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Memorising for Latin

BOOK ONE

Nouns

EVAN MILLNER

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UNIVERSITAS SCHOLARIUM

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Introduction

To read Latin, you need to know the endings of its nouns and adjectives and the forms of its verbs, and you need to know them well enough to recognise them at once. Grammar books set these out in tables, in an order chosen for good grammatical reasons. But that order was not chosen to make them easy to learn. These little books show you two ways to learn them quickly: by changing the order a little, and by putting the forms into a memory room.

Memorising for Latin comes in three books. The first is on **nouns**, the second on **adjectives**, and the third on **verbs**. All three begin with this same introduction, which explains the memory system.

An old Roman method

The Romans themselves used methods like this. Memory was one of the five parts of the art of speaking, and orators were trained in it. The method comes down to us in a Latin textbook of rhetoric, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, written by an unknown author around 85 BC. Its fourth part, *memoria*, explains the method of places, the *method of loci*. It is the only full account to survive from the ancient world, although Cicero and Quintilian, the great teachers of rhetoric, also write about it. It was taught again in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance. The Roman orator Cicero, and many other famous Romans, could speak for hours without notes, because they had placed the main points of their speeches in the rooms of a building they knew well. The Greeks called each such place a *topos*, which is where our word *topic* comes from. In Latin a place is a *locus*, and more than one place are *loci*: so this is the *method of loci*, the method of places.

Why this method was forgotten

This method was used for many hundreds of years, from the time of the ancient Romans. One reason it is not taught in schools today is a group of people called the Puritans, about four hundred years ago. They were very religious, and they had a great deal to do with the education of children in the English-speaking world. One of them, William Perkins, wrote against the method in England in the 1580s.

The Puritans did not like the idea of making funny pictures, because they did not like things that were funny. And the stranger and more unusual a picture is, the better you will remember it. Nobody can see into the heads of little boys and girls, but you can imagine what kind of pictures they might make in there! The Puritans did not like that at all. They could not see into the children's heads, and they did not want children thinking of strange pictures. And so the method stopped being taught in schools.

But we are teaching it again, because we do not mind if you make funny pictures in your head: strange pictures, weird pictures, unusual pictures. This is good. The stranger and more unusual your pictures are, the easier they will be to remember. And you do not have to tell anybody what they are. They are yours alone.

If you cannot see pictures in your mind

Not everyone can see pictures in their mind's eye. I cannot, or not clearly. Yet the method still works well for me. I can remember the shape and the feel of things very clearly. So instead of seeing a thing in its square, I imagine running my hands over it, and feeling it. It is very odd indeed, running my hand over an imaginary eyeball with an arm

growing out of it! But then I know exactly what shape it has, and exactly where it is. If you have a good memory for sounds, you can do the same thing with sound.

The memory room

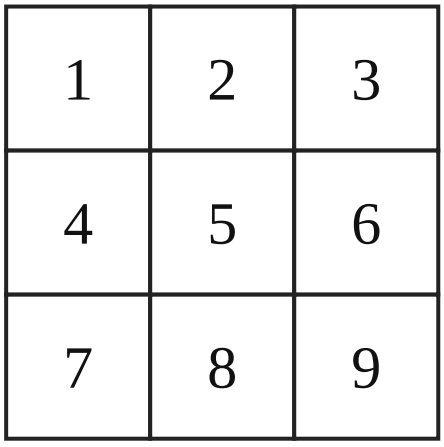
This book uses the memory room described in *Methods to Remember*. Here it is again, step by step.

Step One: get comfortable

Sit with your back to the fireplace, or to a wall of your room. Pick a square room that has four walls: you will be imagining yourself sitting with your back against one of those walls. Every time you imagine yourself in this room, you will be sitting in the same place.

The floor

Imagine the floor is divided into nine squares, three squares to a row. This is like a big game of noughts and crosses (tic-tac-toe) laid out on the floor in front of you, covering the whole floor of the room. The square furthest away from you, on the left, is square number 1. Then comes square number 2, and on the right-hand side, furthest away from you, square number 3. The middle row is 4, 5, 6, and the row right where you are is 7, 8, 9. You are sitting in square number 8.



you sit in 8

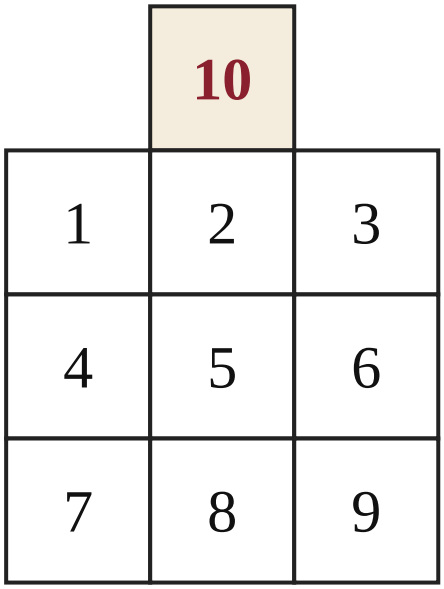
The floor

These nine are the nine squares in the middle of the diagram.

The first wall: the tens

The wall on your left is the first wall. Divide it, too, into nine squares, with another noughts-and-crosses board, and number them the same way, starting from the top left-hand corner of the wall as you turn to face it: 1 to 9.

You will notice that we have gone 1 to 9 on the floor, and then back to 1 to 9 on the wall, which is not particularly useful. So, on the ceiling, directly above the 2 of this wall, imagine one more square, sticking up above the board. That square is 10. Everything on this wall is in the tens: its 1 is really 11, its 2 is 12, its 3 is 13, and so on until we get to 19.

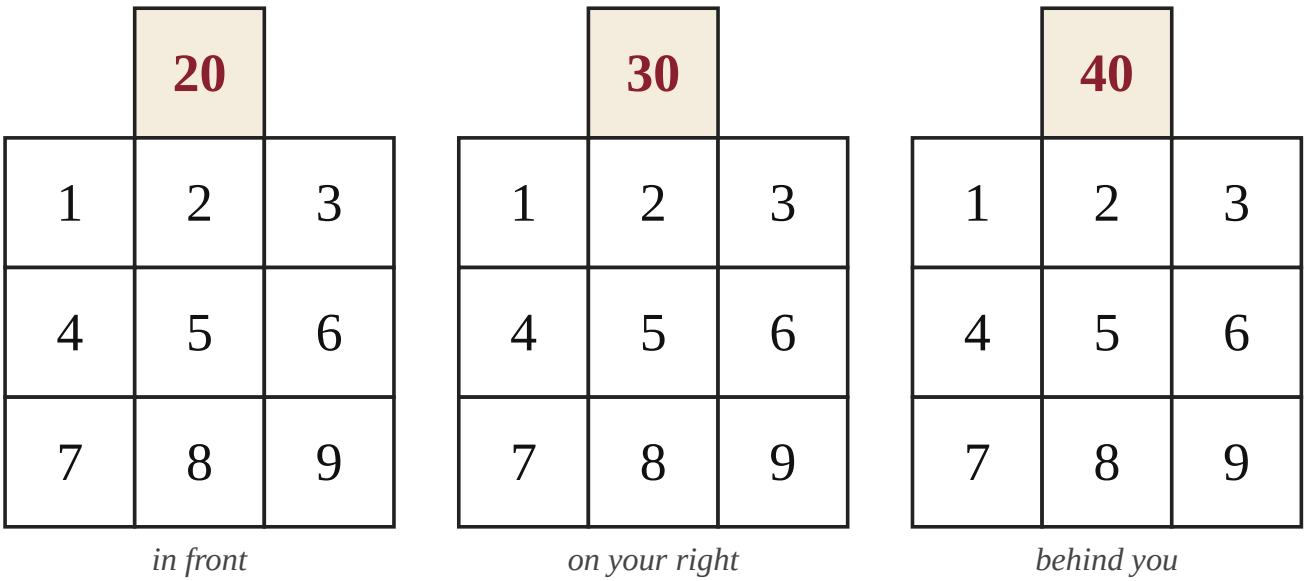


The first wall, with 10 above it

Now compare the wall with the floor, and note the consistency: the wall is numbered exactly like the floor. Don't remember the wall as 11, 12, 13, but as plain single digits, with the 10 placed just above the wall, on the ceiling. Everything below the 10 is in the tens.

