Accentuation

There are three types of accent in Greek: acute (´), grave (`), and circumflex (˜).[1] Normally, each word has one accent. Which one it is, and where it appears, are the result of interaction between the word's basic accent and the rules that govern accentuation. A word will try to keep its basic accentuation unless prevented by some rule; if so prevented, it will prefer to change its type and remain on the same syllable than to change syllables.

Accent is determined partly by vowel quantity; it is therefore necessary to know which vowels are long and which short. Epsilon and omicron are always short; eta and omega are always long; alpha, iota, and upsilon are long in some words and short in others. The following combinations of vowels are diphthongs and count as one long vowel: ει, υι, αυ, ευ, ηυ, ου, ᾳ, ῃ, ῳ. The remaining diphthongs, αι and οι, count as one long vowel except when they are the *very last* letters of a word, in which case they count as one short vowel;[2] but in optative endings they are long even when at the very end of a word.[3] (Thus οι counts as long in ἀνθρώποις and παιδεύοι (optative), but short in ἄνθρωποι; αι counts as long in ἀγαθαῖς and παιδεύσαι (optative), but short in ἀγαθαί and παίδευσαι (imperative).) All other combinations of vowels count as two separate vowels and therefore as two separate syllables.

To accent all words correctly one needs to know the quantities of doubtful vowels in final syllables. The most important of these are:

– almost all -ι, -ις, and -ιν endings are short;
– finite verb endings in -α, -ας, or -αν are short, except in contract verbs;
– all neuter plural noun and adjective endings in -α are short;
– the -ας ending in the first declension genitive singular is always long;

[1] Originally these represented a rising pitch, the failure of the pitch to rise on a syllable where that would otherwise be expected, and a pitch that rose and fell on the same syllable (hence the restriction of the circumflex to long vowels). Now, however, it is customary to pronounce all three types of accent like the English stress accent. If when memorizing vocabulary one says the word out loud with a stress on the accented syllable, one engages in the memorization process portions of one's brain that would otherwise remain unused, and this makes it possible to learn the position of accents more efficiently.

[2] For purposes of accentuation, that is; in scanning poetry any diphthong in any position counts as one long vowel.

[3] Also in locative adverbs (e.g. οἴκοι) and some interjections (e.g. αἰαῖ).

- the accusative plural ending -ας is long in the first declension but short in the third declension;
- first declension feminine nouns can have a nominative/vocative singular in short -α, in which case they also have a short -αν in the accusative, or in long -α, in which case the accusative -αν is also long. First-second declension *adjectives*, in the feminine, always have long -α and -αν.

NB: ultima = last syllable; penultimate = next to last syllable; antepenultimate = third syllable from the end.

I. Basic accents

The basic accent, i.e. the one found on the dictionary-entry form of a word, must be memorized except in the case of verbs. Most finite verb forms have recessive accents (i.e. the accent goes as close to the beginning of the word as possible).

II. Accent rules

A. Basic rules

1.   An acute or grave may occur on a long or short vowel, but a circumflex can appear only on a long vowel. Thus ἀνήρ, ἀνὴρ, ἀνδρός, ἀνδρὸς, γῆ.
2.   If an acute accent stands on the ultima, and that word is followed by another non-enclitic word (see C below for enclitics) without intervening punctuation, the acute changes to a grave. This is the only situation in which the grave accent is used. Thus ἀνὴρ καὶ γυνή but ἀνήρ, καὶ γυνή.[4]
3.   An acute accent may stand only on one of the last three syllables of a word; if the last vowel is long, the acute may stand only on one of the last two syllables. (A word with a basic accent on the antepenultimate will move the accent to the penultimate if the last vowel is long.) Thus ἄνθρωπος but ἀνθρώπου.
4.   A circumflex may stand only on one of the last two syllables of a word; if the last vowel is long, a circumflex may stand only on the ultima. (A word with a basic accent on the penultimate will change the accent to acute if the last vowel is long.) Thus δῶρον but δώρου; Κλεοφῶν.
5.   If the accent is on the penultimate, and that syllable has a long vowel, and the ultima is short, the accent must be a circumflex. Thus δῶρον. (This rule is called the σωτῆρα rule.)

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[4] Interrogative τίς and τί are exceptions to this rule: their accents never become grave.

