

# Faroese

Hjalmar P. Petersen and Jonathan Adams

## A Language Course for Beginners

Grammar



**FAROESE**  
**A Language Course for Beginners**

**GRAMMAR**

by

*Hjalmar P. Petersen and Jonathan Adams*

**STÍÐIN**  
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## Abbreviations

acc.	accusative	intrans.	intransitive
adj.	adjective	lit.	literally
adv.	adverb	m.	masculine
comp.	comparative	n.	neuter
conj.	conjunction	n.-fin.	non-finite
Dan.	Danish	nom.	nominative
dat.	dative	num.	numeral
dem.	demonstrative	obj.	object
dir.	direct	ON	Old Norse
Eng.	English	past part.	past participle
excl.	exclamation	pl.	plural
f.	feminine	pret.	preterite
Far.	Faroese	prep.	preposition
fin.	finite	pron.	pronoun
gen.	genitive	refl.	reflexive
Ger.	German	sg.	singular
Ice.	Icelandic	subj.	subject
imp.	imperative	superl.	superlative
impers.	impersonal	sup.	supine
indecl.	indeclinable	trans.	transitive
ind.	indirect	vb.	verb
inf.	infinitive	*	the form is incorrect or unattested
inter.	interrogative		
interj.	interjection		

## The grammar of Faroese: *An overview*

Faroese is a highly inflected language. Some paradigms are very complex and complicated as a result of allomorphic variation (that is, parts of words can be pronounced differently without changing their meaning).<sup>1</sup> This variation is something that characterises Faroese morphology, e.g.:

(1a)	<b>dag</b>	[deː]	'day' <i>acc. sg.</i>
(1b)	<b>dagar</b>	[d̥ɛːaɪ]	'days' <i>nom. pl.</i>
(1c)	<b>dagblað</b>	[d̥ɛːbl̥eːaː]	'newspaper' <i>nom. sg.</i>
(2a)	<b>maður</b>	[m̥eːvʊɪ]	'man' <i>nom. sg.</i>
(2b)	<b>mann</b>	[m̥anː]	'man' <i>acc. sg.</i>
(2c)	<b>monnum</b>	[m̥ɔːnːʊn]	'men' <i>dat. pl.</i>
(2d)	<b>menn</b>	[m̥eːnː]	'men' <i>nom. pl.</i>
(3a)	<b>vegur</b>	[veːvʊɪ]	'road' <i>nom. sg.</i>
(3b)	<b>vegir</b>	[veːjɪ]	'roads' <i>nom. pl.</i>
(4a)	<b>veður</b>	[veːvʊɪ]	'weather' <i>nom. sg.</i>
(4b)	<b>veðri</b>	[veːɣɪ]	'weather' <i>dat. sg.</i>
(5a)	<b>kúgv</b>	[kɪɣv]	'cow' <i>nom. sg.</i>
(5b)	<b>kúm</b>	[k̥auːm]	'cows' <i>dat. pl.</i>
(5c)	<b>kýr</b>	[k̥uiːɪ]	'cows' <i>nom. pl.</i>
(6a)	<b>lúgva</b>	[lɪɣva]	'to lie'
(6b)	<b>lýgur</b>	[l̥uiːjʊɪ]	'lies' <i>pres.</i>
(6c)	<b>leyg</b>	[l̥eiːj]	'lied' <i>pret. sg.</i>
(6d)	<b>lugu</b>	[luːwʊ]	'lied' <i>pret. pl.</i>
(6e)	<b>logið</b>	[loːjɪ]	'lied' <i>past part.</i>

Faroese has had some historical changes not observed in other Scandinavian languages, as for example the so-called *skerping*, where *-gv* was originally inserted in bisyllabic words after the high, back vowel *-u* resulting in ON *kúin* > *kúgvin* 'the cow'; the older pronunciation was with [ɣ], now it is with [ɪ], see example (5a) and (6a); another part of the *skerping* was that *-ggj* was originally inserted in bisyllabic words after high, front vowels as ON *deyja* > Far. *doyggja* 'to die,' and OFar. \**heiur* > Far. *heyggjur* 'hill'. Changes like these were possible as the islands were so isolated from the rest of Scandinavia. Furthermore, during the time Danish was the official language of the Faroe Islands, many changes happened in Faroese, especially in vocabulary and syntax. The Faroese language can be considered as being situated between Insular Scandinavian (Icelandic) and Mainland Scandinavian

<sup>1</sup> The same thing occurs in English. Compare, for example, the pronunciation of the ending *-ed* that marks the past tense in these three words: *grunted* [əd]; *bugged* [d]; *hushed* [t].



(Norwegian, Swedish and Danish). For example, compare the position of the negative particle *ikki* 'not' in (7), and we find also examples of congruent lexicalization as (7e), where there is an overabundance of homophonous words, **diamorphs**, that serve as bridges or triggers for the code-mix.

- (7a) *Jógvan sigur, at hann keypir ikki bilin*  
 (7b) *Jógvan sigur, at hann ikki keypir bilin*  
 'Jógvan says that he is not going to buy the car'<sup>2</sup>
- (7c) *Jógvan viðurkennir, at hann elskar ikki konuna*  
 (7d) *Jógvan viðurkennir, at hann ikki elskar konuna*  
 'Jógvan admits that he does not love his wife'
- (7e) *Tað er forundarligt, at tú ikki skalt forstanda ein dunklan hentydning*  
 (7f) *Det er forunderligt, at du ikke skal forstå en dunkel hentydning (Dan.)*  
 'It is strange that you are unable to understand a vague hint'

Another characteristic of Faroese is the many diphthongs; as a rule of thumb all long vowels in ON became diphthongs in Faroese, e.g. *ó, í/ý* changed to [eu:] and [ui:]. The result of diphthongisation is that Faroese has 13 long and 10 short vowels; more on this in §14 and §14.2.

There are also examples of convergence, as a result of the bilingual Faroese-Danish language situation, where it is sometimes Faroese that sets the syntactic frame, sometimes Danish. In (8a) it is the Faroese expression *ilskast inn á* 'to be irritated with' that sets the syntactic frame, even though the verb is borrowed (*irriterast* < Dan. *irriteres* 'to be irritated'). However, Danish sets the syntactic frame in (8b), the 'correct' Faroese sentence being the one in (8c):

- (8a) *Malla irriterast inn á hundin, tí hann goyr so illa*  
 Malla is irritated in on dog-the, because he barks so badly  
 'Malla is irritated with the dog, because it barks so much'
- (8b) *Malla gevur ringin til mannin*  
 Malla gives ring-the to man-the  
 'Malla gives the ring to the man'
- (8c) *Malla gevur manninum ringin*  
 Malla gives man-the-dat. ring-the-acc.  
 'Malla gives the man the ring'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dan. *Jógvan siger, at han ikke køber bilen*, and Ice. *Jógvan segir, að hann kaupir ekki bilin* (or more correctly: *Jógvan segist ekki ætla að kaupa bilin*).

However, there is possibly another factor at play in (8b), namely *drift*, which causes the language to change in a certain direction, in this particular case from a synthetic to an analytic language.<sup>3</sup> Such a drift, or perhaps it is influence from Danish, can also be seen, for example, in 'stranding structure' as illustrated in (9b), where the preposition *frá* 'from' is stranded at the end of the clause and is not at the front as in (9c). The sentence in (9a) would be 'proper' Faroese:

- (9a) *Eg veit ikki, hvaðani eg havi lært danskt*  
 I know not, whence I have learnt Danish  
 'I don't know where I have learnt Danish from'
- (9b) *Eg veit ikki, hvar eg havi lært danskt frá*  
 I know not, where I have learnt Danish from  
 'I don't know, where I have learnt Danish from'
- (9c) *Eg veit ikki, hvarfrá eg havi lært danskt*  
 I know not, where from I have learnt Danish  
 'I don't know where I have learnt Danish from'

The influence of Danish has also resulted in a puristic movement and attitude to language by some Faroese people who view this influence as undesirable or a threat to Faroese. The result of purism is not seen so much in syntax, but rather in vocabulary, where older Faroese words are bestowed new meaning (for example, *básur* 'stall, box' has come to mean 'stand'), or where Icelandic words are borrowed more or less directly into Faroese (for example, *bókmentir* 'literature' < Ice. *bókmenntir*, and *tøkni* 'technology' < Ice. *tækni*). The situation today is that most people try to find a middle-of-the-road solution. In other words, they use created neologisms and older Faroese (or Old Norse) words to some extent in their written language, for example *litur* 'colour', instead of the borrowed *farva* 'colour', but use *farva* in their spoken language.

This is obviously a very simplified description of the actual language situation, but you should note as a learner of Faroese that there is a difference between the spoken language, which contains many loanwords from Danish, and the written language, where some writers try to eliminate these borrowings.

<sup>3</sup> A synthetic language is a highly inflected language with a high morpheme-per-word ratio (for example, 'eg send-i fróð-skap-ar-setr-i-num bræv-ið' = I send-1.sg.pres. learning-f.gen.sg.-seat-dat.-the letter-the = 'I send the university the letter'). An analytic language is one in which the vast majority of morphemes are fully fledged words and there is little inflection. Meaning is shaped by using particles and word order (for example, 'I send the letter to the university').

## How to use this grammar book

This part of the course not only concentrates on grammatical forms but also on language use; the book is not to be read from the first to the last page, but is for reference. As well as grammar, it includes chapters on syntax, pronunciation, punctuation, orthography, a glossary of grammatical terms and suggested further reading. References for suggested further reading are grouped by topic at the end of the book, but if the reader would like to get even more references with regard to Faroese, s/he should acquire a copy of *Faroese. An Overview and Reference Grammar* by H. Thráinsson, H. P. Petersen, J. í Lon Jacobsen and Z. S. Hansen (Tórshavn: Føroya Fróðskaparfelag, 2004).

## 1. Gender

Faroese has three genders: masculine (m.), feminine (f.) and neuter (n.). Gender is reflected in the behaviour of associated words. It is not possible to determine the gender of the following three words from the nominative alone: **akur** 'field', **fjøður** 'feather', **reiður** 'nest'. The nouns' gender is reflected, for example, by the adjectives:

A	B	C
ein stórur akur	ein stór fjøður	eitt stórt reiður

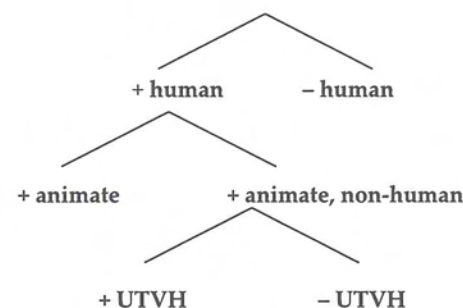
The noun **akur** 'field' in column A is masculine, which is reflected in the declension of the adjective **stórur** 'big'. The gender in B is feminine, as seen by **stór** 'big', and the gender in C is reflected in the adjective **stórt** 'big' as well as in the indefinite article **eitt** 'a'.

It might sometimes be difficult to determine the gender of a noun in Faroese. Sometimes it is necessary to remember the gender, but it is possible to set up some semantic rules, and in other instances some rules based on the form of the nouns.

### 1.1. Semantic rules

There is a core of nouns in Faroese whose gender is assigned according to semantic rules. This core is divided between human, animate and inanimate. The nouns with the feature human are further divided between animate and non-human that have utility value for humans (UTVH) on the one hand and all other animate nouns on the other (fig. 1).

Fig. 1 The classification of nouns



When a noun has the feature [human, animate, male/female] its gender follows the sex of the referent. The same holds for a noun with the feature [+animate, +non-human, +UTVH]: Nouns like **maður** 'man' and **tarvur** 'bull' are thus masculine, **kona** 'woman' and **kúgv** 'cow' are feminine.

## 1.2. Human, animate, male

Nouns denoting a male person are masculine in Faroese: **abbati** 'abbot', **abbi** 'grandad', **alskari** 'lover', **faðir** 'father', **feðgar** 'father and son(s)', **friðil** 'lover', **fursti/fúrsti** 'prince', **garpur** 'hero', **geldingur** 'eunuch', **gluntur** 'boy', **goði** 'heathen priest', **gubbi** 'godfather', **harri** 'master', **keisari** 'emperor', **klerkur** 'priest', **kongur** 'king', **tussi** 'giant', and **vitringur** 'wise man'.

## 1.3. Non-human, animate, male, utility value for humans

Corresponding to the male human group above (§1.2), we also find a male non-human group: **brimil** 'male seal', **hani** 'cock', **tarvur** 'bull', and **veðurur** 'ram'.

## 1.4. Persons are masculine

If a noun refers to a human that can be a male or female, it is masculine. For example, **granni** 'neighbour' is masculine as a neighbour can be either a man or a woman. Other nouns belonging to this group are nouns of nationality: **dani** or **danskari** 'Dane', **fraklendingur** 'Frenchman, Frenchwoman', **svenskari** 'Swede'. Nouns denoting a profession also belong to this group: **assistentur** 'assistant', **lærari** 'teacher', **sjúkrarøktarfrøðingur** 'nurse'. In discourse these nouns are referred to by the pronoun **hann** 'he' or **hon** 'she' depending on the sex of the referent, so even though the noun **lærari** 'teacher' is masculine, it is referred to with **hon** 'she' if the teacher is a woman.

Lærarin er sjúkur í dag. Hon kemur aftur í skúla í morgin  
'The teacher is sick today. She will be back in school tomorrow'

## 1.5. Human, animate, female

Nouns denoting a female human being are feminine: **dóttir** 'daughter', **drotning** 'queen', **genta** 'girl', **kappakvinna** 'heroine', **kona** 'woman', **mamma** 'mother', **neita** 'battleaxe', **nunna** 'nun', **prinsessa** 'princess', **skøkja** 'whore', and **systir** 'sister'.

## 1.6. Non-human, animate, female, utility value for humans

Corresponding to the gender assignment in §1.3 and §1.5, there is a rule, where female animals are feminine: **høna** 'hen', **tík** 'bitch', and **ær** 'ewe'.

## 1.7. Musical instruments are feminine

There is a clear tendency for musical instruments to be feminine: **fagott** 'bassoon', **sello** 'cello', **violin** 'violin'. There are, however, a few exceptions: **bassur** 'bass guitar' and **guitarur** or **gittari** 'guitar' are masculine; **horn** 'horn', **klaver** 'piano', and **piano** 'piano' are neuter. In some dialects (Norðuroygjar) **guitar** is feminine.

## 1.8. Human beings of unknown sex

There is a small group of nouns referring to human beings of unknown sex that are neuter. The following nouns belong to this group: **avkom** 'offspring', **barn** 'child', **fólk** 'people', **foreldur** 'parents', **fostur** 'embryo', **hjún** 'husband and wife', **individ** 'individual', **kind** 'children, offspring', **menniskja** 'people, humans', **systkin** 'siblings', and **systkinabarn** 'cousin'.

## 1.9. Chemical elements and metals are neuter

This group is neuter: **aluminium** 'aluminium', **gull** 'gold', **kopar** 'copper', **krystall** 'crystal', **silvur** 'silver', **tin** 'tin', and **uran** 'uranium'.

## 1.10. Alcohol

Alcohol is neuter: **akvavitt** 'aqua vitae', **viski** 'whisky', **øl** 'beer' and **vodka** 'vodka' for example. The nouns above are mass nouns and neuter when talking about alcohol in general: **øl** 'beer (in general)'. However, when drinking or buying a beer, the noun becomes countable and the gender changes to feminine. See examples (1a) and (1b):

- (1a) **Ikki nógv øl er bryggjað í Føroyum**  
(non-countable, neuter)  
'There is not much beer brewed in the Faroe Islands'
- (1b) **Eg fari at fáa mær eina øl**  
(countable, feminine)  
'I am going to get a (bottle of) beer'

## 1.11. Gender of loanwords

Most loanwords in Faroese are borrowed from Danish. Danish has two genders:

- common
- neuter

The rule is that common gender nouns in Danish are either masculine or feminine in Faroese, while neuter nouns in Danish are neuter in Faroese. The principle is clear: keep the gender of the donor language.

The semantic rules above apply to Danish loans as well as the native vocabulary. This is the reason why **astronomur** 'astronomer' and **kommunistur** 'communist' are masculine. They follow the semantic gender assignment rule that persons are masculine. Another example would be **primadonna** 'leading lady', which is feminine according to the rule: [+human,

+animate, +female] are feminine. Other examples of this rule are **xantippa** 'shrew', and **økonoma** 'matron, catering officer', and so on, which are feminine.

### 1.11.1. Formal assignment in loanwords: Masculine

It is possible to determine gender in loanwords from form only.

#### (a) -ari

A great many nouns in Faroese with the suffix **-ari**, which corresponds to Danish **-er** and English **-er** (Far. **elskari**: Dan. **elsker**, Eng. **lover**), are masculine, and since they denote persons they are masculine.

But there are nouns with the suffix **-ari**, which do not denote persons. Nonetheless, they are masculine according to the formal rule that all nouns ending in **-ari** are masculine. So the Danish common gender noun **medister** 'Cumberland sausage' becomes a masculine gender noun in Faroese **medistari**.

#### (b) -ansur

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-ans** are masculine in Faroese (**-ansur**):

Dan. **dissonans** > Far. **dissonansur** 'dissonance'  
 Dan. **glans** > Far. **glansur** 'sheen'  
 Dan. **substans** > Far. **substansur** 'substance'

#### (c) -torur

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-tor** are masculine in Faroese (**-torur**):

Dan. **faktor** > Far. **faktorur** 'factor'  
 Dan. **generator** > Far. **generatorur** 'generator', **motorur** 'engine'.  
 Dan. **sektor** > Far. **sektorur** 'sector'

#### (d) -tetur

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-tet** are masculine in Faroese (**-tetur**):

Dan. **aggressivitet** > Far. **aggressivitetur** 'aggressiveness'  
 Dan. **formalitet** > Far. **formalitetur** 'formality'  
 Dan. **passivitet** > Far. **passivitetur** 'passivity'

Note that Danish neuter gender nouns ending in **-tet** preserve their neuter gender in Faroese:

Dan. **universitet** > Far. **universitet** 'university'.

#### (e) -tøurur

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-tø** (denoting persons) end up as masculine in Faroese (**-tøurur**):

Dan. **aktør** > **aktøurur** 'player'  
 Dan. **direktør** > **direktøurur** 'manager'  
 Dan. **redaktør** > **redaktøurur** 'editor'

#### (f) -us

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-us** are masculine in Faroese (**-us**):

Dan. **radius** > Far. **radius** 'radius'  
 Dan. **cyklus** > Far. **syklus** 'cycle'  
 Dan. **globus** > Far. **globus** 'globe'

### 1.11.1.1. Loanwords in -ik: Masculine or Feminine

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-ik** are a special case, as they can be either masculine (**-ikkur**) or feminine (**-ikk**) in Faroese.

Dan.	masculine in Far.	
automatik	automatikkur	'automatics'
gymnastik	gymnastikkur	'physical exercise'
hermetik	hermetikkur	'tinned food'
hydraulik	hydraulikkur	'hydraulics'
katolik	katolikkur	'Catholic'
kosmetik	kosmetikkur	'cosmetics'
kritik	kritikkur	'criticism'
lyrik	lyrikkur	'lyric poetry'
mekanik	mekanikkur	'mechanics'
metrik	metrikkur	'prosody'
motorik	motorikkur	'motor function'
musik	musikkur	'music'
panik	panikkur	'panic'
politik	politikkur	'politics'
problematik	problematikkur	'problems'
pedagogik	pedagogikkur	'pedagogy'
romantik	romantikkur	'romance'
statistik	statistikkur	'statistics'
stilistik	stilistikkur	'stylistics'
taktik	taktikkur	'tactics'
teknik	teknikkur	'technology'; 'technique'

Dan.	feminine in Far.	
antik	antikk	'antiquity'
botanik	botanikk	'botany'
fabrik	fabrikk	'factory'
fonetik	fonetikk	'phonetics'
fysik	fysikk	'physics'
kosmetik	kosmetikk	'cosmetics'
mosaik	mosaikk	'mosaic'
pragmatik	pragmatikk	'pragmatic'
replik	replikk	'reply'
republik	republikk	'republic'
romantik	romantikk	'Romanticism'

There are no specific rules to be found, but note the following semantic core:

- Nouns denoting something to do with machinery are masculine;
- Nouns denoting language disciplines, learning and periods of the arts are mostly feminine;
- Art in general is masculine.

Fig. 2

Masculine		Feminine		
<b>Machinery</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>Art periods</b>	<b>Learning</b>	<b>Linguistics</b>
<i>hydraulikkur</i>	<i>lyrikkur</i>	<i>antikk</i>	<i>botanikk</i>	<i>fonetikk</i>
<i>mekanikkur</i>	<i>metrikkur</i>	<i>romantikk</i>	<i>fysikk</i>	<i>lingvistikk</i>
<i>teknikkur</i>	<i>musikkur</i>			<i>pragmatikk</i>
<i>(motorikkur)</i>	<i>stilstikkur</i>			<i>semantikk</i>

### 1.11.2. Formal assignment in loanwords: Feminine

#### (a) **-tión, -sjón**

All nouns ending in *-tion* or *-sion* in Danish (and English) are feminine in Faroese (**-tión**, **-sjón**). This is probably because they are abstract nouns; compare the derivational process *renna* 'to run' ⇒ *rennan/renning* 'running' (cf. §3.6.2 and §12.2.1) where the nouns *rennan/renning* 'running' are abstract.

Dan. **definition** > Far. **definiótión** 'definition'  
 Dan. **korrupsion** > Far. **korrupsjótión** 'corruption'  
 Dan. **pension** > Far. **pensjótión** 'pension'

#### (b) **-o**

Danish common gender nouns with word final **-o** are feminine in Faroese (**-o**):

Dan. **konto** > Far. **konto** 'account'  
 Dan. **duo** > Far. **duo** 'duo'  
 Dan. **giro** > Far. **giro** 'giro'

#### (c) **-heit**

Danish common gender nouns ending in **-hed** are feminine in Faroese (**-heit**):

Dan. **storhed** > Far. **stórheit** 'greatness'  
 Dan. **forfængelighed** > Far. **forfeingilighet** 'vanity'  
 Dan. **størgættighed** > Far. **stóraktighet** 'haughtiness'

#### (d) **-logi**

Danish nouns ending in **-logi** are feminine in Faroese (**-logi**):

Dan. **analogi** > Far. **analogi** 'analogy'  
 Dan. **fonologi** > Far. **fonologi** 'phonology'  
 Dan. **økologi** > Far. **økologi** 'ecology'

#### (e) **-oni**

Danish nouns ending in **-oni** are feminine in Faroese (**-oni**):

Dan. **harmoni** > Far. **harmoni** 'harmony'  
 Dan. **koloni** > Far. **koloni** 'colony'  
 Dan. **symfoni** > Far. **symfoni** 'symphony'

### 1.11.3. Formal assignment in loanwords: Neuter

The rule is that Danish neuter nouns are neuter in Faroese.

#### (a) **-a**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-a** are neuter in Faroese (**-a**):

Dan. **alfa** > Far. **alfa** 'alpha'  
 Dan. **omega** > Far. **omega** 'omega'  
 Dan. **drama** > Far. **drama** 'drama'  
 Dan. **nirvana** > Far. **nirvana** 'nirvana'  
 Dan. **skema** > Far. **skema** 'scheme'

#### (b) **-at**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-at** are neuter in Faroese:

Dan. **apparat** > Far. **apparat** 'tool'; 'apparatus'  
Dan. **diktat** > Far. **diktat** 'dictation'  
Dan. **lektorat** > Far. **lektorat** 'lectureship'  
Dan. **senat** > Far. **senat** 'senate'

(c) **-ment**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-ment** are neuter in Faroese:

Dan. **ekskrement** > Far. **ekskrement** 'excrement'  
Dan. **eksperiment** > Far. **eksperiment** 'experiment'  
Dan. **parlament** > Far. **parlament** 'parliament'

Note that the Danish common gender noun **cement** 'cement' is neuter in Faroese (**sement**) through analogy with other nouns ending in **-ment**.

(d) **-o**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-o** (and **-eau**) are neuter in Faroese (**-o**):

Dan. **foto** > Far. **foto** 'photo'  
Dan. **casino** > Far. **kasino** 'casino'  
Dan. **kilo** > Far. **kilo** 'kilo'  
Dan. **motto** > Far. **motto** 'motto'  
Dan. **niveau** > Far. **nivo** 'level'

(e) **-em**

Danish neuter gender nouns ending in **-em** are also neuter in Faroese (**-em**):

Dan. **fonem** > Far. **fonem** 'phoneme'  
Dan. **grafem** > Far. **grafem** 'grapheme'  
Dan. **morfem** > Far. **morfem** 'morpheme'  
Dan. **rekviem** > Far. **rekviem** 'requiem'  
Dan. **teorem** > Far. **teorem** 'theorem'

(f) **-in**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-in** are also neuter in Faroese (**-in**):

Dan. **adrenalin** > Far. **adrenalin** 'adrenaline'

However, note that the Danish neuter gender noun **gardin** 'curtain' is a feminine noun in Faroese: **gardina**.

(g) **-mi**

Danish neuter gender nouns ending in **-mi** are also neuter in Faroese (**-mi**):

Dan. **akademi** > Far. **akademi** 'academy'  
Dan. **bigami** > Far. **bigami** 'bigamy'  
Dan. **monogami** > Far. **monogami** 'monogamy'

(h) **-om**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-om** are neuter in Faroese (**-om**):

Dan. **atom** > Far. **atom** 'atom'  
Dan. **diplom** > Far. **diplom** 'diploma'  
Dan. **idiom** > Far. **idiom** 'idiom'  
Dan. **kondom** > Far. **kondom** 'condom'  
Dan. **kromosom** > Far. **kromosom** 'chromosome'  
Dan. **symptom** > Far. **symptom** 'symptom'

(i) **-tek**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-tek** are neuter in Faroese (**-tek**):

Dan. **apotek** > Far. **apotek** 'chemist's', 'pharmacy'  
Dan. **diskotek** > Far. **diskotek** 'disco'  
Dan. **fonotek** > Far. **fonotek** 'sound library'  
Dan. **kartotek** > Far. **kartotek** 'card index'

(j) **-tet**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-tet** are neuter in Faroese:

Dan. **admiralitet** > Far. **admiralitet** 'admiralty'  
Dan. **universitet** > Far. **universitet** 'university'

(k) **-tiv**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-tiv** are neuter in Faroese (**-tiv**):

Dan. **adjektiv** > Far. **adjektiv** 'adjective'  
Dan. **alternativ** > Far. **alternativ** 'alternative'  
Dan. **kollektiv** > Far. **kollektiv** 'collective'  
Dan. **lokomotiv** > Far. **lokomotiv** 'locomotive'  
Dan. **negativ** > Far. **negativ** 'negative'  
Dan. **regulativ** > Far. **regulativ** 'regulations'

(l) **-um**

Danish neuter nouns ending in **-um** are neuter in Faroese (**-um**):

Dan. **evangelium** > Far. **evangelium** 'gospel'  
Dan. **faktum** > Far. **faktum** 'fact'

Dan. **forum** > Far. **forum** 'forum'  
 Dan. **kalcium** > Far. **kalsium** 'calcium'  
 Dan. **kompendium** > Far. **kompendium** 'compendium'  
 Dan. **lokum** > Far. **lokum** 'privy'  
 Dan. **mausoleum** > Far. **mausoleum** 'mausoleum'  
 Dan. **medium** > Far. **medium** 'medium'  
 Dan. **monstrum** > Far. **monstrum** 'monster'  
 Dan. **narkotikum** > Far. **narkotikum** 'drug'  
 Dan. **refugium** > Far. **refugium** 'retreat'  
 Dan. **solarium** > Far. **solarium** 'solarium'  
 Dan. **studium** > Far. **studium** 'study'; 'studies'

#### 1.11.4. Gender in abbreviations

There are no hard and fast rules for the gender of abbreviations, and there has been no study of the subject in Faroese. Below are some rules of thumb:

a. Faroese words or words treated as Faroese may preserve the gender of the unabbreviated form:

<b>bh</b>	'bra'	< <b>brósthaldari</b>	masculine
<b>kr</b>	'króna'	< <b>króna</b>	feminine

b. Persons are masculine and -er > -ari (masc.)

<b>VHF'ari</b>	'radio controller on a boat'
<b>dj-(ari)</b>	'DJ'
<b>HB'ari</b>	'supporter of the Tórshavn football team <i>Havnar Bóltfelag</i> '

c. Foreign abbreviations or abbreviations where the source is not obvious are usually neuter:

<b>BBC</b>	(tað) <b>bretska BBC</b>	'the British BBC'
<b>ST</b>	<b>ST er máttleyst</b>	'the UN is powerless'
<b>EU</b>	<b>Er EU so stórt sum Kanada?</b>	'Is the EU as big as Canada?'

**ST = Sameindu tjóðir** '(The) United Nations'. The abbreviation **FN** (from the Danish *Forenede Nationer*) is also widely used. Other abbreviations that are neuter singular include **CIA** (Central Intelligence Agency), **DDR** (German Democratic Republic), **FBI** (Federal Bureau of Investigation), **USA** (United States of America) and **USSR** (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).

#### 1.12. Double gender nouns

Some nouns have double gender. They are not many, and are listed below. The most usual gender of the noun is listed under **Usual Gender**, while **Alternative Gender** shows the other gender that the noun has. In some rare cases it is difficult to decide which gender is the most usual. In these cases the nouns are listed under the heading **Equal**.

Alternative gender	Equal	Usual gender	Meaning
altanur <i>m.</i>		altan <i>f.</i>	'balcony'
armóð <i>n.</i>		armóð <i>f.</i>	'poverty'
askur <i>m.</i>		ask <i>f.</i>	'ash'
	álvur <i>m./n.</i>		'flat end of a hook' <sup>4</sup>
álvundur <i>m./álvindi m.</i>		álvinda <i>f.</i>	'small eel'
bamsi <i>m.</i>		bamsa <i>f.</i>	'teddy bear'
betring <i>f.</i>		betringur <i>m.</i>	'improvement' <sup>5</sup>
bil <i>f.</i>		bilur <i>m.</i>	'car'
bjøllur <i>m.</i>		bjøll <i>f.</i>	'dew'
	blanding <i>f.</i> , blandingur <i>m.</i>		'mixture'
blídni <i>m.</i>		blídni <i>n.</i>	'kindness'
brekur <i>m.</i>		brek <i>n.</i>	'defect'
bringur <i>m.</i>		bringa <i>f.</i>	'hillock'
bræði <i>f.</i>		bræði <i>n.</i>	'haste'
dekkur <i>m.</i>		dekk <i>n.</i>	'deck'
dølsk(n) <i>f.</i>		dølsk(n) <i>i n.</i>	'bluntness'
eydna <i>n.</i>		eydna <i>f.</i>	'fortune, happiness'
farri <i>m.</i>		farr <i>n.</i>	'a bit'
	firming <i>f.</i> , firmingur <i>m.</i>		'shyness'
fjáltur <i>n./f.</i>		fjáltur- <i>m.</i>	'fear'
fleyg <i>f.</i>		fleyg <i>n.</i>	'bird catching (with net)'
gekk <i>n.</i>		gekkur <i>m.</i>	'notch (on a gun)'
góra <i>f.</i>		góri <i>m.</i>	'black stripe (in the sky)'
griður <i>m.</i>		grið <i>n.</i>	'grace'
	heidni <i>n./f.</i>		'paganism'
hendingur <i>m.</i>		hending <i>f.</i>	'happening'
hillingur <i>m.</i>		hilling <i>f.</i>	'ideal'
hunang <i>n.</i>		hunangur <i>m.</i>	'honey'
hungur <i>m.</i>		hungur <i>n.</i>	'hunger'
hveiti <i>f.</i>		hveiti <i>n.</i>	'wheat'
iv <i>n.</i>		ivi <i>m.</i>	'doubt'
ídni <i>f.</i>		ídni <i>n.</i>	'industry'
itrótt <i>f.</i>		itróttur <i>m.</i>	'sports'
	kalkun <i>f.</i> , kalkunur <i>m.</i>		'turkey'
kamsur <i>m.</i>		kams <i>n.</i>	'pastry made with fish liver'
kaskett <i>f.</i>	kaskettur <i>m.</i>		'peaked cap'

<sup>4</sup> Rarely used. It is difficult to say which gender is more usual in this word, masculine or neuter.

<sup>5</sup> Very common in *eg fari ynskja tær góðan* (m.) *betring* (m.) 'Lit.: I am going to wish you good improvement'. The masculine is clear.

kombikkur <i>m.</i> ,		kombikk <i>n.</i>	'stickleback'
kombikki <i>m.</i> ,		korða <i>f.</i>	'chord'
kombikkja <i>f.</i>		kraft <i>f.</i>	'strength'
korði <i>m.</i>		krak <i>n.</i>	'turbulent sea'
kraftur <i>m.</i>			'nausea'
kraki <i>m.</i>		kvirra <i>f.</i>	'silence'
	kválm <i>n.</i> / kválmi <i>m.</i>	kurteisi <i>n.</i>	'courtesy'
kvirri <i>m.</i>		køkur <i>m.</i>	'kitchen'
kurteisi <i>f.</i>		lagna <i>f.</i>	'fate'
køk <i>f.</i>		laksur <i>m.</i>	'salmon'
lagni <i>m.</i>			'guillemot'
laks <i>n.</i>		lund <i>f.</i>	'grove'
	lomvigi <i>m.</i> , lomviga <i>f.</i>	likam <i>n.</i>	'body'
lundur <i>m.</i>			'inclination'
likamur <i>m.</i>		lýdni <i>n.</i>	'obedience'
	lyst <i>f.</i> , lystur <i>m.</i> <sup>6</sup>	marra <i>f.</i>	'mud'
lýdni <i>f.</i>		meining <i>f.</i>	'opinion'
marrur <i>m.</i>		meskur <i>m.</i>	'mash'
meiningur <i>m.</i>		messing <i>n./f.</i>	'brass'
meska <i>f.</i>		nakni <i>n.</i>	'nakedness'
messingur <i>m.</i>		nám <i>n.</i>	'mine'
	nakni <i>f./n.</i>	náti <i>m.</i>	'fulmar'
náma <i>f.</i>			'post'
náta <i>f.</i>		orsøk <i>f.</i>	'reason'
	neip <i>n.</i> , neipa <i>f.</i> <sup>7</sup>		'swath', 'sword'
orsaki <i>m.</i>		pest <i>f.</i>	'plague'
	ódnur <i>m.</i> , ódn <i>f.</i>	pill <i>n.</i>	'penis'; 'vagina'
pestur <i>m.</i>			'pistol'
pilli <i>m.</i>		pilur <i>m.</i>	'arrow'
	pistól <i>f.</i> , pistólur <i>m.</i>	pláss <i>n.</i>	'work'
píla <i>f.</i>		prísur <i>m.</i>	'honour'
plássur <i>m.</i>		prus <i>n.</i>	'scratch'
prís <i>n.</i>		puttur <i>m.</i>	'stick'
prusur <i>m.</i>			'saving'
putt <i>n.</i>		rós <i>n.</i>	'praise'
	redning <i>f.</i> , redningur <i>m.</i>		'rust stain'
rós <i>f.</i>		set <i>n.</i>	'seed potato'
	saling <i>f.</i> , salingur <i>m.</i>	sirm <i>n.</i>	'drizzle'
set <i>f.</i>		skilp <i>n.</i>	'kind of mortar'
sirma <i>f.</i>		skógur <i>m.</i>	'forest', 'woods'
skilpur <i>m.</i>		skølmur <i>m.</i>	'big knife'
skóg <i>f.</i>		slætta <i>m.</i>	'plain'
skølm <i>f.</i>			
slætta <i>f.</i>			

<sup>6</sup> Equally used in: **eg havi ongan** (m.) **lyst** (m.) **til hatta**, and **eg havi onga** (f.) **lyst** (f.) **til hatta** 'I don't feel like doing that'.

<sup>7</sup> Very rare word. Used only in the ballads.

steypur <i>m.</i>		steyp <i>n.</i>	'cup'
stimbur <i>m.</i>		stimbur <i>n.</i>	'strength'
straff <i>f.</i>		straffur <i>m.</i>	'punishment'
støf <i>f.</i>		støfur <i>m.</i>	'sturgeon'
	sýs <i>n.</i> , sýsa <i>f.</i>		'tardy person'
tekst <i>f.</i>		tekstur <i>m.</i>	'text'
tinningur <i>m.</i>		tinning <i>f.</i>	'temple'
tornur <i>m.</i>		torn <i>f.</i>	'thorn'
tóna <i>f.</i>		tóni <i>m.</i>	'note'
	válur <i>m.</i> , váll <i>n.</i>		'roundish hill'
vest <i>n.</i>		vestur <i>m.</i>	'waistcoat'
	yngul <i>n.</i> , yngul <i>m.</i>		'brood'

### 1.13. Beings of both sexes

In most cases the neuter plural is used when addressing both men and women or referring to both men and woman (and children). So on entering a room, you would ask:

- (1a) **Eru øll komin?**  
are all-*n.pl.* come?  
'Has everyone arrived?'<sup>8</sup>

Note also the neuter in the following examples:

- (2a) **Summi halda, at Føroyar eru í Skotlandi**  
some-*n.pl.* think that Faroes are in Scotland  
'Some people believe that the Faroe Islands are situated in Scotland'
- (2b) **Sást tú nøkur í dansinum í gjár?**  
saw you anybody-*n.pl.* in dance-the in yesterday?  
'Did you see anybody at the dance party yesterday?'
- (2c) **Hvørji sást tú í dansinum í gjár?**  
whom-*n.pl.* saw you in dance-the in yesterday?  
'Who did you see at the dance party yesterday?'

<sup>8</sup> If you speak Icelandic, note that Faroese differs in this respect: Icelandic would have the nominative, plural masculine (**allir**) in this sentence.



The neuter is used when referring to beings of both sexes, plural, whereas masculine is used in singular. The neuter is ruled out in the singular, as it would denote inanimate beings, as in (3b) and (3d)

- (3a) **Sást tú nakran í dansinum í gjár?**  
saw you anybody-*m.acc.sg.* in dance-the in yesterday?  
'Did you see anybody at the dance party yesterday?'
- (3b) **Sást tú okkurt í dansinum í gjár?**  
saw you anything-*n.acc.sg.* in dance-the in yesterday?  
'Did you see anything at the dance party yesterday?'
- (3c) **Hvønn sást tú í dansinum í gjár?**  
whom-*m.acc.sg.* saw you in dance-the in yesterday?  
'Who did you see at the dance party yesterday?'
- (3d) **Hvat sást tú í dansinum í gjár?**  
what-*n.sg.* saw you in dance-the in yesterday?  
'What did you see in the dance yesterday?'

## 2. Articles

### 2.1. The definite article

Here are the forms of six nouns with the definite article (**armur** 'arm', **granni** 'neighbour', **hurð** 'door', **dunna** 'duck', **barn** 'child', and **eyga** 'eye'). The hyphen is not used in written Faroese. We have placed the genitive forms in parentheses, as the genitive is not an active case in modern Faroese.

The first word of each pair is a so-called strong noun (**armur**, **hurð**, **barn**), that is, it typically ends in a consonant; the second word of each pair (**granni**, **dunna**, **eyga**) is a weak noun, that is, it ends in a vowel.

#### 2.1.1. Forms

Figure 1

		Singular	Plural
Masculine	Nom.	<b>armur-in, granni-n</b>	<b>armar-nir, grannar-nir</b>
	Acc.	<b>arm-in, granna-n</b>	<b>armar-nar, grannar-nar</b>
	Dat.	<b>armi-num, granna-num</b>	<b>ørmu-num, grannu-num</b>
	(Gen.)	<b>arms-ins, granna-ns</b>	<b>arma-nna, granna-nna</b>
Feminine	Nom.	<b>hurð-in, dunna-n</b>	<b>hurðar-nar, dunnur-nar</b>
	Acc.	<b>hurð-ina, dunnu-na</b>	<b>hurðar-nar, dunnur-nar</b>
	Dat.	<b>hurð-ini, dunnu-ni</b>	<b>hurðu-num, dunnu-num</b>
	(Gen.)	<b>hurðar-innar, dunnu-nnar</b>	<b>hurða-nna, dunna-nna</b>
Neuter	Nom.	<b>barn-ið, eyga-ð</b>	<b>børn-ini, eygu-ni</b>
	Acc.	<b>barn-ið, eyga-ð</b>	<b>børn-ini, eygu-ni</b>
	Dat.	<b>barni-num, eyga-num</b>	<b>børnu-num, eygu-num</b>
	(Gen.)	<b>barns-ins, eyga-ns</b>	<b>barna-nna, eygna-nna</b>

Note that, as in other North Germanic languages, the definite article is a suffix in Faroese. The meaning of **armur-in** is *arm-the*, that is 'the arm'.

In the plural **armarnir**, **armarnar**, **hurðarnar** the -r before the suffixed definite article is not pronounced, so we say **armarnir**, **armarnar**, **hurðarnar**.

The letter ð in the suffix -ið is never pronounced; for example **barnið** sounds like **barni** /badni/.

Similarly the ð in the article is never pronounced; for example **eygað** sounds like **eyga** /ei:ja/. However, in spoken Faroese the definite article -ð is may be pronounced as if it were -ðið, so **eygað** sounds as if it were spelt **eygaðið** /ei:jaji/.

### 2.1.2. Nouns ending in a vowel

Some nouns ending in a vowel, *ð* or *g* lose their dative singular ending *-i* before the suffixed article. Remember that *ð* and *g* are never pronounced word finally as in *vág* 'bay' /vɑː/, or between vowels as in *lagið* 'the melody' /læːjɪ/.

The rule is thus that the dative *-i* is lost in the masculine and neuter, and the dative and accusative *-i* is lost in feminine when a suffixed definite article is added.

Figure 2

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	<i>býur</i> 'town'	<i>vág</i> 'bay'	<i>træ</i> 'tree'
Nom.	<i>býurin</i>	<i>vágin</i>	<i>træið</i>
Acc.	<i>býin</i>	<i>váginna</i>	<i>træið</i>
Dat.	<i>býinum</i>	<i>váginni</i>	<i>træinum</i>

Historically, nouns that now end in *-ggj* and *-gv* in Modern Faroese once ended in a vowel, so *sjógvur* 'sea' and *hoyggj* 'hay' were originally *sjó* and *hoy*. This is why there is no *-i* in the definite dative in masculine and neuter, nor in the definite dative and accusative in feminine. Note that *-gv* and *-ggj* never occur in front of consonants.

The noun *vágna* can also have the form *vánna*. The same in the dative: *vágni*, *vánni*.

Figure 3

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	<i>sjógvur</i> 'sea'	<i>oyggj</i> 'island'	<i>hoyggj</i> 'hay'
Nom.	<i>sjógvurin</i>	<i>oyggin</i>	<i>hoyggið</i>
Acc.	<i>sjógvin</i>	<i>oynna</i>	<i>hoyggið</i>
Dat.	<i>sjónum</i>	<i>oynni</i>	<i>hoynum</i>

### 2.1.3. The free-standing definite article

In English, definiteness is expressed with the definite article *the*, as in *the arm*, compared with the indefinite article, as in *an arm*. As we have seen (in §2.1.1), what is a prepositioned definite article in English is a suffix in Faroese: **armurin**.

When an adjective is used before a noun ('the red car'), it is necessary to use the definite form of the noun together with a prepositioned free-standing definite article (**tann reyði bilurin**). There are two free-standing definite articles in Faroese:

- **tann** the most common, specially in spoken Faroese
- **hin** usually only used in the written language

These free-standing prepositioned articles are declined for gender, case and number, see below.

In the examples below, we have the definite article **tann** in the masculine (1a), feminine (1b) and neuter (1c) together with a noun and the corresponding definite suffix.

It is the gender of the noun that determines which article is used: **bilur** *m.* = **tann**; **hurð** *f.* = **tann** and **skip** *n.* = **tað**.

- (1a) **Tann stóri bilurin** stendur har  
'The big car stands there'
- (1b) **Tann reyða hurðin** er brotin  
'The red door is broken'
- (1c) **Tað gráa skipið** fer avstað í morgin  
'The grey ship leaves tomorrow'

Formally the definite articles **tann** 'the' and **hin** 'the' are the same as the demonstrative pronouns **tann** 'this, that', and **hin** 'the other'. The difference between the articles and the pronouns lies in their articulation. When used as articles, **tann** and **hin** are unstressed, and when used as pronouns they are stressed.

Figure 4

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>
Nom. sg.	<b>tann</b>	<b>tann</b>	<b>tað</b>
Acc. sg.	<b>tann</b>	<b>ta</b>	<b>tað</b>
Dat. sg.	<b>tí</b>	<b>teirri/tí</b>	<b>tí</b>
Nom. pl.	<b>teir</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tey</b>
Acc. pl.	<b>teir</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tey</b>
Dat. pl.	<b>teimum</b>	<b>teimum</b>	<b>teimum</b>

Figure 5

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>
Nom. sg.	<b>hin</b>	<b>hin</b>	<b>hitt</b>
Acc. sg.	<b>hin</b>	<b>hina</b>	<b>hitt</b>
Dat. sg.	<b>hinum</b>	<b>hinari / hini</b>	<b>hinum</b>
Nom. pl.	<b>hinir</b>	<b>hinar</b>	<b>hini</b>
Acc. pl.	<b>hinar</b>	<b>hinar</b>	<b>hini</b>
Dat. pl.	<b>hinum</b>	<b>hinum</b>	<b>hinum</b>

## 2.2. The indefinite article

The indefinite article is **ein** 'a'. It is inflected for gender, case and number as shown below:

Figure 6

	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>
Nom. sg.	<b>ein</b>	<b>ein</b>
Acc. sg.	<b>ein</b>	<b>eina</b>
Dat. sg.	<b>einum</b>	<b>einari / eini</b>
Nom. pl.	<b>einir</b>	<b>einir</b>
Acc. pl.	<b>einir</b>	<b>einir</b>
Dat. pl.	<b>einum</b>	<b>einum</b>

## 2.3. The use of the articles

The definite article is used when a familiar concept is spoken about. This principle is the same in Faroese as in English:

- (1) **Tey hava keypt ein nýggjan, reyðan bát. Nú liggur tann reyði báturin við kai í Sandavági. Á kaiini ganga menn runt og hyggja at bátinum. Menninir eru allir í góðum lag.**

'They have bought a new, red boat. Now the boat is moored along the quayside in Sandavágur. On the quay men walk around and look at the boat. The men are all in a good mood'.

Look at the following phrase: **tann reyði báturin**. Translated directly into English it would mean 'the red-the boat-the'. Usually Faroese requires both a prepositioned definite article (**tann** in the example above) + a postpositioned article (**-in** in the example above) if the noun is qualified by an adjective. We call this use of two definite markers 'double definition'.

When both speaker and hearer know the noun is one of a kind, the prepositioned article can be omitted:

- (2a) **Fann** amerikanski forsetin  
'The American president'
- (2b) **Fað** føroyska málið  
'The Faroese language'
- (2c) **Fað** føroyska landsliðið  
'The Faroese national football team'

Sometimes this usage corresponds to the indefinite in English; for example: **tann føroyski ídnaðurin** 'Faroese industry', **tann almenna hugsanin** 'public opinion'. As there is only one Faroese industry and one public opinion, it is possible to omit **tann** 'the' in these phrases.

### 2.3.1. Definite article in Faroese – no article in English

(a) Faroese requires a definite article in abstract nouns, where English usually has a bare noun:

- (3a) **Sum tíðin** gongur! How time flies!  
(3b) **Lívið** eftir deyðan Life after death

(b) Nouns denoting aspects of human life and thought are usually definite in Faroese:

**aldurdómurin** 'old age', **arbeiðið** 'work', **deyðin** 'death', **eydnan** 'happiness', **himmelin** 'heaven', **kommunisman** 'communism', **lagnan** 'fate', **lívið** 'life', **ungdómurin** 'youth', **ævinleikin** 'eternity'.

(c) In proverbs and idiomatic expressions we may have definite nouns:

- (4a) **Hevði tú dugað at sitið so væl á drunninum sum á munninum**  
 'If only you could sit on your behind as well as on your mouth' (= 'if only you could be silent about (sth.)')
- (4b) **Lívið er stutt, deyðin langur**  
 'Life is short, death (is) long'

(d) Definite nouns are used for locative expressions, except in a generic sense, and when denoting villages, towns and islands:

- (5a) **Hann er í býnum**  
 'He is in town/going to town'
- (5b) **Hon er farin í býin**  
 'She has gone to town'
- (5c) **Claire lesur á universitetinum**  
 'Claire studies at university'
- (5d) **Marjun liggur á sjúkrahúsinum**  
 'Marjun is in hospital'

but note:

- (6) **Hon fer í song / í kirkju / í skúla / til arbeiðis**  
 'She goes to bed / to church / to school / to work'

(e) When speaking about time, the definite article is required in Faroese, especially with the preposition **um** 'about': **um dagin** 'by day, in the daytime', **um kvöldið** 'by evening, in the evening', **um náttina** 'by night, in the night-time', but also in expressions like **í skýmingini** 'at dusk'.

(f) When speaking about types and groups in a collective sense, Faroese has a definite article:

- (7) **Fiskaprísirnir falla**  
 'Fish-prices are falling'

(g) There are other phrases too:

- (8a) **sleppa ígjøgnum tollin**  
 'get through customs'
- (8b) **við postinum**  
 'by post'
- (8c) **síggja í sjónvarpinum**  
 'see on (the) TV'

### 2.3.2. Definite article in Faroese – indefinite article in English

(a) Often when indicating frequency of occurrence, we use a definite article in Faroese, and an indefinite article in English:

- (9a) **fimm ferðir um árið/mánaðin/vikuna**  
 'five times a year/month/week'
- (9b) **John fortjenar hundrað krónur um tíman**  
 'John earns one hundred krónur an hour'
- (9c) **Hann drekkur fimm koppar av kaffi um dagin**  
 'He drinks five cups of coffee a day'
- (9d) **Kringvarpið kostar 2000 krónur um árið**  
 'The television licence costs 2000 krónur a year'

In example (9d), **Kringvarpið** 'The Faroese Broadcasting Network' is definite, as there is only one Faroese broadcasting network; compare above phrases like **amerikanski forsetin** 'The American president', where **forsetin** is definite, as there is only one president.

### 2.3.3. No article in Faroese – definite article in English

(a) With certain adjectives:

- (10a) **Sama kvöld komu vit aftur**  
 'The same evening we arrived'
- (10b) **Síðstu ferð eg sá hana**  
 'The last time I saw her'

- (10c) **Fyrstu ferð eg sá hann**  
'The first time I saw him'
- (10d) **Tey búgva á ovastu hædd**  
'They live on the top floor'
- (10e) **Marjun býr á niðastu hædd**  
'Marjun lives on the ground floor'
- (10f) **Núverandi lögmaður**  
'the current *lögmaður*' [≈'prime minister of the Faroe Islands']

(b) In phrases involving musical instruments with the meaning that someone plays a certain instrument:

- (11) **Olli spælir guitar / klaver / mandolin**  
'Olli plays the guitar / the piano / the mandolin'

(c) With many linguistic terms and other words from Latin we find no article in Faroese, but an article in English:

- (12a) **Tað stendur í nútíð / presens**  
'It is in the present tense'
- (12b) **Orðið stendur í fleirtali / pluralis**  
'The word is in the plural'

(d) With points of the compass:

- (13a) **Sólin kemur upp í eystri og setur í vestri**  
'The sun rises in the east and sets in the west'

(e) When English has a superlative with the definite article, Faroese usually has no article:

- (14a) **Hvat kjøt smakkar best?**  
'Which meat tastes the best?'
- (14b) **Hvør er klókastur?**  
'Who is the brightest?'
- (14c) **Hvør oyggj er minst?**  
'Which island is the smallest?'

(f) River names with a definite article in English often have no article in Faroese:

- (15a) **Donau**  
'The Danube'
- (15b) **Mississippi**  
'The Mississippi'
- (15c) **Po**  
'The River Po'

Note that the Nile is *Niláin* (lit.: 'Nile-river-the'). So also the Thames, *Themsáin*.

(g) In many set phrases there is no article in Faroese:

- (16a) **Hann er sonur ein lækna**  
'He is the son of a doctor'
- (16b) **við vón um**  
'in the hope of'
- (16c) **við undantaki av**  
'with the exception of'
- (16d) **við hjálpi av**  
'with the help of'

(h) In phrases with an unstressed *hava* 'have' there is no article in Faroese:

- (17a) **hava rætt til**  
'have the right to'
- (17b) **hava móguleika fyri**  
'have the opportunity to'
- (17c) **hava hug til**  
'have the desire to'

### 2.3.4. No article in Faroese – indefinite article in English

- (a) When a noun denotes
- nationality
  - profession
  - trade
  - religion or political belief
- (18a) **Høgni er danskari**  
'Høgni is a Dane'
- (18b) **Jóhan er lærari**  
'Jóhan is a teacher'
- (18c) **David er prestur**  
'David is a priest'
- (18d) **Páll er kommunistur**  
'Páll is a communist'
- (18e) **Torbjørn er klovnur**  
'Torbjørn is a clown'

Note that example (18e) means that **Torbjørn** is working as a clown, in contrast to: **Lukas er ein klovnur**, where the noun is a personal attribute of Lukas – it describes him as being (like) a clown. In these cases both Faroese and English have an indefinite article:

- (19a) **Lukas er ein klovnur**  
'Lucas is a clown' (he is behaving like a fool)
- (19b) **Albert er eitt flogvit**  
'Albert is a genius'
- (19c) **Hon er eitt mœsn**  
'She is a chatterbox'

(b) When the noun is followed by **sum** 'in the capacity of', it appears with no article in Faroese:

- (20a) **Sum lærari var hann góður**  
'As a teacher he was good'
- (20b) **Sum ung var hon ógvuliga góð í sær**  
'As a young [woman] she was very gentle'

(c) In idiomatic phrases the noun may appear without an article, for example:

- (21a) **fáa bræv við postinum**  
'receive a letter by mail'
- (21b) **hava/eiga bil**  
'have/own a car'
- (21c) **koyra bil**  
'drive a car'
- (21d) **roykja pípu**  
'smoke a pipe'
- (21e) **biðja um pláss/bilett**  
'book a seat/ticket'
- (21f) **hava fepur**  
'have a high temperature'
- (21g) **hava høvuðpínu**  
'have a headache'
- (21h) **tað var spell**  
'that was a shame'
- (21i) **í ringum/góðum lag(i)**  
'in a bad/good mood'

### 2.3.5. Difference in the position of articles

Note the following sentences and the English translations:

- (22a) **ein hálvur litur**  
'half a litre'
- (22b) **ein líka so góð framløga**  
'as fine a presentation'
- (22c) **eina heilt stutta tíð**  
'for quite a short time'
- (22d) **øll familjan**  
'the whole family'

### 3. Nouns

#### (a) Introduction

Nouns are one of the three genders:

- masculine
- feminine
- neuter

There are three, productive cases:

- nominative
- accusative
- dative

as well as one non-productive (historical) case:

- genitive

There are two numbers:

- singular
- plural

In addition to this, nouns can be:

- definite
- indefinite

Nouns belong to one of several declensional classes depending on the forms they show when they decline.

#### (b) Referring to nouns

The indefinite article **ein** 'a', stands in front of a masculine or feminine noun, **eitt** in front of a neuter noun. A masculine noun is referred to with the masculine personal pronoun **hann** 'he, it', a feminine noun with the feminine personal pronoun **hon** 'she, it', and a neuter noun with the neuter personal pronoun **tað** 'it'.

<b>ein maður – hann</b>	'a man – he'
<b>ein steinur – hann</b>	'a stone – it'
<b>ein genta – hon</b>	'a girl – she'
<b>ein hurð – hon</b>	'a door – it'
<b>eitt barn – tað</b>	'a child – he/she'
<b>eitt skip – tað</b>	'a ship – it'

#### (c) Rules of thumb with regard to gender:

- Many masculine nouns have the ending **-ur** in the nominative (**arm-ur** 'arm'), and **-ar** in the plural.
- Many masculine and neuter nouns have the ending **-i** in the dative (**arm-i**, **barn-i** 'child').
- Many feminine nouns have no ending in the singular. The same holds for some neuter nouns except for the dative **-i**, for example neuter: **barn-i** 'child'. Most feminine nouns have the ending **-ir** in the plural in spoken Faroese.
- The article **ein** is used in front of masculine and feminine nouns in the nominative (**ein armur** 'an arm', **ein hurð** 'a door'), **eitt** in front of neuter (**eitt barn** 'a child').
- The indefinite article/demonstrative pronoun **tann** is used in front of masculine and feminine nouns in the nominative (**tann maðurin** 'that man', **tann konan** 'that woman'), **tað** in the neuter, nominative, accusative (**tað barnið** 'that child').

#### (d) The genitive

Traditionally one case is recognised in addition to the three productive cases mentioned above: the genitive. This case is no longer productive in Modern Faroese. It is never used in the spoken language and only sometimes in the written language (for example, **mansins bátur** 'the man's boat' instead of the more colloquial **báturin hjá manninum** 'the man's boat' [lit.: 'the boat with the man']). The genitive case is chosen simply because it is more concise. It could even be argued that the genitive construction in the modern language is in fact a loan from Danish (cf. Dan. **mandens båd** and Far. **mansins bátur**) rather than a revival of a purer West Scandinavian style.

We have included the genitive in brackets in the declensional tables in this grammar as there are four instances where the genitive is used in the modern language:

- after the preposition **til** 'to'
- after the preposition **ímillum** 'between'
- in word formation
- personal pronouns

The old genitive is used when expressing movement to a place and being between two places:

(1a) **Vit sigla til Íslands**  
'we sail to Iceland'

(1b) **Vit eru ímillum Íslands og Grønlands**  
'we are between Iceland and Greenland'

Note that in the spoken language, the accusative is also used instead of the old genitive in both (1a) and (1b): **til Ísland**; **ímillum Ísland og Grønland**. Nouns (including many

placenames) are nowadays usually in the accusative case after the prepositions **til** and **ímillum**. However, as far as personal pronouns are concerned, we see the genitive as an active case; for example, **fara niðan til hansara** 'go up to his place'.

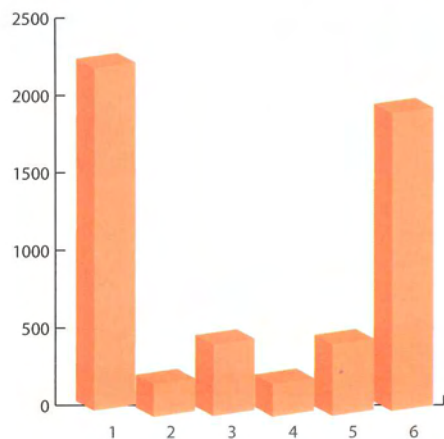
The genitive appears in compounds as either **-s**, **-ar**, **-(n)a**, **-ra**, but it does not have any semantic meaning, although language planners claim that this is the case. There are no speakers of Faroese who differentiate between the two nouns **bygdarvegur** 'road in a village' (lit.: 'village's road') and **bygdavegur** 'road between two/or more villages' (lit.: 'villages' road').<sup>9</sup> The only pronunciation used by native speakers is with the **-a** (**bygdavegur**). Compounds are discussed in detail in chapter 12.

(e) **Number** is used to distinguish between one and more than one: **ein steinur** 'a stone' (singular), **nógvir steinar** 'many stones' (plural). The plural suffixes are either **-ar**, **-i(r)** **-ur** or **-0**. Of these, **-ar** is the most usual ending in the plural for masculine, and **-ir** for feminine. The ending **-ur** in the plural is only used in written Faroese and some dialects. The **-r** ending is, for example, found in the neuter plural noun **dømir** 'examples', singular **dømi**.

The figure below shows the distribution of the suffixes **-0**, **-ar** and **-ir** for simplex masculine and feminine nouns in the plural:

Figure 7

(1) f. **-ir**, (2) m. **-ir**, (3) f., no plural ending, (4) m., no plural ending, (5) f. **-ar**, (6) m. **-ar**.



(f) Nouns in Faroese are grouped into different declensional classes, depending on the *forms* they show when declined. The major division is between strong nouns and weak nouns.

<sup>9</sup> In **bygdarvegur**, **-ar** reflects the Old Norse genitive singular, hence the meaning 'road in a village'; in the latter, **bygdavegur**, **-a** reflects the Old Norse genitive plural, hence the meaning 'road between two/or more villages'.

Typically a weak noun has a vowel as an ending: **granni** *m.* 'neighbour', **kona** *f.* 'woman', and **eyga** *n.* 'eye'.

Strong nouns usually end in a consonant: **stein-ur** *m.* 'stone', **hurð** *f.* 'door', and **barn** *n.* 'child', but some strong nouns end in a vowel, for example **kvæði** *n.* 'ballad', and **elli** *f.* 'old age'.

The division into different classes depending on the form will become clear below, when we show the different declensions of nouns in Faroese, but one example can illustrate the matter with regard to why there are different classes in the language.

A strong masculine noun usually ends in **-ur** in the nominative: **steinur** 'stone', and most masculine nouns have **-ar** in the plural: **steinar** 'stones'. This noun belongs to one specific class. The noun **akur** 'field', also a masculine noun, seems to have the ending in **-ur** in the singular, but this is not the case, as becomes evident when looking at the plural: **akr-ar**. The ending is **-ar**, but the **-r** becomes part of the root, as it changes from something like **akur-ar** to **akr-ar**. The point is that formally **steinur** 'stone', and **akur** 'field', belong to different declensional classes.

### 3.1. Masculine

Typically strong masculine nouns have **-ur** in the nominative singular – see however the different classes below. They have no ending in the accusative singular, **-i** in the dative singular and **-ar** in the nominative plural (although some have **-ir**).

#### 3.1.1. First class: Masculine

The nouns belonging to this class have **-ur** in the nominative singular, **-i** in the dative singular, and **-ar** in the nominative and accusative plural.