The other three walls

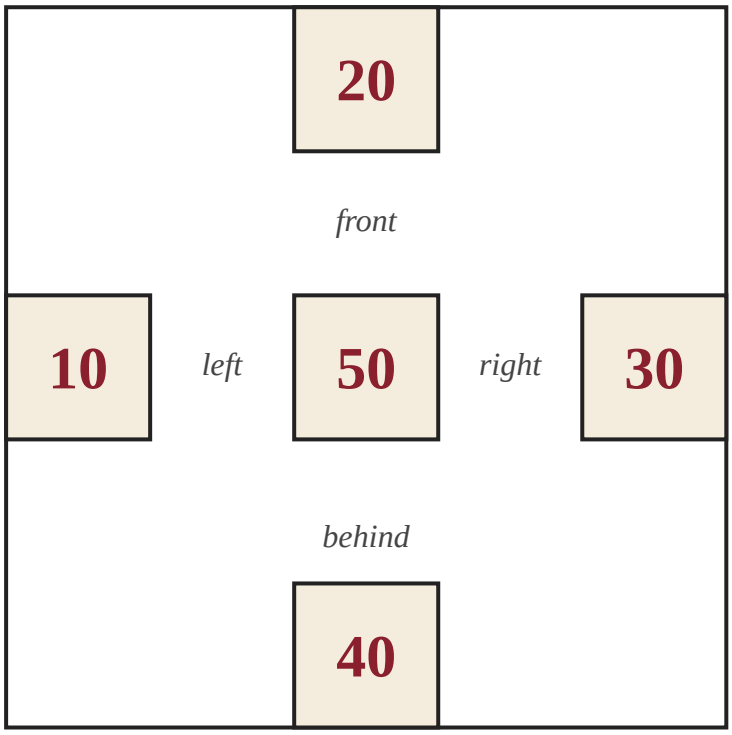
Then do the same for the remaining walls. The wall in front of you is the second wall: above it, on the ceiling, is 20, and its squares are 21, 22, 23, up to 29. The wall on your right is the third wall, with 30 above it: 31 to 39. The wall behind your back is the fourth wall, with 40 above it: 41 to 49.



The second, third and fourth walls

The ceiling: 50

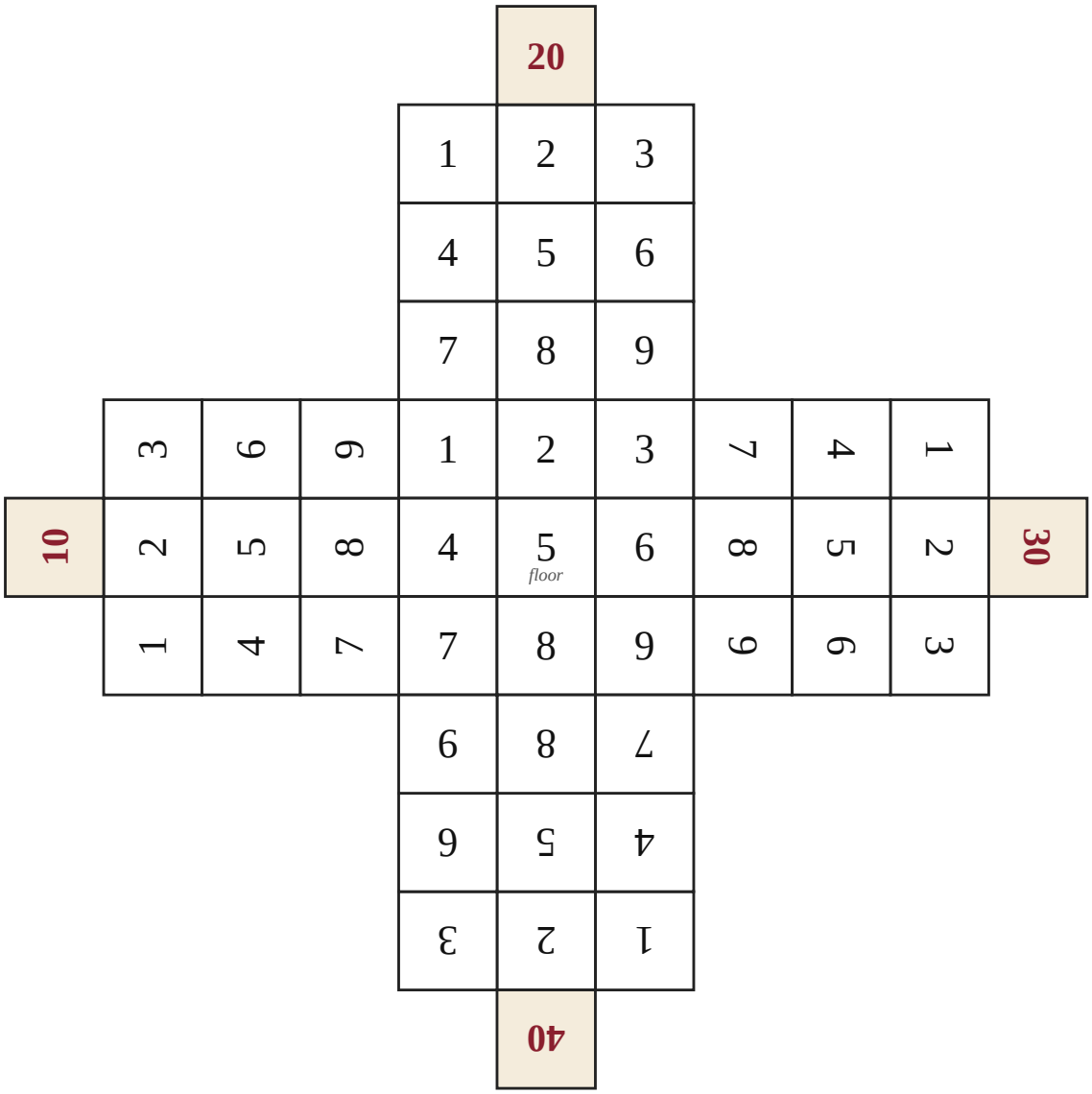
Right in the middle of the ceiling, where the light or lamp would be, place one more square. Sometimes in the middle of a ceiling there is a beautiful plaster ceiling rose with the lampshade hanging from it; sometimes it is just a lamp. That is square number 50, right in the middle of the ceiling above your head.



The ceiling, as you look up

So we have fifty places, or *loci*, in this room.

The diagram



The memory room, unfolded

Examine the diagram. If you cut it out and folded it up, with the numbers on the inside, you would have your room: the floor in the middle, the four walls folded up around it, and the 10, 20, 30 and 40 on the ceiling above their walls. Drawing the diagram out on a large sheet of card and making the cube can also be of assistance.

Or find an old cardboard box. Draw the noughts-and-crosses board on the inside of the bottom of the box for the floor, and then on the inside of each wall. Cardboard boxes usually have folding leaves that close to make the lid: draw the 10, 20, 30 and 40 on the inside of those. Draw on the inside of the box, not the outside.

Take some time to get this pattern firmly into your head. I would spend a good ten minutes running over it in your mind's eye.

More rooms

Once this room is finished, we can imagine ourselves opening a door in the wall and going into another room, and after that room into yet another. The important thing is to remember which room comes after which. The first room holds the numbers 1 to 50, the second 51 to 100, and so on. You can put one of these memory rooms in every room and closet in your home.

