

Capitulum VI - Via Latina

The Passive Voice

Latin verbs have two voices: active and passive. The use of voice in Latin is identical to English.

The Active Voice is used to indicate that the subject of the sentence is doing something (or simply is something):

Marcus puellam pulsat. Marcus hits the girl.

Marcus improbus est. Marcus is bad.

The Passive Voice is used to indicate that someone or something is doing something to the subject of the sentence:

Puella pulsatur ā Marcō. The girl is hit by Marcus.

This chapter introduces the passive voice, but only in the 3rd Person. Here are the personal endings:

	Singular		Plural	
	-tur		-ntur	
Thus:	<i>portātur</i>	<i>timētur</i>	<i>vehitur</i>	<i>audītur</i>
	<i>portantur</i>	<i>timentur</i>	<i>vehuntur</i>	<i>audiuntur</i>

Ablative of Personal Agent

The ablative is used with the preposition *ā* or *ab* to express the agent in a passive construction (*i.e.*, the person doing the action of the verb).

Iūlius ab Ursō et Dāvō portātur. Julius is carried by Ursus and Davus.

Saccī ā Syrō et Lēandrō portantur. The sacks are carried by Syrus and Leander.

Verba Mēdī ā Lydiā audiuntur. The words of Medus are heard by Lydia.

Ablative of Means (Instrument)

The ablative is used to express the *means* or *instrument* by which the action of the verb is effected. The ablative of means can appear in both active and passive sentences.

Dominus servōs malōs bacculō verberat. The master beats the slaves with a staff.

Lydia verbīs Mēdī dēlectātur. Lydia is pleased by the words of Medus.

Although the ablative of means is translated with a preposition in English (by or with), in Latin it is formed by the ablative alone and never with a preposition.

Ablative of Place from Which

The ablative is used from express motion from.

Venit ab oppidō. He comes from town.

If a city, town, or small island is named, the ablative by itself (with no preposition) is used.

Tūsculō venit. He comes from Tusculum.

Accusative of Place to Which

The accusative is used to express motion towards.

Ad oppidum it. He goes to the town.

If a city, town, or small island is named, the accusative by itself (with no preposition) is used.

Rōmam it. He is going to Rome.

Ablative of Route

The ablative is used to express the route by which one travels. It is never accompanied by a preposition in Latin. The English use of “via” or “by way of” echoes Latin’s usage of the ablative of route: “I went via (by way of) New York”.

Mēdus viā Latīnā Tūsculō Rōmam ambulat. Medus walks from Tusculum to Rome by way of the Latin Road.

Is quī viā Latīnā venit per portam Capēnam Rōmam intrat. He who comes by way of the the Latin Road enters Rome through the Capena Gate.

The Locative Case

The locative case (expressing location) is restricted to cities, towns, and small islands, and four other words. It is normally the same form as the genitive singular (or, if the noun is plural, the dative plural).

Mēdus Tūsculī nōn est; neque Rōmae est Mēdus. Medus is not in Tusculum; nor is he in Rome.

Quō, Unde, Ubī

English uses “where” to express three distinct concepts: motion toward, motion from, and location. Latin has separate words for these:

quō = where to? *Quō it Mēdus?* Where is Medus going?

unde = from where *Unde venit Mēdus?* Where is Medus coming from?

ubī = where (location) *Ubī habitat Mēdus?* Where does Medus live?

Prepositions with the Accusative

Prepositions in Latin will take their object either in the ablative or accusative case (a very few prepositions will take objects in both cases). This chapter introduces eight common preposition which govern the accusative case:

ad, to, towards

ante, before, in front of

post, behind, after

inter, between, among during

prope, near, close to

circum, around

apud, at, near, by, with, in the presence of

per, through; during; by

Vocabulary

tam . . . quam, as . . . as

it, (he, she, it) goes

eunt, (they) go

quam, how