Figure 8

	'arm'	'bird'	'day'	'hill'	'sea'
Sg.					
Nom.	armur	fuglur	dagur	heyggjur	sjógvur
Acc.	arm	fugl	dag	heyggj	sjógv
Dat.	armi	fugli	degi	heyggi	sjógvi
(Gen.	arms	fugls	dags	heys	sjóvar)
Pl.					
Nom.	armar	fuglar	dagar	heyggjar	sjógvar
Acc.	armar	fuglar	dagar	heyggjar	sjógvar
Dat.	ørnum	fuglum	døgum	heyggjum	sjógvum
(Gen.	arma	fugla	daga	heyggja	sjóa)



Note that the noun **armur** changes its stem vowel **a** to **ø** in the dative plural. This is the so-called u-umlaut; see the section on pronunciation for more details on umlaut. Generally the shift is **a** (or **æ**) to **ø** before **u** (**arm-** + **-um** > **ørmum**). Before nasal consonants (**n**, **m**) the shift is **a** to **o**. Note that the **-j** is deleted in **heyggi**. This is a spelling convention, as the letter combination **-ggi** and **-ggj** both are pronounced [dʒ:], so there is no need to write **\*-ggji**. Loanwords ending in **-tor**, **-tør** and **-ur** decline as **armur** 'arm'.

Figure 9

	'factor'	'torture'
Sg.		
Nom.	faktorur	torturur
Acc.	faktor	tortur
Dat.	faktori	torturi
(Gen.	faktors	torturs)
Pl.		
Nom.	faktorar	
Acc.	faktorar	
Dat.	faktorum	
(Gen.	faktora)	

### 3.1.2. Second class: Masculine; nouns with radical **-r**, **-l**, **-n**

Compare the declension of **armur** 'arm', a class 1 noun above, and **akur** 'field' and **meldur** 'whirl' below. Note that the stem in the dative singular and the plural changes:

Figure 10

	'field'	'whirl'
Sg.		
Nom.	akur	meldur
Acc.	akur	meldur
Dat.	akri	meldri
(Gen.	akurs	meldurs)

Pl.		
Nom.	akrar	meldrar
Acc.	akrar	meldrar
Dat.	økrum	meldrum
(Gen.	akra	meldra)

On the face of it, **-ur** seems to be the ending in **akur** and **meldur**, but note that the **-r** in **akur** 'field' and **meldur** 'whirl' is part of the nouns' roots **akr-** and **meldr-**, when the ending **-i** is added in the dative singular, and **-ar** in the nominative and accusative plural: **akr-i**, **meldr-i**, **akr-ar**, **meldr-ar**. The **-r** in **akur** and **meldur** is radical; it is part of the root.

The same thing happens with **-n** and **-l** in some nouns, all belonging to the same class of nouns.

Figure 11

	'field'	'driving'	'cliff'	'heaven'	'heaven'
Sg.					
Nom.	akur	rakstur	hamar	himmal	himin
Acc.	akur	rakstur	hamar	himmal	himin
Dat.	akri	rakstri	hamri	himli	himni
(Gen.	akurs	raksturs	hamars	himmals	himins)
Pl.					
Nom.	akrar	rakstrar	hamrar	himlar	himnar
Acc.	akrar	rakstrar	hamrar	himlar	himnar
Dat.	økrum	rakstrum	homrum	himlum	himnum
(Gen.	akra	rakstra	hamra	himla	himna)
	'evening'	'key'	'glacier'	'morning'	
Sg.					
Nom.	aftan	lykil	jökul	morgun	
Acc.	aftan	lykil	jökul	morgun	
Dat.	aftni	lykli	jökli	morgni	
(Gen.	aftans	lykils	jökuls	morguns)	

Pl.			
Nom.	lyklar	jøklar	morgnar
Acc.	lyklar	jøklar	morgnar
Dat.	lyklum	jøklum	morgnum
(Gen.	lykla	jøkla	morgna)

The change of a to o in **homrum** is due to the so-called u-umlaut. See the section on pronunciation for more details.

a. The following nouns are declined like **akur** 'field':

**aldur** 'age'; **bakstur** 'something baked'; **blástur/blóstur** 'breath'; **bævur** 'beaver'; **faddur** 'godparent'; **finger** 'finger'; **flúður/flúrir** 'skerry'; **grevstur** 'digging'; 'excavation'; **hamstur** 'hamster'; **havur** 'male goat', 'billy'; **kvastur/kveistur** 'feather duster'; **leiftur** 'young pilot whale'; **leiktur/leittur** 'long bar'; **lestur** 'reading'; **litur** 'litre'; **lúður** 'lure'; **meldur** 'whirl'; **metur** 'metre'; **otur** 'otter'; **pístur** 'cold wind'; **rakstur** 'driving sheep'; **róður** 'rowing'; **rórar** (pl.) 'groin'; **sigur** 'victory'; **veðurur** 'ram'; **vektur** 'vector'; **vetur** 'winter'; **vintur** 'winter'; **vættur** 'fairy' (also f.).

b. The following nouns are declined like **hamar** 'cliff':

**jaðar** 'edge', 'border'; **spaðar** 'spade'.

c. The following nouns are declined like **lykil** 'key':

**aksil** 'axle'; **bekil** 'clubfoot'; **biðil** 'suitor'; **bendil** 'tape'; **birtil** 'slanderer', 'backbiter'; 'instrument for trimming wicks in an oil-lamp'; **bitil** 'bit'; **brigdil** 'variable'; **brimil** 'male seal'; **búffil** 'buffalo'; **brytil** 'fractal'; **bøðil** 'executioner'; **bøkil** 'lump'; **dekil** 'deuce'; **depil** 'centre'; **devil** 'devil'; **dintil** 'buttocks'; **dirðil** 'buttocks'; **diskil** 'disk'; **dregil** 'something long and narrow'; 'ribbon'; **døsil** 'something that is tangled up'; **eingil** 'angel'; **eitil** 'lymph node'; **fesil** 'something that is tangled up'; **fetil** 'string', 'rope'; **firtil** 'quarter'; **fívil** 'fool'; **formil** 'formula'; **friðil** 'lover'; **frymil** 'model'; **føsil** 'something that is tangled up'; **føtil** 'pedal'; **gaffil** 'fork'; **geril** 'processor'; **gissil** 'hostage'; **grevil** 'peg'; **griffil** 'slate pencil'; **gripil** 'eraser', 'rubber'; **gyrðil** 'belt'; **handil** 'store'; **hekil** 'hooked tip'; **hermil** 'synthesizer'; **hirðil** 'shepherd'; **hitil** 'calorie'; **hviril** 'whirl'; **hvítill** 'blanket'; **høkil** 'lower part of shoulder'; **hövil** 'plane'; **jaksil** 'molar'; **karniffil** 'lowest card in a card game'; **kápil** 'cable'; **kertil** 'gland'; **ketil** 'kettle'; **kimbil** 'bundle'; **kistil** 'box';

**kittil** 'overall'; **knevil** 'lad'; **knipil** 'stunted person'; **knortil** 'knot'; **knykil** 'tumour'; **knyrtill** 'morsel', 'crumb'; **koyril** 'whip', 'scourge'; **krintil** 'drill'; **krypil** 'cripple'; **krækil** 'little hook'; **kuril** 'tiff'; **kventil** 'effeminate man'; **kvinkil** 'a bit'; **kvintil** 'shaft with blades which drives the mill wheel'; **kvirtill** 'a bit'; **kyndil** 'torch'; **kyrtill** 'coat'; **kýpil** 'excrescence'; **leitil** 'search engine'; **marmennil** 'merman'; **meitil** 'chisel'; **meril** 'thin sheep'; **miðil** 'medium', 'means'; **myndil** 'model'; **møbil** 'peace of furniture'; **nertil** 'tangent'; **nigil** 'larva of the daddy longlegs, cranefly'; **nipil** 'matted lump in wool'; **nippil** 'short pipe'; **nykil** 'bunch of heated hay in a stack'; **nývil** '[euphemism for] whale'; **ompil** 'young gannet'; **parabil** 'parable'; **pegil** 'half a pint'; **pensil** 'paintbrush'; **pitil** 'tongue on a saw'; **poppil** 'poplar'; **rekil** 'tangled spinning yarn'; 'tall, lanky man'; 'catkin'; **rennil** 'round plate on spindle and spinning wheel'; 'pig's snout'; 'glans of horse's penis'; 'chap', 'fellow'; **repil** 'row', 'line'; **revil** 'strip', 'ribbon', 'shred'; **riðil** 'row', 'line'; **rimil** 'narrow strait'; **rimpil** 'boat which is too narrow and capsizes easily'; **ritil** 'telegraph'; **røðil** 'telephone'; **røkil** 'monitor'; **røvil** 'tail part of a fish'; **saðil** 'saddle'; **seðil** 'slip of paper', 'note'; **semil** 'monitor'; **sevil** 'proboscis', 'trunk'; **sigil** 'magnet'; **sirmil** 'sprinkler'; **sjøtil** 'ledge'; **skammil** '(foot)stool'; **skekil** 'spanking', 'beating'; **skendsil** 'fool'; **skjúttill** 'shuttle'; **skutil** 'harpoon'; **skyndil** 'gas pedal'; **skøndil** 'beardless male'; 'man no-one respects'; **slitil** 'switch'; **smyril** 'merlin'; **sniffil** 'small boat'; 'small knife'; 'small mammal'; **snigil** 'snail'; **snortil** 'wool remaining on the spindle'; 'something or someone small'; **snryril** 'spiral'; **snøkil** 'strip of hide'; 'matted, tangled hair'; **soytil** 'wool remaining on the spindle'; 'something or someone small'; **spegil** 'mirror'; **sperðil** 'sausage (sheep's rectum stuffed with tallow, suet and intestines)'; **spinnil** 'iron pin in centre of a grinding wheel'; **stápil** 'pin in a door hinge'; 'stack', 'pile'; **steingil** 'shutter for a door'; 'bar'; **sterril** 'ribbon'; 'oar fish'; **strimmil** 'strip'; **stongsil** 'bar', 'bolt', 'barrier', 'obstacle'; **stoytil** 'pestle'; **støðil** 'milking place'; **svikil**; **svøvil** 'swivel on a fishing line'; **syndil** 'ditch'; **søkil** 'small sinker on a fishing line'; **søpil** 'duster'; 'tangled, matted object'; **tistil** 'thistle'; **títill** 'substance', 'nature'; 'particle'; **tortil** 'small grooved wheel on a spindle'; 'small dog'; 'small glass of schnapps'; **trevil** 'rag'; **trygil** 'small trough-shaped box'; 'small boat'; 'puddle'; **tummil** 'thumb'; **tunnill** 'tunnel'; **tyril** 'helicopter'; **vaktill** 'quail'; **veksil** 'exchange'; **vimpil** 'steamer'; **vindil** 'ball of wool'; 'cigar'; **øgil** 'thawing ice'; 'dirty river water'; 'rushing of water'; **økil** 'ankle'.

d. The following nouns are declined like **jökul** 'glacier':

**bongul** 'tall, thin man'; **bøkul** 'lump', 'clod'; **devul** 'devil'; **djevul** 'devil';

**fongul** 'jail'; **grunsul** 'suspicion', 'feeling'; **jaksul** 'molar'; **kakkul** 'tile'; **kapittul** 'chapter'; **kingul** 'kink', 'crick'; **kongul** 'small piece of turf'; '(pine)cone'; **konsul** 'consul'; **kupul** 'lamp shade'; **máttul** 'dynamo'; **mondul** 'handle on a grinding mill'; **møttul** 'mantle', 'cloak', 'coat'; **ongul** '(fish)hook'; **riðul** 'row', 'line'; 'crowd'; **sirkul** 'circle'; **sjøtul** 'ledge'; **skammul** '(foot)stool'; **skekul** 'certain lock (ship)'; **skupul** 'shovel', 'scoop'; **smergul**; **spávul**; **stápul** 'pin on a door hinge'; **stikul** 'point of a horn on cattle'; **stuðul** 'support', 'backing'; **støðul** 'milking place'; **støpul** 'pile (of stones)'; **svøvul** 'swivel on a fishing line'; **søpul** 'duster'; 'tangled, matted object'; **ti(t)tul** 'title'; **tongul** 'stalk of sea tangle'; **trakul** 'devil'; **tuberkul** 'tuberculosis'; **vinkul** 'angle'; **vondul** 'bundle of hay'; **øgul** 'thawing ice'; 'dirty river water'; 'rushing of water'; **økil** 'ankle'; **øksul** 'shaft of a grindstone'.

e. The following nouns are declined like **himmel** 'sky':

**bagal** 'bishop's staff'; **kaðal** 'rope'; **stakkal** 'poor fellow'.

f. The following noun is also declined like **himin** 'heaven':

**drottin** 'king'.

### 3.1.3. Third class: Masculine; plural in *-ir*

The nouns belonging to this class have the familiar **-ur** in the nominative singular, **-i** in the dative singular and **-ir** in the nominative and accusative plural.

Figure 12

	'meeting'	'field'	'son'	'fjord'	'division'
Sg.					
Nom.	<b>fundur</b>	<b>vøllur</b>	<b>sonur</b>	<b>fjørður</b>	<b>táttur</b>
Acc.	<b>fund</b>	<b>vøll</b>	<b>son</b>	<b>fjørð</b>	<b>tátt</b>
Dat.	<b>fund</b>	<b>vølli</b>	<b>syni</b>	<b>firði</b>	<b>tætti</b>
(Gen.	<b>fundar</b>	<b>vallar</b>	<b>sonar</b>	<b>fjarðar</b>	<b>táttar</b> )
Pl.					
Nom.	<b>fundir</b>	<b>vøllir</b>	<b>synir</b>	<b>firðir</b>	<b>tættir</b>
Acc.	<b>fundir</b>	<b>vøllir</b>	<b>synir</b>	<b>firðir</b>	<b>tættir</b>
Dat.	<b>fundum</b>	<b>vøllum</b>	<b>sonum</b>	<b>fjørðum</b>	<b>táttum</b>
(Gen.	<b>funda</b>	<b>valla</b>	<b>sona</b>	<b>fjarða</b>	<b>tátta</b> )

The plural of **sonur** 'son', **fjørður** 'fjord' and **táttur** 'strand' is indicated in the dictionary as **synir**, **firðir** and **tættir**. That is, nouns with a vowel mutation are shown in full in the dictionary. When we say dictionary, we mean *Føroysk orðabók* (Faroese Dictionary) from 1998.

Loanwords in **-ansur** and **-tetur**, like **substansur** 'substance' and **formalitetur** 'formality', are declined like **fundur** 'meeting' except for the genitive singular.

Figure 13

	'dissonance'	'identity'
Sg.		
Nom.	<b>dissonansur</b>	<b>identitetur</b>
Acc.	<b>dissonans</b>	<b>identitet</b>
Dat.	<b>dissonansi</b>	<b>identiteti</b>
(Gen.	<b>dissonans</b>	<b>identitets)</b>
Pl.		
Nom.	<b>dissonansir</b>	<b>identitetir</b>
Acc.	<b>dissonansir</b>	<b>identitetir</b>
Dat.	<b>dissonansum</b>	<b>identitetum</b>
(Gen.	<b>dissonansa</b>	<b>identiteta)</b>

### 3.1.4. Fourth class: Weak Masculine Nouns

Weak masculine nouns end in a vowel in the singular, and **-ar** in the nominative and accusative plural. A typical weak noun is **granni** 'neighbour'. Note that when we speak of weak feminine and neuter nouns, these also end in a vowel – something that is characteristic for weak nouns in Faroese. We have included the two nouns **bóndi** 'farmer' and **frændi** 'relative' into this class. Note the difference in the plural between **granni** 'neighbour' and the other two. Note also that written **-ur** in the plural is pronounced as **-ir** [ɪ] in almost all dialects.

Figure 14

	'neighbour'	'thought'	'farmer'	'relative'
Sg.				
Nom.	granni	tanki	bóndi	frændi
Acc.	granna	tanka	bónða	frænda
Dat.	granna	tanka	bónða	frænda
(Gen.	granna	tanka	bónða	frænda)
Pl.				
Nom.	grannar	tankar	bøndur	frændur
Acc.	grannar	tankar	bøndur	frændur
Dat.	grannum	tonkum	bóndum	frændum
(Gen.	granna	tanka	bónða	frænda)

Note that the dative plural can also have the form *tankum*.

Faroese words in *-ari* that are borrowed from Danish words in *-er* are declined like *granni*. The suffix *-ari* is associated with the *nomen agentis* e.g. *dómari* 'judge', *skipari* 'skipper' (cf. Eng. teacher, singer, torturer etc.).

Figure 15

	'Cumberland sausage'	'computer'	'bowler hat'
Sg.			
Nom.	medistari	kompjútari	bovlari
Acc.	medistara	kompjútara	bovlara
Dat.	medistara	kompjútara	bovlara
(Gen.	medistara	kompjútara	bovlara)
Pl.			
Nom.	medistarar	kompjútarar	bovlarar
Acc.	medistarar	kompjútarar	bovlarar
Dat.	medistarum	kompjútarum	bovlarum
(Gen.	medistara	kompjútara	bovlara)

Note that the nom. pl. and acc. pl. ending *-arar* is usually pronounced as if it were spelt *-arir*, except on *Norðoyggjar* and *Eysturoy* where it is pronounced *-ara*.

### 3.1.5. Fifth class: Masculine nouns in *-us*

A few nouns end in *-us* in Faroese. Usually they designate persons, that is nouns such as *káanus/gáanus* 'person who stares', and *gneggjus*<sup>10</sup>. They are inflected as below. Note that loanwords in *-us* inflect in the same way.

Figure 16

	'person that neighs'	'cycle'	'globe'
Sg.			
Nom.	gneggjus	syklus	globus
Acc.	gneggjus	syklus	globus
Dat.	gneggjusi	syklusi	globusi
(Gen.	gneggjus	syklus	globus)
Pl.			
Nom.	gneggjuser	syklusar	globusar
Acc.	gneggjuser	syklusar	globusar
Dat.	gneggjusum	syklusum	globusum
(Gen.	gneggjusa	syklusa	globusa)

*Globus* may also have the form *globusur*. The same holds for *syklusur*. These forms decline like *armur* (see §3.1.1).

### 3.2. Feminine

A typical strong feminine noun in Faroese has no ending in the singular, and *-ir* in the plural.

#### 3.2.1. First class: Feminine

Nouns belonging to this class have no ending in the singular, and *-ar* in the plural. If a feminine noun belonging to this class has the vowel *ø* in the singular, it changes to *a* in the nominative and accusative plural, cf. *vørr* 'lip' below; cf. also the historical genitive, which is used in compounds. Note also the change of *a* to *ø* in front of *u* in *vørrum*. This is the so-called *u*-umlaut.

Figure 17

	'oar'	'lip'	'island'
Sg.			
Nom.	ár	vørr	oyggj
Acc.	ár	vørr	oyggj
Dat.	ár	vørr	oyggj
(Gen.	árar	varrar	oyggjar)

<sup>10</sup> It is used of a person that neighs like an horse, when he or she talks.

Pl.			
Nom.	árar	varrar	oyggjar
Acc.	árar	varrar	oyggjar
Dat.	árum	vørrum	oyggjum
(Gen.	ára	varra	oyggja)

Loanwords (abstract words derived from verbs) are declined as above. The nouns that belong to this class have no ending in the nominative, accusative or dative singular, and **-ar** in the plural. They all end in **-ing** in Danish, and hence have the same declension as for example **renning** 'running' in Faroese, derived from the verb **at renna** 'to run'.

Figure 18

	'formulation'	'running'	'screen version', 'filming'
Sg.			
Nom.	formulering	renning	filmatisering
Acc.	formulering	renning	filmatisering
Dat.	formulering	renning	filmatisering
(Gen.	formuleringar	renningar	filmatiseringar)
Pl.			
Nom.	formuleringar	renningar	filmatiseringar
Acc.	formuleringar	renningar	filmatiseringar
Dat.	formuleringum	renningum	filmatiseringum
(Gen.	formuleringa	renninga	filmatiseringa)

### 3.2.2. Second class: Feminine; nouns with radical -r

The feminine nouns that belong to this class are extremely few. They are: **brúður** 'bride', **ertur** 'pea', **fjøður** 'feather', **gimbur** 'female lamb (one year old)', **gívrur** 'witch', **livur** 'liver', **manstur/mastur/meistur** 'mast', **nævur** 'birch bark', **þjoltur** 'rag', **royður** 'blue whale', **vættur/veittur** 'fairy', **vinstur** 'abomasum'. Note that the **-r** of the root is radical, just as was the case with masculine nouns like **akur** 'field', and for example **himmal** 'heaven', with radical **-l**.

Figure 19

	'bride'	'feather'	'goblin'
Sg.			
Nom.	brúður	fjøður	vættur
Acc.	brúður	fjøður	vættur
Dat.	brúður	fjøður	vættur
(Gen.	brúð(r)ar	fjaðrar	vættrar)
Pl.			
Nom.	brúðrar	fjaðrar	vættrar
Acc.	brúðrar	fjaðrar	vættrar
Dat.	brúðrum	fjaðrum	vættrum
(Gen.	brúðra	fjaðra	vættra)

Nouns with **-ø** in the singular change this to **-a** in the plural, compare **fjøður**.

### 3.2.3. Third class: Feminine; plural in -ir

The plural has **-ir** in all nouns belonging to this class. If the stem contains an **ø** in the nominative singular, it changes to **a** in the nominative plural (**jørð** : **jarðir**). If it contains **ógv** in the nominative singular, this changes to **á** in the nominative plural (**krógv** : **kráir**).

Figure 20

	'sun'	'earth'	'pub'
Sg.			
Nom.	sól	jørð	krógv
Acc.	sól	jørð	krógv
Dat.	sól	jørð	krógv
(Gen.	sólar	jarðar	kráar)
Pl.			
Nom.	sólir	jarðir	kráir
Acc.	sólir	jarðir	kráir
Dat.	sólum	jørðum	kráum
(Gen.	sóla	jarða	kráa)

Loanwords that decline like **sól** are Danish common gender nouns ending in **-tión** and **-sjón** in Faroese, nouns with the suffix **-heit** and nouns with word final **-ø**.

Figure 21

	'definition'	'greatness'	'account'
Sg.			
Nom.	definíti <b>ón</b>	stórheit	konto
Acc.	definíti <b>ón</b>	stórheit	konto
Dat.	definíti <b>ón</b>	stórheit	konto
(Gen.	definíti <b>ónar</b>	stórheit <b>ar</b>	konto <b>ar</b> )
Pl.			
Nom.	definíti <b>ónir</b>	stórheit <b>ir</b>	konto <b>ir</b>
Acc.	definíti <b>ónir</b>	stórheit <b>ir</b>	konto <b>ir</b>
Dat.	definíti <b>ónum</b>	stórheit <b>um</b>	konto <b>um</b>
(Gen.	definíti <b>óna</b>	stórheit <b>a</b>	konto <b>a</b> )

Note that it is possible to list **konto** here, as the endings are the same as in the other nouns, even though it ends in a vowel. We could also list a noun like **analogi** 'analogy' here, but have chosen to list it under class seven, cf. native **elli** 'old age'.

### 3.2.4. Fourth class: Feminine. Vowel alternation and *-ur* in the plural

The nouns belonging to this class have vowel alternation between the singular and plural. The plural in the nominative and accusative is written **-ur** but pronounced **-ir** [ɪ].

Figure 22

	'night'	'unit of land'	'book'	'hand'	'bed'
Sg.					
Nom.	nátt	mørk	bók	hond	song
Acc.	nátt	mørk	bók	hond	song
Dat.	nátt	mørk	bók	hond	song
(Gen.	náttar	markar	bókar	handar	songar)
Pl.					
Nom.	nætur	merkur	bøkur	hendur	sengur
Acc.	nætur	merkur	bøkur	hendur	sengur
Dat.	náttum	mørkum	bókum	hondum	songum
(Gen.	nátta	marka	bóka	handar	songa)

Here we find nouns such as **brók** 'trousers', **rót** 'root', **stong** 'pole', **tong** 'pliers', **kartong** 'carton'. In the spoken language you will sometimes find **næturm**, **merkurm**, **bøkrum**, **hendrum**, **sengrum** and the following definite forms:

**Figure 23** This figure shows the forms that are usual in spoken Faroese (with radical **r**), and those you typically will find in written Faroese (without radical **r**):

Pl.					
Nom.	nætrinar	merkrisar	bøkrinar	hendrisar	sengrisar
Acc.	nætrinar	merkrisar	bøkrinar	hendrisar	sengrisar
Dat.	nætrunum	merkrunum	bøkrunum	hendrunum	sengrunum
(Written:)					
	nætturnar	merkurnar	bøkurnar	hendurnar	sengurnar
	nætturnar	merkurnar	bøkurnar	hendurnar	sengurnar
	náttunum	mørkunum	bókunum	hondunum	songunum

### 3.2.5. Fifth class: Feminine. Vowel alternation as *mús* ~ *mýs*

There is a vowel alternation between the singular and the plural, just as in English 'mouse : mice'. The nouns that belong to this class are few.

Figure 24

	'goose'	'mouse'	'tooth'	'toe'	'claw'
Sg.					
Nom.	gás	mús	tonn	tá	klógv
Acc.	gás	mús	tonn	tá	klógv
Dat.	gás	mús	tonn	tá	klógv
(Gen.	gásar	músar	tannar	táar	klóar)
Pl.					
Nom.	gæs	mýs	tenn	tær	kløur/klør
Acc.	gæs	mýs	tenn	tær	kløur/klør
Dat.	gásur	músur	tonnum	táum/tóm	kløum/klóm
(Gen.	gása	músa	tanna	táa	klógva)
	'cow'			'ewe'	
Sg.					
Nom.	kúgv		ær		
Acc.	kúgv		ær		
Dat.	kúgv		ær		
(Gen.	kúgv		ær(s)		

Pl.		
Nom.	kýr	ær
Acc.	kýr	ær
Dat.	kúm/kúgvum	ærum/óm
(Gen.	kúa	á)

It is not unusual to hear the plural forms *gásir*, *músir*, *tennir*, *táir*, *kúgvir* and *ærir* in the spoken language. The 'genitive' of *ær* is in compounds like *ær(s)kjöt* 'meat of ewe' and *áseyður* Lit.: 'ewe-sheep', meaning a 'ewe older than one year'.

### 3.2.6. Sixth class: Feminine. Weak nouns

As with weak masculine nouns, weak feminine nouns end in a vowel. Note that the written ending *-ur* in the plural has changed to *-ir* in many dialects, hence it has the pronunciation [i].

Figure 25

	'tongue'	'history'	'bog'
Sg.			
Nom.	tunga	søga	mýra
Acc.	tungu	søgu	mýru
Dat.	tungu	søgu	mýru
(Gen.	tungu	søgu	mýru)
Pl.			
Nom.	tungur	søgur	mýrar
Acc.	tungur	søgur	mýrar
Dat.	tungum	søgum	mýrum
(Gen.	tunga	sagna	mýra)

Note that the noun *mýra* 'bog', has a mixed inflection: it has the same suffixes as the weak nouns in the singular, but different endings in the plural, hence it could be classified as 6a. The noun *erma* 'sleeve' declines as *mýra*. In *Føroysk orðabók* from 1998, they list the form *mýri*, a 'class 32 feminine noun', as the main form, but we do not recommend this use, as it is only found in place names. You should use the forms in this grammar.

### 3.2.7. Seventh class: Feminine

The nouns belonging to this class are extremely rare. The native nouns typically have no plural form and are derived from corresponding adjectives as *glaður* 'happy' and the corresponding noun *gleði* 'joy'. Loanwords such as *analogi* 'analogy' and *koloni* 'colony' formally decline like *gleði* 'joy'.

Figure 26

	'old age'	'life span'	'joy'	'analogy'	'colony'
Sg.					
Nom.	elli	ævi	gleði	analogi	koloni
Acc.	elli	ævi	gleði	analogi	koloni
Dat.	elli	ævi	gleði	analogi	koloni
(Gen.	ellis	ævis	gleðis	analogis	kolonis)
Pl.					
Nom.	~	ævir	gleðir	analogiir	koloniir
Acc.	~	ævir	gleðir	analogiir	koloniir
Dat.	~	~	~	analogium	kolonium
(Gen.	~	~	~	analogia	kolonia)

The genitive *-s* can be seen in compounds such as *ellisheim* 'old people's home' and *gleðisstund*<sup>11</sup> 'happy moment'.

### 3.3. Neuter

Neuter nouns typically have no ending in the nominative and accusative singular and plural; most have *-i* in the dative singular and some have vowel alternation between the singular and the plural.

#### 3.3.1. First class: Neuter

The largest class of neuter nouns are those that decline like *barn* 'child', *bræv* 'letter', *land* 'country' and *horn* 'horn'.

Figure 27

	'child'	'letter'	'country'	'horn'
Sg.				
Nom.	barn	bræv	land	horn
Acc.	barn	bræv	land	horn
Dat.	barni	brævi	landi	horni
(Gen.	barns	brævs	lands	horns)
Pl.				
Nom.	børn	brøv	lond	horn
Acc.	børn	brøv	lond	horn
Dat.	børnum	brøvum	londum	hornum
(Gen.	barna	bræva	landa	horna)

<sup>11</sup> From a synchronic point of view the form given in *Føroysk orðabók* (*gleðistund*) is wrong; there should be an *-s* used as a compound infix in such nouns.

Note the change of a to ø in the plural. This is the so called u-umlaut. More on this in the section on pronunciation. Generally the shift is a/æ to ø (**barn** : **børn**; **bræv** : **brøv**), but before nasal consonants (**n, m**) the shift is a to o (**land** : **lond**).

Most Danish neuter loans end up in this class, and they decline as the corresponding nouns in class 1 in Faroese. That is with no ending in the nominative and accusative singular, -s in the historical genitive, and no ending in the nominative, accusative plural, although there is a tendency to put in -ir in the plural. Formally the following loanwords decline like Class 1 neuter nouns:

- Nouns in **-em** (**fonem**)
- Nouns in **-om** (**atom**)
- Nouns in **-rat** (**lektorat**)
- Nouns in **-tek** (**kartotek**)
- Nouns in **-tiv** (**kollektiv**)
- Nouns in **-um** (**kompendum**)

Figure 28

	'phoneme'	'atom'	'lectureship'	'card index'	'collective'
Sg.					
Nom.	fonem	atom	lektorat	kartotek	kollektiv
Acc.	fonem	atom	lektorat	kartotek	kollektiv
Dat.	fonemi	atomi	lektorati	kartoteki	kollektivi
(Gen.	fonems	atoms	lektorats	kartoteks	kollektivs)
Pl.					
Nom.	fonem	atom	lektorat	kartotek	kollektiv
Acc.	fonem	atom	lektorat	kartotek	kollektiv
Dat.	fonemum	atomum	lektoratum	kartotekum	kollektivum
(Gen.	fonema	atoma	lektorata	kartoteka	kollektiva)

### 3.3.2. Second class: Neuter nouns with radical -r, -l, and -n

Some masculine nouns have radical -r, -n, -l.

Figure 29

	'nest'	'summer'	'room'	'fun'	'temple'
Sg.					
Nom.	reiður	summar	kamar	gaman	tempul
Acc.	reiður	summar	kamar	gaman	tempul
Dat.	reiðri	sumri	kamari	gamni	templi
(Gen.	reiðurs	summars	kamars	gamans	tempuls)
Pl.					
Nom.	reiður	summur	kømur		tempul
Acc.	reiður	summur	kømur		tempul
Dat.	reiðrum	sumrum	kømurum		templum
(Gen.	reiðra	sumra	kam(a)ra		templ(a)

### 3.3.3. Third class. -i in the singular, -ir in the plural

Neuter nouns belonging to this class have -i in the singular, -(i)r in the plural. Note that although they end in a vowel they are not weak nouns. We have included borrowings with word final vowel into this class, that is **akademi** and **kasino**.

Figure 30

	'example'	'state'	'academy'	'casino'
Sg.				
Nom.	dømi	ríki	akademi	kasino
Acc.	dømi	ríki	akademi	kasino
Dat.	dømi	ríki	akademi	kasino
(Gen.	dømis	ríkis	akademis	kasinos)
Pl.				
Nom.	dømi(r)	ríki(r)	akademi(ir)	kasino(ir)
Acc.	dømi(r)	ríki(r)	akademi(ir)	kasino(ir)
Dat.	dømum	ríkjum	akademium	kasinoium
(Gen.	døma	ríkja	akademia	kasino(a)

A note on the spelling: The letter combination **ki** is pronounced [tʃ] as in English 'church'. So is the letter combination **kj**, and this is why there is a -j in the dative and the genitive plural form. In written Faroese you will usually find the nominative and accusative plural with the form **dømi**. This is not the case, however, in loanwords where -ir is the rule.



### 3.3.4. Fourth class: Weak Neuter Nouns: ending in *-a* in the singular, *-ur* in the plural

These nouns have written *-ur* in the plural, although some writers prefer to write only *-u*. Note that historically this *-u* has changed to *-i* in many dialects through analogy, so the actual ending is pronounced *-ir* [ɪ].

Nouns belonging to this class denote body parts: *eista* 'testicle', *eyga* 'eye', *hjarta* 'heart', *lunga* 'lung', and also: *ambra* 'ambergris', *álvara* 'seriousness', *deyda* 'tardy person', *drama* 'drama', *drekka* 'cup of tea', *heima* 'home', *komma* 'comma', *leika* 'toy', *menniskja* 'human', *noða* 'ball of yarn', *nugga* 'nougat', *paprika* 'paprika'. Note that loanwords from Danish neuter words ending with *-a*, such as *drama* 'drama', belong to this class.

Figure 31

	'eye'	'heart'	'drama'	'theme'
Sg.				
Nom.	eyga	hjarta	drama	tema
Acc.	eyga	hjarta	drama	tema
Dat.	eyga	hjarta	drama	tema
(Gen.)	eyga	hjarta	drama	tema
Pl.				
Nom.	eygu(r)	hjörtu(r)	dramu(r)	temu(r)
Acc.	eygu(r)	hjörtu(r)	dramu(r)	temu(r)
Dat.	eygum	hjörtum	dramum	temum
(Gen.)	eygna	hjärt(n)a	drama	tema

### 3.4. Declension of proper nouns: Names of people and places

The main rule is that personal names are not inflected in Faroese. Take for example the three names *Jógvan*, *Ólavur* and *Jann*. According to descriptive rules it is usually said that they should be inflected as in column A; colloquial Faroese inflects the nouns as in column B:

	A	B
Nom.	Ólavur er her Jógvan er her Jann er her	Ólavur er her 'Ólavur is here' Jógvan er her 'Jógvan is here' Jann er her 'Jann is here'
Acc.	Eg síggi Ólav Eg síggi Jógvan Eg síggi Jann	Eg síggi Ólavur 'I see Ólavur' Eg síggi Jógvan 'I see Jógvan' Eg síggi Jann 'I see Jann'

Dat.	hjá Ólavi hjá Jógvani hjá Janni	hjá Ólavur 'at Ólavur's place' hjá Jógvan 'at Jógvan's place' hjá Jann 'at Jann's place'
------	---------------------------------------	--

A prescriptive rule is that personal nouns ending in *-ur* inflect like a masculine noun in *-ur*, that is, as the name *Ólavur* in column A.

Inflection patterns for personal names are as follows:

#### Male names

Nom.	Ólavur	Bartal	Heðin	Bárður	Beini	Beinir
Acc.	Ólav	Bartal	Heðin	Bárð	Beina	Beinir
Dat.	Ólavi	Bartali	Heðini	Bárði	Beina	Beini
Gen.	Ólavs	Bartals	Heðins	Bárðar	Beina	Beinis

#### Female names

Nom.	Lív	Bjørg	Maja	Anna
Acc.	Lív	Bjørg	Maju	Onnu
Dat.	Lív	Bjørg	Maju	Onnu
Gen.	Lívar	Bjargar	Maju	Onnu

Note the umlaut in *Anna* : *Onnu*, where *a* changes to *o* in front of a nasal. Forms with no umlaut, like *Annu*, are, however, common.

**Continents:** *Asia*, *Australia*, *Afrika*, *Evropa*, *Amerika* – these are all neuter and inflect like *eyga* 'eye', for example *eg havi verið í Afrika* 'I have been to Africa'.

**Countries:** Country names are as a rule neuter in Faroese.

#### 1. Neuter:

a. Many country names are compounds, where the second part of the noun is the neuter noun *-land* 'country', like: *Bretland* 'Britain', *Egyptaland* 'Egypt', *Estland* 'Estonia', *Finnland* 'Finland', *Frakland* 'France', *Grikkaland* 'Greece', *Grønland* 'Greenland', *Holland* 'Netherlands', *Hvítarusland* 'Belarus', *Ísland* 'Iceland', *Írland* 'Ireland', *Norðurírlund* 'Northern Ireland', *Onland* 'England', *Pólland* 'Poland', *Russland* 'Russia', *Skotland* 'Scotland', *Turkland* 'Turkey', *Týskland*, 'Germany'. These nouns inflect as neuter nouns of class 1:

- (1a) *Finnland er eitt norðurlandskt land* (nominative)  
'Finland is a Scandinavian country'

(1b) **Martha er góð við Írland** (accusative)  
'Martha loves Ireland'

(1c) **Ivalu er úr Grønlandi** (dative)  
'Ivalu is from Greenland'

b. Other country names ending in a consonant inflect like **land** – that is, as a regular neuter noun of the first class. These include: **Afganistan, Aserbadjan, Bangladesj, Barain, Barbados, Belis, Benin, Brasil, Butan, Ekvador, El Salvador, Eysturtimor** 'East Timor', **Gabon, Honduras, Iran, Irak, Ísrael, Japan, Jemen, Jordan, Kamerun** 'Cameroon', **Kasakstan, Katar** 'Qatar', **Kirgistan, Kjadd** 'Chad', **Kurdistan, Kuwait, Kýpros / Kypem** 'Cyprus', **Laos, Libanon, Liktnstein** 'Liechtenstein', **Madagaskar, Mosambikk, Mórítius, Nepal, Niger, Noreg** 'Norway', **Oman, Pakistan, Portugal, Singapor, Sudan, Surinam, Svais** 'Switzerland', **Tadsjikistan, Tailand, Taivan, Trinidad, Turkmenistan, Ungarn** 'Hungary', **Usbekistan, Vjetnam, Wales** (or **Kymru**).

(2a) **Afganistan er ekki í Europa** (nominative)  
'Afghanistan is not in Europe'

(2b) **Martha fer til Gibraltar** (accusative)  
'Martha goes to Gibraltar'

(2c) **John er úr Hong Kong** (dative)  
'John is from Hong Kong'

c. Countries ending in a vowel are neuter and decline as neuter nouns of class 4 (cf. the continents above). Here we have names like: **Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgia** 'Belgium', **Bermuda, Bolivia, Bosnia og Hersigovina, Botswana, Brasilia** 'Brazil', **Bulgaria, Eritrea, Etiopia, Fiji, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Italia, Jamaika, Kambodja** 'Cambodia', **Kanada, Kekenía** 'Chechnya', **Kekkia** 'the Czech Republic', **Kenja, Kili** 'Chile', **Kina, Kolumbia, Korea, Kosta Ríka, Kroatía, Kuba, Latvía, Lesoto, Liberia, Libía, Litava** 'Lithuania', **Makedonía, Malaisia, Malaví, Malí, Malta, Marokko, Meksíkó, Miðafrikalýðveldi** 'Central African Republic', **Moldava, Monako, Mongolía, Namibía, Nígíría, Norra** 'Norway', **Panama, Paragvaí, Perú, Rúmenía, Rúanda, Sambía** 'Zambia', **Simbábví** 'Zimbabwe', **Slóvakía, Slóvenía, Somalía, Spánía, Srí Lanka, Suður-Afríka** 'South Africa', **Sýría, Tansanía, Tobago, Tonga, Tunesía, Tuvalu, Uganda, Úkraína, Venusúela**.

(3a) **Litava er eitt baltískt land** (nominative)  
'Lithuania is a Baltic country'

(3b) **Martha fer til Perú** (accusative)  
'Martha goes to Peru'

(3c) **Kim Il Sung er úr Korea** (dative)  
'Kim Il Sung is from Korea'

d. Country names ending in **-ríki** are also neuter and decline as Class 3 nouns: **Svøríki** 'Sweden', **Sameindu Emirríkíni** (def. pl.) 'United Arab Emirates', **Vatikanríkið** (def.) 'the Vatican'.

(4) **Pávin býr í Vatikanríkinum** (dative)  
'The pope lives in the Vatican'

e. Note that **Niðurlond** 'the Netherlands' is neuter plural.

(5) **Tey velta tulipanir í Niðurlondum** (dative)  
'They grow tulips in the Netherlands'

2. Feminine:

a. Names of countries ending in **-oyggjar** are feminine: **Filipsoyggjar** 'the Philippines', **Grønhøvdaoyggjar** 'Cape Verde Islands', **Komorroyggjar** 'Comorros', **Maldívoyggjar** 'Maldives', **Marshalloyggjar** 'Marshall Islands', **Grenadínoyggjar** 'Grenadines', **Seyskelloyggjar** 'Seychelles'.

(6) **Hann er úr Grønhøvdaoyggjum** (dative)  
'He's from Cape Verde'

b. **Danmark** and **Lukseborg** are feminine.

(7) **Eg fari at flyta til Danmarkar** (genitive)  
'I'm going to move to Denmark'

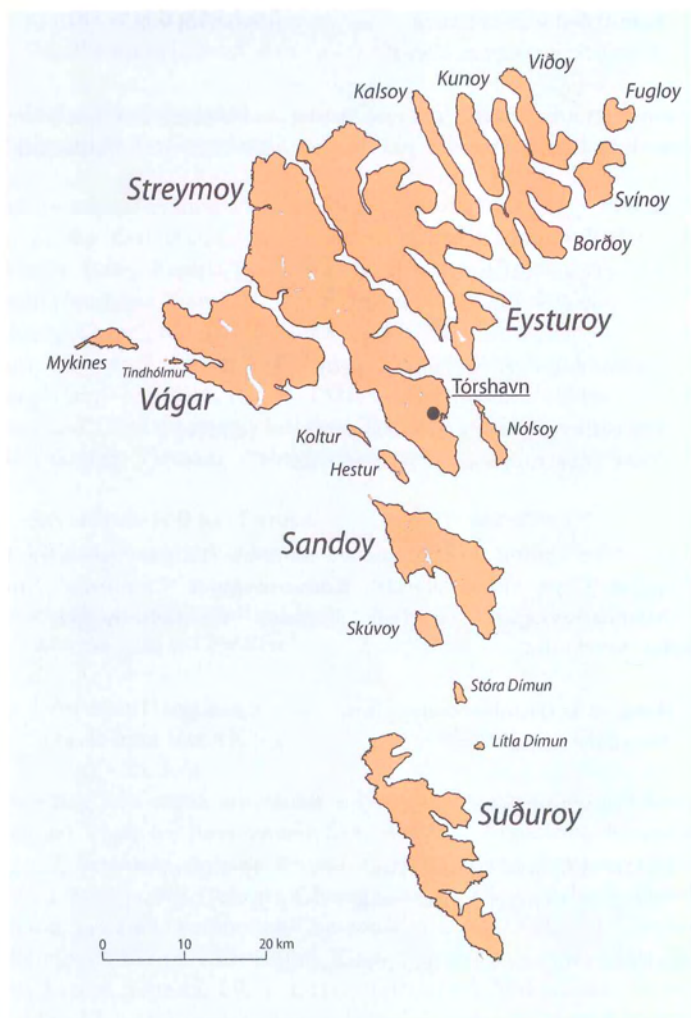
c. **Fílabeinsstrondin** 'Ivory Coast' is feminine definite.

(8) **Maria býr í / á Fílabeinsstrondini** (dative)  
'Maria lives in Ivory Coast'

### Names of the islands in the Faroes

The gender is indicated after each placename.

The islands of the Faroes are, from west to east, **Mykines** (n.), **Vágar** (f. pl.), **Koltur** (n.), **Hestur** (m.), **Streymoy** (f.), **Nólsoy** (f.), **Eysturoy** (f.), **Kalsoy** (f.), **Kunoy** (f.), **Borðoy** (f.), **Viðoy** (f.), **Svínoy** (f.), **Fugloy** (f.). And to the south: **Sandoy** (f.), **Skúgvoy** (f.), **Stóra Dímun** (f.), **Lítla Dímun** (f.), **Suðuroy** (f.).



Note the use of *í* 'in,' with island names: *í Sandoy* and also *í Vágum*, *í Hesti*, *í Koltri*. But also *í Filipsoyggjum* 'in the Philippines'. The *-oy* is usually just pronounced as *-i*, so you would hear people say *í Suðri* (written: *í Suðuroy*). The names of islands in the Faroes often appear in the definite form. When definite, the forms are as follows:

Figure 32

	Suðuroy	Fugloy	Vágar
Sg.			
Nom.	Suðuroyggin	Fugloyggin	
Acc.	Suðuroynna	Fugloyinna	
Dat.	Suðuroynni	Fugloynni	
Pl.			
Nom.			Vágarnar
Acc.			Vágarnar
Dat.			Vágunum

The *-ggi/j* disappears in front of a consonant in the accusative and dative. *Vágar* is named after the three *vágir* 'bays' on that island: *Sandavágur*, *Miðvágur* and *Sørvágur*, hence the plural form. Most people say *eg fari vestur í Vágar* lit.: I am going west in Vágar = 'I am going to Vágar' and would not use the definite form of the noun, although you may hear this form also.

#### Names of towns

Names of towns are inflected, as a rule, when they are native words, for example *til Havnar* 'to Tórshavn'. When the names of the towns are non-native, they are usually not inflected: *í Hong Kong, New York, Washington, Moskva, Helsinki...*

#### Names of villages

Many Faroese village names are compounds and the second part of the compound is then inflected like regular a noun:

- (9a) *Sandavágur er í Vágum* (nominative)  
'Sandavágur is in Vágar'
- (9b) *Martha kennir Fuglafjørð* (accusative)  
'Martha knows Fuglafjørður'
- (9c) *Lars er úr Vági* (dative)  
'Lars is from Vágur'

Various prepositions can be used to express 'in', 'from', and 'to' with the names of towns and villages in the Faroes. Here are the most common place names:

	'in'	'from'	'to'
Akrar	á Økrum	av Økrum	á Akrar
Bøur	í Bø	úr Bø	til Biggjar
Dalur	í Dali	úr Dali	til Dals
Eiði	á Eiði	av Eiði	til Eiðis
Fámjin	í Fámjin	úr Fámjin	til Fámjins
Gjógv	við Gjógv	frá Gjógv	til Gjár
Glyvrum	á Glyvrum	av Glyvrum	til Glyvrum
Hellur	Hellurnar	av Hellunum	á/til Hellurnar
Húsar	á Húsum	av Húsum	til Húsa(r)
Hvalba	í Hvalba	úr Hvalba	til Hvalbiar
Kaldbak	í Kaldbak	úr Kaldbak	til Kaldbaks
Kirkja	á Kirkju	av Kirkju	til Kirkju
Kirkjubøur	í Kirkjubø	úr Kirkjubø	til Kirkjubøar
Klaksvík	í Klaksvík	úr Klaksvík	til Klaksvíkar
Kollafjarður	í Kollafirði	úr Kollafirði	til Kollafjarðar
Langasandur	á Langasandi	av Langasandi	til Langasands
Nes	á Nesi	av Nesi	á Nes
Norðdeplil	í Norðdepli	úr Norðdepli	til Norðdeplis
Norðragøta	í Norðragøtu	úr Norðragøtu	til Norðragøtu
Norðtoftir	í Norðtoftum	úr Norðtoftum	til Norðtofta
Oyrbakki	á Oyrbakka	av Oyrbakka	til Oyrbakka
Oyri	á Oyri	av Oyri	til Oyri
Porkeiri	í Porkeiri	úr Porkeiri	til Porkeiris
Saksun	í Saksun	úr Saksun	til Saksunar
Skælingur	á Skælingi	av Skælingi	til Skælings
Skopun	í Skopun	úr Skopun	til Skopunar
Streymnes	í Streymnesi	úr Streymnesi	til Streymnesar
Stykkið	á Stykkinum	av Stykkinum	til Stykkið
Sund	á Sundi	av Sundi	á Sund
Tjørnuvík	í Tjørnuvík	úr Tjørnuvík	til Tjørnuvíkar
Tórshavn	í Tórshavn	úr Tórshavn	til Tórshavnar
Vágur	í Vági	úr Vági	til Vágs
Velbastaður	á Velbastað	av Velbastað	til Velbastaðar
Vestmanna	í Vestmanna	úr Vestmanna	til Vestmannar
Víkarbyrgi	í Víkarbyrgi	úr Víkarbyrgi	til Víkarbyrgis

For example:

**av – á 'from – in'**

**Hon er av Eiði**  
'She is from Eiði'

**Hann er av Strondum**  
'He is from Strendur'

**úr – í 'from – in'**

**Jóhan er úr Havn**  
'Jóhan is from Tórshavn'

**Jóhan er úr Vestmanna**  
'Jóhan is from Vestmanna'

**Jóhan er úr Vatnsoyrum**  
'Jóhan is from Vatnsoyri'

**frá – við 'from – in'**

**Petur Jacob er frá Gjógv**  
'Petur Jacob is from Gjógv'

**Hon er frá Ljósá**  
'She is from Ljósá'

**Hann er frá Norðskála**  
'He is from Norðskáli'

**Hon býr á Eiði**  
'She lives in Eiði'

**Hann býr á Strondum**  
'He lives in Strendur'

**Jóhan býr í Havn**  
'Jóhan lives in Tórshavn'

**Jóhan býr í Vestmanna**  
'Jóhan lives in Vestmanna'

**Jóhan býr í Vatnsoyrum**  
'Jóhan lives in Vatnsoyri'

**Petur Jacob býr við Gjógv**  
'Peter Jacob lives in Gjógv'

**Hon býr við Ljósá**  
'She lives in Ljósá'

**Hann býr á Norðskála**  
'He lives in Norðskáli'

### Street names

Many Faroese street names are compounds having *-vegur* 'road' or *-gøta* 'street' as the last compound. Those ending in *-vegur* are masculine (class 3), and those in *-gøta* feminine (class 6). Hence the following:

- |       |  |              |
|-------|--|--------------|
| (10a) | <b>Dalavegur er stongdur</b><br>'Dalavegur is closed'          | (nominative) |
| (10b) | <b>Onnugøta er stongd</b><br>'Onnugøta is closed'              | (nominative) |
| (10c) | <b>Vit fara niðan á Dalaveg</b><br>'We are going to Dalavegur' | (accusative) |

- (10d) **Vit koyra niðan á Onnugøtu** (accusative)  
'We drive up to Onnugøta'
- (10e) **Vit koyra eftir Dalavegi** (dative)  
'We drive on Dalavegur'
- (10f) **Vit koyra eftir Onnugøtu** (dative)  
'We drive on Onnugøta'

### Names of mountains

If a name of a mountain is a compound, then it takes the gender of and inflects the final compound element as a regular noun. For example:

- (11a) **Malinstindur** er í Sandavági (masculine, nominative)  
'Malinstindur is in Sandavágur'
- (11b) **Húsafelli** er eisini í Sandavági (neuter, nominative)  
'Húsafelli is also in Sandavágur'
- (11c) **Vit ganga niðan á Malinstind** (masculine, accusative)  
'We walk up Malinstindur'
- (11d) **Vit ganga niðan á Húsafelli** (neuter, accusative)  
'We walk up Húsafelli'
- (11e) **Vit eru á Malinstindi** (masculine, dative)  
'We are on Malinstindur'
- (11f) **Vit eru á Húsafelli** (neuter, dative)  
'We are on Húsafelli'

### 3.5. Case usage

**Nominative:** The subject is in nominative. You will find the subject in a sentence by asking who (is doing something), as in *The arm is broken* = *what or who is broken?* = *the arm*. Below we have some examples with subjects:

- (1a) **Ein maður** rennur heim  
'A man runs home'
- (1b) **Bátur**in siglir  
'The boat sails'

- (1c) **Konan** grætur  
'The woman cries'
- (1d) **Gentan** flennir  
'The girl laughs'

**Accusative:** The direct object is in the accusative. You will find the direct object by asking *what or whom*, as in *John saw the boat* = *What or whom did John see?* = *the boat*.

Most verbs in Faroese require an accusative object:

- (2a) Eg síggi **ein mann** renna  
'I see a man running'
- (2b) Eg síggi **ein bát** sigla  
'I see a boat sailing'
- (2c) Eg hoyri **eina konu** gráta  
'I hear a woman crying'
- (2d) Eg síggi **eina gentu** flenna  
'I see a girl laughing'

**Dative:** Some verbs require a dative, rather than an accusative, object. For example *bjarga* 'save', *bjóða* 'invite', *dugna* 'help', *fagna* 'welcome', *forða* 'prevent', *fylgja* 'follow', *gagnast* 'be useful to', *heilsa* 'greet', *hjálpa* 'help', *líkjast* 'resemble', *líva* 'protect', 'spare', *miskunna* 'pity', 'have mercy on', *møta* 'meet', *náa* 'reach', *nærkast* 'get closer to', *prísa* 'praise', *ráða* 'have control over', *rósa* 'praise', *skemta* 'entertain', *skýla* 'protect', *snúgva* 'turn', *steðga* 'stop', *stjórna* 'govern', 'direct', *stuðla* 'support', *stuttleika* 'entertain', *stýra* 'govern', 'steer', *stevna* 'summon before the court', *takka* 'thank', *tarna* 'delay', *trúgva* 'believe'.

- (3a) Eg hjálpti **einari konu** yvir um vegin  
'I helped a woman across the road'
- (3b) Maja bjóðaði **Ólavi** heim  
'Maya invited Ólavur home'
- (3c) Eg møtti **pávanum**  
'I met the pope'

**Indirect dative and direct accusative objects:** Some verbs take an indirect object in the dative and a direct object in the accusative. They are called ditransitive verbs. They are usually translated into English with a to-construction.

(4a) Eg gav konuni ein muss  
D A  
 'I gave the woman a kiss'

(4b) Poul veitti teimum hjálp  
D A  
 'Poul gave them help'

Among the ditransitive verbs in Faroese are: **banna** 'forbid', **bjóða** 'offer', **fáa** 'get', **fyrigeva** 'forgive', **geva** 'give', **gjalda** 'pay', **læna** 'lend', **lona** 'repay', **meina** 'forbid', **rinda** 'pay', **selja** 'sell', **senda** 'send', **sigja** 'tell', **skriva** 'write', **sýna** 'show', **sýta** 'refuse', **valda** 'cause', **veita** 'give', 'allot', **vísa** 'show'.

### 3.5.1. Accusative subject

In some rare cases the subject is not in the nominative, but in the accusative. These constructions are very archaic and never used today in spoken Faroese, where the constructions under B are used.

A	B
(5a) <b>meg nøtrar í holdið</b> me shudders in the flesh 'I shudder'	<b>tað nøtrar meg í holdið</b> it shudders me in the flesh 'I shudder'
(5b) <b>meg óraði tað altíð</b> me expected that always 'I always expected that'	<b>tað óraði meg altíð</b> that expected me always 'I always expected that'

In general, the verbs that used to take an accusative subject in Faroese take either a nominative subject (see below) or have different constructions (5Ba) and (5Bb). In (6a) the subject is in the accusative; this construction can be found in poetic language or in the Bible, but not in spoken Faroese.

### Higher style

### Spoken Faroese

(6a) <b>meg droymdi ein dreym</b> me dreamt a dream 'I had a dream'	<b>eg droymdi ein dreym</b> 'I had a dream'
(6b) <b>meg minnst ikki</b> me remember not 'I don't remember'	<b>eg minnst ikki...</b> 'I don't remember'
(6c) <b>meg grunaði tað altíð</b> me suspected it always 'I always suspected that'	<b>eg grunaði tað altíð</b> 'I always suspected that'
(6d) <b>nú fór, sum meg vardi</b> now went, as me expected 'now it was as I expected'	<b>nú fór, sum eg vardi</b> 'now it was as I expected'

### 3.5.2. Accusative or dative subject

In some rare cases the verb can take either an accusative or a dative subject. The verbs in question are **fýsa**, **hugbíta** and **lysta** all meaning 'to want'. Of these expressions, only (7c) is likely to be used with the dative.

Accusative	Dative
(7a) <b>meg fýsir lítið at fara</b> me wants little to go 'I don't want to go'	<b>mær fýsir lítið at fara</b> to me wants little to go 'I don't want to go'
(7b) <b>meg hugbítur at síggja hana</b> me wants to see her 'I want to see her'	<b>mær hugbítur at síggja hana</b> to me wants to see her 'I want to see her'
(7c) <b>meg lystir at drekka</b> me wants to drink 'I want to drink'	<b>mær lystir at drekka</b> to me wants to drink 'I want to drink'

### 3.5.3. Dative subjects

The following verbs take a dative subject. The verb is always in the 3rd person singular, even though the subject is plural, at least in written Faroese. Note that some of the verbs have a restricted use. The verbs are illustrated with some examples. The verbs are: **berast fyri** 'seem', **bresta** 'break', 'fail to materialise', **dáma** 'like', **eydnast** 'succeed', **ganga væl/illa** 'be successful / unsuccessful', **gangast væl / illa** 'succeed, not succeed', **hóva** 'like', **huga** 'like', **hugna við** 'like', **leiðast við** 'get bored with', **líka** 'like', **lítast á** 'like', **nýtast** 'need', 'have to',

skríma um 'like', standast við 'feel nauseated by', 'detest', sýnast 'seem', tróta 'lack', tykja 'seem', tykjast 'seem', tørva 'lack', vanta 'lack', verða á 'happen to (unluckily)', verða dátt við 'be startled at', vita væl / illa við 'be doing fine / badly'.

The verb is in 3rd person singular, even though the subject is in the plural (8b), (8d). Note also that the noun phrase after the verb (**mjólkina, pening**) is in the accusative:

- (8a) **mær dámar mjólkina**  
me like the milk  
'I like the milk'
- (8b) **teimum dámar mjólkina**  
them like the milk  
'they like the milk'
- (8c) **mær vantar pening**  
me lack money  
'I need money'
- (8d) **teimum vantar pening**  
them lack money  
'They need money'

### 3.6. Singularia tantum

Some nouns do not have any plural form. They are called *singularia tantum*.

### 3.6.1. Singularia tantum: Masculine

The following nouns are singular tantum, masculine in Faroese.

Figure 33

almáttur	'almighty'	flutningur	'moving'
andglettur	'headwind'	fløvi	'heat'
angur	'regret'	flykringur	'snow falling in (large) flakes'
aningur	'weak light'	fómur	'foam'
arvur	'inheritance'	fríður	'peace'
batnaður	'improvement'	frísur	'tousled hair'
bágur	'worry'	froyður	'foam'
beddur	'small pool'	froysur	'snort(ing)'
beigur	'accident'	fýrikur	'four of clubs'
bjöllur	'dew'	gaddur	'rocky ground'
bleðil	'folia'	gessur	'persistence'; 'desire'
borður	'heath rush'	gitnaður	'conception'
býggjur	'town' <sup>12</sup>	gjalur	'rough wind'
børkur	'bark'	gjóstur	'draught'
danskur	'Dane'	glammur	'noise'
dámur	'look'	gleimur	'joy'
degningur	'dawn'	gnýggjur	'noise'
dekkur	'deck'	gnýur	'noise'
dentur	'emphasis'	grasingur	'edge of the grass (on a beach or cliff)'
diggur	'small drop'	grasningur	'dispute about the boundaries of an outfield'
dilkur	'good meal'	grátur	'crying'
djassur	'jazz'	greytur	'mush'
dugur	'capability'	gríður	'amnesty'
dulur	'something hidden'	grunur	'supposition'
dussur	'cup of tea'	gývil	'broom ( <i>cytissus</i> )'
dyningur	'swell'	harmur	'sadness'
eimur	'glows'	heiður	'honour'
etikur	'vinegar'	hemingur	'nausea'
eyrur	'gravel'	hivningur	'improvement'
fagnaður	'applause'	hómur	'idea'
fantur	'situation' <sup>13</sup>	hugsingur	'condition'
farri	'thin film'; 'a bit'	hugur	'disposition'
fáningur	'the getting of something'	hungur	'hunger'
fáttur	'mood'	hýrur	'mood'
fepur	'fever'	hættingur	'daring venture'
feril	'suspicion'		
fjáltur	'worry'		

<sup>12</sup> In the idiom: *bera boð í býggj* = *bera boð í bý* 'return' (Lit.: 'carry message to town').