Setting this system up in your head requires a small investment of time. Once you have it, you will have it with you for life.

The memory room comes from Gregor von Feinaigle's New Art of Memory *(1812), as set out by Francis Fauvel-Gouraud in* Phreno-Mnemotechny *(1845).*

The endings of the five declensions

What you will learn in one day

This book gives you two short rhymes: one for the singular and one for the plural. If you memorise these two rhymes, and then do the practice exercises at the end of the book, you should have a reasonable command of all the endings of all the nouns in Latin in one single day.

Many students spend months, or even years, suffering over these endings. You do not need to. With the rhymes you learn the basic outline very quickly. Then, through the exercises, you fine-tune your knowledge and your skill.

A better order

Grammar books usually give the cases in the order nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, ablative, or nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative. Here we use a different order:

nominative, vocative, accusative, ablative, dative, genitive

In this order, endings that are the same, or nearly the same, come next to each other. So the endings can be said in one breath, like a chant. Just say each line, one after the other, and then write them down.

This order is not only easier to memorise. It also has a logic of its own.

We begin with the **nominative**: the word itself, the name of the thing. This is the form you find first in the dictionary. Next comes the **vocative**, the form you use when you call someone or speak to them. The nominative and the vocative are very closely related, and in most words they are the same.

Then comes the **accusative**. This is the natural next step. When I say *I see the book*, or *I have the book*, *the book* is in the accusative. It is as if an arrow shoots out from the action and strikes the object of the action.

Next in our order comes the **ablative**, which is quite simple. Then comes the **dative**, which is used in slightly more complex ways.

At the very end of the sequence comes the **genitive**. This is the other form that the dictionary gives you: a dictionary usually gives a noun in the nominative and the genitive, for example *dominus, domini*. The genitive tells you which declension the word belongs to. So the two forms that you find in the dictionary stand at the two ends of the chant. It is right and good that the genitive comes at the end: your eye needs to fall on it at once, and you need to know it, because you will see it in the dictionary.

Not a new idea

Tables like these are not new. The Roman grammarian Varro (116–27 BC), in Book 10 of his work *On the Latin Language* (*De Lingua Latina*), set out the forms of words in rows, some going across and some going down, "as on a board" (*ut in tabula*), like the squared board of a Roman board game. Going across, he put the cases of one word: *albus, albi, albo*. Going down, he put its genders: *albus, alba, album*. So when we put Latin forms into squares, we are doing something that the Romans themselves did.

The singular

SINGULAR	I	II	III	IV	V
Nominative	**A**	**US**	**CLONES TRAX**	**US**	**ES**
Vocative	**A**	**E**	**CLONES TRAX**	**US**	**ES**
Accusative	**AM**	**UM**	**EM**	**UM**	**EM**
Ablative	**A**	**O**	**E**	**U**	**E**
Dative	**AE**	**O**	**I**	**UI**	**EI**
Genitive	**AE**	**I**	**IS**	**US**	**EI**

The singular endings of the five declensions

In the third declension the nominative and vocative singular have many different forms. The letters of **CLONES TRAX** give most of them. Look at the third-declension nouns in a grammar book, and you will see that their nominatives end in these letters: *lac* (c), *consul* (l), *leo* (o), *nomen* (n), *mare* (e), *civis* (s), *caput* (t), *pater* (r), *poema* (a), *rex* (x).

Now learn these chants. The words in brackets are rough sound-alikes that help you remember.

- **First declension:** A – A – AM – A – AE – AE *(ah, ah, am, a, eye, eye)*
- **Second declension:** US – E – UM – O – O – I *((m)us-e-um, ohw, ohw, ee)*
- **Third declension:** (CLONES TRAX) – (CLONES TRAX) – EM – E – I – IS *(clone's trax, clone's trax, amaze)*
- **Fourth declension:** US – US – UM – U – UI – US *(use, use, 'em, you, you-ee, use)*

- **Fifth declension:** ES – ES – EM – E – EI – EI *(S and M, eh, hey, hey!)*

Now say the whole singular mnemonic, like a little poem:

Ah, ah, am, a, eye, eye,
(M)us-e-um, ohw, ohw, ee,
Clone's trax, clone's trax, amaze,
Use, use, 'em, you, you-ee, use,
S and M, eh, hey, hey!

The first declension: singular

Here is the first declension in the singular, with a model word, *puella*, a girl. In the dictionary you will find it as *puella, puellae*: the nominative and the genitive, the first and the last lines of the table.

Case	Ending	*puella* (girl in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-a**	puell**a**	the girl (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	puell**a**	O girl! (calling her)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	puell**am**	the girl (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	puell**ā**	by, with, from the girl	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	puell**ae**	to, for the girl	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	puell**ae**	of the girl	*eye*

The first declension, singular

Look at the colours. The nominative, the vocative and the ablative all end in **-a** (yellow). In the ablative the *a* is long, *puellā*, but it is written the same in most books. The dative and the genitive both end in **-ae** (blue), and the mnemonic says *eye* twice, once for each. Only the accusative, **-am** (orange), stands alone.

The second declension: singular

The model word is *dominus*, a master. In the dictionary: *dominus, dominī*.

Case	Ending	*dominus* (master in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-us**	domin**us**	the master (doing the action)	*(m)us-e-um*
Vocative	**-e**	domin**e**	O master! (calling him)	
Accusative	**-um**	domin**um**	the master (receiving the action)	
Ablative	**-ō**	domin**ō**	by, with, from the master	*ohw*
Dative	**-ō**	domin**ō**	to, for the master	*ohw*
Genitive	**-ī**	domin**ī**	of the master	*ee*

The second declension, singular

The first three endings, **-us, -e, -um**, are the three sounds of the word *museum*, written here as *(m)us-e-um*: the *m* is only there to help you remember. Then the ablative and the dative both end in **-ō** (yellow), so the mnemonic says *ohw* twice. The genitive ends in **-ī**: *ee*.

The third declension: singular

The model word is *rex*, a king. In the dictionary: *rex, rēgis*. Here you can see why the genitive matters so much: the nominative is *rex*, but all the other cases are built on *rēg-*, which you only learn from the genitive.

Case	Ending	*rex* (king in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	CLONES TRAX	rex	the king (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	CLONES TRAX	rex	O king! (calling him)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	rēg**em**	the king (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	rēg**e**	by, with, from the king	
Dative	**-ī**	rēg**ī**	to, for the king	
Genitive	**-is**	rēg**is**	of the king	

The third declension, singular

The nominative and the vocative are the same (yellow), and they can end in many ways: the letters of CLONES TRAX. After that, the endings are **-em, -e, -ī, -is**, which run together in the mnemonic as *amaze*.

The fourth declension: singular

The model word is *manus*, a hand. In the dictionary: *manus, manūs*.

Case	Ending	*manus* (hand in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-us**	man**us**	the hand (doing the action)	*use*
Vocative	**-us**	man**us**	O hand! (calling it)	*use*
Accusative	**-um**	man**um**	the hand (receiving the action)	*'em*
Ablative	**-ū**	man**ū**	by, with, from the hand	*you*
Dative	**-uī**	man**uī**	to, for the hand	*you-ee*
Genitive	**-ūs**	man**ūs**	of the hand	*use*

The fourth declension, singular

The nominative, the vocative and the genitive all end in **-us** (yellow), so the mnemonic says *use* three times. In the genitive the *u* is long, *manūs*. The others are **-um**, **-ū** and **-uī**: *'em, you, you-ee*.

The fifth declension: singular

The model word is *diēs*, a day. In the dictionary: *diēs, diēī*.

