

# Grammar in Brief

# Part I: Nominals

Part II: Weak Verbs

Part III: Strong Verbs

## Nominals

Noun

Pronoun

Adjective  
including participles

## Nominals

Noun

Pronoun

Adjective  
including participles

- ▶ Number
- ▶ Case
- ▶ Gender

## *a*-Stem Nouns (Masculine and Neuter)

<b>masc</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>	<b>neut</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	hestr	hestar	<i>Nom.</i>	barn	børn
<i>Acc.</i>	hest	hesta	<i>Acc.</i>	barn	børn
<i>Gen.</i>	hests	hesta	<i>Gen.</i>	barns	barna
<i>Dat.</i>	hesti	hestum	<i>Dat.</i>	barni	børnum

- ▶ Genitive singular normally *-s*; forms in *-ar* originate as *i-* or *u-*stems (*skógr* “forest” : *skógar*; *hofundr* “chieftain” : *hofundar*)
- ▶ Thematic vowel *a* (masc. nom/acc pl.)
- ▶ Nom/acc pl. in neuters subject to labial mutation

## $\bar{o}$ -Stem Nouns (Feminine)

	<b>fem</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>		þqrf	þarfar
<i>Acc.</i>		þqrf	þarfar
<i>Gen.</i>		þarfar	þarfa
<i>Dat.</i>		þqrf	þqrfum

- ▶ Genitive singular in *-ar*
- ▶ Thematic vowel *a* (nom./acc. plural)
- ▶ Nom, acc., dat. singular subject to labial mutation

## *i*-Stem Nouns (Masculine and Feminine)

<b>masc</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>	<b>fem</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	gestr	gestir	<i>Nom.</i>	qxl	axlir
<i>Acc.</i>	gest	gesti	<i>Acc.</i>	qxl	axlir
<i>Gen.</i>	gests	gesta	<i>Gen.</i>	axlar	axla
<i>Dat.</i>	gest	gestum	<i>Dat.</i>	qxl	qxlum

- ▶ Gen. sg. normally *-ar*, but masc. contamination from *a*-stems
- ▶ Thematic vowel *i* (nom./acc. pl.)
- ▶ Feminines have acc. pl. *-ir*, masculines *-i*
- ▶ Dative singular masculine normally a zero ending (but contamination from *a*-stems)
- ▶ Feminines have *u*-mutation in nom., acc., dat. singular (like *ō*-stems)

## Weak Nouns (All Genders)

	<b>masc</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>		bogi	bogar
<i>Acc.</i>		boga	boga
<i>Gen.</i>		boga	boga
<i>Dat.</i>		boga	bogum

	<b>fem</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>		saga	sogur
<i>Acc.</i>		sogu	sogur
<i>Gen.</i>		sogu	sagna
<i>Dat.</i>		sogu	sogum

- ▶ Plurals largely like strong forms (but neut./fem. gen. pl. *-na*)
- ▶ Masc./fem. singulars have one nominative form, one oblique form
- ▶ Cf. weak adjective declension



## Weak Nouns (All Genders)

	<b>neut</b>	<b>sg</b>	<b>pl</b>
<i>Nom.</i>		hjarta	hjǫrtu
<i>Acc.</i>		hjarta	hjǫrtu
<i>Gen.</i>		hjarta	hjartna
<i>Dat.</i>		hjarta	hjǫrtum

- ▶ Neuter singulars indeclinable, in *-a*
- ▶ Neuter plurals subject to labial mutation except in the genitive

## (Definite) Article

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sg	fem	masc	neut	pl	fem	masc	neut
<i>Nom.</i>	in	inn	it	<i>Nom.</i>	nar	inir	in
<i>Acc.</i>	ina	inn	it	<i>Acc.</i>	nar	ina	in
<i>Gen.</i>	innar	ins	ins	<i>Gen.</i>	nna	nna	nna
<i>Dat.</i>	inni	inum	inu	<i>Dat.</i>	num	num	num

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sg	<i>Nom.</i>	laugin	pl	<i>Nom.</i>	laugarnar
	<i>Acc.</i>	laugina		<i>Acc.</i>	laugarnar
	<i>Gen.</i>	laugarinnar		<i>Gen.</i>	lauganna
	<i>Dat.</i>	lauginni		<i>Dat.</i>	laugunum

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## (Definite) Article

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sg	fem	masc	neut	pl	fem	masc	neut
<i>Nom.</i>	in	inn	it	<i>Nom.</i>	nar	inir	in
<i>Acc.</i>	ina	inn	it	<i>Acc.</i>	nar	ina	in
<i>Gen.</i>	innar	ins	ins	<i>Gen.</i>	nna	nna	nna
<i>Dat.</i>	inni	inum	inu	<i>Dat.</i>	num	num	num