To summarize the rules in tabular form, the possible accents are as follows ($\smile$ = a syllable with a short vowel, $-$ = a syllable with a long vowel, and x = a syllable with either vowel):

x x́ x $\smile$	x x $\smallsmile$́ x	x x x x́
	x x $\stackrel{\prime}{-}$ $-$	x x x x̀
	x x $\stackrel{\frown}{}$ $\smile$	x x x $\stackrel{\frown}{}$

Many words have a recessive accent, i.e. an accent that tries to be as close to the start of the word as possible. On words with three or more syllables, the possibilities for recessive accents are only x́ x $\smile$ and x x́ $-$, but for words of two syllables the possibilities for recessive accents are $\smallsmile$́ x, $\stackrel{\frown}{}$ $\smile$, and $\stackrel{\prime}{-}$ $-$.

B. Paradigm-specific rules

1.   Finite verb forms are nearly always recessive. Infinitives, participles, nouns, and adjectives usually have a persistent accent: i.e. the syllable on which the accent appears is not predictable by the recessive rules but must be learned separately, and if the word is inflected the accent tries to stay on the syllable where it appears in the dictionary-entry form. There are however some complications:

2.   Nouns and adjectives of the first and second declensions, if they have the basic accent on the ultima, have an acute in the nominative, vocative, and accusative but a circumflex in the genitive and dative (both singular and plural, all genders). Thus ἀγαθός, ἀγαθοῦ, ἀγαθῷ, ἀγαθόν, ἀγαθέ, ἀγαθοί, ἀγαθῶν, etc.

3.   Nouns (but not adjectives) of the first declension always have a circumflex on the ultima in the genitive plural, regardless of the natural accent. This also applies to the feminines of adjectives and participles that have third-declension masculine and neuter forms, but not to those that have second-declension forms (the underlying principle is that if the feminine genitive plural is identical to the masculine and neuter genitives plural, it is accented like them, and otherwise it has a circumflex on the ultima). Thus θαλαττῶν from θάλαττα, and πολιτῶν from πολίτης, but ἀξίων from ἀξία (fem. of ἄξιος, masc. gen. pl. ἀξίων; there is also a noun ἀξία, but this has the genitive plural ἀξιῶν); παιδευουσῶν from παιδεύουσα (masc. παιδεύων, gen. pl. παιδευόντων) but παιδευομένων from παιδευομένη (masc. παιδευόμενος, gen. pl. παιδευομένων).

4.   Monosyllabic nouns of the third declension usually accent the stem in the nominative, vocative, and accusative, but the ending in the genitive and dative (all numbers). The stem accent is normally the same type as the basic accent, except where the basic rules forbid; the ending accent is normally acute except in the

genitive plural. Thus κλώψ, κλωπός, κλωπί, κλῶπα, κλῶπες, κλωπῶν, κλωπί, κλῶπας.

5.   First-declension feminines in short -α (all first-declension nouns in -α that do not have ε, ι, or ρ before the final -α, and a few that do have ε, ι, or ρ) and third-declension neuters in -ς (those declined like γένος) always have recessive accents (except in the genitive plural). Note that this rule makes it possible to tell whether the final -α of a first declension noun is long or short: ἄγκυρα and μοῖρα have short -α, but ἡμέρα must have a long -α, since if it were short, the recessive accent would be *ἥμερα. (NB: first-declension adjectives in -α and first-declension masculine nouns in -ας always have long α.)

6.   Πόλις and other words declined like it have an accent that violates the basic rules by staying on the same syllable throughout the paradigm, even in forms like πόλεως and πόλεων where it ought to move.

7.   Contract verbs (and other contracted words) have accents that reflect the uncontracted forms. When a contraction occurs, if the accented syllable is not one of those that contract, there is no effect on the accent: ἐτίμαε > ἐτίμα. If the accented vowel is the first of the two contracting vowels, the resulting contracted vowel will have a circumflex (τιμάω > τιμῶ); if the accent is on the second contracting vowel, the contracted vowel will have an acute (τιμαόμενος > τιμώμενος).[5] The same rules apply to contracted forms of non-contract verbs, as μενῶ (future of μένω) and λυθῶ (aorist passive subjunctive).

8.   Βασιλεύς and certain other words have their own paradigm-specific rules, which are also followed by other words that decline the way they do; these rules are best learned as part of the irregular declensions of the words concerned.

C. Rules for enclitics (τις, τε, ποτέ, ἐστί, etc.)

These words have no accent of their own and normally follow accented words, whose accents they affect.

