# THE HINDI-URDU VERB

## *A guided tour*

This guide steers you through the main verb tenses and constructions of Hindi-Urdu. The aim is to focus on the verbs *separately* from the other language elements that are covered in course-books and grammars. This version shows Hindi only; an alternative edition adds the examples in calligraphed Urdu. The grammatical explanations use roman script, so as to be readable by all. Technical terminology is fully explained, or avoided whenever possible.

A broader treatment of Hindi grammar and style will be found in the Introduction to my forthcoming *Reader in Hindi Autobiographical Writing*; I can supply a draft if you're interested.

English translations of the example sentences in this guide are not always literal, as there are major differences between English and Hindi-Urdu idiom, and the rhetoric of one language does not always translate straightforwardly into another.

Course-books (such as mine!) often forget to mention that Hindi-Urdu is a 'pro-drop' language — one that often drops pronouns when meaning is clear without them; bear this in mind when reading the examples. Person-specific verb forms such as *piyogī* (2nd-person feminine) and *khāū̃gī* (1st-person feminine) need no pronoun to establish who's who:

लीना, क्या पियोगी ?
Leena, what will you drink?

पियूँगी नहीं, सिर्फ़ खाऊँगी !
I won't drink, I'll just eat!

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Mayday 2015

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## 1. ESSENTIAL TERMS & FORMS

- Infinitive:  *bolnā* to speak,  *dekhnā* to see,  *ānā* to come
- Stem: the infinite minus final *-nā* —  *bol, dekh, ā*
- *āp* imperative (command):  *bolie, dekhie, āie*
- *tum* imperative:  *bolo, dekho, āo*
- *tū* imperative (= stem):  *bol, dekh, ā*
- Imperfective participle: *boltā, dekhtā, ātā*  (inflected for number & gender)
- Perfective participle: *bolā, dekhā, āyā*  (ditto)
- Transitive verb: one that can take a direct object, like *banānā* to make, *paṛhnā* to read.
- Intransitive verb: one that takes no direct object, like *jānā* to go, *nācnā* to dance.

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## 2. *maĩ* constructions versus *mujhe/mujhko* constructions

Every Hindi verb construction is either of the *maĩ jāntā hū̃* type or the *mujhko* type. (This is a rough-and-ready distinction that would offend professional linguists; but it's still worth remembering.) In the former, which we may think of as 'ego-based', the verb agrees with the subject — just as it typically does in English ('I know; she arrived; they will eat'). In the *mujhko* type, the 'ego' stands to one side and is effected, in some way, by the world around it; thus in *mujhe kulfī bahut pasand hai*  'I love kulfi', the subject of the verb is the noun *kulfi*, and not the greedy 'I'. Many other constructions follow this basic pair of patterns; it's important *not to mix the two types*!  Cars run either on gasoline or on diesel, not on a mixture of both.

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## 3. PRESENT IMPERFECTIVE TENSE

This tense describes actions that are done regularly, or habitually, such as to live or work in a particular place, or to follow daily routines.

It is formed by the imperfective participle (e.g. *rahtā*) followed by *hū̃, hai, ho* or *haĩ* (the auxiliary) to match the subject.

मैं अमीनाबाद में रहता हूँ।
I live in Aminabad.

तुम कहाँ काम करते हो ?
Where do you work?

एक दुकान में काम करता हूँ।
I work in a shop.

मेरी बहनें कॉलेज में पढ़ती हैं ।
My sisters study in college.

When a verb is negated, the auxiliary may be dropped. In a *feminine plural* verb, the nasal from the dropped *haĩ* jumps for its life onto the participle: *pītī haĩ* becomes *nahī̃ pītī̃*.

मैं सिगरेट नहीं पीता ।
I don't smoke.

मेरी बहनें भी सिगरेट नहीं पीतीं ।
My sisters don't smoke either.
('also don't smoke')

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## 4. PAST IMPERFECTIVE TENSE

This is the tense for regular or habitual actions *in the past*: things that we 'used to do'.

Form: simply change the auxiliary *hū̃, hai, ho* or *haĩ* to *thā /thī* or *the /thī̃*.

We saw that the auxiliary could be dropped from a *present* imperfective verb, but in the *past* imperfective it is retained, being needed to show the 'past' time-frame. See the fourth example.

बहुत साल पहले मेरे माँ-बाप चेन्नई में रहते थे ।
Many years ago my parents lives in Chennai.

