

LATIN

Introduction

This guide is intended as a brief guide for those without knowledge of Latin who find themselves dealing with books in that language in a library context. It is not a full grammar or vocabulary but may help to dispel the sense of frustration suffered by cataloguers faced with an unfamiliar language. The Historic Libraries Forum hopes to issue similar guides for other languages.

Latin (with ancient Greek) forms the basis of ‘the Classics’, which were widely read and understood in Britain up to the twentieth century. In addition Latin was the language of the Catholic Church, and also of much scholarly discourse, internationally, into the nineteenth century. Latin is very common in collections of older books, either for complete texts or as part of titles. Many Latin words, of course, can be recognised from English words deriving from them (for example *apparatus*, *editor* or *index*), but others are ‘false friends’ like the very common word *opera* (the plural of *opus*), meaning ‘works’.

This guide aims to make it easier to decipher the meaning (especially of titles) and to avoid grammatical errors when transcribing names and titles. Latin is an ‘inflected’ language and consequently changes the ending of a word (including names) depending on its grammatical role; this often replaces the need for prepositions. As a result word order can also be much freer than in English. So *Catulli Carmina* can be translated as ‘Songs of Catullus’ (the dictionary forms being ‘*Catullus*’ and ‘*Carmen*’). *Libros mihi pater dedit* (books / to me / father / gave) and *Dedit pater mihi libros* (gave / father / to me / books) both mean ‘My father gave me the books’.

A useful summary (in some detail but with only a limited vocabulary) is given in C.G. Allen’s *Manual of European Languages for Librarians*, 2nd ed. (Bowker Saur, 1999), pp. 155-179. Various good Latin dictionaries are available and should be on the cataloguer’s reference shelf (but most concentrate on classical Latin and may not include some later forms).

Alphabet

The Latin alphabet presents few problems. It does not normally include ‘k’ or ‘w’, though both may be used in words taken from other languages (*uu* or *vu* is sometimes used to represent ‘w’ in names). The letters *u* and *v* are the same, as are *i* and *j*, so the same word may appear in different spellings (especially in upper-case), e.g. *eius* / *ejus* / *EIVS* (‘his’ or ‘its’) or *vivus* / *uiuus* / *VIVVS* (‘alive’).¹ The transcription of *u* and *v* needs care and may be controlled by cataloguing rules or a printer’s usage. In 17th-century printing a final upper-case *I* may sometimes be found to represent *-ii*, e.g. *HelmestadiI* for *Helmestadii*.

The double letters *Æ* / *æ* and *Œ* / *œ* are common in all periods, in both upper and lower case; occasionally (as in this guide) they appear as ‘ae’ and ‘oe’. Grave and circumflex accents are not uncommon on lower-case letters, especially in words such as *à* (= ‘from’ or ‘by’) but do not usually affect the meaning. In early printing various abbreviations were used, notably for a line or tilde over ‘m’ to represent ‘mm’.

Punctuation is usually straightforward, though it was not used in classical times. An oddity is the use of a semicolon as an abbreviation especially in words ending *-que* (meaning ‘and’), printed as *q;*, which is not really a punctuation mark.

¹ A confusing example is *IVAN OVEN* / *Juan Ouen*, both forms for the Welshman John Owen as found in a 1674 Spanish translation!

Verbs

Latin verbs, like those in many languages, are ‘inflected’ or ‘conjugated’, changing the ending of the word depending on the tense (past, present, future) and the personal connection (I, you, he/she/it, we, they) . It is not possible to do more than illustrate the main categories here so that words can be recognised from their endings (the future tense is not found so often in titles, so is omitted; the subjunctive form similarly is omitted). Note that personal pronouns, e.g. ‘I’, ‘she’, ‘they’ etc., are not normally used but assumed from the context.

