

THE
HANDY GUIDE
TO

NEW
TESTAMENT
GREEK

Grammar, Syntax, and
Diagramming



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 Kregel
Academic

The Handy Guide to New Testament Greek: Grammar, Syntax, and Diagramming

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INTRODUCTION

In a book like this one, the answers to a few basic questions are important: for *whom* the book was written, *what* the book is (and is not), *why* the book was written, *where* it fits into the larger study of its discipline, *how* it might best be used, and *when* the reader would find it useful.

- Who:** This volume is intended for second-year Greek students (and beyond), pastors, teachers, and preachers. Constant NT Greek users (addicts!) might not need it, but would-be experts should find it useful.
- What:** When it comes to the study of NT Greek, this book is more of a collection of helpful tools than explanatory tales. It will not replace grammar and syntax textbooks, but it will supplement them nicely. In addition to reviewing grammar and syntax, this volume teaches phrase diagramming as a tool to discover sermon and lesson outlines quickly in the Greek text.
- Why:** This volume has been created because one year of Greek is dangerous; the language needs review and further study to become truly usable in the study of the Greek NT. The book is designed to be less cumbersome and more readily accessible than carrying around larger grammar and syntax textbooks.
- Where:** Since it presumes some of the basics of NT Greek, this book fits into the Greek learning sequence after a full year of elementary Greek has been mastered and then during and beyond the second year of NT Greek studies.
- How:** Intended as a useful tool and ready reference for the continued study of the Greek NT, even the physical dimensions of this volume are set at handbook size so as to fit with the Greek NT—either the United Bible Societies’ 4th edition (the burgundy UBS⁴) or the Nestle-Aland 28th edition (the blue NA²⁸).
- When:** If kept on hand with the Greek NT, this volume could be in constant use, assisting in the preparation of NT lessons and sermons.

I would like to acknowledge here the many helpful resources that have been mine over the years of my study of New Testament Greek. These have included my Greek professors, my former colleagues at Northwestern College, particularly the ancient and classical languages professors who have offered helpful input, and my several generations of Greek students (both at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and at

Northwestern College) who have endured my practicing on them over the years. I owe a special debt of thanks to my first group of NT Greek students at Biola University, especially those who helped proofread this little volume, and to my friend Jay E. Smith (professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary) who did the same. With large gratitude, I dedicate this small volume to my Greek instructors (in the order of my taking their Greek courses): Professors Wayne Bennedict (Elementary Greek), Walter Dunnett (Intermediate Greek), Walter Elwell (Greek Exegesis), and D. A. Carson (Advanced Greek Grammar). *Soli Deo gloria.*

THIRD DECLENSION: CONSONANT DECLENSION

1. This declension has more quirks than the other two combined.
2. The final letter in the noun stem (usually a consonant) is the basis for distinguishing the declension’s various types.
3. Some consonants fall into particular groups. Liquid consonants include λ, μ, ν, and ρ. Mute consonants include π, β, φ (labials), τ, δ, θ (dentals), and κ, γ, χ (palatals /velars).
4. The noun stem is typically visible in the genitive singular form but not the nominative singular (i.e., lexical) form.
5. Forming the case endings of third declension nouns often appeals to the rules for contraction (see chart below).
6. Accents are consistent and follow the lexical form unless the stem is monosyllabic, in which case all the genitive and dative case forms will be accented on the ultima.

GENERAL CONTRACTION RULES												
CONSONANTAL “SQUARE OF STOPS”								+ σ	+ κ	+ θ		
Labials: π, β, φ								ψ	φ	φθ		
Palatals (a.k.a. Velars): κ, γ, χ								ξ	χ	χθ		
Dentals: τ, δ, θ *								σ	κ	σθ		
* ν tends to contract like a dental and simply drop out, particularly when with τ: αντ + σι = ασι / εντ + σι = εσι / οντ + σι = ουσι												
VOWEL COMBINATIONS (most common: ει and ου)												
+	α	ε	η	ι	ο	υ	ω	αι	ει	η	οι	ου
α	α	α	α	αι	ω	αυ	ω	α	α*	α	φ	ω
ε	η	ει	η	ει	ου	ευ	ω	η	ει	η	οι	ου
ο	ω	ου	ω [†]	οι	ου	ου	ω	φ	οι [§]	οι	οι	ου
* α and [§] ου in some words with -ειν infinitives; [†] φ in subjunctive of μ verbs.												

