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Preface

Norwegian Verbs & Essentials of Grammar presents the major grammatical concepts of the Norwegian language. As evidenced by the first section of this book, major emphasis is given to the mastery of verbs, their conjugations, and uses. Grammar and sentence structure are presented in easily understood contexts. New material is introduced in such a way that it is based upon previously learned material, so that the student can progress with ease through the various sections. Each individual grammatical point is dealt with step-by-step, enabling the student to fully grasp a concept before moving on.

The major advantage of Norwegian Verbs & Essentials of Grammar is that complete grammatical explanations are contained in one section and not scattered throughout the text. Therefore, teacher and student can easily find specific information.

Following each explanation of verb forms or grammar are numerous examples. These clearly illustrate the point in question and can be used as a basis for further work by the student. The list of verbs provides material for use in creative exercises, oral presentations, and compositions.

As a reference text, Norwegian Verbs & Essentials of Grammar can be used by the individual student for study or review, or by the teacher and class as a supplement to any of the basic textbooks. Because of the logical order in which concepts are presented, this book can be used at both the college and the adult education levels.
1 Introduction
to the Norwegian Language

A Brief History of Norwegian

Norwegian is a North Germanic language, related closely enough to Swedish and Danish as to be mutually intelligible with the two. Icelandic, the other North Germanic language, is also related, but not mutually intelligible. Since English and German are West Germanic languages, they share many features with Norwegian, including a cognate basic vocabulary and similar sentence structure. In addition to having similar family histories, Norwegian shares a large part of its vocabulary with German and English through later borrowings. Knowing either English or German is a definite advantage in learning Norwegian.

During the four hundred years when Norway was essentially ruled from Denmark, the standard written form of Norwegian died out. While the people of Norway continued to speak their own dialects, Danish was the official language of church, state, and culture. When Norway gained independence from Denmark in 1814, many felt that the official language should be modified to more closely reflect dialectal forms that had continued to evolve. In the mid-1800s, two approaches to modifying written Norwegian were followed, leading the way to the two standard written forms used today. Bokmål, the written form in this book, and the language spoken by most Norwegians in the East and North, is sometimes called Dano-Norwegian, and it was previously referred to as Riksmål or Riksmål, "the language of the realm." This standard written form evolved directly from Danish, with variant spellings that better represented Norwegian pronunciation and grammatical forms (forms used throughout Norway, but not in Denmark). Nynorsk (previously called Landsmaal or Landsmål) was a revolutionary replacement for the written Danish based on the pioneering linguistic work of Ivar Aasen. Aasen traveled throughout western Norway and reconstructed what the language might have looked like had it not been influenced for such a long time by Danish. A parliamentary resolution in 1885 established Bokmål and Nynorsk as equal written standards, and all official publications must still be made available in both. These two
are only written forms; the spoken language continues to be based on regional
dialects, which may resemble either Bokmål or Nynorsk more closely for each
native speaker. Currently, Norwegian is spoken as a first language by almost 4½
million inhabitants of the country.

This book describes the verbs and grammar of Bokmål, the form that is more
commonly learned by non-Norwegians. In Norway, local school districts deter-
mine which standard written form will be taught first. All students must pass tests
in both Bokmål and Nynorsk. Slightly under 83 percent of all Norwegian elemen-
tary school pupils are taught Bokmål before Nynorsk. In 1994, several fylker (coun-
ties) in Norway had no schools with Nynorsk as their primary language (Østfold,
Akershus, Oslo, Vestfold, Nordland, Troms, Finnmark, and Svalbard). Sogn og
Fjordane was the fylke with the highest percentage of Nynorsk pupils: 96 percent.

**Bokmål and Nynorsk Compared**

This short text from a Norwegian folktale shows some differences between Bokmål
and Nynorsk. The table reviews these and other differences.

**Bokmål:**

Det var en gång en gris som bodde tett ved en kongsgård. Så var det en
dag at alle de andre var i kirke. Da syntes greinen det ble stusslig, og så
rusla han oppover til kongsgården.

**Nynorsk:**

Det var ein gong ein gris som budde tett att med ein kongsgård. Så var
det ein dag alle dei andre var i kyrkja, og då tykte greinen det vart stus-
sleg, og så rusla han i veg opp til kongsgarden.

**English:**

Once upon a time there was a pig who lived near the king’s estate. It
so happened that one day everyone was in church. The pig thought it
was getting lonesome, and so he shuffled up toward the royal estate.

(Text from Anton Fjeldstad, Læreboek i norsk for svensker, Studentlitteratur, Lund 1972;
used with permission of publisher.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Difference</th>
<th>Bokmål</th>
<th>Nynorsk</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some specific</td>
<td>Norge, jeg,</td>
<td>Noreg, eg,</td>
<td>Norway, I,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lexical differences</td>
<td>hun, ikke,</td>
<td>ho, ikkke,</td>
<td>she, not,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>forskjell</td>
<td>skilnad</td>
<td>difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk requires</td>
<td>boken or boka</td>
<td>boka</td>
<td>the book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more nouns to use</td>
<td>en bok or</td>
<td>ei bok</td>
<td>a book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the feminine gender</td>
<td>ei bok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(el) forms. Bokmål</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>usually allows a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bokmål allows</td>
<td>husene or husa</td>
<td>husa</td>
<td>the houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most neuter definite</td>
<td>eplene or epl</td>
<td>epla</td>
<td>the apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plurals to end in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ene or -a. Nynorsk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>requires -a.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk uses</td>
<td>et, vet or veit</td>
<td>eit, veit</td>
<td>a, knows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more diphthongs.</td>
<td>øst or aust</td>
<td>aust</td>
<td>east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bokmål often allows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a choice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk uses</td>
<td>hva, hvit</td>
<td>kva, kvit</td>
<td>what, white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consonant cluster</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kv where Bokmål uses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hv.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk has a vowel</td>
<td>sover</td>
<td>søv</td>
<td>sleeps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alternation for</td>
<td>kommer</td>
<td>kjem</td>
<td>comes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong verbs in the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>present tense and no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-r ending.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk uses</td>
<td>stoler</td>
<td>stolar</td>
<td>chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unstressed a in many</td>
<td>kaster</td>
<td>kastar</td>
<td>throws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words where Bokmål</td>
<td>gammel</td>
<td>gammal</td>
<td>old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uses e.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bokmål uses the</td>
<td>Har du en</td>
<td>Har du en</td>
<td>Do you have a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronoun den to refer</td>
<td>sykkel?</td>
<td>sykkel?</td>
<td>bicycle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to en or ei gender</td>
<td>Nei, jeg har</td>
<td>Nei, eg har</td>
<td>No, I’ve sold it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inanimate objects,</td>
<td>solgt den.</td>
<td>selt han.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nynorsk uses han or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ho.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Variation Within Bokmål

Both Nynorsk and Bokmål allow some options in choosing word forms. The 38 members of the Norwegian Language Council (Språkråd) determine acceptable forms, having set up a two-tiered system in 1938. Many words on the official lists have both a principal form and optional forms. Words can have several equal-status principal forms (for example, boken/boka “the book,” synes/syns “seems, thinks”). Optional forms are allowed in students’ writings, while principal forms are required in textbooks and official government documents. For example, the past tense form of å gi “to give” has the principal ga with optional gav “gave.”

2 Alphabet

Norwegian uses the same 26 letters as English plus three additional vowels, alphabetized after z: æ, ø, å. These vowels are occasionally (in library catalogs and electronic documents) represented by ae, oe, and aa. The letters c, q, x, and z are rarely used in words native to Norwegian.

In this book, the pronunciation of words and letters is represented between slashes using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Readers will note the differences between English and Norwegian pronunciation. For example, the printed g in Norwegian is sometimes pronounced as English /g/, but at other times as /j/.

The names of the letters as represented using the International Phonetic Alphabet are shown between forward slashes. Long vowels are represented with a colon (for example, /iː/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>/a:/</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>/kɔ:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>/beː/</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>/el/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>/seː/</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>/em/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>/deː/</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>/en/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>/eː/</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>/eː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>/ef/</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>/peː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>/geː/</td>
<td>q</td>
<td>/kuː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>/hɔː/</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>/ær/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>/iː/</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>/es/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>/jeː/ or /fɔdd/</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>/teː/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Norwegian uses a few accented vowels, showing stress on the syllable with the accent mark. This is different from French where accents change vowel sounds. The most common (yet still quite rare) accent is é, as in kafé “café” or orkidé “orchid.” A handful of words use ø, seen in the strongly stressed adverb óg “also,” which only occurs at the end of sentences. The French preposition à is used in expressions with numbers like 3 kg à kr 5 “3 kilograms at 5 kroner per kilo.” The words før “feed” and før “traveled” (past tense of å fare) are differentiated from the common adverb and preposition før “too, for.”

### 3 Pronunciation

#### Vowels

There are nine simple vowels, or monophthongs in Norwegian, each of which may be pronounced with either long or short duration: /a/, e, i, u, ø, y, å, ø, ø/. When monophthongs are pronounced as long vowels, their pronunciation is of a longer duration and with tenser tongue and lips. The difference in vowel length is often the only way to distinguish otherwise similar words.

In addition to the nine monophthongs, Norwegian has five diphthongs: /æɛ/, øɛ, æø, øø, and øø/. A diphthong is considered a single vowel sound, but it is composed of two vowel elements. The second vowel sometimes feels like an “offglide” from the first. Three of the Norwegian diphthongs are fairly common, while the other two should be mentioned for the sake of completeness, but need not cause undue concern for students. The diphthongs will be discussed after the nine monophthongs below.

It is impossible to give good directions in print alone on how to pronounce a foreign language. The best any written text can do is to make suggestions about similar sounds in English. Below are such suggestions, although the student is advised to make every attempt possible at finding and imitating either recorded speech or a native speaker of Norwegian. The table below gives the IPA symbols for all long vowels and diphthongs in Norwegian, a description of tongue and lip positions, and a near-equivalent sound in English. The corresponding short vowels are pronounced with less lip and tongue energy, and written without the colon (·).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monophthong</th>
<th>Tongue and Lip Positions</th>
<th>English Near Equivalents</th>
<th>Norwegian Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/a:/</td>
<td>low, back, unrounded</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>før father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dager days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\(/e:/\)
mid, front, unrounded; tendency to have /a/ offglide

halfway between sad and said

\(\text{h\text{g}ter}\) be named

\(\text{tre}\) three, tree

\(/i:/\)
high, front, unrounded

bee

\(\text{min}\) my

\(\text{si}\) say

\(/\text{u}/\)
high, back, over-rounded

more rounded than moo

\(\text{noe}\) any

\(\text{to}\) two

\(/\text{u}/\)
central, high, over-rounded

you

\(\text{du}\) you

\(\text{Gud}\) God

\(/\text{y}/\)
high, front, over-rounded

no English equivalent;
start with /i/ and purse lips

\(\text{by city}\)

\(\text{sky}\) cloud

\(/\text{æ}/\)
mid, front, unrounded

bag

\(\text{er}\) am, is, are

\(\text{aere}\) honor

\(/\text{ø}/\)
mid, back, rounded

bird (without the r sound)

\(\text{ove}\) practice

\(\text{hore}\) hear

\(/\text{ø}/\) (written /\text{a}/ in this book)

low, central, rounded

eastern U.S. and British awe

\(\text{år}\) year

\(\text{håpe}\) hope

Diphthong

Monophthong

Progression

\(/\text{æ}/\)
start with /a/
and rise to /i/

halfway between English hey
and hi

\(\text{jeg I}\)

\(\text{bein}\) bone, leg

\(/\text{ø}/\)
start with /o/
and rise to /y/

close to English boy

\(\text{høyre}\) right

\(\text{øy}\) eye

\(/\text{æ}/\)
start with /æ/
then rise and
round to /u/

similar to English ow, in cow
or how

\(\text{tau}\) rope

\(\text{Europa}\) Europe

\(/\text{ø}/\)
start with /a/ and rise to /y/

very similar to oy
in English boy

\(\text{konvoi}\) convoy

\(\text{boikott}\) boycott

\(/\text{a}/\)
start with /a/ and glide to /i/

similar to English
i in high

\(\text{hai}\) shark

### Consonants

The following Norwegian consonants are pronounced very much like their English equivalents: /b, d, f, h, l, m, n, p, s, t, v/. The main differences between the two are in the remaining consonants, as discussed below. In a manner similar to vowels, consonants in Norwegian can also be long or short, with long consonants generally following short vowels in stressed syllables.

### Word Stress and Vowel Length

Most native Norwegian words are stressed on their first syllables. Borrowed terms often imitate the lending language's syllable stress for example, restaurant "restaurant" is stressed on the final syllable, as it is in French and other European languages). Prefixes like be- (e.g., betale "pay") and for- (forandre "change") are not stressed.

Stressed syllables in Norwegian generally can have a long vowel followed by a short consonant (e.g., tok /tək/ "took"), a long vowel followed by no consonant (ta /ta:/ "take"), or a short vowel followed by a long consonant or consonant group (takk /tak/ "thanks").

In unstressed syllables, vowels maintain their quality, but are always short. Here English differs in that speakers tend to reduce the quality of unstressed vowels to a schwa /ə/ as in the casual pronunciation of words like monotony, triangular, and permanent. Carryover of this tendency may cause problems for English speakers who often reduce the final unstressed syllable in Norwegian words, neglecting the difference between words like jente /ˈjenta/ "girl" and jenta /ˈjenta/ "the girl."

In addition to its relation to word stress, vowel length is largely predictable from the spelling of a word. Short vowels are generally followed by two or more consonants, whereas long vowels are followed by single consonants. For example, tak /tak/ "roof" has a long /a:/ but takk /takk/ "thanks" has a short /a/.

Vowel length and quality are thus very important features of spoken Norwegian. The student is urged to listen to native speakers and imitate—perhaps even exaggerate—the distinctions.
Tones and Intonation

Many non-Norwegians remark on the singsong quality of spoken Norwegian. Two features of the language aid in creating this impression: word tone and sentence intonation.

All stressed words in spoken East Norwegian have either a rising tone (sometimes called single tone) or a falling tone followed by a rising tone (double tone). In West Norway, the double tone rises, then falls. The actual manifestation of these tones varies considerably throughout the dialect areas, but all spoken Norwegian contrasts single and double tones in stressed words. The origins of this feature of the language are deeply rooted in the history of the Germanic languages, and can account for different meanings in otherwise similar words: været “the weather” is pronounced with single tone, with the syllable vee- lower in pitch than the syllable le/ (the t of the definite ending is silent). Contrast that word with være “be,” which has a double tone pronunciation, but is otherwise identical.

The other prosodic feature of spoken Norwegian that catches the ear of non-Norwegians is the sentence melody or intonation. In East Norwegian, the last word or word group in a declarative sentence ends higher than the rest of the sentence. The overall effect sounds to many English speakers like a question, and they are often left wondering why Norwegians make so many inquiries. When Norwegians do want to ask questions, the speaker’s intonation has an even sharper rise on the last word than it would in a statement.

Distinctive Norwegian Sounds

Vowels

Several Norwegian vowel sounds are made with rounded lips, and as such are not customarily produced by English speakers. /y/ and /y:/ are like /i/ and /i:/ except that the lips are drawn forward and rounded. /e/ and /e:/ are rounded versions of /e/ and /æ:/, and /a:/ are similar to /a/ and /æ:/, but with rounded lips.

Consonants

Several consonant clusters (groups of two or more consonants) are never seen in English but are common in Norwegian. As examples, the bj as in bjorn “bear” and fj as in fjord start with the /b/ or /f/ and make a quick “offglide” to a short /i/ or /y/ sound. The English words beauty and future have initial sounds very similar to these Norwegian clusters.

Both letters k and g have two distinct pronunciations. Before back vowels a, å, o, and u, these consonants are pronounced with their “hard” sounds in a manner similar to English; for example, kål /kǎːl/ “cabbage.” Before the front vowels i, y, and ø, the k has a softer, fricative sound, which corresponds to the spelling kj /kj/: for example, kirke /kirk/ “church,” kino /kɪ:n/ “movie,” kylling /kyl̯iŋ/ “chicken.” Before the front vowels i, y, and ø, the written consonant g is pronounced as /j/: gi /gi/ “give,” begynne /bej̯n̩/ “begin.”

Several written clusters share the sound pronounced /j/ (similar to the initial sound in English she). The most common groups are: sj, sk, sjk, and rs as in the following words: sjue /ʃjuː/ “seven,” ski /ʃkiː/ “ski,” skje /ʃkeː/ “spoon,” and norsk /nɔːrk/ “Norwegian.”

East and North Norwegian /r/ is a tap, flap, or trill using the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge, directly behind the front teeth. The American English /r/ sounds are very different, pronounced as retroflex sounds, with the root of the tongue pulled back towards the soft palate. Along the south and west coast of Norway, the /r/ sound is uvular, very similar to a French /ʁ/, and still unlike the American English retroflex /ɾ/.

Relating Spelling to Pronunciation

In general, Norwegian is pronounced much more closely to the way it is spelled than English is. By noticing a few patterns, the new speaker can become quite proficient at guessing how to say a word after reading it.

Here follow some hints about the relationship of spelling to the pronunciation of vowels:

1. Often the letter o when followed by two or more consonants is pronounced as the vowel sound /o/. Godt “good, well” is pronounced as /ˈɡɔt/. Norsk “Norwegian” uses the short /o/ vowel.
2. e before r is often pronounced /æːr/: er /ˈær/ “there.”
3. The diphthong /æːr/ can be written with the following combinations:
   - eg as in jeg /ˈjeɡ/ “I”
   - egn as in regn /ˈreːŋ/ “rain”
   - ei as in bein /ˈbein/ “leg, bone”

“Silent” Letters

Some common spellings in Norwegian contain elements that are not pronounced: “silent” letters.

1. -ig is pronounced /i/. The printed g is not pronounced. Many adjectives and adverbs end in -ig or -lig, e.g., hyggelig /ˈhyɡəlɪɡ/ “pleasant.”
2. Interrogatives corresponding to English *wh-* words are spelled with *hv-* and pronounced /v/, e.g., *hv-r* /vaː/ “what,” *hv-o* /vor/ “where.” Other words that start with *hv-* are pronounced with /v/: *hvite* “white” and *hvete* “wheat.”

3. *Hj-* is always pronounced /j/; e.g., *hjemme* /jemma/ “at home,” *hjelpe* /jelpa/ “help,” and *hjernet* /jørna/ “the corner.”

4. *Gj-* is always pronounced as /j/: *gjøre* /jørə/ “do,” *gjennom* /jennɔːm/ “through.”

5. *-t* is not pronounced in the pronoun or demonstrative *det*, which should always be pronounced /deː/.

6. *-t* as part of the definite ending of *et* nouns is not pronounced in normal speech, although some very careful speakers may use this learned pronunciation. For most speakers, *huset* “the house” is pronounced /husə/. However, the final written *-t* is pronounced when it comes as the past tense or past participle ending on verbs: *snakket* /snakket/ “spoke.”

7. *-d* is often not pronounced at the end of several “small words” like *med* /meː/ “with,” *ved* /veː/ “at.”

8. The conjunction *og* “and” is almost always pronounced /ɔː/ without a /g/ sound in casual and informal Norwegian. However, careful Norwegian speakers frequently use a pronunciation like /ɔːg/. In the stressed adverb *og* “also” the /g/ is pronounced.

9. There is no voiced /z/ sound in Norwegian. In borrowed terms like *Zulu* “Zulu,” Norwegian uses a voiceless /s/, i.e., /suːla/.

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### 4 Spelling Conventions in Norwegian

English has some rules that monitor changes in spelling for various forms of a word. For example, we double the final *p* before adding endings to words like *stop*: *stopped, stopping*. We also change the final *y* to *i* before adding endings: *fly*—*flies, modify—modification*. Norwegian has similar conventions that regulate the written language.

