



RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE

Sanskrit Metres
वृत्तमालिका

(With Romanized Text)

PREPARED JOINTLY BY

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This Teaching Aid for learning the Sanskrit language includes a CD with sound recordings of Sanskrit metres and this Booklet which contains texts of the chanted samples. The samples are chanted by Kashinath Nyaupane.

A separate booklet is available displaying the Sanskrit Devengari script.

Recordings of the Sanskrit samples were made by Kevin McMillin at the RANGJUNG YESHE INSTITUTE.

English proofing and corrections by by Tyler Cann.

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Lexicon of Sanskrit Prosody

- *akṣara* – a syllable
- *ardhasamavṛtta* – a sub-category of *vṛtta*, where the alternate *pādas* have the same prosodic structure.
- *gadya* – prose
- *gaṇa* – a prosodic unit of three syllables (*akṣara*); there are eight *gaṇas*, as there are eight possible permutations of short and long syllables in a group of three.
- *guru* – a ‘heavy’ (long) syllable
- *jāti* – a sub-category of *padya*, where a *pāda* is defined by the number of syllabic ‘measures’ (*mātrā*).
- *laghu* – a ‘light’ (short) syllable
- *mātrā* – a ‘measure’ used in specifying the length of a *pāda* in metres of *jāti* type; a short (laghu) syllable measures 1 *mātrā*, and a long (guru) syllable, 2 *mātrās*.
- *pāda* – a quarter-verse. It may be subdivided into *gaṇas*, i.e. prosodic units of three syllables.
- *padya* – a stanza (which is subdivided into four *pādas*); any composition in verse.
- *samavṛtta* – a sub-category of *vṛtta*, where all *pādas* have the same prosodic structure.
- *viṣamavṛtta* – a sub-category of *vṛtta*, where all *pādas* have a different prosodic structure.
- *vṛtta* – a sub-category of *padya*, where the prosodic structure of a *pāda* is defined by the number and position (short versus long) of syllables.
- *yati* – the way in which the caesura divides a *pāda*. E.g., if the caesura divides an 11 syllable *pāda* into groups of seven and four syllables, we denote that *yati* as 7 by 4.

33. *jāti*

*ayi girinandini nanditamedini
viśvavinodini nandinute
girivaravindhyaśiro ‘dhinivāsini
viṣṇuvilāsini jīṣṇunute.
bhagavati he śitikaṇṭhakuṭumbini
bhūrikuṭumbini bhūtikṛte
jaya jaya he mahiṣāsoramardini
ramyakapardini śailasute..*

30 *mātrātmikā jātiḥ*.

Jāti has 30 *mātrās* (in a *pāda*).

The *yati* is 16 *mātrās* by 14.

Definitions of *gaṇas*

(‘*◌*’ stands for a short syllable, and ‘*—*’, for a long one):

- *ya* ◌ — —
- *ra* — ◌ —
- *ta* — — ◌
- *bha* — ◌ ◌
- *ja* ◌ — ◌
- *sa* ◌ ◌ —
- *ma* — — —
- *na* ◌ ◌ ◌

The above code-names may be combined, and those combinations abbreviated, e.g. a combination of *na* and *ya* could be expressed by *nayau*, or *nyau*.

Short and long syllables are denoted by:

- *la* (short)
- *ga* (long)

32. *gīti*

jaya śivaśaṅkara śambho
jaya girijādhīśa.
jaya jaya sām̐ba sadāśiva
paśupati jagadīśa..

om̐ hara hara hara mahādeva..

22 *mātrātmikā gītiḥ*.

Gīti has 22 *mātrās* (in a *pāda*).

The *yati* is 12 *mātrās* by 10.

31. *āryā*

mṛgamīnasajjanānām
ṛṇajalasantōṣavīhitavṛttīnām.
lubdhakadhīvarapīśunā
niṣkāraṇam vairiṇo jagati..

yasyāḥ pāde prathame dvādaśamātrās tathā tṛtīye 'pi.
aṣṭādaśa dvitīye caturthake pañcadaśa sāryāā..

The metre whose 1st and 3rd *pādas* consist of 12 *mātrās*,
the 2nd of 18 *mātrās*, and the 4th of 15 *mātrās* is *āryā*.

Illustrations of the Main 33 Sanskrit Metres

In the presentation that follows the metres are divided into three groups, and arranged, within each group, in the order of the number of syllables. The text of each sample is followed by a *sūtra* (an aphorism) in Sanskrit and English (the translation into English is not literal) describing the metre. The samples may be chanted by the reader while listening to the accompanying Compact Disk.

