

## Ablative Absolute

The Ablative is a very busy case in every Latin noun declension. Its name comes from my favorite verb, *auferro* (*ad, away from, latus, carried, i.e., carried away*), to remove, to separate.

The idea of separation is important, because the AA is separated from the main clause of a sentence.

- Physically separated and
- Separated because it has a different subject than the main clause of the sentence

For example, compare the following two sentences:

Romam videntes, viri gaudebant.

Roma visa, viri gaudebant.

1 Romam videntes, viri gaudebant.

- What is the subject of the sentence?
- What is the participle videntes describing?
- Does this sentence contain an AA?

2 Romā visā, viri gaudebant.

- What is the subject of the sentence?
- What is the participle visā describing?
- Does this sentence contain an AA?

The AA is used to describe the circumstances under which the rest of the action in a sentence occurs.

- AA is usually constructed with a noun in the ablative case accompanied by a modifying participle:

Roma visa \_\_\_\_\_

Claudia audiente \_\_\_\_\_

- However, it may also be constructed using two nouns

Numa rege \_\_\_\_\_

- Or a noun and an adjective, both in the ablative case

Herculo forti \_\_\_\_\_

Like other participial phrases, the ablative absolute can be translated quite literally, as in Roma visa, (with Rome having been seen).

- Often it is better style to transform the phrase to a clause when translating, converting the participle to a verb in the appropriate tense, treating the ablative noun as its subject, and supplying the most logical conjunction (usually 'when,' 'since,' or 'although:')

- Eo imperium tenente, eventum timeo. \_\_\_\_\_

- His rebus auditis, coepit timere. \_\_\_\_\_

- Or: when, since, after, etc.

- When, since, after, etc, these things had been heard, he began....

- Choose the phrase that best conveys the meaning of the AA in the sentence.

- Remember that the default translation of an AA is

"after the \_\_\_\_\_ had been \_\_\_\_\_-ed."

"the \_\_\_\_\_ having been \_\_\_\_\_-ed."

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- **Eo imperium tenente, eventum timeo.**

- 
- **His rebus auditis, coepit timere.**


- \_\_\_\_\_

- **Or: when, since, after, etc.**


- **When, since, after, etc, these things had been heard, he began....**

**Choose the English phrase that best translates the Latin word or phrase in italics.**

1. *Signō datō*, milites urbem oppugnaverunt.
  - a. the signal having been given
  - b. when the signal was given
  - c. although the signal was given
2. *Servus non accusatus* fugit.
  - a. although he was not accused
  - b. not having been accused
  - c. because he was not accused
3. *urbe oppugnatā*, bellum geremus.
  - a. when the city had been attacked
  - b. the city having been attacked
  - c. if the city is attacked
4. *Servus accusatus* fugit
  - a. although he was accused
  - b. having been accused
  - c. because he was accused
5. *Multis militibus interfectis*, oppidum tamen expugnāvimus
  - a. many soldiers having been killed
  - b. since many soldiers were killed
  - c. although many soldiers were killed
6. *Pueri laudatī* laeti [happy] erant.
  - a. having been praised
  - b. because they were praised
  - c. although they were praised


 Match the italicized English phrase to its Latin equivalent.

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. _____ Are they <i>going to come</i> ?                   | a. scriptae erant   |
| 2. _____ Are they <i>coming</i> ?                          | b. scripsisse       |
| 3. _____ We saw the boys <i>running</i> .                  | c. scriptās esse    |
| 4. _____ I know that they <i>are coming</i> .              | d. scriptum esse    |
| 5. _____ When he had found the book, he was happy.         | e. cursūra          |
| 6. _____ He said they <i>had come</i> .                    | f. currentēs        |
| 7. _____ While <i>running</i> to the street, the boy fell. | g. currēbat         |
| 8. _____ I knew she <i>wrote</i> the letter.               | h. cursūri          |
| 9. _____ She said the letter <i>had been written</i> .     | i. currēns          |
| 10. _____ She was <i>about to run</i> across the street.   | j. inveniēns librum |
|  | k. ventūri          |
|  | l. librō inventō    |
|  | m. venire           |
|  | n. veniuntne        |
|  | o. vēnisse          |
|  | p. vēnerunt         |

 Complete the Latin sentences by translating the English words in parentheses.

- (What) \_\_\_\_\_ librōs lēgistī?
- Auctor (by whom) \_\_\_\_\_ liber scriptus est nōtus est.
- (What) \_\_\_\_\_ facis?
- (Whose) \_\_\_\_\_ cōsilium id est?
- (Who) \_\_\_\_\_ trāns viam cucurrērunt?
- (To what) \_\_\_\_\_ puerō librum dōnās?
- Puellae (whose) \_\_\_\_\_ librōs habeō sorōrēs meae sunt.
- (What) \_\_\_\_\_ auxilium exspectās?
- 9-10. (Who) \_\_\_\_\_ pecūniam (which) \_\_\_\_\_ āmiserās invēnit?

