

Broad type	Narrower type
Separative	- many combinations with prepositions (e fano) - comparative - ablative of origin (e.g. genere nobili)
Instrumental	- for tools used (pugnis clausisque) - ablative of cause - ablative of manner - attendant circumstances - ablative of description - with certain verbs (<i>utor, fruor</i>) - ablative of measure of difference
Locative or Temporal	- ablative of time - locative ablative (with prepositions, e.g. in <i>aedibus</i>)

Revision sheet: uses of the ablative

General rule

The ablative is used to denote the relations expressed in English by the prepositions *from, in, at, with, by*.

There are three broad 'areas of responsibility' for the ablative case:

- Answering the questions of... – from where? with what starting point? => separative ablative
- with what? by what? => ablative of instrument
- where? when? => locative ablative (relating to place) and temporal ablative

1) True ablative ('ablative proper'/separative ablative)

It indicates the point *from which* the action (whether it is literal or figurative) moves (imagine *separation, ablatus* from *aufero*, 'I take away').

ē sacrariō = out of the shrine

ā conuiuiō = from the party

- In this category, a new ablative is introduced: the **ablative of comparison**.

Verres est Ciceronē eloquentior = Verres is more eloquent than Cicero.

uiri peiores omnibus aliis = men worse than everybody else.

The comparative degree is often followed by the ablative signifying 'than' (notice how you have to supply it). Remember that we have also learnt another way of doing comparison, using *quam* (and when *quam* is used, the two things compared are put in the same case).

- In this category, we also find the **ablative of origin/source**.

nata genere nobili = she was born *from* a good family.

natus Iove et Maiā = he was born *from* Jupiter and Maia.

2) **'Locative' ablative**

It indicates the point *in time or space where or when* something occurs (commonly with *in*). This is what I colloquially call the 'stationary' ablative, meaning that the ablative is used to describe one point in time or space.

(in) illō tempore = at that time

primā horā = at the first hour

decem diēbus = (with)in ten days

3) **'Instrumental' ablative**

It indicates the means/instrument *by which* the action is carried out, or the people, qualities and circumstances *which accompany* the action (in English often with 'by' or 'with'). Instrumental ablative denotes *means, instrument, manner and accompaniment*.

mulier summā uirtutē = a woman of the highest virtue

gladio et pugnīs me uerberat = he strikes me with a sword and fists.

- In this category, we find the **ablative of attendant circumstances**, 'together with'. It is usually introduced by a *cum*, but sometimes is omitted, so be extra careful.

uenimus cum coniugibus et magnā calamitatē = we come together with wives and a great disaster.

signum abstulit magno cum gemitu ciuitatis = he removed the image to loud clamour of the people

- In this category, we also find the **ablative after some deponent verbs** = learn them: *utor* ('I use'), *fruor* ('I enjoy')¹. These verbs always govern the ablative.

fruebantur cupiditatē = they used to enjoy greed.

hīs uerbīs uteris = you use these words.

- In this category, we also find the **ablative of measure (sometimes degree) of difference**. This ablative, with comparatives and words that imply a comparison, is employed to *denote the measure, or degree, of difference*.

¹ And other verbs and their compounds you have not learnt yet, but here they are in case you are curious: *fungor* ('I perform'), *potior* (when followed by the ablative, 'I gain control of', by the genitive, 'I control'), *uescor* ('I eat').

Verres multo turpior est quam comites sui = Verres is much (*by a great amount*) viler than his companions.
duobus digitis longior = 'longer by two fingers', i.e. 'two fingers longer'

- In this category, we also find the **ablative of cause**, which is deployed to show *why an action was carried out*. The motive which influences the mind of the person acting is expressed by the ablative of course.

amore hoc fecit = she did this from love (*because of love*)
avaritia Verris classis a praedonibus capta est = because of Verres' greed, the fleet was captured by pirates

4) **Ablative absolute**

A noun or a pronoun, with another noun or adjective (especially a participle) can be put in the ablative to define *the time* or *circumstances* of an action.

This construction is very common, and is called the **ablative absolute**. For the moment, think of it as an ablative of attendant circumstances (thus 'with' or 'in the circumstances of'), and then you can retranslate it to render the circumstances better.

eō tempore, Verre praetore = at this time, with Verres as praetor (or 'when Verres was praetor').

