

Lesson 3- Verb Clues: Recognizing Tense

Base and Ending

Let's start learning to handle verbs. Every Greek verb is made up of two basic parts: the base and the ending.

λυ ω
Base Ending

The base usually looks the same as it appears in the lexicon, but the ending often changes, to give extra information about the word. To figure out what the base of a word is, drop the ω at the end of it in the lexicon; what is left is the base.

- ✍ ♦ The part of speech we are now studying is _____.
- ♦ Greek verbs always have at least _____ basic parts.
- ♦ The first part is the _____.
- ♦ The second part is the _____.
- ♦ Give the base of: βαπτω _____
 πιστευω _____

Answer Key

verbs
two
base
ending
βαπτ
πιστευ

Verb Tenses

Verbs come in six tenses. The tense of a verb tells (1) what **kind** of action takes place, and (2) what **time** the action happens.

- ✍ ♦ How many tenses do Greek verbs have? _____
- ♦ The tense tells the _____ of action and the _____ of action.

six
kind, time

Clues

Tense Clues—How do I tell what tense a verb is?

You can tell the tense of a verb by watching for certain extra letters added to the beginning or end of the base.

- ✍ ♦ Does the base usually show a verb's tense? _____
- ♦ Does the ending usually show a verb's tense? _____
- ♦ Where do I look to determine a verb's tense? At the _____
or _____ of the base.

no
no
beginning
end

Lesson 3 (cont.)

Present Tense Clues

When no extra letters have been added, the verb is **present** tense.

Base → λυ ω ← ending

Translate “I release,” or “I am releasing.”

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>✍</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ What tense is λυω? _____♦ What is the base of πεμπω? _____♦ Is πεμπω present tense? _____♦ Is “I send” a good present tense translation? _____♦ What other translation could you substitute for “I send”? _____ | <p>present</p> <p>πεμπ</p> <p>yes</p> <p>yes</p> <p>I am sending</p> |
|--|--|

Future Tense Clues

When there’s an extra σ at the end of the base, the verb is **future**.

λυ σ ω
base **future** ending
clue

Translate it as “I will release.”

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>✍</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ What letter is added to show a future verb? _____♦ Where is the σ added? At the _____ of the _____.♦ Circle the verbs that are future:
λυσω λυσεις λυω λυομεν
(Notice that the ending might change—just look for σ.)♦ Circle the future verbs:
λυεις πιστευσω ακουσετε | <p>σ</p> <p>end, base</p> <p>λυσω, λυσεις</p> <p>πιστευσω, ακουσετε</p> |
|--|---|

Imperfect Tense Clues

An ε added to the front of the base means the verb is in the **imperfect** tense.

ε λυ ον
Imperfect base ending
clue

The extra ε is often called an **augment**.

Imperfect means continued action in the past—“I was releasing.”

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| <p>✍</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">♦ Which of the translations below shows present tense? _____♦ Which shows future? _____
a. I was releasing b. I release c. I will release | <p>b</p> <p>c</p> |
|---|-------------------|

Lesson 3 (cont.)

- ♦ What letter is the clue for imperfect? _____
- ♦ Where is the ε added? At the _____ of the _____.
- ♦ This extra ε is often called an _____.
- ♦ Circle all the imperfect verbs:

λυετε λυσετε ελυετε
ελυον επιστευε πιστευσει

ε
beginning, base
augment

ελυετε,
ελυον, επιστευε

Aorist Tense Clues

A verb with an ε before the base and a σ after it is in the **aorist** tense.

ε λυ σ α
aorist base **aorist** ending
clue **clue**

Aorist means simple action in the past, with no stress on completed or continuing action. There are two other tenses, perfect and pluperfect; we will save those for another day.

- ✍ ♦ What letters are added to show aorist? _____ and _____
- ♦ Where is the ε added? At the _____ of the _____
- ♦ Where is the σ added? At the _____ of the _____
- ♦ Circle the aorist verbs:

ελυσω ελυε ελυσε λυσει
πιστευσω επιστευσα πιστευει

ε, σ
beginning, base
end, base

ελυσω, ελυσε,
επιστευσα

In Action

- ✍ ♦ Identify the tense shown by each diagram:
 - base + σ + ending _____
 - ε + base + ending _____
 - base + ending _____
 - ε + base + σ + ending _____

- ♦ Try writing the alphabet one more time:

- ♦ Check it and correct any errors. Try once more:

a. future
b. imperfect
c. present
d. aorist

Lesson 3 (cont.)

In the Book

- ✍ ♦ Turn to 1 Thessalonians 5 (Προς Θεσσαλονικεις Α), verses 16–27. You'll find these verbs there.

Look up each one in the lexicon, and write down the **meaning** and the **tense** of each:

Verse 16—χαίρετε _____

Verse 21—δοκιμάζετε _____

Verse 21—κατεχετε _____

Verse 27—ενορκίζω _____