An Introduction to Modern Scots

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Thanks for ideas, inspiration and advice to Gavin Falconer, Sandy Fleming, John M. Kirk, Ian Parsley and John M. Tait.
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Foreword

Everyday speech in Lowland Scotland varies from speaker to speaker, something often referred to as a speech continuum. That continuum ranges from Traditional Scots—often called Braid Scots, Scotch or the Doric—to Scottish Standard English (p. 69). Thus many people in Scotland have access to the features of two linguistic systems and are able to range from one to the other according to the demands of the situation in which they find themselves. Such decisions are usually based on stylistic and contextual factors, the use of Scots being far more likely among the working class and older rural people, especially those whose exposure to the anglicising influence of the Scottish education system has been minimal.

This book concentrates wholly on the Traditional Scots end of that speech continuum. That includes archaic and some obsolete vocabulary for traditional trades and ways of life which are often described in literature. Among many contemporary speakers, Scots forms of words have now been replaced with pronunciations nearer their Standard English cognates. Having said that, much of what is presented here will still be recognisable and reflective of the speech of many Lowland Scots today.

Traditional Scots has no equivalent of ‘RP’. Scots is spoken in various dialects. The Scots orthography used here is based on regularised eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary practices, and can, on the whole, be read and pronounced as is usual in any Scots dialect. The information on pronunciation may not be as comprehensive as one might wish. To cover the slight variations from the general description provided here would entail writing a version of this book for each and every dialect. Both the ten-volume Scottish National Dictionary and the Concise Scots Dictionary from SLD Ltd. provide phonetic transcriptions.

If you intend using this book to learn to speak Scots, you should choose the dialect (p. 14) you wish to learn—all are equally valid.
What is Scots?

The Emergence of Scots

The first languages spoken in Scotland for which we have names were Pictish and Cumbric. The Picts, referred to as Caledoni by classical writers, occupied eastern and northern Scotland from the late Iron Age. What little evidence there is, such as place names with the elements "Aber-" and "Pit-", indicates that Pictish was a Brythonic language related to the modern Celtic languages Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The Romans called them Picti, perhaps from a name the Picts used for themselves. Old Norse Péttar or Péttir and Old English Pehtas, Pihtas, Pyhtas or Peohtas are derived from the Latin Picti. The Old English Pehtas went on to become Modern Scots Pechts, the Standard English form Picts having been influenced by the Latin Pictus.

At the time of the Picts, south-west Scotland (Strathclyde) was occupied by another Brythonic tribe, the Britons, who spoke Cumbric, which was also related to modern Welsh. South-east Scotland was part of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom—later earldom—of Northumbria, whose inhabitants spoke Old English, which they called Ænglisc. Those people were the descendants of the Angles who had settled in the north of England. By A.D. 500 a tribe of people from the north of Ireland called the Scoti had begun to settle in Argyle. These new immigrants spoke Gaelic, another Celtic language, and they called their new kingdom Dalriada. By A.D. 900 the Scoti of Dalriada had absorbed and integrated the original Pictish inhabitants and formed the kingdom of Alba north of the Forth and Clyde. Shortly afterwards, the British kingdom of Strathclyde became part of the kingdom of Alba. After the battle of Carham around 1018 the Northumbrian territory north of the Tweed also became part of the kingdom of Alba, thus creating the borders of modern Scotland, which have hardly changed since.

One of the conditions placed on the annexation of the Northumbrian lands was that the Northumbrians be allowed to use their own Old English language and laws. After the Norman invasion of England in 1066. King David I of Scotland (1124–53) granted lands to many Norman noblemen who held lands in the Midlands and northern England. Most of the lower–rank people accompanying those Norman noblemen spoke a variety of Early Northern Middle English, which they called Inglis, a dialect heavily influenced by the Anglo–Scandinavian of the Danelaw. That explains much of the Scandinavian vocabulary of Modern Scots that cannot be ascribed to the Norse influence in the Northern Isles and Caithness. The variety of Inglis resulting from the speech of recent incomers and the natives of south–east Scotland soon gained in prestige, and by A.D. 1290 Inglis had spread up the east coast to the Moray Firth and taken hold south of the Clyde. Only Galloway, South Ayrshire and the Highlands to the north and west remained Gaelic–speaking. The wars of independence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries soon separated early Northern Middle English north and south of the Cheviots. That eventually led to a situation where the Royal household was no longer orientated to Gaelic speaking Scotland. During the following centuries Middle English developed separately on the two sides of the border. From the twelfth century extensive trade took place between the eastern seaboard of Scotland and the Low Countries.
Trading colonies were established there, and, similarly, many traders and craftspeople settled in Scotland. They too enriched the vocabulary of Scots, with Dutch and Low Saxon loans. Later on, the Auld Alliance with France further influenced the *Inglis* of Scotland with the addition of more Norman and central French vocabulary. Meanwhile Gaelic had also been adding lexical items. Many terms for topographical features are of Gaelic origin, although owing to the low regard held for things Gaelic in the Lowlands little more was passed on. The great language of learning in mediaeval Europe was Latin, and that too influenced the *Inglis* of Scotland, especially in the realms of literature and the law. Eventually Scotland’s political centre of gravity moved from the west Highlands into central Scotland.

The Early northern Middle English spoken in Northumbria and Scotland was very much the same, but the emergence of the two competing political entities of England and Scotland caused a shift in their populations’ centres of gravity. In Scotland people looked to their capital Edinburgh and to the *Inglis* spoken in the Lothians as a model for a national standard, both spoken and written. In Northumbria they looked to the emerging standard language of the east Midlands and later the speech of London. The early Middle English varieties in the south and north were noticeably different, reflecting the patterns of settlement by different Anglo-Saxon tribes and varying degrees of Scandinavian influence. Those varieties did share a considerable amount of common vocabulary, but later divergent pronunciation shifts further increased the difference between the varieties north and south of the Tay.

**The Relationship of Scots to Other Germanic Languages**

Early Scottish literature in *Inglis*, such as Barbour’s *Brus* (c.1375), Wyntoun’s *Kronykil* (c.1420) and Blind Harry’s *Wallace* (c.1478) may more accurately be described as early northern Middle English: Scholars of Scots refer to the language of the period as Early Scots. By the end of the fifteenth century the *Inglis* of Scotland had become a national language and was being called *Scottis* to distinguish it from the language of England; although *Scottis* had also previously been used to refer to Scottish Gaelic. The following period in the
development of *Scottis*, known as Middle Scots, brought forth an abundance of literature based around the Royal Court in Edinburgh and the University of St. Andrews. Masterpieces by writers such as Henryson (1450–c.1505), Dunbar (c.1460–c.1530), Douglas (1476–1522), and Lyndsay (c.1486–1555) saw the introduction of a great many French and Latin words into Scots. At the same time, the spellings employed by those writers indicated many pronunciation changes, probably owing to natural developments in the language. English writers and literature also exerted some influence on the spelling of Scots.

The Development of (Standard) English and Scots

During the ongoing struggles of the Reformation, the reformers had failed to introduce a Scots translation of the Bible, instead using translations from England which were already available. The differences between the written languages, of course, posed no insurmountable problems of intelligibility for an educated readership, but the spoken word remained as different as ever. After the Union of the Crowns in 1603 the Scottish Court moved to London, further increasing the status of Standard English in Scotland. It was also during the seventeenth-century Plantation of Ulster that many Scots speakers settled in the...
north of Ireland in what were in some cases to become predominantly Scots-speaking areas. Settlers from Scotland outnumbered those from England by up to six to one. It was the Union of the English and Scottish Parliaments in 1707 that dealt the death knell to Scots as the ‘official language’ of Scotland. The Standard English of England increasingly became the language of politics, education, religion and prestige. Elocution lessons were in great demand among the aristocracy, who were the first to endeavour to adopt the southern tongue, in both speech and writing, by eradicating Scotticisms (Scots words and grammar features). They were closely followed by the middle classes and then generally by anyone who desired to be upwardly mobile. That process was also having an impact on Scots in Ulster, which was put under additional pressure by the more prestigious neighbouring dialects of English origin. Modern Scots of course continued to be used as the vernacular of the vast majority of people in Lowland Scotland and those areas of Ulster predominantly settled by Lowlanders in previous centuries. The centuries–old vernacular ballads continued to be immensely popular among all sections of society, even though the population was increasingly being educated in Standard English. It was also during that period that many of the ballads of the Borders and the North–east which had been orally handed down the centuries came to be written down. Writers such as Robert Sempill (c. 1530–1595), Lady Wardlaw (1677–1727) and Lady Grizel Baillie (1665–1746) helped keep the vernacular alive as a literary medium until the eighteenth–century revival of interest in Scots and Scottish literature.

In the eighteenth century not all sections of the Scots intelligentsia accepted the marginalisation of Scots. Some writers, among them Allan Ramsay (1686–1758), Robert Fergusson (1750–1774) and Robert Burns (1759–1796), continuing into the nineteenth century with Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) and others, also used Scots. That eighteenth–century revival of Scots literature, which was quickly followed in Ulster, was based largely on current colloquial Scots, although the spelling was becoming increasingly anglicised, with apostrophes substituted for some apparently missing letters, nevertheless many Middle Scots spelling conventions continued to be used. The revival of the eighteenth century continued into the nineteenth century, with the publication of Jamieson’s *Etymological Dictionary of the Scottish Language* (1808). Scots was once again being regarded as the national language by the intelligentsia, although use of it for any purpose other than literary endeavour was frowned upon. Writers such as John Galt (1779–1839), George Macdonald (1824–1905), Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894), James Matthew Barrie (1860–1937) and Samuel Rutherford Crockett (1859–1914) also employed Scots dialogue in their novels. That pan–dialectal literary Scots continued to be used throughout the nineteenth century, but later in the period non–traditional phonetic representations of different dialectal realisations, and sometimes even ‘eye dialect’ spellings, were increasingly used in written Scots, particularly in newspaper columns.

By the twentieth century Scots had become the language of the so–called lower classes, used only informally and more or less condemned to the pub and the playground. Consequently, knowledge of the eighteenth– and nineteenth–century written tradition began to wane, and the effects of education in standard English increasingly led many writers to use the sound–to–letter correspondences of Standard English to represent their dialect’s...
pronunciation and even more apostrophes to indicate supposedly missing letters, thus adding to the misconception that Scots was a debased form of English rather than a language variety that had developed independently. The Scots revival of the twentieth century led to a resurgence of interest, with the publication of reference and dictionary works such as Warrack’s *Scots Dialect Dictionary* and the ten-volume *Scottish National Dictionary*. In the 1920s, the renaissance in the use of Scots led by Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher Murray Grieve) was not just literary but also political—exhibiting the belief, based on a Gaelic proverb, that for a nation to regain its soul, it must also regain its language. MacDiarmid found himself among many contemporaries writing both prose and poetry. Other exponents included Douglas Young, Sidney Goodsir Smith, Robert Garioch and Robert McLellan. Many of those writers were accused of artificially inventing a language because they made use of Scots dictionaries and older literary works to increase and develop their already substantial native Scots vocabularies. On the other hand, recourse to dictionaries and other literary works by writers using standard German, French or English who wished to expand their vocabularies was considered an enlightening and educational practice. Those attempts to have Scots hold its own continued after the Second World War, even though the ever-expanding reach of the mass media, especially broadcasting, which was almost completely presented through the medium of Standard English, gave the whole population access to a spoken English on which they could model their speech. Scots was now considered the language of the tartan variety show or the country bumpkin. Mainstream Scotland spoke Standard Scottish English. In Ulster a similarly ‘standarised’ variety had emerged in Scots-speaking areas. Speakers of both varieties also often retained many grammatical traits inherited from Scots.
Language or Dialect?

Popular culture usually thinks of a dialect as a substandard, low-status, often rustic form of language, usually associated with the peasantry, the working class or other parts of the community lacking in prestige. As such, dialects are often thought of as being some kind of erroneous deviation from the norm—an aberration of the ‘proper’ or standard form of language.

The fact is that all speakers of any language are speakers of at least one dialect—Standard English, for example, is as much an English dialect as any other form of English. No dialect is in any way structurally superior to any other.

Linguistically speaking, dialects are usually regarded as dialects of a language, that is, subdivisions of a particular language, e.g.

- The Parisian dialect of French
- The Lancashire dialect of English
- The Bavarian dialect of German.

Language

“A language is a collection of mutually intelligible dialects” is a definition which conveniently characterises a dialect as a subpart of a language, and provides a criterion for distinguishing between one language and another. Another criterion for distinguishing languages from dialects is the *Ausbausprache*—*Abstandsprache*—*Dachsprache* framework developed by the linguist Heinz Kloss. Under the terms of that framework, Kloss considered Scots to be a *Halbsprache* (half language). *Ausbau* here refers to a variety having its own standardised form which is used autonomously with respect to other related languages. The *Abstand* refers to the distance between the languages as regards mutual intelligibility. A *Dachsprache* is usually a standard language which ‘roofs’ different dialects in a dialect continuum.

Take, for example, the Scandinavian languages, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. Those are usually assumed to be different languages. However, speakers of those three languages can, with little effort, understand and communicate with one another. Those *Ausbau* languages have little *Abstand* and are mutually intelligible. Another example is German, assumed to be a single language. There are, however, varieties of German which are not understood by speakers of other varieties.

What does the above prove? One thing for certain—‘language’ is not a particularly linguistic notion at all. Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and German are usually thought of as single languages owing to political, geographical, historical, sociological and cultural, as well as linguistic reasons.
Therefore, the term ‘language’ is relatively ‘unscientific’. Linguists usually refer to ‘varieties of language’. Consequently, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish could be referred to as varieties of Scandinavian.

**Accents**

Accent refers to a variety which is phonetically or phonologically (pronunciation or realisation) different from other varieties.

**Dialects**

A dialect is a variety which is grammatically (and perhaps lexically) different from other varieties, rather than being phonologically different. Dialects and accents frequently merge into each other without any discrete break.

**Geographic Dialect Continua**

A dialect continuum is a chain of mutual intelligibility across geographical space. Adjacent dialects are usually intelligible, but dialects which are farther apart may not be mutually intelligible.

An example of such a continuum is the Romance dialect continuum stretching across the Iberian peninsula through France and parts of Belgium and down to the southern tip of Italy. From one place to another across this area there will be some linguistic differences distinguishing one dialect from the next. Sometimes the differences would be greater, sometimes lesser, but with distance they would be cumulative. The farther apart the places, the greater the differences would become. As the distance increases between places, communication becomes increasingly difficult and eventually impossible. In places far apart the ‘dialects’ spoken are mutually unintelligible, although all across the dialect continuum a chain of mutual intelligibility exists.

In this example the continuum includes Portuguese, Spanish, Catalan, French and Italian. Where does one language end and the other begin?

Europe has many other dialect continua. The West Germanic language continuum includes Frisian, Dutch (Flemish), Low Saxon, German and Swiss German. The varieties spoken in Ostend in Belgium and Zürich in Switzerland are not mutually intelligible but are linked by a dialect continuum. Low Saxon is often regarded as a dialect of Dutch in the Netherlands and a dialect of German in Germany. Can the same ‘language’ be a dialect of two different ones? In fact, Low Saxon is a marginalised language, not a dialect of either Dutch or German.

Another dialect continuum is the North Slavic dialect continuum that includes Czech, Slovak, Polish, Ukrainian and Russian.
As elsewhere in Europe, a language continuum exists in the British Isles, stretching from Cornwall to Shetland. Beat Glauser’s research into the linguistic border between Scots and English dialects showed that the phonological and lexical borders were almost identical, one of the most marked borders in any European language continuum. This, of course, has to do with historical and social factors. Before the Union of 1707 people in Scotland looked to Court Scots as their linguistic standard whereas in England people looked to London. After the Union, people in Scotland continued using Scots as an expression of their identity while their English neighbours increasingly abandoned their traditional dialect. To a large extent it now seems as if English dialects stop at the border and Scots dialects begin there.

**Autonomy and Heteronomy**

Some Franconian varieties spoken in the west Germanic dialect continuum are considered to be dialects of Dutch, while others are considered to be dialects of German. This is owing to the relationship that these dialects bear to their respective *Dach* or standard languages, Dutch and German. This is simply because people in the Netherlands usually believe they are speaking Dutch, that they read and write Dutch and that the standardising influences on their dialect will be towards Dutch, and on the whole they will look towards Dutch as the standard language which normally corresponds to their vernacular. The same is true of the dialects in Germany.

Since heteronomy and autonomy are the result of political and cultural, rather than purely linguistic, factors, they are subject to change. For example, until 1650 part of what is now southern Sweden was Danish, and the dialects spoken there were then considered Danish dialects. As a result of war and conquest, that area became part of Sweden. Forty or fifty years later, those dialects were considered dialects of Swedish, although no linguistic change had taken place. Those dialects had become heteronomous with respect to standard Swedish rather than Danish. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century the official language used in Norway was Danish. It was only with the re-mergence of Norway as an independent nation that a distinct, autonomous standard Norwegian was developed—with two standards, Bokmål and Nynorsk.

Not until the 1920s did what we now call Afrikaans become an independent language, with the acquisition of its own name, orthography and standardised grammar. Before that it was considered a form of Dutch.

For a brief period in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Scots can be regarded as an autonomous *Ausbau* variety, having its own ‘standardised’ orthography and grammar. At the time no language in Europe was as standardised as they are today. The degree of orthographic variation at the time was no different from that in contemporary England. It was Standard English becoming the official language which eventually caused Scots speakers to think of that as the *Dachsprache* to which their vernacular was heteronomous. Scots did not cease to be spoken in 1707.
Is Scots a Dialect or a Language?

Product information taken from the packaging of a Philips energy saving lamp in Danish, Norwegian, Czech and Slovak reads as follows.

Kan ikke brukes i forbindelse med dimme utstyr eller elektronisk av og på mekanismer. Ikke egnet til bruk i helt lukkede armaturer.


Nevhodné pre stmievanie, elektronické spínanie, pre fotobunky casové spínanie a senzory snímania intenzity svetla. Nevhodné prevádzkovat' v úplne uzavretých svietidlách.

Nevhodné pro stmívání, elektronické spínání, fotobunky. Casoá zarízení a stmívací cidla. Nevhodné k použití do hermeticky uzavrených svitidel.

Which is the language and which the dialect?

Arguments put forward in order to define Scots as a language include the fact that Scots has, as described in the introduction to the Scottish National Dictionary, at least five dialect groups. The dialects of Scots are, with their varying accents, pronunciation, lexis and grammar, by and large mutually intelligible amongst Scots speakers, but speakers of Standard English and other English dialects often find (broad) Scots dialects unintelligible. Scots has also been the medium of an extensive literature reaching back at least 600 years. Although Modern Scots is not as standardised as Standard English, prestigious literary conventions do exist. However, knowledge of them is variable owing to little, if any, education taking place through the medium of Scots or even about it. Furthermore, Scots grammars have been published over the years, so codification or Ausbau is not completely lacking in that respect either. Finally, Scots is also officially recognised.

From the Scottish Education Department’s Scots Language Factsheet (12.08.99) dealing with the Scottish Executive’s Policy on the Scots Language:

“[The Scottish Executive considers the Scots language to be an important part of Scotland’s distinctive linguistic and cultural heritage ...”

“The UK Government announced on 4 June 1998 its decision to sign the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This came into effect as of the 1 July 2001. The Scots language will be covered by Part II of the Charter. By applying Part II of the Charter to Scots the Government will be recognising the distinctive nature and cultural value of the language.
“The Consultative Steering Group Report (Section 3.3 §§ 53–64 ‘Language’) has recommended that the normal working language of the Parliament should be English but the CSG Report recognised the strong historical and cultural arguments for facilitating the use of Gaelic and Scots in the Parliament.