1.   If the preceding word ends in an acute accent, the accent does not change to grave. Thus ἀγαθός τις, ἀγαθοί τινες.

2.   If the preceding word has an acute on the penultimate, a monosyllabic enclitic can be added without change, but a dissyllabic enclitic takes an accent on its ultima. Thus λόγος τις, but λόγοι τινές, λόγων τινῶν.

3.   If the preceding word has an acute on the antepenultimate, it adds a further acute on the ultima. Thus ἄνθρωπός τις, ἄνθρωποί τινες.

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[5] This is because an acute on a long vowel represents an accent on the second half of the vowel, while a circumflex represents an accent on the first half of the vowel.

4.   If the preceding word has a circumflex on the ultima, there is no change. Thus ἀγαθῶν τε, ἀγαθῶν τινων.

5.   If the preceding word has a circumflex on the penultimate, it adds an acute on the ultima. Thus δῶρά τε, δῶρά τινα.

6.   If several enclitics stand in a row, each one except the last takes an accent (on its second syllable, if dissyllabic). Thus ἐάν ποτέ τίς τί τινι διδῷ.

7.   To summarize in tabular form, where "α" represents a syllable of the preceding word and "ε" a syllable of the enclitic:

$$-α-α-ά + ε \text{ or } ε-ε \qquad\qquad -α-α-ᾶ + ε \text{ or } ε-ε$$
$$-α-ά-α + ε \text{ or } ε-έ \text{ or } ε-ῆ \qquad -α-ᾶ-ά + ε \text{ or } ε-ε$$
$$-ά-α-ά + ε \text{ or } ε-ε$$

D. Rules for proclitics (ἐκ, οὐ, εἰ, ὡς, ὁ, ἡ, οἱ, αἱ, etc.)

These words have no accents of their own and are accentually joined to the words that follow them. If followed by an accented word, they cause no changes; if followed by an enclitic, they take an acute accent from the enclitic. Thus ὁ ἄνθρωπος but εἴ τις, οἵ γε.

Exercise A (basic rules)

Add correct accents to the following words:

1. Finite verbs:
παιδευε, παιδευωσι, παιδευοιμι, παιδευετω, ἐπαιδευον, ἐπαιδευομεν, παιδευο-μαι, παιδευομεθα, παιδευῃ, παιδευωμεθα, παιδευησθε, παιδευοιμην, παιδευοιο, παιδευου, παιδευεσθω, παιδευσουσι, παιδευσοι, παιδευσοιεν, παιδευσεται, παιδευ-σομεθα, παιδευσοιτο, παιδευσοιμην, παιδευσοιμεθα, παιδευσοιντο, ἐπαιδευσα, ἐπαιδευσε, ἐπαιδευσαμεν, ἐπαιδευσαν, παιδευσαιμι, παιδευσαι (optative), παιδευ-σαι (imperative), παιδευσαιεν, παιδευσον, παιδευσατω, παιδευσατε, παιδευ-σαντων, πεπαιδευκα, πεπαιδευκατε, ἐπεπαιδευκη, ἐπεπαιδευκεσαν, πεπαιδευκοι, πεπαιδευκοιμεν, πεπαιδευμαι, πεπαιδευσαι, πεπαιδευται, πεπαιδευμεθα, πεπαιδευσθε, ἐπεπαιδευμην, ἐπεπαιδευσο, πεπαιδευσομαι, πεπαιδευσει, διδ-ωμι, διδωσι, δωμεν, διδοασι, διδομαι, δωται, διδοται, δωμεθα, διδομεθα, διδοιην, δωτε, διδοιημεν, ἐδωκα, δωνται, ἐδομεν, ἐδομην, ἐδοτο, δοιεν, δωσι, δοιησαν, δοισθε, δοσθω, δοσθε, δοιτο, δοντων, δοτω, δοιο, ἐθηκε, θειεν, ἐθηκας, ἐθου, θειτε, ἐθεμεθα, θειμεν, ἐθεμην, ἐθεσαν, θωσι, ἐθετε, ἐθηκα, θωμεν, θητε, θεισαν, θειητε, θειημεν.