उस ज़माने में चेन्नई को मद्रास कहते थे ।
In those days they called Chennai 'Madras'.
('Chennai was called Madras')

पुराने शहर में मकान काफ़ी सस्ते होते थे ।
Houses in the old city used to be quite cheap.

माँ घर में ही रहती थीं, बाहर नहीं जाती थीं ।
Mother used to stay at home, she didn't go out.

A participle without an auxiliary (*jate* rather than *jāte the*) suggests that an action was typical and routine: English equivalents are expressed with 'would'. This is more common in writing than in speech.

शनिवार को हम सिनेमा जाते ।
On Saturdays we would go the cinema.

सिनेमा जाकर हम मूँगफली ख़ूब खाते ।
In the cinema we'd eat peanuts like anything.

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The term 'aspect' can be useful here. The above two tenses share the same 'aspect' in that they are both *imperfective* — they describe habitual events that are by their nature 'incomplete'. Two other 'aspects' are the *perfective* (describing time-bound one-off events such as 'I ate the apple' or 'the car arrived') and *continuous* or *progressive* (describing ongoing actions and featuring '-ing' verbs in English, such as 'I was working' or 'he is talking on the phone').

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## 5. CONTINUOUS TENSES

These tenses, also known as 'progressive', describe things that are *happening currently* — equivalent to the '-ing' tenses in English: 'Leena is working', 'They were making dinner'.

It comprises stem, followed by *rahā/rahī/rahe* as a separate word, followed by the auxiliary verb: *amjad so rahā hai* 'Amjad is sleeping'.  What are people doing right now? —

मैं एक कहानी लिख रहा हूँ /था ।
I am/was writing a story.

तुम क्या कर रही हो ?
What are you doing?

लता जी गा रही हैं, और मैं सुन रही हूँ !
Lata ji is singing, and I'm listening!

लीना और नेहा नाच रही थीं !
Leena and Neha were dancing!

Some speakers use a masculine verb for f.plural subjects, as in the last example — *nāc rage the.*

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## 6. PERFECTIVE TENSES

This tense, the 'simple past', describes one-off actions in the past — single actions that are time-bound.  With intransitive verbs, the perfect participle agrees with the subject:

मैं आज ही पहुँचा ।
I arrived just today.

लीना और नेहा कल आईं ।
Leena and Neha came yesterday.

चाचा जी तीन दिन यहाँ रहे ।
Chacha ji stayed here for three days.

हम सभी छत पर ही सोये ।
We all slept on the roof.

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Transitive verbs, by contrast, use an 'ergative' construction: the logical subject takes the postposition ने, and the verb agrees with the logical object: so in the equivalent to 'My brother cooked dinner', the verb will agree with 'dinner' and not with 'my brother'.

In the first example below, the logical subject is *merā bhāī* and the logical object is *jalebiyā̃* — so the verb is feminine plural, *khāī̃*. This takes some getting used to (and can cause tears at first), but soon begins to seem familiar.

शादी में मेरे भाई ने बहुत जलेबियाँ खाईं ।
My brother ate a ton of jalebis at the wedding.

राम ने चाय पी, नेहा ने पानी पिया ।
Ram drank tea and Neha drank water.

दूसरों ने कोका कोला ही पिया ।
The others just drank coke.

लीना ने कुछ नहीं पिया । सिर्फ़ खाया । ख़ूब खाया !
Leena didn't drink anything. She just ate. She ate a *lot*!

When *ko* marks a targeted item (for example, when that 'item' is an individual, or an individualized thing) this agreement is 'blocked'; the verb remains in the masculine singular by default. Thus in the first example below, *bulāyā* does not agree with feminine *līnā*.

In the third example, the tablets are *general* (just 'some tablets') and are not marked with *ko*, but in the fourth they are *particularized* (they are the tablets just mentioned!) and *are* so marked.

उन्होंने लीना को बग़ीचे में बुलाया ।
They called Leena into the garden.

उनके कुत्ते ने लीना की टाँग काटी ।
Their dog bit Leena's leg.

किसी ने कुछ गोलियाँ निकालीं…
Someone took out some tablets…

और लीना ने उनको खाया ।
…and Leena ate them.

When using phrase verbs such as *kī kośiś karnā* or *kā intazār karnā*, the verb agrees with the noun embedded within that phrase — i.e. with feminine *kośiś* or masculine *intazār*. Such verbs have a literal translation of 'to make an attempt of X', 'to do the waiting of X' etc., which is why they include a possessive k*ā*/k*ī*.

