

Grammar

Grammar

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() □□□□ □□□□□□ (talk)

Learning the Armenian Language

This section deals primarily with the Eastern Armenian dialect, the primary dialect of the country of Armenia. During Armenia's time as part of the Soviet Union, the U.S.S.R. took steps to highly standardize the language. As a result, the grammar may seem rather systematic and tedious at times. However, because of the standardization, exceptions are very rare, and once a grammatical rule is memorized, it is almost universally applicable. Exceptions are so rare, in fact, that the majority of them will be discussed in subsequent sections.

Infinitives

Every Armenian verb consists of a root and one of five possible infinitive suffixes: `-□□`, `-□□□`, `-□□□□`, `-□□□□□`, or `-□□□□□□`. The root consists of everything in the word up until the suffix, and, with very few exceptions, will never change, no matter the tense.

Armenian, like many languages in its language-family, requires strict subject-verb agreement, which is usually indicated by the suffix of the conjugated verb, eliminating the need for personal pronouns.

Present Tense

There is only one present tense in Armenian, and though it's structured like English's present continuous tense, it can act as the present continuous (I am walking) or the simple present (I walk).

The Present tense is one of the few tenses in Armenian which has a single suffix, **-եմ**, distributed equally, independent of the subject of the verb. The subject-verb agreement is then manifested through placement of a conjugated "to be" after the verb.

Եմ (to be)

Եմ Եմ-I am (*yes em*)

Ես եմ **Եմ**-you(sing.) are (*doo es*)

Նա **Եմ** -he/she/it is (*nah eh*)

Եմք **Եմք**-we are (*menk enk*)

Եմքք **Եմքք**-you(pl./form.) are (*dook ek*)

Եմքքք **Եմքքք**-they are (*nrank en*)

Example: In **Կարդում եմ** (to read), the suffix **-ում** is replaced by the present tense marker **-եմ**, followed by one of the six listed present forms of "to be".

Եմ Կարդում եմ **Եմ**-I reading am (*yes kartoom em*)

Ես Կարդում եմ **Եմ**-you (sing.) reading are (*doo kartoom es*)

Նա Կարդում եմ **Եմ** -he/she/it reading is (*nah kartoom eh*)

Եմք Կարդում եմք **Եմք**-we reading are (*menk kartoom enk*)

Եմքք Կարդում եմքք **Եմքք**-you (pl./form.) reading are (*dook kartoom ek*)

Եմքքք Կարդում եմքքք **Եմքքք**-they reading are (*nrank kartoom en*)

If the verb ending is polysyllabic (**-ում**, **-անում**, **-ալում**), then only the final syllable, starting with the second vowel, is replaced by **-եմ**.

Hence, **Մահանում եմ** (to die) becomes **Մահանում եմ**, and so on.

Negation

To negate the verb, simply add a **չ** to the beginning of the present "to be" and switch its position to be before the verb.

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Example: ճիշտ չեն ուտում-They aren't eating (*nǰrank chen ootoom*)

Irregulars

Exceptions occur in monosyllabic verbs, such as գալ (to come) and տալ (to give) where the root is only marked by a single consonant. In cases such as these, the verb remains as it is, and the suffix **-ու** is added onto the end.

Example: մենք գալու ենք-we coming are (*menk galees enk*)

Another exception lies in the verb գիտնալ (to know). This verb is conjugated in the present by simply tacking on the present form of "to be" onto the end of the root գիտ.

Example: Ես գիտեմ-I know (*yes geetem*)

Future Tense

There are two versions of the future tense in Armenian. The first and most common is marked by the prefix **ն-** added onto the root, as well as the final consonant in the infinitive suffix being replaced by the subject's corresponding end-marker.

