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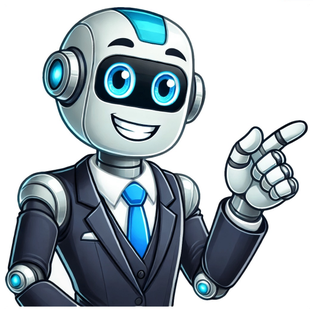

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Latin (/ˈlæt.ɪn/ LAT-in, lat-IN; Latīnum [ˈlaːtiːnũː]) is a Italic language originally spoken in Latium, the region around the city of Rome, in the south-west of the peninsula. It is the language of the Latins, who dominated the Roman Republic and Empire, and of their descendants, the Romans. Latin is a highly inflected language, with nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, and participles inflected for gender, number, case, tense, mood, voice, and aspect. The Latin alphabet is derived from the Etruscan and Greek alphabets. Latin retains the phonemic contrast between long and short vowels, which has been lost in the Romance languages. Latin has been a highly influential language throughout its history, and has left many loanwords in English and other languages, especially in the form of scientific and technical terms. Latin is a member of the Italic branch of the Indo-European language family. The Latin alphabet is the most widely used writing system in the world, and Latin is still taught in many schools, especially in Europe and the Americas. It is most common in British public schools and grammar schools, the Italian from classical and late Latin, which evolved during the medieval period. Latin was taught to be written and spoken at least until the late seventeenth century, when spoken skills began to erode. Contemporary Latin is generally studied to be read rather than spoken. Ecclesiastical Latin remains the official language of the Roman Catholic Church. Latin grammar is highly flexible, with classes of inflection for case, number, person, gender, tense, mood, voice, and aspect. The Latin alphabet is directly