लीना ने एक घंटे तक डाक्टर का इंतज़ार किया।
Leena waited for the doctor for one hour.

मैंने उनको फ़ोन करने की कोशिश की ।
I tried to phone him.

Auxiliaries add new variations of tense to perfective verbs, whether transitive or intransitive: *līnā uṭhī, līnā uṭhī hai, līnā uṭhī thī* 'Leena got up, Leena has got up, Leena had got up'. More on this in section 11.

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## 7. FUTURE TENSE

Unlike English, which uses the auxiliary 'will' to form its future tense, Hindi-Urdu has a single-word future: *bolū̃gā, bolegā, bologe, bolẽge*, with feminine equivalents ending *-gī*.

मैं आज पहुँचूँगा ।
I will arrive today.

लीना और नेहा कल आएँगी ।
Leena and Neha will come tomorrow.

चाचा जी तीन दिन यहाँ रहेंगे ।
Chacha ji will stay here for three days.

हम सभी छत पर ही सोयेंगे ( = सोएँगे) ।
We will all sleep on the roof.

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## 8. SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD

Subjunctive verbs, used for actions that are wished, possible, suggested, or uncertain, are identical in form to the future but with the final syllable (and therefore gender specificity) removed: *bolẽge* > *bolẽ*.

चलें *?*
Shall we go?

मैं आऊँ *?*
May I come in?

आप उधर बैठें …
Please sit over there…

…अगर आपको एतराज़ न हो ।
…if you don't object.

The subjunctive is used to express a wished-for or intended action, especially when *one* person wants *another* to do something:

लीना चाहती है कि मैं खाना बनाऊँ ।
Leena wants me to cook.

हम चाहते थे कि आप भी हाथ बँटाएँ !
We wanted you to help too!

The word *tāki* (or the phrase *jis se ki*) 'so that, in order that' is followed by a subjunctive verb:

सब कुछ समझा दो ताकि कोई ग़लतफ़हमी न हो ।
Explain everything so that there's no misunderstanding.

टी॰वी बंद कर दो जिस से मैं आराम से सो सकूँ ।
Turn off the TV so that I can sleep comfortably.

Note that the *tum* form of the subjunctive (*suno, dekho, baiṭho, uṭho*) is the same as the imperative!

## 9. THE ABSOLUTIVE

This absolutely easy verb form gives the essential sense of 'having done' or 'after doing' — though these would not be the best translation equivalents in English: see some variations below. It is called 'absolutive' because it is independent of the surrounding syntax; linguists often favor using obscure terms for simple things. Also known as the 'conjunctive participle'.

It is made up of stem + *-kar,* thus *dekhkar* 'having seen', *jākar* 'having gone'. An alternative that's heard frequently in colloquial speech is *-ke,* thus *dekhke, jāke*; and in the verb *karnā* this *-e* form (*karke*) is the only choice available. A third alternative, more common in written prose than in speech, is the stem alone: *dekh, jā*. All three forms (*jākar, jāke, jā*) give the same meaning.

A common use is for the first of two actions in a sequence, where two serial verbs would be linked by 'and' in English: 'May I sit here and work?', *maĩ yahā̃ baiṭhkar kām karū̃?* — *s*ee examples 2 and 3.

> महक को फ़ोन करके तुम क्या कहोगे ?
> What will you say when you phone Mehek?

> माफ़ी माँगकर उसे सब कुछ बताऊँगा ।
> I'll apologize and tell her everything.

> अरे, वह गुस्सा होके तुम्हें गाली देगी !
> What! She'll get angry and swear at you!

> नहीं, मैं मीठी-मीठी बातें कहकर उसे समझाऊँगा ।
> No, I'll talk her round by saying sweet things.

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## 10. PASSIVE VOICE

A passive verb focuses on *the action that is done*, rather than on the doer of the action. In English it is made with the verb 'to be' + a past participle (as in 'it is made'); in Hindi it is formed with a past participle and the verb *jānā*, as in *banāyā jātā hai,* 'it is made'. All parts of the verb phrase agree with the subject: thus *banāyā jātā hai* belongs to masculine singular subject. Any tense may be used.

> यह किताब कब लिखी गई ?
> When was this book written?

> कई साल पहले लिखी गई थी ।
> It was written several years ago.

