

CHAPTER 1: THE ALPHABET

| | | | |
|---------|-------|----------|---------------------------------|
| alpha | A α | ἄλφα | ä as in father |
| beta | B β | βῆτα | b as in bit |
| gamma | Γ γ | γάμμα | g as in get |
| delta | Δ δ | δέλτα | d as in den |
| epsilon | E ε | ἒ ψιλόν | ě as in get |
| zeta | Z ζ | ζῆτα | dz as in gadzooks |
| eta | H η | ἦτα | ā as in lake |
| theta | Θ θ | θῆτα | th as in thought |
| iota | I ι | ἰῶτα | ĩ as in bit, or ē as in machine |
| kappa | K κ | κάππα | k as in kit |
| lambda | Λ λ | λάμβδα | l as in lit |
| mu | M μ | μῦ | m as in meet |
| nu | N ν | νῦ | n as in neat |
| xi | Ξ ξ | ξῖ | ks = x as in taxi |
| omicron | O ο | ὀ μικρόν | ô as in off |
| pi | Π π | πῖ | p as in pen |
| rho | Ρ ρ | ῥῶ | slightly rolled r |
| sigma | Σ σ ς | σίγμα | s as in set |
| tau | T τ | ταῦ | t as in ten |
| upsilon | Υ υ | ῦ ψιλόν | ū as in duty or û as in put |
| phi | Φ φ | φῖ | ph = f as in phone |
| chi | Χ χ | χῖ | ch = kh as in Loch Ness |
| psi | Ψ ψ | ψῖ | ps as in flaps |
| omega | Ω ω | ὦ μέγα | ō as in total |

SAMPLE VOCABULARY

| | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| ἄθλητής | ä thlā tās | = athlete |
| βιβλίον | bī blē ôn | = book |
| γεωγραφία | gě ō grā fē ä | = geography |
| δημοκρατία | dā mō krā tē ä | = democracy |
| ἐγώ | ě gō | = I |
| ζῶον | dzō ôn | = living creature |
| ἤλεκτρον | ā lěk trôn | = amber (cf. electron) |
| θεός | thě ôs | = god |
| ἰδέα | ī dē ä | = form; appearance; notion |
| καλός | kā lôs | = beautiful |
| λόγος | lô gôs | = word |
| μελωδία | mě lō dē ä | = melody |
| νέον | ně ôn | = new thing |
| ξύλον | xū lôn | = piece of wood |
| Ὀλυμπία | ô lūm pē ä | = Olympia |
| ποιητής | poi ā tās | = poet |
| ῥυθμός | rhūth mōs | = rhythm |
| σύνταξις | sūn tā ksīs | = syntax |
| τέχνη | tě khnā | = technical skill |
| ῥυθμός | hū mnôs | = hymn, song |
| φωνή | fō nā | = voice, sound |
| χαρακτήρ | khā rā ktār | = character |
| ψυχή | psū khā | = soul |
| ὦ | ō | = oh... (calling someone) |

VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

Vowels are letters that represent sounds made with the unobstructed breath. There are seven vowels in the Greek alphabet: $\alpha, \varepsilon, \eta, \iota, \omicron, \upsilon, \omega$.

The consonants represent sounds made with the lips, teeth, nose, or throat. There are seventeen consonants in the Greek alphabet: $\beta, \gamma, \delta, \zeta, \theta, \kappa, \lambda, \mu, \nu, \xi, \pi, \rho, \sigma, \tau, \phi, \chi, \psi$. The labial sounds, those made with the lips, are represented by $\beta, \pi,$ and ϕ . The dental sounds, those made by the teeth, are represented by the letters $\delta, \theta, \sigma,$ and τ . The liquid sounds, made with the nose, are represented by $\lambda, \mu, \nu,$ and ρ . The glottal sounds, made in the throat, are represented by the letters $\gamma, \kappa,$ and χ . There are also three letters that represent combinations of consonant sounds: ζ, ξ and ψ . ζ represents the combination represented by d and z in English. ξ is the combination of κ and σ : ψ is the combination of π and σ .

