

**Habitual Aspect**  
(Actions performed on a regular basis)

Habitual Aspect conjugation at a glance (detailed explanation below after tables)

Table 1: The binary habitual aspect conjugation as exists currently. M=Male, F =Female

Formula:	<b>Stem+ ता/ते/ती → followed by होना <i>honā</i> present or past</b> <i>tā/te/tī</i> (Golden Rule I)			
Example	with verb: <b>खाना</b> <i>khānā</i>			
Pronoun	M Present	M Past	F Present	F Past
Singular	<b>Stem + ता/ते →</b> होना present	<b>Stem + ता/ते →</b> होना past	<b>Stem + ती →</b> होना present	<b>Stem + ती →</b> होना past
मैं <i>māĩ</i>	खाता हूँ <i>khātā hūĩ</i>	खाता था <i>khātā thā</i>	खाती हूँ <i>khātī ...</i>	खाती थी <i>khātī thī</i>
तू <i>tū</i>	खाता है	खाता था	खाती है	खाती थी
यह <i>yah</i>	खाता है	खाता था	खाती है	खाती थी
वह <i>vah</i>	खाता है	खाता था	खाती है	खाती थी
Plural				
हम <i>ham</i>	खाते हैं <i>khāte hāĩ</i>	खाते थे <i>khāte the</i>	खाती हैं .." ... <i>hāĩ</i>	खाती थीं .." ... <i>thĩ</i>
तुम <i>tum</i>	खाते हो .." .. <i>ho</i>	खाते थे	खाती हो .." ... <i>ho</i>	खाती थीं
आप <i>āp</i>	खाते हैं .." .. <i>hāĩ</i>	खाते थे	खाती हैं .." ... <i>hāĩ</i>	खाती थीं
ये <i>ye</i>	खाते हैं	खाते थे	खाती हैं	खाती थीं
वे <i>ve</i>	खाते हैं	खाते थे	खाती हैं	खाती थीं

**Table 2: Factoring in a non-binary voice**

[M = male, F = female, Proposed NB = non-binary\* (In 2014 the Supreme Court of India acknowledged that gender is not binary “male” or “female” only, but to date there is no way to express oneself in a non-binary voice in Hindi. \*See detailed comment at the end of the document)]

Formula:		Stem+ ता/ते/ ती/तो → followed by होना <i>honā</i> present or past				
		$\frac{tā/te/}{(Golden\ Rule\ I)}$ $\frac{tī/to}$				
Example with verb:		खाना <i>khānā</i>				
Pronoun	M Present	M Past	F Present	F Past	NB Present	NB Past
Singular	Stem + ता/ते → होना present	Stem + ता/ते → होना past	Stem + ती → होना present	Stem + ती → होना past	Stem + तो → होना present	Stem + तो → होना past
मैं <i>māĩ</i>	खाता हूँ <i>khātā hūĩ</i>	खाता था <i>khātā thā</i>	खाती हूँ <i>khātī ...</i>	खाती थी <i>khātī thī</i>	खातो हूँ <i>khāto ...</i>	खातो थो <i>khāto tho</i>
तू <i>tū</i>	खाता है " <i>hai</i>	खाता था	खाती है " <i>hai</i>	खाती थी	खातो है " <i>hai</i>	खातो थो
यह <i>yah</i>	खाता है	खाता था	खाती है	खाती थी	खातो है	खातो थो
वह <i>vah</i>	खाता है	खाता था	खाती है	खाती थी	खातो है	खातो थो
Plural						
हम <i>ham</i>	खाते हैं <i>khāte hāĩ</i>	खाते थे <i>khāte the</i>	खाती हैं .."... <i>hāĩ</i>	खाती थीं .."... <i>thĩ</i>	खातो हैं .."... <i>hāĩ</i>	खातो थों .."... <i>thō</i>
तुम <i>tum</i>	खाते हो .."... <i>ho</i>	खाते थे	खाती हो .."... <i>ho</i>	खाती थीं	खातो हो .."... <i>ho</i>	खातो थों
आप <i>āp</i>	खाते हैं .."... <i>hāĩ</i>	खाते थे	खाती हैं .."... <i>hāĩ</i>	खाती थीं	खातो हैं .."... <i>hāĩ</i>	खातो थों
ये <i>ye</i>	खाते हैं	खाते थे	खाती हैं	खाती थीं	खातो हैं	खातो थों
वे <i>ve</i>	खाते हैं	खाते थे	खाती हैं	खाती थीं	खातो हैं	खातो थों

## Decoding the Mystery of the Hindi Habitual aspectual conjugation:

In Hindi the **Habitual tense** is used to talk about **actions performed on a regular (habitual) basis**, whether **present or past**. These are equivalent to the English, “**I come**”, “**I see**”, “**I conquer**”, “**I used to come**”, “**I used to see**”, “**I used to conquer**”.

