

**Transition to Attic Greek**  
**Paula Debnar, Greek 222, Spring 2006**

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## Transition to Attic Greek

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A quick glance at a topographic map of the Mediterranean, including mainland Greece and the western coast of what is now Turkey, helps to explain the persistence of dialects in Ancient Greek. Mountain ranges, and in some cases the sea, separated the many *poleis* and territories of the Greek-speaking people of antiquity. Inscriptions reveal just how diverse the ancient Greek language was—as diverse as the orthography used to represent it.

While some Ancient Greek dialects were both spoken and written (or used for oral composition), Homeric Greek—a blend of Ionic and Aeolic—was used only for poetry. Epic poems, hymns, and even elegiacs composed in this dialect apparently could be understood by many (if not most) speakers of Greek, but there were no “native” speakers of Homeric Greek. The Aeolic, Doric, Ionic, and Attic dialects, on the other hand, were both literary and spoken (although the two forms were not identical). History and medical texts, for example, were composed in Ionic, regardless of the native dialect of the author. Doric is the dialect of much choral poetry. Although the dialogue in tragedy is in Attic (lightly flavored with epic), its choruses are sprinkled with Doric forms. Philosophical texts and oratory are usually in Attic.

After Alexander’s conquests in the fourth century BCE, a “common language” emerged. *Koine*, as it is called, is a development of Attic and the dialect of the *New Testament*.

### Attic Morphology

#### §1 Consonants

- In Attic you will see  $\tau\tau$  instead of  $\sigma\sigma$ ; thus, *θάλαττα* instead of *θάλασσα* and *πράττω* instead of *πρήττω* (see below on  $\bar{a}$  in place of Homeric/Ionic  $\eta$ ).
- Two sigmas resulting from the addition of a case ending to a stem (e.g., *ἔπεσσι*) will lose one sigma (*ἔπεσι*).
- Also, the combination  $\rho\sigma$  found in Homer (e.g., *κόρση*) will appear as  $\rho\rho$  in Attic (*κόρρη*).

#### §2 Vowels and verbs

The most obvious differences in the forms (morphology) of Homeric, Ionic, and Attic Greek are the results of the contraction of vowels. As Pharr (*Homeric Greek* §459) observes, “Attic carries the contraction of vowels to a further extent than does any other of the Greek dialects, two or more vowels coming together and admitting of contraction practically never remaining uncontracted.” Contraction takes place in all parts of speech, but since so many Greek verb stems end in vowels (*ποιέω*, *make*; *τιμάω*, *honor*; *ἀξιόω*, *think worthy*), we will begin with verbal contractions. Keep in mind, however, that the rules of contraction obtain no matter what part of speech you are dealing with.

uncontracted → contracted

-εω

ποιέω → ποιῶ

ποιέεις → ποιεῖς

ποιέει → ποιεῖ

uncontracted → contracted

ποιέομεν → ποιούμεν

ποιέετε → ποιεῖτε

ποιέουσι → ποιούσι

-αω

τιμάω → τιμῶ

τιμάεις → τιμᾶς

τιμάει → τιμᾶ

τιμάομεν → τιμῶμεν

τιμάετε → τιμᾶτε

τιμάουσι → τιμῶσι

-οω

ἀξιόω → ἀξιῶ

ἀξιόεις → ἀξιῶς

ἀξιόει → ἀξιοῖ

ἀξιόομεν → ἀξιοῦμεν

ἀξιόετε → ἀξιοῦτε

ἀξιόουσι → ἀξιοῦσι

In the examples above the accent in the uncontracted form falls on the vowel of the vowel stem, as is normal, given the rules for accenting verbs (recessive accentuation). In contracted forms the accent tries (usually) to stay on the original accented vowel/diphthong. But if that vowel/diphthong has been absorbed into the contraction, a circumflex may replace the original acute. Consequently, circumflexes in odd places are likely to indicate the presence of a contraction. (Remember: accents are our friends.)