Present tense	‘love’	‘see’	‘hear’
I ...	<i>amo</i>	<i>video</i>	<i>audio</i>
You ...	<i>amas</i>	<i>vides</i>	<i>audis</i>
He/she/it ...	<i>amat</i>	<i>videt</i>	<i>audit</i>
We ...	<i>amamus</i>	<i>videmus</i>	<i>audimus</i>
You (plural)...	<i>amatis</i>	<i>videtis</i>	<i>auditis</i>
They ...	<i>amant</i>	<i>vident</i>	<i>audiunt</i>

Imperfect (past) tense – continuing action (‘he loved her for many years’)

I ...	<i>amabam</i>	<i>videbam</i>	<i>audiebam</i>
You ...	<i>amabas</i>	<i>videbas</i>	<i>audiebas</i>
He/she/it ...	<i>amabat</i>	<i>videbat</i>	<i>audiebat</i>
We ...	<i>amabamus</i>	<i>videbamus</i>	<i>audiebamus</i>
You (plural)...	<i>amabatis</i>	<i>videbatis</i>	<i>audiebatis</i>
They	<i>amabant</i>	<i>videbant</i>	<i>audiebant</i>

Perfect (past) tense – precise past event (cf. *veni, vidi, vici* ‘I came, I saw, I conquered’)

I ...	<i>amavi</i>	<i>vidi</i>	<i>audivi</i>
You ...	<i>amavis</i>	<i>vidisti</i>	<i>audivis</i>
He/she/it ...	<i>amavit</i>	<i>vidit</i>	<i>audivit</i>
We ...	<i>amavimus</i>	<i>vidimus</i>	<i>audivimus</i>
You (plural)...	<i>amavistis</i>	<i>vidistis</i>	<i>audivistis</i>
They	<i>amaverunt</i>	<i>viderunt</i>	<i>audiverunt</i>

Again, there are very many variants and irregularities, some of which appear frequently in titles etc. Among these are the verb *do* ‘I give’ which has *dedi, dedit* in the perfect, or *scribo* ‘I write’ which has *scripsi, scripsit* in the perfect and *scriptum* as the past participle. Even more irregular is *fero* ‘bring, carry’, which has *tuli, tulit* in the perfect and *latum* as the past participle (hence both ‘transfer’ and ‘translate’)

The passive (‘I am loved’ etc.) has its own range of endings, which can often be recognised by an ending in *-r* or *-ur*, e.g. *videtur* ‘[it] is seen’ (or ‘it appears’), or *audiuntur* ‘[they] are heard’. In the perfect tense the passive is formed by using the participle and the verb ‘to be’, e.g. *scriptum erat* ‘[it] was written’.

The verb ‘to be’ is highly irregular, with the present tense *sum* ‘I am’, *es* ‘you are’, *est* ‘[he/she/it] is’, *sumus* ‘we are’, *estis* ‘you are’, *sunt* ‘[they] are’. These are common words and soon appear familiar. For ‘I was’, the imperfect *eram, eras, erat* etc. is commonly used and is more regular, but the perfect form *fui, fuisti, fuit, fuimus, fuistis, fuerunt* is also found quite often in titles. Fortunately *habeo* ‘to have’ is relatively regular, with forms such as *habet* ‘has’ or *habuit* ‘had’ appearing frequently – but it is not used in forms such as ‘he has written’ where the imperfect or perfect is used..

Nouns and adjectives

Latin nouns (including personal and place names), and adjectives, are ‘declined’, that is their endings change to show grammatical changes such as singular and plural, or to show ‘cases’ which can replace prepositions – though other prepositions are used and change the case of the noun (see below). There are many variants of these forms or ‘declensions’ and only the most common can be shown here. Dictionaries use the ‘nominative singular’ form as heading, but usually indicate other cases, especially with the frequent irregular forms. (Note that the definite and indefinite articles ‘the’ and ‘a’ have no equivalent in Latin, so that *liber* can mean ‘book’, ‘a book’ or ‘the book’.) All nouns are masculine, feminine or neuter, and adjectives ‘agree’ with the gender of the noun; but it is rarely necessary to understand this when reading titles.