## DERIVATIVES AND WORD STUDY

 Form Latin compound words from the parts given.

EXAMPLE

ad-capiō      accipiō

- dis-facilis      \_\_\_\_\_
- dis-pōnō      \_\_\_\_\_
- sub-premō      \_\_\_\_\_

TESTS

# THE ABLATIVE ABSOLUTE

## PRACTICE ONE

Translate the following Ablative Absolute phrases.

1. Antōniō cōnsule \_\_\_\_\_
2. tē vivō \_\_\_\_\_
3. magistrātibus creātis \_\_\_\_\_
4. fābulā nārrātā \_\_\_\_\_
5. rege loquente \_\_\_\_\_
6. orāculō datō \_\_\_\_\_
7. verbis dictis \_\_\_\_\_
8. timōre dēpositō \_\_\_\_\_
9. vestimentis indūtis \_\_\_\_\_
10. pecūniā āmissā \_\_\_\_\_
11. iānuā apertā \_\_\_\_\_
12. Galliā pācātā \_\_\_\_\_
13. ignibus extinctis \_\_\_\_\_
14. cibō sumptō \_\_\_\_\_
15. senatōribus adstāntibus \_\_\_\_\_

Editors of Latin texts often set off the Ablative Absolute construction by commas, which makes it easy for the reader to spot. However, this is not always the case. Also, sometimes the two words (there must always be two) which make up the Ablative Absolute are separated from each other by qualifying words or phrases.

**Cōsiliis ducis ab senatōribus compertis, discessimus.**  
*After the leader's plans had been discovered by the senators, we left.*

## PRACTICE TWO

Translate the following Ablative Absolute phrases.

1. Mercuriō ē caelō dilapsō \_\_\_\_\_
2. saxis ē mōntibus in viam collapsis \_\_\_\_\_
3. ventis tempestāte agitātis \_\_\_\_\_
4. his rēbus ūnō diē perfectis \_\_\_\_\_
5. pāce in Asiam ā Māriō impositā \_\_\_\_\_
6. ossibus in terrā sepultis \_\_\_\_\_
7. puerō ē senātū ēiectō \_\_\_\_\_
8. vōtis ā Troianis factis \_\_\_\_\_
9. filiā ducis in mātrimonium datā \_\_\_\_\_

(cont.)

10. milite metū subitō exānimātō \_\_\_\_\_
11. vēlīs in altum datīs \_\_\_\_\_
12. dīs cotīdiē iuvāntibus \_\_\_\_\_
13. filiō Rōmam ā patre praemissō \_\_\_\_\_
14. scelere magnō ab eō perfectō \_\_\_\_\_
15. librō dē amicitia ā Cicerone scriptō \_\_\_\_\_
16. quō crudeliter factō \_\_\_\_\_
17. litterīs sine morā scriptīs \_\_\_\_\_
18. signō ā principe datō \_\_\_\_\_
19. quibus rebus ab omnibus auditis \_\_\_\_\_
20. cenā celeriter sumptā \_\_\_\_\_

### PRACTICE THREE

Restate the first clause in each of these sentences as an Ablative Absolute.

e.g., Postquam pōntifex sacrificium perfecit, pompam spectāvimus.

sacrificiō ā pōntifice perfectō \_\_\_\_\_,

1. Postquam Antōnius complūrēs nāvēs amīsit, Agrippa consilium novum cēpit.  
\_\_\_\_\_ ab Antōniō \_\_\_\_\_,
2. Cum septem cervī transfixi essent, Aenēās et socii convīvium parāvērunt.  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,
3. Cum pōns trans Rhēnum factus est, Caesar in Germāniam transiit.  
\_\_\_\_\_ trans Rhēnum \_\_\_\_\_,
4. Dum cantat imperātōr, omnēs tacent.  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,
5. Quod caelum erat serēnum, ad īnsulam nāvigare cōstituimus.  
\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_,
6. Cum equus in urbem trāctus esset, Graeci multōs Trōiānōs interfēcērunt.  
\_\_\_\_\_ in urbem \_\_\_\_\_,
7. Dum discipulī librōs legunt, magister scribebat.  
\_\_\_\_\_ ā discipulis \_\_\_\_\_,
8. Postquam geminī in Tiberim missi sunt, multōs diēs pluit.  
\_\_\_\_\_ in Tiberim \_\_\_\_\_,