#### 1 No Final -mm

Norwegian words never end in *-mm*, but *-mm-* frequently occurs in the middle of words. Often a word ends in single *-m* in one form, but uses *-mm-* when it is not the last letter in a related word. Note that spelling conventions apply generally to words, and are not restricted to one part of speech.

- **et rom** a room
  - **rommet** the room
- **hjem** to home
  - **hjemme** at home
- **morsom** fun (singular)
  - **morsomme** fun (plural)
- **kom** come, came
  - (imperative, past tense)
  - **komme** come (infinitive)

Some words end in a single consonant because the vowel that precedes it is long. To preserve vowel length, the word-final consonant is not doubled with the addition of an ending. For example, the noun **et problem** “a problem” retains only one *-m* when an ending is added: **problemet** “the problem,” to preserve its pronunciation, /probleːm/.
2 Avoid Three Consecutive Consonants

The Norwegian tendency is to avoid three consonants in a row. If a consonant can be dropped without the word becoming confused with others, this is usually done. The adjective *grunn* "green," for example, adds the consonant ending -t for a neuter singular noun. The form then is *grønt*, rather than *grønt*. Other examples include adding the past tense ending to a verb: *å kjenne* "to know," *kjente* "knew;" *å gleme* "to forget," *glemede* "forgot;" *å spille* "to play," *spilte* "played."

3 Drop Unstressed -e

In unstressed syllables, the vowel -e is often dropped when an ending is added, especially in combinations like -el, -en, and -er. For example, in nouns, *en onkel* "uncle" (singular) corresponds to *onkler* "uncles" (plural); *ei finger* "a finger," *fingerer* "fingers;" *et teater* "a theater," *teatret* "the theater." This spelling convention is applied also to adjectives; for example, *gammel* "old" (singular), *gamle* "old" (plural and definite).

4 Accented -ê

A very small number of Norwegian words use the acute accent -ê, for example in *kafé* "café" and *orkidê* "orchid." In a word like *idê* "idea," the accent is not used when endings are added: *en idê, idêen* "the idea," *ideer* "ideas," and *ideene* "the ideas."

*The asterisk denotes that the form is wrong and should not be used.
5 Overview of Verb Forms

The Norwegian verbal system is generally simpler than that of many other European languages. Within each tense, all subjects have the same form. Compare English present tense "am/is/are" to Norwegian, where the form is "er" throughout:

I am  
Jeg er

You (informal—singular) are  
Du er

You (formal—singular and plural) are  
De er

He, she, it is  
Han, hun, den / det er

We are  
Vi er

You (informal—plural) are  
Dere er

They are  
De er

Infinitive

The infinitive is a form of the verb that does not appear in a specific tense or time. These verb forms often appear with the infinitive marker: "to" in English and "å" in Norwegian. All Norwegian infinitives end in vowels, except a few infinitives of -s verbs (see chapter 14). Examples of infinitives (shown here with the infinitive marker) are: å tenke "to think," å bære "to carry, bear," å treffe "to meet," å gjøre "to do," å si "to say," å se "to see," å bo "to dwell." The infinitive is the name of the action, and as such may be used as a noun, as the subject of a sentence:

Å prate med venner er hyggelig.  
To chat with friends is pleasant.
Infinitives can also function as objects, as seen in constructions such as:

Jeg liker å spille ishockey.          I like to play hockey.
Marit er glad i å snakke norsk.     Marit is fond of speaking Norwegian.

The infinitive (without the marker å) is used with modal helping verbs such as må, måtte, kan, kunne (see discussion of modals in chapter 7):

Dere må lese nå.                    You must read now.
Kunne du sende meg saltet?          Could you pass me the salt?

**Stem**

For many of the forms of verbs discussed in these chapters, it is important to know what a verb’s stem is. The stem is the infinitive minus the unstressed -e at the end (if there is one). For verbs that end in stressed vowels, the stem is the same as the infinitive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kjøpe</td>
<td>kjøp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oversette</td>
<td>oversett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selge</td>
<td>selg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gå</td>
<td>gå</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bli</td>
<td>bli</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative**

The imperative form resembles the stem. It is used to command someone (an understood “you” subject) to do something.

Gå!                              Go!
Snakk norsk!                     Speak Norwegian!

Si det på engelsk. Say it in English.

**Sample Verb in All Tenses**

Below is a chart of the verb å spise “to eat” in all forms. Note that these forms do not take different endings when used with different subjects. Norwegian verbs are uniform within a tense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>(å) spise</th>
<th>(to) eat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stem</td>
<td>spis-</td>
<td>eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>Spis!</td>
<td>Eat!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>spiser</td>
<td>eat/eats/eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past tense</td>
<td>spiste</td>
<td>ate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present participle</td>
<td>spisende</td>
<td>eating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>skal/vil spise</td>
<td>shall/will eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>skulle/ville spise</td>
<td>should/would eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Verb Classes**

Present tense forms in Norwegian show very little irregularity. The present tense is formed by adding -r to the infinitive (å se “to see,” han ser “he sees”). There are only a handful of exceptions. (See the short list of irregular forms in chapter 6.) However, Norwegian past tense and participle forms can be divided into regular and irregular classes. When students understand the separation between regular
and irregular past tense forms, and then the division of regular verbs into four classes, they find it much more efficient to learn the forms for each Norwegian verb.

Regular past tense forms use endings that consist of some combination of -t or -d. This is similar to English regular past tenses, which end in -ed (for example, played and printed). The four classes of past tense endings for regular verbs end in -et, -te, -de, and -dte. (See chapter 8 for a complete explanation of past tense forms.)

Corresponding endings for past participles for the four classes end in -et, -t, -d, and -dd. (Chapter 9 gives complete details on forming past participles.)

Verbs with past tenses and past participles that are not "regular" as described above are called "irregular." The forms for past tense and past participle for these verbs do not fall into neat classes, as do the forms for regular verbs. The forms for the past tense often have different vowels than the corresponding present tense and infinitive forms. Past tense forms for irregular verbs do not add -t or -d endings. English examples (that illustrate vowel changes) are "to write—he wrote; to eat—we ate." Norwegian examples include å skrive ("to write")—hun skrev ("she wrote") and å drikke ("to drink")—vi drakk ("we drank").

The fact that a verb is irregular in the past tense does not imply that it will be irregular in the present. For example du drakk ("you drank") shows an irregular verb form in the past tense, but the present tense form du drikker ("you are drinking") is regular.

6 Present Tense

Verb endings for all tenses are much simpler in Norwegian than in French, German, and even English because the endings in Norwegian are the same for all subjects. Norwegian verbs do not change according to the person or number of the subject: if you know the verb ending for one subject in Norwegian, you know the ending for all subjects. In addition, regular verbs far outnumber irregular verbs. However, as often happens in language, irregular verbs are among those most commonly used.

Forming the Present Tense

The present tense is used to describe events that are ongoing, repetitive, or habitual. Almost all verbs in Norwegian form the present tense (for all subjects) by adding an -er to the verb’s stem (generally the infinitive minus an unstressed -e at the end—if there is one).

Regular Present Tense Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å bosette</td>
<td>jeg, du, han, hun, den, det, vi, dere, De, de, Georg, kvinne...</td>
<td>bosetter settles, settle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ha</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>har has, have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å kjøpe</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>kjøper buys, buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å selge</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>selger sells, sell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular Present Tense Forms

Not counting the "s verbs," only a handful of verbs have present tense forms that do not follow this pattern of adding -r, or -er to the stem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å gjøre to do</td>
<td>jeg, du, han, hun, det, vi, dere, De, de, Georg, kvinnen...</td>
<td>gjør does, do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spørre to ask</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>spør asks, ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å være to be</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>er is, am, are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å vite to know a fact</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>vet knows, know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following helping verbs (modal auxiliaries) also have irregular present tenses. Note that the equivalent English modals do not generally have infinitives (there is no form to can, or to must).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å kunne be able to</td>
<td>jeg, du, han, hun, det, vi, dere, De, de, Georg, kvinnen...</td>
<td>kan can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ville to want to</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>vil wants to, want to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å måtte to need to</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>må must</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å skulle should, shall</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>skal shall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å burde ought to</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>bør ought to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of Present Tense Use

While English has three separate ways to describe an occurrence in the present, Norwegian uses one form:

- She is eating.
- She eats.
- She does eat.

Hun spiser.

Norwegian does not use the present progressive ("is eating") form. To stress the ongoing nature of an activity, two verbs are usually joined with og:

Mette sitter og leser.  
Mette is reading [sitting and reading].

Extra emphasis as in the English "does eat" can be added with intonation or other markers.

Current activities

Jeg spiser middag nå.  
I am eating dinner now.

Ann leser ei bok om irsk historie.  
Ann is reading a book on Irish history.

Dette innlegget er jeg helt enig i.  
I completely agree with this comment.

Kjell gjør mange interessante ting.  
Kjell is doing many interesting things.

Vi er på besøk i Trondheim.  
We are visiting Trondheim.

Bodil vet at Finn er hjemme.  
Bodil knows that Finn is at home.

Usual or habitual states

Oslo er hovedstaden i Norge.  
Oslo is the capital of Norway.

Vann koker ved 100° C.  
Water boils at 100° Celsius.

Det er ikke gull alt som glimrer.  
All that glitters is not gold.

Nordmenn snakker norsk.  
Norwegians speak Norwegian.

Berit sover seint om søndagen.  
Berit sleeps late on Sundays.

Petter og hans familie reiser til Italia hvert år.  
Petter and his family travel to Italy every year.

Future activities

A present tense verb can be used to describe events that will take place in the future. An adverb or adverbial phrase indicates when in the future the event will take place.
Siri legger seg ved 11-tiden i kveld.  
Siri will go to bed at about 11 o’clock this evening.

Vi reiser til Norge til høsten.  
We will travel to Norway this fall.

I morgen blir det snø.  
It will snow tomorrow.

Snart ringer vi ham.  
We’ll call him soon.

Continuing action

Han sitter og skriver brev.  
He is writing [sitting and writing] letters.

Tone går og tenker.  
Tone is thinking [walking and thinking].

Mannen står og koper på dem.  
The man is staring [standing and staring] at them.

Karin ligger og leser avisa.  
Karin is reading [lying and reading] the newspaper.

Modal Helping Verbs

Modal helping verbs (like English will or must) express modes or conditions. In Norwegian they are used to describe future, desired, recommended, allowed, or conditional events. Unlike English, these modal forms can appear in the infinitive, present, past, and perfect tenses. In Norwegian it is possible to have two or more modal verbs in a row: Må jeg ville kunne snakke norsk? “Do I need to want to be able to speak Norwegian?” While the perfect forms exist for all of these modals, several are rarely used.

The grammatical form of past tense for the modal does not always imply a past event. These modal helping verbs can be used to make a statement or request less direct and more polite than the corresponding phrases. The past tenses kunne, skulle, and ville also reduce the abruptness of certain requests:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sett deg.</td>
<td>Sit down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kan du sette deg?</td>
<td>Can you sit down?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vil du sette deg?</td>
<td>Will you sit down?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunne du sette deg?</td>
<td>Could you sit down?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main verb, the one that follows these helping verbs, must always be in the infinitive without the infinitive marker å, though it may also be left off when it describes movement toward a specific goal. This holds for the modals måtte, skulle, and ville.

Vi skal reise til Moskva.  
We will travel to Moscow.

or

Vi skal til Moskva.
Jeg må gå hjem nå.
or
Jeg må hjem nå.

The main verb can also be omitted in certain questions using modals:

Hva må du gjøre?
or
Hva må du?

Hvorfør skal du gjøre det?
or
Hvorfør skal du det?

Common Modal Verbs

Burde:  å burde, bør, burde, har burdet
ought to, should

Dere bør sitte stille en stund.
You (plural) ought to sit quietly a while.

Han burde ha gjort hjemmeleksene
nøyere.
He ought to have done his homework more accurately.

Vi har burdet skrive brev til våre
venner.
We should have written to our friends.

Få:  å få, får, fikk, har fått
have permission to, need to, cause to

The verb å få is considered a modal in some of its many functions. As a main verb, få means “get, receive,” but as a modal it can mean “have permission to, be able to, need to, cause to, manage to.”

Så skulle hun få mannen sin til å
 gjøre det.
Then she could get her husband
to do it.

Vi får se om David greier seg.
We’ll see if David manages it.

De fikk reise til slutt.
They got to go finally.

Jeg er så glad for å ha fått se dem.
I am so happy I have managed
to see them.

Forfatteren fikk solgt bokmanuset til
et stort forlag.
The author managed to sell the book manuscript to a big publisher.

Kunne:  å kunne, kan, kunne, har kunnet
can, be able to

Karin ville kunne snakke arabisk.
Karin wanted to be able to speak Arabic.

Kan du svømme godt?
Can you swim well?

Vi forklarte hvordan en slik
bevegelse kunne slå rot i Norge.
We explained how such a
movement could take root
in Norway.

Til nå, har jeg ikke kunnet forstå
min venn.
Until now, I was not able to
understand my friend.

Måtte:  å måtte, må, måtte, har måttet
have to, must

Jeg må spise fordi jeg er sulten.
I have to eat because I’m hungry.

Å måtte skrive nynorsk er noe
mange unge nordmenn misliker.
To have to write Nynorsk is
something many young
Norwegians dislike.

Det betyr at han må kjempe hardere.
That means he has to fight
harder.

Klara måtte bli hjemme fordi hun
ikke hadde skrevet ferdig essayet.
Klara had to stay home because
she hadn’t finished writing
her essay.

Jeg har måttet arbeide på fabrikk
de to siste åra.
I had to work in a factory for the
last two years.
8 Forms of the Past Tense

Past tense and past participle forms of Norwegian verbs fall into two large categories—regular and irregular—which may then be subdivided further. The four classes of regular past tense verbs are discussed below, as are the verbs with irregular past forms. Verbs with irregular present forms do not necessarily also have irregular past forms (e.g., ville, vil, ville, har villt). The forms of many regular and irregular Norwegian verbs are listed alphabetically in the appendix beginning on page 137.

Regular Verbs

Regular past tense verbs (sometimes called “weak” verbs) are those that maintain the same vowel in the stem of the verb but add an ending with -d or -t. Each of the four classes of regular verbs in Norwegian uses different endings with -d or -t that are partially predictable according to the structure of the verb’s stem.

English makes the same distinction between regular and irregular verbs. All regular verbs in English add -ed to the verb stem to form the past tense (for example to play ⇔ played). Note that the verb to give ⇔ gave in English is strong, because the vowel in the infinitive alternates with the vowel in the past tense (i ⇔ a).

A few verbs have alternative forms in several classes, stemming from dialectal differences. These alternative forms are accommodated in today’s Bokmål. For example å klage “to complain” can have the past tense klaget (Class I) or klaagd (Class III). Some strong verbs end in -t or -d but are considered strong because the stem vowel varies between infinitive and past tense forms. For example, notice the vowel difference in å gjøre “to do” and gjorde “did.”
Class I

A very large group of Norwegian regular verbs fall into this group. They add -et to the stem form. Many verbs have a double consonant ending in their stems. There is an alternative ending -a for past tense in this class. Han åpnet/åpna døra “He opened the door.” While the ending -a is allowed in Bokmål, it is much rarer than the -et endings that are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å snakke</td>
<td>snakket/snakka</td>
<td>to speak, spoke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å danse</td>
<td>danset/dansa</td>
<td>to dance, danced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å vente</td>
<td>ventet/venta</td>
<td>to wait, waited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class II

The other fairly large class of weak verbs adds -te to the verb’s stem to form the past tense. For the most part, the infinitive has a long vowel followed by only one consonant. A few clear examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å kjøpe</td>
<td>kjøpte</td>
<td>to buy, bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å låne</td>
<td>lånte</td>
<td>to borrow/lend borrowed/lent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å reise</td>
<td>reiste</td>
<td>to travel, traveled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spise</td>
<td>spiste</td>
<td>eat, ate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few consonant clusters (groups of consonants) function as a single consonant and are thus included among Class II regular verbs. Stems with -nd and -ld for example are included here, as are the verbs with these double consonants in their stems: ll, mm, and nn. Double consonants are most often simplified (see chapter 4). The chart below gives one example of each cluster.

Class III

For this class, the past tense ending -de is added to the stem. These verbs generally have stems that end in a diphthong (for example ei), or in a -g or -v.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å greie</td>
<td>greide</td>
<td>to manage, managed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å klage</td>
<td>klagde/klaget/klaga</td>
<td>to complain, complained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å prøve</td>
<td>prøvde</td>
<td>to try, tried</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class IV

Verbs in this class have past tenses that end in -dde. Generally verbs with stems that end in stressed vowels fall into Class IV; the stem (to which the -dde is added) is equivalent to the infinitive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å bo</td>
<td>bodde</td>
<td>to live, lived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å nå</td>
<td>nådde</td>
<td>to reach, reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å tro</td>
<td>trodde</td>
<td>to believe, believed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular Verbs

Many of the most common verbs in Norwegian have irregular forms for the past tense. There is generally no way to guess what the form is, so memorization or consulting lists is important. Strong verbs are those that alternate stem vowels in the infinitive, present, and past tense. A good example in English of a strong verb is drive (infinitive) and drove (past tense). While patterns do exist for these verbs, it is probably easier to learn the forms through use and repetition rather than through analytical classifications. Norwegian strong verbs are very commonly used, so the student will have plenty of opportunity to practice them. Alternate forms that Norwegian students may use in writing, but that are not standard in textbooks, are given in brackets—as is the tradition in Norwegian word lists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å bli</td>
<td>ble/blei/vart</td>
<td>to become, became</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å være</td>
<td>bar</td>
<td>to bear, bore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å drikke</td>
<td>drakk</td>
<td>to drink, drank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å finne</td>
<td>fant</td>
<td>to find, found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å få</td>
<td>fikk [fekk]</td>
<td>to get, got</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gi</td>
<td>gav [ga]</td>
<td>to give, gave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gjøre</td>
<td>gjorde</td>
<td>to do, did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gå</td>
<td>gikk [gjekk]</td>
<td>to go, went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å hjelpe</td>
<td>hjalp</td>
<td>to help, helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ligge</td>
<td>lå</td>
<td>to lie, lay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å si</td>
<td>sa</td>
<td>to say, said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å sitte</td>
<td>satt</td>
<td>to sit, sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å skrive</td>
<td>skrev/skreiv</td>
<td>to write, wrote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å sove</td>
<td>sov</td>
<td>to sleep, slept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spørre</td>
<td>spurte</td>
<td>to ask, asked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A more complete list of strong and regular verbs, giving past tense and past participle, appears in chapter 9.

Examples of Past Tense Use

The past tense is used to describe events that began and ended at a specific time in the past. It can also describe events that occurred often or repeatedly in the past. In addition, a speaker can use this tense to express an immediate sensation or opinion. In this case, the statement refers to the present.

Specific past time

Egil var i Bergen for en uke siden.  
Egil was in Bergen a week ago.

Besøkte dere familien deres i fjor?  
Did you all visit your family last year?

Barna skrev mange brev til besteforeldre.  
The children wrote many letters to their grandparents.

Andersson bodde i Tromsø i 1995.  
Andersson lived in Tromsø in 1995.

Bombardementet begynte lørdag.  
The bombing began on Saturday.

Repeated past actions

Karin kjørte til hytta tre ganger om uken.  
Karin drove to the cabin three times a week.

Farfar fortalte ofte om det gamle landet.  
Grandfather often told of the old country.
Description of present sensation

The past tense in this case describes a reaction to or description of a present sensation.

Det var hyggelig å treffe deg!  It is nice to meet you!
Kaken var delig.  The cake is delicious.

9 Present Perfect and Past Perfect Tenses

The present perfect tense describes events that have taken place at an indeterminate time before the utterance or that have lasted for an indeterminate length of time. Since it does not matter exactly when the activity has taken place (other than at some point in the past), the main focus is on the outcome and consequence of the action. The past tense, on the other hand, is used for events that occurred at specific, named times in the past.

