PARTS OF SPEECH

Latin, as English, has eight parts of speech:

· NOUN
· PRONOUN
· ADJECTIVE
· VERB
· ADVERB
· CONJUNCTION
· PREPOSITION
· INTERJECTION

Noun - the name of a person, place, thing, or idea.
· Gender: In English gender has faded for most nouns, except for special uses (e.g., ships). Latin retains gender distinctions for all nouns, some natural (e.g., puella) and some grammatical (terra).
· Nouns are sometimes called substantives because they were once thought to denote the substantia (essential nature) of a person or thing.

Pronoun - a word used in place of a noun.
· Personal pronoun - I, you, he, she, it, they, etc.
· Reflexive pronoun - refers to subject of sentence (He saw himself).
· Interrogative pronoun - Who, whom, whose, what?
· Demonstrative pronoun - This, that, these, those.
· Relative pronoun - Who, etc. (in subordinate clauses).
· Possessive pronoun - Mine, yours, his, hers etc.
· Indefinite pronoun - Some(one), some(thing).

Adjective - a word that describes a noun or pronoun.
· Descriptive - terra pulchra (a beautiful land).
· Possessive - mater tua (your mother).
· Interrogative - quae dea . . . ? (what goddess . . . ?)
· Demonstrative - hoc consilium (this plan).
· Indefinite - aliqua spes (some hope).

Verb - a word that expresses an action or condition.
· Transitive verb - takes a direct object to complete its meaning. It necessarily affects some person or thing or produces some result. Thus, the statements interficio (I kill) or aedifico (I build) are not complete until it is clear whom I kill or what I build.
   · The person or thing affected or effected by the action of the verb is the direct object and is always in the accusative case.
Intransitive verb - does not require a direct object to complete its meaning. The action of the verb does not "pass over" (transire) to another person or thing. Thus, sum (I am), sto (I stand), curro (I run), cado (I am falling), sol lucet (the sun is shining) would all be nonsensical if given a direct object.

But many verbs can be both transitive and intransitive: I run/I run the race. I can stand/ I can stand it no longer. As is clear in the last example, this change from intransitive to transitive often is accomplished by a change in basic meaning (stand vs. endure, bear) that seldom corresponds to the Latin usage. Thus, sto means only "I stand" in Latin and is only intransitive.

Many verbs which are transitive in English were considered by the Romans to be intransitive in force. Thus, "I spare" is considered by us transitive and to require a direct object: "I spare my enemies". To the Romans, however, the idea was intransitive and the person affected must take an indirect object in the dative case: parco meis inimicis ("I am sparing to my enemies").

Adverbs - a word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

He fights well.
The fight was very long.
He lost too easily.

Conjunction - a word that joins words, phrases, or clauses.

- Coordinate - connects equal words, phrases, and clauses:

  Over land and sea
  Good or evil
  I see but I don't understand.

- Subordinate - joins dependent clauses to the main idea of a sentence:

  Although the night was dark, we found our way.
  We found our way until the sun set.
  We found our way because there was a full moon.

Preposition - a word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and another word in the sentence (in, on, towards, with, by, etc.).

- In Latin, as in English, prepositions are almost always placed before (praeposita) the words they define.
- Many prepositions have become pre-fixed to verbs and modify their original meaning: trans (across) + portare (to carry) = transportare (to carry across).
  - Often the preposition is modified for ease of pronunciation, as in in + portare = importare = to carry in. This is known as assimilation.

Interjection - an expression of emotion, thrown in (interiecta) among, but grammatically independent of, the other words of the sentence.

Alas, poor Yorick, I knew him.

Of the eight parts of speech in Latin, 5 are inflected (noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb); the other 3 (conjunction, preposition, and interjection) are invariable.