- a. Most nouns ending in ‘-a’ or ‘-us’ or ‘-um’ (e.g. *poeta* ‘poet’, *filius* ‘son’ or *bellum* ‘war’) have similar forms (most adjectives use the same form as the noun they refer to).

Singular

Nominative (dictionary form):	<i>poeta</i>	<i>filius</i>	<i>bellum</i>
Accusative (for object of verb)	<i>poetam</i>	<i>filium</i>	<i>bellum</i>
Genitive (possessive – ‘of’)	<i>poetae</i>	<i>fili</i>	<i>belli</i>
Dative (‘to’ or ‘for’)	<i>poetae</i>	<i>filio</i>	<i>bello</i>
Ablative (‘by’, ‘with’ or ‘from’)	<i>poeta</i>	<i>filio</i>	<i>bello</i>

Plural

Nominative	<i>poetae</i>	<i>fili</i>	<i>bella</i>
Accusative	<i>poetas</i>	<i>filios</i>	<i>bella</i>
Genitive	<i>poetarum</i>	<i>filiorum</i>	<i>bellorum</i>
Dative and Ablative	<i>poetis</i>	<i>filiis</i>	<i>bellis</i>

So for example the sentence *Non amat poeta filiorum bellum longum* could be translated as ‘The poet does not love the long war of his sons’.

Some nouns of this declension do not have *-us* but a different form in the nominative singular, e.g. *liber* (‘book’), which becomes *librum*, *libri* etc., so giving the common *libri* as part of the title for a work in several ‘books’ or parts.

- b. Other nouns (including some ending in *-us*) have different endings, and may well change the stem of the word too. The dictionary should help here! There are two main groups, one ending in a consonant, especially ‘r’, ‘s’ or ‘x’, e.g. *pater* (‘father’ – similarly *mater* ‘mother’ and *frater* ‘brother’), or *lex* (‘law’ – also *rex* ‘king’) – dictionaries should cross-reference these forms – and the other in *-us*, e.g. *casus* (‘cause’) as in *casus belli* ‘the cause of the war’ or ‘the reason for the dispute’.

Singular

Nominative	<i>pater</i>	<i>lex</i>	<i>casus</i>
Accusative	<i>patrem</i>	<i>legem</i>	<i>casum</i>
Genitive	<i>patris</i>	<i>legis</i>	<i>casus</i>
Dative	<i>patri</i>	<i>legi</i>	<i>casui</i>
Ablative	<i>patre</i>	<i>lege</i>	<i>casu</i>

Plural

Nominative	<i>patres</i>	<i>leges</i>	<i>casus</i>
Accusative	<i>patres</i>	<i>leges</i>	<i>casus</i>
Genitive	<i>patrum</i>	<i>legum</i>	<i>casuum</i>
Dative and Ablative	<i>patribus</i>	<i>legibus</i>	<i>casibus</i>

In these categories there are far more variants and irregular forms, but these endings should help to recognise most possible endings of nouns and adjectives and so the grammatical structure of the sentence.

Names

In classical times Roman writers commonly had up to three names e.g. *Marcus Tullius Cicero* or *Quintus Horatius Flaccus*, sometimes with a place-name added e.g. *Titus Livius Patavinus* [of Padua]. They may have been best known by the second or third of these – in these cases ‘Cicero’ or (in English usage) ‘Horace’ and ‘Livy’. Unused forenames may be given as initials or sometimes omitted. Authority files or classical dictionaries will show the favoured form (though French and German reference works sometimes use different forms, such as *Tite-Live* for *Titus Livius*, or *Horaz* for Horace; note too that older English writers called Cicero ‘Tully’ from his middle name *Tullius*).