“This involves teachers in valuing pupils’ spoken language .... This makes children aware of the richness of the language and helps them value the Scots they may use at home or with their peers.”

The Northern Ireland Good Friday/Belfast Agreement, approved by referendum on 22 May 1998, states the following:

“Rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity.

Economic, Social and Cultural Issues

3. All participants recognise the importance of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to linguistic diversity, including in Northern Ireland, the Irish language, Ulster-Scots and the languages of the various ethnic communities, all of which are part of the cultural wealth of the island of Ireland.”

The North/South Co-operation (implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, wherein “Annex 1, Part 5, Language, states the following:

“– promotion of greater awareness and use of Ullans and of Ulster Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island.”

and in Annex 2, DEFINITIONS, Part 5, Language, it states the following:

“1.7 “Ullans” is to be understood as the variety of the Scots language traditionally found in parts of Northern Ireland and Donegal. “Ulster–Scots cultural issues” relate to the cultural traditions of the part of the population of Northern Ireland and the border counties which is of Scottish ancestry and the influence of their cultural traditions on others, both within the island of Ireland and in the rest of the world.”

Nevertheless, socio-linguistically, Scots functions as part of English as a whole rather than independently from it. Scots is consequently subject to the same dialect levelling and widespread adoption of what is considered the prestigious form of the language as the dialects of English spoken elsewhere in Britain. It is still often the case that, when written, Standard English is the frame of reference rather than Scots itself. The conventions of Standard English and their perceived sound-to-letter correspondences are used in, sometimes esoteric, attempts to provide the reader with the Scots pronunciation in much the same way written representation of other dialects of English manifest themselves in popular culture.
Ultimately there is no ‘scientific’ way to prove whether Scots is a language or a dialect. It boils down to personal opinions and prejudices. The status of Scots could be debated until the cows come home—or in Scots: *Till the kye comes hame.*
Phonology

Pronunciation information is presented using the International Phonetic Alphabet developed by the International Phonetic Association (IPA). The transcriptions are broad, capturing only enough aspects of a realisation to show how words differ from one another or where the realisation differs significantly between dialects. For more detailed transcriptions, please consult the literature mentioned in the bibliography.

Phonemes are shown between oblique strokes, for example, /x/, and words are presented between square brackets, for example, [røːz] (ruise). Other symbols employed, apart from phonemes, are /ː/, which indicates that the preceding vowel is long, /ˈ/, which indicates that the following syllable is stressed, and /∅/, which means that the realisation of the grapheme is silent or ‘zero’. Pronunciation examples are given in one or more of the following varieties: Scottish Standard English, German or French. Scottish Standard English (p. 69) is essentially (British) Standard English spoken with a Scottish accent.

When discussing the written form, graphemes (letters and digraphs, etc.) are usually presented between angled brackets, as in, for example, <ui>. How the spellings are actually employed is described in the chapter entitled Written Scots (p. 23).

The general realisation of the underlying phonemes is presented here. Further information on the realisation in individual varieties is also presented in the chapter Written Scots (p. 23).

There is no standard or prestige spoken Scots akin to the Received Pronunciation (RP) of Standard English. Spoken Scots is expressed through its various dialects.
Scots Dialects
Selected Places and Areas mentioned
The main dialect divisions of Scots are as follows:

**Southern Scots**, also known as Border Scots, is—apart for a stretch of land between Carlisle and Gretna where the Cumbrian and Scots dialects mix—noticeably different from the English dialects spoken south of the border. Beat Glauser's research into the varieties on the two sides of the border concluded that the linguistic and political borders had become practically identical. Southern Scots is also known as the *yowe* and *mey* (you and me) dialect because of its distinctive diphthongisation.

**Central Scots**, subdivided into:

- South-east Central Scots
- North-east Central Scots
- West Central Scots
- South-west Central Scots

It was South-east Central Scots from which the Middle Scots standard of the universities, Court and Royal Household emerged, itself contributing some of the Modern Scots literary orthographic conventions. West Central Scots is the dialect which Robert Burns would have spoken.

**Ulster Scots**, an extension of Central Scots with pockets influenced by Southern Scots, is spoken in parts of Ulster, the only area outwith Scotland where Scots has survived as a spoken vernacular. Scots in Ulster has been under the same linguistic pressure as Scots in Scotland, not only from Standard English, but also from the neighbouring (and more prestigious) dialects of English origin. However, Scots has also influenced everyday speech throughout the north of Ireland. Wholesale Lowland Scots migration to Ulster started in the early seventeenth century. Scots settled in east Donegal and the northern half of the Ards Peninsula, spreading at first through Newtownards and Comber and then across the northern half of Down. Scots also settled from Islandmagee to Glenarm and in the west as far as Antrim Town and in the north at Ballymoney. Today Ulster Scots is spoken by both Protestants and Catholics. The dialect is subdivided into:

- Western Ulster Scots in north-east County Londonderry and County Donegal
- Central Ulster Scots in parts of County Londonderry and County Antrim
- Eastern Ulster Scots in County Down

**Northern Scots**, subdivided into:

- South Northern Scots
- Mid Northern Scots
- North Northern Scots

Mid Northern Scots or North-east Scots is often popularly referred to as ‘the Doric’, ‘the Moray Claik’ and ‘the Buchan Claik’. The name Doric comes from the Greek ‘Doria’, a
division of ancient Greece whose inhabitants were viewed as ‘rural’ or ‘rustic’ by the Athenians. The term Doric was originally used to describe Scots in general but nowadays tends only to refer to Mid Northern varieties.

**Insular Scots** is spoken in Orkney and Shetland, which were colonised from Norway, under Danish control, in the ninth century. The colonists spoke a Scandinavian language which came to be known as Norn. Between 1321 and 1468 the islands were governed under proxy by the Scottish Earls of Angus, Strathearn and St. Clair. In 1468 the Islands were offered as dowry security for the marriage of the Danish princess Margaret to James III. The dowry was never paid and the islands became part of Scotland. Eventually, through Scots government and settlement, mainly from Lothian and Fife, but also Angus, the islands became Scots-speaking. The residual Norn influence on the dialect affects not only phonology but also vocabulary and verb construction. There is often distinct variation within Insular Scots and some noticeable differences from mainland Scots varieties, especially with regard to vowel length and the consonants. Insular Scots is often written using orthographic traditions of its own because it is thought that the conventions of traditional literary Scots do not adequately represent the varieties on the page.

**Urban Scots** is often used to refer to the dialects of Scots spoken in and around towns and cities, especially Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Although the Belfast dialect cannot be considered Scots, its location between Scots-speaking areas to the north and south meant that many of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century century incomers introduced numerous Scots features to the speech of the city. Such features include both grammatical and syntactical influences, but the most prominent are in vocabulary, such as *thon* (that), *wee* (small), *weans* (children), *daunder* (a stroll), *jouk* (to duck), *keek* (peep), *skelf* (splinter), *polis* (police), *crack* (chat), *farl* from a contraction of *fardel* (a three-cornered cake), *oxter* (armpit), *neb* (nose), *scunner* or hypercorrect *scunder* (disgust), *stour* (dust), *redd* (prepare, arrange), *clart* (mud, dirt) and the universal *ay* and *ye* for ‘yes’ and ‘you’.

The phonology of the urban varieties is generally that of the surrounding rural dialects, all urban dialects suffering from a loss of much particularly Scots vocabulary. Owing to its location, Dundee shares features with Central and Northern varieties. Edinburgh Scots encompasses the surrounding towns such as Bonnyrigg, Dalkeith and Penicuik. The speech of North Berwick, Dunbar, Haddington and Tranent is also heavily influenced by that dialect. Glasgow Scots, known colloquially as ‘the Patter’, is well established in surrounding towns such as Clydebank, Paisley, Renfrew and Rutherglen, and increasingly gaining influence around the Firth of Clyde in Campbeltown, Dumbarton, Gourock, Greenock and Rothesay. An east Lanarkshire variety is spoken in Airdrie, Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Denny, Motherwell, Strathaven and Wishaw. An Ayrshire variety is spoken in Carstairs, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Leadhills and Prestwick. Glaswegians are very innovative when coining new terms, for example, *boggin* (smelly), *malkie* (slash), *stotter* (an extreme example of its kind), *bampot* (a fool) and *heid-banger* (an idiot), many becoming quite widespread throughout Scotland, and in some cases, Ulster.
**Gaelic and Scots** (p. 65). Gaelic is the Celtic language traditionally spoken in the Highlands and Islands to the west, known as the *Gàidhealtachd* in Gaelic. The Highlands and Islands were on the whole Gaelic-speaking until well into the nineteenth century. Since then a Highland form of Scottish Standard English has replaced Gaelic in much of the Highlands, but Gaelic is still spoken as a community language on the western fringes and in the Hebrides. Gaelic has had some influence on Scots, and traditional literature often contains representations of Scots as it was perceived to be spoken by Gaels.

The southern extent of Scots can be identified on the basis of features which differentiate Scots from neighbouring English dialects, such as the realisation of *come*, /x/ or /ç/ (<gh> or <ch>), where Standard English cognates have /f/ or /θ/, the Scots realisation of <wh> as /ʍ/ as against /w/, and where r becomes the Northumbrian ‘burr’.

Dialects of course gradually pass into each other, so that a mixture of dialects occurs where one variety merges into another. A whole series of maps would be necessary to represent the distribution of sounds accurately.
Consonants

In Scots, consonants usually have much the same realisations as in Scottish Standard English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Sounds like</th>
<th>Usual spellings</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Sounds like</th>
<th>Usual spellings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>bat</td>
<td>&lt;b&gt;</td>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>sip</td>
<td>&lt;c, s, ss, se&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td>&lt;d&gt;</td>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>ship</td>
<td>&lt;sh&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dʒ/</td>
<td>jam</td>
<td>&lt;j, g(e), dge&gt;</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>tip</td>
<td>&lt;t&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>fat</td>
<td>&lt;f, ph&gt;</td>
<td>/tf/</td>
<td>chin</td>
<td>&lt;ch-, -tch&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>&lt;g&gt;</td>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>thin</td>
<td>&lt;th&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>hat</td>
<td>&lt;h&gt;</td>
<td>/ð/</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>&lt;th&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>yet</td>
<td>&lt;y&gt;</td>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>van</td>
<td>&lt;v&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>kit</td>
<td>&lt;c, k&gt;</td>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>witch</td>
<td>&lt;w&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>lot</td>
<td>&lt;l&gt;</td>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>which</td>
<td>&lt;wh&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>mat</td>
<td>&lt;m&gt;</td>
<td>/ç, x/</td>
<td>loch</td>
<td>&lt;ch&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>not</td>
<td>&lt;n&gt;</td>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>zip</td>
<td>&lt;s, se, z&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
<td>sing</td>
<td>&lt;ng&gt;</td>
<td>/ʒ/</td>
<td>vision</td>
<td>&lt;s, sh&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>pet</td>
<td>&lt;p&gt;</td>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>rat</td>
<td>&lt;r&gt; (usually trilled (rolled) in Scots)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many speakers substitute a glottal stop (/ʔ/) for /t/, and sometimes /k/ and /p/, in particular between vowels, or for a final /t/. 
Vowels

J. C. Catford (1957) described Scots as essentially having a 12-vowel system (excluding diphthongs). However, owing to mergers some dialects have as few as eight vowels. A. J. Aitken (1977, 2002) described a 19-vowel system (including diphthongs, some long and short realisations, and the historical vowel 3). Both excluded the unstressed vowel /a/ (Eng. above, Ger. Nase, Fr. çé). More detail on the realisations in the various dialects can be found in the chapter Written Scots (p. 37).

Aitken also developed the vowel-numbering system used here as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Sounds like</th>
<th>Usual spellings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sub&gt;short&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>/ɔɪ/</td>
<td>Eng. bite</td>
<td>i-e, y-e, ey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sub&gt;long&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>/aɪ/</td>
<td>Eng. buy, Ger. weit</td>
<td>i-e, y-e, ey–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>/ɪ/</td>
<td>Eng. feet, Ger. Biene, Fr. ici</td>
<td>ee, ei, ie, e–e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>/ei/</td>
<td>Estonian leib, cf. Ger. Laib.</td>
<td>ea, ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>/e/</td>
<td>Eng. aim, Ger. See, Fr. été</td>
<td>a–e, ai, ae, ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>/oː/</td>
<td>Eng. toad, Ger. Boot</td>
<td>o-a, o–e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>Eng. food, Ger. Schule, Fr. roue</td>
<td>oo, ou, u–e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>/ø/</td>
<td>Ger. schön, Fr. peu</td>
<td>ui, eu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>/eː/</td>
<td>Eng. aim, Ger. See, Fr. Été</td>
<td>a–e, ai, ae, ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>/ɔɪ/</td>
<td>Eng. bite</td>
<td>(e)y(e), uy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>/oe/</td>
<td>Eng. boy, Ger. Heu</td>
<td>oi, oy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>/ai/</td>
<td>Eng. bite</td>
<td>i–e, y–e, ey, ui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>Eng. feet, Ger. Biene, Fr. Ici</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>Eng. father, Ger. Name, Fr. pâte</td>
<td>a, au, aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/ɔː/</td>
<td>Eng. cost, Ger. Sonne, Fr. tort</td>
<td>a, au, aw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

in some Ulster dialects merged with 17.
13 /ʌu/ Eng. cow, Ger. Haus <ow(e)>
May be /o/ before /k/ and sometimes /p/.

14 /ju/ Eng. you, Ger. Jugend <u-e, eu, ew, ue>
/jʌu/ Ger. Jauche in some Northern dialects.

15 /ɪ/ Eng. pity, Ger. mjt <i>
some merger with 19. Tends towards 16 in some eastern and Southern dialects.

16 /ɛ/ Eng. pen, Ger. Fest, Fr. faite <e>

17 /a/ Eng. cat, Ger. hat, Fr. pätte <a>
some merger with 12.

18 /o/ Eng. rode, Ger. Sohn, Fr. soot <o>
May merge with 5 in some Central and Southern dialects.

19 /ʌ/ Eng. but <u>

* Aitken treated the contemporary outcomes of vowel 7 before /k/ and /x/, often /(j)ʌu/ or /(j)ʌ/ depending on dialect, as a merger with vowel 14. Those are treated as realisations of vowel 7 here.

Other IPA symbols which may be encountered here are:

The unstressed vowel /a/ Eng. above, Ger. Nase
/æ/ Southern Eng. fat
/ʌ/ Ger. Hütte, Fr. mjr
/œ/ Ger. Göttlich, Fr. sœur
/o/ Australian Eng. bird, Swedish dum
/ɔ/ Ger. Fülle
/au/ Australian Eng. goat
/ɪa/ Southern Eng. leer
/œ/ Australian Eng. my
/ɛi/ Dutch wijn
/ei/ Spanish rev
/oi/ Eng. noise
/ɔi/ Southern Eng. boy

Vowel length is described by the Scottish Vowel–length Rule. The SVLR is most developed in the Central and Ulster dialects. In peripheral varieties (Southern, Western Fife, Eastern Perthshire, Western Angus and Insular) not all vowels are affected. In many words, adherence to the rule diminishes the farther north a dialect is from central Scotland.

The vowels /a, ɪ, ʌ, ɛ, a/ and /æ/ are usually short. /ø/ may be realized as /y/ in short environments.
The vowels /e, i, o, u, ø/ and /y/ are usually long:
In stressed syllables before the voiced fricatives /v, ð, z, ð/ and /r/. The Shetland /d/ realisation of the underlying /ð/ remains a long environment;
Before the monomorphemic end-stressed syllables /rd/, /r/ followed by any voiced consonant, /g/ and /dʒ/;
Before another vowel; and
Before a morpheme boundary. A morpheme is the smallest meaningful part into which a word can be divided, that is, inflexions, prefixes and suffixes, etc.
Some varieties may merge vowel 17 with vowel 12 in long environments. In Ulster, /eː/ may be realized as /ɛː/, and vowels 16, 17 and 18 are usually always long.

The vowels /ɑ/ and /ɔ/ are usually long in most dialects.

Diphthongs

The diphthong /aɪ/ usually occurs in long environments and /ai/ in short environments. Other diphthongs are /ʌu, oe, oi/ and /ju/.
In Ulster, vowel 13, realised as /əʊ/, is short before a voiceless consonant and before a sonorant followed by a voiceless consonant, but long elsewhere.
Written Scots

Scots orthography stems from the conventions used in Northern Middle English and later Scottish innovations. During the Middle Scots period, Scots orthography was never standardised in the way in which we would understand it today—one spelling per word—but both Scots and Southern English, nevertheless, had fairly regularised literary conventions. ‘Standard’ English did not become fully standardised until the end of the eighteenth century. The period of greatest orthographic stability and distinctiveness of written Scots was during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Owing to the increased availability of printed publications from England during the sixteenth century, the influence of the emerging Southern English standard on written Scots began to increase. With the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the Southern English standard had replaced Scots for most official writing, and with the Union of Parliaments in 1707, written Scots was no longer used at all for official purposes.

However, Scots continued to be written in the vernacular literature of the eighteenth century, a tradition that has continued to the present day. That tradition adopted many Standard English conventions but still employed some of the Middle Scots conventions that better represented Scots phonology. That modern tradition was vibrantly expressed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Within it was what is termed literary Scots here. Literary Scots represented no dialect in particular, and its prestigious conventions were employed by writers who spoke various dialects, the pronunciation of the written word being interpreted by the reader according to his own dialect as the Scots readers of the time were probably blissfully unaware of the Standard English realisations of words spelt in that manner. Common examples of such spellings are aboon rather than abuin, brown rather than broun, dead rather than deid, night rather than nicht, past tense –ed rather than –it, verbal noun and present participle –ing rather than –in, along with apostrophes for supposedly missing letters such as a’ rather than aw, de’il rather than deil, gi’e rather than gie, fu’ rather than fou or the suffix fu, ha’e rather than hae, mak’ rather than mak, o’ rather than o, o’er rather than ower, sa’t rather than saut, ta’en rather than taen, wi’ rather than wi, and where the apostrophe represented the simplification of the clusters /ld/ and /nd/, such as aul’ rather than auld, han’ or haun’ rather than haund. Apostrophes were also sometimes inserted where a vowel had been altered and there was no standardising or etymological justification, such as floo’ers rather than flouers and noo’ rather than nou.

The foregoing simply served the notion that Scots was some kind of uncouth English. There also existed what is here termed dialect writing. In dialect writing, the spellings employed were usually intended to indicate the pronunciation of a particular variety. Of course, the line between literary Scots and dialect writing was never clear-cut. Even when writing literary Scots, exponents would often use words that they had perhaps not seen in print before, and, often unsure of what may have been an analogous spelling, instead chose to write the word phonetically. The more frequent a word, the more regularised the spelling was amongst the writers of the time.
Modern Scots has no officially sanctioned authority which prescribes the ‘right’ way to spell Scots. Nevertheless, the prestigious orthographic conventions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary Scots are thoroughly described in the 1921 *Manual of Modern Scots* and in the *Scottish National Dictionary* (SND). It is from that tradition that Scots dictionaries, especially the SND and others such as the *Concise Scots Dictionary* (CSD), both published by the *Scottish National Dictionary Association* (SNDA) now *Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd.* (SLD), usually record spelling variants in common use. The use of such non-prescriptive dictionaries as a guide often results in writers using a mixture of spellings reflecting historical, regional, register-specific, accidental or idiosyncratic variants. Since the Scots revival of the early twentieth century, numerous suggestions have been presented with the intention of encouraging Scots writers to harmonise their orthography. Writing in the *Edinburgh Companion to Scots*, John Corbett described “devising a normative orthography for Scots” as “one of the greatest linguistic hobbies of the past century.”

