

THE GREEK ALPHABET (Modern Greek Pronunciation)

See our “Learning Greek” playlist on youtube:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKe32DDj2fSmcugbHQyvyE6TvWNwkRde0>

Written Symbol	Name of Letter	Sound
α	alfa	a (Spanish ‘a’)
β	veeta	v
γ	gamma (voiced Scots ‘Lo <u>ch</u> ’)	g (voiced ‘ch’)
δ	<u>th</u> elta	th as in <u>th</u> e
ε	epsilon	e (<u>b</u> et)
ζ	zeeta	z
η	eeta	ee
θ	theeta	th
ι	iota (yota)	ee
κ	kappa	k
λ	lam <u>d</u> a (d as in <u>th</u> e)	l
μ	mee	m
ν	nee	n
ξ	ksee	ks
ο	omicron	o (<u>o</u> bey)
π	pee	p
ρ	ro	r
σ, ς (final)	sigma	s
τ	taf	t
υ	eepsilon	ee
φ	fee	f
χ	<u>ch</u> ee (<u>ch</u> as in Scots Lo <u>ch</u>)	ch (unvoiced ch)
ψ	psee	ps
ω	omega	o (<u>o</u> bey)

Note on γ (gamma):

γ = voiced Scots Loch before α, ο, ω

γ = ‘y’ (yell) before ε, αι, ευ, η, ι, οι, υ (i.e. anything with a letter ε or sound of ‘ee’)

γγ = ‘ng’ (sing) = γκ, γξ, γχ

GREEK VOWEL SOUNDS

α (alfa)

ε = $\alpha\iota$ (bet)

$\alpha\upsilon$ = (oven) before vowels and *voiced* consonant

$\alpha\upsilon$ = (huff) before *unvoiced* consonants

$\varepsilon\upsilon$ = (ever) before vowels and *voiced* consonants

$\varepsilon\upsilon$ = (heifer) before *unvoiced* consonants

$\eta\upsilon$ = (even) before vowels and *voiced* consonants

$\eta\upsilon$ = (thief) before *unvoiced* consonants

ι = $\varepsilon\iota$ = $\omicron\iota$ = η = υ = $\upsilon\iota$ = (meeet) (If in doubt say *ee*!)

\omicron = ω = (obey)

$\omicron\upsilon$ = (soon)

Note: When three vowels occur together, take the first two vowels *together*, unless this produces an impossible pair, as for example: $\alpha\gamma\iota\omicron\upsilon$ = ‘ayeeou.’ Here taking the iota and the omicron together will not work. $\upsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$ (ui-os) means “son.” Take the first two vowels together to make the diphthong “ui” (pronounced “ee”)

‘ ‘ ^ stress marks for pronunciation

- ’ soft breathing (does not affect pronunciation)
- ‘ rough breathing (does not affect pronunciation)
- ’ apostrophe (letter left out)

GREEK CAPITAL LETTERS

Written Symbol	Name of Letter		
A	alfa	N	nec
B	veeta	Ξ	ksee
Γ	gamma	Ο	omicron
Δ	<u>th</u> elta	Π	pee
E	epsilon	Ρ	ro
Z	zeeta	Σ	sigma
H	eeta	Τ	taf
Θ	theeta	Υ	eeepsilon
I	iota	Φ	fee
K	kappa	Χ	chee
Λ	lam <u>d</u> a	Ψ	psee
M	mec	Ω	oméga

NEW TESTAMENT GREEK GRAMMAR (Part 1)

1. Noun = a person, place or thing.

Three genders: Masculine, feminine and neuter (like German). All nouns have a gender distinguished by the definite article, 'the.' Singular = one only. Plural = more than one.

Cases:

Nominative: for the subject of the sentence

Accusative: for the object of the sentence and after prepositions + accusative, i.e. prepositions which govern the accusative case. *Pros ton theon*, with God. *Pros* governs the accusative case and *ton theon* is thus in the accusative case.

Genitive: the 'of' or possessive case, and after prepositions + genitive

Dative: the 'to' or 'for' case, and after prepositions + dative

The **Nominative** is the naming case. It names the subject.

The **Accusative** case shows the OBJECT, as a point to which something is moving. "The car (subject) hit the wall (object)." "The people (subject) welcomed **the message** (object)."

The **Genitive** is the case of attribution and ownership. Thus "the Kingdom of God," the Kingdom which has as its attribute a relationship to God. "A heart of unbelief," a heart which has unbelief as its attribute.

The **Dative** case shows the one *for* whom, or *in whose interest* a thing is performed. "I will give all things **to** the believers."

