

☞ The nominative (without a preposition, without the accusative ending) is used for the following roles:

- ☞ subject
- ☞ vocative
- ☞ predicate nominative
- ☞ predicate

Subject

☞ A subject is that which performs the action of the predicate. The subject must always be in the nominative.

La patro donis al mi dolĉan pomon. - My father gave me a sweet apple.

Ili promenadis. - They were taking a walk.

La soldato pafis. - The soldier shot.

Subite granda hundo alsaltis el inter la arbetoj. - Suddenly a big dog jumped from among the bushes.

Ĉu vi aŭdis jam tiun historion? - Did you already hear this story?

La folioj faladis de la arboj. - The leaves were falling from the trees.

Tio surprizis min. - That surprised me.

Estis iam malgranda knabino. - Once there was a little girl.

Mankas al mi nenio. - I lack nothing.

Ŝi estas tre maljuna. - She is very old.

Vocative

☞ The sentence function called vocative show to whom the utterance is directed. A vocative is usually the name of the person addressed, and it is said specifically for getting their attention. The vocative is normally separated from the rest of the sentence by a comma or commas. The vocative must always be in the nominative.

Elizabeto, ĉu vi scias, kie la hundo estas? - Elizabeth, do you know where the dog is?

Mi konstatis, kara Petro, ke vi ne estis en la lernejo hodiaŭ. - I realized, dear Peter, that you were not at school today.

Mi deziras al vi bonan tagon, sinjoro! - I wish you a good day, Sir!

Estimata prezidanto, mi ŝatus fari jenan proponon. - Mr. Chairman (Madam Chairman), I would like to make the following proposal. (estimata = esteemed)

Nominative

☞ Noun sentence elements can have an epithet which shows the identity of the matter, normally by its proper name. That kind of **restrictive appositive** always stands after its main word and should be in the nominative:

Tio estis en la monato Majo. - That was in the month of May.

The month is called "May". Majo is a predicate nominative, an epithet of the word monato.

Ni vizitis la urbon Seulo. - We visited the city Seoul.

La ĉefurbo de Britio estas Londono, sed ankaŭ en Kanado kaj Usono oni havas urbojn Londono. - The capital city of Britain is London, but also in Canada and the United States there are cities named London.

Sinjoro Petro kaj lia edzino tre amas miajn infanojn. - Mister Peter and his wife love my children very much.

☞ One can often insert **kiu nomiĝas** before a predicate nominative: monato, kiu nomiĝas Majo; urbon, kiu nomiĝas Seulo; urbojn, kiuj nomiĝas Londono:

☞ Don't use the preposition **de** before a predicate nominative: ~~la urbo de Nov-Jorko, la ŝtato de Keralo, la Popola Respubliko de Ĉinujo~~. Correct are only: la urbo Nov-Jorko, la ŝtato Keralo, la Popola Respubliko Ĉinujo.

☞ Compare a predicate nominative with an **apposition**.

Predicative

☞ A predicative is a phrase which **describes** the subject or object **by means of the predicate**. The predicative is normally in the nominative.

☞ Descriptive nominative

A predicative is a phrase which **describes** the subject or object **by means of the predicate**. The predicative is normally in the nominative.

Predicate nominative

The verb **esti** is the main verb which links the description to the subject. Other such linking verbs are, for example, (far)igi, ŝajni, montriĝi and nomiĝi.

A predicate nominative is most often an adjective (adjectival phrase) or adjective-like particle.

Ŝi **estis terure malbela**. - She was terribly ugly.

Terure malbela is a description modifying **ŝi**. The two are linked by the verb **estis**.

La patro **estas sana**. - The father is healthy.

Sana is a description of **la patro**.

La dentoj de leono **estas akraj**. - The teeth of a lion are sharp.

Ili **fariĝis trankvilaj**. - They became calm.

La juna vidvino **fariĝis denove fianĉino**. - The young widow got engaged again (lit. became a fiancée again.)

Ŝi **aspektis kolera**. - She looked angry.

With **aspekti** (to look like), however, we often use a circumstantial complement of manner instead of an adjectival predicative: **En la novaj vestoj ŝi aspektis tiel elegante kaj bele**.

Ordinare li **ne estas tia**. - Usually he is not like that.

The adjectival particle **tia** describes the subject **li** through the linking verb **estas**.

A predicate nominative can also be a noun phrase in the nominative:

Leono **estas besto**. - A lion is an animal.

Besto is a (species)description of **leono**.

Januaro **estas la unua monato de la jaro**. - January is the first month of the year.

Mi **scias, kio mi** **estas**. - I know what I am.

Mia frato **fariĝos doktoro**. - My brother will become a doctor.

A predicate nominative can also be a noun phrase with a preposition. That kind of description shows a quality. One can transform that kind of description into an adjective:

Li **estas hodiaŭ en kolera humoro**. = Li **estas hodiaŭ kolerhumora**. - He is, today, in an angry mood. = Today he is ill-humored.

Ili **estas de la sama speco**. = Ili **estas samspecaj**. - They are of the same type (species etc).

We use an adverb as a predicative instead of an adjective, if the described subject is an infinitive or a subordinate clause:

Resti kun leono **estas danĝere**. - To stay with a lion is dangerous.

Estas pli bone, ke ni tie ĉi manĝu kaj iru en la urbon vespere. - It's better that we eat here and go into town in the evening.

