

Chapter 33

The First Aorist

33.1 The **Aorist** is the tense that implies a simple action - a complete action, or an act that took place at one point in time e.g. I did (something).

If an action in the past was continuous or repeated, Greek uses the **Imperfect**

e.g. I used to (do something), I was (doing something)

Greek is like English and German, in that verbs make their past tenses in different ways –

Some verbs have endings added to the stem, e.g. I call, I called.

English calls these **Weak** Verbs, Greek calls them **First Aorists**.

Some verbs alter the stem, e.g. I run, I ran.

English calls these **Strong** verbs, Greek calls them **Second Aorists**.

In the case of Verbs with a First Aorist form, the Present and the Aorist stems are usually identical.

However - Greek, like most languages, is developing with time, and words and grammar change.

Occasionally Greek writers, including some of the Classical authors and NT writers made 'mistakes' with their grammar, and used 1st Aorist endings on 2nd Aorist stems. Don't let this confuse you when you meet it - it's just the equivalent of someone mixing up English grammar and saying "I wented". In fact, some English verbs are currently flipping between Strong and Weak - do you say "it shone" or "it shined" ?

33.2 The basic pattern for the First Aorist Indicative Active

In forming the First Aorist Indicative, the augment **ε-** denoting a past tense, is added to the front of the stem.

A sigma **-σ-** goes on the end of the stem, and the personal endings are added after the sigma.

I	ἐ-STEM- σα	ἐ-STEM- σαμεν	we
you	ἐ-STEM- σας	ἐ-STEM- σατε	y'all
he/she/it	ἐ-STEM- σεν	ἐ-STEM- σαν	they

Chant the endings **σα σας σεν σαμεν σατε σαν** until you have them memorized.

NOTE the predominant **-σα-** of the First Aorist. We will see the **-σα-** in the Aorist Infinitive, the Participle, and (at least the sigma) in the Imperative. When you see a **-σα-** think "**Simple Action**" or "**AoriSt**"

Compound Verbs (stem + prefix) (See Section 29.5)

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 **ἀνη-**, and **κατα-** may become **κατη-**.

Compound verbs with **εὖ-** often do not have an augment, just use the personal endings for the tense.

If the prefix ends in a **-κ**, the **-κ** changes to a **-ξ** before the augment.

Contract Verbs (See Section 26.4)

Because of the sigma, contraction does not take place. However, for almost all contract verbs (except **καλέω** and its compounds) the ending vowel of the stem is broadened.

α becomes η ε becomes η ο becomes ω **καλέω** does not broaden the ε

Examples : Read the following table **aloud** several times until you are familiar with the way First Aorists are formed.

	Present		Aorist	
I beget	γεννάω	ἐγέννησα	I begat	
I serve	διακονέω	διηκόνησα	I served	
I call	καλέω	ἐκάλεσα	I called	
I walk around	περιπατέω	περιεπάτησα	I walked around	
I do, act	ποιέω	ἐποίησα	I did, acted, made	

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

- | | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| 1. ὁ Ἀβραὰμ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαάκ. | Abraham begat Isaac. | (Matt. 1:2) |
| 2. Κύριε, πότε σε εἶδομεν . . .
ξένον ἢ γυμνὸν . . ἢ ἐν φυλακῇ
καὶ οὐ διηκονήσαμέν σοι ; | Lord, when did we see you . .
a stranger, or naked, . . or in prison,
and did not serve you? | (Matt. 25:44) |
| 3. ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐρεῖ αὐτοῖς,
Ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν, . . .
ἐμοὶ ἐποιήσατε. | The king will say to them,
"Truly I say to you . . .
you did it to me." | (Matt. 25:40) |
| 4. καὶ προσῆλθον αὐτῷ τυφλοὶ καὶ χωλοὶ
ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς. | And blind and lame (men) came to him in the
temple, and he healed them. | (Matt. 21:14) |
| 5. οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ἐπετίμησαν αὐτοῖς. | But the disciples rebuked them. | (Matt. 19:13) |
| 6. μετὰ ταῦτα ἐφάνερωσεν ἑαυτὸν
πάλιν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς μαθηταῖς
ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης. | After these things, Jesus revealed himself
again to the disciples
on (at) the sea. | (John 21:1) |
| 7. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν. | But Jesus went away from there. | (Matt. 12:15) |
| 8. Ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν. | My daughter died just now. | (Matt. 9:18) |
| 9. ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς διατάσων
τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ. | Jesus finished commanding (giving orders)
to his disciples. | (Matt. 11:1) |
| 10. καὶ ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν
ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐθεώρησαν αὐτούς
οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτῶν. | And they went up into heaven
in the cloud, and their enemies saw them. | (Rev. 11:12) |

