

# Grammatica: Unit 6

## Verbs

### The Complete Latin Infinitive

**The infinitive** is a form that expresses the concept of a verb. You already know the present active infinitive and the present infinitive of deponent verbs. You learn them as the second principal part of each new verb. Infinitives also occur in future and perfect tenses, and both active and passive voices.

Here is an overview of the infinitive in English before we learn the Latin forms.

	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	to love	to be loved
Perfect	to have loved	to have been loved
Future	to be about to love	to be about to be loved

Latin has infinitive forms in three tenses: present, perfect, and future. The present and perfect infinitive forms, both active and passive, are used commonly. The future active infinitive is common in Latin, although rare in English. The future passive infinitive is rarely used in Latin.

## Present Infinitives

### Active forms:

The present active infinitive is simply the second principal part of active verbs. We translate the active infinitive forms with “to” and the concept of the verb. E.g. *amare* - “to love.”

### Passive forms:

To make the present passive infinitive, take the present active infinitive, remove the final *-e* and add *-i*, except in the third and third *-io* conjugation where the entire *-ere* infinitive ending is dropped before adding *-i*.

*amare* - *e* + *i* = *amari*  
*scribere* - *ere* + *i* = *scribi*

We translate present passive infinitives as “to be X-ed.”

The chart below shows how to form the present infinitive in all conjugations with a translation for each form.

<u>Conjugation</u>	<u>Active Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Passive Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>
1st conj.	amare	to love	amari	to be loved
2nd conj.	habēre	to have	habēri	to be had
3rd conj.	scribere	to write	scribi	to be written
3rd -io conj.	cupere	to want	cupi	to be wanted
4th conj.	audire	to hear	audiri	to be heard

## Perfect Infinitives

### Active forms:

All perfect active forms are made from the third principal part (the first person singular perfect active indicative). To form the perfect active **infinitive**, remove the *-i* from the third principal part and add *-isse*.

$$amav + -isse = amavisse$$

The perfect active infinitive is translated as “to **have** X-ed,” because, in English, we often use the helping verb “has/have” to indicate the perfect tense.

The chart below shows how to form the perfect active infinitive in all conjugations with a translation for each form.

<u>Conjugation</u>	<u>Third prin. part</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Perfect Act. Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>
1st conj.	amavi	I have loved	amavisse	to have loved
2nd conj.	habui	I have had	habuisse	to have had
3rd conj.	scripsi	I have written	scripsisse	to have written
3rd -io conj.	cupivi	I have wanted	cupivisse	to have wanted
4th conj.	audivi	I have heard	audivisse	to have heard

### Passive forms:

All perfect passive forms are made from the fourth principal part. The infinitive is the perfect passive participle and *esse* (the infinitive of “to be”). The two words remain separate. The participle will still reflect the gender and number of the subject. (More on this in Indirect Statements below.)

*amatum esse* - to have been loved

The perfect passive infinitive is translated as “to have been X-ed.”

The chart below shows how to form the perfect passive infinitive in all conjugations with a translation for each form.

<u>Conjugation</u>	<u>Perfect Passive Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>
1st conj.	<i>amatum esse</i>	to have been loved
2nd conj.	<i>habutum esse</i>	to have been had
3rd conj.	<i>scriptum esse</i>	to have been written
3rd -io conj.	<i>cupitum esse</i>	to have been wanted
4th conj.	<i>auditum esse</i>	to have been heard

## Future Infinitives

The future active infinitive is used commonly in Latin in Indirect Statement, a construction for reporting speech which you will learn shortly. The future passive infinitive is found only rarely.

### Active forms:

All future active infinitives are made from the future active participle and *esse* (the infinitive of “to be”). The two words remain separate.

*amaturum esse*

The participle will still reflect the gender and number of the subject. The future active infinitive is translated as “to be about to X.”

The chart below shows how to form the future active infinitive in all conjugations with a translation for each form.

