

Pali Verbs

Companion to Introduction to Pali, by A.K. Warder (2010 edition)

PRESENT (i.e. "he goes")

1st Conjugation (I) - most common type; the majority of verbs

bhū = "to be"; p. 10

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	bhavati	bhavanti (they are)
2nd Person	bhavasi	bhavatha
1st Person	bhavāmi	bhavāma

3rd Conjugation (III)

See p. 62

Form with **verb + '-ya'**

man = "to think"

'man + ya --> 'maññī', then conjugate the same as 1st Conjugation.

5th Conjugation (V)

jānāti = "to know"; p. 104

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	jānāti	jānanti (they know)
2nd Person	jānāsi	jānātha
1st Person	jānāmi	jānāma

6th Conjugation (VI)

kar = "to do, make, work"; p. 36

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	karoti	karonti (they do, make, work)
2nd Person	karosi	karotha
1st Person	karomi	karoma

7th Conjugation (VII) - 2nd most common verb type

dis = "to teach"; p. 21

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	deseti	desenti (they teach)
2nd Person	desesi	desetha
1st Person	desemi	desema

Irregular Present

as = "to be"; p. 31. Often at beginning of sentence; assertion.

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	atthi	santi (there are)
2nd Person	asi	attha
1st Person	asmi/amhi	amha/amhā

hū = "to be"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	hoti	honti
2nd Person	hosi	hotha
1st Person	homi	homa

PRESENT PARTICIPLE (i.e. "going")

pp. 46-47

Used like adjectives or qualifying nouns, with which they agree in gender, case and number. Add '-nt' or '-māna' to end of stem to form.

gam = "to go"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	gaccham/gacchanto	gacchantā (going)
2nd Person	gacchantam	gacchante
1st Person	gacchatā	gacchantehi

PAST/AORIST (i.e. "he went")

1st Form

p. 24

kam + upa + sam → upasaṃkama = "to approach"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	upasaṃkama	upasaṃkamaṃsu (they approached)
2nd Person	upasaṃkama	upasaṃkamittha
1st Person	upasaṃkamaṃ	upasaṃkamimhā, or '-imha'

2nd Form

p. 25

dis = "to teach"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	desesi	desesuṃ (they taught)
2nd Person	desesi	desittha
1st Person	desesiṃ	desimha

3rd Form: verbs ending in -ā

kar = "to do/make"; p. 25

Add 'a-' as a prefix, then inflect as below:

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	akāsi	akamaṃsu (they did/made)
2nd Person	akāsi	akattha
1st Person	akāsiṃ	akamha/akamhā

Other (irregular) Past/Aorist

hū = "to be"; p. 26

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	ahosi	ahesuṃ (they were/there was)
2nd Person	ahosi	ahuvattha
1st Person	ahosiṃ	ahumha

vac = "to say"; p. 32

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	avoca	avocuṃ (they said)
2nd Person	avoca/avaca	avocuttha/avacuttha
1st Person	avocaṃ	avocumha/avocumhā

gam = "to go"; p. 64

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	agamāsi	agamamaṃsu (they went)
2nd Person	agamā	agamittha
1st Person	agamāsiṃ	agamamhā

(d)dis = "to see"; p. 64

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	addasā	addasaṃsu (they saw)
2nd Person	addasā	addasatha
1st Person	addasaṃ	addasāma

(s)su = "to hear"; p. 70

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	assosi	assosuṃ (they heard)
2nd Person	assosi	assuttha
1st Person	assosiṃ	assumha

PAST PARTICIPLE (i.e. "gone")

pp. 39-41

Usually formed from the root, with the suffix '-ta' or '-ita'.

Some past participles are used as nouns, and agree with nouns in gender, case and number.

Normally passive (except in the case of intransitive verbs), usually indicates the present perfect. Example: we have approached *mayam upasaṃkantā*

Examples: kar → kata; gam → gata; (t)ṭhā → ṭhita; dis → desita; bhās → bhāsita; pucch → puṭṭha; vac → vutta; su → suta

p. 64

Some verbs form past participles with the suffix '-na'

Examples: dā → dinna, nisīd → nisinna

IMPERATIVE (i.e. "go!")

pp. 34-35

A command, prohibition, invitation or wish, often found at the beginning of a sentence.

bhū = "to be"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	bhavatu	bhavantu
2nd Person	bhava/bhavāhi	bhavatha
1st Person	bhavāmi	bhavāma

Verbs of the 7th conjugation use the '-hi' inflection.

Examples:

jīv → **jīvāhi** ("live!", "make your living!")

i → ehi ("go!", "you must go!")

vad → vadehi ("say!", "speak!")

hū → 2nd person sing.: hohi ("be!"); 3rd person sing.: hotu

as → 3rd person sing.: atthu (be!)

PASSIVE (i.e. "he is gone")

pp. 51-52

Present Indicative Passive is most common type. Add '-ya' or '-iya' to end of word. Inflections are the same as present tense. The stem shows if a verb is present or passive. Example: present stem of verb (p)pa-hā is 'paha', whereas passive stem is 'pahiya'.

paha = "it is given up";

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	pahiyati	pahiyanti (they are given up)
2nd Person	pahiyasi	pahiyatha
1st Person	pahiyāmi	pahiyāma

Other Passive Forms

Aorist Passive: add aorist inflections to passive stem. Example: han → haññati → **haññimsu** ("they were killed"). p. 52.

Present Participle Passive: add māna to passive stem. Example: kar → kariyati → **kariyamāna** ("being done"). p. 52.

Future passive: add '-iss' or '-ess' to passive stem, and inflect like the future tense. Example: (p)pa-hā → pahīya → **pahīyissati** (=it will be given up). pp. 54-55.

GERUND (i.e. "having gone")

pp. 48-49

Expresses an action preceding the action of the main verb of a sentence.

Usually formed from the same stem as the past participle by adding '-tva', '-itva' or '-ya'

Examples:

upasaṃkam → **upasaṃkamitvā**

ādā → **ādāya**

(s)su → **sutvā**

FUTURE (i.e. "he will go")

pp. 54-55

Expresses the probable, hypothetical future, certainty/determination

Add '-iss' to the stem. For the 7th conjugation, add '-ess' to the stem.

Then, conjugate (inflect) the same as present tense.

gam = "to go"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	gamissati	gamissanti
2nd Person	gamissasi	gamissatha
1st Person	gamissāmi	gamissāma

CAUSATIVE (i.e. "causes to go")

pp. 78-82

"causes to be", "develops"

bhū = "to be"

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	bhāveti	bhāventi
2nd Person	bhāvesi	bhāvetha
1st Person	bhāvemi	bhāvema

In some cases, add '-(ā)p' after root, then conjugate as above.

Example: kar → kārāp → **kārāpeti** ("it/he/she causes to do/make")

OPTATIVE (i.e. "he should, would, or may go")

pp. 86-88

Expresses "potential", used for any hypothetical action.

Formed from the present stem of all conjugations, as below, with stem ending in '-e':

bhaveyya = "should, would, could be"; p. 86

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	bhaveyya	bhaveyyuṃ (they should be)
2nd Person	bhaveyyāsi	bhaveyyātha
1st Person	bhaveyyaṃ	bhaveyyāma

The following are irregular:

as (1st, more common, form) = "to be"; p. 86

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	assa	assu (they should be)
2nd Person	assa	assatha
1st Person	assaṃ	assāma

as (2nd, "poetic", form) = "to be"; p. 87

	Singular	Plural
3rd Person	siyā	siyaṃsu (they should be)
2nd Person	siyā	-----
1st Person	siyaṃ	-----