

## Chapter 29

### The Imperfect Indicative Active Compound Verbs

**29.1** So far we have used verbs in the Present and the Future tenses. Now we come to one of the Past tenses of the verb - the **Imperfect**. The Imperfect is built upon the Present stem of the verb. It has the name "Imperfect" because it does not indicate that an action has been completed in the past. It is used to express "I was doing something" or "I used to do something" - over a period of time, or repeatedly, rather than just once.

Note that, particularly when conversations are reported, Greek may use the present, rather than a past tense. This is not bad Greek grammar - it is known as the "**Historical Present**", and is done on purpose, to make the action seem more immediate to the reader.

There is no Imperfect Subjunctive, Optative, Imperative, Infinitive, or Participle.

Besides the Imperfect, there are some other past tenses in Greek, which we will meet later, but most of them have several things in common.

1. A past tense usually has an **ε-** in front of the verb stem.  
This is called an "**augment**" (it is added to the stem, making it longer).  
The Augment is equivalent to the English "-ed" at the end of a verb - I walk, I walked.
2. Sets of personal endings are used, which are very similar to the endings we have already learned.

**29.2** The basic pattern for the **Imperfect Indicative Active** is

I	ἐ-STEM-οῦν	ἐ-STEM-ομεν	we
you (singular)	ἐ-STEM-εις	ἐ-STEM-ετε	y'all
he/she/it	ἐ-STEM-εν	ἐ-STEM-ον	they

For λέγω, this becomes

I was saying	ἐλεγον	ἐλεγομεν	we were saying
you were saying	ἐλεγες	ἐλεγετε	y'all were saying
he/she/it was saying	ἐλεγεν	ἐλεγον	they were saying

We already know the endings for the First and Second Persons Plural. The Second Person Singular is very similar to that for the Present tense. We only have two endings to learn and practice. Note that there is possible confusion between the First Person Singular and the Third Person Plural - they both end in **-OV**. A Greek sentence will usually resolve this problem by using a pronoun if the sense is not clear.

Chant the endings **-OV -εις -εν -ομεν -ετε -ον** until you know them by heart.

**Practice** - until you can read and translate easily

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. ὁ πρεσβυτερος ἐδιδασκεν τους μαθητας.            | The presbyter/elder was teaching the disciples.    |
| 2. οἱ ἅγιοι ἐδιδασκον τα τεκνα ;                    | Were the saints teaching the children?             |
| 3. ἐγω οὐκ ἐδιδασκον το παιδιον.                    | I was not teaching the child.                      |
| 4. ἐβλεπομεν τα προβατα.                            | We were looking at the sheep.                      |
| 5. ὑμεις οὐκ ἐβλεπετε τους δουλους.                 | You were not looking at the slaves.                |
| 6. συ ἐγραφες ἐπιστολας τοις ἁγιοις.                | You were writing letters to the saints.            |
| 7. τα παιδια ἐβαλλον λιθους<br>εἰς την θαλασσαν.    | The children were throwing stones<br>into the sea. |
| 8. οἱ Ῥωμαιοι ἐδιωκον τους ἀδελφους.                | The Romans were persecuting the brothers.          |
| 9. ὁ Ἰησους ἐθεραπευεν τους τυφλους.                | Jesus was healing the blind (men, people).         |
| 10. ἡ μητηρ αὐτου και ὁ πατηρ<br>ἐμενον ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ. | His mother and father<br>remained in the house.    |

### 29.3 Contract verbs follow the usual rules of contraction.

The moveable  $\nu$  on the third person singular drops off.

$\alpha + \epsilon = \alpha$     $\alpha + \omicron = \omega$     $\epsilon + \epsilon = \epsilon\iota$     $\epsilon + \omicron = \omicron\upsilon$     $\omicron + \epsilon = \omicron\upsilon$     $\omicron + \omicron = \omicron\upsilon$

	τιμαω - I honor	ποιεω - I do, act, make	σταυρωω - I crucify
I	ἐτιμων	ἐποιουν	ἐσταυρουν
you	ἐτιμας	ἐποιεις	ἐσταυρους
he/she/it	ἐτιμα	ἐποιει	ἐσταυρου
we	ἐτιμωμεν	ἐποιουμεν	ἐσταυρουμεν
y'all	ἐτιματε	ἐποιειτε	ἐσταυρουτε
they	ἐτιμων	ἐποιουν	ἐσταυρουν