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sg	<i>Nom.</i>	steinninn	pl	<i>Nom.</i>	steinarnir
	<i>Acc.</i>	steininn		<i>Acc.</i>	steinana
	<i>Gen.</i>	steinsins		<i>Gen.</i>	steinanna
	<i>Dat.</i>	steini-num		<i>Dat.</i>	steinu-num

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## (Definite) Article

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sg	fem	masc	neut	pl	fem	masc	neut
<i>Nom.</i>	in	inn	it	<i>Nom.</i>	nar	inir	in
<i>Acc.</i>	ina	inn	it	<i>Acc.</i>	nar	ina	in
<i>Gen.</i>	innar	ins	ins	<i>Gen.</i>	nna	nna	nna
<i>Dat.</i>	inni	inum	inu	<i>Dat.</i>	num	num	num

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sg	<i>Nom.</i>	orđit	pl	<i>Nom.</i>	orđin
	<i>Acc.</i>	orđit		<i>Acc.</i>	orđit
	<i>Gen.</i>	orđsins		<i>Gen.</i>	orđanna
	<i>Dat.</i>	orđinu		<i>Dat.</i>	orđunum

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## (Definite) Article

sg fem		sg masc		sg neut	
<i>Nom.</i>	þorfin	<i>Nom.</i>	hestrinn	<i>Nom.</i>	barnit
<i>Acc.</i>	þorfina	<i>Acc.</i>	hestinn	<i>Acc.</i>	barnit
<i>Gen.</i>	þarfarinnar	<i>Gen.</i>	hestsins	<i>Gen.</i>	barnsins
<i>Dat.</i>	þorfinni	<i>Dat.</i>	hestinum	<i>Dat.</i>	barninu
pl		pl		pl	
<i>Nom.</i>	þarfar <b>nar</b>	<i>Nom.</i>	hestar <b>nir</b>	<i>Nom.</i>	børn <b>in</b>
<i>Acc.</i>	þarfar <b>nar</b>	<i>Acc.</i>	hesta <b>na</b>	<i>Acc.</i>	børn <b>in</b>
<i>Gen.</i>	þarfanna	<i>Gen.</i>	hestanna	<i>Gen.</i>	barnanna
<i>Dat.</i>	þorfun <b>um</b>	<i>Dat.</i>	hestun <b>um</b>	<i>Dat.</i>	børnun <b>um</b>

# Pronouns

→ [studium.langeslag.org/norse18/pronouns.html](http://studium.langeslag.org/norse18/pronouns.html)

→ [flash.langeslag.org/onphr.php](http://flash.langeslag.org/onphr.php) set 1

- ▶ Personal: singular, **dual**, plural
- ▶ Neuter and plural personal pronouns derive from demonstrative
- ▶ Personal, demonstrative: **separate plural forms for each gender**

## Adjectives

### Strong

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	<b>masc</b>	<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>
<i>Nom.</i>		djarfr víkingr	djarfir víkingar
<i>Acc.</i>		djarfan víking	djarfa víkinga
<i>Gen.</i>		djarfs víkings	djarfra víkinga
<i>Dat.</i>		djǫrfum víkingi	djǫrfum víkingum

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### Weak

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	<b>masc</b>	<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	inn	djarfi víkingr	inir djǫrfu víkingar
<i>Acc.</i>	inn	djarfa víking	ina djǫrfu víkinga
<i>Gen.</i>	ins	djarfa víkings	inna djǫrfu víkinga
<i>Dat.</i>	inum	djarfa víkingi	inum djǫrfum víkingum

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## Syncope in Dissyllabic Adjectives

### Strong

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<b>masc</b>	<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	auðigr víkingr	auðgir víkingar
<i>Acc.</i>	auðgan víking	auðga víkinga
<i>Gen.</i>	auðigs víkings	auðigra víkinga
<i>Dat.</i>	auðgum víkingi	auðgum víkingum

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### Weak

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<b>masc</b>	<b>singular</b>	<b>plural</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	inn auðgi víkingr	inir auðgu víkingar
<i>Acc.</i>	inn auðga víking	ina auðgu víkinga
<i>Gen.</i>	ins auðga víkings	inna auðgu víkinga
<i>Dat.</i>	inum auðga víkingi	inum auðgum víkingum

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## Comparison

Formation:

