

THE IMPERFECT (PAST CONTINUOUS) TENSE

This tense is used to describe an action that was continuous or habitual eg I was swimming, I used to smoke.

For Type 1 Verbs eg δουλεύω (work)

To form the imperfect, add simple past endings to the present tense stem. So

δουλεύω (I am working) → δούλευα (I was working, I used to work). For example:

γράφω (I am writing)	έγραφα	(I was writing, I used to write)
	έγραφες	(you were writing, you used to write)
	έγραφε	etc
	γράφαμε	
	γράφατε	
	γράφανε	

The stress follows the same pattern as in the simple past and always falls on the third syllable from the end. So as with the simple past, an extra é- is added to make up 3 syllables if necessary (as in έγραφα above).

For Type 2A and 2B Verbs eg μιλάω (speak), θεωρώ (consider)

To form the imperfect, the stem is formed from the present by replacing -άω or -ώ with ούς

The same past tense endings are used. For example:

μιλάω (I am speaking)	μιλούσα	(I was writing, I used to write)
	μιλούσες	(you were speaking, you used to speak)
	μιλούσε	etc
	μιλούσαμε	
	μιλούσατε	
	μιλούσανε	

For these verbs, the stress always falls on the ούς syllable (whether it is third from the end or not)

Other examples of the imperfect (past continuous) tense:

Present Tense		Imperfect	
γελάω	I laugh, I'm laughing	γελούσα	I was laughing, I used to laugh
αγοράζουμε	We buy, we're buying	αγοράζαμε	We were buying, we used to buy
ρωτάω	I ask, I am asking	ρωτούσα	I was asking, I used to ask
καπνίζω	I smoke, I am smoking	κάπνιζα	I was smoking, I used to smoke
θεωρείτε	You consider, you're considering	θεωρούσατε	You were considering, you used to...
πεινάς	You are hungry	πεινούσες	You were (you used to be) hungry

For Passive Verbs eg σηκώνομαι (get up) κοιμάμαι (sleep) The Imperfect is formed as follows

Present	Imperfect	Present	Imperfect
σηκώνομαι	σηκωνόμουνα	κοιμάμαι	κοιμόμουνα
σηκώνεσαι	σηκωνόσουνα	κοιμάσαι	κοιμόσουνα
σηκώνεται	σηκωνότανε	κοιμάται	κοιμότανε
σηκωνόμαστε	σηκωνόμαστε	κοιμόμαστε	κοιμόμαστε
σηκωνέστε	σηκωνόσαστε	κοιμάστε	κοιμόσαστε
σηκωνόνται	σηκωνόντουσαν	κοιμούνται	κοιμόντουσαν