ու -ն

ուք -ու

ն -ն/ա

ուք -նք

ուք -ն

ուք -ն

Example: գալնալ (to admire) becomes:

Ես գալեանամ I will admire (*yes kəheeyanam*)

Դու գալեանաս you (sing.) will admire (*doo kəheeyanas*)

Նա գալեանահ he/she/it will admire (*nah kəheeyanah*)

ենք կաheeyanank we will admire (*menk kəheeyanank*)

դուք կաheeyanak you (pl. form.) will admire (*dook kəheeyanak*)

նրանք կաheeyanan they will admire (*nrank kəheeyanan*)

If the verb is an -իլ or -անք verb, and the subject is third-person singular (նրան), as usual, the ի is dropped, but the ի that precedes it is changed to ւ. So in the case of, for example, կրկնել (to speak), the third-person singular version of it in the future tense would be կրկնուի (*kəkhosee*) rather than կրկնի.

To negate, conjugate the verb as if it were in the third-person singular future, but without the ի, and put the a negated present tense "to be" before the verb.

Example: չես գնալ you will not go (*doo ches gənah*)

Another way to express the future tense would be to simply add an -ուի to the end of the infinitive verb and follow it with a present tense "to be".

Example: ենք կաheeyanank (menk handeepeloo yenk) where the verb is հանդիպել (to meet).

This would be the equivalent to saying "we will be meeting", whereas ենք կաheeyanank (menk kəhandeepenk) would more accurately be translated as simply "we will meet".

To negate, simply follow the same procedure as negating present tense verbs.

չես գնալուի you will not be going (*doo ches gənaloo*)

Past Tense

Armenian has a number of past tenses, all of which will be discussed in detail.

Preterite (simple past)

Just like English, this tense has the most variation and exceptions (though, generally these variations occur in groups rather than random exceptions, and the number of irregulars is not even close to the amount that exist in English). The bulk of Armenian verbs are conjugated similarly in the preterite tense, as the bulk of Armenian verbs are polysyllabic and end in either -իլ or -անք (as we saw in the present tense, irregulars tend to be entirely monosyllabic, or end with a polysyllabic infinitive stem).

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In the case of -ᠠᠭ and -ᠨᠠᠭ verbs, remove the ᠠ and replace it with the corresponding ending:

ᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭ

ᠠᠭᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭᠠᠭ

ᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭ

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ -ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ

Example: ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ (to say)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ I said (*yes ahsetsee*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ you (sing.) said (*doo ahsetseer*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ he/she/it said (*nah ahsets*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ we said (*menk ahsetseenk*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ you (pl./form.) said (*dook ahsetseek*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ they said (*nᠠrank ahsetseen*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ (to stay/remain)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ I stayed (*yes mᠠnahtsee*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ you (sing.) stayed (*doo mᠠnahtseer*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ he/she/it stayed (*nah mᠠnahts*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ we stayed (*menk mᠠnahtseenk*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ you (pl./form.) stayed (*dook mᠠnahtseek*)

ᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭᠠᠭ they stayed (*nᠠrank mᠠnahtseen*)

Verbs which end with -**stahsa**, -**stahsar**, or -**stahsav** are conjugated by replacing the **sa** in the suffix with the corresponding stem:

u -**sa**

du -**sa**

na -**sa**

menk -**sa**

dook -**sa**

nrank -**sa**

Example: **stahsa** (to receive)

u **stahsa** I received (*yes stahsa*)

du **stahsar** you (sing.) received (*doo stahsar*)

na **stahsav** he/she/it received (*nah stahsav*)

menk **stahsank** we received (*menk stahsank*)

dook **stahsak** you (pl./form.) received (*dook stahsak*)

nrank **stahsahn** they received (*nrank stahsahn*)

Many verbs which end in -**sa** (but not -**stahsa**) are conjugated similarly to -**stahsa** verbs, but without the **sa**.

Example: **hahsa** (to arrive)

u **hahsa**

du **hahsar**

na **hahsav**

menk **hahsank**

dook **hahsak**

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հոգանքներ **հոգանքներ**

There is also a family of verbs in Armenian which end in **-հոգանքներ**. These verbs in all other tenses are treated the same as normal **-հոգանքներ** verbs (the **հոգանքներ** simply being treated as part of the root). These verbs indicate a caused action. For example, where **սովորել** (*sovorel*) means "to learn", **սովորեցնել** (*sovoretsnel*) means "to cause to learn" or in other words "to teach".

