

A Grammar, Vocabularies and Exercises for Sections One–Twenty

Introduction

Alphabet and pronunciation

THE ALPHABET

A	α	(alpha) pronounced 'cup' or 'calm'
B	β	(beta) pronounced 'b' as in English
Γ	γ	(gamma) a hard 'g', like 'got'
Δ	δ	(delta) a clean* 'd', like 'dot'
E	ε	(epsilon) short 'e' like 'pet'
Z	ζ	(zeta) like 'wisdom'
H	η	(eta) pronounced as in 'hair'
Θ	θ	(theta) – blow a hard* 't' ('tare')
I	ι	(iota) like 'bin' or like 'bead'
K	κ	(kappa) a clean* 'k' like 'skin'
Λ	λ	(lambda) like 'lock'
M	μ	(mu) like 'mock'
N	ν	(nu) like 'net'
Ξ	ξ	(xi) like 'box'
O	ο	(omicron) a short 'o', like 'pot'
Π	π	(pi) a clean* 'p', like 'spot'
P	ρ	(rho) a rolled 'r', like 'rrat'
Σ	σ ς	(sigma) a soft 's', like 'sing'
T	τ	(tau) a clean 't', like 'sting'
Υ	υ	(upsilon) French 'lune' or German 'Müller'
Φ	φ	(phi) – blow a hard* 'p', like 'pool'
X	χ	(khi) – blow a hard* 'c', like 'cool'
Ψ	ψ	(psi) as in 'lapse'
Ω	ω	(omega) like 'saw'

* 'Clean' indicates no 'h' sound; 'blow hard' indicates plenty of 'h' aspiration (e.g. φ as in 'top-hole').

Diphthongs

- αι as in 'high'
- αυ as in 'how'
- οι as in 'boy'
- υι as in French 'huit'

Digraphs

ει (*fiancé*) and ου (*boo*) are single sounds
 εὐ- pronounce both elements *separately*

Double-consonants

γγ as in 'finger'; γ is sounded as *ng* in γκ, γχ, γξ, and γμ.
 ττ as 'rat-trap', λλ as 'wholly', should be dwelt on.

Sigma and iota subscript

Observe that ζ is used at the *end* of words, while σ is used elsewhere (e.g. στασις, 'revolt'). Sometimes ι is printed *underneath* a preceding α (α), η (η) and ω (ω), when it is called 'iota subscript' (Latin, 'written under'). It is always written 'adscript' in capitals, e.g. τίμηι → TIMHI.

Breathings

■ 'Rough' breathing

All words that begin with a vowel have a breathing. ' above a lower-case vowel, or in front of a capital, indicates the *presence* of an 'h' sound, e.g. ὄρος = *horos* ('marker'), ὀπλιτης = *hoplitēs* ('hoplite'), Ἑλλας = *Hellas* ('Greece').

■ 'Smooth' breathing

' above a lower-case vowel, or in front of a capital, indicates the *absence* of 'h' sound, e.g. ὄρος = *oros* ('mountain'), ἄτομος = *atomos* ('atom').

■ Diphthongs

Note that, on a diphthong and digraph, the breathing comes on the *second* vowel, e.g. Αἰσχυλος, Aeschylus.

Punctuation

Greek uses ; for a question-mark (?) and · for a colon (:) or semi-colon (;). Otherwise, punctuation is as in English.

Vowel-length

Diphthongs and the vowels η and ω are always pronounced long; ο and ε are always pronounced short. A macron is used to indicate where α, ι, υ are pronounced long (ᾱ, ī, ū) in learning vocabularies, total vocabularies and tables in the *Grammar*. A vowel with a circumflex accent ~ or iota subscript ι̣ is long, needing no macron to mark it.

* Further information on the whole subject of alphabet and pronunciation is given in the *Reference Grammar*.

Transliteration

Most Greek letters convert simply into English, e.g. β and τ become 'b' and 't'.