<sup>13</sup> In the expression: *har er skil og fantur* 'there the situation is bad'

höttur	'small knot'
ivur	'doubt'
jammur	'misery'
javnaður	'equality'
kannur	'ownership'
kavi	'snow'
kervil	'cow parsley'
keymur	'hands clutched together'
kiltur	'sheet'
klökkur	'shock'
Kristindómur	'Christianity'
kunstur	'trick'
lagnaður	'fate'
landnyrðingur	'north-east'
landsynningur	'south-east'
larmur	'noise'
levnaður	'hullabaloo'
lovnaður	'promise'
loypingur	'curdled milk', 'junket'
luktur	'smell'
lyngur	'heather'
lyrikkur	'lyrics'
malingur	'changing in weather'
marrur	'mud'
matur	'food'
málmur	'ore'
messingur	'brass'
móður	'anger'
mógvur	'turf'
mókur	'nap'
monningur	'money'
mungur	'desire for food'
naglur	'nail'
nissur	'slight taste'
opningur	'bowel movement', 'evacuation'
poesiur	'poetry'
politikkur	'policy'
poppur	'pop'
proviantur	'provisions'
pulsur	'pulse'

punsur	'punch'
rekstur	'drove'
ribbingur	'bad, cold weather'
rigningur	'rain'
riklingur	'strip of dried flatfish'
riskur	'rust-stain'
rotningur	'bad weather'
rómur	'joy'
rudningur	'much surf'
rugur	'rye'
rustur	'rust'
ryskur	'woodrush'
ræðil	'scarecrow'
rølikur	'yarrow'
sabbatur	'Sabbath'
sallur	'third'
seigil	'staying power'
seismikkur	'seismic'
siropur	'syrup'
sjangur	'yelling'
sjongur	'yelling'
skammur	'the devil'
skapnaður	'form'; 'design'
skervur	'terrible mood'
skilningur	'understanding'
skilpur	'type of mortar'
skipningur	'number of sheep in a single pasture'
skonkur	'gift'
skörvingur	'soup with milk turning sour'
skrekkur	'fear'
skúlvur	'ugly sky'
skúmur	'foam'
skyrur	'curdled milk', 'curds'
skörur	'bad mood'
smekkur	'spanking'
smekur	'taste'
smilur	'smell'
snepil	'dram'; 'schnapps'
snjógvur	'snow'
snúður	'bend'

snykur	'fish liver oil', 'blubber oil'
soymur	'dried tendon of a pilot whale'
sparnaður	'economy'
spergul	'spurry'
spinningur	'tough food'
sportur	'sport'
standsur	'stop'
stilnaður	'silence'
stimbur	'strength'
strúkur	'tough wind'
stuldrur	'theft'
stúvingur	'white sauce', 'roux'
styttningur	'cheese'
störur	'sturgeon'
súgur	'flow'
súgvur	'flow'
svali	'coolness'
svarmur	'vapour'
svultur	'hunger'
svöltur	'hunger'
sýrlingur	'weak acid (e.g. H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> )'
talingur	'certainly not' <sup>14</sup>
temingur	'persistent wind'
tevur	'smell'
tjörgur	'dirt', 'filth' <sup>15</sup>
tollur	'duty', 'customs'
tortur	'shame'

toygingur	'badly curdled milk'
toygur	'swallow', 'gulp'
trekkur	'shit'
trekkur	'draught'
trivnaður	'well-being'
trúnaður	'confidence'
turkur	'drought'
tvingsil	'compulsion'
tvistur	'twist'
tyngsil	'depression'
tægungur	'brown turf'
tægungur	'brown turf'
tæringur	'tuberculosis'
tømingur	'persistent wind'
útsynningur	'south-west'
varni	'suspicion'
varhugi	'suspicion'
varningur	'warning'
válur	'roundish hill'
vekur	'watching'
vellingur	'gruel'
vetringur	'cattle one winter old'
viður	'wood'
vísingur	'incline'
væmingur	'hint', 'suggestion'
ylur	'mild heat'
yngul	'fry'

<sup>14</sup> In the expression: *ikki tal(n)ingur um* 'certainly not', 'out of the question'.

<sup>15</sup> In the expression: *skitin sum ein tjörgur* 'very dirty'



### 3.6.2. Singularia tantum: Feminine

The following nouns are singularia tantum feminine. Notice the list includes many abstracts ending in *-isma* and *-an*:

Figure 34

aftran	'indecision'	farra	'thin film'; 'a bit'
angan	'smelling'	ferðsla	'traffic'
angist	'fear'	fínkan	'refinement'
armóð	'poverty'	fjasan	'fiddling with'
art	'kind'	fjálgan	'cherishing'
astma	'asthma'	flennan	'laughing'
atvent	'Advent'	flusnan	'peeling'
áta	'plankton'	flövan	'heat'
baksan	'manoeuvring'	föld	'earth'
balan	'bad weather'	fóra	'luck'
bangan	'knocking'	fragd	'pleasure'
bangheit	'anxiety'	frelsa	'salvation'
baptisma	'baptism'	fríðan	'preservation'
batnan	'improvement'	fríðkan	'embellishment'
beisa	'stain'	froysan	'snorting'
beistan	'scampering'	fumma	'smoke'
beljan	'roaring'	fundamentalisma	'fundamentalism'
birta	'light'	fækkan	'decreasing'
bíðan	'waiting'	fyrnska	'something old'
blandan	'mixing'	fólnan	'fading'
blindan	'blinding'	fösta	'fast'
blokka	'kind of game'	galdran	'noisiness'
blótan	'swearing'	gartan	'noisiness'
blygdan	'shyness'	gákan	'talking'
bolsjevisma	'bolshevism'	geispan	'moaning'
borða	'moss rush'	glentran	'joking'
brakan	'creaking'	glukosa	'glucose'
bralan	'roaring'	greiða	'explanation'
brigdan	'reproaching'	grónska	'dried corn'
bræði	'haste'	grunan	'suspicion'
buddisma	'Buddhism'	grundan	'thinking'
buldran	'cracking'	grönka	'green place'
dapan	'squinting'	grönska	'green slime'
darran	'shivering'	gusan	'wind movement', 'draught'
dálkan	'pollution'	halgan	'devoting'
dimma	'darkness'	hartan	'reproof'
drýgsla	'long-drawn-out-ness'	herðsla	'hardness'; 'hard-frozen snow'
elta	'dough'	herman	'imitation'
eydna	'happiness'		

heystan	'harvesting'	ljóman	'sounding'
himpran	'hesitation'	ljótkan	'becoming uglier'
hinduisma	'Hinduism'	lokkan	'persuading'
hostan	'coughing'	loyna	'secret'
hoyggjan	'haymaking'	lyndska	'craftiness'; 'treachery'
hóman	'suggestion', 'hint'; 'premonition'	lýdni	'obedience'
		løðsla	'boat-loading'
hugska	'notion', 'idea' <sup>16</sup>	Madonna	'the Virgin Mary'
hundska	'insatiability'	malaria	'malaria'
hveiti	'wheat'	marra	'nightmare'
hvistan	'whistling'	marxisma	'Marxism'
hvíta	'junket'	megi	'strength'
hvæsan	'hissing'	menska	'bravery'
hyggja	'caution'	mentun	'culture'
hýggja	'type of cobweb (thought to forecast a northerly wind)'	meylan	'talking endlessly'
		mildi	'mildness'
hætta	'danger'	mildni	'mildness'
iðran	'regret'	mjólk	'milk'
iðrun	'regret'	móða	'froth, scum in a pot'
influenta	'influenza'	móra	'wet mud'
islamisma	'Islamism'	munan	'influence'
jarman	'bleating'	mura	'character'
jesan	'invocating Jesus'	mussan	'kissing'
judaisma	'Judaism'	mutlan	'mumbling'
karran	'saying karr (the sound of the guillemot)'	múnja	'red lead, against rust'
		myrra	'myrrh'
kákan	'cackling'	møði	'tiredness'
keksan	'wading in mud'	nakni	'nakedness'
kelan	'petting'	natúr	'nature'
kiman	'ringing'	naturalisma	'naturalism'
kitlan	'tickling'	neggjan	'neighing'
klíggjan	'retching'	niða	'darkness'
knakan	'creaking'	nístan	'squealing'
kvirri	'silence'	nytta	'usefulness'
leiði	'boredom'	nærkan	'approaching'
leikan	'playing'	nævur	'bark'
lekja	'cure'	orka	'energy'
leta	'idler'	óttá	'3 o'clock in the morning'
leti	'laziness'	pasta	'pasta'
lívgan	'protecting'	rásan	'hurrying'

<sup>16</sup> As in *ikki hava hugska til* 'not be in the mood for'.

reiðran	'nest-making'
reikan	'wandering'
reinskan	'cleaning'
remma	'slight taste'
rennan	'running'
reypan	'boasting'
ríkjan	'squeaking'
ringlan	'rattling'
rokan	'drifting'
rópan	'yelling'
rótan	'grabbing'
runan	'light surf in the sea'
ruran	'lulling'
rúmkan	'expanding'
røddan	'having loud voice'
sáldan	'rough sea'
sátt	'agreement'
set	'seed potato'
shintoisma	'Shintoism'
siðan	'discipline'
sikhisma	'Sikhism'
sjaggan	'performing a task with difficulty'
sjónd	'sight'
skopan	'crowding'
skotran	'crowding'
snávan	'falling'
snerkjan	'grimacing'
snorkan	'snoring'
soda	'soda'
sodnan	'digesting'
sora	'small turf'
sosialisma	'socialism'
soya	'soya'
sóknan	'searching'
speki	'wisdom'
spina	'sperm'
spjálkan	'kicking'
sprongd	'over-exertion'
spyrna	'pressure (of earth against a stone wall)'
stalinisma	'Stalinism'

staran	'staring'
stild	'quietness'
strekan	'bad wind'
strongd	'stress'
stundan	'desiring'
stygð	'shyness'
stynjan	'groaning'
suðan	'roaring'
surkklan	'gargling'
súg	'flow'
súgv	'flow'
súlta	'brawn'
súpan	'soup'
svongd	'hunger'
svølt	'hunger'
svøvnd	'sleepiness'
synjan	'refusal'
sæla	'happiness'
sældan	'rough sea'
taðan	'manuring', 'fertilising'
taoisma	'Taoism'
tága	'tough roots (in turf)'
teskan	'whispering'
tíggjan	'behaving'
tístran	'chattering'
tjóra	'tar'
tøkni	'technology'
tora	'thunder'
tosan	'talking'
troka	'trouble'
tutlan	'whispering'
tvætlan	'talking nonsense'
tvassan	'talking nonsense'
tvørran	'missing'
tykt	'discipline'
tyngd	'sleepiness'
tægan	'tearing apart'
uggan	'comforting'
undran	'wondering'
valtran	'wandering'
vasan	'romping'
vágan	'daring'

vesan	'smoking'
vild	'discretion'
vinglan	'reeling'
vissa	'certainty'
vreiði	'anger'
vænta	'expectation'
vørild	'world'

vøsa	'smoke'
vøsan	'smoking'
ymiska	'hardship'
yngd	'youth'
zoroastrianisma	'Zoroastrianism'
øði	'anger'
øvund	'envy'

### 3.6.3. Singularia tantum: Neuter

The following nouns are singularia tantum neuter. Notice the list includes many abstracts ending in *-ilsi*:

ali	'art'	brasni	'impetuosity'
anilsi	'weak light'	brenni	'firewood'
ansni	'caution'	broyti	'change'
argilsi	'indignation'	bryggj	'brew'
ánilsi	'suspicion'	bræði	'rashness'
bakali	'band (for horse)', 'crupper'	bæri	'worn, pretty cloth'
bakkulsi	'cakes', 'cookies' etc.	dánilsi	'faint'
baldur	'much wind'	deiggj	'dough'
bangilsi	'fear'	dimmi	'darkness'
bangni	'anxiety'	dirvi	'courage'
barndømi	'second childhood'; 'senility'	djevlari	'nuisance'
begynnulsi	'beginning'	dymbi	'dust'
beiski	'bitterness'	dýggj	'mud'; 'mire'
beli	'big belly'	dæmi	'complexion'
bilsi	'surprise'	dølsk(ni)	'apathy'
bindilsi	'dyspepsia'	eini	'juniper'
bindindi	'patience'	eini	'agreement'
bláilsi	'blue substance'	einki	'nothing'
blindi	'blindness'	eitur	'poison'
blindni	'blindness'	elvi	'strength'
blíðni	'kindness'	eni	'anger'
blúni	'shyness'	erkvisni	'sensitivity'
blýggj	'lead'	erni	'arrogance', 'pride'
bløði	'anger'	erpni	'arrogance', 'pride'
		etur	'ether'
		eydni	'luck'
		eystur	'east'

<b>fantílsi</b> <sup>17</sup>	'mess'; 'slovenliness', 'sloppiness'	<b>hvörvi</b>	'optical illusion'; 'hallucination'	<b>norður</b>	'north'	<b>skikk</b>	'figure, shape'
<b>fegni</b>	'happiness'	<b>hygni</b>	'thoughtfulness'	<b>nótrílsi</b>	'trembling'	<b>skundni</b>	'hurry'
<b>fiðri</b>	'feather'	<b>hýggj</b>	'mould'	<b>okur</b>	'usury'	<b>skvaldur</b>	'cackle'
<b>fími</b>	'to be athletic'	<b>hæsi</b>	'hoarseness'	<b>opsni</b>	'indiscretion'	<b>skygni</b>	'transparency'
<b>firtni</b>	'offence'	<b>hæsi</b>	'hoarseness'	<b>oyði</b>	'waste(s)'	<b>slapur</b>	'something soft and slimy'
<b>fisali</b>	'sore on heel'	<b>jaǵstur</b>	'chase', 'hunt'	<b>perlur</b>	'fine silk or satin cloth'	<b>slatur</b>	'gossip'
<b>fiskari</b>	'fishing'	<b>kaffi</b>	'coffee'	<b>piprílsi</b>	'shivering'	<b>slátur</b>	'slaughter-food'
<b>fiski</b>	'fishing'	<b>karti</b>	'sheep illness (in ear, mouth or on foot)'	<b>pírni</b>	'miserliness'	<b>slavari</b>	'slavery'
<b>fjáltur</b>	'fear'	<b>kjökur</b>	'rough sea'	<b>pjátur</b>	'chatting'	<b>sleiskni</b>	'obsequiousness'
<b>fleyggj</b>	'bird catching with a pole and net'	<b>klandur</b>	'quarrel'	<b>pjökni</b>	'care(fulness)'	<b>sleyg</b>	'gossip'
<b>flindur</b>	'bit'	<b>klemmílsi</b>	'fainting fit'	<b>polití</b>	'police'	<b>slikkari</b>	'sweets'
<b>föli</b>	'feeling'	<b>klumbur</b>	'big piece of wood'	<b>pripni</b>	'touchiness'	<b>slipur</b>	'something soft and slimy'
<b>fyrni</b>	'lying fallow'	<b>kógv</b>	'thick fog'	<b>pulvur</b>	'powder'	<b>slögv</b>	'fish waste'
<b>fýsi</b>	'eagerness'	<b>kræsni</b>	'pickiness'	<b>putur</b>	'powder'	<b>slupr</b>	'slimy mass (e.g. in a cod's head)' see: <i>slupr</i>
<b>fýsni</b>	'eagerness'	<b>kurteisi</b>	'courtesy'	<b>rakkali</b>	'seal's penis'	<b>slýggj</b>	'slime (in sea)'
<b>gæsni</b>	'restlessness'	<b>kvílkni</b>	'anxiety'	<b>rapul</b>	'crack'; 'bang'	<b>smædni</b>	'shyness'
<b>garterílsi</b>	'noise'	<b>kæti</b>	'joy'	<b>reiði</b>	'anger'	<b>smikur</b>	'flattery'
<b>gegni</b>	'capacity'	<b>køni</b>	'skill', 'knowledge'	<b>reingi</b>	'whale's penis'	<b>smoltur</b>	'liquid fat'
<b>geingi</b>	'state of the path, road'	<b>køni</b>	'skill', 'knowledge'	<b>rembi</b>	'arrogance'	<b>sögv</b>	'cackle'
<b>geispi</b>	'yawning'	<b>lammílsi</b>	'paralysis'	<b>rissali</b>	'chafing', 'soreness after riding without a saddle'	<b>sorílsi</b>	'destruction'
<b>genevur</b>	'Hollands (gin)'	<b>lammíteriílsi</b>	'noise'	<b>ristílsi</b>	'shivering'	<b>spælni</b>	'play'
<b>giti</b>	'reputation'	<b>leiur</b>	'clay'	<b>rokílsi</b>	'cloud of dust'; 'row'	<b>sparni</b>	'economy'
<b>gírni</b>	'miserliness'	<b>linkílsi</b>	'lull'	<b>royggj</b>	'peritoneum (fish)'	<b>spökjari</b>	'haunting'
<b>glítur</b>	'glitter'	<b>lóður</b>	'ammunition'	<b>roykílsi</b>	'incense'	<b>spölni</b>	'play'
<b>greiði</b>	'explanation'	<b>lóður</b>	'gunpowder'; 'welfare'	<b>ruður</b>	'gossip'	<b>spýggj</b>	'something or someone unbearable'
<b>grími</b>	'face'	<b>luktílsi</b>	'perfume'	<b>rumbul</b>	'row'; 'tough sea'	<b>stíkn</b>	'dislike, aversion'
<b>groyti</b>	'magma'	<b>lumbur</b>	'crash'	<b>rupul</b>	'rough sea'	<b>stilli</b>	'calm'
<b>hatur</b>	'hate'	<b>lúnskni</b>	'craftiness'; 'treachery'	<b>rúður</b>	'acorn barnacle'	<b>stímbul</b>	'crowd'
<b>hegni</b>	'skill'	<b>lyndi</b>	'character'	<b>rúður</b>	'piece of lace'	<b>stímbur</b>	'strength'
<b>heidni</b>	'paganism'	<b>lyndski</b>	'inclination'	<b>rúílsi</b>	'regret'	<b>stínni</b>	'strength'
<b>helvíti</b>	'hell'	<b>lýdni</b>	'obedience'	<b>rørílsi</b>	'touch'	<b>stírvni</b>	'stiffness'
<b>hepni</b>	'luck'	<b>lýsi</b>	'light'	<b>sami</b>	'agreement'	<b>strýggj</b>	'coarse hair'; 'residue from straw, hay'
<b>heskni</b>	'dislike'	<b>megi</b>	'power'	<b>seiggi</b>	'toughness'	<b>stumbul</b>	'toddlings'
<b>hilni</b>	'idea'	<b>megni</b>	'strength'	<b>semi</b>	'agreement'	<b>stúrni</b>	'dejection'
<b>hilnílsi</b>	'idea'	<b>meingi</b>	'group'	<b>sendi</b>	'whetstone'; 'grindstone'	<b>stýrílsi</b>	'government'
<b>hógv</b>	'moderation'	<b>menni</b>	'strength'	<b>signílsi</b> <sup>18</sup>	'benediction'	<b>suður</b>	'south'
<b>höpi</b>	'connection'	<b>meti</b>	'amount'	<b>silki</b>	'silks'		
<b>hungur</b>	'hunger'	<b>mutur</b>	'bribery'	<b>silvíkni</b>	'calm sea'		
<b>hvæsi</b>	'asthma'	<b>myrkur</b>	'darkness'	<b>silvítni</b>	'calm sea'		
<b>hveiti</b>	'wheat'	<b>mæli</b>	'voice'	<b>sinni</b>	'mentality'		
		<b>nakni</b>	'nakedness'	<b>sjerri</b>	'cherry'		
		<b>níkkul</b>	'nickel'				

<sup>17</sup> Especially in **einki fantílsi á** 'something that is completely mixed-up', **fantílsið á hasum!** 'what a mess!'.

<sup>18</sup> Used only in the mild curse **halga signílsi!** 'goodness!'.

sukur	'sugar'
sutur	'complaint'
svávul	'sulphur'
svimbul	'dizziness'
svímilsí	'fainting'
teiti	'joy'
tigul	'tiles'
timbur	'timber'
tólmi	'patience'
treiski	'staying power'
treiskni	'staying power'
treyst	'staying power'
treysti	'staying power'
tuktílsi	'discipline'
tvitni	'malice'
tykni	'short-temperedness'
tyrvi	'taste of wood (e.g. in milk kept in a wooden vessel)'
uggílsi	'comfort'

vælsignílsi	'blessing'
væri	'being'
vambur <sup>19</sup>	
vandni	'carefulness'
varni	'carefulness'
veður	'weather'
vendi	'turning'
vestur	'west'
víðílsi	'in the open air'
víggj	'fight'
víggj	'flyblow'
virgni	'activity'
yndi	'love'
yngul	'brood'
yvri	'anger'
æti	'plankton'
örílsi	'dizziness'
örviti	'madness'
ösi	'front part of the neck'

### 3.7. Pluralia tantum

Some nouns have no singular form, only plural. They are called pluralia tantum.

#### 3.7.1. Pluralia tantum: Masculine

Figure 35

feðgar	'father and son(s)'	slíðrar	'sheath'
harklar	'crusty dirt'	snurlar	'small whirling gust of wind'
koppar	'smallpox'	stetlingar	'children's feet'
kvörkrar	'throat'	tríningar	'three parts'
lendar	'lumbar'	tuberklar	'tuberculosis'
meslingar	'measles'	tvíningar	'two parts'
møplar	'furniture'	tössingar	'wet feet'
pengar	'money'	ýtar	'men'
rørar	'groin'		

Some of these are natural pairs: **feðgar** 'father and son(s)', **kvörkrar** 'throat', **lendar** 'lumbar', **rørar** 'groin', 'testicles', **slíðrar** 'sheath' (they were made of two parts in early times), **stetlingar** 'children's feet', **tríningar** 'three parts', **tvíningar** 'two parts', **tössingar** 'wet feet'.

<sup>19</sup> In idioms like *sita hendur í vambur* meaning 'not being lazy'.

Others are mass nouns, and occur in pairs or groups: **koppar** 'smallpox', **meslingar** 'measles', **møplar** 'furniture', **pengar** 'money', **tuberklar** 'tuberculosis'.

The noun **ýtar** 'men', is old, and only seen in the ballads.

#### 3.7.2. Pluralia tantum: Feminine

Figure 36

anir	'prospect'	kosmur	'mumps'
bríllur	'glasses'	kríllur	'being in a bad/good mood'
buksur	'trousers'	kusmur	'mumps'
dyr	'entrance'	lótir	'gestures'
faktir/fektir	'bad habits'	lundir	'fillet'
fallur	'mood'	løppur	'feet'
fillur	'something that is in pieces'	mentir	'ability'; 'culture'
fleytir	'whipped milk with rennet'	møðgur	'mother and daughter(s)'
fluggur	'strip of cloth'	páskir	'Easter'
fransósir	'syphilis'	pokur	'smallpox'
frænir	'news'	ránir/ræni <sup>21</sup>	'opportunities'
ganir	'big spikes in a cow's mouth'	røðir	'rowing gear'
grupur	'red spots'	skreytir <sup>22</sup>	'accomplishment'
gætur <sup>20</sup>	'attention'	skrópur	'imagined sickness'
halgir	'many holy days in a row'	skrúðir	'pretty clothes'
herðar	'shoulders'	slíðrar	'sheath' (also <i>m.</i> )
herklar	'crusty dirt' (see <i>harklar m.</i> )	snurringar	'stomach cramps'
hóttur	'threats'	tropur	'tropes'
keipur	'gestures'	trussur	'briefs'
kláður	'scabies'	tubbur	'tuberculosis'
		tøkur <sup>23</sup>	'count', 'number'
		tømur <sup>24</sup>	'tamelessness'
		vánir	'prospects'
		vinkir	'gestures'
		virkingar	'pains'

Natural pairs: **brøkur** 'trousers', 'breeches', **buksur** 'trousers', **dyr** 'entrance', **herðar** 'shoulders', **lundir** 'fillets', **løppur** 'feet', **møðgur** 'mother and daughter(s)', **slíðrar** 'sheath', **trussur** 'briefs'.

<sup>20</sup> In the phrase *geva onkrum gætur* 'pay attention to someone'.

<sup>21</sup> In the phrase *(ikki) fáa ránir til eitt* '(not) be able to do something'.

<sup>22</sup> In the phrase *hann ger ikki stórar skreytir* 'he does not do much'.

<sup>23</sup> Archaic. for example, *ei koma tölur á* 'uncountable'.

<sup>24</sup> In the phrase *ikki hava tomur á* 'unable to tame'; 'not master'.

### 3.7.3. Pluralia tantum: Neuter

Figure 37

Below we have listed all pluralia tantum neuter nouns in Faroese

áttur	'eight' (in card playing)	røðir	'rowing gear' (also f.)
beskeð	'message'	sannindir	'truths'
bjørg	'cliff where birds have nests'	savnindir	'documents'; 'archivalia'
eirindi	'mercy', 'leniency'	seksur	'six' (in card playing)
fimmur	'five (in card playing)'	sir	'tail fin'
foreldur	'parents'	sjeyur	'seven' (in card playing)
frættindi	'news'	skjótindir	'the veins between the lungs and the heart' (in sheep)
fýrur	'four' (in card playing)	skúrs	'frame of mind', 'mood'
gøgn	'tools'	skør	'frame of mind', 'mood'
herðindir	'hard current'	slittir	'bad sheep-skin shoes'
hjún	'husband and wife'	spør	'troubles'
hyggindi	'wisdom'	systkin	'siblings'
jól	'Christmas'	tákn	'gills'
kløtur	'impassable area'	teknindir	'graphics'
kyrrindir	'sea with no current'	tíðindir	'news'
leikindir	'wooden door-hinges'	tíggjur	'ten' (in card playing)
líkindir	'circumstances'	triur	'three' (in card playing)
lunnindir	'special rights that go with land ownership'	trøv	'shift' (one part made of linen, one part of wool)
lætir	'gestures'	tveyur	'two' (in card playing)
løg	'ford'; 'stepping stones'	týggir	'harness'
løgir	'ford'; 'stepping stones'	tøð	'slurry'
neyðindir	'having to go to the toilet'	vil	'intestine'
níggjur	'nine' (in card playing)	vísindi	'science'
nýggindi	'news'	øt	'kind of herb used to dye'
ravindir	'electronics'		cloth black
rot	'snoring'		
rættindir	'rights'		

### 3.7.4. Difference in number between English and Faroese

Some nouns have a different number in Faroese and English.

Faroese	English
<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>
møplar	'furniture'
upplýsingar	'information'
pengar	'money'
Faroese	English
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
innihald	'contents'
løn	'wages'
miðöld	'Middle Ages'
ríkidømi	'riches'
spiritus	'spirits'
tollur	'customs'

And many words in *-ikk ~ -ics*

Here we find *phonetics* and *politics*, but they are used as singular in English, *politics is...*

Faroese	English
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
fonetikk	'phonetics'
politikkur	'politics'
Faroese	English
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural, a pair of</i>
saksur	'pair of scissors'
pinsett	'pair of tweezers'

Note also the following:

Faroese	English
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
skulu vit skifta um pláss?	'shall we swap places?'
tey broyttu meining	'they changed their minds'
tey lótu seg í frakkan og fóru	'they put on their coats and left'

The construction 'one of the most':

**Hon er ein tann / hin vakrasta gentan eg kenni**  
 'She is one of the most beautiful girls I know'

With some numerical constructions:

Faroese	English
<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
hálvannað ár	'one and a half years'
tvær og ein hálv vika	'two and a half weeks'
í 14. og 15. öld	'in the 14 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> centuries'

## 4. Adjectives

Adjectives say something about the noun or pronoun they modify. A car might not just be a car, but a *red* car. A house might not just be a house, but a *big* or *small* house. I might be *short* and you might be *tall*. Adjectives have:

- Three cases (nominative, accusative, dative)
- Two numbers (singular, plural)
- Three genders (masculine, feminine, neuter)
- Definiteness (indefinite, definite)
- Comparison (positive, comparative, superlative)

Adjectives inflect for gender in Faroese as in the following example, where the form of the adjective changes between masculine, feminine and neuter.

The adjectives in the figure below are indefinite (or strong) with the indefinite article **ein** 'a' in front of the adjective. Note that **ein** 'a' is also inflected.

Figure 38

Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
<b>ein stórir maður</b>	<b>ein stór kona</b>	<b>eitt stórt barn</b>
a big man	a big woman	a big child

The noun **maður** is masculine, and the corresponding adjective **stórir** 'big' and the indefinite article **ein** are also masculine. The noun **kona** 'woman' is feminine, so its accompanying adjective has the feminine form **stór**, and the indefinite pronoun is also feminine **ein**. The noun **barn** 'child' is neuter, hence the form of the adjective **stórt** and the indefinite pronoun **eitt**. All the adjectives are in the nominative, singular, indefinite and in the positive, and they all agree accordingly with the noun they modify.

Adjectives like nouns have three different forms for the cases and they inflect for singular and plural. We will not include the genitive in the declension of adjectives, as it is not used in modern Faroese, except in compounds like **sjúk-ra-hús** (lit.: 'sick-house [house of the sick]'), 'hospital'.

Figure 39

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>stórir maður</b>	<b>stór kona</b>	<b>stórt barn</b>
Acc.	<b>stóran mann</b>	<b>stóra konu</b>	<b>stórt barn</b>
Dat.	<b>stórum manni</b>	<b>stórari konu</b>	<b>stórum barni</b>

Pl.			
Nom.	<b>stórir menn</b>	<b>stórar konur</b>	<b>stór børn</b>
Acc.	<b>stórar menn</b>	<b>stórar konur</b>	<b>stór børn</b>
Dat.	<b>stórum monnum</b>	<b>stórum konum</b>	<b>stórum børnum</b>

Note that the form of the dative plural is the same in all three genders.

- The dative plural of indefinite adjectives always ends in **-um**: **stórum**.
- Nominative singular feminine and nominative and accusative neuter plural always have the same form for indefinite adjectives: **stór**.

There is a difference in English between 'a big man' and 'the big man'. The difference is not formal, but in the meaning. The phrase 'a big man' does not refer to a particular big man, as 'the big man' does. The difference is that the former is indefinite, the latter definite:

<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>Definite</u>
a big man	the big man

Faroese distinguishes between the indefinite and definite declension of adjectives in a specific way, with the definite articles **tann** and **tað** 'the' + the definite declension of the adjective + the definite suffix in the noun declension. The definite declension is shown in detail in §4.2. *Definite*. We will here just look at the nominative forms.

Figure 40

<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Neuter</u>
<b>tann reyði bilurin</b>	<b>tann reyða hurðin</b>	<b>tað reyða skipið</b>

In addition to this, adjectives have different grades or degrees. A man might not just be big, but he might be or appear bigger than the man standing next to him. When comparing like this, the comparative is used. If the man is the biggest man you have ever seen, you use the superlative.

Figure 41

<u>Positive</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
<b>stórir</b>	<b>størri</b>	<b>størstur</b>
big	bigger	biggest
<b>fittur</b>	<b>fittari</b>	<b>fittastur</b>
nice	nicer	nicest

Note the similarity in form between Faroese and English in the comparative and the superlative. The forms **-ari** and **-ri** will be explained below.

A gradation form of an adjective can also be declined for gender, case, number and definiteness, for example **tann dýrasti bilurin** 'the most expensive car', **teir dýrastu bilarnir** 'the most expensive cars' or **ein dýrari bilur** 'a more expensive car', **tveir dýrari bilar** 'two more expensive cars'. See more under §4.8.

#### 4.1. Indefinite (strong) and definite (weak)

Adjectives in Faroese are declined as either indefinite or definite:

<i>Indefinite:</i>	<b>ein stórir maður</b>	'a big man'
<i>Definite:</i>	<b>tann stóri maðurin</b>	'the big man'

In traditional grammars, the indefinite adjective declension is referred to as the strong declension and the definite adjective declension as the weak declension.

There is a difference in structure between Faroese and English in the definite phrase **tann stóri maðurin** 'the big man'. As a rule Faroese has the definite article **tann** 'the' + adjective in the definite declension: **stóri** (the indefinite form is **stórir**) + the definite article attached to the end of the noun **maðurin** (lit. 'man-the'). The Faroese phrase can be dissected to mean 'the big-[the] man-the'. The use of a definite article before and after the noun is called double definition.

Ideally, we use indefinite forms of an adjective, when speaking about something, which is not mentioned or which is unknown in the discourse, and when we continue talking about it, we use the definite form of the adjective.

- (1) **Ein fitt kona gongur á vegnum. Nú gongur tann fitta konan fram við mær**  
'A nice woman is walking on the road. Now the nice woman is walking past me'

In the following we will first introduce the different classes of the definite adjectives and then proceed to the indefinite declensions, before showing how to compare adjectives.

Definite adjectives end in a vowel, either **-i**, **-u** or **-a**. Note the cases where an **a** or **æ** in the root of the adjective shifts to **ø** (or **o**) – the so-called u-umlaut which is described in more detail in §14.2.3.

The stem of a weak adjective is found by removing the ending **-an** of the accusative singular form of the indefinite masculine adjective.

STRONG/INDEFINITE DECLENSION	ADJECTIVE STEM	WEAK MASCULINE
<b>MASCULINE, ACCUSATIVE:</b>		
spak-an	spak-	spak-i 'tame'
blá-an	blá-	blái-i 'blue'
vakr-an	vakr-	vakr-i 'pretty'
gaml-an	gaml-	gaml-i 'old'
fegn-an	fegn-	fegn-i 'happy'
modn-an	modn-	modn-i 'mouldy'
bitn-an	bitn-	bitn-i 'bitten'
bún-an	bún-	bún-i 'mature'

#### 4.1. Definite inflection

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	spaki	spaka	spaka
Acc.	spaka	spøku	spaka
Dat.	spaka	spøku	spaka
Pl.			
Nom.	spøku	spøku	spøku
Acc.	spøku	spøku	spøku
Dat.	spøku	spøku	spøku

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	blái	bláa	bláa
Acc.	bláa	bláu	bláa
Dat.	bláa	bláu	bláa
Pl.			
Nom.	bláu	bláu	bláu
Acc.	bláu	bláu	bláu
Dat.	bláu	bláu	bláu

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	vakri	vakra	vakra
Acc.	vakra	vøkru	vakra
Dat.	vakra	vøkru	vakra
Pl.			
Nom.	vøkru	vøkru	vøkru
Acc.	vøkru	vøkru	vøkru
Dat.	vøkru	vøkru	vøkru

#### 4.2.1. The use of definite (or weak) forms of adjectives

The definite (or weak) forms of the adjectives are used:

- After the definite article (unstressed **tann** and **hin** 'the'):
  - tann reyði bilurin** 'the red car'
  - hin gamla konan** 'the old woman'
  - tað stóra barnið** 'the big child'
- After the demonstrative pronouns (stressed **tann** and others):
  - tann reyði bilurin** 'this red car'
  - hasin sterki maðurin** 'that strong man'
  - henda stóra konan** 'this big woman'
  - tey dýru londini** 'those expensive countries'
- After the possessive pronouns (**mín** 'mine', **tín** 'your', **hansara** 'his' etc.):
  - mín svartá ketta** 'my black cat'
  - hennara nýggi bilur** 'her new car'
  - okkara fagra land** 'our beautiful country'
  - hansara vakra kona** 'his beautiful wife'
- In set expressions:
  - føroyska málið** 'the Faroese language'
  - almenna hugsanin** 'public opinion'
- Before or after a personal name (personal names can be considered definite):
  - góði Jógvan** 'dear/good Jógvan'
  - Eirikur Reyði** 'Erik the Red'
  - kæra Lena** 'dear Lena'

In all other cases, the indefinite ('strong') declension of adjectives is used.

#### 4.3. Indefinite inflection

There are four classes of adjectives in Faroese. The classes are:

1. Adjectives with stem final consonant: **stórur** (**stór-**) 'big'
2. Adjectives with stem final vowel: **bláur** (**blá-**) 'blue', **reyður** (**reyð-**) 'red', and adjectives with *skerping*: **nýggjur** (**nýggi-**) 'new'
3. Adjectives with radical -r, -l: **vakur** (**vakr-**) 'pretty', **gamal** (**gaml-**) 'old'.
4. Adjectives with stem final -n: **búgvín** (**búg-**) 'mature'.

It is important to note that -ð (and -g) word finally are not pronounced – that is why **reyð-ur** 'red' is grouped together with adjectives with stem final vowel, for example **bláur** 'blue'. The reason for grouping **nýggjur** 'new' together with **bláur** 'blue', is because these



adjectives have **-tt** in the nominative, accusative singular neuter, as does **blátt** 'blue' ~ **nýtt** 'new' compared with a single **-t** in the neuter in for example **stórt** 'big'. Historically, the stems of adjectives ending in **-ggj** ended in a vowel (cf. ON **nýr** 'new' with stem **ný-**).

#### 4.3.1. First class

The adjectives belonging to this class have stems that end in a consonant: **stór-**, and **-t** in the nominative and accusative neuter. If the stem contains **a** or **æ** in the root, then these vowels change to **ø** in front **u** in the suffix in the dative singular and plural, the feminine nominative singular, and neuter nominative and accusative plural. If this **a** (or **æ**) stands in front of a nasal consonant (**m** or **n**), it changes to **o** (cf. **langur** : **long**, **longum**).

A rule of thumb: Nominative and accusative neuter plural is always the same as nominative singular feminine. Here are the indefinite forms of the adjectives **stórir** 'big', **spakur** 'tame' and **langur** 'long':

Figure 42

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	stórir	stórir	stórt
Acc.	stóran	stóra	stórt
Dat.	stórum	stórari	stórum
Pl.			
Nom.	stórir	stórar	stór
Acc.	stórar	stórar	stór
Dat.	stórum	stórum	stórum
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	spakur	spøk	spakt
Acc.	spakan	spaka	spakt
Dat.	spøkum	spakari	spøkum
Pl.			
Nom.	spakir	spakar	spøk
Acc.	spakar	spakar	spøk
Dat.	spøkum	spøkum	spøkum
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	langur	long	langt
Acc.	langan	langa	langt
Dat.	longum	langari	longum

Pl.			
Nom.	langir	langar	long
Acc.	langar	langar	long
Dat.	longum	longum	longum

In spoken Faroese, and also sometimes in the written language, you may find forms without the u-umlaut: **langum**, **lang** and **spakum**, **spak**.

#### 4.3.2. Second class

The adjectives which belong to this class end in a stem final vowel: **blá-**, **reyð-**. The suffix in the nominative, accusative neuter is **-tt**. Note that **-ð** and **-g** are never pronounced between vowels and word finally, so that **reyð-** actually ends in a vowel sound /ɛi:j/. Adjectives with *skerping* (**-ggj**, **-gv**) might be grouped here (or in a class by themselves), but since they take **-tt** in the nominative and accusative neuter, like adjectives that end in a vowel, they have been grouped here. Here are the indefinite forms of the adjectives **bláur** 'blue', **reyður** 'red' and **nýggjur** 'new':

Figure 43

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	bláur	blá	blátt
Acc.	bláan	bláa	blátt
Dat.	bláum	blári	bláum
Pl.			
Nom.	bláir	bláar	blá
Acc.	bláar	bláar	blá
Dat.	bláum	bláum	bláum
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	reyður	reyð	reytt
Acc.	reyðan	reyða	reytt
Dat.	reyðum	reyðari	reyðum
Pl.			
Nom.	reyðir	reyðar	reyð
Acc.	reyðar	reyðar	reyð
Dat.	reyðum	reyðum	reyðum
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	nýggjur	nýggj	nýtt

Acc.	nýggjan	nýggja	nýtt
Dat.	nýggjum	nýggjari	nýggjum
Pl.			
Nom.	nýggir	nýggjar	nýggj
Acc.	nýggjar	nýggjar	nýggj
Dat.	nýggjum	nýggjum	nýggjum

Note that *ð* + *tt* becomes *tt* (*reyð*- + *-tt* > *reytt*).

#### 4.3.3. Third class

The adjectives belonging to this class have radical *-r* or *-l*. The *-r* and *-l* become part of the root when the ending begins in a vowel. Here are the indefinite forms of the adjectives *vakur* 'pretty' and *gamal* 'old':

Figure 44

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	vakur	vøkur	vakurt
Acc.	vakran	vakra	vakurt
Dat.	vøkrum	vakrari	vøkrum
Pl.			
Nom.	vakrir	vakrar	vøkur
Acc.	vakrar	vakrar	vøkur
Dat.	vøkrum	vøkrum	vøkrum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	gamal	gomul	gamalt
Acc.	gamlan	gamla	gamalt
Dat.	golum	gamlari	golum
Pl.			
Nom.	gamlir	gamlar	gomul
Acc.	gamlar	gamlar	gomul
Dat.	golum	golum	golum

The rule is that when the ending begins with a vowel, the vowel before the *-r* and *-l* is dropped, and the *-r* and *-l* become part of the root: *vakur* but *vakr-an*, and *gamal* but *gaml-ir*, and so on.

The adjective *lítill* 'small' is declined like *gamal* 'old', but it has *-ið* in the nominative and accusative neuter singular: *lítíð*.

#### 4.3.4. Fourth class

The adjectives, which belong to this class end in *-n* in the nominative masculine and feminine, and in *-ið* in the neuter. Note that the word final *-n* is radical in this class. Note also that before another consonant written *g* is pronounced as [g] and *ð* as [d]: *fegin* [fe:jin] and *fegnan* [fegnan] and *moðin* [mo:jin] : *modnan* [mødnan]. Here are the indefinite forms of the adjectives *fegin* 'happy', *moðin* 'mouldy', *bitin* 'bitten', *búgvín* 'mature' and *grógvín* 'grown':

Figure 45

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	fegin	fegin	fegið
Acc.	fegnan	fegna	fegið
Dat.	fegnum	fegnari	fegnum
Pl.			
Nom.	fegnir	fegnar	fegin
Acc.	fegnar	fegnar	fegin
Dat.	fegnum	fegnum	fegnum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	moðin	moðin	moðið
Acc.	modnan	modna	moðið
Dat.	modnum	modnari	modnum
Pl.			
Nom.	modnir	modnar	moðin
Acc.	modnar	modnar	moðin
Dat.	modnum	modnum	modnum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	bitin	bitin	bitið
Acc.	bitnan	bitna	bitið
Dat.	bitnum	bitnari	bitnum
Pl.			
Nom.	bitnir	bitnar	bitin
Acc.	bitnar	bitnar	bitin
Dat.	bitnum	bitnum	bitnum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	búgvín	búgvín	búgvíð
Acc.	búnan	búna	búgvíð
Dat.	búnum	búnari	búnum
Pl.			
Nom.	búnir	búnar	búgvín
Acc.	búnar	búnar	búgvín
Dat.	búnum	búnum	búnum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	grógvín	grógvín	grógvíð
Acc.	grónan	gróna	grógvíð
Dat.	grónum	grónari	grónum
Pl.			
Nom.	grónir	grónar	grógvín
Acc.	grónar	grónar	grógvín
Dat.	grónum	grónum	grónum

Note that **bitin** 'bitten' is past participle of the strong verb **bíta** 'to bite'. Past participles of strong verbs decline like **bitin** above. In the case of **búgvín** 'ready' and **grógvín** 'grown' it is important to note that **-gv** is deleted in front of the **-n**, which becomes part of the root (and the rule is, that we never have **-gv** in front of a consonant: **grógv-n-an** ⇒ **grón-an**). Historically, the reason is that **-gv** was never inserted in front of a consonant. Compare also for example the declination of a noun like **kúgv** 'cow', and the accusative singular definite form **kúnna** 'the cow'.

#### 4.3.5. Summary table

The table below may be useful for reference:

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	
Sg.	Nom.	____-ur (/l/n/r)	<u>u-uml.</u> -Ø	____-t/(tt/ð)
	Acc.	____-an	____-a	____-t/(tt/ð)
	Dat.	<u>u-uml.</u> -um	____-ari	<u>u-uml.</u> -um
Pl.	Nom.	____-ir	____-ar	<u>u-uml.</u> -Ø(/l/n/r)
	Acc.	____-ar	____-ar	<u>u-uml.</u> -Ø(/l/n/r)
	Dat.	<u>u-uml.</u> -um	<u>u-uml.</u> -um	<u>u-uml.</u> -um

#### 4.4. Adjectival nouns

Adjectives can be used as nouns in the following cases:

1. When a noun is omitted in order to avoid repetition
2. When a noun is merely understood
3. Independent use with no noun understood

##### Add. 1: Omitted nouns:

- (1a) **Elin vil hava ein franskan bil, heldur enn ein japanskan (bil)**  
'Elin wants a French car, rather than a Japanese'
- (1b) **Elin vil hava ein lítlan (bil), heldur enn ein stóran bil**  
'Elin wants a small, rather than a big car'
- (1c) **Bilur hennara er gamal, so hon vil hava ein nýggjan (bil)**  
'Her car is old, so she wants a new one'
- (1d) **Áhugað kunnu venda sær til Jónatan**  
'Interested (people) can turn to Jónatan'

##### Add. 2: A noun is implied:

- (2a) **Gamli kemur skjótt heim, so vit mugu vaska up**  
old[-the] comes home soon, so we must wash up  
'My old man is coming home soon, so we have to do the dishes'
- (2b) **Sum ung arbeiddi hon í Keypmannahavn**  
as young worked she in Copenhagen  
'As a young woman she worked in Copenhagen'
- (2c) **Hann fór tjúgu ára gamal til Íslands**  
he went twenty years old to Iceland  
'He went as a twenty-year-old man to Iceland'

##### Add. 3: Independent use with no noun understood

- (3a) **Valið stóð ímillum gott ella ónt**  
choice-the stood between good or bad  
'The choice was between good or evil'

Faroese uses adjectival nouns in the definite plural in much the same way as English, largely to describe people:

Faroese	English
tey arbeiðsleysu	the unemployed
tey fátæku	the poor
tey ríku	the rich
tey sjúku	the sick
tey særðu	the wounded

In the examples below we have indefinite adjectives. They describe people and can be used in this sense only:

- (4a) **Fremmand kunnu venda sær til...**  
'Strangers can turn to...'
- (4b) **Har vóru hvørki livandi ella deyð**  
'There were neither the quick nor the dead'
- (4c) **Ferðandi verða biðin um at...**  
'Travellers are asked to...'
- (4d) **Tað kostar 50 krónur fyri vaksín, 20 fyri børn**  
'It costs 50 krónur for adults, 20 for children'

In some cases Faroese uses the definite neuter singular, as in: **gera sítt besta** 'do one's best', **tað er tað góða við honum** 'that is the fine thing about him'.

In many cases we see that Faroese has a definite adjectival noun, where English has a common noun:

	Faroese	English
(5a)	Tey <b>dannaðu</b>	the educated people
(5b)	Hin/ <b>tann dømði</b>	the convicted person
(5c)	Hin/ <b>tann myrði</b>	the murdered victim
(5d)	Hin/ <b>tann sakleysi</b>	the innocent person
(5e)	Tey <b>kongaligu</b>	the Royals
(5f)	Tey <b>grønu</b>	the Greens
(5g)	Tey <b>konservativu</b>	the Conservatives
(5h)	Tey <b>kristnu</b>	the Christians

In some cases an adjectival noun in Faroese corresponds to an abstract noun in English, as in **tað býtta** 'inadvisability', **tað neyðuga** 'necessity'.

## Comparison

There are two ways of forming the comparative in Faroese.

	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Type 1		-ar-	-ast-
Type 2		-r-	-st

- (1a) **Snar er vakur, Flekk er vakrari, men Conchita er vakrast**  
'Snar is pretty, Flekk is prettier, but Conchita is prettiest'
- (1b) **Snar er stórir, Flekk er størri, men Conchita er størst**  
'Snar is big, Flekk is bigger, but Conchita is biggest'

Type two adjectives are less common than type one and they also have vowel alternation. They are:

Figure 46

	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
'few'	fáur	færri	fæstur
'full'; 'drunk'	fullur	fylri	fylstur
'high'	høgur	hægri	hægstur
'low'	lágur	lægri	lægstur
'long'	langur	longri	longstur
'big'	stórir	størri	størstur
'short'	stuttur	stytttri	styttstur
'narrow'	trongur	tregri	tregstur

### 4.5. Suppletive comparison

In a few adjectives the stem in the positive is not the same as in the comparative and superlative. This is called suppletive comparison, and it is found in the following adjectives:

	Positive	Comparative	Superlative
'old'	gamal	eldri	elstur
'good'	góður	betri	bestur
'bad'	illur	verri	verstur
'bad'	ringur	verri	verstur
'bad'	óndur	verri	verstur
'small'	lítill	minni	minstur
'many'	mangur	fleiri	flestur
'much'	nógvur	meiri	mestur
'much'	mikil	meiri	mestur

#### 4.6. Incomplete comparison

When adjectives lack the positive form, the comparison is incomplete, as in the following cases:

Comparative	Superlative
aftari 'further back'	aftastur 'furthest back'
eystari 'further east'	eystastur 'furthest east'
fyrri 'former'	fyrstur 'first (of two)'
fremri 'further to the front'	fremstur 'furthest to the front'
handari 'further away from'	handastur 'furthest away from'
heimari 'closer to home'	heimastur 'closest to home'
higari 'nearer'	higastur 'nearest'
innari 'inner'	innastur 'innermost'
niðari 'further down'	niðastur 'furthest down'
norðari 'further north'	norðastur 'furthest north'
nærri 'closer'	næstur 'closest'
ovari 'higher up'	ovastur 'highest up'
sunnari / syðri 'further south'	sunnastur/syðstur 'furthest south'
vestari 'further west'	vestastur 'furthest west'
uttari / ytri 'outer'	uttastur / ytstur 'outermost'

#### 4.7. Comparison with *meira/meiri* and *mest*

Faroese has a periphrastic way of expressing comparison, like in English, by using *meira/meiri* 'more' and *mest* 'most'. It is used in the comparison of present participles, of some indeclinable adjectives and of many foreign adjectives. This way of expressing comparison is also spreading in the colloquial language at the expense of the regular comparison, possibly due to English or Danish influence, or a drift where the language changes from a synthetic language to an analytic language (see the overview of Faroese grammar at the beginning of the book).

##### Present Participle:

Tann meira hóskandi spurningurin  
'The more appropriate question'

Tann mest hóskandi spurningurin  
'The most appropriate question'

##### Indeclinable Adjectives:

- (1) **Hetta er meira fyríbils enn støðugt**  
'This is more temporary than permanent'

##### Loans:

(2a) **Jóhanna er meira sjalu enn Elin**  
'Jóhanna is more jealous than Elin'

(2b) **Bjöll er mest sjalu**  
'Bjöll is most jealous'

##### Colloquial use:

(3a) **Jóhan er mest keðiligur sum lærari**  
'Jóhan is most boring as a teacher'

Instead of:

(3b) **Jóhan er keðiligastur sum lærari**

(4a) **Hesin bilurin er meira reyður enn tín**  
'This car is redder than yours'

Instead of:

(4b) **Hesin bilurin er reyðari enn tín**

#### 4.8. Inflection

The definite comparative is inflected as a definite (or weak) adjective:

Figure 47

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'more expensive'		
Sg.			
Nom.	dýrari	dýrara	dýrara
Acc.	dýrara	dýraru	dýrara
Dat.	dýrara	dýraru	dýrara
Pl.			
Nom.	dýraru	dýraru	dýraru
Acc.	dýraru	dýraru	dýraru
Dat.	dýraru	dýraru	dýraru

For example:

- (1a) **Tann vakrari hundurin**  
'The prettier dog'
- (1b) **Hansara vakrara dóttir**  
'His prettier daughter'
- (1c) **Tey vakraru skipini**  
'The prettier ships'

The indefinite comparative is, however, indeclinable. The form is always **-ari**. In the sentences below **hundur** 'dog' is masculine, **genta** 'girl' is feminine and **skip** 'ship' is neuter. The comparative always has the same form **vakrari** 'prettier'.

- (2a) **Hetta er ein vakur hundur, men hasin er vakrari**  
'This is a pretty dog, but that one is prettier'
- (2b) **Hetta er ein vøkur genta, men handan er vakrari**  
'This is a pretty girl, but that one is prettier'
- (2c) **Hetta er eitt vakurt skip, men hatta er vakrari**  
'This is a pretty ship, but that one is prettier'

Examples with the superlative are below:

Figure 48

M. sg.:	Hann er <b>vakrastur</b> 'He is prettiest'
M. pl:	Teir eru <b>vakrastir</b> 'They are prettiest'
F. sg.:	Hon er <b>vakrast</b> 'She is prettiest'
F. pl.:	Tær eru <b>vakrastar</b> 'They are prettiest'
Nom. sg.:	Tað er <b>vakrast</b> 'It is prettiest'
Nom. pl.:	Tey eru <b>vakrast</b> 'They are prettiest'

When the superlative is definite (or weak), it is inflected like a definite adjective, ending in a vowel in all cases:

Figure 49

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'most expensive'		
Sg.			
Nom.	dýrasti	dýrasta	dýrasta
Acc.	dýrasta	dýrastu	dýrasta
Dat.	dýrasta	dýrastu	dýrasta
Pl.			
Nom.	dýrastu	dýrastu	dýrastu
Acc.	dýrastu	dýrastu	dýrastu
Dat.	dýrastu	dýrastu	dýrastu

Examples are:

- (3a) **Hatta er tann dýrasti kjólin í handlinum**  
'That is the most expensive dress in the store'
- (3b) **Jóhan elskar ta vakrastu gentuna í býnum**  
'Jóhan loves the prettiest girl in town'
- (3c) **Vit keyptu tað bíligasta teið**  
'We bought the cheapest tea'
- (3d) **Við teimum størstu bilunum koyrdu tey yvir Sahara**  
'With the biggest car they drove through the Sahara'

#### 4.8.1. 'One of the most...'

An important construction in Faroese with the superlative meaning 'one of the most...' is:

indef. art. + def. art. sg. + superlative (weak decl.) [+ noun def. sg.]

For example:

- (4a) **Meksikobýur er ein tann størsti býurin í heiminum**  
'Mexico City is one of the biggest cities in the world'
- (4b) **Hattar er eitt tað fittasta, eg havi hoyrt!**  
'That's one of the nicest things I've ever heard!'

- (4c) **Hann ætlar sær at gera SVF til eina ta best umtóktu rásina í Evropu**  
'He plans to make SVF one of the most popular TV channels in Europe'

#### 4.8.2. Uptoner prefix *allar-*

There is a prefix *allar-*, which has the meaning 'very, by far, of all', as in the following sentences:

- (5a) **London er tann allarstørsti býurin í Onglandi**  
'London is by far the biggest city in England'
- (5b) **Hann er tann allarringasti forsetin nakrantíð**  
'He is by far the worst president ever'

#### 4.9. Indeclinable adjectives

Some adjectives are indeclinable – they cannot be inflected. There is a large group with the suffix *-andi* (usually from present participles) and also some loanwords. Cf. the examples below:

- (1a) **Per er tað mest ótolandi barnið, sum eg kenni**  
'Per is the most intolerable child that I know of'
- (1b) **Hon er tann mest ótolandi gentan í klassanum**  
'She is the most intolerable girl in the class'
- (1c) **Tey eru meira ótolandi enn grannarnir**  
'They are more intolerable than the neighbours'

Adjectives ending in *-andi* are always indeclinable. In addition, the following adjectives are indeclinable: *alskyns* 'of different kind', *almanna* 'official', *avrak* 'very thin', *beinleiðis* 'direct', *bráðfeingis* 'temporary', *darrarak* 'skinny', *deyðarak* 'skinny', *diddarak* 'skinny', *eins* 'same', *einskyns* 'some', *felags* 'common', *fullvegis* 'completely', *hampa* 'nice', *hálsrak* 'lean around the neck', *(ikki) hissini* 'not so little', *horarak* 'skinny', *hunda* 'bad', *hundans* 'darned', 'wretched', *hundraðtals* 'in the hundreds', *innangarða* 'inside the fence', *innvortis* 'inside', *ísakaldahor* 'skinny', *ísakaldarak* 'skinny', *ísarak* 'skinny', *kaldarak* 'skinny', *karrak* 'skinny', *lorta* 'bad', *lúsa* 'bad', *neyðara* 'poor', *neyðar(s)* 'poor', *nýmótans* 'modern', *ordans* 'colossal', *oyðini* 'deserted', *óbeinleiðis* 'indirect', *ófanta* 'bad', *ókeypis* 'free (of charge)', *ólukku* 'poor', *ósams* 'not agree', *óvanda* 'poor', *parrak* 'skinny', *patt* 'unable to make a move (in chess)', *rak* 'lean', *sankta* 'holy', *santa* 'holy', *skirv* 'bad', 'decrepit', *skitta* 'shitty', 'wretched', *skít* 'drunk', *smávegis* 'a little', *snorarak* 'skinny', *spræn* 'very', *stak* 'excellent', *stórhendis* 'much', *stórvegis* 'much', *tilfriðs* 'satisfied', *tjóva* 'bad', *úss* 'decrepit', *vanlukku* 'bad', *vána* 'bad', *villini* 'wild'.

Further example:

- (2a) **Tað var ein góður, gamaldags filmur**  
'That was a good, old-fashioned film'
- (2b) **Er tú tilfriðs nú?**  
'Are you satisfied now?'
- (2c) **Eg hati nýmótans, lorta popptónleik**  
'I hate modern bad pop-music'
- (2d) **Tað komu hundraðtals børn til konsertina**  
'Hundreds of children came to the concert'

## 5. Numerals

Numerals can be divided into cardinal numbers and ordinal numbers. Cardinal numbers are ones like English 'one', 'two' and 'three' corresponding to Faroese **eitt**, **tvey** and **trý**, while ordinal numbers are ones like English 'first', 'second' and 'third' corresponding to Faroese **fyrsti**, **annar** and **triði**.

Due to influence from Danish, in numbers above 20 the unit comes first, then the ten, joined together by **og** ('and'); for example 35 **fimm og tretivu** is constructed in the same way as Danish **femogtredive** ('five-and-thirty'). Several other European languages have a similar system; for example, German **fünfunddreißig**, Dutch **vijfendertig**, and Slovene **petintrideset**.

### 5.1. Cardinal numbers

1	<b>eitt</b>	50	<b>hálvtrýss</b>
2	<b>tvey</b>	60	<b>trýss</b>
3	<b>trý</b>	70	<b>hálvfjerðs</b>
4	<b>fýra</b>	80	<b>fýrs</b>
5	<b>fimm</b>	90	<b>hálvfems</b>
6	<b>seks</b>	100	<b>hundrað</b>
7	<b>sjey</b>	21	<b>ein og tjúgu</b>
8	<b>átta</b>	32	<b>tvey og tretivu</b>
9	<b>níggju</b>	43	<b>trý og fjørutu</b>
10	<b>tíggju</b>	54	<b>fýra og hálvtrýss</b>
11	<b>ellivu</b>	65	<b>fimm og trýss</b>
12	<b>tólv</b>	76	<b>seks og hálvfjerðs</b>
13	<b>trettan</b>	87	<b>sjey og fýrs</b>
14	<b>fjórthan</b>	98	<b>átta og hálvfems</b>
15	<b>fimtan</b>	109	<b>hundrað og níggju</b>
16	<b>sekstan</b>	210	<b>tvey hundrað og tíggju</b>
17	<b>seytjan</b>	1000	<b>túsund</b>
18	<b>átjan</b>	1100	<b>ellivuhundrað</b>
19	<b>nítjan</b>	2000	<b>tveytúsund</b>
20	<b>tjúgu</b>	100.000	<b>hundrað túsund</b>
30	<b>tretivu</b>	1.000.000	<b>ein millión</b>
40	<b>fjørutu</b>		

The number system in Faroese is borrowed mainly from Danish, and it is this system we will use in this book and recommend people use, as it is the only number system that is used in colloquial Faroese. When writing cheques and the like, a decimal system is used. This 'resurrected' system is also promoted by language purists, but has not caught on in colloquial Faroese:

	Colloquial Speech	Writing
30	<b>tretivu</b>	<b>triáti</b>
40	<b>fjørutu</b>	<b>fjørutu</b>
50	<b>hálvtrýss</b>	<b>fimmti</b>
60	<b>trýss</b>	<b>seksti</b>
70	<b>hálvfjerðs</b>	<b>sjeyti</b>
80	<b>fýrs</b>	<b>áttati</b>
90	<b>hálvfems</b>	<b>níti</b>
21	<b>ein og tjúgu</b>	<b>tjúguein</b>
32	<b>tvey og tretivu</b>	<b>triátitvey</b>
43	<b>trý og fjørutu</b>	<b>fýratitry</b>
54	<b>fýra og hálvtrýss</b>	<b>fimmtifýra</b>
65	<b>fimm og trýss</b>	<b>seksfimm</b>
76	<b>seks og hálvfjerðs</b>	<b>sjeytiseks</b>
87	<b>sjey og fýrs</b>	<b>áttatisjey</b>
98	<b>átta og hálvfems</b>	<b>nítiáttu</b>

Another way of expressing 50, 60, 70, 80 and 90 is described below. It may still be heard in colloquial speech, but it is rather old-fashioned and not the usual way of expressing these numbers.

	Colloquial Speech	'Older' forms	Structure / Lit.
50	<b>hálvtrýss</b>	<b>hálvtrýssinstjúgu</b>	2½ x 20
60	<b>trýss</b>	<b>trýssinstjúgu</b>	3 x 20
70	<b>hálvfjerðs</b>	<b>hálvfjerðsinstjúgu</b>	3½ x 20
80	<b>fýrs</b>	<b>fýrsinstjúgu</b>	4 x 20
90	<b>hálvfems</b>	<b>hálvfemsinstjúgu</b>	4½ x 20
78	<b>átta og hálvfjerðs</b>	<b>átta og hálvfjerðsinstjúgu</b>	8 + (3½ x 20)

The numerals **eitt**, **tvey** and **trý** inflect for:

- Gender: **ein bilur** *m.*, **ein hurð** *f.*, **eitt skip** *n.*  
one car      one door      one ship
- Case: **ein bilur**      **ein hurð**      **eitt skip** (nom.)  
**Eg síggi ein bil / eina hurð / eitt skip** (acc.)  
'I see one car / door / ship (acc.)'

...við einum bili / á einari hurð / við einum skipi  
'...with one car/on one door/with one ship (dat.)'



	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	ein	ein	eitt
Acc.	ein	eina	eitt
Dat.	einum	einari	einum
'Pair forms':			
Nom.	einir	einar	eini
Acc.	einar	einar	eini
Dat.	einum	einum	einum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	tveir	tvær	tvey
Acc.	tveir	tvær	tvey
Dat.	tveimum	tveimum	tveimum
'Pair forms':			
Nom.	tvinnir	tvinnar	tvinni
Acc.	tvinnar	tvinnar	tvinni
Dat.	tvinum	tvinum	tvinum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	tríggir	tríggjar	trý
Acc.	tríggjar	tríggjar	trý
Dat.	trimum	trimum	trimum
'Pair forms':			
Nom.	trinnir	trinnar	trinni
Acc.	trinnar	trinnar	trini
Dat.	trinnum	trinnum	trinnum

Note that **einir** is used for 'one pair', **tvinnir** for 'two pairs', and **trinnir** for 'three pairs':

(1a) **Ein sokkur liggur á gólvinum**

'One sock is lying on the floor'

(1b) **Einir sokkar liggja á gólvinum**

'A pair of socks is lying on the floor'

(2a) **Tveir sokkar liggja á gólvinum**

'Two socks are lying on the floor'

(2b) **Tvinnir sokkar liggja á gólvinum**

'Two pairs of socks are lying on the floor'

(3a) **Tríggir sokkar liggja á gólvinum**

'Three socks are lying on the floor'

(3b) **Trinnir sokkar liggja á gólvinum**

'Three pairs of socks are lying on the floor'

The pair-forms are also used as below:

(4a) **Hatta vóru eini góð tíðindi**

'That was some good news'

(4b) **Eg hevði einar Brillur her, men nú eru tær burtur**

'I had one pair of glasses here, but now they are gone'

The nouns **tíðindir** 'news', and **brillur** 'glasses', are *pluralia tantum* – they exist only in the plural, and with such nouns the pair form(s) of the numerals must be used.