Of course, medio-passive forms of these verbs also contract; for example, *ποιέεται* will become *ποιεῖται*. Even with consonant-stem verbs (e.g., *φέρω*) or verbs whose stems end in *v*, such as —you guessed it— *λύω*, a thematic vowel will contract with any ending that begins with a vowel—which brings me to my dictum.

#### §4 “Debnar’s dictum”

When perusing an old copy of Plato’s *Apology* that I used as an undergraduate, I noticed that in the margins I had regularly queried forms like βούλει, βούλη and διηγῆσῃ. The difficulty with these forms, as I later realized, is that they are due to the contraction of a thematic vowel (ε or η) with the ending -αι, which results in -ει (sometimes -η).

- βούλε-αι (present indicative) becomes βούλει
- βούλ-η-αι (present subjunctive) becomes βούλη,
- διηγῆσ-ε-αι (future indicative) becomes διηγῆσῃ.

The secondary ending of the second person singular (-ο) creates similar problems. My discovery led to the following dictum: *When in doubt about a verb, try a form of the second person singular medio-passive.*

#### §5 Contraction in general

Nouns, adjectives, and participles, etc., contract as well, so you should take a long look at a full table of contractions (e.g., *Homeric Greek* §585 or Smyth, *A Greek Grammar* §59). You are likely to have to consult these tables from time to time throughout the semester.

As you will see, contractions are often determined by the order in the which the vowels appear in the uncontracted form. Having some idea of the likely results of combinations can help you “unearth” the vowels disguised by contraction. Here are some general guidelines. (Consult a grammar for the rare combinations with υ and ι.)

In order from strongest to weakest:

1. Strong: ω and ο (usually yielding ω/ο sounds in contractions).
  - a. An initial ω with any vowel will result in ω (or ω if an iota is present).
  - b. An initial ο followed by an η or α also results in ω. If an iota is present, you may see οι or ω.
  - c. An initial ο followed by ε, ο, or ου will result in ου (or οι if an iota is present).
  - d. The vowels ω and ο are so strong that, even when they are following vowels, they can overpower an initial α or η. The result of α/η + ο/ω is ω (or ω if there is an iota present).
2. Average strength: η and α as initial vowels.
  - a. An initial α is “stronger” than a following ε/η. In other words, α + ε/η (ει or η) will result in an ā (αι or α).
  - b. An initial η is “stronger” than a following α or ε. In other words η + ε/α will yield η (or η in the presence of an iota).
3. The modest epsilon is the weakest, but even it can have some effect.
  - a. An initial ε before another ε it will contract to ει.
  - b. An initial ε followed by α or η usually yields η (or η if a iota is present), but you will sometimes see ā (or αι). (See above “Debnar’s Dictum”).
  - c. An initial ε cannot compete with ο/ω-sounds (see 1 b.)

## §6 Verbal augments

Attic forms of secondary (past) tenses **of the indicative** are augmented. So the *absence* of an augment is important.

## §7 The Declension of Nouns and Adjectives

Words to the wise—or to the panicky, as the case may be. If you know the type of noun you are working with (its declension, gender, etc.), and you know the Homeric case-endings, by acquainting yourself with a few common patterns you can usually figure out the case and number of the Attic form. But there are some real differences, so a quick overview of the declensions in Attic and Homeric is useful.

## §8 The first declension

Attic first-declension nouns use *-αις* (instead of *-ης* or the long form *-ησι*). Some additional differences in the Attic first-declension are the result of contraction.

(Outside the nominative, Attic forms are listed only when they differ from Homeric.)

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Homeric</b>	<b>Attic</b>
nominative/ vocative	<i>βουλή</i>	<i>βουλή</i>
<b>Plural</b>		
nominative/ vocative	<i>βουλαί</i>	
genitive	<i>βουλάων</i>	<i>βουλῶν</i>
dative	<i>βουλῆς</i> or <i>βουλῆσι</i>	<i>βουλαῖς</i>
accusative	<i>βουλάς</i>	

Here, too, you can see that in contractions the accent tries to stay on the original accented vowel/diphthong. If that vowel/diphthong has been absorbed into the contraction, a circumflex will replace an original acute (if it can).