In medieval times forenames in Latin dress were normal, e.g. *Joannes* or *Petrus* often with a place-name or other epithet attached, such as *Joannes Damascenus* or *Petrus Aureolus*; catalogues often use an English form such as ‘John, of Damascus’. Other medieval writers have surnames of a modern type in a Latin dress, e.g. *Petrus Abelardus* or Peter Abelard.

From the 15th and 16th century onwards surnames were frequently Latinised, often by adding the usual Latin ending ‘us’ or ‘ius’ to give forms such as *Isaacus Newtonus* or *Josephus Smithius* for ‘Isaac Newton’ or ‘Joseph Smith’, or *Franciscus Burmannus* for the Dutch ‘Frans Burmann’. Catalogue use varies in preferring Latin or vernacular forms – some Latin forms like *Copernicus* or *Grotius* have become widely used.

Epithets or initials may be used before (sometimes after) a name, such as *Divus* or *D.* for a religious scholar, *R.P.* for ‘Reverend Father’, or *Frat.* or *F.* for a monk or friar; these should not be confused with personal initials, though there is no obvious reference source for them. Religious titles such as *papa* ‘pope’, *episcopus* ‘bishop’ or *decanus* ‘dean’ are regularly used with or without a place-name, e.g. *episcopus Exoniensis* ‘bishop of Exeter’. Other common forms include *praeclarus* ‘excellent’, *celeberrimus* ‘most famous’. Place-names may also be added directly to personal names, often in an adjectival form e.g. *Oxoniensis* ‘of Oxford’.²

For place-names see also under ‘Imprints’ below.

Note that all names are normally inflected, changing the ending according to the grammar. Many names in titles appear in the genitive form (‘of’ or ‘by’), usually ending in ‘-i’ or ‘-ii’ for names in ‘-us’ or ‘-ius’, or ending in ‘-is’ for names ending in ‘-o’ or ‘-es’, as in *Catulli Carmina* mentioned above, or *Orationes Ciceronis* for Cicero’s Orations. Other forms may be found with phrases like *editi* (‘edited by’) or *auctore* (‘the author being ...’), with endings in ‘-o’, ‘-e’ or ‘-i’, e.g. *Compendium auctore F. Petro Aureoli* (compare *Petri Aureoli ... commentarius*).

² Some forms including place-names can be misleading, e.g. *Ulpio Franekerensi Frisio auctore*, where the author is [Joannes] Ulpianus of Franeker in Friesland.

Pronouns

Pronouns are not normally used for the subject of a verb, so *scribis* means ‘you write’. They are of course used for other purposes and are found in the accusative, genitive, dative and ablative forms, as well as in a nominative form where this is necessary (e.g. *Et tu Brute* ‘You too, Brutus’ or *Ego et rex meus* ‘I and my king’).

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative	Ablative
I, me	<i>ego</i>	<i>me</i>	<i>mei</i>	<i>mihi</i>	<i>me</i>
you	<i>tu</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>tui</i>	<i>tibi</i>	<i>te</i>
he / him	<i>is</i>	<i>eum / se</i>	<i>sui</i>	<i>ei / sibi</i>	<i>eo / se</i>
she / her	<i>ea</i>	<i>eam / se</i>	<i>sui</i>	<i>ei / sibi</i>	<i>ea / se</i>
it	<i>id</i>	<i>id / se</i>	<i>sui</i>	<i>ei / sibi</i>	<i>eo / se</i>
we/us	<i>nos</i>	<i>nos</i>	<i>nostrum</i>	<i>nobis</i>	<i>nobis</i>
you (plural)	<i>vos</i>	<i>vos</i>	<i>vestrum</i>	<i>vobis</i>	<i>vobis</i>
they	<i>ei / eae / ea</i>	<i>eos / eas/ ea</i>	<i>eorum / earum</i>	<i>eis</i>	<i>eis</i>

