

IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Getting a glimpse of the Greek alphabet
- » Introducing Greek grammar and expressions
- » Speaking Greek in various circumstances

Chapter **1**

Greek in a Nutshell

This chapter gives you a sample of some of the topics and vocabulary you'll encounter in the rest of the book. It's like dipping your finger into a jar of honey — and in this case, the honey is the Greek language itself.

Introducing the Basics

A few topics are essential as you begin learning Greek: the alphabet, grammar, useful expressions, and numbers, among others. The following sections give you the scoop on basic Greek.

The Greek alphabet

Check out this list: A, B, E, I, K, M, N, O, T.

Do you recognize these letters? They're some of the letters in the Greek alphabet. So, we're off to a good start! Are there more? Of course! The Greek alphabet has 24 letters waiting for you to discover them. And some of them might be completely unfamiliar to you: Take for example the letter Ξ, which sounds like “x,” or the letter Π, which sounds like “p.” Have you seen those before?

If you're eager to begin learning Greek, you don't have to wait long. Chapter 2 dives right into the Greek letters. After you complete that chapter, you'll be able to recognize any Greek text.

Basic and not-so-basic grammar

After introducing you to the Greek alphabet in Chapter 2, I guide you through simple grammar topics in Chapters 3 and 4. The reason grammar is important and is placed at the beginning of this book is because by understanding how basic grammar works, you'll be able to create correct sentences — so you can speak, express what you want to say, and be understood by your conversation partner.

It's different, for example, to say:

Εμείς πήγαμε στο μουσείο. (e-meēs pee-ga-me sto moo-see-o) (*We went to the museum.*)

Εγώ πηγαίνω στο μουσείο. (e-go pee-ye-no sto moo-see-o) (*I'm going to the museum.*)

Εσύ δεν πήγες στο μουσείο. (e-see den pee-yēs sto moo-see-o) (*You didn't go to the museum.*)



ΤΙΠ

Each of these sentences, even though they seem quite similar, gives different information about a visit to the museum. To adjust a sentence to say exactly what you want, you need to know at least basic grammar. If you don't know it already, I'd recommend studying Chapters 3 and 4 fairly early on.

Useful expressions

In Chapter 5, I provide you with the most essential expressions — those you can use during your first visit to Greece (and beyond!). These are, after all, the first phrases one learns when picking up any new language. For example:

- » καλημέρα (ka-lee-me-ra) (*good morning*)
- » γεια (ya) (*hi, hello*)
- » Τι κάνεις; (tee ka-neēs) (*How are you?*)
- » Πώς σε λένε; (pos se le-ne) (*What's your name?*)
- » Από πού είσαι; (a-po poo ee-se) (*Where are you from?*)
- » ναι (ne) (*yes*)

- » ὄχι (o-hee) (*no*)
- » ευχαριστώ (ef-kha-ree-sto) (*thank you*)

In Chapter 5, I also give you words and phrases that help you talk more about yourself in Greek. That way, you learn vocabulary for εθνικότητες (e-thnee-ko-tee-tes) (*nationalities*), επαγγέλματα (e-pa-ge-lma-ta) (*professions*), and οικογένεια (ee-ko-ye-nee-a) (*family*).



REMEMBER

Building your vocabulary alongside grammar while learning a language is extremely important. Personally, I believe languages should be learned holistically, meaning that all aspects should develop together: grammar, vocabulary, writing, reading, speaking, and listening comprehension. This book has been designed to offer you just that.

Numbers, dates, and measurements

Want to count your money?

Say a date?

Weigh fruit at the greengrocer?

All of these tasks require knowing numbers. In Chapter 6, I teach you the numbers from 0 to 1,000 — the ones you need for everyday conversations. But since you might be eager, I go ahead and share the numbers from 1 to 10 here:

- » 1 — ένα (e-na)
- » 2 — δύο (dee-o)
- » 3 — τρία (tree-a)
- » 4 — τέσσερα (te-se-ra)
- » 5 — πέντε (pe-nde)
- » 6 — έξι (e-ksee)
- » 7 — επτά (e-pta)
- » 8 — οκτώ (o-kto)
- » 9 — εννιά (e-nya)
- » 10 — δέκα (de-ka)



The ancient Greeks were among the first civilizations to develop mathematical thinking, and some of the earliest mathematicians have gone down in history — you may have heard of Pythagoras or Archimedes.

Greek at home

Our home is the place where most of us spend the majority of our time. It's where we have our daily rituals and habits, where we relax, work, and create. So, expanding the vocabulary related to the world around us, Chapter 7 talks about our daily routine as well as the home and its furnishings.

Putting Greek into Action

In Part 2 of this book, you learn Greek that helps you in your everyday life in Greece — whether as a tourist or a more permanent resident. It covers a range of essential topics you need to speak in shops, on public transportation, at work, or even during a visit to the doctor.

Going places

When visiting a new city, you definitely need to get around. You might use the αυτοκίνητο (af-to-kee-nee-to) (*car*), λεωφορείο (le-o-fo-ree-o) (*bus*), τρένο (tre-no) (*train*), or another means of transportation. You may also need to ask someone for directions:

Πού είναι η Ακρόπολη; (poo ee-ne ee a-kro-po-lee) (*Where is the Acropolis?*)

Πού είναι το κέντρο; (poo ee-ne to ke-dro) (*Where is the center?*)

And you need to understand the directions they give you:

Στρίψε δεξιά. (stree-pse de-ksee-a) (*Turn right.*)

Στρίψε αριστερά. (stree-pse a-ree-ste-ra) (*Turn left.*)

Προχώρα ευθεία. (pro-kho-ra ef-thee-a) (*Go straight.*)

Check out Chapter 8 for more information about getting around Greece.

