

Grammatica: Unit 7

Verbs

The Subjunctive Mood

Latin has three moods: **indicative**, **imperative**, and **subjunctive**. As you learned in [Unit 1](#), the indicative expresses a fact and the imperative expresses a direct command.

In this Unit we will learn about the **subjunctive**. The subjunctive expresses a hypothetical, ideal, or conditional verbal idea. There are four tenses of the subjunctive, two of which are presented in this Unit (present and imperfect) and two in [Unit 8](#) (perfect and pluperfect).

The **translation of the subjunctive** depends upon the particular construction in which it is used. In this Unit, you will learn about two subjunctive constructions, Purpose Clauses and Result Clauses.

Present Subjunctive

The present subjunctive is formed by inserting the letter “-a-” between the present stem and the personal ending, except in the first conjugation for which “-e-” is used since “-a-” is already used for the indicative forms. The short “-e-” of the 3rd conjugation is absorbed by the “-a-”. Here is a chart depicting the vowel changes for each conjugation:

	<u>Indicative Vowel</u>	<u>Subjunctive Vowel</u>
First Conjugation	-a- e.g. amat	-e- e.g. amet
Second Conjugation	-ē- e.g. habet	-ea- e.g. habeat
Third Conjugation -o	-e- e.g. ducit	-a- e.g. ducat

Third Conjugation - io	-i- e.g. cupit	-ia- e.g. cupiat
Fourth Conjugation	-i- e.g. audit	-ia- e.g. audiat

As part of the **present system** (present, imperfect, and future tenses of the indicative; present and imperfect of the subjunctive) of Latin verbs, the difference in the formation of present **active** and **passive** subjunctives is a matter of personal endings. Once again, the tail tells the tale! Good news! You will use the personal endings you have already learned for the indicative:

PERSONAL ENDINGS	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	-m	-mus	-r	-mur
2nd person	-s	-tis	-ris*	-mini
3rd person	-t	-nt	-tur	-ntur

*the alternate ending is “-re,” which can be used in any of the tenses in the present system, including the present and imperfect subjunctive.

First Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	amem	amemus	amer	amemur
2nd person	ames	ametis	ameris	amemini
3rd person	amet	ament	ametur	amentur

Second Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	habeam	habeamus	habear	habeamur
2nd person	habeas	habeatis	habearis	habeamini
3rd person	habeat	habeant	habeatur	habeantur

Third Conjugation -o

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	ducam*	ducamus	ducar*	ducamur
2nd person	ducas	ducatis	ducaris	ducamini
3rd person	ducat	ducant	ducatur	ducantur

*note the overlap with the 1st person singular future indicative. The future indicative and present subjunctive originally represented the same concepts.

Third Conjugation -io

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	cupiam*	cupiamus	cupiar*	cupiamur
2nd person	cupias	cupiatis	cupiaris	cupiamini
3rd person	cupiat	cupiant	cupiatur	cupiantur

*note the overlap with the 1st person singular future indicative. The future indicative and present subjunctive originally represented the same concepts.

Fourth Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	audiam*	audiamus	audiar*	audiamur
2nd person	audias	audiatis	audiaris	audiamini
3rd person	audiat	audiant	audiatur	audiantur

*note the overlap with the 1st person singular future indicative. The future indicative and present subjunctive originally represented the same concepts.

The irregular verb *sum, esse, fui, futurum* has the same stem (*si-*) throughout, unlike its indicative forms.

Sum and Possum

	sum, esse, fui, futurum		possum, posse, potui	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	sim	simus	possim	possimus
2nd person	sis	sitis	possis	possitis
3rd person	sit	sint	possit	possint

Imperfect Subjunctive

The **imperfect active subjunctive** and imperfect passive subjunctive are formed by adding active or passive personal endings to the present active infinitive (the second principal part). Good news! You will use the personal endings you have already learned for the indicative:

PERSONAL ENDINGS	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	-m	-mus	-r	-mur
2nd person	-s	-tis	-ris [*]	-mini
3rd person	-t	-nt	-tur	-ntur

*the alternate ending is “-re,” which can be used in any of the tenses in the present system, including the present and imperfect subjunctive.

First Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	amarem	amare mus	amarer	amare mur
2nd person	amares	amare tis	amarer is	amare mini
3rd person	amaret	amare nt	amare tur	amare ntur

Second Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	haberem	haber emus	haberer	haber emur
2nd person	haberes	haber etis	haberer is	haber emini
3rd person	haberet	haber ent	haber etur	haber entur

Third Conjugation -o

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	ducerem	duceremus	ducerer	duceremur
2nd person	duceres	duceretis	ducereris	duceremini
3rd person	duceret	ducerent	duceretur	ducerentur

Third Conjugation -io

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	caperem	caperemus	caperer	caperemur
2nd person	caperes	caperetis	capereris	caperemini
3rd person	caperet	caperent	caperetur	caperentur

Fourth Conjugation

	ACTIVE		PASSIVE	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	audirem	audiremus	audirer	audiremur
2nd person	audires	audiretis	audireris	audiremini
3rd person	audiret	audirent	audiretur	audirentur

Sum and Possum

	sum		possum	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	essem	essemus	possem	possemus
2nd person	esses	essetis	posses	possetis
3rd person	esset	essent	posset	possent

Deponent Verbs

Deponent verbs do not have an active infinitive form, but the imperfect subjunctive is formed as though there were an active infinitive form. So, the forms look identical to the passive imperfect subjunctive of regular verbs.

First Conjugation

	DEPONENT	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	hortarer	hortaremur
2nd person	hortareris	hortaremini
3rd person	hortaretur	hortarentur

Second Conjugation

	DEPONENT	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	faterer	fateremur
2nd person	fatereris	fateremini
3rd person	fateretur	faterentur

Third Conjugation -o

	DEPONENT	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	sequerer	sequeremur
2nd person	sequereris	sequeremini
3rd person	sequeretur	sequerentur

Third Conjugation -io

	DEPONENT	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	egrederer	egrederemur
2nd person	egredereris	egrederemini
3rd person	egrederetur	egrederentur

Fourth Conjugation

	DEPONENT	
	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st person	experirer	experiremur
2nd person	experireris	experiremini
3rd person	experiretur	experirentur

Uses of the Subjunctive

Purpose Clauses

A **Purpose Clause** (also known as a Final Clause) is a subordinate clause that expresses the purpose of the main verb. In English, purpose constructions can be expressed either by a clause or, sometimes, by an infinitive. Take a look at the following examples:

We study Latin **in order that we understand all languages better.**

We study Latin **in order to understand all languages better.**

We study Latin **to understand all languages better.**

We studied Latin **in order that we not lack knowledge.**

While English uses a dependent clause or an infinitive to express purpose, a Latin Purpose Clause is introduced by *ut/uti*, or *ne* if the clause expresses a negative purpose.

Linguae latinae studemus ut omnes linguas melius intellegamus.

We study Latin **in order that we understand all languages better.**

Linguae latinae studuimus ne scientiā careremus.

We studied Latin **in order that we not lack knowledge.**

Unlike English, Latin does not use an infinitive to express purpose.

A **Relative Clause of Purpose** can also be used to express the purpose of the main verb. The verb is in the subjunctive mood:

Linguae latinae studemus quā omnes linguas melius intellegamus.

We study Latin **by which we might understand all languages better.**

This will be covered in greater detail in [Unit 10](#).

Tense of Subjunctive in a Purpose Clause

The tense of the subjunctive depends upon the main verb. If it is present or future, the subjunctive is in the present tense. (This is also the case when the Perfect tense is used as a [Present Perfect](#).) If the main verb is past, the subjunctive is imperfect.

*Linguae latinae studemus **ut omnes linguas melius intellegamus.***

We study Latin **in order that we understand all languages better.**

*Linguae latinae studebamus **ut omnes linguas melius intellegeremus.***

We were studying Latin **in order that we understood all languages better.**

*Linguae latinae studebimus **ne scientiā careamus.***

We will study Latin **in order that we not lack knowledge.**

*Linguae latinae studuimus **ne scientiā careremus.***

We studied Latin **in order that we not lack knowledge.**

Result Clauses

A [Result Clause](#) (also known as a Consecutive Clause) is a subordinate clause that expresses the result of the main verb. The main clause typically has a “flag” word that signals an upcoming result clause, e.g. “such,” “so great,” “of such a quality.”

They study Latin **so well that they easily learn many languages.**

They were studying Latin **so poorly that they did not easily learn many languages.**

Result clause “flag” words in Latin include *ita, tam, sic, tantus, talis, adeo*.

In Latin, a result clause is introduced by *ut/uti*, or *ut/uti* plus a negative word if the clause expresses a negative result.

