

LIFELOVEME LEARNING SERIES

SANSKRIT GRAMMAR FOR BHAGWAT GITA

Level GĪTĀ • A verse-reading companion

THE LEARNING PROMISE

Examples first. Patterns next. Technical names only when they help the reader understand a sentence.

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English • Version 1.0 • 16 August 2026

LifeLoveMe: learning connected to life

LifeLoveMe is a developing human-centered framework for learning, reflection, wellness, relationships, memories and practical life assistance. It uses technology and AI as companions—to organize knowledge around a person’s goals and make learning easier to explore at one’s own pace.

SINGLE SOURCE FOR REFERENCE MATERIAL

Use the Sanskrit Learning Helper v0.2 for alphabet and transliteration, visarga and halant, sandhi patterns, vibhakti summaries, selected dhātus, noun and verb grids, lakāras and the glossary. This level book teaches their use through examples and does not reproduce those charts.

About the Author

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1. What this guide is for

The standard Sanskrit title is Bhagavad Gītā (भगवद्गीता), commonly written Bhagwat Gita in English.

This guide helps a learner recognize the grammar that repeatedly carries meaning in its verses. It is not a complete grammar and it is not a word-by-word translation of the Gītā.

READING PRINCIPLE

Do not begin by forcing Sanskrit into English word order. First find the predicate, identify possible forms, connect agreeing words, recover joined sounds, and only then build the translation.

Read the whole sentence. Test the clues. Keep alternatives when needed.

Look for	Question	Typical evidence
Predicate	What is asserted?	finite verb, participle, noun/adjective, implied अस्ति
Participants	Who acts, experiences or is affected?	case endings + verb requirements
Connections	Which words belong together?	gender, number and case agreement
Boundaries	Which sounds or words have joined?	sandhi and compound analysis
Discourse	What contrast or sequence is signaled?	particles, pronouns, relative-correlative pairs

COMPANION REFERENCE

Use the Sanskrit Learning Helper v0.2 for the alphabet, transliteration, full vibhakti overview, selected dhātus, noun/verb grids, lakāras, sandhi table and glossary. This document applies those tools to Bhagavad Gītā examples.

2. The smallest useful sentence analysis

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन। — Bhagavad Gītā 2.47

Written form	Recover / identify	Function in the line
कर्मणि एव	karmaṇi eva	in action alone; locative singular + emphasis
अधिकारः ते	adhikāraḥ te	your sphere/claim; nominative + genitive pronoun
मा	mā	prohibitive particle: do not / let not
फलेषु	phaleṣu	in the fruits/results; locative plural
कदाचन	kadācana	at any time / ever

A form of “is” is understood: “Your sphere is in action alone, never in its fruits.” The verse shows why a reader must allow nominal predication and implied अस्ति.

THREE PASSES

1 Recover visible forms. 2 Build the grammatical relation. 3 Consider the philosophical interpretation. Do not let the interpretation replace the grammar.

3. Case endings: relations, not English prepositions

Case clue	Frequent Gītā reading question	Example
Nominative	Who/what is presented or predicated?	आत्मा • ātmā
Accusative	Whom/what is reached? Goal of motion?	माम् • mām
Instrumental	By/with/through what?	आत्मना • ātmanā
Dative	To/for whom? For what purpose?	हिताय • hitāya
Ablative	From what? Because of what?	धर्मात् • dharmāt
Genitive	Whose? Of what?	धर्मस्य • dharmasya
Locative	Where/in/regarding what?	कर्मणि, फलेषु

4. Number and agreement

Sanskrit marks singular, dual and plural. A finite verb agrees with its subject in person and number; adjectives and many participles agree with their nouns in gender, number and case.

Text	Agreement clue	Reading
न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित्। • 2.20	singular verbs; subject carried from context	It is not born, nor does it die.
वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यम् ... • 2.21	accusative singular forms point to the same referent	[one who] knows it as indestructible, eternal ...
नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि। • 2.23	शस्त्राणि neuter plural + छिन्दन्ति plural	Weapons do not cut it.

REDUNDANCY HELPS

Number may appear on both noun and verb. This cross-check helps recover an omitted subject and detect which words belong together.

5. Pronouns often carry the argument

Form	Basic force	Reading use
अहम् / माम् / मया	I / me / by me	speaker and role change with case
त्वम् / त्वाम् / ते	you / you / your or to you	Arjuna as addressee
सः / सा / तत्	he / she / it-that	points back or contrasts
एतत् / इदम्	this	nearby idea or object
यत् ... तत्	whatever/which ... that	relative-correlative linkage

6. The verb: person, number, time and mood

What to identify	Example	Meaning contribution
present statement	भवति • bhavati	is / becomes
past narration	अब्रवीत् • abravīt	said
future	भविष्यति • bhaviṣyati	will be / become
command	विद्धि • viddhi; कुरु • kuru	know!; do!
possibility/advice	उद्धरेत् • uddharet	should raise / may raise
prohibition	मा ... कृथाः	do not do ...

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्। — 6.5

Form	Recover	Observation
उद्धरेत्	ud + hr, optative	one should raise
आत्मना	instrumental singular	by oneself / by the self
आत्मानम्	accusative singular	oneself / the self as object
अवसादयेत्	causative optative	should not cause to sink/degrade

ROOTS ARE NOT ENOUGH

A dhātu helps identify a word family, but the actual stem, ending, voice and context determine the sentence meaning.

