Latin phrases used in English

A

ab extra — from without
ab imo pectore — from the bottom of the heart
ab incunabulis — from the cradle
ab initio — from the beginning
ab intra — from within
ab origine — from the beginning
ab ovo — from the beginning (lit. from the egg)
ab ovo usque ad malas — from beginning to end (lit. from the egg to the apples — at a Roman banquet)
ab uno disce omnes — from one, learn of all others
ab urbe condita — from the founding of the city (of Rome)
absens hoeres non erit — out of sight out of mind (lit. the absent will not be heir)
absente reo — the accused being absent
ab latitando omen — let this not be a portent [of evil]
ab uno disce omnes — from one, learn of the others
ab urbe condita — from the foundation of the city [of Rome]
a capite ad calcem — from head to toe (lit. from head to heel)
a cruce salus — salvation from the cross
ad aperturam (libri) — at the opening (of the book), wherever the book opens
ad arbitrium — at pleasure
ad calendas Graecas — never (lit. at the Greek calends — not in their calendar)
ad captandum vulgus — to please the crowd
a Deo et rege — from God and the king
ad extremum — to extremes, to the last
ad die — from that day
ad extremum — to the last
ad finem — to the end
ad gustum — to one’s taste
ad hoc — for a specific purpose
ad hominem — arguing to the emotions and not to reason (lit. to the man)
ad huc sub judice lis est — the matter is still undecided and not to be interfered with from the outside (lit. the case is still before the judge)
ad infinitum — on and on, to infinity
ad instar — in the fashion of
ad interim — in the meantime, meantime
ad internecionem — to the last (lit. to extermination)
ad libitum — at leisure
ad locum — at the place
ad majorem Dei gloriam — to the greater glory of God (the motto of the Jesuit order)
ad modum — in the manner of
ad multos annos — for many years [Happy birthday!]
ad nauseam — annoyingly with no end (lit. to disgust)
ad patres — deceased (lit. to the parents)
ad referendum — for further consideration
ad rem — to the point; for the purpose for which it is intended
adscriptus glebae — attached to the land
adsum — Present! Here! (lit. I am here)
ad summum — to the highest point/degree
ad unguem — to a nicety, precisely (lit. to the nail)
ad unum omnes — to the last man (lit. all to one)
ad utrumque paratus — prepared for either eventuality
ad valorem — to the (correct) value
ad vitam aut culpam — until some misconduct is proven (lit. to life or fault)
ad vivum — lifelike
aegrescit medendo — he gets worse with the remedies he uses
aequabiliter et diligenter — equably and diligently
aequo animo — unperturbed, with equanimity (lit. with equal mind)
aere perennius — more lasting than brass
aetatis suae — of his/her age
a fortiori — with stronger reason
age quod agis — concentrate on what you are doing (lit. do what you do)
alere flammam — to feed the flame
alieni appetens, sui profusus — greedy for the possessions of others, lavish with one's own
alter ego — another self
alter idem — another exactly the same
alter ipse amicus — a friend who is one's counterpart
alterum tantum — as much more
altius citius fortius — higher, faster, stronger (motto of the modern Olympic Games)
amantium irae amoris integratio — lovers' quarrels are the making of love
a maximis ad minima — from the greatest to the least
amici probantur rebus adversis — friends are proven in adversity
amicus humani generis — a friend of the human race
amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas — Plato is a friend, but truth a greater friend
amicus usque ad aras — a friend to the very end (lit. to the sacrificial altar)
amor patriae — love of country
anglice — in English, in the English language
anguis in herba — a false friend (lit. a snake in the grass)
animo et fide — with courage and faith
anno — in the year
anno aetatis suae — in the year of his/her age
anno Christi — in the year of Christ
anno Domini — in the year of our Lord
anno humanae salutis — in the year of mankind's redemption
anno mundi — in the year of the world
anno urbis conditae — from the year of the founding of the city (of Rome)
annus terribilis — a horrible year
annus mirabilis — a year of wonders [1666 AD, the year of the great fire of London]
ante lucem — before the dawn
ante meridiem — before noon, in the morning
a posse ad esse — from possibility to reality
aquila non capit muscas — an eagle does not chase/catch flies
arbiter bibendi — master of ceremonies, toastmaster (lit. the judge of drinking)
arbiter eleganiaraum — an authority on good taste
Arcades ambo — fellows of the same cloth (lit. Arcadians both)
arcan[a] caelestia — heavenly mysteries
arcana imperii — State secrets
ardentia verba — glowing words/language
argumentum ad crumenam — an argument to one's own interest (lit. to the purse)
ar[um]entum ad hominem — an argument to one's interests and prejudices (lit. to the man)
ar[um]entum ad ignorantiam — an argument aimed at the other's ignorance
argumentum ad judicium — an argument appealing to the judgement
argumentum ad verecundiam — an argument appealing to modesty
argumentum baculinum — brute force (lit. an argument with cudgels)
ar[um]entum ad rem — an argument sticking to the matter in hand
arrectis auribus — all attention (lit. with ears pricked up)
ar est cerare artem — true art is to conceal art
ars gratia artis — art for the sake of art (the motto of film — makers MGM)
ar longa, vita brevis — art is long, life is short
Artium Magister — master of arts (MA)
asinus ad lyram — an awkward individual (lit. an ass on the harp/lyre)
at spes non fracta — but hope is not crushed/broken
aur[ae]a mediocritas — the golden/happy mean [middle way]
auri sacra fames — the accursed craving for money (lit. the sacred hunger of gold)
auspicium melioris aevi — a sign of a better age [to come]
aut Caesar aut nullus — either Caesar or no one
aut inveniam viam aut faciam — either I shall find a way or I shall make one
aut vicere aut mori — victory or death (lit. either to conquer or to die)
auxiliun ab alto — help from on high
Ave Imperator, morituri te salutant — Hail, Emperor, those about to die [in the arena] salute you
at verbis ad verbera — from words to blows
avito viret honore — she/he flourishes on the honours on his ancestors
Ave Maria — Hail Mary (the first words of a Catholic prayer)
bella matribus detestata — wars hated by mothers
bellum internecinum — a war of extermination
bene orasse est bene studuisse — to have prayed well is to have studied well
bene placet — it meets with approval (lit. it pleases well)
bis dat qui cito dat — who give quickly gives twice
bis pueri senes — old men are boys twice
bona fide — in good faith
bona fides — in law, sincerity or the honest intention (lit. good faith)
brevi manu — extemporaneously, without thought or preparation (lit. with a short hand)
brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio — I become obscure when I try to be brief
brutum fulmen — a harmless thunderbolt