> सारी नई किताबें इस अलमारी में रखी जाएँ ।
> All the new books should be put in this cupboard.

इस तरह की किताबें "बाय पोस्ट" (डाक से) ही बेची जाएँ ।
This kind of books should be sold by post only.

कुछ किताबें आज ही भेजी जा रही हैं ।
Some books are being sent today.

बाक़ी किताबें अगले हफ़्ते तक भेजी जाएँगी
The remaining books will be sent by next week.

When the subject is blocked with *ko*, the verb ceases to agree with it and falls back into the default masculine singular: *kitābō ko … bhejā jāega.*

Some intransitive verbs can have an *inherently* passive sense: *biknā* means 'to be sold' and *chapnā* means 'to be printed' so no passive verbs are involved in these sentences —

पुरानी किताबें मुश्किल से बिकती हैं !
Old books don't sell (are not sold) easily!

कुल मिलाकर कितनी किताबें छपेंगी ?
How many books will be printed altogether?

In a negative sentence, marking the passive agent of an action with *se* means that the agent can't *bear to do* something, can't *bring themselves to do it*.

मुझसे यह किताब नहीं पढ़ी जाएगी !
There's no way I can read this book!

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## 11. ADDING AN AUXILIARY VERB

Variations in the auxiliary verb (*hai, thā, hogā, ho*, etc.) can yield new tenses, as in these examples:

उनकी बहन पंजाबी भी बोलती है ।
Their sister speaks Panjabi too.

उनकी बहन पंजाबी भी बोलती थी ।
Their sister used to speak Panjabi too.

उनकी बहन पंजाबी भी बोलती होगी ।
Their sister must (surely) speak Panjabi too.

शायद उनकी बहन पंजाबी भी बोलती हो ।
Maybe their sister speaks Panjabi too.

किसी ने खिड़की खोली ।
Someone opened the window.

किसी ने खिड़की खोली है ।
Someone has opened the window.

किसी ने खिड़की खोली थी ।
Someone had opened the window.

किसी ने खिड़की खोली होगी ।
Someone will have (must have) opened the window.

किसी ने खिड़की खोली हो ।
Someone may have opened the window.

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## 12. COMPULSION 1 — INFINITIVE VERB + *CĀHIYE*

Don't confuse this usage with **noun +** *cāhiye*, as in *mujhe pānī cāhie* I want/need water.

The sentence *mujhe jānā cāhie* means 'I should go', and may have nothing to do with actual wanting, as we see in *mujhe ghar jānā cāhie lekin maĩ jānā nahī̃ cāhtā* 'I should go home but I don't want to.'

तुमको भी यहीं रहना चाहिए ।
You should stay right here.

महक को अब तक पहुँचना चाहिए था ।
Mehek should have arrived by now.

तो हमें क्या करना चाहिए ?
So what should we do?

शायद हमें किसी को फ़ोन करना चाहिए ।
Maybe we shall call someone.

The infinitive verb agrees with a direct object: so *karnī* agrees with *śikāyat*, and *karnā* with *intazār* —

तुमको शिकायत नहीं करनी चाहिए ।
You shouldn't complain.

हमें दो-तीन घंटे इंतज़ार करना चाहिए ।
We should wait two or three hours.

## 13. COMPULSION 2 — INFINITIVE VERB + *PAṚNĀ*

Built like the *cāhie* construction, this *paṛnā* usage means 'must' — a strong sense of compulsion, typically beyond the control of the individual concerned. Here are examples in the future tense:

हमें उस कुत्तेवाले आदमी से कुछ कहना पड़ेगा ।
We'll have to say something to that dog-owner.

हाँ, और पुलिस से भी शिकायत करनी पड़ेगी ।
Yes, and we'll have to complain to the police too.

लीना को अस्पिताल जाना पड़ेगा ।
Leena will have to go to hospital.

लीना, तुमको ये दवाइयाँ पीनी पड़ेंगी ।
Leena, you will have to take these medicines.

In the imperfective tenses, this construction speaks of regular or routine commitments:

हमें सात बजे घर से निकलना पड़ता है ।
We always have to leave the house at seven.

छोटू अभी छोटा है इसलिए मुझे उसकी मदद करनी पड़ती है ।
Chotu is still young so I have to help him.

And in perfective tenses, the context often involves an unforeseen need or unexpected crisis:

मैं देर से उठी इसलिए मुझे टैक्सी से आना पड़ा ।
I got up late so I had to come by taxi.

