

## Suffixes with the Imperfect and Imperative

Normal imperfect prefixes and suffixes	Normal imperative suffixes that are part of the verb itself		Object suffixes with imperfect and imperative <sup>1</sup>	Suffixes with nun energetic	Translation
3ms ם			3ms םה	3ms םנ	him
3fs ת			3fs תה םה	3fs תנ	her
2ms ת	2ms ם		2ms תהקטל <sup>2</sup>	תנ	you m.
2fs ת ... לי	2fs ם		2fs תה		you f.
1cs א			1cs אה	1cs אה	me
3mp ם...ל			3mp ם		them m.
3fp ת...נה			3fp תה		them. f.
2mp ת...ו	2mp ו		2mp ם		you m. pl.
2fp ת...נה	2fp נה		2fp not attested		you f. pl.
1cp ן			1cp ןה	1cp ןה	us

Note: The 3fp and 2fp imperfect and 2fp imperative forms are not attested; they are replaced by their corresponding mp forms. (û instead of nâ).

### Explanation of Suffixes with the Imperfect and Imperative

1. Almost always the same recognition points apply in the Imperfect forms with suffixes as is true with imperfect forms without suffixes.

**Qal** Watch for hireq-shewa with the prefixed consonant. יקטל

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<sup>1</sup>If the imperfect or imperative form ends in a vowel (2fs, 2mp, 3mp), the connecting vowel is omitted.

<sup>2</sup>The consonants קטל are typed here merely to force my computer to print a final kaph.

**Niphal** Watch for the Niphal triangle: hireq--dagesh forte--qames יקטל

**Piel and Pual** Watch for a dagesh forte in the middle letter and a vocal shewa under the prefix. If the first root consonant has a qibbus beneath it, the form is Pual. יקטל יקטל

**Hiphil** Watch for a pathah under the prefixed consonant יקטיל

**Hophal** Watch for a qames hatuph under the prefixed consonant יקטיל

**Hithpael** Watch for נת, את, תת, ית in the prefixes.

There will be the usual adjustments for gutturals, etc.

2. The Qal imperative is formed by dropping the prefix from the Imperfect and making any needed vowel changes. The rule of Shewa is explained on p. 56. When object suffixes are added to the imperative a *qames hatuph* replaces the *shewa* in the 2ms: יקטלני.

3. When translating a portion of the Bible, let an English translation help you. When Yahweh tells Abram in Gen 12:1 “Go from your country,” you should be alerted that you are most likely dealing with an imperative in Hebrew. Similarly, when Neh 4:4 (Heb 3:36) says “Give them over as plunder” think imperative as you look at the word ונתנם. In this case the final *mem* is the 3 m pl suffix and you are left with the letters *taw and nun*. Since Nehemiah is talking with God, you can assume that the form is 2ms. In the Imperfect that would look like this: נתנם. Hence the imperative is formed from the *pe nun* root נתן. If you only have two root consonants, your principal options are to add a *yod* or *nun* at the beginning, a *heh* at the end, or interpret it as a Hollow root.

4 Quite frequently Hebrew inserts between the verb and its suffix the syllable *en*, which is called the *nun energic*. This does not affect the meaning of the word, but apparently sounded right to a native Hebrew speaker. These forms are listed in the 2nd last column of the table on Suffixes with the Imperfect and Imperative. *en+hû* became *ennû* (3ms), *en+hā* became *ennā* (3fs), and *en+kā* became *ekkā* (2ms). *en+nî* stayed as *ennî*, and *en+nû* stayed as *ennû* (1cpl). You will see that 3ms and 1cpl are identical, but in context that will never be a problem.

5. Use without hesitation the table I have prepared on Suffixes with the Imperfect and Imperative (cf. the similar sheet on suffixes with the Perfect). Whenever you are expected to recognize such forms on a quiz or the final examination, you may use these sheets. I hope that the more Hebrew you read the more you will come to recognize automatically that a suffix like נִי means “me,” 1cs.

impimvsuffixes.nb