

μή is a negator like οὐ. In broad terms, while οὐ is used in statements and is usually found with the indicative, μή is used in more 'complicated' constructions, like conditionals and purpose clauses and is usually found with non-indicative forms. Here it adds the negative sense '**not**'. For example:

τί ἄν οὖν βουλόμενος ἐγὼ τοιοῦτον κίνδυνον ἐκινδύνεου, εἰ μή τὸ μέγιστον τῶν ἀδικημάτων ἢ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἡδίκημένος;

(Lysias Speeches 1.45)

ἵνα δὲ μή, ὅποτε λουῖσθαι δεοί, κινδυνεύῃ κατὰ τῆς κλίμακος καταβαίνουσα, ἐγὼ μὲν ἄνω διητώμην, αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες κάτω.

(Lysias Speeches 1.9)

μή can also be used in prohibitions, where it can be translated '**don't**'. This is followed by the present imperative or the aorist subjunctive. For example:

μήτε τοίνυν ταῦτα φοβοῦ

(Plato Crito 45a)

μή θαύμαζε τὰ λεγόμενα ἀλλ' ἀποκρίνου

(Plato Crito 50d)

μή σε πείσῃ Κρίτων ποιεῖν ἃ λέγει μᾶλλον ἢ ἡμεῖς.

(Plato Crito 54d)

Remember, μή can be extended in various ways and still be used in prohibitions.

For example:

μηδεμιᾶ πολυπραγμοσύνη προσεληλυθέναι με νόμιζε πρὸς σέ

(Lysias Speeches 1.15)

ψεύση δὲ μηδέν, ἀλλὰ πάντα τάληθῆ λέγε.

(Lysias Speeches 1.18)

Thirdly, μή is used with the meaning of the conjunction '**lest**', particularly after verbs of

fearing.

For example:

οὔτε συνήδει κακὸν οὐδὲν ὃ ἐγὼ δεδιὼς μή τις πύθηται ἐπεθύμουν αὐτὸν ἀπολέσαι,

(Lysias Speeches 1.43)

ὡς ἔγωγε καὶ ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῶν σῶν ἐπιτηδείων αἰσχύνομαι μὴ δόξη ἅπαν τὸ
πρᾶγμα τὸ περὶ σὲ ἀνανδρίᾳ τινὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ πεπραχθῆαι

(Plato Crito 45e)

You should also learn 2 important combinations including μή: ἀρα μή is used to suggest that the result is something that you do not want to happen:

ἄρα γε μὴ ἐμοῦ προμηθῆ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιτηδείων μή, ἐὰν σὺ ἐνθένδε ἐξέλθῃς, οἱ
συκοφάνται ἡμῖν πράγματα παρέχουσιν ὡς σὲ ἐνθένδε ἐκκλέψασιν, καὶ ἀναγκασθῶμεν ἢ
καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν οὐσίαν ἀποβαλεῖν ἢ συχνὰ χρήματα, ἢ καὶ ἄλλο τι πρὸς τούτοις παθεῖν;

(Plato Crito 44e)

Similarly, ὅπως μή means 'see to it that this does not happen'. For example:

ὅπως τοίνυν ταῦτα μηδεὶς ἀνθρώπων πεύσεται· εἰ δέ μή, οὐδὲν σοι κύριον ἔσται τῶν πρὸς
ἔμ' ὠμολογημένων.

(Lysias Speeches 1.21)