

# Grammar: The first declension

## *Overview*

The first declension is the first group of nouns, grouped according to their similar pattern of endings. For the other declensions, go to the appropriate page:

2nd declension

3rd declension

4th declension

5th declension

First declension nouns are almost always feminine, but there are a few nouns with first declension endings that are MASCULINE. These are known as the 'pain' nouns, because their first letters spell 'pain':

*Poeta*

*Agricola*

*Incola*

*Nauta*

## *Summary of basic case endings*

|            |                   |                          |
|------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Nominative | subject           | what does the verb       |
| Accusative | (direct) object   | what the verb is done to |
| Genitive   |                   | 'of'                     |
| Dative:    | (indirect object) | 'to, for'                |
| Ablative:  |                   | 'by, with, from'         |

## *Declension table*

*puella, puellae* (f) - girl

| <b>Case</b> | <b>sing.</b> | <b>pl.</b> |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Nom.        | puella       | puellae    |
| Acc.        | puellam      | puellas    |

|      |         |           |
|------|---------|-----------|
| Gen. | puellae | puellarum |
| Dat. | puellae | puellis   |
| Abl. | puellā  | puellis   |

Notice that the:

genitive singular  
 dative singular  
 nominative plural

all have the same endings.

The nominative is the subject of the verb. If you see this ending, therefore, check the verb. If it is plural, then there is a high chance that the -ae ending is the nominative plural. If it is singular, then the -ae ending has to be singular.

### *Examples drawn from the exercises*

Locate the first declension noun in each sentence and identify its number and case.

The number after each question indicates the exercise from which it has been drawn, so that you can look at the example in context.

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. castra sunt in Italia.                                  | <i>Exercise 7</i>  |
| 2. manu pineam quate taedam.                               | <i>Exercise 4</i>  |
| 3. mea uita ...  | <i>Exercise 8</i>  |
| 4. fata iubet.   | <i>Exercise 4</i>  |
| 5. tuae plagae sunt suaves.                                | <i>Exercise 5</i>  |
| 6. sic nova tum tellus herbas virgultaque primum sustulit. | <i>Exercise 9</i>  |
| 7. sacrificia privata et publica procurant.                | <i>Exercise 11</i> |
| 8. deinde regiam intravit.                                 | <i>Exercise 10</i> |
| 9. Nautarum gubernatores ...                               | <i>Exercise 3</i>  |
| 10. Quid est nebula?                                       | <i>Exercise 3</i>  |