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# Danish

AN ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR

Robin Allan  
Philip Holmes  
Tom Lundskær-Nielsen

Danish

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# DANISH: AN ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR

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# CONTENTS

<b>Preface</b>	xii
<b>Symbols and abbreviations used in the text</b>	xiii
<b>1 PRONUNCIATION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Vowel sounds</b>	
1 Vowels and their pronunciation	1
2 Vowel length and spelling	4
3 Diphthongs	5
<b>Consonant sounds</b>	
4 Stops: <b>p, t, k</b>	5
5 Stops: <b>b, d, g</b>	6
6 <b>s, c, sc, x, z</b>	8
7 <b>f, h, j, sj, sh, ch</b>	8
8 <b>l, n, ng, nk, r, v, w</b>	8
9 Syllable loss and vowel merger	9
10 Pronunciation of some frequent words	9
<b>The glottal stop</b>	
11 The glottal stop ('stød')	10
12 Inflected forms—'stød' variations	11
<b>Stress</b>	
13 Stress	13
14 Stressed in the clause	13
15 Unstressed in the clause	14
16 Two-word stress	15
17 Stressed and unstressed syllables	16
18 Stressed prefixes	16

19	Stressed suffixes	17
20	Unstressed prefixes	17
21	Unstressed suffixes	17
<b>2</b>	<b>NOUNS</b>	<b>19</b>
	<b>Gender</b>	
22	Gender	19
23	Gender rules	19
	<b>Plurals</b>	
24	Plurals and declensions	22
25	Predicting plurals	22
26	Plurals in <b>-(e)r</b> ( <b>en gade—gader; et billede—billeder</b> )	23
27	Plurals in <b>-e</b> ( <b>en dag—dage; et hus—huse</b> )	24
28	Zero-plural ( <b>en sko—sko; et år—år</b> )	25
29	Plurals with a vowel change ( <b>en tand—tænder</b> )	25
30	Plurals of nouns in <b>-el, -en, -er</b> ( <b>en søster—søstre</b> )	26
31	Nouns doubling the final consonant	26
32	Plurals of loanwords	27
33	Count and non-count nouns	27
34	Nouns with no plural form	28
35	Nouns with no singular form	28
36	Differences in number	28
	<b>The genitive</b>	
37	Genitives	29
	<b>Articles</b>	
38	Articles—form	30
39	Article use—introduction	32
40	Article use—end article in Danish, no article in English	32
41	Article use—no article in Danish, definite article in English	33
42	Article use—no article in Danish, indefinite article in English	33
43	Article use—end article in Danish, possessive pronoun in English	34
<b>3</b>	<b>ADJECTIVES</b>	<b>35</b>
44	Adjectives in outline	35

<b>Indefinite declension</b>		
45	Indefinite form—regular	36
46	Indefinite form—neuter same as common gender	36
47	Variations in plural/definite	37
48	Indefinite form—special cases	37
49	Adjectives doubling the final consonant in the plural	38
50	Indeclinable adjectives	38
51	Indefinite constructions	39
52	Agreement and lack of agreement	40
<b>Definite declension</b>		
53	Definite constructions	41
54	Adjectival nouns	42
55	‘The English’ and other nationality words	44
<b>Comparison</b>		
56	Comparison—introduction	44
57	Comparison with <b>-ere, -est</b>	45
58	Comparison with vowel change and <b>-(e)re, -(e)st</b>	46
59	Irregular comparison	46
60	Comparison with <b>mere, mest</b>	46
61	Similarity, dissimilarity and reinforcement	47
62	Inflexion of the superlative	48
63	The absolute comparative and absolute superlative	49
<b>4</b>	<b>NUMERALS</b>	51
64	Cardinal and ordinal numbers	51
65	Major uses of cardinal and ordinal numbers	53
66	Time by the clock	54
<b>5</b>	<b>PRONOUNS</b>	57
67	Personal and reflexive pronouns—form	57
68	Use of personal pronouns	58
69	Uses of <b>det</b>	58
70	Reflexive pronouns	60
71	Reciprocal pronouns	61



72	Possessive pronouns	61
73	Non-reflexive and reflexive possessives: <b>hans</b> or <b>sin</b> ?	63
74	Demonstrative pronouns	65
75	Relative pronouns	66
76	<b>Der</b> or <b>som</b> ?	68
77	Interrogative pronouns ( <b>hv-</b> words)	69
78	Indefinite pronouns	70
<b>6</b>	<b>VERBS</b>	<b>75</b>
	<b>Verb forms</b>	
79	Verb forms in outline	75
80	First conjugation	76
81	Second conjugation	77
82	Third conjugation	78
83	Fourth conjugation—introduction	78
84	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-a-</b>	79
85	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-e-</b>	79
86	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-i-</b>	79
87	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-y-</b>	81
88	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-æ-</b>	82
89	Fourth conjugation: stem vowel in <b>-å-</b>	83
90	Fourth conjugation: verbs with the same stem vowel in all forms	84
91	Infinitive	84
92	Past participle	86
93	Present participle	88
	<b>Tenses</b>	
94	Present tense	90
95	Past tense	91
96	Perfect tense	91
97	Past perfect tense	92
98	Future tense	93
99	Differences in the use of tenses	94
	<b>Mood</b>	

100	Mood and modal verbs	94
101	Imperative	97
102	Subjunctive	97
	<b>Types of verb</b>	
103	Transitive, intransitive, copula and reflexive verbs	98
	<b>-s Verbs and the passive</b>	
104	-s forms, deponent and reciprocal verbs	99
105	The passive	100
	<b>Compound verbs</b>	
106	Compound verbs	104
<b>7</b>	<b>ADVERBS</b>	107
107	Adverbs—form	107
108	Comparison of adverbs	108
109	Use of adverbs	109
110	Adverbs indicating location and motion	110
111	Some difficult adverbs	111
<b>8</b>	<b>PREPOSITIONS</b>	113
112	Prepositions—introduction	113
113	The most common Danish prepositions	116
114	<b>af</b>	119
115	<b>efter</b>	120
116	<b>for</b>	120
117	<b>fra</b>	122
118	<b>i</b>	122
119	<b>med</b>	123
120	<b>mod</b>	124
121	<b>om</b>	125
122	<b>over</b>	126
123	<b>på</b>	127
124	<b>til</b>	127
125	<b>under</b>	128
126	<b>ved</b>	129

127	Common English prepositions and their Danish equivalents—summary	130
128	Translating ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, etc., as expressions of time	131
129	Translating ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, etc., as expressions of place	132
130	Prepositions in expressions of time—summary	134
131	Translating ‘of’	135
<b>9</b>	<b>INTERJECTIONS</b>	<b>139</b>
132	Interjections	139
<b>10</b>	<b>CONJUNCTIONS</b>	<b>143</b>
133	Coordinating conjunctions	143
134	Subordinating conjunctions	144
135	Other subordinators	146
136	Translating some difficult conjunctions	146
<b>11</b>	<b>WORD ORDER AND CLAUSE STRUCTURE</b>	<b>151</b>
137	Word classes and clause elements	151
138	Clause types	151
139	Main clause structure	152
140	Link position	154
141	Extra positions	154
142	Real subject and formal subject	155
143	Finite verb	155
144	Non-finite verb	156
145	Clausal adverbial	156
146	Other adverbials	156
147	Objects and complements	157
148	Passive agent	158
149	Topicalisation	159
150	Light elements	160
151	Position of <b>ikke</b> and negative elements	161
152	Passive transformation	162
153	Existential sentences	162
154	Subordinate clause as an element in the main clause	163
155	Main clause structure—an extended positional schema with examples	165

156	Subordinate clause structure	166
157	Independent clauses	168
158	Cleft sentences	168
159	Three types of subordinate clause with main clause structure	169
160	Major word order and clause structure problems —summary	170
<b>12</b>	<b>WORD FORMATION</b>	<b>173</b>
161	Introduction	173
162	Compounding	173
163	Affixation	175
164	Abbreviation	179
165	List of common abbreviations	179
<b>13</b>	<b>ORTHOGRAPHY</b>	<b>185</b>
166	The alphabet	185
167	<b>Aa, Å, aa, å</b>	185
168	Small or capital letters?	185
169	Word division	186
<b>14</b>	<b>PUNCTUATION</b>	<b>189</b>
170	Punctuation marks	189
171	The comma	189
172	The full stop	191
173	The exclamation mark	191
174	Direct speech	191
175	The apostrophe	192
176	The hyphen	192
	<b>Linguistic terms</b>	<b>195</b>
	<b>Danish, Latin and English linguistic terms</b>	<b>199</b>
	<b>Short bibliography</b>	<b>203</b>
	<b>Index</b>	<b>205</b>

# PREFACE

We have two aims with this book. First, we want to provide learners of Danish with a concise description of the structure of Danish phonology, morphology and syntax, as well as a brief account of orthography, punctuation and word formation. Second, we try to describe in greater detail those areas of Danish structure that in our experience tend to pose special problems for learners whose first language is English. To help learners, most of the examples have been translated.

The ‘new comma’, as recommended by the Danish National Language Council, has been used throughout.

The book is largely traditional in its approach and terminology, but a number of the terms used are explained in a separate glossary of ‘Linguistic Terms’ at the end.

The various tables and diagrams are intended to make the book easy to use; in many cases it will be possible for the learner to predict word forms and clause patterns from just a few rules. The ‘Index’ contains paragraph references both to linguistic concepts and to some Danish and English keywords and their uses, and together with the ‘Contents’ this should normally serve as a starting point for any search.

Learners progressing to an intermediate level or simply wanting more thorough explanations of specific points may wish to consult our much more detailed *Danish: A Comprehensive Grammar*, Routledge, 1995, reprinted with changes in 1998.

We would like to thank Henrik Galberg Jacobsen for his invaluable comments, especially on the chapter on pronunciation, and we are extremely grateful to Dinah Bechshøft at the Danish Ministry of Education for financial support in the preparation phase. Other colleagues and students have provided helpful suggestions, but any errors are ours alone.

The authors primarily responsible for the individual chapters of the book are as follows: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 (PH), Chapters 5, 6 (TLN), Chapter 7 (RA), Chapters 8, 9 (TLN), Chapters 10, 11 (RA), Chapters 12, 13, 14 (PH).

Robin Allan, Philip Holmes and  
Tom Lundskaer-Nielsen  
November 1999

# SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

[ ]	phonetic script
[i:]	long vowel
' <b>kalde</b> , <b>stu'dere</b>	stressed syllable
2+syllables	two or more syllables
<b>kolleg(a)er, (at)</b> <b>ringer</b> <b>der/som</b>	letter, syllable or word may be omitted stem <b>ring</b> plus ending <b>-er</b> alternatives
<b>x→y</b>	<b>x</b> becomes <b>y</b> , e.g. when an ending is added
MC, SC	main clause, subordinate clause
<b>hv</b> -question	question introduced by an interrogative pronoun or adverb ( <b>hv</b> - word)
pron.	pronunciation
cons	consonant
⊗	'plus zero', i.e. no ending is added to a word form
*	incorrect form or ungrammatical construction
S	subject
FS	formal subject
RS	real subject
InfS	subject of an infinitive
SComp.	subject complement
O	object
DO	direct object
IO	indirect object
V	verb
FV	finite verb
intr.	intransitive verb
tr.	transitive verb
prep.	preposition
Prep.Comp.	prepositional complement
sub conj	subordinating conjunction
a	clausal adverbial (position)

A	other adverbial (position)
F	front position
k	link position (conjunctions)
X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub>	extra positions
FE	first element (in a compound)
SE	second element (in a compound)

# 1 PRONUNCIATION

This brief account of Danish pronunciation uses a modified version of IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet).

## VOWEL SOUNDS

### 1 VOWELS AND THEIR PRONUNCIATION

1 Unrounded vowels:

I		E			Æ	
[i:]	[i]	[e:]	[e]	[ə]	[ɛ:]	[ɛ]
<b>smile</b>	<b>lille</b>	<b>dele</b>	<b>hedde</b>	<b>pibe</b>	<b>kæle</b>	<b>tælle</b>
A						
[a:]	[a]	[ɑ:]	[ɑ]			
<b>male</b>	<b>bal</b>	<b>vare</b>	<b>pragt</b>			

2 Rounded vowels:

(a) Rounded front vowels:

Y		Ø			
[y:]	[y]	[ø:]	[ø]	[œ:]	[œ]
<b>hyle</b>	<b>fyldte</b>	<b>føle</b>	<b>øl</b>	<b>gøre</b>	<b>børn</b>



2 DANISH: AN ESSENTIAL GRAMMAR

(b) Rounded back vowels:

U		O		Å			
[u:]	[u]	[o:]	[o]	[å:]	[å]	[ɔ:]	[ɔ]
<b>bule</b>	<b>kulde</b>	<b>skole</b>	<b>foto</b>	<b>måle</b>	<b>bombe</b>	<b>åre</b>	<b>bånd</b>

*Notes:*

1 The pronunciation of the letters **i**, **o**, **u**, **y** when representing short vowels is often more open than is usually associated with these letters:

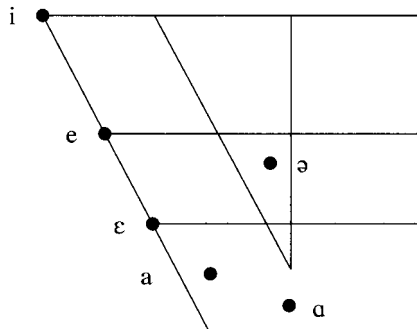
**finde** [ˈfɛnə], **bombe** [ˈbɑmbə], **kul** [kål], **skulle** [ˈsgølə]

2 Pronunciation of **e**, **æ**, **a**, **ø**, **å** before and after **r** is more open than in other positions:

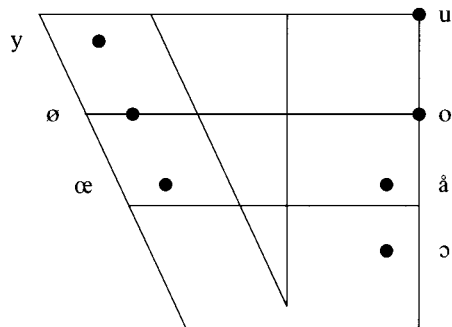
long vowels: **ren**, **træ**, **fare**, **frø**, **gøre**, **får**; short vowels: **fred**, **fræk**, **fra**, **var**, **krølle**, **børste**, **rådhus**

3 The position of Danish vowels:

Unrounded vowels



Rounded vowels



## 4 Vowels by articulation:

	Front		Back	
	Unrounded	Rounded	Unrounded	Rounded
<i>Closed</i>	i	y		u
<i>Half closed</i>	e	ø		o
<i>Half open</i>	ɛ	œ		â
<i>Open</i>	a		ɑ	ɔ

## 5 Approximate equivalent to pronunciation (here 'English'=British English):

Long <b>i</b>	[i:]	ee in English 'bee'
Short <b>i</b>	[ɪ]	i in English 'sin'
Long <b>e</b>	[e:]	No equivalent in English, cf. French 'les'
Short <b>e</b>	[ɛ]	i in English 'if'
Unstressed <b>e</b>	[ə]	initial a in English 'again'
Long <b>æ</b>	[ɛ:]	ai in English 'said'
Short <b>æ</b>	[ɛ]	e in English 'pet'
Long <b>a</b>	[a:]	a in English 'bad' but slightly more open
Short <b>a</b>	[a]	a in English 'hat'
Long (open) <b>a</b>	[a:]	a in English 'card'
Short (open) <b>a</b>	[a]	ea in English 'heart', but shorter
Long <b>y</b>	[y:]	No equivalent in English, cf. German ü in 'Bühne'
Short <b>y</b>	[y]	No equivalent in English, cf. German ü in 'Glück'
Long <b>ø</b>	[ø:]	No equivalent in English, cf. German ö in 'schön'
Short <b>ø</b>	[ø]	No equivalent in English, cf. French eux in 'deux'
Long (open) <b>ø</b>	[œ:]	No equivalent in English, cf. French eu in 'leur'
Short (open) <b>ø</b>	[œ]	No equivalent in English, cf. French eu in 'neuf'
Long <b>u</b>	[u:]	oo in English 'room'
Short <b>u</b>	[u]	u in English 'full'
Long <b>o</b>	[o:]	No equivalent in English, cf. German o in 'froh'
Short <b>o</b>	[o]	eau in French 'beau'
Long <b>â</b>	[â:]	No equivalent in English, French or German
Short <b>â</b>	[â]	No equivalent in English, French or German
Long (open) <b>â</b>	[ɔ:]	a in English 'all'
Short (open) <b>â</b>	[ɔ]	o in English 'hot'

*Note:* The pronunciation of **e** is very variable and difficult to predict. In unstressed syllables the letter **e** is pronounced as schwa [ə]:

**gribe** ['gri:bə] , **flue** ['flu:ə] , **gammel** ['gʌmə] , **billede** ['belədə] , **værelse** ['væ:rəlsə] , **fælles** ['fɛləs]

**-er** often merges and is pronounced [ə]: **sommer** ['sʊmə] , **søster** ['sʊsdə]  
**-re** and **-rer** are pronounced [ə]: **lære** ['lɛ:ə] , **lærer** ['lɛ:ə]

For the loss of **e** in the pronunciation of some words see 9.

## 2

## VOWEL LENGTH AND SPELLING

1 A double consonant or consonant group between two vowels usually indicates that the preceding vowel is short, a single consonant that it is long (but see 2.2 below):

<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>
<i>VCV</i>	<i>VCCV</i>
<b>læse</b>	<b>læsse</b>
<b>lyse</b>	<b>tyske</b>
<b>kæle</b>	<b>vælte</b>
<b>smile</b>	<b>lille</b>
<b>lune</b>	<b>kunne</b>
<b>skrabe</b>	<b>krabbe</b>

*Exceptions:*

1 Long vowel+double (long) consonant is found in some words in **æ**- (which is long): **æg—ægget, æt—ætten**, some words in **-dd, -tt: bredde, vidde, otte, sjette** and a few others: **hoste, påske**.

2 Vowels before **-gl, -gn** where the **g** is silent are long: **fugle, ligne**.

2 The single final consonants **b** and **n** usually follow a long vowel: **reb, gren**. But if the single final consonant is **m, p, t, k, g** (pronounced hard as [g]), **f**, the preceding vowel is usually short: **lam, krop, hat, blik, bryg, stof**. It is not always possible to detect whether the vowel is long or short from the written form, as one of the two consonants is usually dropped in final position in Danish. This is especially difficult in the case of **l, s**:

<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>
<b>sal</b>	<b>smal</b>
<b>sol</b>	<b>øl</b>
<b>stil</b>	<b>til</b>
<b>hus</b>	<b>bus</b>
<b>las</b>	<b>glas</b>

Only when these words are inflected (i.e. when a vowel is added after the consonant) can we determine from the single or double consonant what the vowel length is:

<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>
<b>salen</b>	<b>smalle</b>
<b>solen</b>	<b>øllet</b>
<b>huse</b>	<b>busser</b>
<b>lasen</b>	<b>glasset</b>

3 Final stressed vowels are usually long: **se, sy, tro, gå**.

*Exceptions:* These include some words usually unstressed in the sentence, e.g. personal pronouns: **du, vi, I, de**, the adverbs **nu, så**, and the interjection **ja**.

### 3 DIPHTHONGS

Danish diphthongs are of two kinds. Notice the spelling of these sounds.

- Diphthongs with [i] as their second component:

<b>aj, eg, ej, ig</b>	[ai]	<b>maj, leg, hej, mig, dig, sig</b>
<b>øg, øj</b>	[ɔi]	<b>løg, nøgle, høj, tøj, fløjte</b>

Rather rarely:

<b>uj</b>	[ui]	<b>huje</b>
-----------	------	-------------

- Diphthongs with [u] as their second component:

<b>iv</b>	[iu]	<b>ivrig, livlig, tvivl</b>
<b>ev</b>	[eu]	<b>blev, hev</b>
<b>ev</b>	[ɛu]	<b>evne, brev</b>
<b>yv</b>	[yu]	<b>syv, tyv</b>
<b>øv</b>	[øu]	<b>øvre, støv</b>
<b>øv</b>	[œu]	<b>støvle, vrøvl</b>
<b>ov</b>	[ɔu]	<b>lov, skov</b>
<b>ag</b>	[au]	<b>hagl</b>
<b>av</b>	[au]	<b>hav (sea)</b>
<b>av</b>	[au]	<b>gav</b>
<b>og</b>	[åu]	<b>bog, sprog</b>

### CONSONANT SOUNDS

#### 4 STOPS: **p, t, k**

1 There are nine stops in Danish:

	Unvoiced		Voiced
	Aspirated	Unaspirated	
<i>Lip sounds (bilabial)</i>	<b>p</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>m</b>
<i>Tongue tip sounds (alveolar)</i>	<b>t</b>	<b>d</b>	<b>n</b>
<i>Tongue root sounds (velar)</i>	<b>k</b>	<b>g</b>	<b>ŋ</b>

2 **p, t** and **k** in initial position before a full vowel are aspirated stops:

<b>p</b>	[p]	<b>passe, pose</b>
----------	-----	--------------------

<b>t</b>	[t]	<b>tand, til</b>
<b>k</b>	[k]	<b>kirke, komme</b>

In all other positions (including after **s-** and when doubled) **p, t, k** are unaspirated stops and become [b], [d], [g]:

<b>p</b>	[b]	<b>spille, tæppe, stop</b>
<b>t</b>	[d]	<b>støj, rotte, kat</b>
<b>k</b>	[g]	<b>sko, lokke, tak</b>

This produces homophones, so that **lapp**e and **labbe** are both pronounced as [ˈlabə].

3 Notice the following special pronunciations and spellings in loanwords:

<b>p-</b> is silent in the group <b>ps-</b>	<b>psykolog, pseudonym</b>
<b>qu</b> [k]	<b>enquete, mannequin</b>
	[kv]
	<b>quickstep, quiz</b>
<b>-t</b> is silent in some French loans	<b>buffet, debut, filet</b>
<b>-ti-</b> [ʃ]	<b>funktion, information, station</b>

## 5

STOPS: **b, d, g**

1 The letter **b** is pronounced [b] in all positions: **bil, briller, dyb, skæbne, åben**.

2 The letter **d** is usually pronounced in one of three ways:

(a) 'hard' **d** [d] initially and before a full vowel:

**dag, dusin, dø, djærv, drama, soldat, student, heldig**

(b) 'soft' **d** [ð] after a vowel and when doubled:

**mad, møde, trediv, smedje, bedre, sødme, hedde, sidde**

*Exceptions:*

1d is [d] in **addere, bredde, middag, vidde**.

2 **moder**, mother; **fader**, father; and **broder**, brother; are often abbreviated **mor, far, bror** in both pronunciation and spelling, but the **d** found in the plural forms of these words is pronounced [ð]: **mødre, fædre, brødre**.

(c) silent **d**:

(i) **d** is silent in the combinations:

<b>-ld:</b>	<b>ild, sild, kildre, melde</b>
<b>-nd:</b>	<b>mand, vind, dundre, kende</b>

**d** is, therefore, silent in words ending in **-ende**: **spændende, søskende, tyvende**:

**-rd:**                    **bord, gård, gærde**

*Exceptions:*

1 **ld, nd, rd** are pronounced [ld] [nd] [rd] respectively when they are followed by **-ig, -isk:**

<b>heldig, mandig, værdig</b>	(cf. silent <b>d</b> in <b>held, mand, værd</b> )
<b>heraldisk, indisk, nordisk</b>	(cf. silent <b>d</b> in <b>alder, ind, nord</b> )

2 **ld** is pronounced [ld] in the following frequent words incorporating **-ldr-:**

**aldrig, ældre, forældre, skildre**

3 **nd** is pronounced [nd] in many words incorporating **-ndr-:**

**andre, hindre, ændre**

(ii) **d** is also silent in the combinations:

<b>-ds:</b>	<b>spids, klods, vidste</b>
<b>-dt:</b>	<b>fedt, godt, skidt</b>

3 The letter **g** is usually pronounced in one of the following four ways:

(a) 'hard' **g** [g]:

before a full vowel:	<b>gæst, gade, liga</b>
when doubled:	<b>kigge, lægge</b>
before <b>-t:</b>	<b>vigtigt, vægt</b>
following a short vowel:	<b>mug, myg, ryg</b>
(cf. inflected forms:	<b>muggen, myggen, ryggen)</b>

(b) 'soft' **g** [j] (or silent) after **i, e, æ, a, y, ø:**

**krig, steg** (from the verb **stege**), **læge, dag, syg, søge**

(c) silent **g:**

(i) **g** is silent in the combinations **-lg** in some cases: **salg, valg**.

(ii) **g** is silent after **u:** **rug, uge, kugle**.

(iii) **g** becomes [u] after **ra, r, o, å:** **krage, sorg, bog, tåge**.

*Note:* Adjectives ending in **-g** do not have hard **g** in the neuter: **klogt** [klåud].

(d) Note also the following loanwords involving the letter **g:**

<b>g</b>	[dj] in some English loans	<b>gentleman, manager</b>
<b>g</b>	[d] in some English loans	<b>image, management</b>
<b>g</b>	[ʃ] in some French loans	<b>aubergine, logi, regi</b>

<b>g</b>	[ʒ] before <b>e</b>	<b>bagage, budget, garage, genere, ingeniør, prestige</b>
<b>-gn</b>	[nj] in some French loans	<b>champagne, cognac</b>

## 6

s, c, sc, x, z

<b>s</b>	[s]	<b>se, sol, spille, glas, vise</b>
<b>s</b>	is usually silent in French loans	<b>apropos, en gros, pommes frites, succes</b>
<b>-si-</b>	[ʃ]	<b>division, pension</b>
<b>c</b>	[s] before <b>i, e, æ, y, ø</b>	<b>cirkus, præcis, pjece, cæsar, cykel, cølibat</b>
<b>c</b>	[k] in other cases and before <b>a, o, u</b>	<b>café, computer, curling, picnic</b>
<b>sc</b>	[s] before <b>i, e</b>	<b>science fiction, scene</b>
	[sg] in other cases	<b>scoop, score, mascara, screene</b>
<b>x</b>	[s] initially	<b>xenofobi, xylofon</b>
<b>x</b>	[gs] after a vowel	<b>sex, taxa</b>
<b>z</b>	[s]	<b>benzin, jazz, ozon, zoologi</b>
<b>zz</b>	[ds] in some Italian loans	<b>pizza, mezzosopran</b>

## 7

f, h, j, sj, sh, ch

<b>f</b>	[f]	<b>fem, fisk, kaffe</b>
<b>f</b>	is silent in	<b>af</b>
<b>f</b>	[u] in <b>af-</b>	<b>affald, afsked</b>
<b>h</b>	[h]	<b>hest, hotel, hus</b>
<b>h</b>	is silent in <b>hj-, hv-</b>	<b>hjem, hjul, hjælpe, hjørne</b> (15 words in all)
		<b>hvad, hvem, hvid, hvis, hvor, hvordan</b> (some 30 words in all)
<b>j</b>	[j] before a vowel:	<b>jakke, jord, kjole, stjæle</b>
<b>j</b>	[ʃ] in some French loans:	<b>jalousi, jargon, journalist</b>
<b>j</b>	[dj] in some English loans	<b>jazz, jeans, jeep, job, juice</b>
<b>j</b>	is silent in	<b>vejr</b>
<b>sj</b>	[ʃ]	<b>sjov, sjuske, sjælden</b>
<b>sh</b>	[ʃ] in English loans	<b>shampoo, shorts, sherry, finish</b>
<b>ch</b>	[ʃ]	<b>chauffør, chef, chok, match</b>

## 8

l, n, ng, nk, r, v, w

<b>l</b>	[l]	<b>lille, luft, plante, folk</b>
	often silent in	<b>skal, skulle, til, vil</b>
<b>n</b>	[n]	<b>nabo, sne, skinne, ven</b>
<b>ng</b>	[ŋ]	<b>seng, bange, finger, synge</b>
<b>ng</b>	[ŋg] stressed <b>g</b> or before <b>a, u, o</b>	<b>fungere, tangent, tango</b>
<b>nk</b>	[ŋk] stressed <b>k</b> or before a consonant or <b>a, u, o</b>	<b>blanket, Frankrig, banko</b>
<b>nk</b>	[ŋg]	<b>tank, enke, synke, tænke</b>

*Note:*

<b>an</b>	[aŋ]	in the following:	<b>balance, branche, chance, restaurant</b>
<b>en</b>	[aŋ]	in the following:	<b>engagere, konkurrence, pension</b>
<b>on</b>	[ɔŋ]	in the following:	<b>beton, jargon, kupon, perron, konkurrere</b>
<b>r</b>	[r]		<b>ravn, ride, rose</b>
<b>r</b>	[ɔ]	in endings: vowel+ <b>r(e)</b> , <b>-er</b>	<b>være, roser, sender</b>
<b>r</b>		is silent in French loans	<b>atelier, foyer</b>
<b>v</b>	[v]		<b>vask, vise, kvinde, svare, avis</b>
<b>v</b>	[u]	(see 3)	<b>hævn, tavle, sovs</b>
<b>v</b>		is silent in the ending <b>-lv</b>	<b>selv, sølv, halv, guld, tolv</b>

*Exceptions:*

**lv** is pronounced [lv] in **hvælv, ulv** and in inflected forms: **selve, halve**.

<b>w</b>	[v] or [w]	<b>sweater, weekend, whisky</b>
<b>w</b>	[u]	<b>bowle, cowboy, show</b>

## 9

### SYLLABLE LOSS AND VOWEL MERGER

1 Unstressed **e** [ə] in a medial syllable is often not pronounced:

**interessant** [intrə'san'd], **elleve** (or **elve**) ['ɛlvə], **mærkelig** ['mæɔgli], **husene** ['hu:'snə], **lugtede** ['lågðə], **faldende** ['falnə], **cyklen** [or **cyklen**] ['syglən]

This also occurs in the present tense of certain common verbs, where a consonant+unstressed **e** is not pronounced:

**beder** ['be'ɔ], **klæder** ['klɛ:ɔ], **tager** [ta'], **bliver** ['bli'ɔ], **giver** ['gi'ɔ], **siger** ['si'ɔ], **bruger** ['bru:ɔ], **spørger** ['sbœɔ], **bærer** ['bɛɔ], **skærer** ['sgɛɔ], **rører** ['rœɔ]

2 In rapid speech unstressed **e** [ə] tends to merge (i.e. adopt the same pronunciation) as adjacent vowels:

	<i>Normal tempo</i>	<i>Rapid tempo</i>
<b>stue</b>	['sdu:ə]	[sdu:u]
<b>pige</b>	['pi:ə]	[pi:i]

## 10

### PRONUNCIATION OF SOME FREQUENT WORDS

Some words of high frequency are not pronounced phonetically. They include the following, which are often found in unstressed positions in the clause (see 13).



Pronouns:

<b>jeg</b>	[ja]	<b>De</b>	[di]	<b>de</b>	[di]
<b>mig</b>	[ma]	<b>dig</b>	[da]	<b>sig</b>	[sa]

Modal verbs:

<b>kan</b>	[ka]	<b>skal</b>	[sga]	<b>vil</b>	[ve]
<b>kunne</b>	[ku]	<b>skulle</b>	[sgu]		

Verbs:

<b>have</b>	[ha]	<b>blive</b>	[bli:]	<b>tage</b>	[ta]
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Adverbs:

<b>ikke</b>	[eg]
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Conjunctions, etc.:

<b>og</b>	[ɔ]	<b>at</b>	[ad] or [a]
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**Han lå *og* sov./Hun sagde *at* hun ville komme i dag.**

***at* as an infinitive marker [ɔ]:**

**Glem *ikke at* skrive.**

Prepositions:

<b>med</b>	[mɛ]	<b>til</b>	[te]	<b>ved</b>	[ve]
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## THE GLOTTAL STOP

### 11

#### THE GLOTTAL STOP ('STØD')

1 In Danish the glottal stop or 'stød' (a sound like that found in Cockney 'bottle' [bɔ'l] 'water' [wɔ:'ə] or 'little' [li'l]) is a functional phoneme that is used to distinguish forms that are otherwise similar. To show this we list below some words with and without 'stød':

*No 'stød'*

**man**  
**hun**  
**mig**  
**møller**

one  
she  
me  
miller

*'Stød'*

**mand'**  
**hund'**  
**maj'**  
**Møll'er**

man  
dog  
May  
(surname)

*No 'stød'*

**maler** painter  
**byger** (plural of **byge**) showers  
**tanke** (definite of **tanke**) the thought

*'Stød'*

**ma'ler** paints  
**by'er** (plural of **by**) town  
**tan'ken** (definite of **tank**) the tank

Notice that in the last two cases 'stød' is used to indicate a monosyllabic stem (**by**, **tank**) and distinguish it from a bisyllabic stem (**byge**, **tanke**).

*Note:* The 'stød' is not found in some southern Danish dialects.

2 General rules for 'stød':

'Stød' can only be present:

- in stressed syllables (though not all stressed syllables)
- in voiced syllables.

Only two syllable types can therefore have 'stød':

- syllables with a long vowel; the long vowel then carries the 'stød':

**i's**, **bi'l**, **li'v**, **bageri'**, **be'n**, **café'**, **æ'g**, **hu's**, **ny'**, **bå'd**

- syllables with a short vowel+voiced consonant; the voiced consonant then carries the 'stød' (but 'stød' is not necessarily present in all cases):

**ler'**, **mand'**, **kam'**, **skal'**, **bord'**, **grøn'**

A word such as the adjective **let** can never therefore have 'stød', as it has a short vowel and voiceless consonant. Nor can, for example, **hat**, **hest**, **kop**, **snaps**.

Notice that [b], [d], [g] are voiceless in Danish and do not take 'stød': **hoppe**, **otte**, **lægge**.

It is primarily monosyllables that have 'stød': **barn'**, **frem'**, **gå'**, **grøn'**, **mund'**.

## 12

### INFLECTED FORMS—'STØD' VARIATIONS

The general rule is that inflexion does not alter the 'stød' pattern in inflected forms:

with 'stød'	<b>hu's</b> , <b>hu'set</b> ; <b>vej'</b> , <b>vej'en</b> ; <b>bo'</b> , <b>bor'</b>
without 'stød'	<b>drage</b> , <b>drager</b> ; <b>fare</b> , <b>farer</b>

In the summary below the focus is, however, on those cases where the pattern *does* change.

1 'Stød' in nouns:

Plural forms:

**-r** plurals: use is the same in the singular and the plural (either with or without 'stød' throughout).

**-er** plurals: 'stød' is lost in the plural of nouns ending in **-l**, **-m**, **-n**, **-r** +consonant: **en form'**, **former**

‘stød’ is lost in the plural of nouns ending in **-nd, -rd** where the **d** is silent: **en stund’, stunder**

‘stød’ is lost in the plural of nouns ending in **d [ð]**: **en tid’, tider**

**-e** plurals: ‘stød’ is often lost in the plural: **et hu’s, huse**

**Zero** plurals: use is the same in the singular and the plural (either with or without ‘stød’ throughout): **mu’s, mu’s.**

Nouns with end article:

Nouns ending in a voiced consonant may add ‘stød’: **guly, gul’vet.**

2 ‘Stød’ in adjectives:

Neuter form in **-t**: most adjectives do not change.

Adjectives ending in a stressed vowel lose ‘stød’ when adding the neuter ending: **fri’, frit.**

Adjectives ending in **d [ð]** lose ‘stød’ when adding the neuter ending: **dø’d, dødt.**

Plural forms in **-e**:

Monosyllables generally lose ‘stød’ in the plural: **dum’, dumme.**

Comparatives and superlatives:

Adjectives with ‘stød’ generally lose it in the comparative and superlative: **nem’, nemmere, nemmest; se’n, senere, senest.**

3 ‘Stød’ in verbs:

Weak verbs (Conjugations I, II, III) tend to lose ‘stød’ in the past tense if they already possess it in the infinitive or present tense.

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>bo’</b>	<b>bor’</b>	<b>boede</b>	<b>bo’et</b>	live, stay
<b>tale</b>	<b>ta’ler</b>	<b>talte</b>	<b>ta’lt</b>	talk
<b>dø’</b>	<b>dør’</b>	<b>døde</b>	<b>død’</b>	die

Strong verbs (Conjugation IV): those with ‘stød’ in the infinitive or present tense tend to lose the ‘stød’ in the past participle.

<b>stå’</b>	<b>står’</b>	<b>stod’</b>	<b>stået</b>	stand
<b>finde</b>	<b>find’er</b>	<b>fand’t</b>	<b>fundet</b>	find

**-r** stem verbs only have ‘stød’ in the past tense:

<b>bære</b>	<b>bærer</b>	<b>bar’</b>	<b>båret</b>	carry
<b>fare</b>	<b>farer</b>	<b>for’</b>	<b>faret</b>	hurry

Imperatives:

If the infinitive has a long vowel, ‘stød’ appears in the imperative: **købe, kø’b!**

If the infinitive has a short vowel with a voiced consonant, the consonant takes ‘stød’ in the imperative: **kalde, kald’!**

## STRESS

13  
STRESS

In Danish—as in English—there is an important distinction between words that have stress in the clause and those that do not. All the words that are significant for the meaning of a clause are stressed (see 14). This is called clause stress. But different syllables within these stressed words may also be stressed. This is known as word stress. The method shown for marking stress is illustrated here:

**Hun er 'nitten 'år og stu'derende .** She is 19 years old and a student.

What follows is a series of lists for reference:

- of those types of words in the clause which have clause stress
- of those types of words which are usually unstressed
- of phrases with two-word stress
- of stressed and unstressed syllables within words
- of stressed and unstressed prefixes and suffixes within words.

14  
STRESSED IN THE CLAUSE*Nouns*

Nouns are usually stressed:

**'Lis har 'købt et 'hus.** Lis has bought a house.  
**'Huset 'har et 'tag .** The house has a roof.

*Exceptions:*

Nouns expressing quantity:

**et antal 'børn** a number of children

Titles before proper nouns:

**direktør 'Nielsen** Director Nielsen

*Verbs*

Simple full verbs are usually stressed:

**'Eva 'spiser og 'drikker 'hele 'dagen .** Eva eats and drinks all day.  
**'Eva 'drikker en 'øl .** Eva is drinking a beer.

But verbs are unstressed when followed by a subject complement:

Hun blev 'syg .

She fell ill.

SComp.

Han er poli'tibetjent .

He is a policeman.

SComp.

*Note:* er is pronounced with a short [ɛɔ] .

*Expressions of manner, place, time (MPT-expressions)*

These expressions usually have stress.

'Nu bor hun i 'Sakskøbing .

Now she lives in Sakskøbing.

MPT

MPT

'Lukker for'retningen 'tidigt i 'dag?

Is the shop shutting early today?

MPT

MPT

## 15

### UNSTRESSED IN THE CLAUSE

*Modal verbs and modal equivalents*

'Svend vil være pro'fessor .

Svend wants to be a professor.

'Hans gider ikke skrive 'brev .

Hans can't be bothered to write a letter.

*Pronouns and hv- words (interrogatives)*

jeg [ja], du, han, hun, den, det [de], vi, I, De, de [di] (I, you, he, she, it, it, we, you, they)

Hvad 'sagde du?

What did you say?

mig [ma], dig [da], sig [sa], ham, hende, os, jer, Dem, dem (me, you, himself, etc., him, her, us, you, them)

*Exception:* When the object pronoun is in initial position or is contrasted, it acquires stress:

'Ham elsker jeg (men 'hende synes jeg ikke om).

Him I love (but her I do not like).

(Jeg 'elsker ham.

I love him.)

Possessive pronouns when used with a noun:

min, din, sin, hans, hendes,

my, your, his, etc., his, her,

dens, dets, vores, jeres, Deres, deres

its, our, your, their

Det er 'vores 'hus .

It's our house.

*Conjunctions*

og [ɔ] , men, at  
da, når, om, hvis

Han 'sagde at han drak 'gin og 'tonic .

and, but, that

when/since, when, whether, if

He said that he drank gin and tonic.

## 16

## TWO-WORD STRESS

Where two or more words belong together in one semantic unit, the last word in the phrase is stressed.

*Preposition+noun*

(Kig) i 'bogen .

Look in the book.

(De kommer) i 'dag .

They're coming today.

*Indefinite article+noun*

en 'bil

a car

et 'hus

a house

*Verb+particle*

gå 'ud

go out

vende 'om

turn round

*Verb<sub>1</sub> +verb<sub>2</sub>*

Jeg skal 'gå .

I must go.

De var 'kommet .

They had arrived.

*Infinitive marker+verb*

at 'gå

to go

at 'komme

to come

*Verb+complement*

(Han) er 'høj .

He is tall.

(Hun) er 'slank .

She is slim.

*end/som +the word compared*

(Han er højere) end 'Ole .

He is taller than Ole.

(Han er lige så ung) som 'hende.

He is just as young as she is.

*Pronoun+adverb*

**dette 'her**  
this

**de 'der**  
those

*Time, measurement*

**klokken 'tre**  
three o'clock

**(to) kopper 'kaffe**  
two cups of coffee

*First name+surname*

**Anders 'Nielsen**

## 17

## STRESSED AND UNSTRESSED SYLLABLES

Many indigenous non-compounds with more than one syllable, and all those with unstressed **e** [ə], have stress on the first syllable and either secondary stress or no stress on the following syllables:

Stress on the first syllable:

**'cykel, 'venlig, 'huse, 'englænder, 'al|tid, 'ejen|dom**  
**'skrive, 'skriver, 'skrivende**

Stress on another syllable:

- words with the prefixes **be-**, **er-**, **for-**: **be'retning** (account), **be'tale** (pay), **er'fare** (experience), **for'nemmelse** (feeling)
- words with the suffix **-ere**: **par'kere** (park), **stu'dere** (study)
- many foreign loans: **restau'rant** (restaurant), **re'vy** (revue), **universi'tet** (university)
- words with foreign suffixes: **regis'sør** (stage manager), **gym'nast** (gymnast), **musi'kant** (musician).

Compounds (words made up of two (or more) words) usually have stress on the first syllable: **'arbejdsplads, 'morgenmad, 'skrivebord, 'læsebog**

Some problem words:

Many words that are familiar from English are, however, stressed differently from English:

**chau'før, choko'lade, demo'krat, demonstra'tion, direk'tør, fa'milie,**  
**fi'gur, institu'tion, interes'seret, journa'list, 'juli, ka'tolsk, kul'tur,**  
**littera'tur, milli'on, mi'nut, mo'del, na'tur, ner'vøs, passa'ger, poli'tik,**  
**por'tion, pri'vat, pro'gram, refe'rence, religi'on, stu'dent, toi'let,**  
**traditio'nel, vegeta'tion**

## 18

## STRESSED PREFIXES

These include amplifying, negating and contrasting prefixes.

**a-, ante-, anti-, eks-, hyper-, mis-, pseudo-, semi-, super-, ultra-, und-, van-, vice-, ærke-**

'asocial, 'antedatere, 'antisemitisk, 'eksmand, 'hyperaktiv, 'mistanke,  
'pseudovidenskabelig, 'semifinale, 'supernova, 'ultrahurtig, 'undgå,  
'vanvittig, 'vicedirektør, 'ærkedansk

## 19

## STRESSED SUFFIXES

Many of these were originally loan suffixes.

-abel, -al, -ance, -ant, -ast, -at, -ere, -esse, -graf, -grafi, -ik, -isme, -ist, -sion, -tet, -ør, -øs, -øse:

vari'abel, origi'nal, tole'rance, konso'nant, kon'trast, appa'rat,  
koncen'trere, stewar'desse, foto'graf, bibliogra'fi, repub'lik, tu'risme,  
receptio'nist, ekspan'sion, kontinui'tet, konduk'tør, gene'røs, mass'øse

## 20

## UNSTRESSED PREFIXES

These include many loan prefixes.

ab-, be-, de-, er-, for-, ge-, in-, (il-, im-, ir-), intro-, kom-, kon- (kol-, kor-), mono-, pan-, para-, peri-,  
poly-, trans-:

ab'norm, be'tale, degra'dere, er'hverv, for'stå, ge'mytlig,  
intro'duktion, inva'lid, kompagn'i, kon'cern, mono'pol, pante'isme,  
para'doks, peri'fer, poly'krom, trans'port

*Exceptions:*

'in - to express negation:  
'for - meaning 'before', 'front':

'ineffektiv, 'intolerant  
'forstad, i 'forgårs

## 21

## UNSTRESSED SUFFIXES

-de, -else, -ig, -(n)ing, -isk, -me, -ske:

'højde, 'rettelse, 'rolig, 'regning, e'rotisk, 'sødme, 'sangerske





# 2 NOUNS

## GENDER

### 22 GENDER

Danish nouns are either common gender (**en-** words) or neuter (**et-** words). The corresponding indefinite article (see 38) is **en** or **et**, 'a(n)'. About 75 per cent of nouns are **en-** words and 25 per cent **et-** words.

<i>Common gender</i> <i>Indefinite</i>		<i>Neuter</i> <i>Indefinite</i>	
<b>en mand</b> a man	<b>en uge</b> a week	<b>et hus</b> a house	<b>et æble</b> an apple

Gender determines the form with end article (definite article) singular (see 38):

<i>Common gender</i> <i>Definite</i>		<i>Neuter</i> <i>Definite</i>	
<b>manden</b> the man	<b>ugen</b> the week	<b>huset</b> the house	<b>æblet</b> the apple

Gender also determines the form of the adjective and some pronouns, as these agree in gender and number with nouns (see 44–49, 68, 74):

**en stor pige**  
a big girl  
**pigen er stor**  
the girl is big

**et stort hus**  
a big house  
**huset er stort**  
the house is big

### 23 GENDER RULES

1 Common gender by meaning:

Personal names and nouns denoting human beings, animals, plants, trees, festivals and months and names of rivers are generally common gender:

**en dreng**, a boy; **en kone**, a wife; **en lærer**, a teacher; **en søster**, a sister; **en udlænding**, a foreigner; **en gas**, a goose; **en hund**, a dog; **en kat**, a cat; **en ko**, a cow; **en laks**, a salmon; **en rose**, a rose; **en birk**, a birch; **en eg**, an oak; **i julen**, at Christmas; **Themsen**, the Thames

Gender in proper nouns is usually shown by congruence with other words:

<b>Bo er ung endnu.</b>	Bo is still young.	( <b>ung</b> =common gender)
<b>Januar var kold.</b>	January was cold.	( <b>kold</b> =common gender)
cf. also		
<b>Danmark er ikke stort.</b>	Denmark is not big.	( <b>stort</b> =neuter)

*Exceptions:* **et barn**, a child; **et bud**, a messenger; **et individ**, an individual; **et medlem**, a member; **et menneske**, a human being; **et vidne**, a witness; **et dyr**, an animal; **et egern**, a squirrel; **et føl**, a foal; **et kid**, a kid; **et får**, a sheep; **et lam**, a lamb; **et møl**, a moth; **et svin**, a pig; **et æsel**, a donkey; **et bær**, a berry; **et frø**, a seed; **et træ**, a tree; compounds in **-bær**, **-frø**, **-træ**.

