

How to say “should be” in Pāli

Verb ‘to be’ always requires a complement (adjective or noun¹). So, the syntax with “should be” is of three parts: S.V.C in English, and S.C.V in Pāli. We can say it in two ways in Pāli. In both ways, subject and complement must agree in form, gender, and number. See the examples below—

1. A man should be brave.
Puriso sūro bhaveyya.
Purisena sūrena bhavitabbaṃ.
2. A woman should be elegant.
Itthī sirimatī bhaveyya.
Itthiyā sirimantiyā bhavitabbaṃ.
3. A teacher should be wise.
Acariyo paṇḍito bhaveyya.
Acariyena paṇḍitena bhavitabbaṃ.
4. Students should be obedient.
Sissā suvacā bhaveyyuṃ.
Sissehi suvacehi bhavitabbaṃ.
5. Meditators should be always mindful.
Yogino sadā satimantā bhaveyyuṃ.
Yogīhi sadā satimantehi bhavitabbaṃ.
6. A king should be straightforward.
Rājā ujuko bhaveyya.
Rājinā ujukena bhavitabbaṃ.
7. A monk should be contented.
Bhikkhu santuṭṭho bhaveyya.
Bhikkhunā santuṭṭhena bhavitabbaṃ.
8. A nun should be calm.
Bhikkhunī santī bhaveyya.
Bhikkhuniyā santiyā bhavitabbaṃ.
9. Meditators should not be busy.
Yogīno bahu-kiccā na bhaveyyuṃ.
Yogīhi bahu-kiccehi na bhavitabbaṃ.
10. Humans should be kind-hearted.

¹ The complement can be adjective, noun, adverb, locative, and a phrase.

- Manussā suhadayā bhaveyyuṃ.
Manussehi suhadayehi bhavitabbaṃ.*
11. Devotees should not be drunkards.
*Upāsakā sura-dhuttā na bhaveyyuṃ.
Upāsamehi surā-dhuttehi na bhavitabbaṃ.*
12. Wise ones should not be womanizers.
*Paṇḍitā itthi-dhuttā na bhaveyyuṃ.
Paṇḍitehi itthi-dhuttehi na bhavitabbaṃ.*
13. One should be one's refuge.
*Attā attano nātho bhaveyya.
Attanā attano nāthena bhavitabbaṃ.*
14. We should be gentle.
*Mayaṃ mudukā bhaveyyāma.
Amhehi mudukehi bhavitabbaṃ.*
15. We should not be arrogant.
*Mayaṃ pagabbhā na bhaveyyāma.
Amhehi pagabbhehi na bhavitabbaṃ.*
16. We should not be hard-to-take-care.
*Mayaṃ du-bharā na bhaveyyāma.
Amhehi du-bharehi na bhavitabbaṃ.*
17. You should be easy-to-take-care.
*Tumhe su-bharā bhaveyyātha.
Tumhehi su-bharāhi bhavitabbaṃ.*
18. I should be a good person.
*Ahaṃ sappuriso bhaveyyāmi.
Mayā sappurisenā bhavitabbaṃ.*
19. You should be mature.
*Tvaṃ nipako bhaveyyāsi.
Tayā nipakena bhavitabbaṃ*
20. A monk, when going, knows thus, "I'm going."
*Bhikkhu gacchanto vā gacchāmi'ti pajānāti.
Bhikkhunā gacchantena vā gacchāmi'ti pajānitabbaṃ.*
21. A monk, when standing, knows thus, "I'm standing."
*Bhikkhu ṭhito vā ṭhito'mhī'ti pajānāti.
Bhikkhunā ṭhitena vā ṭhito'mhī'ti pajānitabbaṃ.*

Exercises—

1. Make a sentence with V-3 or “-*tabba*” suffix by using adjectives below:

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| • <i>manāpo/ a-manāpo</i> | loveable/ despicable |
| • <i>sīlavā/ dussīlo</i> | virtuous/ un-virtuous |
| • <i>paññavā/ dupañño</i> | educated/ uneducated |
| • <i>balavā/ dubbalo</i> | strong/ weak |
| • <i>dhanavā/ daliddo</i> | rich/ poor |
| • <i>paṇḍito/ bālo</i> | smart/ stupid |
| • <i>abhirūpā/ duvaṇṇā</i> | beautiful/ ugly |
| • <i>manāpā/ a-manāpā</i> | loveable/ despicable |
| • <i>sīlavantī/ dussīlā</i> | virtuous/ un-virtuous |
| • <i>paññavantī/ dupaññā</i> | educated/ uneducated |
| • <i>balavantī/ dubbalā</i> | strong/ weak |
| • <i>dhanavantī/ daliddā</i> | rich/ poor |
| • <i>paṇḍitā/ bālā</i> | smart/ stupid |