Possessive forms (‘my, your, their’ etc.) are as follows – all of these except *eius* decline to match the noun; they also normally follow the noun, as shown:

meus / mea / meum e.g. *liber meus* ‘my book’, *notae meae* ‘my notes’
tuus / tua / tuum e.g. *filia tua* ‘your daughter’
eius or *suus / sua / suum* e.g. *post mortem eius* or *post mortem suam* ‘after his / her death’
nostrum / nostra / noster (then *nostrum, nostram* etc.)
vester / vestra / vester (then *vestrum, vestram* etc.)
eius or *suus / sua / suum*

‘This’ and ‘these’ are like adjectives, but with irregular declension:

Singular

Masculine	<i>hic</i>	<i>hunc</i>	<i>huius</i>	<i>huic</i>	<i>hoc</i>
Feminine	<i>haec</i>	<i>hanc</i>	<i>huius</i>	<i>huic</i>	<i>hac</i>
Neuter	<i>hoc</i>	<i>hoc</i>	<i>huius</i>	<i>huic</i>	<i>hoc</i>

Plural

Masculine	<i>hi</i>	<i>hos</i>	<i>horum</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>his</i>
Feminine	<i>hae</i>	<i>has</i>	<i>harum</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>his</i>
Neuter	<i>haec</i>	<i>haec</i>	<i>horum</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>his</i>

Similar forms are used for the relative pronoun ‘who’, ‘whose’, ‘which’ (also in questions).

Singular

Masculine	<i>qui / quis</i>	<i>quem</i>	<i>cuius</i>	<i>cui</i>	<i>quo</i>
Feminine	<i>quae</i>	<i>quam</i>	<i>cuius</i>	<i>cui</i>	<i>qua</i>
Neuter	<i>quod</i>	<i>quod</i>	<i>cuius</i>	<i>cui</i>	<i>quo</i>

Plural

Masculine	<i>qui</i>	<i>quos</i>	<i>quorum</i>	<i>quibus</i>	<i>quibus</i>
Feminine	<i>quae</i>	<i>quas</i>	<i>quarum</i>	<i>quibus</i>	<i>quibus</i>
Neuter	<i>qua</i>	<i>qua</i>	<i>quorum</i>	<i>quibus</i>	<i>quibus</i>

Prepositions

Some prepositions used in English are unnecessary in Latin because of the declension of nouns and adjectives, but a great many are found nonetheless. They affect the case of the noun following them, sometimes in different ways depending on the meaning. Some of the commonest prepositions are listed below, with the case they take indicated and an example of their use.

<i>a</i> or <i>ab</i> 'from' – ablative	<i>ab ovo</i> 'from the egg'
<i>ad</i> 'to' – accusative	<i>ad astra</i> 'to the stars'
<i>ante</i> 'before' – accusative	<i>ante meridiem</i> 'before mid-day'
<i>cum</i> 'with' – ablative	<i>cum grano salis</i> 'with a grain of salt'
<i>de</i> 'from' or 'on' - ablative	<i>de legibus</i> 'on the laws'
<i>e</i> or <i>ex</i> 'out of', 'from' – ablative	<i>ex hypothesi</i> 'from what was supposed'
<i>in</i> 'into', 'to' – accusative	<i>Caesar in Britanniam venit</i> 'Caesar came to Britain'
<i>in</i> 'in' – ablative	<i>in principio</i> 'in the beginning'
<i>post</i> 'after' – accusative	<i>post mortem</i> 'after death'
<i>sine</i> 'without' – ablative	<i>sine verbo</i> 'without a word'
<i>super</i> 'over, above' - acc. or abl.	<i>sedebat super omnibus</i> 'he was sitting above them all'
<i>sub</i> 'under' – acc. or abl.	<i>sub rosa</i> 'under the rose' or 'in secret'

Some other useful words

et or *atque* 'and'