2 Common gender by form, in nouns with the following suffixes:

-ance	<b>en ambulance</b> , an ambulance
-ans	<b>en substans</b> , a substance
-ant	<b>en repræsentant</b> , a representative
-de	<b>en bredde</b> , a breadth; <b>en længde</b> , a length
-dom	<b>en ejendom</b> , a property; <b>en sygdom</b> , an illness
-é	<b>en allé</b> , an avenue; <b>en café</b> , a café
-else	<b>en bevægelse</b> , a movement; <b>en skuffelse</b> , a disappointment

*Exceptions:* **et spøgelse**, a ghost; **et værelse**, a room.

-en	verbal nouns: <b>en formåen</b> , an ability; <b>en kunnen</b> , a capacity; <b>en væren</b> , (a) being; <b>en kommen og gåen</b> , coming and going
-ence	<b>en konference</b> , a conference
-ens	<b>en frekvens</b> , a frequency
-er	<b>en lærer</b> , a teacher
-hed	<b>en lejlighed</b> , a flat; <b>en tavshed</b> , a silence
-ik	<b>en grammatik</b> , a grammar
-ing	<b>en regning</b> , a bill; <b>en slægtning</b> , a relative; <b>en yndling</b> , a favourite
-ion	<b>en diskussion</b> , a discussion; <b>en situation</b> , a situation
-isme	<b>socialisme(n)</b> , socialism
-ør	<b>en direktør</b> , a director

For feminine suffixes see [23.7](#) below.

3 Neuter by meaning:

Nouns denoting substances, areas and localities, letters of the alphabet and nouns formed from other word classes (e.g. pronouns, interjections) are generally neuter:

(**et**) **brød**, bread; **glas**, glass; **jern**, iron; **kød**, meat; **papir**, paper; **snavs**, dirt; **vand**, water; **et kontinent**, a continent; **et sogn**, a parish; **et torv**, a square; **et langt i**, a long i; **et ja**, a yes; **jeget**, the ego

*Exceptions:* **en by**, a town; **en ø**, an island; **verden**, the world.

This also applies to proper names for geographical locations. In the case of countries the word **landet** is assumed:

**Italien er dejligt om sommeren**, Italy is lovely in summer; **det lille Danmark**, little Denmark

*Exceptions:* Notice that for towns the word **byen** is assumed: **(Byen) København er stor**.

4 Neuter by form, in nouns with the following suffixes:

**-dømme**      **et omdømme**, a reputation  
**-ed**            **et hoved**, a head  
**-ende**         **et udseende**, an appearance; **et velbefindende**, a well-being

*Exceptions:* These include people: **en gående**, a pedestrian; **en studerende**, a student.

**-ri**            **et bageri**, a bakery; **et batteri**, a battery  
**-um**          **et gymnasium**, a sixth-form college; **et museum**, a museum

5 Suffixes where gender varies include:

**-al**          **en lineal**, a ruler; BUT: **et ideal**, an ideal  
**-ar**          **en bibliotekar**, a librarian; BUT: **et eksemplar**, a copy  
**-at**          usually neuter: **et certifikat**, a certificate; BUT: (people) **en demokrat**, a democrat  
**-ent**         **en konsulent**, a consultant; BUT: **et departement**, a department  
**-i**            **en industri**, an industry; BUT: **et parti**, a political party  
**-sel**         **en trussel**, a threat; BUT: **et fængsel**, a prison  
**-skab**       **en egenskab**, a quality; BUT: **et ægteskab**, a marriage

6 Compound nouns:

These nearly always take the gender of the second element in the compound:

**en skole+et køkken**→**et skolekøkken**, a school kitchen  
**et køkken+en kniv**→**en køkkenkniv**, a kitchen knife

*Exceptions:*

**et måltid**, a meal, cf. **en tid**, a time

**et bogstav**, a letter of the alphabet, cf. **en stav**, a stave

7 Masculines and feminines:

Female suffixes include: **-esse**, **-inde**, **-ske**, **-øse**.

Matrimonial feminines are now rare: **baronesse**, baroness; **grevinde**, countess. Functional feminines in **-inde**, **-ske**, **-trice**, etc., have recently been curtailed as a result of political correctness: e.g. **lærer** and **lærerinde**→**lærer**, teacher; **nabo** and **naboerske**→**nabo**, neighbour.

Some gender-neutral terms have also been introduced recently: **folketingsmand**→**folketingsmedlem**, MP.

In a few cases where the gender is important these distinctions have been retained: **elsker**→**elskerinde**, lover; **samlever**→**samleverske**, cohabitee; **ven**→**veninde**, friend.

## PLURALS

### 24

#### PLURALS AND DECLENSIONS

Danish nouns have three ways of forming regular plurals, by adding one of the following endings:

**-(e)r**, **-e**, **zero** (i.e. no plural ending)

About 75 per cent of nouns form the plural with **-(e)r**, 15 per cent in **-e**, and 10 per cent in **zero**. Note that nouns of both genders are found in all groups.

Nouns are grouped into the following three declensions according to their plural form.

#### *First declension*

**-(e)r**

<b>en avis</b>	<b>to aviser</b>
a newspaper	two newspapers
<b>et værelse</b>	<b>to værelser</b>
a room	two rooms

#### *Second declension*

**-e**

<b>en lærer</b>	<b>to lærere</b>
a teacher	two teachers
<b>et land</b>	<b>to lande</b>
a country	two countries

#### *Third declension*

**zero** plural

<b>en fisk</b>	<b>to fisk</b>
a fish	two fish
<b>et lys</b>	<b>to lys</b>
a light	two lights

### 25

#### PREDICTING PLURALS

Most plural forms can be predicted accurately from the form of the singular:

1 Structure and gender:

Monosyllabic common gender nouns ending in a consonant:

add <b>-e</b>	<b>en hund</b>	<b>to hunde</b>
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Polysyllabic common gender nouns ending in **-e**:

add <b>-r</b>	<b>en pige</b>	<b>to piger</b>
---------------	----------------	-----------------

Polysyllabic nouns ending in a consonant:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>en regning</b>	<b>to regninger</b>
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Polysyllabic nouns with stress on the last syllable:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>en appelsin</b>	<b>to appelsiner</b>
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2 Form of the final syllable:

Nouns ending in **-dom**:

add <b>-me</b>	<b>en ejendom</b>	<b>to ejendomme</b>
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Nouns ending in unstressed **-er**:

add <b>-e</b>	<b>en dansker</b>	<b>to danskere</b>
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Nouns ending in **-hed**:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>en nyhed</b>	<b>to nyheder</b>
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Nouns ending in **-i**:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>et vaskeri</b>	<b>to vaskerier</b>
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Nouns ending in **-ion**:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>en station</b>	<b>to stationer</b>
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Nouns ending in **-skab**:

add <b>-er</b>	<b>et venskab</b>	<b>to venskaber</b>
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Nouns ending in **-um** drop **-um** and add **-er**:

<b>et museum</b>		<b>to museer</b>
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## 26

### PLURALS IN **-(E)R** (**EN GADE—GADER; ET BILLEDE—BILLEDER**)

This group (known as the first declension) includes:

1 Almost all words ending in a vowel, including:

(a) Nouns ending in unstressed **-e** (which add **-r** in the plural):

**en krone—kroner**, crown; **en lampe—lamper**, lamp; **et menneske—mennesker**, human being; **et vindue—vinduer**, window

*Exception:* **et øje—øjne**, eye.

(b) Nouns ending in a stressed vowel:

**en by—byer**, town; **en ske—skeer**, spoon; **et træ—træer**, tree; **en ø—øer**, island; **en a—åer**, (small) river

*Exception:* **en sko—sko**, shoe.

2 Polysyllabic nouns, especially derivatives and loanwords, many of which have end stress:

**en avis—aviser**, newspaper; **en hilsen—hils(e)ner**, greeting; **et køkken—kø(k)e(n)er**, kitchen; **en måned—måned**, month; **en paraply—paraplyer**, umbrella; **en tangent—tangenter**, tangent, piano key; **en telefon—telefoner**, telephone; **en turist—turister**, tourist

3 Polysyllabic nouns ending in **-hed, -skab**:

**en enhed—enheder**, unit; **et landskab—landskaber**, landscape

4 Many monosyllabic common gender nouns ending in a consonant:

**en blomst—blomster**, flower; **en flod—floder**, river; **en slægt—slægter**, family; **en ven—venner**, friend

## 27

### PLURALS IN -E (EN DAG—DAGE; ET HUS—HUSE)

This group (known as the second declension) includes:

1 Many monosyllabic common gender nouns ending in a consonant (cf. 26.4 above):

**en del—dele**, part; **en dreng—dreng**, boy; **en fugl—fugle**, bird; **en krig—krige**, war; **en løgn—løgne**, lie; **en stol—stole**, chair; **en vej—veje**, road

2 Some monosyllabic neuter nouns:

**et bord—borde**, table; **et brev—breve**, letter; **et land—lande**, country

3 Nouns ending in unstressed **-er** (often denoting people):

**en arbejder—arbejdere**, worker; **en kunstner—kunstnere**, artist; **en lærer—lærere**, teacher; **en svensker—svenskere**, Swede; **en Århusianer—Århusianere**, inhabitant of Århus

4 Nouns ending in **-dom, -(n)ing**:

**en ejendom—ejendomme**, property; **en sygdom—sygdomme**, illness; **en udlænding—udlændinge**, foreigner; **en slægtning—slægtninge**, relative

## 28

ZERO-PLURAL (**EN SKO—SKO; ET ÅR—ÅR**)

This group (known as the third declension) includes:

1 Many monosyllabic neuter nouns:

**et bær—bær**, berry; **et dyr—dyr**, animal; **et glas—glas**, glass; **et kort—kort**, card; **et sprog—sprog**, language; **et tal—tal**, number; **et æg—æg**, egg; **et år—år**, year

2 Some polysyllabic neuter nouns ending in a consonant:

**et forhold—forhold**, relationship; **et forsøg—forsøg**, attempt

3 Some monosyllabic common gender nouns:

**en fejl—fejl**, mistake; **en mus—mus**, mouse; **en sko—sko**, shoe; **en sten—sten**, stone; **en ting—ting**, thing

4 Nouns (for temporary occupations) ending in **-ende**:

**en rejsende—rejsende**, traveller; **en studerende—studerende**, student

## 29

PLURALS WITH A VOWEL CHANGE (**EN TAND—TÆNDER**)

1 Vowel change+er (first declension):

**A→Æ**

<b>en hovedstad</b>	<b>hovedstæder</b>	capital
<b>en kraft</b>	<b>kræfter</b>	power
<b>en nat</b>	<b>nætter</b>	night
<b>en tand</b>	<b>tænder</b>	tooth

**O→Ø**

<b>en bog</b>	<b>bøger</b>	book
<b>en bonde</b>	<b>bønder</b>	farmer
<b>en fod</b>	<b>fødder</b>	feet
<b>en ko</b>	<b>køer</b>	cow

**Å→Æ**

<b>en hånd</b>	<b>hænder</b>	hand
<b>en tå</b>	<b>tæer</b>	toe



2 Vowel change+e (second declension):

<b>A→Æ</b>		
en far (fader)	<b>fædre</b>	father
<b>A→Ø</b>		
en datter	<b>døtre</b>	daughter
<b>O→Ø</b>		
en bror (broder)	<b>brødre</b>	brother
en mor (moder)	<b>mødre</b>	mother

3 Vowel change+zero (third declension):

<b>A→Æ</b>		
en mand	<b>mænd</b>	man
<b>A→Ø</b>		
et barn	<b>børn</b>	child
<b>Å→Æ</b>		
en gas	<b>gæs</b>	goose

## 30

PLURALS OF NOUNS IN **-EL, -EN, -ER (EN SØSTER—SØSTRE)**

Nouns ending in unstressed **-e+l, -n, -r**, often drop the stem **-e-** in the plural, as well as the second part of any preceding double consonants.

1 **-er** plurals (first declension):

en aften	<b>aft(e)ner</b>	evening	et eksempel	<b>eksempler</b>	example
en kartoffel	<b>kartofler</b>	potato	et køkken	<b>kø(k)ner</b>	kitchen

2 **-e** plurals (second declension):

en køelder	<b>køeldre</b>	cellar	et nummer	<b>numre</b>	number
en søster	<b>søstre</b>	sister	et register	<b>registre</b>	register

## 31

## NOUNS DOUBLING THE FINAL CONSONANT

Nouns ending in a short stressed vowel double the following consonant when adding the plural ending (or end article) (see also 2):

en bus	<b>busser</b>	bus
en butik	<b>butikker</b>	shop
en hat	<b>hatte</b>	hat
et hotel	<b>hoteller</b>	hotel
en ven	<b>venner</b>	friend

en væg  
en sygdom

vægge  
sygdomme

wall  
illness

## 32

## PLURALS OF LOANWORDS

1 Loanwords from Latin and Italian:

These tend to retain the plural form from their original language:

et faktum  
et visum

fakta  
visa

fact  
visa

But note the adaptation to Danish inflexions in:

et drama  
en kollega  
en cello  
et konto  
et gymnasium  
et museum  
et centrum  
et kursus

dramaer  
kolleg(a)er  
celloer  
konti/kontoer  
gymnasier  
museer  
centrer/centrum(m)er  
kurser/kursus

drama  
colleague  
cello  
account  
sixth-form college  
museum  
centre  
course

2 Loans from English:

(a) Some loans retain their plural in **-s** at least as an alternative to the Danish plural form:

en check—check(s); en cowboy—cowboys/cowboyer; en fan—fans; et foto—fotos/fotoer; en/et gag—gags; en jumper—jumpers/ jumpere; et party—parties/partyer

(b) Notice, however, adaptation to Danish inflexion in:

en baby—babyer; en shop—shopper; en weekend—weekender en computer—computere; en sweater—sweatere en film—film; et job—job; et point—point

(c) Some nouns occurring in the plural or collective only have a form in **-s**:

conflakes, jeans, odds, shorts

## 33

## COUNT AND NON-COUNT NOUNS

1 Count nouns are nouns that have both a singular and a plural form. They represent individual entities and can be preceded by an indefinite article and by numerals.

en pige  
a girl

to piger  
two girls

en sko  
a shoe

to sko  
two shoes

Count nouns are often words for concrete entities and creatures. Some abstract nouns are count nouns: **evne**, ability; **spørgsmål**, question.

Non-count nouns are only found in the singular form:

<b>kaffe (-n)</b> coffee	<b>mælk (-en)</b> milk	<b>vand (-et)</b> water
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2 Non-count nouns are often words for materials and substances.

Most abstract nouns are non-count nouns: **kedsomhed**, boredom; **lykke**, happiness.

*Note:* A few nouns have both a count plural and a collective plural form:

	<i>Count plural</i>	<i>Collective plural</i>
<b>en mand</b>	<b>mænd</b>	<b>mand</b>
e.g. <b>en gruppe på 10 mand</b> , a group of ten men		
<b>en øl</b>	<b>øl</b> (bottles of beer)	<b>øl</b> (types of beer)
e.g. <b>Han kom med tre øller</b> . He arrived with three bottles of beer.		

### 34

#### NOUNS WITH NO PLURAL FORM

These include:

- 1 Verbal nouns ending in **-en**: **grublen**, brooding; **hensynstagen**, consideration. See also [23.2](#).
- 2 Abstract nouns: **ansvar**, responsibility; **fattigdom**, poverty
- 3 Substances and materials: **kød**, meat; **sne**, snow; **vand**, water

*Note:* Plurals of nouns of this kind are used to indicate types or makes, 'kinds of': **teer**, teas; **vine**, wines.

- 4 Nouns indicating quantity: **fire kilo ost**, four kilos of cheese  
**tre liter mælk**, three litres of milk

### 35

#### NOUNS WITH NO SINGULAR FORM

These include:

- 1 Articles of clothing: **bukser**, trousers; **trusser**, knickers; **tøj**, clothes
- 2 Other collectives: **briller**, glasses; **penge**, money; **søskende**, brothers and sisters

### 36

#### DIFFERENCES IN NUMBER

1 Singular in English, plural in Danish:

**kontanter**, cash; **møbler**, furniture; **oplysninger**, information; **penge**, money; **råd**, advice

Notice: **møbler**, furniture—**et møbel**, a piece of furniture; **nyheder**, news —**en nyhed**, a piece of news; **råd**, advice—**et råd**, a piece of advice.

2 Plural in English, singular in Danish:

**indhold**, contents; **løn**, wages; **saks**, pair of scissors; **statistik** (and others in **-ik**), statistics; **trappe**, stairs

## THE GENITIVE

### 37

#### GENITIVES

1 The genitive ending **-s** is added to the indefinite singular or to the indefinite or definite plural form:

**en drengs hund**  
a boy's dog  
**et barns værelse**  
a child's room  
**drenges hunde**  
boys' dogs  
**børns værelser**  
children's rooms

**drengens hund**  
the boy's dog  
**barnets værelse**  
the child's room  
**drengenes hunde**  
the boys' dogs  
**børnenes værelser**  
the children's rooms

2 Proper nouns also take the genitive **-s**: **Torbens kat**, Torben's cat; **Grundtvigs salmer**, Grundtvig's hymns; **Danmarks hovedstad**, the capital of Denmark.

3 If a noun ends in **-s**, **-x** or **-z** in the singular several alternatives are possible:

**Jens's lejlighed** or **Jens' lejlighed** or **Jenses lejlighed** (Jens' flat)  
**Marx's** or **Marx' bøger** (Marx's books)

With inanimate nouns it is best to use a prepositional phrase instead:

**vores hus/hus's tag**→**taget på vores hus** the roof of our house

4 Some old genitive case endings remain in set phrases after **til**:

**til havs**, by sea; **til sengs**, to bed. See also [124](#).

5 The genitive **-s** is placed on the last word of the noun phrase. This is known as the 'group genitive':

**Herman Bangs romaner** the novels of Herman Bang  
**en af mine venners far** the father of one of my friends

6 Notice the different use of the definite article in English and Danish:

<i>the</i> end of winter	← →	<b>vinterens afslutning</b> , i.e. <i>lit.</i> the winter's end
definite article	no article	definite article

Nouns following a genitive never take an end article in Danish.

7 As in the last example, the **-s** genitive often corresponds to English 'of-constructions' (see also [131](#)):

<b>gårdens ejer</b>	the owner of the farm
<b>dronning Margrethes liv</b>	the life of Queen Margrethe
<b>Danmarks statsminister</b>	the Prime Minister of Denmark
<b>forårets første dag</b>	the first day of spring

8 The **-s** genitive has two special uses:

- in surnames, denoting 'family' or 'shop':  
**hos Olsens**, at the Olsens'  
**Vi køber fisk hos Hansens.**  
We buy fish at Hansen's.
- as a genitive of measurement:  
**et fyrreminutters tv-program**  
a 40-minute TV programme  
**en 75 centiliters vinflaske**  
a 75-centilitre wine bottle

## ARTICLES

### 38

#### ARTICLES—FORM

1 The indefinite article (corresponding to English 'a', 'an') is in Danish either **en** or **et**. The end (definite) article (corresponding to English 'the'), which may be **-(e)n** or **-(e)t**, is added as a suffix to the end of the noun, either to its dictionary form or to its inflected form:

#### *Singular*

##### *Indefinite (en/et)*

<b>en mand</b>	a man
<b>en kvinde</b>	a woman
<b>et hus</b>	a house
<b>et æble</b>	an apple

##### *Definite (end article) (-(e)n)/-(e)t)*

<b>manden</b>	the man
<b>kvinden</b>	the woman
<b>huset</b>	the house
<b>æblet</b>	the apple

##### *Plural (both genders) (-(e)ne)*

##### **-(e)r** plural

<b>aviser</b>	newspapers	<b>aviserne</b>	the newspapers
<b>æbler</b>	apples	<b>æblerne</b>	the apples

*Plural (both genders) (-(e)ne)*

**-e plural**

**heste** horses **hestene** the horses

**zero plural**

**mænd** men **mændene** the men

2 Rules for the end article singular:

(a) Add **-n**, **-t** when the noun ends in unstressed **-e**:

**en uge—ugen**, week **et billede—billedet**, picture

(b) When the noun ends in another vowel or stressed **-e (-é)**, add **-en**, **-et**:

**en by—byen**, town **et strå—strået**, straw  
**en café—cafeen**, café **et træ—træet**, tree

3 When the noun ends in a consonant (but cf. 4, 5), add **-en**, **-et**:

**en hånd—hånden**, hand **et barn—barnet**, child

4 When the noun ends in unstressed **e +l, n, r**, drop the **-e** of the stem and add **-en**, **-et**:

**titel—titlen**, title **teater—teatret**, theatre

But many of these nouns possess alternative definite forms with or without the vowel:

**en aften—aft(e)nen**, evening **et køkken—kø(k)e(n)et**, kitchen

5 Nouns in **-um** drop the **-um** before adding the end article:

**et museum—museet**, museum

6 After a short stressed vowel the final consonant is doubled before adding the end article (see 2):

**en ven—vennen**, friend **et hotel—hotellet**, hotel

7 The end article plural is usually **-ne**:

**byer—byerne**, towns **stole—stolene**, chairs  
**gader—gaderne**, streets **borde—bordene**, tables

But notice that nouns in **-ere** drop the final **-e**: **danskere—danskerne**, Danes.

8 If the noun has a **zero plural** the end article plural is **-ene**:

**børn—børnene**, children **sko—skoene**, shoes  
**dyr—dyrene**, animals **år—årene**, years

## ARTICLE USE—INTRODUCTION

1 In most cases the same principle applies to the use of articles in Danish as in English, namely that when a noun refers anaphorically to a previously mentioned occurrence (when it is a familiar idea or has unique reference), it takes a definite (end) article, whilst a noun for an entity or concept not previously mentioned (non-unique reference) takes an indefinite article. In short, the first time a noun appears it is likely to be in the indefinite form, the next time it will be definite:

**De havde købt *et nyt hus* . *Huset* lå ved *en so* . *Søen* var lille, men dyb.**

←—————                      ←—————  
*1<sup>st</sup> time    next time    1<sup>st</sup> time next time*

They had bought a new house. The house lay by a lake. The lake was small but deep.

2 Concepts that are associated semantically with a previously mentioned noun (e.g. whole-part or type-example), and those that are obvious to everyone, use the definite form:

**Han har *en cykel*, men *gearet* virker ikke.**

←—————  
*first time    associated*

He has a bike but the gear doesn't work.

**Jeg købte forskellige *blomster*, men *roserne* visnede hurtigt.**

←—————  
*first time    associated*

I bought different flowers, but the roses withered quickly.

***Vejret* var fint. *Solen* skinnede. Så jeg vaskede *bilen*.**

*obvious*

*obvious*

*obvious*

The weather was fine. The sun was shining. So I washed the car.

3 However, in some cases, outlined in 40–43 below, the languages differ in their use of the articles.

## ARTICLE USE—END ARTICLE IN DANISH, NO ARTICLE IN ENGLISH

1 Abstract nouns and nouns in a generic sense:

**tilbage til *naturen***

back to nature

***livet efter døden***

life after death

***Danskerne* drikker meget øl.**

Danes drink a lot of beer.

This applies especially to nouns depicting human life and thought: **arbejdet**, work; **krigen**, war; **kærligheden**, love.

2 Many proverbs:

**Historien gentager sig.  
Sådan er livet.**

History repeats itself.  
That's life.

3 Some idiomatic phrases for location and time:

**Han er i byen/taget til byen.  
But: Hun går i kirke/i skole/på arbejde.  
om vinteren/mandagen  
i julen/påsken**

He's in town/going to town.  
She goes to church/school/ work.  
in winter/on Mondays  
at Christmas/Easter

#### 41

#### ARTICLE USE—NO ARTICLE IN DANISH, DEFINITE ARTICLE IN ENGLISH

1 After certain words:

**Samme aften kom vi hjem.  
Næste dag var vejret dejligt.  
De bor på øverste etage.**

The same evening we arrived home.  
The next day the weather was beautiful.  
They live on the top floor.

*Note:* **den næste måned**, the following month; **det næste år**, the following year.

2 In some idiomatic phrases:

**De hører radio.  
Bodil spiller klaver/violin.  
Mor læser avis.  
Hun er datter af en præst.**

They listen to the radio.  
Bodil plays the piano/violin.  
Mother is reading the paper.  
She is the daughter of a vicar.

3 With proper nouns:

**Vi spiste frokost hos Olsens.**

We had lunch at the Olsens'.

#### 42

#### ARTICLE USE—NO ARTICLE IN DANISH, INDEFINITE ARTICLE IN ENGLISH

With nouns denoting nationality, profession, religion or political beliefs:

**Marie er dansker/læge/katolik/socialist.**  
Marie is a Dane/a doctor/a Catholic/a socialist.

**Hun arbejder som læge/læser til lærer.**  
She is working as a doctor/is studying to become a teacher.

Notice that if the noun is qualified by an attributive adjective or relative clause, the indefinite article must be added:

**Hun er en dygtig læge.**

She is a skilled doctor.



**Han er en dansker der elsker god mad.**

He is a Dane who likes good food.

In some cases a figurative use of the noun is indicated by the use of the indefinite article. Compare:

**Coco var klovn.** Coco was a clown (literal=occupation).

**Søren var en klovn.** Søren was a clown (figurative=was a fool).

### 43

#### ARTICLE USE—END ARTICLE IN DANISH, POSSESSIVE PRONOUN IN ENGLISH

With nouns denoting parts of the body and clothing where possession is obvious, Danish prefers the end article to the possessive pronoun:

**Jeg har ondt i armen/benet/hånden/maven.**

I have a pain in my arm/leg/hand/stomach.

**Erik stak hånden i lommen.**

Erik put his hand in his pocket.

# 3 ADJECTIVES

## 44 ADJECTIVES IN OUTLINE

Danish adjectives inflect. In the indefinite declension they agree with the noun in gender (singular only) and number both attributively and predicatively. They also add inflexional endings in the definite declension.

INDEFINITE FORMS			
	<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Attributive</i>	<b>en stor</b> ⊗ <b>bil</b>  a big car <b>god</b> ⊗ <b>mad</b> good food	<b>et stort</b> <b>hus</b>  a big house <b>varmt</b> <b>vand</b> hot water	<b>store</b> <b>biler/</b> <b>huse</b> big cars/houses <b>smukke</b> <b>piger</b> beautiful girls
<i>Predicative</i>	<b>bilen er stor</b> ⊗  the car is big	<b>huset er stort</b>  the house is big	<b>bilerne/husene</b> <b>er store</b> the cars/ houses are big
DEFINITE FORMS			
	<b>den store</b> <b>bil</b>  the big car	<b>det store</b> <b>hus</b>  the big house	<b>de store</b> <b>biler/</b> <b>huse</b> the big cars/ houses
	<b>min store</b> <b>bil</b>  my big car	<b>mit store</b> <b>hus</b>  my big house	<b>mine store</b> <b>biler/huse</b> my big cars/ houses

## INDEFINITE DECLENSION

## 45

## INDEFINITE FORM—REGULAR

1 Main rule:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>zero</b> ( ⊗ )	+t	+e
<b>en fin have</b>	<b>et fint hus</b>	<b>fine haver/huse</b>
a fine garden	a fine house	fine gardens/houses
<b>en rolig by</b>	<b>et roligt sted</b>	<b>rolige byer/steder</b>
a quiet town	a quiet place	quiet towns/places

2 Note that some monosyllabic adjectives with a long vowel+consonant in the common gender form shorten the vowel in the pronunciation of the neuter form: **god** [goˈð]—**godt** [gɔd].

Other examples of neuter forms with a short vowel: **dødt**, dead; **hvidt**, white; **fedt**, fatty; **fladt**, flat; **rødt**, red; **sødt**, sweet; **vådt**, wet.

3 Adjectives following the main rule include:

(a) many monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant or consonant group:

**dyb**, deep; **høj**, high, tall; **kold**, cold; **mørk**, dark; **varm**, hot, warm

(b) polysyllabic adjectives ending in **-al**, **-bar**, **-el**, **-ig**, **-iv**, **-ær**, **-(i)øs**:

**social**, social; **dyrebar**, expensive; **kontroversiel**, controversial; **dygtig**, capable; **naiv**, naive; **vulgær**, vulgar; **series**, serious

## 46

## INDEFINITE FORM—NEUTER SAME AS COMMON GENDER

In the following cases the neuter form has no special ending:

1 Adjectives ending in **-(i)sk**:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>en dansk</b> ⊗ <b>forfatter</b>	<b>et dansk</b> ⊗ <b>skib</b>	<b>danske</b> <b>forfattere/skibe</b>
a Danish writer	a Danish ship	Danish writers/ships

Other examples: **automatisk**, automatic; **elektrisk**, electrical; **fynsk**, of Fyn; **økonomisk**, economic.

This group includes most adjectives denoting nationality or geographical location: **amerikansk**, American; **engelsk**, English; **fransk**, French; **tysk**, German.

In some adjectives ending in **-sk** the neuter **-t** ending is optional: **besk(t)**, bitter; **fersk(t)**, fresh.

2 Adjectives with stems already ending in **-t**:

<b>en sort</b> ⊗ <b>kat</b>	<b>et sort</b> ⊗ <b>hul</b>	<b>sorte</b> <b>katte/huller</b>
a black cat	a black hole	black cats/holes

Other examples: **flot**, posh; **kort**, short; **let**, light; **mæt**, replete; **smart**, smart; **tæt**, close.

(a) This group includes many polysyllabic loans ending in **-t**, **-at**, **-ant**, **-ent**:

**abstrakt**, **privat**, **tolerant**, **konsekvent**

(b) A few adjectives ending in a vowel+d have no special neuter form: **fremmed**, foreign; **glad**, happy; **ked**, bored; **lad**, lazy.

(c) A few adjectives ending in a consonant+d where the **d** is pronounced [d] have no special neuter form: **absurd**, absurd; **lærd**, learned.

## 47

## VARIATIONS IN PLURAL/DEFINITE

In the following cases the plural form varies from the main rule given in 44 above, i.e. it does not simply add **-e**:

1 Adjectives ending in **-el**, **-en**, **-er** drop the **-e** of the stem before adding the plural or definite ending **-e**:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>en gammel kone</b> an old woman	<b>et gammelt hus</b> an old house	<b>gamle koner/huse</b> old women/houses
Compare the definite forms:		
<b>den gamle kone</b> the old woman	<b>det gamle hus</b> the old house	<b>de gamle koner/huse</b> the old women/houses

This group includes: **bitter**, bitter; **doven**, idle; **lækker**, delicious; **mager**, thin; **moden**, ripe; **rusten**, rusty; **sikker**, sure; **simpel**, simple; **voksen**, adult; **ædel**, noble; **åben**, open.

It also includes loanwords in **-abel**, **-ibel**: **diskutabel**, debatable; **flexibel**, flexible.

2 Adjectives in **-et** change the **t** to a **d** before adding the plural/definite ending **-e**:

<b>en blomstret</b> ⊗ <b>vest</b> a flowery waistcoat	<b>et blomstret forklæde</b> a flowery pinafore	<b>blomstrede</b> ⊗ <b>gardiner</b> flowery curtains
--	--	---

This group includes: **broget**, multicoloured, and many past participles, e.g. **elsket**, loved; **forlovet**, engaged; **malet**, painted; **pakket**, packed; **repareret**, repaired; **slukket**, extinguished; **ternet**, checked.

## 48

## INDEFINITE FORM—SPECIAL CASES

1 The adjective **lille**:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>en lille</b> ⊗ <b>pige</b> a small girl	<b>et lille</b> ⊗ <b>barn</b> (no <b>-t</b> ending) a small child	<b>små piger/børn</b> (new stem in plural) small girls/children

Note also the definite forms:

**den lille** ⊗ **pige**  
the small girl

**det lille** ⊗ **barn**  
the small child

**de små piger/børn**  
the small girls/children

2 Adjectives ending in **-å**:

**en blå** ⊗ (**grå** ⊗ ) **skjorte**  
a blue (grey) shirt

**et blå t** (**grå t**) **halstørklæde**  
a blue (grey) scarf

**blå** ⊗ (**grå** ⊗ ) **bukser**  
(no **-e** in plural)  
blue (grey) trousers

3 Adjectives ending in **-v**:

**en grov** ⊗ **stemme**  
a coarse voice

**et groft** **brød**  
(**v**→**f**)  
a coarse loaf

**grove** **brædder**  
coarse boards

Also: **stiv**—**stift**—**stive**, stiff.

4 The past participle forms of some strong verbs—when used attributively—are usually found in the neuter form even with common gender nouns: **en stjålet** (or **stjålen**) **cykel**, a stolen bike; **en maskinskrevet** (or **maskinskreven**) **meddelelse**, a typewritten message. The common gender form in such cases is now considered formal.

## 49

### ADJECTIVES DOUBLING THE FINAL CONSONANT IN THE PLURAL

Adjectives ending in a short stressed vowel plus a single consonant double the final consonant when adding the plural/definite ending in **-e**:

**en tom** **æske**  
an empty box

**et tomt** **hus**  
an empty house

**tomme** **tønder**  
empty barrels

Many adjectives do this, e.g. **flot**, posh; **grim**, ugly; **grøn**, green; **let**, easy, light; **mæt**, replete; **slem**, nasty; **smuk**, pretty; **tom**, empty; **træt**, tired; **tyk**, fat; **tør**, dry.

See also 31.

## 50

### INDECLINABLE ADJECTIVES

Some adjectives add no endings for either neuter or plural. These include the following groups:

1 Adjectives ending in **-e**:

**en moderne** ⊗ **bil**  
a modern car

**et moderne** ⊗ **hus**  
a modern house

**moderne** ⊗ **mennesker**  
modern people

This group includes: **bange**, afraid; **lige**, equal; **stille**, calm; **øde**, deserted, and includes some ordinal numbers and present participles: **tredje**, third; **fjerde**, fourth; **glimrende**, brilliant; **irriterende**, irritating; **rasende**, furious.

2 Many adjectives ending in a stressed vowel:

**en snu** ⊗ **mand**  
a wily man

**et snu** ⊗ **vidne**  
a wily witness

**snu** ⊗ **forretningsmænd**  
wily businessmen

This group includes: **kry**, cocky; **sky**, shy; **tro**, faithful; **ædru**, sober.

*Exceptions:* **fri—frit—fri(e)**, free; **ny—nyt—ny(e)**, new.

3 Adjectives ending in -s:

**en fælles** ⊗ **sag**  
a common cause

**et fælles** ⊗ **projekt**  
a joint project

**fælles** ⊗ **venner**  
mutual friends

This group includes: **afsides**, remote; **ens**, identical; **gammeldags**, old-fashioned; **indbyrdes**, mutual; **stakkels**, poor; **tilfreds**, contented.

*Exceptions:* Adjectives ending in a long vowel+s: **tavs—tavst—tavse**, silent. Also: **løs**, loose; **nerves**, nervous.

4 Some other adjectives, often used only predicatively, do not inflect:

**Det er forkert/slut.**

It is wrong/finished.

**Det er værd at lægge mærke til.**

It is worth noticing.

## 51

### INDEFINITE CONSTRUCTIONS

The indefinite noun phrase (in this case: indefinite premodifier+adjective+noun, e.g. **en+ny+bil**) usually expresses something general and non-specific. The following indefinite constructions are found:

#### *Common gender*

**god mad**

good food

**en ny bil**

a new car

**ikke nogen sjov film**

not a funny film

**ikke nogen god idé**

no good idea

**sådan en dyr jakke**

an expensive jacket like that

**sikken varme**

what a heat

**sikke(n) en kold blæst**

what a cold wind

#### *Neuter*

**fint vejr**

fine weather

**et nyt hus**

a new house

**noget varmt brød**

some hot bread

**ikke noget nyt forslag**

no new proposal

**sådan et stærkt tov**

a strong rope like that

**sikket vejr**

what weather

**sikken et fint vejr**

what beautiful weather

#### *Plural*

**lige veje** (no premodifier)

straight roads

**to nye biler/huse**

two new cars/houses

**nogle saftige æbler**

some juicy apples

**ikke nogen gode idéer**

no good ideas

**sådan nogle store sko**

big shoes like that

**sikke farver**

what colours

**sikke nogle mørke skyer**

what dark clouds

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>hvilken ung mand</b> what young man	<b>hvilket stort slot</b> what big castle	<b>hvilke nye møbler</b> what new furniture
—	—	<b>mange onde gerninger</b> many evil deeds
—	—	<b>alle unge mennesker</b> all young people

## 52

## AGREEMENT AND LACK OF AGREEMENT

1 Usually adjectives agree with the noun they qualify:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Bilen er stor</b> ⊗ . The car is big.	<b>Huset er stort.</b> The house is big.	<b>Æblerne er gode.</b> The apples are good.

2 Some abstract nouns formed from verbs do, however, require the neuter form of the adjective even when they are common gender:

<b>Rygning er skadeligt.</b> Smoking is harmful.	<b>(rygning-en)</b>	<b>Det er skadeligt at ryge.</b> It is harmful to smoke.
<b>Svømning er dejligt.</b> Swimming is lovely.	<b>(svømning-en)</b>	<b>Det er dejligt at svømme.</b> It is lovely to swim.

This also applies to infinitive phrases that are used as subject:

<b>At svømme er dejligt.</b>	Swimming is lovely.
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3 Nouns used in a general, abstract or collective sense normally require the neuter form of the adjective:

<b>Fisk er dyrt.</b>	<b>(fisk-en)</b>	Fish is expensive.
<b>Frugt er sundt.</b>	<b>(frugt-en)</b>	Fruit is healthy.

Cf. <b>Det er dyrt at købe fisk.</b> It is expensive to buy fish.	<b>Det er sundt at spise frugt.</b> Eating fruit is healthy.
--	---

4 Past participle agreement:

Past participles after **være/blive** usually agree with a plural subject:

<b>Bilerne er røde/importerede.</b> ADJECTIVE/PAST PARTICIPLE	The cars are red/imported.
--	----------------------------

But past participles of some verbs only agree with the subject when depicting a state (adjectival), and take the neuter form when used to emphasise an action (verbal) in which case they are less closely linked to the subject (see also [92.3](#)):

*State***Stolene er malet.**

The chairs are painted.  
(as opposed to 'unpainted')

*Action***Stolene er malet.**

The chairs are (have been) painted.  
(Watch out for the wet paint!)

Examples with a plural subject:

**Priserne er faldet.**

**De var draget bort.**

**Syv dage er gået.**

**Ti demonstranter blev arresteret.**

**Alle eleverne var samlet.**

Prices have fallen.

They had left.

A week has passed.

Ten demonstrators were arrested.

All the pupils had assembled.

5 In a few cases the inherent sense of the subject (plural) may override the strict grammatical number (singular):

**Man var uenige.**

**Brudeparret var lykkelige /lykkeligt.**

They had a difference of opinion.

The bridal couple were happy.

## DEFINITE DECLENSION

### 53

#### DEFINITE CONSTRUCTIONS

There are three types of definite construction of adjective+noun:

*Common gender**Neuter**Plural*

TYPE 1 After the front articles **den, det, de**, the demonstratives **den, det, de** and **denne, dette, disse**:

**den røde dør**

the red door

**det røde tag**

the red roof

**de røde vægge**

the red walls

**denne nye båd**

this new boat

**dette nye skib**

this new ship

**disse nye færger**

these new ferries

These are the most frequent uses of the definite declension.

TYPE 2 After genitives and possessive pronouns:

**Karens store gård**

Karen's big farm

**familiens fattige hjem**

the family's poor home

**pigens gamle sko**

the girl's old shoes

**min varme jakke**

my warm jacket

**mit varme tørklæde**

my warm scarf

**mine varme strømper**

my warm socks

**vores grønne vase**

our green vase

**vores hvide spisebord**

our white dining table

**vores sorte stole**

our black chairs

*Exception:* After a genitive or possessive pronoun the adjective **egen** is inflected according to the indefinite declension:



**Mors egen lille Niels**  
**Han har sit eget hus.**

Mum's own little Niels  
 He has his own house.

TYPE 3 With no article preceding the adjective+noun:

<b>Kære ven!</b>	<b>ovennævnte brev</b>	<b>omtalte forfattere</b>
Dear friend!	the above-mentioned letter	the aforementioned authors

*Notes:*

1 When an adjective is used before a noun in the definite, the end (definite) article is replaced by a front article **den, det, de**:

<b>manden</b>	→	<b>den gamle mand</b>
the man		the old man

2 The definite form of the adjective is identical to the plural form in nearly all cases, i.e. **-e** is added to the basic form:

<b>en grøn skov</b>	<b>grønne skove</b>	<b>den grønne skov</b>	<b>de grønne skove</b>
a green forest	green forests	the green forest	the green forests

3 Type 3 above is found in some names of people and places: **lille Erik, Store Kongensgade, Gamle Carlsberg, Vestre Fængsel** and in officialese.

It is also found with the words **første, sidste, forrige, næste, samme: første gang**, the first time; **sidste forestilling**, the final performance; **forrige uge**, last week; **næste fredag**, next Friday; **samme alder**, the same age.

4 With the words **hele** and **selve** an end article is added to the noun: **hele tiden**, the whole time:

**Selve lejligheden er god, men beliggenheden er dårlig.** The flat itself is fine, but its location is poor.

54

ADJECTIVAL NOUNS

1 There are three cases in which adjectives are used as nouns:

(a) when the noun is omitted in order to avoid repetition:

**Han foretrækker dansk mad fremfor fremmed (mad).**  
 He prefers Danish food to foreign food.

(b) when a noun that is not mentioned is understood (these are what are usually known as adjectival nouns):

**De unge forstår ikke de gamle. (mennesker)** is understood after both **unge** and **gamle**)  
 Young people do not understand old people.

(c) independent use of the adjective with no noun understood:

**Valget stod mellem grønt og blå.**

The choice was between green and blue.

2 Danish uses adjectival nouns in the definite plural in the same way as English:

**de arbejdsløse**, the unemployed; **de fattige**, the poor; **de rige**, the rich; **de syge**, the sick; **de sårede**, the wounded; **de unges verden**, the world of the young

Notice from this last example that adjectival nouns have a (noun) genitive in **-s**:

**de retfærdiges søvn**

the sleep of the just

3 Danish also uses the common gender indefinite adjective as a noun:

**en fremmed**, a stranger; **en gal**, a madman; **en lille**, a little child; **en lærd**, a scholar; **en nyfødt**, a new-born baby; **en sagkyndig**, an expert; **en voksen**, an adult

4 In a few cases Danish uses the neuter definite form of the adjective nominally:

**Det er det fine ved ham.**  
**i det fri**

That's the nice thing about him.  
in the open air

*Note:* This also applies to the superlative: **gøre sit bedste**, do one's best.

5 In many cases where Danish has a definite adjectival noun, English has a count noun:

**den myrdede**, the murder victim; **den uskyldige**, the innocent person; **de kongelige**, the royals; **de overlevende**, the survivors; **de rejsende**, the travellers

6 Neuter adjectival nouns in Danish may correspond to abstract nouns or concepts in English:

**det gode**, good(ness); **det passende**, what is suitable

7 In a few cases Danish also uses the singular definite form of the adjective without an article as a noun to denote people and numbered entities (cf. 53, Type 3):

**elskede**, my love; **undertegnede**, the undersigned

**Jeg bor på fjerde (sal).**  
**Frederik skal op i sjette (klasse).**

I live on the fourth (floor).  
Frederik is going into the sixth class.

## 'THE ENGLISH' AND OTHER NATIONALITY WORDS

Whereas English often employs adjectival nouns such as 'the English', 'the French' to express nationality, Danish prefers proper nouns, e.g. **englænderne**, **franskmændene**. Some frequent nationality words are listed below.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Inhabitant</i>
Amerika (De Forenede Stater)	amerikansk	amerikaner-e
Danmark	dansk	dansker-e
England (Storbritannien)	engelsk (britisk)	englænder-e (briter-e)
Europa	europæisk	europæer-e
Finland	finsk	finne-r
Frankrig	fransk	franskmand, -mænd
Grækenland	græsk	græker-e
Holland	hollandsk	hollænder-e
Irland	irsk	irer-e, irlænder-e
Island	islandsk	islænding-e
Italien	italiensk	italiener-e
Japan	japansk	japaner-e
Kina	kinesisk	kineser-e
Litauen	litauisk	litauer-e
Norge	norsk	nordmand, -mænd
Rusland	russisk	russer-e
Spanien	spansk	spanier-e, spaniol-er
Sverige	svensk	svensker-e
Tyskland	tysk	tysker-e

## COMPARISON

## COMPARISON—INTRODUCTION

The comparative form of the adjective in **-(e)re** is indeclinable, i.e. the adjective has the same form for definite and indefinite. Note, however, that the superlative in **-(e)st** has two forms (**-(e)st**/**-(e)ste**, see 62).

1 Comparison implies that:

- two objects or circumstances are contrasted:

**Søren er højere end Erik.** Søren is taller than Erik.

- one object or circumstance is contrasted with itself at a different juncture:

**Det er mere overskyet i dag.** It is more overcast today.

2 There are four different methods of comparison:

- (a) Add **-ere**, **-est** to the positive (basic) form:

**pæn—pænere—pænest**

See 57.

(b) Change the stem vowel of the positive form and add **-re, -(e)st**:**ung—yngre—yngst**

See 58.

(c) Irregular comparison (change of stem):

**god—bedre—bedst**

See 59.

(d) Comparison with **mere, mest** and the positive form:**snavset—mere snavset—mest snavset**

See 60.

## 57

COMPARISON WITH **-ERE, -EST**1 The most common method of showing comparison is to add **-ere** and **-est** to the adjective:

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>
<b>glad</b> happy	<b>gladere</b> happier	<b>gladest</b> happiest

Most adjectives compare this way, including: **dyb**, deep; **dyr**, expensive; **fin**, fine; **høj**, high; **hård**, hard; **kold**, cold; **kort**, short; **lav**, low; **lys**, light; **mørk**, dark; **ny**, new; **pæn**, beautiful; **sjov**, fun; **tung**, heavy; **tynd**, thin.

2 Adjectives ending in a short stressed vowel plus a consonant often double the final consonant before adding the comparative and superlative endings (cf. 49):

<b>smuk</b> beautiful	<b>smukkere</b> more beautiful	<b>smukkest</b> most beautiful
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See also 31.

3 Adjectives ending in **-en, -el, -er** drop the **-e-** of the stem before adding the comparative and superlative endings:

<b>sikker</b> safe	<b>sikrere</b> safer	<b>sikrest</b> safest
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See also 30.

4 **Nær** has deviant forms:

<b>nær</b> close	<b>nærmere</b> closer	<b>nærmest</b> closest
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5 A few adjectives (often ending in **-ig** and **-som**) add **-ere** but **-st** (and not **-est**) to the positive form:

<b>kedelig</b> boring	<b>kedeligere</b> more boring	<b>kedeligst</b> most boring
<b>morsom</b> funny	<b>morsommere</b> funnier	<b>morsomst</b> funniest

Others: **farlig**, dangerous; **fattig**, poor; **langsom**, slow; **voldsom**, violent.