2. Other words (note the following basic accents: στράτευμα, πόλεμος, κῆρυξ, γενναῖος, ἄξιος, ῥήτωρ, πολίτης (long ι), θάλαττα, καλός, παιδεύων, ἀνδρεῖος, δαίμων):
στρατευματος, στρατευματι, στρατευματα, στρατευματων, στρατευμασι, πολεμου, πολεμῳ, πολεμον, πολεμοι, πολεμων, πολεμοις, πολεμους, κηρυκος, κηρυκα, κηρυκες,

κηρυκων, κηρυξι, γενναιου, γενναιῳ, γενναιον, γενναιε, γενναιοι, γενναιων, γεν-
ναιοις, γενναιους, γενναια (fem.), γενναιας (gen.), γενναιᾳ, γενναιαν, γενναιαι, γεν-
ναιων, γενναιαις, γενναιας (acc.), γενναια (neut.), ἀξιου, ἀξιῳ, ἀξιον, ἀξιοι, ἀξιων,
ἀξιοις, ἀξιους, ἀξια (fem.), ἀξιας (gen.), ἀξιᾳ, ἀξιαι, ἀξιων, ἀξιαις, ἀξιας (acc.), ἀξια
(neut.), ῥητορος, ῥητορων, ῥητορ, ῥητορας, ῥητορες, πολιτου, πολιτην, πολιτα, πολι-
ται, πολιταις, πολιτας, θαλαττης, θαλαττῃ, θαλατταν, θαλατται, θαλατταις, θαλατ-
τας, καλον, καλοι, καλη, καλαι, καλα, καλους, παιδευοντος, παιδευοντες, παιδευον-
των, παιδευοντας, παιδευον (neut.), ἀνδρειου, ἀνδρειῳ, ἀνδρειον, ἀνδρειοι, ἀνδρειων,
ἀνδρειοις, ἀνδρειους, ἀνδρεια (fem.), ἀνδρειας (gen.), ἀνδρειᾳ, ἀνδρειαν, ἀνδρειαι,
ἀνδρειων, ἀνδρειαις, ἀνδρειας (acc.), ἀνδρεια (neut.), δαιμονος, δαιμονι, δαιμονα, δαι-
μον, δαιμονες, δαιμονων, δαιμοσι, δαιμονας.

3. Groups of words (note the basic accents κακός, σοφός, δῆλος, δέ, καί):
κακον δε, σοφον και, δηλου κακοι και σοφοι, σοφους δε κακους και δηλους, σοφην δε
και κακην.

Exercise B (paradigm-specific rules)

1. Given the natural accents ὁδός, φωνή, κακός, αἴξ, μάχη (short α), θήρ, φιλέω, νίκη
(long ι), χείρ, χώρα, παιδευθείς, παιδευσάμενος, μάντις, put the correct accents on the
following words:
ὁδου, ὁδῳ, ὁδον, ὁδοι, ὁδων, ὁδοις, ὁδους, φωνης, φωνῃ, φωνην, φωναι, φωνων,
φωναις, φωνας, κακου, κακῳ, κακον, κακοι, κακων, κακοις, κακους, κακη, κακης, κακῃ,
κακαι, κακαις, κακας, κακα, αἰγος, αἰγι, αἰγα, αἰγες, αἰγων, αἰξι, αἰγας, μαχης, μαχην,
μαχαι, μαχων, μαχας, θηρος, θηρι, θηρα, θηρες, θηρων, θηρσι, θηρας, φιλεις, φιλουμεν,
φιλουσι, φιλητε, φιλοιην, φιλοιη, φιλοιμεν, φιλοιεν, φιλει (indicative), φιλει (imperative),
φιλειτω, φιλειτε, φιλουντων, ἐφιλουν, ἐφιλεις, ἐφιλει, ἐφιλουμεν, φιλουμαι, φιλειται,
φιλωμεθα, φιλησθε, φιλοιμην, φιλοιο, φιλοιτο, φιλοιμεθα, φιλοισθε, φιλου, φιλεισθω,
φιλεισθε, φιλεισθων, ἐφιλουμην, ἐφιλου, ἐφιλειτο, ἐφιλουμεθα, νικης, νικῃ, νικην, νικαι,
νικων, νικαις, νικας, χειρος, χειρι, χειρα, χειρες, χειρων, χερσι, χειρας, χωρας (gen.),
χωρᾳ, χωραν, χωραι, χωρων, χωραις, χωρας (acc.), παιδευθεντος, παιδευθεντα,
παιδευθεντες, παιδευθεντων, παιδευθεισι, παιδευθεντας, παιδευθεισα, παιδευθεισης,
παιδευθεισῃ, παιδευθεισαν, παιδευθεισαι, παιδευθεισων, παιδευθεισαις, παιδευ-
θεισας, παιδευθεν, παιδευσαμενου, παιδευσαμενον, παιδευσαμενοι, παιδευσαμενων
(masc.), παιδευσαμενοις, παιδευσαμενη, παιδευσαμεναι, παιδευσαμενων (fem.),
παιδευσαμενας, παιδευσαμενα, μαντεως, μαντει, μαντιν, μαντεις, μαντεων, μαντεσι.

