

- By rule, to form the nominative singular, masc./fem. nouns whose stems end in a, l, n, and r add nothing (\emptyset) to the stem:
ex: cōnsul/ \emptyset > consul sorōr/ \emptyset > sorōr
- But n-stems and some r-stems often also undergo vowel gradation (called “**Ablaut**” = **A!**), often including a **lengthening (L)** of the final vowel, and can lose the final stem consonant (if it’s a nasal) through nasalization (cf. the French pronunciation of “*un bon chien*”) if the Nom. ends in an o-grade.

M/F -n and -r stem nouns: Ablaut one step up from current grade for Nom., then **L**

If stem is basic e-grade, Nom = o-grade (usually the case for n-nouns)

If stem is zero grade, Nom = e-grade (usually the case for r-nouns)

ex: (stem) **homen/** > **homin/** (e-grade, with subsequent vowel weakening)

(nom.) **homen/LA!-o** > **homōn** > **homō** (L, A!-o-grade, nasalization)

(gen.) **homen/is** > **hominis** (stem in the e-grade)

ex: (stem) **fratr/** > **fratr/** (zero grade stem)

(nom.) **fratr/LA!-e** > **fratēr** > **frater** (L, A!-e-grade, later shortening)

(gen.) **fratr/is** > **fratris** (stem in the zero grade)

Note: the **Neuter n-stem nouns** do not seem to undergo the same Ablaut pattern, but do not weaken the final vowel in the Nominative:

ex: (stem) **carmen/** > (e-grade) = (nom.) **carmen** (e-grade, no weakening), but

gen.: **carmen/is** > **carminis** (e-grade, with subsequent weakening)

Vowel Gradation (Ablaut)—a quick intro:

Practice: Decline each noun given to the right in every case and number:

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.		
Gen.		
Dat.		
Acc.		
Abl.		
Voc.		

ex: rēx, rēgis, m.

Base: _____

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.		
Gen.		
Dat.		
Acc.		
Abl.		
Voc.		

ex: corpus, corporis, nt.

Base: _____

Review: Noun/Adj. Agreement:

Practice: Decline the following noun/adjective pair in the chart below

	Noun: amor, amōris, <i>m.</i> / Adj: magnus, magna, magnum	
	singular	plural
Nominative		
Genitive		
Dative		
Accusative		
Ablative		

	Noun: pāx, pacis, <i>f.</i> / Adj: Rōmānus, Rōmāna, Rōmānum	
	singular	plural
Nominative		
Genitive		
Dative		
Accusative		
Ablative		

Practice: Identify the possible case(s), number(s), and gender of the following noun forms, then give the complete dictionary entry:

(Note: some forms may have more than one case/number possibility, but each has only one gender)

corpora –

rēgibus –

virtūtī –

nōmine –

pacēs –

uxōrem –

carminum –

amor –

Key Terms:
3rd Declension

Vowel Gradation/Ablaut

Nasalization