NOTE : Section 33.3 may be postponed until later in the course.

33.3 Possibilities for Weirdness : We have already met all these possibilities :

- i. If the stem begins with a vowel**, the augment causes the same changes as for the Imperfect.
If the stem begins with a iota the augment is often omitted. (See Section 29.4)
- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------|
| ε + α = η | ε + ε = η | ε + ο = ω | ε + ι = ει or ι |
| ε + αι = η | ε + ει = η | ε + οι = ω | |
| ε + αυ = ηυ | ε + ευ = ευ or ηυ | | |
- ii. Liquid Verbs** (stem ends in **-λ, -μ, -ν, or -ρ**) (See Section 27.1)
The **-σ-** of the Aorist drops out, and there may be other minor changes to the stem, similar to what happens when forming the Future tense.
- iii. Verbs whose stems end in a guttural, labial, or dental** (See Section 27.5)
- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Gutturals | κ, γ, χ combine with σ to give ξ |
| Labials | π, β, φ combine with σ to give ψ |
| Dentals | τ, δ, θ (or ζ) drop out when σ is added |

Examples : Read the following table **aloud** several times until you are familiar with the way First Aorists are formed. **Reading aloud** builds aural memory and helps to alert one to the "hidden sigmas" in ψ and ξ. Note that πορεύομαι is Deponent in the Present tense (uses Middle endings), but has Active endings in the Aorist.

	Present	Aorist	
I love	ἀγαπάω	ἠγάπησα	I loved
I announce	ἀγγέλλω	ἠγγειλα	I announced
I buy	ἀγοράζω	ἠγόρασα	I bought
I take up	αἴρω	ἤρα	I took up
I ask for	αἰτέω	ἤτησα	I asked for
I announce	ἀναγγέλλω	ἀνήγγειλα	I announced
I see	βλέπω	ἔβλεψα	I saw

I write	γράφω	ἔγραψα	I wrote
I raise	ἐγείρω	ἤγειρα	I raised
I wish	θέλω (ἔθελω)	ἠθέλησα	I wished
I am strong, able	ἰσχύω	ἴσχυσα	I was strong, able
I dwell	κατοικέω	κατώκησα	I dwelt
I preach	κηρύσσω	ἐκήρυξα	I preached
I steal	κλέπτω	ἔκλεψα	I stole
I cry out	κράζω	ἔκραξα	I cried out
I remain	μένω	ἔμεινα	I remained
I dwell	οἰκέω	ῴκησα	I dwelt
I swear	ὀμνύω	ὤμοσα	I swore (an oath)
I send	πέμπω	ἔπεμψα	I sent
I save	σώζω	ἔσωσα	I saved
I rejoice	χαίρω	ἐχάρησα	I rejoiced