**Practice** - until you can read and translate easily

- οἱ ὑποκριται ἐπλανων τον λαον. The hypocrites were leading the people astray.
- το δαιμονιον οὐκ ἐποιει τα καλα. The demon was not doing (the) good things.
- οἱ στρατιωται ἐσταυρουν τον Ἰησουν. The soldiers were crucifying Jesus.
- ἐποιειτε το ἐργον καλον ; Were you doing the good deed?
- ἐγω ἐτιμων τους διδασκαλους. I respected the teachers.
- οὗτος ἐτηρει τας ἐντολας. He (this one) was keeping the commandments.
- ἡμεις ἐζητουμεν την ἀληθειαν. We were seeking the truth.
- πας ἀνθρωπος ἐζητει τα ιδια. Each man was seeking his own (things).
- οἱ υἱοι ἐκαλουν τας ἀδελφας αυτων. The sons were calling their sisters.
- ἐκεινοι οἱ λησται οὐκ ἐτηρουν τον νομον. Those robbers were not keeping the law.

**29.4 If the verb stem begins with a vowel** - the augment and the vowel combine to give a long vowel. If the stem begins with a *iota* the augment is often omitted.

$\epsilon + \alpha = \eta$     $\epsilon + \epsilon = \eta$     $\epsilon + \omicron = \omega$     $\epsilon + \iota = \epsilon\iota$  or  $\upsilon$   
 $\epsilon + \alpha\iota = \eta$     $\epsilon + \epsilon\iota = \eta$     $\epsilon + \omicron\iota = \omega$   
 $\epsilon + \alpha\upsilon = \eta\upsilon$     $\epsilon + \epsilon\upsilon = \epsilon\upsilon$  or  $\eta\upsilon$

For ἀκουω this becomes

I was hearing	ἤκουον	ἤκουομεν	we were hearing
you were hearing	ἤκουες	ἤκουετε	y'all were hearing
he/she/it was hearing	ἤκουεν	ἤκουον	they were hearing

For ἀγαπαω and similar verbs, there are changes both at the front and at the end of the stem

I was loving	ἠγαπων	ἠγαπωμεν	we were loving
you were loving	ἠγαπας	ἠγαπατε	y'all were loving
he/she/it was loving	ἠγαπα	ἠγαπων	they were loving

ἔχω (I have) is slightly irregular. Its stem changes to εἶχ- for the Imperfect.

**NOTE :** If, when reading a Greek text, you meet a verb starting with η-, and you do not find it in the dictionary entries for "η", remember that it is most probably a past tense of a verb beginning with α- or ε-

**Practice** - until you can read and translate easily

- ἡμεις οὐκ ἠγαπωμεν τα ἔργα του πονηρου. We were not loving the works of the evil one.
- αὕτη ἠκολουθε τοις πρεσβυτεροις. She was following the elders.
- οὗτοι ἠρωτων τον διδασκαλον  
περι του βιβλιου. They (those men) were asking the teacher  
about the book.
- ὕμεις ἠκολουθειτε τω Ἰησου ἢ τω Ἰωαννω ; Were you following Jesus, or John?

5. το πνευμα του θεου ὠκει ἐν τῷ προφητῇ.	The Spirit of God dwelt in the prophet.
6. ἐγὼ εἶχον τα βιβλια σημερον ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξῶ αὐτα αὐριον.	I had the books today but I won't have them tomorrow.
7. εἶχεν ὁ δουλος το ἀργυριον του κυριου αὐτου ;	Did the slave have his master's money?
8. ὠκειτε ἐν τη γῆ Αἴγυπτου ;	Did you (used to) live in the land of Egypt?
9. ταυτα τα προβατα ἤκουε της φωνης του κυριου.	These sheep were listening to the voice of the Lord.
<i>(Remember, 3rd Person Neuter Plural can take a singular verb)</i>	
10. εἶπεν αὐτοις ὁ Ἰησους, Εἰ ὁ θεος πατηρ ὑμων ἦν, ἠγαπατε ἂν ἐμε.	Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would have loved me." (John 8:42)

## 29.5 Compound Verbs

Compound verbs are built by adding a prefix to the stem of the verb. The meaning of the verb may change either slightly (e.g. to show direction or emphasis) or (more rarely) completely.

e.g. βαλλῶ - I throw    ἐκβαλλῶ - I cast out    ἀρχῶ - I rule    ὑπαρχῶ - I am

The prefix is not regarded as part of the stem of the verb, so, for past tenses of compound verbs :

**the augment is normally inserted between the main stem and the prefix.**

The addition of the augment may cause slight changes to the letters on either side of it.

If the prefix ends with a vowel, the vowel usually drops out and is replaced by the augment.

**περι-** and **προ-** usually keep their vowels.

**ἀνα-** may become **ἀνη-**, and **κατα-** may become **κατη-**

Compound verbs with **εὖ-** often do not have an augment, but just use the personal endings for the tense.