## §9 The old-fashion $\bar{a}$

The retention of an earlier  $\bar{a}$  in Attic is not restricted to the first declension, but I have included this feature here, since it affects most first-declension nouns with stems ending in  $\epsilon$ ,  $\iota$ , or  $\rho$ . These keep  $\bar{a}$  throughout singular as well as plural: *ἀγορά*, *ἀγορᾶς*, *ἡ*.

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Homeric</b>	<b>Attic</b>
nominative/ vocative	ἀγορή	ἀγορά
genitive	ἀγορήs	ἀγοράs
dative	ἀγορήῃ	ἀγοράῃ
accusative	ἀγορή	ἀγοράν
<b>Plural</b>		
nominative/vocative	ἀγοραί	
genitive	ἀγοράων	ἀγορῶν
dative	ἀγορήs or ἀγορήσι	ἀγοραῖs
accusative	ἀγοράs	

### §10 The second declension

As was true of the first declension, the second declension uses a short form of the dative plural, *-οιs* (not *-οισι*).

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Homeric</b>	<b>Attic</b>
nominative/ vocative	θυμός / θυμέ	θυμός / θυμέ
dative plural	θυμοῖs, θυμοῖσι	θυμοῖs

The genitive singular of *masculine* nouns of the Attic first declension seems to have borrowed an ending from the second declension (mostly masculine and neuter) : *-ου* (instead of the Homeric *-αο* or *-εω*).

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Homeric</b>	<b>Attic</b>
nominative/ vocative	αἰχμητήs	αἰχμητήs
genitive	αἰχμητάο or αἰχμητέω	αἰχμητοῦ

## §11 The “Attic declension”

The so-called Attic-declension consists of second-declension nouns or adjectives that have undergone quantitative metathesis, an exchange of vowel lengths. In the word for temple (*νηός*), for example, the long *η* becomes a short *ε*, while the short *ο* (*οι* as well) becomes a long *ω*. The good news is that this change makes it easier to distinguish “ship” from “temple” in Greek. Equally good news is that the accent of the nominative is kept throughout the paradigm. Consult your grammar for other examples of Attic-declension nouns and adjectives (Even more good news: there are not many).

Homeric *ὁ νηός* (temple) —> Attic *ὁ νεώς*

	<b>Homeric</b>	<b>Attic</b>
<b>Singular</b>		
nom/voc	<i>νηός</i>	<i>νεώς</i>
genitive	<i>νηοῦ</i>	<i>νεώ</i>
dative	<i>νηῶ</i>	<i>νεῶ</i>
accusative	<i>νηόν</i>	<i>νεών</i>
<b>Plural</b>		
nom/voc	<i>νηοί</i>	<i>νεῶ</i>
genitive	<i>νηῶν</i>	<i>νεών</i>
dative	<i>νηοῖς</i>	<i>νεώς</i>
accusative	<i>νηούς</i>	<i>νεώς</i>

## §12 First- and second-declension contracted adjectives

Contracted adjectives can easily trip you up. When you encounter the adjective χρυσοῦς (*golden*), if you are not on your toes, you could easily forget that this form can be the masculine, nominative, singular as well as the masculine, accusative, plural.

Singular	masc.	fem.	neuter
nom/voc	χρυσοῦς (> χρύσεος)	χρυσῆ	χρυσοῦν (> χρύσειον)
genitive	χρυσοῦ	χρυσῆς	χρυσοῦ
dative	χρυσῶ	χρυσῇ	χρυσῶ
accusative	χρυσοῦν	χρυσῆν	χρυσοῦν
Plural			
nom/voc	χρυσοῖ	χρυσαιῖ	χρυσᾶ
genitive	χρυσῶν	χρυσῶν	χρυσῶν
dative	χρυσοῖς	χρυσαιῖς	χρυσοῖς
accusative	χρυσοῦς	χρυσᾶς	χρυσᾶ

Throughout the above paradigm a circumflex appears in the ultima, even though the word was originally accented χρύσεος. My guess (as a non-linguist) is that even the Greeks gave up trying to figure out where accents should go in contracted words. Notice also that the contraction of εα in the neuter plural results in ᾶ not the expected η—perhaps to avoid confusing it with the feminine nominative singular. Then again, who knows!