## 58

COMPARISON WITH VOWEL CHANGE AND **-(E)RE**, **-(E)ST**

Only four adjectives modify the root vowel before adding the comparative or superlative ending:

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	
<b>få</b>	<b>færre</b>	<b>færrest</b>	few
<b>lang</b>	<b>længere</b>	<b>længst</b>	long
<b>stor</b>	<b>større</b>	<b>størst</b>	big
<b>ung</b>	<b>yngre</b>	<b>yngst</b>	young

## 59

## IRREGULAR COMPARISON

1 The following adjectives change their stem in the comparative and superlative:

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	
<b>dårlig, slem</b>	<b>værre</b>	<b>værst</b>	bad
<b>gammel</b>	<b>ældre</b>	<b>ældst</b>	old
<b>god</b>	<b>bedre</b>	<b>bedst</b>	good
<b>lidt, lille</b>	<b>mindre</b>	<b>mindst</b>	small
<b>mange</b>	<b>flere</b>	<b>flest</b>	many
<b>meget (megen)</b>	<b>mere</b>	<b>mest</b>	much

2 **Værre**, **værst** often indicate ‘more of a bad quality’: **Hendes dårlige ben er blevet værre**, Her bad leg has got worse (i.e. it was bad to begin with); whereas **dårligere**, **dårligest** often indicate less of a good quality: **Kartoflerne er blevet dårligere i år**, The potatoes have got worse this year (i.e. they may have been good last year).

3 **Flere**, **flest** are plural forms used with count nouns: **Vi købte flere bøger**, We bought more books; whereas **mere**, **mest** are singular forms used with non-count nouns: **Vil du have mere øl?**, Would you like some more beer?

For count/non-count nouns see [33](#).

## 60

COMPARISON WITH **MERE**, **MEST**

This group includes a number of different types:

1 Present and past participles and most longer adjectives:

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>
<b>spændende</b> exciting	<b>mere spændende</b> more exciting	<b>mest spændende</b> most exciting
<b>velkendt</b> well-known	<b>mere velkendt</b> more well-known	<b>mest velkendt</b> most well-known

2 Adjectives ending in **-et**:

<b>interesseret</b> interested	<b>mere interesseret</b> more interested	<b>mest interesseret</b> most interested
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Others: **forvirret**, confused; **skuffet**, disappointed; **snavset**, dirty; **tosset**, foolish.  
3 All adjectives ending in **-isk** and most ending in **-sk**:

<b>praktisk</b> practical	<b>mere praktisk</b> more practical	<b>mest praktisk</b> most practical
------------------------------	--	--

Others: **dansk**, Danish; **fantastisk**, fantastic; **humoristisk**, humorous; **jordisk**, earthly; **musikalsk**, musical; **realistisk**, realistic.

*Exceptions:* **barsk**, harsh; **besk**, bitter; **fersk**, fresh; **frisk**, fresh, go according to the main rule with the endings **-ere**, **-est**.

4 Some adjectives ending in **-en**:

<b>sulten</b> hungry	<b>mere sulten</b> more hungry	<b>mest sulten</b> most hungry
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Others: **voksen**, adult; **vågen**, awake; **åben**, open.

5 Some adjectives ending in unstressed **-e** and short adjectives ending in a vowel:

<b>bange</b> afraid	<b>mere bange</b> more afraid	<b>mest bange</b> most afraid
------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------

Others: **grå**, grey; **lige**, similar; **stille**, peaceful; **ædru**, sober.

## 6 Some loanwords:

<b>desperat</b> desperate	<b>mere desperat</b> more desperate	<b>mest desperat</b> most desperate
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## 61

## SIMILARITY, DISSIMILARITY AND REINFORCEMENT

There are a number of ways of expressing similarity, dissimilarity and reinforcement other than by using comparison (cf. 57–60 above):

## 1 Similarity:

**lige så+adj+som**

as...as

**samme+noun+som**

the same...as

**ligne**

be/look like

**Hun var lige så venlig som hun var smuk.**

She was as friendly as she was beautiful.

**De taler samme dialekt som os.**

They speak the same dialect as us.

**Han ligner sin far.**

He is/looks like his father.

## 2 Dissimilarity:

**ikke så+adj+som**

not as...as

**Hun var ikke så rig som Greta Garbo.**

She wasn't as rich as Greta Garbo.

The particle **end** is often used with comparatives:**Min bror er stærkere end din.**

My brother is bigger than yours.

The adjectives **anden**, other, different; **anderledes**, different; and **forskellig**, different, dissimilar, also express dissimilarity:**De to søskende er meget forskellige.**

The two siblings are very different.

## 3 Reinforcement:

**stadig+comparative**

ever

**aller-+superlative**

very

**Kvaliteten blev stadig værre.**

The quality got ever worse.

**Han var min allerbedste ven.**

He was my very best friend.

## 62

## INFLEXION OF THE SUPERLATIVE

In the same way as other adjectives in the positive form, the superlative inflects in the definite, adding an **-e**:**Det er den kedeligste bog jeg har læst.**

That is the most boring book I have read.

**Det var en af de mest fantastiske forestillinger jeg nogensinde har set.**

That was one of the most fantastic performances I've ever seen.

*Note:* The adjectives **bedste**, **første**, **sidste** are often used without a front article, see 53, Type 3.

## 63

## THE ABSOLUTE COMPARATIVE AND ABSOLUTE SUPERLATIVE

When the second part of the comparative or superlative is not stated, the element of comparison may disappear. The comparative then often equates to English phrases with 'rather', 'fairly', etc.:

**Min onkel er en ældre mand.**

My uncle is an elderly man.

**Han lånte en større sum penge.**

He borrowed a rather large sum of money.

Others: **en bedre middag**, a rather good dinner; **en længere samtale**, quite a long conversation.

The superlative often equates to English phrases with 'very', etc.:

**med det venligste smil**

with a very friendly smile

**med største fornøjelse**

with very great pleasure

**Jan og Marie er de bedste venner.**

Jan and Marie are the best of friends.





# 4 NUMERALS

64

## CARDINAL AND ORDINAL NUMBERS

1 Cardinal and ordinal numbers:

### *Cardinal numbers*

0	nul
1	en/et
2	to
3	tre
4	fire
5	fem
6	seks
7	syv
8	otte
9	ni
10	ti
11	el(le)ve ['elvə]
12	tolv [tɔlʰ]
13	tretten
14	fjorten
15	femten
16	seksten ['saisdən]
17	sytten
18	atten
19	nitten
20	tyve
21	enogtyve
22	toogtyve
30	tred(i)ve
40	fyrre

### *Ordinal numbers*

første
anden, andet
tredje
fjerde
femte
sjette
syvende
ottende
niende
tiende
el(le)vte
tolvte
trettende
fjortende
femtende
seksende
syttende
attende
nittende
tyvende
enogtyvende
toogtyvende
tred(i)vte
fyrretyvende

*Cardinal numbers*

50	<b>halvtreds</b> [hal'tres]
60	<b>tres</b>
70	<b>halvfjerds</b>
80	<b>firs</b>
90	<b>halvfems</b>
100	<b>(et) hundrede</b>
101	<b>(et) hundred(e) og en/et</b>
125	<b>(et) hundred(e) og femogtyve</b>
200	<b>to hundrede</b>
1 000	<b>(et) tusind(e)</b>
1 000 000	<b>en million</b>
1 000 000 000	<b>en milliard</b>

*Ordinal numbers*

<b>halvtredsindstyvende</b>
<b>tresindstyvende</b>
<b>halvfjerdsindstyvende</b>
<b>firsindstyvende</b>
<b>halvfemsindstyvende</b>
<b>hundrede</b>
<b>tusinde</b>
<b>millionte</b>
<b>milliardende</b>

2 The units come before the tens in Danish, and numerals under 100 are written as one word.

**seksogtyve**

twenty-six

3 The gap (or full stop) between the thousands in numbers written as figures corresponds to the English comma:

**6 000 000 (6.000.000)**

6,000,000

4 The numerals from 50 to 100 often cause confusion. They are based on a system of scores (20s):

**halvtredsindstyve**, usually abbreviated **halvtreds**, means '2½ times 20', i.e. 50.

**tresindstyve**, usually abbreviated **tres**, means '3 times 20', i.e. 60.

**halvfjerdsindstyve**, usually abbreviated **halvfjerds**, means '3½ times 20', i.e. 70.

**firsindstyve**, usually abbreviated **firs**, means '4 times 20', i.e. 80.

**halvfemsindstyve**, usually abbreviated **halvfems**, means '4½ times 20', i.e. 90.

In this system large numbers such as telephone numbers may at times prove opaque to learners: **94 57 71 82=fireoghalvfems, syvoghalvtreds, enoghalvfjerds, toogfirs**.

5 A simpler system for writing numerals is used by Danes in commerce and inter-Nordic contexts:

20 **toti**, 30 **treti**, 40 **firti**, 50 **femti**, 60 **seksti**, 70 **syvti**, 80 **otti**, 90 **niti** 25 **totifem**, etc.

6 The numeral **én** 'one' is often given an accent to distinguish it from the indefinite article **en** a(n), and inflects according to the gender of the following noun: **ét år**, one year; **hundredeogét år**, 101 years. Agreement of **én** does not occur in other compound numerals: **énogtyve børn**, 21 children.

7 The ordinal numbers **et hundrede**, **et tusind(e)** usually have plurals in **-r** when used in the sense 'hundreds/thousands of'.

The ordinal numbers **en million**, **en milliard** have plurals in **-er**.

## 65

## MAJOR USES OF CARDINAL AND ORDINAL NUMBERS

1 Telephone numbers (see also 64.4):

These are given in pairs:

**52 19 77**                    **tooghalvtreds—nitten—syvoghalvfjerds**

2 Dates:

**mandag den/d. 5. april**

or:            **mandag den 5.4**

or:            **den femte i fjerde**

or:            **5/4**

**1993**            **nittenhundrede og treoghalvfems** or: **nittentreoghalvfems**

3 Temperature:

**Det fryser 10 grader.**

**Det er 10 graders frost/kulde.**

**Det er minus 10 grader.**

**Det er 30 graders varme.**

**Det er 30 grader varmt.**

} It's 10 degrees below zero.  
 }  
 } It's 30 degrees.  
 }

But:

**Han har 40 graders feber.**

**Han har 40 i feber.**

He has a temperature of 40 degrees.

4 Money:

**1,25 kr**            **en krone og femogtyve** or: **én femogtyve**

**25 kr**            **femogtyve kroner**

**1,50 kr**            **halvanden krone**

**2,50 kr**            **to en halv (krone)**

**6,75 kr**            **seks (kroner og) femoghalvfjerds**

**25,95 kr**            **femogtyve (kroner og) femoghalvfems**

**165,55 kr**            **(et) hundrede og femogtres (kroner og) femoghalvtreds**

**en hundredkroneseddel**, a 100-kroner note

**en tier**, a 10-kroner coin

**en femmer**, a 5-kroner coin

*Note:* The nouns ending in **-er** (pl. **-e**) are used to indicate number generally:

**Vi tager en toer til arbejdet.**

We take a number two (bus) to work.

5 Fractions, decimals:

These are formed from ordinal numbers by adding **-del(e)**:

$\frac{1}{2}$	<b>en halv, halvdelen</b>
$\frac{1}{4}$	<b>en fjerdedel/kvart</b>
$\frac{3}{5}$	<b>tre femtedele</b>
$\frac{1}{8}$	<b>en ottendedel</b>

**halv** inflects: **en halv pære** half a pear; **et halvt æble** half an apple; **den halve tid** half the time.

Notice: **1½=halvanden** or: **én og en halv**.

A comma is used where English has a decimal point:

**0,45** nul komma fire fem/nul komma femogfyrre

6 Decades, centuries:

in the 1800s (nineteenth century)

in the 1900s (twentieth century)

in the 1880s

in the 90s

a woman in her fifties

**i det nittende (19.) århundrede (i 1800-tallet)**

**i det tyvende (20.) århundrede (i 1900-tallet)**

**i 1880'erne (i attenhundrede og firserne)**

**i 90'erne (i halvfemserne)**

**en kvinde i halvtredserne**

7 Others:

**et syvtal**, a figure 7

**et par**, a pair

**et dusin**, a dozen

**en halv snes**, 10

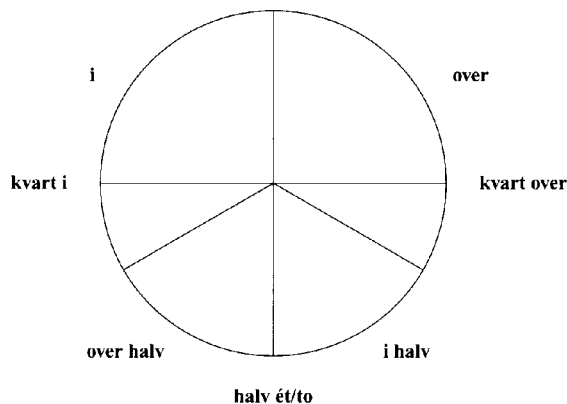
**en snes**, 20

**en gang, to gange**, once, twice

## 66

### TIME BY THE CLOCK

klokken ét/to



Hvad er klokken?

Den/Klokken er (præcis) ti.

Den/Klokken er ti minutter over tre.

Den/Klokken er syv minutter i fem.

Den/Klokken er et kvarter i/over tolv.

Den/Klokken er halv syv.

Den/Klokken er fem minutter i halv syv.

Den/Klokken er fem minutter over halv syv.

Den/Klokken er mange.

Hvad/Hvilken tid kører toget?

13.00 (tretten nul nul)

What's the time?

It's (exactly) ten o'clock.

It's ten past three.

It's seven minutes to five.

It's a quarter to/past twelve.

It's half past six.

It's twenty-five past six.

It's twenty-five to seven.

It's late.

What time does the train leave?

thirteen hundred hours, i.e. 1 pm



# 5 PRONOUNS

67

## PERSONAL AND REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS—FORM

### *Subject pronouns*

### *Object pronouns*

### *Reflexive pronouns*

#### *Singular*

1	<b>jeg</b>	I	<b>mig</b>	me	<b>mig</b>	me, myself
2	<b>du</b>	you	<b>dig</b>	you	<b>dig</b>	you(rself)
	<b>De</b>	you	<b>Dem</b>	you	<b>Dem</b>	you(rself)
3	<b>han</b>	he	<b>ham</b>	him	<b>sig</b>	him(self)
	<b>hun</b>	she	<b>hende</b>	her	<b>sig</b>	her(self)
	<b>den</b>	it	<b>den</b>	it	<b>sig</b>	it(self)
	<b>det</b>	it	<b>det</b>	it	<b>sig</b>	it(self)

#### *Plural*

1	<b>vi</b>	we	<b>os</b>	us	<b>os</b>	us, ourselves
2	<b>I</b>	you	<b>jer</b>	you	<b>jer</b>	you(rselves)
	<b>De</b>	you	<b>Dem</b>	you	<b>Dem</b>	you(rselves)
3	<b>de</b>	they	<b>dem</b>	them	<b>sig</b>	them(selves)

#### *Notes:*

1 Pronunciation:

**jeg** [jai]  
**mig** [mai]

**De, de** [di]  
**dig** [dai]

**det** [de]  
**sig** [sai]

2 Unlike English 'I', **jeg** does not have a capital letter except at the beginning of a sentence.

3 **De** and **Dem**, the polite forms, always have capital initial letters, as does **I**.

4 **I** is the plural of **du**, the familiar form.



## USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS

**Idu/De:** these are used to address people. Most people now use the familiar **du**, notably at school, work, in the family and among friends. **De** is used to strangers, in formal situations such as official communications, to elderly people, and when surnames are used to address people (e.g. **Undskyld, hr./fru Hansen, har De set min kat?**, Excuse me, Mr/Mrs Hansen, have you seen my cat?). Note also the following idiomatic expressions:

**Du, kan du lige holde mit glas?**  
Hey you, could you just hold my glass?

**Kære du, vil du ikke hjælpe mig?**  
My dear, will you please help me?

The polite form **De** is both singular and plural.

2 **han/hun:** these are not used to refer to so-called 'higher animals' or countries, unlike English. Notice that countries are neuter (to agree with **et land**): **Danmark er dyrt, men dejligt** Denmark is expensive, but lovely.

3 **den/det/de:** in addition to serving as personal pronouns, these words are also used as front articles (see 38) and as demonstrative pronouns (see 74), but **den** is never used to refer to a person. When referring to neuter nouns denoting people such as **et barn** or **et menneske**, **han** or **hun** is used.

Examples of usage:

**Knud har købt en ny bil.**

Knud has bought a new car.

**Knud har købt et nyt hus.**

Knud has bought a new house.

**Knud har to hunde.**

Knud has two dogs.

**Knud har et barn.**

Knud has a child.

**Den er meget stor.**

It's very big.

**Det er meget stort.**

It's very big.

**De er meget store.**

They are very big.

**Hun hedder Sonja.**

She is called Sonja.

4 The object form is used as subject complement in the following cases:

**Hvem er det? Det er mig.**

Who is it. It's me.

**Det er ham der er den ældste.**

It is he who is the eldest.

## USES OF DET

In addition to serving as a pronoun referring back to a previously mentioned noun, **det** has a number of idiomatic usages:

1 As the subject of **være/blive** when the verb is followed by a noun, a pronoun or an adjective, irrespective of gender or number:

**Hvem er hun? Det er min mor.**

Who's she? It's my mother.

**Hvad blev det? Det blev en pige.**

What was it? It was a girl (*of a birth*).

**Hvem er størst? Det er Viggo.** Who is the tallest? Viggo is.

2 As the formal subject of an infinitive (phrase):

**Det er svært at lære dansk.** It's hard to learn Danish.

Note, however, that **der** is also used as a formal subject in certain cases, notably with the passive and with indefinite real subjects (see 142):

**Der drikkes meget øl i Danmark.** A lot of beer is drunk in Denmark.  
**Der hænger et billede på væggen.** A painting is hanging on the wall.

Danish uses **der**+an intransitive verb in this way while English generally uses only 'there'+the verb 'to be':

**Der bor mange indvandrere her.** There are a lot of immigrants here.

3 As an impersonal subject:

**Det blæser/hagler/regner/sner.** It is windy/hailing/raining/snowing.  
**Det ringer/banker på døren.** There's a ring on the door bell/ a knock at the door.  
**Det ser ud til at han er syg.** It looks as if he's ill.  
**Hvordan går det? Det går fint.** How are you?/How are things? Fine.

4 As an object of verbs meaning 'believe', 'fear', 'hope', 'say', 'think', etc. (cf. English 'so'):

**Fik han jobbet?** **Det frygter/håber/siger/tror de.**  
 Did he get the job? They fear/hope/say/believe so.

Note also:

**Per er dansker, og det er Pia også.** Per is a Dane and so is Pia.

5 In answer to questions, without an English equivalent, as a complement of **være/blive** or as an object of other auxiliary verbs:

**Er du træt? Nej, det er jeg ikke.** Are you tired? No, I'm not.  
**Kan du tale dansk? Ja, det kan jeg.** Do you speak Danish? Yes, I do.  
**Kommer de i aften? Ja, det gør de.** Are they coming tonight? Yes, they are.

Note also:

**Hun ser venlig ud, og det er hun også.**  
 She looks kind, and so she is.

6 When referring back to a whole clause:

**Han hævder at han bor i Amerika, men *det* gør han ikke.**

He claims that he lives in America, but he doesn't.

## 70

## REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

See also reflexive verbs, [103.5](#).

The reflexive pronoun is used as direct/indirect object or prepositional complement when it is identical in meaning to the subject. Reflexive forms are identical to object forms in the first and second person, but in the third person (singular and plural) **sig** is used.

**Jeg faldt og slog mig.**

I fell and hurt myself

**Du skal lukke døren efter dig!**

You must close the door behind you!

**Hun har lige vasket sig.**

She has just washed (herself).

**Vi morede os meget i aftes.**

We enjoyed ourselves a lot last night.

**Skynd jer!**

Hurry up!

**De havde ingen penge på sig.**

They had no money on them.

It is important that the reflexive forms are used correctly. There is a lot of difference in meaning between **Han skød ham**, He shot him (i.e. someone else) and **Han skød sig**, He shot himself.

There is one notable exception to the main rule. After a verb followed by an object+infinitive construction, a reflexive pronoun refers to the object of the main verb (i.e. the subject of the infinitive—here: **Peter**), but a personal pronoun to the subject of the main clause (here: **Jens**):

**Jens (S) bad Peter (O) vaske sig.** (reflexive pronoun)

Jens asked Peter to wash (himself). (i.e. Peter to be washed)

**Jens (S) bad Peter (O) vaske ham.** (personal pronoun)

Jens asked Peter to wash him. (i.e. Jens to be washed)

The reflexive pronouns are used with a number of verbs in Danish (see [103.5](#)) where the reflexive idea is absent in English: **barbere sig**, shave; **gifte sig**, get married; **glæde sig**, look forward; **kede sig**, be bored; **lægge/ sætte sig**, lie/sit down; **opføre sig**, behave; **rejse sig**, get/stand up; **ærgre sig**, be/feel annoyed; **øve sig**, practise, etc.

Reflexive pronouns are always unstressed. If emphasis is needed, for example, to indicate a contrast or lack of assistance, the word **selv** is added to the reflexive pronoun. Note that English often uses 'own':

**Kan han vaske sig selv?**

Can he wash himself?

**Hun redte sig selv.**

She combed her own hair.

**De lærte at sminke sig selv.**

They learnt to do their own make-up.

**Selv** can also function more independently, referring to nouns or pronouns. Like **sig**, it is gender-neutral and it is always stressed:

**Per skrev artiklen selv.**

Per wrote the article himself.

**Du kan selv vælge menuen.**

You can choose the menu yourself.

Selv har jeg aldrig set ham.  
Det var hende selv der sagde det.

I myself have never seen him.  
It was she herself who said it.

## 71

## RECIPROCAL PRONOUNS

Modern Danish has in effect only one reciprocal pronoun: **hinanden** 'each other'. Unlike the reflexive pronouns, which are used in connection with a simple action/state, **hinanden** implies a mutual action/state between two or more individuals or things. **Hinanden** refers back to a plural subject and can never itself be the subject of the clause. It has a genitive form: **hinandens**.

De elsker hinanden.

They love each other.

Vi gav hinanden hånden.

We shook hands.

Stoler I på hinanden?

Do you trust each other?

De har mødt hinandens børn.

They have met each other's children.

Until recently, **hverandre** was used to refer to more than two. It is now very formal and old-fashioned.

## 72

## POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Possessive pronouns have the same form irrespective of position. Unlike English, there is thus no formal distinction between attributive and predicative use:

Det er min bog.

It is my book.

Bogen er min.

The book is mine.

First and second person possessives agree in form with the noun:

Det er *din* bil, *dit* hus og *dine* penge.

Cf. *en* bil, *et* hus, *penge* (pl.)

It is your car, your house and your money.

Third person possessives ending in **-s** do not inflect:

Det er **hans/hendes** bil, **hans/hendes** hus og **hans/hendes** penge.

It is his/her car, his/her house and his/her money.

The reflexive forms **sin**, **sit**, **sine** are explained more fully in [73](#).

	<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Singular</i>				
1	<b>min</b>	<b>mit</b>	<b>mine</b>	my, mine
2	familiar <b>din</b>	<b>dit</b>	<b>dine</b>	your, yours
	formal <b>Deres</b>	<b>Deres</b>	<b>Deres</b>	your, yours
3	masculine <b>hans/sin</b>	<b>hans/sit</b>	<b>hans/sine</b>	his

	<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
feminine	<b>hendes/sin</b>	<b>hendes/sit</b>	<b>hendes/sine</b>	her, hers
non-human	<b>dens/sin</b>	<b>dets/sit</b>	<b>dens/dets/sine</b>	its
	<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Plural</i>				
1	<b>vores</b> <b>(vor)</b>	<b>vores</b> <b>(vort)</b>	<b>vores</b> <b>(vore)</b>	our, ours
2	familiar <b>jeres</b> <b>(jer)</b>	<b>jeres</b> <b>(jert)</b>	<b>jeres</b> <b>(jere)</b>	your, yours
	formal <b>Deres</b>	<b>Deres</b>	<b>Deres</b>	your, yours
3	<b>deres</b>	<b>deres</b>	<b>deres</b>	their, theirs

*Notes:*

1 Possessive pronouns have genitive meaning and therefore no separate genitive form:

<b>dine forældres bøger</b>	your parents' books
<b>dine bøger</b>	your books

2 The second person forms **din, dit, dine** correspond to **du**; **jeres** corresponds to **I**; **Deres** corresponds to **De**; but **jer, jert, jere** are now obsolete.

3 The third person form **deres** corresponds to **de**.

4 The form **vores** is found in modern everyday Danish; **vor, vort, vore** tend to be found in formal Danish and fixed expressions:

<b>Vores børn er voksne nu.</b>	Our children are adults now.
<b>Vores have er dejlig om sommeren.</b>	Our garden is lovely in summer.

But often:

<b>vor dronning, vort modersmål, vore forfædre</b>	our Queen/mother tongue/ancestors
--	-----------------------------------

Note also: **i vor tid/i vore dage**, in our time, nowadays; **Vor Herre/Vorherre**, Our Lord.

5 **dens, dets** are used of animals and inanimate objects:

<b>Hunden er såret. Dens ben bløder.</b>	The dog is injured. Its leg is bleeding.
<b>Huset er gammelt, men dets tag er nyt.</b>	The house is old but its roof is new.

6 English possessive pronouns modifying words for parts of the body or articles of clothing are usually rendered by the definite article in Danish if there is no doubt about the ownership:

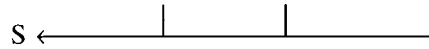
<b>Han har brækket armen.</b>	He has broken his arm.
<b>Tag skoene af!</b>	Take off your shoes!

## 73

NON-REFLEXIVE AND REFLEXIVE POSSESSIVES: **HANS** OR **SIN**?

1 The reflexive forms **sin/sit/sine** modify an object or a prepositional complement and refer to the subject of the clause with which it is identical in meaning:

**Han elsker sin kone, sit barn og sine forældre.**



He loves his wife, his child and his parents.

Notice that **sin/sit/sine** cannot be used to refer to a plural subject:

**De elsker deres mor.**

They love their mother.

**De har glemt deres penge.**

They have forgotten their money.

**Sin/sit/sine** cannot be used to modify the subject of the clause, i.e. it cannot be part of it; **hans** (etc.) is used instead:

**Hans datter hentede ham.**

His daughter fetched him.

S

2 The non-reflexive forms do not refer back to the subject of the clause they appear in; here **sin/sit/sine** must be used.

Compare:

*Reflexive:*

**Svend tog på ferie med sin kone.**

S

Svend went on holiday with his (own) wife.

*Non-reflexive:*

**Ole er sur, fordi Svend tog på ferie med hans kone.**

S

/SC

S

Ole is in a bad mood because Svend went on holiday with his (i.e. Ole's) wife.

The non-reflexive, third person possessive pronouns **hans, hendes, dens/ dets, deres** may modify the subject (S), the subject complement (SComp.), the object (O) or a prepositional complement (Prep.Comp.):

**Hans kone er lærer.**

His wife is a teacher.

S

**Bageren var hendes søn.**

The baker was her son.

(SComp.)

**Jeg mødte hendes mand i byen.** O I met her husband in town.

**De er glade for deres børn.** (Prep.Comp.) O They are fond of their children.

There are two simple ways of testing which form to use in the third person singular:

(a) Draw an arrow to the referent of the pronoun (which the pronoun must not modify). Is the referent the subject of that clause? If so, use a form of **sin/sit/sine**; if not, then use a non-reflexive form.

(b) Can you insert the word 'own' before the modified noun in English? If so, use a form of **sin/sit/sine**; if not, then use a non-reflexive form.

3 A problem arises when there is more than one clause in the sentence:

She thinks that *her* son is lovely. S /SC S **Hun synes at hendes søn er dejlig.**

Here 'her' is not in the same clause as 'she' (the subject of the main clause), but modifies 'son' as part of the subject of the subordinate clause ('her son'). Therefore use **hendes**.

Cf. **Hun elsker sin søn.** S O She loves her son.

4 The main rule also applies when the possessive precedes the subject:

**Til sin fødselsdag fik hun et ur.** → S O For her birthday she got a watch.

5 In object+infinitive constructions, **sin/sit/sine** may refer to the subject of the infinitive (InfS):

Lone heard her call her husband. S InfS ← Prep.Comp. **Lone hørte hende kalde på sin mand.**  
 (i.e. not Lone's husband)  
 John saw him kick his dog. S InfS ← O **John så ham sparke sin hund.**  
 (i.e. not John's dog)

To test this, expand the ellipted clause into a full clause and apply the main rule:

**Jeg så at han sparkede sin hund.** S /SC S ← O

6 **Sin/sit/sine** may also have general reference:

**Det er ikke let at elske sin næste.** Loving your neighbour is not easy.  
**At betale sine regninger er vigtigt.** To pay one's bills is important.

7 Note the use of **sin/sit/sine** in abbreviated comparisons:

**Han er højere end sin kone.** He is taller than his wife.  
 Cf. **Han er højere end hans kone er.** He is taller than his wife is.

8 Note the use of **sin/sit/sine** in expressions with **hver sin**, etc. However, here the appropriate plural pronoun is increasingly used, i.e. **hver vores/ jeres/deres**:

**Vi fik hver sine/vores møbler.**  
**I kan vælge hver sin/jeres menu.**

We each got our own furniture.  
You may each choose your own menu.

**Pigerne sov i hver sit/deres værelse.**

Each of the girls slept in her/their own room.

Notice that **hver** is indeclinable in such phrases, and that the choice of **sin/sit/sine** is determined by the gender/number of the noun modified.

## 74

## DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

	<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
'Near'	<b>denne (her), den her</b> this	<b>dette (her), det her</b> this	<b>disse (her), de her</b> these
'Distant'	<b>den (der)</b> that	<b>det (der)</b> that	<b>de (der)</b> those

1 The main difference between the two sets of demonstratives (**denne/dette/disse** vs. **den/det/de**) is one of proximity or distance (in space or time) from the speaker. This may be emphasised by the addition of **her** (nearby) or **der** (further away). Demonstratives are always stressed and often have an identifying or 'pointing' function.

**Denne** vase er meget gammel.  
**Den (der)** på bordet er ganske ny.

This vase is very old.  
The one on the table is quite new.

2 The addition of **her/der** makes the demonstrative much more colloquial, especially when preceding a noun. They are therefore mostly used when the noun is omitted.

**Jeg mener denne** bog, ikke **den der**.

I mean this book, not that one.

3 As in English, the demonstratives may be used attributively or predicatively (i.e. independently of a noun). They then take the number/gender of the noun to which they refer:

**Hvad koster de** bananer?  
**Er de** billigere end **de her**?  
**Dette** er noget nyt.  
**Jeg tager dette** kort, ikke **det der**.

What do those bananas cost?  
Are they cheaper than these?  
This is something new.  
I'll take this card, not that one.

4 The demonstrative is often used in Danish to direct attention to a following restrictive (i.e. necessary) relative clause. In these cases it replaces the usual end article, but younger Danes increasingly use the end article in these cases:

**Den** elev som fik de højeste karakterer, er min nabo.  
(Or: **Eleven**...)



The pupil who got the highest marks is my neighbour.

**Det bælte hun købte i går, passer ikke til hendes nye kjole.**

(Or: Bæltet...)

The belt she bought yesterday does go with her new dress.

If the relative clause is non-restrictive (i.e. not strictly necessary), only an end article is possible:

**Træerne, som i øvrigt snart skal fældes, skygger for udsigten.**

The trees, which incidentally will be cut down soon, are blocking the view.

5 The demonstrative is also used to refer to a following **at**-clause:

**Vi traf *den* beslutning at firmaet måtte lukke.**

We took the decision that the firm had to close down.

6 When referring to people, the genitive forms **dennes**, **disses** may be found in formal Danish:

***Dennes/Disses* udtalelser var interessante.**

This person's/These people's statements were interesting.

7 **Dennes (ds.)** also means 'inst.' (this month):

**Jvf. vores brev af den 10. *dennes* (ds.).**

Cf. our letter of the 10th inst.

8 **Den** is used independently of a person in proverbs, etc.:

***Den der ler sidst, ler bedst.***

He who laughs last laughs longest.

9 Note that the object form of **de** (when not followed by a noun) is **dem**:

**De sko? Nej, *dem* har jeg aldrig set for!**

Those shoes! No, I've never seen those before!

10 Note also the following idiomatic phrases:

**den og den person/dato** (etc.)

such and such a person/date (etc.)

**på det og det tidspunkt**

at such and such a time

Relative pronouns introduce a subordinate relative clause and usually refer back to a correlative (corr.) in the main clause:

**Jeg har en ven/som er læge.**  
corr.

I have a friend who is a doctor.

Relative pronouns include:

<b>der</b>	who, which, that
<b>som</b>	who(m), which, that
<b>hvis</b>	whose
<b>hvem</b>	who(m)
<b>hvad</b>	what, which
<b>hvilken/hvilket/hvilke</b>	(who(m)), which

Note that **hvor** (where) is a relative adverb.

There are two types of relative clause: restrictive and non-restrictive. A restrictive relative clause is necessary in order to identify the correlative and therefore cannot be omitted. In a non-restrictive (or parenthetical) relative clause the correlative is known, so the relative clause merely provides extra information and can be omitted. Compare:

*Restrictive:*

**Min kollega som bor på Amager, tager bussen til arbejde.**

My colleague who lives on (the island of) Amager takes the bus to work. (one of several)

*Non-restrictive:*

**Min mor, som nu er meget gammel, bor på plejehjem.**

My mother, who is now very old, lives in a nursing home. (identity not in doubt)

According to the rules of the 'new comma' (see 171) there is no comma before a restrictive clause.

Examples of use:

- Kan du se den dreng der leger derhenne?** (Or: drengen...)  
Can you see the boy who is playing over there?
- Det hus som ligger på hjørnet, har røde mursten.** (Or: Huset...)  
The house that stands on the corner has red bricks.
- Den film (som) vi så i går, var meget morsom.** (Or: Filmen...)  
The film (that) we saw yesterday was very funny.
- Vores børn, som I vist ikke har set, går i skole nu.**  
Our children, who(m) you haven't seen, I suppose, now go to school.
- Den vej (som) hun bor på, går forbi kirken.** (Or: Vejen...)  
The road (that) she lives in goes past the church.
- Kirsten, hvis datter skal giftes, er alvorligt syg.**  
Kirsten, whose daughter is getting married, is seriously ill.
- Hanne kommer fra den by hvis navn jeg ikke kan udtale.**  
Hanne comes from the town whose name I can't pronounce.
- Hun er den kvinde med hvem jeg helst vil rejse til Rom.**  
She is the woman with whom I most want to go to Rome.
- Han spiser med fingrene, hvad der ikke ser pænt ud.**  
He eats with his fingers, which doesn't look very nice.
- Han ønsker selv reparere taget, hvad han ikke kan.**

He wants to repair the roof himself, which he can't do.

11 **Gør hvad du vil!**

Do what you want!

12 **Det er det hus i hvilket Per boede.**

That is the house in which Per lived.

13 **Helle siger at Palle ikke kan svømme, hvilket er noget sludder.**

Helle says that Palle can't swim, which is nonsense.

*Notes:*

1 **der** is only used as subject (example 1). See 76.

2 **som** may be omitted from a restrictive relative clause when it is not the subject (examples 3, 5). See 76.

3 A preposition cannot appear in the same clause directly before **som**, but may be placed at the end of the clause, whether **som** is omitted or not (example 5). See 76.

4 A preposition may precede **hvem** and **hvilken** in formal Danish (examples 8, 12).

5 **hvis** is found mainly in written Danish and refers to both animate and inanimate nouns (examples 6, 7).

6 **hvem** can only refer to humans (example 8); **hvad** and (largely) **hvilken** refer to non-humans (examples 9–13).

7 In a non-restrictive clause, **hvad** and **hvilken** can refer back to the whole of the previous clause (examples 9, 10, 13).

8 When **hvad** is the subject of the relative clause, it must be followed by **der** (example 9).

9 **hvad** can also refer to some following information (cataphoric reference):

**Men hvad han ikke fortalte os var at han skal opereres.**

But what he didn't tell us was that he is going to have an operation.

10 Note the frequent construction: **alt hvad** (all that):

**Hun gjorde alt hvad hun kunne.**

She did all that she could.

11 **hvilken** is the only relative pronoun that inflects for gender/number. It is only used in formal written language: **hvilken** (common gender, sing.); **hvilket** (neuter, sing.); **hvilke** (plural).

12 Note that **hvem**, **hvad**, **hvilken**, **hvis** are also interrogative pronouns. See 77.

76

DER OR SOM?

Both words have uses other than that of a relative pronoun: **der** can function as a formal subject (**Der sidder en fugl på min cykel**, There's a bird sitting on my bike), and as an adverb of place (**Hun står lige der**, She is standing just there); while **som** may be a conjunction (**Svend er lige så stor som sin søster**, Svend is just as tall as his sister). See 107, 134, 142.

**Der** can only be the subject in a relative clause. In this function either **der** or **som** may be used, though **der** is more common in spoken Danish. They can introduce both restrictive and non-restrictive clauses:

*Restrictive:*

**Så du den kamp der/som blev vist i fjernsynet i aftes?**

Did you watch the match that was shown on TV last night?

*Non-restrictive:*

**Min bedste ven, *der/som* lige har fået et nyt job, har købt hus.**  
My best friend, who has just got a new job, has bought a house.

However, when there are two coordinated relative clauses, **der** cannot be used in the second one:

**Det er en vin *der/som* kan drikkes nu, men *som* også kan gemmes.**  
This is a wine that can be drunk now, but which may also be laid down.

**Som** can function as subject, direct/indirect object or prepositional complement in the relative clause. When it is a prepositional complement, the preposition cannot precede **som**, but must come after the verb. **Som** cannot be omitted when it introduces a non-restrictive clause.

<b>Jeg har en veninde, <i>som</i> er utrolig sød.</b> I have a girlfriend who is incredibly nice.	(subject)
<b>Jeg har en veninde, <i>som</i> jeg besøger hver måned.</b> I have a girlfriend whom I visit every month.	(direct object)
<b>Jeg har en veninde, <i>som</i> jeg giver mange gaver.</b> I have a girlfriend whom I give many presents to.	(indirect object)
<b>Jeg har en veninde, <i>som</i> jeg ofte skriver til.</b> I have a girlfriend whom I often write to.	(Prep.Comp.)

In a restricted clause, when it is not the subject, **som** may (optionally) be left out:

<b>Den bog (<i>som</i>) jeg købte i fredags, er blevet væk.</b> The book (that) I bought on Friday has gone missing.	(direct object)
<b>Har du set de bure (<i>som</i>) de holder løver i?</b> Have you seen the cages (which) they keep lions in?	(Prep.Comp.)

## 77

### INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS (HV- WORDS)

Interrogative pronouns introduce a direct or indirect question.

Interrogative pronouns (**hv-** words) include:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Genitive</i>
<b>hvem</b> who(m)	<b>hvad</b> what	<b>hvem</b> who(m)	<b>hvis</b> whose
<b>hvilken</b> what/which	<b>hvilket</b> what/which	<b>hvilke</b> what/which	
<b>hvad for en</b> which (kind/one)	<b>hvad for et</b> which (kind/one)	<b>hvad for nogle</b> which (kinds/ones)	

Note that **hvor**, where; **hvordan**, how; **hvorfor**, why; and **hvornår**, when; are interrogative adverbs.

Examples of use:

<b>Hvem er det?</b>	Who is it?
<b>Hvem talte du med?</b>	Who(m) did you talk to?

Hun spurgte hvem der ringede.  
 Hvad er klokken?  
 Kan du se hvad Dorte laver?  
 Hvad for en bog vil De have?  
 Hvad for nogle børn har de?  
 Hvilken skole går Deres søn i?  
 Hvis hat er det?  
 De vidste ikke hvis (hat) det var.

She asked who phoned.  
 What's the time?  
 Can you see what Dorte is doing?  
 What kind of/Which book do you want?  
 What kind of children do they have?  
 Which school does your son go to?  
 Whose hat is it?  
 They didn't know whose (hat) it was.

*Notes:*

- 1 **hvilken** (etc.) is mostly found in written Danish; **hvad for en** (etc.) in colloquial language.  
 2 **hvem** and **hvad** must add **der**, when they are the subject in a subordinate clause (indirect question):

Jeg hørte ikke hvem der vandt.  
 Han spurgte hvad der var sket.

I didn't hear who won.  
 He asked what had happened.

- 3 For emphasis, **hvem**, **hvad**, **hvilken** may add **som helst**:

Hvem som helst kan komme til festen.

Anyone may come to the party.

## 78

## INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

Indefinite pronouns include the following:

<i>Common gender</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
<b>al</b>	<b>alt, alting</b>	<b>alle</b>	all, everything, everyone
		<b>begge</b>	both
<b>(en)hver</b>	<b>hvert</b>		each, every(one)
<b>ingen</b>	<b>intet, ingenting</b>	<b>ingen</b>	no, none, no one, nothing
	<b>lidt</b>	<b>få</b>	little, few
<b>man</b>			one, you, they
<b>megen, meget</b>	<b>meget</b>	<b>mange</b>	much, very, many
<b>nogen</b>	<b>noget</b>	<b>nogle (nogen)</b>	some/any, something/ anything, someone/ anyone

1 **Al, alt, alle**

- (a) **Al** is only used with non-count nouns: **al den snak/støj**, all that talk/noise.  
 (b) **Alt** 'all', 'everything' is very common, while **alting** is used for emphasis:

Fortæl mig **alt**!  
 Hvor er **alt** mit tøj?  
**Alting** er forbi!

Tell me everything!  
 Where are all my clothes?  
 Everything is at an end!

Note also: **i alt**, in all; **alt i alt**, all in all; **alt for**, too; **alt hvad**, all that; **alt vel**, everything OK; **frem for alt**, above all; **trods alt**, despite everything.

(c) **Alle** 'all', 'everybody', 'everyone' can appear attributively, nominally and in the genitive:

<i>Alle</i> børn går i skole.	All children go to school.
<i>Alle</i> kom til tiden.	Everybody arrived on time.
Nu skal vi <i>alle</i> hjem og spise.	We are all going home to eat now.
Det er ikke <i>alles</i> yndlingsmusik.	It's not everyone's favourite music.

Note also: **alle og enhver**, all and sundry; **alle sammen**, one and all; **alle steder/vegne**, everywhere; **alle tiders**, fantastic, of all time; **en gang for alle**, once and for all.

## 2 Begge

**Begge** is used both attributively and nominally; in nominal use it is sometimes, but not always, followed by **to** (two). It also has a genitive form: **begges**.

<i>Begge</i> forældre(ne) går på arbejde.	Both parents go to work.
Hun kan lide <i>begge</i> dele.	She likes both.
Jeg så <i>begge</i> forestillinger(ne).	I saw both (the) performances.
De er <i>begge</i> (to) meget venlige.	They are both very kind.
<i>Begge</i> (to) gav deres samtykke.	Both gave their consent.
De er voksne <i>begge to</i> .	They are both adults.
<i>Begges</i> formue gik tabt.	The fortune of both was lost.

NB: 'both...and' corresponds to **både...og**.

Charlotte kan <i>både</i> læse og skrive.	Charlotte can both read and write.
---	------------------------------------

## 3 Hver, hvert, enhver

**Hver/hvert** is used both attributively and nominally; **enhver** has greater emphasis:

**hver time/dag/uge/måned**, every hour/day/week/month; **hvert minut/år**, every minute/year; **hver anden gang**, every second time; **hver især**, each one

<i>Hver</i> (person) fik en gave.	Each (person) got a present.
De fik en gave <i>hver</i> .	They got a present each.
De fik <i>hver</i> en gave.	They each got a present.
Det kan <i>enhver</i> forstå.	Anyone can understand that.
Der er noget for <i>enhver</i> (smag).	There is something for every(one's)/ taste.
<i>Hver</i> mand/ <i>Enhver</i> sin lyst.	Everyone to his taste.

## 4 Ingen, intet, ingenting

(a) **Ingen** is used with common gender and plural nouns, **intet** with neuter nouns; both can have nominal function. **Ingen, intet** are often replaced by **ikke nogen/noget** in spoken Danish:

De har <i>ingen</i> børn/penge.	They have no children/money.
<i>Intet</i> nyt er godt nyt.	No news is good news.
Jeg mødte <i>ikke nogen</i> (mennesker).	I didn't meet anyone/any people.
Vi har <i>ikke noget</i> at spise.	We have nothing to eat.
<i>Ingen</i> har set ham i dag.	No one has seen him today.

(b) **Ingenting** is colloquial and more emphatic than **intet/ikke noget**. It is only used nominally:

<b>Jeg hørte <i>ingenting</i>.</b>	I heard nothing.
<b>Der er <i>ingenting</i> i vejen.</b>	There's nothing wrong.
<b>Det gør <i>ingenting</i>.</b>	It doesn't matter.

### 5 Lidt, få

(a) **Lidt** denotes a small quantity and may appear with either common gender or neuter non-count nouns, or before adjectives, but it can also be used nominally. It has positive connotations (=English 'some'); to make it more negative it may be preceded by **kun** or **meget**. For comparison see 59.

<b>Har du <i>lidt</i> mælk?</b>	Have you got some milk?
<b>Jeg blev <i>lidt</i> sur.</b>	I became a little bad tempered.
<b>Der er kun <i>lidt</i> tilbage i flasken.</b>	There's only a little left in the bottle.
<b>Hun spiser meget <i>lidt</i>.</b>	She eats very little.
<b>Vil du have <i>lidt</i> mere?</b>	Do you want a little more?
<b>Der er tre søm for <i>lidt</i>.</b>	There are three nails too few.

Note also: **Bliv/Vent lidt!**, Stay/Wait a little!; **lidt efter lidt**, little by little; **om lidt**, in a moment.

(b) **Få** denotes a small number and is used with plural nouns or nominally. It has negative connotations (=English '(very) few'), which may be emphasised by adding **kun** or **meget**. If **nogle** is added, it sounds more positive. For comparison see 59.

<b>Der var <i>få</i> mennesker til stede.</b>	There were few people present.
<b>Der er kun <i>få</i> æbler på træet.</b>	There are few apples on the tree.
<b>Meget <i>få</i> mødte op.</b>	Very few turned up.
<b>Der er nogle <i>få</i> billetter tilbage.</b>	There are a few tickets left.
<b>Stykket er afgjort kun for de <i>få</i>.</b>	The play is definitely only for the few.

### 6 Man

**Man** is third person singular and has general reference to humans (cf. French 'on' and German 'man'). There is no single English equivalent, but depending on the context 'you', 'one', 'we', 'they' or a passive construction may translate it. Outside the subject case, other forms are used:

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Possessive</i>	<i>Reflexive</i>
man	én	ens, sin/sit/sine	sig

<b><i>Man</i> kører bare ligeud.</b>	You just drive straight on.
<b><i>Man</i> ved aldrig hvad der kan ske.</b>	You never know what might happen.
<b><i>Man</i> kan ikke vide alt.</b>	One can't know everything.
<b>I Italien spiser <i>man</i> meget pasta.</b>	In Italy they eat a lot of pasta.
<b><i>Man</i> fangede tyven.</b>	The thief was caught.
<b>Kan <i>man</i> mon stole på det?</b>	Is that reliable, I wonder?
<b>Det giver <i>én</i> chancen for at vinde.</b>	It gives one the chance to win.
<b><i>Éns</i> handlinger kan misforstås.</b>	One's actions may be misunderstood.
<b><i>Man</i> må gøre <i>sit</i> bedste.</b>	One must do one's best.
<b><i>Man</i> kan vente <i>sig</i> meget af ham.</b>	One can expect a lot from him.