<u>Conjugation</u>	<u>Future Active Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>
1st conj.	amatum esse	to be about to love
2nd conj.	habiturum esse	to be about to have
3rd conj.	scripturum esse	to be about to write
3rd -io conj.	cupiturum esse	to be about to want
4th conj.	auditurum esse	to be about to hear

Passive forms:

All future passive infinitive forms are unusual and rare. They are made from the perfect passive participle in the neuter singular and *iri* (the present passive infinitive of *eo* “to go”). The two words remain separate. The participle never changes its ending.

*amatum iri* - to be about to be loved

The future passive infinitive is translated as “to be about to be X-ed.”

The chart below shows how to form the future passive infinitive in all conjugations with a translation for each form.

<u>Conjugation</u>	<u>Future Passive Infinitive</u>	<u>Translation</u>
1st conj.	amatum iri	to be about to be loved
2nd conj.	habiturum iri	to be about to be had
3rd conj.	scripturum iri	to be about to be written
3rd -io conj.	cupiturum iri	to be about to be wanted
4th conj.	auditurum iri	to be about to be heard

## Overview of All Six Infinitives for Each Conjugation

### First Conjugation

<u>Tense</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	<i>amare</i> to love	<i>amari</i> to be loved
Perfect	<i>amavisse</i> to have loved	<i>amatum esse</i> to have been loved
Future	<i>amaturum esse</i> to be about to love	<i>amatum iri</i> to be about to be loved

### Second Conjugation

<u>Tense</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	<i>habere</i> to have	<i>haberi</i> to be had
Perfect	<i>habuisse</i> to have had	<i>habitum esse</i> to have been had
Future	<i>habiturum esse</i> to be about to have	<i>habitum iri</i> to be about to be had

### Third Conjugation

<u>Tense</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	<i>scribere</i> to write	<i>scribi</i> to be written
Perfect	<i>scripsisse</i> to have written	<i>scriptum esse</i> to have been written
Future	<i>scripturum esse</i> to be about to write	<i>scriptum iri</i> to be about to be written

## Third -io Conjugation

<u>Tense</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	<i>cupere</i> to want	<i>cupi</i> to be wanted
Perfect	<i>cupivisse</i> to have wanted	<i>cupitum esse</i> to have been wanted
Future	<i>cupiturum esse</i> to be about to want	<i>cupitum iri</i> to be about to be wanted

## Fourth Conjugation

<u>Tense</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>
Present	<i>audire</i> to hear	<i>audiri</i> to be heard
Perfect	<i>audivisse</i> to have heard	<i>auditum esse</i> to have been heard
Future	<i>auditurum esse</i> to be about to hear	<i>auditum iri</i> to be about to be heard

## Indirect Statement

### What is an Indirect Statement?

In [Unit 1](#), you learned how to use infinitives as Complementary Infinitives, to complete the meaning of other verbs. Now you will learn how to use infinitives in an important Latin construction: Indirect Statement.

Indirect statements are used to report statements that are said, thought, or felt. Let's begin by considering some examples in English.

Direct statement: Aelia says, "The penalties are bad."  
Indirect statement: Aelia says that the penalties are bad.

Direct statement: Hilarianus thought, "Aelia loves philosophy."  
Indirect statement: Hilarianus thought that Aelia loved philosophy.

In English, there is not much change between a direct and indirect statement. In Latin, there will be a complete change in construction.

Sentences that use indirect statement in Latin will have main verbs of sensation, or “verbs of the head.” [These can include verbs of thinking, hearing, seeing, feeling, knowing, saying, denying, and many others.](#) The content of what is thought, heard, seen, or felt must be reported in Latin with an accusative-infinitive construction.

Let’s return to our examples from above.

Aelia says, “The penalties are bad.”

Direct statement: *Aelia dicit, “Poenae sunt malae.”*

The main clause “Aelia says” does not change. To report what Aelia says indirectly, rather than quote her directly, we use an indirect statement. In Latin, this idea is written so that the subject of the indirect statement is in the accusative and the verb is in the infinitive. Note in the Latin below that *malas*, as the predicate adjective referring back to *poenas*, is in the accusative case.

Aelia says that the penalties are bad.

Indirect statement: *Aelia dicit poenas esse malas.*

In the second example from above, the main verb is in the imperfect tense.

Hilarianus thought that Aelia loved philosophy.

