

Expand Your Latin Vocabulary

1) NOUNS FROM VERBS: As in English, many Latin verbs also serve as the roots of nouns. For many of the Latin verbs you have learned, you can easily determine the words for the PERFORMER and the ACT OF PERFORMING the ACTION. (*i.e.* if you know “to write”; you can determine “writer” and “writing”)

Take the verb’s perfect passive stem: (*i.e.* FOURTH PRINCIPLE PART minus “um”)

- To yield the PERFORMER of the particular ACTION, **ADD “or”** to the verb’s perfect passive stem:
 - *Scribo, scribere, scripsi, scriptum* → script (-um) → script + or
→ **SCRIPTOR** (“one who writes, a writer”)
- To yield the ACT OF PERFORMING the ACTION, **ADD “io”** to the verb’s perfect passive stem:
 - *Navigo, -are, -avi, -atum* → navigat (-um) → navigat + io
→ **NAVIGATIO** (“(the act of) sailing, navigating”)

2) NOUNS FROM ADJECTIVES: There is also a standard way to determine the noun form of many third declension adjectives. *I.e.* if you have the adjective “brief”, the noun the expresses the state of being brief would be “brevity”; *e.g.* “brevity is the soul of wit”

In Latin this is simple.

- Take the stem of a third declension adjective
 - *brevis, -e* “brief” → brev (-is) → brev-
- Add the suffix “-itas” to the stem
 - brev + itas → **BREVITAS**: “the state of being brief, brevity”
- Another example: *mortalis -e* “mortal” → mortal (-is) → mortal + itas → **MORTALITAS**: “the state of being mortal, mortality”