

# Learn to Read Koine Greek

## Reading Vocabulary Cheat Sheet

This reference sheet condenses much of the Koine Greek grammar that is relevant to figuring out what a clause is saying. When you don't know what a word form is saying, and you look it up in some external resource, you will find a list of properties that form has (i.e. the form's *parsing*), and this sheet will help you sort out what those properties are telling you.

---

### Major Unit Types for Reading:

The major unit types you need to know are:

- **phrases**, which are made up almost exclusively of nominals (e.g. 'Jesus', 'the yellow box' etc.), —these are traditionally nouns, verbs, articles, pronouns
- **clauses**, which are usually made up of verbals and nominals together (e.g. 'Jesus walked'), though they can be simply verbals
- **wrappers**, which 'package' subsequent units (e.g. 'under the tree'; 'if this condition is met'), and
- **coordinated units** which are units of the same type joined by a coordinator like 'and' (e.g. 'Jesus and Peter')

### Phrases (nominal clusters):

Nominals are words that have case, gender, and number properties. Nominals can signal simple things ('yellow', 'cool', etc.), complex things ('human', 'frame', 'beauty'), or pointer things ('this', 'that', 'he', 'she', 'what').

- **Case:** Case signals how a word relates to other words in its phrase or clause.
  - *Nominative* is the pure nominal meaning ('he', 'she')
  - *Genitive* is the case of qualification ('of him', 'of her')
  - *Dative* is the case of circumstance or relation ('to him', 'to her')
  - *Accusative* is the case of restricted nominal meaning ('him', 'her')

Case hierarchy		
<b><i>Most-central case</i></b>	<b><i>Less-central case</i></b>	<b><i>Least-central cases</i></b>
Nominative	→ Accusative	→ Dative Genitive

- **Gender:** Gender signals a grammatical property (masculine, feminine, or neuter) that has some semantic meaning (perhaps indicating a male or female referent), but this meaning is not always significant.
- **Number:** Number signals whether a form is singular ('woman') or plural ('women').

**The article** is the most common nominal:

# Learn to Read Koine Greek

- The article is a short word, almost always starting with τ, exceptions are ὁ ἡ οἱ αἱ. Gloss as ‘the’ or ‘the one’ (or ‘the ones’ for plural, ‘of the ones’ for genitive plural, etc.)
- Note that the article is essentially a τ with a case ending (and the vowel is either ο, or α/η, which can be lengthened according to normal vowel contraction rules).

## *The paradigm for the Greek article*

		masc.	fem.	neuter
sing.	nom.	ὁ	ἡ	τό
	gen.	τοῦ	τῆς	τοῦ
	dat.	τῷ	τῇ	τῷ
	acc.	τόν	τήν	τό
pl.	nom.	οἱ	αἱ	τά
	gen.	τῶν	τῶν	τῶν
	dat.	τοῖς	ταῖς	τοῖς
	acc.	τούς	τάς	τά

## Clauses (verbal clusters):

Clauses are usually made up of combinations of nominals and verbals (sometimes you will have verbless clauses, which simply say ‘God good’ or something, which should be glossed like ‘God is good’).

**Verbals** are words that have *aspect*, *voice*, and *mood* properties (and often person and number as well).

- *Aspect*: Aspect signals how complicated the presentation or construal of a process is.
  - *Perfective* aspect signals a process is a simple (i.e. uncomplicated) process and probably involves a single clause
    - *Aorist tense form* could be glossed ‘he walked’
  - *Imperfective* aspect signals a process is complex and this process probably involves multiple clauses
    - *Present tense form* could be glossed ‘he is walking’
    - *Imperfect tense form* could be glossed ‘he was walking’
  - *Stative* aspect signals a process is part of a complex situation, and this situation probably involves multiple clauses
    - *Perfect tense form* could be glossed ‘he has walked’
    - *Pluperfect tense form* could be glossed ‘he had walked’
  - Some verbal forms do not signal aspect, and thus they are *aspectually vague*
    - εἰμί means ‘I am’ and it does not have aspect
    - The *future tense form* does not have aspect, but signals *expectation* of some kind.

