LATIN VERB CONJUGATIONS

Just as similar nouns are grouped together in things called declensions, similar verbs are grouped together in things called conjugations. Up until now we have just been dealing with the verbs of the first conjugation.

First conjugation verbs have a first principle part ending in –o, and an infinitive ending in –are. Because of that -are infinitive, all present system tenses in the first conjugation have an -a- in the present stem before the personal endings. You have already learned how to translate all of the tenses of first conjugation verbs.

So now it is time to totally overwhelm you by introducing the other groups of Latin verbs: the 2nd, 3rd, 3rd –io and 4th conjugations. But is this really going to be overwhelming? Is this too much for you to handle? Will you have reason to quit Latin right now and give up?

Inferi, no! Admittedly, on the surface, the thought of five different types of verbs, all acting differently, would be ridiculously complicated. But as you'll see by looking at my handy-dandy chart below, it's really quite simple if you just think about it this way:

     1. The primary reason to learn Latin verb forms is so that you will know what tense the verb is in and, therefore, how to correctly translate it into English. 90% of the time in a Latin class, you are converting <u>from Latin to English</u>. So just concentrate on identifying the tense of the verb from its spelling.

     2. The imperfect tense verbs, no matter what conjugation they are from, are all identifiable by the characteristic –ba- spelling. If you see –ba, you know it's imperfect, you translate it as "was ---ing".

     3. The perfect tense verbs, no matter what conjugation they are from, are all identifiable by the characteristic –i, -isti, -it, etc. personal endings. If you see –i, -isti, -it, you know it's perfect, you translate it as "---ed".

     4. The pluperfect tense verbs, no matter what conjugation they are from, are all identifiable by the characteristic –eram, -eras, -erat personal endings. If you see –eram, -eras, -erat, you know it's pluperfect, you translate it as "had ---ed".

     5. The future perfect tense verbs, no matter what conjugation they are from, are all identifiable by the characteristic –ero, -eris, -erit personal endings. If you see –ero, -eris, -erit, you know it's future perfect, you translate it as "will have ---ed".

	1st -o, -are	2nd -eo, - ēre	3rd -o, -ere	3rd –io -io, -ere	4th -io, -ire
Pres	-a-	-e-	-i-	-i-	-i-
Imp	-ba-	→	→	→	→
Fut	-bo, -bi-, -bu-	-bo, -bi-, -bu-	-e-	-ie-	-ie-
Perf	-i,-isti,-it,etc.	→	→	→	→
Pluper	-eram,-eras,-erat,etc.	→	→	→	→
FP	-ero,-eris,-erit,etc.	→	→	→	→

So the only place any confusion could arise is between the present and future tenses. But even here, the problem is a small one. Looking above, the only two forms that might be confused would be the present tense of the second conjugation and the future of the third conjugation. Everywhere else the endings are unique in tense and conjugation.

In terms of this "present-future" issue, I like to think of the conjugations as made up of two groups: the "bo,bi,bu" conjugations (1st and 2nd) and the "i before e" conjugations (3rd and 4th), i.e. the ones with an –i- in the present tense before the –e- in the future.

You will never forget that a "bo,bi,bu" ending means it's in the future tense ("will ---"), so you just need to concentrate on that one vowel ending that can be confused: -e-. And the only way to avoid that is to semper, semper, semper **memorize the principle parts of the verbs**. The principle parts of the verb will tell you what conjugation it belongs to and the conjugation will tell you whether that –e- form is a present tense or a future.

And that's just how simple it is to translate Latin verbs correctly. Memorize the principle parts. Let the spelling of the verb tell you what tense it is. And if you occasionally screw up, it's should only boil down to a 50/50 guess between the present tense and future. So you'll still get it right half of the time.

FINAL (for now) CASE USAGES

Final review, at this point you have (of course!) learned the following case uses:

Nominative
> Subject: **Brock** likes the blues.
> Predicate Nominative: Brock is **a true hipster**.

Genitive
> Possession: The music **of Brock** is, of course, vinyl.
> Partitive: Part **of me** thinks of Brock as my truest brother.
> Objective: Brock's love **of DP** is fierce.

Dative
> Indirect Object: Let's give a round of snaps **to Brock**.
> Reference: Brock's connections were a huge help **to me**.
> With Adjective: Even a scribbled note by Brock is suitable **for framing**.

Accusative
> Direct Object: I love **the Brockster**.
> w/ preposition: This weekend we're all going **to Brock's pad**.

Ablative
> Location: Brock is **in the house**.
> Means: Brock can surely wail **with that harmonica**.
> Accompaniment: Brock's going to the club **with his buds**.
> Agent: Nothing is done right unless it's done **by Brock**.
> Respect: Brock is outstanding **in coolness**.

Now for some final additions.

Uses of Cases: the Dative Case

Rare, always used with "sum", awkward when literally translated, I present to you: the Dative of Possession.

> Naves hostibus sunt = The ships are to the enemies. = The enemies have ships.

You should now understand this Latin sentence:

> **It was suitable for Marcus to bring flowers to my mother for my father because Marcus already had flowers.**
> **Erat idoneum Marco portare flores matri patri quod iam flores erant Marco.**

Uses of Cases: the Ablative Case

In the Ablative of Separation, the ablative case is used, without a preposition, with a verb of separation where no motion is implied.

> Marcus was temporarily detached from reality. = Marcus veritate ad tempus remotus est..

In the Ablative of Manner, the ablative case is used, <u>often</u> with a preposition, to describe how an action is performed, as an alternative to using an adverb.

> Victoria walked to the podium with virtue in her heart. = Victoria cum virtute in pectore ad rostrum ambulavit.

You should now understand this Latin sentence:

> **In a competition with my friends, I was surpassed in skill with a sword by Marcus when he separated me from my weapon with finesse.**
> **In certamine cum amicis, ab Marco gladio in arte superatus sum ubi me telo argutiis separavit.**

NUMBERS: CARDINAL, ORDINAL and ROMAN

You won't see them very often, many are closely related to English words that you know, and you ought to be able to count to 20 just like the kids in French and Spanish. Just learn them and quit yer bellyachin':

Cardinal		Roman	Ordinal	
one	unus, a, um	I	first	primus, a, um
two	duo, ae, o	II	second	secundus, a, um
three	tres, tria	III	third	tertius, a, um
four	quattuor	IV	fourth	quartus, a, um
five	quinque	V	fifth	quintus, a, um
six	sex	VI	sixth	sextus, a, um
seven	septem	VII	seventh	septimus, a um
eight	octo	VIII	eighth	octavus, a, um
nine	novem	IX	ninth	nonus, a, um
ten	decem	X	tenth	decimus, a, um
eleven	undecim	XI	eleventh	undecimus, a, um
twelve	duodecim	XII	twelfth	duodecimus, a, um
thirteen	tredecim	XIII	thirteenth	tertius, a, um decimus, a, um
fourteen	quattuordecim	XIV	fourteenth	quartus, a, um decimus, a, um
fifteen	quindecim	XV	fifteenth	quintus, a, um decimus, a, um
sixteen	sedecim	XVI	sixteenth	sextus, a, um decimus, a, um
seventeen	septendecim	XVII	seventeenth	septimus, a, um decimus, a, um
eighteen	duodeviginti	XVIII	eighteenth	duodevicesimus, a, um
nineteen	undeviginti	XIX	nineteenth	undevicesimus, a, um
twenty	viginti	XX	twentieth	vicesimus, a, um