-que added to a word = 'and' before it e.g. *index notasque scripsit* '[he] wrote the index and notes'

non 'not'

nec, neque 'nor', 'not'

sive or *seu* 'or'

ut 'as' e.g. *ut antea indicatur* 'as is indicated earlier'

multus / multa / multum 'much, many' e.g. *multum in parvo* 'much in little', 'a lot in a small space'

hic 'here' (as well as 'this'); *ibi* 'there', *ubi* 'where'

liber 'book' (often as a part of a longer work)

tomus 'volume' *tomus alter* or *tomus secundus* 'second volume'

pars 'part' *pars prima* 'first part'; *divisa in partes tres* 'divided into three parts'

novus / nova / novum 'new' - *vetus / vetus / vetus* (plural *veteres / vetera*) 'old' - *nunc* 'now'

opus, plural *opera* '[a] work' e.g. *opus utilissimum* 'a very useful work'

omnes / omnia 'all' e.g. *opera omnia* 'the complete works' (also *totus / tota / totum*)

scripta quae exstant (also *extant*) 'the works that survive'

res 'thing' in various senses

e.g. *res gestae* 'what happened [things done]', *index rerum et verborum* 'index of subjects and words'

Deus 'God'; *Dominus* 'Lord'; *sacer / sacra / sacrum* 'holy'; *sanctus / -a / -um* 'holy; [a] saint'

recensuit, recognovit '[he] edited'; *collegit*, '[he] collected'

instruxit '[he] drew up'; *illustravit* '[he] explained, illustrated [not usually with pictures]'

studio 'the work of ... [by the study of...]; *fecit* '[he] made, did'

accessit, accesserunt ... 'there is / are added ...'

-issimus / -issima / -issimum 'most', 'very' e.g. *index copiosissimus* 'a very copious index'

Numerals and Dates

The Latin names of numbers are as follows:

1 <i>unus / una / unum</i>	6 <i>sex</i>	11 <i>undecim</i>	16 <i>sedecim</i>
2 <i>duo / dua</i>	7 <i>septem</i>	12 <i>duodecim</i>	17 <i>septemdecim</i>
3 <i>tres / tria</i>	8 <i>octo</i>	13 <i>tredecim</i>	18 <i>duodeviginti</i>
4 <i>quattuor</i>	9 <i>novem</i>	14 <i>quattuordecim</i>	19 <i>undeviginti</i>
5 <i>quinque</i>	10 <i>decem</i>	15 <i>quindecim</i>	20 <i>viginta</i>
30 <i>triginta</i>	70 <i>septuaginta</i>		
40 <i>quadraginta</i>	80 <i>octoginta</i>		
50 <i>quingaginta</i>	90 <i>nonaginta</i>		
60 <i>sexaginta</i>			
100 <i>centum</i>	1000 <i>mille</i>		

Ordinal numbers (first, second etc.) are mostly recognisable from the cardinal forms, but note:

1 st	<i>primus / prima / primum</i>
2 nd	<i>secundus / secunda / secundum</i> OR <i>alter / altera</i> hence <i>tomus alter</i> ‘Vol. 2’
3 rd	<i>tertius / tertia / tertium</i>
20 th	<i>vicesimus / -a / -um</i>
40 th	<i>quadragessimus / -a / -um</i>

Note also *prior / prius* ‘first of two’ or ‘earlier’ (*prius* also ‘formerly’) and *ultimus / -a / -um* ‘last’

Roman numerals are read as follows:

<i>I</i> = 1	All these (except <i>V</i> , <i>L</i> and <i>D</i>) can be duplicated to give multiples,
<i>V</i> = 5	so that <i>II</i> and <i>III</i> = 2 and 3, <i>XXX</i> = 30, and <i>CC</i> = 200. They are also
<i>X</i> = 10	combined so that <i>VII</i> = 7 (5 + 2) or <i>LXVI</i> = 66 (50 + 10 + 5 + 1).
<i>L</i> = 50	
<i>C</i> = 100	But <i>I</i> , <i>X</i> and <i>C</i> are also used to <u>subtract</u> from the following (higher)
<i>D</i> = 500	numeral so that <i>IV</i> = 4 (one from <i>V</i> or 5), <i>IX</i> = 9 (one from <i>X</i> or 10),
<i>M</i> = 1000	<i>XL</i> = 40 (10 from <i>L</i> or 50), <i>XC</i> = 90 (10 from <i>C</i> or 100).