## § 13 The third declension

Third-declension nouns regularly use the short ending -σι (not -εσι or -εσσι) for the dative plural. Beware: the s of the ending interacts with the final consonant of consonant-stem nouns.

nominative	φύλαξ	δαίμων	ἐλπίς	χάρις	σῶμα
stem +σι	φύλακ-σι	δαιμόν-σι	ἐλπιδ-σι	χάριτ-σι	σώματ-σι
dative plural	φύλαξι	δαίμοσι	ἐλπίσι	χάρισι	σώμασι

### §14 Third-declension -σ stem nouns and adjectives

Like their Homeric counterparts the Attic form of these nouns (and adjectives) have lost an original *s* between two vowels. But unlike the Homeric forms, in Attic the adjacent vowels contract:

In the examples below, notice how easy it is to determine the case and number *if* you can figure out what regular third-declension ending is hidden within a contraction.

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Attic a- stem</b>	<b>(Homeric)</b>	<b>Attic o- stem</b>	<b>(Homeric)</b>
nominative/ voc	γέρας (n.)		αἰδώς (f.)	
genitive	γέρως	(γερα-ος)	αἰδούς	αἰδο-ος
dative	γέραι		αἰδοῖ	
accusative	γέρας		αἰδῶ	αἰδο-α
<b>Plural</b>				
nominative/ vocative	γερά	(γερα-α)	(declined in sg. only)	
genitive	γερώων	(γερα-ων)		
dative	γέρασι			
accusative	γέρά	(γερα-α)		

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Attic</b> ε- stem, ( <b>Homeric</b> ) (n.)		<b>Attic</b> ε- stem, (m.)	<b>(Homeric)</b>
nominative/ voc.	ἔπος (n.)		τριήρης /τριήρες (m.)	
genitive	ἔπους	(ἔπε-ος)	τριήρους	(τριήρε-ος)
dative	ἔπει		τριήρει	
accusative	ἔπος		τριήρη	(τριήρε-α)
<b>Plural</b>				
nominative/voc.	ἔπη	(ἔπε-α)	τριήρεις	(τριήρε-ες)
genitive	ἐπῶν	(ἐπέ-ων)	τριήρων	(τριήρε-ων)
dative	ἔπεσι	ἔπεσι/ ἐπέεσσι	τριήρεσι	
accusative	ἔπη	(ἔπε-α)	τριήρεις (borrowed from the nom.)	(τριήρε-ας)

An important third-declension ε-stem noun compared with two third-declension nouns whose stems end in -εε.

<b>Singular</b>	<b>Attic</b> ε- stem, (m.)	<b>Attic</b> εε- stem (m.)	<b>Attic</b> εε- stem (n.)
<b>stem</b>			
nominative/ vocative	Σωκράτης /Σώκρατες	Περικλῆς / Περικλείς (m.)	δέος
genitive	Σωκράτους	Περικλέους	δέους
dative	Σωκράτει	Περικλεῖ	δέει
accusative	Σωκράτη	Περικλέα	δέος

### §15 Third-declension adjectives with -ον stems (two-ending adjectives)

Many comparative adjectives (e.g., *ἀμείνων*, -ον and *βελτίων*, -ον) fall into this category. The final -ν of the stem disappears when followed by an α and the resulting combination of vowels does odd things.