But some are not so obvious. Note in particular:

ζ = *sd or z*

γγ = *ng*

η = *e*

θ = *th*

κ = *c or k*

-ον = *-um or -on*

-ος = *-us or -os*

υ = *y or u*

χ = *ch or kh*

ψ = *ps*

EXERCISES

1. Write the following Greek words (which you will meet in Section 1) in their English form:*

Βυζάντιον	Παρθενών
Δικαιόπολις	Χίος
Εύβοια	ἄκρόπολις
Ζηνόθεμις	ἐμπόριον
Ἡγέστρατος	

* You will see these words have accents. They are explained at **343, 344–8**.

2. Write the following English words in their Greek form:
- for a word that *begins* with a vowel, mark the 'smooth' breathing *over the vowel*, e.g. *ē*lectron = ἤλεκτρον
 - for a word that begins with an 'h', write the vowel which follows 'h' and then mark the *rough* breathing *over it*. Thus *historia* = ἱστορία.
 - diphthongs place the breathing over the *second* vowel, e.g. *eugenēs* = εὐγενής.

drama, panthēr, crocus, geranium, hippopotamus, ibis, asbestos, charactēr, scēnē, Periclēs, Sophoclēś, Euripidēs, *Hippocratēs, comma, cōlon, Sōcratēs, Zeus, Artemis, *Hēraclēs, asthma, dyspepsia, cinēma, orchēstra, mēlon, iris.

* With English *capital* 'H', write the vowel which follows the H as a capital, and put the 'rough' breathing *before* it, e.g. Homēros, Ὅμηρος (Homer).

Grammatical introduction

This section introduces some basic terms of grammar for you when translating from Greek into English. The grammar of a language explains simply how it works, and it does this by using various technical terms, the most important of which are introduced below.

Those who are familiar with these terms (e.g. because they have already studied Latin) should nevertheless read **6–7** for its introduction to some basic principles of Greek.

BASIC TERMS

Below you will find some of the basic technical terms of grammar.

Noun

‘The woman persuades the man.’

1. In this sentence ‘woman’ and ‘man’ are NOUNS. Nouns name things or people, e.g. potato, telephone, Chloe, honesty, courage. Cf. ‘The dog pursues Charlotte.’

Gender

2. Gender is a grammatical term and has nothing to do with males and females. Nouns come in three ‘genders’ in Greek – MASCULINE, FEMININE and NEUTER. Compare French or Spanish, which have two genders, masculine and feminine: ‘le soleil’ and ‘el sol’ [‘the sun’ in French and Spanish] are MASCULINE, but ‘la lune’ and ‘la luna’ [‘the moon’] are FEMININE. The gender of a noun in a given language DOES NOT CHANGE. So ‘the moon’ is ALWAYS feminine in Spanish and French.

Verb and clause

‘The woman persuades the man.’

3. (a) The word ‘persuades’ is a VERB. Verbs are usually ‘action-words’ – bring, win, walk, complain: ‘I *bring*’, ‘you *win*’, ‘they *complain*’. They can also express a state: ‘she *is*’, ‘he *remains*’. The verb tells us what is being done or happening in a sentence: ‘The dog pursues Charlotte.’ All the verbs quoted here are FINITE verbs. This means they have a person (‘I’, ‘he’ etc.), a TENSE (all referring to present time in the examples given) and a MOOD (here ‘indicative’: they indicate something is the case. See p.369(iv)).
- (b) Sentences often contain numbers of CLAUSES. Each clause has a FINITE verb in it, e.g. ‘When Chloe left, although she forgot her glasses, she did not return to pick them up.’ The finite verbs here are ‘left’, ‘forgot’, ‘return’ – but not ‘pick’.

- (c) We define these clauses in relation to each other. 'SUBORDINATE' clauses are introduced by words like 'when', 'although', 'so that', 'if', 'because', 'since' and so on. When you have removed all the subordinating clauses, you are left with the MAIN CLAUSE and the MAIN VERB (or verbs). In the example in (b), 'return' is the main verb.