दरवाज़े पर ताला लगा था सो हमें एक खिड़की तोड़नी पड़ी ।
The door was locked so we had to break a window.

मेरा हाथ कट गया । मुझे पट्टी बाँधनी पड़ी ।
My hand got cut. I had to bandage it.

## 14. COMPULSION 3 — INFINITIVE VERB + *HONĀ*

Built like the *paṛnā* construction, this *paṛnā* usage gives a *weaker* sense of compulsion — a mention of things due to be done as a matter of course. Remember that the system of agreement remains the same as in the *cāhie* and *paṛnā* constructions: in our first example, *karne haĩ* agrees with masculine plural *kām* 'jobs, tasks'.

मुझे बहुत सारे छोटे-मोटे काम करने हैं ।
I have loads of odd tasks to do.

आज हमें महक से मिलना था मगर उसने फ़ोन नहीं किया ।
Today we were to meet Mehek but she hasn't called.

लीना को भी आना था लेकिन वह नहीं आई ।
Leena was to come to but she didn't come.

कल आपको बाहर जाना है न ?
Tomorrow you have to go out, don't you?

(तुमको) कॉफ़ी पीनी है ?
(Would you) like some coffee?

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## 15. *SAKNĀ* and *PĀNĀ*

(These verbs, which express ability or its opposite, are intransitive, so there's no *ne* involved.)

Verb stem + *saknā* gives a sense of 'ability' — often a *physical* ability to do something. It also appears in the sense of 'may I?' when seeking permission.

क्या तुम यह फोटो भेज सकते हो ?
Can you send this photo?

नहीं, फाइल बहुत बड़ी है, मैं इसे डाउनलोड नहीं कर सकता ।
No, the file is very big, I can't download it.

महक भी इसे भेज नहीं सकी ।
Mehek couldn't send it either.
(Mehek also could not send it.)

क्या मैं वह फ़ोटो देख सकता हूँ ?
May I see that photo?

Verb stem + *pānā* also gives a sense of 'ability', but often meaning 'to *manage*' to achieve something.

वह मेरी मदद करना चाहती थी लेकिन कर नहीं पाई ।
She wanted to help me but couldn't.

वह भी यह नया प्रोग्राम नहीं समझ पा रही ।
Even she can't understand this new program.

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## 16. *CUKNĀ*

Verb stem + *cuknā* means 'having finished doing' something, or 'having already done' something. This too is intransitive — no *ne* involved! Not used in negated sentences (if you haven't *done* something, then how could you have *finished doing* it?)

लीना कई बार धोखा खा चुकी है !
Leena has already been tricked many times!

हम दिल दे चुके सनम !
I've already given my heart away, my love.

वह कल तक भूल चुकी होगी ।
She'll have forgotten by tomorrow.

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## 17. COMPOUND VERBS

Compound verbs have a physical structure like that of the previous item: a verb stem followed by an inflecting verb. The verb stem gives the basic meaning, and the inflecting verb adds nuance: thus *karnā* means 'to do', while *kar lenā* typically means 'to do for oneself'. Generally speaking, *lenā* suggests a sense of self-benefit or achievement, *denā* suggests an outward-going action or benefit, *jānā* emphasizes the completion or finality suggested by the act of 'arrival', and *ḍālnā* adds vigor or violence. This is just the beginning of long list of highly expressive … er … expressions.

लीना ने चाय बना ली  ।
Leena made herself some tea.

फिर उसने रवि के सारे ख़त जला दिए ।
Then she burned all Ravi's letters.

जब उसने देखा कि महक आ गई थी …
When she saw that Mehek had arrived…

तो उसने उसे रवि के बारे में बता डाला ।
…she let rip about Ravi.

So much for a traditional introduction to compound verbs. What the learner *really* needs to learn is when *not* to use them. For example, they are not often used in negated sentences, or in contexts such as questions, which lack the affirmative basis for adding nuance. Compound verbs are like spices added to food: great to add subtle flavor, but not so good when wrongly applied, and useless in a 'negative' context where there is no food at all!

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## 18. COUNTERFACTUALS

Counterfactuals (or, if you prefer, 'counter-to-fact' constructions) speak of things that *could have been* but weren't or aren't. Mehek isn't here, but if she *was….*

अगर महक यहाँ होती तो वह हमारी मदद जरूर करती ।
If Mehek were here she'd help us for sure.