Nouns are formed from the neuter cardinal numbers by adding the suffix **-ari**, that is: **eitt** ⇒ **eittari**, **tvey** ⇒ **tveyari**, **trý** ⇒ **tríari**, **fýra** ⇒ **fýrari**, and **fimm** ⇒ **fimmari** and so on. In (5a) it is possible to imagine a boat with the number 3 that is placed badly in a race, in (5b) a car with the number 5:

(5a) **Tríarin liggur illa fyri beint í lötuni**

'Boat number three is badly placed at the movement'

(5b) **Fimmarin liggur væl fyri**

'Car number five is well placed'

The figure itself is given by adding the simplex noun **-tal**:

(6a) **Áttatølini vóru nógv við próvtøkuna**

'There were many eights (≈ grade C) at the exam'

(6b) **Marjus fekk fimm tíggjutøl**

'Marius got five tens (≈ grade B+)'

When talking about busses, trains, classes or hospital wards, either the number nouns are used or a system similar to that in English. (7a) is more used in spoken Faroese, whereas (7b) may occasionally be heard. So also (7c) and (7d):

- (7a) **Vit fara við bussi nummar fýra til arbeiðis**  
'We take bus number four to work'
- (7b) **Vit fara við fýranum til arbeiðis**  
'We take the number four to work'
- (7c) **Bussur nummar eitt koyrir til Steinatún**  
'Bus number one goes to Steinatún'
- (7d) **Eittarin koyrir til Steinatún**  
'The number one goes to Steinatún'

The following nouns are derived from cardinal numbers:

Cardinal number		Derived noun
tíggju	>	tíggjuáraskeið <i>n.</i> 'decade'
	>	áratíggju <i>n. pl.</i> 'decade'
túsund	>	túsundáraskeið <i>n.</i> 'millennium'

Note also *øld f.* 'century'.

*Ferð f.* is used to indicate frequency. As for *hesa/hesu* and so on both forms are possible.

fimm ferðir	'five times'
hesa ferð	'this time'
hesu ferð	'this time'
hina ferð	'that time'
hinu ferð	'that time'
eina aðra ferð	'another time'
eina aðru ferð	'another time'

Twofold, threefold and so on are translated with *ferðir* so *nógv sum*:

- (8a) **Tað henda dupult so nógv arbeiðis á sjónum**  
'Twice as many accidents happen at sea'
- (8b) **Jógvan tjenar fimm ferðir so nógv sum Marsanna**  
'Jógvan earns five times as much as Marsanna'
- (8c) **Tann seksdupulta upphæddin**  
'Six times the amount'

### 5.1.1. Temperature

Temperature is measured using centigrade. The Faroese word for degree is *stig (n.)*. It is used interchangeably with the Danish loanword *grad (-ir, pl.), f.*

- (9a) **Hitamátarin vísir 5 stig pluss / 5 plussstig**  
'The thermometer is showing plus 5 degrees (5 above zero)'
- (9b) **Tað er fimm stiga hiti í dag**  
'It is 5 degrees (above zero) today'
- (9c) **Hitamátarin stendur á 5 minus**  
'The thermometer is showing 5 below (zero)'

Note:

- (10a) **Abigail hevur 40 gradir í fepri**  
'Abigail has a temperature of 40°C (104°F)'
- (10b) **Abigail hevur nógvan fepur**  
'Abigail has a very high temperature'
- (10c) **Fert tú at taka fepurin á honum nú?**  
'Are you going to take his temperature now?'

### 5.1.2. Mathematical expressions

Note that the symbol for subtraction in Faroese is  $\div$  (or  $-$ ), and the symbol for division is  $:$ .

$4 + 5 = 9$	fýra pluss fimm er (lik við) níggju
$14 \div 2 = 7$	fjórðan minus tvey er (lik við) tólv
$5 \times 2 = 10$	fimm gangað við tvey er (lik við) tíggju
	fimm faldað við tvey er (lik við) tíggju
$10 : 5 = 2$	tíggju dividerað við fimm er (lik við) tvey
	tíggju deilt við fimm er (lik við) tvey
$2^2 = 4$	kvadratið av tvey er fýra
$\sqrt{16} = 4$	kvadratrótin av sekstan er fýra
	ferrótin av sekstan er fýra
%	prosent

## 5.2. Ordinal numbers

The ordinal numbers are:

1. fyrsti	16. sekstandi
2. annar	17. seytjandi
3. triði	18. átjandi
4. fjórði	19. níjtjandi
5. fimti	20. tjúgundi
6. sætti	30. tretivundi
7. sjeyndi	40. fjørutíundi
8. áttandi	50. hálvtrýssinstjúgundi
9. níggjundi	60. trýsinstjúgundi
10. tíggjundi	70. hálvfjerðsinstjúgundi
11. ellivti/ellinti	80. fýrsinstjúgundi
12. tólvti	90. hálvfemsinstjúgundi
13. trettandi	100. hundrandi
14. fjúrtandi	200. tveyhundrandi
15. fimtandi	

The full-stop is used after the final digit to indicate that the numeral should be read as an ordinal. This is the Faroese equivalent of the ordinal markers in English '-st', '-nd', '-rd', '-th' (21. = '21st').

Note the following constructions:

21. ein og tjúgundi	87. sjei og fýrsinstjúgundi
32. tvey og tredivundi	98. átta og hálvfemsinstjúgundi
43. trí og fjørutíundi	101. hundrað og fyrsti
54. fýra og hálvtrýssinstjúgundi	109. hundrað og níggjundi
65. fimm og trýsinstjúgundi	121. hundrað og ein og tjúgundi
76. seks og hálvfjerðsinstjúgundi	225. tveyhundrað og fimm og tjúgundi

(1a) Í dag er fyrsti apríl  
'Today is 1st April'

(1b) Pápi kemur heim fyrsta apríl  
'Dad comes home on 1st April'

In (1a) *fyrsti* is masculine, singular nominative, in (1b) masculine, singular, accusative.

(1c) Hatta er tann triðja ølin hjá honum  
'That is his third beer'

(1d) og Per drekkur sína fjórðu øl  
'and Per drinks his fourth beer'

(1e) Hetta er tað fimta skipið, sum er farið av knóranum  
this is the fifth ship-the that is gone off atlas-dat.-the  
'This is the fifth ship that has gone bankrupt'

The ordinal numbers *fyrsti* 'first', *triði* 'third', and so on inflect like weak adjectives:

Figure 50

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	fyrsti	fyrsta	fyrsta
Acc.	fyrsta	fyrstu	fyrsta
Dat.	fyrsta	fyrstu	fyrsta
Pl.			
Nom.	fyrstu	fyrstu	fyrstu
Acc.	fyrstu	fyrstu	fyrstu
Dat.	fyrstu	fyrstu	fyrstu

The ordinal number *annar* 'second', however, inflects like a strong adjective:

Figure 51

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	annar	onnur	annað
Acc.	annan	aðru/aðra	annað
Dat.	øðrum	aðrari/aðru	øðrum
Pl.			
Nom.	aðrir	aðrar	onnur
Acc.	aðrar	aðrar	onnur
Dat.	øðrum	øðrum	øðrum

In the feminine accusative *aðru* is the only form used in colloquial speech to mean 'second' (see example 2e below). The form *aðra* is used in the construction *eina aðra* to mean 'another' (see example 2f).

(2a) Í dag er annar apríl  
in day is second-m.nom. April-m.nom.  
'Today is 2nd April'

- (2b) **Pápi kemur heim annan apríl**  
dad comes home second- *m.acc.* April-*m.acc.*  
'Dad comes home on 2nd April'
- (2c) **Hetta er onnur ølin hjá honum**  
this is second-*f.nom.* beer-*f.nom.* with him  
'This is his second beer'
- (2d) **Hetta er annað skipið hjá teimum, sum er farið av knóranum**  
this is second-*n.nom.* ship-*n.nom.*-the with them, that is gone off atlas-*f.dat.*-  
the  
'This is their second ship, that has gone bankrupt'
- (2e) **Per drekkur sína aðru øl**  
Per drinks his second-*f.acc.* beer-*f.acc.*  
'Per drinks his second beer'
- (2f) **Per drekkur eina aðra øl**  
Per drinks a second-*f.acc.* beer-*f.acc.*  
'Per drinks another beer'

### 5.3. Other expressions of numerical quantity

- (3a) 'a dozen'  
tylft (-ar, -ir), *f.* dozen  
dusin (-s, -0), *n.* dozen  
eitt hálvt dusin av eggum half a dozen eggs  
tólv dusin av pakkum a gross of packages (144 packages)
- (3b) approximate numbers  
nøkur og fjøruti 'forty-something', 'forty-odd'  
nøkur og 76 fólk vóru komin 'approximately 76 people had arrived'

### 5.4. Fractions

- a half ein helvt (-ar, -ir), *f.*, eitt hálvt (cf. §5.5)  
a third ein triðing/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a quarter ein fjórðing/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a fifth ein fimting/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a sixth ein sætting/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*, ein sættapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a seventh ein sjeyping/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*, ein sjeypindipart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*

- a eighth ein átting/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*, ein áttandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a ninth ein níggjundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a tenth ein tíggjundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
an eleventh ein ellivtapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a twelfth ein tólvtapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a thirteenth ein tretandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a fourteenth ein fjúrtandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a fifteenth ein fimtandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a sixteenth ein sekstandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a seventeenth ein seytjandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
an eighteenth ein átjandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a nineteenth ein nítjandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a twentieth ein tjúgundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a twenty-fifth ein fimmogtjúgundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a fiftieth ein hálvtrýssinstjúgundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a hundredth ein hundrandapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a thousandth ein túsundapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*  
a millionth ein milliántapart/ur (-s, -ar), *m.*

- (1a) ein fjórðingur av einari vínflesku  
'a quarter of a bottle of wine'
- (1b) ein fimtingur av fólkinum  
'a fifth of the population'
- (1c) tríggir fjórðingar av børnunum  
'three-quarters of the children'

### 5.5. Half

The noun for 'half' is *helvt* (-ar, -ir), *f.*:

- (1a) Helvtin av ølini  
'half of the beer'
- (1b) Helvtin av bananini  
'half of the banana'
- (1c) Skilti tú helvtina av tí, sum hann segði?  
'Did you understand half of what he said?'

The adjective form is *hálv/ur* 'half (a)...':

- (2a) **Ein hálv síða**  
'half a page'
- (2b) **Fimm hálfvar síður**  
'five half-pages'
- (2c) **Hann arbeiðir hálva tíð**  
'He works half-time'
- (2d) **Hálva tíð var hann fullur**  
'He was drunk half the time'
- (2e) **Eg havi ein hálvan pakka av kipsum**  
'I have half a packet of crisps'
- (2f) **Ein hálvur litur**  
'half a litre'
- (2g) **Tveir og ein hálvan kilometur**  
'two and a half kilometres'

Notice the phrase **hálvurannar** 'one and a half' which is followed by the singular in Faroese:

- (3a) **hálvurannar litur**  
'one and a half litres'
- (3b) **ein og ein hálvur litur**  
'one and a half litres'

Notice also the difference between Faroese and English:

<u>Faroese</u>	<u>English</u>
hálvannað ár / eitt og eitt hálv ár	18 months
eitt hálv ár	6 months
(4a) <b>Aage átti fjórðingin av skipinum</b> 'Aage owned a quarter of the ship'	
(4b) <b>Klokkan er trí korter til seks</b> 'The time is a quarter to six' (see §5.9)	

## 5.6. Dates

Centuries and decades:

<u>Faroese</u>	<u>English</u>
ein öld	a century
í øldir	for centuries
okkara öld	our century
fimmáraskeið	five years / period of five years
átjanhundrað og sjev	1807 (eighteen hundred and seven)
bókmentirnar í tjúgunum	the literature of the twenties
hon er um fjøruti	she is around forty
hon er í fjørutunum	she is in her forties
hon er í trýssunum	she is in her sixties

## 5.7. Years

<u>Faroese</u>	<u>English</u>
nítjanhundrað og hálvtrýss	1950
nítjanhundrað og seks og hálvtrýss	1956
fýrsini	the eighties
í hálvtrýssunum	in the fifties

## 5.8. Months, days

januar	mai	septembur/september
februar	juni	oktobur/oktober
mars	juli	novembur/november
apríl	august	desembur/desember

Note the following expressions:

<u>Faroese</u>	<u>English</u>
í ár	this year
í fjør	last year
í fyrraárið	the year before last
árið fyri fyrraárið	three years ago
næsta ár	next year

The days of the week are:

<b>mánadagur</b>	Monday
<b>týsdagur</b>	Tuesday
<b>mikudagur</b>	Wednesday
<b>hósdagur</b>	Thursday
<b>fríggjadagur</b>	Friday
<b>leygardagur</b>	Saturday
<b>sunnudagur</b>	Sunday

Note that months and days of the week do not have capital letters in Faroese.

On Suðuroy we find **ónsdagur** for 'Wednesday' (instead of **mikudagur**) and **tórsdagur** for 'Thursday' (instead of **hósdagur**).

The days of the week in Faroese have similarities with those in many other Germanic languages and mean the following:

<b>mánadagur</b>	day of the moon
<b>týsdagur</b>	day of the god Týr
<b>mikudagur</b>	< * miðvikudagur 'mid-week day'
<b>ónsdagur</b>	day of the god Óðinn
<b>hósdagur, tórsdagur</b>	day of the god Þórr
<b>fríggjadagur</b>	day of the goddess Frigg
<b>leygardagur</b>	wash-day
<b>sunnudagur</b>	day of the sun

Corresponding to English *on* Faroese makes use of the definite form of the name of the weekday in the accusative:

- (1a) **Mánadagin regnaði í Havn**  
'On Monday it rained in Tórshavn'
- (1b) **og týsdagin og mikudagin var eisini toka har**  
'and on Tuesday and Wednesday it was foggy there too'

If we want to say 'on Mondays' (i.e. every Monday), 'on Tuesdays', and so on, we use the accusative indefinite form of the weekday:

- (2a) **Fríggjadag arbeiði eg heima**  
'On Fridays I work at home'
- (2b) **Posturin kemur mikudag og leygardag**  
'The post comes on Wednesdays and Saturdays'

Note the following expressions:

<b>Faroese</b>	<b>English</b>
<b>í dag</b>	today
<b>í morgin</b>	tomorrow
<b>í ovurmorgin</b>	the day after tomorrow
<b>í gjár</b>	yesterday
<b>í fyrradagin</b>	the day before yesterday
<b>dagin fyri fyrradagin</b>	three days ago

The ordinal number is used to express the date in Faroese.

- (3a) **Tórshavn, tann/hin fimta desember 1998**  
'Tórshavn, 5th December, 1998'
- (3b) **Jónas er føddur tann/hin fyraogtjúgunda septembur 1962**  
'Jónas is born on 24th September, 1962'

The English preposition *on* has no corresponding equivalent in Faroese:

- (4a) **Vit komu aftur tann/hin tretivunda mars í ár**  
'We came back on 30th March this year'

Note the following expressions, where the names of the seasons and the days of the week are in the definite form:

- (5a) **Vit koma mánadagin**  
'We arrive on Monday'
- (5b) **Tað er kalt um veturin í Grønlandi**  
'It is cold during the winter in Greenland'
- (5c) **Um summarið regnar illa í Føroyum**  
'In the summer it rains a lot in the Faroe Islands'

### 5.9. The time

When asking the time in Faroese, the following expressions are used: (1a) and (1b) are used most commonly in spoken Faroese, whereas (1c) is less usual, although it would not sound strange.

	Question	Answer
(1a)	<b>Hvussu nógv er klokkan?</b> Lit.: How much is the clock? 'What is the time?'	<b>Klokkan er...</b> Lit.: the clock is... 'It is...' <b>Hon er...</b> 'she [the clock] is...'
(1b)	<b>Hvat er klokkan?</b> Lit.: What is the clock? 'What is the time?'	<b>Klokkan er...</b> Lit.: the clock is... 'It is...' <b>Hon er...</b> 'she [the clock] is...'
(1c)	<b>Hvat er fram?</b> Lit.: What is forward? 'What is the time?'	<b>Klokkan er...</b> Lit.: the clock is... 'It is...' <b>Hon er...</b> 'she [the clock] is...'

When telling the time we use the following expressions:

English	Faroese
It is one o'clock	<b>Klokkan er eitt</b>
It is ten minutes past one	<b>Klokkan er tíggju minuttir yvir eitt</b>
It is fifteen minutes past one	<b>Klokkan er eitt korter til tvey</b> <b>Klokkan er fimtan minuttir yvir eitt</b>
It is twenty minutes past one	<b>Klokkan er fimtan minuttir í hálvgum tvey</b>
It is half past one	<b>Klokkan er tjúgu minuttir yvir eitt</b>
It is twenty-five to two	<b>Klokkan er tíggju minuttir í hálvgum tvey</b>
It is fifteen minutes to two	<b>Klokkan er trí korter til tvey</b>
It is ten minutes to two	<b>Klokkan er tíggju minuttir í tve</b>
It is five minutes to one	<b>Klokkan er fimm minuttir í eitt</b>
It is two o'clock	<b>Klokkan er tvey</b>

## 6. Pronouns

Pronouns are words like *I, he, she, himself, herself, mine, this, that, who* and *someone*.

In Faroese we find the following pronouns:

- personal pronouns (**eg, tú, hann, hon, tað...**)
- reflexive pronouns (**seg, sær, sín**)
- possessive pronouns (**mín, tín, hansara, hennara...**)
- demonstrative pronouns (**tann, hesin, hasin...**)
- interrogative pronouns (**hvør...**)
- indefinite pronouns (**summi, onkur...**)

### 6.1. Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns in Faroese are in the 1st person **eg** 'I', 2nd person **tú** 'you' and 3rd person **hann** 'he', **hon** 'she', **tað** 'it'; **vit** 'we', **tit** 'you pl.', **tygum** 'you polite', and **teir, tær, tey** 'they'. These pronouns are inflected for the nominative, accusative, dative and genitive. Note that we find the genitive forms commonly used in the inflection of personal pronouns, but not in the inflection of nouns and adjectives.

Figure 52

	1st person	2nd person	2nd person polite
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>eg</b>	<b>tú</b>	<b>tygum</b>
Acc.	<b>meg</b>	<b>teg</b>	<b>tygum</b>
Dat.	<b>mær</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tygum</b>
Gen.	<b>mín</b>	<b>tín</b>	<b>tygara</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>vit</b>	<b>tit</b>	
Acc.	<b>okkum</b>	<b>tykkum</b>	
Dat.	<b>okkum</b>	<b>tykkum</b>	
Gen.	<b>okkara</b>	<b>tykkara</b>	

The polite form **tygum** 'you' is not much used anymore in spoken Faroese, but it is still found in the written language, in letters for instance, and you may still hear people address older people, they do not know, with **tygum** 'you'. Below we have some sentences, illustrating the use of the cases in each of the pronouns:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| (1a) <b>Eg eri glaður</b><br>'I am happy'             | <b>Tú ert glaður</b><br>'You are happy'           | <b>Tygum eru glaður</b><br>'You are happy'          |
| (1b) <b>Hundurin elskar meg</b><br>'The dog loves me' | <b>Hundurin elskar teg</b><br>'The dog loves you' | <b>Hundurin elskar tygum</b><br>'The dog loves you' |

(1c) **Jógvan hjálpir mær**      **Jógvan hjálpir tær**      **Jógvan hjálpir tygum**  
 'Jógvan helps me'      'Jógvan helps you'      'Jógvan helps you'

(1d) **Vit fara niðan til hennara**      **Far inn til hansara**  
 we go up to her      go in to him!  
 'We are going up to her place'      'Go in to him!'

In the case of the accusative **mæg** 'me', **teg** 'you' and **tygum** 'you' the pronoun is the object of the sentence. You will find the object of a sentence by asking *whom*, that is: the dog loves *whom*.

Some objects are however in the dative, and it depends on the verb in front of the object, as there are some verbs that require the dative. There are not many of them and they are listed in section §3.5. **Case Usage**.

Note also the following constructions (clefts), where the verb agrees either with the empty (formal) subject **tað** 'it' (as in **tað er eg**), or with the real subject **eg** 'I' (as in **tað eri eg**). In (2a) we have the same pattern, agreement with the empty **tað** (er) or the plural pronoun **tygum** (eru). The verb in the subordinate clause agrees with the subject of the main clause (cf. **eigi** and **eiga**). Note also (2c) with either a singular or plural verb and a plural noun phrase (**25 stig**, '25 degrees'). In (2c) a definite noun is ruled out.

(2a) **Tað er eg, sum eigi bilin**      **Tað eri eg, sum eigi bilin**  
 it is I, who own the car      'it am I, who own the car  
 'I'm the one who owns the car'      'I'm the one who owns the car'

(2b) **Tað er tygum, sum eiga bilin**      **Tað eru tygum, sum eiga bilin**  
 it is you, who own the car      it are you, who own the car  
 'You're the one who owns the car'      'You're the one who owns the car'

(2c) **Tað er 25 stig í dag**      **Tað eru 25 stig í dag**  
 there is 25 degrees today      there are 25 degrees today  
 'It is 25 degrees today'      'It is 25 degrees today'

The forms of the third person ('he', 'she', it', 'they') are shown below:

	3rd Person Masculine	3rd Person Feminine	3rd Person Neuter
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>hann</b>	<b>hon</b>	<b>tað</b>
Acc.	<b>hann</b>	<b>hana</b>	<b>tað</b>

Dat.	<b>honum</b>	<b>henni</b>	<b>tí</b>
Gen.	<b>hansara</b>	<b>hennara</b>	<b>tess</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>teir</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tey</b>
Acc.	<b>teir</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tey</b>
Dat.	<b>teimum</b>	<b>teimum</b>	<b>teimum</b>
Gen.	<b>teirra</b>	<b>teirra</b>	<b>teirra</b>

## 6.2. Reflexive pronouns

The forms of the reflexive pronouns are as below. We have included first and second person also, for the sake of convenience.

Figure 53

	third person	first person	second person		
Acc.	<b>seg</b>	<b>meg</b>	<b>okkum</b>	<b>teg</b>	<b>tykkum</b>
Dat.	<b>sær</b>	<b>mær</b>	<b>okkum</b>	<b>tær</b>	<b>tykkum</b>
Gen.	<b>sín</b>	<b>mín</b>	<b>okkara</b>	<b>tín</b>	<b>tykkara</b>

The third person forms correspond to English 'himself', 'herself' and 'itself'. The reflexive pronoun is in the third person only. One difference between English and Faroese is that English has a complex (or compound) reflexive ('the children wash themselves [= "their selves"]'), but Faroese has a simplex reflexive (**'børnini vaska sær'**). However, a complex reflexive can also be found in Faroese, in which case it inflects for gender, case (just accusative and dative), and number:

Figure 54

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.			
Acc.	<b>seg sjálvan</b>	<b>seg sjálva</b>	<b>seg sjálvt</b>
Dat.	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvari</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>
Pl.			
Acc.	<b>seg sjálvar</b>	<b>seg sjálvar</b>	<b>seg sjálvi</b>
Dat.	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>



The simplex reflexive is used as in the following example, where a complex reflexive is also possible:

	Simplex reflexive	Complex reflexive
(1a)	<b>Maðurin vaskar sær</b> 'The man washes himself'	<b>Maðurin vaskar sær sjálvum</b> 'The man washes himself'
(1b)	<b>Konan vaskar sær</b> 'The woman washes herself'	<b>Konan vaskar sær sjálvari</b> 'The woman washes herself'
(1c)	<b>Barnið vaskar sær</b> 'The child washes himself/herself'	<b>Barnið vaskar sær sjálvum</b> 'The child washes himself/herself'

The simplex reflexive pronoun is not gender specific in Faroese, whereas the complex reflexive is gender specific (compare the examples above).

Corresponding to English 'myself', 'yourself', 'ourselves' and 'yourselves' are the following forms:

Figure 55

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'myself'		
Sg.			
Acc.	<b>meg sjálvan</b>	<b>meg sjálva</b>	<b>meg sjálvt</b>
Dat.	<b>mær sjálvum</b>	<b>mær sjálvari</b>	<b>mær sjálvum</b>
	'yourself'		
Sg.			
Acc.	<b>teg sjálvan</b>	<b>teg sjálva</b>	<b>teg sjálvt</b>
Dat.	<b>tær sjálvum</b>	<b>tær sjálvari</b>	<b>tær sjálvum</b>
	'ourselves'		
Pl.			
Acc.	<b>okkum sjálvar</b>	<b>okkum sjálvar</b>	<b>okkum sjálvi</b>
Dat.	<b>okkum sjálvum</b>	<b>okkum sjálvum</b>	<b>okkum sjálvum</b>
	'yourselves'		

Pl.			
Acc.	<b>tykkum sjálvar</b>	<b>tykkum sjálvar</b>	<b>tykkum sjálvi</b>
Dat.	<b>tykkum sjálvum</b>	<b>tykkum sjálvum</b>	<b>tykkum sjálvum</b>

For example:

- (2a) **Tú skalt elska næstan eins og teg sjálvan / sjálvan teg**  
you shall love your fellow human as yourself / self-you-*m*.  
'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'
- (2b) **Tú skalt fara væl við tær sjálvari**  
you shall go well with yourself-*f*.  
'You need to take care of yourself'
- (2c) **Tit skulu fara væl við tykkum sjálvum**  
you shall go well with yourself-*m,ff,pl*.  
'You need to take care of yourselves'

### 6.2.1. Long distance reflexive

The simplex reflexive can be used as a so-called long distance reflexive or anaphora. In the example below **seg** may refer back to **Jógvan**, the subject of the subordinate clause, or to **Marjun**, the subject of the main clause. This is not possible in English, where the reflexive can only refer back to the subject in the subordinate clause, as the translation shows.

- (3) **Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar seg**  
Mary says that John loves himself (that is: John)  
Mary says that John loves her(self) (that is: Marjun)  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves himself'  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves her'

The reflexive **seg** might refer back to **Jógvan** in which case she says that he loves himself, or it might refer back to **Marjun**, in which case **Marjun** says that **Jógvan** loves *her*.

Compare sentence (3) with (4a) and (4b), where the latter two contain the complex reflexive, and then correspond to English:

- (4a) **Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar \*seg sjálva**  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves \*herself'
- (4b) **Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar seg sjálvan**  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves himself'

The rule is then that when the anaphora is complex it has to agree with the subject in the same clause, just as in English. So *seg sjálva* is not possible in (4a) because it is feminine, and *Jógvan* is a male person, whereas it is possible in (4b) because *seg sjálvan* is masculine and refers back to the male person *Jógvan*.

If the personal pronoun *hann* 'he', or *hon* 'she', is used in the same position, the meaning in (5a) is that *Jógvan* loves some other person, say *Anna*, while the meaning in (5b) is that *Jógvan* hates someone else, say *George*.

- (5a) *Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar hana*  
'Mary says that John loves her (= some other girl)'
- (5b) *Marjun sigur, at Jógvan hatar hann*  
'Mary says that John hates him (= some other man)'

### 6.3. Reciprocal pronouns

In the sentence in (1) there is a relationship between the grammatical agents in that each of the participants occupies the role of an agent and a patient with respect to each other. Reciprocal pronouns are illustrated in (1a) to (1c) with the verb *hjálpa* 'help', which requires the dative and (2a) and (2b) with the verb *elska* 'love', which requires the accusative.

- (1a) *Jóhan og Marjun kliptu hvørjum øðrum*  
'Jóhan and Marjun cut each other's hair'
- (1b) *Elisabeth og Jóannes hjálptu hvør øðrum*  
'Elisabeth and Jóannes helped each other'
- (1c) *Elisabeth og Jóannes hjálptu hvørjum øðrum*  
'Elisabeth and Jóannes helped each other'

We can use either *hvør øðrum* (where *hvør* is in the nominative and *øðrum* is inflected for the dative), or *hvørjum øðrum* (where both *hvørjum* and *øðrum* are inflected for the dative). When the verb requires an accusative object, the following patterns emerge:

- (2a) *Jóhan og Marjun elska hvønn annan*  
'Jóhan and Marjun love each other'
- (2b) *Jóhan og Marjun elska hvørt annað*  
'Jóhan and Marjun love each other'

In (2a) the form of the pronoun *hvønn* is masculine. Masculine is selected according to the semantic rule 'persons are masculine', whereas neuter is selected in (2b) as *Jógvan* and

*Marjun* are each of a different sex (two or more people of different sex together are usually referred to in the neuter). Both the masculine and the neuter forms as used in the examples above are quite acceptable and used in spoken Faroese.

### 6.4. Possessive pronouns

Consider the sentences below:

- (1a) *Maðurin málar mín bil*  
'The man paints my car'
- (1b) *Maðurin elskar mína konu*  
'The man loves my wife'
- (1c) *Maðurin elskar mítt barn*  
'The man loves my child'

The noun *bil* ('car' from *bilur*) is masculine (in the accusative, singular), and requires a masculine accusative singular form of the pronoun. In (1b) the noun *konu* ('wife' from *kona*) is feminine accusative singular, hence the possessive pronoun must also be feminine accusative singular (*mína*). In (1c) the possessive pronoun is neuter accusative singular (*mítt* 'my'), as the noun *barn* 'child' is neuter accusative, singular. Because possessive pronouns have to inflect to match the gender, number and case of the nouns they qualify, just like adjectives, they are sometimes called *possessive adjectives* rather than possessive pronouns.

Note that there is a correspondence between the owner and the thing owned. In *mín bil* 'my car', *mína konu* 'my wife' and *mítt barn* 'my child' the person who owns is the 1st person *eg* 'I'. If you owned the car, it would be *tú* 'you' or the 2nd person: *maðurin málar tín bil* 'the man paints your car', and if it was his car, it would be the 3rd person *hann* 'he': *maðurin málar sín bil* 'the man paints his car':

Owner	Possessive	Pronoun	
	m	f	n
Eg (1st person)	mín	mín	mítt
Tú (2nd person)	tín	tín	títt
Hann (3rd person)	sín	sín	sítt
Hon (3rd person)	sín	sín	sítt
Tað (3rd person)	sín	sín	sítt
Vit (1st person pl.)	okkara	okkara	okkara
Tið (2nd person pl.)	tykkara	tykkara	tykkara
Teir, tær, tey (3rd person pl.)	teirra	teirra	teirra

Note also the difference between for example 3rd person *sín* and 3rd person genitive of the personal pronoun: *hansara* 'his', and feminine *hennara* 'her':

- (2a) **Konan málar sín bil**  
‘The woman paints her own car’
- (2b) **Konan málar hennara bil**  
‘The woman paints her car = someone else’s car’
- (2c) **Maðurin málar sín bil**  
‘The man paints his own car’
- (2d) **Maðurin málar hansara bil**  
‘The man paints his car’ = someone else’s car’

Figure 56

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	‘my’		
Sg.			
Nom.	mín	mín	mítt
Acc.	mín	mína	mítt
Dat.	mínum	mínari	mínum
Pl.			
Nom.	mínir	mínar	míni
Acc.	mínar	mínar	míni
Dat.	mínum	mínum	mínum
	‘your’		
Sg.			
Nom.	tín	tín	títt
Acc.	tín	tína	títt
Dat.	tínum	tínari	tínum
Pl.			
Nom.	tínir	tínar	tíni
Acc.	tínar	tínar	tíni
Dat.	tínum	tínum	tínum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	‘his, her, its’		
Sg.			
Nom.	sín	sín	sítt
Acc.	sín	sína	sítt
Dat.	sínum	sínari	sínum
Pl.			
Nom.	sínir	sínar	síni
Acc.	sínar	sínar	síni
Dat.	sínum	sínum	sínum

Some examples:

		Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
(3a)	Eg elski 'I love	mín bil my car	mína konu my wife	mítt barn my child'
(3b)	Tú elskar 'You love	mín bil your car	tína konu your wife	mítt barn your child'
(3c)	Eg elski 'I love	hansara bil his car	hansara konu his wife	hansara barn his child'
(3d)	Hann elskar 'he loves		hansara konu his (= someone else's) wife'	
(3e)	Hann elskar 'He loves		sína konu his (= his own) wife'	
			hansara barn his (= someone else's) child'	
			sítt barn his (= his own) child'	

### 6.5. Demonstrative pronouns

Below we show the demonstrative pronouns in Faroese and some uses.

Figure 57

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'that'		
Sg.			
Nom.	tann	tann	tað
Acc.	tann	ta	tað
Dat.	tí	teirri	tí
Pl.			
Nom.	teir	tær	tey
Acc.	teir	tær	tey
Dat.	teimum	teimum	teimum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'this'		
Sg.			
Nom.	hesin	henda(n)	hetta(r)
Acc.	henda(n)	hesa	hetta(r)
Dat.	hesum	hesari	hesum
Pl.			
Nom.	hesir	hesar	hesi
Acc.	hesar	hesar	hesi
Dat.	hesum	hesum	hesum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'that'		
Sg.			
Nom.	hasin	handa(n)	hatta(r)
Acc.	handa(n)	hasa	hatta(r)
Dat.	hasum	hasari	hasum
Pl.			
Nom.	hasir	hasar	hasi
Acc.	hasar	hasar	hasi
Dat.	hasum	hasum	hasum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'the other'		
Sg.			
Nom.	hin	hin	hitt
Acc.	hin	hina	hitt
Dat.	hinum	hinari	hinum
Pl.			
Nom.	hinir	hinar	hini
Acc.	hinar	hinar	hini
Dat.	hinum	hinum	hinum

The demonstrative pronoun **tann** corresponds to English 'that'. Note that it is stressed, whereas the definite pronoun **tann** 'the' is not.

- (1a) Tað er akkurát tann bátin, sum eg fari at keypa  
'It is exactly that boat I'm going to buy'

- (1b) **Eg fari at keypa tann bátin, sum liggur við kai í Miðvági**  
 'I'm going to buy the boat that's moored in Miðvágur'

In the following sentences, the use of **hesin** 'this', **hasin** 'that', and **hin** 'the other', 'that' becomes evident from the English translations. Note that the noun can be omitted when implied. For example, in (2b) it would be understood that the speaker is talking about a car (perhaps it is part of a conversation between a customer and a car salesperson, and the customer is pointing at the car he wants).

- (2a) **Hesin hevur mangan brattan farið**  
 Lit.: this has many sheer rock gone  
 'This [man] has been in danger many times'
- (2b) **Eg vil ikki hava henda, men handa [bilin]**  
 'I do not want this, but that [car]'
- (2c) **Vit keypa hasa kettuna**  
 'We are going to buy that cat'
- (2d) **Eg síggi ikki hasar konurnar, tú tosar um**  
 'I do not see those women you are talking about'
- (2e) **Tað var hitt árið, tað var so nógvur vindur í Føroyum**  
 'It was the year that it was so windy in the Faroes'

### 6.6. Interrogative pronouns

The interrogative pronoun **hvør** 'who' inflects for

- Case **hvør, hvønn, hvørjum, hvørjir, hvørjar, hvørjum**
- Number **hvør, hvørjir**
- Gender **hvør m., hvør f., hvat n.**

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'who'		
Sg.			
Nom.	hvør	hvør	hvat
Acc.	hvønn	hvørja	hvat
Dat.	hvørjum	hvørjari	hvørjum
Pl.			
Nom.	hvørjir	hvørjar	hvørji
Acc.	hvørjar	hvørjar	hvørji
Dat.	hvørjum	hvørjum	hvørjum

For example:

- (1a) **Hvør er forseti í Amerika?**  
 'Who is the president of the USA?'
- (1b) **Hvønn drong elskar Beinta?**  
 what boy loves Beinta?  
 'Which boy does Beinta love?'
- (1c) **Hvørja gentu elskar Jóhan?**  
 what girl loves Jóhan?  
 'Which girl does Jóhan love?'
- (1d) **Hvørjum barni hjálpti Pætur?**  
 what child helped Pætur?  
 'Which child did Pætur help?'

Note that the noun **drongur** (becomes **drong** in the accusative) 'boy' is masculine and this is why the interrogative pronoun also has to be in the masculine in (1b). In (1c) **genta** (**gentu** in the accusative) 'girl' is feminine, hence the feminine form **hvørja**, and as the noun **barn** 'child' is neuter, the interrogative pronoun is also neuter **hvørjum**.

In examples (1c) and (1d), we could change the word order thus:

**Jóhan elskar hvørja gentu?**

**Pætur hjálpti hvørjum barni?**

The verb **elska** 'to love' takes an accusative complement (**gentu**, acc.), while the verb **hjálp** 'to help' takes a dative complement (**barni**, dat.). This explains the different case of the objects in the sentences below. Even though the interrogative pronoun is moved to the front of the sentence to form a question, it keeps the case assigned to it by the verb: For example:

**Jóhan elskar + acc. = hvørja gentu? ⇒ Hvørja gentu elskar Jóhan elskar hvørja gentu?**

**Pætur hjálpti + dat. = hvørjum barni? ⇒ Hvørjum barni hjálpti Pætur hjálpti hvørjum barni?**

Another way of expressing 'which' in Faroese is with **hvat fyri**. The case of the noun after the construction **hvat fyri** is determined by the verb and not by the preposition **fyri**. In addition to 'which', **hvat fyri** also means 'what kind of', 'what sort of':

- (2a) **Hvat fyri gentu elskar Jóhan?**  
 'Which girl does Jóhan love?'  
 'What kind of girl does Jóhan love?'
- (2b) **Hvat fyri (einum) barni hjálpti Pætur?**  
 'Which child did Pætur help?'  
 'What sort of a child did Pætur help?'
- (2c) **Hvat fyri (ein) maður er pápi tín?**  
 'What sort of a man is your father?'

In (3a) the pronoun **hvørjar** might refer to either men or women, that is, the meaning could be either 'what men did you see at the bar?', or 'what women did you see at the bar?'. If the question is not gender specific ('what men and women?', 'what people?', 'who?'), then neuter is used as in (3b).

- (3a) **Hvørjar sást tú á barrini?**  
 'Who(m) did you see at the bar?'
- (3b) **Hvørji sást tú á barrini?**  
 'Who(m) did you see at the bar?'

Compare then the following sentences:

- (4a) **Hvør stjól bilin?**  
 'Who stole the car?'
- (4b) **Hvør tykkara stjól bilin?**  
 'Which one of you stole the car?'
- (4c) **Hvør av tykkum stjól bilin?**  
 'Which one of you stole the car?'

In (a) the interrogative pronoun is used attributively. In (b) and (c), we have an expression for a part of a whole (partitive) 'which of you', and we note that **tykkara** (4b) is the genitive of the pronoun **tú** 'you', while **tykkum** is the dative of the same pronoun, governed by the preposition **av** 'of'. The former is a partitive genitive, the latter a partitive, prepositional phrase. Both mean the same. It seems likely that (4c) and also the constructions with **hvat fyri** are borrowed from Danish.

## 6.7. Relative pronouns

Spoken Faroese has no real relative pronouns. Instead it makes use of two particles (the 'relative complementisers') **sum** and **ið**. It is sometimes possible to see the genitive form of the interrogative pronoun **hvørs** used as a relative pronoun to mean 'whose', but this is only found in written Faroese:

- (1) **Danmark, hvørs forseti æt Nyrup, er eitt norðurlandskt land**  
 'Denmark, whose prime minister was called Nyrup, is a Scandinavian country'

Examples with the relative particles or complementisers are:

- (2a) **Hetta er konan, sum eg elski**  
 'This is the woman who I love'
- (2b) **Hetta er konan, ið eg elski**  
 'This is the woman who I love'
- (2c) **Hetta er konan, eg elski**  
 'This is the woman I love'

## 6.8. Indefinite pronouns

A typical indefinite pronoun in English is 'somebody'. It is indefinite, as implied in the name, as it does not refer to anyone specifically, just like 'anyone', 'anybody', 'somebody'. An indefinite pronoun like **onkur** 'some, somebody' in Faroese inflects for:

- Case **onkur, onkran, onkrum, onkrir, onkrar, onkrum**
- Number **onkur** 'any' (sg.) – **onkrir** 'some', 'somebody' (pl.)
- Gender **onkur m., onkur f., okkurt n.**

The indefinite pronouns are declined as below:

Figure 58

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'some', 'somebody'		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>onkur</b>	<b>onkur</b>	<b>okkurt</b>
Acc.	<b>onkran</b>	<b>onkra</b>	<b>okkurt</b>
Dat.	<b>onkrum</b>	<b>onkrari</b>	<b>okkrum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>onkrir</b>	<b>onkrar</b>	<b>onkur</b>
Acc.	<b>onkrar</b>	<b>onkrar</b>	<b>onkur</b>
Dat.	<b>onkrum</b>	<b>onkrum</b>	<b>onkrum</b>

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'any', 'anybody', 'some', 'somebody'		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>nakar</b>	<b>nøkur</b>	<b>nakað</b>
Acc.	<b>nakran</b>	<b>nakra</b>	<b>nakað</b>
Dat.	<b>nøkrum</b>	<b>nakrari</b>	<b>nøkrum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>nakrir</b>	<b>nakrar</b>	<b>nøkur</b>
Acc.	<b>nakrar</b>	<b>nakrar</b>	<b>nøkur</b>
Dat.	<b>nøkrum</b>	<b>nøkrum</b>	<b>nøkrum</b>

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'none'		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>eingin</b>	<b>eingin</b>	<b>einki</b>
Acc.	<b>ongan</b>	<b>onga</b>	<b>einki</b>
Dat.	<b>ongum</b>	<b>ongari</b>	<b>ongum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>eingir</b>	<b>ongar</b>	<b>eingi</b>
Acc.	<b>ongan</b>	<b>ongar</b>	<b>eingi</b>
Dat.	<b>ongum</b>	<b>ongum</b>	<b>ongum</b>

There are no hard and fast rules for when to use **onkur** and when to use **nakar**, but **onkur** roughly corresponds to English 'some', 'somebody', while **nakar** corresponds to English 'any', 'anybody'.

In a negative sense, **nakar** is usually used:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1a) <b>Har var ikki nakar inni</b><br>'There was nobody at home'  | <b>*Har var ikki onkur inni</b>                                    |
| (1b) <b>Matur var ikki nakar</b><br>food was not any<br>'There was no food'                              | <b>*Matur var ikki onkur</b><br>food was not some                  |
| (1c) <b>Hann fortaldi ikki nøkrum tað</b><br>he told not any(body) it<br>'He did not tell it to anybody' | <b>*Hann fortaldi ikki onkrum tað</b><br>he told not some(body) it |
| (1d) <b>Her hefur ikki verið nakar</b><br>here has not been anybody<br>'Nobody has been here'            | <b>*Her hefur ikki verið onkur</b><br>here has not been somebody   |

Compare the following two sentences. (2a) has a negative meaning (=1a), whereas (2b) has a positive meaning; (2c) with a positive meaning is impossible:

- (2a) **Har var ikki nakar inni**  
'There was nobody at home'
- (2b) **Har var onkur inni**  
'There was somebody at home'
- (2c) **\*Har var nakar inni**  
there was any(body) at home

When the meaning is 'somebody,' **onkur** would be used:

- (3a) **Onkur fortaldi mær tað**  
somebody told me it  
'Somebody told me'
- (3b) **\*Nakar fortaldi mær tað**  
anybody told me it
- (3c) **Onkur hefur sæð Dianu dansa**  
some has seen Diana dance  
'Somebody has seen Diana dance'
- (3d) **\*Nakar hefur sæð Dianu dansa**  
anybody has seen Diana dance

When used attributively with the meaning 'not a', we find **nakar** not **onkur**

- (4a) **Hann var ikki nakar góður pápi**  
he was not any good father  
'He was not a good father'
- (4b) **\*Hann var ikki onkur góður pápi**  
he was not some good father
- (4c) **Tað var ikki nøkur lött uppgáva**  
'It was not an easy task'
- (4d) **\*Tað var ikki onkur lött uppgáva**  
it was not some easy task

When the meaning is 'no', we also find **nakar** instead of **onkur**:

- (5a) **Hon er ekki nökur skjönnheit**  
she is not any beauty  
'She is no beauty'
- (5b) \***Hon er ekki onkur skjönnheit**  
she is not some beauty
- (5c) **Tað er ekki nakað gott**  
it is not any good  
'It is no good'

Note also the attributive use in:

- (6a) **Uttan nakra grund**  
'without any reason'
- (6b) \***Uttan onkra grund**  
without some reason

**Onkur** corresponds roughly to English 'some(body)' as in:

- (7a) **Onkran dag í næstu viku**  
some day in next week  
'Some day next week'
- (7b) \***Nakran dag í næstu viku**

and when the meaning is 'quite a different person,' as in:

- (8a) **Onkur annar hevði keypt bilin**  
someone else had bought car-the  
'Someone else had bought the car'
- (8b) \***Nakar annar hevði keypt bilin**

The pronoun **hvörgin** 'neither' inflects as:

Figure 59

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'neither'		
Sg.			
Nom.	hvörgin	hvörgin	hvørki
Acc.	hvörgan	hvörga	hvørki
Dat.	hvörgum	hvörgari	hvörgum
Pl.			
Nom.	hvørgir	hvørgar	hvørgi
Acc.	hvørgar	hvørgar	hvørgi
Dat.	hvørgum	hvørgum	hvørgum

- (9a) **Hvörgin teirra var í skúla í dag**  
'Neither of them was at the school today'
- (9b) **Eg skal hvörga hava**  
I shall neither have  
'I shall have neither of them'
- (9c) **Hvørki fáa vátta ella turt**  
neither get wet nor dry  
'Not get anything to drink or eat'
- (9d) **Tað er hvørgum høggt** (Idiom)  
it is neither favourable  
'not moderately'; 'out of any proportion'

We have mentioned the interrogative pronoun **hvör** 'who' above, but there is a homophonous word **hvör** meaning 'each, every'. The inflection is the same as with the interrogative pronoun, except that nominative and accusative, neuter is **hvört** and not **hvat**.

- (10a) **Hvönn dag í vikuni**  
'Each day of the week'
- (10b) **Tað er ekki á hvørjum degi, at...**  
it is not on every day that...  
'It is not every day that...'
- (10c) **Hvør tykkara**  
'Each of you'



- (10d) **Teir liggja í stríð hvør við annan**  
‘They fight with each other’
- (10e) **Annar/triði/fjórði...hvør er annarleidis**  
‘Every second/third/fourth... is different’
- (10f) **Vera hvørt eftir øðrum**  
be each after the other  
‘fit’
- (10g) **Vindurin veksur í hvørjum** (= steadily)  
‘The wind increases steadily’

It is possible to have sentences like those in (11) in Faroese, but not in English: Note the word order:

- (11a) **Tær búgva hvør í sínari bygd**  
‘They each live in their own village’
- (11b) **Tær búgva í hvør sínari bygd**  
‘They each live in their own village’

The indefinite pronouns **annar** ‘other’ and **ein** ‘one’ inflect like the corresponding numerals.

Figure 60

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	‘other’		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>annar</b>	<b>onnur</b>	<b>annað</b>
Acc.	<b>annan</b>	<b>aðra (aðru)</b>	<b>annað</b>
Dat.	<b>øðrum</b>	<b>aðrari</b>	<b>øðrum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>aðrir</b>	<b>aðrar</b>	<b>onnur</b>
Acc.	<b>aðrar</b>	<b>aðrar</b>	<b>onnur</b>
Dat.	<b>øðrum</b>	<b>øðrum</b>	<b>øðrum</b>
	‘one’		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>ein</b>	<b>ein</b>	<b>eitt</b>
Acc.	<b>ein</b>	<b>eina</b>	<b>eitt</b>
Dat.	<b>einum</b>	<b>einari</b>	<b>einum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>einir</b>	<b>einar</b>	<b>eini</b>
Acc.	<b>einar</b>	<b>einar</b>	<b>eini</b>
Dat.	<b>einum</b>	<b>einum</b>	<b>einum</b>

- (12a) **Henny er tann eina, og Bjørk er onnur**  
‘Henny is one of them and Bjørk the other’

- (12b) **Eg vil hava annað arbeiði**  
‘I want another job’

Note also the use of the plural:

- (13a) **Teir drukku einar tólv øl**  
‘They drank some twelve beers’

- (13b) **Bogi og Louisa eiga einar fimm bilar**  
‘Bogi and Louisa own some five cars’

The genitive is not a productive case in Faroese except in the personal pronouns (**hansara** 'his', **hennara** 'hers', **teirra** 'theirs' and so on). Some relics are still found in fixed expressions though as:

- (14a) **Ró er eina best í fimleiki**  
'Ró is one of the best in gymnastics'
- (14b) **Árni drakk eina mest, men Olaf roykti eina mest**  
'Árni drank more than most, while Olaf smoked more than most'

Figure 61

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Pl.	'both'		
Nom.	báðir	báðar	bæði
Acc.	báðar	báðar	bæði
Dat.	báðum	báðum	báðum

There is an old genitive form **beggja** 'of both', used in formal written style after **ímillum** 'between'. The genitive form is also the first part in the compound **beggjatrælur** 'a person that takes both sides'. Below we list two examples with **beggja** from *Føroysk Orðabók* (1998):

- (15a) **Ullin var hvørki av versta ella besta slag, men var ímillum beggja**  
'The wool was neither of the best nor worst kind, but was somewhere in-between (between both)'
- (15b) **Standa ímillum beggja**  
stand between both  
'Have difficulty choosing'

Figure 62

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'self'		
Sg.			
Nom.	sjálvur	sjálv	sjálvt
Acc.	sjálvan	sjálva	sjálvt
Dat.	sjálvum	sjálvari	sjálvum
Pl.			
Nom.	sjálvir	sjálvar	sjálvi
Acc.	sjálvar	sjálvar	sjálvi
Dat.	sjálvum	sjálvum	sjálvum

In §6.2. we had forms of the reflexive pronoun **seg**, **sær**, **sín** 'self', where the simplex reflexive in a sentence like (16) might refer back to Marjun in the main clause or Jógvan in the embedded clause:

- (16) **Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar seg**  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves her = Marjun'  
'Marjun says that Jógvan loves himself'

The reflexive pronouns can occur in compounds together with the pronoun **sjálvur** 'self':

Figure 63

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.	'himself'	'herself'	'itself'
Nom.			
Acc.	seg sjálvan	seg sjálva	seg sjálvt
Dat.	sær sjálvum	sær sjálvari	sær sjálvum
Pl.			
Nom.			
Acc.	seg sjálvar	seg sjálvar	seg sjálvi
Dat.	sær sjálvum	sær sjálvum	sær sjálvum

The use of a complex reflexive like **seg sjálvum** 'himself' differs from the simplex reflexive in that the former can only refer back to the subject in the sentence in which it occurs. (17c) is thus ungrammatical, as **seg sjálvan** is masculine, and might not refer back to a feminine noun – or female – like **Lóa**. It is worth noting that women may refer to themselves with the masculine form of the complex reflexive, (17d), where **seg sjálvan** is masculine, even though the sentence is uttered by a woman. In this sense (17c) is grammatical also.

- (17a) **Lóa elskar seg sjálva**  
'Lóa loves herself'
- (17b) **Lóa elskar seg**  
'Lóa loves herself'
- (17c) \***Jógvan sigur, at Lóa elskar seg sjálvan**  
'Jógvan says that Lóa loves himself'
- (17d) **Lóa drívur seg sjálvan**  
'Lóa forces herself'

Note also expressions like:

- (18a) **av sær sjálvum**  
by itself  
'automatically'
- (18b) **Malla er frá sær sjálvari av gleði í dag**  
Malla is from herself of happiness today  
'Malla is insanely happy today'
- (18c) **Eg var har sjálvur annar**  
I was there self second  
'In addition to me there was another'

Figure 64

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'some'		
Pl.			
Nom.	summir	summar	summi
Acc.	summar	summar	summi
Dat.	summum	summum	summum

The indefinite pronoun **summir** 'some' is used much as in English, but note that the neuter plural form **summi** is usually used to refer to groups of both men and women, as in the sentences below:

- (19a) **Summi komu, og summi fóru...**  
'Some came and some went...'
- (19b) **Høvdu summi vitað, hvat summi søgdu um summi, so**  
Had some known what some said about some then  
**høvdu summi ikki verið so góð við summi, sum summi eru**  
had some not been as kind with some as some are  
**við summi**  
with some
- 'If some people knew what some other people said about them, then they would not love those people as much as they indeed do love them'.

## 7. Verbs

The use of the different tenses in Faroese is described below:

### (a) The present tense

The present tense is used much as in English to express:

- what is happening now

- (1) **Hvat tosar tú um?**  
'What are you talking about?'

- a general or timeless state

- (2) **Vetrarnir í Føroyum eru mildir**  
'The winters are mild in the Faroes'

- a habitual present

- (3) **Eg fari til arbeiðis hvønn dag**  
'I go to work every day'

- a future action

- (4) **Vit flúgva heim í morgin**  
'We fly home tomorrow'

- the historic present

- (5) **Tað, sum síðani hendi var, at Joensen takklar Pætúrsson og skjýtur eitt mál**  
Lit.: That what then happened was that Joensen tackles Pætúrsson and scores a goal  
'What happened next was that, Joensen tackled Pætúrsson and scored a goal!'

The historical present is used when telling stories about past events. When doing this, people often switch into present tense as above (**takklar, skjýtur**).

Faroese does not have any *-ing* form as English, so 'I am going' is expressed with simple present form **eg fari**. But the durative aspect in the English phrase '*I am going*' can be expressed in Faroese by paraphrase; for example:

- (6a) **Eg standi og hugsí um Lenu**  
I stand and think about Lena  
'I am thinking about Lena'
- (6b) **Teir liggja og koyra alla náttina**  
they lie and drive all night-the  
'They are driving all night long'

The point in **Eg standi og hugsí um Lenu** is that the speaker may not be standing, but sitting. The verb **standa** 'to stand' is not used in its lexical sense 'to stand' above.

### (b) The preterite tense

The preterite is used in Faroese to express:

- an event that took place in the past

- (7) **Jógvan fór heim**  
'Jógvan went home'

- a habitual action in the past

- (8) **Hvørja ferð, hann skuldi gera lektiur, græt hann**  
'Everytime he had to do his homework he cried'

- politeness when used with modal verbs

- (9) **Hevði tú kunnað hjálpt mær?**  
'Could you help me, please?'

- an unreal situation

**Jógvan hevði farið heim, um hann kundi**  
'Jógvan would go home if he could'

Note the following sentences:

Faroese (preterite tense)	English (other)
(10) <b>Tað var spell</b>	'That's a shame!'
(11) <b>Tað var alt fyri hesa ferð</b>	'That's all for now'

### (c) The present perfect

The present perfect tense describes an event that took place in the past, but where a link between this event and its significance for the present is established. It is used much as in English. The present perfect tense is constructed with either the present form of the auxiliary verb **hava** + the supine, or the present form of the auxiliary verb **vera** + past participle. There are rules for when to use **hava** + supine and when to use **vera** + past participle.

(i) All transitive verbs (that is, verbs that take an object) use **hava** + supine:

- (12a) **Eg havi lisið eina avís**  
'I have read the newspaper'

- (12b) **Hon hevur brent allar pengarnar**  
'She has burnt all the money'

- (12c) **Eg havi bíðað eftir tær**  
'I have been waiting for you'

(ii) Intransitive verbs (that is, verbs that do not take an object) and that do not express motion or a change of state use **hava** + supine:

- (13a) **Borðið hevur altíð staðið í køkinum**  
'The table has always stood in the kitchen'

- (13b) **Eg havi ikki sovið so ógvuliga væl**  
'I have not slept very well'

- (13c) **Hon hevur ligið í hoynum**  
'She has been lying in the hay'

- (13d) **Vit hava sitið og tosað allan dagin**  
'We have been sitting and talking all day'

(iii) Intransitive verbs that express motion use **vera** + past participle:

- (14a) **Hon er flutt til Klaksvíkar**  
'She has moved to Klaksvík'

- (14b) **Eru tey longu farin?**  
'Have they left already?'

- (14c) **Eru tey longu komin?**  
'Have they arrived already?'

(iv) Intransitive verbs that express a change of state use **vera** + past participle:

- (15a) **Hon er vaknað**  
'She has woken'
- (15b) **Eg eri blivin sjúkur**  
'I have become ill'
- (15c) **Vatnið er fordampað**  
'The water has evaporated'
- (15d) **Børnini eru vaksin**  
'The children have grown up'

(v) Note the following verbs in particular: **vera** ⇒ **hava** + **verið**, **blíva** ⇒ **vera** + **blivin**, **verða** ⇒ **vera** + **vorðin**.

(vi) Note that some verbs can be transitive or intransitive:

- (16) **Eg eri fluttur til Sandavágs**      **Eg havi flutt fyrítøku mína til Sandavágs**  
'I have moved to Sandavágur'      'I have moved my business to Sandavágur'

(vii) If intransitive verbs of motion or change of state express an activity in the past (without any reference to a present state or result of that action), they use **hava** + supine:

- (17a) **Hann hevur svomið til Skúvoy**  
'He has swum to Skúvoy'
- (17b) **Hann hevði svomið um sunðið fleiri ferðir**  
'He has swum across the strait many times'
- (17c) **Eg havi gingið heim**  
'I have walked home'
- (17d) **Eg havi gingið í fjøllunum allan dagin**  
'I have been walking all day in the mountains'
- (17e) **Tey hava ferðast nógv**  
'They have travelled a lot'

- (17f) **Ísurin hevur tiðnað**  
'The ice has melted'

### (e) The past perfect

The past perfect is used to indicate:

- an action in the past that took place before another action in the past

**Tá ið hann hevði drukkið kaffið hjá sær, tveitti hann krússið út ígjøgnum vindeygð**  
'When he had drunk his coffee, he threw the mug through the window'

- an unreal situation

**Eg hevði runnið teinin fleiri ferðir, vissi eg hevði tíð**  
'I would have run the stretch many times, if I had had time'

### (f) The future

The future is expressed with **skal** 'shall,' **fara at** 'to be going to' or the present tense:

- (18a) **Eg skal nokk vaska upp**  
I will wash up  
'I will do the dishes.'

- (18b) **Eg fari at vaska upp**  
I am going to wash up (sometime in the future)  
'I am going to do the dishes'

There are different verb classes in Faroese. The main split is between strong verbs and weak verbs. Weak verbs take an ending containing a **d**, **ð** or **t** to form the preterite, strong verbs do not. Strong verbs usually show tense by changing their vowel. Similarly, for example the verb 'I love': 'I loved', 'I buy': 'I bought'; 'I send': 'I sent' are all weak verbs in English, because they take an ending containing a **d** or **t** to form the preterite. However 'I swim': 'I swam' and 'I fall': 'I fell' are strong verbs as they do not take an ending to mark tense. So also in Faroese: **eg elski** : **eg elskaði**; **eg keypi** : **eg keypti**; **eg sendi** : **eg sendi** are weak, and **eg svimji** : **eg svam** and **eg falli** : **eg fall** are strong as they do not take an ending to mark tense.

Weak verb		Strong verb	
Present 1st person	Past 1st person	Present 1st person	Past 1st person
kalli	kallaði	syngi	sang
'call'	'called'	'sing'	'sang'

A good rule to remember is that 1st person singular in present tense singular always ends in -i:

PRESENT TENSE	eg	kalli	venji	dømi	rógvi	bíti	bróti	sleppi	nemi	drepi	mali
	I	call	practice	judge	row	bite	break	get	touch	kill	grind

Another good rule of thumb is that the infinitive and present tense plural have the same form and end in -a:

INFINITIVE	at	kalla	venja	døma	rógva	bíta	bróta	sleppa	nema	drepa	mala
PRESENT, PLURAL	vit tit tey	kalla	venja	døma	rógva	bíta	bróta	sleppa	nema	drepa	mala

Verbs can be conjugated for two tenses in Faroese:

- Present tense
- Preterite

The present tense: Summary

	1st sg.	2nd sg.	3rd sg.	1st, 2nd, 3rd pl.
Class 1 (weak)	-i	-ar	-ar	-a
Class 2 (weak)	-i	-ur	-ur	-a
Class 3 (weak)	-i	-ir	-ir	-a
Class 4 (weak)	-i	-t	-0	-a
Strong verbs	-i	-ur	-ur	-a

The preterite: Summary

	1st sg.	2nd sg.	3rd sg.	1st, 2nd, 3rd pl.
Class 1 (weak)	-aði	-aði	-aði	-aði -aðu??
Class 2 (weak)	-di, -ti	-di, -ti	-di, -ti	-ðu, -tu
Class 3 (weak)	-(d)di, -ti	-(d)di, -ti	-(d)di, -ti	-(d)ðu, -tu
Class 4 (weak)	-i	-i	-i	-u
Strong verbs	-0	-(st)	-0	-u

In the figure below, we have included the personal pronouns eg 'I', tú 'you', hann 'he', vit 'we', tit 'you', and tey 'they'.

Figure 65

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Strong verbs
Sg.				
eg kalli	eg venji/flyti	eg dømi/royki	eg rógvi	eg bíti
tú kallar	tú venur/flytur	tú dømir/roykir	tú rørt	tú bítur
hann kallar	hann venur/flytur	hann dømir/roykir	hann rør	hann bítur
Pl.				
vit kalla	vit venja/flyta	vit døma/roykja	vit rógva	vit bíta
tit kalla	tit venja/flyta	tit døma/roykja	tit rógva	tit bíta
tey kalla	tey venja/flyta	tey døma/roykja	tey rógva	tey bíta

The preterite is formed as follows:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Strong verbs
Sg.				
eg kallaði	eg vandi/flutti	eg dømdi/roykti	eg róði	eg beit
tú kallaði	tú vandi/flutti	tú dømdi/roykti	tú róði	tú beit(st)
hann kallaði	hann vandi/flutti	hann dømdi/roykti	hann róði	hann beit
Pl.				
vit kallaðu	vit vandu/fluttu	vit dømdu/royktu	vit róðu	vit bitu
tit kallaðu	tit vandu/fluttu	tit dømdu/royktu	tit róðu	tit bitu
tey kallaðu	tey vandu/fluttu	tey dømdu/royktu	tey róðu	tey bitu

There are no personal endings in the preterite, only the preterite marker, which is -aði / -aðu in Class 1, pronounced [ajɪ] and [avʊ]. In class 2, the preterite form includes vowel alternation between e ~ a (venja ~ vandi) and y ~ u (flyta ~ flutti). The suffix -d is added to roots with word final voiced consonant, -t is added to roots with word final unvoiced consonant. The same rule applies to Class 3 verbs, but these verbs do not have any vowel alternation.

