

Review: Basic uses of the cases

NOMINATIVE

Subject of a conjugated verb (including adjectives and appositives that modify the subject). If the verb is an *infinitive*, the subject will be most often in the Accusative.

Predicate Nominative, which may be a noun, an adjective, or other parts of speech. If they have case, they are in the Nominative. Most often a **PN** is found in a clause with a linking verb, but there may be **PN**'s modifying a subject in other clauses or constructions.

Examples:

αἱ κόραι ἦσαν καλαί.

The girls were beautiful.

οἱ νεανῖαι γενήσονται σοφοί.

The young men will become wise.

Παῦλος, ὁ ἀποστολος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἔλεγε τάδε.

Paul, the apostle of Jesus, said the following.

ACCUSATIVE

Direct Object of a transitive verb.

Example: κάλει τοὺς ἀδελφούς. *Call your brothers!*

Subject or **Predicate** of the *infinitive of a linking verb*

Example: ἔφη τὸν βίον εἶναι χαλεπόν.

He said that life is harsh, or: He said that his life was harsh.

Predicate Accusative modifying a function in the Accusative through a verb that is not necessarily linking, but may be transitive or intransitive.

Example: τούσδε τοὺς φιλοσόφους ἐκαλοῦμεν σοφούς.

----- DO ----- V pred acc

We used to call these philosophers wise.

Accusative governed by a preposition (to avoid confusion, we do not call the case governed by a preposition its "object," as some grammars do):

Examples where the Accusative denotes motion toward::

ἀνά + acc = up (e.g. the river); ἐς or εἰς + acc = to, towards a place; πρὸς + acc = to, toward; ὑπό + acc = moving toward the foot or base of (a tree, a mountain); κατά + acc = down (a road, the river), denoting motion

Examples where it is not obvious why the Accusative is governed: διὰ + Acc = on account of; μετὰ + acc = after

GENITIVE

Modifier of a noun, pronoun, adjective, etc. It expresses possession and other relationships that we do not identify specifically in this course. Thus it is equivalent to the English possessive case or the English prepositional phrase “of...” It may be in the attributive or the predicative position, usually with not difference in meaning.

ἄρ' ἤγοντο τοὺς τοῦ κυρίου ἵππους;

ἄρ' ἤγοντο τοὺς ἵππους τοῦ κυρίου;

Both examples mean: *Were they carrying away (= stealing) the master's horses?*

Some verbs take a complement in the genitive that we cannot translate into English as “of” but in whatever way our own idiom requires:

ἤκουσαν τῶν γερόντων. *They heard the old men.*

παίδων τῶν ὑμετέρων ἄρξετε. *You will rule your children.*

Genitive governed by a preposition, often, though not necessarily always, denoting “motion away from.”

ἀπό + gen = away from a place; ἐκ + gen = out of a place; πρὸς + gen = from.

DATIVE

Three basic functions

i) **Indirect dative**: It shows *to or for whom (or what)* the action of the verb takes place. A similar function of the dative completes sometimes an adjective, indicating *for whom or what* something is easy, useful, etc.

κακὸν οὐδὲν ὑμῖν ἔσται.

Literally, "There will be no harm for you." = *No harm will come to you.*

A special application is the *dative of possession*, usually with the verb *to be*.

οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τέκνον.

Literally, "There was no child for them" = *They had no child.*

ii) **Instrumental dative**, with active or passive verbs. It shows *by means of what* something takes place. It has numerous applications, e.g. the *manner* of the action, its *cause*, etc.

λύεται δόλῳ.

He is freed by means of / by deceit / by a trick. (means)

θορύβῳ βαίνουσι(ν).

They walk with an uproar. (manner)

φόβῳ θανάτου ἐδουλεύοντο.

Because of the fear of death they were enslaved. (cause)

iii) **Locative dative.** It makes reference to a place *in or at*, or a time *when*.

τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγείρεται.

On the third day he is raised up.

The dative may be governed by a preposition or a preverb:

ἐν + dat = in or at a place; ὑπό + dat = in or at the foot or base (e.g. of a tree, a mountain).

ἐμμένω τοῖς ὅρκοις. *I abide by the oaths.*