

1.3: Adding adjectives

So far our examples have included only nouns. While **ADJECTIVES** may be classified into several types, for now we will focus only on those that describe qualitatively a noun (good, huge, superfluous). The behavior I represent here, however, applies to all adjectives.

The most important rule is this: an adjective must agree in every possible way, i.e. in gender, number, and case, with the noun it modifies or to which it refers. This type of agreement is not intuitively obvious to an English speaker, since adjectives are invariable in English. On the other hand, in Spanish, German, or French, adjectives change their endings to agree with the nouns they refer to (libro *nuevo*, *nouvelle* maison, *Gutes* Kind).

Adjectives vary in three ways: **GENDER, NUMBER, and CASE**.

While Greek nouns have (as a general rule) one and only one gender, because adjectives must agree with them, they need endings for each of the Greek grammatical genders: **MASCULINE, FEMININE, NEUTER**. Since we are handling in the examples of this lesson only masculine nouns that have the endings **-ος** for the Nominative singular and **-ον** for the Accusative singular, I choose adjectives to which we can add the same endings for those two cases. The nominative of the adjective meaning "fine" gives me three options for gender, cited always in the order masculine, feminine, neuter: *καλός, καλή, καλόν*. I must choose *καλός* for the Nominative and use *καλόν* for the Accusative.

EXAMPLES:

a) *ὁ οἶκος καλός ἐστιν.* *The house is fine.*
 S PN V

The subject *οἶκος* is nominative, singular, and masculine. Therefore only the form *καλός* of the Greek adjective meaning "fine" is appropriate.

b) ἔχω καλὸν οἶκον. *I have a fine house.*

S+V DO

ἔχω is a verb meaning "to have." Its present stem is ἔχ-.

καλὸν οἶκον is the direct object, that is why both adjective and noun are in the accusative case: οἶκον is accusative singular, and so is καλόν.

c) ὁ λόγος καλὸς διδάσκαλος //ἐστίν//. *The story is a fine teacher.*

S PN V

The verb *to be* is implicit. ὁ λόγος is the subject in the nominative case.

καλὸς διδάσκαλος is the predicate nominative. In it the noun, διδάσκαλος, sets the standards for the adjective καλός. Both are nominative singular, and the adjective is masculine, agreeing with the noun.

d) ἔχεις πόνον, διδάσκαλον καλόν. *You (sg) have toil, a fine teacher.*

S+V DO

ἔχεις is the Verb, with the Subject shown in the personal ending.

πόνον, διδάσκαλον καλόν is the direct object. Once again, the adjective must agree with the noun it modifies. Both together, however, modify πόνον. When you mark the syntax, you may call διδάσκαλον an *appositive*, a noun "set next" to another to explain it, (compare "That is John, *my brother*") or you may mark, as above, the entire D O without further specification.