In the preterite tense, the **հոգանքներ** in the stem becomes **հոգանքներ** and from there it is treated like a normal **-հոգանքներ** verb. So the first-person preterite of **սովորել** becomes **սովորեցի**.

Irregulars

Just as in the present tense, monosyllabic verbs tend to function under different rules. **գալ** (to come) and **տալ** (to give) are the only two widely used monosyllabic verbs. Their conjugations in the preterite are as follows:

գալ (to come)

Ես **գալիս** I came (*yes yekah*)

Դու **գալիս** you (sing.) came (*doo yekar*)

Նա **գալիս** he/she/it came (*nah yekav*)

Մենք **գալիս** we came (*menk yekank*)

Դուք **գալիս** you (pl./form.) came (*dook yekak*)

Նրանք **գալիս** they came (*nrank yekan*)

տալ (to give)

Ես **տալիս** I gave (*yes tvetsee*)

Դու **տալիս** you (sing.) gave (*doo tvetseer*)

Նա **տալիս** he/she/it gave (*nah tvets*)

Մենք **տալիս** we gave (*menk tvetseenk*)

Դուք **տալիս** you (pl./form.) gave (*dook tvetseek*)

Նրանք **տալիս** they gave (*nrank tvetseen*)

Ինչպես նաև արարվում է ան규格.

Իս արարում

Ինչ արարում

Ինչ արարում

Ինչպես արարում

Ինչպես արարում

Ինչպես արարում

The verb արարում (to be) can also be used to mean "to happen". When used in that context, it is conjugated as a normal verb, but an irregular one. The root turns into ար- and it is conjugated the same as the preterite of արար . Generally, the only practical sense in which the word would ever be used in this context is in the third-person singular: արարավ (yeghav), which literally means "it happened", as in "consider it done." Armenian speakers often say it in the same context as the English expression "okay" or "whatever".

Imperfect Past

To express the imperfect past tense, one would need to know the past conjugations of "to be".

Իս արարում-I was (*yes eyee*)

Ինչ արարում-you(sing.) were (*doo eyeer*)

Ինչ արարում-he/she/it was (*nah ehr*)

Ինչպես արարում-we were (*menk eyeenk*)

Ինչպես արարում-you(pl./form.) were (*dook eyeek*)

Ինչպես արարում-they were (*nrank eyeen*)

This is the tense through which one expresses continuous action in the pass, such as "I was walking" or "we were talking". The rule is the same as in English. The verb is conjugated the same

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way as it is in the present tense (replacing the stem with -**em**) and followed then followed by the past conjugation of "to be".

So whereas **yes khmoom em** (*yes khmoom em*) means *I drinking am*, **yes khmoom eyee** (*yes khmoom eyee*) means *I drinking was*.

Negation follows exactly the same rule as in the present tense.

yes bambasoom eyee (*yes bambasoom eyee*) *I was gossipping* becomes **no cheyee bambasoom** (*yes cheyee bambasoom*) *I wasn't gossipping*.

Perfect Tense

The perfect tense is a way to express the past which is almost as widely used as the preterite. It sees a much more frequent distribution than its English equivalent.

If the verb is a standard **-en** verb (no **h** or **h** preceding it), then it does not change from its infinitive form and either a present or a past form of "to be" is placed after it.

menk untrel enk (*menk untrel enk*) we have chosen

or

menk untrel eyeenk (*menk untrel eyeenk*) we had chosen

To negate, add **no** to the beginning of the "to be" conjugation and place the word before the verb.

no rank cheyee sksel (*nrank cheyeeen sksel*) they hadn't started

If a **h** precedes the **-en** stem, such as in **hahsel** (to arrive), the **h** is simply removed from the verb, becoming

doohasel es (*doohasel es*) you (sing.) have arrived

The stem in all **-en**, **-eyeen**, and **-eyeenk** verbs becomes **-eyeen**.

Example: **eyeen** (to become full from eating) becomes **eyeen**

Just as in the preterite tense, the **h** in any **-en** verb simply changes to a **h**.

Example: **hahsel** (to simplify/make something easier) becomes **hahsel**.

The stem in any -**oooh** verb becomes -**oooh**.

