

Modern Greek, Beginners I

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Handout 4

Nouns

- Nouns are those parts of language that mean a person, an object, an abstract entity etc. (like teacher, book, freedom). In Greek nouns do not always have the same endings. The endings vary according to the noun's GENDER, its CASE, and its NUMBER.
- The GENDER of Greek nouns is assigned arbitrarily. Some nouns are Masculine, some are Feminine, and some are Neuter. Each GENDER has different endings, but the key way to distinguish them is by the form of the Greek word for 'the' or the word for 'a'.

	Masc	Fem	Neut
the	ο	η	το
a	ένας	μία	ένα

- The CASE of Greek nouns changes according to the word's function in the sentence. When the noun is the subject of the sentence its CASE is NOMINATIVE. When the noun is the object of the sentence its CASE is ACCUSATIVE. When the noun possesses something its CASE is GENITIVE. Finally, when the noun is called, its case is VOCATIVE.
- In English nouns don't show any changes because of case. But we do have different forms in the form of the word 'I'. Consider the following examples:
- I saw Jim. Jim saw me. My book

I, me and my are all different forms of the same word functioning in different circumstances. The same applies in Greek. Focus on the underlined words.

Ο ταχυδρόμος ήρθε

The mailman came NOMINATIVE

Είδα τον ταχυδρόμο

I saw the mailman ACCUSATIVE

Η τσάντα του ταχυδρόμου

The bag of the mailman GENITIVE

Ταχυδρόμε έλα εδώ

Mailman, come here VOCATIVE

- By NUMBER we mean whether there is one of what the noun means (SINGULAR) or more (PLURAL). Above all the cases are in the singular but there are also different forms for the plural.

NOTE: When putting together Greek sentences you have to make sure that the different forms that you use together have the same GENDER, NUMBER and CASE.

Saying Ο ταχυδρόμο is a very serious mistake.

- MOST COMMON TYPES OF NOUNS

The following words show the most common endings for Greek nouns of all three genders

Masculine	ο	φίλος friend (male) πατέρας father μαθητής student	ος ας ής
Feminine	η	φίλη friend (female) μητέρα mother	η α
Neuter	το	παιδί child δώρο gift μάθημα lesson	ι ο μα

Idioms of the day

Θα ήθελα ... παρακαλώ I would like ... please	Δεν πειράζει It doesn't matter.
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