Singular	masculine/fem		neuter
nominative/voc	<i>βελτίων</i>		<i>βέλτιον</i>
genitive	<i>βελτίονος</i>		
dative	<i>βελτίονι</i>		
accusative	<i>βελτίονα</i> or <i>βελτίω</i>	<i>βελτίο[ν]α</i> = <i>βελτία</i> = <i>βελτίω</i>	
Plural			
nominative/vocative	<i>βελτίονες</i> or <i>βελτίους</i>	<i>βελτίο[ν]ες</i> = <i>βελτίους</i> = <i>βελτίους</i>	<i>βελτίονα</i> or <i>βελτίω</i>
genitive	<i>βελτίων</i>		<i>βελτίο[ν]α</i> = <i>βελτία</i> = <i>βελτίω</i>
dative	<i>βελτίοσι</i>		
accusative	<i>βελτίονας</i> or <i>βελτίους</i>	<i>(βελτίους</i> is borrowed from the nominative plural)	<i>βελτίονα</i> or <i>βελτίω</i>

### §16 Miscellaneous metathesis in the third declension

Some third-declension forms also undergo quantitative metathesis (change in the quantity of some of their vowels). You will frequently see this in the genitive singular.

- *βασιλεύς*, Homeric genitive *βασιλῆος* → Attic genitive *βασιλέως*
- *πόλις*, Homeric genitive *πόλεος* → Attic genitive *πόλεως* The Attic form's unexpected accent on the antepenult (when the ultima is long) betrays the presence of metathesis.

## §17 Crasis

Crasis is a “mixing” of the vowels of adjoining words. Breathing marks in strange places, or a rough breathing where you expect a smooth, are hints that you may be dealing with crasis.

- τὰ ληθῆ̃ = τὰ ἀληθῆ̃
- ταῦτά = τὰ αὐτά
- ἀνήρ = ὁ ἀνήρ

## §18 Optatives of contract verbs

In the singular active -εω, -οω, and -αω verbs often use the optative suffixes -ιην, -ιης, and -ιη (instead of the regular -οιμι, οἰς, -οι). Consult a grammar for the complete paradigms.

## §19 Principal parts

Attic uses the perfect and aorist passive (including participles) much more often than does Homeric Greek, so you should review these forms. Moreover, since you will need all six principal parts and because some Attic principal parts may differ from their Homeric counterparts, be sure to review (and/or memorize) the principal parts of the verbs you encounter. You may have to look some up in your lexicon.

## § 20A final comment about morphology

These notes are intended to help ease the transition from Homer and Ionic to Attic. They are by no means comprehensive. Consequently, you should make a habit of consulting your grammars (and/or lexica) when in doubt about forms.

## Attic Syntax

### §21 The article

The demonstrative force of *ὁ, ἡ, τό* is sometimes preserved in Attic (as in *τὸ καὶ τό, this and that*). More often than not, however, *ὁ, ἡ, τό* are used as definite articles (*the*) indicating that the thing/person is known: *ὁ ἀνὴρ, the man* (not *a man*). (See handout for other uses of the article.)

### §22 Use of the article to create substantives

Attic authors use the article plus an adjective (or participle—or anything else used to limit a noun or pronoun) to create a substantive (a noun). The gender of the article and adjective often allow you to infer the “missing” noun.

- *ἡ ἀγαθή* (adjective), *the good [woman]*
- *ὁ σοφός* (adjective), *the wise [man]*
- *τὰ πεπραγμένα* (participle), *the things having-been-done*, that is, *what happened*
- *οἱ βουλόμενοι* (participle), *the [men] willing*, i.e., *volunteers*
- *τὰ ἔμεινον* (genitive), *my things*, or *my business*

Some authors use the article + adjective to create abstract nouns.

- *τὸ καλόν*, *the good* (literally *the good [thing]*)
- *τὸ δίκαιον*, *justice* (literally, *the just [thing]*)
- *τὰ ἀληθῆ* (*τὰ ἀληθῆ*), *the truth* (*the true [things]*)

N.b. There are other ways to form abstract nouns in Greek as well (e.g., *δικαιοσύνη, justice*; *ἀληθεία, truth*).

### §23 The position of the article

The position of the article in relation to adjectives and the nouns (or pronouns) they modify is important—and useful.

In the **attributive** position the article appears directly before the adjective (or other modifier), regardless of whether the noun is preceded by an article or not; for example, *the good woman* can be expressed by

- *ἡ ἀγαθὴ γυνή* (very common)
- *ἡ γυνή ἡ ἀγαθή* or
- *γυνή ἡ ἀγαθή* (least common)

Notice that in all of the above instances you find *ἡ* immediately before *ἀγαθή*.