Definite article

'The woman persuades the man.'

4. 'The' is what is known as the DEFINITE ARTICLE in English. As we shall see when we meet the definite article (def. art.) in Greek in the grammar for Section 1 A–B, it plays an extremely important role in translation from Greek into English.

Subject and object

'The woman persuades the man.'

5. The SUBJECT of the sentence above is 'the woman' – the woman is doing the persuading. The subject, in grammar, is the person or thing doing the action of the verb. This is very important. The subject is NOT what the sentence is about, but is the person or thing performing the verb: 'I bring the potatoes,' 'She wins the cup,' 'The dog pursues Charlotte.'

The OBJECT of the sentence above is 'the man' – the woman is persuading the man. The object is the person or thing on the receiving end of the verb. Examples: 'You bite the apple,' 'Toby likes sport,' 'The dog pursues Charlotte.'

WORD SHAPE AND WORD ORDER

6. One of the most important differences between Greek and English is that in English it is the *order* of the words which tells you what a sentence means, but in Greek it is the changing *shape* of the words. For example, in English the following two sentences mean very different things:

'The woman persuades the man.'

'The man persuades the woman.'

The difference in meaning between these two sentences lies in the *word order*. This tells you who or what is doing the persuading. In the first 'the woman' comes before 'persuades' and this tells you the woman is persuading. In the second 'the man' comes before 'persuades' and so it is the man who is persuading.

Now read the following two sentences in Greek:

ἡ	γυνή	πειθεί	τὸν	ἄνθρωπον.
The woman	persuades	the	man.	

τὴν γυναῖκα πείθει ὁ ἄνθρωπος
 | | | | |
 ‘The woman persuades the man.’

Both sentences have the same word order in Greek: woman – persuades – man. But the *meaning* is quite different: the first means ‘The woman persuades the man,’ but the second, despite the order of the words, in fact means ‘The man persuades the woman’. What is going on? How can we tell which is which?

- In Greek it is the *shape of the words* which tells you what job any word is doing and therefore what a sentence as a whole means – in this case, who is persuading whom. The changes to words in Greek usually (but not always) come at the *end* of words.

Now look at the changes of *word shape* in the two sentences given above.

You will observe that ἡ γυνή contrasts with τὴν γυναῖκα, and τὸν ἄνθρωπον with ὁ ἄνθρωπος. The reason is as follows:

- In the first sentence ‘the woman’ is the *subject* (the woman is doing the persuading) and the Greek form for ‘the woman-as-subject’ is ἡ γυνή.
- In the second, she is the *object* (she is on the receiving end of the persuasion) and the Greek form for that is τὴν γυναῖκα (now you know where ‘gynaecology’ comes from).
- In the same way, ‘the man’ is the subject in the second sentence and the Greek form is ὁ ἄνθρωπος;
- but when he is the object in the first sentence, the Greek is τὸν ἄνθρωπον.
- Notice also how the def. art. changes as well: it is ὁ (masculine) or ἡ (feminine) when its noun is the *subject*, but τὸν (masculine) or τὴν (feminine) when its noun is the *object*.

► **RULE:** pay close attention at all times to the changes in word shape in Greek. There are also examples of changing word shapes in English, usually left-overs from an earlier period. For example:

- ‘I’, ‘he’ and ‘she’ are the *subject shapes* of the sentence;
- ‘me’, ‘him’ and ‘her’ the shapes for the object and everything else.
- So ‘There is a dispute between me, him and her’, not ‘between I, he and she’.

CASE: SUBJECT AND OBJECT

7. Look at the following sentences in English (and note that, while in English we say ‘Hegestratos’, in Greek it is common to say ‘*the* Hegestratos’):

‘[The] Hegestratos sees [the] Sdenothemis.’

‘[The] Sdenothemis chases the sailors.’

