THE SUPINE

The Supine is a verbal noun of the fourth declension, appearing only in the accusative singular (-um) and ablative singular (-ü) and limited to two usages.

I. The Supine in -um:

A. The Supine in -um may be used after verbs of motion to express purpose:

PEEDE ad Caesarem mittunt rogätum auxilium. They send envoys to Caesar to ask for help.

Stultitia est venätum ducere invitäs canës. It is folly to take unwilling dogs to hunt.

The construction is found most commonly with the verbs ire and venire, followed by many phrases: cubitum, dormitum, sessum, salütätum, etc.

The Supine in -um may take a direct object, though the construction was not very common:

Hannibal patriam defënsum revocätus est. Hannibal was recalled to defend his country.

The Supine in -um, very common in early Latin, was not favored by Cicero and Caesar. It was frequent again in Sallust and Livy but in Later Latin was generally supplanted by the infinitive of purpose.

B. The Supine in -um was used with the passive infinitive of ire (iri) to form the rare future passive infinitive:

Häs litteräs redditum iri putäbam. I thought that this letter was going to be returned.

The construction was never common and was often replaced with a futurum esse (fore) ut construction: Nuntiat fore ut foedus fieret. He reported that a treaty would be made.

II. The Supine in -ü.

The Supine in -ü is used with a few adjective (and the nouns fäs, nefäs, and opus) to express an ablative of respect or specification:

mirabile dictü: marvelous to relate
facilis factü: easy to do.
şi hoc fäs est dictü: if this is right to say.
nihil dignum dictü: nothing worthy of mention.