C

cadit questio — there is no more discussion on an issue (lit. the question /proposition falls)
caeca est invidia — envy is blind
ciaelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt (lit. they change their sky but not their
feeling who go overseas)
ciaetera desunt — here there is a break in proceedings (lit. the rest is wanting)
ciaeteris paribus — all things being equal
candida pax — white (robed) peace
cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator — the penniless have nothing to lose (lit. the
destitute will sing before the highway robber)
cantate Domino — sing ye to the Lord
caput mortuum — worthless residue (lit. a dead head)
carent quia vate sacro — they lose out with no poet (to sing their praises)
carpe diem — take the opportunity, enjoy the day (lit. grasp the day)
causae belli — what justifies or causes war (lit. a case of war)
causa sine qua non — an essential condition (lit. a condition without which)
cave canem — beware (of) the dog
caveat emptor — let the buyer beware
cavendo tutus — safe through caution
cedant arma togae — let the military yield to the civil (lit. let arms yield to togas)
censor morum — a censor of morals
cetera desunt — here there is a break in proceedings (lit. the rest is wanting)
ceteris paribus — all things being equal
clarior e tenebris — clearer from obscurity
clarum et venerabile nomen — a famous and venerable name
cocullus non facit monachum — don't trust appearances (lit. the cowl does not make the
monk)
cogito, ergo sum — I think, therefore I am/exist.
comitas inter gentes — politeness between nations
commune bonum — a /the common good
commune periculum concordia parit — a common danger begets harmony
communi consensu — by common consent
communibus annis — on an annual average
componere lites — to settle quarrels /cases at law
compos mentis — sound of mind
compos voti — having obtained one’s wish
concio ad clerum — preaching to the converted (lit. a sermon to the clergy)
concordia discors — discordant harmony
confido et conquiesco — I trust and am at peace
coniunctis viribus — with united powers
consensus facit legem — consent makes laws
consilio et animis — by wisdom and courage
consilio et prudentia — by wisdom and prudence
constantia et virtute — through constancy and bravery/virtue
consuetudo pro lege servatur — custom is held as law
contra bona mores — against good manners
copia verborum — a (rich) supply of words
coram nobis — in our presence, before us
coram non judice — before one who is not a proper judge
coram populo — before the people
corrigenda — things to be corrected/amended
corrumpio optimie pessima — a corruption of what is best is the worst (one of all)
cos ingeniorum — a flint for wits
crambe repetita — a truism/old joke repeated (lit. cabbage repeated)
credat Judeus Apella — tell that to the marines (lit. let Apella the Jew believe that)
crede quod habes, et habes — believe that you have it, and you do
credo quia absurdum — I believe it because it is absurd
credo quia impossible est — I believe it because it is impossible
crescit amor nummi, quantum ipsa pecunia crescit — the love of wealth grows as one’s money does
crescit eundo — it increases as it goes

