

CHAPTER 3

Using all the cases; prepositions; clauses

Using all the cases

So far you have learnt to write out 1st declension nouns in full, and to write and translate sentences involving subjects (in the nominative case) and objects (in the accusative case). So what about all those other cases? The time has come to start addressing those tables ('O table, how nice to see you!') and to start using the 'of's, 'to's, 'for's etc. which we have largely avoided up to now.

Nominative case

Used for the subject.

E.g. *The girl* loves the farmer = *puella agricolam amat*.

Vocative case

When addressing a noun, put the noun you are addressing into the vocative case.

E.g. '*O sailors*, you love the island' = *nautae, insulam amātis*.

Accusative case

Used for the object.

E.g. He loves *the girl* = *puellam amat*

Genitive case

The genitive case is the possessive case. In English we either use the word 'of' or else we use an apostrophe. In Latin, the 'possessor' (i.e. the noun doing the possessing) is put into the genitive case and may come *before* or *after* the other noun.

E.g. The table *of the farmers* = *mēsa agricolārum* (OR *agricolārum mēsa*)

E.g. *The farmer's* table = *mēsa agricolae* (OR *agricolae mēsa*)

Dative case

The dative case is used for the *indirect object* and is generally translated with 'to' or 'for'.

E.g. The farmer sings *to the girls* = *agricola puellis cantat*.

Ablative case

The ablative case is used for the instrument *by means of* which we do something. It is often translated by the words *by* or *with*, but only when these mean *by means of*.

E.g. They overcome the inhabitants *by means of* wisdom = *incolās sapientiā superant*.

E.g. The farmer overcomes the sailor *with arrows* = *agricola nautam sagittis superat*.

So you really want to learn Latin...

Exercise 3. 1

Study the information on the left-hand page about the use of all the cases. Before attempting to translate into Latin, it is a good idea to analyse each sentence, working out which cases you will need. S, V and O will appear as normal, but the extra cases can be added as follows:

S	V	O	Gen.
The farmer	loves	the land	of the inhabitants
S	V	O	Abl.
The sailor	overcomes	the farmer	with an arrow

Once you have analysed a sentence like this, it is practically impossible to translate it into Latin incorrectly. The only thing to watch out for is whether the nouns are singular or plural. Now, analyse the following sentences and then translate into Latin:

1. The girls prepare the table of the farmer.
2. The inhabitants love the fame of Troy.
3. We do not attack Rome with arrows.
4. They will prepare a road for the inhabitants.
5. He has prepared the table for the woman.
6. O girls, the farmers are singing to the women.
7. The arrows of the inhabitants overcome the sailors.
8. They were preparing the tables for the women.
9. O farmers, you will not overcome the country with arrows.
10. O sailors, you have not overcome the inhabitants.

Exercise 3. 2

The more complicated a sentence, the more cases will be involved. Some cases will occur more than once in a sentence. There is no need to panic; just put each noun into Latin in the order it comes in English, remembering to put the verb at the end.

1. The inhabitants of Rome love the glory of Greece.
2. The sailors will overcome the inhabitants of the country with arrows.
3. O farmer, the inhabitants of the country have overcome Greece.
4. He was building a road for the inhabitants of the country.
5. The girls are preparing the table for the sailor.

Using Latin

A.M.

The letters a.m. stand for ante meridiem = before midday.