7. Participles and non-finite forms

Pattern	Gītā example	How to read it
-त्वा / -य • having done	विहाय • having abandoned (2.22); परित्यज्य • abandoning (18.66)	action normally precedes the main verb and shares its controller
present participle	ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः • while a person contemplates objects (2.62)	ongoing action; participle agrees with a noun
past passive participle	उपहत- • impaired/struck (2.7 compound)	completed/resulting state
-तव्य / -नीय • to be done	कार्य / कर्तव्य ideas	necessity or obligation

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज। — 18.66

परित्यज्य supplies a prior or accompanying instruction (“having relinquished”); ब्रज is the imperative main predicate (“go/come, take refuge”); माम् is accusative; एकम् agrees with माम् in the construction.

8. Active, middle and passive presentation

Presentation	Question	Example clue
Active • parasmaipada	Who acts on what?	करोति • does
Middle • ātmanepada	How is the action presented with reference to the subject?	वर्तते • proceeds/exists
Passive	What undergoes the action? Agent expressed how?	हन्यते • is killed (2.20)

CAUTION

Parasmaipada and ātmanepada are conjugational systems; do not reduce them mechanically to “for another” and “for oneself” in every verse.

9. Sandhi: recover the words before interpreting

Surface text	Recovery	What changed
कर्मण्येव	कर्मणि + एव	i + e joins as ye
अधिकारस्ते	अधिकारः + ते	visarga becomes s before t
नैनम्	न + एनम्	a + e becomes ai
रामोऽस्ति (general model)	रामः + अस्ति	visarga form + avagraha
उद्धरेदात्मना	उद्धरेत् + आत्मना	final t voiced before vowel

PRACTICAL METHOD

Copy the surface text. Mark likely finite verbs. Reverse only the sandhi needed to expose meaningful forms. Check every proposed split against morphology and meaning.

10. Compounds: read from the final member outward

Compound	Possible expansion	Reading value
धर्मक्षेत्रे	धर्मस्य क्षेत्रे / धर्ममय क्षेत्रे	in the field of dharma / sacred field
कर्मफलम्	कर्मणः फलम्	fruit/result of action
स्थितप्रज्ञः	स्थिता प्रज्ञा यस्य सः	one whose wisdom is steady
धर्मसंमूढचेताः	धर्मे संमूढं चेतः यस्य	one whose mind is confused about dharma
कर्मयोगः	कर्मणा योगः / कर्मरूपः योगः	yoga through/of action; context refines relation

The final member usually controls the compound's external grammatical behavior. The internal relation may require more than one candidate expansion.

11. Relative-correlative structures

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः। — 3.21

Pair	Function	Reading
यत् यत् ... तत् तत्	whatever ... that	links repeated relative and correlative items
यदा ... तदा	when ... then	links time clauses
यथा ... तथा	as ... so	links comparison or manner
यत्र ... तत्र	where ... there	links place clauses

These pairs may be separated by many words. Track the pair before deciding where the English clause should begin.

12. Small indeclinables, large effects

Word	Frequent force	Caution
न	not	ordinary negation
मा	do not / let not	prohibition, usually with a verbal form
एव	only / indeed / precisely	focus depends on placement
तु	but / however / on the other hand	discourse contrast
हि	indeed / for / because	often explanatory or emphatic
च	and / also	may coordinate words or clauses
अपि	also / even / although	context-sensitive
इति	thus / quote boundary	can close speech, thought or a cited expression

13. Poetry: reconstruct without flattening

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः। — 2.7

Clue	Analysis
पृच्छामि	finite predicate: “I ask”; ending identifies first-person singular
त्वाम्	accusative singular: person asked
कार्पण्य-दोष-उपहत-स्वभावः	compound adjective, nominative singular, describing the implied “I”
धर्म-संमूढ-चेताः	compound adjective, nominative singular, also describing “I”

WHY ORDER IS FLEXIBLE

Agreement lets separated adjectives connect to an omitted first-person subject recovered from पृच्छामि. Meter and emphasis affect placement, but grammar still constrains the reading.

14. A repeatable verse-reading worksheet

Pass	Write down
1 • Sound	read aloud; mark pauses without assuming word boundaries
2 • Segmentation	reverse sandhi; split compounds provisionally
3 • Predication	finite verbs, participles, nominal predicates, implied अस्ति
4 • Morphology	stem/root and possible case/person/number/gender
5 • Connections	agreement, valency, kāraka and pronoun links
6 • Prose order	construct a defensible anvaya
7 • Translation	literal first; readable English second
8 • Confidence	record alternatives and unresolved points

15. Practice verses

Verse	Primary grammar task
2.20 • न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित्	find coordinated singular predicates and negation
2.22 • वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय ...	connect adjective agreement; analyze विहाय; trace यथा structure
2.47 • कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते ...	reverse sandhi; identify locatives; recover nominal predicate
3.21 • यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठः ...	track relative-correlative pairs
4.7 • यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति ...	recover sandhi; link यदा clauses; identify genitive
6.5 • उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम् ...	distinguish instrumental/accusative आत्मन् forms and optatives
18.66 • सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य ...	identify gerund, imperative and accusatives

SELF-CHECK

Can you show the evidence for every connection? Can you distinguish what grammar establishes from what commentary interprets? Can you state uncertainty without abandoning analysis?

16. Continue through the LifeLoveMe series

- Level 0: find the predicate, participants and likely meaning.
- Level 1: apply agreement, regular forms, active/passive and short prose.
- Level 2: handle sandhi, participles, compounds and omitted information.
- Level 3: compare difficult parses, analyze poetry and report confidence.
- Sanskrit Learning Helper v0.2: maintain the reference charts and glossary in one place.