The first suggestions put forward were those of the 1947 *Scots Style Sheet*, a modest two pages simply encouraging a more consistent application of existing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary conventions, except the somewhat innovative, if not unheard of, rejection of the ‘apologetic apostrophe’. Such apostrophes were unsurprisingly rejected in all succeeding suggestions.

In 1975, David Purves, a writer and editor of *Lallans* (published by the *Scots Language Society* (SLS)), presented suggestions in *Lallans* issue 4, following up in the 1979 *Scottish Literary Journal* supplement issue 9. His suggestions also generally followed existing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary conventions but reintroduced some Older Scots conventions. In 1985, David Purves’ suggestions influenced those made by a number of Scots writers who met at the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh. Their suggestions were published in *Lallans* 24 as the *Recommendations For Writers In Scots* and extended lists of recommended spellings followed in issues 39–43.

In 1977 the Association for Scottish Literary and Linguistic Studies and the Scots Language Society jointly sponsored the short-lived *Scots Language Planning Committee* to look into the possibility of a standard orthography for modern Scots. Some two decades later, in 1996, the SLS and the *Scots Language Resource Centre* (SLRC) hosted a public meeting with the aim of setting up a standing body to look into and develop a ‘standard’ Scots orthography. Their *Report an Recommends o the Scots Spellin Comatee* were presented in the 2000 *Lallans* issue 56. Those suggestions were essentially a consistent application of existing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary conventions.

In 1995 the *Aiberdeen Univairsitit Scots Leid Quorum* published their *Innin ti the Scots Leid*, which also generally suggested a consistent application of existing eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary conventions but included a few innovations reminiscent of Older Scots conventions.

In 1997, Philip Robinson published his *Ulster-Scots: A Grammar of the Traditional Written and Spoken Language*. His esoteric spelling suggestions were on the whole anything but
traditional, and, rightly or wrongly, it has been suggested that Robinson’s intention was to create a distinctive orthography in order to underpin his highly dubious assertion that Ulster Scots was a language separate from the Scots spoken in Scotland.

As mentioned above, Scots dictionaries generally recorded usage, in particular the existing literary Scots conventions which had become established in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. With the advent of the Concise English-Scots Dictionary in 1993 and the Scots School Dictionary (SSD) in 1996, both published by the SNDA now SLD, recommendations for a (more) standardised spelling were included. Those recommendations generally followed established eighteenth- and nineteenth-century practices but were not always applied as consistently as others had suggested. That occasionally led to the contradictory application of some spelling conventions. The SNDA’s stated objective was to encourage the use of Scots more widely in the community. Subsequently the SNDA contended that historical spellings from Older Scots were often unfamiliar to modern readers and would make the language seem more difficult.

It is clear from a closer inspection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary Scots from both Scotland and Ulster that many, if not all, well-read writers of the time were aware of the concept of a ‘standard’ or ‘pan-dialectal’ Scots and the orthographic practices of which it was comprised. Extrapolated from that traditional literary Scots, particular graphemes representing specific phonemes—even across dialects where the realisations were often varied but, on the whole, predictable—can be identified by their continued recurrence. Such an approach arguably provides an adequate, often familiar, and unambiguous basis for a regularised pan-dialectal Scots orthography—stemming from tradition and not the idiosyncrasies of individual ‘language-planners’ or those harking back to an apparent ‘golden age’ before political union with England. Furthermore, those graphemes, being compatible with Standard English, enable the inevitable mixing of Scots and Standard English forms—reflecting the nature of much contemporary spoken Scots—to appear, on the page, as a homogeneous language.

As described above, the orthography presented here emanates from the literary tradition, and, being pan-dialectal, can on the whole be read and pronounced in any Scots dialect. The spellings used here can usually be found in the SND, the CSD and the SSD.

The Alphabet

The Scots alphabet now consists of the same letters as the Standard English alphabet, but in Older and Middle Scots the additional letters <þ> (thorn) equivalent to the modern <th>, /ð/ (eth) as in *the*, however, not necessarily differentiated consistently. In addition there was also <ʒ> (yogh) representing a sound similar to the <gn> /ɲ/ in the French *Bretagne* and <ʒ> /ʃ/ as in the modern word *year*. Those are of course now obsolete. (Yogh still occurs as <z> in many words and may be realised as /ʃ/ as in *capercaillie* and /ɲʃ/ or /ɲ/ as in *senzie* and *Menzies*.)
The letters of the alphabet originally also had Scots names, but the influence of education in Standard English has unfortunately led to a decline in the use and knowledge of those original Scots forms.

The letter A was traditionally known as \textit{aw}, realised [a] in Northern varieties and [aː] south of the Tay, now generally \textit{ai} [eː].

The letter B was traditionally known as \textit{bay} [beː], now generally \textit{bee} [biː], for a period [beɪ] in Southern Scots.

The letter C was traditionally known as \textit{sae} [seː], now generally \textit{cee} [si], for a period [sɛi] in Southern Scots.

Those three letters strung together as \textit{Aw–Bay–Sae} used to refer to the alphabet.

The letter D was traditionally known as \textit{day} [deː], now generally \textit{dee} [diː], for a period [dɛi] in Southern Scots.

The letter E was traditionally known as \textit{ay} [eː], now generally \textit{ee} [iː], for a period [ɛi] in Southern Scots.

The letter F is generally known as \textit{eff} [ɛf], but was also [fɛf] in Shetland.

The letter G was traditionally known as \textit{gay} [geː] or [dʒeː], now generally \textit{gee} [dʒiː], for a period [dʒɛi] in Southern Scots.

The letter H is generally known as \textit{aitch} [etʃ] or \textit{itch} [ɪtʃ], previously also [itʃ].

The letter I is generally known as \textit{ey} [əi], previously also \textit{ee} [iː].

The letter J is still generally known as \textit{jye} [ʤəi].

The letter K is generally known as \textit{kay} [keː], but was also \textit{kee} [kiː] or \textit{kye} [kaɪ].

The letter L is generally known as \textit{ell} [ɛl].

The letter M is generally known as \textit{em} [ɛm].

The letter N is generally known as \textit{enn} [ɛn].

The letter O is generally known as \textit{oa} [oː].

The letter P was traditionally known as \textit{pay} [peː], now generally \textit{pee} [piː].

The letter Q was traditionally known as \textit{quee} [kwiː], in Shetland also [hwiː], now generally \textit{cue} [kju].

The letter R was traditionally known as \textit{err} [ɛr], now generally \textit{ar} [ar].

The letter S is generally known as \textit{ess} [ɛs].

The letter T was traditionally known as \textit{tae} [te], also [tai] in Caithness and some Shetland varieties, now generally \textit{tee} [ti], for a period [teɪ] in Southern Scots.

The letter U was traditionally known as \textit{ou} [u], sometimes [wu], now generally \textit{you} [ju].

The letter V was traditionally known as \textit{vowe} [vəu], now generally \textit{vee} [vi].

The letter W is generally known as \textit{dooble–you} ['dubl'ju] but was also \textit{dooble–ou} ['dubl'u] or ['ulu].

The letter X is generally known as \textit{ex} [eks] or [eks].

The letter Y is generally known as \textit{wye} [wai], it was also \textit{ya} [ja] in Shetland.

The letter Z was traditionally known as \textit{ized} [ɪˈdзɛd], also [ˈɪdzɪd] or [ˈɪdzɪt], now generally \textit{zed} [zɛd], occasionally [dzɛd] or [zad].
Orthographic Conventions

Words in Scots are often divided into three groups:

1. Shared vocabulary consists of words which are common to both Standard English and Scots (and often to other languages as well), often spelt the same in the two. Many people mistakenly refer to these words as ‘English Words’—this is the result of an anglocentric view of the world. The German language uses all-*, Arm, Dame, Finger, Hand and Land, words common to both English and German.

2. Close cognates are words which are common to Standard English and Scots (and other languages as well), but which are pronounced (and spelt) differently in Scots, i.e. aw (all), airm (arm) and haund (hand) etc.

3. Words particular to Scots. Many people refer to these as ‘Scots words’, and by implication assume that the words in the previous groups are somehow not ‘Scots words’. This is based on the false assumption that something that occurs in Standard English cannot be Scots. However, the fact is that all the words in those groups are Scots words whether they occur in other languages or not.

Some words which only have a slightly different realisation in Scots from Scottish Standard English (usually the vowel sound), generally have same the spelling as in English. Do not assume that because a word is spelt the same as in Standard English it is pronounced as such.

Base forms of words are usually spelt phonemically—not in a one-letter-to-one-sound manner but in a graphemically more economic manner. In this system, factors such as position, environment and overt markers enable the same letter or cluster of letters to perform several distinct functions. Several letters or letter clusters may also represent the same sound.

Compounds and derivatives tend to be spelt morphemically, with the established grapheme bases usually retained regardless of the phonemic alterations involved. The assumption is that the reader knows the phonemic alterations that accompany the formation of derivatives and inflections. This may be a hindrance to learning Scots pronunciation from the spellings, but Scots spelling is geared to the convenience of native speakers rather than that of the learner.

Some words are spelt the same way as in Standard English but have a different realisation in Scots, for example, the <a(u)> /a/ in aunt(ie), swap, want and wash, etc., the <u> /ʌ/ in bull, v. full, and pull, etc. and the <i> /ɪ/ in bind, find and v. wind, etc. (Note that in those words the final <d> is often silent.)

Words that sound the same in Scots as in Scottish Standard English usually retain the same spelling, e.g. come, door, for, hear, some, the, tongue and young, except where a Scots
spelling has become established. In some words the spellings may differ slightly in order to accommodate the Scots realisation, for example, *lenth* and *strenth*, etc.

Some spellings, of course, do not adhere to the ‘rules’ explained here. Those are considered ‘established spellings’ because dictionaries usually have only one entry for the word in question.

The following descriptions make no claim to be exhaustive. Only the main differences between the dialect areas mentioned are illustrated. Many works have been written about or in local dialects. In Scotland, the local public library can be a good source of such writings.

**Consonants**

The consonant letters are, on the whole, realised much as in Standard English (exceptions and the pronunciation of graphemes and clusters are explained below):

- b /b/, c /s/ or /k/, d /d/, f and ph/f/, g /g/, h /h/, j /dʒ/, k /k/, l /l/, m /m/, n /n/, p /p/, q /kw/, r /r/, s /s/ and /z/, t /t/, v /v/, w /w/, x /ks/ and y /j/.

As in Standard English orthography, in disyllabic words where the first syllable is stressed, the consonant following the single vowel in the first syllable is usually doubled, giving *blatter* (to rattle), *watter* (water), *verra* (very), *fremmit* (strange), *biggit* (built), *dizzen* (dozen), *donnaert* (dazed) and *butter*, etc. The letters <h, j, q, v, w, x> and <y> are not doubled, and, <hh> and <ww> may occur in compounds such as *youthheid* (adolescence), *awweys* (always) and *awwhaur* (everywhere), where the first occurrence of <t> or <w> is part of a consonant or vowel digraph respectively, and the second occurrence of <t> or <w> a consonant.

Many verbs that end with a single consonant letter double that letter in the present and past participles, and the past tense, as do some adjectives for the comparative and superlative, as in, for example, *drap*—*drappin*—*drappit* (drop) and *het*—*hetter*—*hittest* (hot).

The letters <f, l, s> and <z> are usually doubled after short vowels as in, for example, *baff* (a blow), *nyaff* (yelp), *dwall* (dwell), *mell* (mingle), *bass* (a mat), *bress* (brass) and *bizz* (buzz), etc.

In much traditional Scots writing, it was often the practice that only the vowel representations were changed to show the Scots realisations, resulting in spellings such as *aipple*, *cairry*, *jaicket* and *maitter*, etc. Here double consonants are avoided where simple differences to Standard English spelling exist in order to conform to the ‘rules’ described above.

| aiple | apple       | mairy | marry     |
| cairy | carry       | mainer | manner    |
| haimer| hammer      | maiter | matter    |
| jaiket| jacket      |        |           |
Consonants are not usually doubled after long vowels and diphthongs, as in, for example, *ail, kail* (cole), *gean* (wild cherry), *neep* (turnip), *heid* (head), *loan* (lane), *heuk* (hook), *stale* (a foundation) and *tyne* (lose).

When forming the past tense and past perfect of verbs such as *sell, tell, spell, and coff* (buy), the double consonants may become single, giving *selt, telt, spelt* and *coft*.

The grapheme `<b>` is usually realised as /b/, but in North–east Central and Mid Northern varieties may be realised as /p/, for example, in *neebour* (neighbour).

The grapheme `<ch>`, also `<gh>` in some traditional Scots writing, for the fricative /x/ (Ger. Buch), occurs following a back vowel and /ç/ (Ger. dicht) following a front vowel. The SND describes this consonant as “now commonly written ch”, generally occurring in medial or final positions. That convention is applied here in words such as *bocht* (bought), *dreich* (dreary), *loch* (lake) and *nicht* (night). In Mid Northern varieties `<cht>`, usually medial but occasionally final, may be realised as /θ/ in words such as *dochter* (daughter), *micht* (might) and *nocht* (nought), etc., the medial /θ/ often being represented by spellings such as *dother, mith and noth* in dialect writing. The realisations /x/ and /ç/ are now a recessive feature, where in words with Standard English cognates, such as *bought*, *draught*, *enough*, *laugh*, *night*, *right*, *rough*, *sight* and *tight* are often pronounced much as in Standard English. The realisations /x/ and /ç/ usually remain in words with no Standard English cognates such as *dreich* and *loch*, but realisations with /k/ are spreading among the young in some urban sociolectal varieties.

Initially, `<ch>` usually represents the fricative /tʃ/. However, in Chirnside (Berwickshire), North Northern and Insular varieties /ʃ/ may occur, often written `<sh>` in dialect writing, in words such as *chap* (knock), *chield* (a fellow), *chirl* (chirp) and *chowk* (cheek, choke). Finally, following `<r>`, `<ch>` is used for /ʃ/ in words such as *airch* (arch), otherwise `<ch>` is usually used in words such as *catch, fleetch* (coax, flatter), *poosh* (pouch) and *wretch* (wretch). The `<ch>` in the cluster `<nch>` is usually realised /ʃ/ in words such as *brainch* (branch), *dunch* (a blow), *ganch* (to stammer), *hainch* (haunch), *kinch* (kink), *painch* (paunch), *pinch* and *trench*.

As described in the SND, the spelling `<c>` for /s/ is usually used before the letters `<e>` and `<i>`. Such words are generally of Romance origin, for example, *censor, ceevil* (civil), *cedent* and *mediciner* (doctor).

The SND describes the use of Initial `<c>` for /k/ “at the beginning of a syllable before the vowels a, o, u” and “before the consonants l, r, w”. The cluster `<cw>` occurs only sporadically in ‘phonetic’ dialect writing. Extrapolated from that, the ‘rules’ applied here are that /k/ is spelt `<c>` before the vowels `<a>`, `<ai>`, `<au>`, `<aw>`, `<o>`, `<oa>`, `<oo>`, `<ou>` and `<u>`, before the vowel sound (a few exceptions) spelt `<ui>`, before the diphthong spelt `<ow(e)>`, and before `<l>` and `<r>` in words such as *caw* (call), *caddie, carle* (a fellow), *caird* (card), *cairt* (map, chart), *cleid* (clothe), *creash* (grease), *cou* (cow), *cliot* (rag, cloth), *crown* (crown), *coff* (buy), *corrupt, cosy, coast, cruldge* (cower, crouch), *cushat* (wood–pigeon),
cowp (overturn), cowt (colt), cley (clay), crine (shrink, shrivel), cuist (pt. cast) and cuit (ankle). In South–west Central varieties, before front vowels (/a, e, i, y/), it may be palatalised /kj/ in words such as caird (card, tinker).

The SND describes the use of <k> “before front vowels and n”. Extrapolated from that, the ‘rules’ applied here are that <k> is used before the vowels spelt <e> and <ei>, <ee>, <ea> and <eu>. However, a few exceptions with the vowels spelt <ai> and <ae>, and <ui> exist, before the diphthong spelt <i-e> and <y-e>, and before <n> in words such as keek (peep), keeng (king), kebbock (a kind of cheese), Keith, kelter (to tilt up), ken (know), kye (cows), kyte (stomach), kythe (appear), kail (cole), kaim (comb) and knife. In South–west Central varieties, before front vowels (/a, e, i, y/), it may be palatalised /k j/ in words such as ken (know) and kirk (church).

The SND describes the use of <c> for /k/ as being “at the beginning of a syllable before the vowels a, o, u” and “before the consonants l, r ...”. Extrapolated from that, it follows that initial <sc> for /sk/ is usually used before the vowels spelt <a>, <au>, <o>, <oa>, <oo>, <ou>, <u> and <ui>, before the diphthong spelt <ow(e)>, and before <l> and <r> in words such as scantlins (scarce), sclaff (slap), sclate (slate), sclent (slope, incline), scaud (scald), scaur (scar, precipice), scaw (a scab), scone, scoor (scour), scunner (disgust), scrieve (scribble) and scuip (scoop).

The SND describes the use of <k> “before front vowels ...” Extrapolated from that, it follows that initial <sk> is usually used before vowels spelt <ai>, <ae> and <a-e>, before the diphthong spelt <i-e> and <y-e> in words such as skail (scatter), skait (harm, damage), skelf (a splinter), skelp (slap), skeel (skill), skirl (shriek), skive (prowl, shave), skime (to glance, gleam) and skite (to dart, shoot). Initial <sk> may also occur in words of Scandinavian origin.

As described in the SND, /k/ is spelt <ck> “when intervocalic after a short vowel, and final.” That convention is followed here in words such as beck (curtsey), feck (value, quantity), muckle (much, large) and puddock (toad). In North Northern varieties the realisation may be /g/, often spelt <g> in dialect writing.

In South–west Central and Ulster varieties, before front vowels (/a, e, i, y/) a <c> or <k> representing /k/ may be palatalised /kj/ in words such as caird (card), ken (know) and kirk (church).

The grapheme <d> is usually realised as /d/. In Southern Scots a final <d> may be realised as /t/ in words such as cupbuird (cupboard) and orchard, /dʒ/ in words such as curmud (intimate), dauid (strike) and fud (tail) and /ð/ in a few words such as ledder (ladder), pouder (powder), shouder (shoulder) and sowder (solder). In Ulster varieties an Irish substrate may lead to a <d> before <e(r)>, in words such as drap (drop), daunder (stroll) and wander, being realised as an interdental /d̪/, sometimes represented by <d>dh> in Hiberno–English dialect writing, rarely occurring in Ulster Scots writing. The same realisation of <d> may also be found in varieties along the Highland line, particularly in Caithness. In some
varieties, especially in Shetland and Mid Northern varieties, initially before a vowel, the realisation may be palatalised /dj/ or even /ʤ/.

In many varieties the terminal <d> of <ld> is usually silent but is often pronounced in the derived forms (especially past tenses) of words. In much traditional Scots writing that was represented by an apostrophe, for example, aul’ or (a)al’ and fie/l’. However, occasionally the final <d> was simply omitted. In order to achieve orthographic consistency such words are spelt <-ld>.