A. Samavṛtta Metres

1. *śaśivadanā* (6 syllables to a *pāda*)

*śaśivadanānām
vrajataruṇīnām.
adharasudhormi
madhuripur aicchat..*

śaśivadanā nyau.

Śaśivadanā (i.e. its *pāda*) is composed of *na* (◡◡◡) and *ya* (◡ – ◡).

30. *puṣpitāgrā* (12 and 13 syllables)

*tribhuvanabhuvanābhirāmaśam
sakalakalaṅkaharam param prakāśam.
aśaraṇaśaraṇam śaraṇyam īśam
haram ajam īśvaram acyutam prapadye..*

(from the *Yogavāsiṣṭham*)

*ayuḥi nayugarephito yakāro
yuḥi tu najau jaragāś ca puṣpitāgrā.*

If the 1st and the 3rd *pādas* consist of *na* (◡◡◡), *na* (◡◡◡), *ra* (– ◡ –) and *ya* (◡ – ◡), and the 2nd and the 4th of *na* (◡◡◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡), *ra* (– ◡ –) and *ga* (–), the metre is *puṣpitāgrā*.

The *yati* in the 1st and 3rd *pādas* is 7 by 5, and in the 2nd and 4th, 8 by 5.

29. **śīśulīlā** (11 and 12 syllables)

*sugatān sasutān sadharmakāyān
praṇipatyādarato 'khilāṃś ca vandyān.
sugatātmajasamvarāvatāraṃ
kathayiṣyāmi yathāgataṃ samāsāt..*

(*Bodhicaryāvatāraḥ* 1.1)

*prathame sasajā gayugmayuktā
śīśulīlā carame sabhau rayau cet.*

If the first and third *pādas* consist of *sa* (– – –), *sa* (– – –),
ja (– – –), *ga* (–) and *ga* (–), and the second and
the fourth of *sa* (– – –), *bha* (– – –), *ra* (– – –),
and *ya* (– – –), the metre is *śīśulīlā*.

The *yati* in the 1st and 3rd *pādas* is 6 by 5, and in the 2nd
and 4th, 7 by 5.

2. **vidyullekhā** (6 syllables)

*rādhā jātā kṛṣṇaḥ
kṛṣṇo jāto rādhā.
vṛndāraṇye rāse
sphīte cāndre hāse..*

vidyullekhā mo maḥ.

Vidyullekhā is composed of *ma* (– – –) and *ma* (– – –).

The *yati* is 3 by 3.

3. *anuṣṭubh* (8 syllables)

*vāgarthāviva samprktau
vāgarthapratipattaye.
jagataḥ pitarau vande
pārvatīparameśvarau..*

(*Raghuvamśamahākāvya* 1.1)

*gantukāmasya gantuśca
yathā bhedaḥ pratīyate.
tathā bhedo 'nayoḥ jñeyo
yāthāsankhyena paṇḍitaiḥ..*

(*Bodhicaryāvatāraḥ* 1.13)

Unlike in other metres, the *pāda* in *anuṣṭubh* is not subdivided into *gaṇas*. Each *pāda* follows instead the following pattern of short and long syllables (‘ ’ denotes that the syllable may be short or long):

— — — — — — — —
— — — — — — — —
— — — — — — — —
— — — — — — — —

*śloke śaṣṭhaṃ guru jñeyam, sarvatra laghu pañcamam.
dvicatuspādayoḥ hrasvam, sapṭamaṃ dīrgham anyayoḥ..*

In *anuṣṭubh*, the sixth syllable should be known as long; the fifth one always as short.

In the second and fourth *pādas*, the seventh syllable is short; in the other two *pādas*, long.

28. *viyoginī* (11 syllables)

*kṣaṇasampad iyaṃ sudurlabhā
pratīlabdhā puruṣārthasādhanī.
yadi nātra vicinityate hitaṃ
punar apy eṣa samāgamaḥ kutaḥ..*

(*Bodhicaryāvatāraḥ* 1.4)

*viṣame yadi sau jagau same
sabharā lgau ca tadā viyoginī.*

If the first and third *pādas* consist of *sa* (— — —), *sa* (— — —), *ja* (— — —) and *ga* (—), and the second and fourth consist of *sa* (— — —), *bha* (— — —), *ra* (— — —), *la* (—) and *ga* (—), the metre is *viyoginī*.

The *yati* in the 1st and 3rd *pādas* is 6 by 4, and in the 2nd and 4th *pādas*, 7 by 4.

