

The Dative Case

Pure Dative	Indirect Object	“to . . .” “for . . .”	The person or thing to or for which the action of the verb is performed. Occurs <i>only with a transitive verb</i> .
		John 4:10 και ἔδωκεν ἅν σοι ὕδωρ ζῶν “and he would have given living water to you .”	
	Interest (advantage [commodi], disadvantage [incommodi])	“for . . .” “against . . .”	The person (or occasionally thing) which has an interest in the verbal action (i.e., the action benefits or harms the person).
		2 Cor 5:13 εἶτε ἐξέστημεν, θεῷ “If we are insane, it is for God .” Matt 23:31 μαρτυρεῖτε ἑαυτοῖς “You testify against yourselves ”	
	Reference/Respect	“with reference to ...” “in regard to . . .” “concerning . . .”	Indicates the point of reference, context, or subject matter of a statement. This dative indicates the context in which the statement holds true.
		Rom 6:11 λογίζεσθε ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι νεκροὺς μὲν τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ “Consider yourselves dead in regard to sin .”	
Local	Destination	“to . . .” “toward . . .” “at . . .”	Indicates the destination toward which the subject of the action moves, or at which s/he arrives. Occurs <i>only with an intransitive verb</i> .
		Matt 21:5 ὁ βασιλεὺς σου ἔρχεται σοι “Your king is coming to you.”	
	Possession	“belonging to . . .”	Follows verbs of being (εἶμί, γίνομαι, ὑπάρχω) and indicates the person who owns the subject of the verb.
	Acts 8:21 οὐκ ἔστιν σοι μερίς “You have no part .”		
Local	Sphere	“in . . .” “in the sphere of . . .” “with regard to . . .”	Indicates the sphere or realm in which the action happens or (if it modifies a noun) a thing exists. Similar to the dative of reference, but here the action happens <i>within</i> the sphere marked by the dative substantive, not simply <i>in relation to</i> that idea.
		Eph 2:1 ὑμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς τοῖς παραπτώμασιν . . . ὑμῶν. “You were dead in [the sphere of] your transgressions .”	
	Time (when)	“on . . .” “at . . .”	Indicates the time when an action happens. Usually indicates a point in time, rather than an extended period of time.
	Matt 17:23 τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθήσεται “ On the third day he will be raised.”		
Instrumental	Association (accompaniment, comitative)	“with . . .” “together with . . .”	Indicates the person or thing one associates with or accompanies.
		Acts 9:7 οἱ . . . συνοδεύοντες αὐτῷ “The men who were traveling with him .”	
	Manner (adverbial)	“with . . .” “in . . .”	Indicates the manner in which the verb is performed or accomplished. Can usually be converted into an adverb.
		John 7:26 παρησιαῖα λαλεῖ “He speaks with boldness (= boldly) .”	
	Means/Instrument	“with . . .” “by means of . . .”	Indicates the means of instrument by which the action of the verb is performed or accomplished.
		John 11:2 ἐκμάξασα τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ταῖς θριξίν αὐτῆς “She wiped his feet with her hair .”	
	Measure/Degree of Difference	“by . . .”	Accompanies a comparative adjective or adverb. Indicates the extent to which the comparison is true, or the degree of difference involved in the comparison.
	Heb 1:4 τοσοῦτῳ κρείττων γενόμενος τῶν ἀγγέλων “. . . having become [by] so much better than the angels.”		
Cause	“because of . . .”	Indicates the cause or basis of the verbal action.	
	Rom 4:20 οὐ διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ “He did not waver because of unbelief .”		
Cognate Dative	varies	A dative noun is used with a cognate verb (same root or idea) to intensify the action of the verb. Should not be translated separately. Use an adverb or idiom conveying the idea that the action is more intense than usual.	
	Jas 5:17 Ἠλίας . . . προσευχῇ προσέξατο “Elijah . . . prayed earnestly .”		

With certain words	Dative Direct Object	translate as ordinary direct object	Some verbs normally take their direct object in the dative case (instead of the accusative). To see whether a verb falls into this category, see the entry in BAGD. In general these verbs express a personal relation and can be translated using the English words “to” or “in.” E.g., ὑπακούω (I am obedient <i>to</i>), διακονῶ (I minister <i>to</i>), εὐχαριστῶ (I am thankful <i>to</i>), πιστεύω (I trust <i>in</i>).
		Gal 3:6 Καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ . . . “Just as Abraham believed God ...”	
With Prepositions	see uses of the prepositions in question	Several prepositions can be followed by a noun in the dative case (E.g., ἐν, ἐπί, περί). In this case the dative case carries no sense of its own, being dominated by the sense of the preposition.	