In Southern Scots both medial and final <ld> are usually realised as /ld/ in words such as auld (old), bield (shelter), cauld (cold), elder and fauld (fold), but to the west, as in all Central and Ulster varieties, except North–east Central, simplification to /l/ usually occurs finally and when the next word begins with a consonant in words such as auld, bield, cauld, and fauld. Medially the realisation is usually /ld/ in all Central and Ulster varieties in words such as elder, except North–east Central, where it is usually realised as /l/ in all positions.

In Northern varieties simplification to /l/ is the norm, except in North Northern when medial, where the realisation is usually /ld/. In Mid Northern varieties reversal of /l/ and /d/ may occur in words such as warld [wardl] (world) and field [fidl]. In Insular varieties, when syllable–final, simplification to /l/ is frequent. Otherwise the realisation is /ld/.

In many varieties the terminal <d> of <nd> is usually silent but is pronounced in the derived forms (especially past tenses) of many words. In much traditional Scots writing, that was often represented by an apostrophe. However, occasionally the final <d> was simply omitted. In order to achieve orthographic consistency such words are spelt with the <nd>, for example, haund (hand) and soond (sound), and haundit and soondit. Entries in dictionaries often include the terminal <d> in brackets, e.g. haun(d), soon(d), sen(d).

In many words the final <d> of a medial <nd> is also silent. In much traditional Scots writing, that was often represented by an apostrophe. Many words no longer have the <d> pronounced at all. Such words are now spelt using a medial <nn> or <n>.

Here spellings such as bind, blind, find and wind are considered adequate for representing the vowel /ɪ/. Some contemporary writers use spellings like finn(d) in order to emphasise the Scots realisation.

In Southern Scots the cluster <nd> is usually realised as /nd/, but to the west, as in all Central, Ulster and Northern varieties, simplification to /n/ in all positions is not uncommon, being seen in words such as daunter (stroll), find, haund (hand), saund (sand) and sindry (sundry). In Insular varieties, when syllable–final, simplification to /n/ is usual. Otherwise the realisation is /nd/.

The graphemes <f> and <ph> are usually realised as /f/. In Southern Scots that may be realised as /v/ in words such as cauf (calf), staff and sheaf. In Ulster varieties a bilabial /ϕ/, like the <v> in Andalusian Spanish los viejos, may also occur. In Mid Northern and Insular
varieties an initial <f> is often palatalised /fj/ in words such as *fact, fauch* (fallow) and *ferm* (farm), often spelt *fyauich* or *fya(a)ch*, etc. in dialect writing.

The grapheme <g> is usually realised as a hard /g/, but in South-west Central and Ulster varieties, before front vowels (/a, ɛ, e, ɪ, i, y/), it may be palatalised as /gj/ in words such as *girn* (grimace) and *get*. In Mid Northern varieties an initial <g> is often palatalised as /gj/ in words such as *gang* (go) and *gie* (give), often spelt *gyang*, etc. in dialect writing. In Buchan this may be realised as /dj/.

The graphemes <g>, <ge>, <dge> and <j>, except where <g> represents /g/, are usually realised as /dʒ/, occasionally as /ʃ/. The SND describes /dʒ/, besides <g>, as also being “written *dge, ge, j*”, further adding that the “distinctions correspond in the main to those of English”. The *Manual of Modern Scots* describes the usual application as “initially j, medially dg, finally dge or in Romance words ge, when no ambiguity arises.”, adding that a “number of words, generally of Romance origin, beginning with dʒ are spelt with g when the following vowel is i, ɛ, ɪ, ɜ.” Those conventions are applied here in words such as *age, apologeese* (apologise), *begrudge, breinge* (plunge), *cadge* (peddle wares, beg), *cruldge* (cower crouch), *disgeest* (digest), *fadge* (a cake), *gigot* (a leg of mutton), *huge, jeel* (congeal), *jeelie* (jelly), *obleegge* (oblige), *page, rage, vegetable, wage and wigeon*. In Southern Scots, the cluster <nge> may be realised as /nʒ/ in words such as *breinge*. In North Northern, especially in Caithness, and in Insular varieties, initially, the clusters <dge> and <g(e)> may be unvoiced /tʃ/, as is initial <j>, often spelt <ch> in dialect writing.

The cluster <gn> is now usually realised as /n/, but in Northern and Insular varieties the older /gn/ may occur, in words such as *gnap* (gnaw, bite) and *gnaw*.

The grapheme <h> is usually realised as /h/, but in Avoch and Cromarty initial <h> may be elided and insertion of /h/ may also occur. In all dialects /h/ may be elided in the pronouns *he, him, his, her and hers*. In some Latinate words, such as *hospital*, older speakers may elide initial /h/. An initial <h> in words such *hue, huge* and *human*, usually /hj/, may be realised as /ç/ or /ʃ/. The former also occurs in words such as *heuk* (hook), *heuch* (precipice, cliff) and *howe* (hollow).

The cluster <kn> is now usually realised as /n/; the older /kn/ is still to be found in Mid Northern, Caithness and Insular varieties, but in South Northern varieties /tn/ may also occur in words such as *knap* (strike, protuberance), *knee, knot and knowe* (knoll). In the Gaelic–influenced dialects such as those of the Black Isle and Easter Ross, /kr/ may occur, that realisation often being spelt <kr> in dialect writing. In Insular varieties, /hn/ may also occur.

The grapheme <l> is usually realised as /ɫ/ except in the Gaelic–influenced dialects of Easter Ross, south Ayrshire, Wigtownshire and along the Highland line where it is realised /l/; in Southern and Insular Scots the realisation is also /l/ when initial after front vowels and labial and dental consonants. Here /l/ is used in phonetic transcriptions. In North-east and West Central varieties the <l> in words such as *blue, laik* (a toy) and *plou* (plough) may
be realised as /j/, giving [bjuː], [jek] and [pjuː], etc. and resulting in spellings such as blyue or blyew, yaik or yake and pyoo in dialect writing.

The word-final <le> is generally realised as /ʌl, əl/ or simply /l/ in words such as daible (dabble), gorble (gulp, a nestling), paidle (paddle), stibble (stubble), vocable (lexeme) and yabble (chatter).

The grapheme <n> is usually realised as /n/. In Gaelic-influenced varieties in Ulster and along the Highland line, particularly Caithness, an interdental /n̪/ may occur. In Northern and Insular varieties /n/ may be palatalised as /nj/, especially before <a>, for example, in nakit (naked), narg (to nag, grumble), natter (chatter) and nurr (growl, purr).

The grapheme <ng> is always realised /ŋ/. However, after /i/, a palatal /ɲ/ occasionally occurs in Ulster and varieties along the Highland line, in words such as finger, hing (hang), ingan (onion) and single. The final <g> in thing is often silent. That is used in writing because the final <ing> is not the suffix for the gerund or present participle. This word is cognate with German Ding and Scandinavian ting. The sound /ŋ/ also occurs in the cluster <nk> /ŋk/ in words such as bink (bench) and hank (a coil).

The grapheme <p> is usually realised as /p/ but may be realised as /b/ in a few words such as bapteese (baptise), caiptain (captain), lapster (lobster), parley (truce, respite) and rapscallion. In a few words, finally after /m/, /p/ may be aspirated to /f/, usually spelt <ph>, for example in, bump(h), hump(h), gamp(h) (to gape), grump(h) and sump(h).

The grapheme <q>, generally occurring in the digraph <qu>, is realised as /kw/. In quo (quoth) etc. it may be realised as /k/. In Southern Shetland <qu> may also be realised as /m/ in words such as acquent (acquaint), quair (quire) and queen, often spelt <kw> or <wh> in dialect writing.

The grapheme <r>, is traditionally an alveolar tap /ɾ/ or trill /r/ (used here), but the approximant /ɹ/, common in Scottish Standard English (p. 69), is now frequent. Metatheses with <r> occur in some words, for example, cross—corss, gress—girse (grass), wrastle—warsle (wrestle), burnt—brunt, turf—truff, rhubarb—rhubrub, proverbs—provribs, northern—northern, and wart—wrat. In Moray and Upper Banff /r/ may be elided before /s/ in words such as first, hairst (harvest, Autumn), hirsle (shuffle, flock of sheep), hirst (barren), horse and purse.

The grapheme <s>, is usually realised as /s/, for example in saidle (saddle), seemdle (seldom), sloum (a rumour) and syne (since), but may be realised as /z/ in words borrowed from French such as v. close, dose and rose.

The realisation of final <s>, including contracted and genitive forms with <’s> or <s’>, is usually /s/ after voiceless consonants (/f, k, p, t, θ, x/ and /ç/) in words such as laifs (loafs), wifes, wife’s, lochs (lakes) and theas (insists), and /z/ after voiced consonants (/b, d, ð, g, l, m, n, η, r, v/ and /z/) or vowels in words such as dous (doves), haunds (hands), steams,
gie’s (give us), his, hers and thairs (theirs). After the sibilants [s, ʃ, ʒ, z, dʒ] and /tʃ/ the realisation is usually [az] in words such as catches, hooses (houses), juidges (judges), lidges (lodges), rashes (n. rushes) and wisses (wishes) etc. Where /s/ becomes medial before the inflection it remains /s/ in words such as hooses [ˈhusəz] and galluses [ˈgaləsəz] (trouser braces). As a consequence, forms such as lasses—lass’s—lassies and hoose—hoose’s—hoosies are barely distinguishable.

Commenting on /s/ and its voiced equivalent /z/, the SND describes the spelling <z> for the latter, used by some writers, “as a more phonetic representation”, but the literary convention is described as being “generally written s, -ss medially, or -ss, -se finally”. Those literary conventions are applied here where final <ss> is usually realised as /s/ in words such as miss, bliss (bless), bress (brass), uiss (n. use) and wiss (wish). Final <se> is more complicated, and it may be worthwhile consulting a pronunciation dictionary, but it is usually realised as /s/ after the short vowels, /l/, /n/, /p/ and (long vowels before) /r/ in words such as coarse (course, coarse), grilse (young salmon), hoose (house), lowse (adj. loose), manse, mense (sense, honour) and traipe. Final <se> is usually realised as /z/ after long vowels and diphthongs in words such as jalouse (suspect), lowse (v. loosen), phrase, please and uise (v. use).

The grapheme <s> may also be used to represent /ʒ/ in words such as casual, ephesan (a pheasant), leisur (leisure), meisur (measure), pleasur (pleasure), tresur (treasure), uisual (usual) and veesion (vision). The older realisation /z/, in words of French origin, is now all but obsolete.

Initial <sl-> may become <scl-> [skl] by analogy with words where the <scl-> is etymological (p. 57), particularly in South and Mid Northern Scots, producing variants such as slap—sclap, slent—sclent, slidder—sclidder (slip or slide), slitter—sclitter (sloppy mess), slootch—slootch (slouch) and slype—slype (strip or slice).

A prothetic <s> may occur before initial c, k, p, t and occasionally <l> and <m>, producing variants such as clammer—sclammer (clamber), cleesp—sclesp (clasp), clim—sclim (climb), crump—scrump (munch), pink—spink, poach—spoach, tramp—stramp, loonge—sloonge (lounge), muggie—smuggie (wet and misty), mirl—smirl (fragment) and mush—smush (crush) etc.

The trigraph <sch> occurs for /sk/ in a few words such as schame (scheme) and schuil (school).

The grapheme <sh>, as described in the SND, is now the modern spelling in place of the archaic <sch> for /ʃ/ in words such as creash (grease) and sheep. It may also represent /ʒ/ in words such as fusion (vigour) and pushion (poison). In peripheral varieties (p. 14) the cluster <shr> may be realised as /sr/ or /ʃər/ in words such as shreed (shred), shrew and shrood (shroud).
The grapheme `<t>` usually represents `/t/`. In some varieties south of the Tay a final `<t>` may be pronounced `/d/` after `<l>`, `<m>`, `<n>`, `<ng>` or a vowel in a monsyllable in words such as `telt` (told) and `selt` (sold). It may also be glottalised `/ʔ/` in many varieties, especially Central, Ulster and urban ones. That occurs between vowels and finally in words such as `beast`, `but`, `juist` (just) and `watter` (water). Glottal stops are not usually indicated in writing. In Gaelic-influenced varieties in Ulster and along the Highland line, particularly in Caithness, it may also be realised as an interdental `/θ/` like ‘`thh`’. In North Northern and Insular varieties a final `<t>` may be realised as `/d/` in words such as `droukit` (soaked), `it`, `mairit` (married), and `semmit` (undershirt), also occurring in words such as `lempet` (limpet) and `packet` in North Northern varieties, often written `<d>` in dialect writing. In Glaswegian, medial `/t/` in and across words such as `butter` and `let it` often becomes `/ɾ/`, e.g. `[bʌɾəɹ]` and `[lɛɾɪʔ]`.

The grapheme `<th>` is usually realised as `/θ/` in words such as `bath`, `graith` (equipment), `laith` (adj. loath), `thole` (endure), `skaithe` (n. harm, damage) and `thrawn` (thrown, twisted), or `/ð/` in words such as `blether` (blather), `kythe` (appear), `laithe` (v. loathe), `skaithe` (v. harm, damage), `thaim` (them) and `thair` (their). Final `<the>` is used to indicate the voiced consonant `/ð/` in the verbs `bauthe`, `kythe`, `laithe` and `skaithe`. In Central and Ulster varieties the `/θ/` in `thanks`, `thing`, `think` and in compounds such as `awthing` (everything) is often debuccalised to `/h/`, giving `[ʰæŋks]`, `[ʰɪŋ]` and `[ʰɪŋk]`. In Southern Scots initial `/θ/` before `/r/` may be debuccalised to `/h/` in words such as `thrae` (reluctant), `threap` (insist) and `throu` (through). In Ulster medial `<th>` may be silent, and before `<er>` it is often realised as an interdental `/θ/`, seen in words such as `blether`, `thaim` and `thair`. The interdental realisation is very occasionally represented by `<t(th)>` in Hiberno-English dialect writing, rarely occurring in Ulster Scots writing. In Edinburgh and Glasgow `<thr>` may be realised as `/r/` in words such as `three` and when medial realised as `/r/` in words such as ‘brother’ `[bɾəɾæ]`, `[bɾə]` (brither) and ‘mother’ `[məɾæ]` (mither). In Glasgow the is often realised as `[ɾæ]`, as in “we are ra people”.

In Mid Northern varieties, especially in Buchan, a medial `<th>` before `<er>` is often realised as `/d/` in words such as `blether`, `faither` (father) and `mither` (mother). The `/d/` realisation is often represented by `<dd>` in dialect writing. In many Northern varieties, initial `<th>` may be elided in words such as `the`, `thay` (they), `thair` (their), `thare` (there), `this` and `that`.

In Shetland, and to some extent in Orkney varieties, the realisation is either `/d/` in words such as `blether`, `thaim`, `thair`, `/t/` in words such as `wirth` (worth), `thing` and `thrawn`, or, when final, `/ð/` or `/d/` in words such as `buith` (booth) and `meith` (a landmark), but final after a vowel `/θ/` in words such as `mooth` (mouth), `sooth` (south), `truth` (truth). The `/d/` realisation is often spelt `<d(d)>` and the `/t/` realisation `<t>` in dialect writing, for example, `bledder`, `dem`, `der`, `wirt`, `ting`, `traan`, `buid`, `bad` or `bød` and `meid`.

The cluster `<tw>` is usually realised as `/tw/`. In Southern Scots the `/w/` may be vocalised in words such as `twilt` (quilt), `twin` and `twinty` (twenty) giving `[tolt]`, `[ton]` and `[ˈtʊnti]`. In West Lothian and Perthshire it may be realised as `/kw/` in words such as `atween` (between), `twa` (two), `twal` (twelve), `twinty` (twenty) and `twist`, resulting in spellings such as `akween`, `kwaw`, `kwal` and `kwist` in dialect writing.
The grapheme <v> is usually realised as /v/. In Ulster varieties a bilabial /β/, like the <b> in Spanish Habana, may also occur. In Mid Northern varieties along the coast of the Moray Firth, <v> may be realised as /w/ in words such as nervish (nervous), raivel (tangle), vailyie (value), veesion (vision), veesit (visit) and verra (very).

The grapheme <wh> is the modern literary spelling in place of the archaic <quh> in words such as wha (who), whan (when), wheech (rush, dash) and wheel. In Southern, Central and Ulster Scots the realisation is usually /ʍ/. However, in some areas older speakers may have /xw/. In Southern Scots the realisation /h/ may occur in words such as whurl (whorl) and wheezle (wheeze, cough). In Edinburgh and Glasgow it may be replaced by /w/ in words such as whit and wheel, especially among younger speakers.

In Southern, Central and Ulster Scots the realisation is usually /ʍ/ in words such as whaup (curlew), wheech, wheen (a few) and whin (gorse, furze), but not in interrogatives such as wha, whan, whaur (where) and whit (what), where the realisation is /f/. In other Northern varieties the realisation is usually /f/ in all such words. However, /w/ may occur in some more recent additions to the vocabulary of the area. In Aberdeen the realisation /f/ is still widespread, but words such as white, whin and whisky have /ʍ/ and the realisation /w/ is spreading among the youngest speakers. In Cromarty /w/ prevails, and it may also occur in some words in other areas. In the Black Isle and Easter Ross <wh> may be omitted or realised as /h/ in words such as wha, whan, whase (whose) and whit. The /f/ realisation is often represented by spellings such as fa(a), fa(a)n, fa(a)r and fit in dialect writing. In the vicinity of Lerwick, in Shetland, the realisation is often /kw/, often spelt <kw> or <qu> in dialect writing.

The cluster <wr> is now usually simplified to /r/, but in Mid and North Northern varieties it is often realised as /vr/ in words such as wrack (wreck), wrang (wrong), wricht (wright) and write, often written <vr> in dialect writing. In Insular varieties the older realisations /wr/ or /wər/ still occur.

The grapheme <y>, as a consonant, is usually realised as /j/. In Southern Scots it may be elided before /i/ in words such as year.

The grapheme <z> was traditionally realised as /dz/, more recently /z/, in words such as zeal, zenith, zone. The older /dz/ may still occur in words such as zoo. Apart from that <z> is seldom used for /z/ in Scots, except in 'phonetic' dialect writing. The grapheme <z> may also occur in some words as a substitute for the older <ʒ> (yogh) representing the realisations /ɲ/, /ɲi/ and /ŋj/. Earlier <ʒ> became /lj/. This has led to a number of variants using the spellings <z>, <y>, <n> and <ng>, for example, brulzie—brulyie (broil, brawl), gaberlunzie—gaberlunyie (a beggar), senzie—senyie (synod), Cockenzie—Cockennie, Mackenzie—Mackennie and Menzies—Mings.
Silent Letters

Some letters in Scots words are not pronounced.

The <t> after medial <ch> /x/ or /ç/, <f> and <s> before <en> and <le>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>castle</th>
<th>lichtnin</th>
<th>lightning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cuisten</td>
<td>listen</td>
<td>listen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fochten</td>
<td>tichten</td>
<td>tighten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frichten</td>
<td>saften</td>
<td>soften</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirsten</td>
<td>christen</td>
<td>thistle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The <t> in <ct> and <pt>.