27. **sragdharā** (21 syllables)

*yeṣāṃ śrīmadyaśodāsutapadakamale nāsti bhaktir
narāṇām
yeṣāṃ ābhir akanyāpriyaguṇakathane nānuraktā
rasajñā.
yeṣāṃ śrīkṛṣṇalīlālitarasakathākarnane naiva karṇo
dhik tān dhik tān dhig etān kathayati satataṃ
kīrtanastho mṛdaṅgaḥ..*

(Śrīmadbhāgavatam)

*mrabhnair yānāṃ trayeṇa trimuniyatiyutā sragdharā
kīrtiteyam.*

Sragdharā is said to be composed of *ma* (– – –), *ra* (– ~ –),
bha (– ~ ~), *na* (~ ~ ~) and three *ya* (~ – –),
with the *yati* 7 by 7.

4. **pramāṇikā** (8 syllables)

*punātu bhaktir acyutā
sadācyutāṅghripadmayoḥ.
śrutismṛtipramāṇikā
bhavāmburāśītārikā..*

pramāṇikā jarau lagau.

Pramāṇikā is composed of *ja* (~ – ~), *ra* (– ~ –), *la* (~)
and *ga* (–).

The *yati* is 4 by 4.

5. *indravajrā* (11 syllables)

*rātrau yathā meghaghanāndhakāre
vidyut kṣaṇaṃ darśayati prakāśam.
buddhānubhāvena tathā kadācil
lokasya puṇyeṣu matiḥ kṣaṇaṃ syāt..*

(*Bodhicaryāvatāraḥ* 1.5)

syād indravajrā yadi tau jagau gaḥ.

If it consists of *ta* (– – ◡), *ta* (– – ◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡), *ga* (–)
and *ga* (–), the metre is *indravajrā*.

The *yati* is 5 by 6.

26. *śārdūlavikrīḍita* (19 syllables)

*eke satpuruṣāḥ parārthaghaṭakāḥ svārthān parityajya ye
sāmānyās tu parārtham udyamabhṛtaḥ svārthāvirodhena
ye.*

*te 'mī mānuṣarākṣasāḥ parahitān svārthāya vighnanti ye
ye tu ghnanti nirarthakaṃ parahitaṃ te ke na jānīmahe..*

sūryāśvair masajastataḥ saguravaḥ śārdūlavikrīḍitam.

Śārdūlavikrīḍita is composed of *ma* (– – –), *sa* (◡ ◡ –),
ja (◡ – ◡), *sa* (◡ ◡ –), *ta* (– – ◡), *ta* (– – ◡)
and a long syllable, with the *yati* 12 by 7.

25. **kokilaka** (17 syllables)

*jaya jaya jahy ajām ajitādoṣagṛbhītaguṇām
tvam asi yadātmanā samavaruddhasamastabhagaḥ.
agajagadokasām akhilaśaktyavabodhaka te
kvacid ajayātmanā ca carato 'nucaren nigamaḥ..*

yadi bhavato najau bhajajalā guru kokilakam.

If it is composed of *na* (— — —), *ja* (— — —), *bha* (— — —),
ja (— — —), *ja* (— — —), *la* (—) and a long syllable;
the metre is *kokilaka*.

The *yati* is 7 by 10.

6. **upendravajrā** (11 syllables)

*mahīdharā ratnamayās tathānye
vanapradeśās ca vivekaramyāḥ.
latāḥ supuṣpābharanojjvalās ca
drumās ca ye satphalanamraśākhāḥ..*

(*Bodhicaryāvatāraḥ* 2.3)

upendravajrā jatajās tato gauḥ.

Upendravajrā is composed of *ja* (— — —), *ta* (— — —),
ja (— — —), *ga* (—) and *ga* (—)¹.

The *yati* is 5 by 6.

1 The two *ga* are expressed in the above aphorism (*sūtra*) by *gauḥ* (a 'cow'), which is a mnemonic device.

7. *upajāti* (11 syllables)

*brahmālavālaṃ bhuvanaikapālaṃ
yaśoviśālaṃ śiśupālakālam.
saṃsāramāyāmatimohajālaṃ
bālaṃ mukundaṃ śirasā namāmi..*

*anantarodīritalakṣmabhājau
pādaḥ yadyāv upajātayas tāḥ.
itthaṃ kilānyāsv api miśritāsu
vadanti jātiṣv idam eva nāma..*

Upajāti is a combination of *upendravajra* and *indravajra*.²

24. *hariṇī* (17 syllables)

*bahularajase viśvotpattau bhavāya namo namaḥ
prabalatamase tatsaṃhāre harāya namo namaḥ.
janasukhakṛte sattvodriktau mṛdāya namo namaḥ
pramaḥasi pade nistraiguṇye śivāya namo namaḥ..*

nasamarasalā gaḥ ṣaḍvedair hayair hariṇī matā.