**Formula:** The formula for conjugating (forming) the habitual aspect in Hindi is:

**Stem + ता/ते/ती/तो** (applying **Golden Rule I**) followed by **होना** present or past

[**Golden Rule I:** आ — ā ending for **Masculine Singular (MS)**

ए — e ending for **Masculine Plural (MP)**

ई (ई) — ī (ī) ending for **Feminine Singular & Plural (FS/FP)**, where ई is sometimes nasalized in the **Plural**]

ओ (ओं) — o (ō) ending for **Non-binary Singular & Plural (NBS/NBP)**, where ओ is sometimes nasalized in the **Plural**]

So, for example, the habitual aspectual conjugation of the verb **खाना** would be:

:

MS-Present: मैं खाता हूँ *māĩ khātā hūĩ* MS-Past: मैं खाता था *māĩ khātā thā*  
 MP-Present: हम खाते हैं *ham khāte hāĩ* MP-Past: हम खाते थे *ham khāte the*  
 FS-Present: मैं खाती हूँ *māĩ khātī hūĩ* FS-Past: मैं खाती थी *māĩ khātī thī*  
 FP-Present: हम खाती हैं *ham khātī hāĩ* FP-Past: हम खाती थीं *ham khātī thīĩ*  
 NBS-Present: मैं खातो हूँ *māĩ khāto hūĩ* NBS-Past: मैं खातो थो *māĩ khāto tho*  
 NBP-Present: हम खातो हैं *ham khāto hāĩ* NBP-Past: हम खातो थों *ham khāto thō*

and for the verb **सोना/sonā** “to sleep”, it would be:

MS-Present: मैं सोता हूँ *māĩ sotā hūĩ* MS-Past: मैं सोता था *māĩ sotā thā*  
 MP-Present: हम सोते हैं *ham sote hāĩ* MP-Past: हम सोते थे *ham sote the*  
 FS-Present: मैं सोती हूँ *māĩ sotī hūĩ* FS-Past: मैं सोती थी *māĩ sotī thī*  
 FP-Present: हम सोती हैं *ham sotī hāĩ* FP-Past: हम सोती थीं *ham sotī thīĩ*  
 NBS-Present: मैं सोतो हूँ *māĩ soto hūĩ* NBS-Past: मैं सोतो थो *māĩ soto tho*  
 NBP-Present: हम सोतो हैं *ham soto hāĩ* NBP-Past: हम सोतो थों *ham soto thō*

Note: (i) In the **Present Habitual** conjugation, the auxiliary verb **होना *honā*** can be **dropped in the negative**. However, when dropped, **since there is no difference between the FS & FP habitual participle** (i.e. the **खाती *khātī***, **सोती *sotī***, etc. portion of the conjugation), **the nasalization from the auxiliary verb **होना *honā*** [हैं *hāī*] is transferred on to the FP habitual participle, making the FP habitual participle into **खातीं *khātīī***, **सोतीं *sotīī***, etc., thereby indicating difference between the FS & FP conjugation in the negative.**

**Table 3: Feminine Habitual in the affirmative & the negative.**

Example with the verb खाना /*khānā* (to eat).

Pronoun	Feminine Present Affirmative	Feminine Present Negative (with auxiliary verb होना dropped)
<b>Singular</b>	Stem + ती <i>tī</i> → होना <i>honā</i> present	Negation → Stem + ती <i>tī</i>
मैं <i>māī</i>	खाती हूँ <i>khātī hūī</i>	नहीं खाती <i>nahī khātī</i>
तू <i>tū</i>	खाती है	नहीं खाती
यह <i>yah</i>	खाती है	नहीं खाती
वह <i>vah</i>	खाती है	नहीं खाती
<b>Plural</b>		Negation → Stem + तीं <i>tīī</i>
हम <i>ham</i>	खाती हैं <i>khātī hāī</i>	नहीं खातीं <i>nahī khātīī</i>
तुम <i>tum</i>	खाती हो	नहीं खातीं
आप <i>āp</i>	खाती हैं	नहीं खातीं
ये <i>ye</i>	खाती हैं	नहीं खातीं
वे <i>ve</i>	खाती हैं	नहीं खातीं