‘The woman persuades [the] Hegestratos.’

What are the SUBJECTS in each of these sentences? What are the OBJECTS?
 Now examine the same sentences in Greek:

ὁ Ἡγέστρατος ὀρᾷ τὸν Ζηνόθεμιν.

ὁ Ζηνόθεμις δῶκει τοὺς ναύτας.

ἡ γυνὴ πείθει τὸν Ἡγέστρατον.

What are the differences between the Greek for '[the] Hegestratos' when Hegestratos is SUBJECT and when he is OBJECT? What form would '[the] Zenothemis' have if he were the SUBJECT?

Case

The grammatical term for these different word shapes is CASE. Nouns in Greek have a different shape, a different CASE, according to whether they are subject or object in a sentence.

We have already met several examples of different cases in Greek:

ἡ γυνή		πείθει	τὸν ἄνθρωπον.
‘The woman (subject)		persuades	the man (object).’
τὴν γυναῖκα		πείθει	ὁ ἄνθρωπος
‘The woman (object)		persuades	the man (subject).’

The cases in Greek have different names:

The case of the subject is the NOMINATIVE case.

The case of the object is the ACCUSATIVE case.

ἡ γυνή is the nominative of ‘the woman’ in Greek, and τὴν γυναῖκα is the accusative. ‘The woman’ has the shape ἡ γυνή, the nominative case, when it is the subject of a sentence (e.g. when the woman persuades someone), but when ‘the woman’ is the object of a sentence (e.g. when someone persuades the woman), it has the shape τὴν γυναῖκα, the accusative.

Other cases and word shapes of verbs will be explained later.

Grammar for Section 1A–B

In this section you cover:

- The definite article 'the', ὁ ἢ τό
- The principle of 'agreement'
- Adjectives like καλός καλή καλόν
- The vocative case

VOCABULARY CHECK

Ensure you know the meaning of:

ἄρα	ἔπειτα	τίς;
δέ	καί	ᾧ
δεῦρο	σύ	
ἐγώ	τε . . . καί	

VOCABULARY NEEDED FOR 9 (p.9)

βαίνω I go	ἔστιν is	ὁ ῥαψωδός the rhapsode
βαίνει he/she/it goes	ὁ ἢ τό the	τὸν ῥαψωδόν the rhapsode
ἐν Βυζαντίῳ in Byzantium	ὁ ναύτης the sailor	
ἡ γῆ the land	οἱ ναῦται the sailors	
τὴν γῆν the land	ὁρῶσι [they] see	
	τὸ πλοῖον the ship	

'DECLENSION' OF THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

8. We have met several examples of the def. art. in Greek, which corresponds to 'the' in English: τὸ πλοῖον, 'the ship', ὁ κυβερνήτης, 'the helmsman', οἱ ναῦται, 'the sailors'. Here is the def. art. set out in the traditional pattern common to all adjectives and nouns (called a 'declension'), showing how def. art. 'declines':

The definite article ὁ, ἡ, τό, 'the'

	<i>Singular</i>		
	<i>m.</i>	<i>f.</i>	<i>n.</i>
<i>Nominative</i>	ὁ	ἡ	τό
<i>Accusative</i>	τόν	τήν	τό
<i>Genitive</i>	τοῦ	τῆς	τοῦ
<i>Dative</i>	τῷ	τῇ	τῷ

The definite article ὁ, ἡ, τό, 'the' (continued)

	Plural		
	<i>m.</i>	<i>f.</i>	<i>n.</i>
<i>Nominative</i>	οἱ	αἱ	τά
<i>Accusative</i>	τούς	τάς	τά
<i>Genitive</i>	τῶν	τῶν	τῶν
<i>Dative</i>	τοῖς	ταῖς	τοῖς

You have already met the nominative and accusative cases. We shall be concentrating on these for the moment. But you can see that there are two other cases, the genitive (often meaning 'of') and dative (often meaning 'to', 'for' or 'by').