अगर लीना भी आई होती तो क्या होता ?
What would have happened if Leena had come too?

अगर ये पत्थर बोलते तो क्या कहते ?
If these stones spoke what would they say?

काश तुम्हारी माँ भी यहाँ होतीं !
If only your mother were here too!

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## 19. THE INFINITIVE AS A VERBAL NOUN

The infinitive form of the verb states the essential action itself: 'to be or not to be', *honā yā na honā.*

सच बोलना अच्छा होता है ।
It is good to tell the truth.

कभी कभी झूठ बोलना भी ज़रूरी होता है ।
Sometimes it's necessary to lie also.

In the sentences above, the verbal noun *bolnā* is in its direct form because it is the subject of the verb. But elsewhere it can take a postposition, changing its *-ā* ending to oblique *-e* just like any other masculine noun:

झूठ बोलने में कोई फ़ायदा नहीं है ।
There's no point in lying.

बच्चों में सच बोलने की आदत कैसे डालें ?
How can we instill the habit of telling the truth into our children?

---

20.  *MILNĀ* AS 'TO GET', or rather 'TO BE AVAILABLE'

When Hindi-Urdu talks about a person 'getting' X, it makes X the subject of the verb *milnā*, while the recipient takes *ko*. Think of *milnā* as meaning 'to be available, to accrue'.  'I will get a pension', *mujhko penśan milegā.*

क्या हमको हिन्दुस्तान जाने का मौक़ा मिलेगा ?
Will we get the chance to go to India?

हाँ, आपको टिकट भी मिलेगी !
Yes, you'll get a ticket too!

मुझे तुम्हारा ख़त मिल गया, पर लीना का नहीं मिला ।
I got your letter, but I didn't get Leena's.

लीना से तो गालियाँ ही मिलती हैं ।
All I get from Leena is bad language.

---

21. *MILNĀ* AS 'TO MEET'

The 'to get' structure just described is used to describe a meeting that happens by chance, when 'coming across' or 'bumping into' someone is a bit like 'getting' them.

मॉल में मुझे महक मिली ।
*In the mall I met Mehek.*

 If however you meet Mehek *on purpose* rather than by chance, she is marked by *se* —

आज मैं महक से मिलना चाहता हूँ । उससे मॉल में मिलूँगा ।
Today I want to meet Mehek. I'll meet her in the mall..

If both parties together form the joint subject, *se* is not involved —

हम शाम को मिले/ मिलेंगे ।
We met / will meet in the evening.

---

## 22.  VERBS THAT TAKE *SE*

Here are some of there commonest verbs whose use involves the postposition *se* —

मिलना, *to meet (with)*

वह तुमसे मिलना चाहता है ।
He wants to meet you.

पूछना, *to ask or inquire*

राम से पूछो ।
Ask Ram.

कहना, *to say*

उससे क्या कहूँ ?
What should I say to him?

इनकार करना, *to refuse*

राम ने हमारी मदद करने से इनकार कर दिया ।
Ram refused to help us.

---

## 23.  LAGNĀ

Here are some of the commonest uses of the overwhelmingly productive verb *lagnā*.

As 'to seem', or 'it seems that…' —

क्या हुआ महक? नाराज़ लगती हो  ।
What's the matter Mehek? You seem angry.

लगता है (कि) तुम्हें कोई तकलीफ़ है  ।
It seems (that) you're bothered by something.

A feeling or affliction such as hunger or thirst to be felt —

राम को भूख लगी है  ।
*Ram is feeling hungry.*

हाँ और मुझे प्यास लग रही है !
Yes and I'm getting thirsty!

As 'to strike X as being good, bad…'

महक की बात मुझे अच्छी नहीं लगी  ।
I didn't like what Mehek said.

मुझे भी काफ़ी बुरी लगी  ।
I didn't like it much either.

As 'to take a certain amount of time', with the unit of time as grammatical subject.

ख़त लिखने में कितना वक़्त लगता है ?
How long does it take to write a letter?

यह लिखने में मुझे दो घंटे लगे !
It took me two hours to write this!

With an oblique infinitive, *lagnā* means 'to start doing X' —

मेरा भाई और महक हँसने लगे ।
My brother and Mehek started laughing.

मैंने देखा कि बारिश होने लगी थी ।
I saw it had started raining.