As subject, **man** and **én** can be used in an affected and mock ironic way to replace **du/De** and **jeg**, respectively:

**Man er nok i habit i dag!**  
**Én føler sig lidt utilpas.**

So one is wearing a suit today!  
One feels a little unwell.

### 7 **Megen, meget, mange**

(a) **Megen** as the common gender form with non-count nouns is now increasingly being replaced by **meget**. It is still found in formal language:

**Der var megen omtale af sagen.**

There was much talk about the case.

(b) **Meget** is the general form in the singular, and is used to modify non-count nouns or adjectives, or it may have nominal function. For comparison see [59](#):

**Der er meget varmt i stuen.**  
**Det var en meget dårlig præstation.**  
**Er der meget kaffe i kanden?**  
**Der er meget at gøre.**  
**Hvor meget koster det?**  
**Hvor meget er klokken?**

It's very hot in the living room.  
It was a very bad performance.  
Is there a lot of coffee in the pot?  
There's much to do.  
How much is it?  
What's the time?

Note that with some common adjectives (e.g. **god, pæn, sød**) **meget** can sometimes in spoken Danish act as a downtoner rather than an uptoner. If so, it receives stress and the adjective/adverb is part of a rising intonation:

**Hvordan gik det? Det gik meget godt.**  
How did it go? It went all right. (but no more)

**Er det ikke pænt? Jo, det er meget pænt.**  
Isn't it nice? Yes, it is quite nice. (but...)

Before comparative forms, **meget** corresponds to 'much':

**Deres have er meget større end min.**  
Their garden is much bigger than mine.

Note also: **Det er lige meget**, It doesn't matter; **mangt og meget**, a great many things.

(c) **Mange** is used with plural nouns to indicate an unspecified but substantial number. It can have attributive and nominal function. For comparison see [59](#):

**Der var mange mennesker i byen.**  
**Vi hørte mange gode forslag.**  
**Har hun mange penge?**  
**Kom der mange til foredraget?**  
**Der er for mange fattige.**

There were a lot of people in town.  
We heard a lot of good proposals.  
Has she got a lot of money?  
Did many come to the talk?  
There are too many poor people.



Note also: **mange gange**, many times; **Klokken er mange**, It's late.

### 8 **Nogen, noget, nogle**

(a) **Nogen** has both attributive and nominal function. It may appear with common gender non-count nouns in the singular and with plural nouns when it has negative (or non-assertive) connotations (=English 'any(one)'). It therefore often appears with plural nouns in questions and after a negation. It has the genitive form **nogens**.

**Det tog nogen tid at gøre det.**

It took some time to do it.

**Har du nogen cigaretter?**

Have you got any cigarettes?

**Der er ikke nogen hjemme.**

There is no one at home.

**Er der nogen der vil have mere kaffe?**

Would anyone like more coffee?

**Jeg kender ikke nogen der kan flyve.**

I don't know anyone who can fly.

**Er det nogens frakke?**

Is that anyone's coat?

(b) **Noget** has also attributive and nominal function and may correspond to both 'something' and 'anything'. It can modify non-count nouns (including common gender ones) and adjectives:

**Har du noget mad?** (Cf. **maden**)

Have you got any food?

**Der er sket noget alvorligt.**

Something serious has happened.

**Er der noget i vejen?**

Is something/anything the matter?

**Jeg har fået noget i øjet.**

I've got something in my eye.

Note that **ikke nogen/noget** is often used for **ingen/intet** in spoken Danish, see [78.4](#).

(c) **Nogle** (often pronounced like **nogen**) is, due to the conflation in pronunciation, largely restricted to the written language. Here it has positive (or assertive) connotations (=English 'some(one)'):

**Her ligger nogle aviser.**

There are some newspapers here.

**Nogle mennesker bliver aldrig klogere.**

Some people never get any wiser.

**Nogle af børnene kom for sent.**

Some of the children were late.

**Der er nogle der snyder.**

There are some (people) who cheat.

**Efter nogles mening er det forkert.**

In some people's view it's wrong.

Note that in attributive use **nogen** often has stress, whereas **nogle** is unstressed:

**Har du 'nogen' frimærker?**

Have you got any stamps? (non-assertive)

**Har du nogle 'frimærker'?**

Have you got some stamps? (assertive)

# 6 VERBS

## VERBS FORMS

79

### VERB FORMS IN OUTLINE

In modern Danish there is only one form for all persons, singular and plural, in each of the various tenses of the verb.

Danish has no continuous form of the verb (cf. 94) and, like English, employs auxiliary verbs to help form the perfect, past perfect and future tenses (cf. 96ff). For learning purposes it is a convenient simplification to consider the formation of the different verb forms as the addition of an ending to the basic part of the verb—the stem (see below).

There are four principal conjugations of Danish verbs. Conjugations I, II and III are weak conjugations, which form their past tense by means of an ending that adds another syllable to the word. Conjugation IV contains strong verbs, which form their past tense either without an ending (but often by changing the stem vowel) or by the ending **-t** which does not add an extra syllable. Below is a table summarising the endings for each conjugation and verb form (note that vowel stems have no infinitive **-e** ending):

<i>Conjugation</i>	<i>Imperative</i> =stem	<i>Infinitive</i> =stem + <b>e/zero</b>	<i>Present tense</i> =stem+( <b>e</b> ) <b>r</b>	
<i>Weak</i>				
I	<b>lev!</b>	<b>leve</b>	<b>lever</b>	live, be alive
	<b>tro!</b>	<b>tro</b>	<b>tror</b>	believe, think
II	<b>spis!</b>	<b>spise</b>	<b>spiser</b>	eat
III	<b>læg!</b>	<b>lægge</b>	<b>lægger</b>	lay, put
<i>Strong</i>				
IV	<b>drik!</b>	<b>drikke</b>	<b>drikker</b>	drink
	<b>løb!</b>	<b>løbe</b>	<b>løber</b>	run
	<b>skriv!</b>	<b>skrive</b>	<b>skriver</b>	write
	<b>vind!</b>	<b>vinde</b>	<b>vinder</b>	win

<i>Conjugation</i>	<i>Past tense</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Present participle</i>
<i>Weak</i>	stem+ <b>ede/te/de</b>	stem+( <b>e</b> )t	stem+ <b>ende</b>
I	<b>levede</b> <b>troede</b>	<b>levet</b> <b>troet</b>	<b>levende</b> <b>troende</b>
II	<b>spiste</b>	<b>spist</b>	<b>spisende</b>
III	<b>lagde</b>	<b>lagt</b>	<b>læggende</b>
<i>Strong</i>	stem (often with vowel change) + <b>zero/t</b>	stem (often with vowel change) + <b>et</b>	
IV	<b>drak</b> <b>løb</b> <b>skrev</b> <b>vandt</b>	<b>drukket</b> <b>løbet</b> <b>skrevet</b> <b>vundet</b>	<b>drikkende</b> <b>løbende</b> <b>skrivende</b> <b>vindedce</b>

## 80

## FIRST CONJUGATION

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
+ <b>e/zero</b>	+( <b>e</b> ) <b>r</b>	+ <b>ede</b>	+ <b>et</b>	
<b>arbejde</b>	<b>arbejder</b>	<b>arbejdede</b>	<b>arbejdet</b>	work
<b>studere</b>	<b>studerer</b>	<b>studerede</b>	<b>studeret</b>	study
<b>tro</b>	<b>tror</b>	<b>troede</b>	<b>troet</b>	believe, think

More than 80 per cent of weak verbs, and all new verbs, e.g. **jobbe**, work; **lifte**, hitchhike; belong to this conjugation, including those ending in **-ere**: **nationalisere**, nationalise; **parkere**, park.

Examples of frequent verbs in Conjugation I:

**arbejde**, work; **bygge**, build; **elske**, love; **forklare**, explain; **hade**, hate; **handle**, act, shop; **hente**, fetch; **huske**, remember; **lave**, do, make; **lege**, play; **lukke**, close; **pakke**, pack; **prøve**, try; **snakke**, chat, talk; **spille**, play; **vaske**, wash; **vente**, wait; **åbne**, open

Verbs ending in stressed **-e**, **-o**, **-æ**, **-ø**, **-å** in the infinitive add **-r** in the present:

**sne—sner**, snow; **bo—bor**, live, stay; **tø—tør**, thaw; **nå—når**, reach

Verbs ending in stressed **-i**, **-u**, **-y** in the infinitive add **-(e)r** in the present:

**fri—fri(e)r**, propose; **du—du(e)r**, be (any) good; **sy—sy(e)r**, sew

81  
SECOND CONJUGATION

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past Participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
+e	+er	+te	+t	
<b>kende</b>	<b>kender</b>	<b>kendte</b>	<b>kendt</b>	know
<b>køre</b>	<b>kører</b>	<b>kørte</b>	<b>kørt</b>	drive
<b>spise</b>	<b>spiser</b>	<b>spiste</b>	<b>spist</b>	eat

About 10 per cent of Danish weak verbs belong to Conjugation II. They include:

1 Some verbs with stems ending in a long vowel (or a diphthong)+**b**, soft **d**, soft **g**, **-l**, **-n**, **-r**, **-s**:

**købe**, buy; **råbe**, shout; **tabe**, lose; **bløde**, bleed; **brede**, spread; **føde**, give birth; **bruge**, use; **stege**, fry; **søge**, seek; **dele**, divide, share; **føle**, feel; **tale**, talk; **låne**, borrow, lend; **mene**, mean, think; **høre**, hear; **lære**, learn, teach; **læse**, read; **låse**, lock; **rejse**, go, travel; **vise**, show

2 Some verbs with a short vowel and a stem ending in **-l(d)**, **-m**, **-nd**, **-ng**:

**bestille**, do, order; **skille**, separate; **fylde**, fill; **kalde**, call; **glemme**, forget; **ramme**, hit; **begynde**, begin; **kende**, know; **hænge**, hang; **trænge**, need, push

3 A few verbs with a short vowel and a stem vowel in **-ls**, **-nk**:

**frelse**, save; **hilse**, greet; **tænke**, think

4 Very few verbs with a vowel stem:

**ske**, happen

5 A number of verbs with vowel change in the past tense:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past Participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>dølge</b>	<b>dølger</b>	<b>dulgte</b>	<b>dulgt</b>	conceal
<b>fortælle</b>	<b>fortæller</b>	<b>fortalte</b>	<b>fortalt</b>	tell
<b>følge</b>	<b>følger</b>	<b>fulgte</b>	<b>fulgt</b>	follow
<b>række</b>	<b>rækker</b>	<b>rakte</b>	<b>rakt</b>	pass
<b>smøre</b>	<b>smører</b>	<b>smurte</b>	<b>smurt</b>	smear
<b>spørge</b>	<b>spørger</b>	<b>spurgte</b>	<b>spurgt</b>	ask
<b>strække</b>	<b>strækker</b>	<b>strakte</b>	<b>strakt</b>	stretch
<b>sælge</b>	<b>sælger</b>	<b>solgte</b>	<b>solgt</b>	sell
<b>sætte</b>	<b>sætter</b>	<b>satte</b>	<b>sat</b>	place
<b>træde</b>	<b>træder</b>	<b>trådte</b>	<b>trådt</b>	step
<b>tælle</b>	<b>tæller</b>	<b>talte</b>	<b>talt</b>	count
<b>vælge</b>	<b>vælger</b>	<b>valgte</b>	<b>valgt</b>	choose

The **g** in **-lg** and **-rg** is dropped in the pronunciation of the past tense of the following verbs:

**følge—fulgte; sælge—solgte; vælge—valgte; spørge—spurgte**

6 Two irregular verbs:

<b>bringe</b>	<b>bringer</b>	<b>bragte</b>	<b>bragt</b>	bring
<b>vide</b>	<b>ved</b>	<b>vidste</b>	<b>vidst</b>	know

7 Some verbs have vowel shortening in the past tense, e.g.:

**bruger—brugte, use; køber—købte, buy; træde—trådte, step**

## 82

## THIRD CONJUGATION

1 A small group of verbs add the ending **-de** in the past tense:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past Participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>dø</b>	<b>dør</b>	<b>døde</b>	<b>død</b>	die
<b>have</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>havde</b>	<b>haft</b>	have

2 The following have both **-de** and vowel change:

<b>gøre</b>	<b>gøre</b>	<b>gjorde</b>	<b>gjort</b>	do
<b>lægge</b>	<b>lægger</b>	<b>lagde</b>	<b>lagt</b>	lay, put
<b>sige</b>	<b>siger</b>	<b>sagde</b>	<b>sagt</b>	say

3 Two modal verbs are included here:

<b>burde</b>	<b>bør</b>	<b>burde</b>	<b>burdet</b>	ought to
<b>turde</b>	<b>tør</b>	<b>turde</b>	<b>turdet</b>	dare

## 83

## FOURTH CONJUGATION—INTRODUCTION

This conjugation includes about 120 strong verbs, i.e. those whose past tense is monosyllabic (except in compound verbs) and formed either by **zero**-ending and (usually) vowel change or (in a few verbs) by adding the ending **-t** to the stem, with or without vowel change. The vowel change often (but not always) applies to the past participle too, which may thus have (i) the stem vowel, (ii) the vowel of the past tense, or (iii) a vowel different from both the stem and the past tense.

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	
<b>-e/zero</b>	<b>-e(r)</b>	<b>zero/-t (+/-vowel change)</b>	<b>+e(t) (+/-vowel change)</b>	
<b>drikke</b>	<b>drikker</b>	<b>drak</b>	<b>drukket</b>	drink
<b>falde</b>	<b>falder</b>	<b>faldt</b>	<b>faldet</b>	fall

Strong verbs are best learnt individually, but many follow the same vowel change sequence. These gradation series are shown below in alphabetical order. Weak alternative forms are given in brackets; note that these sometimes have a different meaning.

## 84

## FOURTH CONJUGATION: STEM VOWEL IN -a-

Gradation series **a-o-a:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>drage</b>	<b>drager</b>	<b>drog</b>	<b>draget</b>	drag, go
<b>fare</b>	<b>farer</b>	<b>for (farede)</b>	<b>faret</b>	hurry
<b>jage</b>	<b>jager</b>	<b>jog (jagede)</b>	<b>jaget</b>	hurry, thrust; hunt, chase
<b>lade</b>	<b>lader</b>	<b>lod (ladede)</b>	<b>ladet/ladt (ladet)</b>	let; load
<b>tage</b>	<b>tager</b>	<b>tog</b>	<b>taget</b>	take

## 85

## FOURTH CONJUGATION: STEM VOWEL IN -e-

1 Gradation series **e-a-e:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>bede</b>	<b>beder</b>	<b>bad</b>	<b>bedt</b>	ask, pray

2 Gradation series **e-o-e:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>le</b>	<b>ler</b>	<b>lo</b>	<b>le(e)t</b>	laugh

3 Gradation series **e-å-e:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>se</b>	<b>ser</b>	<b>så</b>	<b>set</b>	see, look

## 86

## FOURTH CONJUGATION: STEM VOWEL IN -i-

Strong verbs with the stem vowel **-i-** make up the largest group. They comprise five gradation series:

1 Gradation series **i-a-i:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>briste</b>	<b>brister</b>	<b>brast (bristede)</b>	<b>bristet</b>	break, burst
<b>gide</b>	<b>gider</b>	<b>gad</b>	<b>gidet</b>	feel like
<b>give</b>	<b>giver</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>givet</b>	give

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>klinge</b>	<b>klinger</b>	<b>klang (klingede)</b>	<b>klinget</b>	ring, sound
<b>sidde</b>	<b>sidder</b>	<b>sad</b>	<b>siddet</b>	sit
<b>stinke</b>	<b>stinker</b>	<b>stank</b>	<b>stinket</b>	stink
<b>tie</b>	<b>tier</b>	<b>tav (tiede)</b>	<b>tiet</b>	be silent

2 Gradation series **i-a-u**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>binde</b>	<b>binder</b>	<b>bandt</b>	<b>bundet</b>	bind, tie
<b>drikke</b>	<b>drikker</b>	<b>drak</b>	<b>drukket</b>	drink
<b>finde</b>	<b>finder</b>	<b>findt</b>	<b>fundet</b>	find
<b>rinde</b>	<b>rinder</b>	<b>randt</b>	<b>rundet (rindet)</b>	pass, roll by
<b>slippe</b>	<b>slipper</b>	<b>slap</b>	<b>sluppet</b>	give up, let go
<b>spinde</b>	<b>spinder</b>	<b>spandt</b>	<b>spundet</b>	spin, weave
<b>springe</b>	<b>springer</b>	<b>sprang</b>	<b>sprunget</b>	jump, spring
<b>stikke</b>	<b>stikker</b>	<b>stak</b>	<b>stukket</b>	prick, stick
<b>svinde</b>	<b>svinder</b>	<b>svandt</b>	<b>svundet</b>	decrease
<b>svinge</b>	<b>svinger</b>	<b>svang (svingede)</b>	<b>svunget (svinget)</b>	swing
<b>tvinde</b>	<b>tvinder</b>	<b>tvandt</b>	<b>tvundet</b>	twine, twist
<b>tvinge</b>	<b>tvinger</b>	<b>tvang</b>	<b>tvunget</b>	force
<b>vinde</b>	<b>vinder</b>	<b>vandt</b>	<b>vundet</b>	win

3 Gradation series **i-e-e**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>blive</b>	<b>bliver</b>	<b>blev</b>	<b>blevet</b>	be, become
<b>drive</b>	<b>driver</b>	<b>drev</b>	<b>drevet</b>	drive, idle
<b>glide</b>	<b>glider</b>	<b>gled</b>	<b>gledet</b>	glide, slide
<b>gnide</b>	<b>gnider</b>	<b>gned</b>	<b>gnedet</b>	rub
<b>gribe</b>	<b>griber</b>	<b>greb</b>	<b>grebet</b>	catch, seize
<b>hive</b>	<b>hiver</b>	<b>hev</b>	<b>hevet</b>	heave, pull
<b>knibe</b>	<b>kniber</b>	<b>kneb</b>	<b>knebet</b>	pinch
<b>pibe</b>	<b>piber</b>	<b>peb</b>	<b>pebet</b>	squeak
<b>ride</b>	<b>rider</b>	<b>red</b>	<b>redet</b>	ride
<b>rive</b>	<b>river</b>	<b>rev</b>	<b>revet</b>	scratch
<b>skride</b>	<b>skrider</b>	<b>skred</b>	<b>skredet</b>	slip, walk out
<b>skrige</b>	<b>skriger</b>	<b>skreg</b>	<b>skreget</b>	cry, shout
<b>skrive</b>	<b>skriver</b>	<b>skrev</b>	<b>skrevet</b>	write
<b>slibe</b>	<b>sliber</b>	<b>sleb</b>	<b>slebet</b>	grind
<b>snige</b>	<b>sniger</b>	<b>sneg</b>	<b>sneget</b>	sneak

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>stige</b>	<b>stiger</b>	<b>steg</b>	<b>steget</b>	rise
<b>svide</b>	<b>svider</b>	<b>sved</b>	<b>svedet</b>	burn, singe
<b>svige</b>	<b>sviger</b>	<b>sveg</b>	<b>sveget</b>	betray
<b>vige</b>	<b>viger</b>	<b>veg</b>	<b>veget</b>	retreat, yield
<b>vride</b>	<b>vrider</b>	<b>vred</b>	<b>vredet</b>	wring

4 Gradation series **i-ē-i**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>bide</b>	<b>bider</b>	<b>bed</b>	<b>bidt</b>	bite
<b>lide</b>	<b>lider</b>	<b>led</b>	<b>lidt</b>	suffer
<b>skide</b>	<b>skider</b>	<b>sked</b>	<b>skidt</b>	shit
<b>slide</b>	<b>slider</b>	<b>sled</b>	<b>slidt</b>	toil, wear
<b>smide</b>	<b>smider</b>	<b>smed</b>	<b>smidt</b>	throw
<b>stride</b>	<b>strider</b>	<b>stred</b>	<b>stridt</b>	struggle

5 Gradation series **i-ā-i**:

Notice that the stem consonant **-g-** is dropped in the past tense:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>ligge</b>	<b>ligger</b>	<b>lā</b>	<b>ligget</b>	lie (position)

## 87

FOURTH CONJUGATION: STEM VOWEL IN **-y-**

Strong verbs with the stem vowel **-y-** make up the second largest group. They comprise five gradation series, four of which change the vowel to **-ø-** in the past tense:

1 Gradation series **y-a-u**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>syng</b>	<b>synger</b>	<b>sang</b>	<b>sunget</b>	sing
<b>synke</b>	<b>synker</b>	<b>sank</b>	<b>sunket</b>	sink

2 Gradation series **y-ø-o**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>fryse</b>	<b>fryser</b>	<b>fros</b>	<b>frosset</b>	freeze



3 Gradation series **y-ø-u**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
bryde	bryder	brød	brudt	break
byde	byder	bød	budt	bid, offer
fortryde	fortryder	fortrød	fortrudt	regret
skyde	skyder	skød	skudt	shoot

4 Gradation series **y-ø-y**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
betyde	betyder	betød	betydet	mean
flyde	flyder	flød	flydt	flow
gyde	gyder	gød	gydt	pour, spawn
gyse	gyser	gøs (gyste)	gyst	shiver
lyde	lyder	lød	lydt	sound
nyde	nyder	nød	nydt	enjoy
nyse	nyser	nøs (nyste)	nyst	sneeze
skryde	skryder	skrød (skrydede)	skrydet	brag, bray
snyde	snyder	snød	snydt	cheat

5 Gradation series **y-ø-ø**. Note the change of consonant in **fløj/fløjet** and **løj/løjet**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
flyve	flyver	fløj	fløjet	fly
fyge	fyger	føg	føget	drift, sweep
krybe	kryber	krøb	krøbet	crawl, creep
lyve	lyver	løj	løjet	lie (deceive)
ryge	ryger	røg	røget	smoke
smyge	smyger	smøg (smygede)	smøget (smyget)	slide, slip
stryge	stryger	strøg	strøget	cancel, iron, stroke

## 88

FOURTH CONJUGATION: STEM VOWEL IN **-æ-**

Strong verbs with the stem vowel **-æ-** comprise six gradation series, but each series has very few members:

1 Gradation series **æ-a-a**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
gælde	gælder	gjaldt	gjaldt (gældt)	apply, be valid

2 Gradation series **æ·a·u:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>hjælpe</b>	<b>hjælper</b>	<b>hjalp</b>	<b>hjulpet</b>	help
<b>sprække</b>	<b>sprækker</b>	<b>sprak (sprækkede)</b>	<b>sprukket (sprækket)</b>	crack
<b>træffe</b>	<b>træffer</b>	<b>traf</b>	<b>truffet</b>	hit, meet
<b>trække</b>	<b>trækker</b>	<b>trak</b>	<b>trukket</b>	draw, pull

3 Gradation series **æ·a·æ:**

This gradation series has three members; note that ‘intr’=intransitive, ‘tr’=transitive (cf. 103). **Kvæde** is now old-fashioned and very rare. **Være** has an irregular present tense form:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>hænge</b>	<b>hænger</b>	<b>hang</b> (intr) <b>(hængte)</b> (tr)	<b>hængt</b>	hang
<b>kvæde</b>	<b>kvæder</b>	<b>kvad</b>	<b>kvædet</b>	chant, sing
<b>være</b>	<b>er</b>	<b>var</b>	<b>været</b>	be, exist

4 Gradation series **æ·a·å:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>bære</b>	<b>bærer</b>	<b>bar</b>	<b>båret</b>	bear, carry
<b>skære</b>	<b>skærer</b>	<b>skar</b>	<b>skåret</b>	cut, slice
<b>stjæle</b>	<b>stjæler</b>	<b>stjal</b>	<b>stjålet</b>	steal

5 Gradation series **æ·o·ø:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>sværge</b>	<b>sværger</b>	<b>svor (sværgede)</b>	<b>svoret (sværget)</b>	swear

6 Gradation series **æ·å·æ:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>æde</b>	<b>æder</b>	<b>åd</b>	<b>ædt</b>	eat, gobble

Strong verbs with the stem vowel **-a-** comprise two gradation series, each with two members. All four verbs are vowel stems:

1 Gradation series **å·i·å:**

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>få</b>	<b>får</b>	<b>fik</b>	<b>fået</b>	get, have
<b>gå</b>	<b>går</b>	<b>gik</b>	<b>gået</b>	go, walk

2 Gradation series **å-o-å**:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>slå</b>	<b>slår</b>	<b>slog</b>	<b>slået</b>	beat, hit
<b>stå</b>	<b>star</b>	<b>stod</b>	<b>stået</b>	stand

## 90

## FOURTH CONJUGATION: VERBS WITH THE SAME STEM VOWEL IN ALL FORMS

Seven strong verbs have the same stem vowel in all their forms. However, they belong to the fourth conjugation since they have a monosyllabic past tense form. There are five different stem vowels and two of the verbs add **-t** in the past tense:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1 Stem vowel <b>-a-</b> :				
<b>falde</b>	<b>falder</b>	<b>faldt</b>	<b>faldet</b>	fall
2 Stem vowel <b>-e-</b> :				
<b>hedde</b>	<b>hedder</b>	<b>hed</b>	<b>heddet</b>	be called
3 Stem vowel <b>-o-</b> :				
<b>holde</b>	<b>holder</b>	<b>holdt</b>	<b>holdt</b>	hold
<b>komme</b>	<b>kommer</b>	<b>kom</b>	<b>kommet</b>	come
<b>sove</b>	<b>sover</b>	<b>sov</b>	<b>sovet</b>	sleep
4 Stem vowel <b>-æ-</b> :				
<b>græde</b>	<b>græder</b>	<b>græd</b>	<b>grædt</b>	cry, weep
5 Stem vowel <b>-ø-</b> :				
<b>løbe</b>	<b>løber</b>	<b>løb</b>	<b>løbet</b>	run

## 91

## INFINITIVE

1 Form:

The infinitive is formed in one of two ways:

	<i>Stem</i>	<i>Infinitive</i>	
Consonant stems: stem+ <b>e</b>	<b>leg</b>	<b>lege</b>	play
Vowel stems: stem+ <b>zero</b>	<b>dø</b>	<b>dø</b>	die

The infinitive form is usually preceded by the infinitive marker **at** except after modal verbs, verbs of perception and the verbs **lade, bede**.

2 Use of the infinite without **at**:

(a) After the modal auxiliaries **burde, kunne, måtte, skulle, ville**:

**Han kan ikke svømme.**

He can't swim.

**Jeg skal gå om to minutter.**

I have to go in two minutes.

(b) After **bede, føle, here, lade, se**; often in object+infinitive constructions:

**Vi hørte ham skribe.**

We heard him cry out.

**Jeg så hende ankomme.**

I saw her arrive.

(c) Before the second of two coordinated infinitives:

**Hun lovede at komme og hjælpe mig.**

She promised to come and help me.

(d) In a few idiomatic expressions after **få**:

**Nu får vi se.**

We'll see about that.

(e) Colloquially in prohibitions or warnings, especially to children:

**Ikke kigge/røre/pille næse!**

Don't look/touch/pick your nose!

(f) After the (semi-)modals **behøve, gide, turde**, usage may vary:

**Du behøver ikke (at) gå.**

You don't have to go.

**Han gider ikke (at) rydde op.**

He cannot be bothered to tidy up.

**Jeg tør godt (at) springe ned.**

I dare jump down.

3 Use of the infinite with **at**:

(a) In two-verb constructions (verb+at+infinitive) with verbs such as:

**begynde**, begin; **beslutte**, decide; **forstå**, understand; **forsøge**, try; **håbe**, hope; **lykkes**, succeed; **pleje**, usually do; **synes**, think; **vælge**, choose; **ønske**, want, wish

**Jeg forsøgte at åbne døren.**

I tried to open the door.

**Hun valgte at blive hjemme.**

She chose to stay at home.

(b) When the infinitive acts as subject, subject complement, object or prepositional complement, note that English often uses the gerund (i.e. '-ing' form) in such cases:

**At here musik er afslappende.**

Listening to music is relaxing.

S

**Lykken er at spise godt.**

Happiness is to eat well.

SComp.

**Jeg lærte at tale dansk i skolen.**

I learnt to speak Danish at school.

O

**Han tænkte på at gå i teatret.**

He thought of going to the theatre.

Prep.Comp.

(c) When the infinitive is the complement of a noun or adjective:

**Vil du have lidt vand at drikke?**

Would you like some water to drink?

**Denne bog er svær at forstå.**

This book is difficult to understand.

(d) **for at**+infinitive indicates intention:**Hun gik ind for at hente en bog.**

She went in to fetch a book.

**Han kom for at tale med os.**

He came to speak to us.

NB Danish does not allow a split infinitive, i.e. nothing can stand between **at** and the infinitive.

## 92

## PAST PARTICIPLE

1 Form:

	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
I	<b>gro</b>	<b>gror</b>	<b>groede</b>	<b>groet</b>	grow
	<b>vente</b>	<b>venter</b>	<b>ventede</b>	<b>ventet</b>	wait
II	<b>høre</b>	<b>hører</b>	<b>hørte</b>	<b>hørt</b>	hear
	<b>spørge</b>	<b>spørger</b>	<b>spurgte</b>	<b>spurgt</b>	ask
III	<b>lægge</b>	<b>lægger</b>	<b>lagde</b>	<b>lagt</b>	lay, put
				<b>-et</b>	
IV	<b>hjælpe</b>	<b>hjælper</b>	<b>hjalp</b>	<b>hjulpet</b>	help
	<b>vinde</b>	<b>vinder</b>	<b>vandt</b>	<b>vundet</b>	win
Mostly	<b>-t after -d:</b>			<b>-t</b>	
	<b>flyde</b>	<b>flyder</b>	<b>flød</b>	<b>flydt</b>	flow

Notice that in Conjugation IV (strong verbs) the vowel in the past participle may be different from that in the past tense.

When used as an attributive adjective, the past participle adds an **-e** in the definite and/or plural form. Past participles ending in **-et** usually end in **-ede** in the definite and/or plural form:

**en ønsket gave**, a desired present; **den/de ønskede gave(r)**, the desired present(s)

## 2 Verbal use:

The auxiliaries **have (har/havde)** or **være (er/var)**+the past participle form composite tenses (cf. 96–97):

<b>Susanne har skrevet en bog.</b>	Susanne has written a book.
<b>De havde set filmen.</b>	They had seen the film.
<b>Jeg er begyndt at lære fransk.</b>	I have begun to learn French.
<b>De var taget til Aarhus.</b>	They had gone to Århus.

The past participle is also used with **blive** to form one of the passive constructions (cf. 105):

<b>Bilen blev standset af politiet.</b>	The car was stopped by the police.
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## 3 Adjectival use:

After the auxiliary **være** and in attributive position before a noun, the past participle may function as an adjective (cf. 52.4):

<b>Huset er lejet.</b>	The house is rented.
<b>det lejede hus</b>	the rented house
<b>Bogen var udvalgt.</b>	The book was selected.
<b>den udvalgte bog</b>	the selected book
<b>Stillingen er opslået.</b>	The position is advertised.
<b>den opslåede stilling</b>	the advertised position

When the past participle is in predicative position and has a plural subject, there can be some uncertainty about whether it should be inflected:

(a) Weak verbs—uninflected or **-ede/-e**?

The uninflected forms with the ending **-(e)t** inflect in the following ways:

Conjugation I:	<b>-et</b> → <b>-ede</b> , e.g. <b>lejet</b> → <b>lejede</b> ; <b>ventet</b> → <b>ventede</b>
Conjugation II+III:	<b>-t</b> → <b>-te</b> , e.g. <b>kendt</b> → <b>kendte</b> ; <b>vedlagt</b> → <b>vedlagte</b>

Both forms are found when denoting a state of affairs, but modern Danish increasingly prefers the uninflected form:

<b>Husene er lejet/lejede.</b>	The houses are rented.
<b>Spillerne er kendt/kendte.</b>	The players are (well-)known.
<b>Checkene er vedlagt/vedlagte.</b>	The cheques are enclosed.

When the participle is a complement after verbs other than **være**, the uninflected form is also generally preferred:

**De løb forskrækket(/forskækkede) bort.**  
They ran away frightened.

(b) Strong verbs—uninflected or **-en/-ne**?

In Conjugation IV, the uninflected forms inflect in the following ways:

Singular form ending in <b>-en</b> :	<b>-en</b> → <b>-ne</b> , e.g. <b>stjålen</b> → <b>stjålne</b>
Singular form ending in <b>-et</b> :	<b>-et</b> → <b>-ne/-ede</b> , e.g. <b>tvunget</b> → <b>tvungne</b> ; <b>opslået</b> → <b>opslåede</b>
Singular form ending in <b>-t</b> :	<b>-t</b> → <b>-te</b> , e.g. <b>afbrudt</b> → <b>afbrudte</b>

Here too both forms are usually possible, but again with a growing preference for the uninflected form:

<b>Bilen er stjålet (stjålen).</b>	The car is stolen.
Cf. <b>en stjålet (stjålen) bil</b>	a stolen car
<b>den stjålne bil</b>	the stolen car
<b>Stillingerne er opslået(/opslåede).</b>	The positions are advertised.
Cf. <b>en opslået stilling</b>	an advertised position
<b>den opslåede stilling</b>	the advertised position
<b>Forhandlingerne er afbrudt (/afbrudte).</b>	The negotiations are interrupted.
Cf. <b>en afbrudt forhandling</b>	an interrupted negotiation
<b>den afbrudte forhandling</b>	the interrupted negotiation

(c) Only the uninflected form is used in the passive:

**Husene er blevet lejet.**  
**Bilerne er blevet stjålet.**  
**Stillingerne er blevet opslået.**

## 93

## PRESENT PARTICIPLE

1 Form:

The present participle is formed by adding **-ende** to the verb stem:

I	<b>boende</b> <b>levende</b>	II	<b>kørende</b> <b>spisende</b>	III	<b>døende</b> <b>sigende</b>	IV	<b>liggende</b> <b>ridende</b>
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2 Verbal use:

The present participle is used much less as a verbal form in Danish than is the corresponding form with 'ing' in English. It occurs mainly:

(a) In verbs of motion, e.g. **cykle**, cycle; **gå**, walk; **køre**, drive; **løbe**, run; **springe**, jump; etc., or verbs of expression, e.g. **bande**, swear; **græde**, cry, weep; **le**, laugh; **råbe**, shout; **smile**, smile; etc., when they follow verbs of motion like: **gå**, walk; **komme**, come; **løbe**, run; etc.

<b>Han gik bandende/smilende bort.</b>	He walked away swearing/smiling.
<b>De kom gående/kørende/løbende.</b>	They came walking/driving/running.
<b>Børnene løb grædende hjem.</b>	The children ran home crying.

(b) In verbs of position, e.g. **hænge**, hang; **ligge**, lie; **sidde**, sit; **stå**, stand; etc., when they follow **blive**:

**Hun blev liggende/siddende/stående.**

She remained lying/sitting/standing.

(c) In verbs of position, e.g. **hænge**, hang; **ligge**, lie; **sidde**, sit; **stå**, stand; etc., when they follow **have** +object:

**Han har sin frakke hængende i entreen.**

He has his coat hanging in the hall.

**Jeg havde min cykel stående i skuret.**

I had my bike standing in the shed.

Note that Danish has no formal equivalent to the English continuous forms (cf.94.1):

She is reading the paper.

**Hun læser avisen.**

OR: **Hun ligger/sidder/står og læser avisen.**

3 Other uses:

The present participle can also function as one of the following word classes:

(a) An adjective:

This is by far the most frequent use of the present participle. It can occur in both attributive and predicative position:

*Attributive:*

**Det var en rammende bemærkning.**

It was an incisive remark.

**Vi star over for et stigende problem.**

We are faced with a growing problem.

*Predicative:*

**Hun er charmerende/irriterende.**

She is charming/irritating.

**Han blev efterhånden trættende.**

He gradually became tiresome.

(b) A noun (see also 54):

This is especially common when the participle denotes people characterised by some activity. Some participles can even appear with the indefinite (as well as the definite) article, which is very rare in English, e.g. **en døende**, a dying person; **en logerende**, a lodger; **en rejsende**, a traveller; **en studerende**, a student; etc.

But there are far more examples with the definite article both in the singular and in the plural, e.g. **de (n) ankommende**, the arriving person(s); **de(n) besøgende**, the visitor(s); **de(n) dansende**, the dancer(s); **de(n) gående**, the walking person(s); **de(n) pårørende**, the relative(s); **de(n) ventende**, the waiting person(s); etc.

**Den besøgende var en ung dame.**

The visitor was a young woman.

**De pårørende blev underrettet.**

The relatives were informed.

The present participle can also appear in the genitive:

**de rejsendes baggage**

the travellers' luggage



There are a few examples of neuter nouns:

**et anliggende**, a (business) matter; **et indestående**, a bank balance; etc.

(c) An adverb:

As an adverb, the present participle usually acts as an amplifier (cf. [109.2](#)) for an adjective:

**Hans tænder er blændende hvide.**

His teeth are dazzlingly white.

**Det var brændende varmt i solen.**

It was burning hot in the sun.

**Hun sang imponerende godt.**

She sang impressively well.

Very few present participle forms are adverbs proper, e.g. **udelukkende**, exclusively.

## TENSES

### 94

#### PRESENT TENSE

The present tense expresses:

1 What is happening here and now (instantaneous present) (see also [93.2\(c\)](#)):

**Hvad laver du, Lise?**

What're you doing, Lise?

**Jeg sidder og skriver.**

I'm (sitting) writing.

Danish has no exact equivalent to the English continuous forms but, apart from the present tense, certain constructions are used to indicate an ongoing state or action, e.g.:

**Jeg er i færd/gang med at skrive.**

I'm writing.

**Jeg er ved at lave mad.**

I'm cooking.

2 Statements of general facts (timeless present):

**Jorden kredser rundt om solen.**

The Earth orbits the Sun.

**København ligger på Sjælland.**

Copenhagen is situated on Zealand.

3 What is often repeated (habitual present):

**Om mandagen begynder vi kl. 8.**

On Mondays we begin at 8 o'clock.

**Hvert år rejser vi til Frankrig.**

Every year we go to France.

4 Events in the (near) future:

**I morgen rejser vi til England.**

Tomorrow we are going to England.

**Jeg kommer snart tilbage.**

I'll soon be back.

5 Events in the past that are dramatised (historic or dramatic present):

**I 1914 udbryder 1. verdenskrig.** In 1914 World War I breaks out.

### 95

#### PAST TENSE

The past tense expresses:

1 An action at a definite point in the past (without reference to 'now'):

(a) Past tense only:

**Vi plantede et træ i haven.** We planted a tree in the garden.

(b) Often with a time marker:

**For ti år siden boede jeg i Danmark.** Ten years ago I lived in Denmark.  
**Vi kom sent hjem i aften.** We came home late last night.

2 What was often repeated in the past:

**Vi gik tit på pub i England.** We often went to the pub in England.

This is often rendered by **plejede at**, used to:

**Vi plejede at gå ud om lørdagen.** We used to go out on Saturdays.

### 96

#### PERFECT TENSE

Transitive verbs plus intransitive verbs not expressing motion (including **have** and **være**) use **har**+the past participle to form the perfect tense:

**Jeg har slået græsset.** I have cut the grass.  
**Han har haft mange gæster.** He has had many guests.  
**Vi har været på Madeira.** We have been to Madeira.

Some intransitive verbs, primarily those expressing motion or change, use **er**+the past participle:

**Kufferten er forsvundet.** The suitcase has disappeared.  
**Hun er kommet hjem.** She has come home.  
**Hvad er der sket?** What has happened?  
**John er blevet sagfører.** John has become a lawyer.

Intransitive verbs expressing motion may occasionally express either an action or a state of affairs:

Action: **Han har gået hele vejen.** He has walked all the way.  
State: **Nu er han gået.** Now he has left.  
Action: **Har du flyttet sofaen?** Have you moved the sofa?

State:            **De er flyttet til England.**                            They have moved to England.

The perfect tense establishes a link between the past and the present. This may take the following forms:

1 An action at an indeterminate time in the past, but seen from the present:

**Hun har besøgt sin bror i Kina.**                            She has visited her brother in China.  
**Han er begyndt at ryge igen.**                            He has started smoking again.

2 An action in the past that has consequences for the present:

**Det har sneet hele natten.**                            It has snowed all night. (It's still white.)  
**Der har været indbrud.**                            There has been a burglary. (Things are missing.)

3 An action repeated in the past, but seen from the present:

**Jeg har været i Sverige flere gange.**  
 I have been in Sweden several times.

**Vi har set mange film i år.**  
 We have seen many films this year.

4 An action continuing from the past into the present—with a time adverbial:

**Jeg har boet i Birkerød i ti år (og bor der endnu).**  
 I have lived in Birkerød for ten years (and still live there).

Cf. **Jeg har boet i Birkerød (på et tidspunkt, men bor der ikke længere).**  
 I lived in Birkerød (at some stage but don't live there any longer).

5 An action in the (near) future expressed in a subordinate clause that will be completed before the action expressed in the main clause:

**Når jeg har afsluttet bogen, tager vi på ferie.**  
 When I have finished the book, we'll go on holiday.

## 97

### PAST PERFECT TENSE

The past perfect (or pluperfect) tense is formed with **havde/var**+the past participle (cf. the perfect tense in 96):

**Han havde spist da du ringede.**                            He had eaten when you phoned.  
**Mødet var begyndt da vi kom.**                            The meeting had started when we came.

The past perfect is used to express an action in the past that took place before another action indicated by the past tense:

**Da jeg nåede derhen, var bussen kørt.**

When I got there, the bus had gone.

**Poul fortalte os at han havde været syg.**

Poul told us that he had been ill.

The past perfect may also be used to describe hypothetical events:

**Hvis du ikke havde drukket så meget, kunne du have kørt hjem.**

If you hadn't drunk so much, you could have driven home. (But you have.)

**Hun ville have hjulpet dig hvis du havde bedt hende om det.**

She would have helped you if you had asked her. (But you haven't.)

## 98

### FUTURE TENSE

Although there is no formal future tense in Danish (as there is in French, for example), the combination of **vil**+infinitive is the nearest equivalent and the most neutral way of expressing future reference:

**Hvad vil der ske?**

What will happen?

**I næste uge vil det være for sent.**

Next week will be too late.

However, the future may be expressed in other ways, too, notably the following:

1 **skal**+infinitive implies an arrangement or a promise. A directional adverbial may replace the infinitive to denote an arrangement. Note that a promise usually has a first person subject and often includes the modal adverb **nok** as an extra assurance:

**Vi skal mødes i biografen.**

We are meeting at the cinema.

**Han skal til Falster på søndag.**

He's going to Falster on Sunday.

**Jeg skal nok sende pengene i dag.**

I'll send the money today.

2 Present tense with time adverbial:

It is more common in Danish than in English to use the present tense with future meaning. This often, but not always, refers to the near future:

**Vi tager til Bornholm i næste uge.**

We are going to Bornholm next week.

**Om tre år går han på pension.**

In three years he'll retire.

3 Present tense of **blive, få, komme**, often without a time adverbial:

**Tror du det bliver kedeligt?**

Do you think it will be boring?

**Vi får godt vejr.**

It's going to be nice weather.

**Der kommer mange til festen.**

A lot of people are coming to the party.

## DIFFERENCES IN THE USE OF TENSES

1 Present tense in Danish—past tense in English:

In passive constructions when an action is completed but the result remains:

<b>Bogen er skrevet i 1949.</b>	The book was written in 1949.
<b>Slottet er bygget i 1500-tallet.</b>	The castle was built in the sixteenth century.
<b>Hun er født i Nyborg.</b>	She was born in Nyborg.

2 Present tense in Danish—perfect tense in English:

<b>Er det første gang du er her?</b>	Is it the first time you have been here?
--------------------------------------	--

3 Simple present tense in Danish—present continuous form in English:

<b>Hvad laver børnene?</b>	What are the children doing?
<b>De (sidder og) ser fjernsyn.</b>	They are (sitting) watching TV.

4 Past tense in Danish—present tense in English:

Especially to express spontaneous feelings (emotive past tense):

<b>Det var synd for dig!</b>	That's a pity for you!
<b>Det var pænt af dig!</b>	That's really nice of you!
<b>Var der mere?</b>	Is there anything else?

5 Perfect tense in Danish—past tense in English:

With emphasis on the result rather than the action:

<b>Branner har skrevet <i>Rytteren</i>.</b>	Branner wrote <i>The Riding Master</i> .
<b>Din mor har ringet.</b>	Your mother rang.
<b>Hvor har du lært dansk?</b>	Where did you learn Danish?

## MOOD

## MOOD AND MODAL VERBS

1 The attitude of the speaker to the activity expressed in the verb is indicated by:

Modal verb:	<b>Vi må løbe.</b>	We must run.
Imperative:	<b>Sov godt!</b>	Sleep well!
Subjunctive:	<b>Frederik længe leve!</b>	Long live Frederik!

2 Modal verbs have irregular forms, in particular the present tense:

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>burde</b>	<b>bør</b>	<b>burde</b>	<b>burdet</b>	should, ought to
<b>kunne</b>	<b>kan</b>	<b>kunne</b>	<b>kunnet</b>	can
<b>måtte</b>	<b>må</b>	<b>måtte</b>	<b>måttet</b>	may, must
<b>skulle</b>	<b>skal</b>	<b>skulle</b>	<b>skullet</b>	must, shall
<b>turde</b>	<b>tør</b>	<b>turde</b>	<b>turdet</b>	dare
<b>ville</b>	<b>vil</b>	<b>ville</b>	<b>villet</b>	will, want to

3 Modal verbs also differ from other verbs in that:

- whereas other verbs only denote time/tense (past/present/future), the modals also express the speaker's own commitment or attitude to what is said;
- modal verbs are used as auxiliary verbs in two-verb constructions with a main verb in the infinitive:

<b>Jeg <i>kan</i> ikke løbe længere.</b>	I can't run any further.	(ability)
<b>Det <i>må</i> være det rigtige hus.</b>	It must be the right house.	(logical necessity)

However, modals may also combine with a directional adverbial without an infinitive:

<b>Nå, jeg <i>må</i> hjem nu.</b>	Well, I'll have to go home now.
<b>De <i>skal</i> i biografen i aften.</b>	They are going to the cinema tonight.

4 Use of the modal verbs:

(a) **burde:**

probability

**Ordet burde findes i ordbogen.** The word ought to be in the dictionary.

strong recommendation

**Du bør/burde se den forestilling.** You ought to see that performance.

moral obligation

**Man bør ikke lyve.** One ought not to lie.

(b) **kunne:**

possibility, probability:

**Hun kan være faret vild.** She may have got lost.

**Projektet kunne udføres.** The project could be carried out.

permission, prohibition

**Han kan (ikke) låne min bil.** He can/can't borrow my car.

ability

**Han kan ikke cykle.** He can't (i.e. is not able to) ride a bike.

(c) **måtte:**

logical necessity

**Hun må have glemt tasken der.** She must have left her bag there.

hope

**Må han dog snart få fred!**

permission, prohibition

**Græsset må (ikke) betrædes.**

command

**Nu må du altså gå!**

May he soon be at peace!