Figure 66

<b>Voiced Consonant</b>	<b>Preterite</b>
dám-	dám <u>di</u>
<b>Unvoiced Consonant</b>	
sveip-	sveipti
<b>Long Vowel</b>	
spá-	spá <u>ddi</u>

The suffix -di is used after a verb stem ending in a voiced consonant, -ti after a verb stem ending in an unvoiced consonant, and -ddi after a verb stem ending in a vowel.

Class 4 and strong verbs are a bit more complicated; see more detail under those specific classes. Note that there is no ending in the preterite in the 1st person singular and 3rd person singular, and –st in the 2nd person singular. This ending is very rare in the spoken language.

The imperative singular is in fact identical with the stem of the verb, and the imperative plural is the stem + –ið.

#### Imperative of weak verbs:

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Singular	kalla	flyt	dø̃m	rógv
Plural	kallið	flytið	dø̃mið	rógvið

#### Imperative of strong verbs:

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7
Singular	bít	brót	slepp	nem	drep	mal	grát
Plural	bítið	brótið	sleppið	nemið	drepið	malið	grátið

The main classes in Faroese are:

#### Weak verbs:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
kalla	venja / flyta	dø̃ma / roykja	rógva / doygja
'call'	'practise / move'	'judge / smoke'	'row' / 'die'

#### Strong verbs:

Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7
bíta	bróta	sleppa	nema	drepa	mala	halda, gráta
'bite'	'break'	'let go'	'touch'	'kill'	'grind'	'think, cry'

Note that some of the strong classes are very irregular, as will become evident in the following sections.

## Weak Verbs

### 7.1. Class 1

The first class of verbs, the **kalla** class, is very productive in Faroese, as borrowed verbs usually go into this class. It is characterised by the ending –ar<sup>25</sup> in 2nd and 3rd person singular, present tense, and –aði [aji] in the preterite singular, –aðu [avu] in the preterite plural:

Figure 67

#### Present Tense

CLASS 1						
VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'call'	'shout'	'write'
INFINITIVE		–a	at	kalla	rópa	skriva
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	eg	kalli	rópi	skrivi
		2nd person	tú	kallar	rópar	skrivar
		3rd person	hann, hon	kallar	rópar	skrivar
	Plural	1st person	vit	kalla	rópa	skriva
		2nd person	tit (tygum)	kalla	rópa	skriva
		3rd person	teir, tær, tey	kalla	rópa	skriva

Figure 68

#### Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'call'	'shout'	'write'
INFINITIVE		–a	at	kalla	rópa	skriva
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	eg	kallaði	rópaði	skrivaði
		2nd person	tú	kallaði	rópaði	skrivaði
		3rd person	hann, hon	kallaði	rópaði	skrivaði
	Plural	1st person	vit	kallaðu	rópaðu	skrivðu
		2nd person	tit (tygum)	kallaðu	rópaðu	skrivðu
		3rd person	teir, tær, tey	kallaðu	rópaðu	skrivðu

Imperative singular: **kalla!**  
 Imperative plural: **kallið!**  
 Present participle: **kallandi**  
 Past participle: **kallaður**  
 Supine: **kallað**

<sup>25</sup> It could be argued that the ending is –r, that is: **kalla+r**, and first person: **kalla+ -i =>** (with deletion of –a **kalli**).

The verb *rópa* 'to shout, and also *sveipa* 'to wrap', *brúka* 'to use', *dáma* 'to like', *spáa* 'to predict' may have **-ti**, **-di** or **-ddi** in the preterite. For example: *meina* 'to think', 2nd/3rd person *meinar*, preterite *meinti*, *brúka* 'to use', 2nd/3rd sg. person *brúkar*, preterite *brúkti*.

The verbs are: *bata* 'to make a difference', 2nd/3rd sg. *batar* : pret. *batti/bataði*, *brúka* 'to use', 2nd/3rd sg. *brúkar* : pret. *brúkti*, \**brúkaði*, *dáma* 'to like' 2nd/3rd sg. *dámar* : pret. *dámði*, *dámaði*, *dámti* *feila* 'to be wrong', 2nd/3rd sg. *feilar* : pret. *feilti*, *feilaði*, *flýggja* 'to flee', 2nd/3rd sg. *flýggjar* : pret. *flýgðdi*, *flýggjaði*, *gáa* 'to pay attention to', 2nd/3rd sg. *gáar* : pret. *gáðdi*, *gáaði*, *knúsa* 'to crush', 2nd/3rd sg. *knúsar* : pret. *knústi*, *knúsaði*, *leika* 'to play', 2nd/3rd sg. *leikar* : pret. *leikti*, *leikaði*, *meina* 'to mean', 2nd/3rd sg. *meinar* : pret. *meinti*, \**meinaði*, *muna* 'to make a difference', 2nd/3rd sg. *munar* : pret. *munti*, *munaði*, *plaga* 'to usually do', 2nd/3rd sg. *plagar* : pret. *plagði*/\**plagaði*, *raka* 'to hit', 2nd/3rd sg. *rakar* : pret. *rakti*, *rakaði*, *ráma* 'to hit', 2nd/3rd sg. *rámar* : pret. *rámaði*, *rámti*, *rópa* 'to yell', 2nd/3rd sg. *rópar* : pret. *rópti*, *rópaði*, *rósa* 'to praise', 2nd/3rd sg. *rósar* : pret. *rósti*, *rósaði*, *rúma* 'to contain', 2nd/3rd sg. *rúmar* : pret. *rúmaði*, *rúmði*, *rúmti*, *sáa* 'to saw', 2nd/3rd sg. *sáar* : pret. *sáaði*, *sáðdi*, *saka* 'to damage', 2nd/3rd sg. *sakar* : pret. *sakaði*, (rare) *sakti*, *skaða* 'to damage', 2nd/3rd sg. *skaðar* : *skaðaði*, *skaddi*, *skapa* 'to create', 2nd/3rd sg. *skapar* : pret. *skapti*, *skapaði*, *slúka* 'to swallow', 2nd/3rd sg. *slúkar* : pret. *slúkti*, *slúkaði*, *smíða* 'to build', 2nd/3rd sg. *smíðar* : pret. *smíðaði*, (local) *smíðdi*, *spáa* 'to predict', 2nd/3rd sg. *spáar* : pret. *spáðdi*, *spáaði*, *styðja* 'to support', 2nd/3rd sg. *styðjar* : pret. *styðjaði*, *stuðdi*, *sveipa* 'to wrap up', 2nd/3rd sg. *sveipar* : pret. *sveipaði*, *sveipti*, *tjena* 'to earn' 2nd/3rd sg. *tjenar* : pret. *tjenaði*, *tjenti*.

## 7.2. Class 2

Class 2 verbs are characterised by **-ur** in the 2nd and 3rd person singular present. Class 2 verbs have a vowel alternation between the present tense and the preterite, **venja** 'to practise' ~ **vandi** 'practised', **dylja** 'conceal' ~ **duldi** 'concealed', **flyta** 'to move' ~ **flutti** 'moved', and **flysa** 'peel' ~ **flusti** 'peeled'.

The preterite may have either the suffix **-t** or the suffix **-d**. If the root ends in a voiced vowel, then the suffix **-d** is added in the preterite. If the root ends in an unvoiced vowel, then the suffix **-t** is added.

Voiced Consonant	Unvoiced Consonant	Preterite
ven-	flyt-	van- <b>di</b> , flut- <b>ti</b>
dyl-	flys-	dul- <b>di</b> , flus- <b>ti</b>

Figure 69

### Present Tense

CLASS 2							
VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'practise'	'move'	'sell'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	venja	flyta	selja	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	venji	flyti	selji
		2nd person	-ur	tú	venur	flytur	selur
		3rd person		hann, hon	venur	flytur	selur
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	venja	flyta	selja
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	venja	flyta	selja
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	venja	flyta	selja

Figure 70

### Preterite

CLASS 2							
VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'practise'	'move'	'sell'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	venja	flyta	selja	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-di, -ti	eg	vandi	flutti	seldi
		2nd person	-di, -ti	tú	vandi	flutti	seldi
		3rd person		hann, hon	vandi	flutti	seldi
	Plural	1st person	-du, -tu	vit	vandu	fluttu	seldu
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	vandu	fluttu	seldu
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	vandu	fluttu	seldu

Imperative singular: **ven!**, **flyt!**, **sel!**  
 Imperative plural: **venjið!**, **flytið!**, **seljið!**  
 Present participle: **venjandi**, **flytandi**, **seljandi**  
 Past participle: **vandur**, **fluttur**, **seldur**  
 Supine: **vant**, **flutt**, **selt**

Note that past participle is made by adding **-ur** to the preterite root, the supine by adding **-t** to the preterite root.

We note that there is no vowel alternation in **selja** 'to sell'. The verb **tiga** 'to be silent' also inflects like **selja** 'to sell', but with **i** in the present tense instead of **e**:



Present tense: eg tigi, tú tigur, hann/hon tigur, vit tiga, tit tiga, tey tiga  
 Preterite: eg tagdi, tú tagdi, hann/hon tagdi, vit tagdu, tit tagdu, tey tagdu

The verb *smyrja* 'smear' inflects almost like *flyta* in that it has the regular vowel alternation seen in this class between /i:/ and /u/ (*flyta* : *flutti*), but the 2nd person singular present tense of *smyrja* has a -t: *eg smyrji, tú smyrjt, hann/hon smyr, vit, tit, tey smyrja*.

Other verbs that inflect like *venja* 'to practise' are: *krevja* 'to demand', *lemja* 'to hit', *skilja* 'to understand' (2nd and 3rd person singular *skilir* or *skilur* and no vowel alternation between present and past tense), *telja* 'to count', *temja* 'to train', *velja* 'to select', 'elect'.

Verbs that inflect like *flyta* are: *dylja* 'to conceal', *flysa* 'to peel', *hyggja* 'to look', *hylja* 'to conceal'.

The verbs *berja* 'to hit', *merja* 'to hurt', and *verja* 'to defend' do not have -ur in 2nd and 3rd person present tense. Instead they have -ir, *berjir, merjir, verjir*. So also *flekja* 'to split', *rekja* 'to unravel', *tekja* 'to put roof on', *vekja* 'to wake up'. That is: *flekir, rekir, tekir, vekir*. The reason is that the root + ending has the pronunciation [tʃ], which is the same sound as in English *church*. This sound corresponds to the letter-combination *ki-*, hence -*kir* and not the expected -*kur*.

### 7.3. Class 3

Verbs belonging to this class have -ir in 2nd and 3rd person singular present indicative, and -a in the plural in present tense (same form as the infinitive). The preterite is created by adding the suffix -di to stems with word final voiced consonant, -ti to stems with word final unvoiced consonants and -ddi to stems with word final vowel:

	Preterite	
<u>Voiced Consonant:</u>	dø <u>m</u> -	dø <u>m</u> di
<u>Unvoiced Consonant:</u>	roy <u>k</u> -	roy <u>k</u> ti
<u>Word final vowel:</u>	frø-	frøddi
	gløð-	gløddi

Remember that -ð is never pronounced in word final position. The stem of a verb like *gleða* 'to please', thus ends in a vowel [ǰle:].

Figure 71

### Present tense

CLASS 1							
VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'judge'	'smoke'	'please'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	døma	roykja	gleða	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	dømi	royki	gleði
		2nd person	-ir	tú	dømir	roykir	gleðir
		3rd person		hann, hon	dømir	roykir	gleðir
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	døma	roykja	gleða
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	døma	roykja	gleða
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	døma	roykja	gleða

Figure 72

### Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'judge'	'smoke'	'please'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	døma	roykja	gleða	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-(d)di, -ti	eg	dømdi	roykti	gledði
		2nd person	-(d)di, -ti	tú	dømdi	roykti	gledði
		3rd person		hann, hon	dømdi	roykti	gledði
	Plural	1st person	-(d)du, tu	vit	dømdu	royktu	gleddu
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	dømdu	royktu	gleddu
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	dømdu	royktu	gleddu

Imperative singular: **dø*m*!, royk!, gleð!**  
 Imperative plural: **dø*mið*!, roykið!, gleðið!**  
 Present participle: **dø*mandi*, royk*jandi*, gleð*andi***  
 Past participle: **dø*mdur*, royk*tur*, gleð*dur***  
 Supine: **dø*mt*, royk*t*, gleð*t*.**

### 7.4. Class 4

Verbs belonging to this class have a different inflection than the verbs described so far. Notice that the root has either -gv or -ggj, which is deleted in 2nd and 3rd person singular present tense and altogether in the preterite – or more correctly, it was never here. As usual, the plural form in the present tense is the same as the infinitive.

Figure 73

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'row'	'believe'	'die'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	rógva	trúgva	doygja
PRESENT	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	rógvi	trúgvi	doyggi
		2nd person	-t	tú	rørt	trýrt	doyrt
		3rd person	-0	hann, hon	rør	trýr	doyr
	Plural	1st person		vit	rógva	trúgva	doygja
		2nd person	-a	tit (tygum)	rógva	trúgva	doygja
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	rógva	trúgva	doygja

Figure 74

The preterite: The -gv and -ggj are not allowed in front of consonant, so as -ð was still present when these insertions took place, there is no such insertion in front of the Old Faroese (and Old Norse) consonant -ð. That is:

Old Faroese.	roua (róa)	rouði (róði)
Rule 1 gv-insertion	rógva	rouði
Rule 2 ð-deletion	rógva	roui

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'row'	'believe'	'die'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	rógva	trúgva	doygja
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-ði	eg	róði	trúði	doyði
		2nd person		tú	róði	trúði	doyði
		3rd person	-ði	hann, hon	róði	trúði	doyði
	Plural	1st person		vit	róðu	trúðu	doyðu
		2nd person	-ðu	tit (tygum)	róðu	trúðu	doyðu
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	róðu	trúðu	doyðu

Imperative singular: rógv!, trúgv!, doygj!  
 Imperative plural: rógvið!, trúgvið!, doyggið!  
 Present participle: rógvandi, trúgvandi, doyggjandi  
 Past participle: rógvin  
 Supine: róð, trúð, doyð

Like rógva inflect grógva 'to grow'. Like trúgva inflect búgva 'to live'. Like doygja inflect goygja 'to bark'.

Note that the past tense in these verbs has the morpheme [ɪ], as ð is never pronounced between vowels.

## Strong Verbs

Strong verbs in Faroese are very irregular. Unlike most weak verbs, strong verbs exhibit different vowel alternations. These will be shown in more details under each heading below. There are some similarities between strong and weak verbs. One is that 1st person singular indicative present tense has the ending -i. Another is that the infinitive and the present tense plural have the same form:

	1st person	Infinitive	Plural Present
Strong verb	bíti	bíta	bíta
Weak verb	dømi	døma	døma

### 7.5. Class 1, strong verbs

Strong verbs always have -ur in the present tense, 2nd and 3rd person. In the preterite, they have no ending in 1st and 3rd person singular, and - at least in formal old-fashioned Faroese - the ending -st in 2nd person singular in the preterite. However, this ending -st is rare in spoken Faroese.

Figure 75

Present tense

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'bite'	'become'	'shine'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	bíta	blíva	skína
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	bíti	blívi	skíni
		2nd person		tú	bítur	blívur	skínur
		3rd person	-ur	hann, hon	bítur	blívur	skínur
	Plural	1st person		vit	bíta	blíva	skína
		2nd person	-a	tit (tygum)	bíta	blíva	skína
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	bíta	blíva	skína

Figure 76

Preterite

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'bite'	'become'	'shine'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	bíta	blíva	skína
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-0	eg	beitst	bleivst	skeinst
		2nd person		tú	beit	bleiv	skein
		3rd person	-0	hann, hon	beit	bleiv	skein
	Plural	1st person		vit	bitu	blivu	skinu
		2nd person	-u	tit (tygum)	bitu	blivu	skinu
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	bitu	blivu	skinu

Imperative singular: **bít!, blív!, skín!**  
 Imperative plural: **bítið!, blívið!, skínið!**  
 Present participle: **bítandi, blívandi, skínandi**  
 Past participle: **bitin, blivin**  
 Supine: **bitið, blivið, skinið**

Note that the past participle of strong verbs is made by adding the suffix **-in**. It inflects like an adjective of **class 4**.

Figure 77

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'bitten'		
Sg.			
Nom.	<b>bitin</b>	<b>bitin</b>	<b>bitið</b>
Acc.	<b>bitnan</b>	<b>bitna</b>	<b>bitið</b>
Dat.	<b>bitnum</b>	<b>bitnari</b>	<b>bitnum</b>
Pl.			
Nom.	<b>bitnir</b>	<b>bitnar</b>	<b>bitin</b>
Acc.	<b>bitnar</b>	<b>bitnar</b>	<b>bitin</b>
Dat.	<b>bitnum</b>	<b>bitnum</b>	<b>bitnum</b>

Among the verbs that inflect like those in the figure above are: **dríva** 'drift', **glíða** 'glide', **grína** 'laugh', **hvína** 'whine', **líða** 'move smoothly', **líta** 'look', **míga** 'pee', **níga** 'drop', 'bow', 'bend', **ríða** 'ride', **rína** 'have an effect'; cry', **rísa** 'rise', **ríva** 'scratch', **síga** 'lower (oneself)', **skíta** 'shit', **slíta** 'tear', **stíga** 'step', **svíða** 'singe', 'scorch', **svíkja** 'betray', **víkja** 'give way'.

Note that it is not unusual, rather the rule, that preterite has /ei/ instead of /ai/. This is an analogical spread from the second class of strong verbs, *krúpa* : *kreypt* : *bita* : *X*, *X* => *beyt*.

### 7.6. Class 2, strong verbs

The main vowel alternation are:

	Present	Past sg.	Past pl.	Past Part.	
1.	ó	ey	u	o	
2.	ú	ey	u	o	
3.	ú [i]	ey	u	o	
Ex.	'break'	<b>bróta</b>	<b>breyt</b>	<b>brutu</b>	<b>brotin</b>
	'crawl'	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>kreypt</b>	<b>krupu</b>	<b>kropin</b>
	'lie'	<b>lúgva</b>	<b>leygt</b>	<b>lugu</b>	<b>login</b>

Figure 78

Present tense

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'break'	'crawl'	'lie'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	<b>bróta</b>	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>lúgva</b>	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	<b>bróti</b>	<b>krúpi</b>	<b>lúgvi</b>
		2nd person	-ur	tú	<b>brýtur</b>	<b>krýpur</b>	<b>lýgur</b>
		3rd person		hann, hon	<b>brýtur</b>	<b>krýpur</b>	<b>lýgur</b>
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	<b>bróta</b>	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>lúgva</b>
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	<b>bróta</b>	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>lúgva</b>
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	<b>bróta</b>	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>lúgva</b>

Figure 79

Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'break'	'crawl'	'lie'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	<b>bróta</b>	<b>krúpa</b>	<b>lúgva</b>	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-0	eg	<b>breyt</b>	<b>kreypt</b>	<b>leygt</b>
		2nd person	-0	tú	<b>breytst</b>	<b>kreyptst</b>	<b>leygst</b>
		3rd person		hann, hon	<b>breyt</b>	<b>kreypt</b>	<b>leygt</b>
	Plural	1st person	-u	vit	<b>brutu</b>	<b>krupu</b>	<b>lugu</b>
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	<b>brutu</b>	<b>krupu</b>	<b>lugu</b>
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	<b>brutu</b>	<b>krupu</b>	<b>lugu</b>

Imperative singular: **brót!, krúp!, lúgv!**  
 Imperative plural: **brótið!, krúpið!, lúgvið!**  
 Present participle: **brótandi, krúpandi, lúgvandi**  
 Past participle: **brotin, kropin, login**  
 Supine: **brotið, kropið, logið**

Like **bróta** inflect: **bjóða** 'offer', 'invite', **flóta** 'float', **gjósa** 'blow', 'be draughty', **njóta** 'enjoy', **njósa** 'sneeze'.

Like **krúpa** inflect: **fúka** 'drift', 'fly', **húka** 'squat', **lúka** 'finish', **rúka** 'smoke', 'steam', **súpa** 'eat with spoon'.

Like **lúgva** inflect: **flúgva** 'fly', **klúgva** 'cleave', 'split', **smúgva** 'slip', 'creep', **súgva** 'suck'.

Figure 80  
Past Participle

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'crawled'		
Sg.			
Nom.	kropin	kropin	kropið
Acc.	kropnan	kropna	kropið
Dat.	kropnum	kropnari	kropnum
Pl.			
Nom.	kropnir	kropnar	kropin
Acc.	kropnar	kropnar	kropin
Dat.	kropnum	kropnum	kropnum

7.7. Class 3, strong verbs

The main alternations are:

	Present	Past sg.	Past pl.	Past Part.
1.	e	a	u	o
2.	i	a	u	u
3.	e	a	u	u
4.	i	a	u	o
5.	ø	a	u	o

Figure 81  
Present tense

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'escape'	'bind	'burn'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	sleppa	binda	brenna	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	sleppi	bindi	brenni
		2nd person	-ur	tú	sleppur	bindur	brennur
		3rd person		hann, hon	sleppur	bindur	brennur
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	sleppa	binda	brenna
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	sleppa	binda	brenna
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	sleppa	binda	brenna

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'swim'	'disappear'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	svimja	hvørva	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	-i	eg	svimji	hvørvi
		2nd person	-ur	tú	svimur	hvörvur
		3rd person		hann, hon	svimur	hvörvur
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	svimja	hvørva
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	svimja	hvørva
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	svimja	hvørva

Figure 82

Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'escape'	'bind	'burn'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	sleppa	binda	brenna	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-0	eg	slapp	bant	brann
		2nd person	-ur	tú	slapst	bantst	branst
		3rd person		hann, hon	slapp	bant	brann
	Plural	1st person	-a	vit	sluppu	bundu	brunnu
		2nd person		tit (tygum)	sluppu	bundu	brunnu
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	sluppu	bundu	brunnu

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'swim'	'disappear'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	svimja	hvörva
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	eg	svam	hvarv
		2nd person	tú	svamst	hvarv
		3rd person	hann, hon	svam	hvarv
	Plural	1st person	vit	svumu	hvorvu
		2nd person	tit (tygum)	svumu	hvorvu
		3rd person	teir, tær, tey	svumu	hvorvu

Imperative singular: **slepp!**, **bind!**, **brenn!**, **svim!**, **hvörv!**  
 Imperative plural: **sleppið!**, **bindið!**, **brennið!**, **svimjið!**, **hvörvið!**  
 Present participle: **sleppandi**, **bindandi**, **brennandi**, **svimjandi**, **hvörvandi**  
 Past participle: **sloppin**, **bundin**, **brunnin**, **svomin**, **horvin/hvorvin**  
 Supine: **sloppið**, **bundið**, **brunnið**, **svomið**, **horvið/hvorvið**

Like **sleppa** inflect: **bresta** 'burst', **detta** 'fall', **gleppa** 'slip', **nera** 'touch', **skelva** 'tremble', **spretta** 'jump', 'grow', **verpa** 'lay eggs'.

Like **binda**: **vinda** 'wind', **spinna** 'spin', **finna** 'find', **vinna** 'win', **syngja** 'sing'.

Like **brenna** inflect: **renna** 'run', **drekka** 'drink'.

Like **hvörva** inflect: **rökka** 'reach', **sökka** 'sink'.

Figure 83

Past Participle

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Sg.	'burst'		
Nom.	brostin	brostin	brostið
Acc.	brostnan	brostna	brostið
Dat.	brostnum	brostnari	brostnum
Pl.			
Nom.	brostnir	brostnar	brostin
Acc.	brostnar	brostnar	brostin
Dat.	brostnum	brostnum	brostnum

### 7.8. Class 4, strong verbs

The main vowel alternations found here are:

	Present	Past	Past	Past Part.
1.	e	a	ó	o
2.	o	a	ó	o
3.	o	o	o	o

Figure 84

Present tense

Note that strong verbs (and other verbs with vowel mutation like **smyrja** 'to smear'), with **-r** in the root do not have any **-ur** suffix in the 3rd person singular, present tense, and that they have **-t** in 2nd person present, cf. **bera** 'to carry'. Note also that the strong verbs with root final **-r** have **-t** in the 2nd person preterite.

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'weave'	'carry'	'sleep'	'come'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	veva	bera	sova	koma
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	eg	vevi	beri	sovi	komi
		2nd pers.	tú	vevur	bert	svevur	kemur
		3rd pers.	hann, hon	vevur	ber	svevur	kemur
	Plural	1st pers.	vit	veva	bera	sova	koma
		2nd pers.	tit (tygum)	veva	bera	sova	koma
		3rd pers.	teir, tær, tey	veva	bera	sova	koma

Figure 85

Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'weave'	'carry'	'sleep'	'come'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	veva	bera	sova	koma
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	eg	vav	bar	svav	kom
		2nd pers.	tú	vav	bart	svavst	komst
		3rd pers.	hann, hon	vav	bar	svav	kom
	Plural	1st pers.	vit	vóvu	bóru	svóvu	komu
		2nd pers.	tit (tygum)	vóvu	bóru	svóvu	komu
		3rd pers.	teir, tær, tey	vóvu	bóru	svóvu	komu

Imperative singular: **vev!**, **ber!**, **sov!**, **kom!**  
 Imperative plural: **vevið!**, **berið!**, **sovið!**, **komið!**  
 Present participle: **vevandi**, **berandi**, **sovandi**, **komandi**  
 Past participle: **vovin**, **borin**, (sovin), **komin**  
 Supine: **vovið**, **borið**, **sovið**, **komið**

Note that **veva** is usually inflected as a weak verb of class 1, with the preterite **vevaði**. Like **veva** inflects **nema** 'touch', although it usually has **numu** in the preterite plural (instead of **nómu**).

Figure 86  
Past participle

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'carried'		
Sg.			
Nom.	borin	borin	borið
Acc.	bornan	borna	borið
Dat.	bornum	bornari	bornum
Pl.			
Nom.	bornir	bornar	borin
Acc.	bornar	bornar	borin
Dat.	bornum	bornum	bornum

### 7.9. Class 5, strong verbs

The main vowel alternations in class 5 of strong verbs are:

	Present	Past sg.	Past pl.	Past Part.
1.	e	a	ó	i
2.	i	á	ó	i
3.	e	á	ó	e
4.	ø	a	ó	ø
5.	í	á	ó	æ
6.	e	a	ó	e

Figure 87  
Present tense

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'kill'	'lie'	'eat'	'chant'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	drepa	liggja	eta	kvøða
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	-i	eg	drepi	liggi	eti	kvøði
		2nd pers.	-ur	tú	drepur	liggur	etur	kvøður
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	drepur	liggur	etur	kvøður
	Plural	1st pers.	-a	vit	drepa	liggja	eta	kvøða
		2nd pers.		tit (tygum)	drepa	liggja	eta	kvøða
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	drepa	liggja	eta	kvøða

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'see'	'be'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	síggja	vera
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	-i	eg	síggi	eri
		2nd pers.	-t	tú	sært	ert
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	sær	er
	Plural	1st pers.	-a	vit	síggja	eru
		2nd pers.		tit (tygum)	síggja	eru
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	síggja	eru

Figure 88

Preterite

VERB FORMS			ENDING	EXAMPLES	'kill'	'lie'	'eat'	'chant'
INFINITIVE			-a	at	drepa	liggja	eta	kvøða
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	-0	eg	drap	lám	át	kvað
		2nd pers.	-0	tú	drapst	lást	átst	kvað
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	drap	lám	át	kvað
	Plural	1st pers.	-u	vit	drópu	lógu	ótu	kvóðu
		2nd pers.		tit (tygum)	drópu	lógu	ótu	kvóðu
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	drópu	lógu	ótu	kvóðu

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'see'	'be'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	síggja	vera	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	-0	eg	sá	var
		2nd person	-st/-t	tú	sást	vart
		3rd person	-0	hann, hon, tað	sá	var
	Plural	1st person		vit	sóu	vóru
		2nd person	-u	tit (tygum)	sóu	vóru
		3rd person		teir, tær, tey	sóu	vóru

Imperative singular: **drep!**, **ligg!**, **et!**, **kvøð!**, **síggj!**, **ver!**  
 Imperative plural: **drepið!**, **liggið!**, **etið!**, **kvøðið!**, **síggið!**, **verið!**  
 Present participle: **drepandi**, **liggjandi**, **etandi**, **kvøðandi**, **síggjandi**, **verandi**  
 Past participle: **dripin**, **ligin**, **etin**, **kvøðin**, **sæddur**  
 Supine: **dripið**, **ligið**, **etið**, **kvøðið**, **sæð**, **verið**

It should be noted that **drópu** in the preterite plural is usually **drupu** in spoken Faroese. Other verbs that inflect like **drepa** 'to kill' are **geva** 'to give', **leka** 'to leak', **lesa** 'to read', **reka** 'to drive'. Note also that **biðja** 'to ask for', and **sita** 'to sit' inflect like **drepa**, only that they have -i in the present tense singular and plural. These two verbs have -ó in the past plural: **bóðu**, **sótu**.

Figure 89

Past participle

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'killed'		
Sg.			
Nom.	dripin	dripin	dripið
Acc.	dripnan	dripna	dripið
Dat.	dripnum	dripnari	dripnum
Pl.			
Nom.	dripnir	dripnar	dripin
Acc.	dripnar	dripnar	dripin
Dat.	dripnum	dripnum	dripnum

### 7.10. Class 6, strong verbs

The main vowel alternation in this class are:

	Present	Past	Past	Past Part.
1.	a	ó	ó	a
2.	a	ó	ó	i
3.	á	ó	ó	i
4.	ø	ó	ó	o

Figure 90  
Present tense

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'grind'	'pull'	'hit'	'swear'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	mala	draga	sláa	svørja	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	-i	eg	mali	dragi	slái	svørji
		2nd pers.	-ur/-t	tú	melur	dregur	slært	svørt
		3rd pers.	-ur/-0	hann, hon	melur	dregur	slær	svør
	Plural	1st pers.		vit	mala	draga	sláa	svørja
		2nd pers.	-u	tit (tygum)	mala	draga	sláa	svørja
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	mala	draga	sláa	svørja

Figure 91  
Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'grind'	'pull'	'hit'	'swear'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	mala	draga	sláa	svørja	
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	-0	eg	mól	dró	sló	svór
		2nd pers.	-0	tú	mólst	dróst	slóst	svórt
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	mól	dró	sló	svór
	Plural	1st pers.		vit	mólu	drógu	slógu	svóru
		2nd pers.	-u	tit (tygum)	mólu	drógu	slógu	svóru
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	mólu	drógu	slógu	svóru

Imperative singular: **mal!**, **drag!**, **slá!**, **svør!**  
 Imperative plural: **malið!**, **dragið!**, **sláið!**, **svørjið!**  
 Present participle: **malandi**, **dragandi**, **sláandi**, **svørjandi**  
 Past participle: **malin**, **drigin**, **sligin**, **svorin**  
 Supine: **malið**, **drigið**, **sligið**, **svorið**

The most common verbs belonging to this class are those inflecting like **mala** 'to grind', including such verbs as **ala** 'raise', **gala** 'crow', **vaða** 'wade'.

Verbs that inflect like **draga** 'to pull' are **aka** 'to drive', **grava** 'to dig', **taka** 'to take'. Note that verbs with word final **-r** have **-t** in the 2nd person singular present tense: **slært** 'you hit', **fert** 'you go', and no **-ur** added in 3rd person: **slær** 'he, she hits', **fer** 'he, she goes'.

Another irregular verb that could be included in this class is the verb **stjala** 'to steal', **eg stjali**, **tú stjelur**, **hann stjeler**; **vit/tit/tey stjala**; **eg stjól**, **tú stjól(st)**, **hann stjól**; **vit/tit/tey stjólu**; **er stolin**, **hefur stjolið/stolið**.

### 7.11. Class 7, strong verbs

The main vowel alternations in class seven are:

	Present	Past	Past	Past Part.
1.	a	e	i	i
2.	á	æ	ó	á
3.	a	e	i	i
4.	á	e	i	i
5.	ei	æ	i	i
6.	a	a	u	o
7.	a	æ	ó	a
8.	ey	ey	u	o

Figure 92

Present tense

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'think'	'cry'	'walk'	'get'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	halda	gráta	ganga	fáa	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	-i	eg	haldi	gráti	gangi	fái
		2nd pers.	-ur/-t	tú	heldur	grætur	gongur	fært
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	heldur	grætur	gongur	fær
	Plural	1st pers.	-u	vit	halda	gráta	ganga	fáa
		2nd pers.		tit (tygum)	halda	gráta	ganga	fáa
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	halda	gráta	ganga	fáa

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'be called'	'fall'	'let'	'run'	
INFINITIVE		-a	at	eita	falla	lata	leypa	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	-i	eg	eiti	falli	lati	leypi
		2nd pers.	-ur/-t	tú	eitur	fellur	letur	loypur
		3rd pers.		hann, hon	eitur	fellur	letur	loypur
	Plural	1st pers.	-u	vit	eita	falla	lata	leypa
		2nd pers.		tit (tygum)	eita	falla	lata	leypa
		3rd pers.		teir, tær, tey	eita	falla	lata	leypa



Figure 93

Preterite

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'think'	'cry'	'walk'	'get'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	halda	gráta	ganga	fáa
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	eg	helt	græt	gekk	fekk
		2nd pers.	tú	heltst	grætst	gekst	fekst
		3rd pers.	hann, hon	helt	græt	gekk	fekk
	Plural	1st pers.	vit	hildu	grótu	gingu	finngu
		2nd pers.	tit (tygum)	hildu	grótu	gingu	finngu
		3rd pers.	teir, tær, tey	hildu	grótu	gingu	finngu

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'be called'	'fall'	'let'	'run'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	eita	falla	lata	leypa
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	eg	æt	fall/fell	læt	leyp
		2nd pers.	tú	ætst	falst	lætst	leypst
		3rd pers.	hann, hon	æt	fall/fell	læt	leyp
	Plural	1st pers.	vit	itu	fullu	lótu	lupu
		2nd pers.	tit (tygum)	itu	fullu	lótu	lupu
		3rd pers.	teir, tær, tey	itu	fullu	lótu	lupu

2nd person in the past tense is usually without any -st.

Imperative singular: **halt!, grát!, gakk or gang!, fá!, eit!, fall!, leyp!**  
 Imperative plural: **haldið!, grátið!, gangið!, fáíð!, eitið!, fallið!, leypið!**  
 Present participle: **haldandi, grátandi, gangandi, fáandi, eitandi, fallandi, leypandi**  
 Past participle: **hildin, grátin, gingin, fingin, fallin, lopin**  
 Supine: **hildið, grátið, gingið, fingið, fallið, lopið**

Figure 94

Past participle

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'got', 'gotten'		
Sg.			
Nom.	fingin	fingin	fingið
Acc.	fingnan	fingna	fingið
Dat.	fingnum	fingnari	fingnum
Pl.			
Nom.	fingnir	fingnar	fingin
Acc.	fingnar	fingnar	fingin
Dat.	fingnum	fingnum	fingnum

### 7.12. Modals and auxiliaries

A modal verb, also called a modal auxiliary verb, is a type of auxiliary verb that is used to indicate modality. Modal verbs in Faroese (and also English) are: **eiga** 'have to', **kunna** 'can', 'may', **mega** 'may'; 'shall', 'have to', **munna** 'will', **skula** 'shall', **vilja** 'want'.

Figure 95

Present tense

VERB FORMS		'have to'	'can', 'may'	'may'; 'shall', 'have to'	'will'	'shall'	'want'	
INFINITIVE		eiga	kunna	mega	munna	skula	vilja	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	eigi	kann	má	man	skal	vil
		2nd person	eigur	kanst	mást	manst	skalt	vilt
		3rd person	eigur	kann	má	man	skal	vil
	Plural	1st person	eiga	kunnu	mugu	munnu	skulu	vilja
		2nd person	eiga	kunnu	mugu	munnu	skulu	vilja
		3rd person	eiga	kunnu	mugu	munnu	skulu	vilja

Figure 96

## Preterite

VERB FORMS			'have to'	'can', 'may'	'may'; 'shall', 'have to'	'will'	'shall'	'will'
INFINITIVE			eiga	kunna	mega	munna	skula	vilja
PRETERITE	Singular	1st pers.	átti	kundi	mátti	mundi	skuldi	vildi
		2nd pers.	átti	kundi	mátti	mundi	skuldi	vildi
		3rd pers.	átti	kundi	mátti	mundi	skuldi	vildi
	Plural	1st pers.	áttu	kundu	máttu	mundu	skuldu	vildu
		2nd pers.	áttu	kundu	máttu	mundu	skuldu	vildu
		3rd pers.	áttu	kundu	máttu	mundu	skuldu	vildu

An auxiliary verb has a semantic function in that it adds further information about the main (non-finite) verb that follows the auxiliary. For example, the verb *hava* 'to have' is used to express the perfect tense (*eg havi etið* 'I have eaten'), while the verbs *verða* 'to become' and *blíva* 'to become' are used to express the passive (*maturin verður/blívur etin* 'the food is being eaten').

The auxiliaries *hava*, *verða* and *blíva* ('have', and 'become' respectively) are conjugated as below:

Figure 97

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'have'	'become'	'become'
INFINITIVE		-a	at	<i>hava</i>	<i>verða</i>	<i>blíva</i>
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st pers.	eg	<i>havi</i>	<i>verði</i>	<i>blívi</i>
		2nd pers.	tú	<i>hefur</i>	<i>verður</i>	<i>blívur</i>
		3rd pers.	hann, hon, tað	<i>hefur</i>	<i>verður</i>	<i>blívur</i>
	Plural	1st pers.	vit	<i>hava</i>	<i>verða</i>	<i>blíva</i>
		2nd pers.	tit (tygum)	<i>hava</i>	<i>verða</i>	<i>blíva</i>
		3rd pers.	teir, tær, tey	<i>hava</i>	<i>verða</i>	<i>blíva</i>

Imperative singular: *hav!*, *verð!*, *blív!*  
 Imperative plural: *havið!*, *verðið!*, *blívið!*  
 Present participle: *havandi*, *verðandi*, *blívandi*  
 Past participle: *havdur*, *vorðin*, *blivin*  
 Supine: *havl*

For details on the modal verbs, see Thráinsson et. al. (2004:305ff).

Deontic uses of the modal verb *kunna* are illustrated below, where (1a) expresses ability and (1b) permission. Epistemic use, expressing possibility is in (1d):

- (1a) *Eg kann ekki betala tær í dag*  
 'I cannot pay you today'  
 (1b) *Tit kunnu fara, um tit ekki drekka for nógv*  
 'You may go, if you do not drink too much'  
 (1c) *Tað kann henda, at vit fara heim*  
 it may be so that we are going home  
 'It may be the case that we are going home'

The verbs *eiga at* 'have to' and *mega* 'have to' express necessity and obligation:

- (2a) *Nú eigur hon at koma, annars verða vit ov sein*  
 'Now she has to come, otherwise we will be too late'  
 (2b) *Nú má hon koma, annars verða vit ov sein*  
 'Now she has to come, otherwise we will be too late'  
 (2c) *Vit eiga at fara heim nú*  
 'We must go home now'  
 (2d) *Vit mugu fara*  
 'We have to go'

The verbs *munna* 'will' and *vilja* 'want' express probability. *Vilja* may also express volition. In (3c) the subject is intended in the action, hence volition. In (3b) the subject is not intended in the action, as the verb has an epistemic sense expressing probability.

- (3a) *Hon man fara at gera tað, tað er einki at ivast í*  
 she will go to do it, it is nothing to doubt about  
 'She will do it. There is no doubt about that'  
 (3b) *Knøini vildu ekki bera hann, tí hann hevði drukkið for nógv*  
 the knees would not bear him because he had drunk too much  
 'His knees gave in because he had been drinking too much'  
 (3c) *Jógvan vildi hava hana*  
 Jógvan wanted have her  
 'Jógvan wanted her badly'

The modal verb *skula* 'shall' expresses report (4a, 4b), obligation (4c) and volition (4d):

- (4a) **Tað skal eitast at vera nógur kavi í Grønlandi**  
it shall be called to be much snow in Greenland  
'It is said that there is much snow in Greenland'
- (4b) **Eg var við tann túrin, tá ið Magni skuldi enda á sjónum**  
I was with that trip when Magni should be called to end on the sea  
'I was there when it was said that Magni should end up on the sea'
- (4c) **Mann skal halda tað, sum mann lovar**  
One shall hold it, that one promises  
'You must keep your promise'
- (4d) **Eg skal klára tað**  
'I shall make it'

#### 7.12.1. No infinitive marker in Faroese – infinitive marker in English

Note that Faroese has no infinitive marker (at) after these modal verbs, except for the verb *eiga at* (eg *eigi at gera tað* 'I have to do it').

Faroese	English
Eg má gera tað	'I have to do it'
Eg skal gera tað	'I have to do it'
Eg vil gera tað	'I want to do it'
Eg vil hava, at tú skrivar tað	'I want you to write it'

#### 7.12.2. Irrealis

Compare the two forms of *kunna* 'can' below and the main (non-finite) verb *detta/dottið* 'fall'. In (5a) the meaning is that Jógvan may fall, in (5b) that he could fall. In (5c) the meaning is that Jógvan could have fallen. It is not certain that he would have fallen, but he could have. When the modal verb is in the past tense as *kundi* + the supine *dottið*, the meaning tends to be irrealis. Irrealis indicates that something is not actually the case, that it is 'unreal'. It expresses an event which has not yet happened nor is it likely to happen. Otherwise the event may be far removed from the real course of events.

- (5a) **Jógvan kann detta**  
'Jógvan may fall'
- (5b) **Jógvan kundi detta**  
'Jógvan could fall'

- (5c) **Jógvan kundið dottið**  
'Jógvan could have fallen'

The following examples are all with a past tense modal + infinitive and supine.

- (6a) **Hann mundi fara til Havnar**  
'He probably went to Tórshavn'
- (6b) **Hann mundi farið til Havnar**  
'He almost went to Tórshavn'
- (6c) **Hann kundi fara til Havnar**  
'He could go to Tórshavn'
- (6d) **Hann kundi farið til Havnar**  
'He could have gone to Tórshavn'
- (6e) **Hann mátti fara til Havnar**  
'He had to go to Tórshavn'
- (6f) **Hann máttið farið til Havnar**  
'He should have gone to Tórshavn'
- (6g) **Hann skuldi fara til Havnar**  
'He should go to Tórshavn'
- (6h) **Hann skuldi farið til Havnar**  
'He should have gone to Tórshavn'
- (6i) **Hann átti at fara til Havnar**  
'He should go to Tórshavn'
- (6j) **Hann átti at farið til Havnar**  
'He should have gone to Tórshavn'

#### 7.13. The use of tenses

These are explained in the introduction to verbs in §7. Here is a summary:

The *present tense* is used to say something about the present as *eg fari* 'I am going'. Faroese does not have any *-ing* form, which is used in English to express something that happens continuously in the present. So *eg fari* means both 'I go' and 'I am going'. The preterite tense implies that the action took place in the past, as: *eg spældi guitar* 'I played the guitar'. It may also express possibility, that is 'I would play the guitar, if I could', cf. irrealis above.

The *perfect tenses* are composite tenses. The *present perfect* indicates recent past as **eg havi spælt guitar** 'I have played the guitar', while the *past perfect* as in **eg hevði spælt guitar** 'I had played the guitar', expresses that the action was completed before some other event. The past perfect is also used in Faroese, when the speaker wants to express irrealis, that is when one wants to express an event that has not happened, nor is it likely to happen, or it is far removed from the real course of events, compare English and Faroese:

- (1) **Um tú hevði gjørt lektiur, so hevði tú ikki dumpað**  
'If you had done your homework, you wouldn't have failed'

The *simple future* is created with the help of **skal** 'shall', as **eg skal skriva greinina** 'I shall write the article', or with **fara at** 'be going to', as **eg fari at skriva greinina** 'I'm going to write the article'.

#### 7.14. Infinitive

The infinitive marker is **at**, for example **at skriva** 'to write', **at lesa** 'to read'. When expressing a modal meaning, the infinitive marker is usually omitted.

- (2a) **Jóhanna skal lesa bókina**  
'Jóhanna must read the book'
- (2b) **Jóhanna skuldi lisið bókina**  
'Jóhanna should have read the book'

#### 7.15. Present participle

The present participle ends in **-andi**:

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'running'		
Sg.			
Nom.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi
Acc.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi
Dat.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi
Pl.			
Nom.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi
Acc.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi
Dat.	rennandi	rennandi	rennandi

The present participle is indeclinable.

Examples are:

- (1a) **Ein smílandi maður kom innar til hennara** (m. nom.)  
'A smiling man came to her'
- (1b) **Eg sá ein smílandi mann fara innar til hennara** (m. acc.)  
'I saw a smiling man go to her'
- (1c) **Hann fríggaði við einari smílandi konu** (f. dat.)  
'He flirted with a smiling woman'
- (1d) **Har eru fleiri ótolandi børn** (n. nom. pl.)  
'There are many intolerable children'

#### 7.16. Past participle: Form and use

Past participles in Faroese are formed by adding the following suffixes (note the corresponding English suffixes):

- ur to weak verbs (**kallaður** 'called', **valdur** 'elected', **dømdur** 'judged')
- in to strong verbs (**bitin** 'bitten', **sungin** 'sung').

	Verb	Past tense	Past participle	
(1)	kalla	kallaði	kallaður	} weak verbs
(2)	velja	valdi	valdur	
(3)	døma	dømdi	dømdur	
(4)	grógva	gróði	grógvin <sup>26</sup>	} strong verbs
(5)	bíta	beit	bitin	

The past participle is inflected like an adjective. In the case of the participles of weak verbs (1-3) the inflection is as in **stórir** 'big', that is class 1 adjectives; past participles of strong verbs are inflected like class 4 adjectives.

<sup>26</sup> **Grógva** is not a strong verb, but a new class that developed in Faroese due to the **-gv** insertion.

Figure 98

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'called'		
Sg.			
Nom.	kallaður	kallað	kallað
Acc.	kallaðan	kallaða <sup>27</sup>	kallað
Dat.	kallaðum	kallaðari	kallaðum
Pl.			
Nom.	kallaðir	kallaðar	kallaði
Acc.	kallaðar	kallaðar	kallaði
Dat.	kallaðum	kallaðum	kallaðum
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'bitten'		
Sg.			
Nom.	bitin	bitin	bitið
Acc.	bitnan	bitna	bitið
Dat.	bitnum	bitnari	bitnum
Pl.			
Nom.	bitnir	bitnar	bitin
Acc.	bitnar	bitnar	bitin
Dat.	bitnum	bitnum	bitnum

The past participle is used in the passive. It is typically formed with the auxiliary verb *verða* 'become', or its synonym *blíva* 'become'. (1a) is an active sentence, where the agent is *Jóna*, the patient *Bogi*. In the passive sentence, the patient (1b) has moved to the subject position of the sentence, whereas it was an object in the active sentence. So also in (1c) and (1d).

- (1a) *Jóna klipti Boga*  
'Jóna cut Bogi's hair'
- (1b) *Bogi varð/bleiv kliptur* (av *Jónu*)  
'Bogi's hair was cut' (by *Jóna*)
- (1c) *Jóna kysti Boga*  
'Jóna kissed Bogi'
- (1d) *Bogi varð/bleiv kystur* (av *Jónu*)  
'Bogi was kissed' (by *Jóna*)

<sup>27</sup> What is written as *-aða(r)* may be pronounced /-aja(ɹ)/ or /-ava(ɹ)/.

Note that *blíva* is more used in passive constructions in spoken Faroese.

In § 3.5. under the *dative*, we have listed some verbs in Faroese that require a dative object, as for example *hjálpa* 'help' and *stuðla* 'support'. In passive constructions these verbs usually require a nominative subject in Faroese:

- (2a) *Elin hjálpti gentuni yvir um vegin*  
'Elin helped the girl over the road'
- (2b) *Gentan varð/bleiv hjálpt yvir um vegin* (av *Elini*)  
'The girl was helped over the road' (by *Elin*)

The past participle is also used to express a state of affairs (the perfect tense with *vera*) as in:

- (3a) *Hann er farin til Onglands*  
'He has gone to England'
- (3b) *Hann er flogin*  
he has flown  
'He has gone'
- (3c) *Hundurin er dripin*  
'The dog has been killed'
- (3d) *Hann er sjúkur*  
'He is sick'

A construction with *hava* 'have' focuses on the action of flying itself:

- (4) *Hann hevur flogið nógv til Týsklands*  
'He has flown many times to Germany'

In (3a) and (3b) the function of the participle is the same as a regular predicative adjective, as becomes evident from (3e).

Past participle together with the verbs *verða* and *blíva* 'become' is also used to express a state or result:

- (5) *Hann er vorðin/blivin illa sjúkur*  
'He has become very sick'

### 7.17. Mood

There are only two moods in Faroese expressed formally by the verb: *indicative* and *imperative*. The forms of the indicative are given under the different inflectional classes above.

In the section on the different verb classes the imperative mood is listed. The rule is that imperative singular equals the verbal root, while *-ið* is added in the plural:

Infinitive	Imperative singular	Imperative plural
kalla 'to call'	kalla!	kallið!
velja 'to choose'	vel!	veljið!
døma 'to judge'	døm!	dømið!
rógva 'to row'	rógv!	rógvið!
bíta 'to bite'	bit!	bítið!

Faroese no longer has a formal suffix for the subjunctive mood, but there are a few relics remaining of the subjunctive in religious literature (for example, hymns, blessings and exhortations) and in fixed expressions and swearing, expressing optative modality ('may you...!').

Indicative	Subjunctive
Jesus signar heimið 'Jesus blesses the home'	Jesus signi heimið 'May Jesus bless the home'
Jesus fylgir tær 'Jesus is with you'	Jesus fylgi tær 'May Jesus be with you'
Gud signar Danmark 'God blesses Denmark'	Gud signi Danmark 'God bless Denmark'
Fanin brennur 'The Devil is burning'	Fanin brenni! 'May the Devil burn!' (curse = 'damn it!')

The subjunctive is expressed in Faroese by making use of a modal verb (irrealis) or by simple past tense:

- (1a) **Eg drap hundin**  
'I killed the dog' (past tense)  
'I'd kill the dog' – if I could (subjunctive reading)
- (1b) **Eg hevði dripið hundin** (past perf.)  
Lit.: I had killed the dog  
'I would have killed the dog' – if I could (subjunctive, unreal reading)

Modality is also expressed by making use of the modal verbs, as the following examples show:

- (2a) **Kann eg sleppa at koyra bilin?**  
'May I drive the car?'

Note also the difference between (3a) and (3b):

- (3a) **Hann mundi fara**  
He would go  
'Perhaps he went away'
- (3b) **Hann mundi farið**  
He would gone  
'He almost went away'

### 7.18. Middle-voice

St-verbs are verbs (middle-voice), where *-st* is added, see below.

Figure 99

Inflection of middle-voice, present tense.

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'call'	'take'	
INFINITIVE		-ast	at	kallast	takast	
PRESENT TENSE	Singular	1st person	eg	kallist	takist	
		2nd person	tú	kallast	tekst	
		3rd person	hann, hon	kallast	tekst	
	Plural	1st person	vit	kallast	takast	
		2nd person	-ast	tit (tygum)	kallast	takast
		3rd person	-ast	teir, tær, tey	kallast	takast

Figure 100

Inflection of middle-voice, the preterite tense:

VERB FORMS		ENDING	EXAMPLES	'call'	'take'
INFINITIVE		-ast	at	kallast	takast
PRETERITE	Singular	1st person	eg	kallaðist	tókst
		2nd person	tú	kallaðist	tókst
		3rd person	hann, hon	kallaðist	tókst
	Plural	1st person	vit	kallaðust	tókust
		2nd person	tit (tygum)	kallaðust	tókust
		3rd person	teir, tær, tey	kallaðust	tókust

The -st forms have various meanings. There are the following readings:

1. reflexive reading
2. reciprocal reading
3. modal reading
4. middle (or passive reading)

Reflexive reading is in (1a) and (1b), where the meaning is that Jógvan got himself up from the table, and Maria sat herself down.

- (1a) **Jógvan reistist frá borðinum**  
 Jógvan got himself up from the table  
 'Jógvan got up from the table'
- (1b) **Maria settist niður**  
 Maria sat herself down  
 'Maria sat down'

Reciprocal meaning can be translated with English *each other*:

- (2a) **Jógvan og Marjun mussaðust**  
 'Jóhan and Marjun kissed each other'
- (2b) **Jógvan og Marjun bitast og klórast allan dagin**  
 'Jógvan and Marjun bite and scratch each other all day long'
- (2c) **Prestur og læknin heilsaðust**  
 'The priest and the doctor greeted each other'

A modal reading is in (3)

- (3a) **Tað kemst ikki upp á land har**  
 'It is not possible to get up on land there'
- (3b) **Hagar kemst ikki**  
 there comes not  
 'It is not possible to go there'
- (3c) **Hagar slepst ikki**  
 there permitted not  
 'It is not possible to go there'

A passive meaning is in (4):

- (4a) **Hon hoyrdist rópa 'hjálp!'**  
 'She was heard yelling 'help!'
- (4b) **Hatta rópast fyri leti**  
 'That is called laziness'

### 7.19. The Passive voice

Passive is formed with the verbs **verða** and **blíva** 'become' + a participle form of the verb:

**Hann verður dripin** 'He is killed'  
**Hann blívur dripin** 'He is killed'

In (1) **Jógvan** is the AGENT, while **lampuna** is the PATIENT. The AGENT **Jógvan** is the subject of the sentence, while the PATIENT is the direct object.

- (1) **Jógvan tendrar lampuna**  
 AGENT PATIENT  
 Subj. Obj.  
 'Jógvan switches the lamp on'

In a passive construction, the PATIENT changes position from being the object of the sentence to becoming the subject, but it is still the PATIENT as in (2), whereas the AGENT can either be left out or expressed by means of a prepositional phrase:

- (2) **Lampan varð tundrað (av Jógvani)**  
 'The lamp was switched on (by Jógvan)'

This is the typical active – passive pattern in Faroese as well as in for example English and many other languages.

The example above is with a verb that requires an accusative object: **tendrar lampuna** (acc.), and most verbs in Faroese take an accusative object. The following verbs take a dative object:

**bjarga** ‘save’, **bjóða** ‘invite’, **dugna** ‘help’, **fagna** ‘welcome’, **forða** ‘prevent’, **fylgja** ‘follow’, **gagnast** ‘be useful to’, **heilsa** ‘greet’, **hjálpa** ‘help’, **líkjast** ‘resemble’, **líva** ‘protect’, ‘spare’, **miskunna** ‘pity’, ‘have mercy on’, **møta** ‘meet’, **náa** ‘reach’, **nærkast** ‘get closer to’, **prísa** ‘praise’, **ráða** ‘have control over’, **rósa** ‘praise’, **skemta** ‘entertain’, **skýla** ‘protect’, **snúgva** ‘turn’, **steðga** ‘stop’, **stjórna** ‘govern’, ‘direct’, **stuðla** ‘support’, **stýra** ‘govern’, ‘steer’, **stevna** ‘summon before the court’, **takka** ‘thank’, **tarna** ‘delay’, **trúgva** ‘believe’.

The example (3b) with the verb **steðga** ‘stop’ shows the same pattern as a regular accusative verb in passivisation, that is, the passivised subject is in the nominative case:

- (3a) **Maðurin steðgaði konuni**  
 AGENT                      PATIENT  
 Subj.(nom.)      Obj. (dat.)  
 ‘The man stopped the woman’

- (3b) **Konan varð steðgað (av manninum)**  
 PATIENT                      AGENT  
 Subj. (nom.)              Prepositional Phrase  
 ‘The woman was stopped (by the man)’

Some dative object verbs show a different pattern, that is, the dative object preserves its dative case when it becomes the subject of the sentence. The verbs in question are **bíða** ‘wait’, **dugna** ‘help’, **takka** ‘thank’ and **trúgva** ‘believe’.

- (4a) **Maðurin takkaði konuni**  
 AGENT                      PATIENT  
 Nom.                      Dat.  
 ‘The man thanked the woman’

- (4b) **Konuni varð takkað**  
 PATIENT  
 Dat.  
 ‘The woman was thanked’

Ditransitive verbs have two objects: an indirect object in the dative and a direct object in the accusative. For example:

- (5) **Eg skrivaði henni eitt bræv**  
 I wrote her (dat.) a letter (acc.)  
 ‘I wrote her a letter’

In these constructions the direct object is typically promoted to subject position in the nominative case, whereas the dative object remains in the dative:

- (6) **Eitt bræv varð skrivað henni**  
 A letter (nom.) was written her (dat.)  
 ‘A letter was written to her’

But some speakers accept a construction like (7) below:

- (7) **Henni varð eitt bræv skrivað**  
 Her (dat.) was a letter (acc.) written  
 ‘A letter was written to her’

The impersonal passive is found with certain intransitive verbs such as **dansa** ‘to dance’. In (8a), the active sentence, there is no object. **Alla náttina** ‘all night’ is an adverbial phrase telling us when they danced. In the passive we find the empty **tað** ‘there’ in the subject position (8b), or no subject at all (8c), and no prepositional phrase at all:

- (8a) **Jógvan og Marjun dansaðu alla náttina**  
 ‘Jógvan and Marjun danced all night’  
 (8b) **Tað varð dansað alla náttina (\*av Jógvani og Marjun)**  
 ‘It was danced all night (\*by Jógvan and Marjun)  
 (8c) **Dansað varð alla náttina (\*av Jógvani og Marjun)**  
 ‘Danced was all night (\*by Jógvan and Marjun).

## 7.20. Compound verbs

There are different ways of making compound verbs in Faroese. The most usual compounds are:

- adjective + verb (**fríanga** ‘take time of’)
- adverb/particle + verb (**avgera** ‘decide’).
- verb + numeral (**tvíbýta** ‘divide into two’)
- verb + the pronoun **sjálv-** ‘self’ + verb (**sjáldoyggja** ‘die of sickness’ usually of animals; rare), **sjáldrepa** ‘commit suicide’.
- and then verbs with prefixes like:



- o **be-** (*bedraga* 'deceive' < Dan. *bedrage*)
- o **er-** (*erkenna* 'acknowledge' < Dan. *erkende*)
- o **for-** (*forbanna* 'curse' < Dan. *forbände*)
- o **mis-** (*miskunna* 'show mercy')
- o **van-** (*vanhalga* 'profane')

Many compound verbs in Faroese are borrowed from Danish, for example *afvise* 'reject' > *avvís*. Some writers prefer un-compounded verbs instead of compounds, as *gera av* 'decide' instead of *avgera*, in order to avoid the appearance of a Danish borrowing.

In the following section we will list inseparable compound verbs, separable compound verbs and verbs that have either separable or inseparable prefixes. Note that we only deal with verb + particle (*gera av* 'decide') or particle/verb *avgera* 'decide', or verb + adverb *blaka út* 'throw out'.

### 7.20.1. Inseparable compounds

The following verbs are inseparable compounds. They are generally Danish loans, and it is not possible to have the verb in an un-compounded form (for example: *avheinta* 'fetch', but not *\*heinta av* 'fetch').

Compound	Meaning		
<i>avdúka</i>	'reveal'	<i>innleiða</i>	'begin'
<i>avgeva</i>	'give up'	<i>innloysa</i>	'cash'
<i>avheinta</i>	'fetch'	<i>innrømma</i>	'admit'
<i>avklára</i>	'clarify'	<i>innsiggja</i>	'realise'
<i>avlasta</i>	'relieve'	<i>innibera</i>	'involve'
<i>avleiða</i>	'deflect'	<i>íleggja</i>	'invest'
<i>avlurta</i>	'bug'	<i>írokna</i>	'count', 'include'
<i>avskaffa</i>	'abolish'	<i>medundirrita</i>	'counter-sign'
<i>avsløra</i>	'unveil'	<i>medvirka</i>	'take part in'
<i>avspáka</i>	'take time off'	<i>mótsvara</i>	'correspond to'
<i>avspegla</i>	'reflect'	<i>niðurgera</i>	'put down'; 'crush'
<i>avtofta</i>	'ruin'	<i>pástanda</i>	'claim'
<i>avtrappa</i>	'scale down'	<i>samanfata</i>	'summarise'
<i>avviga</i>	'weigh'	<i>samanhalda</i>	'compare'
<i>avvís</i>	'refuse'	<i>samankoyra</i>	'join'
<i>eftirkanna</i>	'check'	<i>samanskryva</i>	'compile'
<i>eftirlata</i>	'abandon'	<i>tilegna</i>	'acquire'
<i>eftirútbúgva</i>	'train further'	<i>tilføra</i>	'inject'
<i>framskunda</i>	'speed up'	<i>tilflyta</i>	'extend'
<i>framstilla</i>	'give an account of'	<i>tilkalla</i>	'send for'
<i>framtúra</i>	'persist in'	<i>tilkoma</i>	'get'
<i>frábiðja</i>	'won't have something'	<i>tilláta</i>	'allow'
<i>fráskriva</i>	'renounce'	<i>tilogna</i>	'dedicate'
<i>fyriliggi</i>	'be'	<i>tilsiga</i>	'promise'
<i>fyriskriva</i>	'lay down'	<i>tilseta</i>	'add'
<i>fyriláa</i>	'suggest'	<i>tiltrekkja</i>	'attract'
<i>fyristilla</i>	'imagine'	<i>umstilla</i>	'adapt'
<i>fyritrekkja</i>	'prefer'	<i>undirbyggja</i>	'support'; 'substantiate'
<i>gjøgnumføra</i>	'carry through'	<i>undirgrava</i>	'undermine'
<i>gjøgnumskoða</i>	'see through'	<i>undirorðna</i>	'subordinate'
<i>inndraga</i>	'cancel'	<i>undirtrykkja</i>	'suppress', 'put down'
<i>innfría</i>	'fulfill'	<i>uppdraga</i>	'bring up'
		<i>uppfanga</i>	'intercept'; 'catch'

uppfata	'understand', 'grasp'	útrusta	'equip'
uppfordra	'request'	útspæla	'outplay'
uppfylla	'meet'	útstrála	'radiate'
uppføra seg	'behave'	úttrykkja	'express'
upplára	'clear up'	útveksla	'exchange'
uppkrevja	'collect'	útvikla	'develop'
uppmuntra	'cheer up'	viðkenna	'acknowledge'
uppnáa	'gain'	viðvirka	'take part in'; 'appear'
upprætta	'set up'	yvirdríva	'exaggerate'
uppsita	'take care of'	yvirfalla	'attack', 'assault'
uppskúla	'educate further'	yvirfiggja	'overfund'
uppstanda	'be'; 'come into existence'	yvirfóðra	'overfeed'
upptraðka	'appear'	yvirnáttu	'stay overnight'
uppviga	'counterbalance'	yvirhalda	'keep'
útdjúpa	'go into detail about'	yvirkoma	'manage'
útiloka	'shut out'	yvirlappa	'overlap'
útilukka	'shout out'	yvirlíva	'survive'
útleiða	'deduce'	yvirsíggja	'overlook'
útlöysa	'release'	yvirskoða	'cope with'
útmerka seg	'distinguish oneself'	yvirspæla	'overact'
útnýtta	'use', 'exploit'	yvirstreyma	'overflow'
útrópa	'proclaim'	yvirtulka	'over-interpret'

### 7.20.2. Separable compounds

These verbs are generally made up of a verb + an adverb (not, as in the other cases, a verb + a particle).