The present perfect is formed with the present form of an auxiliary verb, either har “have, has” or er “am, is, are” together with the past participle. It is always correct to use har, but Norwegians may also use er as the auxiliary. The use of er is more restricted, and generally with verbs of motion or state. Usage may be somewhat determined by regional dialect, with Northern and Western dialects favoring er, and har more common elsewhere; convention suggests using er when highlighting the end result and using har when the focus is on the action itself. Historical and formal documents tend to use er with verbs of motion and har with all others.

Har du lest boken om Sofie?
Have you read the book about Sofie?

Framtida er alt kommet.
The future has already arrived.

Boka ble forbudt straks den var kommet ut.
The book was forbidden as soon as it was published.

Det har aldri kommet en revolusjon i Norge.
There has never been a revolution in Norway.

Det er et ord som må være kommet inn med hanseatene.
It is a word that must have entered with the Hanseatic traders.
The Past Participle

The past participle in Norwegian generally follows a pattern similar to the past tense form (see appendix beginning on page 137) with endings in -t or -d. Only a few strong verb past participles end in -d; the vast majority end in -t.

A few verbs have alternative forms in several classes. For example, å klage "to complain" can have the past participle klaget (Class II) or klaged (Class IV). Some strong verbs have the typical weak verb -t or -d ending but are considered strong because the stem vowel varies between infinitive and past tense forms.

In addition to its use in forming the present and past perfect, the past participle is also used in the passive construction and as an adjective (see chapters 13 and 18).

Regular Verbs

Class I

This large class of weak verbs adds -et to the stem to form the past participle. Many verbs have a stem-final double consonant or consonant cluster. There is an alternative ending for past participle -a in this class. Han har åpnet/har åpna vinduet "He has opened the window." While the ending -a is allowed in Bokmål, it is much rarer than -et endings and should be avoided by students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å snakke</td>
<td>har snakket/snakka</td>
<td>to speak; have, has spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å danse</td>
<td>har danset/dansa</td>
<td>to dance; have, has danced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å vente</td>
<td>har ventet/venta</td>
<td>to wait; have, has waited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class II

A very large percentage of Norwegian regular verbs fall into this group. Verbs in this class add -t to form the past perfect. For the most part, the infinitive has a long vowel followed by only one consonant. A few clear examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å kjøpe</td>
<td>har kjøpt</td>
<td>to buy; have, has bought</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å læne</td>
<td>har lant</td>
<td>to borrow/lend; have, has borrowed/lent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å reise</td>
<td>har reist</td>
<td>to travel; have, has traveled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spise</td>
<td>har spist</td>
<td>eat; have, has eaten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few stem-final consonant clusters function as single consonants and are thus grouped with Class II regular verbs. Stems with -nd and -ld are included here, as are the verbs with the double consonants -ll, -mm, and -nn in their stems. Stem-final double consonants are simplified with the addition of endings (see chapter 4). The chart below gives one example of each cluster.

Class III

The past participle ending in Class III, -d, is added to the stem. Verbs in this class generally have stems that end in a diphthong, -g, or -v.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å greie</td>
<td>har greid</td>
<td>to manage; have, has managed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å klage</td>
<td>har klagd/klaget/klaga</td>
<td>to complain; have, has complained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class IV

Weak verbs in this class have past participles that add -dd to the stem (and to the infinitive). Generally, verbs with stems that end in stressed vowels fall into this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å bo</td>
<td>har bodd</td>
<td>to live; have, has lived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å nå</td>
<td>har nådd</td>
<td>to reach; have, has reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å tro</td>
<td>har trodd</td>
<td>to believe; have, has believed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular Verbs

Many of the most common verbs in Norwegian have irregular forms in the past participle. There is generally no way to guess what the form is, so memorization or consulting lists is important. Strong verbs are verbs that alternate stem vowels in the infinitive (and present tense) and in the past tense. A good English example of a strong verb is drink (infinitive) and drunk (past participle). While patterns do exist for these verbs, it is probably easier to learn the forms through use and repetition rather than through analytical classifications. Norwegian strong verbs are very commonly used, so the student will have plenty of opportunity to practice them. Some of the most common irregular verbs are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å bli</td>
<td>har blitt</td>
<td>to become; have, has become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å bære</td>
<td>har baret</td>
<td>to bear; have, has borne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å drikke</td>
<td>har drukket</td>
<td>to drink; have, has drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å finne</td>
<td>har funnet</td>
<td>to find; have, has found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å få</td>
<td>har fått</td>
<td>to get; have, has gotten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gi</td>
<td>har gitt</td>
<td>to give; have, has given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gjøre</td>
<td>har gjort</td>
<td>to do; have, has done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å gå</td>
<td>har gått</td>
<td>to go; have, has gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å hjelpe</td>
<td>har hjulpet</td>
<td>to help; have, has helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ligge</td>
<td>har ligget</td>
<td>to lie; have, has lain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å si</td>
<td>har sagt</td>
<td>to say; have, has said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å sitte</td>
<td>har sittet</td>
<td>to sit; have, has sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å skrive</td>
<td>har skrevet</td>
<td>to write; have, has written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å sove</td>
<td>har sovet</td>
<td>to sleep; have, has slept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spørre</td>
<td>har spurt</td>
<td>to ask; have, has asked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å stå</td>
<td>har stått</td>
<td>to stand; have, has stood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ta</td>
<td>har tatt</td>
<td>to take; have, has taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å treffe</td>
<td>har truffet</td>
<td>to meet; have, has met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å vite</td>
<td>har visst</td>
<td>to know; have, has known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å være</td>
<td>har vært</td>
<td>to be; have, has been</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A complete list of 225 verbs, including past tense and past participle forms, appears in the appendix beginning on page 137.

Examples of Present Perfect Use

Jeg har aldri sett et ansikt som ditt.  
I have never seen a face like yours.

Vi har vært gift i fem år nå.  
We’ve been married for five years now.

Senere har han fortalt om hvor fascinert han ble av henne.  
Later he told about how fascinated he was with her.

Familien hans har brutt kontakten med ham.  
His family has broken off contact with him.
Man har ofte sagt at språkene er menneskehetens vinduer mot virkeligheten.

People have often said that languages are humanity's windows on reality.

Past Perfect

The past perfect denotes that an event in the past took place before another named event. The earlier event uses the past perfect, while the more recent one uses the past tense. The past perfect uses an auxiliary verb (most often hadde “had,” sometimes var “was”) with the past participle.

Jeg dro ned til sentrum etter at jeg hadde spist lunsj.

I went downtown after I had eaten lunch.

Etter at jeg hadde lært norsk, studerte jeg norrønt.

After I had learned Norwegian, I studied Old Norse.

Jeg hadde koko kaffe før mannen kom.

I had made coffee before the man arrived.

10 Participles

Present Participles Used as Adjectives

Participles are adjective forms based on verbs, and may be used in a variety of ways in English and Norwegian. English uses the present participle (the -ing form) in the so-called progressive tenses, which describe activities that extend over a period of time.

I am thinking.

She was dreaming.

Olav had been playing tennis.

Norwegian has no corresponding verbal usage of present participles. Present participles are used as adjectives, describing nouns, or pronouns. To form the present participle, Norwegian adds -ende to the stem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present Participle</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å sove</td>
<td>sovende</td>
<td>sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å leke</td>
<td>lekende</td>
<td>playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å dominere</td>
<td>dominerende</td>
<td>dominant, dominating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å stå</td>
<td>stående</td>
<td>standing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Norges dominerende skriftspråk er bokmål.

Norway's dominant written form is Bokmål.
The present participle is often combined with a form of å bli and followed by an infinitive to express a continuing action:

Han ble sittende og prate.  He remained sitting and chatted.
De ble stående og måpe.  They remained standing and stared.

**Past Participles Used as Adjectives**

In addition to their use in forming the perfect tenses and the passive, past participles also have an important function as adjectives:

De undertrykte er ikke hjelpeløse. The oppressed are not helpless.
Han prøvde å sprege de gitte betingelsene for livet sitt. He tried to break open the given constraints on his life.
Undertegnede er prosjektleder. The undersigned is the project leader.

When used as adjectives, past participles are given endings to agree with the noun they modify. Weak verbs that have participles in -et can use either -ede or -ete forms in the definite or plural.

Bortkastet “thrown away,” the past participial adjective related to the verb å kaste bort (å bortkaste), has the following forms:

- en bortkastet bil  an abandoned car; a throw-away car
- et bortkastet hefte  a throw-away notebook
- mange bortkastede/bortkastele timer  many wasted hours

The following are additional examples of weak verb past participle forms:

det smeltede blyet  the smelted lead
gamle hvitstammede bjerker  old white-trunked birch trees
hans forstyrrede tankegang  his disturbed thought process
Strong verbs that have past participles ending in -et use forms ending in -ne when the adjectives are in the definite or plural form:

- **den vidåpne ovnsdøren**
  - the wide-open oven door

- **mange velskrevne bøker**
  - many well-written books

But when these adjectives are used in the predicate (with a verb separating the adjective from the noun), the form ends in -et (the neuter form of the participle):

- **Ovnsdøren er vidåpnet.**
  - The oven door is wide open.

- **Bøkene er velskrevet.**
  - The books are well written.

## Future Tense

Future activities in Norwegian are not expressed with a special tense as they are in other languages such as French. Rather, like English, Norwegian uses several methods to show and describe coming events.

### Helping Verbs Skal and Vil

Use of a modal helping verb combined with the infinitive is the most common way to indicate futurity. **Skal** and **vil** are used the most. **Skal** “shall” is used when the speaker intends to undertake the activity and maintains control over the decisions and plans. The event has been planned. **Vil** “will” expresses an event in which the speaker is involved, but over which he has no control. **Vil** is used less often than **skal** to express the future. English speakers need to guard against overuse of **vil**, especially where they would use “will” in an equivalent English sentence. In Norwegian **vil** most often expresses “want to” or “it is my will to.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vi skal vaske bilen i morgen.</strong></td>
<td>We shall/will wash the car tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vi vil vaske bilen i morgen.</strong></td>
<td>We want to wash the car tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jeg skal bli forfatter.</strong></td>
<td>I’m going to be an author.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skal vi forsøke å ringe foreldrene dine?</strong></td>
<td>Shall we try to call your parents?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jeg håper at denne boken vil bli brutt av mange folk.</strong></td>
<td>I hope that this book will be used by many people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Når man skal skrive om et emne som dette, er det viktig å lese alle kildene.

When one is going to write about a subject like this, it is important to read all the sources.

The Idiom Kommer til å

Using the idiomatic expression *kommer til å* + infinitive is a common way to denote a future event. It is very similar to the English “going to.” Use of the expression suggests that the event is anywhere from moderately likely to absolutely likely to occur. This expression has an informal tone to it.

Vi kommer til å reise i morgen.

We are going to leave tomorrow.

Ann kommer til å gjøre det snart.

Ann will do it soon.

Det kommer vel til å regne i morgen.

I suppose it’ll rain tomorrow.

Bente kommer til å ringe deg i kveld.

Bente is going to call you this evening.

Det kommer til å bli enda verre neste måned.

It’s going to get even worse next month.

Noen lingvister mener at omtrent halvparten av språkene kommer til å forsvinne før året 2100.

Some linguists think that about half of the languages are going to disappear before the year 2100.

Present Tense

Events that will take place in the future are very often expressed with a present tense verb. The future aspect is referenced generally with an adverb (**snu**t “soon”) or adverbial phrase (**i morgent** “tomorrow” or **om en uke** “in a week”).

Vi begynner om en time.

We will begin in an hour.

Kommer du snart på besøk?

Are you coming to visit soon?

Wenche kjøper hus til høsten.

Wenche will buy a house next fall.
12 Conditionals and Subjunctives

Norwegian, unlike French and German, does not have specific “ready-made” grammatical forms for expressing “what if” situations. Rather, it uses verbal phrases with helping verbs (see also chapter 7). English and Norwegian are similar in their use of these constructions.

**Conditional**

To express statements of desire, or wishes that may be contrary to known facts, Norwegian uses the modal helping verb **skulle** “should.” Expressions using **skulle** may describe a future event, as seen from a distinct point in the past.

- **I går skulle hun gå på kino.**
  Yesterday, she was going to go to the movies.

- **Han skulle komme om en time.**
  He was going to arrive in an hour.

- **Hovedformene skulle brukes i lærebøker.**
  The main forms should be/are supposed to be used in textbooks.

- **Nittenåttiåtte skulle bli det året han skrev sitt første fullførte teaterstykke.**
  Nineteen eighty-eight was supposed to be the year he wrote his first complete play.

- **Moren skulle kjøre til Oslo.**
  Mother was going to drive to Oslo.

For conditional statements of events in the past, Norwegians often omit the auxiliary verb **ha.**

**Subjunctive**

While French, German, and many other languages have special grammatical forms for the subjunctive mode, subjunctive forms in Norwegian are rare, and limited to several frozen expressions. The form used is the same as the infinitive. The subjunctive expresses wishes or contrary-to-fact conditions.

- **Leve kongen!**
  Long live the king!

- **Gud bevare oss.**
  God save us.
13 Passives

Sentences (and their verb forms) can be either active or passive, depending on the point of view of the speaker or writer. When the focus is on the action and its doer, we use the active voice. When the focus is on the object being acted upon rather than the doer—or subject—then we use the passive voice.

Active

In active sentences, the verb expresses an action that has an effect or impact on the object. The subject performs the action. Most sentences in normal speech and writing are active. The following sentences use the active voice:

Eivind leste boka. Eivind read the book.
Russerne skilte mennene fra kvinner og barn. The Russians separated the men from the women and children.

Passive

In passive sentences the central focus rests on the action itself and the person or thing that is acted upon. The English passive construction uses the verb to be and the past participle: The cake was eaten. The batter was beaten. The mouse is being chased (by the cat).

Norwegian forms passives in two ways: the bli passive and the -s passive.

1 Bli passive construction

Bli passives use a form of the verb bli (å bli, blir, ble/blei, har blitt) and the past participle of the main verb. Compare the active and passive forms below:

Katten spiser fisk. The cat is eating the fish.

In this active construction the subject (cat) is doing the action (is eating) to the object (the fish).

Fisken blir spist (av katten). The fish is being eaten (by the cat).

In the related passive sentence, the fish (and the eating) is the focal point—the cat need not be mentioned at all. When the logical subject is mentioned, it is introduced by the Norwegian preposition av.

The tense of bli matches the tense of the main verb in the corresponding active sentence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Bli passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>å spise to eat</td>
<td>å bli spist to be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>spiser eats</td>
<td>blir spist is (being) eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>spiste ate</td>
<td>ble spist was (being) eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>skulle/ville spise would eat</td>
<td>skulle/ville bli spist would be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>skal spise shall eat</td>
<td>skal bli spist shall be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future perfect</td>
<td>skal ha spist shall have eaten</td>
<td>skal ha blitt spist shall have been eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present perfect</td>
<td>har spist has eaten</td>
<td>har blitt spist has been eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past perfect</td>
<td>hadde spist had eaten</td>
<td>hadde blitt spist had been eaten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following examples show use of the bli passive:

- **De ble ført bort til ukjent sted.** They were led away to an undisclosed location.
- **Tre mennesker hadde blitt drept.** Three people had been killed.
- **Tittelen har blitt endret.** The title has been changed.
- **Hovedrollen blir spilt av Liv Ullmann.** The main role is played by Liv Ullmann.
- **Det blir begått et mord i romanen.** A murder was committed in the novel.

## 2 -s passive construction

In addition to the bli passive, Norwegians can use another type known as the -s passive. This passive construction is more limited in use stylistically, and less extensive in its forms. To form verbs in the -s passive, an -s is added to the infinitive form of the verb.

While specific events are usually described using the bli passive, the -s passive is used in describing events that are ongoing or general. -s passives are common after modal helping verbs: **må spises** “must be eaten,” **kan spises** “can be eaten,” and **måte spises** “had to be eaten.” Other -s passive constructions tend to sound bookish or administrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>-s passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>å spise to eat</td>
<td>å spises to be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>spiser eats</td>
<td>spises is (being) eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>spiste ate</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditional</td>
<td>skulle/ville spise</td>
<td>skulle/ville spises would be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>skal spise shall eat</td>
<td>skal spises shall be eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future perfect</td>
<td>skal ha spist shall have eaten</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following are examples of -s passive:

- **Aslaug må undersøkes av barnelegen.** Aslaug needs to be examined by the pediatrician.
- **Vi kan ikke påvirkes av noe eller noen utenfor oss.** We cannot be influenced by anything or anyone outside of ourselves.
- **Forfatteren argumenterer her for at inflasjon skapes av myndighetene.** The author argues here that inflation is created by the authorities.
14 -s Verbs

While most Norwegian verbs end in -e or -er in the present tense (e.g., har "has," anbefaler "recommends"), several important verb classes have an -s ending.

-s Passive

The so-called -s passive can be used in the present tense and the infinitive, and is discussed extensively in the previous chapter.

Active Verbs with -s Forms

A small number of Norwegian verbs have active meanings, but end with -s and look like passive forms. Sometimes called "deponent verbs," they have infinitive, present, and past forms ending in -s. The past participle form is rarely used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Present perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å finnes</td>
<td>finnes/fins</td>
<td>fantes/fans</td>
<td>har funnes</td>
<td>to be found, exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å følges</td>
<td>følges</td>
<td>fulgtes</td>
<td>har fulgtes</td>
<td>to be followed, to succeed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å kjennes</td>
<td>kjennes</td>
<td>kjentes</td>
<td>har kjentes</td>
<td>to perceive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å lykkes</td>
<td>lykkes</td>
<td>lyktes</td>
<td>har lykkes</td>
<td>to succeed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Present perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å minnes</td>
<td>minnes</td>
<td>mintes</td>
<td>har mintes</td>
<td>remember, recall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å synes</td>
<td>synes/syns</td>
<td>syntes</td>
<td>har synes/syns</td>
<td>to seem, to think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å trives</td>
<td>trives</td>
<td>trivdes</td>
<td>har trives/trivs</td>
<td>to thrive, to enjoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å undres</td>
<td>undres</td>
<td>undredes</td>
<td>har undres</td>
<td>to wonder about, ponder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spørres</td>
<td>spørres</td>
<td>spurtes</td>
<td>har spurt</td>
<td>depends on, is a question of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hva synes du om filmen?
Vinden synes å ha gått til hvile.
De fleste legere synes å være enige om at det er en farlig sykdom.
En voldsom folkemasse samles på torget.
Vi trivdes svært godt i Bodø.
Deres salgssekkesser kunne ikke følges opp med nye opplag.
Forslaget høres utmerket ut.
Det spørs om han kommer.

Reciprocal Verbs

Reciprocal verbs, which also end in -s, express how the subjects of a sentence interact.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Present perfect</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>å møtes</td>
<td>møtes</td>
<td>møttes</td>
<td>har møttes</td>
<td>to meet each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å omgås/</td>
<td>omgås/</td>
<td>omgikks</td>
<td>har omgåts/</td>
<td>to associate with, pass without noticing each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omgåes</td>
<td>har omgåts/</td>
<td></td>
<td>har omgåttes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å ses/å sees</td>
<td>ses/sees</td>
<td>sås/såes</td>
<td>har ses/</td>
<td>to see each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>har sees (rare)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å skilles</td>
<td>skilles</td>
<td>skiltes</td>
<td>har skiltes</td>
<td>to separate, to be divorced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å slåss</td>
<td>slåss</td>
<td>sloss</td>
<td>har slåss</td>
<td>to fight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vi har møttes bare to ganger tidligere. We have met each other only two times before.

Mannen og kvinnnen omgikks på gata. The man and woman passed each other on the street.

I et slikt miljø må man lære seg å omgås andre på en smidig måte. In this kind of milieu, one needs to learn to associate with others in a flexible manner.

Jeg håper vi skiltes som gode venner. I hope we separate as good friends.

Ha det! Vi sees om en uke. Bye! I’ll see you (we’ll see each other) in a week.
15 Nouns

Nouns are names that refer to people, places, physical objects, concepts, and actions.

