Vergil's Verb Tips: The Infinitive

If the verb form ends in . . .	. . . it's this kind of infinitive:	... and is normally translated as
-āre, -ēre, -ere, -īre, -esse (sum & compounds)	present active	to *x*
-ārī, -ērī, -ī[1], -īrī	present passive[2]	to be *x*'ed
(3rd stem +) -isse; (nōsse for nōvisse)[3]	perfect active[3]	to have *x*'ed
-us/-a/-um (4th principal part)[4] + esse[5]	perfect passive[6]	to have been *x*'ed
(4th stem +) -ūrus/-a/-um[7] + esse[5]; (fore)[8]	future active	to be about to *x*
-um (neut. 4th principal part)[9] + -īrī	future passive[9]	to be about to be *x*'ed

Notes

1. Third and third -iō conjugation verbs form the present passive infinitive by adding -ī directly to the stem, instead of -erī. Examples: *tollō* ("lift") becomes *tollī* ("to be lifted"), even though the present active infinitive is *tollere* ("to lift"); *caedō* ("slaughter") becomes *caedī* ("to be slaughtered), even though the present active infinitive is *caedere* ("to slaughter").

2. All deponent verbs have present infinitives with these endings, but they are nonetheless active. Examples: moror (1st conjugation) has present infinitive *morārī*, which is translated "to delay," not "to be delayed"; *prōgredior* (3rd -iō) has present infinitive *prōgredī*, which is translated "to proceed," not "to be proceeded," which logically would not exist, anyway.

3.   Verbs with third principal parts ending in *-vī* commonly undergo syncopation when forming the perfect active infinitive. Probably the most common example is *nōsse* ("to have found out," hence, "to know") instead of the longer *nōvisse*.

4.   The table gives the nominative singular forms for the perfect passive participle (4th principal part). These forms could also be nominative plural, *-ī/-ae/-a*. In indirect statements, the accusative form of the perfect passive participle would be used instead: singular in *-um/-am/-um*, plural in *-ōs/-ās/-a*.

5.   It is quite common in poetry to omit the *esse*, just as poets often omit forms of *sum*.

6.   Again, the perfect infinitive of a deponent verb would look the same, but would nonetheless be translated actively. Example: *morātus esse* is translated "to have delayed," not "to have been delayed."

7.   To form the future active participle, knock the *-us/-a/-um* off the 4th principal part and replace it with *-ūrus/-ūra/-ūrum*. The endings could also be nominative plural or accusative singular or plural as described in note 4.

8.   For indirect statement, fore is normally used in place of *futūrus esse* as the future active infinitive of *sum* and its compounds, such as *adfore*.

9.   This infinitive is extremely rare. The neuter 4th principal part is really the supine.