# Learn to Read Koine Greek

- **Voice:** Voice signals a certain presentation of the causality of a process
  - *Active* voice signals the subject is presented as causing the process
  - *Middle* voice signals the subject is presented as involved in the process
  - *Passive* voice signals the subject is presented as not causing the process
  - Passive voice is only possible for the aorist and future tense forms. If you see something marked as ‘middle/passive’, treat it as a middle.
- **Number:** Number signals whether a form is singular (‘I’, ‘she’) or plural (‘we’, ‘they’).
- **Person:** Person signals the perspective from which the process unfolds, whether ‘I’ (first person), ‘you’ (second person), or ‘he/she/it’ (third person). These glosses are singular, but in the plural they would be ‘we’, ‘you’, and ‘they’.
- **Mood:** Mood signals what kind of exchange is being made from the perspective of the verb’s person property.
  - *Indicative* mood signals an assertion is being made (‘he is saying’, ‘he said’, etc.)
  - *Subjunctive* mood signals a projection (‘he might say’, ‘he should say’, etc.)
  - *Imperative* mood signals a directive (‘say!’, ‘[he] must say’, etc.)
  - *Optative* mood signals a contingency (‘he could say’, etc.)

**Endings vs. Stem Changes:** the endings of a verb tell you the **mood, voice, person, and number** of the verb; changes to the stem tell you the **aspect**.

Case Endings (for NOMINALS)						Personal Endings (for VERBALS):																																																	
<i>Singular:</i>						<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Primary Endings</td> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Secondary Endings</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M/P</td> <td style="text-align: center;">A</td> <td style="text-align: center;">M/P</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;">S</td> <td>1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ω</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομαι</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ον</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομην</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">εις</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">η</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ες</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">σο</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ει</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">εται</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ε</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ετο</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3" style="vertical-align: middle;">P</td> <td>1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομεν</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομεθα</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομεν</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ομεθα</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ετε</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">εσθε</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ετε</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">εσθε</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ουσι(ν)</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ονται</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">ον</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">οντο</td> </tr> </table>						Primary Endings			Secondary Endings				A	M/P	A	M/P		S	1	ω	ομαι	ον	ομην	2	εις	η	ες	σο	3	ει	εται	ε	ετο	P	1	ομεν	ομεθα	ομεν	ομεθα	2	ετε	εσθε	ετε	εσθε	3	ουσι(ν)	ονται	ον	οντο
Primary Endings			Secondary Endings																																																				
	A	M/P	A	M/P																																																			
S	1	ω	ομαι	ον	ομην																																																		
	2	εις	η	ες	σο																																																		
	3	ει	εται	ε	ετο																																																		
P	1	ομεν	ομεθα	ομεν	ομεθα																																																		
	2	ετε	εσθε	ετε	εσθε																																																		
	3	ουσι(ν)	ονται	ον	οντο																																																		
	2m	1f	2n	3mf	3n																																																		
<b>N</b>	ς	-	ν	ς/-	-/ς																																																		
<b>G</b>	υ	ς	υ	ος	ος																																																		
<b>D</b>	ι (φ)	ι (η)	ι (φ)	ι	ι																																																		
<b>A</b>	ν	ν	ν	α	-/ς																																																		
<i>Plural:</i>																																																							
<b>N</b>	οι	αι	α	ες	α																																																		
<b>G</b>	ων	ων	ων	ων	ων																																																		
<b>D</b>	οις	αις	οις	σι(ν)	σι(ν)																																																		
<b>A</b>	υς	ας	α	ας/ες	α																																																		

**Participles** are verbals that do not have person, but they *do* have case, gender, and number (since they have nominal endings, and nominals are defined as forms that inflect for case, gender, and number). The most common participle ending is -ων (due to phonological changes), but in general, you should look for case endings on the end of a word you know to be a verb. Participles can usually be glossed with a ‘-ing’ ending (such as ‘running’).

# Learn to Read Koine Greek

**Infinitives** are verbals that do not have person or number properties, but they also do not have case or gender properties as participles do.

The most common infinitive endings you should know are *-ειν* and *-αι* (usually *-σαι*, though sometimes *θηναι* or some other forms). For the sake of reference, here is the short infinitival paradigm:

	Active	Middle	Passive
Present	ειν	εσθαι	
Aorist	σαι	σασθαι	θηναι
2nd Aorist	ειν	εσθαι	ηναι
Perfect	κεναι	σθαι	