Gender

In Norwegian, nouns fall into one of three grammatical classes or genders. The three genders are sometimes referred to as masculine, feminine, and neuter, although this classification has little to do with natural genders. Because there is no obvious connection between nouns and their gender, students must either memorize or look up genders to use the correct forms. Approximately 55 percent of all Norwegian nouns are masculine, 25 percent neuter gender, and 20 percent feminine.

Masculine nouns are often called en nouns because their indefinite article is en. Similarly, feminine nouns are ei nouns and neuters et. Almost all ei nouns can be considered en nouns, and use en forms as alternates. Thinking of ei nouns as a subset of en nouns may perhaps be helpful.

Number

Nouns can be either singular or plural. Some nouns represent objects that can be counted (like eple "apple"), while others represent non-countables (melk "milk"). Non-countable nouns can be called "mass nouns," and generally do not have plural forms.

Indefinite and Definite Forms

A noun is usually in the indefinite when it is introduced into conversation or writing. The noun represents something unspecified, not differentiated from all the other
items of its sort. English uses the indefinite singular article "a" or "an," which, since English does not have grammatical gender, is used for all nouns. Norwegian indefinite articles vary according to the gender of the noun, as noted above. In neither language are articles used with indefinite plurals.

The definite article is used to indicate a specific noun or a noun that has been referred to previously. Here English uses the free-standing definite article the, while Norwegian uses a suffix. The specific form of the suffix depends on gender and number. The text that follows shows the most general pattern for en, ei, and et nouns in all four forms (indefinite singular, definite singular, indefinite plural, definite plural). When suffixes are added, the unstressed -e ending on the noun is removed first. For example, the definite singular ending -a for el jente "a girl" is added to jent:-jenta "the girl."

Uses of Indefinite and Definite Forms

Definite forms of nouns are used generally when the noun under discussion has been introduced previously, or when there is only one such item and no additional modifier is needed to understand the reference (for example mån en the "moon"). In the following examples, Norwegian—unlike English—uses the definite forms.

1. Possessive constructions with the "owner" named after the noun:
   - huset mitt  my house
   - bilen til Janne  Janne's car
2. Demonstrative constructions (although there can be variation):
   - denne bilen  this car
   - de barna  those children
3. Some set phrases with specific meanings require definite forms:
   - om vinteren  during the winter
   - til høsten  this coming fall
   - heile natta  the whole night
   - halve kongeriket  half the kingdom

4. Abstract nouns:
   - Slik er livet.  Such is life.
   - Naturen i Norge er vidunderlig.  The landscape, the scenery (nature) in Norway is wonderful.

5. Body parts (used without a possessive):
   - Jeg har vondt i hodet.  I have a headache. (lit. I have bad in the head.)
   - Han tok meg i hånden.  He held my hand.

6. Quantity per units (e.g., $5 a pound)
   - Det koster kr 20 kiloen.  It costs 20 kroner an (lit. = the) kilo.
   - Jeg kjørte 100 km timen.  I drove 100 kilometers an (lit. = the) hour.

The following are cases in which Norwegian does not use the indefinite article. Equivalent phrases in English use a or an.

1. Professions, nationalities, and religions:
   - Hun er sykerpleier.  She is a nurse.
   - Tom er nordmann.  Tom is a Norwegian.
   - Sham er muslim.  Sham is a Muslim.

2. Focus on general activity uses the noun without an article:
   - Kåre liker å kjøre bil.  Kåre likes car driving (to car-drive).
   - Jeg skriver brev i ettermiddag.  I am letter writing this afternoon.
When the profession, nationality, or activity is further specified, Norwegian uses an indefinite article:

**Hun er en fin sykepleier.** She is a fine nurse.

**Jeg skriver et langt brev i ettermiddag.** I am writing a long letter this afternoon.

### En Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en —</td>
<td>add -en</td>
<td>add -ene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en bil a car</td>
<td>bilen the car</td>
<td>biler cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en stol a chair</td>
<td>stolen the chair</td>
<td>stoler chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en radio a radio</td>
<td>radioen the radio</td>
<td>radioer radios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en vei a road</td>
<td>veien the road</td>
<td>veier roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en følelse a feeling</td>
<td>følelsen the feeling</td>
<td>følelser feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Et Nouns**

Feminine nouns (ei nouns) hold a special position in Norwegian grammar. The nouns in the class can, for the most part, also be en nouns (the converse is not true). In certain situations, a speaker may prefer the feminine form, while that same person in other situations will use the masculine form. In formal settings, speakers are more likely to use masculine forms, whereas casual, informal, peer-to-peer dialectal speech favors liberal use of feminine forms. For a few nouns, the use of the feminine is mandated, both by convention and by the Språkråd (Norwegian Language Council). These nouns are marked with asterisks below. For all other feminine nouns, official orthographic lists count the masculine and feminine as equal principal forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ei —</td>
<td>add -a</td>
<td>add -ene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* ei jente a girl</td>
<td>jenta the girl</td>
<td>jenter girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* ei ku a cow</td>
<td>kua the cow</td>
<td>kuer cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* ei fele a fiddle</td>
<td>fela the fiddle</td>
<td>fefer fiddles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* ei geit a goat</td>
<td>geita the goat</td>
<td>geiter goats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei kone a wife</td>
<td>kona the wife</td>
<td>koner wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei klokke a clock</td>
<td>kloka the clock</td>
<td>klokker clocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei utgreiing a report</td>
<td>utgreiinga the report</td>
<td>utgreiinger reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei tante an aunt</td>
<td>tanta the aunt</td>
<td>tanter aunts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Et Nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Neuter nouns differ in a number of ways from en and ei nouns. Most one-syllable et nouns and several et nouns with more than one syllable do not have an -r ending in the indefinite plural (e.g., et hus—mange hus). In addition, many et nouns allow—but do not require—an -a ending in the definite plural form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>et —</td>
<td>add -et</td>
<td>add — or -er</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et år a year</td>
<td>året the year</td>
<td>år years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et bilde a picture</td>
<td>bildet the picture</td>
<td>bilder pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et hus a house</td>
<td>huset the house</td>
<td>hus houses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Neuter nouns ending in -en are not marked with an ending in the plural (e.g., husene/husa the houses).
Irregular Noun Plurals

As in English, a number of nouns have irregular plurals. These irregularities can be sorted into four categories:

1. Vowel change
   (for example, en bok “a book,” mange bøker “many books”)

2. Lack of predictable ending, based on the general pattern
   (en feil “a mistake,” mange feil “many mistakes”)

3. Dropping unstressed -e
   (en onkel “an uncle,” mange onkler “many uncles”)

4. Anomalous endings
   (et øye “an eye,” mange øyne “many eyes”)

The most important are listed below, by genders.

Irregular En Nouns

Many family terms (far “father,” bror “brother,” onkel “uncle”) are irregular, as are body parts. A general pattern is that nouns that end in -el, en, -er will often

drop the -e- when adding endings. Nouns that denote occupations (en baker “a baker”) have special indefinite plural forms (bakeren “bakers”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Definite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en ankel an ankle</td>
<td>ankelen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en baker a baker</td>
<td>bakeren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en bonde a farmer</td>
<td>bonden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en bror a brother</td>
<td>broren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en far a father</td>
<td>faren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en feil a mistake</td>
<td>feilen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en fot a foot</td>
<td>foten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en lærer a teacher</td>
<td>læreren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en mann a man</td>
<td>mann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en onkel an uncle</td>
<td>onkelen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en sko a shoe</td>
<td>skoen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en støvel a boot</td>
<td>støvelen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en sykkel a bicycle</td>
<td>sykkelen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en takk a thanks</td>
<td>takken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en ting a thing</td>
<td>tingen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en vinter a winter</td>
<td>vinteren</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ankler</td>
<td>anklene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bakere</td>
<td>bakerne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bønder</td>
<td>bøndene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brødre</td>
<td>brødrene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fedre</td>
<td>fedrene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feilere</td>
<td>feilene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fatter</td>
<td>fattene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lærerne</td>
<td>lærerne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mennene</td>
<td>mennene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onklene</td>
<td>onklene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skoene</td>
<td>skoene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>støvelene</td>
<td>støvelene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syklen</td>
<td>syklen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takkene</td>
<td>takkene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tingene</td>
<td>tingene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vintrene</td>
<td>vintrene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Irregular Ei Nouns

Many ei nouns (and their corresponding en noun forms) have a vowel change in the plural forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Definite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ei/en bok a book</td>
<td>boka/boken</td>
<td>bøker</td>
<td>bøkene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en datter a daughter</td>
<td>dattera/datteren</td>
<td>døtre</td>
<td>døtrene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en hånd a hand</td>
<td>hånda/hånden</td>
<td>hender</td>
<td>hendene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en mil a mile</td>
<td>mila/milen</td>
<td>mil</td>
<td>milene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en mor a mother</td>
<td>mora/moren</td>
<td>mødre</td>
<td>mødrene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en mus a mouse</td>
<td>musa/musen</td>
<td>mus</td>
<td>musene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en natt a night</td>
<td>natta/natten</td>
<td>netter</td>
<td>nettene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en/ei ski a ski</td>
<td>ski/skien</td>
<td>ski/skier</td>
<td>skiene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en strand a beach</td>
<td>stranda/stranden</td>
<td>strender</td>
<td>strendene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en søster a sister</td>
<td>søstera/søsteren</td>
<td>søstre</td>
<td>søstrene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en tann a tooth</td>
<td>tanna/tannen</td>
<td>tenner</td>
<td>tennene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei/en tå a toe</td>
<td>tåa/tåen</td>
<td>tær</td>
<td>tærne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular Et Nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Definite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>et barn a child</td>
<td>barnet</td>
<td>barn</td>
<td>barna</td>
<td>(cannot use -ene)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

et eksempel an example | eksempet | eksempler | eksemplene |

et kne a knee | kneet | knær | knærne |

et museum a museum | museet | museer | museene/musea |

et sentrum a center | sentret | sentrer | sentrene |

et sted a place | stedet | steder | stedene |

et teater a theater | teateret/teatret | teater/teatre | teatrene/teatra |

et øye an eye | øyet | øyne | øynene |

No Singular Forms

These two nouns below do not have singular forms in Norwegian. To refer to one sibling, one must specify either brother or sister.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Indefinite</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Definite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>foreldre parents</td>
<td>foreldrene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>søskien siblings</td>
<td>søsknene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16 Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to nouns or people who are not explicitly named in a sentence or phrase. As in English, pronouns have a subject form (e.g., I), an object form (me), and a possessive form (mine/my). In grammatical terminology, first person refers to the person or persons speaking; second person points to the person or persons being spoken to; and third person points to a party other than the speaker or the listener. Subject pronouns serve as subjects of sentences. They refer to the actors or doers of the verbs. Object pronouns are objects of verbs or objects of prepositions. The possessive pronouns refer to a person who “owns” an object.

Norwegian has more forms for the second person (you) than English, as it differentiates between singular and plural. Norwegian distinguishes between the subject and the object form of you and also uses De, a formal “you” pronoun. The use of De is currently dying out in most of Norway and is now encountered only in the most formal settings and in historical documents.

Subject Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>first person</td>
<td>jeg I</td>
<td>vi we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second person (informal)</td>
<td>du you</td>
<td>dere you all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second person (formal)</td>
<td>De you</td>
<td>De you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

third person (masculine)  han he
third person (feminine)  hun she
den, det it

The formal pronoun De “you” is always capitalized. Den “it” is used for third person en and ei nouns; det refers to et gender nouns. The pronunciation of several pronouns requires special attention: jeg is pronounced /je:] ; De and de are pronounced /de]/ and rhyme with vi “we”; det is pronounced /de]/—that is, the final t is silent. Han and hun have a short /a/] and /au/] respectively, although the spelling predicts long /a:] and /au:].

Example sentences that use subject pronouns follow (pronouns and their translations are italicized):

Jeg kommer fra Polen.        I come from Poland.

Kan du forklare det for meg?  Can you explain that to me?

Jeg kjøpte en bok. Den var dyr.  I bought a book. It was expensive.

Frank solgte huset. Det var gammelt.  Frank sold the house. It was old.

Hun heter Aud.          Her name is (she is called) Aud.

Vi liker å lese norsk.  We like to study Norwegian.

Vil dere gå på kino i kveld?  Do you (plural) want to go to the movies this evening?

Røker De, Knudsen?  Do you (formal) smoke, Knudsen?

Camilla og Cecilie var syke.  Camilla and Cecilie were sick.
De kunne ikke være med.  They could not come along.

Uses of Det

Det has many uses, and is not only used to refer to et nouns: Det may be used as a grammatical, place-holding subject in impersonal sentences where there is no specific reference to a person or thing:

Det snør.  It is snowing.
Det er mørkt ute.
Hvordan står det til?

It is dark outside.
How are you? (lit. “how stands it to?”)

Det may introduce or point out the existence of something and is used to introduce all genders, singular and plural.

Det er en god bok.
Det ligger fem blyanter på bordet.
Det er min beste venn.
Det var en gang en gammel bonde.

It/that is a good book.
There are five pencils on the table.
This is my best friend.
There was once an old farmer.

Det can also refer to a clause or a verb.

De kan ikke komme. Det har jeg hørt.

They cannot come. That is what I heard.

Kan du snakke norsk?
Ja, det kan jeg.

Can you speak Norwegian?
Yes, that I can.

Object pronouns are used:

Gro ser meg.
Gro sees me.

• as the direct object of verbs

Gro gav meg bildene.
Gro gave me the pictures.

• as the indirect object of verbs

Gro snakker med meg.
Gro is talking with me.

• as the object of prepositions

• predicatively in some expressions

Det er meg.
It is me.

Since English does not differentiate between subject and object forms of “you,” students of Norwegian must be careful to use du and deg appropriately.

Subject: Du

Du må skrive det på norsk.
You must write this in Norwegian.

Jeg skrev et brev til deg i går.
I wrote a letter to you yesterday.

Ser du den pene jenta?
Do you see the pretty girl?

Ser den pene jenta deg?
Does the pretty girl see you?

Du får komme nærmere.
You can come closer.

Jeg kan ikke høre deg.
I can’t hear you.

Third Person Reflexive Object Pronouns

third person (masculine) seg himself
third person (feminine) seg herself
third person (inanimate) seg itself
}

The pronunciations of meg and deg use the diphthong /æ/ in the same manner as the subject jeg “I.”
When the object of a sentence or phrase refers back to a third person subject, Norwegian uses a special reflexive object form of the pronoun. In all cases, regardless of gender or number, the form of the reflexive object is seg. Thus, depending on the subject, seg means “himself, herself, itself,” or “themselves.” When the subject is first or second person (I, we, you), Norwegian uses the normal object form (meg, oss, deg, etc.).

Third person reflexive object examples:

**Han så på seg i speilet.**  
He looked at himself in the mirror.

**Pål så på seg i speilet.**  
Pål looked at himself in the mirror.

**Hun så på seg i speilet.**  
She looked at herself in the mirror.

**De så på seg i speilet.**  
They looked at themselves in the mirror.

**Solveig og Ingrid så på seg i speilet.**  
Solveig and Ingrid looked at themselves in the mirror.

First and second person object examples:

**Jeg så på meg i speilet.**  
I looked at myself in the mirror.

**Du så på deg i speilet.**  
You looked at yourself in the mirror.

**De så på Dem i speilet.**  
You (formal) looked at yourself in the mirror.

**Vi så på oss i speilet.**  
We looked at ourselves in the mirror.

**Dere så på dere i speilet.**  
You (plural, informal) looked at yourselves in the mirror.

### Possessive Phrases

For most of the forms of the possessive pronouns described below, the pronoun must agree in gender and number with the noun that is “owned.”

Norwegian allows two forms of possessive constructions with pronouns. The two types have different stylistic flavors.

1. The nouns can precede the pronoun. In this type of phrase, the noun is in the definite form: *bilen hans* “his car.” This pattern is more oral, concrete, and earthy than (2).

2. The pronoun can precede the noun, and the noun appears in the indefinite form: *hans bil* “his car.” Compared to (1), this pattern sounds more formal, textual, and abstract.

While there is a choice for speakers and writers in using (1) or (2), the two may not be combined, with the possessive preceding the definite form of a noun (i.e., "hans bilen").

In Norwegian, as opposed to English and other languages, the same form of the possessive pronoun is used both attributively and predicatively. Attributive construction places the modifier adjacent to the word it is modifying (min radio); predicative construction uses the main verb to join the modifier to the word it modifies (radioen er min). Compare the Norwegian and English:

**Attributive**

- **Det er min radio.** It is *my* radio.
- **Huset mitt er stort.** My house is big.

**Predicative**

- **Radioen er min.** The radio is *mine.*
- **Det store huset er mitt.** The big house is *mine.*

**Bordet vårt var dyrt.**  
*Our* table was expensive.

**Det dyre bordet er vårt.**  
The expensive table is *ours.*

### Non-Reflexive Possessive Pronouns

**Singular** | **Plural**
---|---
**First person**
- min, mi, mitt, mine
- my, mine
- vår, vår, våre
- our, ours

**Second person (informal)**
- din, di, ditt, dine
- your, yours

**Second person (formal)**
- Deres your, yours
third person (masculine)  hans  his  
third person (feminine)  hennes  her/hers  
third person (inanimate)  dens, dets  its  

\{  

deres  their, theirs  
\}

The possessives min, din, and vår agree with the noun owned, as shown for min below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>En noun</td>
<td>Et noun</td>
<td>Plural nouns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stolen min</td>
<td>klokka mi</td>
<td>bordet mitt</td>
<td>stolene, klokke, bordene mine, mine stoler, klokker, bord</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min stol</td>
<td>mi klokke</td>
<td>mitt bord</td>
<td>my chairs, clocks, tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my chair</td>
<td>my clock</td>
<td>my table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possessives that end in -s, hans “his,” hennes “her(s),” dets “its,” dens “its,” deres “your, yours” (formal), and deres “their(s)” are invariable: they do not change forms to match the gender or number of the noun. The possessive hennes exemplifies the pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Norwegian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>En noun</td>
<td>Et noun</td>
<td>Plural nouns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stolen hennes</td>
<td>klokka hennes</td>
<td>bordet hennes</td>
<td>stolene, klokke, bordene mine, mine stoler, klokker, bord</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hennes stol</td>
<td>hennes klokke</td>
<td>hennes bord</td>
<td>my chairs, clocks, tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her chair</td>
<td>her clock</td>
<td>her table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Third Person Reflexive Possessive Pronouns**

**Singular**

| sin, si, sitt, sine  
his/her own |

**Plural**

| sin, si, sitt, sine  
their own |

When a third person subject of a sentence or clause “owns” the object, Norwegian uses the reflexive, a special form of the possessive pronoun. The forms sin, si, sitt, sine are used for any third person subject. This reflexive possessive pronoun agrees with the noun’s gender and number (as with min, mi, mitt, mine). Notice that the subject can be singular or plural, and can refer to male or female owners. The English sentence, John kisses his girlfriend, is ambiguous—it could be John’s girlfriend or someone else’s. In Norwegian, the use of the reflexive possessive clarifies ownership:

John kysser sin kjæreste.

John kysser hans kjæreste.

Hanson spiser appelsinen sin, pæra si, eplet sitt, og bananene sine.

Gro snakker med moren sin, tanta si, barnet sitt, og kusinene sine.

Lærerne mine leser sin bok, sitt ukeblad, og sine aviser.

My teachers are reading their own book, their own magazine, and their own newspapers.

Since the subject needs to “own” the noun object, a non-reflexive possessive is required within the subject; a sentence may not have a form of sin in the subject.

Per og vennen hans er i London.

Per and his friend are in London.

This sentence cannot have the subject Per og vennen sin.

These special reflexive pronouns only refer to third person subjects. For first and second person subjects, the reflexive form is identical to the non-reflexive form.

Jeg snakker med moren min.

I am talking to my mother.

Vi snakker med mødrene våre.