You may/must not/walk on the grass.

You really must go now!

(d) **skulle:**

rumour

**De skal være rejst til Spanien.**

future in the past

**Det skulle blive endnu værre.**

arrangement

**Vi skal mødes kl. 16.**

promise

**Det skal jeg nok sørge for.**

command

**Du skal gøre hvad jeg siger!**

hypothetical

**Hvis han skulle spørge dig...**

uncertainty

**Hvad skal jeg gøre?**

They are said to have gone to Spain.

Worse was to come.

We are going to meet at 4 pm.

I'll see to that.

You must do what I tell you!

If he were to ask you...

What shall I do?

Note also:

**Vi skal lige til at spise.****Tak skal du have.**

We are about to eat.

Thank you.

(e) **turde:**

idiomatic use

**Det tør anses for sikkert at...**

bravery (=dare)

**Han tør ikke sige sandheden.**

It may safely be assumed that...

He dare not tell the truth.

(f) **ville:**

future

**Han vil være her om en halv time.**

volition

**Jeg vil have en is!****Jeg vil ikke bære tasken!**

hypothetical

**En gratis billet ville være dejligt!**

He will be here in half an hour.

I want an ice cream!

I won't carry the bag!

A free ticket would be nice!

Note that **vil(le) gerne** corresponds to English 'would like to', and **vil(le) hellere** to 'would rather'.

## 101 IMPERATIVE

1 Form: the imperative has the same form as the stem.

	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Imperative</i>
vowel stem	<b>gå</b>	<b>Gå!</b>
consonant stem	<b>standse</b>	<b>Stands!</b>
with double consonant	<b>komme</b>	<b>Kom!</b>

2 Use:

(a) The imperative is used to express a command, a request, a wish or a piece of advice:

<b>Stop!</b>	Stop!
<b>Hent avisen!</b>	Fetch the newspaper!
<b>Hjælp mig et øjeblik!</b>	Help me a moment!
<b>Kør hellere lidt langsommere!</b>	Better drive a little more slowly!
<b>Sov godt!</b>	Sleep well!

(b) All imperatives are technically second person, but the subject pronoun (**du**, **De** or **I**) is only occasionally made explicit, notably to express a contrast and in reflexive forms:

<b>Sid du der, så laver jeg kaffe.</b>	You sit there and I'll make the coffee.
<b>Skynd dig/jer!</b>	Hurry up!

(c) A command, etc., may be softened by adding adverbs such as **bare**, **lige**, etc.:

with <b>bare</b> :	<b>Gør du bare det!</b>	You just do that!
with <b>lige</b> :	<b>Giv mig lige bogen!</b>	Just hand me the book, please!

## 102 SUBJUNCTIVE

The present subjunctive form is identical to the form of the infinitive. It is rarely used nowadays and then only in a few fixed expressions:

Wishes:	<b>Gud velsigne dig!</b>	May God bless you!
	<b>Ulrik længe leve!</b>	Long live Ulrik!
Curses:	<b>Fanden tage ham!</b>	May the Devil take him!
Concessions:	<b>takket være hende</b>	thanks to her
	<b>koste hvad det vil</b>	whatever the cost

The subjunctive in unreal situations is often expressed by the use of **bare** or **gid** with the past tense:

<b>Bare der snart skete noget!</b>	If only something would happen soon!
<b>Gid det var så vel!</b>	If only it were like that!



Notice that English 'were' subjunctive is often the equivalent of Danish **var** indicative:

**Hvis jeg var dig...**

If I were you...

## TYPES OF VERB

### 103

#### TRANSITIVE, INTRANSITIVE, COPULA AND REFLEXIVE VERBS

1 Transitive verbs have a direct object (DO):

**Jakob købte en computer.**

DO

Jakob bought a computer.

Other transitive verbs: **gribe**, catch; **huske**, remember; **sige**, say; **tage**, take; **vide**, know; etc.

Ditransitive verbs have both an indirect object (IO) and a direct object:

**Pia gav Helle en gave.**

IO

DO

Pia gave Helle a present.

Other ditransitive verbs: **fortælle**, tell; **love**, promise; **låne**, lend; **meddele**, inform; **sende**, send; etc.

2 Intransitive verbs cannot have a direct object:

**Den lille sover.**

The baby is asleep.

Other intransitive verbs: **dø**, die; **græde**, weep; **fryse**, be cold, freeze; **lyve**, tell a lie; etc.

Note, however, that some transitive verbs can be used intransitively, the object being latent:

**Vi spiser [X] kl. 19.** (e.g. **middag**)

**Spørg [X] hvis du ikke forstår det.**

We are eating [X] at 7 pm. (e.g. dinner)

Ask [X] if you don't understand it.

Other latent transitive verbs: **drikke**, drink; **hjælpe**, help; **tabe**, lose; **vaske**, wash; **vinde**, win; etc.

3 Some transitive/intransitive verbs in Danish exist in pairs:

#### *Transitive*

**fælde**, fell

**lægge**, lay, place

**stille**, place (upright)

**sænke**, sink (e.g. a ship)

**sætte**, set, place

#### *Intransitive*

**falde**, fall

**ligge**, lie

**stå**, stand

**synke**, sink (e.g. in the water)

**sidde**, sit

Note that in these pairs transitive verbs are usually weak and intransitive verbs strong. In one case both verbs are weak:

**vække**, wake (someone) up

**vågne**, wake up (of one's own accord)

4 Copula verbs are empty verbs that require a subject complement (adjective or noun) rather than an object to complete their meaning. The most common examples are **blive** and **være**:

<b>Knud blev ingeniør.</b>	Knud became an engineer.
<b>De er meget venlige.</b>	They are very kind.

Other copulas: **forblive**, remain; **forekomme**, seem; **lyde**, sound; **se...ud**, appear; **synes**, seem; etc.

5 Reflexive verbs consist of verb+the appropriate reflexive pronoun; the latter functions as the object and agrees in form and meaning with the subject (cf. [67,70](#)):

<b>Sonja gemte sig.</b>	Sonja hid (herself).	(Reflexive)
Cf. <b>Sonja gemte pakken.</b>	Sonja hid the parcel.	(Object)

Other reflexive verbs: **barbere sig**, shave; **bevæge sig**, move; **glæde sig til**, look forward to; **opføre sig**, behave; **rede sig**, comb one's hair; **skynde sig**, hurry; **vaske sig**, wash (oneself); **vende sig**, turn around; etc.

(a) Many reflexive verbs in Danish are non-reflexive in English:

<b>Du har forandret dig.</b>	You have changed.
<b>De giftede sig.</b>	They (got) married.
<b>Jeg kedede mig.</b>	I was bored.
<b>Hun satte sig.</b>	She sat down.
<b>Parret viste sig på balkonen.</b>	The couple appear on the balcony.

(b) Many reflexive verbs express movement:

<b>begive sig</b>	set off
<b>bevæge sig</b>	move
<b>bøje sig</b>	bend
<b>lægge sig</b>	lie down
<b>rejse sig</b>	get up
<b>sætte sig</b>	sit down
<b>vende sig</b>	turn (round)

(c) The reflexive pronoun usually comes in the subject position (**n**) in the clause, but it follows any subject pronoun in that position (cf. [150](#)):

<b>Gæsterne morede sig meget.</b>	The guests enjoyed themselves a lot.
<b>I aftes morede de sig ikke.</b>	Last night they didn't enjoy themselves.

## -s VERBS AND THE PASSIVE

### 104

#### -s FORMS, DEPONENT AND RECIPROCAL VERBS

1 Forms of **-s** verbs (for passive forms see [105](#)):

	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
I	<b>mindes</b>	<b>mindes</b>	<b>mindedes</b>	<b>mindedes</b>	recall
II	<b>synes</b>	<b>synes</b>	<b>syntes</b>	<b>syntes</b>	think
IV	<b>slås</b>	<b>slås</b>	<b>sloges</b>	<b>sloges</b>	fight

## 2 Uses:

There are three distinct uses:

- Deponent **Det lykkedes ham at komme ind i huset.**  
He succeeded in getting into the house.
- Reciprocal **Vi mødes ved rådhuset.**  
We'll meet at the town hall.
- Passive **Middagen serveres kl. 19.** (See 105.)  
Dinner is served at 7 pm.

## 3 Deponent verbs:

Deponent verbs are verbs that have passive form (i.e. **-s** form) but active meaning. Deponent verbs do not usually have a form without **-s**, unlike verbs in the passive.

Deponent verbs include:

**fattes**, be lacking; **findes**, be, exist; **færdes**, move, travel; **længes**, long; **lykkes**, succeed; **mindes**, recall; **mislykkes**, fail; **omgås**, mix with; **synes**, seem; **trives**, do well; **ældes**, age; etc.

## 4 Reciprocal verbs:

Reciprocal verbs usually (but not always) have a plural subject, and the individuals denoted by the subject each carry out the action simultaneously. Reciprocal action may also be expressed by using the reciprocal pronoun **hinanden**, each other (cf. 71).

<b>Vi ses i morgen.</b>	We'll meet tomorrow.
<b>De skiltes som gode venner.</b>	They parted as good friends.
<b>Han slås ofte med sin bror.</b>	He often fights with his brother.

Reciprocal verbs include:

**brydes**, wrestle; **enes**, agree; **følges (ad)**, accompany (each other); **hjælpes ad**, help (each other); **mødes**, meet; **samles**, gather; **ses**, meet; **skiftes**, take turns; **skilles**, part, separate; **skændes**, quarrel; **slås**, fight; **tales ved**, talk; **træffes**, meet; **trættes**, quarrel; etc.

## 105 THE PASSIVE

1 Form of the **-s** passive:

	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
I cons	<b>ventes</b>	<b>ventes</b>	<b>ventedes</b>	–	be expected
I vowel	<b>ros</b>	<b>ros</b>	<b>roedes</b>	–	be rowed (of a boat)

	<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Past participle</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
II	<b>bruges</b>	<b>bruges</b>	<b>brugtes</b>	–	be used
III	<b>gøres</b>	<b>gøres</b>	<b>gjordes</b>	–	be done
IV	<b>ses</b>	<b>ses</b>	<b>sås</b>	–	be seen

Note that the **-s** passive does not normally have a past participle form; composite tenses are formed with the **blive** passive (see below).

2 Compare the following sentences:

<i>Active clause</i>	<b>Drengen</b> subject (agent)	<b>griber</b> active verb	<b>bolden.</b> object (patient)	The boy catches the ball.
<i>Passive clause</i>	<b>Bolden</b> subject (patient)	<b>gribes</b> passive verb	<b>af drengen.</b> prep. phrase (agent)	The ball is caught by the boy.

The transformation from an active to a passive clause involves three changes:

<i>Active</i>		<i>Passive</i>
object	→	subject
subject	→	( <b>af</b> +) prepositional complement
active verb form	→	passive verb form

However, the semantic roles of agent and patient remain unchanged, though the focus changes from agent to patient in the passive clause. Note that the passive transformation usually requires a transitive verb, but see (7) below.

The agent is often omitted in passive clauses when the person carrying out the action is either unknown or unimportant in the context:

<b>Dørene åbnes kl. 20.</b>	The doors open at 8 pm.
<b>Ordet udtales med 'stød'.</b>	The word is pronounced with a glottal stop.
<b>Middagen serveredes i spisesalen.</b>	Dinner was served in the dining hall.
<b>Mødet blev holdt for lukkede døre.</b>	The meeting was held behind closed doors.
<b>Min bil er blevet stjålet.</b>	My car has been stolen.

There are two main types of passive:

- **-s** passive: **Huset males.** The house is (being) painted.
- **blive** passive: **Huset bliver malet.** The house is (being) painted.

A third type also exists, however (expressing a state or result):

- **være** passive: **Huset er malet.** The house is (now) painted.

3 Forms of the passive for **male** (paint):

	<i>-s passive</i>	<i>blive passive</i>
Infinitive	(at) <b>males</b>	(at) <b>blive malet</b>
Present	<b>males</b>	<b>bliver malet</b>
Past	<b>maledes</b>	<b>blev malet</b>
Perfect	–	<b>er blevet malet</b>
Past perfect	–	<b>var blevet malet</b>

4 The **-s** passive:

This is far less common than the **blive** passive. It is quite rare in the past tense and is virtually non-existent in the past participle. It is mainly used:

- in the infinitive with modal verbs that express notions such as obligation, permission, prohibition, volition, etc.:

**Svaret bør sendes til kontoret.**

The answer should be sent to the office.

**Der må spises nu.**

You may start eating now.

**Græsset må ikke betrædes.**

Do not walk on the grass.

**Klagen skal undersøges.**

The complaint has to be investigated.

**Han vil klippes lige nu.**

He wants to have his hair cut right now.

- in the present tense to express a habitual or repeated action (but see (5) below):

**Lysene tændes kl. 21.**

The lights go on at 9 pm.

**Varene bringes ud om fredagen.**

The goods are delivered on Fridays.

Some verbs can only form the passive using **-s**, e.g.: **behøve**, need; **eje**, own; **have**, have; **skylde**, owe; **vide**, know.

- the **-s** passive can also occur in the past tense, but this use is very limited:

**De ventedes først hjem kl. 21.**

They were not expected home till 9 pm.

**Han sås ofte på galopbanen.**

He was often seen at the racecourse.

5 The **blive** passive:

This is more common than the **-s** passive, and is the only option in the composite tenses. It is normally used:

- After modal verbs expressing possibility or future promise:

**Per kan blive udtaget til holdet.**

Per may be picked for the team. (It may happen.)

Cf. **Per kan udtages til holdet.**

Per can be picked for the team. (Nothing prevents it.)

**Bilen skal blive vasket i dag.**

The car will be washed today. (I promise it will be.)

Cf. **Bilen skal vaskes i dag.**

The car is to be washed today. (It has been arranged.)

**Hun vil blive forfremmet.**

She will be promoted. (It's certain.)

Cf. **Hun vil forfremmes.**

She wants to be promoted. (It's her wish.)

- To express a single action:

**Min søn er blevet inviteret ud.**

Cf. **Min søn inviteres tit ud.**

**Nu blev lysene tændt.**

Cf. **Lysene tændes hver aften.**

My son has been invited out.

My son is often invited out.

Now the lights came on.

The lights come on every evening.

Either the **-s** passive or the **blive** passive may be used to indicate a recurrent activity:

**Der stjæles biler hver dag./Der bliver stjålet biler hver dag.**

Cars are stolen every day.

6 The **være** passive:

(a) The participle is a verb:

Usually **være**+past participle indicates the result of an action, i.e. a state rather than an action:

**Bilen er vasket.**

STATE/RESULT

The car is washed.

**Bilen er blevet vasket.**

ACTION

The car has been washed.

In the plural, the past participle form often remains unchanged (cf. [92](#)):

**Bilerne er vasket(/vaskede).**

The cars are washed.

(b) The participle is an adjective:

The participle remains in the **-t** form in the singular irrespective of the gender of the noun, but inflects in the plural:

**Pigen er forelsket.**

The girl is in love.

**Pigerne er forelskede.**

The girls are in love.

**Fordelen er begrænset.**

The advantage is limited.

**Fordelene er begrænsede.**

The advantages are limited.

7 Impersonal passive constructions can, unlike all others, have either a transitive or an intransitive verb:

**Der spises meget flæskekød i Danmark.**

A lot of pork is eaten in Denmark.

**Der blev talt meget om planen.**

They talked much about the plan.

**Der blev danset hele natten.**

There was dancing all night.

## COMPOUND VERBS

### 106

#### COMPOUND VERBS

1 There are two kinds of compound verb:

- Inseparable compounds in which the first element forms an integral part of the verb:

Compare **tale**, speak; with **bagtale**, slander; **betale**, pay; **indtale**, record; **overtale**, persuade.

- Separable compounds in which the prefix may separate from the verb:

(a) Where there is little or no difference in meaning between the compounded and separated forms:

**underskrive**—**skrive under**

sign

(b) Where there is a difference in meaning between the compounded and separated forms:

**udtale**, pronounce

**tale ud**, finish speaking

2 Inseparable compounds include verbs compounded with:

nouns

**kæderyge**, chain smoke; **støvsuge**, vacuum clean

adjectives

**dybfryse**, deep-freeze; **renskrive**, make a fair copy

verbs

**sultestrejke**, be on hunger strike; **øsregne**, pour with rain

numerals

**fir(e)doble**, quadruple

unstressed prefixes

**bedømme**, judge; **forblive**, remain

stressed prefixes

**anbefale**, recommend; **undslippe**, escape

3 Separable compounds include verbs compounded with:

stressed particles

<b>rejse <i>bort</i></b>	go away
<b>svare <i>igen</i></b>	answer back
<b>stige <i>ned</i></b>	descend
<b>gøre <i>om</i></b>	repeat
<b>lukke <i>op</i></b>	open, unlock
<b>arbejde <i>over</i></b>	work overtime
<b>se...<i>ud</i></b>	look

The particles are often prepositions or adverbs. Note that the stress is on the particle.

4 Some compound verbs exist in both the compounded and the separated form:

(a) With (virtually) the same meaning, the compounded form tends to be more formal:

<b>afskære—skære af</b>	cut off
<b>deltage—tage del</b>	take part
<b>fastgøre—gøre fast</b>	secure
<b>fremrykke—rykke frem</b>	advance
<b>indsende—sende ind</b>	send in
<b>nedrive—rive ned</b>	demolish
<b>opgive—give op</b>	give up
<b>udvælge—vælge ud</b>	select

(b) With different meaning, where the compounded form tends to have figurative/abstract meaning and the separated form literal meaning:

<b>afsætte</b> , remove, depose	<b>sætte af</b> , set down, take off
<b>indse</b> , realise	<b>se ind</b> , look into
<b>oversætte</b> , translate	<b>sætte over</b> , jump over, put (e.g. the kettle) on
<b>understrege</b> , emphasise	<b>strege under</b> , underline





# 7 ADVERBS

## 107 ADVERBS—FORM

Adverbs form a heterogeneous group, but the following are the major types:

1 Simple adverb:

**aldrig**, never; **da**, then; **der**, there; **dog**, however; **her**, here; **ikke**, not; **jo**, you know; **just**, exactly; **kun**, only; **lidt**, somewhat, a little; **meget**, much, very; **netop**, exactly; **nok**, probably; **nu**, now; **næppe**, scarcely; **næsten**, almost; **ofte**, often; **straks**, immediately; **vel**, I suppose

2 Adverbs derived from other word classes:

Many adverbs derive from adjectives by adding the ending **-t** to the common gender singular form:

+t     **dejligt, dårligt, fint, godt, højt, langt, smukt**  
delightfully, badly, nicely, well, loudly, far, beautifully

The neuter singular form of the adjective is then identical with the adverb:

**Hun gav et højt skrig fra sig.**

She gave a loud shriek.

*adjective*

**Hun skriger højt.**

She shrieks loudly.

*adverb*

Other adverbs are derived from adjectives and other word classes through the addition of a variety of suffixes:

+deles     **aldeles**, completely; **fremdeles**, still; **særdeles**, extremely  
+ledes     **anderledes**, different; **således**, thus  
+mæssig(t) **forholdsmæssig(t)**, proportionately; **lovmæssig(t)**, legally; **regelmæssig(t)**, regularly  
+s     **dels**, partly; **ellers**, otherwise; **indendørs**, indoors; **udendørs**, out of doors  
+sinde     **ingensinde**, never; **nogensinde**, ever  
+steds     **andetsteds**, somewhere else; **intetsteds**, nowhere; **nogetsteds**, anywhere  
+vis     **heldigvis**, luckily; **muligvis**, possibly; **naturligvis**, naturally; **sandsynligvis**, probably

Both present and past participles (cf. 91f) may also be used as adverbs:

**forbavsende**, amazingly; **overbevisende**, convincingly **begeistret**, enthusiastically

*Notes:*

1 Adverbs derived from adjectives that do not take **-t** in their neuter singular form (cf. 46, 48) do not add **-t**, nor do the adverbs listed above ending in **-deles**, **-ledes**, **-s**, **-sinde**, **-steds**, **-vis** and those derived from participles. For adverbs ending in **-mæssig** the **-t** is optional but is normally added.

2 Adverbs derived from adjectives in **-(l)ig** add **-t** when modifying a verb (i.e. when used as adverbs of manner), but do not normally add **-t** when modifying other word classes (see amplifiers and diminishers in 109 below).

**Hun spiller dejligt.**  
She plays delightfully.

**Det var en dejlig varm sommer.**  
It was a delightfully hot summer.

3 Compound adverb:

**alligevel**, nevertheless; **altid**, always; **bagefter**, afterwards; **derfor**, therefore; **efterhånden**, gradually; **endnu**, still; **hidtil**, so far; **igen**, again; **måske**, perhaps; **også**, also; **rigtignok**, certainly; **simpelthen**, simply; **stadigvæk**, still; **vistnok**, probably

108

COMPARISON OF ADVERBS

1 Adverbs derived from adjectives have the same comparative and superlative forms as their adjectival counterparts, be they regular or irregular:

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	
dårligt	dårligere/værre	dårligst/værst	badly
godt	bedre	bedst	well
langt	længere	længst	far (of distance)
sent	senere	senest	late
tidligt	tidligere	tidligst	early

2 A few other adverbs compare as follows:

gerne	hellere	helst	willingly
længe	længere(e)	længst	for a long time
ofte	oftere	oftest	often
tit	tiere	tiest	often
vel	bedre	bedst	well

3 Adverbs ending in **-mæssig** and **-vis** do not normally compare.

4 Adverbs derived from present and past participles compare with **mere**, **mest**: **mere/mest** **overbevisende**, more/most convincingly.

109  
USE OF ADVERBS

1 Adverbs may modify:

- a verb                    **Han løber *hurtigt*.**  
He runs fast.
- an adjective            **Damen er *utrolig rig*.**  
The lady is incredibly rich.
- an adverb                **Hun løber *forbavsende* hurtigt.**  
She runs amazingly fast.
- a clause  
(see 145)                **Han er *ofte* hjemme.**  
He's often at home.

2 Amplifiers:

These are adverbs, especially those denoting degree or kind, that are used to amplify or strengthen the meaning of an adjective or another adverb:

**alt for**, far too; **ganske**, absolutely, quite; **meget**, very; **ret**, rather

**Det er ganske rigtigt.**  
That's perfectly correct.

**Han synger meget bedre end sin søster.**  
He sings much better than his sister.

Adverbs derived from adjectives are frequently used as amplifiers:

**Det var en frygtelig kedelig film.**  
It was a dreadfully boring film.

**Hun er en ualmindelig begavet studerende.**  
She's an unusually gifted student.

3 Diminishers:

By contrast, these are adverbs that are used to lessen or weaken the meaning of an adjective or another adverb:

**dels**, partly; **lidt**, (a) little; **nok**, enough; **næsten**, almost; **slet ikke**, not at all; **temmelig**, fairly, rather

**Kan du køre lidt langsommere?**  
Can you drive a little more slowly?

**Han var slet ikke glad for at være der.**  
He wasn't at all happy to be there.

## 110

## ADVERBS INDICATING LOCATION AND MOTION

1 Danish adverbs of place show a distinction between motion and location which is now no longer found in English. One form (the shorter form) is found with verbs indicating motion towards a place and another (the longer form) with verbs indicating location at a place. Compound adverbial forms expressing this distinction are also possible.

## MOTION TOWARDS

**Hun kom hjem.**

She came home.

## LOCATION

**Hun er hjemme.**

She is at home.

## MOTION TOWARDS

**Han går ud i haven.**

He's going out into the garden.

## LOCATION

**Han går ude i haven.**

He's walking in the garden.

2 The adverbs which have two forms in this way are:

<i>Motion towards</i>		<i>Location</i>		<i>Compounds</i>	
(Where to?)		(Where?)			
→ •		•			
<b>bort</b> (away)		<b>borte</b> (away)			
<b>frem</b> (forward)		<b>fremme</b> (forward)			
<b>hjem</b> (/to/home)		<b>hjemme</b> (/at/home)		<b>herhjem, derhjem</b>	(here/there)
				<b>herhjemme, derhjemme</b>	at home)
<b>ind</b> (in)		<b>inde</b> (in(side))		<b>herind, derind</b>	(in here/
				<b>herinde, derinde</b>	there)
<b>ud</b> (out)		<b>ude</b> (out(side))		<b>herud, derud</b>	(out here/
				<b>herude, derude</b>	there)
<b>op</b> (up)		<b>oppe</b> (up)		<b>herop, derop</b>	(up here/
				<b>heroppe, deroppe</b>	there)
<b>ned</b> (down)		<b>nede</b> (down)		<b>herned, derned,</b>	(down here/
				<b>hernede, dernede</b>	there)
<b>hen</b> (over)		<b>henne</b> (over)		<b>herhen, derhen,</b>	(over here/
				<b>herhenne, derhenne</b>	there)
<b>om</b> (over)		<b>omme</b> (over)		<b>herom, derom,</b>	(over here/
				<b>heromme, deromme</b>	there)
<b>over</b> (over)		<b>ovre</b> (over)		<b>herover, derover,</b>	(over here/
				<b>herovre, derovre</b>	there)

Examples of use:

**Hvornår er vi fremme i Århus?**

When will we get to Århus?

**Hvornår når vi frem til Århus?**

When will we get to Århus?

**Bogen lå henne på bordet.**

The book lay over on the table.

**Læreren gik hen til bordet.**

The teacher went over to the table.

**Der er en have omme bag huset.**  
**De gik om bag huset.**

There is a garden behind the house.  
 They went behind the house.

## 111

## SOME DIFFICULT ADVERBS

1 **gerne** 'willingly', etc.:

**Jeg gør det gerne.**  
**Jeg vil gerne have en øl.**  
**Han læser gerne romaner.**  
**Det tror jeg gerne.**

I'll willingly do it.  
 I would like a beer, please.  
 He is fond of reading novels.  
 I'm fully prepared to believe it.

2 **ikke** 'not', 'no':

**Jeg kender ham ikke.**  
**Han er ikke større end sin søster.**

I don't know him.  
 He's no bigger than his sister.

**Ikke** is also used, either on its own or together with **også** or **sandt**, as a 'question tag' following positive statements:

**Vejret er koldt, ikke (også/sandt)?**

The weather's cold, isn't it?

After negative statements, **vel** is used for this purpose instead:

**Vejret var ikke koldt, vel?**

The weather wasn't cold, was it?

3 **langt, længe**:

Both words originally derive from **lang**, but have different meanings:

**langt**, far  
**Er der langt til byen?**  
 Is it far to town?

**længe**, for a long time  
**Har I boet her længe?**  
 Have you lived here long?

4 **da, dog, jo, lige, nemlig, nok, nu, sgu, skam, vel, vist**:

These are unstressed modal adverbs expressing the speaker's attitude to what (s)he is saying, and it is difficult to give exact rules for their idiomatic use. Notice the following examples:

**Det var da godt du kom.**  
 I'm very glad that you've come.  
**Hvor er Karen dog rar!**  
 Karen really is a nice girl!  
**Hun er jo syg i dag.**  
 She's ill today, as you know.  
**Han var nemlig meget rig.**  
 He was very rich, you see.

**Du har da fået pengene?**  
 You have received the money, I hope?  
**Hvorfor gjorde hun dog det?**  
 Why on earth did she do that?  
**Vil du lige holde mit glas?**  
 Would you just hold my glass, please?  
**Han havde to biler, nemlig en Jaguar og en BMW.**  
 He had two cars: a Jaguar and a BMW.

**Jeg tror nok vi vinder.**

I think we'll probably win.

**Det er nu ikke rigtigt.**

That's not right, you know.

**Tom er skam i Odense.**

Tom's in Odense, to be sure.

**Det mener du vel ikke?**

You don't really mean that, do you?

**Det må du nok sige!**

You can say that again!

**Det ved jeg sgu ikke!**

How the hell should I know!

**Du har vel ikke et lommetørklæde?**

You haven't got a handkerchief by any chance?

**Jeg var vist fuld i aftes.**

I guess I was drunk last night.

# 8 PREPOSITIONS

## 112 PREPOSITIONS—INTRODUCTION

Prepositions are indeclinable words, i.e. they always have the same form. Prepositions usually govern a complement, and preposition+complement is called a prepositional phrase.

1 Types of preposition:

According to form, there are four types of preposition:

(a) Simple prepositions:

These consist of a single, indivisible word and include the most common prepositions, such as **af, efter, fra, i, med, på, til, ved**.

(b) Compound prepositions:

The preposition *i* may be prefixed to four other independent prepositions (**blandt, gennem, mellem, mod**) to form the compound prepositions: **iblandt, igennem, imellem, imod**, which are more formal variants of the simple ones. Note that **ifølge** (according to) is composed of a preposition+a noun.

(c) Complex prepositions:

These are made up of two or more words, including at least one preposition, which in terms of meaning form a unit. There are four main types:

(i) Adverb+preposition:

Together this combination indicates different types of direction or location. Note that some of the adverbs have a short form for direction/motion, e.g. **hen, ind, ned, op, ud**; and a long form for location, e.g. **henne, inde, nede, oppe, ude** (see also 110). Thus:

*Motion:*

**Tina gik ud i haven.** Tina went into the garden.

*Location:*

**Tina gik ude i haven.** Tina walked (around) in the garden.

(ii) Preposition+noun+preposition:

As in English, there are numerous examples of this construction, e.g. **af frygt for**, for fear of; **i stedet for**, instead of; **med hensyn til**, as regards; **på grund af**, because of; **ved hjælp af**, by means of; etc.

(iii) Preposition+og+preposition:

These are most often opposites in meaning and thus contrastive, such as: **(stå) af og på (bussen)**, (get) on and off (the bus); **for og imod (forslaget)**, for and against (the proposal); **til og fra (arbejde)**, to and from (work); etc.



A few examples with **med** (with) as the second element can have a reinforcing effect, e.g. **fra og med (torsdag)**, from and including (Thursday); **til og med (i morgen)**, up to and including (tomorrow); etc. Note also: **i og med at...**, 'given the fact that...'.  
 (iv) Discontinuous prepositions:

In some cases the complement is surrounded or bracketed by two prepositions and the three elements form a prepositional phrase, i.e. the second preposition does not have a separate complement (unlike the examples in (ii) above). Examples: **ad (helvede) til**, like hell (*lit.* towards hell); **for (mange år) siden**, (many years) ago; **fra (nu) af**, from (now) onwards; etc.

2 Types of prepositional complement:

- a noun (phrase):

**De tog på en lang ferie med børnene.**

They went on a long holiday with the children.

**Vi gik rundt i den dejlige, lille by.**

We walked around in the lovely, little town.

- an object pronoun:

**Jeg boede hos dem i en uge.**

I stayed with them for a week.

Notice that after a preposition the pronoun in Danish, as in English, must be in the object form.

- an infinitive (phrase):

**Han gik uden at sige noget.**

He left without saying anything.

**Hun er bange for at gå ud alene.**

She's afraid of going out alone.

- a subordinate clause introduced by **at** or an interrogative word (a **hv**-word):

**Hun var sikker på at hun havde ret.**

She was sure that she was right.

**Hun er bange for hvad der vil ske.**

She's afraid of what will happen.

Notice that in English a preposition cannot govern a 'that' clause in this way.

- a prepositional phrase:

**Billetter kan bestilles fra i dag,**

Tickets may be booked from today,

**og de kan afhentes indtil på fredag.**  
and they can be collected until Friday.

3 The position of prepositions:

Prepositions may adopt three different positions relative to the complement:

- before the complement (the vast majority of Danish prepositions do this):

<b>fra hans mor</b>	from his mother
<b>i stuen</b>	in the living room
<b>med en kniv</b>	with a knife
<b>til Danmark</b>	to Denmark

- after the complement (very few prepositions do this):

<b>dagen igennem</b>	throughout the day
<b>Han blev natten over.</b>	He stayed overnight/the night.

- bracketing the complement ('discontinuous') (see [112\(c\)\(iv\)](#)):

<b>for ti år siden</b>	ten years ago
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On rare occasions a preposition forms a bracketing expression together with a noun:

<b>for din skyld</b>	for your sake
<b>på firmaets vegne</b>	on behalf of the firm

Notice that in Danish the preposition may be placed as the last element in a clause:

- in **hv**- questions (See [77](#)):

<b>Hvad tænker du på?</b>	What are you thinking about?
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- in relative clauses (See [75–76, 158](#)):

**Det er hende (som) jeg drømmer om.**  
She is the one that I dream of.

- when the prepositional complement occupies the topic position ([149](#)):

<b>Ham kan man ikke stole på.</b> (Cf. <b>Man kan ikke stole på ham.</b> )	He's not to be relied on.
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- in infinitive phrases:

<b>Her er noget at stå på.</b>	Here's something to stand on.
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4 Stressed and unstressed prepositions:

The most common monosyllabic prepositions (**ad, af, for, fra, hos, i, med, om, på, til, ved**) are unstressed when their complement is stressed, but stressed when their complement (usually a pronoun) is unstressed.

*Stressed complement*

**Det var pænt af din 'ven at skrive.**

It was nice of your friend to write.

**Jeg har ikke hørt fra min 'tante .**

I haven't heard from my aunt.

*Unstressed complement*

**Det var pænt 'af ham at skrive.**

It was nice of him to write.

**Jeg har ikke hørt 'fra hende.**

I haven't heard from her.

Another group of prepositions (**bag, efter, foran, forbi, før, (i)gennem, (i)mod, (i)mellem, inden, indtil, langs, omkring, over, siden, uden, under**), most of them having more than one syllable, are either stressed or unstressed when their complement is stressed, but stressed when their complement is unstressed.

*Stressed complement*

**( ) Bag 'huset stod der et stort træ.**

Behind the house was a big tree.

**( ) Under 'broen løb en å.**

Under the bridge ran a stream.

*Unstressed complement*

**'Bag det stod der et stort træ.**

Behind it was a big tree.

**'Under den løb en å.**

Under it ran a stream.

Prepositions placed after the complement and coordinated prepositions are always stressed:

**Hun arbejdede natten i'gennem .**  
**'Fra og 'med i dag er skolen lukket.**

She worked throughout the night.  
From today the school is closed.

Prepositions are stressed when their complement is omitted:

**Han stod 'af [bussen] på hjørnet.**

He got off [the bus] at the corner.

### 113

#### THE MOST COMMON DANISH PREPOSITIONS

Below is a list of frequent Danish prepositions. Examples of common ways in which the twelve most frequent prepositions (asterisked) are used are given in paragraphs 114–26. The remaining prepositions are used in much the same way as their English equivalents.

<b>ad</b>	by, at	<b>*med</b>	with, by
<b>*af</b>	of, with, by	<b>*om</b>	(a)round, about, in
<b>bag(ved)</b>	behind	<b>omkring</b>	(a)round
<b>blandt</b>	among	<b>over</b>	over, above, across
<b>*efter</b>	after, for	<b>*på</b>	on, in, for
<b>*for</b>	before, in front of, at, for	<b>siden</b>	since
<b>foran</b>	in front of	<b>*til</b>	until, to, for
<b>forbi</b>	past	<b>trods</b>	in spite of
<b>for...siden</b>	ago	<b>uden</b>	without
<b>*fra</b>	from	<b>uden for</b>	outside
<b>før</b>	before	<b>*under</b>	under, below, during
<b>hos</b>	at (the home of)	<b>*ved</b>	by, around
<b>*i</b>	in, on, for		
<b>(i)gennem</b>	through, by		
<b>(i)mellem</b>	between		
<b>*(i)mod</b>	to(wards), against		
<b>langs</b>	along		

*Notes:*

1 **ad** is used:

- together with an adverb to express direction/motion:

**De gik hen ad gaden.**

They walked along the street.

**Børnene løb op ad trappen.**

The children ran up the stairs.

- with the meaning 'in that direction':

**De fløjtede/lo ad hende.**

They whistled/laughed at her.

- with the meaning 'through an opening':

**Jens kiggede ud ad vinduet.**

Jens looked out of the window.

- with the meaning 'towards'+time:

**Hen ad aften gik vi hjem.**

Towards evening we went home.

Notice also:

**en/to ad gangen**

one/two at a time

2 **forbi** means ‘past’ in a spatial sense:

**Vi kørte forbi den nye bygning.**  
**Han smuttede forbi vagten.**

We drove past the new building.  
He slipped past the guard.

3 **for...siden** corresponds to ‘ago’ and brackets the complement:

**Vi mødtes for to år siden.**

We met two years ago.

4 **hos** often corresponds to French *chez* and German *bei* (=at the place/home/work of):

**Vi bor hos mine forældre.**  
**Han er hos tandlægen.**  
**Vi køber kød hos slagteren og frugt hos**  
**grønthandleren.**

We’re staying with my parents.  
He’s at the dentist’s.  
We buy meat at the butcher’s and fruit at  
the greengrocer’s.

- as part of a lifestyle or culture:

**Det er en gammel skik hos de indfødte.**

It’s an old custom among the natives.

- as part of someone’s character or work(s) of art:

**Der er noget hos ham jeg ikke kan lide.**  
There’s something about him I don’t like.

**Det er et hyppigt tema hos Carl Nielsen.**  
It’s a frequent theme in Carl Nielsen.

5 **omkring** means ‘about’, ‘(a)round’, ‘circa’, and is used in both a spatial and a temporal sense:

**Der er en voldgrav omkring slottet.**  
**Vi kommer omkring kl. 18.**  
**Der var omkring 50.000 tilskuere.**

There’s a moat around the castle.  
We’ll be there around 6 pm.  
There were approximately 50,000 spectators.

6 **siden** ‘since’ (see also **for...siden** in (3) above):

**Jeg har ikke set ham siden jul.**

I haven’t seen him since Christmas.

7 **trods**:

**Trods sin alder spiller han godt.**

Despite his age he plays well.

Notice also: **trods alt** ‘after all’, ‘despite everything’.

114  
AF

**Af** often denotes origin or source (though see also **fra** in 117) and is used to indicate the passive agent (see 105).

<i>Agent</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Cause</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Possession</i>
by	of	from/of/ with	from/of/off	of	of

*BY*

Huset blev købt af en svensker.  
en roman (skrevet) af Herman Bang  
Musen blev fanget af katten.

The house was bought by a Swede.  
a novel (written) by Herman Bang  
The mouse was caught by the cat.

*FROM*

Huset er bygget af træ.  
Han tog kammen op af lommen.  
dø af sorg  
ingen/nogle/de fleste/halvdelen af dem  
ejereren af bilen

The house is built (out) of wood.  
He took his comb out of his pocket.  
die of grief  
none/some/most/half of them  
the owner of the car

*FROM*

Hun led af kræft.  
Jeg købte computeren af ham.

She suffered from cancer.  
I bought the computer from him.

*WITH*

Hun græd af glæde/skræk/smerte.

She cried with joy/fear/pain.

*OFF*

Han stod/sprang af bussen.

He got/jumped off the bus.

Notice also:

Pigen løb ud af huset.  
Manden stod op af sengen.  
fuld/træt af  
ked af

The girl ran out of the house.  
The man got out of bed.  
full/tired of  
bored with, sorry about

**115**  
**EFTER**

<i>Location/direction</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Desire</i>	<i>Succession</i>	<i>Reference</i>
after/behind	after	for	after/by	according to

*AFTER*

**Hunden løb efter børnene.**  
**Efter lang tid kom brevet.**  
**Kom efter kl. 16.**  
**den ene efter den anden**

The dog ran after the children.  
After a long time the letter arrived.  
Come after 4 pm.  
one after the other

*BEHIND*

**Luk døren efter dig!**  
**De stod efter os i keen.**

Close the door behind you!  
They stood behind us in the queue.

*BY*

**en efter en**  
**spille efter gehør/reglerne**

one by one  
play by ear/the rules

*FOR*

**Vi må ringe efter en taxa.**  
**Damen spurgte efter Lise.**  
**lede/længes efter noget**

We'll have to ring for a taxi.  
The lady asked for Lise.  
look/long for something

*ACCORDING TO*

**efter dansk lovgivning**  
**klæde sig efter årstiden**  
**Det går efter planen.**

according to Danish law  
dress according to the season  
It is going according to plan.

Notice also:

**høre efter**  
**lede/se efter**

listen/pay attention to  
look for

**116**  
**FOR**

**For** corresponds to English 'for' in a wide range of senses, but is only occasionally used with time expressions (but see **for...siden** in [112.3](#), [113](#) Note 3):

<i>Intention/purpose</i>	<i>Indirect object</i>	<i>Cause/means</i>	<i>Place</i>
for	to	for	before

*FOR*

et program for børn  
 Jeg gjorde det for dig/for din skyld.  
 Tak for kortet/mad!  
 Han er berømt for det.  
 Vi købte fjernsynet for 4.000 kr.  
 Hvad er det danske ord for 'goal'?  
 for første gang

a programme for children  
 I did it for you/for your sake.  
 Thank you for your card/the food!  
 He is renowned/famous for that.  
 We bought the TV for 4,000 DKr.  
 What's the Danish word for 'goal'?  
 for the first time

*TO*

beskrive/forklare noget for nogen  
 Hun læste brevet højt for mig.  
 Det er nyt for mig!

describe/explain something to someone  
 She read the letter aloud to me.  
 That's news to me!

*BEFORE*

Vi har hele dagen for os.  
 Sagen kom for retten.

We have the whole day before us.  
 The case came before the court.

Note also:

for øjeblikket  
 Hun er bange for edderkopper.

at the moment  
 She's afraid of spiders.

Han interesserer sig for musik.  
 år for år  
 for det første/andet, etc.  
 chefen for firmaet

He's interested in music.  
 year by year  
 in the first/second place, etc.  
 the manager of the firm

and the following complex prepositions expressing position:

inden/uden for døren  
 oven/neden for trappen

inside/outside the door  
 above/below the stairs

for at+infinitive expresses intention:

Han tog til Norge for at stå på ski.

He went to Norway to go skiing.



## 117

## FRA

**Fra** is used to suggest origin of space and time, as well as distance from a point.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Origin/source</i>	<i>Time</i>
from	from	from

## FROM

**Træet står en meter fra vejen.  
toget fra Odense  
Hvornår flyttede du fra Ålborg?  
Brevet er fra Dinah.  
fra september til december  
fra kl. 8 til kl. 12**

The tree is a metre from the road.  
the train from Odense  
When did you move from Ålborg?  
The letter is from Dinah.  
from September to December  
from 8 till 12 am

Note also:

**trække gardinerne fra  
bortset fra** draw back the curtains  
apart from

## 118

## I

**I** is the most frequently occurring preposition and the second most frequent word in Danish, with many idiomatic uses beyond its basic meaning 'in'. With public buildings and places of work or entertainment, English 'in' is often rendered by Danish **på** (see [123](#), [129](#)). For the uses of **i** with expressions of time, see [128](#).

<i>Location/motion</i>	<i>Material</i>	<i>Time when</i>	<i>Time duration</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
at/in/into	in	at/in	for	in	a/per

## AT

**Pia er i børnehave/kirke/skole.  
Toget standser i Roskilde.  
i begyndelsen/starten/slutningen af maj  
i fuld fart**

Pia is at kindergarten/church/ school.  
The train stops at Roskilde.  
at the beginning/start/end of May  
at full speed

## IN

**Han arbejder i Paris.  
en statue i bronze  
Det skete i april/i 1998.  
i bilen/båden/glasset/huset/toget  
være i form/i tvivl**

He's working in Paris.  
a statue in bronze  
It happened in April/in 1998.  
in the car/boat/glass/house/train  
be fit/in doubt

*INTO* (Motion is usually expressed by a directional adverb+i, see 110.)

<b>Han gik ind i køkkenet.</b>	He went into the kitchen.
<b>Hun løb ud i haven.</b>	She ran into the garden.
<b>Golfbolden trillede ned i hullet.</b>	The golf ball rolled into the hole.

*FOR*

<b>De blev der i fem uger.</b>	They stayed there for five weeks.
<b>Jeg har kendt ham i 30 år.</b>	I've known him for 30 years.

*TO*

<b>Skal du i biografen/teatret?</b>	Are you going to the cinema/ theatre?
<b>Klokken er fem minutter i ti.</b>	It's five minutes to ten.

*A/PER*

<b>en gang i minuttet/timen</b>	once a minute/an hour
<b>90 kilometer i timen</b>	90 kilometres per hour

Notice also:  
with parts of the body:

<b>Jeg har ondt i hovedet/maven.</b>	I have a headache/stomach ache.
<b>Han vaskede sig i ansigtet.</b>	He washed his face.

others:

<b>Hun underviser i dansk.</b>	She teaches Danish.
<b>Glasset gik i stykker.</b>	The glass broke.

## 119 MED

**Med** may be used to render most of the meanings of English 'with'.

<i>Accompaniment</i>	<i>Manner</i>	<i>Means</i>	<i>Possession</i>
with	by/in/with	with	with

*WITH*

<b>Han rejste til Mallorca med Lene.</b>	He went to Majorca with Lene.
<b>Jeg drikker altid kaffe med fløde.</b>	I always drink coffee with cream.
<b>Hun sagde det med et smil.</b>	She said it with a smile.
<b>Spis ikke med fingrene!</b>	Don't eat with your fingers!
<b>Hvordan går det med dig?</b>	How are things with you?

**en mand med skæg/sort hår**

a man with a beard/black hair

*BY***De rejste med bus/fly/tog.  
Vi sender en check med posten.  
Aktierne faldt/steg med 5 procent.**They travelled by bus/plane/train.  
We will send a cheque by post.  
Shares fell/rose by 5 per cent.*IN***tale med lav stemme  
Skriv ordet med store bogstaver!**speak in a low voice  
Write the word in capital letters!*TO***Må jeg tale med chefen?**

May I speak to the boss?

Note also:

**Hun giftede sig med Anders.  
Lad være med at afbryde!  
Af med tøjet!/Ud med sproget!**She married Anders.  
Stop interrupting!  
Off with your clothes!/Out with it!**120  
MOD**

<i>Direction</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Opposition</i>	<i>Comparison</i>
to(wards)	against	towards	against	against/compared to

*TO(WARDS)***Familien kørte mod Esbjerg.  
Toget mod Fyn er forsinket.  
mod nord/syd/øst/vest  
mod jul/påske/pinse**The family drove towards Esbjerg.  
The train to/for Funen is delayed.  
to(wards) the north/south/east/west  
towards Christmas/Easter/Whitsun*AGAINST***Han stod lænet mod træet.**

He stood leaning against the tree.

**med ryggen mod muren  
De protesterede mod planen.  
Danmark skal spille mod Italien.  
mod mine principper/min vilje**with one's back against the wall  
They protested against the plan.  
Denmark are playing against Italy.  
against my principles/will

*(COMPARED) TO*

**ti danskere mod seks finner  
tolv stemmer mod fem**

ten Danes compared to six Finns  
twelve votes to five

**121  
OM**

**Om** is used in a great many idiomatic senses, perhaps most frequently in certain expressions indicating future time (see [128.2](#) Note 1, [130](#)).

<i>Location surrounding</i>	<i>Habitual time</i>	<i>Future time when</i>	<i>Subject matter</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
(a)round	in/on	in	about/on	a/per

*(A)ROUND*

**Hun havde et tørklæde om halsen.  
De gik rundt om huset.**

She had a scarf round her neck.  
They walked round the house.