The main clause is “Hilarianus thought.” What he knew is reported as an indirect statement with a subject accusative and an infinitive verb. Here is the sentence in Latin:

*Hilarianus cogitabat Aeliam philosophiam amare.*

Notice that Latin does not use a word for “that,” a word which often appears in English indirect statements.

## Tenses of Infinitive and Relative Time

In indirect statements, the tense of the reported action [shows time relative to the main verb](#).

Let’s return to the example above:

*Hilarianus cogitabat Aeliam philosophiam amare.*

Hilarianus thought that Aelia loved philosophy.

The indirect statement uses a present infinitive to show that the action of the main verb and the action of indirect statement are both happening at the same time.

Here is a summary of how each infinitive tense denotes relative time in indirect statement:

Present Infinitive: action occurs *at the same time* as the action of the main verb

Perfect Infinitive: action occurs prior to, or *before* the action of the main verb

Future Infinitive: action occurs following, or *after* the action of the main verb

Here are our examples once again. Notice how changing the verb tense in the indirect statement changes the meaning.

Present Infinitive: *Aelia cogitat poenas esse malas.*

Aelia thinks that the penalties are bad. (at the same time)

Perfect Infinitive: *Aelia cogitat poenas fuisse malas.*

Aelia thinks that the penalties were bad. (previously)

Future Infinitive: *Aelia cogitat poenas futuras esse malas.*

Aelia thinks that the penalties are going to be bad. (in the future)

In our second set of examples, the main verb is imperfect. Notice how our translation of the infinitive shifts depending on the tense of the main verb.

Present Infinitive: *Hilarianus cogitabat Aeliam philosophiam amare.*

Hilarianus thought Aelia loved philosophy. (same time)

Perfect Infinitive: *Hilarianus cogitabat Aeliam philosophiam amavisse.*

Hilarianus thought Aelia had loved philosophy. (previously)

Future Infinitive: *Hilarianus cogitabat Aeliam philosophiam amaturam esse.*

Hilarianus thought Aelia was going to love philosophy. (in the future)

Notice the future active infinitive in the last example: *amaturam esse*. It has the ending *-am* to agree with the accusative subject *Aeliam*. When using perfect passive and future active infinitives, which are made up of a participle and *esse*, you must make the participle agree in gender and number with the accusative subject.

Look at these examples.

Aelia believes that Apollonius will read her letter.

*Aelia credit Apollonium litteram suam lecturum esse.*

In this example the future active infinitive, *lecturum esse*, agrees with *Apollonium*, the masculine singular accusative subject of the indirect statement.

Hilarianus thinks that the temples were revered by the citizens.  
*Hilarianus putat templa a civibus culta esse.*

In this example the perfect passive infinitive, *culta esse*, agrees with *templa*, the neuter plural accusative subject of the indirect statement.

## Nouns

### Fourth Declension

Nouns of the [Fourth Declension](#) appear in all three genders. Masculine nouns are the most common in the fourth declension, but there are some feminine fourth declension nouns. The most common is *manus, manūs* (f.) - hand. The noun *domus* uses both 2nd and 4th declension endings and it is also feminine. There are relatively few neuter fourth declension nouns. The dominant letter in all genders is *-u*.

Like the third declension, masculine and feminine fourth declension nouns share the same endings, while the neuter forms have slight differences. You can identify a fourth declension noun by the genitive ending *-ūs*.

The fourth declension masculine and feminine genders use the following endings:

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nominative	<b>-us</b>	<b>-ūs</b>
Genitive	<b>-ūs</b>	<b>-uum</b>
Dative	<b>-ui</b>	<b>-ibus</b>
Accusative	<b>-um</b>	<b>-ūs</b>
Ablative	<b>-ū</b>	<b>-ibus</b>

To decline a **masculine or feminine** noun of the fourth declension, take the stem (found by dropping the ending from the genitive form) and add the endings above to it. Here is the declension pattern for *metus, metūs* (m.) - fear, dread.