Depending on the meaning of the expression, you may find a dative instead of accusative.

δοκεῖ + infinitive + dative, *it seems to [dative] to be a good idea to*  
ἔξεστι(ν), *it is possible* (sometimes the simple ἔστι is used to mean ἔξεστι) + dative  
πρέπει, *it is fitting* (+ dative)

εἰκός [ἔστίη] + infinitive, , *it is reasonable, it is likely that ...* (εἰκός is a neuter, singular, perfect participle).

## §25 Personal expressions.

On the other hand, Greek sometimes uses personal expressions where English would use an impersonal one. δοκοῦσι μοι is often best translated as “It seems to me that they” instead of “They seem to me...” In English we would probably say *It is right for me to go away* instead of *I am right to go away*, which is the literal meaning of δίκαιός εἰμι ἀπελθεῖν.

## §26 Verbal adjectives

Verbal adjectives ending in -τεον express obligation. The person *for whom* there is an obligation may appear in the dative (if expressed at all); e.g., ἀπολογητέον means *a defense must be made* (from ἀπολογέομαι, *to speak in defense of oneself, to make a defense*), and μοι ἀπολογητέον means *I must defend myself*. But verbal adjectives may also be used in a personal construction: *We must help the city* can be expressed in Greek as *The city must be helped by us*: ὠφελητέα (f. sg. nom.) ἐστίη ἡμῖν ἡ πόλις.

## §27 Personal pronouns (For Attic forms of the personal pronoun consult charts in your grammar.)

Attic Greek uses the adjective/pronoun αὐτός, -ή, -ό in its oblique cases (i.e., all cases except the nominative/vocative) as the third person personal pronoun (*him, her, it, them*). In the nominative, αὐτός, -ή, -ό continues means “self,” while used as an attributive adjective αὐτός, -ή, -ό means *the same* (see above).

By the way, to express agency Attic often uses ὑπό + genitive of agent. The perfect passive, however, continues to use the dative of agent (as in Homer).

## §28 Result (or “consecutive”) clauses

- Natural result ὥστε + infinitive (negative μή)
- Emphasis on actual result ὥστε + finite verb (negative οὐ)

## §29 Purpose (“final”) clauses

- With a conjunction (e.g., ἵνα, ὅπως) + finite verb in
  - (when in primary sequence) the subjunctive (negative μή)
  - (when in secondary sequence) the optative (sometimes not always)
- With the future participle (especially when main verb is verb of motion) (negative οὐ)
- With relative ὅστις + future indicative (negative μή)

### §30 Conditional sentences

Conditional sentences are sentences with an *if*-clause (also called the *protasis*), which must be fulfilled for the main or *then*- clause (the *apodosis*) to be true. Conditionals sentences can be “once-off” or “general.” (See handout by H. Dik on conditions or the condition charts in your grammar).

Once-off’ (i.e., *not* general) conditions

Type of condition	English example	Greek <i>if</i> -clause ( <i>protasis</i> )	Greek <i>then</i> -clause ( <i>apodosis</i> )
Neutral (no implication about likelihood of fulfillment of condition).	<i>If it rained, the lake is not dry.</i>	indicative	indicative
*Contrary-to-fact present (condition not fulfilled )	<i>If I were really smart [implied: but I am not], I would be learning Chinese [implied: but I am not].</i>	εἰ + past indicative (often imperfect) (negative μή)	ἄν + past indicative (often imperfect) (negative οὐ)
*Contrary-to-fact past (condition not fulfilled )	<i>If I had been really smart when I was young [implied: but I was not], I would have learned Chinese [implied: but I did not].</i>	εἰ + past indicative (often aorist) (negative μή)	ἄν + past indicative (often aorist) (negative οὐ)
Future More Vivid (likely or probable that the condition will be fulfilled)	<i>If I memorize my principal parts, I will do well in Greek</i>	εἰάν* + subjunctive (*or ἄν or ἦν) (negative μή)	future indicative (or equivalent) (negative οὐ)
Future Less Vivid (possible)	<i>If I were to learn the principal parts of all Greek verbs [hah!], I would always get an A+.</i>	εἰ + optative (negative μή)	ἄν+ optative (negative οὐ)

