

ALTERNATIVE LATIN

PRINCIPLES

- (1) Spot the PATTERN in its simplest form (as in mathematics).
- (2) From the pattern identify the STEM and the ENDING (for convenience below we often separate these by a hyphen).
- (3) Learn examples that conform to the pattern (regular).
- (4) Learn examples that deviate from the pattern (irregular).

NOUNS

[Kennedy 32]

5 Patterns or "declensions".

Identify by the ending of the genitive singular (from dictionary):

- (1) -ae (2) -i (3) -is (4) -ûs (5) -ei

What precedes this is called the STEM from which we decline the rest of the noun according to the pattern.

ADJECTIVES

[K 70-75]

2 Basic patterns related to noun declensions.

(1) 1st/2nd declension.

Masculine	has endings like 2nd declension nouns in -us or -er
Feminine	has endings like 1st declension nouns in -a
Neuter	has endings like 2nd declension nouns in -um

Eg:

	M	F	N	
nominative	bon-us	bon-a	bon-um :	good [K 71]
genitive	bon-i	bon-ae	bon-i	

(2) 3rd declension.

Decline like masculine, feminine and neuter nouns of the 3rd declension (exception: ablative often ends in -i). Masculine and feminine are often identical. Eg:

	M	F	N	
nominative	ingens	ingens	ingens:	huge [K 74]
genitive	ingent-is	ingent-is	ingent-is	

VERBS

[K 111-112]

4 Patterns or "conjugations". Identify by present infinitive, the second of its principle parts (column (B) below). This gives the present stem; perfect stem from perfect indicative ((C) below).

	(A) Conjug- Present ation indicative	(B) Present infinitive	(C) Perfect indicative	(D) Supine	
(1)	am(a)-o	ama-re	amav-i	amat-um :	love
(2)	mone-o	monê-re	monu-i	monit-um :	advise
(3)	reg-o	reg-ere	rex-i	rect-um :	rule
(4)	audi-o	audi-re	audiv-i	audit-um :	hear

Alternative Latin

INDICATIVE ACTIVE

[K 116-119]

	[Present stem]			[Perfect stem]		
	Pres	Future simple	Imperf	Perfect	Future perfect	Plu-perfect
Conjugations (1) and (2):						
1s	-o	-bo	-bam	-i	-ero	-eram
2s	-s	-bis	-bas	-isti	-eris	-eras
3s	-t	-bit	-bat	-it	-erit	-erat
1pl	-mus	-bimus	-bamus	-imus	-erimus	-eramus
2pl	-tis	-bitis	-batis	-itis	-eritis	-eratis
3pl	-nt	-bunt	-bant	-erunt	-erint	-erant

Conjugations (3) and (4):

1s	-o	-am	-ebam	As conjugations (1) and (2)
2s	-(i)s	-es	-ebas	
3s	-(i)t	-et	-ebat	
1pl	-(i)mus	-emus	-ebamus	
2pl	-(i)tis	-etis	-ebatis	
3p	-unt	-ent	-ebant	

IMPERATIVE MOOD, ACTIVE

[K 116-119]

Singular:	Present stem:	ama,	monê,	rege,	audi
Plural:	Present stem + te: but note	ama-te,	monê-te,	reg-ite	audi-te

Irregular 3rd conjugation singular imperatives

[K 118n]

Dico:	dic	- say
Duco:	duc	- lead
Fero:	fer	- bear, bring
Facio:	fac	- do, make

Prohibitions

[K 349]

Noli (s) or nolite (pl) followed by present infinitive ((B) above)

Noli regere: Do not rule

INDICATIVE PASSIVE

[K 120-123]

Present, future simple and imperfect tenses - start with the active form and then substitute so that

1s	-o or -m becomes	-or or -r	
2s	-s	-ris	(but regeris not regiris)
3s	-t	-tur	in present for 3rd
1pl	-mus	-mur	conjugation)
2pl	-tis	-mini	
3pl	-nt	-ntur	

For instance "He shall be ruled" is reg-etur.

Alternative Latin

Perfect, future perfect, pluperfect passive are formed from a combination of perfect participle passive (see below) and

present,	future or	imperfect tense of sum, respectively as
amatus sum,	amatus ero,	amatus eram

PARTICIPLES

Present Participle Active

[K 116-119]

Present stem + (e)ns

ama-ns,	monê-ns,	reg-ens,	audi-ens
Meaning: loving etc			

These decline like a 3rd Declension adjective with stem ending nt-, like ingens, (gen ingent-is) [K 74]

Future Participle Active

[K 116-119]

Stem from supine ((D) above), dropping the -um)

Ending -urus declines as 1st/2nd declension adjective

amat-urus,	monit-urus,	rect-urus,	audit-urus.
Meaning: about to love etc			

Perfect Participle Passive

[K 120-123]

Stem from supine ((D) above), dropping the -um)

Ending -us declines as 1st/2nd declension adjective

amat-us,	monit-us,	rect-us,	audit-us
Meaning: having been loved, etc			

It is also combined in the nominative (all genders), with parts of sum to generate compound passive forms. For instance in the perfect passive indicative

"They (f. pl) have been loved" is amat-ae sunt
(literally, "They are having been loved").