crescit sub pondere virtus — virtue increases under oppression (the McCann family motto)
crimen falsi — the crime of perjury (lit. the crime of falsehood)
crimen laesae majestatis — leze — majesty, the crime of high treason (lit. the crime of injury of the monarch)
crux — a puzzle, a difficulty (lit. a cross)
crux criticorum — the puzzle of critics

crux mediocorum — a puzzle for medical doctors
cui bono — to what good, to whose advantage, to what end

cui fortuna ipsa cedit — to whom Fortune herself yields

cuilibet in arte sua credendum est — each man in his own specialisation is to be believed

culpam poena premit comes — punishment comes hard on the heels of crime

cum bona venia — by your kind leave/permission

cum grano salis — with a grain of salt

cum multis aliis — with many others

cum notis variorum — with the notes of various (commentators)
cum privilegio — with licence/privilege from authority
curiosa felicitas — a happy expression / turn of phrase
currente calamo — with a hasty / rapid hand (lit. with a running pen)
custos morum — the guardian of morals / manners

D

da locum melioribus — give way to your betters
dammant quod non intelligunt — they condemn what they do not understand
dare pondus fumo — to give imporance to trivia (lit. to give weight to smoke)
data et accepta — expenses and receipts
date obulum Belesario — to help the poor (lit. to give a farthing to Belesarius)
Davus sum, non Oedipus — I am bad at puzzles (lit. I am Davus, not Oedipus)
de bono augure — with a good omen / sign
deceptio visus — an optical illusion
decet verecundum esse adolescentum — it becomes a young person to be modest
decipimur specie recti — we are deceived by the show of righteousness
decor decus addit avito — he adds distinction to his ancestry
de die in diem — from day to day
de facto — in fact, in point of fact, actually
de gustibus non est disputandum — there is no accounting for taste (lit. there is no disputing after taste)
Dhei gratia — by the grace of God
de integro — from the beginning, from the start, afresh, anew
de jure — by right, by law
delenda est Cartago — Carthage must be destroyed (lit. deleted)
de minimis non curat lex — the law does not concern itself with trivia
de mortuis, nihil nisi bonum — (to speak) of the dead, nothing but good (Tertullian)
de nihil, nihil fit — from nothing, nothing is made
de novo — afresh, anew
de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis — of all and certain other things
de profundis — from / out of the depths (the first words of Psalm 129)
Deo adjuvante — with God assisting
Deo duce — with God as leader
Deo favente — God favouring
Deo gratias — thanks (be) to God
Deo juvante — with God helping, with God's help
Deo volente — God willing, by God's will
Deo, non fortuna — from God, not from chance
desunt caetera — there is more to follow (lit. the rest is wanting)
detur digniori — let it be given to the more worthy
detur pulchriori — let it be given to the more beautiful
Deus advertat — God forbid!
Deus ex machina — a solution for the impossible problem (lit. God from a machine)
Deus vobiscum! — God be with you
Deus vult — God wishes it
dictum factum — no sooner said than done (lit. said done)
dies non — a day on which a court does not sit
digito mostrari — a person of note (lit. with the finger to be pointed out)
dignus vindice nodus — a difficulty worthy of note
Dii majorum gentium — the twelve Gods of the upper (Roman) classes
Dii penates — the (Roman) household Gods
Dii aliter visum — fate willed /thought differently (lit. seen otherwise by the Gods)
divide et impera — divide and rule
do ut des — I give so that you may give, reciprocal arrangement
docendo discimus — by teaching, we learn
Dominus vobiscum — the Lord be with you
domus et placens uxor — a house and a pleasing wife
dramatis personae — (the cast of) characters in a play
ducit amor patriae — the love of country leads (me on)
dulce domum — back homewards, sweet home
dulce est disipere in loco — it is pleasant (at times) to play the fool
dulce et decorum est pro patria mori — it is pleasant and proper to die for the county (the first line of Horace's Ode, II,13)
dum spiro, spero — where there's life, there's hope (lit. while I breathe, I hope)
dum vivimus, vivamus — live life to the full (lit. while we live, let us live)
durante bene placito — at the pleasure of (lit. during good pleasure)
durante vita — for life (lit. during life)