*IN*

**om morgenen/eftermiddagen/ aftenen  
om sommeren/vinteren  
De kommer om en uge.  
Om to år flytter vi til Spanien.  
Der er noget om snakken.**

in the mornings/afternoons/ evenings  
in summer/winter  
They're coming in a week.  
In two years we'll move to Spain.  
There is something in that.

*ON*

**Vi spiser fisk om fredagen.  
en afhandling om Holberg**

We eat fish on Fridays.  
a dissertation on Holberg

*ABOUT*

**De snakker altid om tøj.  
Bogen handler om et mord.**

They always talk about clothes.  
The book is about a murder.

*A/PER*

**tre gange om dagen/ugen/året**

three times a/per day/week/year

In certain instances, primarily with parts of the body, **om** is used colloquially without an English equivalent:

**Han er kold/snavset om hænderne.**

His hands are cold/dirty.

Notice also:

**Vi bad om en øl.**

We asked for a beer.

**122  
OVER**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Motion</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>List</i>
above, over	across, via	over, past	above, over	of

*ABOVE*

**30 meter over havets overflade**  
**Lampen hænger over bordet.**  
**Temperaturen er over frysepunktet.**

30 metres above sea level  
The lamp hangs above the table.  
The temperature is above zero.

*ACROSS*

**De cyklede over broen.**

They cycled across the bridge.

*OVER*

**Helikopteren fløj over byen.**  
**over en femårs periode**  
**Over 40.000 så kampen.**

The helicopter flew over the town.  
over a five-year period  
Over 40,000 watched the match.

*PAST*

**Klokken er ti minutter over tre.**  
**Det er over midnat.**

It's ten past three.  
It's past midnight.

*OF*

**et kort over England**  
**en liste over ansøgerne**

a map of England  
a list of the applicants

Notice also:

**Toget til Aarhus kører over Sorø.**  
**bekymret/overrasket/vred over**  
**klage/vinde over**

The train to Aarhus goes via Sorø.  
worried about/surprised/angry at  
complain about/win against

**123**  
**PÅ**

**På** is used in many idiomatic senses in addition to the basic meaning of 'on (top of)'. **På** is often used to render English 'in' in connection with public buildings and places of work or entertainment (see 129). For uses of **på** with expressions of time, see 128.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Direction</i>	<i>Time when</i>	<i>Time duration</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Possession</i>
on/at/in	to	on	in	of	of

*ON*

**Bladet ligger på bordet/gulvet.**  
**Vi tager til stranden i dag.**

The magazine is on the table/floor.  
We are going to the seaside today.

*AT*

**Vi mødtes på banegården/ biblioteket.**  
**Hun arbejder på universitetet.**  
**på bunden/hjørnet/toppen**

We met at the station/library.  
She works at the university.  
at the bottom/corner/top

*IN*

**Festen blev holdt på et hotel/en kro.**  
**på gaden/himlen/marken**  
**Man kan gøre meget på kort tid.**

The party was held in a hotel/pub.  
in the street/sky/field  
You can do a lot in a short time.

*TO*

**Jeg skal på kontoret/toilettet.**

I'm going to the office/toilet.

*OF*

**et barn på fire år**  
**navnet på byen**  
**prisen på benzin**

a child of four  
the name of the town  
the price of petrol

Notice also:

**på dansk/engelsk**  
**på denne made**  
**tro/tænke/vente på**  
**irriteret/sur/vred på**

in Danish/English  
in this way  
believe (in)/think of/wait for  
irritated/annoyed/angry with

**124**  
**TIL**

**Til** often denotes motion towards a target, but it has several other uses, e.g. with the indirect object.

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Time when</i>	<i>Indirect object</i>	<i>Possession</i>	<i>'Intended for'</i>
to	till/until	for/to	of	for

*TO*

Han rejser snart til Amerika.  
 fra ni til fem  
 Hvad sagde han til de andre?  
 Jeg gav blomsterne til mor.

He's going to America soon.  
 from nine to five  
 What did he say to the others?  
 I gave the flowers to mum.

*TILL/UNTIL*

Kan du ikke blive her til mandag?  
 Det må vente til næste uge.

Can't you stay here until Monday?  
 It'll have to wait till next week.

*FOR*

Vi spiste fisk til frokost.  
 Han købte en bil til mig.  
 Hvad brugte du hammeren til?

We had fish for lunch.  
 He bought a car for me.  
 What did you use the hammer for?

*OF*

Han er forfatter til mange bøger.  
 døren til soveværelset

He is the author of many books.  
 the door of the bedroom

Remnants of old genitive endings in **-s** and **-e** are still found on nouns in some set phrases after **til**:

**til bords**, at/to the table; **til fods**, on foot; **til sengs**, to bed; **til søs**, at/to sea; **være til stede**, be present

Notice also:

<b>til sidst/slut</b>	finally
<b>oversætte til</b>	translate (in)to
<b>vant til</b>	used to

## 125 UNDER

Basically **under** corresponds to ideas expressed by English 'below', 'under(neath)', etc., but it is also used to render English 'during' in certain time expressions.

<i>Location</i>	<i>Motion</i>	<i>Time duration</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Manner</i>
under/below/ beneath	under	during	below/under	beneath/under

*UNDER*

**Katten sidder under bordet.  
Bilen kørte under broen.  
børn under femten (år)  
under ingen/disse omstændigheder  
Han gjorde det under protest.**

The cat is sitting under the table.  
The car drove under the bridge.  
children under 15 (years old)  
under no/these circumstances  
He did it under protest.

*BELOW*

**Temperaturen er under frysepunktet.  
Det var et slag under bæltstedet.**

The temperature is below zero.  
That was hitting below the belt.

*BENEATH*

**Det er under min værdighed.**

It's beneath my dignity.

*DURING* (when used about a certain activity)

**Der skete meget under krigen.  
Jeg kedede mig under hans tale.**

A lot happened during the war.  
I was bored during his speech.

Notice also:

**Under 20 personer mødte op.  
under den forudsætning at**

Fewer than 20 people turned up.  
on condition that

**126  
VED**

**Ved** suggests adjacency or proximity.

*Location*

at/by/near

*Time when*

about/around/at

*AT*

**De sad ved bordet.  
ved brylluppet/festen  
ved solopgang/solnedgang  
kærlighed ved første blik**

They sat at the table.  
at the wedding/party  
at sunrise/sunset  
love at first sight

*BY*

**Vi har et sommerhus ved kysten.  
Hun sidder ved vinduet.**

We have a cottage by the coast.  
She is sitting by the window.



## NEAR

Louisiana ligger ved Humlebæk.

Louisiana is near Humlebæk.

## ABOUT/AROUND

ved syvtiden

around seven (o'clock)

Notice also:

ved ankomsten/afrejsen

on arrival/on departure

slaget ved Hastings

the battle of Hastings

Der er noget mærkeligt ved hende.

There's something odd about her.

## 127

COMMON ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS AND THEIR DANISH EQUIVALENTS—  
SUMMARY

When translating English prepositional phrases into Danish, you may find the table below of help in choosing a suitable Danish equivalent.

	<i>Time</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Manner</i>	<i>Subject matter</i>	<i>Indirect object</i>	<i>Agent</i>	<i>Measure</i>
about	<b>ved</b>			<b>om</b>			
above		<b>over</b>					<b>over</b>
after	<b>efter</b>	<b>(bag) efter</b>					
across		<b>over</b>					
against		<b>mod</b>	<b>mod</b>				
around	<b>omkring/ved</b>	<b>omkring</b>					
at	<b>i/til (128.1)</b>	<b>i/på/ved (129)</b>					
before	<b>før/inden</b>	<b>foran</b>					
beneath		<b>under</b>	<b>under</b>				
below		<b>under</b>					<b>under</b>
by		<b>ved (129.3)</b>	<b>med</b>			<b>af</b>	
during	<b>under</b>						
for	<b>i (128.4)</b>				<b>for/til</b>		
from	<b>fra</b>	<b>fra/af</b>					
in	<b>i (128.2)</b>	<b>i (129.1)</b>	<b>på</b>				
into		<b>ind i</b>					
of	<b>131</b>	<b>131</b>		<b>131</b>			<b>af/over/på</b>
on	<b>128.3</b>	<b>129.1, 129.2</b>		<b>om</b>			
over	<b>over</b>	<b>over</b>					<b>over</b>
past	<b>over</b>	<b>forbi</b>					
through		<b>gennem</b>	<b>gennem</b>				
to	<b>i</b>	<b>i/til</b>			<b>for/til</b>		
under		<b>under</b>	<b>under</b>				<b>under</b>
with		<b>hos</b>	<b>med</b>				

## 128

## TRANSLATING 'AT', 'IN', 'ON', ETC., AS EXPRESSIONS OF TIME

Because of the idiomatic nature of Danish prepositional expressions of time it is impossible to formulate rules which are both concise and one hundred per cent reliable. For the sake of brevity some variations have been deliberately omitted from what follows. The aim here is to present a scheme of basic conventions that applies in the majority of instances.

1 'At'+expressions of time:

<i>'At'+</i>	<i>Festival</i>	<i>Clock</i>
past	<b>sidste jul</b>	<b>klokken 10 (ti)</b>
habitual	<b>i julen</b>	<b>klokken 10 (ti)</b>
present	<b>i julen</b>	<b>klokken 10 (ti)</b>
future	<b>til jul</b>	<b>klokken 10 (ti)</b>

*Notes:*

1 **Sidste jul, i julen, and til jul**, render English 'at Christmas'='last Christmas', 'this Christmas' and 'next Christmas', respectively.

2 With year date expressions, Danish has either optional **i** plus end article (past) or **til** without article (future):

**Det begyndte (i) julen 1998 og slutter til nytår 2008.**

It began at Christmas 1998 and will end at New Year 2008.

2 'In'+expressions of time:

<i>'In'+</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Decade/century</i>	<i>Month</i>	<i>Season</i>
past	<b>i 1864</b>	<b>i 60'erne/i 1800-tallet</b>	<b>i april</b>	<b>i foråret</b>
habitual	—	—	<b>i april</b>	<b>om foråret</b>
present	—	<b>i 90'erne</b>	<b>i april</b>	<b>i foråret</b>
future	<b>(i) år 2020</b>	<b>i (20)20'erne</b>	<b>til april</b>	<b>til foråret</b>

*Notes:*

1 The preposition **om** (English 'in') answers the question 'When?' to express future action:

**De rejser om en time/om en uge/ om et par år.**

They're leaving in an hour/in a week/ in a couple of years.

2 The preposition **på** (English 'in') answers the question, 'How long does it/will it take?':

**De kan køre til Møn på en time.**

They can drive to Møn in an hour. OR:  
It'll take them an hour to drive to Møn.

**I foråret/til foråret**, etc., renders English 'in spring', etc.= 'last/this/next spring', etc.

3 'On'+expressions of time:

<i>'On'+</i>	<i>Weekday</i>	<i>Date</i>
past	<b>i søndags</b>	den 1./første juli
habitual	<b>om søndagen</b>	den 1./første juli
present	<b>(i dag)</b>	den 1./første juli
future	<b>på søndag</b>	den 1./første juli

*Notes:*

1 **I søndags** and **på søndag**, etc., render English 'on Sunday'='last Sunday' and 'this/next Sunday', etc., respectively.

2 For weekday+calendar date expressions, Danish usually has the weekday without the article and no preposition:

**Han ankom torsdag den 1. april og rejser igen lørdag den 8. maj.**

He arrived on Thursday 1 April and will leave again on Saturday 8 May.

## 4 'For'+duration:

Danish **i**+expression of time:

**De har boet her i tre år.**

They've lived here for three years.

**Jeg har ikke set hende i otte år/ i lang tid.**

I haven't seen her for eight years/ for a long time.

5 'During'=**under** (when the noun denotes an activity):

**Han var pilot under krigen.**

He was a pilot during the war.

**Hun fortalte os det under middagen.**

She told us during dinner.

## 129

## TRANSLATING 'AT', 'IN', 'ON', ETC., AS EXPRESSIONS OF PLACE

1 Because of the idiomatic usages of **i** and **på**, translation of 'at', 'in', 'on', etc., when expressing place relationships, is not always straightforward. The most common instances of Danish usage (to which there are exceptions) are set out below:

*På* (indicating 'on a surface')

**billedet på væggen**

the picture on the wall

**dugen på bordet**

the cloth on the table

**et sår på læben**

a sore on the lip

**Hun sidder på en stol.**

She's sitting on a(n upright) chair.

**på Roskildevej**

**skiven på telefonen**

the dial on the telephone

**knappen på radioen/fjernsynet**

the button on the radio/TV

*I* (indicating 'inside')

**et hul i væggen**

a hole in the wall

**dugen i skuffen**

the cloth in the drawer

**et sår i munden**

a sore in the mouth

**Hun sidder i en stol.**

She's sitting in a(n arm)chair.

**i Bredgade**

**tale i telefon**

speak on the telephone

**et program i radioen/fjernsynet**

a programme on radio/TV

2 Other uses of **på** and **i** to indicate location are:

rooms (dwellings)

**Han er oppe på værelset.**

houses

**Der star nr. 12 på huset.**

It says no. 12 on the house.

areas of towns

**på Vesterbro**

islands and small peninsulas

**på Sjælland/Djursland**

islands (non-independent countries)

**på Færøerne/Grønland**

continents (of one only)

**på Antarktis**

institutions

**på biblioteket**

**på hospitalet**

**på universitetet**

places of work

**på arbejde(t)**

**på kontoret**

places of entertainment

**på diskoteket**

**på restaurant**

others

**på stationen**

**på toilettet**

rooms (spaces)

**Han kiggede ind i værelset.**

houses

**Der er mange mennesker i huset.**

There are many people in the house.

towns

**i Maribo**

larger peninsulas

**i Jylland**

countries (independent)

**i Irland/Tyskland**

continents

**i Afrika/Amerika/Asien/Europa**

institutions

**i børnehaven**

**i kirke(n)**

**i skole(n)**

places of entertainment

**i biografen**

**i teatret**

others

**i banken**

**i Brugsen/Ilum (=stores)**

3 Other Danish prepositions of location are:

(a) **hos**=at someone's house, certain places of work

**Hun bor hos sine forældre.**

**hos bageren/tandlægen**

She lives with her parents.

at the baker's/dentist's

(b) **ved**=at, by

**Damen sad ved skrivebordet/vinduet.**

The woman sat at the desk/by the window.

=by, on (with things extending lengthwise)

**Familien bor ved floden/kysten/Øresund.**

The family live by/on the river/coast/the Sound.

=near

**Hotellet ligger ved jernbanestationen.**  
The hotel is near the railway station.

=of (with battles)

**slaget ved Waterloo**  
the battle of Waterloo

## 130

## PREPOSITIONS IN EXPRESSIONS OF TIME—SUMMARY

	<i>Past</i>	<i>Habitual</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
<i>Seasons</i>				
<b>forår, sommer</b>	<b>sidste forår</b>	<b>om foråret</b>	<b>i foråret</b>	<b>til foråret</b>
<b>efterår, vinter</b>	last spring <b>i sommer/vinter</b> last summer/ winter	in (the) spring	this spring	next spring
<i>Festivals</i>				
<b>jul, påske, pinse</b>	<b>sidste jul</b> last Xmas	<b>i julen</b> at Xmas	<b>i julen</b> this Xmas	<b>til jul</b> next Xmas
<i>Days</i>				
<b>søndag, mandag,</b> etc.	<b>i går</b> yesterday <b>i søndags</b> last Sunday	<b>om søndagen</b> on Sundays	<b>i dag</b> today <b>i dag søndag</b> today Sunday	<b>i morgen</b> tomorrow <b>på/næste søndag</b> next Sunday
<i>Parts of the day</i>				
<b>morgen, formiddag</b>	<b>i morges</b> <b>i formiddags</b> (earlier) this morning	<b>om morgenen</b> <b>om formiddagen</b> in the mornings	<b>her/nu til morgen</b> <b>(her) i formiddag</b> this morning	<b>i morgen tidlig</b> <b>i morgen</b> <b>formiddag</b> tomorrow morning
<b>eftermiddag</b>	<b>i eftermiddags</b> (earlier) this afternoon	<b>om eftermiddag</b> in the afternoon(s)	<b>(nu) i eftermiddag</b> this afternoon	<b>i morgen</b> <b>eftermiddag</b> tomorrow afternoon
<b>aften</b>	<b>i aftes</b> last night/ evening	<b>om aftenen</b> in the evening(s)	<b>(nu) i aften</b> this evening	<b>i morgen aften</b> tomorrow evening
<b>nat</b>	<b>i nat</b> last night/during the night	<b>om natten</b> at night	<b>(her) i nat</b> tonight	<b>i morgen nat</b> tomorrow night

	<i>Past</i>	<i>Habitual</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Future</i>
<i>Years, months</i>				
<b>år</b>	<b>sidste år</b>	<b>om året</b>	<b>i år</b>	<b>(til) næste år</b>
	last year	per year	this year	next year
<b>januar, etc.</b>	<b>i/sidste januar</b>	<b>i januar</b>	<b>i januar</b>	<b>til januar</b>
	last January	in January	this January	next January

### 131 TRANSLATING 'OF'

The English preposition 'of' may be rendered in a great many ways in Danish. What follows is by no means a complete account, but it will provide guidance on how to translate 'of' in the most common instances.

1 Possessive 'of':

(a) English possessive 'of' is commonly rendered by Danish **-s** genitive (cf. 37):

the owner of the car	<b>bilens ejer</b>
the roof of the church	<b>kirkens tag</b>
the top of the tree	<b>træets top</b>

(b) In many cases Danish prefers a compound noun:

the owner of the car/car owner	<b>bilejeren</b>
the roof of the church/church roof	<b>kirketaget</b>
the top of the tree/tree top	<b>trætoppen</b>

2 'The city of Roskilde', etc.:

When English 'of' may be replaced by commas indicating apposition, it is rendered without a preposition in Danish:

the city of Roskilde	<b>byen Roskilde</b>
the kingdom of Norway	<b>kongeriget Norge</b>
the Republic of Ireland	<b>republikken Irland</b>
the month of May	<b>maj måned</b>

3 'A cup of tea', etc.:

Expressions with 'of' denoting measure are usually rendered without a preposition in Danish:

a cup of tea	<b>en kop te</b>
a pair of shoes	<b>et par sko</b>
5 kilos of potatoes	<b>5 kilo kartofler</b>
a large number of Danes	<b>et stort antal danskere</b>

*Notes:*

1 'half of'/'part of'/'some of'/'the majority of':

half of/some of the book  
some/the majority of the voters

**halvdelen af/en del/noget af bogen**  
**nogle/flertallet af vælgerne**

2 Danish usually has **på** corresponding to English 'of' when it is followed by a number:

a salary of 300,000 kroner  
a woman of forty

**en løn på 300.000 kroner**  
**en kvinde på fyrre år**

4 Dates:

Danish has no preposition for 'of' when it is used in dates:

the 1st/first of January  
in May of 1956

**den 1./første januar**  
**i maj 1956**

5 'A heart of stone', etc.:

'Of' indicating material is rendered by **af** in Danish (cf. 114):

a heart of stone  
a statue of marble

**et hjerte af sten**  
**en statue af marmor**

6 'The Queen of Denmark', etc.:

'Of' denoting representation or origin may be rendered by Danish **af** or **fra**. (The sense of geographical origin is stronger with **fra**):

the Queen of Denmark  
a young man of Jutland

**dronningen af Danmark**  
(=Danmarks dronning)  
**en ung mand fra Jylland**  
(=en ung jyde)

Notice that where 'of'='in', Danish has **i**:

the mayor of Helsingør  
The Merchant of Venice

**borgmesteren i Helsingør**  
**Købmanden i Venedig**

7 'North of', etc.:

'Of' with compass points=**for**:

north of Skagen

**nord for Skagen**

*Note:*

the north of England

**Nordengland**

8 'A map of Greenland', etc.:

With maps, lists and directories, **over** is often used:

a map of Greenland

**et kort over Grønland**

a list of telephone numbers  
 a survey of Danish towns

**en liste over telefonnumre**  
**en oversigt over danske byer**

9 'A professor of law', etc.:  
 With job titles, **i** is normally used:

a professor of law

**en professor i jura**  
 (=en juraprofessor)

a teacher of English

**en lærer i engelsk**  
 (=en engelsklærer)





# 9 INTERJECTIONS

## 132 INTERJECTIONS

### 1 Introduction

There are two types of interjection, both of which chiefly belong to the spoken language. They usually appear at the beginning of a sentence and are separated from the rest of it by a comma. **Type 1** includes exclamations and spontaneous expressions of feelings (e.g. discomfort, joy, etc.) without any reference, and imitations of sounds, while **Type 2** consists of formulaic words and expressions used in conventional situations (e.g. affirmations, denials, greetings, etc.).

#### *Type 1:*

### 2 Exclamations, expressions of feelings:

#### (a) Positive feelings:

Delight, satisfaction: **ih, åh:**

**Ih, hvor er hun sød!**  
**Åh, hvor er det dejligt!**

Oh, isn't she sweet?  
Oh, isn't it lovely?

Praise, joy, excitement: **bravo, hurra, juhu:**

**Bravo, det var flot klaret!**  
**Hurra, vi har vundet i tips!**  
**Juhu, vi skal i Tivoli i aften!**

Bravo, well done!  
Hurrah, we've won the pools!  
Yippee, we are going to Tivoli tonight!

Surprise: **hovsa, ih, nej, nå:**

**Hovsa, jeg havde ikke set dig!**  
**Ih/Nej, sikke en overraskelse!**  
**Nå, jeg troede det var i morgen!**

Whoops, I hadn't seen you!  
Oh, what a surprise!  
Oh, I thought it was tomorrow!

#### (b) Negative feelings:

Annoyance: **årh:**

**Årh, nu gik det lige så godt!**

Oh no, and it was going so well!

**Øv, hvorfor må jeg ikke det?**

Oh, why can't I do that?

Disapproval, disgust, discomfort: **fy, føj, puh(a):****Fy, hvor skulle du skamme dig!**

Shame on you!

**Føj, hvor ser den ækel ud!**

Ugh, doesn't it look nasty!

**Puh, hvor er det varmt!**

Phew, it's hot!

**Puha, hvor her lugter!**

Pooh, it smells in here!

Fear: **ih, nej, uh(a):****Ih/Nej/Uh, hvor blev jeg bange!**

Oh, I was really scared!

**Uha, hvor er her mørkt!**

Gosh, isn't it dark in here!

Hesitation: **øh:****Øh, det ved jeg faktisk ikke.**

Er, I don't really know.

Pain: **av:****Av, hvor gør det ondt!**

Ow, it hurts!

3 Imitations of sounds (onomatopoeia):

Sounds of animals: **miav** (cat); **muh** (cow); **mæh** (sheep); **pruh** (horse); **vov** (dog); **øf** (pig).Sounds of objects: **bang** (door, gun); **ding-dong** (bell); **plask** (into water); **tik-tak** (clock).4 Commands to animals and people (a mixture of **Type 1** and **Type 2**):Animals: to dogs: **Dæk!**, Down!; to horses: **Hyp! Prr!**, Gee up! Whoah!;People: to children: **Hys! Ssh!**, Hush! Ssh!; to soldiers: **Giv agt!**, Ready!; **Ret!**, Attention!.*Type 2:*5 Affirmations: **ja, jo** and their compound forms:(a) **Ja, jo** (**jo** is used in the answer when the question contains a negation):**Har du set min nye bil?**

Have you seen my new car?

**Ja./Ja, det har jeg.**

Yes./Yes, I have.

**Er du ikke træt?**

Aren't you tired?

**Jo./Jo, det er jeg.**

Yes./Yes, I am.

**Har du aldrig været i New York?**

Have you never been to New York?

**Jo, to gange.**

Yes, twice.

(b) **Javist, jovist** (stronger affirmation, greater assurance):**Tror du at han stadig elsker mig?**

Do you think he still loves me?

**Javist gør han det!**

Of course he does!

**Har du ikke vandet blomsterne?**

Haven't you watered the flowers?

**Jovist har jeg så!**

Yes, I certainly have!

(c) **Jamen** (expresses mild protest or sympathy):

**De skal snart giftes.**

They are getting married soon.

**Jamen dog, har du slået dig?**

**Jamen, de er da alt for unge!**

But they are far too young!

Oh dear, have you hurt yourself?

(d) **Jaså** (signals surprise and often disapproval):

**Hun er begyndt at arbejde igen.**

She has started to work again.

**Jeg har glemt at købe løg.**

I have forgotten to buy onions.

**Jaså, det havde jeg nu ikke ventet!**

Really, I hadn't expected that!

**Jaså, så må vi jo klare os uden!**

Well then, we'll have to do without.

(e) **Javel** (denotes acceptance of a statement or an order):

**Hun kommer ikke til mødet.**

She's not coming to the meeting.

**Ti stille når jeg taler!**

Shut up when I'm talking!

**Javel, det skal jeg notere.**

OK, I'll make a note of that.

**Javel, hr. sergeant!**

Yes, sir! (i.e. a sergeant)

6 Denials:

(a) **Nej** (clear denial or refusal):

**Kunne du lide filmen?**

Did you like the film?

**Har du tid et øjeblik?**

Have you got a moment?

**Nej, jeg syntes den var kedelig.**

No, I thought it was boring.

**Nej./Nej, det har jeg ikke.**

No./No, I haven't.

(b) **Næ(h)** (implies doubt or hesitation):

**Tror du han tog pengene?**

Do you think he took the money?

**Næh, men man ved jo aldrig!**

Well no, but you never know!

7 Uncertainty: **Tja(h)** (somewhere in between 'yes' and 'no'):

**Tror du vi vinder i aften?**

Do you think we'll win tonight?

**Tjah, måske, vi har da en chance.**

Well, perhaps, we've got a chance.

8 Greetings and exhortations:

(a) On meeting: **dav(s)**, **godaften**, **goddag**, **goddav(s)**, **godmorgen**, **hej**.

(b) On parting: **farvel**, **hej**, **på gensyn**.

(c) Seasonal: **glædelig jul**, Merry Christmas; **godt nytår**, Happy New Year; **god påske**, Happy Easter; **til lykke/tillykke med fødselsdagen**, happy birthday.

(d) Thanks: **(mange) tak**, (many) thanks; **tak for mad/sidst**, thanks for the food/the last time we met; **selv tak/tak i lige made**, thank you (in return).

(e) Apologies and responses: **om forladelse**, sorry; **undskyld**, excuse me/sorry; **åh, jeg be'r/ingen årsag/det var så lidt**, not at all/don't mention it.

(f) Others: **skål**, cheers; **værsgo**, here you are.

9 Expletives (mostly names for God, the Devil, diseases and excrement):

**fandens/helvedes/satans (også), for fanden/helvede/satan, kraftedeme, lort, pis, sateme, sgu, skid, skide** (as a prefix used for extra emphasis, e.g. **skidegod, skidesød**, etc.), **ved gud**

Euphemisms: **for katten/pokker/søren, pokkers, skam, søreme.**

# 10 CONJUNCTIONS

## 133

### COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

1 These join clauses or elements of the same kind and are always found between the words or groups of words that they link (see 140). They do not affect the word order within the groups of words that they link.

*Coordination (linking) of:*

two subjects

***Tom og Jannie*** taler med børnene.

Tom and Jannie are talking to the children.

two verbs

***De sidder og leger.***

They are sitting playing.

two main clauses

(straight word order)

***Jeg holder af Anders, og han holder af mig.***

I'm fond of Anders, and he's fond of me.

two main clauses

(inverted word order)

***Ham kan jeg godt lide, og det kan hun også.***

I like him and she does, too.

two subordinate clauses

***Jeg håber at han vinder, og at han sætter ny rekord.***

I hope that he wins and that he sets a new record.

2 Coordinating conjunctions include:

<b>og</b>	<b>Gå hjem og sov!</b> Go home and go to sleep!	and
<b>eller</b>	<b>Pengene eller livet!</b> Your money or your life!	or
<b>for</b>	<b>Han løb hurtigt, for han havde travlt.</b> He ran quickly for he was in a hurry.	for, because
<b>men</b>	<b>Jeg vasker op, men min kone sørger for maden.</b> I do the washing up but my wife does the cooking.	but
<b>så</b>	<b>Hun plaskede i vandet, så alle blev våde.</b> She splashed in the water so they all got wet.	so

## 134

## SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS

1 These link main clauses (MC) and subordinate clauses (SC). Subordinate clauses may follow or precede the main clause:

Cf. <i>De sover når de er trætte.</i>		They sleep when they're tired.
MC	/sub+SC	
	conj	
<i>Når de er trætte, sover de.</i>		When they're tired they sleep.
sub+SC	/MC	
conj		

2 Subordinating conjunctions and other words (listed below) which introduce subordinate clauses will occupy the first position in the subordinate clause and may affect the word order in those clauses (see 156,159). Such words are of two main types:

(a) General subordinators:

These words introduce indirect speech (**at**=that) and indirect yes/no questions (**om**=whether, if), but impart no meaning to the clause, unlike other subordinating conjunctions in 2(b) below. Just as in English, **at** may sometimes be omitted:

<b>at</b>	<b>Hun sagde (at) hun arbejdede for hårdt.</b> She said (that) she was working too hard. (Cf. direct speech: <b>Hun sagde: 'Jeg arbejder for hårdt.'</b> )	that
<b>om</b>	<b>Jeg spurgte om hun arbejdede for hårdt.</b> I asked whether she was working too hard. (Cf. direct question: <b>Jeg spurgte: 'Arbejder du for hårdt?'</b> )	whether, if

(b) Other subordinating conjunctions:

These words introduce different kinds of adverbial clause (cf. 156,159):

(i) Time:

<b>Når du får tid, kan du slå græsset.</b> When you get the time, you can cut the grass.	when
<b>Når vi var hjemme, plejede far at gå ud.</b> Whenever we were at home Dad used to go out.	when(ever)
<b>Da vi kom hjem, var han gået ud.</b> When we came home, he'd gone out.	when
<b>Jeg er blevet professor siden vi sidst sås.</b> I've become a professor since we last met.	since
<b>Me(de)ns jeg henter flasken, kan du finde nogle glas.</b> While I get the bottle, you can find some glasses.	while
<b>Inden jeg nåede frem, var det for sent.</b> Before I got there, it was too late.	before

*Note:* **Når** (when) is used to introduce clauses describing present and future events, and for repeated actions in the past (=whenever). **Da** (when) is used about a single event or occasion which took place in the past.

## (ii) Cause:

<b>Han kommer ikke i dag <i>fordi</i> han er syg.</b> He's not coming today because he's ill.	because
<b><i>Eftersom</i> det er påskedag, holder butikkerne lukket.</b> Because it's Easter Sunday, the shops are closed.	because
<b>Vi kom sent hjem <i>da</i> toget var forsinket.</b> We got home late as the train was delayed.	as
<b><i>Siden</i> du spørger så pænt, skal du få svar.</b> Since you ask so nicely, you'll get an answer.	since

## (iii) Condition:

<b><i>Hvis</i> det bliver ved med at sne, kan vi stå på ski.</b> If it carries on snowing we can go skiing.	if
<b>Jeg kommer <i>hvis</i> jeg får tid.</b> I'll come if I get the time.	if
<b><i>Bare</i> jeg ser et glas vand, bliver jeg søsyg.</b> If I just see a glass of water I get seasick.	if only/just

## (iv) Concession:

<b>Hun frøs <i>selvom</i> hun havde frakke på.</b> She was cold even though she was wearing a coat.	(a)though/ even though
<b>Han sagde nej <i>skønt</i> han mente jo.</b> He said no though he meant yes.	(a)though/ even though

## (v) Intention:

<b>De gjorde meget <i>for at</i> han skulle føle sig hjemme.</b> They did a lot to make him feel at home.	(in order) to
<b>Han gemte sig <i>så (at)</i> de ikke ville få øje på ham.</b> He hid so that they wouldn't see him.	so that

## (vi) Result:

<b>Det var <i>så</i> koldt <i>at</i> søen frøs til.</b> It was so cold that the lake froze over.	so...that
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## (vii) Comparison:

<b>Anna er lige <i>så</i> stor <i>som</i> sin søster/<i>som</i> hendes søster er.</b> Anna is just as big as her sister/as her sister is.	as...as...
<b>Søren er større <i>end</i> sin bror/<i>end</i> hans bror er.</b> Søren is bigger than his brother/than his brother is.	than
<b><i>Jo</i> mere det sneer, <i>jo</i> gladere bliver børnene.</b> The more it snows, the happier are the children.	the...the...
<b><i>Jo</i> længere vi venter, <i>desto</i> sværere bliver det at få det sagt.</b>	the...the...



The longer we wait, the harder it becomes to say it.

### 135 OTHER SUBORDINATORS

These are words which are not conjunctions, but nevertheless introduce subordinate clauses.

1 Interrogative pronouns (**hv-** words) and adverbs (cf. **77,107**): These words introduce indirect **hv-** questions (cf. **138–39**):

<b>Ved du <i>hvad</i> han gjorde?</b>	Do you know what he did?
<b>Kan du sige mig <i>hvem</i> hun er?</b>	Can you tell me who she is?
<b>Ved du <i>hvordan</i> han har det, og <i>hvornår</i> han kommer?</b>	Do you know how he is and when he's coming?

When **hvad** and **hvem** are the subject of a subordinate clause, **der** is introduced as a subject marker:

**Han vidste ikke hvem *der* havde gjort det.**  
He didn't know who had done it.

**Hun kunne ikke fortælle mig hvad *der* var sket.**  
She couldn't tell me what had happened.

2 Relative pronouns and adverbs (cf. **75–76,107**):

These words introduce relative clauses (cf. **154.2**), which usually form attributes to subjects, objects or complements:

**Vi har fået en ny lærer *der* er meget dygtig.**  
We have got a teacher who's very good.

**Der er noget *som* jeg må tale med dig om.**  
There's something I need to talk to you about.

### 136 TRANSLATING SOME DIFFICULT CONJUNCTIONS

1 'After' is a preposition, adverb and conjunction in English. **Efter** is an adverb and a preposition but not a conjunction (though it is increasingly being perceived as such in modern Danish), and therefore cannot normally introduce a subordinate clause unless it is followed by **at**:

The house burnt down shortly after they left.  
**Huset brændte kort *efter at* de var rejst.**

2 'As'='for'=**for**:

He handed in his notice as he couldn't take the pressure.  
**Han sagde op, for han kunne ikke klare presset.**

= 'while'=**mens (medens), idet**:

As he was talking he went red in the face.

**Mens han talte, blev han rød i hovedet.**

=‘because’=**fordi** (in written language also **da, eftersom**):

We went home again straightaway because the weather was bad.

**Vi tog straks hjem igen fordi vejret var dårligt.**

3 ‘As...as’ in comparisons=**(lige) så...som**:

He is as tall as his father/as his father is.

**Han er (lige) så høj som sin far/som hans far er.**

4 ‘Before’=**inden, før**:

I’d like to be told before you leave.

**Jeg vil gerne have besked før inden du rejser.**

As a conjunction after a negative main clause=**førend**:

Hans had hardly got home before the telephone rang.

**Hans var næppe kommet hjem førend telefonen ringede.**

As an adverb=‘earlier’, ‘previously’=**før**:

Two days before we had met her in town.

**To dage før havde vi truffet hende i byen.**

As a preposition=**før/inden**:

That was before my time!

**Det var for min tid!**

Before long spring will be here.

**Inden længe bliver det forår.**

5 ‘Both’

As a conjunction (‘both A and B’)=**både...og**:

Both Kitty and Jean are foreigners.

**Både Kitty og Jean er udlændinge.**

As a pronoun (‘both Xs’)=**begge (to)**:

They both studied Faroese.

**De studerede begge (to) færøsk.**

6 'But'

As a conjunction=**men**:

He worked hard but he didn't earn much.  
**Han arbejdede hårdt, men han tjente ikke meget.**

As a preposition (=‘except’)=**undtagen/uden**:

All the students but one have passed.  
**Alle de studerende undtagen én har bestået.**

No one but my wife knows.  
**Ingen uden min kone ved det.**

7 'If'

As a general subordinator (=‘whether’=**om**):

I asked her if she would like to dance.  
**Jeg spurgte hende om hun ønskede at danse.**

As a conjunction introducing a conditional clause=**hvis**:

If you don't do your homework then your parents will be angry.  
**Hvis du ikke læser dine lektier, bliver dine forældre vrede.**

8 'That'

As a subordinating conjunction=**at**:

They say (that) they haven't got the time.  
**De siger (at) de ikke har tid.**

As a relative pronoun (=‘which’, ‘whom’) when object=**som**:

He dropped the bottle that he had just bought.  
**Han tabte flasken som han lige havde købt.**

As a relative pronoun (=‘which’, ‘whom’) when subject=either **der** or **som**:

There are eleven countries that have applied for membership of the EU.  
**Der er elleve lande der/som har søgt om medlemskab af EU.**

In cleft sentences (see 158)=either **der/som** or **at**:

**der/som** is used when the correlative is a non-adverbial noun phrase:

It was a dictionary (that) Niels sent me last week.  
**Det var en ordbog (som) Niels sendte mig i sidste uge.**

**at** is used when the correlative is an adverbial of time or place:

It was in 1985 (that) we graduated.

**Det var i 1985 (at) vi tog vores eksamen.**

It was in Odense (that) he learnt to speak Danish.

**Det var i Odense (at) han lærte at tale dansk.**

In the expression 'now that'=**nu da**:

Now that the weather is warmer we can bathe in the lake.

**Nu da vejret er blevet varmere, kan vi bade i søen.**

As a demonstrative (see [74](#)):

That girl is really pretty!

**Den pige er virkelig smuk!**



# 11

## WORD ORDER AND CLAUSE STRUCTURE

### 137 WORD CLASSES AND CLAUSE ELEMENTS

Elsewhere in this book we examine word classes (or parts of speech), i.e. words grouped according to their form or meaning, e.g. nouns, verbs, etc. In this section of the book we examine clause elements, i.e. words and groups of words and their function and position within the clause. These two approaches are illustrated by the following main clause example:

	<b>Vi</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>ikke</b>	<b>set</b>	<b>Peter</b>	<b>i aften.</b>
	(We	have	not	seen	Peter	this evening.)
<i>Word class</i>	pronoun	verb	adverb	verb	noun	preposition + noun
<i>Clause element</i>	subject	finite verb	clausal adverbial	non-finite verb	object	other adverbial

Several clause elements (i.e. any word or group of words) can be moved to the beginning of a clause (main clause statement):

**I aften har vi ikke set Peter.**  
**Peter har vi ikke set i aften.**

This evening we haven't  
 Peter we haven't...

### 138 CLAUSE TYPES

Most clauses possess both a subject (see 142) and a finite verb (see 143).

1 In describing clauses we often use the terms **FV1**-clause and **FV2**-clause:

In **FV1**-clauses the finite verb comes first in the clause.

In **FV2**-clauses the finite verb comes second, after some other element.

2 The five sentence types and the relative positions of the subject, finite verb and other elements in Danish are shown in the table below. Under the *Word order* column, the designation *straight* = subject - finite verb, and the designation *inverted* = finite verb - subject.

<i>Position</i>				
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4 →</i>	<i>Word order</i>
<b>STATEMENT</b>				
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	–	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV2, straight</i>
<b>Han</b>	<b>rejser</b>	–	<b>hjem i dag.</b>	
(He is going home today.)				
<i>Non-subject</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV2, inverted</i>
<b>I dag</b>	<b>rejser</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>hjem.</b>	
(Today he is going home.)				
<b>YES/NO QUESTION</b>				
–	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV1, inverted</i>
–	<b>Rejser</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>hjem i dag?</b>	
(Is he going home today?)				
–	<b>Skal</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>ikke rejse hjem idag?</b>	
(Isn't he going home today?)				
<b>HV- QUESTION</b>				
<i>hv- word</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV2, inverted</i>
<b>Hvorfor</b>	<b>rejser</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>hjem i dag?</b>	
(Why is he going home today?)				
<i>hv- word/Subj.</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	–	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV2, straight</i>
<b>Hvem</b>	<b>rejser</b>	–	<b>hjem i dag?</b>	
(Who is going home today?)				
<b>COMMAND</b>				
–	<i>Finite verb</i>	–	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV1, no subject</i>
–	<b>Rejs</b>	–	<b>hjem!</b>	
(Go home!)				
<b>WISH</b>				
–	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>etc.</i>	<i>FV1, inverted</i>
–	<b>Måtte</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>dog snart blive rask!</b>	
(May you get well soon!)				

*Notes:*

1 **hv-** questions are so called because they begin with an interrogative pronoun/adverb or **hv-** word (see 77).

2 Yes/no questions are so called because the answer to them is 'yes' or 'no'.

3 Notice the difference in structure between **hv-** questions (FV2) and yes/no questions (FV1).

## 139

## MAIN CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Many main clauses possess other elements not detailed in 138 above. These are included in the schema below, which may be used to explain and analyse most main clauses in Danish. Note the symbols **F v n a V N A** which will be used from now on for each of the seven positions.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Front position	Finite verb	(Subject)	Clausal adverbial	Non-finite verb	Object/complement/real subject	Other adverbial
<b>F</b>	<b>v</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>
<i>Sentence type:</i>						
<b>STATEMENT</b>						
<b>Han</b>	<b>rejser</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>hjem i dag.</b>
(He is going home today.)						
<b>I morges</b>	<b>havde</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>endnu ikke</b>	<b>pakket</b>	<b>sin kuffert.</b>	
(This morning he still hadn't packed his suitcase.)						
<b>Sin kuffert</b>	<b>havde</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>endnu ikke</b>	<b>pakket</b>	–	<b>i morges.</b>
<b>Så</b>	<b>blev</b>	<b>de</b>	<b>naturligvis</b>	–	<b>vrede.</b>	
(Then of course they got angry.)						
<b>Der</b>	<b>sidder</b>	–	–	–	<b>to patienter</b>	<b>uden for hans kontor.</b>
(Two patients are sitting outside his office.)						
<b>YES/NO QUESTION</b>						
–	<b>Flytter</b>	<b>de</b>	–	–	–	<b>til Odense?</b>
(Are they moving to Odense?)						
–	<b>Vil</b>	<b>de</b>	<b>ikke</b>	<b>flytte</b>	–	<b>til Odense?</b>
(Don't they want to move to Odense?)						
–	<b>Har</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	<b>villet møde</b>	<b>hende</b>	<b>før?</b>
(Have you never wanted to meet her before?)						
–	<b>Gav</b>	<b>du</b>	–	–	<b>ham pengene?</b>	
(Did you give him the money?)						
<b>HV- QUESTION</b>						
<b>Hvem</b>	<b>kommer</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>her i aften?</b>
(Who is coming here tonight?)						
<b>Hvem</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>du</b>	–	–	<b>pengene</b>	<b>til?</b>
(Who did you give the money to?)						
<b>Hvornår</b>	<b>ønsker</b>	<b>de</b>	–	<b>at rejse</b>	–	<b>til Norge?</b>
(When do they want to go to Norway?)						
<b>COMMAND</b>						
–	<b>Ring</b>	–	<b>altid</b>	–	–	<b>før kl. tolv!</b>
(Always ring before twelve o'clock!)						
–	<b>Kom!</b>					
(Come!)						
<b>WISH</b>						
–	<b>Måtte</b>	<b>der</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	<b>ske</b>	<b>ham noget!</b>	
(May nothing ever happen to him!)						
<b>Længe</b>	<b>leve</b>	<b>kongen!</b>				
(Long live the king!)						

Notice that:

- 1 Main clauses always have a finite verb and usually a subject.
- 2 All positions except that occupied by the finite verb (**v**) may be left vacant.
- 3 The subject usually occupies positions 1 (**F**) or 3 (**n**).
- 4 The front position (**F**) is always occupied in statements and **hv**- questions, but is vacant in yes/no questions.



5 Only one clause element can usually occupy the front position (**F**) at any time.

6 There may be more than one clausal adverbial (**a**), non-finite verb (**V**), object, complement (**N**) or other adverbial (**A**).

#### 140 LINK POSITION

The link position (**k**) is an additional position necessary before the front position (**F**) in order to accommodate conjunctions:

	<i>k</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Han kommer,	men	han	bliver	–	ikke	–	–	længe.
(He is coming, but he won't stay long.)								
Venter du,	eller	–	går	du	–	–	–	nu?
(Are you waiting or are you going now?)								

#### 141 EXTRA POSITIONS

The extra positions (**X<sub>1</sub>**, **X<sub>2</sub>**) are additional positions necessary both before the **F**-position and after the **A**-position to accommodate elements of various kinds outside the clause. These elements often duplicate elements within the clause proper.

	<i>X<sub>1</sub></i>	<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>X<sub>2</sub></i>
1	Tom,	han	er	–	jo	–	syg		i dag.
2	Paris,	det	er	–	vel nok	–	en dejlig by!		
3	I Esbjerg,	der	vil	jeg	gerne	bo.			
4	Da vi kom hjem,	så	lavede	vi	–	–	en kop kaffe.		
5		Det	er	–	ikke	–	sandt	–	at tiden læger alle sår.
6		Det	er	–	–	–	sjovt	–	at spille tennis.

*Translations:* 1 Tom, he's ill today. 2 Paris, that's really a lovely city! 3 In Esbjerg, I would like to live there. 4 When we got home, (then) we made a cup of coffee. 5 It's not true that time heals all wounds. 6 It's fun playing tennis.

If there is also a link position (**k**), the order is:

<b>k</b>	<b>X<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>F</b> , etc.
men	Svend,	han er morsom...
(but Svend, he's amusing...)		

## 142

## REAL SUBJECT AND FORMAL SUBJECT

The subject may be:

- |                           |   |   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| • a noun (phrase):        | <b>Drengen elsker rejer.</b><br><b>Karen star på ski.</b><br><b>Den grimme ælling kom ikke hjem igen.</b> | The boy loves prawns.<br>Karen is skiing.<br>The ugly duckling did not come home again. |
| • a pronoun:              | <b>Han skriver et brev.</b>   | He's writing a letter.  |
| • an adjective:           | <b>Rødt er da smukt.</b>  | Red is beautiful, isn't it?   |
| • an infinitive (phrase): | <b>At lyve er slemt.</b><br><b>At flyve til Billund er meget billigt.</b>                                 | Lying is bad.<br>Flying to Billund is very cheap.                                       |
| • a subordinate clause:   | <b>At vi tabte kampen er forståeligt.</b>   | That we lost the match is understandable.   |

The formal subject (FS) **der** must be inserted when there is a postponed or real subject (RS) that is a noun (phrase):

**Der (FS) sidder en politibetjent (RS) i dagligstuen.**  
There's a policeman sitting in the living room.  
(Cf. **En politibetjent sidder i dagligstuen.**)

If the real subject is an infinitive (phrase), then the formal subject used is **det**:

**Det (FS) er svært at lære dansk (RS).**  
It's difficult to learn Danish.

Similarly, formal subjects may be used in questions:

**Sidder der en politibetjent...?**

**Er det svært at lære dansk?**

## 143

## FINITE VERB

The finite verb is the verb which carries the tense, i.e. which indicates present or past time. The finite forms are, therefore, the simple present and past, and the imperative and subjunctive forms.