SMOOTH AND ROUGH BREATHING MARKS

Any word beginning with a vowel must have a breathing mark over that vowel. (When the initial vowel is capitalized, the breathing mark is written just before it.) There are two types of breathing marks: smooth breathing marks and rough breathing marks. A smooth breathing mark, ´ , shows that the vowel sound is the first sound of the word. A rough breathing mark, ῀ , represents the sound of h before the vowel. A rough breathing mark appears also over the letter ρ at the beginning of a word.

SYLLABIFICATION AND ACCENTUATION

A syllable is a sound consisting of a vowel and the consonant or consonants pronounced together as one unit with the vowel. A word pronounced with one syllable is called monosyllabic. A word with more than one syllable is called polysyllabic. A word with two syllables is called bisyllabic, and a word with three syllables is called trisyllabic. Many words have more than three syllables, but there are no special names for them.

A consonant or group of consonants at the beginning of a word belongs with the first vowel of the word. If a word begins with a vowel, the first syllable begins with that vowel. A single consonant standing between two vowels belongs with the second vowel. A pair of consonants between two vowels are usually divided between the two syllables, unless the two consonants represent a consonant blend. Consonant blends include βλ, βρ; γλ, γν, γρ; δμ, δν; θλ, θν, θρ; κλ, κν, κρ, κτ; μν; πλ, πν, πρ, πτ; σθ, σκ, σμ, σπ, στ; τλ, τμ, τρ; φθ, φλ, φρ; χθ, χλ, χν, and χρ. A consonant at the end of a word belongs with the last syllable.

There are special names for the last three syllables of a word:

1. the last syllable of a word is called the ultima
2. the second to last syllable is called the penult
3. the third to last syllable is called the antepenult.

If a word has only one syllable, it is considered the ultima.

Almost every word has an accent mark on one of its syllables. There are three types of accent: acute, ´, grave, ` , and circumflex, ~ . An acute accent represents a rise in the vocal pitch; a grave accent represents a drop in vocal pitch, and a circumflex accent represents a waver in vocal pitch. The accent mark is written over the vowel of the syllable.

An acute accent can appear on the ultima, penult, or antepenult of a word. A grave accent can appear only on the ultima of a word. A circumflex accent can appear on the ultima or penult of a word.

There are five classifications of words, according to the type and position of their accents.

1. An oxytone word has an acute accent on the ultima.
2. A paroxytone word has an acute accent on the penult.
3. A proparoxytone word has an acute accent on the antepenult.
4. A perispomenon word has a circumflex accent on the ultima.
5. A properispomenon word has a circumflex accent on the penult.

There is no special name for a word with a grave accent. It is considered an oxytone word, but the acute accent on the ultima is turned to a grave accent when the word is followed by another word in a sentence (or letter name):

καλός beautiful

καλὸς ὕμνος beautiful hymn

CLASSIFICATION AND SYLLABIFICATION OF
THE NAMES OF THE LETTERS AND VOCABULARY

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| 1. Oxytone | ἀ·θλη·τής | ῥυθ·μός |
| | ἐ·γώ | φω·νή |
| ἔ ψιλόν | θε·ός | χα·ρα·κτήρ |
| ὀ μικρόν | κα·λός | ψυ·χή |
| ὕ ψιλόν | ποι·η·τής | |
| 2. Paroxytone | σί·γμα | ἰ·δέ·α |
| ἄλ·φα | ᾠ μέ·γα | με·λω·δί·α |
| γά·μμα | | νέ·ον |
| δέλ·τα | βι·βλί·ον | Ὀ·λυμ·πί·α |
| κάπ·πα | γε·ω·γρα·φί·α | τέ·χνη |
| λάμ·βδα | δη·μο·κρα·τί·α | ῥ·μνος |
| 3. Proparoxytone | ἦ·λεκ·τρον | σύν·τα·ξις |
| 4. Perispomenon | | |
| μῦ νῦ ξῖ πῖ ῥῶ ταῦ φῖ χῖ ψῖ ᾠ | | |
| 5. Properispomenon | | |
| βῆ·τα | ζῶ·ον | |
| ζῆ·τα | | |
| ἦ·τα | | |
| θῆ·τα | | |
| ἰῶ·τα | | |

