

# Grammar: Participles

## *Overview*

A participle is a verbal adjective. This means that it takes its meaning from a verb root, but its endings from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd declensions, like adjectives. These are words like 'swimming' and 'swum' in English.

Latin has three participles:

i.	Present active:	portans	carrying
ii.	Perfect passive:	portatus	having been carried
iii.	Future active:	portaturus	about to carry

## *Usage*

As adjectives, participles can modify nouns.

I see the man swimming

which in Latin would be:

**video hominem natantem**

They can also be used to make more complicated sentences.

I see the man who is carrying the amphora

which can also be expressed as:

I see the man carrying the amphora

which in Latin would be:

**video hominem amphoram portantem**

They can even replace a noun entirely,

I see the person swimming

which in Latin would be:

**video natantem**

With perfect passive participles and future active participles you can also tell the gender of the word, and thus supply a missing noun as necessary.

## *The perfect passive participle*

These are translated as 'having been ...'. They agree with their noun in case, gender and number. They take 1st and 2nd declension endings.

	<b>Singular</b>			<b>Plural</b>		
	<b>m</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>m</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>n</b>
Nom	portatus	portata	portatum	portati	portatae	portata
Acc	portatum	portatam	portatam	portatos	portatas	portata
Gen	portati	portatae	portati	portatorum	portatarum	portatorum
Dat	portato	portatae	portato	portatis	portatis	portatis
Abl	portato	portate	portato	portatis	portatis	portatis

There is no perfect active participle in Latin, so you cannot say 'having carried'. You would have to use a subordinate clause, or use the perfect passive participle of a deponent verb, instead.

## *The present active participle*

Present participles take 3rd declension endings. They agree with their noun in case and number. There are no different gender endings.

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
Nominative	portans	portantes
Accusative	portantem	portantes
Genitive	portantis	portantium
Dative	portanti	portantibus
Ablative	portante / i	portantibus

## *The future active participle*

These are translated as 'about to ...'. They take 1st and 2nd declension endings. They agree with their noun in case, gender and number.

	<b>Singular</b>			<b>Plural</b>		
	<b>m</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>m</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>n</b>
Nom	portaturus	portatura	portaturum	portaturi	portaturae	portatura
Acc	portaturum	portaturam	portaturum	portaturos	portaturas	portatura
Gen	portaturi	portaturae	portaturi	portaturorum	portaturarum	portaturorum
Dat	portaturo	portaturae	portaturo	portaturis	portaturis	portaturis
Abl	portaturo	portaturā	portaturo	portaturis	portaturis	portaturis

## *Examples drawn from the exercises*

Locate participle in each sentence and identify its number, gender and case. With what noun (if any) does it agree?

The number after each question indicates the exercise from which it has been drawn, so that you can look at the example in context.

1. mediaeque minans inlabitur urbi ... *Exercise 1*
2. excitusque hilari die nuptialia concinens ... *Exercise 4*
3. hic unus dolor est ex omnibus acer amanti, speranti subito si qua venire negat. *Exercise 6*
4. tenens in gremio 'mea' inquit ... *Exercise 8*
5. Murus instructus laterculo coctili, bitumine interlito ... *Exercise 10*

## *Examples drawn from Cicero*

1. erat enim in illo viro comitate condita gravitas, nec senectus mores mutaverat. *De Senectute 10*
2. 'Certe,' inquit ridens ... *De Senectute 11*
3. Olympiae per stadium ingressus esse Milo dicitur, *De Senectute 32*
4. Hae sunt exercitationes ingeni, haec curricula mentis, in his desudans atque elaborans corporis vires non magno opere desidero. *De Senectute 38*

5.C. Duellium M. f., qui Poenos classe primus devicerat, redeuntem a cena  
senem saepe videbam puer; *De Senectute 44*