We are talking to our mothers.

Du ringte til faren din.

You called your father.
17 Determiners

Several types of words modify or give further grammatical details about nouns. Some grammar books include articles (English a, the) in this class, but in this book such articles are included in the descriptions of nouns (chapter 15). Other determiners include demonstratives (English this, those) that single out and point to specific items. Indefinite pronouns (English some, any, none, each, or all) are a heterogeneous group that refer to sets or subsets of items, limiting or defining which items are included in the focus of the statement.

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns single out specific items. English demonstratives include this, that, these, and those. In Norwegian, as in English, demonstratives can point to nearby or more distant items, as well as to singular or plural items. In addition, Norwegian requires agreement of demonstrative pronouns with the gender of the noun.

Note in the examples below that the demonstrative pronoun is used with the noun in the definite: bilen, bilene, dora, dorene, huset, husene. This most common form, combining the demonstrative pronoun with the definite noun, dette bildet “this picture,” is called “double definite.” Norwegian does allow indefinite nouns to follow demonstrative pronouns under certain conditions—as in abstract references (denne innflytelsete “this influence”) and in more formal writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Near</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Far</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en/ei nouns</td>
<td>denne</td>
<td>disse</td>
<td>den</td>
<td>de</td>
<td>bilene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bilen</td>
<td>bilene</td>
<td>bilen</td>
<td>bilene</td>
<td>bilene</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this car</td>
<td>these cars</td>
<td>that car</td>
<td>those cars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

denne dora
dette huset
dette er min sønn.
dette er fine epler.
dette er mine studenter.
dette er et genders
disse dorene
disse husene
dette huset
dette er fine epler.
dette er mine studenter.
dette er et genders
disse dorene
disse husene
dette huset
dette er fine epler.
dette er mine studenter.

den dora
det huset
dette er mine studenter.
dette er et genders
disse dorene
disse husene
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.

den dora
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.
dette er et genders
disse dorene
disse husene
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.

den dora
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.
dette er et genders
disse dorene
disse husene
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.

den dora
dette huset
dette er mine studenter.

Demonstratives can also stand as stressed words, without the noun: Jeg liker denne bilen “I like this car.” Jeg liker denne “I like this (one).” The understood noun determines the gender and number of the demonstrative.

When the demonstrative introduces people or things that come immediately after a form of være “be” (predicative use of the demonstrative), the demonstrative is a neuter singular form, regardless of the gender of the noun being presented:

Dette er min sønn.
Det er mitt barnebarn.
Det er fine epler.
Dette er mine studenter.

Indefinite Pronouns

A small group of pronouns do not refer to a specific person or object, but rather have a more general reference. These have several forms, agreeing with the nouns they refer to or, in some cases, the nouns they appear with (functioning as adjectives).

all is used with en nouns

All mat er dyr i Norge.

all is used with et nouns

Anna er lei av alt mas.

Alt by itself means “everything.”

Jeg kjøpte alt!

Det er ikke gull alt som glimrer.

This is my son.
That is my grandchild.
Those are fine apples.
These are my students.

All food is expensive in Norway.

Anna is tired of all the fussing.

I bought everything!

Everything that glitters is not gold.
alle is used with plural nouns

På alle måter prøvde vi å beskrive ham. We tried to describe him in all ways.

Alle by itself means “everyone.”

Nesten alle i Norge snakker norsk. Almost everyone in Norway speaks Norwegian.

allting “everything” (equivalent to alt)

Når enden er god, er allting godt. All’s well that ends well.

annen, anna, annet, andre “other(s)”

Det må gjøres på en eller annen måte. It has to be done in one way or another.

Det er en annen sak. That’s a whole other story.

Man kan sende e-post til andre fra hele verden. You can send e-mail to others around the world.

Alt annet er tøv. Everything else is nonsense.

en “one,” ens “one’s.” En is more commonly used than man, and can be used as the subject, as the object, or in the possessive form ens.

En kan bruke datamaskin til å finne ut status for ens bankkonto. One can use a computer to find out the status of one’s bank account.

En vet aldri om framtiden. One never knows about the future.

Ens ord kan bli misforstått. One’s words can be misunderstood.

Det som alltid forbauser en er fattigdommen her hjemme. That which always surprises one is the poverty here at home.

hver (for en/ei nouns), hvert (for et nouns) “each”

Det går bedre og bedre for hver dag. It gets better and better each day.

Hun uttalte hvert ord nøyaktig. She pronounced each word precisely.

Hvert tredje år reiser de til Norge. They travel to Norway every third year.

Vi satt på hver vår stol. Each of us sat on his/her chair. (We each sat on our chair.)

Hver sin smak! To each his own!

ingen “no one, nothing.” Ingen, when it stands by itself, means “no one.” With a noun, it is equivalent to ikke noen “none, not any.”

Det er ingen hjemme. There is nobody home.

Jeg har dessverre ingen penger. I unfortunately have no money.

ingenting “nothing”

Jeg har ingenting å gjøre nå. I’ve got nothing to do now.

intet “nothing” is an archaic form, but might be encountered in formal or older writings. Current Norwegian uses ikke noe.

man “one” (only as subject of sentence)

Man lærer sjelden av historien. One seldom learns from history.

Man kan si at vi dør som vi lever. One can say that we die the same way we live.

Man skulle aldri stole på andre. One should never rely on others.

noe has three alternative meanings

1. By itself noe means “something”:

Jeg må si noe. I have to say something.
Noe måtte gjøres med dette. Something had to be done with this.

Det var noe som vakte oppsikt. It was something that created a stir.

Det gjør ikke noe. It does not matter.

2. Referring to mass (uncountable) nouns of any gender, noe means “some”:

Vil du ha noe melk? Do you want some milk?

Vi må dessverre kjøpe noe. Unfortunately, we must buy some.

3. In questions and negative sentences, referring to et nouns, noe means “any”:

Jeg kan ikke finne cd-en noe sted i byen. I can not find the CD anywhere in town.

Har du noe brød jeg kan låne? Do you have any bread I can borrow?

Har du noe håp om å finne ham? Do you have any hope of finding him?

noen

1. By itself noen means “someone” or “anyone”:

Det banket noen på døra. Someone knocked on the door.

Kjenner du noen her? Do you know anyone here?

Jeg så noen som gikk med krykker. I saw someone who was using (walking with) crutches.

2. Referring to plural nouns (of any gender), noen means “some” or “any”:

Jeg har noen bilder fra Sveits. I have some pictures from Switzerland.

Vi har bodd her i noen år. We have lived here for several years.

Hun har ikke noen penger. She has no money.

3. In questions and negative sentences, referring to en or ei nouns, noen means “any”:

Har du noen gang sett henne? Have you ever seen her?

Hun hadde ikke noen makt. She did not have any power.

Jeg har aldri fått noen forklaring på hva det betyr. I have never gotten an explanation about what that means.
18 Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe or modify nouns or pronouns. They can be used as predicates (e.g., “The man is tall”) or as attributes (“the tall man”). Norwegian adjectives must agree in form with the nouns or pronouns they modify. Endings are generally added to the adjectives’ base forms when the adjectives modify en nouns or plural nouns. The base form is the form found in dictionaries and corresponds to the form that agrees with singular en gender nouns.

Adjectives with Indefinite Nouns

The general pattern for indefinite nouns is shown below for the adjective fin “fine.” Adjectives appear in their base form, without endings, for indefinite singular en and ei nouns, add -t for et nouns, and -e for all plurals. Exceptions to this general rule are discussed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>En singular (no ending)</th>
<th>Ei singular (no ending)</th>
<th>Et singular (-t ending)</th>
<th>Plural (-e ending)</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dyp</td>
<td>dypt</td>
<td>dype</td>
<td>deep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dyr</td>
<td>dyrt</td>
<td>dyre</td>
<td>expensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>god</td>
<td>goed</td>
<td>gode</td>
<td>good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hvit</td>
<td>hvitt</td>
<td>hvite</td>
<td>white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rik</td>
<td>rikt</td>
<td>rike</td>
<td>rich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rød</td>
<td>rodt</td>
<td>rode</td>
<td>red</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sein</td>
<td>seint</td>
<td>seine</td>
<td>late</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stor</td>
<td>stort</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varm</td>
<td>varmt</td>
<td>varme</td>
<td>warm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>våt</td>
<td>vått</td>
<td>våte</td>
<td>wet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irregular Adjectives

Exceptions to this pattern are, for the most part, simple to state and learn. The explanations and examples given below deal with the most common exceptions.

1 The Adjective Liten “Little”

This adjective differs so greatly from the normal pattern that it leads the list of exceptions. Notice that the ei form is different from the en form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>En singular, liten</th>
<th>Ei singular, lita</th>
<th>Et singular, lite</th>
<th>Plural, små</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en liten gutt</td>
<td>ei lita jente</td>
<td>et lito barn</td>
<td>mange små</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little boy</td>
<td>a little girl</td>
<td>a little child</td>
<td>gutter, jenter, barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many small boys, girls, children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Adjectives Ending in -ig

Adjectives that end in -ig (or the common ending -lig) do not add -t when they modify singular, indefinite et (neuter) nouns.

En singular (no ending) Ein singular (no ending) Et singular (no ending) Plural (+e ending)  
en hyggelig kveld ei hyggelig hytte et hyggelig barn mange hyggelige folk  
a pleasant evening a pleasant cottage a pleasant child many pleasant people

A few other -ig adjectives are listed here. Note that this list combines all three genders in the singular:

En/et singular (no ending) Plural (+e ending) English  
gjensidig gjensidige mutual  
høflig høflige polite  
ivrig ivrige enthusiastic  
kjedelig kjedelige boring  
ledig ledige vacant, unoccupied, free  
livlig livlige lively  
nyttig nyttige useful  
tidlig tidlige early  
tydelig tydelige evident  
årlig årlige yearly

3 Adjectives Ending in -sk

Most of the Norwegian adjectives ending in -sk do not add -t when modifying singular et nouns. The following chart shows the forms for these -sk adjectives:

En singular (no ending) Ein singular (no ending) Et singular (no ending) Plural (+e ending)  
en norsk bok ei norsk jente et norsk skip mange norske bilder  
a Norwegian book a Norwegian girl a Norwegian ship many Norwegian pictures

En singular (no ending) Ein singular (no ending) Et singular (no ending) Plural (+e ending)  
en historisk begivenhet ei historisk kirke et historisk museum mange historiske steder  
an historic event an historic church an historic museum many historical places

En/et singular (no ending) Plural (+e ending) English  
amerikansk amerikansk amerikanske American  
automatisk automatisk automatiske automatic  
nordisk nordisk nordiske Nordic  
praktisk praktisk praktiske practical  
svensk svensk svenska Swedish  
teknologisk teknologisk teknologiske technological

Exceptions from the above pattern include single-syllable adjectives that do not refer to nationality: these take the usual -t ending. There are only a few such -sk adjectives: frisk “healthy,” fersk “fresh,” morsk “gruff,” and falsk “false.” This chart shows all forms for these adjectives:

En singular (no ending) Ein singular (no ending) Et singular (-tending) Plural (+e ending)  
en fersk sitron ei fersk plomme et ferskt ople mange ferske paarer  
a fresh lemon a fresh plum a fresh apple many fresh pears

En/et singular Plural English  
barsk barskt barske grim
falsk falskt falske false
morsk morskt morske gruff

4 Adjectives with No Endings

Adjectives with base forms that end in an unstressed -e do not add any endings.

En singular (no ending) Ei singular (no ending) Et singular (no ending) Plural (no ending)
en stille dag ei stille natt et stille år mange stille netter many quiet nights
en stille natt ei stille dag et stille år mange stille netter many quiet nights
en moderne by ei moderne utstilling et moderne samfunn mange moderne hus many modern houses
en moderne by ei moderne utstilling et moderne samfunn mange moderne hus many modern houses

The adjective bra “good” is invariant; it does not take any endings:
en bra gutt a good boy et bra barn a good child mange bra menn many good men

ei bra jente a good girl

5 Adjectives Ending in Stressed Vowels

A number of fairly common one-syllable adjectives ending in stressed vowels add -tt (instead of a single -t) when they modify singular et nouns. Note also that several do not add the normal -e for the plural ending. Adjectives that end in stressed diphthongs (mostly -ei) follow the standard pattern of adding -t for et gender singular.

En/ei singular (no ending) Et singular (-tt ending) Plural (-e ending)
en ny virksomhet et nytt universitet mange nye skoler a new undertaking a new university many new schools
en ny virksomhet ei ny avis a new undertaking ei ny avis a new newspaper

En/ei singular (no ending) Et singular (-tt or -t ending) Plural (-e or no ending)
blå blue blått blå

6 Spelling Conventions for Adjectives

Adjectives often simplify their spellings, as do other parts of speech. In order to avoid three consonants in a row, a double consonant is usually reduced to a single consonant when an ending is added.

En/ei singular (no ending) Et singular (simplified, -e ending) Plural (-e ending)
en grønn plante et grønt tre mange grønne epler a green plant a green tree many green apples
ei grønn pære a green pear

allmenn universal allment allmenne
sunn healthy sunt sunne
vill wild vilt ville
trygg secure trygt trygge
visuell visual visuelt visuelle
In order to avoid three consonants in a row, adjectives with base forms that end in -tt or another consonant plus -t do not add the -t ending:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular (no ending)</th>
<th>ét (no ending)</th>
<th>plural (-t ending)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>glatt slippery</td>
<td>glatt</td>
<td>glatte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flott superb</td>
<td>flott</td>
<td>flotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>briljant radiant</td>
<td>briljant</td>
<td>briljante</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brunett brunette</td>
<td>brunett</td>
<td>brunette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lett easy</td>
<td>lett</td>
<td>lette</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the base form of an adjective ends in -el,-er, or -en, the -e- often disappears with the addition of other suffixes. In many cases, a double consonant is simplified before the endings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular (no ending)</th>
<th>ét (-t ending)</th>
<th>plural (simplified -t ending)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beskjeden modest</td>
<td>beskjedent</td>
<td>beskjedne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gammel old</td>
<td>gammelt</td>
<td>gamle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sulten hungry</td>
<td>sultent</td>
<td>sultne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vacker beautiful</td>
<td>vakkert</td>
<td>vaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>åpen open</td>
<td>åpent</td>
<td>åpne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adjective phrase needs to have a freestanding definite article. These definite articles agree with the gender and number of the noun:

- **den** is used with **en** and **ei** nouns in the singular;
- **det** is used with **et** nouns in the singular;
- **de** is the definite article for all plural nouns.

Recall that Norwegian nouns in the definite use suffixed definite articles (**huset** “the house”). Below are several examples of definite adjective phrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definite article</th>
<th>Adjective in definite form</th>
<th>Noun (usually in definite)</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>den</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>bilen</td>
<td>the big car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>den</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>klokka</td>
<td>the big clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>det</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>huset</td>
<td>the big house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>bilene</td>
<td>the big cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>klokke</td>
<td>the big clocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de</td>
<td>store</td>
<td>husene</td>
<td>the big houses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The definite form for **liten** “little” is irregular. For singular **en**, **ei**, and **et** gender nouns in the definite, the form is **lille**. For all plurals, it is **små**.

- **den lille gutten** the little boy
- **den lille jenta** the little girl
- **det lille barnet** the little child
- **de små gutene, jentene, barna** the small boys, girls, children

This kind of construction, in which there are two markings of the definite (**de** and **barna** in the last example), is the previously discussed “double definite.” The noun can appear using the indefinite. Double definite construction is used with concrete nouns: **den norske kirken** refers to a church building that is Norwegian, in contrast to **den norske kirke**, which refers to the institution of the Norwegian church.
Det hvite hus designates “The White House” (the institution), but det hvite huset means only “the white house” (the house that is white). Several other constructions use this definite adjective form.

- Possessives:
  - min rode bil: my red car
  - den rode bilen min: my red car

- Demonstratives
  - disse store bøkene: these large books

- Set expressions
  - hele dagen: the whole day
  - halve natten: half the night
  - kjære venn: dear friend
  - jeg, arme synder: a poor sinner like me
  - midt på svarte natten: in the dead of the night

**Comparatives and Superlatives**

**Normal Patterns in Comparing Adjectives**

Most adjectives form their comparative and superlative forms following a pattern very similar to English. The English and Norwegian systems are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English standard</th>
<th>Comparative -er</th>
<th>Superlative -est</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tall</td>
<td>taller</td>
<td>tallest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian standard</td>
<td>Comparative -(e)re</td>
<td>Superlative -(e)st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoyt tall</td>
<td>hoytere taller</td>
<td>hoyest tallest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varm</td>
<td>varmere warmer</td>
<td>varmest warmest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stille quiet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Patterns in Comparing Adjectives**

Most exceptions to this general pattern relate to the spelling or pronunciation of the forms.

1. Unstressed -e with endings of -er, -el, -en is often dropped when adjective endings are added.

   **Normal** | **Comparative** | **Superlative**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sulten hungry</td>
<td>sultere hungrier</td>
<td>sultnest hungriest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel busy</td>
<td>traviere more busy</td>
<td>traviest most busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mager lean</td>
<td>magrere more lean</td>
<td>magrest most lean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Several adjectives double the final -m when adding comparative form endings. This does not occur in the superlative form.

   | morsom fun | morsommere more fun | morsomst most fun |

3. Adjectives that end in -ig or -leg in the standard form have irregular superlatives. Where the normal pattern for the superlative adds -est, these adjectives add only -st:

   | hyggelig pleasant | hyggeligere more pleasant | hyggeligst most pleasant |
   | viktig important | viktigere more important | viktigst most important |

**Irregular Comparative and Superlative Forms**

Some of the most commonly used adjectives have comparative and superlative forms that do not merely add endings. These are similar to English good, better, best, or bad, worse, worst. Below is a table with these irregular adjectives:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>god good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dårlig bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ung young  
ynge younger  
yngst youngest  

tung heavy  
tynger heavier  
tyngst heaviest  

liten little  
mindre smaller  
minst smallest  

 gammel old  
eldre older/elder  
eldst oldest/elderst  

 lang lengthy/long  
lenge longer  
 lengst longest  

 stor big  
 større bigger  
 størst biggest  

 få few  
færre fewer  
færrest fewest  

 nær close  
nærermere nearer  
nærnest nearest  

Adjectives Compared with Mer and Most

As in English, there are a number of adjectives that form their comparative and superlative forms with mer “more” and mest “most.” These include some adjectives that end in -et or -ed, some with more than one syllable that end in -sk, adjectives ending in -s, some compound adjectives, and some “heavy” or long forms.

elsket loved  
mer elsket  
mest elsket most loved  

fremmed foreign  
mer fremmed  
mest fremmed most foreign  

sympatisk nice  
mer sympatisk  
mest sympatisk nicest  

avsides remote  
mer avsides  
mest avsides most remote  

selfsikker self-assured  
mer zelfsikker  
mest zelfsikker most self-assured  

interessant interesting  
mer interessant  
mest interessant most interesting  

General Comments on Comparing Adjectives in Norwegian

Since all comparative forms end in -e (except those formed with mer), they do not take endings when they modify singular et nouns or plural nouns.

en rikere mann    a richer man
et større hus    a bigger house
mange eldre kvinner    many older women

The superlative form can appear both with and without the -e ending that most definite adjectives use.

Kenneth er best. Han er den beste gutten i klassen.   
Kenneth is best. He is the best boy in the class.

Denne oppgaven var vanskeligst.  
Det er den vanskeligste jeg har gjort.   
This exercise was most difficult.  
It is the most difficult I have done.

In Norwegian, as opposed to English, one uses the superlative in contrasting two items:

Hvem er yngst, Knut eller Jenny?    Who is younger (lit. = youngest), Knut or Jenny?