Hariṇī is composed of *na* (◡◡◡), *sa* (◡◡◡), *ma* (— — —),
ra (— ◡ —), *sa* (◡◡◡), *la* (◡) and *ga* (—), with the
yati 6 by 4 by 7.

² For *indravajra* and *upendravajra* see above.

23. **mandākrāntā** (17 syllables)

*tvām ālikhya praṇayakupitām dhāturāgaiḥ śilāyām
ātmānaṃ te caraṇapatitaṃ yāvad icchāmi kartum.
asrais tāvan muhur upacitair dr̥ṣṭir ālipyate me
krūras tasminn api na sahate saṅgamaṃ nau kṛtāntaḥ..*

(Kālidāsa: Meghadūtaḥ)

mandākrāntāmbudhiraśanagair mo bhanau tau gayugmam.

Mandākrāntā is composed of *ma* (– – –), *bha* (– ◡ ◡),
na (◡ ◡ ◡), *ta* (– – ◡), *ta* (– – ◡), *ga* (–) and
ga (–), with the *yati* 4 by 6 by 7.

8. **śālinī** (11 syllables)

*puñjībhūtaṃ prema gopāṅganānāṃ
mūrtībhūtaṃ bhāgadheyaṃ yadūnām.
ekībhūtaṃ guptavittaṃ śrutīnām
śyāmībhūtaṃ brahma me sannidhattām..*

māt tau gau cet śālinī vedalokaiḥ.

If *ma* (– – –) is followed by two *ta* (– – ◡) and two *ga* (–),
the metre is *śālinī*, with the *yati* 4 by 7.

9. **rathoddhatā** (11 syllables)

*nandanandanapadāravindayoḥ
syandamānamakarandabindavaḥ.
sindhavaḥ paramasaukhyasampadām
nandayantu hṛdayaṃ mamāniśam..*

rāt parair naralagai rathoddhatā.

With *na* (◡◡◡), *ra* (– ◡ –), *la* (◡) and *ga* (–) following
after *ra* (– ◡ –), the metre is *rathoddhatā*.

The *yati* is 7 by 4.

22. **pr̥thvī** (17 syllables)

*labheta sikatāsu tailam api yatnataḥ pīḍayan
pibec ca mṛgatṛṣṇikāsu salilaṃ pipāsārditaḥ.
bhujāṅgam api kopitaṃ śirasi puṣpavad dhārayet
na tu pratiniviṅtamūrkhajanacittam āradhayet..*

(*Bharṛhari: Nīśatakam*)

jasau jasalā vasugrahayatiś ca pr̥thvī guruḥ.

Pr̥thvī is composed of *ja* (◡ – ◡), *sa* (◡◡ –), *ja* (◡ – ◡),
sa (◡◡ –), *ya* (◡ – –), *la* (◡) and *ga* (–),
with the *yati* 8 by 9.

21. **śikhariṇī** (17 syllables)

*anāghrātaṃ puṣpaṃ kisalayam alūnaṃ kararuhair
anāviddhaṃ ratnaṃ madhu navam anāsvāditarasam.
akhaṇḍaṃ puṇyānāṃ phalam iva ca tadrūpam
anaghaṃ
na jāne bhoktāraṃ kam iha samupasthāsyati vidhiḥ..*

(Śakuntalābhijñānam)

rasai rudraś chinnā yamanasabhalā gaḥ śikhariṇī.

Śikhariṇī has the *yati* 6 by 11, and is composed of
ya (– – –), *ma* (– – –), *na* (– – –), *sa* (– – –),
bha (– – –), *la* (–) and *ga* (–).

10. **svāgatā** (11 syllables)

*śātakumbharucihāridukūlaḥ
kekicandrakavirājitacūlaḥ.
navyayauvanalasadbrajanārī-
rañjano jayati kuñjavihārī..*

svāgatā ranabhagaurguruṇā ca.

Svāgatā consists of *ra* (– – –), *na* (– – –), *bha* (– – –)
and two 'heavy' *ga* (–).

The *yati* is 7 by 4.

11. *indirā* (11 syllables)

*jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ
śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi.
dayita dṛśyatām dikṣu tāvakās
tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate..*

nararalair gurāv indirā matā.

When a long syllable is preceded by *na* (– – –),
ra (– – –), *ra* (– – –) and *la* (–), the metre
is *indirā*.

The *yati* is 6 by 5.

20. *pañcacāmara* (16 syllables)

jaṭāṭavin...