2. Work out from the rules the natural accents of the following:
γλωττα, μουσα, ἁμαξα, δοξα, ἁμιλλα, λεαινα, τραπεζα, ξιφος (neut., short ι), τειχος
(neut.), ἐτος (neut.), εὐρος (neut.), γηρας (neut.), κρεας (neut.).

3. Indicate whether the α in the final syllable of these first-declension words is long or short:
ὥρα, σκιά, μοῖρα, πρῶρα, τόλμα, μυῖα, βασιλεία, ψάλτρια, νεανίας, ταμίας, ἐλευθέρα, αἰσχρά, δικαία.

Exercise C (enclitics)

Given the basic accents καλός, δένδρον, μικρός, ζῷον, λέων, μάχη (short α), *νῆσος*, put the correct accents on the following phrases:
καλος τις, καλοι τινες, καλου τινος, καλων τινων, καλαις τισι, δενδρον τι, δενδρα τινα, δενδρων τινων, δενδρῳ τινι, δενδροις τε, μικροι τινες, μικρος τε και, μικρα γε ἐστι, μικρων τινων ποτε, ζῳου τινος, ζῳων τι, ζῳα τινα, ζῳων τινων, ζῳοις τε τισι, λεον-τος τινος, λεοντων τινων, λεοντα γε, μαχη τις, μαχαι τινες, μαχων τινων, μαχαις τισι, μαχης γε, μαχης τινος, νησοι τινες, νησων τινων, νησον τε ποτε ἐστι, παιδευομαι τε, παιδευομεν γε ποτε, ἐπαιδευε τις ποτε, ἐπαιδευον τινα, παιδευετε τινας γε ποτε, παιδευει τινας, παιδευω γε, παιδευοι τινας, παιδευσετε τινα, παιδευσομεν γε τινα.

Exercise D (proclitics)

Put the correct accents on the following phrases:
εἰ τις ποτε παιδευοι, αἱ γε καλαι, εἰ τι οὐκ ἐχεις, ὁ γε αἰξ καλος ἐστι, ἡ γε κακη ἐστι, ἐκ τε δενδρων.

I | Articles

....
Recommended syntax reading: Smyth §1021–9, 1099–1153
....

The Greek definite article is one of the key structural elements of the language; although it is very often used to express the same thing as English "the," it also has several important grammatical functions, some of which will not become apparent until the next chapter.

A) The article is attached to nouns to indicate definiteness. Greek authors normally use the article for this purpose wherever one would use "the" in English;[1] where English would have the indefinite article "a/an," Greek has no article (or sometimes enclitic τις).

ὁ ἵππος τὰ βιβλία ἐσθίει.	The horse is eating the books.
ἵππος βιβλία ἐσθίει.	A horse is eating books.
ἵππος τις τὰ βιβλία ἐσθίει.	Some horse is eating the books. / A horse is eating the books.

Sometimes, however, an article is used with a noun that would not take one in English.

1) The article is used with plurals that refer to **whole classes**, though not with ones that refer to only some members of the class. It is also used when a singular noun stands for a whole class.[2]

οἱ Ἕλληνες θνητοί.	Greeks (i.e. Greeks in general) are mortal.
οἱ Ἕλληνες ἔφυγον.	The Greeks (i.e. those particular Greeks) fled.
Ἕλληνες τὸν χρυσὸν ἔκλεψαν.	Greeks (i.e. some Greeks) stole the gold.
ὁ ἄνθρωπος θνητός.	Man (i.e. humans in general) is mortal.

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[1] The two exceptions are the special words mentioned in A5, which take an article in English but not in Greek, and the English adverbial "the" with comparatives ("all the better"; "the more the merrier"; "so much the worse"); this "the" is etymologically a different word from the definite article and should never be translated with a Greek article.