1. Normally: add *-ar-*, *-ast-* between stem and ending (may cause syncope)
2. Variant: the same but with front mutation and syncope, leaving the infix *-r-*, *-st-*
3. An unconnected stem that likewise adds *-r-*, *-st-*

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Type 1a	djarfr	djarfari	djarfastr
Type 1b	auðigr	auðgari	auðgastr
Type 2	langr	lengri	lengstr
Type 2	skammr	skemmri	skemmstr
Type 3	góðr	betri	beztr

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## Comparatives and Present Participles

Decline weak, following a simplified declension:

	<b>fem</b>	<b>masc</b>	<b>neut</b>	<b>plural</b>
<i>Nom.</i>	trúandi	trúandi	trúanda	trúandi
<i>Acc.</i>	trúandi	trúanda	trúanda	trúandi
<i>Gen.</i>	trúandi	trúanda	trúanda	trúandi
<i>Dat.</i>	trúandi	trúanda	trúanda	trúandum

# Superlatives and Past Participles

Decline weak or strong according to context:

- ▶ Konungr var **elskaðr**
- ▶ Inn **elskaði** konungr
- ▶ Hann var allra manna **vænstr**.
- ▶ Hann var inn **vænsti** maðr.

Part I: Nominals  
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# A Typical Weak Conjugation

active voice						
<i>present indicative</i>			<i>present subjunctive</i>			
<i>1sg</i>	ek kalla	<i>1pl</i>	vér kòllum	<i>1sg</i>	ek kalla	
<i>2sg</i>	þú kallar	<i>2pl</i>	þér kallið	<i>2sg</i>	þú kallir	
<i>3sg</i>	hon kallar	<i>3pl</i>	þau kalla	<i>3sg</i>	hon kalli	
<i>preterite indicative</i>			<i>preterite subjunctive</i>			
<i>1sg</i>	ek kallaða	<i>1pl</i>	vér kòlluðum	<i>1sg</i>	ek kallaða	
<i>2sg</i>	þú kallaðir	<i>2pl</i>	þér kòlluðuð	<i>2sg</i>	þú kallaðir	
<i>3sg</i>	hon kallaði	<i>3pl</i>	þau kòlluðu	<i>3sg</i>	hon kallaði	
<i>preterite infinitive</i>			kòlluðu			
<i>past participle</i>	<i>f.</i>	kòlluð	<i>m.</i>	kallaðr	<i>n.</i>	kallat
<i>imperative</i>	<i>2sg</i>	kalla	<i>1pl</i>	kòllum	<i>2pl</i>	kallið

Figure: *kalla* 2 “call, name”

## Personal Endings, Present Tense

Person	Pronoun	Ending	Class 2	Class 1 (short)
1sg	ek	—	kalla	tel
2sg	þú	-r	kallar	telr
3sg	hon/hann/þat	-r	kallar	telr
1pl	vér	-um	kollum	teljum
2pl	(þ)ér	-ið	kallið	telið
3pl	þær/þeir/þau	-a	kalla	telja

## Weak Verb Classes and Thematic Vowels

Class	Thematic Vowel	Example
1 short	(i/)j	ek tel, þú telr, hon telr vér teljum, þér telið, þau telja
1 long	i(/j)	ek heyri, þú heyrir, hon heyrir vér heyrum, þér heyrið, þau heyra
2	a	ek kalla, þú kallar, hon kallar vér køllum, þér kallið, þau kalla
3a	i (PN e)	ek hefi, þú hefir, hon hefir vér hofum, þér hafið, þau hafa
3b	i (PN e)	ek segi, þú segir, hon segir vér segjum, þér segið, þau segja

## Stem Length

- Short A monosyllabic stem ending in VC or  $\bar{V}$  (i.e. a long vowel)
- Long Any other combination
- NB Thematic vowels and stem augments *j/v* are not counted towards stem length, while geminate *gg* counts as a single consonant. Diphthongs count as long vowels.
- Short kveðja, hyggja, leggja, selja, spyrja, telja, verja, þekja, æja
- Long blœða, brenna, dreyma, elda, fylgja, hlífa, kyssa, sigla, þykkja

NB *byggja* (older form *byggva*) is a long stem;  
*byggja* (from *\*bugja*) counts as short!