E

e contra — on the other hand (lit. from against)
e pluribus unum — from many, one (the motto of the United States of America)
e re nata — according to the need (lit. born from the thing)
Ecce homo! — behold the man (Pontius Pilate's words about Christ, cf. Jn. 19,5)
Ecce signum" — behold the sign
editio princeps — the first printed edition of a book ego
et rex meus — my king and I
Eheu! — alas!
elapso tempore — the time having elapsed
emeritus /emerita — a retired or pensioned off person (m./f.) after long and faithful service
eo animo — with that purpose (lit. with that mind)
eo nomine — by that name
epulis accumbere divum — to sit at the banquet of the gods
ererpta — extracts
errare humanum est — to err is human
errata — errors noted and corrected
erratum — an error noted and corrected
esse, quam videri — to see, rather than to seem (be seen) to be
est modus in rebus — there is a middle way /medium in (all) things
esto quod esse videris — be what you seem to be
et caetera — and so on (lit. and the rest)
et cetera — and so on (lit. and the rest)
et hoc genus omne — and everything of the kind
et id genus omen — and everything of the kind
et sequentes / et sequentia — and the following
et sic de ceteris — and so of the rest
et sic de similibus — and so of the similar
et tu, Brute — and you (as well), Brutus (Julius Caesar’s words to his murderer)
eventus stultorum magister — fools are taught by results (lit. events are the teacher of fools)
ex — from, out of (Latin preposition)
ex abrupto — suddenly
ex abundantia — out of abundance, generosity ex adverso — on the other side
ex aequo et bono — from what is fair and good
ex animo — sincerely, honestly (lit. from the spirit)
ex auctoritate mihi comissa — by virtue of the authority entrusted on me
ex capite — from memory (lit. from the head)
ex cathedra — with (Papal) teaching authority (lit. from the chair)
ex concesso — from what has been conceded in the argument ex curia — out of court
ex delicto — from the crime
ex dono — by way of gift (lit. from the gift)
ex facto jus oritur — the law springs from the fact
ex gratia — as a favour rather than as a right or obligation (lit. from a favour)
ex hypothesi — a proposition without assumption (lit. from a hypothesis)
ex libris — a label pasted on the front page of a book by the owner (lit. out of the books)
ex mero motu — by (one’s own) free will /impulse
ex more — according to custom
ex necessitate rei — from the need /necessity of the matter
ex nihilo — out of nothing
ex officio — by right attaching to a position, status or office (lit. from the office)
ex parte — a petition by one interested party in a legal case (lit. from the side of)
ex pede Herculem — we calculate the whole from the sample (lit. from the foot, Hercules)
ex post facto — retroactively, with retrospective force (lit. from an after deed)
ex professo — admittedly (lit. professedly)
ex propriis — from /out of one’s own (means / resources)
ex quocunque capite — for whatever reason
ex silentio — in the absence of contrary evidence (lit. out of silence)
ex tacito — silently, tacitly
ex tempore — on the spur of the moment (lit. out of time)
ex ungue, leonem — we calculate the whole from the sample (lit. from the nail, the lion)
ex uno, discunt omnes — from one, all learn
ex usu — by use
ex vi termini — by virtue /force of the word /term
ex voto — by vow, according to a prayer /vow, an action following a promise (lit. out of a vow)
excelsior — higher, taller
exceptio probat regulam — the exception proves the rule
excreta — body wastes, especially
urine and faeces
exeat — a permission to leave a college or diocese
Exegi monumentum aere perennius — I have raised a monument more lasting than brass (the first line of Horace's Ode III, 30)
exempla sunt odiosa — examples are odious /offensive exempli gratia — by way of example
exit — a door to leave a building (lit. he/she went out)
exitus acta probat — the outcome proves the deeds
experientia docet stultos — experience teaches fools
experimentum crucis — a trying matter /trial (lit. an experiment of the cross)
expertus metuit — having experience it, he now fears it
extinctus amabitur idem — dead, he will be loved the same

F

fugaces labuntur anni — the fleeting years pass by

G

gratis — without charge, for free

I

imprimi potest — it is allowed to be published
imprimatur — a Catholic ecclesiastical permission of a work to be published (lit., it may be published), by extension — an official approval

M

mutatis mutandis — the necessary things having been changed

N

nihil obstat — nothing stands in the way (of the work being published), ecclesiastical approval for a work to be printed.

P

pace — by consent /permission /leave of, not to give offence to
pace tua — by you leave /consent /permission
per capita — by head of population (L. caput, head, plural, capita) Usually used in the plural in economic matters.
per caput — by head (of population).
pro bono — for free, no charge, (lit. for the good)
quod vide — please refer to (lit. see it)
quondam — sometime in the past, formerly, once.

S
scilicet — namely, to wit (abbreviated at times to sc. or scil.)(q.v.)
sine qua non — an essential condition — abbreviation of 'causa sine qua non', (q.v.)
sub judice — popular abbreviated form of adhuc sub judice lis est (q.v.)

V
Vade Mecum — a prayer book for journeys (lit. Go with me)
versus — Latin preposition 'against', used in games Team A v. Team B.