Practice - until you can read and translate easily

1. ὁ Ἰωσήφ . . . ἐποίησεν ὡς
προσέταξεν αὐτῷ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου. Joseph did as the angel of the Lord
ordered him. (*see Matt. 1:24*)
2. οἱ ὄχλοι . . . ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεόν. The crowds glorified God. (*see Matt. 9:8*)
3. τότε ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ. Then they returned to Jerusalem. (*Acts 1:12*)
4. ὁ Ἰωάννης ἔπεμψεν πρὸς τὸν κύριον
λέγων, Σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος
ἢ ἄλλον προσδοκῶμεν ; John sent to the Lord,
saying, "Are you the coming one (the one to come)
or do we await another ? (*Luke 7:19*)
5. ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν, Τίς ἐστὶν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ; They asked him, "Who is the man?" (*John 5:12*)
6. ἦραν οὖν τὸν λίθον. Then they took away the stone. (*John 11:41*)
7. ἦλθεν αὐτοῦ ὁ ἐχθρὸς καὶ ἐπέσπειρεν
ζιζάνια ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σίτου
καὶ ἀπῆλθεν. His enemy came and (over-)sowed
darnel amongst the grain,
and went away. (*Matt. 13:25*)
8. ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου. . . As I swore in my wrath. (*Heb. 3:11*)
9. καὶ ὁ δράκων ἐπολέμησεν
καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι αὐτοῦ
καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν. And the dragon fought,
and his angels,
and did not prevail. (*Rev. 12:7-8*)
10. καὶ ἐπέστρεψα βλέπειν τὴν φωνὴν
ἣτις ἐλάλει μετ' ἐμοῦ. And I turned around to see the voice
which was talking to (with) me (*Rev. 1:12*)
(*ἐλάλει - Imperfect - the voice was talking for a period of time. ἣτις - Relative Pronoun + τις*)

33.4 Sentences for reading and translation

1. οὕτως γὰρ ἐδίωξαν τοὺς προφῆτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν. (*Matt. 5:12*)
2. ὁ Μαθθαῖος ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ. (*see Matt. 9:9*)
3. καὶ ἠκολούθησαν αὐτῷ ὄχλοι, . . . καὶ ἐθεράπευσεν αὐτούς. (*see Matt. 12:15*)
4. καὶ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς . . . ἐν παραβολαῖς λέγων,
Ἴδου ἐξῆλθεν ὁ σπείρων τοῦ σπείρειν. (*see Matt. 13:3*)
5. ἄλλα δὲ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὰς ἀκάνθας, καὶ ἀνέβησαν αἱ ἄκανθαι καὶ ἐπνιξαν αὐτά.
(*ἄλλα is the Neuter Nominative Plural of ἄλλος, -η, -ον*) (*Matt. 13:7*)
6. ἐχθρὸς ἄνθρωπος τοῦτο ἐποίησεν. (*Matt. 13:28*)
7. ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς παραβολὰς ταύτας, μετῆρεν ἐκεῖθεν. (*Matt. 13:53*)
8. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνεχώρησεν ἐκεῖθεν ἐν πλοίῳ εἰς ἔρημον τόπον κατ' ἰδίαν. (*Matt. 14:13*)
9. οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ . . . ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραζαν. (*see Matt. 14:26*)
10. οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες, Ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.
(*Matt. 14:33*)

33.5 Writing Practice : Write the Greek text, while saying aloud (Matt. 5:3-6)

μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.	Happy (are) the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of the Heavens.
μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.	Happy are the ones mourning, for they shall be encouraged.
μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.	Happy are the humble, for they shall inherit the earth.
μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην,	Happy are the ones hungering and thirsting (for) righteousness

πεινῶντες and διψῶντες are Present participles of πεινάω - I hunger for, and διψάω - I thirst

33.6 New Testament Passages for reading and translation : Mark 12:1-9

In your Greek New Testament, read the passage aloud several times until you can read it without long pauses or stumbling. Then use the helps to translate it.