## Weak Verb Classes and Thematic Vowels

Class	Thematic Vowel	Example
1 short	(i/)j	ek tel, þú telr, hon telr vér teljum, þér telið, þau telja
1 long	i(/j)	ek heyri, þú heyrir, hon heyrir vér heyrum, þér heyrið, þau heyra
2	a	ek kalla, þú kallar, hon kallar vér køllum, þér kallið, þau kalla
3a	i (PN e)	ek hefi, þú hefir, hon hefir vér hofum, þér hafið, þau hafa
3b	i (PN e)	ek segi, þú segir, hon segir vér segjum, þér segið, þau segja

## Thematic Vowels and Front Mutation

Class	T-Vowel	Front Mutation
1 short	(i/)j	Everywhere except preterite indicative, past ptc
1 long	i(/j)	Everywhere
2	a	Nowhere
3a	i (PN e)	Preterite subjunctive
3b	i (PN e)	Everywhere except preterite indicative, past ptc

## Preterite Formation

The dental suffix *-ði* loses its vowel when followed immediately by a vowel in the personal ending.

Person	Pronoun	Ending	Example
1sg	ek	-a	kallaða
2sg	þú	-r	kallaðir
3sg	hon/hann/þat	—	kallaði
1pl	vér	-um	kolluðum
2pl	(þ)ér	-uð	kolluðuð
3pl	þær/þeir/þau	-u	kolluðu

## Some Representative Weak Verbs

- dvelja (1, short stem)
- spyrja (1, short stem)
- dœma (1, long stem)
- leita (2)
- tala (2)
- þakka (2)
- hafa (3, usual type)
- lifa (3, usual type)
- segja (3, fronted type)

Part I: Nominals

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# Preterite and Past Participle Formation

## Weak

- ▶ Stem + dental suffix + personal ending
- ▶ Dental suffix:
  - ▶ Gothic *-d-*
  - ▶ English *-d/t*
  - ▶ **Old Icelandic** *-ði-*, *-ðr/ð/t*
  - ▶ Form assimilates to context → *-di-*, *-ddi-*, *-ti-*
- ▶ e.g. *said*, *spent*, *walked*
- ▶ *segja* → *sagði*
- ▶ *beiða* → *beiddum*
- ▶ *festu* → *festu*
- ▶ *flytja* → *fluttuð*

## Strong

- ▶ Stem with modified vowel + personal ending
- ▶ Up to four different vowels for present, preterite singular, preterite plural, and past participle (“the four principal parts”)
- ▶ Vowel gradation:
  - ▶ English:
    - ▶ *write*, *wrote*, *written*
    - ▶ *sing*, *sang*, *sung*
  - ▶ Old Icelandic:
    - ▶ *ríta*, *reit*, *ritum*, *ritinn*
    - ▶ *syngja*, *song*, *sungum*, *sunginn*

## Vowel Gradation and the Principal Parts

Class	First	<i>Fronted</i>	Second	Third	<i>Fronted</i>	Fourth
I	í		ei	i		i
II	jú (jó)	ý	au (ó)	u	y	o
III	eCC (iCC)		aCC	uCC	yCC	uCC (oCC)
IV	e		a	á	æ	o
V	e (i)		a (á)	á	æ	e
VI	a	e	ó	ó	œ	a (e)
VII	X	<i>X-fronted</i>	Y	Y	<i>Y-fronted</i>	X

## Vowel Gradation and the Principal Parts

Class	First	<i>Fronted</i>	Second	Third	<i>Fronted</i>	Fourth
I	ríða		reið	riðu		riðinn
II	bjúga	<i>býgr</i>	baug	bugu	<i>bygi</i>	boginn
II	kjósa	<i>kýss</i>	kaus	kusu	<i>kysi</i>	kosinn
III	bresta		brast	brustu	<i>brysti</i>	brostinn
III	finna		fann	fundu	<i>fyndi</i>	fundinn
IV	stela		stal	stálu	<i>stæli</i>	stolinn
V	gefa		gaf	gáfu	<i>gæfi</i>	gefinn
V	sitja		sat	sátu	<i>sæti</i>	setinn
VI	fara	<i>ferr</i>	fór	fóru	<i>færi</i>	farinn
VII	heita		hét	hétu		heitinn
VII	auka	<i>eykr</i>	jók	jóku	<i>æki</i>	aukinn
VII	falla	<i>fellr</i>	fell	fellu		fallinn
VII	róa	<i>rœr</i>	reru	reru		róinn



## Some Sentences

1. Sigurður konungr vildi ríða af bæ.
2. Attila konungr er riðinn út á skóg með sína menn að veiða dýr.
3. Konungr spurði, hvert hann hefði stólit gulli hans.
4. Fór Þórsteinn þá í brott; enn Oddr gerði svá, sem hann hafði ráð til gefit.
5. Í borginni var höfðingi sá, er Óðinn var kallaður; þar var blótstaður mikill.