Shopping

Chances are that during your trip to Greece, you won't skip visiting some local shops for clothing, souvenirs, or groceries. You may have questions:

- » How do you ask for the right clothing size?
- » How do you ask for a discount?
- » How do you find things and shop at the supermarket?

A quick look through Chapter 9 answers all your questions.

Dining and entertainment

Do you prefer a **ταβέρνα** (*ta-ve-rna*) (*tavern*) or an **εστιατόριο** (*e-stee-a-to-ree-o*) (*restaurant*)? And what are the differences between them? Would you like **ζάχαρη** (*za-kha-ree*) (*sugar*) and **γάλα** (*ga-la*) (*milk*) in your **καφές** (*ka-fes*) (*coffee*)? Do you want a **χορτοφαγικό μενού** (*kho-rto-fa-gee-ko me-noo*) (*vegetarian menu*)? What do you do on a night out at **μπουζούκια** (*boo-zoo-kyia*) (*bouzoukia*) or during a traditional Greek **πανηγύρι** (*pa-nee-yee-ree*) (*festival*)?

All of this and much more is explored in Chapter 10, where you find words and phrases related to nightlife, food, drinks, and entertainment in Greece.

Health

Our health is very important, which is why we do everything we can to stay healthy. We go to the doctor, eat healthy foods, and exercise. If you'd like to learn vocabulary related to this topic, then Chapter 11 is for you. Here is some vocabulary to get you started:

- » **ο γιατρός** (*o ya-tros*) (*the doctor*)
- » **το νοσοκομείο** (*to no-so-ko-mee-o*) (*the hospital*)
- » **Πονάω.** (*po-na-o*) (*I'm in pain.*)
- » **Είμαι άρρωστος.** (*ee-me a-ro-stos*) (*I'm sick.*)
- » **υγεία** (*ee ee-yee-a*) (*health*)

Business

Do you want to move your business to Greece? Work at a Greek company? Do you have Greek colleagues and want to speak with them in Greek? Chapter 12 helps you with all of that. Let's look at some basic and very useful vocabulary:

- » Δουλεύω. (doo-lev-o) (*I work.*)
- » δουλειά (doo-lya) (*work, job*)
- » εταιρία (e-te-ree-a) (*company*)
- » υπάλληλος (ee-pa-lee-los) (*employee*)
- » συνάδελφος (see-na-de-lfos) (*colleague*)
- » συνέντευξη (see-ne-def-ksee) (*interview*)
- » συμβόλαιο (see-mvo-le-o) (*contract*)

Taking Greek on the Go

There's no better way to get to know Greece than by traveling it from corner to corner. Alongside everything else, don't forget to pack this book in your suitcase! It will help you immensely, as Part 3 provides all the vocabulary you need for preparing and enjoying your holidays in Greece.

Planning a trip

What do you need to travel?

- » διαβατήριο (dya-va-tee-ree-o) (*passport*)
- » εισιτήριο (ee-see-tee-ree-o) (*ticket*)
- » βαλίτσα (va-lee-tsa) (*suitcase*)
- » ξενοδοχείο (kse-no-do-hee-o) (*hotel*)
- » κράτηση (kra-tee-see) (*reservation*)

These and many other essentials are things you need to keep in mind when planning a trip to Greece. And all the relevant vocabulary can be found in Chapter 13.

Transportation

But how will you travel? And once you arrive in Greece, how will you get around? Will you go to the airport and take a plane? Or perhaps to the station to catch a train? How will you find a taxi, and from where will you catch the ferry to the islands? Where can you buy tickets, and where do you ask for information? And how will you do all of this in Greek? With the help of Chapter 14.

Sightseeing

Greece has so many things to see!

- » το μουσείο (to moo-see-o) (*the museum*)
- » ο αρχαιολογικός χώρος (o a-rhe-o-lo-gee-kos kho-ros) (*the archaeological site*)
- » το θέατρο (to the-a-tro) (*the theater*)
- » το οινοποιείο (to ee-no-pee-ee-o) (*the winery*)
- » τα αξιοθέατα (ta a-ksee-o-the-a-ta) (*the sights*)

If you'd like to practice your Greek, you could choose a tour led by a guide who speaks Greek. It's a fantastic opportunity! Find out more about sightseeing in Greece in Chapter 15.

Enjoying traditions

Chapter 16 includes what I consider the most interesting part — it features vocabulary related to the most important Greek traditions. And you'll certainly get to know Greece much better if you have the chance to experience some of these:

- » ο γάμος (o ga-mos) (*a wedding*)
- » η ονομαστική γιορτή (ee o-no-ma-stee-kee yo-rtee) (*a name day celebration*)
- » το ελληνικό Πάσχα (to e-lee-nee-ko pa-skha) (*Greek Easter*)
- » οι παραδοσιακοί χοροί (ee pa-ra-do-see-a-kee kho-ree) (*the traditional dances*)

