

23. Contract Verbs

Lesson in a Nutshell

Contract verbs are verbs whose stem ends in an **α**, **ε** or **ο**. When this happens, the contract vowel and the first vowel of the personal ending change into something new.

As we have seen, Greek modifies verbs by adding letters to the front and back. This creates all kinds of collisions.

Most of the time, no blood is shed. But when certain vowels collide with each other, they morph into something new.

This is a simple chart that accounts for nearly all collisions of vowels.

Vowel Contractions	
οο, οε, εο → ου	εε → ει
any other vowel + ο or ω → ω	αε → α
οη, εοι, οει → οι	εα → η
<i>contract vowel + first vowel of diphthong simplify if the same, otherwise contract</i>	αει → α

Since we do not have to write Greek, only read it, we do not have to become experts at this. We only have to recognize when a collision has happened so it doesn't throw us for a loop.

One of the most common places to see these collisions is with [contract verbs](#). This is a great place to practice on some collisions.

Contract Verbs

Contract verbs are verbs whose stem ends in an **α**, **ε** or **ο**. For example:

ἀγαπᾶ́ω is an **α** contract verb, meaning “I love”

ποιεῖ́ω is an **ε** contract verb, meaning “I do”

πληροῖ́ω is an **ο** contract verb, meaning “I fill”

You can easily recognize contract verbs by the vowel before the final omega.

When the personal endings are added to the contract verbs, vowels collide and result in some odd looking personal endings. But there is really nothing odd about it. It is just the normal combination of vowels.

See if you can use the vowel contraction table below to figure out the following collisions. Don't worry about accents.

Vowel Contractions	
οο, οε, εο → ου	εε → ει
any other vowel + ο or ω → ω	αε → α
οη, εοι, οει → οι	εα → η
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Present, Active Contract Verbs

α ἀγαπάω		ε ποιέω		ο πληρόω	
ἀγαπ_____	α ω	ποι_____	ε ω	πληρ_____	ο ω
ἀγαπ_____	α εις	ποι_____	ε εις	πληρ_____	ο εις
ἀγαπ_____	α ει	ποι_____	ε ει	πληρ_____	ο ει
ἀγαπ_____	α ομεν	ποι_____	ε ομεν	πληρ_____	ο ομεν
ἀγαπ_____	α ετε	ποι_____	ε ετε	πληρ_____	ο ετε
ἀγαπ_____	α ουσιν	ποι_____	ε ουσιν	πληρ_____	ο ουσιν

Here are the answers.

ἀγαπῶ	ποιῶ	πληρῶ
ἀγαπᾶς	ποιεῖς	πληροῖς
ἀγαπᾷ	ποιεῖ	πληροῖ
ἀγαπῶμεν	ποιούμεν	πληροῦμεν
ἀγαπᾶτε	ποιεῖτε	πληροῦτε
ἀγαπῶσιν	ποιοῦσιν	πληροῦσιν

Again, you do not have to write Greek, just read it. So if you can just recognize contract verbs, you will be able to understand the strange looking endings.

You do not have to be an expert.
You just have to be able to do two things.

1. Recognize that the strange personal ending is due to the fact that you are dealing with a contract verb.
2. Recognize the shape clearly enough to see which personal ending is being used.