

THE PRESENT SYSTEM, ACTIVE AND PASSIVE, INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE

The present system is slightly different in each conjugation. When memorizing a verb it is imperative that you memorize its conjugation (indicated by its principle parts); without knowing this all-important detail you cannot correctly identify tense or mood. For instance, **optet** (from **opto**, **optare**, first conjugation) is a *present subjunctive*; **habet** (from **habeo**, **habere**, second conjugation) is a *present indicative*; **dicet** (from **dico**, **dicere**, third conjugation) is a *future indicative*. Though all three forms share **-e-**, it signals a different tense or mood in each conjugation. The following charts present a synopsis of the present system, illustrating only the third person singular.

IMPERFECT

The sign for the imperfect indicative is **-ba-** in *all* conjugations: imperfect active indicative is **-ba-** + the active endings **-m**, **-s**, **-t**, **-mus**, **-tis**, **-nt**; imperfect passive indicative is **-ba-** + the passive endings **-r**, **-ris (-re)**, **-tur**, **-mur**, **-mini**, **-ntur**. The imperfect subjunctive is formed from the present infinitive + active and passive endings. So:

IMPERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE	IMPERFECT ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE	IMPERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE	IMPERFECT PASSIVE SUBJUNCTIVE
optabat	optaret	optabatur	optaretur
implebat	impleret	implebatur	impleretur
ducebat	duceret	ducebatur	duceretur
incipiebat	inciperet	incipiebatur	inciperetur
sentiebat	sentiret	sentiebatur	sentiretur

PRESENT

In the indicative, the present stem vowels are as follows: first conjugation, **-a-**; second conjugation, **-e-**; third and fourth conjugations, **-i-** (**-u-** in third person plural). In the subjunctive, the stem vowels are as follows: first conjugation, **-e-**; second conjugation, **-ea-**; third conjugation, **-a-**; fourth conjugation, **-ia-**. (**We steal a fiat.**) Active and passive are indicated with the usual characteristic endings. *Note one irregularity*: short **-i-** becomes a short **-e-** before the passive second person singular ending **-ris (-re)**. Hence second person singular, present passive indicative of **duco** (third conjugation) is **duceris** or **ducere** (and *not* **duciris** or **ducire**); the same occurs with **incipio** (**inciperis**, *not* **incipiris**). This does not occur in the fourth conjugation because the **-i-** is long (**sentīris** or **sentīre**). So:

PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE	PRESENT ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE	PRESENT PASSIVE INDICATIVE	PRESENT PASSIVE SUBJUNCTIVE
optat	optet	optatur	optetur
implet	impleat	impletur	impleatur
ducit	ducat	ducitur	ducatur
incipit	incipiat	incipitur	incipiatur
sentit	sentiat	sentitur	sentiat

FUTURE

In the first and second conjugations, the future tense is signaled by **-bi-** (first person singular **-bo-**, third person plural **-bu-**) . Again, a short **-i-** changes to short **-e** before the passive second person singular ending **-ris** (**-re**). Hence, the second person singular, future passive indicative is **-beris** or **-bere** (and *not* **-biris** or **-bire**). In the third and fourth conjugations, the future tense is signaled by a change in the stem vowel: the original stem vowel is replaced with **-ē-** (with **-a-** in the first person singular; i-stems retain the **-i-** throughout). *There is no future subjunctive*. Active and passive are indicated by the usual characteristic endings. So:

FUTURE ACTIVE INDICATIVE

optabit
implebit
ducet
incipiet
sentiet

No
Future
Subjunctive

FUTURE PASSIVE INDICATIVE

optabitur
implebitur
ducetur
incipietur
sentietur

No
Future
Subjunctive