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nominative	metus	metūs
Genitive	metūs	metuum
Dative	metui	metibus
Accusative	metum	metūs
Ablative	metū	metibus

Fourth declension nouns that are **Neuter** have slightly different endings. There are only four regularly occurring fourth declension neuter nouns. The most common are *cornu, cornūs* (n.) - horn, and *genu, genūs* (n.) - knee. The genitive singular ends in *-ūs*. Notice that all the other singular forms end in *-u*.

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nominative	-ū	-ua
Genitive	-ūs	-uum
Dative	-ū	-ibus
Accusative	-ū	-ua
Ablative	-ū	-ibus

To decline a neuter noun in the fourth declension, take the stem (found by dropping the ending from the genitive form) and add the endings above to it:

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nominative	genū	genua
Genitive	genūs	genuum

Dative	genū	genibus
Accusative	genū	genua
Ablative	genū	genibus

Notice that the singular forms have the same ending (-ū), except for the genitive. All neuter nouns, regardless of declension, follow the “neuter rule,” meaning that they will have the same ending in the nominative and accusative singular, and in the nominative and accusative plural.

## Fifth Declension

Nouns of the **Fifth Declension** are feminine. There are two exceptions to this rule: 1) *dies, diei* (m./f.) - “day” is usually masculine, but can be feminine in the singular when referring to time in general. The compound *meridies, meridiē* (m.) - “midday” is masculine. You can identify a fifth declension noun by the nominative ending in -es and genitive in -ei.

The fifth declension nouns use the following endings:

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ēs	-ēs
Genitive	-eī	-ērum
Dative	-eī	-ēbus
Accusative	-em	-ēs
Ablative	-ē	-ēbus

When declining a noun of the fifth declension, we take the stem (found by dropping the ending -ei from the genitive form) and add the endings above to it. Here is the declension pattern for *res, rei* (f.) - a thing, matter.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	rēs	rēs
Genitive	rei	rērum
Dative	rei	rēbus
Accusative	rem	rēs
Ablative	rē	rēbus

# Adjectives

## Degrees of Adjectives

In [Unit 2](#), you learned how Latin adjectives modify nouns and how to decline the two types of adjectives, first and second declension adjectives and third declension adjectives. At that time, you learned the **positive degree** of the adjectives which attributes a simple quality to a noun, for example, *vera amica*, or “true friend.”

Latin adjectives, like English adjectives, have three degrees that allow you to express the intensity of an adjective and to make comparisons between nouns.

**Positive**: Attributes a simple quality to a noun, e.g. “true friend.”

**Comparative**: Attributes a quality to a noun that makes a comparison and shows that the noun has *more* of a quality than one other noun (either explicit or implied), e.g. “truer friend,” “more true friend,” or “rather true friend.”

**Superlative**: Attributes a quality to a noun that shows the noun has the *most* of this quality, e.g. “truest friend” or “most true friend.”

Like positive degree adjectives, comparative and superlative degree adjectives agree with the nouns they modify in gender, number, and case. As you have already learned how to make positive degree adjectives in Unit 2, we will focus here on the forms of the comparative and superlative degrees.

## Forming Comparative Adjectives

**All comparative adjectives use third declension endings**, no matter what their original declension pattern. There is one set of endings for masculine and feminine adjectives and another set of endings for neuter forms.

To make the masculine and feminine comparative forms of any regular adjective, use the adjective stem and add the endings below:

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nom.	<b>-ior</b>	<b>-iores</b>
Gen.	<b>-ioris</b>	<b>-iorum</b>
Dat.	<b>-iorī</b>	<b>-ioribus</b>
Acc.	<b>-iorem</b>	<b>-iores</b>
Abl.	<b>-iore</b>	<b>-ioribus</b>

Notice how the letters *-ior-* are part of every form. Like the ending *-er* in comparative forms in English, these letters will help you recognize comparative forms. Comparative adjectives are **not** *i-*stems and use *-e* for the ablative singular form.

To make the neuter comparative forms of any regular adjective, use the adjective stem and add the endings below:

<u>Case</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Nom.	<b>-ius</b>	<b>-iora</b>
Gen.	<b>-ioris</b>	<b>-iorum</b>
Dat.	<b>-iorī</b>	<b>-ioribus</b>
Acc.	<b>-ius</b>	<b>-iora</b>
Abl.	<b>-iore</b>	<b>-ioribus</b>

Notice how the endings only differ from masculine and feminine forms in the nominative and accusative singular, and in the nominative and accusative plural. All neuter adjectives, regardless of declension, follow the “neuter rule,” meaning that they will have the same ending in the nominative and accusative singular, and in the nominative and accusative plural.