Når er det var mest,    
i januar eller juli?    When is it warmer, in January or July?
Adverbs Related to Adjectives

Many adverbs in Norwegian are related to adjectives. For these adverbs, the same form as the et form of the adjective is used. For example, the adjective pen “beautiful” is pent when it modifies an et noun (et pent hus “a beautiful house”). This same form is the adverb “beautifully” in Fuglen synger pent “The bird sings beautifully.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective Base Form</th>
<th>Adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sein late</td>
<td>seint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoy high, loud</td>
<td>hoyt high, loudly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>god good</td>
<td>godt well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stille quiet</td>
<td>stille quietly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitt stille! Sit still (quietly)!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Common Adverbs

The list below gives meanings and provides examples for many common Norwegian adverbs.

aldri never

Hun har aldri vært borte. She has never been away.
altid always
Vi ringer altid på søndager.
da then, at that time
Da vil vi forstå hele historien.
før before (in time)
Hvor bodde du før?
hvordan how
Jeg forstår ikke hvordan du kan gjøre så mye.

ikke not
Han kan ikke se kirken.

lengte for a long time, long
Har du ventet lengte?

nå now
Hva er klokka nå?

nettopp just, exactly
Har dere nettopp kommet?
ofte often
Vi er ofte i Tyskland.

så then, next
Først laget vi mat, så spiste vi.

We always call on Sunday.
Then we will understand the whole story.
Where did you live before?
I don’t understand how you can do so much.
He cannot see the church.
Have you waited long?
What time is it now?
Have you just arrived?
We are often in Germany.
First we cooked (made food), then we ate.

sjelden seldom
Man lærer sjelden av historien.

svær very
Det er svært viktig å komme i god tid.

Suffix -vis

Modal Adverbs
Four Norwegian adverbs give a special reading or understanding to the sentences they occur in. They are called “modal” adverbs, are always unstressed, and come after the main verb in the sentence. It is difficult to give exact English translations, but the English equivalents below offer some sense of their meanings.

jo certainly
Han kommer jo snart.
Du kan jo forstå meg.

vel probably (has the sense of “I suppose”)
Han kommer vel snart.

Det fins vel ikke en ordentlig best her?
da surely (gives emphasis)
Kom da.

He’ll certainly come soon.
You can certainly understand me.
He’ll probably come soon.
Isn’t there an ordinary horse here, anyway?
Come on already.
Hvem er hun da?
Who is she anyway?

nok probably, perhaps (also with the sense of "I suppose")

Han er nok ikke tilstede.
I'm afraid he is not here.

Det blir nok snø på tirsdag.
There'll be snow on Tuesday, I guess.

**Adverbs of Place and Direction**

Several adverbs come in pairs. One word is used to describe a static position or a location ("in a place"), while the other adverb describes motion to or from a location. For most of the adverbs below, the "to a place" form is shorter than the "in a place" form. The table summarizes the forms for these adverbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To a Place</th>
<th>In a Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fram</td>
<td>Fortsett å kjøre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rett fram. Continue to drive straight forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>Vil du komme hit et øyeblikk? Will you come here a second?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her</td>
<td>Vennene er her. The friends are here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hjem</td>
<td>Jeg gikk hjem. I walked home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hjemme</td>
<td>Vi sitter hjemme. We are sitting at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inn</td>
<td>Han skulle komme inn. He should come in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inne</td>
<td>Det regner så vi blir inne. It is raining, so we are staying in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ned</td>
<td>Kjør ned bakken! Drive down the hill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nede</td>
<td>Nede i dalen er det kjølig. Down in the valley it is cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opp</td>
<td>Dere må opp. You must go up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oppe</td>
<td>Vi er allerede oppe. We are already up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ut Vi gikk ut. We went out. ute Barna leker ute nå. The children are playing outside now.**

When two of these adverbs are combined, hit, her, dit, and der precede the adverb they appear with: hit opp, her oppe “up here,” dit ut, der ute “out there.”

After a helping verb (like vil “will,” må “must,” or skal “shall”), Norwegians often leave off the main motion verb (komme “come,” gå “go,” kjøre “drive”) when one of these adverbs is present. For example:

- Du må hit is equivalent to Du må komme hit.
- Dere må hjem nå.
- Jeg vil ut.
- Skal han inn eller ut?

**Comparative and Superlative Forms of Adverbs**

**Regular Adverbs**

Adverbs that correspond to the neuter form of an adjective (e.g., pent “beautifully”) are compared using the same forms that the adjectives use. The adjective fin (with the forms fin, fint, fine) has in all genders the comparative finere “finer” and the superlative finest. Thus the adverb fint “finitely” has the comparative form finere “more finely,” and the superlative finest “most finely.”

- Hun synger pent. She sings beautifully.
- Han synger penere. He sings more beautifully.
- Vi synger penest. We sing most beautifully.

**Irregular Adverbs**

If the adjective on which the adverb is based has irregular comparative and superlative forms, these forms are then used by the adverb as well. For example, because the adjective god “good” has the irregular comparative form bedre “better” and irregular superlative form best “best,” the adverb godt also uses bedre and best.
20 Word Order

Word order in Norwegian follows the same pattern as English in most cases; however, students of Norwegian need to pay close attention to the differences. Definitions of the sentence parts will make explanations clearer.

The subject of the sentence is generally a noun (katten), a pronoun (de), or a nominal phrase (Det at mannen er kjekk... “That the man is handsome...”). The subject carries out the action of the verb.

The verb gives the action or state of being. Every statement or question has a finite verb, that is, the verb form that indicates tense. The finite verbs are shown in boxes below:

Katten sover.
The cat is sleeping.
Katten sov.
The cat slept/was sleeping.
Katten har sovet i mange timer.
The cat has slept for many hours.
Katten kan sove.
The cat can sleep.
Kunne du sove?
Could you sleep?
Det ble sagt at...
It was said that...

The sentence’s main clause (or independent clause) is able to stand alone, while a subordinate clause (or dependent clause) needs to be connected to a main clause. Subordinating conjunctions (for example fordi, da) are the joining element.

Adverbs and adverbial phrases are used to indicate the time, place, or manner of the action; for example, i Norge “in Norway,” for to uker siden “two weeks ago,” hjemme “at home.”
Questions with Interrogatives

When questions are meant to elicit new information, they use the question words—
or interrogatives hva, hvem, hvor, hvordan, hvorfor, and når. The finite verb follows
the interrogative, which can be the subject, the object, or an adverbial phrase.

**Hvem kommer?**

**Who** is coming?

**Hvem ser meg?**

**Who** sees me?

(note that meg is an object)

**Hvem ser jeg?**

Who(m) do I see?

(note that jeg is the subject)

**Hvor gammel er hun?**

How old is she?

**Når kom du til Danmark?**

When did you come to Denmark?

**Hva har Kristian på seg?**

What is Kristian wearing?

**Hvordan har du det?**

How are you? How do you have it?

**Hvorfor sitter du så langt bak i kirken?**

Why are you sitting so far back in the church?

**Hvilken dialekt eller sosiolekt skal brukes?**

Which dialect or sociolect will be used?

**Hvilke dager har vi norsktime?**

Which days do we have Norwegian class?

Notice that the finite verb comes in the second position, when the phrase with the
interrogative (hvilke dager, hvor gammel) is counted as position one.

Inverted Word Order

In order to draw more attention to an element in a sentence other than the subject,
that element can take the lead-off position. This highlighted element can be an
object, a prepositional phrase, or an adverb of time or place. In Norwegian, a sub-
ordinate clause can also begin a sentence. In all of these instances, the Norwegian
sentence is inverted, that is, the usual order of the subject and the finite verb is
reversed. The non-inverted order is subject + finite verb; the inverted order is finite verb + subject.

Bøkene sine lot han hjemme. His books, he left at home.

I dette nummeret av bladet blir norsk belyst fra mange sider. In this issue of the journal, Norwegian will be analyzed from many angles.

I morgen tidlig skal vi til Italia. Early tomorrow we are going to Italy.

Da jeg våknet, skinte månen inn på gulvet. When I awoke, the moon was shining in on the floor.

Complex Sentences

Complex sentences contain a main clause (which can stand alone) and a subordinate clause (which begins with a subordinating conjunction). Subordinate clauses start with a subordinating conjunction and continue with the order conjunction + subject + finite verb (as in simple statements without inversion). The examples below give only the subordinate clause:

Når du er kommet fram...

Da de var ferdige...

Selv om mange gamle former er blitt gjeninnført i bokmålet...

Før jeg legger meg...

Siden han nå er drept...

Fordi borgermesteren kom fra Nord-Norge...

Mens Ingunn holdt på med det...

Da han ville besøke oss...

Subordinate clauses keep the same word order, whether they precede or follow the independent clause. In these examples where the subordinate clause follows the main clause, the word order is still conjunction + subject + finite verb:

Han spiste fordø han var sulten. He ate because he was hungry.

Hun ønsker at hun vinner gullmedaljen. She hopes (wishes) that she will win the gold medal.

Ikke Placement

This section deals with the placement of ikke "not," as well as several other adverbs describing condition or frequency: aldri "never," alltid "always," beständig "constantly," gjerne "usually, with pleasure," ofte "often," and sjelden "seldom." The placement of these words relative to the finite verb is the most important consideration here.

In straightforward, simple declarative phrases, ikke follows immediately after the finite verb:

Trygve drikker ikke kaffe. Trygve does not drink coffee.

Trine kan ikke drikk kaffe. Trine can not drink coffee.

Rune drakk ikke kaffe. Rune didn’t drink coffee.

Sissel har ikke drukket kaffe på ett år. Sissel has not drunk coffee for one year.

Finn liker ikke å drikke kaffe om kvelden. Finn doesn’t like to drink coffee during the evening.

This general pattern is modified slightly when a pronoun immediately follows the finite verb. In this case, ikke follows the pronoun. Compare the following sentences:

Øyvind ser Sara. Øyvind sees Sara.

Øyvind ser ikke Sara. Øyvind does not see Sara.

Øyvind ser henne. Øyvind sees her.

Øyvind ser henne ikke. Øyvind does not see her.
If two pronouns follow the finite verb, *ikke* follows both:

- **Bodil gav ikke boken til Bjarne.** Bodil did not give the book to Bjarne.
- **Bodil gav den ikke til Bjarne.** Bodil did not give it to Bjarne.
- **Bodil gav ham den ikke.** Bodil did not give it to him.

These patterns hold only when pronouns follow immediately after the finite verb. Note that in sentences that use modal helping verbs, *ikke* follows the modal (the finite verb), and the pronoun follows the infinitive form.

- **Tommy kan forstå Jenny.** Tommy can understand Jenny.
- **Tommy kan ikke forstå Jenny.** Tommy cannot understand Jenny.
- **Tommy kan ikke forstå henne.** Tommy cannot understand her.

In questions, *ikke* follows the same pattern in relation to the finite verb:

- **Kan ikke Tommy forstå Jenny?** Can't Tommy understand Jenny?
- **Forstår ikke Tommy Jenny?** Doesn’t Tommy understand Jenny?
- **Forstår han ikke Jenny?** Doesn’t he understand Jenny?
- **Forstår han henne ikke?** Doesn’t he understand her?

### Ikke Placement with the Imperative

*Ikke* can either precede or follow the imperative form in Norwegian:

- **Ikke snakk så høyt!** Don't speak so loudly!
- **Snakk ikke så høyt!** Don't speak so loudly!

---

**Ikke in Subordinate Clauses**

In subordinate clauses, *ikke* (and *aldri, altid, bestandig, gjerne, ofte, and sjelden*) immediately precede (rather than follow) the finite verb:

- **Jeg var så redd at jeg ikke torde sette en fot i kjøkkenet.** I was so scared that I dared not set foot in the kitchen.
- **Han sa at han ikke ville gå på kino i kveld.** He said that he did not want to go to the movie this evening.
- **Mannen spurt om jeg ikke trengte hjelp.** The man asked if I needed (did not need) help.
- **Kjell forstod meg selv om han aldri har lest norsk.** Kjell understood me even though he never has studied Norwegian.
## 21 Questions

### Questions with Interrogatives

In formulating questions, the speaker may use interrogatives like the English *when* or *how* to elicit new information: “*What* is your name?” Norwegian interrogatives are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interrogative</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Rest of Sentence</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hva</td>
<td>er</td>
<td>dette?</td>
<td>What is this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor</td>
<td>kommer</td>
<td>Marit fra?</td>
<td>Where does Marit come from?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hva</td>
<td>what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hva vil du drikke?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What do you want to drink?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hva heter du?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is your name? (What are you called?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvem</td>
<td>who, whom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvem var i Stockholm i forrige uke?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Who was in Stockholm last week?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvem så du?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whom did you see?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor</td>
<td>where</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor bor du nå?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Where do you live now?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hvor + *adjective or adverb*  how

- *Hvor gammel er du?*  How old are you?
- *Hvor langt er det til Bodo?*  How far is it to Bodø?
- *Hvor mange er klokka?*  What time is it? (lit. How many is the clock?)

Når  when

- *Når pleier nordmenn å spise middag?*  When do Norwegians usually eat dinner?

Hvis*/hvem sin/hvem sitt/hvem sine*  whose

- *Hvem sin datter er hun?*  Whose daughter is she?
- *Hvem sitt hus har du kjøpt?*  Whose house did you buy?

Hvilken (singular en and ei nouns)

- *Hvilken film liker du best?*  Which film do you like best?
- *Hvilket land kommer han fra?*  Which country does he come from?

Hvilke (plural nouns)

- *Hvilke bøker anbefaler du?*  Which books do you recommend?
- *Hvordan lærer dere norsk?*  Why are you learning Norwegian?
- *Hvordan står det til med deg?*  How are you? (lit. How does it stand to with you?)

* Hvis “whose” is archaic. Use *hvem sin*, *hvem sitt*, or *hvem sine* instead.
Hvordan liker du deg i New Jersey?  How do you like (yourself in) New Jersey?

Yes/No Questions

The yes/no question does not request new information, but rather confirmation or denial: “Is your name Lene?” “Yes.” These questions in Norwegian are signaled either through a change in word order or through a rise in intonation towards the end of the question. (This rise is steeper than the normal declarative rise heard in East Norwegian statements. See chapter 3 for more on pronunciation.)

Compare the word order in a statement and in a yes/no question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes/no Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hun kjøpte et nytt hus. She bought a new house.</td>
<td>Kjøpte hun et nytt hus? Did she buy a new house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hun vil kjøpe et nytt hus. She wants to buy a new house.</td>
<td>Vil hun kjøpe et nytt hus? Does she want to buy a new house?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mannen har ødelagt planen. The man has ruined the plan.</td>
<td>Har mannen ødelagt planen? Has the man ruined the plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marit så dem i går. Marit saw them yesterday.</td>
<td>Så Marit dem i går? Did Marit see them yesterday?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 Prepositions

Prepositions are used to connect a noun or pronoun (the “object” of the preposition) to another word or phrase in a sentence. Common prepositions in English are: at, before, around, off, in, and with. As in English, pronouns in Norwegian that are the objects of prepositions must be in the object case: Jeg vil bli med henne “I want to be with her.”

Prepositions frequently have spatial meanings as their primary sense. On suggests a position above and supported by another object. In addition to these spatial meanings, the meaning of a preposition may be extended to deal with time or manner of an action.

The most common Norwegian prepositions with samples of their uses follow. Note that it is often useless to give an English translation for a given preposition that will always make sense. The prepositions that are used in time expressions will be discussed in chapter 25, and are marked below with an asterisk.

av  of, from, by

Vi fant et gammelt bilde av min onkel. We found an old picture of my uncle.

i løpet av femtitallet

et skuespill av Henrik Ibsen

fra 1995 av

Jeg ble sparket av min beste venn. I was kicked by my best friend.

blant  among, belonging to

blant annet (bl.a)  among other things
blant de fineste folk  among the finest people
etter  after, according to
Etter 1814 var Norge knyttet med Sverige. After 1814, Norway was associated with Sweden.
for  for, in order to
For meg er det en fordel. For me, it is an advantage.
Mannen kjøpte boka for å lese den. The man bought the book in order to read it.
fra  from
Hamsun var fra Nord-Norge. Hamsun was from North Norway.
før  before (in time)
Hun kom hit før krigen. She came here before the war.
hos  at, with
Jeg bor hos Larsons nå. I live at Larsons now.
Hos nordmenn er det vanlig å spise middag klokka fire. It is customary among Norwegians to eat dinner at four o’clock.
i*  in
I Finland snakker folk både svensk og finsk. In Finland, people speak both Swedish and Finnish.
Jeg er født i 1948. I was born in 1948.
Vi satt og ventet i en halv time. We sat and waited for a half hour.

med  with
Jeg var med mange gode venner i kveld. I was with lots of good friends last evening.
Jeg har litt med det å gjøre. I have something to do with that.
Vi reiser med buss til Ålesund. We will take the bus to Ålesund.
Gudrun er gift med Gunnar. Gudrun is married to Gunnar.
Hun begynte med å beskrive norsk uttalen. She began by describing Norwegian pronunciation.
Hvordan står det til med deg? How are you? (How stands it to with you?)
Frokost serveres med en gang. Breakfast is served at once.
mellom  between
Det oppstod en stor konflikt mellom stammene. A large conflict arose among the tribes.
Butikken er stengt mellom klokka 10 og 12. The store is closed between 10 and 12 o’clock.
Mellom oss sagt, var det dårlig gjort. Just between us, it was poorly done.
Hva er forholdet mellom våre to skriftformer? What is the relationship between our two written norms?

mot  against, towards
Bilen kjørte mot oss. The car was driving toward us.
Han stemte mot EU medlemskap. He voted against membership in the European Union.
Det går mot sommer nå. It’s getting to be summer now.
Da det gikk mot kvelden, krop Askeladden under sengen igjen. When it got towards evening, Askeladden crept under the bed again.
Mot all forventning, kom ikke Statsministeren til Slottet.

Contrary to all expectation, the Prime Minister did not come to the Palace.

om* about, around, concerning

Boka handler om Norges historie.
The book deals with Norway's history.

Hva synes du om dette?
What do you think about this?

Biblioteket ligger om hjørnet.
The library is around the corner.

Jeg bryr meg ikke om henne.
I'm not concerned about her.

over* over

Boka kostet over kr 250.
The book cost over 250 kroner.

Klokka er fem over tre.
It is five past three.

Unni svømte over til øya.
Unni swam over to the island.

Bussen reiser fra Bergen over Otta.
The bus travels from Bergen via Otta.

på* on, in

Avisen ligger på bordet.
The newspaper is lying on the table.

Hvordan sier du det på norsk?
How do you say that in Norwegian?

Olsen er på biblioteket nå.
Olsen is at the library now.

På fredag er vi hjemme.
On Friday we are home.

på Island
in Iceland

på Hamar
in Hamar

til to, until

Familien Bakke skal flytte til Tyskland.
The Bakke family is going to move to Germany.

Sønnen til forfatteren er sytten år gammel.
The son of the author is 17 years old.

Er du sterk nok til å si nei til det?
Are you strong enough to say no to that?

Vi prøver på å gjøre denne by til et bedre sted å bo.
We are trying to make this city into a better place to live.

under under, during

Under krigen hadde vi svært lite mat.
During the war, we had very little food.

Under reisen måtte vi kjøpe en ny koffert.
During the journey, we had to buy a new suitcase.

Hunden lå under senga hele dagen.
The dog lay under the bed all day.

ved* at, with, by

Det kan løses ved hjelp av myndighetene.
It can be solved with the help of the authorities.

Jeg er student ved Universitetet i Bergen.
I am a student at the University of Bergen.

Kommer du til å spise ved fem tiden?
Are you going to eat at around five o'clock?