Case	Ending	*diēs* (day in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ēs**	di**ēs**	the day (doing the action)	*S*
Vocative	**-ēs**	di**ēs**	O day! (calling it)	*and*
Accusative	**-em**	di**em**	the day (receiving the action)	*M*
Ablative	**-ē**	di**ē**	by, with, from the day	*eh*
Dative	**-ēī**	di**ēī**	to, for the day	*hey*
Genitive	**-ēī**	di**ēī**	of the day	*hey*

The fifth declension, singular

The nominative and the vocative both end in **-ēs** (yellow), and the dative and the genitive both end in **-ēī** (blue), so the mnemonic says *hey* twice. In between come **-em** and **-ē**: *M* and *eh*.

The plural

PLURAL	I	II	III	IV	V
Nominative	**AE**	**I**	**ES**	**US**	**ES**
Vocative	**AE**	**I**	**ES**	**US**	**ES**
Accusative	**AS**	**OS**	**ES**	**US**	**ES**
Ablative	**IS**	**IS**	**IBUS**	**IBUS**	**EBUS**
Dative	**IS**	**IS**	**IBUS**	**IBUS**	**EBUS**
Genitive	**ARUM**	**ORUM**	**UM**	**UUM**	**ERUM**

The plural endings of the five declensions

- **First declension:** AE – AE – AS – IS – IS – ARUM *(I, I, 'as, 'is, 'is, arm: I have his arm)*
- **Second declension:** I – I – OS – IS – IS – ORUM *('E, 'e, 'os, 'is, 'is, orm: he has his arm)*
- **Third declension:** ES – ES – ES – IBUS – IBUS – UM *(ease, ease, ease, ee-bus, ee-bus, um: easy bosom)*
- **Fourth declension:** US – US – US – IBUS – IBUS – UUM *(use, use, use, ee-bus, ee-bus, u-um: use ye bosom)*
- **Fifth declension:** ES – ES – ES – EBUS – EBUS – ERUM *(ease, ease, ease, ay-bus, ay-bus, ay-rum: easy boserum)*

Notice that in the plural the dative and the ablative are always the same, and in this order they stand side by side.

Now say the whole plural mnemonic, like a little poem:

I 'as 'is arm,
'E 'os 'is arm,
Easy bosom,
Use ye bosom,
Easy boserum.

The first declension: plural

Case	Ending	*puellae* (girls in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ae**	puell**ae**	the girls (doing the action)	*I*
Vocative	**-ae**	puell**ae**	O girls! (calling them)	*I*
Accusative	**-ās**	puell**ās**	the girls (receiving the action)	*'as*
Ablative	**-īs**	puell**īs**	by, with, from the girls	*'is*
Dative	**-īs**	puell**īs**	to, for the girls	*'is*
Genitive	**-ārum**	puell**ārum**	of the girls	*arm*

The first declension, plural

The nominative and the vocative are the same, **-ae** (yellow), and so are the ablative and the dative, **-īs** (blue). The accusative **-ās** and the genitive **-ārum** stand alone. Notice that the nominative plural, *puellae*, is the same as the genitive singular.

The second declension: plural

Case	Ending	*dominī* (masters in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ī**	domin**ī**	the masters (doing the action)	*'E*
Vocative	**-ī**	domin**ī**	O masters! (calling them)	*'e*
Accusative	**-ōs**	domin**ōs**	the masters (receiving the action)	*'os*
Ablative	**-īs**	domin**īs**	by, with, from the masters	*'is*
Dative	**-īs**	domin**īs**	to, for the masters	*'is*
Genitive	**-ōrum**	domin**ōrum**	of the masters	*orm*

The second declension, plural

Again the nominative and the vocative are the same, **-ī**, and so are the ablative and the dative, **-īs**. The accusative is **-ōs**, and the genitive **-ōrum**.

The third declension: plural

Case	Ending	*rēgēs* (kings in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ēs**	rēg**ēs**	the kings (doing the action)	*ease*
Vocative	**-ēs**	rēg**ēs**	O kings! (calling them)	*ease*
Accusative	**-ēs**	rēg**ēs**	the kings (receiving the action)	*ease*
Ablative	**-ibus**	rēg**ibus**	by, with, from the kings	*ee-bus*
Dative	**-ibus**	rēg**ibus**	to, for the kings	*ee-bus*
Genitive	**-um**	rēg**um**	of the kings	*um*

The third declension, plural

The nominative, the vocative and the accusative are all **-ēs** (yellow): three in a row. The ablative and the dative are both **-ibus** (blue). The genitive is **-um**.

The fourth declension: plural

Case	Ending	*manūs* (hands in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ūs**	man**ūs**	the hands (doing the action)	*use*
Vocative	**-ūs**	man**ūs**	O hands! (calling them)	*use*
Accusative	**-ūs**	man**ūs**	the hands (receiving the action)	*use*
Ablative	**-ibus**	man**ibus**	by, with, from the hands	*ee-bus*
Dative	**-ibus**	man**ibus**	to, for the hands	*ee-bus*
Genitive	**-uum**	man**uum**	of the hands	*u-um*

The fourth declension, plural

The fourth declension follows the same pattern as the third: three the same, **-ūs**, then two the same, **-ibus**, then the genitive, **-uum**.

The fifth declension: plural

Case	Ending	*diēs* (days in English)	Meaning	Mnemonic
Nominative	**-ēs**	di**ēs**	the days (doing the action)	*ease*
Vocative	**-ēs**	di**ēs**	O days! (calling them)	*ease*
Accusative	**-ēs**	di**ēs**	the days (receiving the action)	*ease*
Ablative	**-ēbus**	di**ēbus**	by, with, from the days	*ay-bus*
Dative	**-ēbus**	di**ēbus**	to, for the days	*ay-bus*
Genitive	**-ērum**	di**ērum**	of the days	*ay-rum*

The fifth declension, plural

And the fifth follows the same pattern again: **-ēs** three times, **-ēbus** twice, and the genitive **-ērum**.

The pattern of the plural

Look at the five plural tables together. In every declension, the ablative and the dative are the same. In every declension, the nominative and the vocative are the same, and in the third, fourth and fifth declensions the accusative is the same as them too. So in the plural you only need to learn three or four endings for each declension, not six.

However, if you just learn the little rhymes, you don't have to worry about how many nominatives and how many vocatives are the same, and how many of these and how many of those. You just need to memorise the rhymes.

Exercises

This is an unusual method. Most textbooks teach one declension, with lots of exercises, and then the next declension, with lots of exercises, and so on. Here we learn all five declensions at once, in one go. So you need plenty of practice with all five together, and that is what these exercises give you.

Now we are going to do some exercises. In each exercise you are given the mnemonic and a Latin word in the nominative. Write out the forms of the word in the empty table. Then check them in the table below it, which is filled in correctly.

Write the macrons as well. A macron is the line above a vowel, as in *ā* or *ō*. It shows that the vowel is long by nature, which means that it is pronounced long. A macron is part of the ending, so when you check your answers, check the macrons too.

Before you look at the filled-in table, fill in the empty one yourself. It helps to cover the lower table with a sheet of paper.

Exercise 1: First declension, singular

Mnemonic: *ah, ah, am, a, eye, eye*. Word: *rosa* (rose in English).