ἤρξατο	(he) began	(Aorist of ἄρχομαι - I begin)
περιέθηκεν	(he) put around	(from περιτίθημι - I place/put around)
ὁ φραγμός	fence, hedge	
ᾧρυξεν	(he) dug	(Aorist of ὀρύσσω - I dig)
τὸ ὑπολήνιον	wine-vat - the container which goes under the wine-press (ὑπό, under + ἡ ληνός, press. A press was built on stones, with a hole in the ground for the vat)	
ὁ πύργος	tower, watch-tower	
ἐξέδετο	(he) leased, gave out	(from ἐκδίδωμι - I give out)
ἀπεδήμησεν	(he) went away, left the country (Aorist of ἀποδημέω - I emigrate; from ἀπο, from + δῆμος - one's one people)	
τῷ καιρῷ	at the time (of the harvest)	
παρά	from (with Genitive)	
λάβη	he might receive	(Aorist Subjunctive of λαμβάνω - I receive, get, take)
λαβόντες	having received, taken	(Aorist Participle of λαμβάνω - I receive, get, take) (Masculine Plural, therefore describing the tenant-farmers, not the landowner)
ἔδειραν	they beat	(Aorist of δέρω - I beat, flog)
κάκεϊνον	and that one	(καὶ + ἐκεῖνος - that)
ἐκεφαλίωσαν	they wounded in the head (Aorist of κεφαλίσω - I hit on the head, κεφαλή - head)	
ἠτίμασαν	they treated with disrespect, insulted	(Aorist of ἀτιμάζω - I insult)
ἀπέκτειναν	they killed	(Aorist of ἀποκτείνω - I kill)
καὶ πολλοὺς ἄλλους	and also many others	(Masculine Accusative plural)
οὓς	whom	(Relative Pronoun - see chapter 15)
μὲν . . . δὲ	some . . . others	
δέροντες	beating	(Present Participle of δέρω - I beat, flog)
ἀποκτείνοντες	killing	(variant spelling of Present Participle of ἀποκτείνω - I kill)
ἓνα	one	(Masculine Accusative singular of εἷς, μία, ἓν - one)
ἔσχατον	last	(Neuter Nominative singular of ἔσχατος -η, -ον - last, used as an Adverb)
ἐντραπήσονται	they will respect (Future Passive of ἐντρέπω - I put to shame, Passive - I respect)	
εἶπαν	(they) said	(variant spelling of εἶπον - see chapter 31)
ἀποκτείνωμεν	let us kill	(Present Subjunctive of ἀποκτείνω - I kill)
ἔσται	(it) will be	(Future of εἶμι - I am)
τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος	of the vineyard	(Genitive of ὁ ἀμπελών)
ἀπολέσει	he will destroy, have someone put to death	(Future of ἀπόλλυμι - I destroy)
δώσει	he will give	(Future of δίδωμι - I give)

33.7 Vocabulary to learn

ἀναχωρέω	I go away, withdraw
ἀποκτείνω	I kill
βασιλεύω	I rule, become king
δέρω	I beat, flog
ἐπισπείρω	I sow again, re-seed
θεωρέω	I observe, see (<i>a theory is expounded for others to look at and check out</i>)
ἰσχύω	I am strong, strong enough, prevail, am able
κληρονομέω	I inherit
μεταίρω	I move away, remove (<i>from μετά + αἴρω - I pick up</i>)
ὀμνύω	I swear (an oath)
πνίγω	I choke (<i>Passive - I drown</i>)
πολεμέω	I fight, wage war (<i>ὁ πόλεμος - war, hence polemic</i>)
προστάσσω	I command
τελευτάω	I am dying, am at the point of death
τελέω	I complete, finish, bring to an end
φυτεύω	I plant (<i>hence the scientific prefix phyto-</i>)
χωρέω	I make room for, accept
χωρίζω	I separate, leave, depart
ἡ ἄκανθα	acanthus, thorn, thistle
το ζιζάνιον	lolium, darnel, "tares" - an inedible species of grass
ἡ κληρονομία	inheritance, property, possession
ὁ κληρονόμος	heir
ὁ κλῆρος	lot, share, portion
ὁ ξένος	stranger
το σιτίον	grain Plural - food
ὁ σῖτος	grain, wheat
ἕνδεκα	eleven (<i>does not decline</i>)
κενός, -η, -ον	empty
ξένος, -η, -ον	strange, foreign, unusual
ἐκεῖθεν	from there (<i>ἐκεῖ = there, -θεν suffix indicates motion away from</i>)
ἔτι	still
μέν	(<i>a particle used to show contrast, continuation of a series, or emphasis</i>)
μέν . . . δέ	one the one hand . . . on the other hand; either . . . or; some . . . others

(do not attempt to use cases other than the nominative singular for the following nouns yet)

ὁ ἀμπελῶν	vineyard
ὁ βασιλεύς	king
ὁ δράκων	dragon
ἡ θυγάτηρ	daughter (<i>the "gh" in daughter is related to the γ in θυγάτηρ</i>)