Elementary Classical Greek I (GRK 101). Introduction to the Greek Alphabet

ALPHABET

	1.	ALPHABET					
ABLAEZHO	Αα	alpha	a (as in "bah")	Νν	$V_{V_{-}}$	nu	n
	Вβ	beta	ь	Ξξ	= \x	xi	x (= khs)
	Γγ	gamma	g (see below)	00	00	omicron	ŏ (boat)
	Δδ	delta	d	$\Pi \ \pi$	Mr.	pi	p
	Εε	epsiloně (met)	Рρ	PP	rho	r
	Ζζ	zeta	zd	Σσς		sigma	s
	Ηη	eta	ē (ehh)	205		(Use the ς form at end of word, σ form within words.)	
	Θθ	theta	th	Ττ	TT	tau	t
		("T" sound + puff of air — "t" in "tough")		YUYU		upsilonu	
I KA	Ιı	iota	i	Φφ	O P	phi	ph
	Кк	kappa	k	xx X	\(\(\)	_	f of air — "p" in "puff")
	Λλ	lambda	1		XX	chi ("K" sound + puf	kh f of air — "c" in "cuff")
	Мμ	mu	m	Ψψ	Yy	psi	ps em can ,
M				Ωω	2w	omega	ō

2. Aspirated ("breathy") consonants

 β (beta) and π (pi) when aspirated become ϕ (phi), not an "f" sound but like a "p" with a heavy puff of air (like the "p" in "puff")

 γ (gamma) and κ (kappa) when aspirated become χ (chi), like a "k" with a heavy puff of air (like the "c" in "cough")

 τ (tau) when aspirated becomes θ (theta), not a "th" sound but like a "t" with a heavy puff of air (like the "t" in "tough")

3. DOUBLE CONSONANTS

 β / π / φ (b/p/ph) PLUS σ (s) = ψ ("ps") γ / κ / χ (g/k/kh) PLUS σ (s) = ξ ("x") σ (s) PLUS δ (d) = ζ (zd) — 'Αθήνας + δ έ = 'Αθήναζε, Athenasde ("to Athens")

4. LOWER-CASE SIGMA

Lower-case sigma is σ , except when it's the last letter in a word. Then it is ς .

5. GAMMA (Γ)

gamma (Γ/γ) followed by gamma (γ), kappa (κ), or chi (χ) = an "ng" sound.

- ἄγγελος = ángelos ("messenger")
- ἀγκύλος = ankúlos ("crooked, bent")
- ἐγχειρίδιον = enkheirídion ("handbook")
- 6. DIPHTHONGS (vowel combinations). Two vowels mixed, with a smooth transition from the one sound to the other

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\alpha_1 = English "aye," "I"
\alpha (alpha + iota subscript) = \alpha_1 (above)
\epsilon_1 = ay ("hay")
\epsilon_2 = ĕ-oo
\epsilon_3 = ehh-oo
\epsilon_4 (eta + iota subscript) = \epsilon_4 = "eh-ee"
\epsilon_4 ou = oh-oo, like the "ow" in "show"
\epsilon_4 or = oy ("boy")
\epsilon_4 = wee ("we")
\epsilon_4 (omega + iota subscript) = \epsilon_4
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7. VOWEL LENGTH

Long vowels take twice the time of short vowels to pronounce, i.e., 2 shorts = 1 long

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\bar{\alpha} ("ahhh," long alpha) \bar{\iota} ("eee," long iota) \bar{\upsilon} (sort of sounds like "oo") \eta (eta, "ehh") is long epsilon, \epsilon ("eh") \omega (omega, pure "ohh") is long omicron, o ("oh")
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Diphthongs (vowel combinations) take the same time as long vowels

8. BREATHINGS (for vowels at beginning of words)

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\dot{o} = "o" = "smooth breathing," no "h" sound at the beginning of a word \dot{o} = "ho" = "rough breathing," "h" sounding \rho (rho) always has rough breathing at beginning of word: πάντα \dot{\rho}εῖ, panta rhei, "all is in flux"
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Use breathings only for initial vowels/diphthongs or rho. Breathings over diphthongs go over the *second* vowel: $\alpha \dot{v}$, not $\dot{\alpha} v$.

9. ACCENTS (over certain vowels)

In ancient Greek, all accents intonational and marked. (Not marked with accent, no accent)

' (acute): voice goes ^{up} in pitch

`(grave): voice stays same

~(circumflex): voice goes up then down again.

ὁ ἄγγελος (ά = alpha acute) = ho ^{an}gelos "the messenger"

 $\dot{\eta}$ ψυχ $\dot{\eta}$ = hē psukh^ē "the soul"

ἡ ψυχὴ (ἡ = eta grave) ἀθάνατός ἐστι = hē psukhē ath^anat^os esti "the soul is immortal" τὸ δῶρον (circumflex omega) ἀγαθόν = to d-o^oo-ron agath^{on} "the gift is good"

10. NEW PUNCTUATION

colon/semicolon = .
question mark = ;

11. GUESS THE ANIMAL (actual ancient Greek animal sounds)

βαῦ βαῦ βῆ βῆ

12. Iliad, opening.

Μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω 'Αχιλῆος οὐλομένην, ἡ μυρί' 'Αχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε, πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς "Αϊδι προΐαψεν ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή, ἐξ οὖ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε 'Ατρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος 'Αχιλλεύς.

Kai d Louraset