

## THE USE OF CASES

Cases in Latin have specific grammatical functions, which must be learned in order to properly understand Latin sentences (which are not dependent, as English sentences are, on word order). The following case uses are fundamental:

### Nominative:

- Subject of a sentence.

*Iuppiter circumspicit* : Jupiter looks around.

*Iuppiter* is the subject (i.e., the actor) of this simple sentence and is in the nominative.

- Predicate nominative (with linking verb “to be” “to seem” “to appear,” etc.).

*Iuppiter est deus* : Jupiter is a god.

The predicate noun *deus* further defines the subject and is in the nominative.

*Iuppiter erat benignus* : Jupiter was kind.

The predicate adjective *benignus* further describes the subject and is in the nominative.

### Genitive:

- Genitive of possession: expresses simple possession.

*Regia reginae magna erat* : The palace of the queen was large.

- Genitive of description: attributes a quality to a noun.

*Diana dea magnae sapientiae est* : Diana is a goddess of great wisdom.

This genitive is normally accompanied by an adjective.

- Genitive with certain adjectives:

*dignus, -a, -um + gen.* = worthy (of)

*Delectamenta sunt pretiosa sed digna pretii* : The delights are costly but worth the price.

N.B. *dignus* may also govern the ablative case.

*plenus, -a, -um + gen.* = full (of)

*Oppidum olim plenum virorum erat* : The town was once full of men.

*peritus, -a, -um + gen.* = skilled (in), expert (in)

*Vir peritus sagittarum est* : The man is skilled with arrows.

N.B.: *peritus* may also govern the accusative and ablative case.

- Partitive Genitive (Genitive of the Whole)

A genitive is used to denote the whole to which a part belongs.

*Deis partem cibi dederunt* : They gave part of the food to the gods.

### Dative:

- Dative of indirect object.

*Dei dona viris dederunt* : The gods gave gifts to the men.

- Dative of possession:

*Nomen mihi Marcus est* : My name is Mark.

Unus filius *Latoniae* erat : Latona had one son.

- Dative with certain adjectives:

*benignus*, -a, -um + dat. = kind (to)

Iuppiter erat *filio* benignus : Jupiter was kind to his son.

*carus*, -a, -um + dat. = dear (to)

Terra *deo* cara erat : The land was dear to the god.

*gratus*, -a, -um + dat. = pleasing (to)

Nymphae *deis* gratae sunt : Nymphs are pleasing to the gods.

*idoneus*, -a, -um + dat. = suitable (for)

Tempus idoneum *poenis* exspectavit : She awaited a suitable time for punishment.

- Dative with certain verbs:

*praesto*, -are, -stiti, -stitum + dat. = to surpass

Cur Latona *mihi* praestat : Why does Latona surpass me?

*impero*, -are + dat. = to command, order

### Accusative:

- Direct Object:

Poeta *fabulas* narravit : The poet told stories.

- Accusative with prepositions:

*ad* + acc. = to, toward, near

*per* + acc. = through

*prope* + acc. = near, close to

*trans*. + acc. = across

*propter* + acc. = on account of, because of

*post* + acc. = after

*inter* + acc. = between, among

*in* + acc. = into

- Subject Accusative in Indirect Speech (with Infinitive):

Minerva monstrat se *deam* esse : Minerva shows that she is a goddess.

*Deos* appropinquare video : I see that the gods are approaching.

### Ablative:

- Ablative of Means:

Phoebus liberos eius *sagittis* necavit : Phoebus killed her children with (by means of) arrows.

- Ablative with prepositions:

*cum* + abl. = with

*sine* + abl. = without

*de* + abl. = about, concerning

*a* (*ab*) + abl. = from, away from, by

*pro* + abl. = in front of, before

*in* + abl. = in, on