Particles

A particle is a small word that can have a big impact on the meaning of a verb. Many particles in Norwegian look like prepositions, but do not have an expressed object.
A sampling follows, with verbs listed in the infinitive:

- bli igjen: remain
- drinke ut: drink up
- finne opp: invent
- finne seg i: tolerate
- finne ut: discover, figure out
- gi etter: give in
- gi opp: give up
- gi ut: publish
- gjøre opp: settle an account
- kjenne igjen: recognize
- komme med: join
- komme seg fram: succeed
- komme seg unna: get away
- lese opp: recite
- lese ut: finish reading
- lukke opp: open
- pakke opp: unpack
- si opp: to quit (a job)
- snakke ut: finish talking
- spise opp: eat up
- være med: accompany
- være til: exist

23 Conjunctions and Subordinate Clauses

Types of Conjunctions and Clauses

Conjunctions join several sentence elements. In English, as in Norwegian, there are two types of conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions join two equal parts of a sentence and include and, or, for, and so. Subordinating conjunctions join unequal clauses and include because, until, whether, when, if, while, and although. Complex sentences contain a subordinate and a main clause. The main thought, action, or focal point in the sentence is expressed in the main clause and modified by a subordinate clause introduced by a subordinating conjunction. In compound sentences, two independent and equal clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction.

In the following compound sentences each clause is underlined, and the coordinating conjunction is shown in boldface:

**John comes from New York, but Tom comes from North Dakota.**

**Oslo is the capital of Norway, yet fewer than half a million people live there.**

In these complex sentences, the main clause is underlined, the subordinate clause is in parentheses, and the subordinating conjunction is shown in boldface:

**When Norway was under Danish rule, governmental business was conducted in Danish.**

**Because Norway was then joined with Sweden in a joint kingdom, it didn’t become an independent country until 1905.**
Coordinating Conjunctions

The Norwegian coordinating conjunctions are og “and,” eller “or,” and men “but.” They can join whole phrases or clauses or parallel elements within the phrases or clauses. The additional conjunction for “for” can only join clauses. Samt “in addition to” joins parallel elements within a clause.

og joins two nouns.

Vi spiste bacon og egg.  We ate bacon and eggs.

In Vi spiste egg og drakk kaffe “We ate eggs and drank coffee,” og joins two phrases. In Vi kan skrive og snakke norsk “We can write and speak Norwegian,” og joins two infinitives. In Åse er Pers mor og Kåre er hans far “Åse is Per’s mother and Kåre is his father,” og joins two independent clauses.

Following are some sentences with men, samt, and for:

Vi hadde tenkt å dra til fjells, men det snødde for mye.  We had intended to head for the mountains, but it snowed too much.

Vi er bestandig omringet av engelsk språk: fjernsyn, Internett, kino og popmusikk, samt fuglitteratur.  We are constantly surrounded by the English language: television, the Internet, movies, pop music, as well as professional texts.

Hun kunne ikke komme for hun var syk.  She couldn’t come for she was sick.

Several conjunctions are used in pairs or series:

både ... og
både x, y, og z
Både Ibsen og Kielland var norske forfattere.
Både Nordland, Troms og Finnmark er fylker i Nord-Norge.
Enten du eller jeg må ringe dem.

enten ... eller
(h)verken ... eller

Subordinating Conjunctions

There are a large number of subordinating conjunctions in Norwegian, so it is helpful to divide them into groups according to function. Make sure to note changes in main clause word order when a subordinate clause begins the sentence.

General

at  that (may be omitted in many cases)
Han sier (at) han er syk.  He says (that) he is sick.
Hvorfor tror du at studentene kan tysk?  Why do you think the students speak German?
Jeg kjente (at) dette var det jeg ville ha ut av livet.  I felt (that) this was what I wanted to get out of life.

Conjunctions of cause/effect

da  as
fordi  because
Vi spiste fordi vi var sultne.  We ate because we were hungry.
siden  since
Siden vi var sultne, spiste vi.  Since we were hungry, we ate.
ettersom  since
Conjuctions of condition

dersom in the case that
hvils if

Hvis du ikke har noe å gjøre på lørdag, ring oss.

med mindre unless
om if, whether

Jeg vet ikke om hun er norsk.
Per spurt om hun var norsk.

Conjuctions of concession

skjønt although
enskjønt although
selv om even if, even though

Ole holdt foredrag selv om han var forkjolet.

Conjuctions of time

da when

De flyttet til Tromsø da Mari var atten år.

når when(ever)

Når vi er trøtte, sover vi.

etter at after

Line forstod hva de mente etter at de forklarte det flere ganger.

før before

Før vi gikk ut, kleddede vi på oss.

innen before, until

Innen jeg reiser, må jeg skrive stilen ferdig.

mens while

Det er vanskelig å snakke i telefon mens du kjører bil.

fra from, forth

Fra han var ung, snakket han nederlandsk.

så lenge som as long as

Conjuctions of purpose

for at so that

Jeg ser ingen fare for at Norge skal bli et fattig land.

så so that

Forfatteren skrev daget rundt så at boka skulle bli ferdig før han drog til Hawaii.
Conjunctions of consequence

så  so

Han var trøtt så han gikk hjem.  He was tired, so he went home.

så at  so that

Hun er på permisjon, så lite gjøres nåførtiden på kontoret.  She’s on leave, so little is done now at the office.

slik at  such that

Det er ikke noen vits i å klippe filmen slik at den kan få en 15-års grense.  There is no point in cutting the film so it can get a rating for fifteen-year-olds.

Conjunctions of comparison

enn  than

Det var varmere i Norge enn jeg hadde trodd.  It was warmer in Norway than I had thought.

jo ... desto  the ... the

Jo mer du prater, desto mindre hører jeg på.  The more you prattle, the less I listen.

jo ... jo  the ... the

Jo flere jo bedre.  The more the merrier.

liksom/likesom  like

Marit har krøllete hår liksom du.  Marit has curly hair like you.

som  as, like

Du må gjøre som jeg sier.  You must do as I say.

som om  as if

Han later som om han er full.  He’s pretending he is drunk.

så ... som  as ... as

Jeg er ikke så flink som du.  I’m not as smart as you.
## 24 Numbers

### Cardinal Numbers

The system for counting and numbering in Norway allows for an older system side-by-side with a newer one. The older system often puts single units before tens, as in the English rhyme about “4 and 20 blackbirds.” In addition to this variety of order, Norwegians use two forms for 7 (sju/syv), 20 (tjue/tyve), and 30 (trett/tredve). Although the forms syv, tyve, and tredve are no longer officially accepted by the Norwegian Language Council, many older texts and speakers still use them. The chart below lists the newer system preceding the slash.

<p>| | | | |</p>
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<td>én, ei, ett</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>tolv /tåll/</td>
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<td>to</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>tretten</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>tre</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>fjorten</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>femten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>fem</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>seksen /sæsten/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>seks</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>sytten /søtten/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>sju/syv</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>atten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>åtte</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>nitten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>tjue /cue/ /tyve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>tjuenen/engotyeve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>elleve</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>tjueto/toogtyve</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | |</p>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>tjuetre/treogtyve</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>åtti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>trett/tredve</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>nitti</td>
</tr>
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<td>35</td>
<td>trettifem/femogtredve</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>ett hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>trettisju/syvogtredve</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>tohundre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>farti</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>fire hundred og tretti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>femti</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>ett tusem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>seksti</td>
<td>1 000 000</td>
<td>en million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>sytti /søtti/</td>
<td>1 000 000 000</td>
<td>en milliard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Large numbers in English are written out with commas separating groups of three digits. Norwegians use either a space or a dot for separation. In official orthography, when the unit is placed before tens, the word og “and” joins the two elements, without a space (e.g., treogfemti = 53). For ease of reading, many writers use spaces (tre og femti).

### Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal numbers (like “first, fiftieth”) are used to place items in a specific order. For most numbers over seventh, ordinals add -ende or -de (for the teens that already end in -en). The smaller numbers have somewhat irregular forms, although -te is the ending for many. When writing ordinals with digits, it is common to put a period after the last digit (e.g., 3. = third).

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (first)</td>
<td>første</td>
<td>7.</td>
<td>sjuende /fjænte/ syvende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>annen, annet, andre</td>
<td>8.</td>
<td>åttende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>tredje</td>
<td>9.</td>
<td>niende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>fjerde /fjære/</td>
<td>10.</td>
<td>tiende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>femte</td>
<td>11.</td>
<td>elleve /ellefte/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>sjette</td>
<td>12.</td>
<td>tolve /tålte/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fractions with denominators greater than 12 use only the cardinal:

\[ \frac{1}{10} \quad \text{en trettendel} \quad \frac{7}{10} \quad \text{sju tjuedeler} \]

A special form can be used in Norwegian for \( \frac{1}{2} \): halvannen (lit. = half of the second) corresponding to \textit{en og en halv} “one and a half.” For example, halvannen time “one and a half hours,” halvannet år “one and a half years.”

Fractions with denominators between 3 and 12 have two forms, one with the ordinal and one with the cardinal number plus del “part.”

\[ \frac{1}{3} \quad \text{en tredel/en tredjedel} \quad \frac{5}{3} \quad \text{tre femdeler/tre femtedeler} \]

\[ \frac{1}{4} \quad \text{to tredel/to tredjedeler} \quad \frac{1}{6} \quad \text{en seksdel/en sjettedel} \]

\[ \frac{1}{8} \quad \text{en fjerdal/en fjerdedel} \]
25 Time Expressions

Days of the Week

The names of the Norwegian days of the week are not capitalized. All are en nouns.

mandag  Monday
 tirsdag  Tuesday
 onsdag  Wednesday
 torsdag  Thursday
 fredag  Friday
 lrdag  Saturday
 sondag  Sunday

På mandag reiste vi.  On Monday, we traveled.
På tirsdag reiser vi.  On Tuesday, we'll travel.
Om onsdagene spiser vi ertesuppe.  On Wednesdays we eat pea

Months

The names of the 12 months are not capitalized in Norwegian. Where the month name is stressed differently from English, an apostrophe precedes the stressed syllable.

januar  January
 februar  February
 mars /ma:/  March
 april /aˈpril/  April
 mai  May
 juni  June
 juli  July
 august /aˈɡust/  August
 september  September
 oktober  October
 november  November
 desember  December

Seasons

The nouns for seasons in Norwegian are not capitalized and are all en gender.

vår (våren)  spring
 sommer (sommeren)  summer
 høst (høsten)  fall
 vinter (vinteren)  winter
Om våren er det pent i Norge.
Springtime (in spring) is beautiful in Norway.

I vinter var det temmelig kaldt her.
This (last) winter it was quite cold here.

Til høsten skal vi til Danmark.
This (coming) fall, we're going to Denmark.

Writing Dates in Norwegian
The conventions for writing dates in Norwegian are as follows (using March 8, 1998):

I dag er det den åttende mars. Today it is the eighth of March.
8.3.1998 3/8/98

Divisions of Time
sekund (et) second
minutt (et) minute
time (en) hour
en halv time half an hour
kvarter (et) quarter of an hour
morgen (en) morning
middag (en) noon
formiddag (en) midmorning
ettermiddag (en) afternoon
aften (en) afternoon
kveld (en) evening

Expressions of Time
nå now
i dag today
i morges this morning
i ettermiddag this afternoon
i kveld /kvel/ this evening
i går yesterday
i morgen /mårn/ tomorrow
i morgen tidlig early (in the day) tomorrow
i år this year
i sommer this (last) summer
i fjor last year
om dagen during the day
om kvelden during the evening
natt (en/ei), netter night, nights
dag (en) a day
døgn (et) 24-hour period
uke (en/ei) week
måned (en) month
årstid (en/ei) season
år (et), år year, years
tiår (et) decade
århundre (et) century
om høsten
hele dagen
hele året
neste uke
i forrige uke
for en time siden
for to år siden
tre dager seinere
10 minutter tidligere
om en uke
om tre dager
ikke på fire dager
ikke på en uke
ved seks-tiden

in fall
all day
all year
next week
last week
an hour ago
two years ago
three days later
10 minutes earlier
in a week
in three days
not for four days
not for a week
around six o’clock

The most important (and often misused by speakers of English) prepositions used in time expressions are listed here:

Om points to an event that will happen at a specific time in the future.

Kan dere ringe tilbake om én time?
Can you call us back in one hour?

I describes the period of time that an event spans.

Vi satt og pratet i to timer.
We sat and chatted for two hours.

På is used when a time period has elapsed without an event.

Harald har ikke blitt sett på tre døgn.
Harald has not been seen for three days.

På is also used to show how long something took to be completed.

Hun kan lese hele boka på fire timer.
She can read the whole book in four hours.

For . . . siden is used to describe the time elapsed since an event.

Vi dro av sted for tre timer siden.
We left three hours ago.

Telling Time

På means “before” while over means “after.” While in English the focus in counting half hours is on the current hour, in Norwegian speakers look ahead to the next hour (halv fem = 4:30). The 10 minutes on either side of a half hour (e.g., from 10:20 to 10:40) are designated as before and after the half-hour period.

In formal settings, speakers note the exact minutes:

Den er fem tjuefem.
It is 5:25.

Klokken er ni null sju.
The time is 9:07.

The 24-hour clock is used in official and precise time-telling.

Flyet går klokken 17.25.
The flight leaves at 5:25 PM.

Norwegians do not differentiate between A.M. and P.M., but can add om formiddagen “in the morning” or om kvelden “in the evening” when it is necessary to clarify the time of day.

There are several equivalent ways to ask what time it is:

Hva er klokken/klokka?
Hvor mye er klokken?
Hvor mange er klokken?

What time is it?

The following list provides the full range of possible responses.

Klokken er sju. Klokka er sju.
Den er sju.

It is seven o’clock.
Klokken er snart sju.
It will be seven o’clock soon.

Klokken er nesten sju.
It is almost seven o’clock.

Den er fem over sju.
It’s five past seven.

Den er ti over sju.
It’s ten past seven.

Den er kvart over sju.
It’s quarter past seven.

Den er ti på halv åtte.
It’s twenty past seven
(10 minutes to half eight).

Den er fem på halv åtte.
It’s seven twenty-five
(five minutes to half eight).

Klokka er halv åtte.
The time is half past seven.

fem over halv åtte
seven thirty-five (five minutes
past half eight)

ti over halv åtte
seven forty, twenty to eight
(10 minutes past half eight)

kvart på åtte
quarter to eight

ti på åtte
ten to eight

fem på åtte
five to eight

Klokken er akkurat åtte nå.
It is exactly eight o’clock now.

Klokken er ett (not én).
It is one o’clock.
# Common Verbs

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<td>begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behandle</td>
<td>behandler</td>
<td>behandlet/behandla</td>
<td>har behandlet</td>
<td>handle, manage</td>
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<tr>
<td>beholde</td>
<td>beholder</td>
<td>beholdt</td>
<td>har beholdt</td>
<td>retain, keep</td>
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<td>bestemme</td>
<td>bestemmer</td>
<td>bestemte</td>
<td>har bestemt</td>
<td>decide</td>
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<td>bestiller</td>
<td>bestille</td>
<td>har bestilt</td>
<td>order</td>
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<td>besøker</td>
<td>besøkte</td>
<td>har besøkt</td>
<td>visit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Marks irregular forms, for example present tense forms that do not add the regular -r ending to the infinitive.
betalte  betalde  har betalt  pay
betrakte  betrakter  betraktet/ betrakta  view, regard
betyr  betyr  betydd  har betydd  mean, signify
bevarer  bevarte  har bevart  save, maintain
bidrag  bidrar  bidrog  har bedratt/ har bedradd  contribute
binde  binder  bandt  har bundet  bind
bite  biter  bet/beit  har bitt  bite
blande  blander  blandet  har blandet  blend, mix
blir  blir  ble/blei  har blitt  remain, become
bodde  bor  har bodd  dwell
bre  brer  bredde/bredte  har bredd/ har bredt  spread
brekke  brekker  brakk  har brukket  break
brenner  brenner  brannt  har brannt  (intransitive) burn up
brente  brenner  brente  har brennt  (transitive) to set fire to
bringe  bringer  brakte  har brakt  to bring
bruken  bruker  brukte  har brukt  use
bryste  bryter  brødt/braut  har brutt  use
burde  * bør  burde  burdet  should
by  byr  baad/bød/ bydde  har byd/d/ har bydd  bid/ command
bygge  bygger  bygde  har bygd  build
bære  bærer  bar  har båret  bear, carry
bøye  bøyer  bøye  har bøyd  bend, conjugate
danne  danner  dannet/danna  har dannet/ har danna  form, create
danse  danser  danset/dansa  har danset/ har dansa  dance
dekke  dekker  dekket/dekka  har dekket/ har dekka  cover, set
dele  deler  delte  har delt  divide, share
drag  drager  drag  har dradd/ har dratt  drag, travel
drepe  dreper  drepte  har drept  kill
drikke  drikker  drakk  har drukket  drink
drive  driver  drev/dreiv  har drevet  operate, run
dyrke  dyrker  dyrket/dyrka  har dyrket/ har dyrka  cultivate, raise
do  dør  døde/døde  har dødd  die
døpe  doper  døpte  har doppt  baptize
eie  eier  eide/átte  har eid/har ått  own
ete  ete  åt  har ett  eat (slang)
falle  faller  falt  har falt  fall
fare  farer  for  har faret/ har fart  fare, travel
finne  finner  fant  har funnet  find
finnes  finnes/fins  fantes  har fantes  be found, exist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Norwegian</th>
<th>English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fly/lyge</td>
<td>fly</td>
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<td>flyte</td>
<td>flyter</td>
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<td>flytte</td>
<td>flytter</td>
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<td>forbereder</td>
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<td>forbådde</td>
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<td>forener</td>
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<td>foretrekker</td>
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<td>forklare</td>
<td>forklarer</td>
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<tr>
<td>forlate</td>
<td>forlater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forlove (seg)</td>
<td>forlover (seg)</td>
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<td>fornemmer</td>
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<td>fryser</td>
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<td>følge/følje</td>
<td>følger/følgjer</td>
</tr>
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<td>får</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gi</td>
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<td>gjelde</td>
<td>gjelder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gjøre</td>
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<td>glimre</td>
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<td>gnage</td>
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<td>gni</td>
<td>gnir</td>
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<tr>
<td>grave</td>
<td>graver</td>
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<td>gre (seg)</td>
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<td>gråter</td>
</tr>
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<td>gå</td>
<td>går</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ha</td>
<td>hadde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handle</td>
<td>handler</td>
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<td>hende</td>
<td>hender</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Common Verbs**