We also use an adverb instead of an adjective when there is no subject mentioned. In that case the predicative describes the whole situation:

Estis al mi tiel terure! - It was terrible for me!

Estis terure (It was terrible) is a general description of the situation.

Ĉu hodiaŭ estas varme aŭ malvarme? - Is it warm or cold today?

If the subject is an implied noun or pronoun, then use the adjective form: **La mastro traktis min tre bone, kaj estis tre afabla**. = ...kaj li **estis tre afabla**. **Estu kuraĝa!** = Vi **estu kuraĝa!**

Object predicative

Some verbs can be used to link a description of their object. Although such predicatives describe an object, they should not receive the ending N:

Vi farbas la domon ruĝan. (= Vi farbas la ruĝan domon.) - You are painting the red house.

Ruĝan here is an **epithet** of **la domon**. = **You are painting that house which is already red**. It is not mentioned which color it will now get.

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Ruĝan here is an **epithet** of la domon. = You are painting that house which is already red. It is not mentioned which color it will now get.

Vi farbas la domon ruĝa. = Vi farbas la domon tiel, ke ĝi fariĝas ruĝa. - You are painting the house red.

Ruĝa is a **predicative** of la domon, so an object predicative. The redness is caused by the action **farbi** (to paint). Nothing was said about which color the house had before. (One can also say: Vi farbas ruĝa la domon. But not: Vi farbas la ruĝa domon.)

An object predicative can be an adjective or an adjective-like particle.

Ĉu vi farbos vian ruĝan domon verda? - Will you paint your red house green?

Ne, ni preferas ĝin flava. = Ne, ni preferas, ke ĝi estu flava. - No, we prefer it yellow. = No, we prefer it to be yellow.

Ŝi trovis la Francajn vinojn tre bonaj. = Ŝi trovis, ke ili estas tre bonaj. - She found the French wines very good. = She found them to be very good.

Neniam mi vidis lin tia. = Neniam mi vidis, ke li estas tia. - Never have I seen him like that. = I have never seen him to be like that.

La ĝojo kaj surprizo faris lin muta! - The joy and surprize made him dumfounded!

Sometimes this type of adjectival description of the object is the logical response to a **when**-phrase, and shows a state which does not depend on the action of the predicate. In that case you can well use the accusative:

Ni lin trovis malvivan. = Ni lin trovis, kiam li estis malviva. - We found him lifeless. = We found him when he was lifeless.

The N in malvivan may aid in clarity, but one can also leave it out. Without the N-ending the meaning can also be: We found him, and found, that he was lifeless.

Mi ŝatas la matenmanĝajn ovojn malmolaj(n). = Mi ŝatas la matenmanĝajn ovojn, kiam ili estas malmolaj. Mi ŝatas, ke la matenmanĝaj ovoj estu malmolaj.

- I like the breakfast eggs hard. = I like the breakfast eggs when they are hard. I like the eggs at breakfast to be hard. Some use N en these type of sentences. Others prefer an adjective without N. There is practically no difference in meaning.

An object predicative can be a noun phrase in the nominative.

Mi elektis lin prezidanto. = Mi elektis lin, ke li estu prezidanto. - I voted him chairman. = I voted him to be chairman. [Note: Esperanto distinguishes between "prezidanto"-chairman, and "prezidento"- president as a political office]

Vin mi volas fari mia edzo! = Mi volas fari tiel, ke vi estos mia edzo. - I want to make you my husband!

Ĉemizojn, kolumojn, manumojn kaj ceterajn similajn objektojn ni nomas tolajo. - Shirts, collars, cuffs and other similar objects we call linen.

With some verbs you can alternatively use a **kiel-expression**: Ili elektis ŝin kiel kasiston.

Sometimes a phrase with a preposition can be an object predicative.

Ŝi lin trovas laŭ ŝia gusto. = Ŝi trovas, ke li estas laŭ ŝia gusto. - She finds him to her taste. = She finds that he is to her taste.

Mi preferas ĝin sen sukero. - I prefer it without sugar.

If the object is an infinitive or subordinate clause, then use an adverb as the object predicative. This basically happens only with the verbs **opini** (to opine) and **trovi** (to find) (when used in the sense of "to hold the opinion[that something is a certain way]"):

Ili trovis saĝe forkuri. - They found it wise to run away.

(They were of the opinion that running away was wise.)

Mi opinias taŭge, ke Petro faru la tutan laboron sola. - I think is suitable that Peter should do all the work alone. = ...that he should do it by himself.

(I was of the opinion that it was suitable for Peter to do all the work alone.)

Note: According to some grammarians one should use an adjective in these types of sentences, because they feel that the adverbial form can be misunderstood as a circumstantial complement of manner. They therefore recommend saying for example Ili trovis saĝa forkuri.

How to check

How to check.

K33 If we are not sure whether it's an epithet or an object predicative we can replace the object with a pronoun (*lin*, *šin*, *ġin*, *ilin* etc). We then tend to take out the epithet because it is part of the object. The predicative, however, we tend to keep because it is an independent sentence element necessary to the meaning of the sentence: *Ċu vi farbas la domon ruġan?* → *Ċu vi farbas ġin?* *Ruġan* is an epithet. *Ċu vi farbas la domon ruġa?* → *Ċu vi farbas ġin ruġa?* *Ruġa* is an object predicative.

English ▾

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