INFINITIVES

Present Infinitive Active

[K 116-119]

As (B) above.

Perfect Infinitive Active

[K 116-119]

From (C) above: add -isse to perfect stem:

amav-isse,	monu-isse,	rex-isse,	audiv-isse
Meaning: to have loved etc			

Future Infinitive Active

[K 116-119]

Future participle active + esse:

amaturus esse,	moniturus esse etc
Meaning: to be about to love etc	

Alternative Latin

Present Infinitive Passive [K 120-123]

As present infinitive active, final e replaced by i:

ama-ri, monê-ri, audi-ri
Exception reg-i
Meaning: to be loved etc

Perfect Infinitive Passive [K 120-123]

Perfect participle passive + esse:

amatus esse, monitus esse, rectus esse, auditus esse
Meaning: to have been loved (literally, to be having been loved) etc

Future Infinitive Passive [K 120-123]

Supine + iri:

amatum iri, monitum iri etc
Meaning: to be about to be loved etc

SUBJUNCTIVES

Present Subjunctive Active [K 116-119]

Present stem + -am, -as, -at, -amus, -atis, -ant
eg reg-am, reg-as, reg-at etc.

Exception 1st conj am-em, am-es, am-et, am-emus, am-etis, am-ent.

Present subjunctive is often translated "may" or "let".

Imperfect Subjunctive Active [K 116-119]

Present infinitive active + -m, -s, -t, -mus, -tis, -nt
eg regere-m, regere-s, regere-t etc

Imperfect subjunctive is often translated "might", "were to" or "would".

Perfect Subjunctive Active [K 116-119]

As future perfect indicative but 1st sing ends -erim.

Pluperfect Subjunctive Active [K 116-119]

Perfect infinitive active + -m, -s, -t, -mus, -tis, -nt
eg rexisse-m, rexisse-s, rexisse-t ...

Pluperfect subjunctive is often translated "would have".

Present and Imperfect Subjunctives Passive [K 120-123]

As the active forms, making the usual substitutions (-m becomes -r etc) to get the passive.

Perfect Subjunctive Passive [K 120-123]

Perfect participle passive + present subjunctive of sum:

amatus sim, sis, sit; amati simus, sitis, sint

Pluperfect Subjunctive Passive

[K 120-123]

Perfect participle passive + imperfect subjunctive of sum:

amatus essem, essês, esset; amati essêmus, essêtis, essent.

GERUND AND GERUNDIVE

[K 107]

The gerund is a neuter active verbal noun meaning "the act of" doing. It is formed by adding -(e)ndum to the present stem and declines like a 2nd declension neuter noun. Thus

ama-ndum, monê-ndum, reg-endum, audi-endum [K 116-119]

The gerundive is an adjective, passive in meaning, as "fit to be" or, "ought to be" done. It is formed like the gerund but with the endings of a 1st/2nd declension adjective ama-nd-us, -a, -um etc. So audiendus means "fit to be heard" or "ought to be heard" [K 120-123]

PRONOUNS

[K 94-101c]

is,	ea,	id	that,	or	he, she, it
hic,	haec,	hoc	this,	or	he, she, it
ille,	illa,	illud	that,	or	he, she, it
iste,	ista,	istud	that (often pejorative)		
idem,	eadem,	idem	the same (declines like is, ea, id)		
ipse,	ipsa,	ipsum	self		
qui,	quae,	quod	who, which (relative), or		
			who?, what? (interrogative)		
quis,	quis,	quid	who?, what?		
alius,	alia,	aliud	(some or an-)other		
alter,	altera,	alterum	one or the other (of two)		

Summary

[K 100,102]

Pronouns broadly follow the pattern of 1st/2nd declension adjectives. But
genitives singular often end -ius
datives singular often end -i.

Pronouns beginning ali- mean "some ..."
eg aliquis, someone; aliquot, some number.

