

Greek 12 (Feb. 11, 2011): Aorist imperatives

The first aorist imperatives are tricky because –ov and –αι figure as verb endings elsewhere and because RG's paradigm verb, *παύω* is monosyllabic in ways that make it hard to deduce what the accentuation is for other verbs. In the aorist accents matter for meaning.

There are two ways that circumflexes show up in the conjugation of the aorist:

- (1) A standard rule: A long penult before a short ultima, if accented, must bear the circumflex (*πειῖσον, πειῖσαι* [imper.]). (Remember that the circumflex occurs only on long syllables). We've seen this rule before: *εἶπον, εἶπες, εἶπε, εἶπομεν, εἶπετε, εἶπον*. Also imperatives (*παῦε* but *παύετε*).

The accent on the 1st aorist active and middle **imperative** is recessive but, with monosyllabic stems, can turn into a circumflex if (rule 1, above) that syllable is long: *πειῖσαι, παῦσαι*; but *ἄρξαι* from *ἄρχω* (*ἄρχ-*). RG's examples *παῦσον / παῦσαι* are in a small category (#198, p. 189). (Recall that, though a diphthong, the –αι is short both in the 1st aor. middle singular imperative and active infinitive.)

- (2) The accent on the 1st aorist active **infinitive** is always on the penult (circumflex if long [*πειῖσαι, ἀκούσαι, ποιῆσαι*]; acute if short [*πράξει* from *πράττω*]).

	Act. 2s. [Acc. recess.*]	Act. 2pl. [Acc. recessive]	Middle 2s.	Middle 2pl. [Acc. recessive]	Act. aor. INFINITIVE
Πείθω	πειῖσον (1)	πειῖσατε	πειῖσαι (1)	πειῖσασθε	πειῖσαι (2)
Ἀκούω	ἄκουσον (1)	ἀκούσατε	ἄκουσαι (1)	ἀκούσασθε	ἀκούσαι (2)
κατηγορέω	κατηγόρησον (1)	κατη- γορήσατε	κατη- γορήσαι (1)	κατη- γορήσασθε	κατη- γορήσαι (2)
ποιέω	ποίησον (1)	ποίησατε	ποίησαι (1)	ποίησασθε	ποιῆσαι (2)
Λέγω	εἶπέ*	εἶπετε			εἶπειν
Γίγνομαι			γενοῦ	γένεσθε	
Λανθάνω	λάθε*	λάθετε	λαθοῦ	λάθεσθε	λαθεῖν
Πάσχω	πάθε*	πάθετε	παθοῦ	πάθεσθε	παθεῖν

A way to keep the accents sorted out is to remember that of aorist infinitives, **only** the 1st middle is recessive; the others are all quirky:

	Active	Middle	Passive
1 st	ἀκοῦσαι	<u>ἀκούσασθαι</u> [recessive]	
2 nd	λαθεῖν	λαθέσθαι	
All			ἀκουσθῆναι, ῥηθῆναι, ποιηθῆναι

AORIST INFINITIVES: ONLY ‘-ασασθαι IS RECESSIVE.

All of the aorist active and middle imperatives are recessive (table above) except the 2nd aorist singular middle (λαβοῦ)*, though rule (1) sometimes yields a circumflex with the 1st singular active and middle (πεῖσον, πεῖσαι; παῦσον, παῦσαι).

AORIST IMPERATIVE: ONLY -οῦ IS NON-RECESSIVE.

(Even the aorist passive imperative, which we haven’t encounter is recessive: ‘-θητι / ‘-θητε.)

*An issue so nasty I won’t hold you responsible for it. The accent on the 2nd aorist active imperative is recessive: λάθε, πάθε, μάθε, ἔλε [αἰρέω, εἶλον]. There are, however, five exceptions:

ἐλθέ [ἔρχομαι > ἦλθον];

εἰπέ [λέγω > εἶπον],

ιδέ [ὄραω > εἶδον];

λαβέ [λαμβάνω > ἔλαβον];

εὐρέ [εὐρίσκω > ηὔρον].

RG has given you *only* exceptions [λαβέ, εἰπέ ἐλθέ], for unfathomable reasons. Shocking.