Cases and number (singular or plural) for Greek nouns are indicated by the *endings* on the nouns:

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	λογ-ος	λογ-οι
Accusative	λογ-ον	λογ-ους
Genitive	λογ-ου	λογ-ων
Dative	λογ-ω	λογ-οις

2. Adjectives. Words describing nouns. "The *rich* man." Adjectives must agree (harmonize) in gender (masculine, feminine or neuter), number (singular or plural), and case (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative) with the noun they describe.

3. Verbs. These have six "persons."

Singular	Plural
I	we
you (KJV "thou")	you (KJV "ye")
he (she, it)	they

"**Tense**" of the verb means the time of the verb: present, past or future.

Present: I speak, I do speak, I am speaking (often in Greek the action as continuous in the present: "I am speaking").

Past:

A) **Imperfect:** "I was speaking."

B) **Aorist**: “I spoke,” the action as simply occurring in the past without reference to progress.

C) **Perfect**: “I have spoken.” The action took place in the past and its results are with us now.

Future: action in the future. “I will (shall) speak.”

“**Voice**” of the verb is either **active** or **passive**.

Active: the subject does the action. “Jesus began to teach.” “Jesus wept.”

Passive: the subject receives the action. “He was taken up.” (think of the dentist’s chair where you are passive)

4. **Relative pronoun**: “The house *which* I bought.” “The man *whom* I saw.” The relative pronoun *relates* the subject under discussion to some fact about it.

5. **The definite article** points out “that well-known one” already mentioned or known to the author and reader. Persons in Greek are designated “*the* Jesus,” “*the* Satan.” You can have “a satan,” an opponent in the Bible, but this is very different from THE Satan. The definite article (like adjectives) must agree (harmonize) with its noun in gender, number and case.

	Singular			Plural		
	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.
Nom.	ο	η	το	οι	αι	τα
Acc.	τον	την	το	τους	τας	τα
Gen.	του	της	του	των	των	των
Dat.	τω	τη	τω	τοις	ταις	τοις

NEW TESTAMENT GREEK GRAMMAR (Part 2)

We have seen that the *subject* and the *object* in Greek are signaled by case endings on nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and the article. These endings show a common pattern. In English we may say “Tom hit Mary,” but we could not say “Mary hit Tom” without altering our meaning. In Greek, however, the endings on Tom and Mary will show which is the subject and which is the object. So Luke can begin his second treatise (Acts) with the object in the accusative:

τον μεν πρωτον λογον: “the first account I composed” (Acts 1:1). The account (λογον) is the direct object and therefore in the accusative case.

The subject of this sentence is found in the verb *εποιησάμην*. The *aorist* (describing an event in the past without reference to its duration) is marked by the letters *σα*. Note that the *σ* may be “hidden” in a *ξ* or a *ψ*.

Prepositions are used with verbs to help express precisely the relationship with a noun. Thus, “he went into (*εις*) the town, through (*δια*) the village.” “They will go into (*εις*) the Kingdom of God.” Many prepositions have links with English words: *περι* (*perimeter*), *δια* (*diameter*), *υπερ*

(*hyperactive*), *υπο* (*hypodermic*). Very common are *μετα* (after) and *εν* (in). Early in Acts Luke uses *αχρι* (until).

Pronouns stand for nouns. “Luke wrote Acts. *He* wrote more of the New Testament than any of the eight writers.” Reflexive pronouns are *myself, yourself, himself*.

Participles are parts of a verb. They cannot create sentences by themselves, but need a main verb to go with them. In English participles are characterized by the ending **-ing**: “*Seeing* his friends,” “*being* assembled,” “*having* come together,” “*saying*.”

Infinitive: This is the basic form of the verb: “to teach,” “to come.” In Greek the *present* infinitive ends in *-ειν*. *Legein*, to say.

More on nouns: These have different patterns or classes of endings. Here is another type:

	Sing.	Plur.
Nom.	αιων	αιωνες
Acc.	αιωνα	αιωνας
Gen.	αιωνος	αιωνων
Dat.	αιωνι	αιωνσι

NEW TESTAMENT GREEK GRAMMAR (Part 3)

Samuel Green: “A little care in learning **to read the language** with perfect facility, even before a single word is understood, will very greatly contribute to future progress” (*Handbook to the Grammar of the Greek New Testament*).

Verbs are really the center of interest in the sentence. They appear in many different forms according to tense (time), voice (active or passive), mood (indicative or subjunctive). Each verb must be analyzed as to its **person** (I, you, he, she, it, we, you, they), **tense** (present, imperfect, aorist, future, perfect), active or passive. Remember that the **aorist** has *-σα* (but *-σε* in the third person singular) as its signal. The **future** active has **-σ + endings**.

