

Verbs that can take a Complementary Infinitive

A **Complementary Infinitive** is used to extend and fill out the meaning of a verb which would have a very limited meaning without the infinitive.

Ex. "**possum**" (I am able) or "**debeō**" (I ought) say very little, whereas "**possum legere**" (I am able to read) and "**debeō cogitāre**" (I ought to think) express valuable information.

These verbs (which are often called **modal verbs** when they take a complementary infinitive) often express possibility, duty, habit, daring, trying, purpose, wishing, hastening, hesitating, ceasing, learning, knowing, beginning or continuing.

They **often take a complementary infinitive in English** also, which makes it easier to determine which verbs in Latin can be followed by a complimentary infinitive.

These verbs do not always have to be followed by a complementary infinitive (except for "queō" and "nequeō"). Some are seldom found without a complementary infinitive while others often take objects or are followed by other constructions.

possum – be able

soleō – be accustomed

audeō – dare

vōlō – wish

nōlō – not wish

mālō – prefer

debeō – ought

cupiō – desire

coepī – began

incipio - begin

dēsīnō – cease

dēsistō – stop

festīnō – hurry

mātūrō – hasten

properō – hurry

queō – be able

nequeō – not be able

optō – choose

discō – learn

doceō – teach

statuō - decide

cōstituō – decide

cōnor – try

temptō – try