Separable	Meaning	Impossible
binda fyrri	'tie'	*fyribinda
bjóða inn	'invite indoors'	*innbjóða
blaka út	'throw out'	*útbلاكa
blanda saman	'mix together'	?samanblanda
blíva burtur	'disappear'	*burturblíva
bora ígjøgnum	'bore through'	*íggjøgnumbora
býta upp	'take (one chess piece for another)'	*uppbýta
døma frá	'confiscate'	*frádøma
draga á	'hesitate'	*ádraga
draga frá	'take away from'	*frádraga

fara frá	'go away from', 'leave'	*fráfara
festu saman	'tie together'	?samanfesta
flætta saman	'weave'	*?samanflætta
flakka um	'wander'	*umflakka
flyta frá	'move out of'	*fráflyta
flyta til	'move to'	*tilflyta
frysta úti	'freeze out'	?útifrysta
grava niður	'bury'	?niðurgrava
greiða frá	'explain'	*frágreiða
grógva til	'grow'	*tilgrógva
halda fram	'continue'	*framhalda
hefta við	'attach'	*viðhefta
heingja út	'denounce'	?útheingja
herja á	'attack'	*áherja
høgga upp	'break up'; 'scrap'	*upphøgga
hølva av	'trash soundly'	?avhølva
klæða í	'dress in'	?íklæða
knýta saman	'tie together'	*?samanknýta
koyra á	'run over'	*ákoyra
koyra til	'run in'	?tilkoyra
koyra yvir	'run over'	*yvirkoyra
læna út	'lend'	?útlána
læsa niður	'lock away'	*niðurlæsa
lesa upp	'unlock'	*upplæsa
leypa á	'attack'	*áleypa
liggja undir	'lose'; 'flood'	*undirliggja
melda til	'enroll'	?tilmelda
møta upp	'appear', 'arrive'	*uppmøta
pakka út	'unpack'	*útpakka
prenta á	'print on'	*áprenta
ríva niður	'tear down'	?niðurríva
rokna við	'include'	*viðrokna
senda til	'send to'	*tilsenda
seta frá	'dismiss'	*fráseta
sigja frá	'tell'	*frásiga
síggja burtur frá	'ignore'	*burturfrásíggja
skelda út	'scold'	?útskelda
skola út	'be taken by the surf'	*útskola
sláa upp	'put up', 'stick up'	*uppsláa
slappa av	'relax'	*avslappa
sleppa út	'get out'	*útsleppa

slúka upp	'swallow up'
springa út	'jump out'
steðga upp	'stop dead'
strika út	'cross out'
svara til	'correspond'
tekna upp	'note down'
telja við	'count in', 'include'
treingja til	'need'
trekkja út	'draw out'
trykkja á	'print on'
trýsta saman	'press together'
víkja frá	'depart from'

*uppslúka
*útspringa
*uppsteðga
*útsrika
*tilsvara
*upptekna
*viðtelja
*tiltreingja
*úttrekkja
*átrykkja
*?samantrýsta
*frávikja

### 7.20.3. Either compound or separable

The following verbs are some of the more frequent verbs that can be either compounds or separable:

Compound	Separable	Meaning
afturhalda	halda aftur	'hold back'
afturkalla	kalla aftur	'call back'
afturrinda	rinda aftur	'pay back'
afturvelja	velja aftur	'reelect'
afturvísa	vísa aftur	'not accept'
avlesa	lesa av	'read'
avmerkja	merkja av	'mark out'
avpróva	próva av	'test'
avrunda	runda av	'round off'
avseta	seta av	'reserve'
avslutta	slutta av	'finish'
áleggja	leggja á	'instruct'; 'direct'
burturbeina	beina burtur	'clear'
burturleiga	leiga burtur	'rent'
burturluta	luta burtur	'dispose'
burturvísa	vísa burtur	'exclude'
sundurbyta	býta sundur	'divide'
eftirapa	apa eftir	'imitate'
eftirgeva	geva eftir	'release'
eftirhalda	halda eftir	'hinder'
eftirkanna	kanna eftir	'reexamine'

eftirlýsa	lýsa eftir	'ask for'
?eftirspyrja	spyrja eftir	'ask for'
framala	ala fram	'grow'
framganga	ganga fram	'appear'
fráboða	boða frá	'inform'
fráráða	ráða frá	'advise not to do'
frásiga sær	sigu frá sær	'renounce'
frávelja	velja frá	'do without'
fyriganga seg	ganga fyrir seg	'occur'
fyríkoma	koma fyrir	'occur'
?fyritaka	taka fyrir	'do something'
gjøgnumarbeiða	arbeiða gjögnum	'work through'
gjögnumganga	ganga ígjögnum	'go through'
gjögnumlesa	lesa ígjögnum	'read through'
gjögnumseyra	seyra ígjögnum	'permeate through'
innflyta	flyta inn	'import'
innhegna	hegna inn	'fence'
innheinta	heinta inn	'catch up with'
innkalla	kalla inn	'call in'
innkrevja	krevja inn	'demand payment of'
innsavna	savna inn	'collect'
innsenda	senda inn	'send in'
innstillta	stillta inn	'adjust'
inniloka	loka inni	'enclose'
innisperra	sperra inni	'shut in'
íresta	resta í	'be short of'
mótarbeiða	arbeiða móti	'work against'
mótstríða	stríða ímóti	'resist'
móttaka	taka ímót	'receive'
mótviga	viga mót	'weigh against'
mótvirka	virka mót	'counteract'
niðurbróta	bróta niður	'tear down'
niðurfella	fella niður	'write down'
niðurfrysta	frysta niður	'freeze'
niðurgjalda	gjalda niður	'pay down'
niðurleggja	leggja niður	'close down'; 'de-escalate'
niðurpína	pína niður	'torment'
niðurtrappa	trappa niður	'step down'
niðurskriva	skriva niður	'write down'
samanbinda	binda saman	'tie together'
samankalla	kalla saman	'call together'

samanleggja	leggja saman	'unite'
samanlíkna	líkna saman	'compare'
samanseta	seta saman	'assemble'; 'put together'
samanskrúva	skrúva saman	'screw together'
samansjóða	sjóða saman	'compile'
samantvinna	tvinna saman	'compile'
samanvevja	vevja saman	'mix together'; 'blend'
sundurgreina	greina sundur	'divide'; 'group'
sundurliða	liða sundur	'specify'
sundurkilja	skilja sundur	'cut up'
tilbúgva	búgva til	'prepare'
tilevna	evna til	'make'
tilgera	gera til	'prepare'
tillaga	laga til	'adjust'
tilluta	luta til	'assign'
tilpassa seg	passa seg til	'adjust'
tilteinkja sær	teinkja sær til	'indent'
tilvirka	virka til	'make', 'manufacture'
gjøgnumtreingja	treingja gjøgnum	'penetrate'
umbiðja	biðja um	'ask for'
umbróta	bróta um	'make up'
umbyggja	byggja um	'rebuild'
umbýta	býta um	'exchange'
umfevna	fevna um	'include'
umgera	gera um	'redo'
umhugsa	hugsa um	'think about'
umleggja	leggja um	'change the order of priorities'
undirstrika	strika undir	'emphasize'
uppala	ala upp	'bring up'
upparbeiða	arbeiða upp	'work up'
uppbyggja	byggja upp	'build up'; 'edify'
uppfinna	finna upp	'invent'
uppfostra	fostra upp	'bring up'
upprísa	fríska upp	'revive'; 'brush up', 'renew'
uppgera	gera upp	'add up'
uppgæva	geva up	'give up'
upphita	hita up	'heat', 'warm up'
uppkalla	kalla upp	'name after'
uppkæpa	keypa upp	'buy up'
uppsiga	sigga upp	'give notice'

uppskipa	skipa upp	'unload'
upptaka	taka upp (í)	'incorporate'
uppvænja	vænja upp	'train up'
útbjóða	bjóða út	'offer'
útbreiða	breiða út	'spread'
útbýggja	byggja út	'enlarge'
útflyta	flyta út	'export'
útfolda seg	folda seg út	'show'
útgera	gera út	'equip'
útgeva	geva út	'publish'
útgjalda	gjalda út	'pay out'
úthola	hola út	'hollow out'
úthvafa	hvafa út	'smooth'
útleiga	leiga út	'rent out'
útluta	luta út	'distribute'
útpeika	peika út	'point out'
útrokna	rokna út	'work out'
útrudda	rudda út	'wipe out'
útsenda	senda út	'send out'
útskifta	skifta út	'replace'
útskilja	skilja út	'secrete'
útskjóta	skjóta út	'postpone'
útskriva	skriva út	'write out'
útstilla	stilla út	'show'
útstykka	stykka út	'parcel out'
útvelja	velja út	'select'; 'single out'
viðfæra	færa við sær	'cause'
viðkoma	koma við	'concern'
viðleggja	leggja við	'attach'

### 7.21. Some problem verbs

Here we shall look at some common English verbs with two or more different meanings (or verbs) in Faroese.

(1) **ask**

spyrja \_\_\_\_\_ enquire  
Vit spurdu hann, hvussu hann æt  
'We asked him what he was called'

biðja \_\_\_\_\_ beg, request  
Hon bað hann fara heim  
'She asked him to go home'

spyrja \_\_\_\_\_ ask (question)  
Lærarin spurdi tey fimm spurningar  
'The teacher asked them five questions'

(2) **be**

vera \_\_\_\_\_ indicating a fact or a state  
Jógvan er lærari  
'Jógvan is a teacher'

blíva/verða \_\_\_\_\_ be (in the future), become  
Tú mást ikki blíva/verða illur, tá ið...  
'You must not be angry, when...'

blíva/verða \_\_\_\_\_ with passive constructions  
Høski varð bitin av føroyskum  
'Høski was fascinated by Faroese'

Høski varð bitin av hundinum  
'Høski was bitten by the dog'

liggja \_\_\_\_\_ geographical position  
Hvar liggur Havnin?  
'Where is Tórshavn?'

kosta \_\_\_\_\_ cost  
Hvussu nógv kostar handa teldan?  
'How much is that computer?'

(3) **change**

broyta, forandra alter, make a change  
Eg broytti eitt sindur í handritinum  
'I changed a few things in the manuscript'

Hon hevur ikki broytt seg  
'She has not changed'

býta \_\_\_\_\_ exchange, swap  
Tey býttu um pláss  
'They changed places'

skifta \_\_\_\_\_ change trains/buses/clothes/gear  
Tey skiftu tok í Hamborg  
'They changed trains in Hamburg'

Hon skifti klæðir tvær ferðir um dagin  
'She changed clothes two times a day'

Í undanbrekku skifta vit gir  
'Downhill we change gear'

veksla \_\_\_\_\_ change money  
Maria vekslaði eururnar um til krónur  
'Maria changed the euros into krónur'

(4) **go**

fara \_\_\_\_\_ travel  
Tey fóru til Týsklands  
'They went to Germany'

Marsanna og Tummas fóru heim  
'Marsanna and Tummas went home'

fara \_\_\_\_\_ walk away, progress of things  
Tað gongur støðugt aftur á hondina  
it goes steady back on hand-the  
'Things are going pretty badly'

Tað gongur fínt  
'It is going fine'

koyra public transport, car etc.

Bussurinn koyrir til Havnar

'The bus goes to Tórshavn'

blíva, verða turn (+adjective)

Jóhannis varð reyður sum ein tomat av øði

'Jóhannis went red as a tomato with anger'

(5) **grow**

dyrka produce (in the soil); transitive

Vit dyrka tomatir

'We grow tomatoes'

vaksa in the soil; intransitive

Planturnar vaksa væl í havanum

'The plants grow well in the garden'

vaksa increase in size or number

Træið er vaksið heilt nógv í síðstuni

'The tree has grown quite a lot lately'

vaksa, økjast increase in degree or number

Spenningurin økist

'The excitement grows'

Talið á hundaeigarum økist

'The number of dog owners is growing'

blíva gradually become (+adjective)

Hon bleiv vakrari við aldrinum

'She grew prettier with age'

But:

Hon eldist

'She is growing older'

(6) **know**

vita know (a fact)

Eg veit ikki

'I don't know'

Tað veit eg ikki

'I don't know about that'

Veitst tú, nær flúgvarin fer?

'Do you know when the plane leaves?'

kenna know (someone), be acquainted with

Kennir tú Bjøll?

'Do you know Bjøll?'

duga languages, ability (how to)

Dugir tú føroyskt?

'Do you know Faroese?'

Dugir tú kongaraðið?

'Do you know the list of monarchs?'

(7) **live**

búgva dwell, reside

Hon býr í Hamburg

'She lives in Hamburg'

liva be alive, conduct one's life

Livir hann enn?

'Is he still alive?'

Hann hevur einki at liva upp til

'He has nothing to live up to'

(8) **put**

leggja place (horizontal)

Hon legði bókina á borðið

'She put the book on the table'

seta place (upright)

Hon setti vasan á borðið

'She put the vase on the table'

koyra place in general; insert

Koyra frímerkir á brævið

'Put stamps on the envelope'

Hann koyrði hondina í lumman  
'He put his hand in his pocket'

- (9) **see**  
síggja \_\_\_\_\_ of vision  
Sært tú handa reyða bilin?  
'Can you see the red car?'

hitta, mæta \_\_\_\_\_ meet (by chance)  
Eg hittu Hallgrím á Oyrargjógv  
'I saw Hallgrímur at Oyrargjógv'

fáa orð á, tosa við \_\_\_\_\_ meet (by arrangement)  
Kann eg fáa orð á stjóran?  
'Could I see the manager?'

Kann eg sleppa at tosa við stjóran?  
'Could I please see the manager?'

skilja \_\_\_\_\_ understand, get it  
Eg skilji  
'I see'

NB also the interjections *so, so* and *ná ná* and *ja, ja*, meaning 'I see' in the sense of understanding.

- (10) **stop**  
steðga \_\_\_\_\_ bring to halt (trans.)  
Jógvan steðgaði bilinum  
'Jógvan stopped the car'
- steðga \_\_\_\_\_ come to a halt (intrans.)  
Bilurin steðgaði  
'The car stopped'
- gevast við \_\_\_\_\_ cease  
Hann gavst við at roykja  
'He stopped smoking'
- Hann gavst við at drekka  
'He stopped drinking'

- (11) **think**  
hugsa um, teinkja \_\_\_\_\_ ponder (indicating brain activity)  
Hugsar tú oftani um meg?  
'Do you often think about me?'

Teinkir tú ofta um meg?  
'Do you often think about me?'

halda \_\_\_\_\_ believe (indicating uncertainty)  
Eg haldi, at Føroyar fara at vinna  
'I think that the Faroe Islands are going to win'

halda \_\_\_\_\_ be of the opinion (based on experience)  
Hann heldur, at bókin er góð  
'He thinks that the book is good'

Heldur tú tað?  
'Do you really think that?'

- (12) **want**  
vilja \_\_\_\_\_ desire, wish  
Vit vilja ikki síggja handa filmin  
'We do not want to see that movie'

vilja hava \_\_\_\_\_ insist on having  
Eg vil hava eitt vínglas  
'I want a glass of wine'

## 8. Prepositions

Prepositions in English are words like 'in', 'on', 'with', 'from' and so on. They are followed by a noun phrase, for example 'in the boat' or 'on an aeroplane'. Prepositions in Faroese govern either the accusative, the dative or, very rarely, the genitive. They never govern the nominative.<sup>28</sup>

(a) Prepositions governing the accusative (see §8.1):

aftan	hasumegin	kring	sunnan
aftanvert	hesumegin	niðan	um
ábeint	hóast	norðan	umframt
áraka	hvørgumegin	oman	umhvørvis
báðumegin	høgrumegin	síðan(i)	umkring
eystan	ígjøgnum	sínumegin	vinstrumegin
foruttan	íkring	skeivumegin	vestan
gjøgnum		somumegin	øðrumegin

(b) Prepositions governing the accusative or the (old, extinct) genitive:

innan	millum	uttan	til vegna
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(c) Prepositions governing the dative (see §8.2):

afrat	at	móti	undan
afturat	av	mótvegis	úr
afturímóti	frá	nær	viðvíkjandi
andstøðis	hjá	nærhendis	
andsýnis	ímóti	nærindis	

(d) Prepositions governing the dative or the accusative:

á	fyrí	undir	yvir
eftir	í	við	

### 8.1. Prepositions governing the accusative

(1a) **aftan** 'behind'

**Standa hendur aftan bak**  
'Stand with one's hands behind one's back'

(1b) **aftanvert** '(right) behind'

**Aftanvert húsini stendur bilurin**  
'The car is parked right behind the house'

(1c) **ábeint** 'opposite'

**Urgan stendur ábeint vindeygað**  
'The organ is opposite the window'

(1d) **áraka** 'opposite'

**Áraka húsini er ein á**  
'Opposite to the house there is a river'

(1e) **foruttan** 'outside', 'without'

**Foruttan fjáltur**  
'Without fear'

(1f) **gjøgnum** 'through'

**Hamarin fór ígjøgnum rútin**  
'The hammer went through the window'

(1g) **hóast** 'despite'

**Hóast tað høga arbeiðsloysið í Íslandi, flyti eg ikke heim til Føroya**

'Despite the high rate of unemployment in Iceland, I'm not moving home to the Faroes'

(1h) **ígjøgnum** 'through'

**Barnið rann ígjøgnum boin**  
'The child ran through the field'

<sup>28</sup> There is example of PP + nominative: *Hvat fyrí bók er henda?* 'What kind of book is this?'



(1i) íkring	'around', 'round'
	<b>Alt landið íkring Golanheyggjarnar</b> 'All the land around the Golan Heights'
(1j) kring	'around'
	<b>Kring mánan</b> 'Around the moon'
(1k) niðan	'up'
	<b>Vit ganga niðan brekkuna</b> 'We are walking up the hill'
(1l) oman	'down'
	<b>Vit fara oman brekkuna</b> 'We are going down the hill'
(1m) síðan(i)	'since'
	<b>Eg havi ikki sæð hana síðani skurðin</b> 'I haven't seen her since the operation'
(1n) um	see §8.1.3.
(1o) umframt	'in addition to'
	<b>Tvey umframt meg</b> 'Two in addition to me'
(1p) umhvervis	'around'
	<b>Umhvervis Sandavág standa fjöllini</b> 'Around Sandavágur are the mountains'
(1q) umkring	'around'
	<b>Sita umkring eitt borð</b> 'To sit around a table'

### 8.1.1. Prepositions ending in *-megin*

The following prepositions end in *-megin*, all governing the accusative with meanings related to 'side'.

(2a) báðumegin	'on both sides'
	<b>Har voru áir báðumegin fjallið</b> 'There were rivers on both sides of the mountain'
(2b) hasumegin	'on that side of'
	<b>Tú skalt sita hasumegin meg</b> 'You shall sit on that side of me'
(2c) hesumegin	'on this side'
	<b>Tú skalt sita hesumegin beiggja tín</b> 'You shall sit on this side of your brother'
(2d) hvørgumegin	'on neither side'
	<b>Hvørgumegin borðið voru stólar</b> 'On neither side of the table were there any chairs'
(2e) høgumegin	'on the right(-hand) side of', 'to the right of'
	<b>Tú skalt sita høgumegin brúðrina</b> 'You shall sit on the right-hand side of the bride'
(2f) sínumegin	'on their side of'
	<b>Teir arbeiða sínumegin havan</b> 'They work on their side of the garden'
(2g) skeivumegin	'on the wrong side of'
	<b>Brúðgómurin situr skeivumegin brúðrina</b> 'The bridegroom sits on the wrong side of the bride'
(2h) somumegin	'on the same side of'
	<b>Øll standa somumegin barrin</b> 'Everyone is standing at the same side of the bar'

(2i) **vinstrumegin** 'on the left(-hand) side of', 'to the left of'

**Tú skalt standa vinstrumegin brúðrina**  
'You'll stand on the left side of the bride'

(2j) **øðrumegin** 'on one side of'

**Tað liggja eini hús øðrumegin girðingina**  
'There is a house on one side of the fence'

### 8.1.2. Prepositions derived from *eystur*, *vestur*, *norður* and *suður*

The adverbs *eystur* 'east', *vestur* 'west', *norður* 'north' and *suður* 'south' can take the suffix *-an*, resulting in a preposition with locative meaning. These prepositions are mostly used with place-names.

Adverb	Preposition
<i>eystur</i> 'east'	<i>eystan</i> <i>Á</i> 'to the east of <i>Á</i> '
<i>vestur</i> 'west'	<i>vestan</i> <i>Fjall</i> 'to the west of <i>Fjall</i> '
<i>norður</i> 'north'	<i>norðan</i> <i>Skarð</i> 'to the north of <i>Skarð</i> '
<i>suður</i> 'south'	<i>sunnan</i> <i>Hús</i> 'to the south of <i>Hús</i> '

### 8.1.3. Various uses of *um*

(3a) 'around'

**Dansa um gullkálvin**  
'Dance around the golden calf'

(3b) 'travelling through'

**Ferðast um flogvøllin**  
'Travel through the airport'

(3c) 'around or over an enclosed area'

**Mala um gólvið**  
'Potter about the floor'

(3d) 'around', 'past'

**Sigla um nesið**  
'Sail around the peninsula'

(3e) 'across'

**Flyta seyð um fjørðin**  
'Transport sheep across the fjord'

(3f) 'by'

**Tey sótu lið um lið**  
'They sat side by side'

(3g) 'over'

**Tey duttu hvørt um annað**  
'They fell over each other'

(3h) 'during', 'through'

**Um veturin**  
'During the winter'

(3i) 'within'

**Um ein mánað**  
'Within a month'

(3j) 'past', 'longer than'

**Tað leið út um Ólavsøku, áðrenn tey fóru**  
'It was past Ólavsøka before they left'

(3k) 'about', 'roughly'

**Har vóru um tveyhundrað seyðir**  
'There were about two hundred sheep'

(3l) 'about', 'concerning'

**Tosa um onkran**  
'Talk about somebody'

**Tey atkvøddu um uppskotið**  
'They voted on the proposal'

(3m) 'for'  
**Dysturinn um fyrsta plássið**  
'The game / match for first place'

(3n) 'over', 'around' (body parts)  
**Vaska sær um ennið**  
'Wash one's forehead'

**Skitinn um hálsinn**  
'Dirty around the neck'

#### 8.1.4. The preposition *til*

The preposition **til** 'to' usually governs a noun in the accusative. However, the genitive is found in certain set expressions (and often with place-names). The preposition **til** governs the genitive form of the personal pronouns (for example, **til hansara** 'to him', **til hennara** 'to her', **til teirra** 'to them').

Examples with the accusative:

(4a) **'To' movement to a place**  
**Hann bar fóðrið yfir til hundinn**  
'He carried the food over to the dog'

(4b) **Participation**  
**Anna og María ganga til seyming**  
'Anna and María go to sewing classes'

(4c) **Change of state**  
**Dvørgurinn umskapaði Hendrik til stein**  
'The dwarf transformed Hendrik into stone'

(4d) **Concerning studies**  
**Vár ætlar at læra til prest og Ólavur til lækna**  
'Vár plans to study to become a priest, and Ólavur a doctor'

(4e) **Time**  
**Vit bíða til miðnátt, so fara vit**  
'We will wait until midnight, then we are leaving'

(4f) **Concerning feelings**  
**Tú skalt ekki bera hatur til næsta tinn**  
'You shall not bear hatred to your brother'

(4g) **Concerning the senses**  
**Hann kendi ekki til nakra gikt langur**  
'He did not feel rheumatism anymore'

(4h) **Goal**  
**Vit bera hoyggj saman til eina sátu**  
'We are carrying the hay together in order to form a stack'

Examples with the historical genitive (5a, 5b, 5c), and the proper genitive (with personal pronoun):

(5a) **Teir eru til lands í Grønlandi**  
'They are on land (ashore) in Greenland'

(5b) **Eg gleði meg til jóla**  
'I am looking forward to Christmas'

(5c) **Elin gongur til Miðvágs**  
'Elin walks to Miðvágur'

(5d) **Vit fara heim til okkara**  
we go home to our place  
'We are going home to our place'

(5e) **Renna yfir til hennara**  
'run over to her'

#### 8.1.5. The preposition *millum*

The preposition **millum** 'between' usually governs a noun in the accusative. However, the genitive is found in certain set expressions (and often with place-names). The preposition **millum** governs the genitive form of the personal pronouns (for example, **okkara millum** 'between us'). Notice the word order – **millum** comes after the pronoun.

Examples with the accusative:

**Movement**  
(6a) **Norrøna siglir millum londini**  
'Norrøna sails between the countries'

(6b) **Concerning persons**  
Hann gekk sum ein maður millum aðrar menn  
'He walked as a man among other men'

(6c) **Time**  
Vit gera einki millum jóla og nýggjár  
'We are not doing anything between Christmas and New Year'

Examples with the historical genitive:

Fixed expressions:

(7a) **Millum fjals og fjøru**  
'Between the mountain and the shore'

(7b) **Millum heims og heljar**  
between this world and hell  
'In a bad situation'

With location:

(8) **Millum Íslands og Grønlands**  
'Between Iceland and Greenland'

With pronouns + genitive:

(9a) **Vit halda hetta loyndarmálið okkara millum**  
'Let's keep this secret between us'

(9b) **Eg kann ikki velja tykkara millum**  
'I can't decide between you two'

### 8.1.6. The preposition *vegna*

The preposition *vegna* 'because of' governs the accusative form of a noun and the genitive form of a personal pronoun. Notice the word order – *vegna* comes after the pronoun.

Examples with the accusative:

(10a) **Handilin er stongdur vegna sjúku**  
'The shop is closed due to illness'

(10b) **Hon er aftur á sjúkrahúsinum vegna vánaliga rygg sín**  
'She is in hospital again because of her bad back'

(10c) **Tað var rationering vegna kríggið**  
'There was rationing because of the war'

(10d) **Vegna tey avvarðandi**  
'On behalf of the relatives'

Examples with the genitive with personal pronouns.

(11a) **Eg fekk ikki arbeiði hansara vegna**  
'I didn't get the job because of him'

(11b) **Hann kom aftur hennara vegna**  
'He came back because of her'

### 8.1.7. The preposition *innan*

The preposition *innan* 'inside' governs the accusative form of a noun and the genitive form in fixed expressions.

Examples with the accusative:

#### With place-names

(12a) **Vit búgva innan Glyvur**  
'We live on the other side of Glyvur'

(12b) **Denoting time**  
Tú skalt rinda rokningina innan tveir mánaðir  
'You shall pay the bill before two months have passed'

Examples with the genitive:

#### In expressions denoting 'inside'

(13a) **innan galvs og gátta**  
'inside'

(13b) **innan veggja**  
'inside'

(13c) **innan hallar**  
'inside the castle'

Note that **innan veggja** 'inside' is used as an adverb **innanveggja** 'inside', 'indoors' also.

### 8.1.8. The preposition **uttan**

The preposition **uttan** 'outside', 'without' governs the accusative form of a noun, and the genitive form in fixed expressions.

Examples with the accusative:

#### Without; except

(14a) **Vit gingu allan vegin uttan mat og klæðir**  
'We walked all the way without food and clothes'

(14b) **Eg sá ongan uttan teg drekka**  
'I saw no one except you drink'

Examples with the genitive:

(15a) **uttan garðs**  
'on the other side of the fence'

(15b) **uttan dura**  
'outside'

(15c) **uttan hallar**  
'outside the castle'

Note the adverbial use in **uttangarðs** 'outside the fence' and **uttandura** 'outside', 'outdoors'.

### 8.2. Prepositions governing the dative

(1a) **afturat** 'in addition to'

**Hann fekk so tað aftur at øllum hinum**  
'He then got that in addition to all the other stuff'

(1b) **aftrat** 'with'

**Aftrat sær hevði hann konu og børn**  
'With him, he had his wife and children'

(1c) **afturímóti** 'compared to'

**Ikki nyttar hann nakað afturímóti mær**  
'He is not much compared to me'

(1d) **andstøðis** 'opposite'

**Eg standi andstøðis tær**  
'I am standing opposite you'

(1e) **andsýnis** 'with respect to, concerning, opposite'

**Stórir áhugi er andsýnis fótþóltinum**  
'There is a lot of interest with respect to football'

(1f) **av** see §8.2.2.

(1g) **frá** see §8.2.3.

(1h) **hjá** see §8.2.4.

(1i) **ímóti** see §8.2.5.

(1j) **mótvegis** 'compared to'

**Mótvegis mær er hann ein eingil**  
'Compared to me is he an angel'

(1k) **nær, nærhendis, nærindis**  
'close to'

**Nær húsunum**  
'Close to the house'

**Nærhendis húsunum**  
'Close to the house'

(1l) **undan** see §8.2.6.

(1m) **úr** see §8.2.7.

(1n) **víðvíkjandi** 'with respect to'

Viðvíkjandi hasum málinum, er tað at siga...  
'With respect to that matter, we can say...'

### 8.2.1. Various uses of at

(2a) 'at', 'to' (movement)

**Teir lögðu at kai**  
'They landed at the quayside'

(2b) 'on', 'at'

**Hon hevði barn at brósti**  
she had a child at her breast  
'She was nursing a child'

(2c) 'to' (change)

**At mold skalt tú verða**  
to dirt shall you be  
'Ashes to ashes'

(2d) 'towards', 'at' (time)

**At kvøldi komu teir aftur**  
'Towards evening they came back'

(2e) 'to', 'of' (in possessive constructions)

**Omma at Onnu**  
grandmother to Anna  
'Anna's grandmother'

### 8.2.2. Various uses of av

(3a) 'from', 'off', 'out of' (movement)

**Hann fór av húsum snimma**  
he went from the house early  
'He left the house early'

(3b) 'from' (origin)

**Jógvan er av Skála**  
'Jógvan is from Skáli'

(3c) 'from', 'away from', 'off', 'out of' (someone's hands)

**Teir tóku bókina av honum**  
'They took the book away from him'  
(Meaning that someone else got the job to finish the book.)

(3d) 'about', 'concerning'

**Boða av grind**  
'Signal about a school of pilot whales'

(3e) 'from' (the direction)

**Hann liggur av beinum norðri**  
he lies from straight north  
'The wind comes straight from the north'

(3f) 'from', 'of', 'out of' (material – also *úr*; see §8.2.7))

**Jakkin er av leðri**  
'The jacket is made of leather'

**Bjálkin er av stáli**  
'The girder is made of steel'

(3g) 'among', 'from', 'one of a larger whole (partitive)'

**Hann var av ringastu figgindum**  
'He was one of the worst enemies'

(3h) 'because of', 'of', 'from'

**Illa komin av hungri**  
'In bad shape because of hunger'

**Hann doyði av sorg**  
'He died from sorrow'

- (3i) 'of', 'with respect to' (a quality or property)

**Eyðmjúkur av lyndi**  
'Humble of character'

- (3j) 'over', 'past' (time)

**Klokkan er júst farin av tólv**  
'It is a little past twelve'

- (3k) 'by' (in the passive)

**Hann bleiv mussaður av einum dana**  
'He was kissed by a Dane'

### 8.2.3. Various uses of frá

- (4a) 'from' (direction)

**Hann fór frá húsum klokkan átta**  
'He left home at eight o'clock'

**Skipið leggur frá landi**  
'The ship sails off from land'

- (4b) 'away from' (place)

**Julius var burtur frá konuni í eitt ár**  
'Julius was away from his wife for one year'

- (4c) 'from' (time)

**Handilin er lukkaður frá klokkan seks á kvöldi**  
'The shop is closed from six o'clock in the evening'

**Hann var sjúkur frá ungum árum (av)**  
he was sick from young age (onwards)  
'He had been sick from a young age'

**Frá degi til dags**  
'From day to day', 'another day'

- (4d) 'from' (origin)

**Lammiterilsí frá orkestrinum**  
'Noise from the band'

### 8.2.4. Various uses of hjá

- (5a) possessive

**Báturin hjá mær**  
the boat with me  
'My boat'

- (5b) 'by'

**Liggja hjá konu**  
'Sleep with a woman'

- (5c) 'at', 'with' (in connection with family or home)

**Heima hjá tykkum**  
'At your place'

**Tey hjá Marjuni**  
'At Marjun's'

- (5d) 'at' (in names of businesses)

**Eg keypi altíð inn hjá Dánjali**  
'I always shop at Dánjal's (shop)'

**Hjá Ingu**  
'At Inga's (shop)'

- (5e) 'with', 'for' (persons)

**Tað gongur støðugt aftur á hondina hjá mær**  
it goes steady back on hand-the with me-dat.  
'I am not doing so well'

### 8.2.5. Various uses of *ímóti*

Note that the preposition *ímóti* 'against' has two forms: *móti* or *ímóti*. Both are used commonly and have exactly the same meaning.

(6a) 'against' (movement)

**Hann legði hondina móti kjálkanum**  
he placed the hand against the chin  
'He placed his hand against his chin'

(6b) 'towards'

**Jógvan kom yvir móti teimum**  
'Jógvan went over towards them'

(6c) 'towards' (direction)

**Pætur vendi sær móti Beintu**  
'Pætur turned towards Beinta'

(6d) 'against'

**Hann tosaði móti lögmanninum í lögtinginum**  
'He spoke against the *lögmaður* in the parliament'

### 8.2.6. Various uses of *undan*

(7a) 'from' (movement)

**Teir koma heim undan Grønlandi**  
'They are coming home from Greenland'

(7b) 'from the underside of'

**Fáa mjólk undan kúnni**  
'Get milk from the cow'

(7c) 'from', 'of' (origin)

**Undan eini ryssu**  
'The offspring of a mare'

(7d) 'from', 'out from under or behind' (movement)

**Maðurin kom undan húsahjørninum**  
'The man appeared from around the corner of the house'

(7e) 'with' (with respect to the direction of the wind, current, slope or the like)

**Sigla undan vindinum**  
'Sail with the wind'

**Sigla undan streyminum**  
'Sail with the current'

**Tað gongur undan brekku**  
'It goes downhill'

(7f) 'earlier than', 'before' (time)

**Undan páskum**  
'Before Easter'

### 8.2.7. Various uses of *úr*

(8a) 'out of', 'from the inside of'

**Koma upp úr bátinum**  
'Get out of the boat'

**Sleppa leysur úr fongsli**  
'Release from jail'

(8b) 'from' (origin)

**Ein kona úr Sandavági eitur Elin**  
'A woman from Sandavágur is named Elin'

(8c) 'from' (direction)

**Elin gongur úr Sandavági til Miðvágs**  
'Elin walks from Sandavágur to Miðvágur'



(8d) 'from', 'of' (material – also av; see §8.2.2))

Gjærdur úr viði  
'Made of wood'

Gjærdur úr stáli  
'Made of steel'

### 8.3. Prepositions governing the accusative and the dative

Several prepositions govern either the accusative or the dative. As far as four of them are concerned **á**, **í**, **undir** and **yvir**, the case they govern can largely be determined by whether or not the preposition is being used to express movement towards a place.

Movement towards	}	accusative
Change of relationship		
No movement towards	}	dative
No change of relationship		

Examples:

(9a) **Jógvan leggur bókina á borðið**  
(acc.)  
'Jógvan puts the book on the table'  
(movement towards the table)

(9b) **Bókin liggur á borðinum**  
(dat.)  
'The book is on the table'  
(no movement towards the table)

(9c) **Marjun gongur niðan á fjallið**  
(acc.)  
'Marjun walks up to the mountain'  
(movement towards the mountain)

(9d) **Marjun er á fjallinum**  
(dat.)

'Marjun is on the mountain'  
(no movement towards the mountain)

(9e) **Koyra barnið í bilin**  
(acc.)  
'Put the child into the car'  
(movement into the car)

(9f) **Barnið er í bilinum**  
(dat.)  
'The child is in the car'  
(no movement into the car)

(9g) **Hundurin fer undir borðið**  
(acc.)  
'The dog goes under the table'  
(movement towards the position under the table)

(9h) **Hundurin er undir borðinum**  
(dat.)  
'The dog is under the table'  
(no movement towards the position under the table)

(9i) **Jógvan heingir lampuna yvir borðið**  
(acc.)  
'Jógvan hangs the lamp over the table'  
(movement towards the position over the table)

(9j) **Lampan hongur yvir borðinum**  
(dat.)  
'The lamp hangs over the table'  
(no movement towards the position over the table)

#### 8.3.1 The preposition *eftir*

The dative is used to express among other things movement and feelings. The accusative is used when the meaning is 'according to' or when expressing time.

(10a) **Ikki gerst nógv eftir deyðan**  
(acc.)  
'Nothing much can be done after death'  
(change of )

- (10b) **Vit býta grindina eftir húsatali**  
(acc.)  
'We divide the pilot whale catch according to the number of houses'  
(according to)
- (10c) **Hundurinn rennur eftir seyði**  
(dat.)  
'The dog is running after sheep'  
(movement)
- (10d) **Jóhan datt eftir liðini á sjógv**  
(dat.)  
'Johan fell sideways into the sea'  
(movement)
- (10e) **Marjun leingist eftir manningum**  
(dat.)  
'Marjun longs for her husband'  
(feeling)
- (10f) **Hanus skrifaði sanginn eftir einum kvöldi**  
(dat.)  
'Hanus wrote the song in one evening'  
(time)

### 8.3.2 The preposition *fyrir*

The preposition *fyrir* governs either the accusative or the dative. First we list *fyrir* + acc., then examples with the dative.

#### Movement

- (11a) **Tey koma ekki fyrir rættin í dag**  
'They will not appear in court today'

#### Path

- (11b) **Tey trýstu hann inn fyrir rættin**  
'They pressed him to appear in front of the court'

#### Replacement

- (11c) **Tú skalt keypa eina aðra bók fyrir hessa**  
'You shall buy another book instead of this one'

#### Value, worth

- (11d) **Eivind keypti bílinn fyrir einn bítan peninga**  
Eivind bought the car for a cheap money  
'Eivind bought the car cheap'

#### Concessive

- (11e) **Tit eru líka vælkomin fyrir það**  
you are equally welcome for that  
'You are equally welcome despite that'

#### Affected

- (11f) **Marjun visti, að arbeiðið ongan týðning hevði fyrir heildina**  
'Marjun knew that the work did not have any importance for the whole'

#### Benefactive

- (11g) **Vit skulu keypa ein nýggjan bát fyrir félagið**  
'We are going to buy a new boat for the club'

#### Time

- (11h) **Hatta hendi fyrir seinna kríggj**  
'That happened before the last war'

#### Exclusive

- (11i) **Altíð arbeiðdi Teodor fyrir seg sjálfan**  
always worked Teodor for himself self  
'Teodor always did work by himself'

Then there are the following examples with *fyrir* + dative.

#### Location

- (12a) **Veturinn stendur fyrir durum**  
winter-the stands for doors  
'The winter is near'

#### Presence

- (12b) **Teitur spældi gítar og sang fyrir kongi**  
'Teitur played the guitar and sang before the king'

#### Time

- (12c) **Hatta hendi fyrir einari viku síðani**  
that happened for one week ago  
'That happened a week ago'

### Away, out of the way

- (12d) **Tað skal dyljast fyri honum**  
it shall conceal for him  
'It shall be concealed from him'

### Towards, in

- (12e) **Vit arbeiða fyri málinum**  
'We are working on the case'

### Purposive

- (12f) **Hann bardist fyri æru sínari**  
'He fought for his honour'

### 8.3.3. The preposition við

There are several semantic rules for the preposition **við** when it governs the dative. The easiest way to remember how to use **við** 'with' in Faroese is to remember the following examples with **við** governing the accusative, and then say that **við** governs the dative in all other instances.

#### Við + accusative

##### Location

- (13a) **Jógvan situr við borðið og etur**  
'Jógvan sits at the table and eats'

##### Direction

- (13b) **Marjun er ikki góð við hann**  
'Marjun is not fond of him'

##### (13c) Instrumental (objective)

**Skipið er væl útstýrt við greiður**  
'The ship is well equipped with tools'

NB In an instrumental objective, the noun phrase after **við** denotes someone or something that has been moved to or placed in, at or on a given location.

#### Við + dative

Some examples with the dative are:

##### Instrumental

- (14a) **Hann grevur við spakanum**  
'He is digging with the spade'

NB In an instrumental, the noun phrase after **við** denotes the instrument or means by which the action was carried out.

### Possessive

- (14b) **Susi er vøkur við bláum eygum**  
'Susi is beautiful with blue eyes'

### Path

- (14c) **Nú ganga tey fram við húsunum**  
'Now they walk past the house'

### 8.4. Circumpositions

In a circumposition, there are two parts that surround the complement. The phenomenon is found, for example, in English 'from then on', in Dutch 'naar het ende toe' (Lit. 'to the end to' = 'to the end'), and in Danish, for example, 'fra ung af' (Lit. 'from young off' = 'from a young age'). Faroese has borrowed the Danish structure as:

- (1a) **Hann var sjúkur frá ungum árum av**  
he was sick from young age off  
'He has been sick ever since he was young'

Another common expression is:

- (2) **Frá upphavi av**  
from the beginning off  
'From the beginning'

We also find circumposition in:

- (3a) **Tað regnaði frá morgni av**  
it rained from morning off  
'It rained all day'
- (3b) **Hann kavaði frá kvøldi av**  
he snowed from evening off  
'It snowed all night'
- (3c) **Hann las bókina frá byrjan av**  
he read book-the from beginning-the off  
'He read the book from the beginning'
- (3d) **Far av Helviti til**  
go of Hell to  
'Go to Hell'

- (3e) **Bilurin kom frá høgru av**  
car-the came from right off  
'The car came from the right'
- (3f) **Teir sigldu við fastastýri fyri**  
they sailed with a fixed rudder for  
'They had a fixed rudder when they sailed'
- (3g) **Teir sigldu við ljósunum fyrri/frá**  
they sailed with light-the on/off  
'They sailed with the lights on/off'
- (3h) **Bilurin bíðaði við motorinum frá**  
car-the waited with engine-the off  
'The car waited with the engine off'

## 8.5. English of

The preposition 'of' in English has a number of different translations in Faroese. Some can be rather tricky.

### 8.5.1. Genitive of in English

<b>English:</b>	'son of a grocer'
<b>Faroese:</b>	sonur ein bakara
<b>English:</b>	'a representative of the company'
<b>Faroese:</b>	eitt umboð hjá fyrirkuni
<b>English:</b>	'professor of chemistry'
<b>Faroese:</b>	professari í kemi
<b>English:</b>	'a map of Germany'
<b>Faroese:</b>	eitt kort av Týsklandi
<b>English:</b>	'the price of potatoes'
<b>Faroese:</b>	prísurin á eplum / eplaprísurin
<b>English:</b>	'the author of a book'
<b>Faroese:</b>	høvundurin av eini bók / høvundurin at eini bók / bókarhøvundurin
<b>English:</b>	'the battle of Waterloo'
<b>Faroese:</b>	bardagin við Waterloo

### 8.5.2. Apposite of in English – direct attachment in Faroese

Sometimes 'of' is used to mark two nouns as being in apposition. For example, 'the kingdom of Denmark' can be understood as meaning something like 'The kingdom = Denmark'. In these cases, the 'of' is not translated in Faroese.

<b>English:</b>	'The kingdom of Denmark'
<b>Faroese:</b>	kongaríkið Danmark
<b>English:</b>	'the summer of '69'
<b>Faroese:</b>	summarið '69

### 8.5.3. The partitive of in English

The partitive refers to the selection of a part out of a group or amount. In English it is expressed with the preposition 'of' as in 'many of my children' or 'a glass of milk'.

When expressing measure, shape and so on, Faroese may use the preposition *av*, but note that sometimes it is possible to use a bare noun phrase in Faroese (for example, 'a game of chess' is simply *talv*).

<b>English:</b>	'I want a cup of coffee'
<b>Faroese:</b>	Eg vil hava ein kopp av kaffi / ein kaffikopp
<b>English:</b>	'a game of chess'
<b>Faroese:</b>	eitt talv
<b>English:</b>	'many of my children'
<b>Faroese:</b>	nógv av børnunum hjá mær nógv av børnum mínum
<b>English:</b>	'have you seen any of my books'
<b>Faroese:</b>	hevur tú sæð nakra av bókunum hjá mær hevur tú sæð nakrar av bókum mínum
<b>English:</b>	'a glass of milk'
<b>Faroese:</b>	eitt glas av mjólk / eitt glas við mjólk / eitt mjólkarglas
<b>English:</b>	'He is one of the nicest guys I know'
<b>Faroese:</b>	Hann er ein av teimum fittastu monnunum, (sum) eg kenni
<b>English:</b>	'Do you want some of this chocolate?'
<b>Faroese:</b>	Vilt tú hava eitt sindur av hesari sjokolatuni?

#### 8.5.4. All, both, the whole of

When expressing 'all', 'both' and 'the whole of', we find direct attachment in Faroese:

English: 'all of the inhabitants'  
Faroese: **allir íbúgvarnir**

English: 'both of the children'  
Faroese: **bæði børnini**

English: 'the whole of the cake'  
Faroese: **øll kakan**

#### 8.5.5. Part of whole

Part of a whole is expressed by use of the preposition *av* 'of' followed by the dative. However, it may be expressed using a genitive construction in the written language, although such use is extremely rare.

English: 'some of the pupils'  
Faroese: **nakrir av næmingunum**      Written, old fashion  
**nakrir næminganna**

English: 'part of the book'  
Faroese: **ein partur av bókini**      **partur bókarinnar**

#### 8.5.6. Material: English (*made*) of

To say that something is 'made of' a certain material Faroese uses *úr* (although *av* can also be used).

English: 'a statue of bronze'  
Faroese: **ein standmynd úr bronsu / ein standmynd av bronsu / ein bronsustandmynd**

English: 'she has a heart of gold'  
Faroese: **hon hevur eitt hjarta av gulli**

#### 8.5.7. Origin

When expressing origin, Faroese usually uses either *frá* 'from' or *úr* 'from', although *av* or a compound noun phrase is possible in a case like the first sentence below:

English: 'the queen of Denmark'  
Faroese: **drotningin av Danmark / Danmarkardrotning**

English: 'the Wizard of Oz'  
Faroese: **Gandakallurin úr / frá Oz**

When the sense is 'functioning in', Faroese uses *í* 'in':

English: 'the mayor of Sandavágur'  
Faroese: **borgmeistarinn í Sandavági**

English: 'the Merchant of Venice'  
Faroese: **Keypmaðurin í Venesia**

#### 8.5.8. Geographical positions

These are expressed, in the senses of motion, by *norður um*, *eystur um*, *suður um* and *vestur um*:

English: 'drive north of Tórshavn'  
Faroese: **koyra norður um Havnina**

English: 'sail west of Mykines'  
Faroese: **sigla vestur um Mykines**

In the sense of position, we use *norðan fyri*, *eystan fyri*, *sunnan fyri* and *vestan fyri*:

English: 'I live north of Tórshavn'  
Faroese: **eg búgvi norðan fyri Havnina**

English: 'an island south of Sandoy'  
Faroese: **ein oyggj sunnan fyri Sandoy**

In the sense of area, Faroese uses compounds where English usually uses 'of':

English: 'the north of England'  
Faroese: **Norðurengland**

**English:** 'the south of France'  
**Faroese:** Suðurfrakland

#### 8.5.9. Dates, months etc.

In the sense of dates, the following expressions are used:

**English:** 'the first of April'  
**Faroese:** fyrsti apríl

**English:** 'the twentieth of December'  
**Faroese:** tjúgundi desember

**English:** 'the month of May'  
**Faroese:** maimánaður

**English:** 'the summer of '69'  
**Faroese:** summarið '69

Note Faroese **upp á** corresponding to expressions of numerical amount in English:

**English:** 'a sum of 50 krónur'  
**Faroese:** ein upphædd upp á 50 krónur

**English:** 'a woman of sixty'  
**Faroese:** ein kona upp á trýss

#### 8.5.10. Attached to verbs

Many verbs are followed by 'of' in English (for example, 'to complain of'). Faroese does not necessarily have **av** in such cases:

**English:** 'I am accusing you of fraud'  
**Faroese:** Eg ákæri teg fyri fals

**English:** 'He always speaks of you fondly'  
**Faroese:** Hann tosar altíð væl um teg

**English:** 'The dictator boasted of his achievements'  
**Faroese:** Einaræðisharrin reyðaði av tí, hann hevði nátt

#### 8.5.11. Attached to adjectives

Many adjectives are followed by 'of' in English (for example, 'afraid of'). Faroese does not necessarily have **av** in such cases:

**English:** 'The boy is afraid of the dark'  
**Faroese:** Drongurin er bangin fyri myrkri

**English:** 'We're certain of the facts'  
**Faroese:** Vit eru viss í sannroyndunum

**English:** 'I'm not proud of my behaviour'  
**Faroese:** Eg eri ikki errin av framferð mínari

## 9. Adverbs

Adverbs do not inflect except for comparison. Adverbs can be divided into different classes according to their meaning:

- (1) Adverbs of time, frequency and duration
- (2) Adverbs of place and direction
- (3) Adverbs of manner and degree
- (4) Clausal adverbs
- (5) Interrogative adverbs

### 9.1. Adverbs of time

These include:

(a) **Adverbs of time:**

**áður** 'before', **beinanvegin** 'immediately', **bráðliga** 'suddenly', **einaferð** 'at one point', **endiliga** 'finally', **longu** 'already', 'some time ago', **nakrantíð** 'ever', 'at any time', **nú** 'now', **onkuntíð** 'at one point', 'sometimes', **samstundis** 'at the same time as', **snemma** 'early', **straks** 'at once', **tá** 'then', **tíðliga** 'early', **umsíðir** 'finally'.

(b) **Adverbs of frequency:**

**aftur** 'again', **aldri(n)** 'never', **altíð** 'always', **javnan** 'usually', **mangan** 'often', **ofta** 'often', **ongantíð** 'never', **sjaldan/sjáldan** 'seldom', **stundum** 'sometimes', **uppaftur** 'again'.

(c) **Adverbs of duration:**

**alsamt** 'still', **enn** 'still', **framleiðis** 'still', **framvegis** 'still', **leingi** 'for a long time', **síðan(i)** 'since', **stutt** 'briefly', **støðugt** 'continuously'.

Note that it is possible to move the adverb towards the beginning of the sentence (1a, 1b, 1c) in order to stress it:

- (1a) **Hon er farin longu**  
'She has left already'
- (1b) **Hon er longu farin**  
'She has already left'
- (1c) **Longu er hon farin**  
'She has left already'

It is not unusual for a prepositional phrase to function as an adverb of time, as we see in the following examples:

- (2a) **Jógvan kom í dag**  
'Jógvan came today'
- (2b) **Jógvan fer av stað í morgin**  
'Jógvan is leaving tomorrow'
- (2c) **Jógvan fer av stað í ovurmorgin**  
'Jógvan is leaving the day after tomorrow'
- (2d) **Tað regnar illa í Føroyum um sumrarnar**  
'It rains a lot in the Faroes in the summertime'
- (2e) **Um vetrarnar er ikki so kalt í Føroyum**  
'In wintertime it is not so cold in the Faroes'

Noun phrases may also function as regular adverbs of time. The noun phrase **seinnapartin** is the definite accusative singular form of **seinnapartur**. The same holds for **fyrrapartin**, the nominative is **fyrrapartur**, and **sunnudagin** is the definite accusative singular form of **sunnudagur**:

- (3a) **Skipið kemur seinnapartin**  
'The ship is coming this afternoon'
- (3b) **Skipið kemur fyrrapartin**  
'The ship is coming this morning'
- (3c) **Skipið kemur sunnudagin**  
'The ship is coming on Sunday'

### 9.2. Adverbs of place and direction

Adverbs of place and direction tell us *where* something occurred or where it is going *to* or coming *from*. They are divided into two sets: (a) locative and (b) movement to or from a place.

(a) **Locative (place):**

Some adverbs belonging to this class may be derived from another adverb by adding the ending **-i**:

<b>aftur</b> 'back'	⇒	<b>afturi</b> 'in the back'
<b>eystur</b> 'east'	⇒	<b>eysturi</b> 'in the east'
<b>vestur</b> 'west'	⇒	<b>vesturi</b> 'in the west'
<b>suður</b> 'south'	⇒	<b>suðuri</b> 'in the south'
<b>norður</b> 'north'	⇒	<b>norðuri</b> 'in the north'
<b>fram</b> 'forwards'	⇒	<b>frammi</b> 'in the front'
<b>inn</b> 'in'	⇒	<b>inni</b> 'inside'
<b>niður</b> 'down'	⇒	<b>niðri</b> 'down below'
<b>upp</b> 'up'	⇒	<b>uppi</b> 'up above'
<b>út</b> 'out'	⇒	<b>úti</b> 'outside'

Some adverbs of place are compounds with the elements **innan-** 'on the inside of' and **uttan** 'on the outside of':

<b>innandura</b>	'inside', 'indoors'
<b>uttandura</b>	'outside', 'outdoors'
<b>innanlands</b>	'domestically', 'in one's own country'
<b>uttanlands</b>	'abroad'

Other adverbs of place may end with the suffix **-laga** 'fairly far', 'quite far':

<b>aftur</b> 'back'	⇒	<b>aftarlaga</b> 'fairly far in the back'
<b>eystur</b> 'east'	⇒	<b>eystarlaga</b> 'fairly far to the east'
<b>vestur</b> 'west'	⇒	<b>vestarlaga</b> 'fairly far to the west'
<b>suður</b> 'south'	⇒	<b>sunnarlaga</b> 'fairly far to the south'
<b>norður</b> 'north'	⇒	<b>norðarlaga</b> 'fairly far to the north'
<b>niður</b> 'down'	⇒	<b>niðarlaga</b> 'fairly far down'
<b>upp</b> 'up'	⇒	<b>ovarlaga</b> 'fairly far up'

Note the compositional suffix **-ar** and the change of **suður** to **sunn-**.

Another suffix for adverbs of location is **-megin** 'side':

<b>hinumegin</b>	'on the other side'
<b>hesumegin</b>	'on this side'
<b>teirra(sa)megin</b>	'on their side'

Finally, there is the suffix **-staðni** 'place':

<b>allastaðni</b>	'everywhere'
<b>summastaðni</b>	'somewhere'
<b>ymsastaðni</b>	'in various places'

(b) **Direction:**

Many adverbs denoting direction towards or to a place end in **-ur** or **-ar**:

**aftur** 'to the back', **eystur** 'to the east', **hagar** 'to there', **higar** 'to here', **innar** 'further in', **niður** 'down', **norður** 'to the north', **suður** 'to the south', **uttar** 'further out', **vestur** 'to the west'.

(1a) **Far tú aftur har og set teg!**  
'You go back and sit down'

(1b) **Vit fara vestur í dag**  
we go west in day  
'We are going to Vágar today'

(1c) **Eg datt niður sum deyður**  
'I fell down as if dead'

(1d) **Kom tú higar og set teg!**  
'You, come here and sit down!'

(1e) **Renn hagar eftir bóltinum!**  
'You, run there and fetch the ball'

(1g) **Komið innar!**  
'Come further in'

(1g) **Far uttar!**  
'Go further out'

Direction from a place is suggested by the suffix **-an**:

<b>eystur</b> 'east'	⇒	<b>eystan</b> 'from the east'
<b>vestur</b> 'west'	⇒	<b>vestan</b> 'from the west'
<b>norður</b> 'east'	⇒	<b>norðan</b> 'from the north'
<b>suður</b> 'south'	⇒	<b>sunnan</b> 'from the south'
<b>heim</b> 'home'	⇒	<b>heiman</b> 'from home'
<b>inn</b> 'in'	⇒	<b>innan</b> 'from inside'
<b>niður</b> 'down'	⇒	<b>niðan</b> 'from below', 'up'
<b>upp</b> 'up'	⇒	<b>oman</b> 'from above', 'down'
<b>út</b> 'out'	⇒	<b>uttan</b> 'from outside'



Direction from a place is also suggested by the suffix **-eftir**:

<b>eystur</b> (⇒ <b>eystan</b> )	⇒	<b>eystaneftir</b> 'from the east'
<b>vestur</b> (⇒ <b>vestan</b> )	⇒	<b>vestaneftir</b> 'from the west'
<b>norður</b> (⇒ <b>norðan</b> )	⇒	<b>norðaneftir</b> 'from the north'
<b>suður</b> (⇒ <b>sunnan</b> )	⇒	<b>sunnaneftir</b> 'from the south'
<b>upp</b> (⇒ <b>oman</b> )	⇒	<b>omaneftir</b> ('from up' =) 'downwards'
<b>niður</b> (⇒ <b>niðan</b> )	⇒	<b>niðaneftir</b> ('from down' =) 'upwards'

Direction from a place is also suggested by the suffix **-ífrá**:

<b>eystur</b> (⇒ <b>eystan</b> )	⇒	<b>eystanífrá</b> 'from the east'
<b>vestur</b> (⇒ <b>vestan</b> )	⇒	<b>vestanífrá</b> 'from the west'
<b>norður</b> (⇒ <b>norðan</b> )	⇒	<b>norðanífrá</b> 'from the north'
<b>suður</b> (⇒ <b>sunnan</b> )	⇒	<b>sunnanífrá</b> 'from the south'
<b>inn</b> (⇒ <b>innan</b> )	⇒	<b>innanífrá</b> 'from the inside'
<b>út</b> (⇒ <b>uttan</b> )	⇒	<b>uttanífrá</b> 'from the outside'

For example:

- (2a) **Hann er vestan í ættini**  
he is west in wind-direction  
'The winds comes from the west'
- (2b) **Teir komu vestaneftir**  
'They came from the west'
- (2c) **Maria gongur omaneftir**  
'Maria is walking downwards'
- (2d) **Maria gongur niðaneftir**  
'Maria is walking upwards'
- (2e) **Teir komu vestanífrá**  
'They came from the west'
- (2f) **Tað má koma innanífrá**  
'It must come from within'
- (2g) **Ein kona uttanífrá**  
a woman from outside  
'A foreign woman'

- (2h) **Vit mugu fáa hjálp uttanífrá**  
'We need help from the outside (world)'

In the figure below we list the adverbs denoting movement to a place, rest at a place and movement from a place:

Figure 101

to a place	at a place	from a place
<b>aftur</b> 'to the back'	<b>afturi</b> 'in the back'	<b>aftan</b> 'from the back'
<b>eystur</b> 'to the east'	<b>eysturi</b> 'in the east'	<b>eystan</b> 'from the east'
<b>hagar</b> 'to there'	<b>har</b> 'there'	<b>haðan(i)</b> 'from there'
<b>higar</b> 'to here'	<b>her</b> 'here'	<b>hiðan(i)</b> 'from there'
<b>heim</b> 'homewards'	<b>heima/heimi</b> 'at home'	<b>heiman</b> 'from home'
<b>inn</b> 'inwards'	<b>inni</b> 'inside'	<b>innan</b> 'from inside'
<b>niður</b> 'downwards'	<b>niðri</b> 'down'	<b>niðan</b> 'up'
<b>norður</b> 'to the north'	<b>norðuri</b> 'in the north'	<b>norðan</b> 'from the north'
<b>suður</b> 'to the south'	<b>suðuri</b> 'in the south'	<b>sunnan</b> 'from the south'
<b>upp</b> 'upwards'	<b>uppi</b> 'up'	<b>oman</b> 'down'
<b>út</b> 'outwards'	<b>úti</b> 'outside'	<b>uttan</b> 'from outside'
<b>vestur</b> 'westwards'	<b>vesturi</b> 'in the west'	<b>vestan</b> 'from the west'

Most locative and directional adverbs can be moved to the beginning of a sentence in Faroese.

- (3a) **Maria las bókina har**  
'Maria read the book there'
- (3b) \***Maria las har bókina**  
Maria read there the book
- (3c) **Har las Maria bókina**  
'Maria read the book there' (with stress on 'there')
- (3d) **Maria hevur lisið bókina har**  
'Maria has read the book there'
- (3e) \***Maria hevur har lisið bókina**  
Maria has there read the book
- (3f) **Har hevur Maria lisið bókina**  
'Maria has read the book there' (with stress on 'there')

The examples also show that a locative or directional adverb cannot be between a finite verb and a non-finite verb and a noun (3b), and between a finite verb and a non-finite verb (3e).

### 9.3. Adverbs of manner and degree

Adverbs of manner describe *how* something is done, while adverbs of degree are typically used together with adverbs of manner in order to quantify or intensify the meaning of the utterance, cf. (1b) where **ógvuliga** 'very' is an adverb of degree, and **knappliga** 'suddenly' is an adverb of manner.

- (1a) **Knappliga** varð myrkt úti  
'Suddenly it was dark outside'
- (1b) **Ógvuliga knappliga** varð myrkt úti  
very suddenly was dark outside  
'It became dark outside very suddenly'

#### (a) Adverbs of manner:

The most common way to form an adverb of manner is to add the suffix **-liga** to the root of an adjective, or to change the adjectival suffix **-ligur** to **-liga**. Note that all the adverbs may have the form **-ligani** (cf. **allastaðni** 'everywhere' from the noun **staðirnir** > **staðn-** and the **-i** from **for** example, **út** ⇒ **úti**).

