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HUNGARIAN LESSON

Hungarian Grammar 3 · Chapter 10 · Putting It Together

🎯 One Verb, Every Form — Minden egy helyen

Nine chapters have given you the parts: the verb map, the indefinite and definite past, the irregular pasts, the future and helper verbs, the conditional, the imperative, the subjunctive and the compound tenses. This chapter puts them side by side, gives you a short procedure for choosing a form, and then tests it with an error-spotting clinic.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Every Hungarian verb form answers four questions: **when or what mood** (marker), **who** (person ending), **what kind of object** (indefinite or definite set), and **which stem** (regular, or one of the changing ones). Answer them in that order and the form follows.

1. The whole map: one verb, every form

Here is *olvas* (read) with its definite partner. Each row is one idea; the Chapter column says where to look.

IDEA	INDEFINITE (I)	DEFINITE (I ... IT)	CHAPTER
Present	olvasok	olvasom	1
Past	olvastam	olvastam	2, 3
Future	fogok olvasni	fogom olvasni	5
Conditional	olvasnék	olvasnám	6
Imperative (you)	olvass	olvasd	7
Subjunctive	hogy olvassak	hogy olvassam	8
May, can (-hat)	olvashatok	olvashatom	8

IDEA	INDEFINITE (I)	DEFINITE (I ... IT)	CHAPTER
Past conditional	**olvastam volna**	**olvastam volna**	6, 9
Must (personal infinitive)	**olvasnom kell**	**olvasnom kell**	5
Should have	**olvasnom kellett volna**	**olvasnom kellett volna**	9

Where both columns show the same form, the object makes no difference: the 1sg past *-tam* serves both sets, and *volna* and the personal infinitive never change. In other persons the past does differ (*olvastál* against *olvastad*).

2. A short decision procedure

1. **Pick the time or mood.** Did it happen (past), will it (future), would it (conditional), is it an order (imperative), is it wanted or required of another person (subjunctive), is it permitted (*-hat/-het*)?
2. **Find the stem.** Is the verb regular, an *-ik* verb, a sibilant stem, or one of the irregulars (*megy, jön, van, tesz, vesz, visz, hisz, eszik, iszik*)? Check the irregular lists in Chapters 4 and 7.
3. **Choose the harmony.** Back (*-nak, -tam, -hat*), front (*-nek, -tem, -het*) or rounded (*-ött, -öm*), following Hungarian Grammar 1.
4. **Decide indefinite or definite.** Is there a definite object (*a könyvet, ezt, őt*, a possessed noun, a proper name)? If yes, use the definite set. Remember the special *-lak/-lek* for "I ... you" (Chapter 3).
5. **Add the person ending** from the paradigm you chose, and place the extra words: *volna* after the past form, *ne* before an imperative, *hogy* before the subjunctive, *fog* before an infinitive.

3. The person carries the form: one word, one place

STRUCTURE	WHERE THE PERSON SHOWS	EXAMPLE
Past + volna	on the past verb	**Olvastunk volna.**
fog + infinitive	on *fog*	**Fogunk olvasni.**

STRUCTURE	WHERE THE PERSON SHOWS	EXAMPLE
Helper + infinitive	on the helper	**Akarunk olvasni.**
kell + personal infinitive	on the infinitive	**Olvasnunk kell.**
hogy + subjunctive	on the subjunctive verb	**Azt akarja, hogy olvassunk.**

4. Error-spotting clinic

Each sentence below has one mistake. Find it, then click.

1. Fogok olvasom a könyvet. (I will read the book.)

▼ Show answer

Fogom olvasni a könyvet. The helper takes the definite ending and the main verb is an infinitive (Chapter 5).

2. Nem menj olvasd! (Don't read it!)

▼ Show answer

Ne olvasd! Commands are negated with *ne* and one verb (Chapter 7).

3. Azt akarom, hogy jössz. (I want you to come.)

▼ Show answer

Azt akarom, hogy gyere. After *akar* with a different subject the verb is the subjunctive (Chapter 8).

4. Mennem kellünk. (We have to go.)

▼ Show answer

Mennünk kell. *Kell* never changes; the person goes on the infinitive (Chapter 5).

5. Ha tudok, mennék. (If I could, I'd go.)

▼ Show answer

Ha tudnék, mennék. An unreal condition takes the conditional in both clauses (Chapter 6).

6. Mentem volnam. (I would have gone.)

▼ Show answer

Mentem volna. *Volna* is fixed (Chapters 6 and 9).

7. Mehetnek vagyok? (May I go?)

▼ Show answer

Mehetek? The *-het* verb conjugates by itself (Chapter 8).

8. Olvasottam a levelet. (I read the letter.)

▼ Show answer

Olvastam a levelet. The stem *olvas-* takes plain *-t-* in the past, not *-ott-* (Chapter 2).

9. Voltam mentem. (I went.)

▼ Show answer

Mentem. The past of *megy* is *ment-* (Chapter 4); *voltam* would be a separate verb.

10. Szeretek egy kávét. (I would like a coffee.)

▼ Show answer

Szeretnék egy kávét. *Szeretek* means "I like"; "I would like" is the conditional (Chapter 6).

🎓 Course Complete — Hungarian Grammar 3

WHAT YOU CAN NOW DO

You can build the Hungarian verb in every tense and mood this course covers: the indefinite and definite past, the irregular pasts, the future, the conditional, the imperative and the subjunctive, plus the helper verbs and the personal infinitive. You can combine them into longer forms (*mennem kellett volna*, *olvashattam volna*), choose between the indefinite and definite sets, and check a form against a short procedure.

CHAPTER	TITLE	THE KEY IDEA
1	The Verb Map	stem + marker + person ending; indefinite and definite
2	The Indefinite Past	-t- and the linking vowels
3	The Definite Past	-tam, -tad, -ta … and -talak/-telek
4	Irregular Pasts	ment-, jött-, tett-, vett-, lett-, volt-
5	The Future and Helper Verbs	fog + infinitive, lesz, mennem kell
6	The Conditional	-nék, -nám, and past + volna
7	The Imperative	-j, olvass/olvasd, ne
8	The Subjunctive	hogy + imperative form, -hat/-het
9	Compound Tenses	kellett volna, szerettem volna, bárcsak
10	Putting It Together	the whole map, a decision procedure, a clinic

What comes next: A natural follow-up is a **Hungarian Grammar 4** on what the verb still has to learn: prefixes and aspect (*megír, elolvas*), participles and verbal nouns, and word order and focus (*Én olvasom a könyvet* against *A könyvet olvasom*). It is a suggestion, not a commitment. For practice in real situations, the Hungarian Basic Conversation courses use these forms in dialogues.