latin participles must always bear in the mind their tense and voice.

Present Active Participle: contemporaneous action, active voice.

Femina clamans eum vidit. The shouting woman saw him.

Perfect Passive Participle: prior action, passive voice.

Femina territa clamavit. The woman, having been frightened, shouted.

Future Active Participle: subsequent action, active voice.

Femina dictura virum vidit. The woman, about to speak, saw her husband.

Future Passive Participle (gerundive): subsequent action, passive voice.

Libros legendos in mensa posuit.

He placed books (having) to 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. But in Latin they only exist for deponent verbs (which have passive forms but only active meaning. Take care to translate the perfect participle of a deponent verb actively (*locutus*, having said; *hortatus*, having encouraged; *secutus*, having followed, *etc.*).

The lack of a perfect active participle for regular verbs in Latin 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.