#### -liga

Adjective		Adverb
<b>bráður</b> 'hasty'	⇒	<b>bráðliga</b> 'suddenly'
<b>harður</b> 'hard'	⇒	<b>harðliga</b> 'severely'
<b>hóvligur</b> 'cool-headed'	⇒	<b>hóvliga</b> 'gently'
<b>knappur</b> 'sudden'	⇒	<b>knappliga</b> 'suddenly'
<b>sáttligur</b> 'mild'	⇒	<b>sáttliga</b> 'mildly'
<b>spakur</b> 'calm'	⇒	<b>spakuliga</b> 'calmly'
<b>stillur</b> 'quiet'	⇒	<b>stillisliga</b> 'quietly'
<b>týðiligur</b> 'clear'	⇒	<b>týðiliga</b> 'clearly'
<b>varisligur</b> 'careful'	⇒	<b>varisliga</b> 'carefully'

Another way of deriving adverbs of manner is to use the nominative singular form of a neuter adjective (usually formed by adding **-t** to the adjective's stem):

Adjective		Adverb
<b>beinur</b> 'direct'		<b>beint</b> 'directly'
<b>harður</b> 'hard'		<b>hart</b> 'hard'
<b>skjótur</b> 'quick'		<b>skjótt</b> 'quickly'

A third derivational process for adverbs of manner is the suffix **-leiðis**

Adjective	Adverb
<b>beinur</b> 'direct'	<b>beinleiðis</b> 'directly'
<b>rættur</b> 'right'	<b>rættleiðis</b> 'the right way'

#### (b) Adverbs of degree:

Here are some common adverbs of degree:

**aggandi** 'very', **avbera** 'extremely', **deyðliga** 'deadly', 'lethal', **eitt sindur** 'a bit', **fittliga** 'fairly', **forbannað** 'damned', **framúrskarandi** 'extremely', **frálíka** 'exceptionally', **heilt** 'completely', **heldur** 'rather', **nakað** 'somewhat', **ov** 'too', **ónatúrliga** 'extremely', **ótrúliga** 'incredibly', **púra** 'completely', **ruddiliga** 'totally', **ræðuliga** 'extremely', **rættiliga** 'really', **sera** 'very', **so** 'so' **ögiliga** 'terribly', 'extremely'.

For example:

- (2a) **Hon er avbera vökur**  
'She is extremely pretty'
- (2b) **Ein frálíka góður bilur, hasin citroëngurinn**  
'An exceptionally good car that Citroën'
- (2c) **Hatta var púra beint**  
'That was completely right'
- (2d) **Hatta var sera gott**  
'That was very good'
- (2e) **Jóhan er aggandi gamal**  
'Jóhan is very old'
- (2f) **Ein framúrskarandi góð framfærsla**  
'An extremely good presentation'

#### 9.4. Clausal adverbs

Some adverbs describe the whole clause. Usually these adverbs have something to do with:

- negation
- non-negation
- estimation

Among these adverbs we find:

**álvaratos** 'honestly', **ei** 'not', **endiliga** 'absolutely', **ivaleyst** 'without doubt', 'doubtlessly', **ikki** 'not', **ja** 'yes', **kanska** 'perhaps', **nei** 'no', **óivað** 'certainly'.

For example:

- (1a) **Nú mást tú, álvaratos, taka teg saman**  
now must you, honestly, take yourself together  
'Honestly, it is time that you pull yourself together'
- (1b) **Tit mugu endiliga koma at vitja**  
'You must definitely come to visit'
- (1c) **Eg drepi ikki hundin**  
'I won't kill the dog'

Note the placement of the adverbs in the main clauses (1a, 1b) and the subordinate clause (2c) to (2g) below. As the sentences show, negation has to be placed after the finite verb in a main clause, whereas it may be placed either before or after the finite verb in a subordinate clause in modern spoken Faroese.

- (2a) **Jógvan drap ikki hundin**  
Jógvan killed not the dog  
'Jógvan did not kill the dog'
- (2b) **\*Jógvan ikki drap hundin**  
Jógvan not killed the dog
- (2c) **Jógvan segði, at hann ikki drap hundin**  
'Jógvan said that he would not kill the dog'
- (2d) **Jógvan segði, at hann drap ikki hundin**  
'Jógvan said that he would not kill the dog'

(2e) **Jógvan viðurkendi, at hann ikki drap hundin**  
'Jógvan admitted that he would not kill the dog'

(2f) **Jógvan viðurkendi, at hann drap ikki hundin**  
'Jógvan admitted that he would not kill the dog'

The reason for negation + verb in subordinate clauses is sometimes taken to be a result of Danish influence, although it might be an inner change, as for example negation is placed in front of the verb in (3) in topicalization:

(3) **Ikki drap hann hundin**  
not killed he dog-the  
'He did not kill the dog'

#### 9.5. Interrogative adverbs

By using an interrogative adverb the speaker asks about time, place, direction to and from, reason why and manner.

- (1a) **Nær fert tú til Føroyar?** (time)  
'When are you going to the Faroe Islands?'
- (1b) **Hvar býr Elin?** (place)  
where lives Elin?  
'Where does Elin live?'
- (1c) **Hvagar gongur leiðin?** (direction to)  
to-where goes the direction?  
'Where are we going?'
- (1d) **Hvaðani ert tú?** (direction from)  
from-where are you  
'Where are you from?'
- (1e) **Hví elskar tú ikki Føroyar?** (reason why)  
'Why don't you love the Faroes?'
- (1f) **Hvussu gongur?** (manner)  
how goes?  
'How are things?'

## 9.6. Comparison of adverbs

Adverbs of manner, in particular, can often be inflected for comparison, although some adverbs of time and place can be inflected too.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
ofta 'often'	oftari	oftast
skjótt 'quickly'	skjótari	skjótast
eystur 'east'	eystari	eystast

Some adverbs show vowel alternation:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
tungt 'heavily'	tyngri	tyngst
stutt 'short'	styttri	stytst
langt 'far'	longri	longst
høgt 'highly'	hægri	hægst
lágt 'lowly'	lægri	lægst
smátt 'a little'	smærri	smæst
seint 'late'	seinni	síðst/seinast

Comparison of these adverbs (and the corresponding adjectives) is shown in the Faroese dictionary (*Føroysk orðabók*). Some adverbs have suppletive comparison:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
suður 'south'	sunnari/syðri	sunnast/syðst
út 'out'	ytri/uttari	ytst/uttast <sup>29</sup>
títt 'frequently'	tíðari	tíðast
fram 'in front'	fremri	fremst
uppi 'up'	ovari	ovast
leingi 'a long time'	longur	longst
gjarna 'readily'	heldur	helst
illa 'bad'	verri	verst
litið 'a little'	minni	minst
mikið/nógv 'a lot'	meir/meiri/meira	mest
væl 'well'	betur	best

Notice the use of **sum** with the superlative to mean 'as possible':

- (1a) **Skriva mær eitt bræv sum skjótast**  
'Write me a letter as soon as possible'

<sup>29</sup> In spoken Faroese you may hear *ykst* with a velar plosive after a high vowel.

- (1b) **Hann svaraði sum best**  
'He answered as well as he could'

## 9.7. Discourse markers

Discourse markers often signal the introduction of a new topic in the conversation. Discourse markers in English are words like 'you know', 'actually', 'basically', 'like', 'I mean' and 'okay'. These fillers are also found in Faroese, and it may sometimes be difficult to translate them. Among the discourse markers are **nú** and **jú** as in:

- (1a) **Guðrun búði jú leingi í Finnlandi**  
Guðrun lived actually/in fact long in Finland  
'Guðrun lived for a long time in Finland'
- (1b) **Steffan hevur nú eisini búð nakað í Føroyum**  
Steffan has now also lived a bit in the Faroe Islands  
'Steffan has actually / in fact lived for some time in the Faroe Islands'

Some adverbs borrowed from Danish function like discourse fillers in Faroese; for example **altso** in (2a), **faktiskt** in (2b) and the second **væl** in (3):

- (2a) **Altso, problemið hjá mær er, at eg kann ikki lesa hart**  
You see, problem with me is that I can not read hard  
'You see, my problem is that I am not able to read aloud'
- (2b) **Eg fekk, faktiskt, meira burturúr enn nógv onnur**  
I got in fact / you know more out of than many others  
'Actually I got more out of it than lots of other people did'

In (3) the speaker is referring to a political party, the Social Democrats (*Javnaðarflokkurin*), at the Løgting:

- (3) **Vissi mann lurta væl eftir orðinum, so má tað væl vera, at alt skal vera javnt**  
if one listens well after words-the, so must it actually be that all shall be equal  
'If one listens carefully to what is being said, then it must, actually, be the case that everything shall be equal'

The first **væl** in (3) is an adverb 'carefully', the second a discourse marker, indicating that things are actually such or indeed such, you see, (addressing the speaker), that all things have to be equal.

## 10. Conjunctions

Conjunctions can be divided into two groups:

- coordinating conjunctions
- subordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are: **og** 'and', **men** 'but', **ella** 'or', **tí** 'for'.

Subordinating conjunctions include: **at** 'that', **um** 'whether', 'if', **meðan** 'while', **so (at)** 'so (that)', **sum** 'that', **vissi** 'if', **hóast** 'although'.

### 10.1. Coordinating conjunctions

Here are some examples using coordinating conjunctions. Notice particularly the word order after **ella** (1b) where the subject and verb are inverted:

- (1a) **Eg keypti mér ein bát, og Hannis keypti sær eina lystjakt**  
'I bought myself a boat and Hannis bought himself a yacht'
- (1b) **Nú skalt tú siga tað, ella geri eg tað!**  
'Now you must tell, or I will do so!'
- (1c) **Eg keypi bilin, men ikki uttan hann er í góðum standi**  
'I will buy the car, but on the condition that it is in good condition'
- (1d) **Flúgvarin fær ikki lent, tí tað er so nógvur mjørki í Vágum**  
'The aeroplane cannot land because there is so much fog on Vágar'

The conjunction **og** 'and' may also form complex conjunctions:

- (2a) **Feðgarnir eru bæði ríkir og glaðir**  
'Father and son(s) are both rich and happy'
- (2b) **Antin eru feðgarnir ríkir og glaðir, ella eru teir fátækir og klókir**  
'Father and son(s) are either rich and happy or they are poor and clever'

### 10.2. Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are divided into three main classes:

1. conjunctions introducing complement clauses
2. conjunctions introducing relative clauses
3. conjunctions introducing adverbial clauses

### 10.2.1. Complement clauses

Complement clauses are complements of the verb, and they are introduced by **at** 'that', **um** 'whether', 'if', **nær** 'when', **hví** 'why', **hvussu** 'how', or the interrogative pronoun **hvør**.

- (1a) **Maria segði, at hon drepur ikki hundin**  
'Maria said that she will not kill the dog'
- (1b) **Maria veit ikki, um hon drepur hundin**  
'Maria does not know if she will kill the dog'
- (1c) **Maria veit ikki, nær (ið) hon drepur hundin**  
'Maria does not know when she will kill the dog'
- (1d) **Maria spurdi seg sjálva, hví hon ikki kundi drepa hundin**  
'Maria asked herself why she couldn't kill the dog'
- (1e) **Maria veit ikki, hvør (ið) drap hundin**  
'Maria does not know who killed the dog'

Notice that the particle **ið** can be placed after the interrogatives **nær (ið)** and **hvør (ið)** when they are used to introduce a subordinate clause. Its use here is not obligatory, but very common in spoken Faroese.

### 10.2.2. Relative clauses

Relative clauses are introduced by **sum** or **ið**. Both have the same meaning and are used interchangeably. Note that the relative pronoun may be omitted in some relative clauses. It is omitted when there is a subject in the main clause (2a) and (2b), but not when there is no subject in the relative clause (2c) and (2d):

- (2a) **Gentan, (sum) eg elskaði, var fitt**  
'The girl (who) I loved was nice'
- (2b) **Gentan, (ið) eg elskaði, var fitt**  
'The girl (who) I loved was nice'
- (2c) **Hatta er tann gamli maðurin, sum er farin til Íslands**  
'That is the old man is gone to Iceland'
- (2d) \* **Hatta er tann gamli maðurin, er farin til Íslands**  
'That is the old man who has gone to Iceland'

It is possible to move *farin* 'gone' in front of the verb *er*, and then the relative pronoun may be omitted:

- (3) **Hatta er tann gamli maðurin, farin er til Íslands**  
'That is the old man who has gone to Iceland'

A relative pronoun may modify a locative adverb (for example, *har sum*), but note the difference between (4a) and (4b), where (4a) is a relative clause, (4b) is an adverbial relative conjunction. This is indicated by the punctuation.

- (4a) **Eg gav henni pengarnar har, sum handilin er**  
I gave her the money there, that the shop is  
'I gave her the money there where the shop is'
- (4b) **Hetta er eitt stað, har sum nógv verður drukkið**  
this is a place, there where much is drunk  
'This is a place where people drink much'

The relative conjunction in Faroese is also used to introduce non-restrictive relative clauses:

- (5) **Pápi tín, sum ongantíð hevur verið til skips, er nú farin avstað**  
father your, who never has been on ship, is now gone away  
'Your father, who has never been on a ship, has now gone off sailing'

The relative pronoun is also used in cleft-sentences where it may alternate with *at*. Note also (6c) where the focused element may be either in the nominative (*nýggjur motorur*) or accusative (*nýggjan motor*) 'new engine'.

- (6a) **Tað er professarin, sum fer til Rom**  
'It is the professor who's going to Rome'
- (6b) **Tað er bara við samráðingum, sum/at friður verður á Balkan**  
'It is only through negotiations that there will be peace in the Balkans'
- (6c) **Tað er ein nýggjur motorur/nýggjan motor, sum bátinum tørvar**  
'It is a new engine that the boat needs'

### 10.2.3. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are introduced by adverbial conjunctions. Note that some of them may consist of more than one word. Usually they are divided into several classes, based on their meanings, and we will illustrate the most usual classes below:

#### (a) Temporal conjunctions:

*tá ið* 'when', *tá* 'when', *nú ið* 'when', *ið* 'when', *meðan* 'while', *áðrenn* 'before', *síðan* 'since', *best sum* 'as', *sum* 'as'.

- (7a) **Jógvan hugsaði alla tíðina, meðan hann rann**  
'Jógvan thought the whole time while he ran'
- (7b) **Jógvan hugsaði altíð, tá ið hann rann**  
'Jógvan always thought when he ran'
- (7c) **Jógvan hevur hugsað nógv, síðani hann kom aftur**  
'Jógvan has been thinking a lot since he came back'
- (7d) **Jógvan hugsaði nógv, áðrenn hann fór**  
'Jógvan thought a lot before he left'
- (7e) **Jógvan hugsaði nógv, sum hann rann**  
'Jógvan thought a lot as he was running'

#### A note on translating 'when' into Faroese:

As an interrogative adverb, for example, if you are asking a question, the word is *nær*:

- (8) **Nær kemur tú heim?**  
'When are you coming home?'

If the subordinating conjunction means at what time, when, then the word is also *nær*:

- (9) **Hann spurdi, nær eg hevði tíð**  
'He asked when I had time'

Otherwise we use *tá ið*:

- (10a) **Eg át paella, tá eg var í Spania**  
'I ate paella when I was in Spain' (occurrence in the past)

(10b) Tá ið pápi okkara kom heim, blivu vit altíð glaðir  
'When(ever) our dad came home, we were always happy'  
(occurrence in the past)

(10c) Tá ið mann arbeiðir, gloymir mann sína pínu  
'When you work you forget your pain' (occurrence in the present)

(10d) Eg fari at ringja til tín, tá ið eg eri í Føroyum  
'I'll call you when I'm in the Faroes' (occurrence in the future)

**(b) Conditional conjunctions:**

**um** 'if', **uttan** 'unless', **vissi** 'if'. Of these the borrowed Danish **vissi** (< Dan. *hvis*) is used in colloquial speech, **um** in written Faroese, although some writers now also use **vissi** in the written language.

(11a) Tú fært bilin, um tú betalir  
'You will get the car, if you pay for it'

(11b) Tú fært bilin, vissi tú betalir  
'You will get the car, if you pay for it'

(11c) Tú fært ikki bilin, uttan (at) tú betalir  
'You will not get the car, unless you pay for it'

However, if 'if' can be replaced by 'whether', you must use **um**, not **vissi**:

(11d) Eg veit ikki, um eg kann koma  
'I don't know if (/whether) I can come'

(11e) \*Eg veit ikki, vissi eg kann koma  
'I don't know if I can come'

**(c) Final conjunctions:**

**til tess at** 'so that', **so at** 'so that', **fyri at** 'in order to', **at** 'so'.

(12a) Hann ansaði eftir, ikki at koma ov seint  
'He took care so that he would not be late'

(12b) Hon skal skriva MA-ritgerðina, til tess at fáa arbeiði  
'She has to write her MA thesis in order to get a job'

(12c) Hann seldi hundin, so at hann fekk farið í feriu  
'He sold the dog so that he could go on vacation'

(12d) Hann seldi hundin fyri at kunna fara í feriu  
'He sold the dog so that he could go on vacation'

**(d) Causal conjunctions:**

**av tí at** 'because', **tí at** 'because', **vegna tess at** 'because', **við tað at** 'because', **eftirsum** 'since'.

(13a) Eg fari ikki avstað, av tí at eg eigi ongar pengar  
'I am not leaving, because I do not have any money'

(13b) Eg fari ikki avstað, tí at eg eigi ongar pengar  
'I am not leaving, because I do not have any money'

(13c) Eg fari ikki avstað, vegna tess at eg eigi ongar pengar  
'I am not leaving, because I do not have any money'

(13d) Eg fari ikki avstað, eftirsum eg eigi ongar pengar  
'I am not leaving, because I do not have any money'

**(e) Consecutive conjunctions:**

**at** 'so', **so at** 'so that', **so** 'so', **so...at** 'so...that', **tað...at** 'so...that'.

(14a) Eru tit so væl fyri, at tit kunnu fara í feriu?  
are you so well-off that you can go on holiday?  
'Are you so well-off that you can go on holiday?'

(14b) Vit taka seyðin, so (at) eigarin kann koma eftir honum  
'We will take the sheep so that the owner can come for it'

**(f) Concessive conjunctions:**

**hóast** 'although', **tó at** 'although', 'even though', **sjálvt um** 'even though', **um** 'even though', **um enn** 'even though', **alt** 'although'.

(15a) Eg fari avstað, hóast hon sigur nei  
'I am leaving, although she says no'

(15b) Birgur var Eivind, tó at hann var gamal  
'Eivind was healthy, even though he was old'

(15c) Birgur var Eivind, sjálvt um hann var gamal  
'Eivind was healthy, even though he was old'

(15d) **Minnið livir, um (enn) maður doyr**  
memory lives even (though) man dies  
'The memory of a person lives, even if they die'

(15e) **Hann mátti dvína, alt hann var stórri**  
'He had to give in, although he was bigger'

**(g) Comparative conjunctions:**

**sum** 'as', **enn** 'than', **so sum** 'as', **alt/helst...helst** 'the...the':

(16a) **Tað eigur at fara at ganga, sum eg spáddi**  
'It will be as I foretold'

(16b) **Tess longur tú drekkur, (tess) sjúkari verður tú**  
'The longer you drink, the worse the hangover'

## 11. Syntax

In this chapter, basic word-order patterns in main and subordinate clauses are described, including: verb second (V2), declarative V1, postponing the subject with a formal subject, placement of adverbs and long distance reflexives.

### 11.1. Basic word order

Faroese is a SVO (= Subject-Verb-Object) language, meaning that the subject comes first in the sentence, then the verb and finally the object. This is in main as well as in embedded clauses:

(1a) **Hundurin sær bilin**  
subj. fin.vb. obj.  
'The dog sees the car'

(1b) **Eg sigi, at hundurin sær bilin**  
subj. fin.vb. obj.  
'I am saying that the dog sees the car'

In an auxiliary construction the pattern is as in (2):

(2) **Hundurin hevur sæð bilin**  
subj. fin.vb. n.-fin.vb. obj.

The indirect object, in the dative after verbs such as *geva* 'give' (see the list in §3.5), is placed after the finite verb, whereas the direct object is placed after the indirect object. Note also the word order with the auxiliary verb *hava* is the same as in (2):

(3a) **Marjun gav manninum ein muss**  
subj fin.vb. ind.obj. dir.obj.  
'Marjun gave the man a kiss'

(3b) **Marjun hevur givið manninum ein muss**  
subj. fin.vb. n.-fin.vb. ind.obj. dir.obj.  
'Marjun has given the man a kiss'



## 11.2. Questions

Questions are formed by moving the verb to the first position in the sentence (1a), (1b),

(1c):

- (1a) **Hundurin sær bilin**                      **Sær hundurin bilin?**  
‘The dog sees the car’                      fin.vb. subj. dir.obj.  
Sees the dog the car  
‘Does the dog see the car?’
- (1b) **Hundurin hevur sæð bilin**                **Hevur hundurin sæð bilin?**  
‘The dog sees the car’                      fin.vb. subj. n.-fin.vb. dir.obj.  
‘Has the dog seen the car?’
- (1c) **Marjun gevur manninum ein muss** **Gevur Marjun manninum ein muss?**  
Marjun gives the man a kiss                fin.vb. subj. ind.obj. dir.obj.  
Gives Marjun the man a kiss  
‘Does Marjun give the man a kiss?’
- (1d) **Marjun hevur givið manninum ein muss**  
‘Marjun has given the man a kiss’
- (1e) **Hevur Marjun givið manninum ein muss?**  
fin.vb. subj. n.-fin.vb ind.obj. dir.obj.  
‘Has Marjun given the man a kiss?’

If the clause begins with a *wh*-word, a question word, the question word is first in the sentence, followed by the finite verb + subject (2).

- (2a) **Hvør er har?**  
‘Who is there?’
- (2b) **Hvønn sá hundurin?**  
‘Who(m) did the dog see?’
- (2c) **Hvørjum hjálpti maðurin?**  
‘Who(m) did the man help?’
- (2d) **Hvørjum gav Marjun ein muss**  
‘Who(m) did Marjun give a kiss?’
- (2e) **Hvønn hevur hundurin sæð**  
‘Who(m) did the dog see?’

(2f) **Hvørjum hevur maðurin hjálpt**  
‘Who(m) has the man helped?’

(2g) **Hvørjum hevur Marjun givið ein muss**  
‘Who(m) has Marjun given a kiss?’

(2h) **Hvat gert tú?**  
‘What are you doing?’

(2i) **Nær fert tú?**  
‘When are you leaving?’

Below is a list of question words:

<b>hvat</b>	what
<b>hvar</b>	where
<b>hvaðan(i)</b>	from where / whence
<b>hvussu</b>	how
<b>hvussu nógv</b>	how much
<b>hvussu nógvir <i>m. pl.</i></b>	how many
<b>hvussu nógvir <i>f. pl.</i></b>	how many
<b>hvussu nógv <i>n. pl.</i></b>	how many
<b>hvussu leingi</b>	how long
<b>hvussu langt</b>	how far
<b>hví</b>	why
<b>nær</b>	when
<b>hvør</b>	who
<b>hvør <i>m. and f.</i></b>	which
<b>hvat <i>n.</i></b>	which
<b>hvat (<i>fyri</i>)</b>	what sort of

Examples of usage:

**Hvat er hatta?**

What is that?

**Hvussu nógvir studentar lesa føroyskt?**

How many students are studying Faroese?

**Hvussu leingi verður tú í Føroyum?**

How long are you in the Faroe Islands?

**Hvussu langt er tað til Klaksvíkar?**

How far is it to Klaksvík?

**Hví lesur tú eingilskt?**

Why are you studying English?

**Nær eru vit í Havn?**

When are we in Tórshavn?

**Hvør er hon?**

Who is she?

**Hvat (*fyri*) breyð etur tú?**

What (sort of) bread are you eating?

**Hvaðan ert tú?**

Where are you from?

### How much?

When asking how much something costs we find the following possibilities:

- (3a) **Hvussu nógv kostar bókin?**  
'How much does the book cost?'
- (3b) **Hvat kostar bókin?**  
'What does the book cost?'

In dialect even: **nógv kostar bókin?** 'how much does the book cost?' (lit.: 'much costs the book'), and it is also possible to say simply: **kostar?**

### Where from?

When asking where someone is from, the following two possibilities are found, where (4b) probably is a Danish loan.

- (4a) **Hvaðani ert tú?**  
whence are you?  
'Where do you come from?'
- (4b) **Hvar ert tú frá?**  
'Where do you come from?'
- (4c) **Hvaðani ert tú frá?**  
Lit: whence are you from?  
'Where are you from?'
- (4d) **Íhvaðan(i) ert tú frá?**  
Lit: in-whence are you from?  
'Where are you from?'

It is also possible to find *hvarfrá* corresponding to Danish *hvorfra* 'where from' and *hvarífrá* 'where-in-from', *hvaðan(i)frá* lit.:whence-(in)-from' as in:

- (5) **Tólvti maður fer at skipa fyri bussferð úr Havn inn á Svangaskarð. Seinni verður lýst hvarfrá og nær.**  
'The Twelfth Man (*name of the football team supporters' club*) is going to organise a bus trip from Tórshavn to Svangaskarð. It will later be advertised from where and when.'

### 11.2.1. Verb second

Faroese is a verb second language, meaning that if a constituent is moved to the front of the sentence, the verb will always occur in the second position. The moved constituents are crossed out in the examples below.

- (6a) **Handa bilin sá hundurin sá handa bilin**  
that car saw the dog  
'The dog saw *that* car'
- (6b) **Ein muss gav Marjun gav manninum ein muss**  
a kiss gave Marjun the man  
'Marjun gave the man *a kiss*'
- (6c) **Ikki tími eg tími ikki at fara**  
not take the trouble I to go  
'I cannot be bothered to go'

### 11.2.2. Declarative V1 (Narrative inversion)

In the language of the ballads, the verb may be in the first position. This is seldom seen in modern Faroese. The example (7a) is taken directly from the ballad language:

- (7a) **Drekka teir úr sínum horni**  
drink they from their horn  
'They are drinking from their drinking-horns'
- (7b) **Nú var tíðin komin at fara. Sat hann leingi og ivaðist. Reistist so. Hugdi seg um og fór útum.**  
now was the time to go. Sat he long and hesitated. Stood then up. Looked around himself and went out.  
'Now it was time to go. He sat there for a long time and hesitated. Then he stood up – he looked around and went out.'

### 11.2.3. Postponing the subject

In the examples above the subject is typically in the first position, as Faroese is a SVO language (Subject-Verb-Object), but sometimes this position is occupied by another word, such as an adverb, or the empty *tað* 'it', 'there' (called the formal subject). The finite verb, however, remains in the second position. Note that (8h) is ungrammatical, as the object cannot be moved to the front.

- (8a) **Tað hava fimm íslendingar bygt hús í Havnini**  
there have five Icelanders built houses in Tórshavn  
'Five Icelanders have built houses in Tórshavn'
- (8b) **Tað hava sitið fimm íslendingar og bíðað eftir byggiloyvi í Havnini**  
there have sat 5 Icelanders and waited after building licence in Tórshavn  
'Five Icelanders have been waiting for a building licence in Tórshavn'
- (8c) **Í ár vorðu nógvar grindir dripnar**  
this year were many pilot whales killed  
'Many pilot whales were killed this year'
- (8d) **Í ár vorðu dripnar nógvar grindir**  
this year were killed many pilot whales  
'This year many pilot whales were killed'
- (8e) **Í ár komu nógvar grindir inn á Sandavág**  
this year came many pilot whales in on Sandavágur  
'This year many pilot whales came to Sandavágur'
- (8f) **Í ár komu inn á Sandavág nógvar grindir**  
this year came in on Sandavágur many pilot whales  
'This year many pilot whales came to Sandavágur'
- (8g) **Í ár drap Tummas á Dómarakontórinum úr Havn nógvar hvalir**  
this year killed Tummas on the Judge's Office from Tórshavn many whales  
'This year Tummas from the Judge's Office in Tórshavn killed many whales'
- (8h) **\*Í ár drap nógvar hvalir Tummas á Dómarakontórinum úr Havn**  
this year killed many whales Tummas on the Judge's Office from Tórshavn
- (8i) **Í ár búði Tummas á Dómarakontórinum úr Havn her**  
this year lived Tummas on the Judge's Office from Tórshavn there  
'This year Tummas from the Judge's Office in Tórshavn lived here'
- (8j) **Í ár búði her Tummas á Dómarakontórinum úr Havn**  
this year lived here Tummas on the Judge's Office from Tórshavn  
'This year Tummas from the Judge's Office in Tórshavn lived here'

### 11.3. Agreement with noun phrase

An adjective has to agree with the noun or pronoun it qualifies in gender, number and case.

#### 11.3.1. Adjectives and agreement

Adjectives and other modifiers have to show agreement in *gender*, *number* and *case* with the noun they modify.

(1a) **Ein góður bilur**  
'A good car'

(1b) **Ein reyð hurð**  
'A red door'

(1c) **Eitt svart skip**  
'A black ship'

In (1a) the noun **bilur** 'car' is masculine, hence the masculine form of the adjective. In (1b) the noun **hurð** 'door' is feminine, hence **góð** 'good', not **góður** or the neuter form **gott**, which is in (1c), as **skip** 'ship' is neuter.

In all the examples above we have the nominative case. The corresponding accusative forms are shown in (2):

(2a) **Eg síggi ein reyðan bil**  
'I see a red car'

(2b) **Eg síggi eina reyða hurð**  
'I see a red door'

(2c) **Eg síggi eitt reytt skip**  
'I see a red ship'

Predicative adjectives also have to agree with the noun they modify:

(3a) **Bilurin er góður**  
'The car is good'

(3b) **Hurðin er reyð**  
'The door is red'

- (3c) **Skipið er reytt**  
'The ship is red'

The adjective is as a rule placed in front of the noun, but sometimes it can come after the noun it qualifies. For example, in (4a) which is from a popular song, and (4b, c, d) which are all place-names:

- (4a) **Meðan hundurin brúni stendur enn í bóndans túni**  
while the dog brown stands still in the farmer's alleyway  
'While the brown dog still stands in the farmer's alleyway'
- (4b) **Fløtan friða**  
plain-the pretty  
'The Pretty Plain'
- (4c) **Hellan hála**  
rock-the slippery  
'The Slippery Rock'
- (4d) **Dalurin langi**  
valley-the long  
'The Long Valley'

### 11.3.2. Definite adjectives

Adjectives have two set of endings, strong and weak or indefinite and definite adjectives. The endings are:

Figure 102

	Indefinite			Definite		
	<i>m.</i>	<i>f.</i>	<i>n.</i>	<i>m.</i>	<i>f.</i>	<i>n.</i>
Sg.						
Nom.	-ur	-0	-t	-i	-a	-a
Acc.	-an	-a	-t	-a	-u	-a
Dat.	-um	-ari	-um	-a	-u	-a
Pl.						
Nom.	-ir	-ar	-0	-u	-u	-u
Acc.	-ar	-ar	-0	-u	-u	-u
Dat.	-um	-um	-um	-u	-u	-u

A rule of thumb is that the indefinite endings are used when English uses *a* as in *a big car* = **ein stórir bilur**, while the definite endings are used, when English has *the* as in *the pretty woman* = **tann vakra konan**. Note that the noun is also definite in Faroese, so we say something like: 'the pretty-the woman-the'. It may be useful to compare the system with other Germanic languages you might know:

Eng.	'a big child'	'the big child'
Far.	<b>eitt stórt barn</b>	<b>tað stóra barnið</b>
Ger.	ein grosses Kind	das grosse Kind
Dan.	et stort barn	det store barn
Swedish	ett stort barn	det stora barnet
Dutch	een groot kind	het grote kind

The definite (or weak) forms of the adjectives are used after:

- the definite article (**tann, hin** 'the'): **tann reyði bilurin** 'the red car'
- the demonstrative pronouns (**tann, hesin, hasin**: **hasin reyði bilurin** 'that red car')
- set expressions: **føroyska málið** 'the Faroese language'
- before or after a personal name: **góða Siri** 'dear Siri', **Eirikur reyði** 'Erik the Red'.

In all other cases, the indefinite (or strong) declension of the adjective is used. For known or familiar entities, a definite form of the noun phrase is used, as the definite basically indicates, what the speaker and the hearer already know about the world. It is thus possible to use the definite form of the adjective – even without an article – in (5f) and (5g), as both speaker and hearer know that there is only one US president, and only one Danish national football team.

- (5a) **Tað stóra skipið**  
'The big ship' (def. art.)
- (5b) **Eg síggi hin gamla mannin á vegnum**  
'I see the old man on the road' (def. art.)
- (5c) **Handa vakra konan gongur skjótt**  
'That pretty woman walks fast' (dem. pron.)
- (5d) **Hatta vakra barnið svevur væl**  
'That pretty child sleeps well' (dem. pron.)
- (5e) **Hesin reyði bilurin koyrir skjótt**  
'This red car drives fast' (dem. pron.)

(5f) **Amerikanski forsetin fer til Kuba at biðja um lán**  
'The US president is going to Cuba to ask for a loan'  
(known entity)

(5g) **Vit halda við danska fótþóltslandsliðnum**  
'We side with the Danish national football team'  
(known entity)

(5h) **Góða Siri. Eg skrivi hetta til tín, hvar tú so ert**  
'Dear Siri, I am writing this to you, wherever you are'  
(personal names)

### Comparative

The comparative is declined with definite endings as the comparative refers to something that is known or given in discourse, that is, if a man is bigger than someone else, both have been introduced into the conversation before.

(6a) **Hesin bilurin er vakrari enn tykkara**  
'This car is prettier than yours'

(6b) **Eg síggi ta størru bygdina av fjallinum**  
'I see the bigger village from the mountain-top'

(6c) **Martin og Ólavur sigla við tí verra skipinum hjá reiðarínum**  
'Martin and Ólavur are sailing in the shipping company's worst ship'  
(meaning the company has two ships and Martin and Ólavur are on the worst one)

The comparative has no inflection when the noun is indefinite. That is: the form of the adjective in the comparative is **vakrari** in all the cases below. An indefinite noun occurs with the indefinite article **ein** 'a' or in neuter **eitt** 'a'.

(7a) **Ein vakrari hundur** (m. nom.)  
'A prettier dog'

(7b) **Ein vakrari ketta** (f. nom.)  
'A prettier cat'

(7c) **Eitt vakrari lamb** (n. nom.)  
'I see a prettier lamb'

(7d) **Eg síggi ein vakrari hund** (m. acc.)  
'I see a prettier dog'

(7e) **Eg kíni einari vakrari kettu** (f. dat.)  
'I stroke a prettier cat'

(7f) **Eg síggi fimm vakrari lomb** (n. acc. pl.)  
'I see five prettier lambs'

### Superlative

The superlative has regular definite declension, as the examples below show, but no indefinite declension.

(8a) **Tann vakrasti bilurin er ein citroëngur**  
'The prettiest car is a Citroën'

(8b) **Eg elski ta vakrastu konuna í Keypmannahavn**  
'I love the prettiest woman in Copenhagen'

### 11.3.3. Other modifiers

Other modifiers are:

- indefinite and definite articles
- numerals
- pronouns

The indefinite article is **ein** 'a', and the definite **tann**, **hin** 'the'. The cardinal numbers **ein** 'one', **tveir** 'two' and **tríggir** 'three' agree with the noun phrase they modify, and ordinal numbers agree and decline as a definite adjective.

(9a) **Ein maður, ein kona og eitt barn ganga har** (indefinite article)  
'A man, a woman and a child are walking there'

(9b) **Jógvan rann so skjótt, sum var hin versti í hølunum á honum** (definite art.)  
'Jógvan ran so fast, as if the Devil (lit.: 'the worst [one]') was right behind him'

(9c) **Eg skal keypa ein bil og eitt skip** (numeral)  
'I am going to buy one car and one ship'

(9d) **Jógvan eigur tríggjar bilar, tvær teldur og trí børn** (numeral)  
'Jógvan has three cars, two computers and three children'

### 11.3.4. Modifying reflexive pronouns

The reflexive pronouns **seg**, **sær** and **sín** are not gender specific, only the complex reflexive pronoun is gender specific:

	Simplex	Complex		
		M	F	N
Sg.				
Acc.	<b>seg</b>	<b>seg sjálvan</b>	<b>seg sjálva</b>	<b>seg sjálvt</b>
Dat.	<b>sær</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvari</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>
Pl.				
Acc.	<b>seg</b>	<b>seg sjálvar</b>	<b>seg sjálvar</b>	<b>seg sjálvi</b>
Dat.	<b>sær</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>	<b>sær sjálvum</b>

Note that the simplex reflexive in the subordinate clauses below may modify the subject in the main clause, something that is impossible in English, as English only has a complex reflexive. The example (10) means either that **Marjus** was shaved by **Jógvan** or that **Jógvan** shaved himself yesterday.

- (10) **Marjus**<sub>i</sub> **segði**<sub>i</sub>, **at Jógvan**<sub>j</sub> **rakaði sær**<sub>i</sub> í **gjár**<sub>i</sub>  
 'Marjus said that Jógvan shaved Marjus yesterday'  
 'Marjus said that Jógvan shaved himself yesterday'

When the reflexive is complex, the pattern is the same as in English 'himself' and 'herself', and can only refer to the subject of the subordinate clause.

- (11a) **Marjus**<sub>i</sub> **segði**<sub>i</sub>, **at Jógvan**<sub>j</sub> **vaskaði sær sjálvum**<sub>ij</sub>  
 'Marjus said that Jógvan washed himself'  
 (11b) **Marjus**<sub>i</sub> **segði**<sub>i</sub>, **at Ninna**<sub>j</sub> **vaskaði sær sjálvari**<sub>ij</sub>  
 'Marjus said that Ninna washed herself'

### 11.3.5. Modifying possessive pronouns

The genitive is still seen as an active case in the personal pronouns. If the owner is, for example, **vit** 'we', then the genitive form of the personal pronoun is used in possessive constructions (**okkara** 'our'). In (12a) the noun is masculine (**bilur**), in (12b) it is feminine (**telda**) and in (12c) it is neuter (**hús**). Even so the genitive form of the personal pronoun does not change.

- (12a) **Hetta er okkara bilur**  
 'This is our car'

- (12b) **Hetta er okkara telda**  
 'This is our computer'

- (12c) **Hetta er okkara hús**  
 'This is our house'

Personal Pronoun	Genitive form of personal pronoun used in possessive constructions	Example
<b>vit</b>	<b>okkara</b>	<b>okkara hús</b> 'our house'
<b>tit, tygum</b>	<b>tykkara</b>	<b>tykkara bilur</b> 'your car'
<b>hann</b>	<b>hansara</b>	<b>hansara barn</b> 'his child'
<b>hon</b>	<b>hennara</b>	<b>hennara barn</b> 'her child'
<b>tað</b>	<b>tess</b>	<b>tess innihald</b> 'its contents'
<b>teir, tær, tey</b>	<b>teirra</b>	<b>teirra<sup>30</sup> børn</b> 'their children'

However, if the owner is **eg** 'I' or **tú** 'you', or we are referring to the third person subject of the clause, then we use the possessive pronouns **mín** 'my', **tín** 'your' and **sín** 'his', 'her', 'its'. These are inflected for gender, number and case:

- (13a) **Hetta er mín bilur** (**bilur** = m. nom. = **mín**)  
 'This is my car'  
 (13b) **Eg síggi mína teldu** (**telda** = f. acc. = **mína**)  
 'I see my computer'  
 (13c) **Eg síggi tíni børn** (**börn** = n. acc. pl. = **tíni**)  
 'I see your children'

As the noun **bilur** in (13a) is masculine, the possessive pronoun is in the masculine, nominative singular. In (13b) the noun **telda** is feminine. It functions as an object in the sentence, hence the accusative form **mína**. In (13c) **tíni børn** is the object of the sentence, and as **barn** (plural **börn**) is neuter the form of the possessive pronoun is **tíni**.

<sup>30</sup> A construction with a clitic is also possible: **teirrasa børn** 'their children' where **-sa** is the clitic.

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'my'		
Sg.			
Nom.	mín	mín	mítt
Acc.	mín	mína	mítt
Dat.	mínum	mínari	mínum
Pl.			
Nom.	mínir	mínar	míni
Acc.	mínar	mínar	míni
Dat.	mínum	mínum	mínum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'your'		
Sg.			
Nom.	tín	tín	títt
Acc.	tín	tína	títt
Dat.	tínum	tínari	tínum
Pl.			
Nom.	tínir	tínar	tíni
Acc.	tínar	tínar	tíni
Dat.	tínum	tínum	tínum

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
	'his', 'her', 'its'		
Sg.			
Nom.	sín	sín	sítt
Acc.	sín	sína	sítt
Dat.	sínum	sínari	sínum
Pl.			
Nom.	sínir	sínar	síni
Acc.	sínar	sínar	síni
Dat.	sínum	sínum	sínum

Note the use of **hansara** 'his', **hennara** 'her' and **sín** below.

(14a) **Heini hatar hansara konu**  
'Heini hates his (someone else's) wife'

(14b) **Heini hatar sína konu**  
'Heini hates his (own) wife'

(14c) **Malla hatar hennara hár**  
'Malla hates her (someone else's) hair'

(14d) **Malla hatar sítt hár**  
'Malla hates her (own) hair'

See also §11.8.

#### 11.4. Subject agreeing with verb

A verb agrees in person (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and number (sg., pl.) with a subject. Thus the verb form **síggi** in (1a) is 1st person, because of the pronoun **eg** 'I'. In (1b) the first verb agrees with the 1st person **eg** 'I', the second with the 2nd person **tú** 'you', the third with the 3rd person **hann** 'he', and the fourth with the 3rd person plural **tey** 'they'. Note that the form of the verb in the plural is the same, also in the past for most verbs, cf. (1c) and (1e). The past singular does also just has one form.

(1a) **Eg síggi konuna**  
'I see the woman'

(1b) **Eg síggi konuna, tú sært mannin, hann sær barnið, og tey síggja alla familjuna**  
'I see the woman, you see the man, he sees the child and they see the whole family'

(1c) **Vit (tit, tey) lesa greinina**  
'We (you, they) read the article'

(1d) **Eg (tú, hann, hon) rópti á mannin**  
'I (you, he, she) called the man'

(1e) **Vit (tit, tey) róptu á mannin**  
'We (you, they) called the man'

##### 11.4.1. Dative and accusative subjects

We have mentioned that some verbs take a dative subject instead of a nominative. These constructions are sometimes heard in spoken Faroese but are more common in written Faroese. Verbs that may take a dative subject are:

**berast** *fyr* 'seem', **bresta** 'break', 'fail to materialise', **dáma** 'like', **eydnast** 'succeed', **ganga** *væl/illa* 'be successful/unsuccessful', **gangast** *væl/illa* 'succeed, not succeed', **hóva** 'like',

**huga** 'like', **hugna við** 'like', **leiðast við** 'be bored with', **líka** 'like', **lítast á** 'like', **nýtast** 'need', 'have to', **skríma um** 'like', **standast við** 'feel nauseated by', 'detest', **sýnast** 'seem', **tróta** 'lack', **tykja** 'seem', **tykjast** 'seem', **tørva** 'lack', **vanta** 'lack', **verða á** 'happen to (unluckily)', **vera dátt við** 'be startled at', **vita væl við / illa við** 'be doing fine / badly'.

Of these especially **dáma** 'to like' is still heard in spoken and seen in written Faroese with a dative subject. Note that the verb is, in written Faroese, in 3rd person singular, even though the subject is in the plural (2b).

(2a) **Mær dámar ikki mjólkina**  
me like not the milk  
'I don't like the milk'

(2b) **Tykkum dámar bommini**  
'You like the sweets'

Note the pairs below, where spoken Faroese has either a new construction (usually borrowed from Danish) or a nominative subject (3b, c):

**Faroese impersonal construction**    **Colloquial speech**

- |      |   |  |
|------|---|--|
| (3a) | <b>Mær leiðist við undirvísingina</b><br>'I am bored with the teaching' | <b>Undirvísingin keðir meg</b> (Dan.)<br>'The teaching bores me' |
| (3b) | <b>Mær dámar mjólkina</b><br>'I like the milk'                          | <b>Eg dámi mjólkina</b><br>'I like the milk'                     |
| (3c) | <b>Mær líkar mjólkina</b><br>'I like the milk'                          | <b>Eg dámi mjólkina</b><br>'I like the milk'                     |
| (3d) | <b>Mær nýtist ikki at fara</b><br>'I don't have to go'                  | <b>Eg behøvist ikki at fara</b> (Dan.)<br>'I don't have to go'   |
| (3e) | <b>Mær trýtur / tørvar ein bil</b><br>'I need a car'                    | <b>Eg havi brúk fyri einum bili</b> (Dan.)<br>'I need a car'     |
| (3f) | <b>Mær tørvar meira máling</b><br>'I lack more paint'                   | <b>Eg mangli meira máling</b> (Dan.)<br>'I lack more paint'      |

In some rare instances it is possible to find accusative subjects also. In A **meg** is in the accusative. The B sentences are with a dummy subject **tað** and the real subject **meg**.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>A</b>   | <b>B</b>  |
| (4a) <b>Meg nøtrar í holdið</b><br>me shudders in the flesh<br>'I shudder'             | <b>Tað nøtrar meg í holdið</b><br>it shudders me in the flesh<br>'I shudder'      |
| (4b) <b>Meg óraði tað altíð</b><br>me expected that always<br>'I always expected that' | <b>Tað óraði meg altíð</b><br>that expected me always<br>'I always expected that' |

In general, verbs that once took an accusative subject in Faroese now take either a nominative subject or they have different constructions altogether, for example (4a) and (4b).

**Higher style (literary)**

**Spoken Faroese**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (5a) <b>Meg droymdi ein dreym</b><br>me dreamt a dream<br>'I dreamt a dream'                | <b>Eg droymdi ein dreym</b><br>'I had a dream'            |
| (5b) <b>Meg minnist ikki...</b><br>me remember not<br>'I don't remember'                    | <b>Eg minnist ikki...</b><br>'I don't remember'           |
| (5c) <b>Meg grunaði tað altíð</b><br>me suspected it always<br>'I always suspected that'    | <b>Eg grunaði tað altíð</b><br>'I always suspected that'  |
| (5d) <b>Nú fór, sum meg vardi</b><br>now went, as me expected<br>'now it was as I expected' | <b>Nú fór, sum eg vardi</b><br>'now it was as I expected' |

We can also find verbs with either accusative or dative subjects: The verbs in question are:

**Accusative**

**Dative**

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| (6a) <b>meg fýsir lítið at fara</b><br>me wants extremely little to go<br>'I don't want to go' | <b>mær fýsir lítið at fara</b>     |
| (6b) <b>meg hugbítur at síggja hana</b><br>me wants to see her<br>'I want to see her'          | <b>mær hugbítur at síggja hana</b> |



- (6c) **meg lystir at drekka**  
 me wants to smoke  
 'I want to smoke'

**mær lystir at drekka**

#### 11.4.2. Agreement and lack of agreement with *hava* and *vera*

Perfect tenses can be constructed using **hava** + supine. The supine does not inflect for case, gender or number. The verb **lisið** is in the supine, while the verb **hava** agrees with the subjects in (6). The supine forms are listed under the inflection of each proper verb class in the section on the verbs (Chapter 7), but for the sake of convenience we will list them here again together with the forms of the verb **hava** 'to have'.

	Present tense	Preterite	Supine
	<b>Sg.</b>		
1.	<b>eg havi</b>	<b>hevði</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>
2.	<b>tú hefur</b>	<b>hevði</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>
3.	<b>hann hefur</b>	<b>hevði</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>
	<b>Pl.</b>		
1.	<b>vit hava</b>	<b>hövdu</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>
2.	<b>tit hava</b>	<b>hövdu</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>
3.	<b>tey hava</b>	<b>hövdu</b>	<b>kallað, valt, dæmt, bitið</b>

Some examples:

- (7a) **Eg havi lisið bókina**  
 'I have read the book'
- (7b) **Maria hefur lisið bókina**  
 'Maria has read the book'
- (7c) **Vit hava ikki lisið bókina**  
 'We have not read the book'
- (7d) **Eg hevði lisið bókina**  
 'I had read the book'
- (7e) **Maria hevði lisið bókina**  
 'Maria had read the book'
- (7f) **Vit hövdu lisið bókina**  
 'We had read the book'

The past perfect is also used to denote irrealis, that is, when one wants to express an event that has not happened, or it is likely to happen, or it is far removed from the real events.

- (8) **Maria hevði lisið bókina**  
 'Maria would have read the book (if she could)'

When the perfect tense is constructed with **vera** + past participle, the participle is declined for number and gender as an adjective:

- (9a) **Drongurin er horvin** (m., nom., sg.)  
 'The boy has disappeared'
- (9b) **Gentan er horvin** (f., nom., sg.)  
 'The girl has disappeared'
- (9c) **Barnið er horvið** (n., nom., sg.)  
 'The child has disappeared'
- (9d) **Dreingirnir eru horvnir** (m., nom., pl.)  
 'The boys have disappeared'
- (9e) **Genturnar eru horvnar** (f., nom., pl.)  
 'The girls have disappeared'
- (9f) **Børnini eru horvin** (n., nom., pl.)  
 'The children have disappeared'

Remember, some verbs of movement or change of state have a different meaning when occurring together with **vera** 'to be' and **hava** 'to have'. The basic pattern is that **vera** has a stative meaning. Note that the participle agrees with the subject in **vera**-clauses.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (10a) <b>Teir eru komnir</b><br>'They have arrived'      | <b>Teir hava komið nógv til okkara</b><br>'They have often visited us'  |
| (10b) <b>Tær eru farnar</b><br>'They have left'          | <b>Tær hava farið víða</b><br>'They have travelled a lot'               |
| (10c) <b>Ísurin er bráðnaður</b><br>'The ice has melted' | <b>Ísurin hefur bráðnað í sólini</b><br>'The ice has melted in the sun' |

Some intransitive verbs are labelled as **unaccusatives**. Unaccusative verbs do not have subjects that are semantic agents. This is very clear in (10a), as the dog is on the 'receiving end' of the dying process and not the one causing it.

- (11a) **Hundurin doyði**  
dog-the died  
'The dog died'
- (11b) \***Hundurin hefur doyð**  
dog-the has died
- (11c) **Hundurin er deyður**  
dog-the is dead  
'The dog is dead'

As a rule of thumb we say that unaccusative verbs are intransitive verbs that take the perfect auxiliary **vera** 'to be', instead of **hava** 'to have,' but note that this is an area of Faroese that needs further investigation.

**The passive** is made with the verbs **verða** and **blíva** 'become'. The verbs have to agree with the subject, and so does the adjective or past participle:

- (12a) **Maðurin bleiv dømdur**  
'The man was convicted'
- (12b) **Menninir blivu dømdir**  
'The men were convicted'

#### 11.4.3. The present continuous

Faroese does not have any *-ing* form as English, so 'I am going' is expressed with the simple present tense form **eg fari**. The durative aspect in the English phrase 'I am going' can be expressed in Faroese by using paraphrase as in (12a), where the speaker says that she is standing and is thinking, although she is actually sitting down. The *-ing* meaning is also expressed in (12b) by means of paraphrase. The verbs **standa** 'to stand' and **liggja** 'to lie' have lost their lexical meaning in (12a) and (12b), and are used to express the durative aspect.

- (13a) **Eg standi og hugsu um Lenu**  
I stand and think about Lena  
'I am thinking about Lena'

- (13b) **Teir liggja og koyra alla náttina**  
they lie and drive all night-the  
'They are driving all night long'

#### 11.4.4. The future tense

The future is expressed with **skal** 'shall,' or **fara** 'to go.'

- (14a) **Eg skal nokk vaska upp**  
I shall wash up  
'I shall do the dishes.'
- (14b) **Eg fari at vaska upp**  
I am going to wash up (sometime in the future)  
'I am going to do the dishes'

#### 11.4.5. Modal verbs, non-finite forms and the spread of supine

Modal verbs agree with the subject, while the non-finite verb below is in either the infinitive or the supine. In (14a) the modal verb **eigur** agrees with the subject **Jógvan**, whereas the main verb **skriva** is in the infinitive. In (14b) the modal verb in the past tense **átti** agrees with the subject **Jógvan**, whereas the main verb is in the supine.

- (15a) **Jógvan eigur at skriva brævið**  
'Jógvan ought to write the letter'
- (15b) **Jógvan átti at skrivað brævið**  
'Jógvan ought to [have] written the letter'
- (15c) **Jógvan eigur at roykja sigarettina**  
'Jógvan ought to smoke the cigarette'
- (15d) **Jógvan átti at roykt sigarettina**  
'Jógvan ought to [have] smoked the cigarette'

### 11.5. Position of adjectives

Adjectives are typically placed in front of the noun they modify:

- (1) **Ein reyður bilur**  
'a red car'

They may, in poetic language, place-names and the names of persons, be placed after the noun:

- (2a) **Hundurin brúni**  
'the brown dog'
- (2b) **Dalurin langi**  
'the Long Valley'
- (2c) **Torgímur illi**  
'Torgímur the Wicked'

### 11.6. Position of adverbs

A lot could be said about placement of the adverbs in Faroese, but we will restrict ourselves to the following positions:

- Adverbs in medial positions
- The verb phrase position (following the object and other elements)
- The modifying position – the adverb is modifying an adjective or another adverb

#### 11.6.1. Clausal adverbs in medial position

Clausal adverbs tend to occur in medial position, that is directly after the finite verb.

- (1a) **Marjun hevur ikki keypt blómurnar**  
'Marjun has not bought the flowers'
- (1b) **Marjun hevur kanska keypt blómurnar**  
'Marjun has perhaps bought the flowers'
- (1c) **Marjun hevur ivaleyst keypt blómurnar**  
'Marjun has undoubtedly bought the flowers'
- (1d) **Marjun hevur jú keypt blómurnar**  
'Marjun has actually bought the flowers'

In the sentences above the adverb follows the finite verb (**hevur**) and precedes the non-finite verb (**keypt**). In clauses containing only one finite verb the adverb is also placed directly after the finite verb. Note that the adverbs have to precede the object (**blómurnar**), as the ungrammaticality of (2c) and (2d) shows. (2c,d,e) are so-called object shift constructions, where the object has moved from a position after the negation: **Marjun keypti ikki blómurnar** ⇒ **Marjun keypti blómurnar ikki blómurnar**. Faroese does not allow object shifts with full noun phrases (2c, d), only with unstressed personal pronouns (2e), just like Swedish, **Marjun elskar ikki hann** ⇒ **Marjun elskar hann ikki hann** ~ Swedish **Maria älskar inte honom** ⇒ **Maria älskar honom inte honom**.

- (2a) **Marjun keypti ikki blómurnar**  
Marjun bought not the flowers  
'Marjun did not buy the flowers'
- (2b) **Marjun keypti jú blómurnar**  
Marjun bought actually the flowers  
'Marjun did actually buy the flowers'
- (2c) \***Marjun keypti blómurnar ikki / jú**  
Marjun bought the flowers not / actually
- (2d) \***Marjun hevur keypt blómurnar ikki / jú**  
Marjun has bought the flowers not / actually
- (2e) **Marjun elskar hann ikki**  
Marjun loves him not  
'Marjun does not love him'

Clausal adverbs may be preposed, but there are exceptions:

- (3a) **Ikki keypti Marjun blómurnar**  
not bought Marjun the flowers  
'It was not the case that Marjun bought the flowers'
- (3b) **Ivaleynt/bestemt keypti Marjun blómurnar**  
undoubtedly bought Marjun the flowers  
'It was undoubtedly the case that Marjun bought the flowers'
- (3c) \***Jú keypti Marjun blómurnar**  
actually bought Marjun the flowers

The reason for the ungrammaticality of (3c) is probably that it is actually not an adverb, but a discourse marker. Discourse markers in Faroese are a subject for further investigation.

In subordinate clauses, clausal adverbs may precede or follow the finite verb:

- (4a) **Eg haldi, at Jógvan aldri hevur keypt nakrar blómur**  
I think that Jógvan never has bought any flowers
- (4b) **Eg haldi, at Jógvan hevur aldri keypt nakrar blómur**  
I think that Jógvan has never bought any flowers

When the subordinate clause is a complement of a certain type of verbs known as 'non-bridge verbs' (like **harma** 'regret'; 'be sorry', **ivast um** 'doubt', **loyna** 'conceal', **vera keddur av** 'be sorry'), the tendency is to have clausal adverb + finite verb (5a), although some speakers accept the word order finite verb + clausal adverb (5b):

- (5a) **Maria harmast um, at Pauli ikki hevur málað húsini**  
Maria regrets that Paul not has painted the house  
'Maria regrets that Paul has not painted the house'
- (5b) **Maria harmast um, at Pauli hevur ikki málað húsini**  
Maria regrets that Paul has not painted the house

### 11.6.2. Verb phrase adverbs

Adverbs of time, place and manner are usually found in the verb phrase position, meaning that they say something about the verb in the sentence:

- (6a) **Jógvan hevur lisið bókina tá** (adverb of time)  
Jógvan has read the book then
- (6b) **Jógvan hevur lisið bókina har** (adverb of place)  
Jógvan has read the book there
- (6c) **Jógvan hevur lisið bókina grundiga** (adverb of manner)  
Jógvan has read the book carefully

They can also be placed first in a clause.

- (7a) **Tá hevur Jógvan lisið bókina**  
Then has Jógvan read the book

- (7b) **Har hevur Jógvan lisið bókina**  
There has Jógvan read the book

- (7c) **Grundiga hevur Jógvan lisið bókina**  
Carefully has Jógvan read the book

Note the position of the time adverb **tá**, the place adverb **har** and the manner adverb **grundiga** in the sentence below with only a finite verb:

- (8a) **Jógvan (\*tá/\*har/\*grundiga) las (tá/\*har/\*grundiga) bókina**  
**tá/har/grundiga**  
Jógvan (then/there/carefully) read (then/there/carefully) the book then/there/carefully
- (8b) **Tá/har/grundiga las Jógvan bókina**  
Then/there/carefully read Jógvan the book

In (8b) the verb changes place, as Faroese is a V2 (verb second) language. V2 means that the second constituent of a declarative main clause is always a verb (cf. **las** 'read', in (8b)).

In subordinate clauses we find that the preferred position of the adverb is final in the sentence.

- (9) **Eg haldi, at Jógvan hevur lisið bókina tá/har/grundiga**  
'I think that Jógvan has read the book then/there/carefully'

### 11.6.3. Modifying adverbs

A modifying adverb is one modifying another adverb or an adjective. An example is in: (10a) and (10b):

- (10a) **Ógvuliga knappliga varð myrkt úti**  
Very suddenly was dark outside
- (10b) **Hallur er sera tjúkkur**  
Hallur is very fat

These adverbs are placed in front of the adverb or adjective they modify as in:

- (11a) **Jógvan hevur lisið bókina ógvuliga væl**  
Jógvan has read the book very carefully
- (11b) **Ógvuliga væl hevur Jógvan lisið bókina**  
Very carefully has Jógvan read the book

(11c) ?Jógvan hevur ógvuliga væl lisið bókina  
Jógvan has very carefully read the book

(11d) Jógvan las bókina ógvuliga væl  
Jógvan has read the book very carefully

(11e) Ógvuliga væl las Jógvan bókina  
Very carefully has Jógvan read the book

(11f) Jógvan las ?ógvuliga væl bókina  
Jógvan read very carefully the book

### 11.7. Headlines

In newspaper headlines the verb is usually omitted:

(1a) Nógv fólk var á Ólavsøku  
many people at Ólavsøka  
'Many people at Ólavsøka'

(1b) Bátur rent á land  
boat gone on land  
'Boat stranded'

### 11.8. Possession

The most usual way of expressing possession in Faroese is with the preposition *hjá*, which means 'with'. In (1) 'the man's car' the thing owned (*bilurin* 'the car') is in the nominative, definite + *hjá* 'with' + the owner (*manninum* 'the man'), which is in the dative, definite.

(1) **Bilurin hjá manninum**  
car-the-*nom.sg.* with man-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The man's car'

The owner has to have the feature [+animate], as becomes evident from the following sentences:

(2a) **Bilurin hjá konuni**  
car-the-*nom.sg.* with woman-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The man's car'

(2b) **Matskálin hjá hundinum**  
feeding bowl-the-*nom.sg.* with dog-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The dog's feeding-bowl'

(2c) **Ætið hjá fiskinum**  
plankton-the-*nom.sg.* with fish-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The fish's plankton'

(2d) \***Lyktin hjá bilinum**  
headlight-the-*nom.sg.* with car-the-*dat.sg.*

(2e) **Lyktin á bilinum**  
headlight-the-*nom.sg.* on car-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The headlight on the car', 'the car's headlight'

(2d) is impossible, as the car is [-animate]. Instead another preposition is used, namely *á* 'on'. The preposition *á* is also used when describing something on the human body:

(3a) **Hárið á manninum**  
hair-the-*nom.sg.* on man-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The hair on the man', 'the man's hair'

(3b) **Oyrað á konuni**  
ear-the-*nom.sg.* on woman-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The ear on the woman', 'the woman's ear'

(3c) **Nøsin á barninum**  
nose-the-*nom.sg.* on child-the-*dat.sg.*  
'The nose on the child', 'the child's nose'

In colloquial speech, it is sometimes possible to hear *hjá* instead of *á* in (3a, 3b, 3c). Possession is also expressed by making use of the possessive pronouns. The possessive pronoun agrees in gender, number and case with the noun it modifies:

(4a) **Hatta er mín bilur**  
'That is my car'

(4b) **Hatta er tín kona**  
'That is your woman'

(4c) **Hatta er(u) míni børn**  
'Those are my children'

(4d) **Hatta er(u) tíni børn**  
'Those are your children'

The word order can be possessive pronoun + noun, or noun + possessive pronoun. The latter is more common in written Faroese and high style, cf. (5):

(5a) **Hatta er bilur mín**  
'That is my car'

(5b) **Hatta er kona tín**  
'That is your wife'

The genitive of the personal pronoun is also used to express possession:

(6a) **Hatta er hennara bilur**  
'That is her car'

(6b) **Hatta er hansara kona**  
'That is his wife'

(6c) **Hatta er(u) okkara børn**  
'Those are our children'

(6d) **Hatta er(u) tykkara børn**  
'Those are your children'

### 11.9. The formal subject *tað*

We have touched upon the formal subject in §11.3. *Agreement with noun phrase*, where we had sentences such as:

(1a) **Tað hava fimm íslendingar** bygd hús í Havnini  
there have five Icelanders built houses in Tórshavn  
'Five Icelanders have built houses in Tórshavn'

(1b) **Tað hava sitið fimm íslendingar** og bíðað eftir byggiloyvi í Havnini  
there have sat 5 Icelanders and waited after building licence in Tórshavn  
'Five Icelanders have been waiting for a building licence in Tórshavn'

The formal subject has the form *tað* 'there'; the form is the same as that of the demonstrative pronoun *tað* (*tað barnið* 'that child') and the definite article (*tað barnið* 'the child').

