

LEARNING THE GREEK ALPHABET

THE FOLLOWING PAGES WILL SHOW YOU AN EASY WAY TO LEARN THE
GREEK ALPHABET

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In this last section we will give you the correct pronunciation of the Greek alphabet, so that you will be able to read in Greek. This will apply to capital letters only, at first.

As you may know, the Greek alphabet is quite similar to the English one. There are some letters that look different though and some letters that look the same but which are pronounced differently.

This is the Greek alphabet.

A	B	Γ	Δ	E	Z	H	Θ	I	K	Λ	M
N	Ξ	O	Π	P	Σ	T	Υ	Φ	X	Ψ	Ω

We will now teach you the sound of Greek letters with the help of memory aids. They will not be taught in the order above, but in the order best suited to learning the sound of each letter

1. The Greek letter Γ sounds like rr*

Imagine Γ looks like a little r

(* Note: The sound is soft and is a cross between a g, gh and r sound and sometimes sounds like y)

So rrata (cat) is Γata.

2. The Greek letter Δ sounds like th (in the)

Imagine Δ is the shape of the pyramids

So chtapothee (octopus) is chtapoΔee

3. The Greek letter Θ sounds like "th" (in theatre)

Imagine Θ looks like the circular stage of a theatre

So thalassa (sea) is Θalassa

4. The Greek letter Λ sounds like "L"

Imagine Λ looks like an upside down v - sideways on

So leemnee (lake) is Λeemnee

5. The Greek letter Ξ sounds like x

Imagine three lines are an extra letter

(Sometimes written as "ks" in the course)

So exoh (out) is eΞoh

You can write your answers in.

What do the following letters sound like?

1. Ξ

2. Λ

3. Θ

4. Δ

5. Γ

Look back for the answers.

The Next set of letters

1. The Greek letter Π sounds like p
Imagine Π looks like a prison window
So polee (much) is Π olee
2. The Greek letter Σ sounds like s (in sea)
Imagine Σ is the shape of the sea on a beach
So soopa (soup) is Σ oopa
3. The Greek letter Φ sounds like f
Imagine Φ looks like a float on a fishing line
So feethee (snake) is Φ eethee
4. The Greek letter Ψ sounds like the *ps* in tipsy
Imagine Ψ looks like a psychologist's couch
So psomee (bread) is Ψ omee
5. The Greek letter Ω sounds like "o" (in hot)
Imagine Ω looks like an "o" on a horseshoe
So proyee (morning) is pr Ω yee

You can write your answers in.

What do the following letters sound like?

1. Ω

2. Ψ

3. Φ

4. Σ

5. Π

Look back for the answers.

The next set of letters

1. The Greek letter **B** sounds like v
Imagine you should **Be** Very strong
So viepee (sees) is **B**lepee
2. The Greek letter **H** sounds like "ee" (in see)
Imagine "**H**" stands for heel
(the "ee" is very short, almost like the i in lit)
So kalee (good) is kal**H**
3. The Greek letter **I** sounds like "ee" (in see)
Imagine **I** am an eel
(the "ee" is very short, almost like the i in lit)
So psaree (fish) is psar**I**
4. The Greek letter **P** sounds like R
Imagine you are a **PRAT**
So teeree (cheese) is tee **P**ee
5. The Greek letter **Y** sounds like "ee" (in see)
Imagine you see the sea
(the "ee" is very short, almost like the i in lit)
So keema (wave) is k**Y**ma
6. The Greek letter **X** sounds like "h" in heater
Imagine **x** marks the spot where I hit you
So echo (I have) is e**X**o

Note: "X" also sounds like the CH in LOCH and is sometimes pronounced like the H in HUE.

You can write your answers in.

What do the following letters sound like?

1. X

2. Y

3. P

4. I

5. H

6. B

Look back for the answers.

Letters that sound the same in Greek and English

The following letters sound the same in English and Greek

A sounds like the A in ARMY

E sounds like the E in SET

O sounds like the O in OFF

N, T, K, M and Z sound the same as they do in English

Remember that some letters sound different in Greek, but N, O, T, M, A, Z, E, O, K sound the same. So, remember:

NOT MAZE OK

These letters are the same in Greek and English.

Combinations of letters to produce certain sounds

In Greek there are also some combinations of letters, used to produce certain sounds.

In the following examples note that we use all the letters you have already been taught:

NT in Greek sounds like D in DAY, so
Domata (tomato) is NTOMATA

ΜΠ in Greek sounds like B in BOTTLE, so
Bookalee (bottle) is ΜΠοοΚΑΛΙ

ΓΚ in Greek sounds like G in GREY, so
gree (grey) is ΓΚΡΙ

ΓΓ in Greek sounds like G in GREY, so
agooree (cucumber) is ΑΓΓοοΡΙ

You can write your answers in.

What do the following letters sound like?

1. ΓΓ

2. ΓΚ

3. ΜΠ

Look back for the answers.

More combinations of letters to produce certain sounds

Note that in the examples we use all the letters and the combinations you already know.

OY in Greek sounds like OO in BOOK, so

Bookalee (bottle) is ΜΠΟΥΚΑΛΙ

EI in Greek sounds like EE in SEE, so

farmakeeo (chemist's shop) is ΦΑΡΜΑΚΕΙΟ

(that is, EE is short)

OI in Greek sounds like EE in SEE, so

skeelee (dogs) is ΣΚΥΛΟΙ

(that is, EE is short)

AI in Greek sounds like E in tEI, so

macheree (knife) is ΜΑΧΑΙΡΙ

You can write your answers in.

What do the following letters sound like?

1. AI

2. OI

3. EI

4. OY

Look back for the answers.

Finally the lower-case letters are as follows

A	α	Lower case looks like an "a"
B	β	Looks like a B
Γ	Υ	Looks like a "y" which is how it is sometimes pronounced
Δ	δ	The funny shape just has to be learned!
E	ε	Looks like a little "E"
Z	ζ	Lower case almost an "s" shape - "z"ish in sound!
H	η	Both sound like "i" in hint
Θ	θ	Both letters look similar
I	ι	Big and little I
K	κ	Looks similar to the capital
Λ	λ	Looks similar to the capital
M	μ	Both sounds "m" - perhaps you live with a mum
N	ν	Both sound like N - remember the navy
Ξ	ξ	Both have three lines
O	ο	Look the same
Π	π	Look similar
P	ρ	Look similar
Σ	σ	The small letter looks like a smouldering grenade
T	τ	Looks like a small version of T
Υ	υ	Imagine You look a little ill - both sound like the "i" in m
Φ	φ	Both look similar to each other
X	Χ	Big and little X
Ψ	ψ	Big and little
Ω	ω	The lower case could look like an olive – both sound like the "o" in olive

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