Pronouns beginning t- often translate "so" or "such"
eg tam, so; tot, so many
tantus, so great; talis, of such a kind, such

Pronouns beginning qu- often translate by an English "wh-" or "how". Eg:
qui and quis: who, which, what (above)
quam: how, as; quot: how many
quantus: how great; qualis: of what kind

Pronouns ending -cumque denote -ever, -soever: Eg:
quicumque: whoever, whatever

Parallelisms are common : tam...quam; tot...quot; alter...alter etc [K 335]

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

Indirect statement (reported speech) (Substantival/noun)

In classical Latin this is normally done by [K 414]
subject in the accusative
verb in the infinitive
"that" omitted, eg
Scio eum bonum esse - I know that he is good
(Literally, I know him to be good)

In Church Latin this may be done by quia / quod (that) with the indicative.

Consecutive clauses (Adverbial) [K 421-422]

Anticipated by some form of "so" in the main clause
(eg ita, tam, sic, or tot "so many", tantus "so great")
Then ut (that, with the subjunctive) (negative, ut non)

Final clauses (Adverbial) [K 423]

Ut (so that / in order to, with a subjunctive)
Ne (so that not, in order not, like ut)
(Note: ut on its own or with an indicative usually means "as", like sicut "just as")

Causal clauses (Adverbial) [K 424-426]

quia / quod (because, with the indicative or subjunctive)
Cum (since, with the subjunctive)

Temporal clauses (Adverbial) [K 427-436]

cum (when, with indicative or (in the past) subjunctive)
antequam (before) } both normally with the indicative
postquam (after) }

Conditional clauses (Adverbial) [K 437-443]

Si (if, with indicative or subjunctive)
Nisi (if not / unless, like si)

Concessive clauses (Adverbial) [K 444-447]

Etsi, etiamsi, tametsi (even if, with indic. or subj.)
Quamquam (although, with the indicative)
Quamvis, licet (although, with the subjunctive)

Relative clauses (Adjectival) [K 450]

Qui, quae, quod (who / which, with an indicative)

ABLATIVE ABSOLUTE [K 237]

The ablative absolute takes the form of two ablatives in succession. One is a noun or pronoun, the other is usually a participle. Attempt a translation along the lines of

"When the <noun> is / was / had been <participle>"

and then rephrase into smoother English when you have understood it. Eg

Alternative Latin

Caesare venturo: When Caesar is about to come, ie
Caesar being on his way

Most commonly the participle is PRESENT (in which case ACTIVE) or
PERFECT (in which case PASSIVE):

caenantibus omnibus : when all were eating
his auditis : when these things had been heard

CONJUNCTIONS

[K 236-238]

Conjunctions regularly encountered include

et : and
atque : and
at : but
sed : but
autem : but, however (2nd word)
vero : but, moreover (2nd word)
nam : for
enim : for (2nd word)
ergo }
itaque } : therefore (usually 2nd word)
igitur }
etiam : also
quoque : also (2nd word)

RULES FOR UNSEENS

Initially:

(1) Read the passage twice over to try and identify the context.

Apply the following suggestions for each sentence:

(2) Identify the separate main and subordinate clauses. Subordinate clauses are often but not always enclosed in commas.

(3) Try bracketing off subordinate clauses and other units as you find them so as to clarify the structure.

Apply the following suggestions for each clause, starting with the main clause:

(4) Find the verb. This is often but not always the last word in the clause.

(5) Parse the verb : identify voice (active / passive), number (singular / plural), person (1st / 2nd / 3rd), mood (indicative / subjunctive / imperative / infinitive etc)

(6) Identify its subject (a noun or pronoun in the nominative case, or built into the verb?)

(7) Identify the object if any in the accusative or perhaps dative case (indirect objects)

(8) Look for any ablative absolutes (active / passive)

(9) Look for parallel structuring: [K 179] Eg:

aut ... aut : either ... or
vel ... vel : either ... or
sive ... sive : whether ... or
nec ... nec (or, neque ... neque) : neither ... nor

Alternative Latin

tam ... quam : so ... as (etc see PRONOUNS above)

When you find words you do not know:

(10) Mentally put "something" until you can make a sensible guess.

(11) With compound verb stems (simple verb name preceded by a preposition eg re-, con-, pre-, ad-, in-, ab-, per-), try first translating the simple stem on its own. Then see what flavour is added by the proposition (eg per- often suggests "completely"). Eg

convocare:	vocare means to call; convocare, to call together.
abicere:	iacere means to throw; abicere, to throw away.
pervenire:	venire means to come; pervenire, to arrive at.

(This doesn't work for invenio which means to find, not come in! - English "invention")

(12) Look for English derivatives. These often come from the supine eg frango, I break, has supine fractum, from which we get "fracture".

Martin Mosse,
August 1998.

Written to accompany *Church Latin for Beginners - An Elementary Course of Exercises in Ecclesiastical Latin* by J. E. Lowe, M.A. (London: Burnes Oates & Washbourne Ltd, 1930).

References "[K nnn]" are to sections in *Kennedy's Revised Latin Primer* (London: Longman, 1962).