THIRD DECLENSION: Consonant Declension Nouns

		Mute Type			Liquid Type	
		Regular			Regular	Syncopated
		Masc.	Fem.	Neu.	M./F.	M./F.
Stem		ἀρχοντ–	σαρκ–	ὄνοματ–	χείρ–	πατερ–
SINGULAR	Nom.	ἄρχων	σάρξ	ὄνομα	χείρ	πατήρ
	Gen.	ἄρχοντος	σαρκός	ὀνόματος	χειρός	πατρός
	Dat.	ἄρχοντι	σαρκί	ὀνόματι	χειρί	πατρί
	Acc.	ἄρχοντα	σάρκα	ὄνομα	χειῖρα	πατέρα
PLURAL	Nom.	ἄρχοντες	σάρκες	ὀνόματα	χειῖρες	πατέρες
	Gen.	ἀρχόντων	σαρκῶν	ὀνομάτων	χειρῶν	πατέρων
	Dat.	ἄρχουσι(ν)	σαρξί(ν)	ὀνόμασι(ν)	χερσί(ν)	πατράσι(ν)
	Acc.	ἄρχοντας	σάρκας	ὀνόματα	χειῖρας	πατέρας

Notes: Words can't end in τ so it drops off in sg. nom./acc. of neu. –ματ- nouns and from the end of –ντ- nouns in sg. nom. Liquid types have lengthened stem vowel in sg. nom., and a short stem vowel drops out in dats. and sg. gen.

		-ς Types		Vowel Types		
		-α·ς	-ε·ς	-ι Stem	-υ Stem	Diphthong
		Neu.	Neu.	Fem.	Masc.	Masc.
Stem		κρεα·ς	γενε·ς	πολι–	ιχθυ–	βασιλευ–
SINGULAR	Nom.	κρέας	γένος	πόλις	ιχθύς	βασιλεύς
	Gen.	κρέως	γένους	πόλεως	ιχθύος	βασιλέως
	Dat.	κρέαι	γένει	πόλει	ιχθύι	βασιλεῖ
	Acc.	κρέας	γένος	πόλιν	ιχθύν	βασιλέα
PLURAL	Nom.	κρέα	γένη	πόλεις	ιχθύες	βασιλεῖς
	Gen.	κρεῶν	γενῶν	πόλεων	ιχθύων	βασιλέων
	Dat.	κρέασι(ν)	γένεσι(ν)	πόλεσι(ν)	ιχθύσι(ν)	βασιλεῦσι(ν)
	Acc.	κρέα	γένη	πόλεις	ιχθύας	βασιλεῖς

Notes: ς stays in sg. nom./acc., but –ες nouns have –ος in sg. nom./acc. ι stays only in sg. nom./acc. and is ε elsewhere in -ι nouns. υ remains for –υ nouns, but in –ευ nouns drops before endings with initial vowels. No contracting in gen.; ως in sg. gen. for -ι and -ευ nouns. The usual α is not in acc. for -ι and –υ nouns.

ADJECTIVES: Spelled Like the Nouns They Describe

An adjective matches the noun it describes in gender, number, and case (a.k.a. G-N-C agreement). An adjective can be written in several different positions relative to the noun it describes.

Position	Structure*		Translation
ATTRIBUTIVE	1. ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος	TAN	"the good man"
	2. ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀγαθὸς	TNTA	
	3. ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀγαθὸς	NTA	
	4. ἄνθρωπος ἀγαθὸς	NA	"good man"
PREDICATE	1. ἀγαθὸς [ἐστίν] ὁ ἄνθρωπος	ATN	"The man is good."
	2. ὁ ἄνθρωπος [ἐστίν] ἀγαθὸς	TNA	

*Key: T = article, A = adjective, N = noun

AAA Rule = Adjective preceded by an Article is Attributive.

An adjective can be used alone (or with its own article) as a noun (a.k.a. substantival use); e.g., τὰ ἀγαθὰ ("the good things").

Declension of Normal Vowel (2-1-2) Adjectives (like Second Decl. in masc. and neu., First Decl. in fem.)				
ἀγαθός – "good"				
		Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
SINGULAR	Nom.	ἀγαθός	ἀγαθή	ἀγαθόν
	Gen.	ἀγαθοῦ	ἀγαθῆς	ἀγαθοῦ
	Dat.	ἀγαθῷ	ἀγαθῇ	ἀγαθῷ
	Acc.	ἀγαθόν	ἀγαθήν	ἀγαθόν
PLURAL	Nom.	ἀγαθοί	ἀγαθαί	ἀγαθά
	Gen.	ἀγαθῶν	ἀγαθῶν	ἀγαθῶν
	Dat.	ἀγαθοῖς	ἀγαθαῖς	ἀγαθοῖς
	Acc.	ἀγαθοὺς	ἀγαθάς	ἀγαθά

Declension of “Old MacDonald” Adjectives (2-1-2 adjectives with stems ending in ε, ι, or ρ “with α” in fem.)				
μικρός—“small”				
		Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
SINGULAR	Nom.	μικρός	μικρά	μικρόν
	Gen.	μικροῦ	μικρᾶς	μικροῦ
	Dat.	μικρῷ	μικρᾷ	μικρῷ
	Acc.	μικρόν	μικράν	μικρόν
PLURAL	Nom.	μικροί	μικραί	μικρά
	Gen.	μικρῶν	μικρῶν	μικρῶν
	Dat.	μικροῖς	μικραῖς	μικροῖς
	Acc.	μικρούς	μικράς	μικρά