Here are the full declensions of two adjectives that you already know from [Unit 3](#) and [Unit 4](#) in the comparative degree: *laetus*, *-a*, *-um* is a first and second declension adjective; *gravis*, *grave* is a third declension adjective. Both will use third declension endings in the comparative degree.

Comparative forms of *laetus, -a, -um*

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Masculine/Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	laetior	laetius
Gen	laetioris	laetioris
Dat	laetiorī	laetiorī
Acc	laetiorem	laetius
Abl	laetiore	laetiore
<u>Plural</u>	<u>Masculine/Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	laetiores	laetiora
Gen	laetiorum	laetiorum
Dat	laetioribus	laetioribus
Acc	laetiores	laetiora
Abl	laetioribus	laetioribus

Comparative forms of *gravis, grave*

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Masculine/Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	gravior	gravius
Gen	gravioris	gravioris
Dat	graviorī	graviorī
Acc	graviorem	gravius
Abl	graviore	graviore
<u>Plural</u>	<u>Masculine/Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	graviores	graviora
Gen	graviorum	graviorum

Dat	gravioribus	gravioribus
Acc	graviores	graviora
Abl	gravioribus	gravioribus

## Making Comparisons with Comparative Adjectives

Comparative adjectives can be used two ways:

1. to modify a noun in an implied comparison.

*Aelia laetior puella est.*

“Aelia is a happier girl.” or “Aelia is a rather happy girl” (understood: than other girls)

*Hilarianus graviores res gerebat.*

“Hilarianus was managing more serious matters.” Or, “Hilarianus was managing rather serious matters.” (understood: than his other concerns)

2. to make direct comparisons between two nouns in respect to the same quality.

*Aelia is a happier girl than her friend.*

*Hilarianus was managing matters more serious than gladiatorial shows.*

There are two ways to make direct comparisons in Latin:

1. Modify the primary noun with a comparative adjective, add *quam* (“than”) and the noun to which it is compared in the same case as the primary noun. Here are our examples from above in Latin:

*Aelia laetior quam amica est.*

“Aelia is happier than her friend.”

(*Aelia* and *amica* are both in the nominative.)

*Hilarianus res graviores quam munera gerebat.*

“Hilarianus was managing matters more serious than gladiatorial shows.”

(*Res* and *munera* are both in the accusative.)

2. Modify the primary noun with a comparative adjective and follow it with the ablative form of the noun to which it is compared. Do not use *quam*. Here are our examples from above in Latin:

*Aelia laetior amicā est.*

“Aelia is a happier girl than her friend.”

(*Aelia* is in the nominative but *amicā* is in the ablative.)

*Hilarianus res graviores muneribus gerebat.*

“Hilarianus was managing matters more serious than gladiatorial shows.”

(*Res* is in the accusative but *muneribus* is in the ablative.)

You will see both ways of making comparisons when you read Latin. The second way, using the ablative of comparison without *quam*, can be harder to recognize.

## Forming Superlative Adjectives

**All superlative adjectives use first and second declension endings**, no matter their original declension pattern. There are separate endings for the masculine, feminine, and neuter forms.

To make the superlative forms of any regular adjective, use the adjective stem, add *-issim-* and first and second declension adjective endings:

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	<b>-issimus</b>	<b>-issima</b>	<b>-issimum</b>
Gen	<b>-issimi</b>	<b>-issimae</b>	<b>-issimi</b>
Dat	<b>-issimo</b>	<b>-issimae</b>	<b>-issimo</b>
Acc	<b>-issimum</b>	<b>-issimam</b>	<b>-issimum</b>
Abl	<b>-issimo</b>	<b>-issimā</b>	<b>-issimo</b>
<u>Plural</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	<b>-issimi</b>	<b>-issimae</b>	<b>-issima</b>
Gen	<b>-issimorum</b>	<b>-issimarum</b>	<b>-issimorum</b>
Dat	<b>-issimis</b>	<b>-issimis</b>	<b>-issimis</b>
Acc	<b>-issimos</b>	<b>-issimas</b>	<b>-issima</b>

Abl	<b>-issimis</b>	<b>-issimis</b>	<b>-issimis</b>
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Notice how the letters *-issim-* are part of every form. These letters will help you recognize superlative forms, like the ending “-est” in many superlative adjective forms in English.