These are often written <ck> and <p> although the <t> is often pronounced in derived forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>act</th>
<th>attempt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contact</td>
<td>corrupt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fact</td>
<td>tempt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the following exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>'cep</th>
<th>except</th>
<th>crap</th>
<th>crept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>empty</td>
<td>empty</td>
<td>disjaskit</td>
<td>dejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfitt</td>
<td>perfect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In many varieties a <d> after <n> and <l> may be silent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>auld</th>
<th>old</th>
<th>sinder</th>
<th>separate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cauld</td>
<td>cold</td>
<td>laund</td>
<td>land (a tenement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haund</td>
<td>hand</td>
<td>roond</td>
<td>round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunder</td>
<td>hundred</td>
<td>mind</td>
<td>remember</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vowels

Short vowels are usually written with a final consonant or consonants in words such as *buff* (strike), *bak* (bake), *ban* (ban, curse), *lib* (geld), *licht* (light), *seck* (sack), *tint* (lost), *wat* (to know, wet) and *wid* (wood), or with two consonants followed by <e> in words such as *birse* (bristle), *carse*, *dulse*, *ense* (else), *girse* (grass), *grilse* (young salmon), *mense* (sense, honour), *merse* (fertile ground) and *winze* (a curse, oath).

Long vowels are usually written without a following consonant, for example, <e> in *be* and *we*, <i> in *wi* (with), <y> in *by*, and, <o> in *jo* (sweetheart) and *no*, a single consonant followed by <e> in words such as *bane* (bone), *fere* (comrade), *bode* (bode, a bid) and *hure* (whore), or two letters <au, aw, ae, ai, ay, ea, ee, ei, ie, oa, oo, ou> in words such as *faw*
(fall, variegated), *glaur* (mud), *snav* (snow), *brae* (hillside), *bairn* (child), *day*, *fear*, *weet* (wet), *dreich* (dreary), *bield* (shelter), *gloam* (become dusk), *hoose* (house), *broun* (brown), and very rarely *<aa>* in, for example, *haar* (a mist).

Diphthongs are usually written with two letters *<ey, eu, oi, ow(e)>* and *<y(e)>*.

The **unstressed** vowel /a/ may be represented by any vowel letter and occurs in unstressed positions in words such as *about* (about), the, *oxter* (armpit), *loanin* (lane), *bannock* and *smeddum* (mettle). It also occurs initially in words such as *ahint* (behind), *awa* (away), *evite* (avoid), *'ithoot* (without), *obteen* (obtain) and *upon*.

In and around Glasgow, and sometimes in other Gaelic–influenced varieties, an epenthetic vowel /a/ or /ʌ/ is often inserted before the final consonant in words such as *girl*, *airm* (arm), *film* and *torn*.

A final lexical *<e>* is used in verbs in order to avoid homographs of plural nouns in, for example, *brouse* (browse)—*brous* (brows), *please*—*pleas*, *tease*—*teas*.

**Vowel 1**, occurring initially and medially, is usually spelt *<i–e, y–e>* and occasionally initially *<ey>*. and is usually realised as /ai/ in short positions and /aɪ/ in long positions (see the SVLR p. 21). The spelling *<i–e>* is usual in words realised similarly in Scots and Scottish Standard English such as *advice*, *bide* (remain), *bile* (n. boil), *drive*, *fine*, *fire*, *five*, *grice* (pigs), *knife*, *lice*, *like*, *rive* (tear), *size*, *thrice*, *while*, *white*, *wife*, *wine* and *wise* (v. wise) whereas *<y–e>* as described in the SND, is “thought of as generally more archaic” and is often used in words which are considered particularly Scots such as *dyke*, *fyle* (foul, soil), *sybae* (spring onion), *syne* (since), *tyne* (lose), *wynd* (narrow lane), and *wyte* (blame). There are of course exceptions such as *rive* (tear) and *wise* (adj. wise). The spelling with *<i>* used in words such as is also used in *kind* (kind) and *mind* (mind) not to be confused with the vowel 15 realisation in words such as *find* and *bind*, which rhyme with ‘pin(ned)’. Vowel 1 also occurs finally in words as *by*, *buy*, *cry*, *forby* (besides, in addition), *fry*, *pie*, *sky* and *tie*. Initial *<ey>* occurs in words such as *eydent*. In and around Campbeltown, Galloway and in Ulster /e/ may occur before /k/ in words such as *like* and *dyke*. In Ulster, after /w/ and /m/, the usual realisation is /aɪ/. However, /ae/ and /ei/ may also occur, in words such as *while*, *white*, *wise*, *wine* and *wyte* and in Buchan /oi/ may occur, the usual realisation in North Northern varieties, often written *<oi>* in dialect writing. In Dundee the realisation /əi/ is common in long positions in words such as *by*, *cry*, *drive*, *five*, *forby* (besides, in addition), *fry*, *pie*, *size*, and *sky*.

**Vowel 2** is usually spelt *<ee, e–e, ei, ie>*. and realised as /i/. Some contemporary writers consider *<ei>* to be ‘more Scots’ and apply it regularly for /i/. The SND states that “since the 18th century the spelling *ee* or, less commonly, *ie* has been largely adopted for this sound ... and in General Scots for Romance [i]”. Those conventions are applied here. The spelling *<ee>* occurs in words such as *ceevil* (civil), *creep*, *eetem* (item), *feel*, *frend* (friend), *freet* (fret, chafe), *jeelie* (jelly), *keep*, *leed* (language), *meet*, *neebour* (neighbour), *neer* (kidney), *meenister* (minister), *peer* (pear), *permeesion* (permission), *releegion* (religion), *treen* (narrow lane), and *trew* (brow).
seek (seek, sick), teeth, weel (well) and weet (wet) etc. The spelling <ie> usually occurs medially before <v> and <i> and in words shared with Standard English, such as bield (shelter), bonspiel (curling match), chield (a fellow), chief, grieve (oversee), lief (agreeable, beloved), nieve (fist), scrieve (scribble), shield, shielin (shepherd’s hut), stieve (firm, stiff) and vieve (vivid, lively). The spelling <ei> generally occurs before /c/ in words such as dreich (dreary), heich (high), skeich (frisky) and wheich (stench), but also occasionally in words such as deiil (devil), eild (age, to grow old), heifer, meith (landmark), neist (next), reive (rob, plunder), seil (bliss), speir (enquire), sweir (reluctant), teind (a tenth or tithe) and weird (fate). The spelling <e-e-e> occurs in words such as bere (a kind of barley), here and fere (comrade). In some Mid Northern varieties /ei/ may occur medially after /w/ and a dark /l/, and occasionally after other consonants, before /r/ /i/ or / iar/ occurs and before /k/, /i/ may occur. In Shetland, before /k/, the realisation may be /ei/. The spelling <ie>, usually realised as /i/, is also used finally in some other words, for example, gie (give) and hie (high) etc. In urban, and increasingly in other varieties, the /i/ realisation, in many Latinate words such as meenister and releigion has been replaced by the Standard Scottish English realisation /i/.

Vowel 3, occurring initially and medially, is usually spelt <ea, ei>. This vowel was realised as /ε/ in Older Scots, becoming /ei/ in North Northern varieties, but has in most varieties, subsequently, variously merged with vowels 2, 4 or 8. The current realisations are usually either /i/ or /e/. In some traditional writing, in particular dialect writing, the spelling <ee> may occur when merged with vowel 2 (/i/). When merged with vowels 4 or 8 (/e/) the spellings <ei>, <a-e> or <ay> when final, and reversal of the digraph <ea> to <ae> may occur. The SND describes the spelling <ea> alternating with the “less frequent al” and that <ei> was often used in words such as breid (bread), deid (dead) and heid (head) in traditional literature. Such insights and observed practice lead to the conventions applied here.

The grapheme <ea> is used in common with many Standard English cognates such as beard, beast, cheap, deave (deafen), eat, ease, east, fear, gear, heap, hear, v. lead, leave and lea’, meal, meat, read, ream (cream), quean (girl) and wheat. However, the realisation /ɛ/ /ɛː/ in Ulster, may occur before /r/ in words such as early, hearth, learn and pearl. In Southern, South–east and West Central Scots generally /i/ but often /e/ before /t/ and /θ/. In North–east Central varieties /e/ is usual, as it is in Ulster—except in a few words such as deave which usually have /i/. The South Northern varieties usually have /i/ but to the south, especially in Dundee, and less frequently to the north, the realisation /e/ may occur. The Mid Northern varieties usually have /i/ except coastal varieties which usually have /e/. However, in some varieties medially after /w/ and a dark /l/, and occasionally after other consonants, /ei/ may occur and before /k/, /i/ may occur. The /ei/ or /i/ realisations are often written fyte for wheat, gryte for great, quyne or quine for quean, spyke or spik(ck) for speak, and w(e)y(e)ver or wiver for weaver in dialect writing. In North Northern varieties the realisation was traditionally /ei/ but /e/ is becoming predominant. The realisation in Orkney is usually /i/, sometimes /e/, and in Shetland either /i/ or /e/ but before /k/ it may be /ε/.

The spelling <ei> is also used, particularly where Standard English cognates are realised as /ε/ or /e/ as in ‘head’ and ‘pear’, such as beir (bear), breid (bread), breinge (rush), deid
(dead), deif (deaf), dreid (dread), eild (age, grow old), eith (easy), eleiven (eleven), heid (head), heiven (heaven), leid (n. lead), meidae (meadow), pleuir (pleasure), seicont (second), seiven (seven), spreid (spread), sweir (swear), teir (v. tear), threid (thread) and weir (wear). In Southern, South–east and West Central Scots generally /i/ but /e/ may also occur, especially before /t/ and /θ/. In North–east Central /e/ is usual, but may also occur in Southern and Central Scots in some words, more so in Wigtownshire. In Ulster /e/ is common but /i/ also occurs, particularly before /d/. In Glasgow eleiven, heiven and seiven may have /i/ or /e/. The South Northern varieties generally have /i/ but to the south, especially in Dundee, and less frequently the north, the realisation /e/ may occur. Mid Northern varieties usually have /i/. However, in some varieties medially after /w/ and a dark /l/ and occasionally after other consonants, /ei/ may occur, that realisation is often written swyte for sweet in dialect writing. In North Northern varieties the realisation was traditionally /ei/ but /e/ is becoming predominant. In some Mid and North Northern varieties before /v/ the realisation /ei/ or even /i/ may also occur, in for example, heiven and seiven, often written hiven and siven or seyven in dialect writing. The realisation in Orkney is usually /i/ and in Shetland either /i/ or /e/ but before /k/ it may be /ɛi/.

Vowel 4 is usually spelt <a-e> and <ae>. The realisation is usually /e/. In most dialects of Middle Scots Vowel 8 (/eː/, see below), usually spelt <ai> initially and medially, had merged with this vowel. Consequently the spelling convention for vowel 8 also came to be used for this vowel. However, before the nasals /m/ and /n/ the traditional <a-e> spelling survived in words such as ane (one), ance (once), bane (bone), hame (home), lame, nane (none) and stane (stone). That also occurs in words such as bake, face, gate (street, way), hale (whole), nakit (naked), Pace (Easter) and rake whereas the spelling <ai> had established itself in words such as aiblins (perhaps), aik (oak), ait (oat), aith (oath), braid (broad), caird (card), daich (dough), hairse (horse), laich (low), saip (soap) and sair (sore) and waiik (weak). In Southern, Central and Ulster Scots /ɛ/, in the latter /ɛː/ may occur before /r/. In Southern Scots the initial <ai> in words such as aiblins, aik, ait and aith is usually palat alised /je/ or /jɛː/, /jɛː/ also occurring in South–east and neighbouring North–east Central varieties, and to some extent in West Central varieties, resulting in spellings such as yiblins, yik and yit in dialect writing. In Southern Scots and South–east Central varieties an initial /h/ may produce /(h)jɛː/ or /cjɛː/ in words such as hairse, have and hale, resulting in spellings such as hyirse or hyirsh, hyim(m), hyem and hyill in dialect writing. In Southern Scots the older /jɛ:/, often written <eea> in dialect writing, may occur in some areas and before /ɛː/, the realisation may be /iːu/, in words such as daich and laich resulting in spellings such as leuch in dialect writing. In Southern, West Central, South–east and neighbouring varieties of North–east Central Scots, and in Ulster outwith Donegal, are, ane and ae—the form usually used before nouns, are pronounced [jɛn], [jɛns] and [je], except in Teviotdale where /jɛː/ occurs, also [jɛn], [jɛns] in Ulster, often spelt yin, yince and yae in dialect writing. The numeral adjective ane may also occur as [wan] alongside the [en], [ɛn], [jæn] and [ɛn] realisations described above. To the south of the South Northern area /ɛ/ may occur for this vowel. In Mid Northern varieties the cluster <ane> is realised as /in/, except in Moray and Nairn where the realisation is usually /en/, in words such alane (alone), ane, ance, bane, gane (gone), mane (moan, lament), nane and stane etc., an /in/ realisation often resulting in dialect spellings such as aleen, een, eence, been, neen and steen. The numeral adjective ane
may also occur as [wan] alongside the [en], [jɪn], [jɪ̈n] and [in] realisations described above. In some Mid Northern varieties after /w/ and a dark /l/, and occasionally after other consonants that vowel may be realised as /ɛi/, often resulting in dialect spellings such as wyme for wame (womb, belly) and wyke or weyk for waik and, after /k/ and before velars, this vowel may be realised as /ja/, often resulting in dialect spellings such as byaak for bake, cyaard for caird, kyaak for cake, nyaakit for nakit and ryaak for rake. In North Northern varieties the traditional realisation is usually /ei/, often spelt in dialect writing. However, /e/ is spreading.

In Insular varieties the realisation is usually /e/, sometimes /ɛː/, and in peripheral areas it may be diphthongised. However, on Whalsay after /k/ and /g/, /je/ may occur as in cake [kjek]. In Orkney after /w/, /ai/ may occur as in wame [wəim], and in some varieties, the cluster <ane> is pronounced /in/, as in alane, ane, bane, gane, mane, nane and stane, and in Orkney /i/ may also occur before other consonants. In dialect writing <ee> may be used to represent the /i/ realisations.

The spelling <ae> usually /e/ and is described by the SND as generally being used "in final syllables" in words such as brae (hillside), frae (from), gae (go), nae (no), sae (so), strae (straw), tae (toe) and wae (woe) and occasionally medially in words such as claes (clothes) and faem (foam). The Southern Scots realisation of the <f> in frae is traditionally /θ/, often spelt thrae in dialect writing. In some Mid Northern varieties medially, in for example claes, after /w/ and a dark /l/, and occasionally after other consonants, this vowel may be realised as /ɛi/, often resulting in a dialect spelling such as cl(e)y(e)s for claes. In parts of Orkney the realisation /i/ may occur. The spelling <ae> is also used for vowel 7 (see below) in words such as adae, dae, shae and tae prep.

**Vowel 5** is usually spelt <oa> or <o-e> and realised as /oː/. However, that has merged with vowel 18 (see below) in Southern, Central and Ulster Scots, in words such as afore, boat, coal, foal, hoast (cough), rose, and thole (endure). The spelling <oe> is occasionally used in oe (grandchild, niece) and ieroe (great–grandchild), and especially in Insular varieties for words of Norn origin such as hoe, soe and voe. In Northern varieties there is some merger with vowel 18, however, the merging lessens outwards from Aberdeen. In Mid Northern varieties an initial /k/ may be realised as /kw/ and the following vowel /εi/, often written kwyle, kwile, kweyl(e) or quyle for coal and quyte for coat. Some merger with vowel 18 also occurs in Insular Scots.

**Vowel 6** is usually spelt <oo, ou, u-e> and occasionally <eu, ew> and <ue>, all realised as /u/. The SND states that the spelling <ou> "is generally preferred in this dictionary" but that "in the course of the 19th century oo came to be used chiefly for this sound, as a borrowing from Standard English orthography, though found as early as the 17th century in Scots." From that, the spelling <ou> is used where the realisation /u/ is considered unambiguous in words such as allou (allow), brou (brow), broun (brown), bouk (bulk), cou (cow), coum (culm), cour (cower), dou (dove), doun (down), dout (doubt), fou (full), hou (how), nou (now), poupit (pulpit), sou (sow), thoum (thumb) and you, but <oo> is used for this vowel in order to avoid confusing <ou> with the Standard Scottish English realisation /ʌu/ in words such
as aboot (about), coont (count), droop, hoose (house), moose (mouse), oo (wool), oot (out), scoor (scour) and soond (sound). The spelling <u-e> also occurs in words such as dule (grief, sorrow) and hure (whore).

The spellings <eu, ew> and <ue> occur in words such as rheums (rheumatic pains), blew, brew, crew, flown (flown), lew (lukewarm), screw, shew (to sew, showed) shewster (seamstress), trews (tartan trousers), blue, grue (shudder), rue (regret), shue (swing, sway), and smue (smirk).

In Southern Scots stem-final <ou> and <oo> are realised as /ʌu/, as in allou, brou, cou, dou, fou, hou, nou, oo, sou and you, resulting in spellings such as allow, dow(e), fow(e), now, sow and yow(e) in dialect writing. In South–west Central varieties the traditional realisation is /y/. However, /u/ is now very prevalent. The /y/ realisation may also occur in some Ulster varieties and is generally the norm in North Northern varieties. In Insular varieties, in words such as dule and hure, the /ʊ/ realisation occurs, often being represented by <ui>, <o> or <o> in dialect writing.

Vowel 7 is usually spelt <ui, eu, ae, i>. This vowel was originally a long <o> /ɔː/ in Old English, which later became /ʊ/ in Older Scots then also /y/. The SND describes the usual literary spelling <ui> as “alternating with the earlier u–e, which is now usually retained only before nasals”, i.e. abuin and abune, but that the “spelling [ui] has become a literary standard also in northern Scots where the actual pronunciation is [i].” as it is for the unrounded realisations /i/ and /e:/ typical of Central varieties. The SND also describes how the spelling <ae> is used to represent “an unrounding of [o] ... in final syllables”. As stated in the SND, the “literary standard” <ui> is used here in words such as abuin (above), abuse (abuse), bluid (blood), bruit (brute), buird (board), cuil (cool), cuit (ankle), duin (done), fluir (floor), fruit, furid (ford), guid (good), juist (just), luif (palm), luim (loom), muir (moor), music (music), pur (poor), ruif (roof), ruise (praise), schuil (school), shuin (shoes), shuir (sure), spuin (spoon), truith (truth), tuim (empty), uise (v. use), uiss (n. use) and Yuil (Yule). However, <ae> or <i> are usual in daes (does), dasna (doesn’t), daena (don’t) or the more frequent dis, disna, dinna, and the literary <ae> “in final syllables” is used in words such as adaé (daae), dæ (do), shae (shoe) and tæ (to). Where /ɔ/ was followed by /k/ or /x/ the realisation is now generally /(j)u/ or /(j)ʌ/ depending on dialect. However, /ɔ/ still occurs in some peripheral varieties (p. 14). The SND describes the use of <eu> “especially before –k, –ch” alternating “with the spelling ui to represent [o]”. From that the literary spelling <eu> is used here in words such as beuch (bough), bek (book), deuk (n. duck), eneuch (enough), heuch (ravine, cliff), heuk (hook), leuch (laughed), leuk (look), neuk (nook), sheuch (ditch), teuch (tough), teug (tug) and teuk (took).