<b>Han løber hurtigt.</b>	He runs fast.
<b>Han løb hurtigt.</b>	He ran fast.
<b>Løb hurtigere!</b>	Run faster!
<b>Formanden længe leve!</b>	Three cheers for the chairman!

In two-verb constructions the finite verb is often an auxiliary verb:

<b>Han har læst tre romaner i dag.</b>	He has read three novels today.
<b>Han kan læse meget hurtigt.</b>	He can read very quickly.

**144**  
NON-FINITE VERB

Non-finite verb forms usually occur only together with a finite verb (143). The non-finite forms are the infinitive, present participle and past participle.

<b>Han kan løbe hurtigt.</b>	He can run fast.
<b>Han kom løbende ned ad gaden.</b>	He came running down the street.
<b>Han har løbet hele vejen.</b>	He has run the whole way.

**145**  
CLAUSAL ADVERBIAL

1 The clausal adverbial usually modifies the sense of the clause as a whole. It is often a simple adverb (see also 107,151):

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>etc.</i>	
Vi	rejser	–	aldrig	til Danmark om sommeren.	never
			altid		always
			gerne		willingly
			ikke		not
			jo		of course
			ofte		often

Cf. the comparable word order in the English main clause:

We	<b>(a)</b> never	<b>(v)</b> go	to Denmark in the summer.
----	---------------------	------------------	---------------------------

2 Notice the relative order when there are several clausal adverbials:

(a) Short modal adverbs:	<b>da, jo, nok, nu, vel</b>
(b) Short pronominal and conjunctive adverbs:	<b>altså, derfor, dog</b>
(c) Longer modal adverbs:	<b>egentlig, muligvis</b>
(d) Negations:	<b>aldrig, ikke</b>

**De har nu (1) altså (2) egentlig (3) aldrig (4) været i København.**

(So in fact they have never been to Copenhagen, you know.)

*Lit.* They have you know so in fact never been in Copenhagen.)

**146**  
OTHER ADVERBIALS

Other adverbials comprise expressions of manner, place, time, condition, cause, etc. They are sometimes called MPT-adverbials for this reason, and often consist of a prepositional phrase or of a subordinate clause:

Vi rejser *med toget*.

*A-manner*

(We're going by train...to Århus...on Thursday.)

Vi rejser *til Århus*.

*A-place*

Vi rejser *på torsdag*.

*A-time*

Vi kommer *hvis vi får tid*.

*A-condition*

(We'll come if we have time.)

Vi går nu *fordi vi har travlt*.

*A-cause*

(We'll go now because we're in a hurry.)

Notice that the relative order of other adverbials is usually (but not always):

Vi rejser med toget (manner) til Århus (place) på torsdag (time) hvis vi får tid (condition).

Some simple adverbs also function as other adverbials: **vi gik bort/ned/ud**. These usually come at the end of the clause. The stressed verb particle also occupies the final adverbial (**A**) position. See also compound verbs, **106**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Jeg	skal	–	jo	klæde	børnene	'på .
(I have to dress the children, you know.)						
Vi	måtte	–	–	skrive	det hele	'ned .
(We had to write it all down.)						

## 147

### OBJECTS AND COMPLEMENTS

Transitive verbs (**103**) take a direct object:

Niels spiser en kage.

Niels is eating a cake.

Intransitive verbs (**103**) take no object:

Niels sidder i sofaen.

Niels is sitting on the sofa.

The direct object (DO)—which goes in the object (**N**) position—may comprise:

- a noun (phrase):  
Hun har stjålet *hans bil*.  
She has stolen his car.
- a pronoun:  
Anna har hjulpet *ham*.  
Anna has helped him.
- a subordinate clause:  
Jeg ved *at han er der*.  
I know he's there.

For pronouns see also light elements, **150**.

Ditransitive verbs take both a direct and an indirect object (see 103). The indirect object (IO) is usually a person or thing for whose sake an action is undertaken:

<b>Jeg gav</b>	<b>Jens</b>	<b>min bog.</b>	<b>Jeg gav</b>	<b>min bog</b>	<b>til Jens.</b>
	IO	DO		DO	IO
I gave Jens my book.			I gave my book to Jens.		

Notice that the order of the objects is usually as in English, i.e. a preposition-less object precedes an object with a preposition:

<b>Han lånte</b>	<b>bogen</b>	<b>til Niels.</b>
	-prep	+prep
(He lent the book to Niels.)		

If neither object has a preposition, the indirect object precedes the direct object:

<b>Han lånte</b>	<b>Niels</b>	<b>bogen.</b>
	IO	DO
(He lent Niels the book.)		

The predicative complement occupies the same position as the object (**N**), and is found in sentences with copula verbs like: **blive, gøre...til..., hedde, kaldes, se...ud, synes, virke, være**. The complement agrees with the subject or object.

<b>Ole og Marie er studerende.</b>	(=Subject complement)
Ole and Marie are students.	
<b>De virker meget intelligente.</b>	
They seem very intelligent.	

When there is an object, the complement follows it and relates to it:

<b>Det gjorde ham glad.</b>	(=Object complement)
That made him happy.	
<b>De kaldte deres hund Bob.</b>	
They called their dog Bob.	

## 148 PASSIVE AGENT

See passive, 105. The passive agent usually occupies the final (other) adverbial position (**A**), and will normally come immediately before any other adverbial expression:

<b>F</b>	<b>v</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>De gamle</b>	<b>bør</b>	–	<b>bestemt</b>	<b>hjælpes</b>	–	<b>af kommunen.</b>
(Old people should certainly be helped by the local authority.)						

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Peter	blev	–	–	klippet	–	af sin kone i går.

(Peter had his hair cut by his wife yesterday.)

### 149 TOPICALISATION

1 The subject most frequently occupies the front position (**F**), but it may be replaced by moving to the front almost any other clause element. This is often done when one wishes to emphasise a particular clause element, or for stylistic reasons, and is known as topicalisation. When the subject is not in the **F**-position, it follows the finite verb (**n**-position).

	<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>Basic clause:</i>	Han	vil	–	alligevel	sælge	huset	i år.
(He'll sell the house this year, anyway.)							
1 ( <b>A</b> to <b>F</b> ):	I år	vil	han	alligevel	sælge	huset.	←
2 ( <b>N</b> to <b>F</b> ):	Huset	vil	han	alligevel	sælge	←	i år.
3 ( <b>a</b> to <b>F</b> ):	Alligevel	vil	han	←	sælge	huset	i år.

When the non-finite verb is moved to **F**, the elements governed by it will normally also be moved with it:

	<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
4 ( <b>V+N</b> to <b>F</b> ):	Sælge huset	vil	han	alligevel	←	←	i år.
5 ( <b>V+N+A</b> to <b>F</b> ):	Sælge huset i år	vil	han	alligevel.	←	←	←

Topicalisation of adverbials which usually occupy the other adverbial position (**A**), especially of time and place (including **her**, **der**), is by far the most frequent type:

<b>Vi tog til Møn i foråret.</b>	→	<b>I foråret tog vi til Møn.</b>
We went to Møn last spring.	→	Last spring we went to Møn.
<b>Hans drak Guinness i Dublin.</b>	→	<b>I Dublin drak Hans Guinness.</b>
Hans drank Guinness in Dublin.	→	In Dublin Hans drank Guinness.
<b>Hun har aldrig været her/der.</b>	→	<b>Her/Der har hun aldrig været.</b>
She has never been here/there.		She has never been here/there.

In the **F**-position it is common to find a subordinate clause which would otherwise be in the other adverbial position:

<b>Vi tog til Møn da vi kom hjem fra Frankrig.</b>
We went to Møn when we got back from France.
→ <b>Da vi kom hjem fra Frankrig, tog vi til Møn.</b>
When we got back from France we went to Møn.

Proper nouns and object pronouns are also commonly topicalised:

**Ulla har vi ikke set længe.**

We haven't seen Ulla for a long time.

**Hende har vi ikke set længe.**

We haven't seen her for a long time.

It is possible to topicalise direct speech:

**'Fy dog!' sagde han.**

'Shame on you!' he said.

The subject complement may also occasionally be topicalised:

**Høflig har han aldrig været!**

He's never been polite!

2 Natural topics:

Most natural topics are unstressed and represent familiar information or are used to link sentences together:

**Vi trængte til en ferie, så i september kørte vi til Jylland. Der traf vi nogle gamle venner. De ejer en stor villa. Den har ti værelser. Vi boede der i 14 dage. Så måtte vi desværre vende hjem igen.**

We needed a holiday, so in September we drove to Jutland. There we met some old friends. They own a large house. It has ten rooms. We stayed there for a fortnight. Then unfortunately we had to come home again.

3 Emphatic topics:

These are rarer and often represent new information. The following emphatic topics are either stylistically marked or used for contrast:

**Rart var det nu ikke!**

But it wasn't very nice!

**En avis købte vi også.**

A newspaper we bought too.

**Det kan jeg ikke tro!**

That I cannot believe!

**Løbe efter piger kan han, men studere vil han ikke.**

Run after girls, that he can do, but study he will not.

## 150

### LIGHT ELEMENTS

'Light' elements are short, unstressed clause elements, e.g. object pronouns and reflexive pronouns. In clauses without a non-finite verb (i.e. the **V**-position is empty), they always move leftwards into the subject position (**n**) after the finite verb. An indirect object (**IO**) with no preposition will nevertheless always precede the direct object (**DO**).

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Jeg	kender	ham (light DO)	ikke.			
Jeg	har	–	aldrig	kendt	ham.	
Jeg	kender	–	ikke		ham.	

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
					(stressed DO)	
Hun	<b>gav</b>	<b>mig</b> (light DO)	<b>ikke</b>	–	<b>bogen.</b>	
Hun	<b>har</b>	–	–	<b>givet</b>	<b>mig bogen.</b> (IO+DO)	
Hun	<b>gav</b>	<b>mig den</b> (light IO+DO)	<b>ikke.</b>			
Hun	<b>gav</b>	–	<b>ikke</b>	–	<b>mig den.</b> (stressed IO)	
Henrik	<b>vasker</b>	<b>sig</b>	<b>ikke.</b>			
Henrik	<b>har</b>	–	<b>ikke</b>	<b>vasket</b>	<b>sig</b>	<b>i dag.</b>

*Translations:* I don't know him./I have never known him./I don't know *him*. She didn't give me the book./She has given me the book./She didn't give me it./She didn't give *me* it. Henrik doesn't wash./Henrik hasn't washed today.

Similarly, the adverbs **her** 'here' and **der** 'there' move leftwards to occupy the **n**-position when they are unstressed and the **V**-position is vacant:

**Hun var her/der ikke.** (=unstressed)  
**Hun var ikke her/der.** (=stressed)

But:

**Hun har ikke været her/der.**

She has not been here/there.

### 151

#### POSITION OF **IKKE** AND NEGATIVE ELEMENTS

The position of **ikke** 'not' and other negative adverbials, e.g. **aldrig** 'never', etc., can vary. When they negate the entire clause they occupy the clausal adverbial **a**-position immediately after the finite verb or subject (see 139ff):

**Peter kommer ikke i dag. I dag kommer Peter ikke. I dag er Peter ikke kommet. Peter vil aldrig gøre det.**

Peter isn't coming today. Today Peter isn't coming. Today Peter hasn't come. Peter will never do it.

Occasionally, for contrast, the negative may come between the finite verb and the subject in inverted statements:

**I dag kommer ikke kun Peter, men også hans familie.**

Today it's not only *Peter* who is coming but also his family.

Pronominal or noun phrase objects containing a negation are also attracted to the **a**-position:



**Jeg havde ikke gjort noget.**  
I hadn't done anything.

But:

**Jeg havde ingenting gjort.**

**Katten har ikke fået noget mad i dag.**  
The cat hasn't had any food today.

But:

**Katten har ingen mad fået i dag.**

**Preben har ikke set noget.**  
Preben hasn't seen anything.

But:

**Preben har intet set.**

For the position of negative elements in subordinate clauses, see [156](#).

## 152

### PASSIVE TRANSFORMATION

By transforming the active verb into a passive form, some of the other elements change position within the clause (see [105](#)):

<i>Active verb</i>	<b>Andersen</b> (=subject) <b>ejer hele huset</b> (=object). Andersen owns the whole house.
<i>Passive verb</i>	<b>Hele huset</b> (=subject) <b>ejes af Andersen</b> (=Prep.Comp.). The whole house is owned by Andersen.

Passive transformation can be used in both main or subordinate clauses. For the position of elements in the passive sentence, see [148](#).

## 153

### EXISTENTIAL SENTENCES

If we do not wish to introduce a subject at the beginning of a clause, we can postpone it (i.e. move it rightwards), but must then fill the front position (**F**) with a formal subject (place-holder subject); the postponed subject is known as the real subject (cf. [142](#)):

**En betjent** sidder inde i køkkenet.                      →    **Der** sidder **en betjent** inde i køkkenet.

*Subject*

A policeman is sitting in the kitchen.

**At holde op med at ryge er svært.***Subject*

Stopping smoking is hard.

*Formal subject*

There's a policeman sitting in the kitchen.

→ **Det er svært at holde op med at ryge.***FS*

It's hard to stop smoking.

*Real subject**RS*

(1) Type 1: When the real subject is an indefinite noun phrase (like **en betjent**), then it occupies the **N**-position:

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Der	findes	–	–	–	ingen bjerge	i Danmark.
Der	sidder	–	ofte	–	en betjent	inde i køkkenet.
–	Sidder	der	ofte	–	en betjent	inde i køkkenet?

*Translations:* There are no mountains in Denmark. There's often a policeman sitting in the kitchen. Is there often a policeman sitting in the kitchen?

The verb in Danish existential sentences is always intransitive, and usually expresses:

•	existence:	<b>findes</b>
•	non-existence:	<b>mangle, savne</b>
•	location:	<b>ligge, sidde, stå, være</b>
•	motion:	<b>gå, komme</b>

In English the only corresponding constructions are: 'there is (are) -ing'. Note that in this case the formal subject is **der**='there'.

(2) Type 2: When the real subject is an infinitive phrase (like **at holde op med at ryge**), then it occupies the **X<sub>2</sub>** position (see also 141f, 156):

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>X<sub>2</sub></i>
Det	er	–	–	–	dejligt	–	at svømme.
Det	er	–	altid	–	svært	–	at være en god taber.

*Translations:* It's lovely to swim. It's always hard to be a good loser.

Note that in this case the formal subject is **det**='it'.

## 154

## SUBORDINATE CLAUSE AS AN ELEMENT IN THE MAIN CLAUSE

1 Subordinate clauses usually constitute the subject, object or other adverbial in a main clause sentence. As such they may occupy several different positions:

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>X<sub>2</sub></i>
<i>Subject clause:</i>							
<b>At du er rask,</b>	<b>glæder</b>	<b>mig</b>	–	–	–	<b>meget.</b>	

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>X</i> <sub>2</sub>
<b>Det</b>	glæder	mig	–	–	–	meget	<i>at du er rask .</i>
<i>Object clause:</i>							
<b>Han</b>	sagde	–	ikke	–	–	i går	<i>at han skal giftes på lørdag .</i>
<i>At han skal giftes på lørdag</i>	sagde	han	ikke	–	–	i går.	
<i>Adverbial clause:</i>							
<b>Vi</b>	går	–	–	–	–	når han kommer .	
<i>Når han kommer,</i>	går	vi.					

*Translations:* That you are well makes me very glad. I am very glad that you are well. He didn't say yesterday that he was getting married on Saturday. That he was getting married on Saturday he did not say yesterday. We will go when he comes. When he comes we will go.

Notice that:

- Subject and object clauses occupy the **F** or **X**<sub>2</sub> positions.
- Most adverbial clauses (time, condition, cause) occupy the **F** or **A** positions.
- Some adverbial clauses (intention, result) can only occupy the **A** position:

<i>F</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
<b>Vi</b>	må	–	–	støtte	ham	<i>for at han ikke skal falde .</i>
<b>Jeg</b>	blev	–	–	–	så vred	<i>at jeg straks gik hjem .</i>

*Translations:* We have to support him so that he doesn't fall. I got so angry that I went home right away.  
2 A relative clause usually functions as an attribute to the correlative, usually a noun:

**Han kiggede på de piger som sad på græsset .**

He looked at the girls who were sitting on the grass.

**Den film (som) vi så i går, var fantastisk.**

The film we saw yesterday was fantastic.

**Den dreng der var uartig, fik ikke lov at komme med til festen.**

The boy who was naughty was not allowed to go to the party.

## 155

MAIN CLAUSE STRUCTURE—AN EXTENDED POSITIONAL SCHEMA WITH  
EXAMPLES

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
	k	X <sub>1</sub>	F	v	n	a	V	N	A	X <sub>2</sub>
1		Han	havde	—	ikke	pakket	kufferte	n	i morges.	
2		I morges	havde	han	ikke	pakket	kufferte	n.		
3		Vi	giver	—	—	—	Ole en	i aften.		
4		Siden	blev	de	desværre	—	syge.			
5		Det	gjorde	—	—	—	ham	glad.		
6		Der	er	—	allerede	kommet	to	betjente.		
7	Og	—	det	er	—	da	—	så sjovt	—	at spille tennis.
8		Henrik	ville	—	jo altid	kysse	os,	—		Marie og mig.
9	men Niels,	han	er	—	nu ikke	—	så tosset.			
10		Bilen	blev	—	—	repareret	—	i går.		
11		Jeg	blev	—	—	hentet	—	af Lise		på banegården i går.
12		Katten	er	—	—	løbet	—	bort.		
13		Jeg	skal	—	jo	klæde	børnene	på.		
14		Hun	kan	—	—	læse	—	meget hurtigt.		
15		I går	kedede	han sig	ikke.					
16		De	har	—	aldrig	giftet	sig.			
17		Vi	kender	ham	ikke.					
18		Sælge huset	vil	han	alligevel ikke	—	—	i år.		
19			Kom!							

*Translations:* 1 He had not packed the case this morning. 2 This morning he had not packed his case. 3 We are giving Ole a present this evening. 4 Then unfortunately they became ill. 5 It made him happy. 6 Two policemen have already come. 7 And it's such fun of course playing tennis. 8 Henrik always wanted to kiss us, you know, Marie and me. 9 But Niels, he's not that stupid, as a matter of fact. 10 The car was repaired yesterday. 11 I was met by Lise at the railway station yesterday. 12 The cat has run away.

13 I have to dress the children, you know. 14 She can read very quickly. 15 Yesterday he wasn't bored. 16 They have never got married. 17 We don't know him. 18 He won't sell the house this year, anyway. 19 Come!

*KEY to the above schema:***k**=link position (conjunction)**X<sub>1</sub>**=extra position**F**=front position**v**=finite verb**n**=nominals**a**=clausal adverb(ial)**V**=non-finite verb**N**=nominals**A**=other adverbial**X<sub>2</sub>**=extra position*For details see paragraph:***140****141****139, 153, 154****143****139, 150****145, 151****144****147, 153, 154****146, 148****141, 154****156****SUBORDINATE CLAUSE STRUCTURE**

Subordinate clauses (which, as we have seen above, may simply be considered as elements in main clauses) also possess an internal structure of their own which differs from that of main clauses as follows:

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Conjunctio n</i>	<i>Subj.</i>	<i>Clausal adverbial</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Non-finite verb</i>	<i>Object/ comp.</i>	<i>Other adverbial</i>	
	<b>k</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>v</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	
<b>Vi rejser</b>	<b>når</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>kommer.</b>				
<b>Vi spurgte</b>	<b>om</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>havde</b>	<b>pakket</b>	<b>kufferten.</b>		
–	<b>Eftersom</b>	<b>de</b>	<b>ikke</b>	<b>havde</b>	<b>sagt</b>	<b>et ord,</b>	–	<b>vidste vi intet.</b>
<b>Hun sagde</b>	<b>(at)</b>	<b>det</b>	<b>ikke</b>	<b>var</b>	–	<b>morsomt</b>	<b>længere.</b>	

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<i>Context</i>	<i>Conjunctio</i>	<i>Subj.</i>	<i>Clausal</i>	<i>Finite verb</i>	<i>Non-finite</i>	<i>Object/</i>	<i>Other</i>	
	<i>n</i>		<i>adverbial</i>		<i>verb</i>	<i>comp.</i>	<i>adverbial</i>	
	<b>k</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>a</b>	<b>v</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	
Hvis vi er stille,	og hvis	vi	ikke	er	–	uartige,	–	må vi se TV i aften.

*Translations:* We will leave when he comes. We asked whether he had packed the case. As they hadn't said a word we knew nothing. She said it wasn't funny any more. If we're quiet and we're not naughty, we'll be allowed to watch TV tonight.

Notice the following characteristics of the subordinate clause:

1 There is no **F**-position in the subordinate clause; the order is always: conjunction—subject—clausal adverbial—finite verb, i.e.:

- The clause always begins with a subordinating conjunction or other subordinator, except for certain uses of **at** and **som** (see 75–76, 156.3).
- The clausal adverbial comes immediately before the finite verb.
- The word order is straight, i.e. the subject comes before the finite verb.

2 The subject position (**n**) is always occupied. If there is both a formal and a real subject, the latter is postponed to the object position (**N**).

3 The conjunction **at** (that) may sometimes be omitted:

**Frederik lovede (at) han ikke ville sige noget.**

Frederik promised (that) he wouldn't say anything.

**Jeg håber (at) jeg snart kan træffe dig igen.**

I hope (that) I can meet you again soon.

4 The guidelines and rules concerning main clause word order outlined earlier apply equally to subordinate clauses, with the exception of the following:

(a) 'Light' or unstressed pronouns, whether as direct or indirect objects, and **her** and **der**, do not move leftwards to the **n**-position but remain in the **N**-position:

**...selvom han ikke gav mig det.**

...although he didn't give me it.

**...skønt jeg aldrig er der.**

...even though I'm never there.

(b) There is no initial extra position in subordinate clauses; any other elements will appear at the end of the clause in the same way as in main clauses:

**...fordi han var enormt beruset, den fyr.**

...because he was extremely drunk, that chap.

(c) The subject will appear first in most subordinate clauses, i.e. the topicalisation of other elements cannot normally happen (but see 159).

(d) The **k**-position is used here to indicate a subordinating conjunction; should there also be a coordinating conjunction introducing the subordinate clause, this is placed in the same position immediately preceding the subordinating conjunction, e.g.:..., **og fordi**...(..., and because...).

## 157

## INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

An independent clause is a subordinate clause which stands alone as a sentence and does not therefore form part of a larger sentence. It is usually an exclamation or a wish, and has the same structure as other subordinate clauses:

<i>k</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>V</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>A</i>
Hvis	du	bare	vidste	–	det hele!	
(If you only knew everything!)						
At	I	ikke	bliver	–	trætte!	
(That you don't get tired!)						

Clauses beginning with the words **bare, blot, gid, mon** have subordinate clause word order:

**Gid hun ikke var så syg!**

If only she weren't so ill!

**Mon han nogensinde finder sig en kone?**

I wonder if he'll ever find a wife.

## 158

## CLEFT SENTENCES

In order to emphasise an element together with the action of the verb, that element (X) may be extracted from the sentence and inserted into the construction:

**Det er/var X som/der...**

It is/was X who/that...

The remainder of the original sentence is downgraded and relegated to a subordinate clause added onto the end. Notice that **der** and **som** are used to refer to a non-adverbial noun phrase or pronoun, and **at** (unless omitted) is used to refer to a time or place adverbial:

- Cf.
- Klaus sendte mig en bog i sidste uge.**  
Klaus sent me a book last week.
  - **Det var en bog (som) Klaus sendte mig i sidste uge.**  
It was a book that Klaus...
  - **Det var Klaus der sendte mig en bog i sidste uge.**  
It was Klaus who...
  - **Det var i sidste uge (at) Klaus sendte mig en bog.**  
It was last week that Klaus...

The cleft sentence is also very common in questions:

**Var det oppositionslederen der kritiserede regeringen?**

Was it the leader of the opposition who criticised the government?

(Cf. **Kritiserede oppositionslederen regeringen?**)

**Er det dig der bestemmer her?**

Is it you who decides here?

**Er det øl han drikker?**

Is it beer he drinks?

### 159

#### THREE TYPES OF SUBORDINATE CLAUSE WITH MAIN CLAUSE STRUCTURE

These are all exceptions, in different ways, to **156** above, in that the subordinate clause forms part of a sentence (cf. **154**) but has a word order structure that can be the same as that of the main clause (see **139,155**).

1 **At**-clauses with a 'topic':

Subordinate clauses which are reported speech usually have subordinate clause word order, yet in spoken and informal written language it is increasingly common for an element to follow the conjunction as a kind of topic. When a non-subject comes immediately after the conjunction **at**, the finite verb and subject are inverted (i.e. main clause word order):

**Frederik sagde, at *i går* var hele familien i Tivoli.**

Frederik said that yesterday the whole family went to Tivoli.

2 **At**-clauses with finite verb—clausal adverb order: In some cases the clausal adverbial adopts the same position as in the main clause, i.e. after the finite verb, rather than its usual subordinate clause position before the finite verb:

**Frederik sagde, at han *skulle ikke* på arbejde i dag.**

Frederik said that he wasn't going to work today.

This is only found in spoken Danish and should never be written. Write:

**Frederik sagde, at han *ikke skulle* på arbejde i dag.**

An explanation for this order is that the **at**-clause is regarded as a statement in direct speech, i.e. as a main clause, cf.:

**Frederik sagde: 'Jeg *s kal ikke* på arbejde i dag.'**

Frederik said: 'I'm not going to work today.'

The conjunction **at** functions therefore in almost the same way as a colon.

3 Conditional clauses with yes/no question order:

Conditional clauses are usually introduced by **hvis**:



**Hvis du ikke skriver til mor, bliver hun ked af det.**

If you don't write to Mother she'll feel sad.

But conditional clauses may have no subordinating conjunction, and rely on inverted word order (finite verb—subject) to indicate condition:

***Skriver du ikke til mor, bliver hun ked af det.*** (Conditional)

Cf. ***Skriver du ikke til mor?*** (Yes/no question)

Clauses of this type also occur in English:

Had I known you were arriving, I would have waited.

Were you to agree to this, it would be disastrous.

## 160

### MAJOR WORD ORDER AND CLAUSE STRUCTURE PROBLEMS—SUMMARY

A number of aspects of word order are similar in Danish and English. This summary concentrates only on some of the major differences.

<b>Key:</b>	<b>S</b>	=	subject
	<b>O</b>	=	object
	<b>V</b>	=	finite verb
	<b>Advl</b>	=	clausal adverbial
	<b>T</b>	=	clause element (non-subject) which may come first in the clause

#### 1 Main clause—inversion ( 138,149,155)

*Danish:*            *English:*

S–V–T            S–V–T

**Han sover nu.** He is asleep now.    In Danish non-subjects often come first in the main clause, and this causes inversion of subject and finite verb. In English the order is always subject-verb.

T–V–S            T–S–V

**Nu sover han.** Now he is asleep.

2 Main clause—adverb(ial)s (e.g. **ikke, aldrig**) (145,151,155)

S-V-Advl

S-Advl-V

**De leger aldrig.** They never play. In main clauses in Danish the clausal adverbial (adverb) usually comes immediately after the finite verb. In English it usually comes immediately before the finite verb.

3 Subordinate clause—adverb(ial)s (e.g. **ikke, aldrig**) (156,159)

S-Advl-V

S-V-Advl

**De sagde at de ikke havde skrevet.** They said that they had not written. In subordinate clauses in Danish the clausal adverbial (adverb) always comes immediately before the finite verb. In English the order varies.

S-Advl-V

**De ved at jeg aldrig drikker.** They know that I never drink.

Remember: subject—**ikke**—verb in Danish.

## 4 Objects, etc., with and without stress (150)

S-V-Advl-O

S-V-Advl-O

**Jeg kender ikke ham.** I don't know *him*. When object pronouns lose their stress in Danish they move left in the sentence. In English stress is used.

S-V-O-Advl

**Jeg kender ham ikke.** I don't know him.



# 12 WORD FORMATION

## 161 INTRODUCTION

The vocabulary of Danish is constantly being altered by five main processes:

1 Borrowing from other languages:

English 'a strike' → **en strejke** strike

2 Compounding of existing stems:

**en cykel+en hjelm** → **en cykelhjelm** cycle helmet

3 Affixation:

**u-+ven** → **uven** (*lit.* 'un-friend') enemy

4 Abbreviation:

**præventiv-pille** → **p-pille** contraceptive pill

5 Change of form, meaning or word class:

**et veto** (noun) → **at vetoe** (verb)

Borrowing from other languages normally involves the eventual assimilation of a loanword into the Danish system of orthography, pronunciation and inflexion.

## 162 COMPOUNDING

1 The first element of a compound may be a noun, adjective, verb, pronoun, numeral, adverb, preposition or word group, while the second element is usually a noun, adjective or verb:

Noun+noun: **sommer | ferie** (summer holiday)  
Noun+verb: **kæde | ryge** (chain smoke)

Noun+adjective:	<b>kul   sort</b>	(black as coal)
Verb+noun:	<b>skrive   bord</b>	(writing desk)
Verb+adjective:	<b>køre   klar</b>	(ready to drive away)
Verb+verb:	<b>øse   regne</b>	(rain cats and dogs)

For separable and inseparable compound verbs see [106](#).

2 Compound nouns may be formed by three main methods:

- noun+noun                      **pige | skole**                      (girls' school)
- noun+link **-e**+noun        **jul | e | dag**                      (Christmas Day)
- noun+link **-s**+noun        **forsikring | s | præmie**        (insurance premium)

Notice that the second element in compounds determines the gender and inflexion of the compound:

**en skole+et køkken**→**et skole | køkken**, a school kitchen

Whether or not **-s** is used as a link between nouns depends to some extent on the form of the elements (first element=FE in what follows).

An **s**- link is usual in nouns that:

- have an FE ending in **-dom**, **-else**, **-hed**, **-(n)ing**, **-sel**, **-skab**:

**kristendom | s | undervisning**, **ledelse | s | struktur**, **sundhed | s | farlig**, **landing | s | bane**, **fødsel | s | kontrol**, **redskab | s | skur**

- have an FE ending in one of the borrowed Romance suffixes **-ion**, **-tion**, **-tet**, **-um**:

**opinion | s | måling**, **navigation | s | skole**, **pietet | s | følelse**, **petroleum | s | kamin**

- have an FE which is itself a compound:

**rød | vin | s | glas**  
**skrive | bord | s | skuffe**

cf. **vin | glas**  
cf. **bord | skuffe**

An **e**- link is found in some compound nouns which derives from either an original genitive (**natt | e | leje**) or a plural (**engl | e | skare**), but it also occurs in the following cases:

- when the FE ends in a consonant and the SE (second element) begins with a consonant:

**ost | e | mad**, **sgn | e | præst**

- when the FE is a word for a living being and ends in the suffix **-ing**:

**vikings | e | flåde**, **ynglings | e | alder**

3 First element forms:

(a) When they are FE, nouns are usually found in their singular (uninflected) form: **bil | sæde**.

*Exceptions:* **blomster | bed, børne | have**.

(b) When they are FE, adjectives are found in their basic form: **gråt vejr → grå | vejr**.

*Exceptions:* **nyt | år, små | børn**.

(c) When they are FE, verbs are found in their infinitive form: **skrive | maskine, spille mand**.

*Exceptions:* Verb stems occasionally form the FE: **brus | hane, byg | mester**.

### 163 AFFIXATION

1 Affixation involves adding a prefix to the beginning or a suffix to the end of a stem. Whilst prefixes do not alter the word class or inflexion of the stem, suffixes are often employed precisely to form words of a different class:

<i>Prefix</i>			
<b>u-</b> <i>negative prefix</i>	+	<b>ven</b> <i>noun</i> friend	→ <b>uven</b> <i>noun</i> enemy

#### *Suffix*

<b>venlig</b> <i>adjective</i> friendly	+	<b>-hed</b> <i>noun suffix</i>	→	<b>venlighed</b> <i>noun</i> friendliness
<b>tank</b> <i>noun</i> tank	+	<b>-e</b> <i>verb suffix</i>	→	<b>tanke</b> <i>verb</i> to fill up the tank

2 The same basic meaning may be expressed by several different prefixes, e.g. the words **dis harmoni**, **ikke -vold**, **in tolerant**, **non konformisme** and **u lykkelig** all have negative prefixes. The same is true of some suffixes: **udvandrere**, **emigrant**, **inspektør** and **inspektør** all have suffixes meaning 'a person carrying out a specific task'. Generally speaking, prefixes and suffixes are much vaguer in meaning than the stems they modify.

3 Productive and non-productive affixes:

Productive affixes are those still being used to form derivatives whose meaning can be predicted from the form:

- agtig**=like, as in: **friskfyragtig**, sparky, like Jack the Lad
- bar**=possible to, as in: **bærbar**, possible to carry, portable

## 4 Prefixes—the following is a list of some frequent examples.

<i>Group/prefix</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Translation</i>
<i>Negative and pejorative</i>			
<b>u-</b>	not, opposite of, bad	<b>ukonventionel, uven</b>	unconventional, enemy
		<b>uvane</b>	bad habit
<b>il-</b>	not, opposite of	<b>illegal</b>	illegal
<b>im-</b>	not, opposite of	<b>immobil</b>	immobile
<b>in-</b>	not, opposite of	<b>intolerant</b>	intolerant
<b>ir-</b>	not, opposite of	<b>irrelevant</b>	irrelevant
<b>non-</b>	not, opposite of	<b>nonkonformisme</b>	non-conformity
<b>mis-</b>	abuse	<b>misbruger</b>	addict
	bad	<b>mislyd</b>	dissonance
<b>van-</b>	wrongly	<b>vanskabt</b>	misshapen
	bad	<b>vanrøgte</b>	neglect
<i>Attitude</i>			
<b>ko-</b>	together with	<b>koordinere</b>	coordinate
<b>kol-</b>	together with	<b>kollaboratør</b>	collaborator
<b>kom-</b>	together with	<b>kompagnon</b>	partner
<b>kon-</b>	together with	<b>kongenial</b>	congenial
<b>kor-</b>	together with	<b>korrespondere</b>	correspond
<b>sam-</b>	together with	<b>samboer</b>	partner, cohabitee
<b>sær-</b>	separate from	<b>særtilfælde</b>	special circumstance
<b>anti-</b>	against	<b>antikommunist</b>	anti-communist
<b>kontra-</b>	against	<b>kontrarevolution</b>	counter-revolution
<b>pro-</b>	favourable towards	<b>provestilig</b>	pro-western
<i>Location or direction</i>			
<b>eks-</b>	from	<b>ekskudere</b>	exclude
<b>trans-</b>	across	<b>transplantation</b>	transplantation
<i>Direction (time or place)</i>			
<b>an-</b>	to, towards	<b>ankomme</b>	arrive
<b>for-</b>	away from	<b>fordrive</b>	expel
<b>und-</b>	away from	<b>undslippe</b>	escape
<b>gen-</b>	back, again	<b>genfinde</b>	rediscover
<b>re-</b>	back, again	<b>reetablere</b>	re-establish
<b>fort-</b>	further	<b>fortsætte</b>	continue
<b>videre-</b>	further	<b>videreuddannelse</b>	further education
<i>Number</i>			
<b>mono-</b>	one	<b>monoteist</b>	monotheist
<b>bi-</b>	two	<b>bilateral</b>	bilateral
<b>tve-</b>	two	<b>tvekamp</b>	duel
<b>pan-</b>	all	<b>panamerikansk</b>	Pan-American
<i>Conversion verb to verb</i>			
<b>an-</b>	transitivising	<b>råbe</b> , call	→ <b>anråbe</b> , shout/hail
<b>be-</b>	transitivising	<b>bo</b> , live	→ <b>bebo</b> , inhabit
<i>Conversion adjective to verb</i>			
<b>be-</b>	make into X	<b>fri</b> , free	→ <b>befri</b> , liberate
<b>for-</b>	make into X	<b>ny</b> , new	→ <b>forny</b> , renew

5 Suffixes—the following is a list of some frequent examples.

<i>Group/suffix</i>	<i>Deriving from</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Translation</i>
<b>NOUN-FORMING</b>				
<i>People</i>				
<b>-ant</b>	V-ere	person	<b>musikant</b>	musician
<b>-ent</b>	V-ere	person	<b>assistent</b>	assistant
<b>-at</b>		person	<b>demokrat</b>	democrat
<b>-er</b>		person	<b>snedker</b>	joiner
<b>-er</b>		agent of an action	<b>bager</b>	baker
<b>-er</b>		nationality	<b>belgier</b>	Belgian
<b>-iner</b>		person	<b>filipiner</b>	Filipino
<b>-ing, -ling, -ning</b>		origin	<b>islænding</b>	Icelander
			<b>ætling</b>	descendant
			<b>flygtning</b>	refugee
<b>-iker</b>	N-ik	occupation	<b>politiker</b>	politician
<b>-ist</b>	V-e, N	occupation, hobby	<b>motionist</b>	jogger
<b>-ør</b>	V-ere	occupation	<b>inspektør</b>	inspector
<i>Feminine</i>				
<b>-inde</b>			<b>værtinde</b>	hostess
<b>-esse</b>	N		<b>prinsesse</b>	princess
<b>-ske</b>	V-e, N-er		<b>plejerske</b>	nurse
<b>-trice</b>	N-ør		<b>direktrice</b>	(female) director
<b>-øse</b>	N-ør, V-ere		<b>massøse</b>	masseuse
<i>Activity</i>				
<b>-ende</b>	V-e		<b>forehavende</b>	project
<b>-else</b>	V-e	activity	<b>følelse</b>	feeling
<b>-(n)ing</b>	V-e	activity	<b>skrivning</b>	writing
	V-e	activity	<b>udvikling</b>	development
<b>-sel</b>	V-e	activity	<b>indførsel</b>	importation
<b>-sion</b>	V-ere	<b>eksplod/ere</b> explode →	<b>eksplosion</b>	explosion
<b>-ition</b>	V-ere	<b>kompon/ere</b> compose →	<b>komposition</b>	composition
<b>-(a)tion</b>	V-ere	<b>inform/ere</b> inform →	<b>information</b>	information
		<b>fung/ere</b> function →	<b>funktion</b>	function
Zero suffix	V-e		<b>duft</b>	fragrance
			<b>sult</b>	hunger
<i>Abstractions</i>				
<b>-ance</b>			<b>elegance</b>	elegance
<b>-ence</b>			<b>kompetence</b>	competence
<b>-ens</b>			<b>frekvens</b>	frequency
<b>-dom</b>	N, A		<b>sygdom</b>	illness
<b>-else</b>	V-e		<b>fristelse</b>	temptation
<b>-ende</b>			<b>velbefindende</b>	well-being
<b>-hed</b>			<b>medlidenhed</b>	compassion
<b>-ing</b>	V-e		<b>afmagring</b>	slimming
<b>-isme</b>			<b>socialisme</b>	socialism
<b>-itet</b>	A		<b>popularitet</b>	popularity
<b>-sel</b>	V-e		<b>glemsel</b>	oblivion
<b>-skab</b>	N, A		<b>ondskab</b>	evil



<i>Group/suffix</i>	<i>Deriving from</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Translation</i>
<b>ADJECTIVE-FORMING</b>				
<i>From verbs</i>				
<b>-abel</b>	V-ere	possible	<b>diskutabel</b>	debatable
<b>-ibel</b>	V-ere	possible	<b>disponibel</b>	disposable
<b>-at</b>	V-ere		<b>separat</b>	separate
<b>-bar</b>	V-e	possible	<b>vaskbar</b>	washable
<b>-et</b>	V-e		<b>nystartet</b>	recently launched
<b>-et</b>	V-ere		<b>indstuderet</b>	rehearsed
<b>-lig</b>	V-e	possible	<b>læselig</b>	readable
<b>-ig</b>	V	inclination	<b>syndig</b>	sinful
<b>-sk</b>	V, A	inclination	<b>indbildsk</b>	conceited
<b>-som</b>	V, A	inclination	<b>arbejdsom</b>	hard-working
<b>-(t)iv</b>	V-ere	inclination	<b>demonstrativ</b>	demonstrative
<i>From nouns</i>				
<b>-agtig</b>	N	characteristic of	<b>barnagtig</b>	childish
<b>-ant</b>	N-ance/-ence		<b>elegant</b>	elegant
<b>-el</b>	N	belonging to	<b>kulturel</b>	cultural
<b>-(e)lig</b>	N	belonging to	<b>kristelig</b>	Christian
<b>-en</b>	N	which have X	<b>ulden</b>	woollen
<b>-ent</b>	N		<b>intelligent</b>	intelligent
<b>-et</b>	N	which have X	<b>enarmet</b>	one-armed
<b>-ig</b>	N	which have X	<b>listig</b>	sly
<b>-(i)sk</b>	N	belonging to	<b>britisk</b>	British
			<b>hollandsk</b>	Dutch
<b>-iv</b>	N-tion/-sion		<b>aktiv</b>	active
<b>-mæssig</b>	N	in accordance with	<b>kontraktmæssig</b>	contractual
<b>-ær</b>	N		<b>litterær</b>	literary
<b>-øs</b>	N		<b>nervøs</b>	nervous
<i>From adjectives</i>				
<b>-agtig</b>	A	like	<b>blødagtig</b>	soft
<b>-artet</b>	A	having the property of	<b>godartet</b>	benign
<b>VERB-FORMING</b>				
<i>From nouns</i>				
<b>-e/-ere</b>	N	add/provide with	<b>adressere,</b> <b>farve</b>	address, colour
	N	remove	<b>affugte,</b> <b>støvsuge</b>	dehumidify, hoover
	N	place in	<b>logere</b>	lodge
	N	do	<b>cykle, vaske</b>	cycle, wash
	N	be, act as (with prefix)	<b>kritisere</b> <b>vikariere</b>	criticise stand in
			<b>forklare</b> <b>amerikanisere</b>	explain Americanise
<i>From adjectives</i>				
<b>-e</b>	N, A	make, change into (with prefix) (with prefix)	<b>varme, tørre</b> <b>bemyndige</b>	heat, dry authorise
<b>-ne</b>	A	become X	<b>forbitre</b> <b>gulne, mørkne</b>	embitter turn yellow, darken

Non-productive affixes are those no longer used to form derivatives:

**-dom** in: **fattigdom, sygdom, ungdom**, etc.

Non-productive affixes may have been borrowed in many loanwords but have never been used to form any new indigenous derivatives, e.g.: Latin **kon-**: **konflikt, konsonant**.

## 164 ABBREVIATION

Abbreviation involves the loss of a morpheme or part of a morpheme. Abbreviations arise from three different processes.

1 Clipping—reduction at the beginning or end of a word:

	<i>Whole morpheme lost</i>		<i>Part morpheme lost</i>
Initial reduction:	<b>(bi)cykel</b> bicycle		<b>(frika)delle</b> meatball
Final reduction:	<b>kilo(gram)</b> kilogramme		<b>krimi(nalroman)</b> detective novel

2 Blend (or telescope reduction)—the middle of a word is removed:

**m(erværdi)oms(ætningsafgift) (=moms)**      value added tax

3 Acronym—only an initial letter or letters remain after reduction. Acronyms are of three kinds:

(a) Alphabetisms—the initials are pronounced as letters of the alphabet: **LO** ['el'o:], (Danish Trades Union Congress); **bh** ['be:'hå:], bra(ssiere).

(b) Acronyms pronounced as words: **Nato** ['na:to:], **Saab** [sa:b].

(c) Hybrid forms: **p-plads (parkeringsplads)**; car park; **u-båd (undervandsbåd)**, submarine.

## 165 LIST OF COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

What follows is not a full list, but a number of dictionaries of abbreviations are currently available.