Irregulars

The most commonly used irregulars are **oooh** (to come), **oooh** (to give), **ooohoooh** (to be), and **ooohoooh** (to eat).

oooh becomes **oooh**

oooh becomes **oooh**

ooohoooh becomes **oooh**

ooohoooh becomes **ooohoooh**

Conditional

This tense can be used to express "would", and it can be used to denote future or past conditions, such as "I would go" or "I would *have gone*".

The conditional tense is expressed similarly to the future tense. The **u** prefix is still tacked on to the beginning of the root, and the final **o** is replaced the corresponding end marker.

For -**oo** and -**oooh** verbs:

u -**oo**

oooh -**oo**

oo -**oo**

ooohoooh -**oooh**

ooohoooh -**oo**

ooohoooh -**oo**

Example: **ooohooohoooh** (to send)

u **ooohooohooohoooh** (*yes k'ooghark'eyee*) *I would send/would have sent*

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Իմ օգոհարկ'յեեր (doo k'ooghark'eyeer) you (sing.) would send/would have sent

Նա օգոհարկ'եր (nah k'ooghark'er) he/she/it would send/would have sent

Մենք օգոհարկ'յենք (menk k'ooghark'yeenk) we would send/would have sent

Դուք օգոհարկ'յեեք (dook k'ooghark'yeek) you (pl./form.) would send/would have sent

Նրանք օգոհարկ'յեն (nrank k'ooghark'yeen) they would send/would have sent

For -իմ, -նա, and -մենք verbs, use the same endings, but precede them with ի, as Armenian phonetics does not allow for a shift from ի to ն without a semi-vowel between them (the exception being the third-person singular, as its conjugation does not contain ի).

Example: Թուժանք (to be late)

Իմ Թուժանք

Նա Թուժանք

Մենք Թուժանք

Դուք Թուժանք

Նրանք Թուժանք

Նրանք Թուժանք

Reflexives

To express reflexive action (*I was understood* rather than *I understood*), a ի is inserted into the verb, in most cases just before the suffix. Provided below are examples from all verb families.

Իմանալ (to remember)

Իմանալ (to be remembered)

Present: Դուք իմանալու եք doo heeshvoom es You are remembered (lit. you are being remembered)

Preterite: Նա իմանալու էր nah heeshvets he/she/it was remembered

Future: *menk k'heeshvenk* We will be remembered

Perfect: *n'rank heeshvel en* They have been remembered

(to read)

(to be read)

Present: *geerk k'artatsvroom eh* The book is read (lit. the book is being read)

Preterite: *geerk k'artatsvets* The book was read

Future: *geerk k'artatsvee* The book will be read

Perfect: *geerk k'artatsvel eh* The book has been read

(to make difficult)

(to be made difficult)

Present: *s'rank d'zhvaratsvroom en* These are being made difficult

Preterite: *s'rank d'zhvaratsvetseen* These were made difficult

Future: *s'rank k'd'zhvaratsven* These will be made difficult

Perfect: *s'rank d'zhvaratsvel en* These have been made difficult

(to promise)

(to be promised)

Present: *dah khostatsvroom eh* That is being promised

Preterite: *dah khostatsvets* That was promised

Future: *dah k'khostatsvee* That will be promised

Perfect: *dah khostatsvel eh* That has been promised

(to confess/admit)

(to be confessed/admitted)

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Present: նրա մեղքերն օրհնվում են *nrah meghker khostovatsvooom en* His sins are being confessed

Preterite: նրա մեղքերն օրհնվեցին *nrah meghker khostovatsvetseen* His sins were confessed

Future: նրա մեղքերն օրհնվեն *nrah meghker k khostovatsven* His sins will be confessed

Perfect: նրա մեղքերն օրհնվել են *nrah meghker khostovatsvel en* His sins have been confessed

նրա մեղքերն օրհնվի (to will/desire that something happen)

նրա մեղքերն օրհնվի (to be willed/desired)

Cases

Armenian has seven grammatical cases: nominative, dative, accusative, locative, ablative, genitive, and instrumental.

նրա մեղքերն օրհնվում են