

*Qui multum habet, plus cupit.*<sup>1</sup>

# First Declension Nouns

## The Cases



On the page 9 of *Latin Without Tears* there are exercises using all the cases (except the vocative) of singular first declension nouns.

Latin nouns are usually learnt by **memorising** the pattern of the endings for each declension so that you can recognise them when you meet them in a piece of text. The usual<sup>2</sup> order is:

Nominative  
Vocative (see below)  
Accusative  
Genitive  
Dative  
Ablative

You should now learn the little song which teaches the cases in their order and function. Find this by opening Volume 5 of the *Mothers' Companion* clicking on *Latin Without Tears* and then clicking *View Song Files*. **This song is invaluable so be sure to get it by heart.**

The Vocative Case. This is the special ending used when a noun is used to address someone. e.g. "Come here, Susan." Susan would be in the vocative. Or "Did you hear me, Susan?" If we wanted to be old fashioned we might say, "I am coming, O King." "O king" is in the vocative. In Latin there are just a few times when the vocative has a different ending from the nominative. Since they are so few Mrs Mortimer (the author of *Latin Without Tears*) missed the vocative case out in her early chapters. It is useful to know of its existence, however, and the song does not make sense without it!

The first declension singular looks like this then:

Nominative	<i>femina</i>
Vocative	<i>femina</i>
Accusative	<i>feminam</i>
Genitive	<i>feminae</i>
Dative	<i>feminae</i>
Ablative	<i>feminā</i> (the little mark showing that the a is long will not always be printed but the ablative a ending is always long whether indicated by a mark or not.)

You must learn *femina, femina, feminam, feminae, feminae, feminā* so that you can chant it easily by heart. Then substitute other first declension nouns *terra, terra terram...* and so on. Chant these out also. There is a handy illustrated sheet of examples using the word *rana* (frog) on the *Mothers' Companion*. Find it in Volume 5, click on *Latin Without Tears Part 1*, then *Latin vocabulary sheets*, then *cases of singular nouns of the first declension*. Print it out and put it up on your wall. After you have looked at it you may prefer to make your own sheet in the same way using a different first declension noun.

<sup>1</sup> He who has much wants more.

<sup>2</sup> The order seems to be different in the USA so watch out if you are using internet resources.

Look at the words set out on p.9 of *Latin Without Tears*. You will see they match up except that the vocative case is missing.

Listen to the audio on the *Mothers' Companion* flash drive to get the correct pronunciation unless you have someone helping you who knows how to pronounce Latin.

Here are three more nouns in the nominative case to learn from the IGCSE vocabulary list. Remember, if you wish to use one of these words as the object in a sentence you will need to change the ending from *a* to *am*. If you wish to use a noun in the genitive case or the dative case remember to change the ending to *ae*. The nominative and genitive singular forms of the nouns are shown here as they would be in a dictionary. The genitive singular is given because from it we can determine to which of the groups or declensions of nouns any word belongs. All first declension nouns have a genitive singular ending *ae*.

*mensa, mensae* – table

NB:- *mensa* was usually the first noun learnt in Latin. Many children must have struggled with the concept of the vocative: “O table!”

Bible example:

*tabernaculum enim factum est primum in quo inerant candelabra et **mensa** et propositio panum quae dicitur sancta* (Hebrews 9:2)

*insula, insulae* – island, block of flats

Bible example:

*et omnis **insula** fugit et montes non sunt inventi* (Revelation 16:20)

*puella, puellae* – girl

Bible example:

*et tenens manum **puellae** ait illi “talitha cumi” quod est interpretatum “puella tibi dico surge”* (Mark 5:41)

NB:- this example shows the genitive “the hand **of the girl**.”

Practice chanting your new words in the same pattern as *femina*.

Some new first conjugation verbs.

*Ambulare* – to walk

Bible example:

*melior est pauper qui **ambulat** in simplicitate sua quam torquens labia insipiens* (Proverbs 19:1)

*liberare* – to free

Bible example:

*Ecce enim Deus noster, quem colimus, potest eripere nos de camino ignis ardentis, et de manibus tuis, o rex, **liberare**.* (Daniel 3:17)

*negare* – to deny, to say that... not

Bible example:

*quis est mendax nisi is qui negat quoniam Iesus non est Christus?* (I John 2:22)

Remember that you don't need to understand all the words in the Bible examples. Look them up in the English Bible and look at the similarities in some of the words. Did you spot *pauper* and *ignis*?

**Always write the vocabulary words in your indexed note book.**