Here are the full declensions of two adjectives that you already know from [Unit 3](#) and [Unit 4](#) in the superlative degree: *laetus*, *-a*, *-um* is a first and second declension adjective; *gravis*, *grave* is a third declension adjective. Both will use first and second endings in the superlative.

#### Superlatives forms of *laetus*, *-a*, *-um*

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	<b>laetissimus</b>	<b>laetissima</b>	<b>laetissimum</b>
Gen	<b>laetissimi</b>	<b>laetissimae</b>	<b>laetissimi</b>
Dat	<b>laetissimo</b>	<b>laetissimae</b>	<b>laetissimo</b>
Acc	<b>laetissimum</b>	<b>laetissimam</b>	<b>laetissimum</b>
Abl	<b>laetissimo</b>	<b>laetissimā</b>	<b>laetissimo</b>
<u>Plural</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	<b>laetissimi</b>	<b>laetissimae</b>	<b>laetissima</b>
Gen	<b>laetissimorum</b>	<b>laetissimarum</b>	<b>laetissimorum</b>
Dat	<b>laetissimis</b>	<b>laetissimis</b>	<b>laetissimis</b>
Acc	<b>laetissimos</b>	<b>laetissimas</b>	<b>laetissima</b>
Abl	<b>laetissimis</b>	<b>laetissimis</b>	<b>laetissimis</b>

#### Superlative forms of *gravis*, *grave*

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
Nom	<b>gravissimus</b>	<b>gravissima</b>	<b>gravissimum</b>
Gen	<b>gravissimi</b>	<b>gravissimae</b>	<b>gravissimi</b>
Dat	<b>gravissimo</b>	<b>gravissimae</b>	<b>gravissimo</b>
Acc	<b>gravissimum</b>	<b>gravissimam</b>	<b>gravissimum</b>
Abl	<b>gravissimo</b>	<b>gravissimā</b>	<b>gravissimo</b>

Plural	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom	gravissimi	gravissimae	gravissima
Gen	gravissimorum	gravissimarum	gravissimorum
Dat	gravissimis	gravissimis	gravissimis
Acc	gravissimos	gravissimas	gravissima
Abl	gravissimis	gravissimis	gravissimis

**Two exceptions to the rules for forming superlative adjectives: *-limus* and *-rimus* adjectives**

1. If the adjective stem ends in *-l*, you add *-lim-* and first and second declension endings. Look at the superlative form of a new vocabulary word *facilis*, *-e* “easy” (stem = *facil-*).

*facillimus, -a, -um* “easiest”

2. If the masculine nominative singular ends in *-er*, you add *-rim-* and first and second declension endings. Look at the superlative forms of *miser*, *miser*, *miserum* “miserable” (stem = *miser-*)

*miserrimus, -a, -um* “most miserable”

## Two Ways to Use the Superlative Adjective

The superlative adjective is most often used modifying a noun to say that the noun has the greatest quality of an adjective, for example:

*Aelia laetissima est.*  
Aelia is the happiest.

*Hilarianus res gravissimas gerebat.*  
Hilarianus was managing the most serious matters.

You can also use the superlative adjective to express that something has the highest possible degree of an adjective. To do this, add “*quam*” to your sentence before the superlative adjective.

*Aelia quam laetissima est.*

Aelia is as happy as possible.

*Hilarianus res quam gravissimas gerebat.*

Hilarianus was managing matters as serious as possible.

## Irregular Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Just as in English, some of the most common adjectives in Latin have irregular comparative and superlative forms. Often they change stems in the comparative and superlative degrees just like “bad,” “worse,” and “worst” in English. Because these stem changes cannot be predicted from the stem of the positive degree, it is important to learn these comparative and superlative forms. They have been included as vocabulary in this unit.