DIPHTHONGS

Diphthongs represent the union of two vowels in one syllable. There are eight diphthongs in Ancient Greek. The first vowel can be α , ϵ , η , \omicron , or υ . The second vowel is always either ι or υ . When a word begins with a diphthong, the breathing mark goes over the second vowel.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---|---|---------------|
| $\alpha\iota$ | \bar{i} as in aisle | $\alpha\acute{\iota}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$ | $\bar{i} \bar{l}\bar{u} \bar{r}\bar{o}s$ | = cat |
| $\alpha\upsilon$ | ow as in cow | $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ | ow $\bar{t}\bar{o}s$ | = self |
| $\epsilon\iota$ | \bar{a} as in freight | $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\acute{\iota}$ | $\bar{a} \bar{m}\bar{e}$ | = I am |
| $\epsilon\upsilon$ | $\check{e}\bar{u}$ | $\epsilon\check{\upsilon}$ | $\check{e}\bar{u}$ | = well |
| $\eta\upsilon$ | $\bar{a}\bar{u}$ | $\eta\check{\upsilon}\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$ | $h\bar{a}\bar{u} \bar{r}\bar{a} \bar{k}\bar{a}$ | = Eureka |
| $\omicron\iota$ | oi as in toil | $\omicron\acute{\iota}\kappa\acute{\iota}\alpha$ | oi $\bar{k}\bar{e} \bar{a}$ | = house |
| $\omicron\upsilon$ | \bar{u} as in group | $\omicron\bar{\upsilon}\rho\alpha\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ | $\bar{u} \bar{r}\bar{a} \bar{n}\bar{o}s$ | = sky, heaven |
| $\upsilon\iota$ | $w\bar{e}$ | $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\acute{o}\varsigma$ | $hw\bar{e} \bar{o}s$ | = son |

1. Oxytone: $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\mu\acute{\iota}$, $\omicron\bar{\upsilon}\rho\alpha\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\upsilon\acute{\iota}\acute{o}\varsigma$
2. Paroxytone: $\omicron\acute{\iota}\kappa\acute{\iota}\alpha$
3. Proparoxytone: $\alpha\acute{\iota}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\rho\omicron\varsigma$, $\eta\check{\upsilon}\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$
4. Perispomenon: $\epsilon\check{\upsilon}$

IMPROPER DIPHTHONGS AND IOTA SUBSCRIPTS

When long α , η , or ω combine with ι , the iota does not affect the sound of the first vowel. This is called an **improper diphthong**. If the first vowel is capitalized, the iota is written after it; otherwise, the iota appears in the form of an **iota subscript** beneath the vowel: α , η , ω .

NAMES OF THE GODS

| | | |
|------------|----------|-------------|
| Zeus | Ζεύς | dzěūs |
| Hera | Ἥρα | hā rä |
| Poseidon | Ποσειδῶν | Pô sā dōn |
| Hades | Ἅιδης | hī dās |
| Demeter | Δημήτηρ | dā mā tār |
| Hestia | Ἑστία | hě stē ä |
| Aphrodite | Ἀφροδίτη | ä frô dē tā |
| Athena | Ἀθήνη | ä thā nā |
| Hephaestos | Ἥφαιστος | hā fī stōs |
| Ares | Ἄρης | ä rās |
| Apollo | Ἀπόλλων | ä pōl lōn |
| Artemis | Ἄρτεμις | är tě mīs |
| Dionysos | Διόνυσος | dī ô nū sōs |
| Hermes | Ἑρμῆς | hěr mās |

1. Oxytone: Ζεύς
2. Paroxytone: Ἥρα, Ἅιδης, Δημήτηρ, Ἑστία,
Ἀφροδίτη, Ἀθήνη, Ἄρης, Ἀπόλλων
3. Proparoxytone: Ἥφαιστος, Διόνυσος
4. Perispomenon: Ποσειδῶν, Ἑρμῆς