

Grammar: Compound verbs

Overview

In Latin it is possible to make compound verbs, usually by adding a preposition in front of an existing verb.

Compounding a verb can have three effects:

1. It means the same as the two words individually.

ex	+	eo	>	exeo
out	+	I go	>	I go out

2. It can intensify the meaning of the verb.

ex	+	audio	>	exaudio
out	+	hear	>	hear, hearken

3. It can have a separate, new meaning.

in	+	venio	>	invenio
in	+	I go	>	I find

Spellings

Adding prefixes to verbs often results in a change in the spelling of the prefix.

ad	+	ferro	>	affero
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This reflects the easiest way to pronounce the new word. It can mean that compounds are sometimes harder to spot.

Adding a prefix also changes the stress on the verb, which often results in a vowel change.

cum	+	facio	>	conficio
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Direct objects after a compound verb

Compound verbs often accompanied by a dative. This is demonstrated further in the *Uses of the Dative* page.