[2] There is a similar usage in English, e.g. "The dodo is extinct" or "He plays the violin."

2) **Names** of people[3] or places that the reader is expected to recognize, either from previous mention in the same text or because they are well known, often take the article, though often they do not.[4]

ὑπὸ τοῦ Σωκράτους ἐπαιδεύθη.	He was educated by Socrates.
ἡ Ἑλλὰς καλή.	Greece is beautiful.
Πολύιππος μὲν ἔφυγε, Μόνιππος δὲ οὔ·[5]	Polyippus fled but Monippus did not,
ὁ γὰρ Πολύιππος αἰσχρός ἐστιν.	for Polyippus is shameful.

3) The article is generally used with **abstract nouns** in making generalizations.

ἡ ἀρετή	excellence
ἡ ἐλευθερία	freedom
ἡ εἰρήνη ἀγαθή	peace is good
but	
ἐν εἰρήνῃ ἐζῶντο	they lived in peace

4) The article is regularly used to indicate unemphatic **possession**, where English would have "my," "your," "his," etc. This only works when the possession is inferable from context; usually this means that the possessor is mentioned in the sentence (or the preceding sentence) and the noun modified by the article has a meaning that indicates some type of relationship (kinship, friendship, superiority, subservience, familiarity, etc.).

ἐπαίδευσε τὸν ἀδελφόν.	He educated his brother.
ὁ δοῦλος ἔφερε τὸν δεσπότην.	The slave was carrying his master.

5) But Greek does not use the article with a few idiosyncratic words that, because they refer to something unique and well known, are considered to be already definite in themselves.

ἐν ἀγορᾷ	in the marketplace
βασιλεύς	the Persian king (as opposed to ὁ βασιλεύς, the king of a Greek state)

> **Preliminary exercise 1 (on A).** Indicate whether or not articles would be used in Greek with the underlined words, and why.
>
> a. Freedom is precious to everyone.
> b. The traders in the marketplace often have their sons with them.

[3] The article can also be used with any person's name, whether or not it would be recognized, as part of an identification formula. Such formulae normally put the article after the noun, followed by an identifier such as a demotic or the genitive of the father's name: Πολέμαρχος ὁ Κεφάλου "Polemarchus, son of Cephalus."

[4] There is much debate about the criteria that determine its use and absence.

[5] Note that οὐ is accented when it is the last word in a sentence: οὔ.

c.   Thieves took the gold from the temple.
d.   Thieves are antisocial and should be severely punished.
e.   Thieves are heading for the marketplace right now.
f.   Humility was not an important virtue for the Greeks.
g.   I need to find my sister.
h.   Themistocles talked directly to the Persian king.
i.   Yesterday we saw two brothers feeding the pigeons.
j.   Yesterday we saw our brothers feeding pigeons.
k.   Brothers share a special kind of love.
l.   Three brothers were involved in the robbery.
m.   Love is a transfiguring emotion.
n.   The Athenians did not appreciate Socrates.

B) Substantivization. The primary function of an article attached to something other than a noun is to create a noun.

1) Any **adjective** (or participle: see chapter v) can be turned into a noun by adding an article, and these substantivized adjectives are usually considered to have an understood noun "man," "men," "woman," "women," "thing," or "things," according to their gender and number.[6] If the context makes it clear, however, another noun can be understood.

οἱ ἀγαθοὶ εὖ βουλεύονται.	The good deliberate well. / Good men deliberate well. / The good men are deliberating well.
τὴν κακὴν οὐ φιλῶ.	I do not like the bad woman.
οὐκ ἐθέλω τὰ αἰσχρὰ μανθάνειν.	I do not wish to learn (the) shameful things.
ὁ μὲν ἀγαθὸς ποιητὴς ἥκει, ὁ δὲ κακὸς οὔ.	The good poet has come, but not the bad one.

The neuter singular of a substantivized adjective can be used as an abstract noun.

τὸ δίκαιον	justice

2) The **articular infinitive** is the closest Greek equivalent of the English gerund (verbal noun in -ing). The infinitive is preceded by a neuter singular article.

τὸ νικᾶν καλόν.	Winning is good. / It is good to win.
τῷ φεύγειν οὐ μαθήσεσθε.	You will not learn by fleeing.

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[6] There is an English parallel for this usage in phrases like "from the sublime to the ridiculous" or "Only the brave deserve the fair."