---

## 24.  PARTICIPLES USED AS ADJECTIVES

Let's take *cooking* as our context here, using the verbs *ubalnā* 'to boil, be boiled', *jalnā* 'to burn, be burned, *sūkhnā* 'to fry, be fried' (these examples are all intransitive).  This is how the perfective and imperfective participles can be used as adjectives, describing nouns:

उबला पानी,  जला गोश्त,  सूखी मछली
boiled water, burned meat, dried fish

In order to distinguish *this* usage of the hardworking participle from its other functions, we can add *huā* (the participle from *honā*, used as an auxiliary)

उबला हुआ पानी,  जला हुआ गोश्त, सूखी हुई मछली
boiled water, burned meat, dried fish

This stands in contrast to use of *imperfective* participles (to which *huā* etc. can again be added) —

उबलता (हुआ) पानी,  जलता (हुआ) गोश्त,  सूखती (हुई) मछली
boiling water, burning meat, drying fish

---

## 25.  PARTICIPLES USED AS ADVERBS

When participles are used as adverbs — that is, when they describe an action rather than a thing — they normally have an invariable *-e* ending, as in *karte*, extended to *karte hue* as before. Typically, they refer to an action that is being done *on the side*, while doing something else:

दांत साफ़ करते हुए मैं रेडियो सुन रही थी ।
I was cleaning my teeth as I listened to the radio.

रेडियो सुनते हुए मैं दाँत साफ़ कर रही थी ।
I was listening to the radio as I cleaned my teeth.

*sunte sunte* is similar to *sunte hue,* but stresses that an action is unremitting, and may lead to a consequence of some kind:

रेडियो सुनते सुनते मैं सो गई ।
Listening (continuously) to the radio I fell asleep.

*sunte hī* stresses immediacy:

तुम्हारी आवाज़ सुनते ही मैं उठ गई ।
As soon as I heard your voice I got up.

---

## 26.  CAUSATIVES

While *bannā* means 'to be made', and *banānā* means 'to make', *banvānā* means 'to cause to be made, to get made (by X)'.  Many sets of verbs include a causative:

| | |
|---|---|
| *denā > dilvānā* | 'to cause to be given' |
| *likhnā > likhvānā* | 'to get written' |
| *bhejnā > bhijvānā* | 'to get sent' |

कुत्तेवाले आदमी ने डाक्टर को हज़ार रुपये दिलवाए ।
The dog-owner had ₹ 1000 given to the doctor.

उन्होंने कुछ दवाइयाँ भिजवाईं ।
He had some medicines sent.

लीना ने किसी दोस्त से टैटू बनवाया ।
Leena had a tattoo made by some friend.

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27. BRIEFLY…

(a) *binā kahe* (binā + inflected perfective participle) means 'without saying'.

बिना किए, बिना देखे, बिना सोचे
without doing, looking, thinking

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(b) *karne lāyaq* (oblique infinitive + *lāyaq*) means 'worth doing' or 'suitable for'.

देखने लायक़, पढ़ने लायक़, पीने लायक़
worth seeing, worth reading, fit for drinking

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(c) An oblique infinitive can show purpose or intention. An unexpressed *ke lie* haunts the phrase as a ghostposition, so the infinitive is oblique.

तुम हिन्दुसतान क्यों जा रहे हो ? काम करने ?
Why are you going to India? To work?

नहीं, कुछ रिश्तेदारों से मिलने जा रहा हूँ ।
No, I'm going to meet some relatives.

(d) An oblique infinitive + *denā* means 'to allow X to do, to let X do'.

मुझे जाने दो !
Let me go!

पहले अपना नाम बता, फिर हम तुझे जाने देंगे ।
First tell us your name, then we'll let you go.

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(e) A perfective participle + *karnā* gives a habitual or recurrent sense. It can even be used with *honā* (*nārāz huā karnā*, 'to be constantly angry'.) With *jānā*, the participle used is *jāyā* (not the usual *gayā*).

शाम को हम पार्क में सैर किया करते हैं ।
In the evening we take a walk in the park.

गुस्सा मत हुआ करो !
Don't be angry all the time!

हम सिनेमा रोज़ जाया करेंगे !
We'll go to the cinema every day!

___

(f) A direct-case infinitive + *ānā* describes the possession of a skill —

मुझे बोलना आता है, लिखना-पढ़ना नहीं आता ।
I can speak, but I can't read or write.

Used with a language name, *ānā* provides a way of saying 'I know language X' —

मुझे थोड़ी गुजराती भी आती है ।
I know a little Gujarati also.

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