

Imperatives

Another Dimension of Latin Verbs

Instructions: Read this exercise to learn about Latin imperatives.

You've seen a bit of how Latin writers and story tellers make use of verbs to tell what someone does or is doing in the present, or what someone is or is being. You have seen how verbs can express indirect exhortation. Verbs can of course also tell what someone did or was in the past, or will do or will be in the future.

You won't learn all the dimensions of Latin verbs here, but you will soon learn enough about them so that you can understand written text, even understanding its inner mechanics, and you can write your own stories in Latin telling about things in the past and future tenses.

Your next step is relatively easy. Below are some sentences with verbs in a form called the 'imperative,' which is used for giving direct commands or requests.

1st Conjugation

Cordelia, ora pro me.

Cordelia, pray for me.

Amici mei, orate pro me.

My friends, pray for me.

2nd Conjugation

Cordelia, habe fiduciam in me.

Cordelia, have confidence in me.

Amici mei, pacem habete inter vos.

My friends, have peace among you.

3rd Conjugation

Cordelia, in me credi.

Cordelia, believe in me.

Amici mei, in me credite.

My friends, believe in me.

3rd Conjugation (but with stems ending in c)

Cordelia, hoc fac.

Cordelia, do this.

Amici mei, hoc facite.

My friends, do this.

4th Conjugation

Cordelia, audi vocem meom.

Cordelia, hear my voice.

Amici mei, audite vocem meom.

My friends, hear my voice.

In the chart below you can see the simple pattern of endings that form the imperative. Memorize this chart.

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1st Conjugation	-a	-ate
2nd Conjugation	-ē	-ēte
3rd Conjugation	-e	-ite
(but with stems ending in c)	-∅*	-ite
4th Conjugation	-i	-ite

*The sign -∅ stands for a "zero" ending, that is, no ending at all.

Below is another chart.

IMPERATIVE FORMS

	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>	
1st Conjugation	<i>Canta!</i>	Sing!	<i>Cantate!</i>	Sing!
2nd Conjugation	<i>Dele!</i>	Delete!	<i>Delete!</i>	Delete!
3rd Conjugation (a)	<i>Vende!</i>	Sell!	<i>Vendite!</i>	Sell!
3rd Conjugation (b)	<i>Capite!</i>	Take!	<i>Capite!</i>	Take!
3rd Conjugation (c)	<i>Hoc fac!*</i>	Do this!	<i>Hoc facite!</i>	Do this!
	<i>NOT *Hoc face!</i>			
4th Conjugation	<i>Veni!</i>	Come!	<i>Venite!</i>	Come!

*Verbs such as *facere* 'make, do,' *dicere* 'say,' *ducere* 'lead,' whose one-syllable root ends in the consonant -c, have the shorter imperative form in the singular.

NEGATIVE IMPERATIVES

A direct negative command may be formed with *nolite* or *noli* plus a verb in its infinitive form:

Plural

Nolite altercare 'Don't quarrel'
Nolite timere 'Don't fear'
Nolite id facere 'Don't do it'

Singular

Noli cadere 'Don't fall'
Noli me tangere! 'Don't touch me!'
Noli me vexare! 'Don't bother me!'