The digraph <ui> is usually realised as /ʊ/ in Southern Scots. However, /ɔe/ and /e/ also occur. More recently the typical Central Scots realisations have become very prevalent. In Central varieties the realisation is usually /ɪ/ in short positions (see p. 21) in words such as abuin, bluid, bruit, cuil, cuit, duin, fruit, guid, luif, luim, muin, schuil, spuin and Yuil, sometimes resulting in spellings such as abin, din and gid in dialect writing. Initially the realisation is /jɪ/, as in uiss, often spelt yiss or yuiss(s) in dialect writing. In long positions the realisation is usually /e:/ in words such as abuise, buird, fluir, furid, muir, muisic, ruise
and shuir, often spelt flair, mair and shair etc. in dialect writing. Initially the realisation is /jeː/ as in uise, often spelt yaise in dialect writing. From Burnmouth to Berwick–upon–Tweed /i/ may occur in some words. In South–west Central varieties the traditional realisation /y/ or occasional /i/ may also occur and in North–east Central varieties in western parts of Fife older speakers retain the realisation /ə/, towards Perthshire /y/, in western Perthshire /i/ may occur in some words, and to the east the realisation /e/ often represented by <ai> or <a–e> in dialect writing, for example, abain or abane.

Ulster generally follows the Central Scots pattern described above. However, /ɛː/ may occur before /r/, as it does in Irish–settled Glasgow. In north Antrim and parts of north–east Londonderry, especially before /n/ and /l/, the realisation is often /eː/, and in County Donegal, the mid Ards and west of the Strangford Lough /iː/ also occurs. The /eː/ and /ɛː/ realisations are often spelt abain or abane, flair or flare, shair and skail or skale, and the /iː/ realisations abeen, fleer and meen, in dialect writing. In Ulster /ju/ generally occurs in uise and uiss, hence the standard spelling use in dialect writing.

In South Northern varieties the realisation is traditionally /ə/, especially inland, in West Angus /y/, in the Mearns /i/, and along the coast /e/ is common, but the typical Central Scots realisations described above are also becoming prevalent. In Mid Northern varieties the usual realisation is /i/, but after /g/ and /k/, /wi/, and in Moray and Nairn, before /r/, the realisation is usually /(j)uː/. In North Northern varieties the realisation is usually /i/, or /(j)uː/ before /r/. The afore mentioned /i/, /wi/ and /(j)uː/ realisations are often represented by spellings such as abeen, adee, b(y)oord, dee, ceet, kweet, queet, quartz or sweet, deen, fleer, floor, f(y)oord, geed, gweed, leem, meen, myoor, scheel or skeel, skweel, squeal or squeel, eese, eess and Yeel in dialect writing.

In Insular varieties the realisation is usually /o/, however, /v/ also occurs, on the island of Stronsay realisations similar to those of Central Scots occur with /i/ in short positions and /eː/ in long positions, and in Orkney /(j)u/ may occur before /p/. Those /o/ and /v/ realisations may be represented by <ø> or <œ> in dialect writing, imitating Scandinavian and Icelandic practice.

In urban varieties, and to an increasing extent in other varieties, Standard Scottish English realisations are spreading, especially in common words with Standard English cognates.

Stem–final <ae> in words such as adae, dae, shae and tae prep. is usually realised as /ə/ in Southern Scots. However, /œ/ and /e/ also occur. In Central varieties the realisation is usually /eː/, increasingly spreading into Southern Scots. In South–west Central varieties the traditional realisation /y/ may also occur and in North–east Central varieties in western parts of Fife older speakers retain the realisation /ə/ and towards Perthshire /y/. In Ulster the realisation is usually /eː/ but in the mid Ards, west of Strangford Lough and County Donegal /iː/ also occurs. In South Northern varieties the realisation is traditionally /ə/, especially inland, in West Angus /y/, and in the Mearns /i/. In Mid and North Northern varieties the usual realisation is /i/. However, in some North Northern varieties /ə/ or /y/ may also occur. In Insular varieties the realisation is as for <ui> described above.
The Spelling <i> is used in <i>did</i>, <i>didna</i> (didn’t) and the more frequent <i>dinna</i> (don’t), <i>dis</i> (does) and <i>disna</i> (doesn’t) along with <i><ae>daena</i></i>, <i>daes</i> and <i>daesna</i>. That vowel is usually realised as /ø/ in Southern Scots. However, /œ/ and /ɵ/ also occur. In Central varieties the realisation is usually /ɪ/, hence the more common <i>dinna</i>, <i>dis</i> and <i>disna</i>, increasingly spreading into Southern Scots varieties. In South–west Central varieties the traditional realisation /y/ may also occur and in North–east Central varieties in western parts of Fife older speakers retain the realisation /ø/, towards Perthshire /y/, and to the east the realisation /e/. In Ulster the realisation is /ɪ/ in mid Antrim, the north Ards and parts of County Down. In north Antrim and points in north–east Londonderry the realisation is usually /eː/, hence the spellings <i>daena</i> and <i>daesna</i>. That vowel is usually realised as /ø/ in Southern Scots. However, /œ/ and /ɵ/ also occur. In Central varieties the realisation is usually /ɪ/, hence the more common <i>dinna</i>, <i>dis</i> and <i>disna</i>, increasingly spreading into Southern Scots varieties. In Mid and North Northern varieties the realisation is usually /i/. However, /ø/ or /y/ may also occur. In Insular varieties the realisation is as for <i>ui</i> described above.

The digraph <i>eu</i> is usually realised as /jʌ/ in Southern Scots. However, /ɵ/ may also occur. In South–east Central and Northern varieties the realisation is usually /ju/. However, in North Northern, /jɔ/ may also occur after /n/. West and South–west Central varieties have /jʌ/ but in and around Campbeltown /ʌ/ occurs. In North–east Central and Ulster varieties the realisation is usually /ja/ or /ʌ/. In Insular varieties the realisation is usually /œ/, but /y/ or /jʊ/. In dialect writing the /jɔ/ and /jʌ/ realisations of <i>eneuch</i> (enough) are often spelt anyoch, enyooch, enyouch, or enyeuch, and the /jʌ/ or /ʌ/ realisations of that and other words such as <i>heuk</i> and <i>teuch</i> are spelt often en(y)uch, h(y)u(c)k and t(y)uch in dialect writing. In Insular Scots dialect writing <i>œ</i> or <i>ø</i> may be used to represent /ø/ and /y/ realisations in imitation of Scandinavian and Icelandic practice. In urban varieties, and to an increasing extent in other varieties, Standard English realisations are spreading, especially in common words with Standard English cognates.

**Vowel 8** has merged with vowel 4 (/e/, see above) in many varieties. The realisation is usually /e/: in those varieties which have no merger with vowel 4. The usual spellings are <i>aï</i>, a–e and <i>ay</i>. The spelling <i>aï</i> and occasionally <i>a–e</i> are generally used initially and medially in words such as <i>aïple</i> (apple), <i>aïrm</i> (arm), <i>baïrn</i> (child), <i>braïth</i> (breath), <i>caïrn</i> (heap of stones), <i>cairt</i> (chart, map), <i>caïtur</i> (creature), <i>daïrn</i> (darn), <i>fain</i> (eager, happy), <i>gaïther</i> (gather), <i>graïth</i> (equipment), <i>haimer</i> (hammer), <i>jaïket</i> (jacket), <i>pairt</i> (part), <i>shairp</i> (sharp), <i>stair</i> (stairs) and <i>waïrm</i> (warm). The realisation often varies between /e(ː)/ and /ɛ/ (/ɛː/ in Ulster), especially before /r/. In Glasgow /ɛː/ is usual before /r/. In Southern and Central Scots the realisation is usually /e/. In South and Mid Northern varieties the realisation is usually /e/ but to the south of the South Northern area /ɛ/ may occur. In Dundee an epenthetic vowel may occur, for example, [ɛːɹʌm] <i>aïrm</i>. In some Mid Northern varieties, especially after /k/ and before velars, this vowel may be palatised /ja/, often resulting in dialect spellings such as <i>cyाarn</i> for <i>cairn</i>, <i>fyaak</i> for <i>faik</i> (n. fold, ply), <i>lyaaq</i> for <i>laïg</i> (chatter) and <i>slyaak</i> or <i>slyaach</i> for <i>slaïk</i> (besmear). In some Mid and North Northern varieties before /z/ the realisation /ɛ:/ may also occur, in for example, <i>maïsles</i> (measles), <i>raison</i> (reason) and <i>saison</i> (season), often written <i>mizzles</i>, <i>rizzon</i> and <i>sizzon</i> in dialect.
writing.

In North Northern varieties the traditional realisation is usually /ei/, often spelt <ey> in dialect writing. However, /e/ is spreading. In Insular varieties the realisation is usually /ɛː/. However, in west Shetland /e/ also occurs and in peripheral areas it may be diphthongised. In parts of Orkney /æ:/ may occur before /p/, /t/, /k/, /ʧ/, /f/, /s/ and /ʃ/ in words such as aiple and craitur. In Orkney /i/ may occur. In dialect writing <ae> may be used to represent the /ɛː/, /e/ and /æ:/ realisations.

The spelling <ay>, usually realised as /e(ː)/, is described by the SND as generally being used “in final position” in words such as day, gray (grey), lay, pay and say. Note tea spelt with <ea>. The realisation was historically /teː/, and has remained so in some varieties, especially in Northern, Insular and Ulster varieties, otherwise it is usually [tiː], but also [tɛi] in Southern Scots.

**Vowel 8a**, occurring finally, is usually spelt <-eye,-ye, -y> and is usually realised as /ai/ or /aɪ/ in words such as cley (clay), fley (frighten), gey (gay, very), kye (cows), Mey (May), pey (pay), wey (way), whey and why. In Ulster, after /w/ and /ʍ/, the realisation is usually /aɪ/. However, /ae/ may also occur, in words such as wey and whey and why etc. and /ae/ or /ɛi/ may occur finally in words such as kye.

**Vowel 9** is usually spelt <oi, oy> and generally realised as /oe/ or /oi/, <oy> usually occurring finally, in the surname Boyd and words such as foy (farewell feast), noise and ploy.

**Vowel 10** is usually spelt <i-e, y-e> and occasionally initially <ey> and is usually realised as /ai/ in words such as bile (v. boil), ile (oil), eyntment (ointment), eyster (oyster), jine (join), pint (point), sile (soil), spile (spoil) and vice (voice). The spelling <ui> may occasionally occur in words such as guiser (masquerade or mummer). In Ulster, and to some extent in other dialects, especially Southern Scots, the realisation /oi/ may also occur in words such as bile and ile, hence spellings such as boil and oil in dialect writing. In Dundee a final glide /-(j)əl/ or epenthetic vowel may occur, for example, spile [spai(j)əl] and bile [bai(j)əl].

**Vowel 11**, occurring finally, is usually spelt <-ee> or in a few words <-e> and is realised as /i/, except in Southern Scots where the realisation is /ɛi/ in words such as be, dee (die), dree (endure), ee (eye), free, he, knee, me, see, tree, we, and wee (little). In Southern Scots dialect writing such words are often spelt dey, dei or die, frei, knie, sey or sei, bey, hei or hie, mey or mei and wey, <ey> being the usual, stem–final, literary representation of that diphthong. Note the words lea, plea, sea and tea with an <ea> spelling. The vowel is generally realised as /iː/ but sea may be realised as /sɛi/ in Southern Scots, often resulting in spellings such as sey or sie in dialect writing. In Ulster, by analogy with other words spelt with <ea> (see vowel 3 above), the realisation [eː] may also occur.
Vowel 12 is usually spelt <a, au, aw>. The SND describes the literary spelling as "... au or, when final, aw" and that the dialect spelling <aa> is used "to indicate a long vowel [aː]. This spelling is common in Insular Scots, Northern Scots and south Argyll as a substitute for a and au" further adding that "au, representing the sound [ɔː], in east mid and west mid Scots and generally adopted as the standard spelling in other dialects also, where the vowel remains unrounded". Here the literary spellings described above are used where <au> is usually used initially and medially in words such as auld (old), bauld (bold, bald) cauld (cold), caunle (candle), draucht (draught), fauld (fold), haund (hand), laund (land), maun (must), saund (sand), scauld (a scolding), slauchter (slaughter) and wauken (waken), noting that laund has an unstressed vowel in compounds and is spelt land, in for example, hieland (highland) and Scotland. The spelling <aw> is usually used finally in words such as blow (blow), braw (handsome), claw, draw, gnaw, law, maw (mow, bleat, seagull), saw, slaw (slow), snow (snow) and taw (to taw leather, a thong), but may occasionally occur initially and medially in words such as awn (to own, possess), awfu (awful), bawbee (small coin) and bawsant (white streaked).

In Southern and South-west Central Scots the usual realisation is [aː], also occurring in other Central varieties, although /ɔː:/ (SND /ɔ:/) is more prevalent there, and spreading into the Southern Scots varieties. In West Central varieties /a/ may occur in maun and in and around Campbeltown /a/ occurs, except in the cluster <auld>, which may be realised as /auld/. In Ulster the realisation is usually /aː/ or /ɔː/ in eastern and central varieties, and /aː/ in western dialects, however to the west /aː/ in (m, n, r, x). In Insular varieties some areas may have /a/ or /ɔ/, and the cluster <auld> may be pronounced /auld/. In North Northern varieties /a/ may occur before /l/, /n/, /r/ and /x/. In Insular varieties some areas may have /a/ or /ɔ/, and the cluster <auld> may be pronounced /auld/.

In some words, as described in the SND, the historical consonant <l> “has been vocalised and then absorbed by the preceding a, resulting in a long vowel sound [...]” often marked by an apostrophe—e.g. ba” but also describes the use of <w> “indicating the vocalisation of –l”, citing the examples caw, faw and waw. Today the ‘apologetic apostrophe’ is eschewed and instead, as described above, the alternative <aw>, incidentally the usual word–final representation of that vowel, is used in words such as aw (all), baw (ball), caw (call), faw (fall), gaw (gall), haw (hall) and staw (stall). The realisation is generally as described above, the Buchan /jaːv/ not occurring where /l/ has been vocalised.
The SND describes <a> as standing “for the following sounds […] [a:]” citing the examples twa and wha. Here the literary spelling <a> is used finally in words such as awa (away), twa (two) and wha (who). The realisations are much as described above except that in Southern and South–east Central Scots the realisation may be /e/, resulting in spellings such as twae, tway and whae in dialect writing.

Vowel 13 is usually spelt <ow>e and generally realised as /ʌu/. The SND states that the “ow spelling is preferred in this dictionary” in order to “distinguish [it] from” <ou>. Extrapolated from that the spelling <ow> is usually initially and medially in words such as bowk (retch), bowt (bolt), cowp (overturn), cowt (colt), dowie (dismal), fowk (folk), gowd (gold), gowpen (double handful), growthe (growth), howff (public house), howk (dig), lowp (leap) and owsen (oxen), and generally <owe> finally in words such as flowe (flow), growe (growth), howe (hollow), knowe (knoll), lowe (flame), rowe (roll, row a boat), thowe (thaw), and towe (hemp rope). In some of those words, especially before /k/, vocalisation to /ɔː:/ may occur in words such as bowk, fowk and yowk. Vocalisation is most predominant in Central, Ulster and South Northern varieties in words such as bowk, fowk, gowpen and howk, often spelt boak or boke, goapen or gopen and hoak or hoak in dialect writing. In Mid Northern varieties the realisation /jɔ/ or /jɔː/ may occur, often spelt byoak, byoke or byock and hoak, hoke or hock in dialect writing, and in Shetland /u/ and in Orkney /ɔ/ may occur.

Vowel 14 is usually spelt <ew>, occasionally <eu>, in words such as dew, ewest (nearest), feu (tenure), few, new, peuther (a fuss), pewter, spew and tw a variant of taw (taw leather), but medially the vowel may be spelt differently in words such as beauty, duty and fuel and is generally realised as /ju/ in Southern, Central, Ulster, South Northern and Insular Scots varieties. In Mid Northern varieties the realisation is /ju/ in ewest, feu and spew etc. but /jʌu/, except in and around Aberdeen, in words such as beauty, dew, duty, few, new, peuter and spew. In North Northern varieties the realisation is usually /jy/.

Vowel 15 is usually spelt <i> and generally realised as /ɪ/. However, in some varieties /ɛ/ (before /r/ it may also be nearer /e/) or a realisation approaching /ʌ/ may also occur in words such as bird, brig (bridge), drink, find, fit (foot), in, inch, kintra (country), kist (chest), licht (light), lift (lift, sky), nicht (night), pit (put), rin (run), shilpit (sickly, puny), simmer (summer), sin (sin, since) and stibble (stubble). In Southern, Central and Ulster Scots varieties the realisation is usually /ɪ/. However, /ɛ/ may also occur in North Roxburghshire and Donegal. In Southern Scots before /ɡ/, /ŋ/ and /ç/ the realisation /ai/ may occur. In Ulster it may be /i/ and towards the Highland line /ʌ/ may occur before /l/, /kl/ and /tl/. In Fife, before /ŋ/, /ei/ may occur. In South and Mid Northern varieties the realisation is also usually /ɪ/. However, /ɛ/ may also occur in some South Northern varieties. In Mid Northern varieties in some words, such as kintra, the initial /k/ may be realised as /kw/, often spelt kwintra in dialect writing. The usual realisation in North Northern varieties is /ɛ/. However, in the Black Isle and Easter Ross /ai/ may occur before /ɡ/ and /ç/. An /ɛ/ realisation may be written <e>, and an /ai/ realisation <ey>, in dialect writing. In Insular varieties the realisation is usually /ɪ/. However, in Orkney /i/ may occur before /ɡ/, /k/ and /m/, before...
/l/, /ɛ/ may occur, before /ç/ and /ʃ/ diphthongisation to /ai/ or /at/ may occur as in nicht and fish, and a preceding /k/ may be realised as /k]/, and occasionally as /tʃ/.

This vowel may also merge with vowel 19 (/ʌ/) after /w/ and /m/ (<w(h)> in some varieties. Here the literary spelling <i> is used in words such as whin (gorse or furze), whisper, whit (what), wid (wood), will, wind, wir (our), wirl (word), wirm (worm), wirthy (worthy) and wittins (news, information). In all Southern, Central, Ulster, South Northern and Mid Northern Scots varieties after /w/ and /ŋ/ (<w(h)> the realisation is often /ʌ/, which may be written whun, whasper, whut, wud, wund, wur, wurm and wittins in dialect writing. In Southern and Mid Northern varieties where <wh> is realised /f/ written dialect representations may be fun(n) (find), fusper (whisper) and fut (what).

The spelling <i> may also be used for vowel 7 (see above) in words such as dis (does), disna (doesn’t) and dinna (don’t), the more frequent alternatives of daes, daesna and daena.

Vowel 16 is usually spelt <e> and generally realised as /ɛ/, but may be nearer /e/ before /r/, in words such as bed, ebb, esh (ash tree), fecht (fight), fern (farm), gled (glad, hawk), gless (glass), hert (heart), ken (know), seek (sack), stert (start), yett (gate) and wecht (weight). In some Southern Scots varieties the realisation may be /æ/. In Fife, before /g/, the realisation may be /ei/. In coastal villages in the Mid Northern area /ei/, in Insular varieties, before /r/ it may be /e/ and in the outer isles of Shetland diphthongisation may occur. In some Mid Northern varieties, before /n/ in some words of Romance origin such as enter, gentry, Henry and pension, pent (pint) and plenty, and sense, and a few others, in particular before /nt/, the realisation may be /i/ in words such as bent (stiff grass), kent (knew), lenth (length) and pence often spelt inter, gintry, Hinky, pinsion, pint, plinty, sinse, bint, kint, linth and pince in dialect writing. In some coastal varieties the realisation may be /ei/ often spelt <ey> in dialect writing in words such as bend, edge, egg, end, leg, lenth (length), seg (sedge), send, and strenth (strength) etc.