*bhaje vrajaikanandanam samastapāpakhaṇḍanam
svabhaktacittarañjanam sadaiva nandanandanam.
supicchagucchamālakam sunādaveṇuhastakam
anaṅgaraṅgasāgaram namāmi kṛṣṇanāgaram..*

jarau jarau tato jagau ca pañcacāmaram vadet.

One should recite *pañcacāmara* as consisting of
ja (– – –), *ra* (– – –), *ja* (– – –), *ra* (– – –),
then *ja* (– – –) and *ga* (–).

The *yati* is 8 by 8.

19. *mālinī* (15 syllables)

*manasi vacasi kāye puṇyapīyūṣapūrṇās
tribhuvanam upakāraśreṇibhiḥ prīṇayantaḥ.
paraṅṇaparamāṇūn parvatīkr̥tya nityam
nijahṛdi vikasantaḥ santi santaḥ kiyantaḥ..*

(from the *Nitiśatakam*)

nanamayayayuteyaṃ mālinī bhogilokaiḥ.

Mālinī is composed of *na* (◡ ◡ ◡), *na* (◡ ◡ ◡), *ma* (– – –),
ya (◡ – –) and *ya* (◡ – –), with the *yati* 8 by 7.

12. *vaṃśastha* (12 syllables)

*rajojuṣe janmani sattvavṛttaye
sthitau prajānām pralaye tamaḥ spṛśe.
ajāya sargasthitināśahetave
trayīmayāya triguṇātmane namaḥ..*

jatau tu vaṃśastham udīritaṃ jarau.

Vaṃśastha is described as composed of *ja* (◡ – ◡),
ta (– – ◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡) and *ra* (– ◡ –).

The *yati* is 5 by 7.

13. **bhujāṅgaprayāta** (12 syllables)

*gale ruṇḍamālaṃ tanau sarpajālaṃ
mahākālakālaṃ gaṇeśādhipālam.
jaṭājūṭabhaṅgottaraṅgair viśālam
śivaṃ śaṅkaraṃ śambhum īśānam īḍe..*

bhujāṅgaprayātaṃ caturbhir yakāraiḥ.

Bhujāṅgaprayāta is composed of four *ya* (◡ – ◡).

The *yati* is 6 by 6.

18. **vasantatilakā** (14 syllables)

*ratnākaras tava gṛhaṃ gṛhiṇī ca padmā
kiṃ deyamasti bhavate jagadīśvarāya.
ābhīravāmanayanāhṛtamānasāya
dattaṃ mano yadupate kṛpayā gṛhāṇa..*

jñeyā vasantatilakā tabhajā jagau gaḥ.

Vasantatilakā should be known as consisting of *ta* (– – ◡),
bha (– ◡ ◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡), *ja* (◡ – ◡), *ga* (–)
and *ga* (–).

The *yati* is 8 by 6.

17. **praharṣiṇī** (13 syllables)

*gopīnām adharasudhārasasya pānair
uttuṅgastanakalaśopagūhanaś ca.
āścaryair api rativibhramair murāreḥ
saṃsāre matir abhavat prahārṣiṇīhaḥ..*

tryāsābhir manajaraḡāḥ praharṣiṇīyam.

Praharṣiṇī is composed of *ma* (– – –), *na* (– – –),
ja (– – –), *ra* (– – –) and *ga* (–), with the *yati* 3
by 10.

14. **toṭaka** (12 syllables)

*adharaṃ madhuraṃ vadaṇaṃ madhuraṃ
nayaṇaṃ madhuraṃ hasitaṃ madhuraṃ.
hṛdayaṃ madhuraṃ gamaṇaṃ madhuraṃ
madhurādhipater akhilaṃ madhuraṃ..*

vada toṭakam abdhisakārayutam.

You should recite *toṭaka* as consisting of four *sa* (– – –).

15. **sragviṇī** (12 syllables)

*acyutaṃ keśavaṃ rāmanārāyaṇam
kṛṣṇadāmodaraṃ vāsudevaṃ harim.
śrīdharaṃ mādhavaṃ gopikāvallabham
jānakīnāyakaṃ rāmacandraṃ bhaje..*

kīrtitaiṣā catūrephikā sragviṇī.

Sragviṇī is described as composed of four *ra* (– ∪ –).

The *yati* is 6 by 6.

16. **drutavilambita** (12 syllables)

*aśanam ācara kāñcanabhājane
tvam api kukkura mā kuru vismayam.
iha hi pāmaranāyakamandire
na hi satām asatām ca vivecanam..*

drutavilambitam āha nabhau bharau.

Drutavilambita is composed of *na* (– ∪ ∪), *bha* (– ∪ ∪),
bha (– ∪ ∪) and *ra* (– ∪ –).

The *yati* is 7 by 5.