

7. Nouns / Ουσιαστικά

Nouns in Greek are declinable words and may be classified as masculine, feminine or neuter. Although the determination of the grammatical gender of the Greek words is often arbitrary, the following rules may be applied with the necessary caution: Names of male persons and male animals are masculine. Names of female persons and female animals are feminine. Names of objects are usually neuter. However, notice that in some cases names of persons and animals may be neuter as well and that names of visible and not-visible objects may also be either masculine or feminine. Nouns usually belong to one gender but in some cases to two, masculine and feminine, when for example they refer to professions: ο δικηγόρος, η δικηγόρος (the lawyer).

Gender may be determined by the article preceding the nouns or by the ending of the nouns in the nominative singular. For example all masculine nouns end in -ς (however notice that nouns ending in -ς are not per definition masculine, for example: η οδός (the street) is feminine, το κράτος (the state) is neuter), most feminine nouns end in -α, -η, most neuter nouns in -ι, -ο.

Declension

Nouns in principle decline in all four cases in the singular and plural number as well. They usually retain the same number of syllables in the plural as in the singular number. However, there are nouns whose plural is formed with an additional syllable. These nouns are called imparisyllables “ανισοσύλλαβα”. The stress mark usually remains in the same position as in the nominative singular.

Greek nouns of each gender can be divided into groups according to their endings. Nouns of a certain group with the same ending decline the same way.

The following tables exemplify the groups of the three genders. One noun of every group is being representatively declined and as said above other nouns belonging to the same group decline the same way. Any details and exceptions with the stress mark and the endings will be given under the tables.

7.1 Masculine nouns

-ας, -ες	ο αγώνας (the contest, game)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο αγώνας	οι αγώνες
gen	του αγώνα	των αγώνων
acc	τον αγώνα	τους αγώνες
voc	- αγώνα	- αγώνες

1. Two-syllable nouns ending in -ας and those ending in -ίας and -ίστας bear the stress mark on the last syllable in the genitive plural, for example: ο άντρας – των αντρών (the man), ο επιχειρηματίας – των επιχειρηματιών (the businessman), ο τουρίστας – των τουριστών (the tourist)
2. Nouns ending in -ας, which are stressed on the third-to-last (third from the end) syllable in the nominative singular, bear the stress mark on the second-to-last (second from the end) syllable in the genitive plural, for example: ο γείτονας – των γειτόνων (the neighbor)

-ης, -ες	ο μαθητής (the pupil)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο μαθητής	οι μαθητές
gen	του μαθητή	των μαθητών
acc	το μαθητή	τους μαθητές
voc	- μαθητή	- μαθητές

Nouns ending in -ης, which are stressed on the second-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, bear the stress mark on the last syllable in the genitive plural, for example: ο ναύτης – των ναυτών (the sailor)

-ος, -οι	ο δρόμος (the street, the way)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο δρόμος	οι δρόμοι
gen	του δρόμου	των δρόμων
acc	το δρόμο	τους δρόμους
voc	- δρόμε	- δρόμοι

1. Proper names, which are stressed on the second-to-last syllable in the nominative singular as Αλέκος, Γιώργος, Πέτρος, Σπύρος etc, form the vocative with -ο, for example: Αλέκο, Γιώργο, Πέτρο, Σπύρο etc. Notice that proper name Παύλος can either have -ε or -ο: Παύλο, Παύλε.
2. Three-syllable nouns ending in -ος, which are stressed on the third-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, usually bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in the genitive singular and the genitive and accusative plural, for example: ο άνθρωπος – του ανθρώπου, των ανθρώπων, τους ανθρώπους. However, this rule does not apply to nouns with more than three syllables, for example: ο ρινόκερος – του ρινόκερου, των ρινόκερων, τους ρινόκερους.

-ας, -άδες (impar.)	ο παπάς (the priest)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο παπάς	οι παπάδες
gen	του παπά	των παπάδων
acc	τον παπά	τους παπάδες
voc	- παπά	- παπάδες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in all cases plurale.
Attention: αέρας - αέρηδες

-ης, -ηδες (impar.)	ο μανάβης (de greengrocer)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο μανάβης	οι μανάβηδες
gen	του μανάβη	των μανάβηδων
acc	το μανάβη	τους μανάβηδες
voc	- μανάβη	- μανάβηδες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the third-to-last syllable in all cases plural.

-ες, -έδες / -ούς, -ούδες (impar.)	ο καφές (the coffee) ο παππούς (the grandfather)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο καφές παππούς	οι καφέδες παππούδες
gen	του καφέ παππού	των καφέδων παππούδων
acc	τον καφέ παππού	τους καφέδες παππούδες
voc	- καφέ παππού	- καφέδες παππούδες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in all cases plural.

7.1.1. Masculine nouns with an exceptional declension

-έας, -εις	ο γονέας (the parent)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	ο γονέας	οι γονεείς
gen	του γονέα	των γονέων
acc	το γονέα	τους γονεείς
voc	- γονέα	- γονεείς

There are some more masculine nouns with an exceptional declension as: ο διδάσκων (the teacher) (διδάσκ-οντος, -οντα / -οντες, όντων), ο μυς (the muscle) (μυ-ός, μυ / μύ-ες, -ών, μυς), ο ιχθύς (the fish) (ιχθ-ύος, -ύ / -ύες, -ύων, -ύς).

7.2 Feminine nouns

-α, -ες	η θάλασσα (the see)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η θάλασσα	οι θάλασσες
gen	της θάλασσας	των θαλασσών
acc	τη θάλασσα	τις θάλασσες
voc	- θάλασσα	- θάλασσες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the last syllable in the genitive plural, for example: η θάλασσα – των θαλασσών (the see), η ώρα – των ωρών (the time), η καρδιά – των καρδιών (the hart).