Vowel 17 is usually spelt <a> and is generally realised as /a/ in words such as aff (off), appen (open), at, back, bak (bake), bank, bap (bread roll), craft (croft), laft (loft), lang (long), lat (let), mak (make), prat (a trick), prattick (practice, custom), ratton (rat), rax (reach, stretch), shap (shop), tak (take), tap (top), wad (would, wed, wager), want, wash and watch. In Southern and Central Scots /a/, especially before /n(d)/ and /ŋ/, may also occur, this being more likely south of the river Forth than to the north of it. In Southern and South–east Central Scots, in words such as watter (water), /e/ may occur, resulting in spellings such as wait(t)er in dialect writing. In some Southern Scots varieties the realisation may be /o/ in words such as aff, appen, craft, laft and tap. In West Central varieties the realisation /ʌ/ may occur in words such as stomack (stomach) and parritch (porridge), often written stomack and purritch in dialect writing. In Ulster the usual realisation is /a/, but /a/ in central and western varieties. However, /e/ also occurs especially after /k/ or before /k/, /g/ and /ŋ/. In Northern and Insular varieties the realisation is usually /a/ but, from Dundee to Arbroath, it may be /ɛ/ before /b/ and /g/. In Buchan gang (go) is pronounced [gjaŋ, gjɪŋ, dʒɪŋ] and gaun (going) [gəːn] or [dʒəːn]. In the Black Isle and Easter Ross /ai/ may occur before /n/. In some Mid Northern varieties, before /nt/, the realisation may be /i/ or /ʌ/ (especially
after /w/), in words such as want, often spelt wint or wunt in dialect writing, and between /r/ and /t/ the realisation may be /ɔ/ in words such as prat, prattick and ratton. In some Insular varieties /ɔ/ and /æ/ may also occur.

Vowel 18 is usually spelt <o> and realised as /ɜ/. However, /o/ is common in Central and Ulster varieties, in words such as boss, box, cod, common, dochter (daughter), on, orchard, ort, loch (lake), nocht (nought), rock and thocht (thought), where the SND describes the use of <oa>, for the realisation /o/, by some writers as a “phonetic spelling”, for example, boax, coammon, oan and roa(c)k. In Southern Scots and the south east of the South Central area the cluster <och> is often realised as /ʌux/ in words such as dochter, thocht and nocht, often spelt douchter or dowchter, thoucht or thowcht, and nowcht, or as a non-fricative dowter, thowt and nowt, in dialect writing. Furthermore, an initial <o> may be realised as /wʌ/ in words such as orchart (orchard) and ort (waste), often spelt, wurche(r)t and wort in dialect writing, also wuppen (open). In West Central varieties the realisation /ʌ/ may occur in words such as body (a person) and mony (many), often spelt buddy and munny or munnie in dialect writing. In parts of Moray and Caithness /o/ may occur. On Yell (Shetland), before /x/, /au/ may occur in word such as dochter, loch and thocht.

Vowel 19 is usually spelt <u> and generally realised as /ʌ/ in words such as bull, bund (bound), burn (burn, stream), drumly (muddy, sullen), drunken (drunk), dubs (muddy puddles), full, fund (found), grund (ground), hunder (hundred), pull, truff (turf, pilfer), unce (ounce) and wund (wound, coiled).

Prefixes and Suffixes

The SND describes <-ie> as being used “finally, as a diminutive or hypocoristic ending”, in for example, grannie, laddie, lassie, shappie (shoppie) and wifie. In Southern Scots the realisation is usually [ɪ], also occurring in South–east Central varieties. However, the [e] realisation of the other Central and Ulster varieties is more prevalent. In North–east Central varieties [i] also occurs, especially to the west. In Northern varieties a system of vowel harmony operates where the usual realisation is [i] if the preceding vowel is /i/ or /ai/, or the preceding consonant is /b, d, ð, g, v, z/ or /z/. Otherwise the realisation is [ɪ], but [e] may also occur in South Northern varieties. In Insular varieties the realisation is usually [i].

The SND also describes <-ie> “as an adjective ending, corresponding to English –y”, citing the examples bonnie, couthie and pawkie”, but also describes <-y> “as an alternative to the commoner Scots spelling –IE.”

Both <-ie> and <-y> are used for forming adjectives; <-ie> tends to be used in particularly Scots words and <-y> in words the same or similar to Standard English, but <-ly> is preferred over the unwieldy <-lie> for adverbial endings, for example, reekie (smoky), pernicketie (fastidious), sairy (sorry), stany (stony), stourie (dusty), brawly (handsomely), bonnily (beautifully), kannie (cautious, skilful), cannily (cautiously, skilfully), feckly (mostly), fully, geily (very well, fairly), likely, specially, saily (sorely), shuirly (surely)
and uncoly (very much).

In Southern Scots the realisation may be [(l)i]e. However, [(l)i] is more prevalent, also occurring in South–east Central varieties. Nevertheless, there, the realisation [(l)e], common to all other Central and Ulster varieties, prevails. In East Perthshire, a system of vowel harmony operates where the usual realisation is [(l)i] if the preceding vowel is /i/ or /ai/, or the preceding consonant is /b, d, ð, g, v, z/ or /z/. Otherwise the realisation is [(l)i]. Northern varieties follow the pattern described for East Perthshire but [(l)e] may also occur in South Northern varieties, with [(l)e] or [(l)i] occurring in Dundee. In Insular varieties the realisation is usually [(l)i].

The suffixes <-ly> <-lies> may be used to form adverbs. The realisations of <-ly> are as the adjective ending above and <-lies> [lɪez, lɪz, lez] and [liz].

When forming the present participle from verbs ending in <-ie>, the <-ie> changes to <-y> giving cairyn (carrying) and couryin (cowering).

A final <-ie> also occurs in words such as aurie (area), Australie (Australia) and Indie (India).

In Older Scots the past–tense inflection of regular (weak) verbs (see p. 150) was written <-it> or <-yt>. The traditional literary spelling in modern Scots is usually <-it> and the past participle is also used as an adjective. The past–tense inflection <-it> now generally occurs only after stop consonants, where the usual realisations are [t], [et] or [at]. In Southern Scots the latter may be [it]. In Caithness [id] or [ad] occur in in words such as lib—libbit (gelded), dunt—duntit (hit), big—biggit (built), souk—soukit (sucked), hap—happit (enfolded) and pent—pentit (painted). Likewise, in Caithness, final <et> is realised as [id], for example, lempet (limpet) and packet. After the remaining voiceless consonants the vowel in the inflection <-it> had become elided by the Modern Scots period, and the realisation is usually /t/, although /d/ may also occur, especially in Central and Southern Scots. In Caithness the realisation is usually /d/. That was often written <-‘t> or even <-‘d>, although in the latter the intended pronunciation was likely /t/. Whether the apostrophe represents the elision of the vowel in the older regular inflection <-it> or is an ‘apologetic apostrophe’ representing the elision of the <-e> in Standard English <-ed> is open to debate. Here the inflection is generally written <-t> in words such as claich—claicht (besmeared), huff—hufft (swelled), graith—graitht (prepared), fash—fasht (bothered), lauch—laucht (laughed), miss—misst (missed) and teach—teacht (taught). After the remaining voiced consonants, except nasals and liquids, the inflection is generally /d/, written <-(e)d> rather than <-‘d> in words such as bairge—bairged ( barged), deave—deaved ( deafened), lowse—lowsed ( loosened) and skaithe—skaithed (harmed). After nasal and liquid consonants the realisation is also usually /t/, although /d/ may also occur, especially in Central and Southern Scots. In Caithness the realisation is /d/. For that, an intended /t/ realisation is written <-‘t> and a /d/ realisation <-(e)d>, giving variants such as bile—bile‘/biled (boiled), dirt—dirlt/dirled, (vibrated) drown—drount/drowned (drowned), fear—feart/feared, fung—fungt/funged (struck), gar—gart/garred (compelled), ken—kent/ken(ne)d (knew), sell—selt/selled (sold) and teem—teemt/teemed (emptied).
The traditional literary spelling for the negative particle is <-na> in words such as daena or dinna (don’t), haesna (hasn’t), maunna (mustn’t), winna (won’t) andwisna (wasn’t). In Southern Scots the realisation is usually [nə]. However, [nɪ] also occurs, as it does in South–east Central varieties, although there the [ne] realisation is more prevalent, also occurring in North–east, South–west Central and Ulster varieties. The [ne] realisation is also spreading from the east into West Central varieties, where the realisation is traditionally [na]. In Northern and Insular varieties the realisation is also usually [na]. The [ne] and [nɪ] realisations are often spelt dinnae or dinny and wisnae or wisny in dialect writing. The more recent innovation <nae>, perhaps prescribing a [ne] realisation, common in much contemporary dialect writing, is not used here.

The vowel represented by final <-ae> in words such as Americae (America), arrae (arrow), barrae (barrow), nairae (narrow), swallowae (swallow) and windae (window), is usually realised as [e] in Southern Scots. In Central varieties the realisation is usually [e]. However, in and around Glasgow [a] or [ə] occur, resulting in spellings such as barra in dialect writing. In North–east Central varieties the realisation [i] also occurs, especially to the west, resulting in spellings such as Americ(k)y and arrie in dialect writing. In Ulster the realisation is usually [e]. However, depending on stress, [ɪ] and [ɛ] also occur. In Dundee [e] or [i] occurs. In Northern varieties the realisation is usually [a], often simply spelt <a> in dialect writing. However, [e] may also occur in Mid Northern varieties. In Insular varieties [a], [ɔ] and [u] occur.

The suffix <-fu> (-ful) in words such as awfu (awful), carefu (careful) and mensefu (sensible), is usually reduced to [fa] but may also be [fe] or [fɪ] in Southern Scots, the latter also occurring in South–east Central varieties. However, there, as in North–east central varieties, [fe] also occurs. In West Central varieties the realisation may also be [fa], and in Ulster [fu]. In Northern varieties the realisation is usually [fe]. However, [fe] also occurs in Mid and North Northern varieties. Insular varieties generally have [fu] along with the doublet –ful [fɪl]. In dialect writing the various realisations are often represented by spellings such as awfi, awfy, awfie, awfae, affa, affy, aafu and aafil, rather than the literary and etymological awfu.

The derivational suffix <-fee> (-fy), traditionally realised as [fi(ː)], in words such as magnifee (magnify), modifee (modify), saitisfee (satisfy) and seegnifee (signify).

The suffix <-heid> (-hood) in words such as bairnheid (childhood), guidliheid (goodliness), neebourheid (neighbourhood), youthheid (adolescence) and wiseheid (wisdom) is usually realised as [hid].

The adjectival suffix <-ous> in words such as byous (special), contermacious (perverse) and sairious (serious) is usually realised as [as].

The derivational suffix <-ual> is traditionally realised [wal] in words such as actual, annual, gradual and uisual (usual).
The humorous mock-Latin suffix <-us> is added to nouns, verbs and adjectives and is applied to persons to imply, somewhat disparagingly, smallness, dullness or stupidity in words such as *dummus* (dull, taciturn), *gawpus* (waffling fool) and *snackus* (a smack). It is usually realised [əs].

The agent suffix is usually <-er>, but a few fossilised forms in <-ar> and the Latinate <-or> occur, examples being *cottar* (cottager), *fermer* (farmer), *liar*, *precentor*, *souter* (cobbler) and *wirker* (worker), from the verb *wirk*. The realisation is usually [ər].

The final <-sur> (-sure) in words such as *leisur* (leisure) and *pleisur* (pleasure), traditionally realised as [zər], is now increasingly [ʒər].

The final <-tur> (-ture) in words such as *craitur* (creature), *lectur* (lecture) and *pictur* (picture) is usually realised as [tər].

The final <-ar> (-ary) and <-or> (-ory) in words such as *dictionar* (dictionary), *missionar* (missionary), *necessar* (necessary), *notar* (notary), *ordinar* (ordinary), *secretar* (secretary), *summarr* (summary), *interrogator* (interrogatory) and *inventor* (inventory) is usually realised as [ər].

The directional suffix <-wart> (-ward) in words such as *affwart* (offward), *backwart* (backward), *inwart* (inward) and *soothwart* (southward) is usually realised as [(w)ərt], but also <-warth> in some Northern varieties, realised as [warθ, wərθ] or [warθ]. Note the contracted form *forrit* (forward). In some Northern varieties the form <-warth> has been conflated with <-with> [wɪθ, wʌθ] which is also used as a directional suffix, in words such as *dounwith* (downwards), *hamewith* (homewards), *inwith* (inwards) and *wastwith* (westwards).

The prefix <ex-> in words such as *exactly*, *examine* (examine), *exexecute* (executor), *expleen* (explain) and *excheenge* (exchange) is usually realised as [gz] between unstressed and stressed vowels, otherwise [ks].

The prefix <for->, used much as in Standard English, in words such as *forbeir* (forbear) *forgaither* (forgather), *forfaren* (forlorn), *forfochten* (exhausted), *forfespeck* (to bewitch), *forhou* (forsake), *forleet* (forsake) and *forthink* (reconsider) is usually realised as [fər].

The prefix <fore->, meaning before in time or place, in words such as *forebeir* (forebear) *forebreest* (forefront), *foreheid* (forehead), *forenen(s)t* (opposite), *forespeck* (bespeak) and *forestair* (front stairs) is usually realised as [fɔr, far].

Other prefixes such as <dis->, <per-> and <pro-> and derivational suffixes such as <-ism>, <-ment> and <-ness> are pronounced and spelt much as in Standard English. Examples with <dis-> [dɪs-] are *disabuise* (misuse), *discomfit* (inconvenience), *disherten* (dishearten), *dishort* (an injury), *disjaskit* (dejected), *disjune* (breakfast), *dislaiden* (unload), *displenish* (divest) and *dispone* (arrange). Examples with <per-> [pər-, par-] are *perfet*
(perfect), *perjink* (fastidious), *pernicketie* (fastidious) and *perteen* (pertain). Examples with *<pro->* [pro-] are *procurator*, *profoond* (profound), *prog nostic* (prognostication), *propale* (divulge), *propine* (gift, tribute), *prorogate* (postpone) and *proveesion* (provision). An example with *<–ism>* [-izm, –azm] is *mainerism* (mannerism). Examples with *<–ment>* [-mɛn(t), –man(t)] are *adverteesement* (advertisement), *advisement* (advice), *aliment* (alimony), *assytment* (compensation), *betterment* (improvement), *bodement* (embellishment), *easement* (relief), *endurement* (endurance), *infeftment* (registration of title) and *scaiterment* (dispersal). Examples with *<–ness>* [-nes, –nas] are *aesomeness* (solitariness), *bairnliness* (childishness), *betterness* (recovery), *crabbitness* (bad temper), *evenliness* (equanimity), *fainness* (affection), *mirkness* (gloom), *sairness* (soreness), *sibness* (kinship), *thrawnness* (stubbornness) and *unconess* (strangeness). The derivational suffix *<–tion>*$, in for example, *ambeetion* (ambition), *defluction* (expectoration), *gumption* (intelligence), *paction* (bargain) is realised as *[-fən]*, but where preceded by an *<a>* the traditional realisation is *[-aːfən]*, in for example, *bletheration* (nonsense), *cantation* (conversation), *disclamation* (repudiation), *nation*, *scunneration* (causing disgust) and *terrification* (terror).

Other inflectional affixes are explained in the chapters about grammar (p. 73).

**Strong and Weak Forms**

Many words, particularly auxiliary verbs, personal and relative pronouns, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions and adverbs, have both strong and weak or unstressed realisations. Here the spelling is generally based on the strong form, for example, *be* [biː(t), bɪ], also *[bɛ:*] in Ulster varieties, *by* [bʌɪ, beɪ, bɪ], *for* [fɔːr, fɔː, fər, fɛr, fɜːr], *hae* [hɛː, aː], *her* [hɑr, ər], *hɪm* [hɪm, aɪm], *like* [laɪk, ɪk, ək], *man* [mæn, mən, mɑn], *my* [maɪ, maɪ, mæ], *thair* [θeər, θər] (their), *thaim* [θɛm, θəm] (them), *that* [θæt, θət, æt], *time* [taɪm, tɪm], *we* [wi, wɛ] and *wi* [wi, wɛ, wa] (with), but may be based on unstressed forms in words such as *A* [aː] (I), *[aɪ] seldom occurring in everyday speech. Some words may be written with both a stressed and unstressed form, for example, *hit* [hɪt, haɪt], [hɪt] in North Northern and Insular varieties, and *it* [ɪt, t], [ɪd, d] in North Northern and Insular varieties, *kind* [kain(d)] and *kin* [kɪn] (kind), and *oor* [ʊər] and *wir* [wɪr, wɜː, wɛr, wi].

**Doublets**

Some words have more than one form, for example, *chaw* (chew) [tʃaː, tʃɔː] in Southern Central and Ulster Scots, [tʃaː, dʒaː] in Northern and Insular varieties, and *chow* [tʃau], *full* [fʊl] and *fou* [fuː], Southern Scots [fau], *pull* [pɔl] and *pou* [pɔu], Southern Scots [pəu] and *near* [nɪər], [ner] and *naur* [nær, 'nɔːr'], Southern Scots [nær].

**Unpredictable Forms**

With some words the pronunciation in a particular dialect cannot be predicted based on the spelling ‘rules’ described above. For example the words ‘change’, ‘estrange’, and ‘range’ originally had vowel 4 in Older Scots. In some varieties that remained vowel 4 giving *change,*
strange and range [tʃen(d)ʒ, stren(d)ʒ, ren(d)ʒ], while in other varieties that vowel became either vowel 1 or 2 giving chinge, stringe [tʃain(d)ʒ, strain(d)ʒ] or cheenge, streenge and reenge [tʃin(d)ʒ, strin(d)ʒ, rin(d)ʒ]. The same goes for chain, chine, cheen, strain, strine and streen(d) (strain). Other examples are the /u/ or /ʌu/ in gou (gull), the /ʌu/ or /u/ in cowper (horse dealer), crowdie (a soft cheese), gowst (bluster), lowp (leap) and scowth (scope), faur (far) [fɑːr, fɔːr], [faːr] in Northern Scots and Southern Scots [fɛr, fær], sometimes written fer.

Connected Speech

Words are of course written as separate units, but in everyday speech there is a difference between the pronunciation of words in isolation and in connected speech. The changes are usually regular and predictable. That usually involves:

Deletion—or the loss of sounds similar to the silent letters explained above (p. 37).

Assimilation—where a sound changes to become like a neighbouring sound. For example, /p, t/ and /k/ between vowels or a voiced sound may be realised more like /b, d/ and /g/ as in slip it unner ['sɪlb ɪ 'nær] (slip it under), sit doun [sɪ 'dʌn] (sit down) and blackberries ['blaːkˌbɛrɪz] (crowberries), final <en> [ən] becoming /m/ or /ŋ/ as in gowpen ['gʌpm] (double handful), cruppen ['krʌpm] (crept), spoken ['spɒkŋ], chicken ['tʃɪkŋ] and taiken ['tekn] (token), also baucon ['bɑːkŋ] (bacon) and deacon ['dɪkŋ], realising neist month [nis mʌnθ] rather than [nist mʌnθ] or beasts as [bis] rather than [bists] and realising dæ ye want tae as ['dʒɪ wane] or ['dʒɪ wane] (do you want to).

Reduction—where, usually in unstressed positions, vowels are reduced to /ɪ/ or /ə/. This occurs in Scots much the same as it does in Standard English.