Case	Mnemonic	*rosa* (rose in English)
Nominative	*ah*	
Vocative	*ah*	
Accusative	*am*	
Ablative	*a*	
Dative	*eye*	
Genitive	*eye*	

Exercise 1: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	*rosa* (rose in English)
Nominative	*ah*	ros**a**
Vocative	*ah*	ros**a**
Accusative	*am*	ros**am**
Ablative	*a*	ros**ā**
Dative	*eye*	ros**ae**
Genitive	*eye*	ros**ae**

Exercise 1: the answers

Exercise 2: First declension, plural

Mnemonic: *I, I, 'as, 'is, 'is, arm*. Word: *rosa* (rose in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***rosa*** (rose in English): plural
Nominative	*I*	
Vocative	*I*	
Accusative	*'as*	
Ablative	*'is*	
Dative	*'is*	
Genitive	*arm*	

Exercise 2: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***rosa*** (rose in English): plural
Nominative	*I*	ros**ae**
Vocative	*I*	ros**ae**
Accusative	*'as*	ros**ās**
Ablative	*'is*	ros**īs**
Dative	*'is*	ros**īs**
Genitive	*arm*	ros**ārum**

Exercise 2: the answers

Exercise 3: Second declension, singular

Mnemonic: *(m)us-e-um, ohw, ohw, ee*. Word: *amīcus* (friend in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***amīcus*** (friend in English)
Nominative	*(m)us-e-um*	
Vocative		
Accusative		
Ablative	*ohw*	
Dative	*ohw*	
Genitive	*ee*	

Exercise 3: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***amīcus*** (friend in English)
Nominative	*(m)us-e-um*	amīc**us**
Vocative		amīc**e**
Accusative		amīc**um**
Ablative	*ohw*	amīc**ō**
Dative	*ohw*	amīc**ō**
Genitive	*ee*	amīc**ī**

Exercise 3: the answers

Exercise 4: Second declension, plural

Mnemonic: *'E, 'e, 'os, 'is, 'is, orm*. Word: *amīcus* (friend in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***amīcus*** (friend in English): plural
Nominative	*'E*	
Vocative	*'e*	
Accusative	*'os*	
Ablative	*'is*	
Dative	*'is*	
Genitive	*orm*	

Exercise 4: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***amīcus*** (friend in English): plural
Nominative	*'E*	amīc**ī**
Vocative	*'e*	amīc**ī**
Accusative	*'os*	amīc**ōs**
Ablative	*'is*	amīc**īs**
Dative	*'is*	amīc**īs**
Genitive	*orm*	amīc**ōrum**

Exercise 4: the answers

Exercise 5: Third declension, singular

Mnemonic: *clone's trax, clone's trax, amaze*. Word: *dux, ducis* (leader in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***dux, ducis*** (leader in English)
Nominative	*clone's trax*	
Vocative	*clone's trax*	
Accusative	*amaze*	
Ablative		
Dative		
Genitive		

Exercise 5: fill in the forms

In the third declension you also need the genitive, *ducis*, because it gives you the stem *duc-*. The nominative alone does not tell you this.

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***dux, ducis*** (leader in English)
Nominative	*clone's trax*	dux
Vocative	*clone's trax*	dux
Accusative	*amaze*	duc**em**
Ablative		duc**e**
Dative		duc**ī**
Genitive		duc**is**

Exercise 5: the answers

Exercise 6: Third declension, plural

Mnemonic: *ease, ease, ease, ee-bus, ee-bus, um*. Word: *dux, ducis* (leader in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***dux, ducis*** (leader in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	
Vocative	*ease*	
Accusative	*ease*	
Ablative	*ee-bus*	
Dative	*ee-bus*	
Genitive	*um*	

Exercise 6: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***dux, ducis*** (leader in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	duc**ēs**
Vocative	*ease*	duc**ēs**
Accusative	*ease*	duc**ēs**
Ablative	*ee-bus*	duc**ibus**
Dative	*ee-bus*	duc**ibus**
Genitive	*um*	duc**um**

Exercise 6: the answers

Exercise 7: Fourth declension, singular

Mnemonic: *use, use, 'em, you, you-ee, use*. Word: *frūctus* (fruit in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***frūctus*** (fruit in English)
Nominative	*use*	
Vocative	*use*	
Accusative	*'em*	
Ablative	*you*	
Dative	*you-ee*	
Genitive	*use*	

Exercise 7: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***frūctus*** (fruit in English)
Nominative	*use*	frūct**us**
Vocative	*use*	frūct**us**
Accusative	*’em*	frūct**um**
Ablative	*you*	frūct**ū**
Dative	*you-ee*	frūct**uī**
Genitive	*use*	frūct**ūs**

Exercise 7: the answers

Exercise 8: Fourth declension, plural

Mnemonic: *use, use, use, ee-bus, ee-bus, u-um*. Word: *frūctus* (fruit in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***frūctus*** (fruit in English): plural
Nominative	*use*	
Vocative	*use*	
Accusative	*use*	
Ablative	*ee-bus*	
Dative	*ee-bus*	
Genitive	*u-um*	

Exercise 8: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***frūctus*** (fruit in English): plural
Nominative	*use*	frūct**ūs**
Vocative	*use*	frūct**ūs**
Accusative	*use*	frūct**ūs**
Ablative	*ee-bus*	frūct**ibus**
Dative	*ee-bus*	frūct**ibus**
Genitive	*u-um*	frūct**uum**

Exercise 8: the answers

Exercise 9: Fifth declension, singular

Mnemonic: *S, and, M, eh, hey, hey*. Word: *rēs* (thing in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***rēs*** (thing in English)
Nominative	*S*	
Vocative	*and*	
Accusative	*M*	
Ablative	*eh*	
Dative	*hey*	
Genitive	*hey*	

Exercise 9: fill in the forms

Note: in *rēs* the *e* of the dative and genitive is short, *reī*, because it comes after a consonant. In *diēs* it comes after a vowel, so it is long, *diēī*.

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***rēs*** (thing in English)
Nominative	*S*	r**ēs**
Vocative	*and*	r**ēs**
Accusative	*M*	r**em**
Ablative	*eh*	r**ē**
Dative	*hey*	r**eī**
Genitive	*hey*	r**eī**

Exercise 9: the answers

Exercise 10: Fifth declension, plural

Mnemonic: *ease, ease, ease, ay-bus, ay-bus, ay-rum*. Word: *rēs* (thing in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***rēs*** (thing in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	
Vocative	*ease*	
Accusative	*ease*	
Ablative	*ay-bus*	
Dative	*ay-bus*	
Genitive	*ay-rum*	

Exercise 10: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***rēs*** (thing in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	r**ēs**
Vocative	*ease*	r**ēs**
Accusative	*ease*	r**ēs**
Ablative	*ay-bus*	r**ēbus**
Dative	*ay-bus*	r**ēbus**
Genitive	*ay-rum*	r**ērum**

Exercise 10: the answers

Reverse exercises: from the Latin to the rhyme

Now we do the exercises the other way round. This time we give you the Latin, and you write the rhyme.

In each exercise, the first column gives you all the forms of a Latin word, in our order: nominative, vocative, accusative, ablative, dative, genitive. In the second column, which is empty, write the part of the rhyme that goes with each form. For example, beside *terra* you write *ah*, and beside *terram* you write *am*. Then check your answers in the table below it, which is filled in correctly.

As before, fill in the empty table yourself before you look at the filled-in one. Cover the lower table with a sheet of paper.

These are new words, which you have not met in the exercises before.

