

CHAPTER 9: THE IMPERFECT TENSE

CONJUGATION	Verb stem + augment + personal endings	
	sing.	pl.
1	-ον	-ομεν
2	-ες	-ετε
3	-ε	-ον
	sing.	pl.
1	ἔλυον	ἐλύομεν
2	ἔλυες	ἐλύετε
3	ἔλυε	ἔλυον
	sing.	pl.
1	ἔγραφον	ἐγράφομεν
2	ἔγραφες	ἐγράφετε
3	ἔγραφε	ἔγραφον
	sing.	pl.
1	ἔσφζον	ἐσφζομεν
2	ἔσφζες	ἐσφζετε
3	ἔσφζε	ἔσφζον
	sing.	pl.
1	ἐδίωκον	ἐδιώκομεν
2	ἐδίωκες	ἐδιώκετε
3	ἐδίωκε	ἐδίωκον

The imperfect tense expresses continuous or habitual action in past time. It is translated *was doing*; for example, ἔλυον = I was releasing; ἔγραφον = I was writing. Notice that the one Greek verb is translated with a verb phrase in English. The verb εἶμι is not used to translate the imperfect tense of action verbs. The imperfect tense of εἶμι is translated *was, were*, but only to identify, describe, or locate the subject. In some contexts, particularly with the adverb πάλῳς = formerly, the imperfect tense expresses habitual action and will be translated *used to do*.

The imperfect tense of regular verbs is formed by adding an initial ε to the verb stem. This is called *augmentation*, and the letter ε is called the *augment*. When a stem beginning with a vowel is augmented, the initial vowel is lengthened. For example, α becomes η: the imperfect of ἀγρεύω is ἤγρευον. The imperfect of ὀπλίζω is ὤπλιζον.

The imperfect tense uses different endings than the present tense. Notice that the first person singular and third person plural forms of the imperfect tense are both -ov.

The endings of all forms have final syllables that are short. This means that all forms of the imperfect will have a short ultima. Therefore, the accent of all forms of the imperfect will be on the antepenult. Because the first and second person plural endings have two syllables, the accent will not fall on the same syllable in these forms as in the other forms. For all forms, however, the accent will be on the antepenult of the word.

When a verb form in the 3rd person singular, ending -ε, comes at the end of a sentence, the end of a clause, or before a word beginning with a vowel, the letter nu (movable nu) will be added.

The imperfect tense of εἰμί is irregular.

CONJUGATION OF εἰμί, IMPERFECT

	sing.	pl.
1.	ἦ/ἦν	ἦμεν
2.	ἦσθα	ἦτε
3.	ἦν	ἦσαν

The imperfect forms of εἰμί are **not** enclitic.

VOCABULARY: ADVERBS

πάρως	formerly, previously
τήμερον	today
χθές	yesterday

MORPHOLOGY EXERCISES

A. Translate the following verb forms.

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| 1. ἤγγρευες | 11. we were singing |
| 2. ἐπίεζε | 12. you (pl.) were dancing |
| 3. ἔσπενδον | 13. they were throwing |
| 4. ἔννευε | 14. I was throwing |
| 5. ἔτριβε | 15. he was stealing |
| 6. ἐδάπτομεν | 16. you (sing.) were molding |
| 7. ἐπράττετε | 17. I was dancing |
| 8. ἐφύλαττες | 18. you (pl.) were gathering |
| 9. ἐγράφομεν | 19. he was saving |
| 10. ἐτρέφετε | 20. we were arranging |

GREEK TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION

1. χθές ἔμελλον, τήμερον χορεύω.
2. ἐπιστολὰς τῇ δμῶῃ πάρος ἔπεμπον.
3. οἱ γεωργοὶ τὰς ἀμνάς εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐπόρευον.
4. ἦ νέος.
5. νέοι ἦμεν.
6. οἱ γεωργοὶ νέοι ἦσαν.
7. οἱ κακοεργοὶ τοὺς γεωργοὺς ἐπίεζον.
8. τοὺς γὰρ καρποὺς πάρος ἔκλεπτον.
9. ἡ δμῶῃ ἐν τῇ σκιᾷ ἐσχόλαζεν.
10. αἱ ἀμναὶ ἐδάπτον τὴν κριθήν.
11. ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ ἦσθα;
12. οὐδαμά. ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ ἦν.
13. ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ ἦτε;
14. ναί, ἐν τῇ αὐλῇ χθές ἦμεν.
15. ἐδιώκομεν τὰς ἀμνάς.

ENGLISH TO GREEK TRANSLATION

1. Were you (pl.) hunting rams?
2. Yes, we were hunting rams yesterday.
3. Formerly, the farmer used to hunt rams.
4. The townsmen were noble.
5. You (sing.) were noble.