- **It is essential that you learn all these forms now.** Their functions will be fully discussed later. The cases will often be referred to in their shortened forms as nom., acc., gen. and dat.

The principle of agreement

9. Translate the following sentences:

ὁ ραψωδὸς βαίνει.

τὸ πλοῖον ἐστὶν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ.

οἱ ναῦται ὀρώσι τὴν γῆν καὶ τὸν ραψωδόν.

What marks the SUBJECT in each of them? What marks the OBJECT (note there is no object in the first two sentences)? The reason the article is ὁ when 'the rhapsode' is the SUBJECT and τόν when 'the rhapsode' is the OBJECT is that the article changes to AGREE with the noun with which it is linked. That is to say, it changes form according to:

- the GENDER of its noun (i.e. whether the noun is masculine, feminine or neuter – remember the GENDER of a noun never changes),
- the CASE its noun is in (e.g. nom. if it is the subject),
- and the NUMBER of the noun (i.e. whether it is SINGULAR or PLURAL).

If the noun with which the article is linked is MASCULINE, NOM., and SINGULAR, the article will *also* be MASCULINE, NOM., and SINGULAR. This is what we mean by saying the article is 'agreeing' with its noun. So:

ἡ γυνὴ πείθει τὸν ἄνθρωπον. ('The woman persuades the man.')

‘The woman’ = ἡ γυνή when ‘the woman’ is the subject, because ἡ γυνή is FEMININE, NOM., SINGULAR. What would be the form of the def. art. if ‘the woman’ were the *object*?

ἄρα ἀκούεις καὶ σὺ τὸν ψόφον; (‘Do you also hear the noise?’)

‘The noise’ = τὸν ψόφον when ‘the noise’ is the object, because ψόφον is MASCULINE, ACC., SINGULAR. What would be the form of the def. art. if ‘the noise’ were the *subject*?

οἱ ναῦται εἰσβαίνουσιν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον. (‘The sailors go onto the ship.’)

‘The sailors’ = οἱ ναῦται when ‘the sailors’ are the subject, because ναῦται is MASCULINE, NOM., PLURAL. What would the form of the def. art. be if ‘the sailors’ were the *object*?

ποῦ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀκρόπολις; (‘Where is the Acropolis?’)

‘The Acropolis’ = ἡ ἀκρόπολις when ‘the Acropolis’ is the subject, because ἀκρόπολις is FEMININE, NOM., SINGULAR. What would the form of the def. art. be if ‘the Acropolis’ were the *object*?

The def. art. is your *anchor* in the sentence:

- ▶ See οἱ, and you know the noun it goes with is subject, plural, masculine.
- ▶ See τὸν, and you know the noun it goes with is object, singular, masculine, and so on.
- ▶ So even if you do not know how the NOUN changes, the def. art. will tell you exactly the function in the sentence of the noun it agrees with.

See how useful the def. art. is by doing the following examples. You have not yet met or learned any of the nouns involved, though you can have a guess at their meaning. But you can tell a great deal about them by the preceding def. art. So, using each word’s def. art. as your guide to the answer, write down the GENDER, CASE, and NUMBER (where possible) of each:

τὴν πόλιν (cf. ‘political’)	τῆς δημοκρατίας
τὸν βασιλέα (cf. ‘basil’, king of herbs)	τῷ Ὁμήρῳ
οἱ γέροντες (cf. ‘gerontologist’)	τῶν ἀτόμων
τὰς τριήρεις (cf. ‘trireme’)	ταῖς τέχναις

Would τὴν πόλιν be SUBJECT or OBJECT in a sentence?

What about οἱ γέροντες?

The def. art. tells you this even if you have learnt nothing at all about the noun or the ways it changes.

- ▶ **RULE:** always PAY THE CLOSEST ATTENTION to the def. art.: it will tell you immediately the function of the noun to which it is