Exercise 11: First declension, singular

Word: *terra* (land in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

terra (land in English)	**Mnemonic**
terr**a**	
terr**a**	
terr**am**	
terr**ā**	
terr**ae**	
terr**ae**	

Exercise 11: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

terra (land in English)	**Mnemonic**
terr**a**	*ah*
terr**a**	*ah*
terr**am**	*am*
terr**ā**	*a*
terr**ae**	*eye*
terr**ae**	*eye*

Exercise 11: the answers

Exercise 12: First declension, plural

Word: *terra* (land in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

terra (land in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
terr**ae**	
terr**ae**	
terr**ās**	
terr**īs**	
terr**īs**	
terr**ārum**	

Exercise 12: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

terra (land in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
terr**ae**	*I*
terr**ae**	*I*
terr**ās**	*'as*
terr**īs**	*'is*
terr**īs**	*'is*
terr**ārum**	*arm*

Exercise 12: the answers

Exercise 13: Second declension, singular

Word: *equus* (horse in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

equus (horse in English)	**Mnemonic**
equ**us**	
equ**e**	
equ**um**	
equ**ō**	
equ**ō**	
equ**ī**	

Exercise 13: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

equus (horse in English)	**Mnemonic**
equ**us**	*(m)us-e-um*
equ**e**	
equ**um**	
equ**ō**	*ohw*
equ**ō**	*ohw*
equ**ī**	*ee*

Exercise 13: the answers

Exercise 14: Second declension, plural

Word: *equus* (horse in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

equus (horse in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
equ**ī**	
equ**ī**	
equ**ōs**	
equ**īs**	
equ**īs**	
equ**ōrum**	

Exercise 14: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

equus (horse in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
equ**ī**	*’E*
equ**ī**	*’e*
equ**ōs**	*’os*
equ**īs**	*’is*
equ**īs**	*’is*
equ**ōrum**	*orm*

Exercise 14: the answers

Exercise 15: Third declension, singular

Word: *lēx, lēgis* (law in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

lēx, lēgis (law in English)	**Mnemonic**
lēx	
lēx	
lēg**em**	
lēg**e**	
lēg**ī**	
lēg**is**	

Exercise 15: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

lēx, lēgis (law in English)	**Mnemonic**
lēx	*clone's trax*
lēx	*clone's trax*
lēg**em**	*amaze*
lēg**e**	
lēg**ī**	
lēg**is**	

Exercise 15: the answers

Exercise 16: Third declension, plural

Word: *lēx, lēgis* (law in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

lēx, lēgis (law in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
lēg**ēs**	
lēg**ēs**	
lēg**ēs**	
lēg**ibus**	
lēg**ibus**	
lēg**um**	

Exercise 16: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

lēx, lēgis (law in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
lēg**ēs**	*ease*
lēg**ēs**	*ease*
lēg**ēs**	*ease*
lēg**ibus**	*ee-bus*
lēg**ibus**	*ee-bus*
lēg**um**	*um*

Exercise 16: the answers

Exercise 17: Fourth declension, singular

Word: *portus* (harbour in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

portus (harbour in English)	**Mnemonic**
port**us**	
port**us**	
port**um**	
port**ū**	
port**uī**	
port**ūs**	

Exercise 17: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

portus (harbour in English)	**Mnemonic**
port**us**	*use*
port**us**	*use*
port**um**	*’em*
port**ū**	*you*
port**uī**	*you-ee*
port**ūs**	*use*

Exercise 17: the answers

Exercise 18: Fourth declension, plural

Word: *portus* (harbour in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

portus (harbour in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
port**ūs**	
port**ūs**	
port**ūs**	
port**ibus**	
port**ibus**	
port**uum**	

Exercise 18: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

portus (harbour in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
port**ūs**	*use*
port**ūs**	*use*
port**ūs**	*use*
port**ibus**	*ee-bus*
port**ibus**	*ee-bus*
port**uum**	*u-um*

Exercise 18: the answers

Exercise 19: Fifth declension, singular

Word: *faciēs* (face in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

faciēs (face in English)	**Mnemonic**
faci**ēs**	
faci**ēs**	
faci**em**	
faci**ē**	
faci**ēī**	
faci**ēī**	

Exercise 19: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

faciēs (face in English)	**Mnemonic**
faci**ēs**	*S*
faci**ēs**	*and*
faci**em**	*M*
faci**ē**	*eh*
faci**ēī**	*hey*
faci**ēī**	*hey*

Exercise 19: the answers

Exercise 20: Fifth declension, plural

Word: *faciēs* (face in English). Write the rhyme beside each form.

faciēs (face in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
faci**ēs**	
faci**ēs**	
faci**ēs**	
faci**ēbus**	
faci**ēbus**	
faci**ērum**	

Exercise 20: write the rhyme

Check your answers:

faciēs (face in English): plural	**Mnemonic**
faci**ēs**	*ease*
faci**ēs**	*ease*
faci**ēs**	*ease*
faci**ēbus**	*ay-bus*
faci**ēbus**	*ay-bus*
faci**ērum**	*ay-rum*

Exercise 20: the answers

More exercises: from the rhyme to the Latin

Here are more exercises of the first kind, with new words. Again you are given the rhyme and a Latin word in the nominative. Write out all the forms of the word in the empty table, with their macrons. Then check them in the table below it.

Remember to fill in the empty table yourself before you look at the filled-in one.

Exercise 21: First declension, singular

Mnemonic: *ah, ah, am, a, eye, eye*. Word: *stella* (star in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***stella*** (star in English)
Nominative	*ah*	
Vocative	*ah*	
Accusative	*am*	
Ablative	*a*	
Dative	*eye*	
Genitive	*eye*	

Exercise 21: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***stella*** (star in English)
Nominative	*ah*	stell**a**
Vocative	*ah*	stell**a**
Accusative	*am*	stell**am**
Ablative	*a*	stell**ā**
Dative	*eye*	stell**ae**
Genitive	*eye*	stell**ae**

Exercise 21: the answers

Exercise 22: First declension, plural

Mnemonic: *I, I, 'as, 'is, 'is, arm*. Word: *stella* (star in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***stella*** (star in English): plural
Nominative	*I*	
Vocative	*I*	
Accusative	*'as*	
Ablative	*'is*	
Dative	*'is*	
Genitive	*arm*	

Exercise 22: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***stella*** (star in English): plural
Nominative	*I*	stell**ae**
Vocative	*I*	stell**ae**
Accusative	*’as*	stell**ās**
Ablative	*’is*	stell**īs**
Dative	*’is*	stell**īs**
Genitive	*arm*	stell**ārum**

Exercise 22: the answers

Exercise 23: Second declension, singular

Mnemonic: *(m)us-e-um, ohw, ohw, ee*. Word: *lupus* (wolf in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***lupus*** (wolf in English)
Nominative	*(m)us-e-um*	
Vocative		
Accusative		
Ablative	*ohw*	
Dative	*ohw*	
Genitive	*ee*	

Exercise 23: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***lupus*** (wolf in English)
Nominative	*(m)us-e-um*	lup**us**
Vocative		lup**e**
Accusative		lup**um**
Ablative	*ohw*	lup**ō**
Dative	*ohw*	lup**ō**
Genitive	*ee*	lup**ī**

Exercise 23: the answers

Exercise 24: Second declension, plural

Mnemonic: *'E, 'e, 'os, 'is, 'is, orm*. Word: *lupus* (wolf in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***lupus*** (wolf in English): plural
Nominative	*'E*	
Vocative	*'e*	
Accusative	*'os*	
Ablative	*'is*	
Dative	*'is*	
Genitive	*orm*	

Exercise 24: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***lupus*** (wolf in English): plural
Nominative	*’E*	lup**ī**
Vocative	*’e*	lup**ī**
Accusative	*’os*	lup**ōs**
Ablative	*’is*	lup**īs**
Dative	*’is*	lup**īs**
Genitive	*orm*	lup**ōrum**

Exercise 24: the answers

Exercise 25: Third declension, singular

Mnemonic: *clone's trax, clone's trax, amaze*. Word: *pater, patris* (father in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***pater, patris*** (father in English)
Nominative	*clone’s trax*	
Vocative	*clone’s trax*	
Accusative	*amaze*	
Ablative		
Dative		
Genitive		

Exercise 25: fill in the forms

In *pater* the *e* drops out in the other cases: the genitive *patris* gives you the stem *patr-*.

