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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ε-STEM-ον</td>
<td>ε-STEM-οµεν</td>
<td>ε-STEM-ες</td>
<td>ε-STEM-ετε</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ε-STEM-εν</td>
<td>ε-STEM-ον</td>
<td>ε-STEM-ετε</td>
<td>ε-STEM-ον</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For λεγω, 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 εἶλεγον 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 -ον. A Greek sentence will usually resolve this problem by using a pronoun if the sense is not clear.

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

1. ὁ πρεσβυτερος ἐδιδασκεν τους µαθητας. The presbyter/elder was teaching the disciples.
2. οι άγιοι ἐδιδασκαν τα τεκνα. Were the saints teaching the children?
3. ἐγω οὐκ ἐδιδασκαν το παιδιον. I was not teaching the child.
4. έβλεποµεν τα προβατα. We were looking at the sheep.
5. ύµεις οὐκ ἔβλεπετε τους δουλους. You were not looking at the slaves.
6. συ έγραφες µεταηµνευµατα τους άγιους. You were writing letters to the saints.
7. τα παιδια ἐβαλλον λιθους εἰς την θαλασσαν. The children were throwing stones into the sea.
8. οι Ῥωµαιοι ἐδιωκον τους αδελφους. The Romans were persecuting the brothers.
9. ο Ιησους ἐθεραπευεν τους τυφλους. Jesus was healing the blind (men, people).
10. η µητηρ αυτου και ο πατηρ έµενον ἐν τω οίκῳ. His mother and father remained in the house.
29.3 **Contract verbs** follow the usual rules of contraction.

The moveable ν on the third person singular drops off.

\[ \alpha + \varepsilon = \alpha \quad \alpha + \omicron = \omega \quad \varepsilon + \varepsilon = \varepsilon \quad \varepsilon + \omicron = \omicron \quad \omicron + \varepsilon = \omicron \quad \omicron + \omicron = \omicron \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>ἐτιμῶν</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>ἐτίμας</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>ἐτίμα</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>ἐτιμομέν</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y'all</td>
<td>ἐτιμάτε</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>ἐτιμῶν</td>
<td>I honor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

1. οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ἐπλανῶν τὸν λαὸν. The hypocrites were leading the people astray.
2. τὸ δαίμονιον οὐκ ἐποιεῖ τὰ καλὰ. The demon was not doing (the) good things.
3. οἱ στρατιώται ἔσταυρον τὸν Ἰησοῦν. The soldiers were crucifying Jesus.
4. ἐποιεῖτε τὸ ἑργὸν καλὸν; Were you doing the good deed?
5. ἐγὼ ἐτιμῶ τοὺς διδάσκαλους. I respected the teachers.
6. ἦτε ἐτηροῦτε τὰς ἐντολὰς. You were keeping the commandments.
7. ἦμες ἐζήτουμεν τὴν ἀληθείαν. We were seeking the truth.
8. πᾶς ἀνθρώπος ἐζητεῖ τὰ ἰδια. Each man was seeking his own (things).
9. οἱ υἱοὶ ἐκάλουν τὰς ἀδελφὰς αὐτῶν. The sons were calling their sisters.
10. ἦκενοι οἱ λῃσταὶ οὐκ ἔτηρον τὸν νόμον. 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 an iota the augment is often omitted.

\[ \varepsilon + \alpha = \eta \quad \varepsilon + \varepsilon = \eta \quad \varepsilon + \omicron = \omega \quad \varepsilon + \imath = \varepsilon \quad \varepsilon + \imath = \varepsilon \]

For ἀκοῦω this becomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>ἠκοον</td>
<td>I heard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>ἠκοουες</td>
<td>you were hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>ἠκουετε</td>
<td>y'all were hearing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>ἠγαπῶν</td>
<td>I was loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>ἠγαπας</td>
<td>you were loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it</td>
<td>ἠγαπατε</td>
<td>y'all were loving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ἐχω (I have) is slightly irregular. Its stem changes to ἐχι 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

1. ἦμεις οὐκ ἠγαπομεν τὰ ἑργα του πονηρου. We were not loving the works of the evil one.
2. αὐτὴ ἠκολουθε τοις πρεσβυτεροις. She was following the elders.
3. οὕτωι ᾧμεν τὸν διδασκαλον περὶ του βιβλιου. They (those men) were asking the teacher about the book.
4. ἦμεις ἠκολουθετε τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἦ τῷ Ἰωαννῳ; Were you following Jesus, or John?
5. το πνεῦμα του θεου ὄκει ἐν τω προφητῃ. The Spirit of God dwelt in the prophet.
6. ἐγω εἰχον τα βιβλια σηµερον but I won't have them tomorrow.
   ἀλλ συκ εξω αυτα αύριον. Did the slave have
7. εἰχεν ο δουλος το άργυριον his master's money?
tου κυριου αυτου ; Did you (used to) live in the land of Egypt?
8. κατεν τη γη Αίγυπτου ; These sheep were listening
   της φωνης του κυριου. to the voice of the Lord.
(Remember, 3rd Person Neuter Plural can take a singular verb)
9. ταυτα τα προβατα you would have loved me." (John 8:42)
   ηκουε (3rd Person Neuter Plural can take a singular verb)
10. εἰπεν αὐτοις ὁ Ιησους, "If God were your Father,
    ἠγαπατε ἀν ἐµε."

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. βαλλω - I throw  ἐκβαλλω - I cast out  ἀρχω - I rule  ύπαρχω - 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 ἄνη- , and κατα- may become κατη-

Compound verbs with ευ- 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 ἀνοιγω - I open up. The stem is οἰγω - I open. By the rules above, the imperfect should have the form ἀνῳγον - the augment broadens the -o- to an -ω-, and the iota drops down to become a iota-subscript. However, some writers occasionally use a "double augment" ἀνεῳγον, or even a "triple augment" ἠνεῳγον.