The **relative pronoun**, “the apostles *whom* he chose, to *whom* he gave commands,” looks very much like the definite article:

	Sing.			Plur.		
	m.	f.	n.	m.	f.	n.
Nom.	οι	η	ο	οι	αι	α
Acc.	ους	ην	ο	ους	ας	α
Gen.	ων	ης	ου	ων	ων	ων
Dat.	οις	η	ω	οις	αις	οις

Nouns. We have seen patterns like λογος and αιων. Here is a pattern for **feminine** nouns. The endings remind us somewhat of the λογος pattern but the letter α has replaced the letter ο:

	Sing.	Plur.
Nom.	δοξα	δοξαι
Acc.	δοξαν	δοξας
Gen.	δοξης	δοξων
Dat.	δοξη	δοξαις

Translations are the subtlest forms of commentary. The translator stands between you and the original writer. His presuppositions and doctrinal prejudices may affect his translation. This is more likely to happen in a translation which is more of a paraphrase (i.e. the NIV, GNB, NLT) than in a more literal rendering (NASV). An interlinear prints the Greek with the English under each word. The KJV translated both κοσμος and αιων as “world.” George Eldon Ladd says, “**This is a bad translation** and conceals from the reader a very valuable truth” (*The Last Things*, p. 104). κοσμος means world-system, usually the present evil world system of which Satan is the God (2 Cor. 4:4) while αιων means a period of time, age or eon. The New Testament looks forward to the end of the **age** (αιων), not the end of the *world*.

NEW TESTAMENT GREEK GRAMMAR (Part 4)

Verbs will always be the heart of a Greek sentence. They create the action. They are both the most important and the most complex element. They appear in different “persons,” “tenses” (time), “voice” (active or passive), and “**mood**”: **indicative** (dealing with facts) or **subjunctive** (dealing with hypotheses). “If I were a rich man...” “I were” is subjunctive.

The **imperfect** tense of the verb is the ‘**was -ing**’ tense. It describes activity continuing in the past. “I was reading.” In Greek imperfect tenses there will be an “augment” on the front of the verb. This is true of the first and second aorist tenses also. The **augment** is an ε added to the beginning of the verb. Note a good example of an imperfect. Acts 8:12: “They were being baptized” or Luke 8:8: “He used [repeatedly] to raise his voice.”

Other signs to be found on verbs are: an σ appears before the ending on **future** forms of the verb. -σα appears as the sign of the **aorist (simple action in the past)**. The **present infinitive** is shown by the ending -ειν. The **aorist infinitive** ends in -σαι. The difference in meaning between the present and aorist infinitive is that the present infinitive means “to be in the process of...” and the aorist infinitive simply states the fact: “to + verb.”

The **participle** in the present (“eating,” “doing”) ends in -ων (masc.), ουσα (fem.), ον (neut.). The **participle** in the aorist tense ends in ας (masc.), ασα (fem.), αν (neut.) There is also a second aorist participle which ends like the present participle in ων (masc.), ουσα (fem.), ον (neut.). All **participles** are declined (i.e. show case endings) just as nouns are, and they must match or agree in gender, number and case with the nouns they describe. Note a wonderful example in Luke 4:41: “The demons were crying out and Jesus rebuked the demons.”

Verbs have “voices,” either active (initiating the action) or passive (receiving the action, being acted upon). **Active:** “to act”; **middle:** “to act for oneself”; **passive** “to be acted upon.”

Deponent verbs are middle or passive in their form, but active in meaning.

Reference works are available which present every verb occurring in the NT with an analysis of its person, voice, mood and tense (*Analytical Greek Lexicon*, Samuel Bagster and Sons). A **lexicon** of New Testament Greek lists every word in the New Testament in its basic form and gives a definition of its meaning in English. A dictionary at the back of the Greek NT does this in a simple form.

Augment is the addition on the front of a verb in the **imperfect** tense (was -ing) and the **aorist** tense. The letter added is usually -ε. If the verb in its basic form already begins with a vowel the addition of the augment will cause the vowel to change from:

α to η, ε to η, ο to ω

If the verb has a preposition as the first part of it, the augment will appear before the verbal part, i.e. between the preposition and the verb. This will all amount to *one word*.

Road signs for Greek

The following facts will help you to negotiate a Greek sentence.

There are two forms of infinite verbs: the infinitive and the participle.

The infinitive is “to be” and the participle is “being” or having been.

Present infinitives are signaled by **-ein**.

-men- signals a passive participle.

For nouns and pronouns **OMEGA NEE (ων)** (pronounced *ohn*) is the genitive plural ending of all nouns and pronouns.

OMEGA NEE (ων) is the ending on a present participle. lu-ohn, leg-ohn: loosing, speaking