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***pater, patris*** (father in English)
Nominative	*clone's trax*	pater
Vocative	*clone's trax*	pater
Accusative	*amaze*	patr**em**
Ablative		patr**e**
Dative		patr**ī**
Genitive		patr**is**

Exercise 25: the answers

Exercise 26: Third declension, plural

Mnemonic: *ease, ease, ease, ee-bus, ee-bus, um*. Word: *pater, patris* (father in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***pater, patris*** (father in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	
Vocative	*ease*	
Accusative	*ease*	
Ablative	*ee-bus*	
Dative	*ee-bus*	
Genitive	*um*	

Exercise 26: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***pater, patris*** (father in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	patr**ēs**
Vocative	*ease*	patr**ēs**
Accusative	*ease*	patr**ēs**
Ablative	*ee-bus*	patr**ibus**
Dative	*ee-bus*	patr**ibus**
Genitive	*um*	patr**um**

Exercise 26: the answers

Exercise 27: Fourth declension, singular

Mnemonic: *use, use, 'em, you, you-ee, use*. Word: *cursus* (course in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***cursus*** (course in English)
Nominative	*use*	
Vocative	*use*	
Accusative	*'em*	
Ablative	*you*	
Dative	*you-ee*	
Genitive	*use*	

Exercise 27: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***cursus*** (course in English)
Nominative	*use*	curs**us**
Vocative	*use*	curs**us**
Accusative	*'em*	curs**um**
Ablative	*you*	curs**ū**
Dative	*you-ee*	curs**uī**
Genitive	*use*	curs**ūs**

Exercise 27: the answers

Exercise 28: Fourth declension, plural

Mnemonic: *use, use, use, ee-bus, ee-bus, u-um*. Word: *cursus* (course in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***cursus*** (course in English): plural
Nominative	*use*	
Vocative	*use*	
Accusative	*use*	
Ablative	*ee-bus*	
Dative	*ee-bus*	
Genitive	*u-um*	

Exercise 28: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***cursus*** (course in English): plural
Nominative	*use*	curs**ūs**
Vocative	*use*	curs**ūs**
Accusative	*use*	curs**ūs**
Ablative	*ee-bus*	curs**ibus**
Dative	*ee-bus*	curs**ibus**
Genitive	*u-um*	curs**uum**

Exercise 28: the answers

Exercise 29: Fifth declension, singular

Mnemonic: *S, and, M, eh, hey, hey*. Word: *aciēs* (battle line in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***aciēs*** (battle line in English)
Nominative	*S*	
Vocative	*and*	
Accusative	*M*	
Ablative	*eh*	
Dative	*hey*	
Genitive	*hey*	

Exercise 29: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***aciēs*** (battle line in English)
Nominative	*S*	aci**ēs**
Vocative	*and*	aci**ēs**
Accusative	*M*	aci**em**
Ablative	*eh*	aci**ē**
Dative	*hey*	aci**ēī**
Genitive	*hey*	aci**ēī**

Exercise 29: the answers

Exercise 30: Fifth declension, plural

Mnemonic: *ease, ease, ease, ay-bus, ay-bus, ay-rum*. Word: *aciēs* (battle line in English).

Case	Mnemonic	***aciēs*** (battle line in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	
Vocative	*ease*	
Accusative	*ease*	
Ablative	*ay-bus*	
Dative	*ay-bus*	
Genitive	*ay-rum*	

Exercise 30: fill in the forms

Check your answers:

Case	Mnemonic	***aciēs*** (battle line in English): plural
Nominative	*ease*	aci**ēs**
Vocative	*ease*	aci**ēs**
Accusative	*ease*	aci**ēs**
Ablative	*ay-bus*	aci**ēbus**
Dative	*ay-bus*	aci**ēbus**
Genitive	*ay-rum*	aci**ērum**

Exercise 30: the answers

The gender of nouns

Feminine, masculine and neuter

Every Latin noun has a gender. It is **feminine**, **masculine** or **neuter**. You need to know the gender of a noun, because adjectives and other words must agree with it.

In this book we always give the genders in this order: feminine, masculine, neuter. Most grammar books put the masculine first. We put the feminine first, because then the masculine and the neuter stand side by side, and you will see in Book Two how closely they are related.

Very often the ending tells you the gender. Most nouns in *-a* are feminine, like *puella*. Most nouns in *-us* are masculine, like *dominus*. But not always. Some nouns look feminine, but they are masculine. Some look masculine, but they are feminine. And in the third declension the nominative often gives you no help at all. So how can you find the true gender of a noun? There is a simple method: look at its diminutive.

The diminutive

A **diminutive** is a "little" form of a noun. In English we say *duck* and *duckling*, *book* and *booklet*. Latin makes diminutives very often, by adding these endings to the stem of the noun:

- **-ula, -ulus, -ulum**, or **-cula, -culus, -culum**

For example, *filius* (son in English) becomes *filiolus* (little son in English). Even the word *puella* (girl in English) is an old diminutive, made from *puer* (boy in English).

A diminutive is always a noun of the first or second declension, so you already know its endings from the rhymes. And its ending shows its gender very clearly:

- **-ula** or **-cula**: feminine
- **-ulus** or **-culus**: masculine
- **-ulum** or **-culum**: neuter

The diminutive shows the true gender

Here is the key: a diminutive almost always keeps the gender of the noun it comes from. So if a noun's own ending does not show its true gender clearly, look at its diminutive. The diminutive shows it.

Diminutives in speech

Diminutives were very common in spoken Latin, much less so in written Latin. So many diminutives are not found in the Roman books that have come down to us. But we know that they existed. French *soleil* (sun in English), for example, comes from a spoken Latin *sōliculus*, "little sun", a word that no Roman author wrote down. In the same way, Greeks today use diminutives all the time in everyday spoken Greek, but you do not find them in the formal written language.

So once you know the rules for making a diminutive, you may freely make one yourself, even for a noun that has no diminutive in Roman literature. We are using diminutives to help us remember the gender of a noun, and for this, your own diminutive works just as well.

The rules are simple:

- For a noun of the first or second declension, add **-ula, -ulus, -ulum** to the stem.

- For a noun of the third, fourth or fifth declension, add **-cula, -culus, -culum**. (Sometimes a vowel comes before it, as in *manicula*.)
- Choose **-ula** for a feminine noun, **-ulus** for a masculine noun, and **-ulum** for a neuter noun.

When you learn a new noun and its gender, make its diminutive and say it once or twice. The diminutive will hold the gender for you.

There is a second gain. If you make the diminutive part of your practice whenever you learn a new noun, you will be repeating the noun twice: once in its own form, and once as its diminutive. This makes it far more likely that you will remember it. And this is a good thing.

Nauta, a sailor

Here is the noun *nauta* (sailor in English). It is first declension, like *puella*, and it looks feminine. But it is masculine.

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***nauta*** (sailor in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-a**	naut**a**	the sailor (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	naut**a**	O sailor! (calling him)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	naut**am**	the sailor (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	naut**ā**	by, with, from the sailor	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	naut**ae**	to, for the sailor	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	naut**ae**	of the sailor	*eye*

nauta, a sailor: masculine

No Roman book gives us a diminutive of *nauta*, so we make one by the rules. *Nauta* is first declension, so we add *-ulus* to the stem *naut-*, because the noun is masculine: *nautulus* (little sailor in English). Now the ending *-us* tells you clearly that *nauta* is masculine.

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***nautulus*** (little sailor in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-us**	nautul**us**	the little sailor (doing the action)	*(m)us-e-um*
Vocative	**-e**	nautul**e**	O little sailor! (calling him)	
Accusative	**-um**	nautul**um**	the little sailor (receiving the action)	
Ablative	**-ō**	nautul**ō**	by, with, from the little sailor	*ohw*
Dative	**-ō**	nautul**ō**	to, for the little sailor	*ohw*
Genitive	**-ī**	nautul**ī**	of the little sailor	*ee*

nautulus, a little sailor: masculine

There is also a related word that the Romans used: *nauclērus* (ship's master in English). It was borrowed from Greek, and it is not a diminutive. But it too is masculine, and its ending *-us* gives you a second reminder that *nauta* is masculine.