Declension of Consonant Ending (3-3) Adjectives (like Third Decl. in masc./fem. and Third Decl. in neu.)					
		Liquid Type		-ς Types	
		Masc./Fem.	Neu.	Masc./Fem.	Neu.
SINGULAR	Nom.	πλείων	πλείον	ἀληθής	ἀληθές
	Gen.	πλείονος	πλείονος	ἀληθοῦς	ἀληθοῦς
	Dat.	πλείονι	πλείονι	ἀληθεῖ	ἀληθεῖ
	Acc.	πλείονα	πλείον	ἀληθῆ	ἀληθές
PLURAL	Nom.	πλείονες	πλείονα	ἀληθεῖς	ἀληθῆ
	Gen.	πλείόνων	πλείόνων	ἀληθῶν	ἀληθῶν
	Dat.	πλείοσι(ν)	πλείοσι(ν)	ἀληθέσι(ν)	ἀληθέσι(ν)
	Acc.	πλείονας	πλείονα	ἀληθεῖς	ἀληθῆ

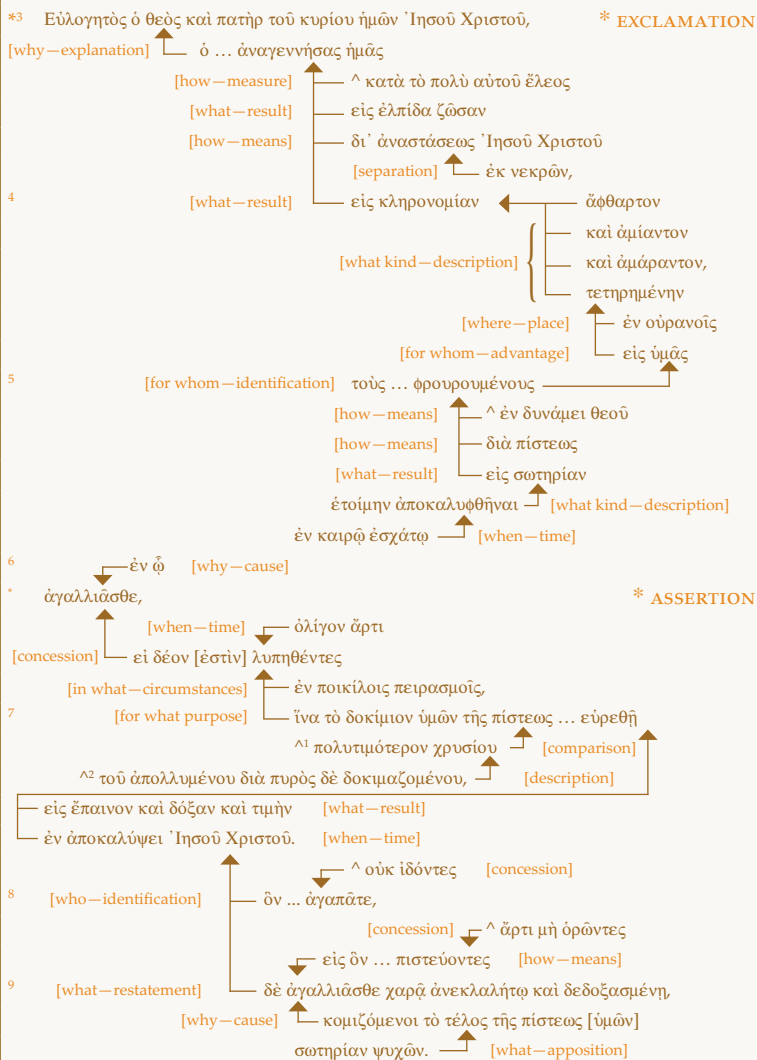
Declension of -ντ Stem (3-1-3) Adjectives (like Third Decl. in masc. and neu., First Decl. in fem.)				
		Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
SINGULAR	Nom.	πάς	πάσα	πάν
	Gen.	παντός	πάσης	παντός
	Dat.	παντί	πάση	παντί
	Acc.	πάντα	πάσαν	πάν
PLURAL	Nom.	πάντες	πάσαι	πάντα
	Gen.	πάντων	πασών	πάντων
	Dat.	πᾶσι	πάσαις	πᾶσι
	Acc.	πάντας	πάσας	πάντα

Note: πᾶς (“all, every”) and ὅλος (“whole”) are the two adjectives that are always in predicate position but translated as if in attributive position.

Adjectival Comparisons *			
EXAMPLE ONE			
Positive (declined as above)		σοφός	wise
Comparative (-τερος, -τερα, -τερον)		σοφότερος	wiser
Superlative (-τατος, -τατη, -τατον)		σοφάτατος	most wise
EXAMPLE TWO			
Positive (declined as above)		κακός	evil, wicked
Comparative (-ίων)		κακίων	more evil
Superlative (-ιστος)		κάκιστος	most evil
OTHER IRREGULARITIES			
ἀγαθός	good	κρείσσων	better
κακός	evil, wicked	χειρόν	worse
μέγας	great	μείζων	greater
πολύς	much, many	πλείων	more

*The comparative and superlative forms are declined like the positive form of the adjective following the appropriate 2-1-2, 3-3, or 3-1-3 declension. Sometimes comparative and superlative forms are used with elative meaning (e.g., “very small”).

Step 6 (Semantic Labels) for 1 Peter 1:3-9



Step 7 (English Diagram) for 1 Peter 1:3-9

