

Chapter 15

RULE 1: *-ba-* is the tense marker for the imperfect tense in all conjugations.

RULE 2: The ablative of time, used without a preposition, shows "point in time."

I. Grammar

If you taught the imperfect tense in Chapter 5 and also reinforced in later chapters (8 and 10), Chapter 15 will be a well-earned review. If not, return to [Chapter 5](#) in this Teaching Guide and review my remarks on the imperfect tense.

A. The Ablative of Time

Stress two things: (1) the ablative of time requires **no** preposition, and (2) it must use a noun which denotes time, e.g. day, hour, minute, sunrise, bedtime, classtime, winter, yesterday, the Classical Age, etc. As of this lesson the words that they know which can become ablatives of time are: *hora* and *tempus*. In the next lesson they will add *aetas* to this list.

This chapter offers you a good chance to stress the Roman way of looking at time. Students will meet in this chapter both the imperfect tense and the ablative of time. Behind both constructions lies the concept of "continual versus stopped" action. The imperfect tense shows continuous or repeated action in the past in contrast to the perfect tense which shows single-event or stopped action in the past. The ablative of time relates the "point" in time at/in/on/within which an event took place, whereas the accusative of time (see [Chapter 37](#)) shows the "duration" of time during/through/over/for which an event took place. It is probably wise to introduce the accusative of duration of time along with the ablative of point in time because their distinction helps students learn both. All in all, it's easier, I believe, to learn a foreign concept if you also learn what the foreigners considered its opposite.

History of the Ablative of Time. The ablative acquired this use when it absorbed the locative which originally designated both place and time, cf. *ubi* meaning "where" and "when." The sense of "within which," a meaning bordering on duration, came to the ablative mostly from negative expressions, such as "You will neither eat nor drink anything *within (the period of) these ten days*" (Plautus). Extended to positive constructions, this sense took on a new implication: "He came *three days from now* (literally 'within a three-day period')," "He was sent *a few years ago* (literally 'within a few years')." In certain negative expressions, the ablative then assumed a sense of duration of time ("so that he can't get out of bed *for three whole days*," "since they had been fighting continually *for five hours*") but, when used this way, was usually accompanied by some word emphasizing the total extent of time (*totus, semper, continenter, perpetuo*), as if the time period were looked at as a single unit of time. Ultimately, the ablative was used to denote extent of time in certain circumstances, such as epitaphs (*vixit annis . . .*).

II. Vocabulary

- **Italia:** Probably a Hellenized version of *Vitelia* ("Calf-land"), this word, no doubt, originally referred to just the southern part of the Italian peninsula (*Magna Graecia*) and only later (by the third century BCE) was extended to the everything south of Liguria and Cisalpine Gaul. *Italics* were named after a type of printing introduced by the Venetian Aldo Manuzio and his family (1450-1597 CE); these texts of the Greek and Roman classics, called Aldine texts, helped popularize the reading of classical works in the modern age.
- **pater:** Contracts! For the formation of the nominative singular, see [Chapter 7](#).
- **miser:** Does *not* contract!
- **inter:** Takes an **accusative** object, see [Chapter 5, s.v. propter](#).
- **itaque:** Means literally "and so." *Ita*, "so," is the correlative ("answering form") of *ut*, "how."

- **quoniam:** Means literally "since now." *Quon* is from *quom*, an old form of *cum* ("when, since, although"). *Quoniam* can mean "since, seeing that, whereas, because."
- **committo:** Takes a **dativ**e indirect object, "entrust X (accusative) to Y (dative)." [Stress the components of the compound verbs in this vocabulary list: *com/mitto* = *cum-* + *mitto* ("send along with"); *ex/specto* = *ex-* + *specto* ("look out of"); *intellego* = *inter-* + *lego* ("choose between").]
- **iacio:** The perfect *ieci* belongs a class of strong aorists rare in Latin (*feci, egi, fregi, cepi*, cf. Gr. *etheka, heka*). *laceo* is the corresponding intransitive form of the *iac-* base which means "be thrown (down)" (> "lie"), cf. *pendeo* ("be suspended, hang") vs. *pendo* ("hang, weigh out"). As with *capio* and *facio*, the compounds of *iacio* lose their *-a-*, becoming *-ic-* or *-iec(-jec-)*. Wheelock's list of derivatives shows this very nicely.
- **intellego:** Unlike other compounds of *lego* (*diligio, colligo*), *inter/lego* retains the *-e-* in the base (i.e. does not undergo vowel gradation). Also, unlike its base verb which forms its perfect by vowel-lengthening (*lêgi*), this *lego*-compound forms a perfect like Greek sigmatic aorists (*intellexi*); see Chapter 12. Clearly Latin speakers at some point forgot that this was a compound of *lego* and give it a life of its own.
- **timeo:** There is no fourth principal part for *timeo*, because this verb has no true passive. Students will tend to confuse the opposite verbs, *timeo* and *terreo* (Chapter 18), so it is a good idea to stress the meaning of this word now before the confusion can take root: "*Timid* people are fearful, whereas fearsome people *terrify*."

III. Sentences

Practice and Review

1. Here, *ars* has the sense of "technical craft, means."
1. In this sentence, *se . . . gerere* means "conduct oneself."
1. *Facio* here takes a double accusative, "to make X Y." Explain to students that the second accusative works like an appositive.
2. For "used to" in this sentence and in sentence 14, some students will look in the English-to-Latin vocabulary in the back of the book and try to employ some form of *utor*. It's best to forestall this problem by telling them ahead of time that "used to" should be represented by the imperfect tense.
3. Similarly, "kept" will send some students in search of aberrant mutations of *teneo*. Tell them "kept" represents "continual action" and therefore the imperfect tense will cover it.
4. If "we saved his life" once, the verb "saved" should be in the perfect tense.