Manus and manicula

Manus (hand in English) is fourth declension. It ends in *-us*, so it looks masculine. But it is feminine. Its diminutive, *manicula* (little hand in English), ends in *-a*, and so it shows that *manus* is feminine.

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***manus*** (hand in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-us**	man**us**	the hand (doing the action)	*use*
Vocative	**-us**	man**us**	O hand! (calling it)	*use*
Accusative	**-um**	man**um**	the hand (receiving the action)	*'em*
Ablative	**-ū**	man**ū**	by, with, from the hand	*you*
Dative	**-uī**	man**uī**	to, for the hand	*you-ee*
Genitive	**-ūs**	man**ūs**	of the hand	*use*

manus, a hand: feminine

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***manicula*** (little hand in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-a**	manicul**a**	the little hand (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	manicul**a**	O little hand! (calling it)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	manicul**am**	the little hand (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	manicul**ā**	by, with, from the little hand	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	manicul**ae**	to, for the little hand	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	manicul**ae**	of the little hand	*eye*

manicula, a little hand: feminine

Arbor and arbuscula

Arbor (tree in English) is third declension. Most nouns in *-or* are masculine, like *ōrātor* (speaker in English), so *arbor* looks masculine. But it is feminine. Its diminutive, *arbuscula* (little tree in English),

shows this.

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***arbor*** (tree in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-r**	arbor	the tree (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	**-r**	arbor	O tree! (calling it)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	arbor**em**	the tree (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	arbor**e**	by, with, from the tree	
Dative	**-ī**	arbor**ī**	to, for the tree	
Genitive	**-is**	arbor**is**	of the tree	

arbor, a tree: feminine

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***arbuscula*** (little tree in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-a**	arbuscul**a**	the little tree (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	arbuscul**a**	O little tree! (calling it)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	arbuscul**am**	the little tree (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	arbuscul**ā**	by, with, from the little tree	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	arbuscul**ae**	to, for the little tree	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	arbuscul**ae**	of the little tree	*eye*

arbuscula, a little tree: feminine

Nāvis and nāvicula

Nāvis (ship in English) ends in *-is*, like *cīvis* (citizen in English), which is usually masculine. So from its nominative you cannot tell the gender of *nāvis*. Its diminutive, *nāvicula* (little ship in English), shows that it is feminine. (The ablative of *nāvis* can also be *nāvī*.)

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***nāvis*** (ship in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-s**	nāvis	the ship (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	**-s**	nāvis	O ship! (calling it)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	nāv**em**	the ship (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	nāv**e**	by, with, from the ship	
Dative	**-ī**	nāv**ī**	to, for the ship	
Genitive	**-is**	nāv**is**	of the ship	

nāvis, a ship: feminine

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***nāvicula*** (little ship in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-a**	nāvicul**a**	the little ship (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	nāvicul**a**	O little ship! (calling it)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	nāvicul**am**	the little ship (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	nāvicul**ā**	by, with, from the little ship	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	nāvicul**ae**	to, for the little ship	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	nāvicul**ae**	of the little ship	*eye*

nāvicula, a little ship: feminine

Pars and particula, mōns and monticulus

Here are two nouns that look almost the same: *pars, partis* (part in English) and *mōns, montis* (mountain in English). Both end in *-rs* or *-ns*, both have a genitive in *-tis*, and both are third declension. But they do not have the same gender. Their diminutives show the difference at once: *particula* (little part in English) is feminine, and *monticulus* (little mountain in English) is masculine.

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***pars, partis*** (part in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-s**	pars	the part (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	**-s**	pars	O part! (calling it)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	part**em**	the part (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	part**e**	by, with, from the part	
Dative	**-ī**	part**ī**	to, for the part	
Genitive	**-is**	part**is**	of the part	

pars, a part: feminine

Gender: **feminine**				
Case	**Ending**	***particula*** (little part in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-a**	particul**a**	the little part (doing the action)	*ah*
Vocative	**-a**	particul**a**	O little part! (calling it)	*ah*
Accusative	**-am**	particul**am**	the little part (receiving the action)	*am*
Ablative	**-ā**	particul**ā**	by, with, from the little part	*a*
Dative	**-ae**	particul**ae**	to, for the little part	*eye*
Genitive	**-ae**	particul**ae**	of the little part	*eye*

particula, a little part: feminine

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***mōns, montis*** (mountain in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-s**	mōns	the mountain (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	**-s**	mōns	O mountain! (calling it)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	mont**em**	the mountain (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	mont**e**	by, with, from the mountain	
Dative	**-ī**	mont**ī**	to, for the mountain	
Genitive	**-is**	mont**is**	of the mountain	

mōns, a mountain: masculine

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***monticulus*** (little mountain in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-us**	monticul**us**	the little mountain (doing the action)	*(m)us-e-um*
Vocative	**-e**	monticul**e**	O little mountain! (calling it)	
Accusative	**-um**	monticul**um**	the little mountain (receiving the action)	
Ablative	**-ō**	monticul**ō**	by, with, from the little mountain	*ohw*
Dative	**-ō**	monticul**ō**	to, for the little mountain	*ohw*
Genitive	**-ī**	monticul**ī**	of the little mountain	*ee*

monticulus, a little mountain: masculine

Flōs and flōsculus

Flōs, flōris (flower in English) is third declension, and its nominative gives no clue to its gender. Its diminutive, *flōsculus* (little flower in English), ends in *-us*, and shows that *flōs* is masculine.

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***flōs, flōris*** (flower in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-s**	flōs	the flower (doing the action)	*clone's trax*
Vocative	**-s**	flōs	O flower! (calling it)	*clone's trax*
Accusative	**-em**	flōr**em**	the flower (receiving the action)	*amaze*
Ablative	**-e**	flōr**e**	by, with, from the flower	
Dative	**-ī**	flōr**ī**	to, for the flower	
Genitive	**-is**	flōr**is**	of the flower	

flōs, a flower: masculine

Gender: **masculine**				
Case	**Ending**	***flōsculus*** (little flower in English)	**Meaning**	**Mnemonic**
Nominative	**-us**	flōscul**us**	the little flower (doing the action)	*(m)us-e-um*
Vocative	**-e**	flōscul**e**	O little flower! (calling it)	
Accusative	**-um**	flōscul**um**	the little flower (receiving the action)	
Ablative	**-ō**	flōscul**ō**	by, with, from the little flower	*ohw*
Dative	**-ō**	flōscul**ō**	to, for the little flower	*ohw*
Genitive	**-ī**	flōscul**ī**	of the little flower	*ee*

flōsculus, a little flower: masculine

Diminutives in English

Diminutives were so common in Latin that many English words come from the diminutive, not from the main word. A *particle* comes from *particula*, not from *pars*. A *manicule*, the little pointing hand ☞ that

printers put in the margin of a book, comes from *manicula*, not from *manus*. And a *molecule* comes from *mōlēcula*, "a little mass", from *mōlēs*.

Latin noun	Diminutive	English word
pars (part in English)	*particula*	**particle**
manus (hand in English)	*manicula*	**manicule**
mōlēs (mass in English)	*mōlēcula*	**molecule**
mūs (mouse in English)	*mūsculus*	**muscle**
artus (joint in English)	*articulus*	**article**
capsa (box in English)	*capsula*	**capsule**
fōrma (shape in English)	*fōrmula*	**formula**
calx (stone in English)	*calculus*	**calculus**
corpus (body in English)	*corpusculum*	**corpuscle**

English words that come from Latin diminutives

Some of these are surprising. A *muscle* is a "little mouse", *mūsculus*: the Romans thought a muscle moving under the skin looked like a little mouse. And *mōlēcula* is not found in any Roman book at all. It was made much later, in the 1600s, following the rules for making diminutives, just as you may do. The word is usually credited to the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655), who used it when he was trying to explain the ideas about atoms in the writings of the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus.