

# Briefing 4 – Compound Sentences

## 1. Compound Sentences - introduction

This briefing describes the manner by which Latin creates compound sentences. They are very common.

A compound sentence is one which translates in English into two or more clauses, each with a verb. The Main Clause is the one that introduces the subject and the verb that describe the primary action. Dependent clauses give more information about what is happening in the main clause. **Adverbial clauses** can qualify the action of a verb. **Adjectival clauses** give more information about subject or object or other participants in the main clause (or other dependent clauses). **Substantival clauses** act like nouns. For example:

- I learned to read when I was a young boy. [I learned to read a long ago] – **adverbial clause**
- A pupil who knows Latin endings will understand Latin. [A careful pupil will understand Latin] – **adjectival clause**
- It is useful to be able to read Latin fluently [The Latin language is useful] - **substantival clause**

In the highlighted sentences above, the main clause is highlighted in yellow. The dependent clause is highlighted in blue. The highlights in this paragraph can also be considered as dependent clauses, because they can be re-written as:

‘which I have highlighted in yellow’

‘which I have highlighted in blue’

## 2. Forms of dependent clauses

### 2.1. Relative clauses in Latin

Relative clauses are dependent clauses that are introduced by a **relative pronoun** referring to a specific noun or object. Relative pronouns translate the words *who* or *what* or *that*. Usually they use **qui/quaе/quod** and its cases. They are a form of adjectival clause.

The general idea is that the pronoun **qui/quaе/quod** (and its cases) take the place of the noun referred to, and so uses the case, gender and number that the noun would use if it were placed directly in the clause.

**Amulius tamen, qui multos milites habebat, fratrem expulit.**  
*Amulius, however, who (nom sing masc) many soldiers had, [his] brother expelled*

**Amulius, cuius milites fortes erant, urbem cēpit.**  
*whose (gen sing masc) soldiers brave were the city took [the soldiers of Amulius (genitive)]*

### 2.2. Accusative and infinitive clauses in Latin

Accusative and infinitive clauses are a very common way of introducing a perception or observation related to the **object** of the main sentence. The object is followed by an infinitive that identifies what the perception or observation is. Verbs of command (e.g. *iubeo I order*) can also use an accusative and infinitive construction. This is a form of substantival clause. For example: *I saw him a book to be reading* [infinitive] – [*I saw that he was reading a book*].

If the content of the clause represents something that has been stated, it is said to be an ‘Indirect statement’,

The accusative and infinitive

- A present infinitive e.g. **capere** - *to take* – when what is observed is at the same time as the observation
- A past infinitive e.g. **cēpisse** – *to have taken* – when what is observed is finished at that time
- A future infinitive e.g. **captūrus esse** – *to be about to be taken* – for a fact in the future

The infinitive can be in the passive (e.g. **capi** – *to be taken* or **captus esse** *to have been taken*).

For example (accusative/infinitive highlighted in pink):

**Amulius servos iussit pueros in flumen iacere** (Latin Stories Section 1 story 2)  
*Amulius [his] slaves ordered the boys into the river to throw*

**Amulius dixit milites urbem capere.**  
*Amulius said the soldiers the city to take (to be taking). or in better English  
Amulius said [that] the soldiers were taking the city.*

**Amulius putavit milites urbem cēpisse.**  
*Amulius thought the soldiers the city to have taken or in better English  
Amulius thought [that] the soldiers had taken the city.*

**Amulius sperabat milites urbem captūrōs esse.**  
*Amulius hoped the soldiers the city to be about to take (agrees with milites in accusative) or ...  
Amulius hoped [that] the soldiers would take the city.*

You can sometimes find accusative and infinitives nested inside each other:

nonnulli viri dixerunt **se** { **hoc facere** } **iussos esse** faces **iecisisse**  
*some men said [that] they this to do having been ordered, torches to have thrown*

Or in better English: *Some men said that they had been ordered to throw torches [in order to start fires].*

The rule here is to look out for infinitives and then identify corresponding preceding accusatives.

### 2.3. (NEW) Gerund introduced by ad

Another compact way in Latin of introducing a simple dependent clause is using the preposition *ad* (*to*) that introduces the distinctive **gerund** form of a verb. The gerund is similar in formation to a present participle (goes on the present tense stem) but has the ending **-ndum** rather than the participle's **-ns**. The gerund is an Active noun that expresses the need for a verb's action.

Here is an example (Latin Stories 34):

**milites ad regiam cucurrunt ad auxilium ferendum**  
*Soldiers to the palace ran [in order] to help bring*

The uncommon **-ndum** ending is the give away – also **ad** is not an appropriate preposition for the noun **auxilium**.

The **gerundive** is a verbal 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> decl adjective with similar form **-ndus** which is a bit like a present participle Passive, and carries the meaning 'meet to be *verb-ed*' ('deserving to be *verb-ed*'). For example:

**fur puniendus est. puella amanda est**  
*The thief meet [deserving] to be punished is The girl meet [deserving] to be loved is*

### 2.4. Clauses introduced by a conjunction with indicative or subjunctive

You will often find clauses introduced by a conjunction such as **quod** (*because*) or **ut** (*in order that*). There are many conjunctions in the list.

Clauses that are presented as facts are usually in the normal **indicative** tenses; those that are possibilities are usually in the **subjunctive**. You do not need to know all the rules! See Briefing 3 for endings associated with **subjunctives**.

It is very helpful to be aware that verbs that look like infinitives with an e-based suffix are usually subjunctives.

**amabat** – *he was loving* – has corresponding subjunctive **amaret** because **amo** has infinitive **amare**

**The most common such infinitives end in -are, -ere, -ire (present infinitives) or -isse (past infinitives). Also watch for esse (the infinitive of sum,es,est) – to be.**

### 2.5. Causal clauses (e.g. because ...)

These may be introduced by **quod, quia** (*because*) or **quando** (*since* or *when[ever]*) and usually take the indicative, but can take the subjunctive when the clause is not factual or definite. **cum** meaning *since* takes the **subjunctive**.

**Amulius, quod his verbis non credebat, etiam iratior erat**  
*Amulius, because these words did not believe, even more angry was*

### 2.6. Temporal clauses (e.g. when, while) clarify the timing within the main clause

Temporal clauses may be introduced by **cum** or **ubi** (*when*), **postquam** (*after*) etc. and may take subjunctive.

**cum Alcestis periisset, Hercules villae Admeti appropinquavit**  
*When Alcestis died, Hercules to the house of Admetus approached*

### 2.7. Clauses introduced by a conjunction ut as a command ('in order that')

Commands are usually introduced by **ut** plus subjunctive:

**Aristagoras pugnare constituit ut ipse tyrannus Naxi essent.**  
*Aristagoras to fight decided in order that he himself king of Naxos [should] be.*

## 3. The Ablative Absolute construction

You will often encounter an Ablative Absolute construction, which is a phrase that describes a situation that is true for the sentence as a whole. It is a very compact way of setting a scene in Latin. It is a form of **adverbial clause**

It can be seen as resulting from the 'with' meaning of the ablative case: 'with [something having happened]' or 'with [something being true]'. The 'with' can also be translated as 'when [something had happened or was true]'.

The Ablative Absolute is a phrase, consisting of a Noun in the Ablative Case and a Participle (or another Noun or Adjective) in agreement with it: Here are some examples (the Ablative Absolute is in **bold**.)

**regibus exactis** consules creati sunt. LIVY.  
*Kings having been abolished, consuls were elected.*

**pereunte obsequio** imperium intercidit. TACITUS.  
*Obedience failing, government falls to pieces.*

**Caesare venturo**, Phosphore, redde diem. MARTIAL.  
*Caesar being on his way, star of morn, restore the day.*

Here, 'venturo' is abl sing of the future participle 'venturus' of venio, I come.

nil desperandum **Teucro duce**. HORACE.  
*There must be no despair, Teucer being leader.*

natus est Augustus **consulibus Cicerone et Antonio**. SUETONIUS.  
*Augustus was born when Cicero and Antonius were consuls.*

Formally, the Ablative Absolute defines some circumstance which is connected with the action of the Sentence. It is called Absolute ('absolutus' means 'set free') because the Noun and Participle are independent of the rest of the Sentence in construction. A dependent clause joined to the Sentence by a Conjunction may be used instead of an Ablative Absolute construction. In the first example 'Regibus exactis' might be replaced by 'Cum reges exacti essent', when kings had been driven out

This construction is not used if the Noun would represent either the Subject or Object of the sentence.