Occasionally *IIII*. is used for 4 instead of *IV* (this is usual on clock-faces!).

Lower-case letters are sometimes found, especially in manuscript. A final *i* may be written as *j*, e.g. *libri vij* ‘seven books’ or *viiij s.* ‘8 shillings’

In dates, notably in imprints and colophons, these combined letters give numerals such as the following

MDXXI. = 1521 *MDCL*. = 1650 *MDCCLXV*. = 1745 *MDCCLXXXVIII*. = 1888

In the early 20th century *MDCCCC*. was sometimes used for the year after *MDCCCXCIX*. = 1899, but this was soon replaced by *MCM*. The 21st century has adopted *MM* to give e.g. *MMIX*. for 2009.

Roman numerals are often printed, as here, with a full stop at the end even if the sentence continues. Full stops may also be used to divide the letters into blocks, eg. *M. DC. XCIV.* for 1694.

One final oddity, found in some imprint dates of the late 16th to early 18th centuries, especially from the Low Countries, is the form which appears to read *CIC* and *IC* (for *M* and *D* respectively), with the final *C* in each case reversed or upside down, somewhat like *CI↵* or *I↵*. These are usually transcribed as *M* and *D*, with a note explaining the special characters as ‘turned Cs’.

Titles

Titles of literary and other classical works often omit *Opera* 'Works' and simply give the author's name. In other cases the title may begin with the author's name sometimes with a preceding epithet. The name may be in the genitive case, as in *Catulli Carmina*, or in the nominative with the title proper often beginning *de*, as in *M. T. Cicero De oratione* (for Cicero on Oratory). Titles may also incorporate (usually at the end) the number of parts or books that make up the work, e.g. *C. Julii Caesaris De bello gallico libri quinque* ('Caius Julius Caesar's five books on the Gallic War').

Editions of classical works and later works may incorporate details of successive editors and may include extensive edition notes, e.g. the 1726 third edition ('expanded & amended') of Newton's great work: *Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica auctore Isaaco Newtono . Editio tertia aucta & emendata* (literally 'Of natural philosophy / the mathematical beginnings / the author being Isaac Newton. / Third edition increased and improved').

Imprints

Place-names often have quite different forms in Latin; various reference books or web-sites can help to identify them. The most authoritative source is Graesse's *Orbis Latinus*, available on-line at <http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/Graesse/contents.html>. Some examples found in imprints are:

<i>Argentorati</i> 'Strasbourg'	<i>Augustae Vindelicorum</i> 'Augsburg'
<i>Basileae</i> 'Basle'	<i>Cantabrigiae</i> 'Cambridge'
<i>Hafniae</i> 'Copenhagen'	<i>Hagae Comitum</i> 'The Hague'
<i>Hanoviae</i> 'Hanau' (not Hanover)	<i>Londini</i> 'London'
<i>Lugduni</i> 'Lyon'	<i>Lugduni Batavorum</i> 'Leiden'
<i>Lutetiae</i> or <i>Lutetiae Parisiorum</i> 'Paris'	<i>Oxoniae</i> 'Oxford'
<i>Rothomagi</i> 'Rouen'	<i>Venetis</i> or <i>Vinegiae</i> 'Venice'

Printers' and publishers' names may be given in a Latin form, using words such as

apud ... 'at the house of ...' or simply 'at'
in aedibus ... 'at the premises of ...'
ex officina ... or *in typographio* ... 'at the printing house of ...'
typis academicis 'at the university press'

imprimebat or *excudebat* '[he] printed it'
impressum ... or *excusum* ... or *typis* ... 'printed by'
impensis ... or *sumptibus* ... 'at the expense of ...'

bibliopola 'bookseller'
veneunt or *venales habentur* '[they] are sold'

Addresses may also be given in Latin, sometimes adding *sub signo* ... 'under the sign of the ...'

