

# ABLATIVE OF MEANS

Means is generally how something is accomplished. Some grammarians like to divide this category into instrument, method, and degree; but for the purposes of this course, means includes all three. In English, certain prepositions introduce a means: "with", "by", and "through" are the most common. For example, "sword" in "He struck him with a sword." is a means; similarly, "arrow" in "He was struck by an arrow." and "training" in "He accomplished much through training."

In Latin, means is almost always expressed with the ablative case and no preposition:

Consider the following examples:

*Homo oculis videt.* ("A person sees with his eyes.")

English-speaking students naturally want to use the preposition *cum* when showing means in Latin. This is, of course, because *cum* is the closest word in Latin to the English word "with", which is the most common preposition to show means in English. But *cum* in Latin is strictly used to show a location with someone or something, not means.

Consider the following examples:

*Vir gladio percutit.* ("A man strikes with--that is, using--the sword.")

*Vir cum gladio super petram stat.* ("A man with--that is, in possession of---a sword is standing on the rock.")