get, receive

give

manage to do something

be in force, apply

do

please, make happy

forget

glide

glisten

gnaw

rub

dig

comb one’s hair

grasp, seize

cry, weep

go, walk

have

act, shop, deal with

happen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>henge</th>
<th>henger</th>
<th>hang</th>
<th>har hengt</th>
<th>hang, droop (intransitive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>henge</td>
<td>henger</td>
<td>hengte</td>
<td>har hengt</td>
<td>hang up (transitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hente</td>
<td>henter</td>
<td>hentet/henta</td>
<td>har hentet/ har henta</td>
<td>fetch, bring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hete</td>
<td>heter</td>
<td>het/hette</td>
<td>har hett</td>
<td>be named</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heve</td>
<td>hever</td>
<td>hevde/hevet</td>
<td>har hevd/ har hevet</td>
<td>raise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hilse</td>
<td>hilser</td>
<td>hilste</td>
<td>har hilst</td>
<td>greet</td>
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<td>hjelper</td>
<td>hjalp</td>
<td>har hjulpet</td>
<td>help</td>
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<tr>
<td>holde</td>
<td>holder</td>
<td>holdt</td>
<td>har holdt</td>
<td>keep, hold</td>
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<td>hoppe</td>
<td>hopper</td>
<td>hoppet/hoppa</td>
<td>har hoppent/ har hoppa</td>
<td>hop</td>
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<td>husker</td>
<td>husket/huska</td>
<td>har husket/ har huska</td>
<td>remember</td>
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<tr>
<td>hvile/kvile</td>
<td>hviler/kviler</td>
<td>hvilte/kvilte</td>
<td>har hvilt/ har kvilt</td>
<td>rest</td>
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<td>har hørt</td>
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<td>håndhilser</td>
<td>håndhilste</td>
<td>har håndhilst</td>
<td>shake hands</td>
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<td>inkludere</td>
<td>inkluderer</td>
<td>inkluderte</td>
<td>har inkludert</td>
<td>include</td>
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<td>innfører</td>
<td>innførte</td>
<td>har innført</td>
<td>introduce</td>
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<td>har interessert</td>
<td>interest</td>
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<td>har invitert</td>
<td>invite</td>
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<td>jobber</td>
<td>jobbet/jobba</td>
<td>har jobbet/ har jobba</td>
<td>work</td>
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<td>kjempe</td>
<td>kjemper</td>
<td>kjempt/ kjempa</td>
<td>har kjempt/ har kjempa</td>
<td>fight</td>
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<td>kjenner</td>
<td>kjente</td>
<td>har kjent</td>
<td>know (person, place)</td>
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<td>kjøpte</td>
<td>har kjøpt</td>
<td>purchase</td>
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<td>har kjørt</td>
<td>drive</td>
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<td>klage</td>
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<td>klaget/klaga/ klagde</td>
<td>har klaget/ har klagd</td>
<td>complain</td>
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<td>klarte</td>
<td>har klart</td>
<td>manage</td>
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<td>kler</td>
<td>klede</td>
<td>har kledd</td>
<td>dress, suit one</td>
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<td>klippet/klippa</td>
<td>har klippet/ har klippa</td>
<td>cut</td>
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<td>knekker</td>
<td>knakk/knekte/ knekket</td>
<td>har knekket/ har knekt</td>
<td>crack, snap</td>
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<td>koker</td>
<td>kokte</td>
<td>har kokt</td>
<td>boil</td>
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<td>kom</td>
<td>har kommet</td>
<td>come</td>
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<td>koser</td>
<td>koste/kosa</td>
<td>har kost/ har kosa</td>
<td>make cozy</td>
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<td>koster</td>
<td>kostet/kosta</td>
<td>har kostet/ har kosta</td>
<td>cost; sweep</td>
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<td>krøp/kraup</td>
<td>har krøpet</td>
<td>creep</td>
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<td>kunne</td>
<td>* kan</td>
<td>kunne</td>
<td>har kunnet</td>
<td>be able to</td>
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<td>kvede</td>
<td>kveder</td>
<td>kvad</td>
<td>har kvedet</td>
<td>chant, sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la</td>
<td>lar</td>
<td>lot</td>
<td>har latt</td>
<td>allow, let</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lage</td>
<td>lager</td>
<td>laget/laga/ lagde</td>
<td>har laget/ har laga/ har lugd</td>
<td>make, create</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
late  later  lot  har latt  let, allow
le  ler  lo  har ledd  laugh
leder  ledet  har ledet  lead
lege  leger  leget/legte  har leget/ har legt  heal, cure
legge  legge  la  har lagt  lay, place
leie  leier  leide  har leid  rent
leke  leker  lekte  har lekt  play
lekke  lekker  lekket/lekte/ lakk  har lekt/ har lekket  leak
lese  leser  leste  har lest  read, study
leve  lever  levde  har levd  live, be alive
lide/li  lider  led/lei  har lidd/ har lidt  suffer, wear on (time)
ligge  ligger  lå  har ligget  lie
ligne/likne  ligner/likner  lignet/ligna/ liknet/likna  har lignet/ har ligna/ har liknet/ har likna  resemble, look like
like  liker  likte  har likt  like
love  lover  lovet/lova/ lovte/lovde  har lovet/ har lova/ har lovdt  promise, praise
lukke  lukker  lukket/lukka  har lukket/ har lukka  shut
lukte  lukter  luktet/lukta  har luktet/ har lukta  smell
lure  lurer  lurte  har lurt  wonder, dupe
lytte  lytter  lyttet/lytta  har lyttet/ har lytta  listen
lyve/lyge/ ljuge  lyver/lyger/ ljuger  løy/laug  løyet  lie, fib
lære  lærer  laerte  har lært  learn, teach
løpe  loper  løp  har løpt/ har lopet  run
låne  låner  lånte  har lånt  lend, borrow
male  maler  malte  har malt  paint; purr
melder  meldte  har meldt  announce, report
mene  mener  mente  har ment  think, be of the opinion
merke  merker  merket/merka  har merket/ har merka  mark
misbruker  misbrukte  har misbrukt  misuse, abuse
mislike  misliker  mislikte  har mislikt  dislike
motta  mottar  mottok  har mottatt  receive
møte  møter  møtte  har møtt  meet
måtte  * må  måtte  har måttet  have to, be obliged to
nyte  nyter  nøt/naut  har nøtt  enjoy
pipe  pipper  pep  har pepet  whistle, pipe
prøve  prøver  prøvde  har prøvd  try, attempt
reise  reiser  reiste  har reist  travel, raise
rekke  rekker  rakk  har rukket  reach; be enough
rekke 　rekker 　rakte 　har rakt 　stretch
ri/ride 　rir 　rei/red 　har ridd 　ride (horse)
rive 　river 　rev/reiv 　har revet 　tear apart
ryke 　ryker 　røk/rauk 　har røket 　send out
　smoke, steam
røyke/røke 　røyker/røker 　røykte/røktere 　har røykter/ 　har røkt 　smoke 　(a cigarette)
　se 　ser 　så 　har sett 　see
　serge 　selger 　solgte 　har solgt 　sell
　søndte 　søndte 　har søndtet 　send
　sette 　setter 　satte 　har satt 　set, place
　si 　*sier 　sa 　har sagt 　say, tell
　sige 　siger 　seig 　har seget 　sink
　sittte 　sitter 　satt 　har sittet 　sit
　skje 　skjer 　skjedde 　har skjedd 　happen
　skjelve 　skjelver 　skalv 　har skjelvet 　shake, tremble
　skjære 　skjaerer 　skar 　har skåret 　cut
　sli 　skli 　skli/skilde 　har sklidd 　slide
　skrike 　skriker 　skrek/skreik 　har skreket 　scream
　skrIVE 　skriver 　skrev/skreiv 　har skrevet 　write
　skulle 　* skal 　skulle 　har skullet 　should, shall
　skvette 　skvetter 　skvatt 　har skvettet 　start suddenly, splash (transitive and intransitive)
　skyte 　skyter 　skjøt/skaut 　har skutt 　shoot
skyve 　skyver 　skjøv/skauv 　har skjøvet 　shove
　slippe/sleppe 　slipper/slepper slapp 　har sloppet 　let go
slite 　sliter 　slet/sleit 　har slitt 　toil, wear out
slå 　slår 　slo 　har slått 　hit, wear out
slåss 　* slåss 　sloss 　har slåss 　fight
smøre 　smører 　smurte 　har smurt 　butter, smear
sove 　sover 　sov 　har sovet 　sleep
sprekke 　sprekker 　sprakk 　har sprukket 　burst, split
springe 　springer 　sprang 　har sprunget 　jump, run
spørre 　* spør 　spurte 　har spurt 　ask
stige 　stiger 　steg/steig 　har steget 　climb
stikke 　stikker 　stakk 　har stukket 　stick, stab
stjele 　stjeler 　stjal 　har stålet 　steal
stryke 　stryker 　strøk/strauk 　har strøket 　strike, iron, remove, fail
stå 　står 　stod 　har stått 　stand, stand up
svi 　svir 　sved/svidde/svei 　har svidd 　burn, suffer
svike 　sviker 　svek/sveik 　har sveket 　betray, disappoint
synes 　* synes/syns 　syntes 　har synes/har syns 　seem, think, be visible
　syng 　synger 　sang 　har sunget 　sing
synge 　synker 　sank 　har sunket 　sink
søke 　søker 　søkte 　har søkt 　seek
Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefixes

Norwegian uses a small number of prefixes, as does English, to modify the main word. The chart summarizes each prefix, with examples. Several prefixes are more international, having joined Norwegian as elements of loan words. These prefixes (like multi- and ultra-) are also often seen in English.

- an- ankomme arrive
- be- beskrive describe, bety signify
- for- forstå understand
- fore- foreta undertake
- gjen- gjenlyd echo, gjenåvelg reciprocal, gjeninnføre reintroduce
- mis- mislikke dislike, misbruk abuse, misforstå misunderstand
- om- omfavne embrace, omfattende comprehensive, omgi surround
- u- ugress weed, ugift single, unmarried, ujevn uneven
- unn- unngå avoid, unntak exception
- van- vanvittig mad, vantro skeptical
Suffixes

The following chart shows suffixes, alphabetized according to the last letter of the suffix. If a student is reading and recognizes part of a word, finding the suffix listed here may help figure out the meaning. Both word-forming suffixes (like the English -dom "free + dom") and grammatical suffixes (like -ed "play + ed") are listed here.

-ade definite noun ending, ei gender singular
-ade definite noun ending, et gender plural
-ade variant past tense and participle ending for verbs like käste, which usually have -et endings
-d past participle ending
-nad (en) forms nouns
-dd past participle
-ede plural and definite past participles
-dde past tense of verbs
-ende present participle
-ende ordinal numbers
-ske denotes female professions
-sle nouns from verbs, adjectives, nouns
-ne verbs showing a change of condition
-isme (en) noun for distinct action or process "-ism"
-(e)ne definite plural for nouns
-ete past participle
-inne (en) denotes female professions, positions
-ere comparative form of adjectives
-ere indefinite plural of nouns ending in -er
-ere productive verb forming
-ere comparative form of adverbs
-erne definite plural ending of nouns ending in -er
-else (en) noun forming from verb

lukkede shut
å bo, bor, bodde, bodd
en gående mann a walking man
tiende tenth, femtiende fiftieth
sykepleierske female nurse
kjensle sensation, from kjenne to feel
å hvitne to whiten
anakronisme anachronism
bilene the cars
bildene the pictures
piggete barbed
lærerinne female teacher
snillere kinder
lærere teachers
engasjere engage, get involved
fortere faster
lærerne teachers
en begynnelse beginning
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<thead>
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<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>-te</td>
<td>past tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-este</td>
<td>definite form of superlative adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ig</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)ig</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-messig</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-aktig</td>
<td>adjective forming, having the quality of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ing</td>
<td>person from an area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ling</td>
<td>diminutive or group noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ning</td>
<td>noun forming from verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-eri</td>
<td>noun forming, profession, workplace, collective activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(i)sk</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-sel</td>
<td>noun forming</td>
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<td>-dom</td>
<td>noun forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-som</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-en</td>
<td>definite singular of en noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-skap</td>
<td>noun forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)r</td>
<td>indefinite noun plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)r</td>
<td>present tense of verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-bar</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-er</td>
<td>noun forming name of profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ær</td>
<td>noun forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-s</td>
<td>possessive for nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)s</td>
<td>passive of verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-vis</td>
<td>adverb of manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-løs</td>
<td>adjective forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-t</td>
<td>past participle of verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)l</td>
<td>adjective form for et noun, indefinite singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-(e)t</td>
<td>noun, definite singular, et noun</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hjelpsom</td>
<td>helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dagen</td>
<td>the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vennskap</td>
<td>friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biler</td>
<td>cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å bo, bor, bodde, har bodd</td>
<td>to live, lives, lived, have lived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å finne, finner, fant, har funnet</td>
<td>to find, finds, found, have found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brukbar</td>
<td>usable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lærer</td>
<td>teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millionær</td>
<td>millionaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en bils</td>
<td>a car’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bilens</td>
<td>the car’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>det sies</td>
<td>it is said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heldigvis</td>
<td>luckily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arbeidsløs</td>
<td>unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>å spise, spiser, spitse, har spist</td>
<td>to eat, eats, ate, have eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>et flint hus</td>
<td>a fine house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>huset</td>
<td>the house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common Pitfalls for English Speakers

The common mistakes described below are for the most part caused when English speakers follow English patterns and rules. By being careful to avoid these 12 common mistakes, students can make great strides towards more correct Norwegian. Note that sentences that are within asterisks are *wrong* and should not be used as models, but rather as examples of common mistakes.

1 Word Order

The most common mistake in both spoken and written Norwegian is neglecting to invert subject and finite verb when an element other than the subject starts a sentence.

*I dag jeg er i Oslo.* ⇒ *I dag er jeg i Oslo.*

Today I am in Oslo.

The subject jeg is not the first element in the sentence, so the finite verb er must come before the subject. That process is usually called “inversion.” (Conjunctions, however, can start the sentence without causing inversion.)

Men han er norsk. But he is Norwegian.

2 Infinitive of Verb Follows Modal Helping Verbs

After modal helping verbs like skulle “should,” skal “shall,” ville “would,” vil “will,” måtte “had to,” må “must,” kunne “could,” and kan “can” (see chapter 7), the main verb must be in the infinitive form without the infinitive marker å.
4 Finite Verbs Need a Tense

Norwegian draws a distinction between infinitive form (snakke) and the present tense (snakker). Students who rely too heavily on the English forms will be confused because in English infinitive forms are identical with the first and second person forms: “speak” is the infinitive and is also used in “I speak, you speak.” Compare the following:

*Jeg snakke norsk.* ⇒ Jeg snakker norsk.  I speak Norwegian.

Jeg liker å snakke norsk.  I like to speak English.

5 Du, Deg or Dere

The various forms of you in Norwegian are often confused by English speakers. Norwegian distinguishes between subject and object for second person singular and plural where English does not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular subject vs. singular object form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Du kommer fra Fargo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You come from Fargo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi kjenner deg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We know you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>plural subject:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dere kommer fra Fargo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (all) come from Fargo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural object:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vi forstår dere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We understand you (all).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Definite Nouns Have Definite Suffixes

Definite forms of nouns use suffixed definite articles; not preposed separate articles as in English the.

*det hus* ⇒ huset  the house

*de barn* ⇒ barna  the children
7 Som/At/Hvem/Det—That

Although each of these words may correspond to English *that*, they may not be used interchangeably where “that” would be used in English.

**Som** connects a noun or pronoun with a clause that gives further information:

- Han er en mann som jeg kjenner.
- *Han er en mann at jeg kjenner*
- or
- *Han er en mann hvem jeg kjenner.*

The subordinating conjunction **at** connects a verb with a following clause.

- Han vet at det er mandag i dag. He knows that it is Monday today.
- Jeg tror at han heter Per. I think that his name is Per.
- *Jeg tror som han heter Per.*

**Hvem** is the interrogative “who, whom.”

- Jeg kjenner en mann som heter Arnulf.
- *Jeg kjenner en mann hvem heter Arnulf.*

**Hvem er du sammen med?** Who are you together with?

When **hvem** is the subject in a relative clause, it must be followed by **som:**

- Jeg så ikke hvem som snakket. I didn’t see who was talking.

The pronoun and article **det** corresponds to English “the” or “that”:

- *Det store rommet* the big room, that big room
- **Hvem er det?** Who is that?

8 Hvor/Hvordan—How Many, How Far

When English uses the interrogative *how* with an adjective or adverb, the corresponding Norwegian interrogative is **hvor. Hvordan** also means *how,* but is generally not used in conjunction with the adjective or adverb.

- *Hvordan mange venner har du?*
- **Hvor mange venner har du?** How many friends do you have?

When the subject is a noun or pronoun:

- *Hvordan langt er det til Stavanger?*
- **Hvor langt er det til Stavanger?** How far is it to Stavanger?
- **Hvordan staver du Kristiansand?** How do you spell Kristiansand?

9 Da/Når/Så—When/Then

**Da** can be a conjunction *(when)* or an adverb *(then).* Its function and translation is most often apparent in the word order. Note the appropriate English translation in each example shown.

- **Da telefonen ringte . . .** When the telephone rang . . . (subject + finite verb implies da is a conjunction)
- **Da ringte telefonen.** Then the telephone rang. (finite verb + subject implies da is an adverb)

**Når** is the conjunction that corresponds to *when* when the activity is in the present or future or **whenever** when the activity is a repeated action in the past.

**Så** as an adverb means *then, subsequently. *As a conjunction it means *so that.**
10 Synes/Tro/Tenke—To Think

Norwegian uses several different verbs where English uses only one, to think. Again, care should be taken to use the context-appropriate word in Norwegian.

Å synes is used when the speaker has experienced something and has formed an opinion based on that experience. One can argue with that opinion, but not with it as a fact.

Jeg synes filmen var spennende. I think the film was exciting (I saw it, and I found it exciting).

Å tro expresses something factual (whether correct or not). One can argue with the facts presented.

Jeg tror at han er i Bergen. I think that he is in Bergen.

Å tenke focuses on the mental activity of thinking.

Vi har tenkt å ta en tur til Grønland. We have thought about (considered) taking a trip to Greenland.

11 Gang/Tid/Time—Time

These three words are often confused by English speakers, although their Norwegian uses are very distinct.

Time, while it looks like the English time, means hour or class period.

Vi har ventet i en time. We have waited for an hour.

Gang means time only in the sense of occurrence, occasion.

Jeg var i Norge en gang for mange år siden. I was in Norway once (one time) many years ago.

Det var en gang et troll. Once upon a time, there was a troll.

The Norwegian tid covers English time in a much more general sense, with English equivalents epoch, time period, passage of time.

12 Word Pairs with Long and Short Vowels

Speakers of English often fail to differentiate between long and short vowels when they speak Norwegian. This leads to more blank stares from Norwegian interlocutors than other pronunciation inexactness.

Du bør snakke norsk hele tiden. You ought to speak Norwegian the whole time.

Hun visste ikke hva tid det var på natten. She didn’t know what time of night it was.

Tiden leger alle sår. Time heals all wounds.

The vowel in tak “roof/ceiling” is long: /taːk/. The vowel in tack “thanks” is short: /tæk/. Compare mine “my/mine” /miːn/ with minne “remind” /mɪn/.
### Norwegian Names

#### The Hundred Most Popular Female Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agnes</th>
<th>Borghild</th>
<th>Grete</th>
<th>Ingeborg</th>
<th>Kristin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anette</td>
<td>Brit</td>
<td>Grethe</td>
<td>Inger</td>
<td>Kristine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anita</td>
<td>Britt</td>
<td>Gro</td>
<td>Ingrid</td>
<td>Laila</td>
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<td>Ann</td>
<td>Camilla</td>
<td>Gudrun</td>
<td>Ingunn</td>
<td>Lene</td>
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<td>Anna</td>
<td>Cecilie</td>
<td>Gunn</td>
<td>Irene</td>
<td>Lillian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Eli</td>
<td>Gunvor</td>
<td>Janne</td>
<td>Linda</td>
</tr>
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<td>Aslaug</td>
<td>Elin</td>
<td>Hanne</td>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Line</td>
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<td>Elisabeth</td>
<td>Hege</td>
<td>Jorunn</td>
<td>Linn</td>
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<td>Aud</td>
<td>Ellen</td>
<td>Heidi</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>Lisbeth</td>
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<td>Bente</td>
<td>Elsa</td>
<td>Helene</td>
<td>Kari</td>
<td>Lise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Berit</td>
<td>Else</td>
<td>Helga</td>
<td>Karin</td>
<td>Liv</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bjørg</td>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>Hilde</td>
<td>Kirsten</td>
<td>Magnhild</td>
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<td>Bodil</td>
<td>Gerd</td>
<td>Ida</td>
<td>Kjersti</td>
<td>Margit</td>
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#### The Hundred Most Popular Male Names

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<th>Helge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anders</td>
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<td>Henrik</td>
<td>Iørn</td>
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<td>Hákon</td>
<td>Karl</td>
<td>Martin</td>
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<td>Hávard</td>
<td>Kenneth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arne</td>
<td>Erling</td>
<td>Inge</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>Nils</td>
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<td>Espen</td>
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<td>Kjell</td>
<td>Odd</td>
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<td>Jan</td>
<td>Kjetil</td>
<td>Oddvar</td>
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<td>Frank</td>
<td>Jarle</td>
<td>Knut</td>
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<td>Gunnar</td>
<td>John</td>
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<td>Hans</td>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>Leif</td>
<td>Per</td>
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<td>Egil</td>
<td>Harald</td>
<td>Jostein</td>
<td>Magne</td>
<td>Petter</td>
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* Information provided by Statistisk Sentralbyrå, Oslo
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