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 The disciple was announcing the Gospel
   ἐν ταις συναγωγαις αυτων. in their synagogues.
3. ἡ µητηρ του Ιωαννου περιεπατειν John's mother was walking
   ἐν τῳ ιερῳ. in the temple.
4. ὁ ἀγγελος ἐξεκρεεν την φιαλην οἰκῳ The angel was pouring out his bowl
   εἰς την γην. onto the earth. (see Rev. 16:2)
5. ἀπήγας τους δεσµιους προς την φυλακην; Were you leading the prisoners
   ἀφαι τους στρατιωτας ἀρτον. away to the prison?
6. ὁ Ἰωαννης ἀπεκαλυπτεν τα εργα του θεου οἱ άστροι τοις φυλακην.
   Μπασκοντι προς την θυσια ταις έκκλησιαις. His father remained in the house.
7. ὁ πατηρ αυτου ἐπεµενεν ἐν τω οἰκῳ. His father remained in the house.
8. οἱ δεσµιοι ἐπεσεν εις τοις στρατιωτας άρτον. The prisoners were asking the soldiers
   ἀφαι τους στρατιωτας μεσαν. for bread.
9. ἐπετρεποµεν τα παιδια ψαλλειν οἱ συναγωγης. We were allowing the children to sing
   ἐν τη συναγωγη. in the synagogue.
10. ὁ Ἰωσηφ και ἡ µητηρ του Ησου κατωκουν ἐν τη κοµη. Joseph and the mother of Jesus
    ἦσαν κατωκουν ἐν τη κοµη.

29.6 Sentences for reading and translation
1. οἱ τελωναι μετηνοουν και ἠκλουθουν τῳ Ἰωαννῳ.
2. αἱ ἁμαρτιαι ἡµων κατηργουν τας προσευχας ἡµων.
3. ὁ µαθητης κατειχεν την διδαχην του διδασκαλου.
4. οἱ προφηται προελεγον ὅτι ὁ θεος µελλει κρινειν τον κοσµον.
5. ὁ µατηρ προηγεν τους υιους αυτου εις την Γαλιλαιαν.
6. και προσεφερον αυτῳ παιδια. (Mark 10:13)
7. ἁναπηγενεναι τον ὑιον αυτης;
8. εξεβαλε τα δαιµονια;
9. ἀπηγγελες το εὐαγγελιον ταις παρθενοις;
10. ἠκουοµεν τους λογους οὑς ὁι προφηται.

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

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


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)
cheidra hand (Accusative of η χειρ - hand)
tois 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)

κατηγορησιων they might accuse (Aorist Subjunctive of κατηγορεω - I accuse, denounce)
ξηραν dry (Feminine Accusative of ξηρος - a -o -n - dry)
έχοντες to the one having (Masculine Dative singular Participle of εχω - I have)

εἰς το µεσον in the center (Aorist Infinitive of σῳζω - I save)
ποιησαι to do (Aorist Infinitive of ποιεω - I do, act, make)
κακοποιησαι to do evil (Aorist Infinitive of κακοποιεω - I do evil)
σωσαι to save (Aorist Infinitive of σῳζω - I save)

ἀποκτειναι to kill (Aorist Infinitive of ἀποκτεινω - I kill)

ἐσιωπων 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 συλυπεω - I am sad with, or very sad)
πωρωσει hardening, obstinacy (Dative sing. of η πωρωσις - stubbornness, unfeeling)

ἐξελθοντες having gone out (Masc. Nom. plural Participle, describing οἱ Φαρισαιοι)

η Ησιωνησιων they were giving (Imperfect of διδωµι - I give. A Semitic idiom for "make a plot")
kat' αυτου against him

ἀποκαθιστηµι 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)

ἐγειρε rise up!, stand up! (2nd person singular Imperative of εγειρω - I raise)
πωρωσει hardening, obstinacy (Dative sing. of η πωρωσις - stubbornness, unfeeling)

Being the day (Genitive, ης used for η)

εσιωπων they remained/kept/were silent (Imperfect of σιωπαω - I remain silent)
περιβλεψαµενος having looked around at (Aorist Participle of περιβλεπω - I look around at)
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ὁ κατακλυσμός flood, deluge
ἀπώλεσεν (it) destroyed (simple past of ἀπολλύμι - I destroy)
pαντας everything, all (Masculine Accusative plural of πας, πασα, παν - each, every)
Λωτ Lot (Abraham's nephew)
ἡ in the (ἡ used for η)
ἐβρεξεν (it) rained, watered (simple past of βρεχω - I wet, rain)
tο θείον 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 (transitive) I tear down, destroy (intransitive) 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
κατασχέω I pour down, pour onto
κατακείμονας I hold down, hold fast, head for (ship)
κατοικέω I dwell, settle, inhabit
οἰκέω 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
προσφέρω I offer, bring before, present
ὑπάρχω I am, exist
ξηραίνω I dry up
φυτεύω I plant (hence scientific words starting with phyto- for plant sciences)
ἔχρως, -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 ὁμοίος, -α, -ον - like)
ὁπως that, in order that
(Do n't attempt to use cases other than the Nominative singular for the following nouns yet)
tο κάλυμμα veil
tο τα ὑπάρχοντα possessions
tο πῦρ fire (hence the scientific prefix pyr- for fever, burning, heat)
ἡ χείρ hand (hence chiropractor, chiropodist, etc.)