-η, -ες	η ψυχή (the soul)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η ψυχή	οι ψυχές
gen	της ψυχής	των ψυχών
acc	την ψυχή	τις ψυχές
voc	- ψυχή	- ψυχές

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the last syllable in the genitive plural, for example: η νίκη – των νικών (the victory). However, a large number of nouns ending in -η, which are stressed on the second-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, do not form the genitive plural. All nouns ending in -η, which are stressed on the third-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, do not form the genitive plural, for example: η ζάχαρη – no genitive plural

-η, -εις archaic declension (πόλη, δύναμη, -ση, -ξη, -ψη)	η θέση (the position)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η θέση	οι θέσεις
gen	της θέσης, θέσεως	των θέσεων
acc	τη θέση	τις θέσεις
voc	- θέση	- θέσεις

Archaic nouns ending in -η, which are stressed on the third-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in all cases plural but the genitive case. The genitive plural bears the stress mark on the third-to-last syllable, for example: η δύναμη – οι δυνάμεις, των δυνάμεων, τις δυνάμεις, - δυνάμεις (the power)

-ος, -οι archaic declension	η οδός (the street)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η οδός	οι οδοί
gen	της οδού	των οδών
acc	την οδό	τις οδούς
voc	- οδό (seldom)	- οδοί (seldom)

Archaic nouns ending in -ος, which are stressed on the third-to-last syllable in the nominative singular, bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in the genitive singular and the genitive and accusative plural, for example: η διάμετρος – της διαμέτρου, των διαμέτρων, τις διαμέτρους (the diameter).

-α, -άδες (impar.)	η γιαγιά (the grandmother)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η γιαγιά	οι γιαγιάδες
gen	της γιαγιάς	των γιαγιάδων
acc	τη γιαγιά	τις γιαγιάδες
voc	- γιαγιά	- γιαγιάδες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in all cases plural.

-ού, -ούδες (impar.)	η αλεπού (the fox)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η αλεπού	οι αλεπούδες
gen	της αλεπούς	των αλεπούδων
acc	την αλεπού	τις αλεπούδες
voc	- αλεπού	- αλεπούδες

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable in all cases plural.

-ω	η Φρόσω (proper name)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	η Φρόσω	-
gen	της Φρόσως	-
acc	τη Φρόσω	-
voc	- Φρόσω	-

7.3 Neuter nouns

-ο, -α	το βιβλίο (the book)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το βιβλίο	τα βιβλία
gen	του βιβλίου	των βιβλίων
acc	το βιβλίο	τα βιβλία
voc	- βιβλίο	- βιβλία

-ι, -ια	το παιδί (the child)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το παιδί	τα παιδιά
gen	του παιδιού	των παιδιών
acc	το παιδί	τα παιδιά
voc	- παιδί	- παιδιά

The most neuter nouns ending in the vocal sound i are written with -ι. However, some nouns are written with -υ: βράδυ, δάκρυ, δίχτυ, δόρυ, οξύ εν στάχυ. **Attention:** βράδυ is written nevertheless with -ι in the genitive singular and in all cases plural: βραδιού, βράδια enz.

-ος, -η	το κράτος (the state)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το κράτος	τα κράτη
gen	του κράτους	των κρατών
acc	το κράτος	τα κράτη
voc	- κράτος	- κράτη

The nouns of this group bear the stress mark on the last syllable in the genitive plural.

-μα, -ματα (impar.)	το γράμμα (the letter)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το γράμμα	τα γράμματα
gen	του γράμματος	των γραμμάτων
acc	το γράμμα	τα γράμματα
voc	- γράμμα	- γράμματα

The nouns of this group take an extra syllable in the genitive singular and in all cases plural. The genitive plural bears the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable.

-σιμο (-ξίμο, -ψίμο) -σίματα (impar.)	το βάψιμο (the painting)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το βάψιμο	τα βαψίματα
gen	του βαψίματος	των βαψιμάτων
acc	το βάψιμο	τα βαψίματα
voc	- βάψιμο	- βαψίματα

The nouns of this group take an extra syllable in the genitive singular and in all cases plural. The genitive plural bears the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable.

-ας, -ατα -ος, -ότα -ως, -ώτα (impar.)	κρέας (the meat), τέρας (the monster) γεγονός (the fact) καθεστώς (the regime), φως (the light)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το κρέας γεγονός φως	τα κρέατα γεγονότα φώτα
gen	του κρέατος γεγονότος φωτός	των κρεάτων γεγονότων φώτων
acc	το κρέας γεγονός φως	τα κρέατα γεγονότα φώτα
voc	- κρέας γεγονός φως	- κρέατα γεγονότα φώτα

These nouns take an extra syllable in the genitive singular and in all cases plural.

7.3.1 Neuter nouns with an exceptional declension

-ον, -οντα -αν, -αντα -εν, -εντα (impar.)	καθήκον (the duty) σύμπαν (the space) φωνήεν (the vowel)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το καθήκον	τα καθήκοντα
gen	του καθήκοντος	των καθηκόντων
acc	το καθήκον	τα καθήκοντα
voc	- καθήκον	- καθήκοντα

These nouns take an extra syllable in the genitive singular and in all cases plural. The genitive plural bears the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable.

το οξύ, το δόρυ (impar.)	το οξύ (the acid), το δόρυ (the spear)	
Case	Singular	Plural
nom	το οξύ δόρυ	τα οξέα δόρατα
gen	του οξέως δόρατος	των οξέων δοράτων
acc	το οξύ δόρυ	τα οξέα δόρατα
voc	- οξύ δόρυ	- οξέα δόρατα

These nouns take an extra syllable in the genitive singular and in all cases plural. The genitive plural bears the stress mark on the second-to-last syllable.