

Verbs: The Present System The Ten Classes (गणः)

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Sanskrit verbs are divided into a number of categories , all of which have been mentioned in an earlier file (“The Sanskrit Verb: An Overview”). These include person, number, voice, tense, and mode or mood. There are four tense systems: present, perfect, aorist, and future. The Present System consists of the:

- a. present indicative (लट्)
- b. imperfect (लृट्)
- c. imperative (लोट्)
- d. optative (विधि लिट्)
- e. present participle (*vartamāne kṛdanta-*)

The ten classes (*ganāḥ*) of verbs are typically described by giving the first root of the series of roots that belong to that class. Thus the first class is the *bhū gaṇaḥ* or “bhū class.” The names of the other classes (from 2 to 10) are the *ad gaṇaḥ*, *hu gaṇaḥ*, *div gaṇaḥ*, *su gaṇaḥ*, *tud gaṇaḥ*, *rudh gaṇaḥ*, *tan gaṇaḥ*, *krī gaṇaḥ*, and *cur gaṇaḥ*. These 10 fall under two categories: the *a gaṇāḥ* and the *non-a gaṇāḥ*.

a gaṇāḥ

The *a* classes (*bhū*, *div*, *tud*, *cur* or *first*, *fourth*, *sixth*, *tenth* classes) are characterized by adding a final *-a* to the stem. Once the stem on which the *-a* is formed, it will not change. Some irregular forms do occur, however.

Class	Class sign	Root	Guṇa	laṭ	
1. bhū	<i>a</i>	ghuṣ	ghoṣa	ghoṣati	‘(S)he is crying’
4. div	<i>ya</i>	kṣudh	∅	kṣudhyati	‘(S)he is angry’

6. tud	á *	viś	ø	viśati	‘(S)he enters’
10. cur	áya *	cur	coraya	corayati	‘(S)he is stealing’

* The *tud* and *cur* class signs are accented in Vedic Sanskrit. This is not the case in Classical Sanskrit, however.

non-a gaṇāḥ

The *non-a* classes (*ad*, *hu*, *su*, *rudh*, *tan*, and *krī* or, respectively, the *second*, *third*, *fifth*, *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth* classes) do not attach a final *-a* to the stem. Changes within the root or class sign do occur, however. The changes are variable in the stem, which may be *strong* or *weak*. Strong stems occur, most importantly, in the singular number, all persons (*laṭ* and *lañ*, *parasmaipada*).

Class	Class sign	Root	Stem	laṭ	
2. ad	ø	dviṣ ‘hate’	dveṣ- (strong) dviṣ- (weak)	dveṣṭi/ dviṣanti	‘he hates’ ‘they hate’
3. hu	reduplication of root	bhṛ ‘bear’	bibhar- (strong) bibhṛ- (weak)	bibharṣi bibhrati	‘you bear’ ‘they bear’
5. su	<i>nu</i>	su	suno- (strong) sunu- (weak)	sunoṣi sunomi	“You press out” “I press out”
7. rudh	na/n	yuj	yunaj- (strong) yuñj- (weak)	yunajmi yuñjmaḥ	“I join” “We join
8. tan	u	tan	tano- tanu-	tanomi tanvanti	“I stretch” “They stretch”
9. krī	nā/nī	krī	krīṇā- krīṇi-	krīṇāsi krīṇītha	“You buy” “You buy” (pl)