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Comparative</b>	<b>Superlative</b>
malus, -a, -um (bad)	peior, peius (worse)	pessimus, -a, -um (worst)
bonus, -a, -um (good)	melior, melius (better)	optimus, -a, -um (best)
magnus, -a, -um (big)	maior, maius (bigger)	maximus, -a, -um (biggest, greatest)
multus, -a, -um (much, many)	plus (gen. pluris)* (more)	plurimus, -a, -um (most, very many)
parvus, -a, -um (small)	minor, minus (smaller)	minimus, -a, -um (smallest, least)
superus, -a, -um (above, upper)	superior, superius (higher, upper)	supremus, -a, -um or summus, -a, -um (highest, uppermost)

\**plus* (gen. *pluris*) is neuter singular and **functions as a noun**. There are no singular masculine and feminine forms. For example, to say “more water” in Latin, you would say *plus aquae* or “more of water.” There are plural forms for all three genders.

## Comparison of Adjectives Lacking a Positive Form

Some adjectives that have comparative and superlative forms lack a positive degree form, Usually they are derived from prepositions. The more common forms have been included in your [Verba](#).

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Comparative</b>	<b>Superlative</b>
citra (this side of)	citerior, citerius (earlier, nearer)	citimus, -a, -um (nearest)

de (down)	deterior, deterius (inferior)	deterrimus, -a, -um (worst)
intra (within)	interior, interius (inner)	intimus, -a, -um (innermost)
prae (before, in front)	prior, prius (earlier, preceding)	primus, -a, -um (first)
prope (near, recent)	propior, propius (nearer, more recent)	proximus, -a, -um (nearest, most recent)
ultra (beyond)	ulterior, ulterius (farther, rather extreme)	ultimus, -a, -um (farthest, extreme)

## Adverbs

### Changing Adjectives to Adverbs (Review)

In [Unit 4](#), you learned how to change adjectives into adverbs. In order to form an adverb from a 1st and 2nd declension adjective, you add the ending *-e*. In order to form an adverb from a 3rd declension adjective, you add the ending *-iter*.

#### 1st and 2nd Declension Adjective

<i>certus, -a, -um</i>	<i>certe</i>
certain	certainly

#### 3rd Declension Adjective

<i>dulcis, -e</i>	<i>dulciter</i>
sweet	sweetly

### Comparative and Superlative Adverbs

Just like adjectives, adverbs also have degrees, which means there are comparative and superlative adverbs. Also like adjectives, in the comparative and superlative degrees the endings stay the same across declensions.

The ending for the comparative adverb is *-ius* (this is the same ending for the comparative adjective in the neuter, singular, nominative/accusative). The comparative adverb in English is translated as “more \_\_\_\_\_ly.”

<i>certus, -a, -um</i>	<i>certe</i>	<i>certius</i>
certain	certainly	more certainly
<i>dulcis, -e</i>	<i>dulciter</i>	<i>dulcius</i>
sweet	sweetly	more sweetly

The ending for the superlative adverb is *-issime*, which includes *-issim-* typically used with superlative adjectives. The superlative adverb in English is translated as “most \_\_\_\_\_ly.”

<i>certus, -a, -um</i>	<i>certe</i>	<i>certius</i>	<i>certissime</i>
certain	certainly	more certainly	most certainly
<i>dulcis, -e</i>	<i>dulciter</i>	<i>dulcius</i>	<i>dulcissime</i>
sweet	sweetly	more sweetly	most sweetly
<i>similis, -e</i>	<i>similiter</i>	<i>similius</i>	<i>simillime</i>
similar	similarly	more similarly	most similarly
<i>miser, -a, -um</i>	<i>misere</i>	<i>miserius</i>	<i>miserrime</i>
wretched	wretchedly	more wretchedly	most wretchedly

These endings can also be used for adverbs that were not derived from adjectives.

<i>diu</i>	<i>diutius</i>	<i>diutissime</i>
for a long time	for a longer time	for the longest time
<i>saepe</i>	<i>saepius</i>	<i>saeplissime</i>
often	more often	most often