<b>adb</b>	<b>automatisk</b>	<b>art.</b>	<b>1 artikel</b>
	<b>databelhandling</b>		<b>2 artium, e.g. mag.art.</b>
<b>adr.</b>	<b>adresse</b>	<b>A/S, a/s</b>	<b>aktieselskab</b>
<b>AF</b>	<b>arbejdsformidlingen</b>	<b>ass.</b>	<b>assistent</b>
<b>afd.</b>	<b>1 afdeling</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>arbejdsmarkedets</b>
	<b>2 afdøde</b>		<b>tillægspension</b>
<b>afg.</b>	<b>afgang</b>	<b>aug.</b>	<b>august</b>
<b>afs.</b>	<b>afsender</b>	<b>att.</b>	<b>attention (til)</b>
<b>alm.</b>	<b>almindelig</b>	<b>aut.</b>	<b>1 automatisk</b>
<b>a.m.b.a.</b>	<b>andelsselskab med</b>		<b>2 autoriseret</b>
	<b>begrænset ansvar</b>	<b>bd.</b>	<b>bind</b>
<b>ang.</b>	<b>angående</b>	<b>bl.a.</b>	<b>blandt andet/andre</b>

ank.	ankomst	C	Celsius
anm.	1 anmeldelse	c.	cent
	2 anmærkning	ca.	cirka
apr.	april	cand.	candidatus
ApS	anpartsselskab	c.c.	carbon copy (kopi til)
cf.	confer (jævnfør)		3 født
civiling.	civilingeniør		4 følgende (side)
		d.	1 den
	2 død	feb.	februar
dat.	dateret	ff.	følgende (sider)
dav.	daværende	fa.	firma(et)
d.d.	dags dato	fakt.	faktura
d.e.	det er (det vil sige)	f.eks.	for eksempel
dec.	december	fhv.	forhenværende
dir.	1 direkte	fk.	fælleskøn
	2 direktorat	f.Kr.	før Kristus
	3 direktør	fl.	flaske
	4 dirigent	flg.	følgende
div.	1 diverse	flt.	flertal
	2 division	fm.	1 formiddag
DM	danmarksmesterskab		2 fuldmægtig
do.	ditto	f.m.	foregående måned
dr.	1 doctor, e.g. dr.phil.	fmd.	formand
	2 doktor	f.o.m.	fra og med
	3 drenge	forb.	1 forbindelse
d.s.	1 den/det/de samme		2 forbud
	2 dennes	foreg.	foregående
d.s.s.	det samme som	forf.	forfatter
dvs.	det vil sige	fork.	forkortelse, forkortet
d.y.	den yngre	forsk.	forskellig
d.æ.	den ældre	forts.	fortsættelse, fortsættes
d.å.	dette år	FP	fortidspension
edb	elektronisk	fr.	1 fredag
	databehandling		2 fru, frøken
eftf.	efterfølger	frk.	frøken
egl.	egentlig	f.t.	for tiden
e.Kr.	efter Kristus	f.v.t.	før vor tidsregning
eks.	eksempel	fx	for eksempel
ekskl.	eksklusive	f.å.	foregående år
ekspl.	eksemplar	g	1 gram
e.l.	eller lignende	g., gg.	2 gymnasieklasse
			gang(e)

enk.	enkelt	gl.	1 gammel
EM	europamesterskab		2 glas
em.	eftermiddag	g.m.	gift med
etc.	etcetera	gnsn.	gennemsnit
evt.	eventuel (-t, -le)	gr.	1 grad
f.	1 femininum		2 gruppe
	2 for	G/S, g/s	gensidigt selskab
GT	Gamle Testamente	K/S, k/s	kommanditselskab
ha	hektar	kt.	konto
henv.	1 henvendelse	kv.	kvinde(lig)
	2 henvisning	l	liter
hf	højere	l.	linie, linje
	forberedelseseksamen	lb.nr.	løbenummer
hhv.	henholdsvis	lejl.	lejlighed
hk	hestekraft	lign.	lignende
H.K.H.	Hans/Hendes Kongelige	Ll.	Lille (in place names)
	lok.	1 lokal(nummer)	
	Højhed		2 lokale
hpl.	holdeplads	lø.	lørdag
hr.	herre	m.	med
i alm.	i almindelighed	ma.	mandag
ib.	indbundet	m.a.o.	med andre ord
if.	ifølge	mc	1 motorcykel
i henh. til	i henhold til		2 musikkassette
iht.	i henhold til	md.	måned
indb.	1 indbundet	mdl.	1 mandlig
	2 indbygger		2 månedlig
ing.	ingeniør	mdtl.	mundligt
inkl.	inklusive	medd.	meddelelse
instr.	1 instruktion.	medflg.	medfølgende
	instruktør	medl.	medlem
	2 instrument	MF	medlem af Folketinget
I/S, i/s	interessentselskab	mfl., m.fl.	med flere
istf., i st. for	i stedet for	mgl.	mangler, manglende
	mhp., m.h.p.	med henblik på	
itk.	intetkøn		
jan.	januar	mht., m.h.t.	med hensyn til
jf. (jvf.)	jævnfør	mia.	milliard(er)
j. nr.	journalnummer	mio.	million(er)
kap.	kapitel	m/k	mand(lig)/kvinde(lig)
kat.	1 katalog	ml.	mellem

	2 katolsk	m.m.	med mere
kbh.	københavnsk	modsv.	modsvarende
kgl.	kongelig	modt.	modtager
kl.	1 klasse	mv., m.v.	med videre
	2 klokken	N	nord
kld.	kælder	n.	neutrum
km/t.	kilometer i timen	ndf.	nedenfor
Kr.	Kirke (in place names)	ned.	nederst
kr.	krone(r)	nedenst.	nedenstående
NM	nordisk mesterskab	par.	paragraf
NN	nomen nescio (=I do not know the name.)	p.b.v.	på bestyrelsens vegne
	pct.	procent	
	pga, p.g.a.	på grund af	
nord.	nordisk	pk.	pakke
nov.	november	pkt.	punkt
Nr.	Nørre (in place names)	Pl.	Plads (in place names)
	pl., plur.	pluralis	
nr.	nummer	P&T	post- og telegrafvæsenet
NT	Ny Testamente		
nto.	netto	pr.	per
nuv.	nuværende	pt.	patient
o.	omkring	p.t.	pro tempore (for the time being)
o.a.	og andet/andre		
obl.	obligatorisk	p...v.	på...s vegne
obs!	observer!	på gr. af	på grund af
off.	1 offentlig	R	rekommanderet (letters)
	2 officiel		
ofl., o.fl.	og flere	rad.	radikal
og lign.	og lignende	red.	redaktion, redaktør, redigeret (af)
okt.	oktober		
OL	Olympiske Lege	regn.	regning
o.l.	og lignende	repr.	repræsentant
o/m	omdrejninger per minut	resp.	respektive
		S	syd
o.m.a.	og mange andre, og meget andet	s	sekund
		s.	side
omg.	1 omgang	sa.	samme
	2 omgående	s.d.	se denne (dette, disse)
omkr.	omkring	Sdr.	Sønder, Søndre (in place names)
omr.	område		
omtr.	omtrent	sept.	september

ons.	onsdag	Sg.	singularis
opg.	opgang	s/h	sort-hvid
opl.	1 oplag	sing.	singularis
	2 oplysning	Skt.	Sankt
opr.	1 oprettet	s.m.	samme måned
	2 oprindelig	sml.	sammenlign
ovenn.	ovennævnte	sn	sogn
ovenst.	ovenstående	spec.	specielt
ovf.	ovenfor	spm.	spørgsmål
p-	parkerings-, præventiv(pille)	spsk.	spiseskefuld
st.	1 station	St.	Store (in place names)
	2 stuen (etage)	uafh.	uafhængig
	3 størrelse	udb., udbet.	udbetaling
stk.	stykk(e)	udg.	udgave, udgivet (af)
s.u.	svar udbedes	uds.	udsendelse
sædv.	sædvanlig(vis)	undt.	undtagen
søn.	søndag	u.å.	uden år
s.å.	samme år	V	vest
t	ton	V.	Vester (in place names)
t.	time	v.	ved
tdl.	tønde(r) land	vedr.	vedrørende
t.eks.	til eksempel	vejl.	vejledning
th., t.h.	til højre	VM	verdensmesterskab
tidl.	tidligere	vvs	varme, ventilation.
tilh.	tilhørende		sanitet
tilsv.	tilsvarende	vær.	værelse
tirs.	tirsdag	Ø	øst
tlf.	telefon	Ø.	Øster (in place names)
tors.	torsdag	øv.	øverst
t.o.m.	til og med	øvr.	øvrige
tsk.	teskefuld	årg.	årgang
tv., t.v.	til venstre	årh.	århundrede
u.	1 uden	årl.	årlig
	2 under		



# 13

## ORTHOGRAPHY

### 166

#### THE ALPHABET

The Danish alphabet contains the same letters as the English alphabet, but after **z** come three additional letters: **Æ/æ**, **Ø/ø** and **Å/å** in that order. The letters **c**, **q**, **w** and **x** are less commonly used in Danish and are usually found only in loanwords. The spelling reform of 1948 saw three important changes:

- 1 The letter **Å/å** was introduced.
- 2 The capital letter at the beginning of nouns (as in German) was abolished.
- 3 The modals **kunde**, **skulde**, **vilde** became **kunne**, **skulle**, **ville** (could, should, would).

### 167

#### Aa, Å, aa, å

When, in 1948, Denmark officially replaced the spelling **Aa** and **aa** with the letters **Å** and **å** in most words, words such as **aaben** and **paastaa** became **åben** (open) and **påstå** (claim). This change in spelling did not affect pronunciation.

This reform brought Danish spelling into line with spelling in Norway and Sweden. There was initially resistance on the part of some towns, institutions and individuals, so that spellings such as **Aabenraa** or **Aage Skovgaard** are still found. Individuals may retain the older spelling whilst local authorities legally have to use the new ones. Strangely, the position of this new letter in the alphabet was not officially determined until 1955. In fact, it moved from the beginning to the end of the Danish alphabet (which now begins with A and ends with Å), causing a lot of work for lexicographers.

### 168

#### SMALL OR CAPITAL LETTERS?

1 Where English has a capital letter at the beginning of words, in many cases Danish has a small letter, such as:

- Days of the week, months and festivals:

**tirsdag**, Tuesday; **juni**, June; **påske**, Easter



- Nationality words (both nouns and adjectives):

**dansk**, Danish; **engelsk**, English; **finsk**, Finnish; **en amerikaner**, an American; **en franskmand**, a Frenchman; **en tysker**, a German

- 2 Proper nouns (names) constituting a single word have a capital letter:

**Var Diderichsen dansker?**

Was Diderichsen a Dane?

- 3 In compound names the first element of the compound has a capital letter but the second element loses its capital:

**Stor|københavn**, Greater Copenhagen

cf. **København**, Copenhagen

Note that in some compounds which have become fixed expressions the first element may lose its capital letter:

**et danmark|s|kort**, a map of Denmark, cf. **Danmark**, Denmark or: **et Danmark|s|kort**

- 4 In name phrases the first and other significant words tend to have capital letters:

**Forenede Nationer**, the United Nations; **Gorm den Gamle**, King Gorm the Old; **Dansk Kirke i Udlandet**, the Danish Church in Foreign Ports

If the name is introduced by a definite article, the article may or may not have a capital letter:

**Det/det Kongelige Teater**, The Royal Theatre; **De/de Kanariske Øer**, The Canary Islands; also with an addition **Det/det nye Kongelige Bibliotek**, The new Royal Library.

## 169

### WORD DIVISION

Sometimes it is necessary to divide words at the end of lines, and this word division (or hyphenation) in Danish follows some basic principles:

- 1 Compounds are divided into their separate elements:

**møbel-fabrik, gå-gade, halv-år**

- 2 Derivatives may be divided according to prefix or suffix:

**u-vane, af-folke, musik-ant, arbejd-som**

- 3 Inflexional endings that constitute a syllable can be divided from the stem:

**huse-ne, lav-ere, svare-de**

4 There must be at least one vowel on each line. Thus a single syllable word cannot be divided, e.g. **blomst**, **mindst**, **strengt**.

5 Words which are neither compounds nor derivatives divide according to the number of consonants involved:

(a) One or two consonants—one consonant goes on the new line:

**bo-gen**, **bus-sen**

(b) A consonant group may move to the new line if it can begin a Danish word.

**bis-pen** or **bi-spen**, **tas-ke** or **ta-ske**

(c) Consonants in the same syllable cannot be separated:

**\*kno-gle**

**\*te-knik**

BUT

BUT

**knog-le**

**tek-nik**



# 14 PUNCTUATION

## 170 PUNCTUATION MARKS

The names of the principal punctuation marks (**skilletegn**) used in Danish are:

.	<b>punktum</b>
,	<b>komma</b>
:	<b>kolon</b>
;	<b>semikolon</b>
?	<b>spørgsmålstegn</b>
!	<b>udråbstegn</b>
/	<b>skråstreg</b>
-	<b>bindestreg</b>
—	<b>tankestreg</b>
,	<b>apostrof</b>
...	<b>prikker</b>
()	<b>parentes</b>
[]	<b>firkantet parentes</b>
{ }	<b>klammer</b>
“ ”, “/” « »	<b>anførselstegn</b>

## 171 THE COMMA

For some time Danish has had two different systems of using the comma. One, called the ‘traditional comma’, was clause-based and was applied mechanically to the text; the other, known as the ‘pause comma’, was used to indicate natural pauses in the text.

In 1996, *Dansk Sprognævn* (the Danish National Language Council) attempted to combine the two systems. However, the outcome was (i) that the ‘traditional comma’ was preserved but renamed the ‘grammatical comma’, and (ii) that a new system, the ‘new comma’, was devised which is closer to the previous ‘pause comma’.

But although there are thus still two acceptable comma systems in Danish, *Dansk Sprognævn* itself strongly recommends the use of the ‘new comma’, and therefore this is the system outlined below.

1 The comma is used:

(a) Between two coordinated clauses:

**Det sner, og det er koldt.** It is snowing and it is cold.

(b) Between a subordinate clause and a following main clause:

**Da vi havde spist, gik vi i byen.** When we had eaten we went into town.

(c) Around a non-restrictive relative clause (cf. 75) or another parenthetical expression:

**Min far, som nu er meget gammel, bor på Falster.**  
My father, who is now very old, lives on Falster.

(d) After (but not before) a restrictive relative clause (cf. 75):

**Folk der kommer for sent, må vente udenfor.**  
People who are late must wait outside.

(e) To mark a parenthetical apposition:

**Danmarks nordligste punkt, Grenen, ligger ved Skagen.**  
The northernmost point in Denmark, Grenen, is near Skagen.

(f) To mark elements in the extra position (cf. 141):

**Peter, ham kan du godt stole på.** Peter, him you can trust.

(g) To mark off interjections (cf. 132):

**Ja, det har du ret i.** Yes, you are right there.

(h) To mark enumerations, though not the last one after **og**:

**Han købte kød, frugt, brød og vin.** He bought meat, fruit, bread and wine.

(i) Before **men**:

**Vi læser avis, men hører ikke radio.**  
We read the paper but don't listen to the radio.

2 There is no comma:

(a) Between a main clause and a following subordinate clause:

**Hun sagde at hun var træt.** She said she was tired.

(b) Before a restrictive relative clause (cf. 75):

**Jeg læste den bog som du gav mig.** I read the book that you gave me.

(c) Around non-parenthetical apposition:

**Den berømte danske romanforfatter Peter Høeg taler her i dag.**

The famous Danish novelist Peter Høeg is speaking here today.

In 2 (a) and (b), the ‘grammatical comma’ system would have required a comma: (a) before **at**, (b) before **som**.

## 172 THE FULL STOP

The full stop is found:

1 At the end of a sentence:

**Kampen blev udsat til den følgende søndag.**

The match was postponed until the following Sunday.

2 In some abbreviations (cf. 165):

**bl.a.**, inter alia; **f.eks.**, e.g.; **m.m.**, etc.

3 In mathematical expressions (cf. 65):

**1.000.000 kr**

1,000,000 kroner

Note that Danish uses a decimal comma, where English has a decimal point (65.5):

**7,5 l**

7.5 litres

## 173 THE EXCLAMATION MARK

The exclamation mark is used when addressing people directly, and after exclamations and rhetorical questions:

**Mine damer og herrer!**

Ladies and gentlemen!

**Hej!**

Hi!

**På gensyn, Helle!**

See you soon, Helle!

**Du er komplet åndssvag!**

You are completely insane!

## 174 DIRECT SPEECH

Several different typographical conventions are used to indicate dialogue:

(a) dash (**tankestreg**)

—**Hvad hedder du? spurgte han.**

‘What’s your name?’ he asked.

(b) inverted commas

**“Er der noget på færde?” spurgte hun.**

- (c) guillemet 'Is something wrong?' she asked.  
 »Hvor er du, Peter?« kaldte hans mor.  
 'Where are you, Peter?' his mother called.

### 175 THE APOSTROPHE

1 Unlike in English, the apostrophe is not normally used to indicate a possessor (i.e. to mark a genitive):

<b>kattens hale</b>	the cat's tail
<b>Gretes onkel</b>	Grete's uncle

2 Note, however, that the apostrophe is found indicating a genitive after proper nouns ending in **-s**, **-x**, **-z** (see also [37.3](#)):

<b>Lars'(s) kusiner</b>	Lars's cousins
<b>Marx'(s) skrifter</b>	Marx's writings

3 The apostrophe is sometimes used to mark an inflexional ending:

(a) In abbreviations without a full stop:

**pc'en**, the PC (personal computer); **tv'et**, the TV set; **wc'er**, toilets

(b) After numerals:

**1990'erne**, the 1990s

### 176 THE HYPHEN

The hyphen is used:

1 to replace **og**:

**engelsk-dansk ordbog**, English-Danish dictionary

2 To replace **(fra)...til**:

**Butikken er åben 9–18**. The shop is open 9 to 6.

3 To avoid repetition of the second element of a compound:

**rug- eller franskbrød**, rye bread or French bread  
(← **rugbrød eller franskbrød**)

4 Where the first element of a compound is an abbreviation or a number:

**p-plads**, parking place; **2000-tallet**, the 21st century





# LINGUISTIC TERMS

This list comprises terms that may not be familiar to a student of languages, as well as those that are not already explained in the text. Users should also consult the Index for references in the text.

ABSTRACT NOUNS refer to unobservable notions, e.g. **musik**, music; **påstand**, assertion; **vanskelighed**, difficulty.

ABSTRACT SENSE is when the literal sense is no longer transparent. Compare the meaning of the verb in: **Hun satte kartoflerne over**, She put the potatoes on (literal sense) with: **Hun oversatte bogen**, She translated the book (abstract sense); (cf. FIGURATIVE SENSE).

ADJECTIVE PHRASES consist of an adjective or a participle with one or more modifiers, e.g. **Han er utrolig energisk**, He is incredibly energetic.

ADVERB PHRASES consist of an adverb with one or more modifiers, e.g. **Han kørte temmelig hurtigt**, He drove quite fast.

ADVERBIALS (see CLAUSAL ADVERBS) are words, phrases or clauses that function as adverbs. Adverbs, noun phrases, prepositional phrases and subordinate clauses can all be adverbials of different kinds (manner, place, time, condition, etc.), e.g. **Hun sang smukt** (adverb, manner), She sang beautifully; **Hun sang hele aftenen** (noun phrase, time), She sang the whole evening; **Hun sang i Det Kongelige Teater** (prep. phrase, place), She sang in the Royal Theatre; **Hun sang kun hvis hun havde lyst** (sub. clause, condition), She only sang when she felt like it.

AFFIX is a prefix added to the beginning or a suffix added to the end of a word, e.g. **ulykkelig**, unhappy; **godhed**, goodness.

AGENT is the person or thing carrying out the action in both active and passive constructions, e.g. **Drengen stjæler bilen**, The boy steals the car; **Bilen stjæles af drengen**, The car is stolen by the boy.

AGREEMENT is a way of showing that two grammatical units have a certain feature in common, e.g. **mine hunde**, my dogs; **Slottet er stort**, The castle is big.

APPOSITION is where two consecutive noun phrases, separated only by a comma, describe the same entity, e.g. **Per, min bror, er rig**, Per, my brother, is rich.

ATTRIBUTIVE is used to describe adjectives or pronouns that precede a noun and modify it, e.g. **et stort hus**, a big house; **min bil**, my car.

BLENDs are new words formed by omitting part of an existing word, e.g. **merværdiomsætningsafgift** → **moms**, VAT.

CLAUSAL ADVERBS are adverbs that modify the sense of the clause as a whole, e.g. **Han er ikke dum**, He's not stupid; **De er altid ude**, They are always out.

CLAUSE is a syntactic unit that usually consists of at least a finite verb and a subject (though the subject may be understood, as in most imperative clauses, e.g. **Hent lige avisen!**, Do fetch the paper, please!). There are two major types of clause: main clauses (MC) and subordinate clauses (SC), e.g. **Middagen stod på bordet** (MC) **da jeg kom hjem** (SC), The dinner was on the table when I got home (cf. SENTENCE).

CLIPPINGS are new words formed by omitting the beginning or end of a word, e.g. **automobil** → *bil*, car; **biograf** → *bio*, cinema.

COLLECTIVE NOUNS are nouns whose singular form denotes a group, e.g. **familie**, family; **hold**, team; **kvæg**, cattle.

COMMON NOUNS are all nouns that are not PROPER NOUNS, e.g. **en hund**, a dog; **to borde**, two tables.

COMPLEMENTS express a meaning that adds to (or complements) that of the subject or object. They can be either an ADJECTIVE (PHRASE) or a NOUN (PHRASE), e.g. **Dorthe og Sven er intelligente**.

**De er gode venner**, Dorthe and Sven are intelligent. They are good friends; **De slog ham bevidstløs**, They knocked him unconscious. (For 'prepositional complement' see PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE.)

COMPLEX VERBS have two or more parts: **Jeg har spist snegle**, I have eaten snails; **Cyklen er blevet stjålet**, The bike has been stolen.

COMPOUND VERBS are verbs consisting of a STEM and a prefix or particle, which may be inseparable or separable from the stem, e.g. **betale**, pay, but **dehage/tage del**, take part.

CONJUGATION denotes the way a verb is inflected, i.e. its pattern of endings, and the grouping of verbs according to their endings, e.g. past tense forms in: Conj. I **leve—levede**, live; Conj. II **spise—spiste**, eat.

COPULAS are verbs linking a subject complement to the subject, e.g. **Pia er dansker**, Pia is a Dane; **Søren blev sur**, Søren became bad-tempered.

CORRELATIVE is the word or phrase that a pronoun replaces or refers to, e.g. **Den tale** is replaced by **som** in: **Den tale som han holdt, var kedelig**, The speech that he made was boring.

COUNT NOUNS are nouns that denote individual countable entities and therefore usually have a plural form (including zero-ending), e.g. **bog—bøger**, book-s; **dreng—dreng**, boy-s; **æg—æg**, egg-s.

DECLENSION denotes the different ways of INFLECTING count nouns in the plural, e.g. **biler, krige, flag**, cars, wars, flags. It also denotes adjective inflexion, e.g. **en rød bil**, a red car; **et rødt hus**, a red house; **den røde bil**, the red car.

DEFINITE refers to a specified entity, cf. **Tyven har stjålet cyklen**, The thief has stolen the bike. Indefinite refers to a non-specified entity, e.g. **En tyv har stjålet cyklen**, A thief has stolen the bike.

DERIVATIVE refers to a word derived from a STEM, usually by the addition of an AFFIX, e.g. **angå**, concern; **foregå**, take place; and **overgå**, surpass; are all derivatives of the verb **gå**, go.

DIRECT OBJECT denotes a noun phrase, a pronoun or a clause governed by a (transitive) verb, e.g. **Drengen hentede bolden/den**, The boy fetched the ball/it; **Hun sagde at hun var træt**, She said that she was tired.

DUPLICATION involves the repetition of a subject, object or adverbial, usually in the form of a pronoun or adverb, e.g. **Jens, han er ikke dum**, Jens, he isn't stupid.

ELLIPSIS involves the omission of a word or word group in the sentence, e.g. **Må jeg få en is? Nej, du må ikke få en is!**, Can I have an ice cream? No, you can't/have an ice cream/.

FIGURATIVE SENSE is when the literal sense has been extended but is still somehow transparent, e.g. **Han fulgte i sin faders fodspor**, He followed in his father's footsteps (cf. ABSTRACT SENSE).

FINITE VERB is a verb form which in itself shows tense (and sometimes mood and/or voice). There are three finite verb forms in Danish: the present tense, the past tense and the imperative, e.g. **Jeg venter; Jeg ventede; Vent!**, I'm waiting; I waited; Wait! (cf. NON-FINITE VERB).

FORMAL SUBJECT is **der** or **det** in cases when the REAL SUBJECT is postponed, e.g. **Der (FS) sidder en gammel mand (RS) på bænken**, There's an old man sitting on the bench; **Det (FS) er synd at du ikke kan komme til festen (RS)**, It's a pity that you can't come to the party.

FRONT is the position at the beginning of a main clause. It is usually occupied by the subject, e.g. **Vi er sultne**, We are hungry. But non-subjects, especially ADVERBIAL expressions of time or place, often occupy the front position, e.g. **I morgen skal jeg spille fodbold**, Tomorrow I'm playing football.

- GENDER may indicate sex: **drengen—han**; **pigen—hun**, the boy—he; the girl—she; or grammatical gender: **et barn**, a child; **et hus**, a house; **en stol**, a chair.
- IDIOM(ATIC) indicates a traditional usage that is not readily explicable from the grammar or from the individual elements.
- IMPERATIVE is a finite verb form identical in Danish with the stem of the verb, expressing a command, warning, direction or the like, e.g. **Kom!**, Come on!; **Vend om!**, Turn round!
- IMPERSONAL CONSTRUCTIONS do not involve a person but usually **det** or **der**, e.g. **Det sner**, It's snowing; **Der snydes meget**, There's a lot of cheating.
- INDECLINABLE describes words that do not INFLECT, e.g. the adjectives **moderne**, good; **fælles**, common, mutual; which take no endings for gender or plural: **et moderne hus**, a modern house; **fælles venner**, mutual friends. Whole word classes may be indeclinable, e.g. conjunctions and prepositions.
- INDEFINITE (see DEFINITE)INDIRECT OBJECT usually denotes a person or an animal benefiting from an action (i.e. the recipient), e.g. **Vi gav ham pengene**, We gave him the money.
- INFINITIVE PHRASE is a phrase consisting of an infinitive accompanied by one or more modifiers, e.g. **at skrive et brev**, to write a letter.
- INFLECT means to change the form of a word by means of endings, vowel changes or in other ways, e.g. the verb **skrive**, write, inflects **skriv**, **skrive**, **skriver**, **skrev**, **skrevet**, etc.
- INFLEXION (see INFLECT)
- INTERROGATIVE is used of questions, e.g. interrogative pronouns and adverbs introduce a question: **Hvem var det?**, Who was that?; **Hvorfor kom du ikke?**, Why didn't you come?
- INVERTED word order denotes verb—subject order, e.g. **I dag rejser vi**, Today we are leaving.
- MATRIX is that part of a complex sentence that remains when the subordinate clause is removed, e.g. **Birthe lovede at hun ville skrive til os**, Birthe promised that she would write to us.
- MORPHEME is the smallest part of a word expressing meaning: in the word **bilerne**, the cars, there are three morphemes: **bil**, car, **er** (plural morpheme), **ne** (definite plural morpheme).
- MUTATED VOWEL is one that changes when a word is inflected, e.g. **o** → **ø** in **fod—fødder**, foot—feet; **u** → **y** in **ung—yngre**, young—younger.
- NOMINAL means a word or phrase functioning as a noun, e.g. **Bogen er interessant**, The book is interesting; **At læse er interessant**, Reading is interesting.
- NON-COUNT NOUNS are nouns that cannot describe individual countable entities. They may be either singular words with no plural form, usually denoting substances (mass-words), e.g. **luft**, air; **mel**, flour; **sand**, sand; or they may be plural words with no equivalent singular form, e.g. **klæder**, clothes; **penge**, money; **shorts**, shorts.
- NON-FINITE VERB forms are those not showing tense, namely the infinitive and the participles, e.g. **(at) løbe**, (to) run; **løbende**, running; **løbet**, run.
- NOUN PHRASES consist of a noun accompanied by one or more modifiers which may precede or follow the noun, e.g. **en dejlig dag**, a lovely day; **en dag som jeg aldrig vil glemme**, a day I shall never forget.
- NUMBER is a collective term for singular and plural. The plural form is usually marked by an inflexional ending, e.g. **en blyant**, a pencil; **to blyanter**, two pencils.
- PART OF SPEECH means word class, e.g. noun, adjective, verb, conjunction, etc.
- PARTICLE is a stressed adverb or preposition appearing together with a verb to form a single unit of meaning, e.g. **ned** in **skrive ned**, write down; **ud** in **skælde ud**, tell off.
- PARTITIVE denotes a part of a whole or of a substance, e.g. **en del af pengene**, some of the money; **en flaske vin**, a bottle of wine; **et kilo kartofler**, a kilo of potatoes.
- PEJORATIVE means deprecating, e.g. **dit fjols!**, you idiot!

PREDICATE is the central part of the clause, excluding the subject. The predicate comprises the verb plus any object, complement or adverbial: **Han spiller (klaver hver dag)**, He plays (the piano every day).

PREDICATIVE indicates the position after a copula verb: **Skuespillet er svært**, The play is difficult; **De bliver gamle**, They're growing old.

PREDICATIVE COMPLEMENT is a noun (phrase) or adjective (phrase) in the PREDICATE complementing (i.e. filling out) the subject or object: **Leo er min bror. Han er seks år gammel**, Leo is my brother. He is six years old.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE consists of a preposition plus a prepositional complement (a noun (phrase), a pronoun, an infinitive (phrase) or a clause), e.g. **pigen med det lange hår**, the girl with the long hair; **pigen tænkte på ham**, the girl thought of him; **pigen gik uden at sige farvel**, the girl left without saying goodbye; **pigen sørgede for at bordet blev dækket**, the girl saw to it that the table was set.

PRODUCTIVE implies that a word class or method of word formation can still produce new words, e.g. the suffix **-bar** in **vaskbar**, washable.

PROPER NOUNS are names of specific people, places, occasions, events, books, etc., e.g. **Jørgen, Randers, Løgneren**.

REAL SUBJECT is the postponed subject, e.g. **Det er dejligt at drikke vin**, It's nice to drink wine (cf. FORMAL SUBJECT).

RECIPROCAL indicates a mutual activity expressed either in the pronoun, e.g. **De elsker hinanden**, They love each other; or in the verb, e.g. **Vi ses i morgen**, See you tomorrow.

SEMANTIC denotes the meaning of words, phrases, etc.

SENTENCE is a syntactic unit that contains a complete meaning and consists of one or more clauses (cf. CLAUSE). Thus the following three examples are all sentences: **Se der!**, Look there!; **Hun tager bussen når det regner**, She takes the bus when it rains; **Hvis du tror at jeg kan huske hvad han sagde da vi besøgte ham i sidste uge, tager du fejl**, If you think that I can remember what he said when we visited him last week, you're wrong.

SIMPLE VERBS consist of one word only (a FINITE VERB), e.g. **Hjælp!**, Help!; **(han) sover**, (he) sleeps; **(han) gik**, (he) went.

STATEMENT is a sentence or clause conveying information, as distinct from a question, exclamation or command.

STEM is the part of the verb onto which inflexional endings are added, e.g. **dansø, danser, dansede, danset**.

SYLLABLE consists of a vowel and usually one or more consonants, e.g. **ø, dø, rør, rødt, in-du-stri-ar-bej-de-re**.

TAG QUESTION is a phrase attached to the end of a statement which turns it into a question: **Han kan lide laks, ikke sandt?**, He likes salmon, doesn't he?

VERB PHRASES consist of a FINITE VERB form (optionally) accompanied by one or more NON-FINITE VERB forms in a chain, e.g. **Han sover**, He is sleeping; **Han må kunne løbe**, He must be able to run.

# DANISH, LATIN AND ENGLISH LINGUISTIC TERMS

In many Danish grammars and works on language, Danish linguistic terms are used in preference to the more international Latin-based terms. This list shows equivalents.

<i>Danish</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>English</i>
<b>Selvlyd</b>	<b>Vokal</b>	Vowel
<b>Medlyd</b>	<b>Konsonant</b>	Consonant
<b>Navneord</b>	<b>Substantiv</b>	Noun
<b>Egennavn</b>	<b>Proprium</b>	Proper noun
<b>Kendeord</b>	<b>Artikel</b>	Article
<b>Tillægsord</b>	<b>Adjektiv</b>	Adjective
<b>Stedord</b>	<b>Pronomen</b>	Pronoun
<b>Personligt stedord</b>	<b>Personligt pronomen</b>	Personal pronoun
<b>Ejestedord</b>	<b>Possessivt pronomen</b>	Possessive pronoun
<b>Tilbagevisende stedord</b>	<b>Refleksivt pronomen</b>	Reflexive pronoun
<b>Gensidigt stedord</b>	<b>Reciprokt pronomen</b>	Reciprocal pronoun
<b>Påpegende stedord</b>	<b>Demonstrativt pronomen</b>	Demonstrative pronoun
<b>Spørgende stedord</b>	<b>Interrogativt pronomen</b>	Interrogative pronoun
<b>Henførende stedord</b>	<b>Relativt pronomen</b>	Relative pronoun
<b>Ubestemt stedord</b>	<b>Indefinit pronomen</b>	Indefinite pronoun
<b>Talord</b>	<b>Numerale</b>	Numeral
<b>Mængdetal</b>	<b>Kardinaltal</b>	Cardinal number
<b>Ordenstal</b>	<b>Ordinaltal</b>	Ordinal number
<b>Udsagnsord</b>	<b>Verbum</b>	Verb
<b>Mådesudsagnsord</b>	<b>Modalverbum</b>	Modal verb
<b>Biord</b>	<b>Adverbium</b>	Adverb
<b>Bindeord</b>	<b>Konjunktion</b>	Conjunction
<b>Forholdsord</b>	<b>Præposition</b>	Preposition
<b>Ytringsord</b>	<b>Interjektion</b>	Interjection
<b>Fald</b>	<b>Kasus</b>	Case
<b>Grundledsfald</b>	<b>Nominativ</b>	Nominative
<b>Genstandsfald</b>	<b>Akkusativ/dativ</b>	Accusative/dative
<b>Tillægfsald</b>	<b>Genitiv</b>	Genitive

<i>Danish</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>English</i>
<b>Tal</b>	<b>Numerus</b>	Number
<b>Ental</b>	<b>Singular</b>	Singular
<b>Flertal</b>	<b>Pluralis</b>	Plural
<b>Køn</b>	<b>Genus</b>	Gender
<b>Fælleskøn</b>	<b>Commune (maskulinum/femininum)</b>	Common gender (masculine/feminine)
<b>Intetkøn</b>	<b>Neutrum</b>	Neuter
<b>Gradbøjning</b>	<b>Komparation</b>	Comparison
1 grad	<b>Positiv</b>	Positive
2 grad	<b>Komparativ</b>	Comparative
3 grad	<b>Superlativ</b>	Superlative
<b>Måde</b>	<b>Modus</b>	Mood
<b>Fortælle måde</b>	<b>Indikativ</b>	Indicative
<b>Bydemåde</b>	<b>Imperativ</b>	Imperative
<b>Ønskemåde</b>	<b>Konjunktiv</b>	Subjunctive
<b>Tid</b>	<b>Tempus</b>	Tense
<b>Art</b>	<b>Diatese=aktiv/passiv</b>	active/passive voice
<b>Navneform</b>	<b>Infinitiv</b>	Infinitive
<b>Tillægsform</b>	<b>Participium</b>	Participle
<b>Forstavelse</b>	<b>Præfiks</b>	Prefix
<b>(Aflednings)endelse</b>	<b>Suffiks</b>	Suffix
<b>Navnesamstilling</b>	<b>Apposition</b>	Apposition
<b>Udsagnsled</b>	<b>Verbal(led)</b>	(Finite) Verb
<b>Grundled</b>	<b>Subjekt</b>	Subject
<b>Genstandsled</b>	<b>Objekt</b>	Object
<b>Omsagnsled</b>	<b>Prædikativ</b>	Complement
<b>Biled</b>	<b>Adverbial</b>	Adverbial
<b>Sideordning</b>	<b>Paratakse</b>	Parataxis
<b>Underordning</b>	<b>Hypotakse</b>	Hypotaxis
<b>Samordning</b>	<b>Neksus</b>	Nexus

## Supplementary terms

<b>A</b>	<b>Sætningsdannende verbalformer</b>	<b>Finite verbalformer</b>	Finite verb forms
1	Nutidsform	<b>Præsens</b>	Present tense
2	Datidsform	<b>Imperfektum/ Præteritum</b>	Past tense
3	Bydeform	<b>Imperativ</b>	Imperative
4	Ønskeform	<b>Konjunktiv</b>	Subjunctive
<b>B</b>	<b>Ikke-sætningsdannende verbalformer</b>	<b>Infinitte verbalformer</b>	Non-finite verb forms
1	Navneform	<b>Infinitiv</b>	Infinitive

**2 Tillægsform**

**a Nutids tillægsform**

**b Datids tillægsform**

**Ubøjet**

**Bøjelig**

**Participium**

**Præsens participium**

**Perfektum/Præteritum participium**

**Verbalt participium**

**Adjektivisk participium**

Participle

Present participle

Past participle

Verbal participle

Adjectival participle





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# INDEX

Figures refer to *paragraphs* and *sub-paragraphs*. Words in bold are Danish. Words in italics are English.

- AA/aa** 166f
- abbreviation 164f
- about* 127
- above* 127
- abstract nouns 34
- acronym 164.3
- active verb 105
- ad** 113
- adjectival noun 54, 93.3(b)
- adjective 44–63
- adjective agreement 44, 51f
- adverb 107–11
- adverbial, *see*: Clausal adverbial, Other adverbials
- adverbial clause 154
- adverbs of location and motion 110
- af** 114
- affix 163
- affixation 163
- after* 127
- against* 127
- agent 105.2, 148, 152, 155
- agreement 44, 51f
- al (alt, alle)** 78
- aldrig** 160.3
- altid** 107.3
- amplifier 113
- anden (andet, andre)** 64.1
- apostrophe 175
- article 38
- article use 39–43
- as* 136.2
- as...as* 136.3
- ask* 81.5, 85.1
- at* 127ff
- at** (conjunction) 134.2(a), 135.8, 156.3
- at** (infinitive marker) 91.2
- at-** clause with a ‘topic’ 159.1
- at-** clause with FV-CA word order 159.2
- auxiliary verb 92.2, 143
- bare** 134.2(b)
- barn** 28.1, 29.3
- be* 88.3
- before* 127, 136.4
- begge** 135.5
- below* 127
- blend 164.2
- blive (bliver, blev, blevet)** 10, 86.3
- blive** passive 105.5
- blå** 48.2
- borrowing 161.1
- bort** 110.2
- borte** 110.2
- both* 136.5
- burde (bør, burde)** 100
- but* 136.6
- by* 127
- både...og** 135.4
- can* 100
- capital letter 168
- cardinal number 64f
- century 65.6
- clausal adverbial 107, 145, 151, 156.1, 160.2, 160.3
- clause element 137
- clause stress 14f
- clause structure 137–60
- clause types 138
- cleft sentence 158
- clipping 164.1
- clock 66
- collective 33.2n, 35

- come* 90.3  
 comma 171  
 command 101.2, 138.2, 139  
 common abbreviations 165  
 common prepositions 113  
 comparison of adjectives 56–63  
 comparison of adverbs 108  
 complement 92.3, 147  
 compound adverb 107.3  
 compound name 168  
 compound noun 23.6, 131.1(b), 162  
 compound preposition 112.1(b)  
 compound verb 106  
 compounding 162  
 conditional clause 159.3  
 conjugation 79–90  
 conjunction 133–6, 140  
 consonant 4–8  
 context 157  
 coordinating conjunction 133, 156.4(d)  
 copula verb 103.4  
 count noun 34
- da** 111.4, 134.2(b)  
 dash 174  
 date 65.2, 131.4  
**de** 10, 67f  
**De** 10, 67f  
 decades 65.6, 172.3  
 decimals 65.5  
 definite declension of the adjective 53  
 definite form of the adjective 44, 53f  
 definite form of the noun 22, 38  
**dem** 67  
 demonstrative pronoun 53, 74  
**den** 67f  
**denne (dette, disse)** 74  
 deponent verb 104.3  
**der** (adverb) 158  
**der** (pronoun) 75f, 135.2, 135.8, 142, 156.4(c)  
**det** 67f, 142, 153  
 difficult adverbs 111  
 difficult conjunctions 136  
**dig** 10, 67, 70  
 diphthong 3  
 direct object 103.1, 147  
 direct speech 149.1, 174  
*do* 82.2  
**dog** 111.4
- du** 67f  
*during* 127, 128.5  
**dårlig** 59.1  
**dårligt** (adv.) 108
- efter** 115  
**eftersom** 134.2(b)  
**eller** 133  
 emphatic topic 149.3  
**en** (article) 22, 38  
**én** (numeral) 64.6  
**end** 61.2, 134.2(b)  
**et** (article) 22, 38  
**ét** (numeral) 64.6  
 exclamation mark 173  
 existential sentence 153  
 expletive 132.9  
 extra positions 141, 171.8
- female suffixes 23.7  
 festival 168  
 finite verb 138, 143, 149  
 first conjugation 80  
 first element 162  
**flere** 59.3  
**flest** 59.3  
*for* 127  
**for** (conj.) 133, 136.2  
**for** (prep.) 115, 116  
**for at** 91.3, 134.2(b)  
**forbi** 113  
**fordi** 134.2(b)  
 formal subject 67.2, 142, 153  
**forrige** 53n  
**forskellig** 61.2  
 fourth conjugation 83  
**fra** 117  
 fractions 65.5  
**frem** 110.2  
**fremme** 110.2  
*from* 127  
 front article 53  
 full stop 172  
 future tense 98  
 FV1 clause 138.1  
 FV2 clause 138.1  
**før** 135.3  
**første** 53n, 62n  
**få** (adj.) 58

- få** (pronoun) 78  
**få** (verb) 89.1
- gammel** 59.1  
**ganske** 122.2  
gender 22f  
gender rules 23  
general subordinator 134.2(a)  
genitive 37, 131, 175  
**gerne** 108, 111.1  
glottal stop (**stød**) 11  
*go* 89.1  
**god** 45.2  
**godt** (adv.) 108  
gradation series 83–90  
greetings 132  
**grov** 48.3  
*grow* 92.1  
**grå** 48.2  
guillemet 174  
**gå** 89.1
- han** 67f  
*have* 82.1  
**have (har, havde, haft)** 82.1, 96f  
**hen** 110.2  
**henne** 110.2  
**her** 156.4(a)  
**hinanden** 71  
**hjem** 110.2  
**hjemme** 110.2  
**hos** 113, 129.3  
**hun** 67f  
**hv-** question 77, 138.2, 139  
**hv-** word 75, 77, 135  
**hvad** 75, 77, 135  
**hvem** 75, 77, 135.1  
**hver(t)** 78  
**hverandre** 71  
**hvilken** 75, 77  
**hvis** 75, 133(b), 135.7, 159.3  
**hvordan** 135.1  
hyphen 176
- i** 118  
*if* 136.7  
**ikke** 107.1, 111.2, 151, 160.3  
imitation 132  
imperative 101
- impersonal passive 105.7  
impersonal subject 69.3  
*in* 127ff  
**ind** 110.2  
**inde** 110.2  
indeclinable adjective 50  
indefinite adjective 45–51  
indefinite adjective constructions 51  
indefinite article 22, 38  
indefinite form of the noun 22, 28  
indefinite pronoun 78  
**inden** 134.2(b), 135.4  
independent clause 157  
indirect object 147  
indirect question 134.2(a), 135.1  
indirect speech 133(a)  
infinitive 91, 144  
infinitive marker 91.2  
infinitive phrase 153  
inflexion of superlative 62  
**ingen (intet, ingen)** 78  
**ingenting** 78  
inseparable compound verb 106  
interjection 132  
interrogative pronoun 77  
*into* 127  
intransitive verb 96, 103, 153  
inversion 138.2, 160.1  
inverted commas 174  
inverted word order 138.2  
*it* 67f
- ja** 132.5  
**jaså** 132.5  
**javel** 132.5  
**javist** 132.5  
**jo** 111.4, 132.5  
**jo...desto** 134.2(b)  
**jo...jo...** 134.2(b)  
**jovist** 132.5
- know* 81  
**komme** 90.3  
**kunne (kan, kunne)** 10, 100
- lang(t)** 58  
**langt** (adv.) 108, 111.3  
**lige** 111.4  
**lige...som...** 136.3

- lige...så** 61.1  
**ligge** 86.5  
 light elements 150, 156.4(a)  
**ligne** 61.1  
**lille** 48.1, 59.1  
 link position 140  
*live* 79  
 loanwords 32  
**længe** 108, 111.3
- main clause 139–53  
**man** 78  
**mange** 59.1  
 masculine suffixes 23.7  
*may* 100, 102.1  
**med** 119  
**me(de)ns** 134.2(b)  
**meget (megen)** 55.1, 78  
**mellem** 127  
**men** 133.2, 135.6  
**mere** 59f  
**mest** 59f  
**mig** 10, 70  
**mod** 120  
 modal auxiliary verb 91.2, 100, 143  
 money 65.4  
 month 168  
 mood 100–3  
 MPT-adverbial 146  
*must* 100  
**måtte (må, måtte)** 100
- nationality words 42, 55  
 natural topic 149.2  
**ned** 110.2  
**nede** 110.2  
 negative element 160  
 negative prefix 163.4  
**nej** 132.6  
**nemlig** 111.4  
*no* 132.6  
*no* (pronoun) 78  
**nogen (noget, nogle)** 78  
**nok** 111.4  
 non-count noun 33  
 non-finite verb 144  
 noun 22–43  
 noun declensions 24–28  
 noun plurals 24–32
- noun with end article 22, 35f  
**nu** 111.4  
**nu da** 135.8  
 number 36  
 numerals 64f  
**når** 134.2(b)
- object 147, 160.4  
 object complement 147  
 object pronoun 150  
*of* 37.7, 127, 131  
**ofte** 108  
**og** 12  
**om** (adverb) 110.2  
**om** (prep.) 121  
**omkring** 111  
**omme** 110.2  
*on* 127ff  
**ond** 59.1  
**op** 110.2  
**oppe** 110.2  
 ordinal number 64f  
 orthography 166–68  
 other adverbials 146  
*ought to* 100  
*over* 122  
**over**
- particle 106  
 partitive genitive 131.3  
 passive 104.1, 105, 152  
 passive agent 105, 146, 152  
 past participle 92, 143  
 past perfect tense 97  
 past tense 75, 95, 99, 143  
 patient 105.2  
 perfect tense 96, 99  
 personal pronoun 67f  
 plural forms of loanwords 32  
 plural forms of nouns 24–32  
 possessive pronoun 43, 72f  
 predicting plurals 25  
 prefix 163.2, 163.4  
 preposition 112–26  
 preposition, place 130  
 preposition, time 128–30  
 prepositional complement 112.2  
 present participle 93, 144  
 present tense 94, 99, 143

- prohibition 91.2  
 pronoun 67–78  
 pronunciation 1–10  
 punctuation 170–76  
 punctuation marks 170  
*put* 82.2  
**på** 123
- real subject 142, 153  
 reciprocal pronoun 71  
 reciprocal verb 104.4  
 reflexive possessive pronoun 73  
 reflexive pronoun 70, 150  
 reflexive verb 103.5  
 relative clause 75f, 154.2, 171.1  
 relative pronoun 75  
 restrictive relative clause 75f
- s form of the verb 104  
 -s genitive 37  
 -s passive 104.2, 105.4  
 s- link 162.2  
*say* 82.2  
 second conjugation 81  
*see* 85.3  
**selv** 70  
**selvom** 134.2(b)  
 separable compound verb 106  
**sgu** 111.4  
*shall* 98, 100  
*should* 98, 100  
**siden** (conj.) 134.2(b)  
**siden** (prep.) 113  
**sidste** 53, 63n  
**sig** 10, 70  
**sikke(n)** (*sikken, ikke*) 51  
 similarity 61  
**sin** (*sit, sine*) 72f  
**skam** 111.4  
**skulle** (*skal*) 10, 98, 100  
**skønt** 134.2(b)  
**som** 77f, 135.8, 158  
 spelling 166–68  
 spelling reform 166  
 statement 138.2, 139  
**stiv** 48.3  
 stop 4–5  
**stor** 58  
 straight word order 138.2
- stress 13–21  
 stressed affixes 18f  
 stressed syllables 17  
 strong verb 83–90  
 stød 11f  
**stå**  
 subject 138, 140, 149, 156.2  
 subject complement 147  
 subject pronoun 67f  
 subjunctive 102  
 subordinate clause 154, 156–60, 170  
 subordinating conjunction 134, 156.4(d)  
 suffix 163.2, 163.5  
 syllable loss 9.1  
 syllable stress 17  
**så** 134.2(b)  
**så...at** 134.2(b)  
**så...som** 134.2(b)
- tage** 10, 84  
*take* 84  
 -tal 65.6, 65.7  
 telephone number 65.1  
 telescope reduction 164.2  
 temperature 65.3  
 tense 94–99  
*that* (conjunction) 136.8  
*that* (demonstrative) 74  
*that* (relative pronoun) 75  
*The English*, etc. 55  
*think* 79  
 third conjugation 82  
*this* 74  
*through* 127  
**til** 124  
 til+genitive 46.2  
 time by the clock 66  
**tit** 108  
*to* 127  
 topicalisation 149  
 transitive verb 96, 103  
**trods** 113  
**turde** (*tør, turde*) 100  
 two-verb constructions 91.3
- ud** 110.2  
**ude** 110.2  
**uden** 135.6  
*under* 127



**under** 125

**undtagen** 135.6

**ung** 58

unstressed **e** 1.5n, 9

unstressed object 156.4(a)

uses of tenses 99

**var** 10

**ved** 126, 129.3

**vel** (stressed) 108

**vel** (unstressed) 111.4

verb 79–106

verb forms 79–92

verb particle 106

verb tenses 94–99

**ville (vil, ville)** 100

**vist** 111.4

vowel 1–3

vowel changes in nouns 29

vowel length 2

vowel merger 9.2

**være (er, var, været)** 88.3, 96f

**være** passive 105.6

**værre, værst** 59.2

*want to* 100

weak verb 79–82

weekday 168

*will* 100

wish 101.2, 102, 138.2, 139

*with* 127

word class 137

word formation 161–65

word order 137–60

word stress 17

*yes* 132.5

yes/no question 138.2, 139

**Å/å** 166f