

## Some Rules for Greek Accents

- The **grave** accent ( ` ) can occur *only* on the ultima.
- The grave accent can occur on either long or short vowels (or diphthongs).
- The grave accent occurs *only* on the ultima of a word that is immediately followed by another word, with no intervening mark of punctuation.
- An **acute** accent ( ´ ) on the ultima is changed to the grave accent on any word that is immediately followed by another word, with no intervening mark of punctuation: θεός, but θεός ἦν ὁ λόγος.
- The acute accent can occur on either long or short vowels (or diphthongs).
- The acute accent can occur on any one of the last three syllables of a word.
- The acute accent can stand on the antepenult (ἐλώρια) *only* if the ultima is short.
  - Corollary: If a word has an acute accent on the antepenult, the ultima *must* be short. (If ἐλώρια, then -ᾶ.)
- The **circumflex** accent ( ˘ ) can stand *only* on a long vowel (η, ω, ᾱ, ι, υ) or a diphthong.
- The circumflex accent can stand *only* on one of the last two syllables of a word.
- The circumflex accent can stand on the penult (πρῶτα) *only* if the ultima is short.
  - Corollary: If a word has a circumflex accent on the penult, the ultima *must* be short. (If πρῶτα, then -ᾶ.)
- If a long penult is accented, and the ultima is short, the accent *must* be a circumflex.
  - Corollary: If a long penult has an acute accent, the ultima *must* be long. (If χώρα, then -ᾶ.)

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- The accent of Greek **nouns** and **adjectives** is *persistent*. That is, each noun and adjective has a place where its accent naturally tends to be. This place needs to be learned for each noun or adjective. E.g., in ἄνθρωπος the accent naturally tends to be on the syllable containing the letters ἄνθ. This is, however, subject to the universal rules for Greek accents (above). Thus ἄνθρωπος (nominative singular), but ἀνθρώπῳ (dative singular).
- The accent of nouns and adjectives changes its position *only* to accommodate the universal rules for Greek accents (above).
  - Exception: The genitive plural of *all* nouns of the first declension (α-declension nouns) has a circumflex accent on the ultima. Thus θάλαττα (nominative singular), but θαλαττῶν (genitive plural). Note: This is only an *apparent* exception. The accent is the result of a contraction, with original -ᾶων becoming -ῶν.
- Nouns of the first declension (α-declension nouns) and the second declension (ο-declension nouns), *if accented on the ultima*, take a circumflex accent in the genitive and dative, an acute accent in the nominative, accusative and vocative.
- The accent of the finite forms of Greek **verbs** is *recessive*.
  - Corollary: If a finite verb form has three or more syllables, and if the ultima is short, the word will have an acute accent on the antepenult.
  - Corollary: If a finite verb form has a long ultima, the word will have an acute accent on the penult.
  - Corollary: If a finite verb form has only two syllables, the accent will be on the penult, with the accent being acute or circumflex depending on the quantity of the penult and the ultima. Thus πείθε, but πείθει, πέμπε.
  - Corollary: A finite verb form of two or more syllables cannot be accented on the ultima.