Religious and other publications often have an statement of authorisation such as *permissu superiorum* 'by permission of the higher authorities' or *cum privilegio* 'with [royal] permission'.

Dates may be given in roman or arabic numerals (see above for roman numerals), often preceded by the word *anno* 'in the year' (also *anno Domini* 'in the year of the Lord' or *anno salutis* 'in the year of salvation'), and sometimes *mense* 'in the month'.

Scriptis Petrus Hoarius
Anno MMIX, mense Junio

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Two examples of Latin titles from ESTC records, with literal and ‘proper’ translations

1. A straightforward edition of a classical literary text.

[P. Ouidii Nasonis Metamorphoseon libri XV. Ab Andrea Nauagerio castigati, & Vict. Giselini scholijs illustrati. Reliqua proximè sequens pagella indicabit. Londini: Excudebat Richardus Field impensis Iohannis Harrisoni, 1589.](#)

Of P. Ovidius Naso / Of the Metamorphoses the 15 books. / By Andrea Navagerius edited / and with the of Victorius Giselinus notes illustrated. / The rest the most closely following little page will indicate. / In London: Richardus Field printed [it] at the expense of Iohannes Harrisonus, 1589.

The fifteen books of Ovid’s Metamorphoses. Edited by Andrea Navagero, together with the notes of Victor Gislain. The full contents are shown on the next page.
London: Printed by Richard Field for John Harrison, 1589.

Notes: Ovid’s full name was *Publius Ovidius Naso*, but he is usually referred to in the short version (many authority files use this form too). *Metamorphoseon* is the genitive plural of the Greek word *Metamorphoses*, spelt however in Roman letters. *Scholia* is a common words for a scholarly commentary, often deriving from earlier editions or manuscripts. *Reliqua* means ‘the things left over’, so ‘the rest’, in this case probably the details of the contents. *Pagella* is an unusual diminutive for *pagina* ‘page’.

2. A religious work by a royal author, with an unusually explicit printing date.

[Assertio septem sacramentorum aduersus Martin. Lutheru\[m\], ædita ab inuictissimo Angliæ et Franciæ rege, et do. Hybernæ Henrico eius nominis octauo. Apud inclytam urbem Londinum in ædibus Pynsonianis, An. M.D.XXI. quarto idus Iulij.](#)

Assertion of the seven sacraments against Martin[us] Lutherus, / edited [or published] by the most unconquered of England and France King, and lord [dominus] of Hibernia Henricus of his name the eighth. / At the notable town London: in the Pynsonian premises. In the year 1521, the fourth of the Ides of July.

A defence of the seven sacraments, asserting [their validity] against Martin Luther. / Written by Henry VIII, the victorious king of England and France and lord of Ireland. Printed in London, by Pynson, 18th July 1521.

Notes: This is the work for which the Pope granted Henry VIII and his successors the title *Fidei Defensor* or Defender of the Faith. The ‘Ides’ was the designation of the 15th day of the Roman month (‘Kalends’ was the first day), so the fourth day of the Ides is the 18th.

In *aduersus* and *inuictissimo* the dictionary spellings would be ‘aduersus’ and ‘invictissimus’; the title-page forms might be in upper-case and read *ADVERSVS* and *INVICTISSIMO*, but u/v in the middle of a word is usually transcribed as ‘u’ in cataloguing (cf *Ouidii* in the first example). Note that the full stops after *Martin.* and *do.* do not end sentences but indicate abbreviations.