A formal subject is used with unaccusative verbs as in:

(2) **Tað komu nakrir hestar gangandi** eftir vegnum  
there came some horses walking after road-the  
'Some horses were walking along the road'

Formal subjects are also used in a variety of other intransitive verbs. The following examples are all from Thráinsson et. al. (2004).

(3) **Tað dansaði eitt par í havanum í gjárvöldið**  
there danced a pair in garden-the in yesterday evening-the  
'A couple danced in the garden yesterday evening'

Impersonal passive constructions with *tað* are generally accepted:

(4) **Tað bleiv dansað í havanum í gjárvöldið**  
there was danced in garden-the in yesterday evening-the  
'People danced in the garden yesterday evening.'

Formal subjects are also accepted by some speakers with transitive verb constructions:

(5) **Tað keypti onkur útlendingur húsið hjá Eivindi**  
there bought some foreigner house-the at Eivind  
'Some foreigner bought Eivind's house'

Formal subjects are also found with passive verbs:

(6) **Tað blivu nógv hús keypt í Fuglafirði í fjør**  
there were many houses bought in Fuglafjørður in last-year  
'Many houses were bought in Fuglafjørður last year.'

The formal subject is found for the 'it' in weather-related verbs:

(7) **Tað regnar ofta í Havni**  
it rains often in Havni  
'It rains frequently in Tórshavn'

A formal subject is also found in predicate constructions like the following:

(8) **Tað er lítið skilagott, [at koyra við summerdekkum um veturin]**  
it is little sensible [to drive with summer-tyres in winter-the]  
'It is not wise [to use summer tyres in the winter]'

It is worth noting that in (6c) and (6d), repeated here for convenience as (9a) and (9b), the verb may be in the singular, although we would expect the plural; in other words, the verb can agree either with the formal subject (singular), as in (9a) and (9b), or with the real subject (plural), as in (9c) and (9d):

- (9a) **Hatta er okkara børn**  
'Those are our children'
- (9b) **Hatta er tykkara børn**  
'Those are your children'
- (9c) **Hatta eru okkara børn**  
'Those are our children'
- (9d) **Hatta eru tykkara børn**  
'Those are your children'

## 12. Compounds and derivations

Faroese is rich in compounds and we shall briefly look at them here together with derivational suffixes.

### 12.1. Compounds

In the following sections the most common types of compounds in Faroese are listed, but before we proceed some introductory comments need to be made about the compound suffixes and the old genitive.

In noun compounds there are the following two possibilities: root compounds and joint compounds:

Root compounds	Joint compounds
<b>mannfólk</b> 'man'	<b>mannaflokkur</b> 'group of humans'
<b>barntøka</b> 'adoption'	<b>barngár</b> 'childhood'
	<b>barnablað</b> 'children's magazine'
<b>bókhald</b> 'book-keeping'	<b>bókarblað</b> 'leaf in a book'
	<b>bókasavn</b> 'library'
	Lit.: 'collection of books'

Root compounds are made by using the root of the noun. The root corresponds to the accusative singular form of each noun with the suffixes removed:

Noun	Acc.sg.	Root	Meaning
<b>stólur</b>	<b>stól</b>	<b>stól-</b>	'chair'
<b>maður</b>	<b>mann</b>	<b>mann-</b>	'man'
<b>granni</b>	<b>granna</b>	<b>grann-</b>	'neighbour'
<b>bók</b>	<b>bók</b>	<b>bók-</b>	'book'
<b>sól</b>	<b>sól</b>	<b>sól-</b>	'sun'
<b>genta</b>	<b>gentu</b>	<b>gent-</b>	'girl'
<b>barn</b>	<b>barn</b>	<b>barn-</b>	'child'
<b>ríki</b>	<b>ríki</b>	<b>ríki-</b>	'kingdom'
<b>hjarta</b>	<b>hjarta</b>	<b>hjárt-</b>	'heart'

Note the weak nouns (**granni**, **genta**, **hjarta**). In compounds the oblique forms are used: **grannalag** 'neighbourhood', **gentunavn** 'girl's-name' and **hjártajúka** 'heart disease'.

The joint compounds need some further comment. As the historical genitive is an unproductive case in Faroese, its use in compounding is somewhat artificial as the genitive forms have no semantic content. Therefore we have chosen to label the compounds with

–a, –s, –ar above as joint compounds (compounds created by joining two words with an infix).

The idea behind **mann-a-flokkur** lit.: ‘flock of men’ is that the historical genitive plural (**manna**) is used to express the fact that there is more than one human in a group of humans. In **bók-ar-blað** (lit.: ‘leaf of a book’), the historical genitive singular (**bókar**) is used to express the fact that it is one sheet in one book compared with **bók-a-savn** ‘collection of books’, which uses the old genitive plural to express the fact that we are talking about a collection of many books. Note, however, that both **bókarblað** and **bókasavn** are pronounced alike, that is, without the –r. Then, due to influence from the written language, a false –ar is not seldom heard in for example **ítróttarsamband** ‘athletic association’, where we would expect the old genitive plural **ítróttasamband**, as there is more than one association in an athletic union. Native speakers of Faroese do not have the feeling of when to choose –ar and –a. Even –s is false in a word like **innflúgvistorn** ‘control tower’, where the verbal infix –i was expected, as in **flúgvjleiðari** ‘air-traffic controller’. **Innflúgvistorn** is a hypercorrect form with the infix –s from the historical masculine as **skipsførari** ‘shipmaster’.

There are different types of compounds, where a noun is the second part of the compound:

### 12.1.1. Noun compounds

noun + noun	<b>bila+ferja</b> ‘car+ferry = ferry that carries cars’
adjective + noun	<b>smá+genta</b> ‘small+girl = girl’
verb + noun	<b>renni+fjøl</b> ‘running+board = skateboard’
numeral + noun	<b>átta+tal</b> ‘eight+number = eight’
adverb/particle + noun	<b>upp+gerð</b> ‘up+making = setting; affectation’

### 12.1.2. Verb compounds

noun + verb	<b>leið+beina</b> ‘path+direct = direct’
adjective + verb	<b>harð+frysta</b> ‘hard+freeze = freeze solid’
numeral + verb	<b>fjór+falda</b> ‘four+multiply = quadruple’
adverb/particle + verb	<b>yvir+bjóða</b> ‘over+bid = outbid’

### 12.1.3. Adjective compounds

noun + adjective	<b>kinna+reyður</b> ‘chin+red = red’
verb + adjective	<b>renn+vátur</b> ‘run+wet = dripping wet’
adjective + adjective	<b>góð+sintur</b> ‘good+tempered = kind’
adverb/particle + adjective	<b>gjøgnum+frosin</b> ‘through+frozen = extremely cold’

## 12.2. Derivational suffixes

We will look at suffixes deriving nouns, suffixes deriving adjectives, suffixes deriving adverbs and prefixation in the following sections.

### 12.2.1. Suffixes deriving nouns

The suffix –ari (cf. English –er) is used to denote *nomen actiones* nouns, which all are masculine according to the semantic gender assignment rule that persons are masculine.

The suffixes –an and –ing are usually used to derive abstract, feminine nouns from verbs. The nouns derived in this way have an abstract meaning. The suffix –ilsi, borrowed from Danish –else, is used to derive neuter nouns. In some cases derivation is done by conversion, that is a noun is derived from a verb with no suffix at all (**møsn**).

-from verbs		
Suffix	Basic verb	Derived noun
-ari	<b>døma</b> ‘to judge’	<b>dómari</b> ‘judge’
	<b>renna</b> ‘to run’	<b>rennari</b> ‘runner’
-an	<b>renna</b> ‘to run’	<b>rennan</b> ‘running’
-ing	<b>blanda</b> ‘to mix’	<b>blandan</b> ‘mixing’
	<b>blanda</b> ‘to mix’	<b>blandingur</b> ‘mix’
-ilsi	<b>klemma</b> ‘to squeeze’	<b>klemmilsí</b> ‘dizziness’
	<b>begynna</b> ‘to begin’	<b>begynnílsi</b> ‘beginning’
conversion	<b>møsna</b> ‘to chatter’	<b>møsn</b> ‘chatterbox’

-from nouns		
Suffix	Basic noun	Derived noun
-ist	<b>bassur</b> ‘bass’	<b>bassistur</b> ‘bass-player’
-inda	<b>lærari</b> ‘teacher’	<b>lærarinda</b> <sup>31</sup> ‘female teacher’
	<b>fúrsti</b> ‘prince’	<b>fúrstinda</b> ‘princess’
-ynja	<b>ásur</b> ‘heathen god’	<b>ásynja</b> ‘heathen goddess’.

-from adjectives		
Suffix	Basic adjective	Derived noun
-dómur	<b>kristin</b> ‘Christian’	<b>kristindómur</b> ‘Christianity’
-skapur	<b>harður</b> ‘hard’	<b>harðskapur</b> ‘brutality’
	<b>ørur</b> ‘mad’	<b>ørskapur</b> ‘madness’
-heit	<b>stórus</b> ‘great’	<b>stórheit</b> ‘greatness’

<sup>31</sup> In written Faroese a writer would use –inna, **lærarinna**, but we recommend –inda.



### 12.2.2. Suffixes deriving adjectives

#### -from nouns

The ending **-ur** is not part of the derivational suffix; it is the inflectional ending.

Suffix	Basic noun	Derived adjective
-ig-	blóð 'blood'	blóðigur 'bloody'
	hugmóð 'arrogance'	hugmóðigur 'arrogant'
-lig-	abbi 'grandfather'	abbaligur 'old-fashioned'
-sk-	dani 'Dane'	danskur 'Danish'
-ug-	fynd 'pith'	fyndugur 'pithy'
-ut-	blóð 'blood'	blóðutur 'bloody'

#### -from verbs

The **-i** in **rennandi** is an inflectional ending. So also **-ur** in **trúligur**.

Suffix	Basic verb	Derived adjective
-and-	renna 'to run'	rennandi 'running'
-lig-	trúgva 'to believe'	trúligur 'credible'

#### -from adjectives

Suffix	Basic adjective	Derived adjective
-lig-	bláur 'blue'	bláligur 'bluish'

### 12.2.3. Suffixes deriving adverbs

These are discussed in detail in §9. Below is a summary.

#### -from adjectives

Suffix	Basic adjective	Derived adverb
-a	harðligur 'harsh'	harðliga 'harshly'
-t	beinur 'direct'	beint 'directly'

#### -from adverbs

Suffix	Basic adverb	Derived adverb
-an	út 'out'	uttan 'from outside'
-ar	út 'out'	uttar 'further out'
-i	út 'out'	úti 'outside'
-laga	uttar 'further out'	uttarlaga 'fairly far out'
-liga	uttar 'further out'	uttarliga 'fairly far out'

### 12.3. Prefixes

The most common prefixes in Faroese are listed below:

Prefix	Meaning of prefix	Example
aðal-	'main'	aðalstjóri 'main manager'
al-	'all', 'complete'	albann 'complete excommunication'
allar-	'very', 'by far', 'of all'	allarstørstur 'biggest of all'
endur-	're-'	endurmála 'repaint'
er-	'tiny', 'micro'	erbylgjuovnur 'microwave oven'
miðal-	'middle', 'medium'	miðalfiskur 'average-sized fish'
megin-	'main'	megindeild 'main department'
mis-	'mis-', 'un-'	misskilja 'misunderstand'
ný-	'new'	nýborin 'new(ly) born'
ov-	'over-'	ovfisking 'overfishing'
ovur-	'super-'	ovurstóur 'very big'
ó-	'un-'	óundansleppandi 'unavoidable'
tor-	'difficult'	torskildur 'difficult to understand'
van-	'un-', 'mis-'	vanhalga 'profane'
ør-	'tiny', 'micro'	ørfáir 'very few'

In addition to these prefixes we find **be-** and **for-**. These are very common in spoken Faroese, and are borrowed from Danish. Usually it is not just the prefix that is borrowed but the whole word. The prefixes can be found in common words such as **begynna** 'to begin' and **fordøma** 'to condemn'.

The prefix **aðal-** is used with nouns and in some past participle forms: **aðalmunur** 'main difference', **aðalumboð** 'main representative' and **aðalborin** 'noble'. The prefix **al-** is used with nouns, **albann** 'complete excommunication' and adjectives **albilsin** 'very surprised', **alfagur** 'totally beautiful'. The prefix **allar-** is only used with the superlative form of adjectives and adverbs **allaruttastur** (adj.) and **allaruttast** (adv.) 'on the edge'. The prefix **endur-** is used with nouns: **endurdópur** 're-baptizing', and with verbs: **endurmála** 'repaint'. The prefixes **er-** and **ør-** are used with nouns: **erbylgja** 'microwave', and with adjectives: **erfinur** 'very small'. The prefix **megin-** is used with nouns only: **megingrund** 'main reason', while **mis-** can be used with nouns: **misgerð** 'misdeed', and with verbs: **misbrúka** 'abuse', and adjectives: **misháttur** 'ugly'. The prefix **ný-** is used with nouns: **nýbygd** 'new village', and with adjectives: **nýfikin** 'curious'. The prefix **ov-** is used with nouns: **ovarbeiði** 'too much work', and with verbs: **ovarbeiða** 'to work too much', and adjectives (past participles): **ovdrukkin** 'very drunk'. The suffix **ovur-** may be prefixed to nouns: **ovurgleði** 'joy', and with adjectives: **ovurdjarvur** 'very daring', and adverbs: **ovurhonds** 'very', and with the verb **ovurundra** 'esteem highly'. The prefix **ó-** may be added to nouns: **óár** 'bad year', to adjectives: **óansin** 'careless', to verbs: **órógva** 'disturb', and have an adverbial meaning **óføra**

'extremely'. The prefix **tor-** may be added to a participial form as **torlisiin** 'difficult to read', **tornæmur** 'stupid'. The prefix **van-** is added to a noun: **vanbrúk** 'neglect', to a verb: **vanbýta** 'divide unevenly', and to a participial form **vanskaptur** 'distorted'.

### 13. Interjections

An interjection is a word or phrase thrown into a conversation to exclaim about something. It may be used to express emotion, indicate surprise, or call attention sharply to something. Interjections are indeclinable and have no grammatical connection. Among the interjections found in Faroese are the following. Note that it is difficult to translate some of them.

<b>adú</b>	'oh'	<b>illanstíð</b>	'really', 'the devil'
<b>ai</b>	'ouch'	<b>íðan</b>	'then', 'so then'
<b>áh</b>	'oh'	<b>íss /oyjössus</b> <sup>32</sup>	[surprise; disappointment]
<b>ája</b>	'certainly', 'ah'	<b>ja</b>	'yes'
<b>áje</b>	'oh God'	<b>jú</b>	'yes'
<b>ájú, á</b>	'certainly', 'of course', 'indeed'	<b>jús</b>	'yes indeed', 'certainly'
<b>ass / assj</b>	[annoyance]	<b>mammasta</b>	'by God'
<b>dekan</b>	'damn'	<b>nei</b>	'no', 'oh, no'
<b>dums</b>	'thud'	<b>oy</b>	'oh'
<b>eya meg</b>	'woe', 'alas'	<b>oys /oyjössus</b>	'God', 'oh God'
<b>eyeya meg</b>	'wow'	<b>ólukkuíð</b>	'what', 'how odd'
<b>fý</b>	'ugh', 'shame'	<b>píkarill</b>	'hang it'
<b>ha</b>	'eh'	<b>píkarillinar</b>	'hang it'
<b>halgadóy</b>	'gosh'	<b>píkasjey</b>	'hang it'
<b>halgasjey</b>	'gosh'	<b>puff</b>	'alas'
<b>halló</b>	'hello'	<b>puff</b>	'yack'
<b>há há</b>	'ha ha'	<b>sí</b>	'look', 'see'
<b>hey</b>	'hi', 'hey'	<b>skál</b>	'cheers'
<b>huff</b>	'ahem'	<b>suff</b>	'alas'
<b>hurra</b>	'hurrah', 'hooray'	<b>takk</b>	'thanks'
<b>hurrá</b>	'hurrah', 'hooray'	<b>tví</b>	'phooey', 'pooh'
<b>hússj</b>	'hush'	<b>uff</b>	'ugh', 'yuck'
<b>hygga</b>	'look'	<b>vei</b>	'alas', 'woe'
<b>hygga síggj</b>	'well', 'indeed'		

<sup>32</sup> From *Oy Jössus* < Jesus.

Words used to call or order animals are also interjections [gee-up!]:

<b>hó</b>	[driving pilot whales ashore]	<b>kjú-kjú-kjúka</b>	[calling a hen]
<b>huts</b>	'fetch' [dog]	<b>kussi-kussi-kussi</b>	[calling a calf]
<b>kisk-kisk</b>	[calling a cat]	<b>sirri-sirri-sirri</b>	[calling a sheep]
<b>kíss-kíss</b>	'shoo'	<b>tirri-tirri-tirri</b>	[calling a sheep]
		<b>tu</b>	'whoa'

As are the words used to copy animal or other sounds [woof woof! vroom!]:

<b>buldó</b>	'bang'	<b>klipp</b>	[oyster catcher]
<b>bums</b>	'bump'	<b>krá</b>	[crow]
<b>drøn</b>	'vroom'	<b>kri</b>	[tern]
<b>gák</b>	[goose]	<b>kro</b>	[raven]
<b>gvagg</b>	'quack'	<b>krumm</b>	[raven]
<b>kakkuláarakó</b>	'cockadoodledoo'	<b>krukk</b>	[raven]
<b>karibb</b>	[oyster catcher]	<b>kúst</b>	'moo'
<b>karr</b>	[guillemot]	<b>mjavv</b>	'meow'
<b>kipp-kipp</b>	'cheep cheep'	<b>skrukk</b>	'cluck'
<b>kirri-kirri</b>	[snipe]	<b>slurp</b>	'slurp'
<b>kli</b>	[oyster catcher]	<b>voff</b>	'woof'

A number of interjections may be considered rude or obscene and should only be used with extreme caution. For example:

<b>pínadoyð</b>	'God damn it'
<b>fanin í helviti</b>	'F!#?ing hell!' (Lit.: 'devil in hell')
<b>helvitis fani</b>	'F!#?ing hell!' (Lit.: 'Hell's devil')

## 14. Pronunciation

The best way to learn the pronunciation of Faroese is, of course, to listen to and imitate native speakers, use the recording that accompanies this course, listen to Faroese radio or watch Faroese television (both are available over the Internet, for example on *www.olivant.fo*). Below is a brief account of the pronunciation of Faroese.

Faroese has 13 long vowels and 10 short vowels. The main rule is that long vowels are shortened in front of two or more consonants. In addition to this two new vowels are borrowed from Danish, long /a:/ as in **havi** 'garden' and **tomat** 'tomato', and long /y:/ as in **typa** 'type' and **gysari** 'horror film'.

There are 18 consonants in Faroese, and their pronunciation is not difficult for speakers of English.

### 14.1. Stress

The general rule in Faroese is that stress is on the first syllable. The stressed vowels are underlined:

**reнна** 'to run', **avtala** 'to arrange', 'arrangement', and so on.

Borrowings from Danish have the same stress pattern as in Danish (or sometimes in English): **definera** 'to define', **garasja** 'garage', **garantera** 'to guarantee', and so on.

### 14.2. Vowels

Faroese has 13 long vowels and 10 short vowels. The main rule is that a long vowel like **i** in **hin** 'the other', pronounced /hi:n/ becomes short in front of two (or more) consonants: **hitt** 'the other' (neuter form): /hi<sup>h</sup>t/. See §14.2.1 for exceptions to this rule.

The diphthongs are divided into three groups:

1. those ending with an **-i**,
2. those ending with a **-u**,
3. floating diphthongs (that is, both parts of the diphthong are equal in sonority).

Figure 103

**Orthography**      **Example****Monophthongs**

	<u>Long vowel</u>	<u>Short vowel</u>	
i/y	hin [i:]	hitt [ɪ]	'the other'
e	frekur [e:]	frekt [ɛ]	'impudent'
ø	høgur [ø:]	høgt [œ]	'high'
u	gulur[u:]	gult [ʊ]	'yellow'
o	tola [o:]	toldi [ɔ]	'put up with'

**Diphthongs***Ending with -i*

ei	heitur [ai:]	heitt [ai]	'hot'
ey	reyður [ɛi:]	reytt [ɛ]	'red'
oy	royna [ɔi:]	royndi [ɔi]	'try'
í/ý	pína [ui:]	píndi [ui]	'punish'
	brýna [ui:]	brýndi [ui]	'sharpen'

*Ending with -u*

ú	fúlur [æu:]	fúlt [ʏ]	'dirty'
ó	stórir [œu:]	stórt [œ]	'big'

*Floating diphthongs*

a/æ	maður [ɛa:]	mann [a]	'man'
á	hálur [ɔa:]	hált [ɔ]	'slippery'

**14.2.1. Exceptions**

In front of the following consonant combinations, the vowels are long:

-pr	daprir 'sad' [ɛa:]
-pl	epli 'potato' [ɛi:]
-tj	viŧja 'to visit' [i:]
-tr	vetrar 'winters' [ɛi:]
-kj	vekja 'to wake up' [ɛi:]
-kr	akrar 'fields' [ɛa:]
-kl	bekla 'to walk crookedly' [ɛi:]
-sj	flesjar 'skerries' [ɛi:]

**14.2.2. Hiatus**

In the history of Faroese *ð* and *g* were deleted word finally, between vowels and after certain consonants. Instead either /j/, /w/ or /v/ are inserted between vowels and word finally after a vowel. First the rules for /w/ and /j/ insertion after a high vowel. These are:

- (1) If the stressed vowel has the quality of -i (i, y, í, ý, ei, ey, oy), the inserted glide is /j/
- (2) If the stressed vowel has the quality of -u (u, ó, ú), the inserted vowel is /w/

<u>Orthography</u>	<u>Glide insertion</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>
(1) <b>sig</b> 'to say'	j	/sija/
(1) <b>sig</b> 'say'	j	/sij/
(1) <b>oyða</b> 'to destroy'	j	/ɔija/
(2) <b>mugu</b> 'have to do'	w	/mu:wu/
(2) <b>sóu</b> 'saw'	w	/sɛu:wu/
(2) <b>tú</b> 'you'	w	/t <sup>h</sup> uuw/

The inserted vowel is, so to say, copying the quality of the preceding vowel.

If the stressed vowel is: **e, ø, o, a, æ, á**, it is the unstressed vowel in the following syllable that decides the quality of the inserted vowel.

- (1) In front of an unstressed -i, the inserted glide is /j/
- (2) In front of an unstressed -u, a labio-dental /v/ is inserted

<u>Orthography</u>	<u>Glide insertion</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>
(1) <b>gleði</b> 'happiness'	j	/gle:ji/
(1) <b>løg</b> in 'strange'	j	/lø:jin/
(2) <b>æðu</b> 'eider'	v	/ɛa:vʊ/
(2) <b>ráði</b> 'rule'	j	/ɾa:ji/

If the unstressed vowel is -a, preceded by **á** or **a/æ, e, ø** or **o**, there is no glide insertion.

<u>Orthography</u>	<u>Glide insertion</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>
<b>fáa</b> 'to get'	0	/fɔ:a/
<b>saga</b> 'to saw'	0	/sɛ:a/
<b>ræða</b> 'to scare'	0	/ɾɛ:a/
<b>gleða</b> 'to make happy'	0	/gle:a/
<b>røða</b> 'to talk'	0	/ɾø:a/
<b>noða</b> 'ball of wool'	0	/no:a/

Things are, however, complicated by analogical levelling, so that nominative singular *æða* is pronounced /*ɛa:va*/ not the expected [*ɛ:a*]. The form /*ɛa:va*/ is an analogical form from acc., and dat. sg. *æðu* /*ɛa:vʊ*/. In the dialect of Suðuroy the pronunciation is still with no glide insertion in the nominative [*ɛ:a*]. Further changes have also happened. In *fáa* 'to get', for example, some dialects (Suðurstreymoy being one of them) have [fu:wa] and Vágar, Mykines and parts of Norðurstreymoy [fʊr:wa] in order to get the syllable structure Consonant + Vowel (here: wa), as such a structure appears to be the most natural in the languages of the world.

### 14.2.3. Umlaut

Umlaut is a process whereby a vowel in the stressed syllable is pronounced more like a vowel (or semivowel) in the following syllable. It is a type of assimilation.

In Faroese, we observe u-umlaut in all parts of speech where the inflection (the 'ending') has a **u** and the stem contains an **a** or **æ**. In such cases the **a** or **æ** in the stem changes to **ø**, unless it is followed by either an **m** or **n**, in which case it changes to **o**. The **u** in the **-ur** ending of the masculine singular nominative and the **u** in the dative singular masculine and neuter definite ending **num** do not count as a 'real' **u** for the purposes of umlaut:<sup>33</sup>

m. sg. <b>armur</b> 'arm'	>	dat. pl. <b>ørmum</b> 'arms'
m. sg. <b>spakur</b> 'tame'	>	dat. pl. <b>spøkum</b> 'tame'
m. sg. <b>lættur</b> 'easy'	>	dat. pl. <b>løttum</b> 'easy'
1. sg. pret. <b>hevði</b> 'had'	>	1. pl. pret. <b>høvdu</b> 'had'

But:

m. sg. <b>armur</b> 'arm'	>	dat. sg. def. <b>arminum</b> 'the arm'
m. sg. <b>maður</b> 'man'	>	dat. sg. def. <b>manninum</b> 'the man'
n. sg. <b>barn</b> 'child'	>	dat. sg. def. <b>barninum</b> 'the child'

Note, however, that it is also possible to have no umlaut in the dative plural, so people might say **armum** instead of **ørmum**. In some words, u-umlaut is never heard, for example, **hvalum** 'whales' (never **\*hvølum**).

U-umlaut also occurs sometimes where there is no following **u**. Again only the vowels **a** and **æ** are affected. U-umlaut without the **u**, occurs in noun and adjective declensions in these instances:<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> We lack u-umlaut in masculine nominative singular nouns in **-ur**, such as **armur**, because originally this ending was just **-r** (with no **u**); cf. ON **armr**.

<sup>34</sup> Historically these forms are derived from words ending in **u** (**\*spaku**, **\*varRu** etc.), but the **u** has since been lost although the mutated vowel in the stem remains.

### • feminine nominative and indefinite adjective like the examples below:

**vørr**, noun 'lip' (cf. nom. pl. **varrar**)  
**øksl**, noun 'shoulder' (cf. nom. pl. **akslar**)  
**fonn**, noun 'snowdrift' (cf. nom. pl. **fannir**)  
**spøk**, adj. 'tame' < **spakur**  
**gomul**, adj. 'old' < **gamal**  
**løtt**, adj. 'easy' < **lættur**

### • feminine accusative singular noun

**vørr**, noun 'lip' (cf. nom. pl. **varrar**)  
**øksl**, noun 'shoulder' (cf. nom. pl. **akslar**)  
**nøs**, noun 'nose' (cf. nom. pl. **nasar**)  
**fonn**, noun 'snowdrift' (cf. nom. pl. **fannir**)

### • feminine dative singular noun

**vørr**, noun 'lip' (cf. nom. pl. **varrar**)  
**øksl**, noun 'shoulder' (cf. nom. pl. **akslar**)  
**nøs**, noun 'nose' (cf. nom. pl. **nasar**)  
**fonn**, noun 'snowdrift' (cf. nom. pl. **fannir**)

### • neuter nominative plural noun and indefinite adjective

**børn**, noun 'children' < **barn**  
**trø**, noun 'trees' < **træ**  
**lond**, noun 'countries' < **land**  
**lomb**, noun 'lambs' < **lamb**  
**spøk**, adj. 'tame' < **spakur**  
**gomul**, adj. 'old' < **gamal**  
**løtt**, adj. 'easy' < **lættur**

### • neuter accusative plural noun and indefinite adjective

**børn**, noun 'children' < **barn**  
**trø**, noun 'trees' < **træ**  
**lond**, noun 'countries' < **land**  
**lomb**, noun 'lambs' < **lamb**  
**spøk**, adj. 'tame' < **spakur**  
**gomul**, adj. 'old' < **gamal**  
**løtt**, adj. 'easy' < **lættur**

Some nouns and adjectives are, however, not affected. For example, we say **glað** (f. nom. sg., and n. nom./acc. pl. of **glaður** 'happy'), never **\*gløð**.

#### 14.2.4. Special vowel + consonant combinations

Faroese orthography is etymological. This is why we in some instances do not find a one-to-one between sound and letter. This is also the case in a great many other languages, such as English, French and Danish. However, many letter combinations have a predictable pronunciation. For example:

Orthography	Example	Pronunciation
-ógv-	nógv 'much'	[ɛ]
-úgv-	kúgv 'cow'	[ɪ]
-ang-	langur 'long'	[ɛ]
-angi-	langir 'long'	[ɛ]
-ank-	banka 'knock'	[ɛ]
-anki-	banki 'bank'	[a] <sup>35</sup>
-eingi-	eingin 'no one'	[ɔ]
-einki-	einki 'nothing'	[ɔ]

#### 14.2.5. Special consonant combinations

Here we list some special consonant combinations. For further details on the consonants and their pronunciation, see below. Note that **nn** is pronounced **dn** only after the diphthongs **ei** and **oy**.

Orthography	Example	Pronunciation
-ll-	allir	[adliɹ]
-rn-	barn	[badn]
-rs-	vers	[vɛs]
-nn-	oynni, seinni	[ɔidnɪ, saidnɪ]

When **-r** is part of the root, and **-n** is part of a suffix, **-rn** is not pronounced as [dn]; for example, **farnir** past part. 'gone' (< **far-** + **-nir**) is pronounced [fɹn].

#### 14.3. Consonants

The **plosives** in Faroese are (written): **p, t, k, b, d** and **g**. They are all unvoiced in Faroese.

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar
Aspirated	p <sup>h</sup>	t <sup>h</sup>	k <sup>h</sup>
Unaspirated	ɸ	ɖ	ɡ

<sup>35</sup> Loanwords like **ein banki** 'a bank', have the value of the vowel they have in Danish.

The difference between **p** and **b**, **t** and **d**, and **k** and **g** is aspiration:

**tala** /t<sup>h</sup>ɛa:la/ 'to talk', **dala** /d<sup>h</sup>ɛa:la/ 'fall'

Note that some phoneticians transcribe these words as **tala** /t<sup>h</sup>ɛa:la/, **dala** /d<sup>h</sup>ɛa:la/.

There are two affricates: [tʃ], as in English 'church', and [dʒ] as in English 'judge'. They correspond to the following letter combinations:

[tʃ]	[dʒ]
ki-	gi-
ky-	gy-
ke-	ge-
key-	gey-
kj-	gj-
tj-	dj-
hj-	

The nasals are the bilabial **m** and the alveolar **n**. When followed by an aspirated, unvoiced plosive, the nasals change to an unvoiced sound: [m̥] and [n̥] as in **eymt** 'soar' and **lænt** 'borrowed' compared with the voiced nasals in **eymd** 'need' and **land** 'country'.

The nasals change their place of articulation from alveolar to palatal in front of the palatal affricates [tʃ] and [dʒ]. These sounds are written [jɪ] and [jɹ] and are found in words such as **einki** 'nothing' and **eingin** 'nobody'. In front of a velar, [n] changes to a velar nasal [ŋ]: **kongur** 'king'. Here the sound is voiced, whereas it is unvoiced in **onkur** 'somebody'.

The fricatives are: [f, v, s, ʃ, ɹ, j]. The sound [ʃ] corresponds to the same sound found in English for example *shine*, and has the following letter combinations in Faroese:

[ʃ]
sj-
ski-
ske-
skey-
stj-

The pronunciation of Faroese **r** varies a lot. Some people have quite a vibrant [r], but the usual pronunciation is a fricative [ɹ].

In front of an alveolar consonant this fricative changes to a retroflex fricative (**hojrđi** 'heard') [ɻ], and the tendency overall is that the younger generation is replacing the fricative [ɹ] with

a retroflex [ɹ] in all positions. To many foreigners it sounds similar to the r-pronunciation in some Irish, West Country and North American accents. The letter combination **rs** is also retroflex [s]

**Alveolar sound** renna, vera, ver

**Retroflex sound** tordi, art

**Retroflex sound** vers

Note that **-rn-** is pronounced **-rn-** (not **-dn-**), when **-r** is part of the root, and **-n** is a suffix, as mentioned above. When the definite ending is added to a noun as in: **armarnir**, **hurðarnar** **-r** is deleted: [aɪmaɪnɪ] to [aɪmaɪnɪ] for example. In some words the letter combination **-rn-** is pronounced **-rn-** (rather than **-dn-**); for example, **ørn** 'eagle'. Note that the unvoiced fricative [ɹ] sounds a lot like [s]; for example, in **írskt**, **førka** 'move', **partur** 'share' and **svartur** 'black.'

There is one alveolar, lateral phoneme /l/, but as with /n/ this sound is palatal in front of the palatal affricates. These sounds are written [ç] as in **telgi** 'I cut', and [ç] as in **kjálki** 'chin'. When /l/ is situated in front of an unvoiced, aspirated sound, the /l/ becomes unvoiced; compare **alda** 'wave' and **alt** 'all', where the former is a plain [l], the latter is an unvoiced [l̥].

Faroese **h** is pronounced as English **h**. In the combinations **hv-** we find [kv-] as in **hvat** 'what', **hvussu** 'how', and **hj-** is pronounced [tʃ] as in **hjá** 'with'. Exceptions are **hjarta** 'heart', **Hjalmar**, **hjálpa** 'to help', **hjörtur** 'stag'.

Given this, we have the following consonant phonemes in Faroese:

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Plosives	p <sup>h</sup> / b	t <sup>h</sup> / d		k <sup>h</sup> / g
Affricates			ç / ʃ	
Nasals	m	n		
Fricatives	f/v	s / ɹ / j	ʃ	h
Laterals		l		

## 15. Punctuation

The full stop is used at the end of an utterance:

- (1) **Malla dugdi at síggja á fólki, um lagið var gott. Henda dagin Martin kom aftur, visti hon, at okkurt var galið.**  
 'Malla could tell, by looking at people, if they were in a good mood. The day Martin came back, she knew that something was wrong.'

The semicolon is used in much the same way as in English. It connects two clauses and marks a pause longer than a comma and shorter than a full stop:

- (2) **Í gjár var Tina í Vágum; í morgin fer hon til Suðuroyar.**  
 'Yesterday Tina was in Vágur; tomorrow she goes to Suðuroy.'

The comma is always written between a main and a subordinate clause, and between subordinate clauses:

- (3a) **Eg ætlaði at siga tær, at eg fari til Amerika at lesa, tí tað er so gott.**  
 'I was planning to tell you that I am going to America to study, because it is so good.'
- (3b) **Tey fóru heim, tí (at) tað regnaði.**  
 'They went home because it rained.'

The comma is also used to separate the meanings of two closely connected clauses that belong together, are (often) connected with **og** 'and' and **men** 'but' and have different subjects.

- (4a) **Eitt rópar her, annað har**  
 'One yells here, another there'
- (4b) **Bókin kom aftur, og harí hevði hann skrivað...**  
 'The book came back, and in it he had written...'
- (4c) **Hon fór at renna, men hann tímdi ikki**  
 'She started to run, but he did not bother'

The comma is also used in coordinated sentences with no conjunction, and between coordinated sentences with the conjunction **men** 'but'.

- (5a) **Hann keypti øl, brennivín, tubbak og súreplir**  
 'He bought beer, spirits, tobacco and apples'

- (5b) **Hon er gomul, men birg**  
'She is old, but vigorous'

In apposition:

- (6) **Ringasta fót bólt sliðið, MB, vann dystin í gjár**  
'The poorest team, MB, won the game yesterday'

The colon is used to introduce direct speech:

- (7) **Jógvan segði: "nú kann tað vera well!"**  
'Jógvan said: "Now is enough!"'

Quotation marks are used as in English, but may vary in appearance:

'Halló!'	"Farvæl!"
,Góðan dag!'	»Heil!«
„Gott kvøld!“	

Sometimes speech is marked by an introductory dash:

– Hvat ætlar tú tær? spurdi hon.  
– Einkí, svaraði hann.

The hyphen: **út- og innflutningur** (= **útflutningur og innflutningur**) 'export and import'. In the combination of numbers and letters: **1990-árin** 'the nineties', **A4-stødd** 'A4'. Also when there is a compound with an abbreviation and a regular noun: **ST-sáttmáli** 'UN agreement'. A hyphen is also used between a personal name and an attribute in the front of the personal name: **Uppsala-Pætur** 'Pætur from the place Uppsalar', **Nólsoyar-Páll** 'Paul from the island Nólsoy'.

Otherwise punctuation marks (question marks, exclamation marks, dashes, parentheses) are used much as in English.

## 16. Orthography

Faroese orthography is based on etymological principles, hence there can sometimes be quite a difference between the written letter and its pronunciation.

### 16.1. The alphabet

The Faroese alphabet has 29 letters:

#### Small letters

a, á, b, d, ð, e, f, g, h, i, í, j, k, l, m, n, o, ó, p, r, s, t, u, ú, v, y, ý, æ, ø.

#### Capital letters

A, Á, B, D, Ð, E, F, G, H, I, Í, J, K, L, M, N, O, Ó, P, R, S, T, U, Ú, V, Y, Ý, Æ, Ø.

### 16.2. Capital and small letters

In some older texts we find ö instead of ø. Today ø is used everywhere. Note also that Faroese does not have the letter x except in the words **sex** 'sex' and **x-ásur** 'x-axis', and no **z/Z** except in personal names such as **Zakaris** and **Zakariassen**. There is no **c** or **w** in the Faroese alphabet, except in loanwords, for example **celsius**; but note **visky** or **viski** 'whisky'.

An accent over a letter means it is a diphthong in Faroese, as we shall show below. The consonant ð is problematic for native speakers to handle as it is never pronounced: **hurð** 'door', **lað** 'pile, stack', **laða** 'pile up'. This results in a formidable number of spelling mistakes on signs, menus and so on. One infamous example is on a wall down by the harbour in Tórshavn, where children have painted a goal for playing football. In the middle of the goal, in huge letters they have written **málð** for **mál** 'goal'.

Instead of a pronounced ð, there are rules for glide-insertion or lack of such an insertion (see 14.2.2. *Hiatus*), or the ð represents no sound at all as in /hu:ɹ/ **hurð** 'door'.

Below we show the vowels and their pronunciation. Note that the first of each given pronunciation is the long variant, that is, the one that occurs in front of one or no consonant, as **hálur** (long) : **hált** (short) 'slippery'.

a/æ	á	e	i/y	í/ý	o	ó	u
εa:/a	ɔa:/ɔ	e:/e	i:/i	ui:/ui	o:/ɔ	œu:/œ	u:/u
ú	ø	ei	ey	oy			
uu:/y	ø:/œ	ai:/ai	ei:/e	oi:/ɔi			



Capital letters are used first in a text, and after a full-stop, question mark and exclamation mark. Also after direct speech, as in: **Gud segði: "Veri ljós," og tað var ljós** 'God said, let there be light, and there was light'. Personal names are written with capital letter: **Sjúrdur, Anna**, and also names of animals, for example the dog names **Flekk, Snati, Kilo, Pysla, Spyr-Hann** 'Ask-Him'. The names of ships and boats are written with capital letter: **Hvilvtenni, Krákan...**, and place-names: **Føroyar, Bretland, Kuba**. So also street names: **á Merkrunum** (note that the preposition is not with capital letter). Religious names: **Gud, Várharra, Buddha**, but: **faðirin** 'the Father', **sonurin** 'the Son', **frelsarinn** 'the Saviour', **heilagi andin** 'The Holy Spirit'. Planets: **Venus, Mars**, but: **jørðin** 'the earth', **sólin** 'the sun', **mánin** 'the moon'. Names of political parties and unions are written with capital letters: **Sambandsflokkurin, Arbeðsmannafelagið** 'The Workers' Union'.

Small letters are used for the names of the months, weekdays, holidays such as Christmas and Easter: **januar, mánadagur** 'Monday', **jól** 'Christmas', **páskir** 'Easter', but also festivals such as the national day of the Faroes **ólavsøka**. Names of nationalities and inhabitants: **føroyingur** 'Faroese', **týskari** 'German', **íslendingur** 'Icelander', and for example: **vágamaður** 'man/woman from the island Vágur', **sandavágskvinna** 'woman from the village Sandavágur'. Names of people belonging to parties are also written with small letters, as **javnaðarmaður, javnaðarkvinna** 'Social Democrat'.

### 16.3. Word-division

Compounds are written in one word: **skrivstova** 'office', **bátsmaður** 'boatswain'. Note that words ending in **-ggj** and **-gv** lose these consonants if the second part of the compound starts with a consonant (except **h**): **sjógóður** 'good on the sea', from **sjógvur** 'sea', **hoylús** 'hay-house', but **hoyggjhús** 'hay-house' and **sjóalda** 'sea-wave'. The reason is historical, as **-ggj** and **-gv** developed originally in bi- or poly-syllabic words between vowels.

An adverb + preposition is written in one word when they are used adverbially, and in two words when they are used prepositionally (that is with a noun):

- (1a) **Jógvan datt úti**  
'Jógvan fell out into (i.e. overboard)' – adverbial
- (1b) **Jógvan rann út á kaiina**  
'Jógvan ran out onto the quay' – prepositional

If we need to divide a compound between lines on a page, the first part and the second part are divided such: **skriv-stova, báts-maður**. An uncompounded word is divided between the suffix and the stem: **arm-ur, hond-in** and so on. We can also divide it into syllables: **bát-ar-nir** according to syllables in the word – a syllable is typically made up of a nucleus (vowels in Faroese) and (optional) initial and final margins (consonants in Faroese). They are the building blocks of words and you may count how many syllables are in a word: **bát(1)-ar(2)-nir(3)**.

## Glossary of grammatical terms

### Active (gerðsøgn)

The active voice is used when the subject of the verb is the agent / actor of the verb: **Jógvan drap fuglin** 'Jógvan killed the bird'. See also *voice; passive*.

### Accusative (hvønnfall)

Is a *case*; most *direct objects* in Faroese are in the accusative, **maðurin** (nominative) **elskar konuna** (accusative) 'The man loves the woman'. The accusative is also used after some prepositions.

### Adjective (lýsingarorð)

An adjective describes what a noun or a pronoun is like and answers the question 'what is *x* like?' Adjectives are declined in number (**ein stórir maður** 'a big man', **fleiri stórir menn** 'several big men'), case (**hann er ein stórir maður** 'he is a big man', but **eg sá ein stóran mann** 'I saw a big man'), gender (**ein stórir maður** 'a big man', **ein stór kona** 'a big woman', **eitt stórt barn** 'a big child') and degree (**tann stóri maðurin** 'the big man', **tann størri maðurin** 'the bigger man', **tann størsti maðurin** 'the biggest man'). Adjectives are inflected according to the strong declension (**maðurin er stórir** 'the man is big') or the weak declension (**tann stóri maðurin** 'the big man').

### Adverb (hjáorð)

An adverb modifies a verb and answers the question 'how?': **eg renni skjótt** 'I run fast'. They also provide information about time, frequency and duration; place and direction; manner and degree. An example with an adverb of time is **Jógvan fór beinanvegin** 'Jógvan went immediately'. Adverbs of frequency: **tú ert altíð fullur** 'you are always drunk'. Adverbs of duration: **Tú ert framvegis fullur** 'you are still drunk'. Adverbs of place and direction are for example **hann stendur har** 'he is standing there' (place) and **vit sigla vestureftir** 'we are sailing to the west'. Adverbs of manner and degree are **knappliga var myrkt úti** 'suddenly it was dark outside,' and **hon er avbera vøkur** 'she is extremely pretty'. Clausal adverbs are for example **nú mast tú, álvaratos, taka teg saman** 'now you really have to pull yourself together'.

### Article (kenniorð)

The indefinite article is English 'a(n)'; the definite article is English 'the'. For example: **ein maður** 'a man'; **maðurin** 'the man'. Note that the definite article is a suffix in Faroese. 'The big man' is **tann stóri maðurin** with both a prepositioned and a suffixed definite article; this is called 'double definition'.

### Auxiliary verb (hjálparsagnorð)

An auxiliary verb gives further semantic or syntactic information about the main verb. Auxiliary verbs are also called helping verbs or verbal auxiliaries. An example with an auxiliary is **eg havi lisið bókina** 'I have read the book'.

### Cardinal (grundtal)

Cardinal numbers are counting numbers used for referring to quantity: **eitt, tvey, trí, fyra** : 'one', 'two', 'three', 'four' and so on.

### Case (fall)

The different forms of a noun, adjective, pronoun or numeral used to show how they function in a sentence. In Faroese, there are three active cases (the nominative, the accusative and the dative), and one historical case (the genitive).

### Clause (setningur)

A clause consists of a *subject* + a *predicate*: **eg eri** 'I am'.

### Conjugation (sagnorðabending)

Is the modification of a verb from its basic form: **at renna** 'to run', **eg renni** 'I run', **eg rann** 'I ran' and so on to express person, number and tense.

### Conjunction (sambindingarorð)

A conjunction is used to join two or more sentences, clauses or words together. Typical conjunctions are **men** 'but', and **og** 'and': **Marjun rennur og Jógvan koyrir** 'Marjun runs and Jógvan drives'. See also *clause*.

### Dative (hvørjumfall)

Is a *case*. The *indirect object* is in the dative case **hann sendir mær** (dative = indirect object) **brævið** (accusative = direct object) 'he is sending me the letter'. Some *direct objects* in Faroese are also in the dative: **maðurin** (nominative) **hjálpir konuni** (dative) 'the man helps the woman'. The dative is also used after some prepositions.

### Declension (bending)

Is the modification of a *noun*, *pronoun* or an *adjective* to indicate number, *case* and definiteness in Faroese.

### Definite article (bundið kenniorð)

The definite article is English 'the'. A noun may be definite or indefinite. Definiteness is expressed with the definite article **tann** 'the' + weak declension of the adjective + a noun + definite ending in Faroese: **tann stóra konan** Lit.: the big-*the* woman-the 'the big woman'.

### Demonstrative pronoun (ávísingarfornavn)

A demonstrative is a term that is used to refer to words like **hesin** 'this' and **handa** 'that'. They indicate a location relatively nearer or further from the speaker: **henda bókin** 'this book' and **handa bókin** 'that book'.

### Direct object (hvørjumfalsávirki)

A thing or person that undergoes the action expressed by the verb: **hon keypti bókina** 'she bought the book', **hann elskar Onnu** 'he loves Anna', **eg hjálpti tær** 'I helped you'.

### Ditransitive verbs

A ditransitive verb takes one subject and two objects. The indirect object is in the dative in Faroese, the direct object in the accusative: **Jógvan gevur konuni ein muss** Jógvan gives wife-the-*dat.* a kiss-*acc.* 'Jógvan gives his wife a kiss'.

### Double definiteness

See: *article*, *definite article*.

### Ending (ending)

Final part of a word that changes as a result of *declension* or *conjugation*. Case, number or tense might be expressed with an ending. In **stór-ur** the **-ur** is an ending with the meaning 'nominative, singular, indefinite, masculine.'

### Epistemic sense

The epistemic sense qualifies the truth value of a sentence containing a modal, whereas a root sense expresses necessity, obligation, permission, volition or ability on behalf of the agent which usually, but not necessarily is expressed by the subject of the sentence.

### Feminine (kvennkyn)

Is one of the three *genders* in Faroese. The other two are *masculine* and *neuter*.

### Genitive (hvørsfall)

Is a case. It was used to express possession, typically, as in Old Norse **mannsins bátur** 'the man's boat'. The case is little used in modern Faroese and has been replaced by a number of other constructions (for example, **báturin hjá mannum** 'the man's boat')

### Gender (kyn)

Is a grammatical category whereby words are divided into different grammatical classes. These classes play a role in agreement / concord relationships. A masculine noun requires an adjective in the masculine for example, while a feminine noun requires an adjective in the feminine. It is useful to distinguish between grammatical gender and biological gender. In Faroese, as in many other Indo-European languages, gender follows sex in nouns that are high up in the hierarchy (human >> animate >> inanimate) and that is why we find that **maður** 'man' is masculine, **kona** 'woman' feminine and **barn** 'child' neuter.

### Helping verb (hjálparsagnorð)

See *auxiliary verb*.

### Imperative (boðsháttur)

Is a mood that expresses direct commands, requests and prohibitions: **steðga bilinum!** 'stop the car!'

### Indefinite article (óbundið kenniorð)

The indefinite article is English 'a(n)'. A noun may be definite or indefinite. Indefiniteness is expressed with the article **ein** 'a' + strong declension of the adjective (if there is any) + strong declension of the noun: **ein (stórir) maður** 'a big man'.

### Indicative (søguháttur)

The indicative mood expresses factual statements and positive beliefs. It is the most common mood of all. A typical example is **Jóhan rennur heim** 'Jóhan runs home'.

### Indirect object (óbeinleiðis ávirki, atviki)

An object is part of the predicate in a sentence. An indirect object is always in the *dative* occurring together with (and in front of) a *direct object* in the *accusative*: **konan sendi honum eitt bræv** 'his wife sent him a letter'. An indirect object is the recipient of the direct object. It is **honum** 'him' who receives the letter.

### Infinitive (navnháttur)

The infinitive of a verb is its basic (or dictionary) form. It occurs with or without the infinitive marker **at** 'to': **at renna** 'to run'.

### Interjections (miðalvarpingar)

An interjection has usually no grammatical connection to the rest of the sentence. It simply expresses emotions, for example **avv!** 'ouch!'

### Interrogative pronoun (spurnarfornavn)

Interrogative pronouns, such as 'who', 'whom' and 'what', are used to introduce an interrogative clause, to ask a question: **hvør seldi bilin?** 'who sold the car?'

### Intransitive verb (óávirkandi sagnorð)

Verbs are either transitive or intransitive (or *unaccusative*). An intransitive verb does not take an object: **Jógvan rennur** 'John runs'. Note that it may also be a transitive verb in: **Jógvan rennur teinin** 'John runs the stretch'.

### Main clause (høvuðssetningur)

A main clause is a free clause, not contained within another: **Jógvan rennur** 'Jógvan runs' is a main clause.

### Masculine (kallkyn)

Is one of the three *genders* in Faroese. The other two are *feminine* and *neuter*.

### Medio-passive (miðalsøgn)

When a verb appears in the *active* form but expresses a *passive* action, the verb is in the medio-passive (or middle voice). An example is **hann noyddist av landinum** 'he was forced to leave the country'. Medio-passive forms in Faroese have the suffix **-st**, but note that **-st** is also used to express reciprocity, for example **tey mussast** 'they kiss each other'. See also *reciprocal pronoun*.

### Mood (háttur)

Mood describes the relationship of a verb with reality and intent. For example, the imperative mood is used for giving orders.

### Mutation

See *umlaut*.

### Neuter (hvørkikyn)

Is one of the three *genders* in Faroese. The other two are *feminine* and *masculine*.

### Nominative (hvørfall)

Is a *case* used to mark the subject of a verb. The subject is the thing or person carrying out the action of a sentence (for example: I play the guitar; we ran to the shop; The Faroe Islands are in the North Atlantic).

### Noun (navnorð)

A noun is an object (book, candle, chair), a person (girl, prime, minister, Mary) or a concept (love, freedom, independence).

### Object (ávirki)

An object is the complement of a transitive verb: **Jógvan elskar konuna** 'Jógvan loves the wife'. Objects are usually in the accusative in Faroese, although some few are in the dative.

### Ordinal (raðtal)

Ordinal numbers are numbers such as **fyrsti** 'first', **triði** 'third' and so forth.

### Participle (lýsingarháttur)

Is a form of the verb which is used as an adjective. There are two participles in Faroese: *present participle* (nútiðar lýsingarháttur) and *past participle* (tátiðar lýsingarháttur). The present participle can be seen in **ein flennandi maður** 'a laughing man'. Past participle in: **maðurin er dripin** 'the man is killed'.

### Passive (tolsøgn)

The passive voice is used when the subject of the verb is the patient, target or undergoer of the action: **fuglurin varð dripin** 'the bird was killed'. See also *active; voice*.

### Past participle (tátiðar lýsingarháttur)

See *participle*.

### Past perfect (núliðin tíð)

Is also called pluperfect and refers to an event that has been completed before another past action. **Jónas, sum visti, at hon hevði reist seg, bað hana setast.** 'Jónas, who knew she had risen, asked her to sit down again'. Here **hevði reist seg** 'had risen' is past perfect. Someone (a girl) rises from her seat, and this event of rising takes place before another event (Jónas noticing the fact that the girl has risen).

### Past tense (tátið)

See *present tense*

### Personal pronouns (persónsfornevni)

Are pronouns like **eg, tú, hann, hon, vit...** 'I, you, he, she, we'.

### Plural (fleirtal)

Is a grammatical category referring to two or more items or units.

### Possessive pronoun (ognarfornavn)

Are pronouns like **mín, tín, okkara, hansara...** 'my / mine, your, our, his'.

### Predicate (umsagnarheild)

That part of a clause containing what is said about the subject: **eg eri føroyingur** 'I am Faroese'.

### Prefix (forskoyti, forfesti)

Prefixes are added in front of a word: **vinur** 'friend' : **ó+vinur** 'enemy' (Lit.: 'un-friend').

### Preposition (fyrirseting)

A preposition combines syntactically with one complement as **á takinum** 'on the roof' where **á** 'on' is the preposition and **takinum** 'the roof' is the complement (*stýring*).

### Present tense (nútið)

One of the two simple tenses in Faroese (the other is the *preterite*). The present refers to something happening at the present time (or more correctly not happening in the past): **eg renni** 'I'm running'.

### Present participle (nútiðar lýsingarháttur)

See *participle*

### Present perfect (núliðin tíð)

Is a compound tense that refers to an event that has been completed in the near past: **Jónas, sum veit, at hon hevur reist seg, biður hana seta seg** 'Jónas, who knows that she has risen, asks her to sit down again'. The event of her having risen must have taken place before the event of Jónas knowing this. Present perfect because the meaning is that the action has been completed with respect to the present, cf. present tense on the main verb **veit** 'knows'.

### Preterite (tátíð)

The preterite is a tense, the (simple) past tense, which expresses actions that took place in the past: **hann kom** 'he came', 'he was coming', 'he did come', **vit ótu** 'we ate', 'we were eating', 'we did eat', **tú skrivaði** 'you wrote', 'you were writing', 'you did write'.

### Primary stress (høvuðsherðing)

The main stress on a word: **vínur** and **forherðaður**.

### Pronoun (fornavn)

See *Demonstrative pronouns; Interrogative pronouns; Personal pronouns; Possessive Pronoun; Reciprocal pronoun; Reflexive pronoun; Relative pronoun*.

### Reciprocal pronoun (sínámillumfornavn)

Is the pronoun that can be used to express reciprocity 'each other': **teir hjálptu hvørjum øðrum** 'they helped each other'. Reciprocity is often expressed using the *medio-passive*: **tey mussast** 'they kiss each other', where each of the participants occupies both the role of the agent and the patient with respect to each other.

### Reflexive pronoun (afturbent fornavn)

A reflexive pronoun is an object pronoun that refers back to the subject noun or a pronoun, either in the same clause or not: **Marjun sigur, at Jógvan elskar seg** where **seg** is the reflexive pronoun, and may mean (1) Marjun thinks that Jógvan loves her = Marjun) or (2) Marjun thinks that Jógvan loves himself).

### Relative pronoun (afturbent fornavn)

A relative pronoun introduces a relative clause: **Marjun er ein persónur, sum tú ikki kannst líta á** 'Marjun is a person, who you cannot trust'. The relative clause is introduced by **sum** and it modifies the reference noun **Marjun**.

### Secondary stress (háherðing)

Words do not only have one main stress, but also a secondary stress: **mannfólk** 'real man'. The main stress falls on the **-a**, the secondary stress on the **ó**.

### Singular (eintal)

Is a grammatical category referring to a single item or unit.

### Stem (stovnur)

Is the main part of a word that remains unchanged (except for *umlaut*) and to which grammatical endings are added. It consists of the root of a word + derivational ending but minus inflectional endings: **stórlig-** which is made up of the root of **stórus** ⇒ **stór-** + the derivational suffix (deriving adjectives) **-lig**, but minus the usual masculine ending **-ur**. The root and the stem are the simplex words such as **arm-**.

### Stress (herðing)

Is the relative emphasis given to certain syllables.

### Strong inflection (sterk bending)

Strong inflection can be seen in nouns and adjective as in **ein stórus maður** 'a big man.'

### Subject (grundliður)

A subject of a sentence is one of the two main constituents a sentence is made of. The other is the *predicate*. The subject governs agreement with the verb: **hann rennur** 'he runs' and **vit renna** 'we run.'

### Suffix (eftirskoyti, eftirfesti)

Suffixes appear at the end of a word. Endings are suffixes as **arm** (root/stem) + suffix **-ur** (**armur**).

### Tense (tíð)

Tense expresses the time at which an event denoted by the verb took place: **eg tosi** 'I'm talking' (in the present), **eg tosaði** 'I talked' (in the past).

### Transitive verb (ávirkandi sagnorð)

Transitive verbs require an object: **\*Jógvan dámar** '\*Jógvan likes' compared to **Jógvan dámar mjólkina** 'Jógvan likes the milk'.

### Umlaut (umljóð)

Umlaut is a process whereby a vowel in the stressed syllable is pronounced more like a vowel (or semivowel) in the following syllable. It is a type of assimilation.

### Unaccusative

An unaccusative verb is a verb, whose syntactic subject is not a semantic agent, as **hundurin doyði** 'the dog died' or **Jógva datt** 'John fell'.

### Verb (sagnorð)

Verbs typically denote an action (**dansa** 'dance') an occurrence **glitra** 'glitra' or a state of being **vera** 'to be', **standa** 'to stand'.

### Voice (íbæri)

Voice describes the relationship between the action (or state) that the verb expresses and the participants identified by its arguments (subject, object...) When the subject is the agent / actor of the verb, the verb is in the active voice: **Jógvan drap fuglin** 'Jógvan killed the bird'.

If the subject is the patient, target or undergoer of the action, it is said to be in the passive voice: **Fuglurin varð dripin** 'The bird was killed'.

#### **Weak inflection** (veik bending)

The weak inflection can be seen in nouns and adjective as in **tann stóri maðurin** 'the big-the man-the.'

## **Suggested further reading and study**

The following suggestions are not exhaustive. The reader is referred to Thráinsson, Petersen, Jacobsen and Hansen (2004) for a more extensive list of books and articles on Faroese.

### **Grammars and overviews**

Andreasen, P., and Dahl, Á. 1997. *Mállæra*. Tórshavn: Føroya Skúlabólagrunnur.

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Thráinsson, H., Petersen, H. P., Jacobsen, J. í Lon, and Hansen, Z. S. 2004. *Faroese: An Overview and Reference Grammar*. Tórshavn: Føroya Fróðskaparfelag.

### **Article collections in books**

Barnes, M. P. 2001. *Faroese Language Studies*. Studia Nordica 5. Oslo: Novus.

Hagström, B. 1991. *Átta greinir um føroyskt mál*. Tórshavn: Emil Thomsen.

### **Syntax**

There are two main books on Faroese syntax, and the reader is referred to these and references in these two books. One is in Faroese and the other in English. Sandqvist's book is also well worth reading.

Henriksen, J. 2000. *Orðalagslæra*. Tórshavn: Sprotin.

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Eythórsson, T., and Jónsson, J. Gíslí. 2003. 'The case of subject in Faroese'. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 71: 145-202.

#### Cleft sentences

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#### Definiteness

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#### Reflexivisation

Barnes, M. P. 1986. 'Reflexivisation in Faroese: A preliminary survey'. *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 101: 95-126. [Also in Barnes 2001].

#### Subordinate-Clause Word Order

Barnes, M. P. 1987. 'Some remarks on subordinate-clause word order in Faroese'. *Scripta Islandica* 38: 3-35. [Also in Barnes 2001].

Jonas, D. 2003. 'On embedded clause word order in Faroese'. *Grammatik i fokus. Festskrift till Christer Platzack Vol. II*. Ed. by L. O. Delsing, C. Falk, G. Josefsson and H. Á. Sigurðsson. Lund: Department of Scandinavian Linguistics, Lund University, pp. 193-198.

Petersen, H. P. 2002 'IP or TP in Modern Faroese'. *Working Papers in Scandinavian Syntax* 66: 75-83.

Thráinsson, H. 2000. 'Um áhrif dönsku á íslensku og færøysku.' *Frændafundur* 3. Ed. by Magnús Snædal and Turið Sigurðardóttir. Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, pp. 116-130.

Thráinsson, H. 2001. 'Um sagnbeygingu og orðaröð í færøysku og fleiri málum'. *Íslensk mál* 23: 7-70.

#### Morphology

Again the reader is referred to Thráinsson et. al. (2004).

#### Morphological Typology and Morphology in General

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#### Especially on Verb Morphology:

Petersen, H. P. 1992. 'Sagnorðaflokkar'. *Málting* 5: 31-38.

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### Faroese summer courses

Every third year *Føroyamálsdeildin* (The Department of Faroese at the University of the Faroe Islands) organises a Faroese Summer Course for foreigners, especially for those from outside Scandinavia. The course usually takes place from 1 August and lasts three to four weeks. More information is available on: [www.setur.fo](http://www.setur.fo).

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