Verbs: The Imperfect Tense II

You have now met all the endings of the imperfect tense:

Singular	1	-bam	Plural	1	-bāmus
	2	-bās		2	-bātis
	3	-bat		3	-bant

Note that the vowel is short before final *-m*, *-t*, and *-nt*.

These are the endings of the imperfect tense of *all* Latin verbs (except **esse** and its compounds, of which **posse** is one; see page 98).

Compare the following chart showing verbs in the imperfect tense with the chart showing present tense forms on page 73.

		1st Conjugation	2nd Conjugation	3rd Conjugation		4th Conjugation
Infinitive		par**á**re	hab**é**re	mítt**ere**	iác**ere** (-iō)	aud**í**re
Singular	1	pará**bam**	habé**bam**	mitté**bam**	iacié**bam**	audié**bam**
	2	pará**bās**	habé**bās**	mitté**bās**	iacié**bās**	audié**bās**
	3	pará**bat**	habé**bat**	mitté**bat**	iacié**bat**	audié**bat**
Plural	1	parē**bámus**	habē**bámus**	mittē**bámus**	iaciē**bámus**	audiē**bámus**
	2	parā**bátis**	habē**bátis**	mittē**bátis**	iaciē**bátis**	audiē**bátis**
	3	pará**bant**	habé**bant**	mitté**bant**	iacié**bant**	audié**bant**

Be sure to learn these forms thoroughly.

Note that the personal endings are the same as those given for the present tense on page 54, except that in this tense the 1st person singular ends in *-m* (compare **sum**).

The imperfect tense shows action *in the past* that was

a. going on for a time:

Ego et Mārcus **spectābāmus** cisium. (14:10)
Marcus and I were watching the carriage.
Cornēlia dormīre **volēbat**. (13:8)
Cornelia wanted to sleep.

b. repeated:

Mārcus **vexābat** Cornēliam. (13:7–8)
Marcus kept annoying Cornelia.

c. habitual or customary:

Dāvus in Britanniā **habitābat**.
Davus used to live in Britain.

d. beginning to happen:

> Equōs ad raedam nostram **dēvertēbat.** (14:11)
> He **began to turn** the horses **aside** in the direction of our carriage.

Let the context guide you to an appropriate translation.

EXERCISE 14b

Read aloud, paying special attention to the tenses of verbs. Then translate:

1. Tabellārium līberī spectābant.
2. Cornēlius, ubi epistulās scrībēbat, uxōrem et līberōs vidēre nōlēbat.
3. Gaudēbat Cornēlius quod omnēs incolumēs erant.
4. Cīvēs tabellāriōs ex urbe saepe mittunt.
5. Syrus tabellārium vītāre poterat quod equōs tenēbat.
6. Dormiēbāsne, Syre? Minimē vērō, domine! Ego placidē per viam ībam.
7. Quid vōs faciēbātis, puerī? Nōs omnēs raedās spectābāmus, pater.
8. Appropinquābatne cisium placidē? Minimē! Celerrimē per viam ībat.
9. Cūr mē semper vexās, Mārce? Dormīre volō.

EXERCISE 14c

Select, read aloud, and translate:

1. Tabellārius equōs ferōciter _____.   incitābam/incitābat/incitābant
2. Pater et māter ē raedā _____.   dēscendēbās/dēscendēbat/dēscendēbant
3. Cūr tū celeriter iter _____?   faciēbās/faciēbant/faciēbāmus
4. Nōs omnēs in raedā _____.   dormiēbam/dormiēbātis/dormiēbāmus
5. Ego et Mārcus saepe in agrīs _____.   currēbāmus/currēbant/currēbat

EXERCISE 14d

Supply the appropriate imperfect tense endings, read aloud, and translate:

1. Tabellārius multās epistulās ab urbe portā_____.
2. Cornēlia, quae dēfessa era_____, in cubiculō dormiē_____.
3. Nōs raedās magnā arte agē_____.
4. Sub arboribus vīneārum et in olīvētīs vōs Getam petē_____.
5. Latrā_____ canēs; per agrōs currē_____; Getam invenīre nōn potera_____.
6. "Servumne, Dāve, baculō verberā_____?"
7. Aliī servī in vīllā, aliī in vīneīs labōrā_____.
8. Sextus identidem clāmā_____, "Ecce! Aurīga!"

olīvētum, *olive grove*