When factoring in a *non-binary voice* conjugation, the same principles of negation observed for feminine conjugations apply. **Since there is no difference between the NBS & NBP habitual participle** (i.e. the **खातो *khāto*, सोतो *soto***, etc. portion of the conjugation), the nasalization from the auxiliary verb **होना *honā* [हैं *hāī*]** is transferred on to the NBP habitual participle, making the NBP habitual participle into **खातों *khātō*, सोतों *sotō***, etc., thereby indicating difference between the NBS & NBP conjugation in the negative.

**Table 4: Non-Binary Habitual in the affirmative & the negative.**

Example with the verb खाना *khānā* (to eat).

Pronoun	Non-Binary Present Affirmative	Non-Binary Present Negative (with auxiliary verb होना dropped)
<b>Singular</b>	<b>Stem + तो <i>to</i> → होना <i>honā</i> present</b>	<b>Negation → Stem + तो <i>to</i></b>
मैं <i>māī</i>	खातो हूँ <i>khāto hūī</i>	नहीं खातो <i>nahī khāto</i>
तू <i>tū</i>	खातो है	नहीं खातो
यह <i>yah</i>	खातो है	नहीं खातो
वह <i>vah</i>	खातो है	नहीं खातो
<b>Plural</b>		<b>Negation → Stem + तों <i>tō</i></b>
हम <i>ham</i>	खातो हैं <i>khāto hāī</i>	नहीं खातों <i>nahī khātō</i>
तुम <i>tum</i>	खातो हो	नहीं खातों
आप <i>āp</i>	खातो हैं	नहीं खातों
ये <i>ye</i>	खातो हैं	नहीं खातों
वे <i>ve</i>	खातो हैं	नहीं खातों

So, for example, in the **present tense plural affirmative female voice** one would say: **हम गोश्त खाती हैं** *ham gosht khātī hāī* | But **while negating** the same, **in the present tense** one would say: **हम गोश्त खाती थीं**, लेकिन अब **हम नहीं खातीं** *ham gosht khātī thī, lekin ab (ham) nahī khātī* |

By the same token, in the **present tense plural affirmative non-binary voice** one would say: **हम गोश्त खातो हैं** *ham gosht khāto hāī* | But **while negating** the same, **in the present tense** one would say: **हम गोश्त खातो थीं**, लेकिन अब **हम नहीं खातों** *ham gosht khāto thō, lekin ab (ham) nahī khātō* |

(ii) The auxiliary verb **होना** is **never dropped in the past habitual conjugation, irrespective of gender.**

**\*Why factor in a non-binary voice in Hindi verb conjugations?**

Until 2014, in India, the parent culture of Hindi, only 2 genders, viz male and female, were legally recognized. Transgender, non-binary, transexual, genderqueer and gender-questioning people were forced to identify themselves within a binary gender classification. Hindi being a gendered language, we see this traditional binary gender classification in verb conjugations and in a certain class of nouns and adjectives. Personal pronouns on the other hand are gender neutral in Hindi.

In April 2014, in a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court of India formally recognized the rights of transgender, non-binary, transexual, genderqueer and gender-questioning people to determine their gender as neither male nor female, thereby affirming the existence of a third gender, and ending traditional binary gender classifications.

Although this ruling has had a tremendous impact on gender identification, as far as the Hindi language is concerned, other than being able to choose a “third box” which is neither male nor female on official forms, gender expression in Hindi is still binary. While the masculine plural form is often used across genders in some parts of India and hence could conceivably be used as a “gender neutral” expression, it is still problematic for many as it could be perceived masculine. Like many other gendered languages, Hindi has yet to catch up with realities of identity.

Proposing a *non-binary conjugation*, is an avant-garde attempt to address the limitations posed by the gendered nature of verb conjugations in Hindi. It is not (yet :-)) part of the Hindi language.

At the very least, such an attempt will hopefully start the much needed conversation about the gendered nature of Hindi and realities of identity.