*Linguae latinae **tam bene student ut multas linguas facile discant.***

They study Latin **so well that they easily learn many languages.**

*Linguae latinae **tam male studebant ut multas linguas non facile discerent.***

They were studying Latin **so poorly that they did not easily learn many languages.**

*Note that a negative result uses *ut non*, *ut nemo*, etc. A result clause never uses *ne*.

Tense of Subjunctive in a Result Clause

The tense of the subjunctive depends upon the main verb. If it is present or future, the subjunctive is in the present tense. If the main verb is past, the subjunctive is imperfect. See the examples above.

Uses of the Ablative

Ablative Absolute

The **ablative absolute** is a special use of the Latin participle. A noun or pronoun not otherwise occurring in the sentence may be put in the ablative case, modified by a participle, to express circumstances under which the main verb takes place. This phrase is “absolute” (*solutum* - having been loosened) in the sense that it is only “loosely” connected with the rest of the sentence.

Eo dicto, Perpetua patrem reliquit.

With that said, Perpetua left her father behind.

Duce proficiscente, miles ad urbem accessit.

The leader setting forth, the soldier approached the city.

Some ablative absolutes lack the participle when the appropriate form does not exist, for example the present participle of the verb “to be.” When this occurs, you should add the implied verb in your English translation:

Hilariano duce, spem habebamus.

Hilarianus being leader, we had hope.

Ablative absolutes may be translated literally, as above, but often that leads to rather awkward English. The examples above might be better rendered:

Eo dicto, Perpetua patrem reliquit.

Since that had been said, Perpetua left her father behind.

After that was said, Perpetua left her father behind.

Duce proficiscente, miles ad urbem accessit.

As the leader set out, the soldier approached the city.

Tense of Participle in an Ablative Absolute

As we saw in [Unit 6](#) for the tenses of infinitives, the tense of a participle is relative to that of the main verb, and the ablative absolute is no exception to this rule. For example,

- a present participle expresses action that occurs at the *same time* as that of the main verb

Scalā de caelō descendenti, Perpetua sē hostem suum victuram esse scivit.

When the ladder descended from heaven, Perpetua knew that she was going to conquer her enemy.

- a perfect participle expresses action that occurs *before* that of the main verb

Visione ā Perpetuā visā, alīi laetī factī sunt.

Since Perpetua had seen a vision, the others became happy

- a future participle expresses action that occurs *after* that of the main verb

Ratione omnēs metūs victurā, Epicurus ē finibus mundi rediit.

With reason about to conquer all fears, Epicurus returned from the ends of the world.

Review

In addition to ablative absolutes, the uses of ablative that we have encountered so far in this text are:

Ablative of Time When or Within Which. This is used to express a specific time for an event or action or the time within which the action or event occurs. In English, you may add the prepositions “in,” “on,” “at,” or “within” ([Unit 3](#)).

Eā nocte omnia tacuerunt.

On that night everything was silent.

Ablative of Place Where. The ablative is used to indicate place where. Typically the phrase is introduced by a preposition (*in, sub*) ([Unit 3](#))

Vivit in urbe.

She lives **in the city**.

Ablative of Place From Which. The ablative is used to indicate place from which with a verb of motion. Typically the phrase is introduced by a preposition (*ab, ex, or de*), except when referring to cities, towns, and certain nouns ([Unit 3](#)).

Puer a monte domum currit.

The boy runs home **from the mountain**

Carthagine Apollonius profectus est.

Apollonius departed **from Carthage**.

Ablative of Personal Agent. The person/people performing the action expressed by a passive verb is rendered in Latin by “*a*” or “*ab*” with the person/people in the ablative case ([Unit 3](#)).

Carmen a puellā canitur.

The song is sung **by the girl**.

Ablative of Means or Instrument. If the performer of the action of the verb is not expressed by the subject, it is put into the ablative case with no preposition ([Unit 3](#)).

Scala oculis Perpetuae visa est.

The ladder was seen **with the eyes** of Perpetua.

Ablative of Manner. This indicates the manner in which an action takes place, usually with the preposition *cum*, but if the noun is modified by an adjective the preposition may be omitted ([Unit 3](#)).

Hilarius magnā cum virtute civēs ducēbat.

Hilarius was leading the citizens **with great virtue**.

Ablative of Comparison. A noun modified by a comparative adjective can be followed with the ablative form of the noun to which it is compared ([Unit 6](#)).

Alī putant Epicurum fuisse maiorem deīs.

Some believe that Epicurus was greater than the **gods**.