If the prefix ends in a **-κ**, the **-κ** changes to a **-ξ** before the augment.

NOTE : In the New Testament there are variant spellings for the imperfect of **ἀνοιγῶ** - I open up. The stem is οἶγῶ - I open. By the rules above, the imperfect should have the form ἀνωγον - the augment broadens the -ο- to an -ω-, and the iota drops down to become a iota-subscript. However, some writers occasionally use a "double augment" ἀνεωγον, or even a "triple augment" ἠνεωγον.

**Practice** - until you can read and translate easily

1. οἱ ἀποστολοι ἐξεβαλλον τα δαιμονια.	The apostles were casting the demons out.
2. ὁ μαθητης ἀπηγγελλεν το εὐαγγελιον ἐν ταις συναγωγαις αὐτων.	The disciple was announcing the Gospel in their synagogues.
3. ἡ μητηρ του Ἰωαννου περιεπατειν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.	John's mother was walking in the temple.
4. ὁ ἄγγελος ἐξεχεεν την φιαλην αὐτου εἰς την γην.	The angel was pouring out his bowl onto the earth. (see Rev. 16:2)
5. ἀπηγεσ τους δεσμιους προς την φυλακην ;	Were you leading the prisoners away to the prison?
6. ὁ Ἰωαννης ἀπεκαλυπτεν τα ἔργα του θεου ταις ἐκκλησιας.	John was revealing the works of God to the Churches.
7. ὁ πατηρ αὐτου ἐπεμενεν ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ.	His father remained in the house.
8. οἱ δεσμοι ἦτουν τους στρατιωτας ἄρτον.	The prisoners were asking the soldiers for bread.
9. ἐπετρεπομεν τα παιδια ψαλλειν ἐν τη συναγωγῇ.	We were allowing the children to sing in the synagogue.
10. ὁ Ἰωσηφ και ἡ μητηρ του Ἰησου κατῶκουν ἐν τη κῶμῃ.	Joseph and the mother of Jesus were dwelling in the village.

## 29.6 Sentences for reading and translation

1. οἱ τελωναι μετηνοουν και ἠκλουθουν τῷ Ἰωαννῷ.
2. αἱ ἁμαρτια ἡμων κατηργουν τας προσευχας ἡμων.
3. ὁ μαθητης κατειχεν την διδαχην του διδασκαλου.
4. οἱ προφηται προελεγον ἡμιν ὅτι ὁ θεος μελλει κρινειν τον κοσμον.
5. ὁ πατηρ προηγεν τους υἱους αὐτου εις την Γαλιλαιαν.
6. ἡ μητηρ προσεδοκεν τον υἱον αὐτης ;
7. και προσεφερον αὐτῷ παιδια. (Mark 10:13)
8. ἐξεβαλλετε τα δαιμονια ;
9. ἀπηγγελλες το εὐαγγελιον ταις παρθενοις ;
10. ἠκουομεν τους λογους οὐς ἔλαλουν οἱ προφηται.

## 29.7 Writing Practice : Write the Greek text several times, while saying aloud (Matt. 5:4)

μακαριοι οἱ πτωχοι τῷ πνευματι, Happy (are) the poor in spirit  
ὅτι αὐτων ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεια των οὐρανων. For theirs is the Kingdom of the Heavens  
μακαριοι οἱ πενθουντες, Happy are the ones mourning,

## 29.8 New Testament Passages for reading and translation : Mark 3:1-6, Luke 17:26-28

In your Greek New Testament, read the passages aloud several times until you can read them without long pauses or stumbling. Then use the helps to translate them.

