

## Lesson 1

### The अ Conjugation of Verbs: Unaccented *a*

As is true for most IndoEuropean languages, Sanskrit verbs come on three or more levels.

1. First, there is the root. You'll often find it indicated with a "square root" sign. E.g., √पत्, "pat, to fly." This is the form that Perry mentions first in the vocabulary lists, usually without the root sign. I will follow suit unless we're deliberately referring to the root in its function as root. Sometimes you will see a number in front of a root, such as 1विद् and 2विद् (vid). In such cases, it appears that two verbs with different meanings have the same root. Here, for example विद् is the root for both "to know" and "to find."
2. The stem is based on the root, but it usually manifests some changes. Here we see the difference between most IE languages, which inflect words, and other—non-IE—languages, say Hungarian or Tlingit, where the root and stem would be pretty much identical, and where all the accommodations are done by adding prefixes and suffixes right onto the root ("agglutination" instead of "inflection").
3. In many verbs of the अ-conjugation ("a") the only change consists of adding an अ to the root, so the stem that grows out of पत् (pat, "to fly") is पत (pata). In the next lesson, we will address verbs where some changes are required moving from the root to the stem and on to the inflected forms. (I'm using pat just to provide an alternative to Perry's vad.)

Person	Singular	Dual	Plural
1 <sup>st</sup>	पतामि patāmi	पतावस् patāvas	पतामस् patāmas
2 <sup>nd</sup>	पतसि patasi	पतथस् patathas	पतथ patatha
3 <sup>rd</sup>	पतति patati	पततस् patatas	पतन्ति patanti

These are the inflected forms, in which the proper ending for each person and number has been added to the stem. They are the forms to learn for the verbs of different conjugations. However, when they are used in actual sentences, chances are that they don't quite appear that way. There are still a few other matters we must consider. We cannot simply take these forms and insert them before we have made some adjustments to suit various circumstances.

1. Four of these forms end in in the consonant स्. The “s” sound is the last one pronounced in these words. The implied “a” is suppressed, and so we slipped a **virama** into the very last spot. For example, the first person plural, “पतामस्, we fly,” is not pronounced “patāmasa,” but “patāmas.”

These same four words and many of their cousins and relatives, as well as ones ending in “r,” take on a different look when they are actually used in a sentence. The “s+virama” construction (स्) is dropped, and the *visarga* appears. The visarga is an aspiration, similar to an “h”, written with a sign that looks like a colon. Thus, to choose one example, the 1<sup>st</sup> person dual is पतावस् in the listing,

but will frequently show up as पतावः pronounced “patāvaha,” most likely at the end of actual sentences.

2. If the form does end with the **implied a** after the last consonants, you leave it as it is and “pronounce the “a.” The 2<sup>nd</sup> person plural, पतथ, pronounced “pa-ta-tha” serves as an example.
3. If the form ends in a stated vowel, you write the word as it is and include the vowel with your pronunciation. Examples in our table above are all three persons singular and the third person plural, all of which end in an i: पतामि । पतसि । पतति । पतन्ति.

Please do Exercise I on page 26 of Perry, *Sanskrit Primer*.

### Sample Answers for Exercise I.

1) Today we live.

5) When you run, then you fall.

10) Again we two fall.

15) अद्य त्यजन्ति

20) यजामः

25) शंसथः

That's enough for now. Please [send me](#) your translations. I look forward to seeing your work.