\*Tense outside the indicative usually refers to aspect, not time. So the imperfect in contrary-to-fact conditions (CTF) may be used anytime the author wants to emphasize continuation (even in past CTF). The aorist may be used (even in the present CTF) to avoid implying continuation. The reason the imperfect is often used for the present CTF is because the action continues right up to the present. Context should allow you to distinguish between past and present contrary-to-fact conditions. By the way, authors also mix up conditions, so be on the alert.

### §31 Potentials (“could,” “might,” “could have”...)

Potential (now and in future) : ἄν + optative (present for continuing action; aorist for simple action)

Past potential, which continues (right up to, but not including, the present moment) = ἄν + imperfect

Past potential, which (in the present) is no longer potential = ἄν + aorist indicative

### §32 General Conditions

General Conditions	English example	If-clause (protasis)	Then-clause (apodosis)
Present	<i>If I run too quickly, I lose my breath.</i>	ἔάν* + subjunctive (*or ἄν or ἦν)	present indicative
Past	<i>When I was young, if I ran quickly, I lost my breath.</i>	εἰ + optative	imperfect

You can also use a relative clause or temporal clause instead of the if-clause:

- *Whenever I run/ran too quickly, I lose/lost my breath* (temporal clause).
- *Whoever runs/ran quickly, loses/lost her breath.* (relative clause).

Notice that “*Whenever I run*” is equivalent to “*If I ever run,*” while “*Whoever runs*” is equivalent to *If anyone ever runs.*

### §33 Indirect statement (also called indirect discourse or *oratio obliqua*): **three constructions**

1) Introductory verb of saying or thinking plus an

#### **Infinitive\***

a) **accusative subject + infinitive** if the subject of the introductory verb is **different** from the subject of the indirect statement.

ἡγούμην ταύτην οἰκειότητα μεγίστην εἶναι (*I thought that this relationship was most important*).

b) **infinitive + nominative** modifiers of the subject, if the subject of the introductory verb is **the same** as the subject of the indirect statement

ἡγείται μέγιστη εἶναι (*She thinks she is most important*).

\* The tense of the infinitive [often] expresses time relative to the introductory verb.

2) Introductory verb of physical perception, knowing, showing, learning, or remembering plus a

**Participle\***

a) **Participle** in the **accusative** + [optional accusative noun/pronoun] if the subjects are **different**.

*οἶδα τοὺς Ἀθηναίους χειμάζοντας. (I know that the Athenians are wintering.)*

b) **Participle** [and modifiers] in the **nominative** if the subjects are the **same**.

*αἰσθανόμεθα γελοῖοι ὄντες. (We perceive that we are ridiculous).*

\*The tense of the participle [often] expresses time relative to the introductory verb.

3) Introductory verb of saying, knowing, showing, or feeling emotion plus

**Conjunction** (ὅτι, ὡς) + clause with **finite verb**

a) When the introductory verb is in a **primary** tense, the verb of the indirect statement will be in

- the **same tense** that it was in direct statement—much as it is in English.
- λέγω ὅτι οὗτος ὁ φοιτῶν ἐστίν πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα (*I say that this is the man who was visiting my wife*).

b) When the introductory verb is in a **secondary** (past) tense, the verb of indirect discourse *sometimes* (but not always)

- shifts to the corresponding tense of the **optative**.
- εἶπον ὅτι οὗτος ὁ φοιτῶν εἶη πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα (*I said that this was the man who was visiting my wife*).

In other words, unlike English, in which there is a change in tense, in Greek there a **change in mood**.

Which method? The rules are not hard and fast. A verb may admit more than one construction, and a change in construction may imply a difference in the meaning of the introductory verb. So when in doubt, consult a grammar.