ἐξηραμμενην	having been dried up = withered	(a past Passive Participle of ξηραινω - I dry up)
χειρα	hand	( Accusative of ἡ χειρ - hand)
τοις σαββασιν	on the Sabbath	( the Aramaic for Sabbath is "shabbata", and this gave rise to a neuter plural form σαββατα - but the meaning was still singular)
κατηγορησωσιν	they might accuse	( Aorist Subjunctive of κατηγορω - I accuse, denounce)
ξηραν	dry	( Feminine Accusative of ξηρος -α -ον - dry)
ἐχοντι	to the one having	( Masculine Dative singular Participle of ἔχω - I have)
ἐγειρε	rise up!, stand up!	( 2nd person singular Imperative of ἐγειρω - I raise)
εις το μεσον	in the center	
ποιησαι	to do	( Aorist Infinitive of ποιω - I do, act, make)
κακοποιησαι	to do evil	( Aorist Infinitive of κακοποιω - I do evil)
σωσαι	to save	( Aorist Infinitive of σωζω - I save)
ἀποκτειναι	to kill	( Aorist Infinitive of ἀποκτεινω - I kill)
ἔσιωπων	they remained/kept/were silent	( Imperfect of σιωπαω - I remain silent)
περιβλεψαμενος	having looked around at	( Aorist Participle of περιβλεπω - I look around at)
συλλυπουμενος	being very grieved/sad	( a Participle of συλλυπεω - I am sad with, or very sad)
πωρωσει	hardening, obstinacy	( Dative sing. of ἡ πωρωσις - stubbornness, unfeeling)
ἀπε-κατε-σταθη	it was set up again = it was restored	( Note the double augment)
	( a past Passive of ἀποκαθιστημι - I set up again, restore to proper condition)	
ἐξελθοντες	having gone out	( Masc. Nom. plural Participle, describing οἱ Φαρισαιοι)
Ἡρωδιανων	Herodians'	( Genitive plural. The Ἡρωδιανοι sided with Herod and his family. Normally the Pharisees and the Herodians were at enmity with one another)
το συμβουλιον	plan, council, plot	
ἐδιδουν	they were giving	(Imperfect of δίδωμι - I give. A Semitic idiom for "make a plot")
κατ' αὐτου	against him	
ἀπολεσωσιν	they might destroy	( Subjunctive of ἀπολλυμι - I destroy)
ἐγενετο	it was	( simple past of γινομαι - I happen, am, become)
ἔσται	it will be	( Future of εἶμι - I am)
ἥς ἡμερας	the day	( Genitive, ἥς used for της)
εἰσηλθεν	(he) entered	
ἦλθεν	(it) came	

ὁ κατακλυσμος	flood, deluge	
ἄπωλεσεν	(it) destroyed	( simple past of ἀπολλυμι - I destroy)
παντας	everything, all	( Masculine Accusative plural of πας, πασα, παν - each, every)
Λωτ	Lot (Abraham's nephew)	
ἦ	in the	( ἦ used for τη)
ἔβρεξεν	(it) rained, watered	( simple past of βρεχω - I wet, rain)
το θειον	sulfur	( hence the chemical prefix theio- for sulfur compounds)

## 29.9 Vocabulary to learn

ἀπάγω	I lead away	
ἀποκαλύπτω	I reveal, unveil	
γαμέω	I marry	
γαμίζω	I give (a bride) in marriage	
ἐκτείνω	I stretch out	
ἐκχέω	I pour out	
ἐπιμένω	I remain, abide, persevere	
ἐπιτρέπω	I allow, permit	
καλύπτω	I cover, hide, veil	
καταλύω	( <b>transitive</b> ) I tear down, destroy	( <b>intransitive</b> ) I stay with (as a guest)
κατανοέω	I consider, notice, am aware of	
καταργέω	I cancel, make ineffective, destroy	
κατηγορέω	I accuse, bring charges against	
καταχέω	I pour down, pour onto	
κατέχω	I hold down, hold fast, head for (ship)	
κατοικέω	I dwell, settle, inhabit	
οικέω	I dwell, live (in)	
παράγω	I pass by, pass on, pass away	
παρατηρέω	I watch closely, keep an eye on	
παρέχω	I cause, bring about, offer	
περιβάλλω	I put on, dress ( one dressed by throwing a toga or cloak around oneself)	
περιβλέπω	I look around at	
προάγω	I go before, ahead of	
προλέγω	I say in advance, warn, predict	
προσδοκάω	I wait for, look for, expect	
προσφέρω	I offer, bring before, present	
ὑπάρχω	I am, exist	
ξηραίνω	I dry up	<b>Passive</b> - I am withered
φυτεύω	I plant	( hence scientific words starting with phyto- for plant sciences)
ξηρός, -α, -ον	dry	( hence xeriscape and Xerox - dry copying )
ἡ κιβωτός	ark, ship	
ἡ φιάλη	vial, bowl, flask	
ἄχρι	up until	( either as a conjunction, or as a preposition with Genitive)
εὐθύς	immediately	
ὁμοίως	similarly, likewise	( adverb, from the adjective ὁμοιος, -α, -ον - like)
ὅπως	that, in order that	
	( Don't attempt to use cases other than the Nominative singular for the following nouns yet)	
το κάλυμμα	veil	
τα ὑπάρχοντα	possessions	
το πῦρ	fire	( hence the scientific prefix pyr- for fever, burning, heat)
	( the pyramids were so called because when the sun shone on them they looked to be on fire)	
ἡ χεῖρ	hand	( hence chiropractor, chiroprapist, etc.)