Run–together Words

Occasionally, particularly in dialect or colloquial styles, some words are run together. For example, gaun tae (going to) as gaunae or gonnae (cf. gonna) and kind o (kind of) as kinno, kinna (cf. kinda). The running together of words, often with phonetic spellings, is also often used to mimic the unintelligibility of Spoken Scots to outsiders for comic effect, for example, sittin errinyur simmit for sittin thare in your semmit, taken from the successful BBC comedy sketches ‘Parliamo Glasgow’ by Staley Baxter. Words are not run together here except in genuine compound words.

Syntax and Morphology

The grammatical structure of Scots sentences can usually be extrapolated from the examples given in the chapters on grammar (p. 73). Where necessary, further explanation is included. The changes in word form owing to tense are explained in the appropriate sections.

Little space is accorded to explaining the differences between Scots and Standard English. That should be apparent from the examples given.
Punctuation and Use of Capital letters

Standard English usage is followed.

Other aspects of spelling, especially irregular changes owing to inflexions and tense changes, are dealt with in the appropriate sections.

Apostrophes

As described above, the ‘apologetic apostrophe’ is not used in place of supposedly ‘missing’ letters. For example, deil rather than de’il (devil), mak rather than mak’ (make), tak rather than tak’ (take), taen rather than ta’en (taken), gie rather than gi’e (give), sel rather than sel’ (self), siller rather than sil’er (silver), nummer rather than num’er (number), aw rather than a’ (all), baw rather than ba’ (ball), caw rather than ca’ (call) faut rather than fa’ut (fault) and saut rather than sa’ (salt). Apostrophes are, however, used in contractions of Scots words. For Example you’d, we’ll, he’s, and i’ for in, ’at for that, ’maist for awmaist, ‘gin for agin, lea’ for leave, e’en for even, e’en nou for even nou rather than eenou, e’en’t for even it rather than eent, oot’n rather than ooten for oot on, and gaun’ae for gaun tae rather than gonny or gaunae. In the following, the shorter forms are considered doublets rather than contractions; mou and mooth (mouth), and wi and with, wi being the usual realisation in isolation but with also occurring in compounds such as inwith, ootwith, within and without.
**Standard English and Scots Cognates**

Many Scots and Standard English words are derived by direct descent from the same source. Some insights into the spelling of Scots may be gained by comparing the spelling of Scots words to the spellings of their Standard English cognates. There are, of course, exceptions to the ‘rules’ explained below.

Unlike Standard English, Scots has no <b> after <m> in the accented or any following syllable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chaumer</td>
<td>chamber</td>
<td>rummle</td>
<td>rumble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cummer</td>
<td>cumber</td>
<td>skemmel</td>
<td>shamble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emmers</td>
<td>embers</td>
<td>thimble</td>
<td>thimble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lammer</td>
<td>amber</td>
<td>timmer</td>
<td>timber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nummer</td>
<td>number</td>
<td>tummel</td>
<td>tumble</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the following exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>December</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member</td>
<td>member</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots has <ch>, pronounced /x/ or /ç/, where Standard English has <gh>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bocht</th>
<th>bought</th>
<th>micht</th>
<th>might v.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bricht</td>
<td>bright</td>
<td>nicht</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fecht</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>roch</td>
<td>rough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fricht</td>
<td>fright</td>
<td>sicht</td>
<td>sight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heich</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>thocht</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lauch</td>
<td>laugh</td>
<td>teuch</td>
<td>tough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>licht</td>
<td>light</td>
<td>troch</td>
<td>trough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maucht</td>
<td>might n.</td>
<td>wecht</td>
<td>weight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the exception ‘delight’, which comes from Old French ‘deliter’. The Standard English spelling arose by analogy with ‘light’. The word is not traditionally pronounced [da'list] but may be owing to false analogy; the form delicht has been used by some Scots writers. Here it is written (and pronounced) delite [da'laɪt]. Burgh [ˈbʌrə] is usually written with <gh> in Scots.
As previously mentioned, the final <d> after <n> is usually silent. In many varieties, the historic <d> in medial positions is not pronounced. In such words the spelling <n> or <nn> is used.

bunnle  bundle  thunner  thunder
ciaunle  candle  wunner  wonder

Scots often has no final <f> where Standard English does.

sel  self  shirra  sheriff

In some words Scots has <d> or <dd> where Standard English has <th>.

faddom  fathom  stiddie  stithy
faurdin  farthing  wedder  wether
smiddie  smithy  widdie  withy

Scots often has <g> or <gg> where Standard English has <dge>.

brig  bridge  rig  ridge
dreg  dredge  seg  sedge
egg  edge on

Note the exceptions hedge and sled (sledge).

Scots often has <k> or <ck> where Standard English has <ch>. The Scots <k> or <ck> is often claimed to be of Scandinavian origin.

birk  birch  steek  stitch
bick  bitch  streek  stretch
breeks  breeches  thack  thatch
kirk  church  yeukie  itchy
larick  larch

Note: sic (such)

Scots often has <scl> where Standard English has <sl>.

sclate  slate  sclave  slave
sclider  slender  sclice  slice

Scots often has <sk> where Standard English has <sh>.

skare  share  skemmels  shambles
skelf  shelf
In Scots, the position of <r> is often switched compared with the preceding or following vowel in Standard English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brunt</th>
<th>Burnt</th>
<th>Proverb</th>
<th>Proverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crib</td>
<td>Curb</td>
<td>Rhubrub</td>
<td>Rhubarb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girse</td>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>Truff</td>
<td>Turf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirsten</td>
<td>Christen</td>
<td>Wrat</td>
<td>Wart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modren</td>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Warstle</td>
<td>Wrestle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertend</td>
<td>Pretend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many Scots dialects vary between the pronunciations /ʃ/ and /s/ in a large number of words of Norman French origin. These words may be spelt using <s>, <c> or <sh>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gushet</th>
<th>Gusset</th>
<th>Offisher</th>
<th>Officer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hairsh</td>
<td>Hoarse</td>
<td>Shew</td>
<td>Sew (clothes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minsh</td>
<td>Mince</td>
<td>Shinders</td>
<td>Cinders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notish</td>
<td>Notice</td>
<td>Veshel</td>
<td>Vessel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some words Scots has no final <th> where Standard English does.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mou</th>
<th>Mouth</th>
<th>Unco</th>
<th>'Uncouth'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quo</td>
<td>Quoth</td>
<td>Wi</td>
<td>With</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has no medial and final <v> where Standard English does.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Braw</th>
<th>'Brave'</th>
<th>Hairst</th>
<th>Harvest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caur</td>
<td>Calves</td>
<td>Lea’</td>
<td>Leave v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Del</td>
<td>Delve</td>
<td>Lue</td>
<td>Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deil</td>
<td>Devil</td>
<td>Ower</td>
<td>Over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dou</td>
<td>Dove</td>
<td>Ser</td>
<td>Serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E’en</td>
<td>Even</td>
<td>Siller</td>
<td>Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gie</td>
<td>Give</td>
<td>Twal</td>
<td>Twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hae</td>
<td>Have</td>
<td>Waw</td>
<td>Wave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <a> where Standard English has <o>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appen</th>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Saft</th>
<th>Soft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crap</td>
<td>Crop</td>
<td>Sang</td>
<td>Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drap</td>
<td>Drop</td>
<td>Strang</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang</td>
<td>Long</td>
<td>Tap</td>
<td>Top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat</td>
<td>Pot</td>
<td>Thrang</td>
<td>Throng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sab</td>
<td>Sob</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scots often has <a-e> where Standard English has <o-e>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ane</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bane</td>
<td>bone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gane</td>
<td>gone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hale</td>
<td>whole</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

hame  home
lane  lone
stane  stone

Note the exceptions in <ai>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kail</td>
<td>cole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mair</td>
<td>more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raip</td>
<td>rope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

sair  sore
straik  stroke

Scots often has <ai> where Standard English has <a>, especially in words with <r> + consonant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>airm</td>
<td>arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bedraigle</td>
<td>bedragle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faither</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mainer</td>
<td>manner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

saidle  saddle
shairp  sharp
yaird  yard
yairn  yarn

Scots often has <au> where Standard English has <al>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cauf</td>
<td>calf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caum</td>
<td>calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cauk</td>
<td>chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fause</td>
<td>false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hauf</td>
<td>half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hause</td>
<td>halse (neck)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

maut  malt
paum  palm
psaum  psalm
saumon  salmon
saut  salt
scaud  scald

Note: stalk, talk and walk.

Scots often has <auld> where Standard English has <old>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>auld</td>
<td>old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bauld</td>
<td>bold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cauld</td>
<td>cold</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

fauld  fold
scauld  scold
tauld  told

Note the exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a</th>
<th>o</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gowd</td>
<td>gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haud</td>
<td>hold</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

souder  solder
sodger  soldier
In some words Scots often has final <aw> where Standard English has final <ow>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blaw</td>
<td>blow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craw</td>
<td>crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maw</td>
<td>mow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maw</td>
<td>mow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blaw</td>
<td>blow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craw</td>
<td>crow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maw</td>
<td>mow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <aw> where Standard English has final <all>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aw</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baw</td>
<td>ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caw</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faw</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aw</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baw</td>
<td>ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caw</td>
<td>call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faw</td>
<td>fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <e> where Standard English has <a>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bress</td>
<td>brass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clesp</td>
<td>clasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fest</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bress</td>
<td>brass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clesp</td>
<td>clasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fest</td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <ee> where Standard English has <e>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>freet</td>
<td>fret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeelie</td>
<td>jelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freet</td>
<td>fret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jeelie</td>
<td>jelly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the exception *reid* (red) [rid, red], [reid] in North Northern varieties and *rid* [rɪd] in West Central and Shetland varieties.

In some words of Latin origin, Scots has kept the original pronunciation /i(ː)/ in the stressed syllable, spelt <ee>, where Standard Scottish English has /ɪ/ or /aɪ/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bapteese</td>
<td>baptise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceevil</td>
<td>civil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eetem</td>
<td>item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leeberal</td>
<td>liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leeshence</td>
<td>licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bapteese</td>
<td>baptise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceevil</td>
<td>civil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eetem</td>
<td>item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leeberal</td>
<td>liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leeshence</td>
<td>licence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *seestem* (system).

Scots often has <euk> and <euch> where Standard English has <ook> and <ough>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beuch</td>
<td>bough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beuk</td>
<td>book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eneuch</td>
<td>enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heuk</td>
<td>hook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beuch</td>
<td>bough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beuk</td>
<td>book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eneuch</td>
<td>enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heuk</td>
<td>hook</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note others where Scots has `<eu>`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cleuch</th>
<th>ravine</th>
<th>sheuch</th>
<th>ditch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deuk</td>
<td>duck n.</td>
<td>speug</td>
<td>sparrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heuch</td>
<td>cliff</td>
<td>teug</td>
<td>tug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leuch</td>
<td>laughed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has `<i>` where Standard English has `<o>`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>brither</th>
<th>brother</th>
<th>ither</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mither</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has `<i>` where Standard English has `<u>`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nit</th>
<th>nut</th>
<th>simmer</th>
<th>summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Scots often has `<i>` or `<u>` after `<wh>` and `<w>` where Standard English has `<e>`, `<i>`, or `<o>`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>werd</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>wulk</th>
<th>whelk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wirm</td>
<td>worm</td>
<td>wumman</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whurl</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has `<i-e>` [əɪ] where Standard English has `<oi>`

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>anint</th>
<th>anoint</th>
<th>jine</th>
<th>join</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bile</td>
<td>boil (sore)</td>
<td>pint</td>
<td>point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bile</td>
<td>boil (water)</td>
<td>spile</td>
<td>spoil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chice</td>
<td>choice</td>
<td>vice</td>
<td>voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also *eyster* (oyster), *eyntment* (ointment), *ile* (oil) and *ryal* (royal).

Note the exceptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>evite</th>
<th>avoid</th>
<th>noise</th>
<th>noise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>queir</td>
<td>choir</td>
<td>pushion</td>
<td>poison</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Scots often has <oo> where Standard English has <ou>.

aboot   about   oot   out
hoose   house   roond   round
moose   mouse   soond   sound (healthy)
oor     our     soond   sound (noise)

Scots often has <ou> where Standard English has <ow> medially.

broun   brown   goun   gown
cour    cower   pouder   powder
croud   crowd   pouer   power
croun   crown   shour   shower
doun    down    touel   towel
droun   drown   tour    tower
flouer  flower  toun    town
foul    fowl

In some words Scots has <ou> where Standard English has final <ow>.

allou   allow   cou    cow
bou     bow     hou    how
brou    brow    nou    now

Exceptions to the above are:

ablo     below   furr   furrow
buller   bellow   minnin   minnow
elbuck   elbow

Scots often has <ow> medially and <owe> finally, where Standard English has <ol(l)>.

bowe   boll   howe   hollow
bowster   bolster   knowe   knoll
bowt    bolt    powe   poll
cowt    colt    rowe   roll
gowf    golf    stowen   stolen
Scots often has <u> where Standard English has <ou>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fund</th>
<th>found</th>
<th>munt</th>
<th>mount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>funtain</td>
<td>fountain</td>
<td>muntain</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grund</td>
<td>ground</td>
<td>murn</td>
<td>mourn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the exceptions are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>colour</th>
<th>colour</th>
<th>tho</th>
<th>though</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eneuch</td>
<td>enough</td>
<td>thocht</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group</td>
<td>group</td>
<td>throu</td>
<td>through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kintra</td>
<td>country</td>
<td>tour</td>
<td>tour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <ui> where Standard English has <oo>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bluid</th>
<th>blood</th>
<th>muin</th>
<th>moon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cuil</td>
<td>cool</td>
<td>muir</td>
<td>moor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duin</td>
<td>done</td>
<td>puil</td>
<td>pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fluir</td>
<td>floor</td>
<td>puir</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guid</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>ruise</td>
<td>roose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luim</td>
<td>loom</td>
<td>schuil</td>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muid</td>
<td>mood</td>
<td>spuin</td>
<td>spoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note others where Scots has <ui>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>buird</th>
<th>board</th>
<th>Fuirsday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bruit</td>
<td>brute</td>
<td>luif</td>
<td>palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuithe</td>
<td>young</td>
<td>refuise</td>
<td>refuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>coal-fish</td>
<td>shuir</td>
<td>sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duin</td>
<td>done</td>
<td>uiss</td>
<td>use n.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruit</td>
<td>fruit</td>
<td>uise</td>
<td>use v.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fuird</td>
<td>ford</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: fit (foot) and wid (wood).

In many words Scots has initial <a> where Standard English has <be>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ablo</th>
<th>below</th>
<th>aneath</th>
<th>beneath</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acause</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>aside</td>
<td>beside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afore</td>
<td>before</td>
<td>atween</td>
<td>between</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahint</td>
<td>behind</td>
<td>ayont</td>
<td>beyond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In many words Scots has final <ae> where Standard English has final <ow>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>arrae</th>
<th>arrow</th>
<th>pillae</th>
<th>pillow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>barrae</td>
<td>barrow</td>
<td>shaidae</td>
<td>shadow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bellaes</td>
<td>bellowes</td>
<td>sorrae</td>
<td>sorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>borrae</td>
<td>borrow</td>
<td>swallae</td>
<td>swallow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follae</td>
<td>follow</td>
<td>weedae</td>
<td>widow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marrae</td>
<td>marrow</td>
<td>windae</td>
<td>window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meidae</td>
<td>meadow</td>
<td>yellae</td>
<td>yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nairaet</td>
<td>narrow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, in some words Scots has final <ae> where Standard English has final <a>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>algebrae</th>
<th>algebra</th>
<th>Canadae</th>
<th>Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alphae</td>
<td>alpha</td>
<td>Cheenae</td>
<td>China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americae</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>omegae</td>
<td>omega</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <-fee> where Standard English has <-fy>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>magnifee</th>
<th>magnify</th>
<th>saitisfee</th>
<th>satisfy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>modifee</td>
<td>modify</td>
<td>seegnifee</td>
<td>signify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scots often has <-ur> where Standard English has <-ure>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>craitur</th>
<th>creature</th>
<th>naitur</th>
<th>nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lectur</td>
<td>lecture</td>
<td>pictur</td>
<td>picture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixtur</td>
<td>mixture</td>
<td>ventur</td>
<td>venture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note siccar [ˈsɪkər] (secure).

Scots often has <-ar> or <-or> where Standard English has <-ary> or <-ory>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dictionar</th>
<th>dictionary</th>
<th>secretar</th>
<th>secretary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>missionar</td>
<td>missionary</td>
<td>summear</td>
<td>summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>necessar</td>
<td>necessary</td>
<td>interrogator</td>
<td>interrogatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notar</td>
<td>notary</td>
<td>inventor</td>
<td>inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ordinar</td>
<td>ordinary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gaelic and Scots

Gaelic has had some influence on Scots, particularly in areas along the Highland line.

Gaelic words in Scots are mostly topographical terms such as *ben* from *beinn*—a mountain, *bog, cairn* from *càrn*—a pile of stones, *clachan*—a hamlet, *craig* from *creag*—a rock, *drum* from *druim*—a ridge, *glen* from *gleann*—a valley, *inch* from *innis*—a small island, *knock* from *cnoc*—a hill, *loch*—a lake and *strath*—a river valley, are the most prominent Gaelic contributions to Scots.

Some other Gaelic words used in Scots are *bladdoch* from *blàthach*—buttermilk, *brat*—an apron, *brock* from *broc*—a badger, *cranreuch* from *crannreothadh*—hoar-frost, *fail* from *fàl*—a turf, *ingle* from *aingeal*—a hearth, *kelpie* from *colpach*—a water sprite, *messan* from *measan*—a small dog, *partan*—an edible crab, *quaich* from *cuach*—a drinking bowl and *tocher* from *tochar*—a dowry. More recent additions are words for aspects of Highland culture, often retaining their Gaelic spellings, examples being *sporran* from *sporan*—a purse, *sgian dubh*—the dirk worn in the stocking, *cèilidh*—a social evening with traditional music, *claymore* from *claidheamh mòr*—a basket-hilted sword, and *clarsach* from *clàrsach*—a harp.

Irish has also contributed words to Ulster Scots, and through contact to some varieties in South–west Scotland. Besides well-known words for aspects of Irish culture, such as *bodhrán*—a frame drum, *banshee* from *bean sí*—a female spirit warning of death, *camán*—a shinty stick and *caubeen* from *cáibín*—a hat or cap, there are *dullachan* from *dúlachán*—a brown trout, *glaiks* from *glac*—a lever to aid in churning, *gullion* from *goilín*—a marsh, *gomach* from *gamach*—a fool and *moilie* from *maolán*—bald, hornless.

The phonology of Scots has been little affected by Gaelic, except for dialects adjacent to the Highland line, in particular Caithness. Examples are interdental realisations such as */d̪, t̪/ and */n̪/ instead of */d, t/ and */n/, the alveolar approximant */ɻ/ instead of */r/ and a clear */l/ rather than a dark */l/, the latter two also being common in Dumfries and Galloway. Occasionally a palatal */ɲ/ may also occur after */i/ instead of */ŋ/. In Ulster, from Irish, interdental realisations such as */q̪, t̪, n̪/ and also */l/ may occur, along with alveolo-palatal */ɕ/, */ʑ/ instead of */ʃ/, */ʒ/ instead of */f/, */β/ instead of */v/ and occasionally palatal */ɲ/ after */i/ instead of */ŋ/. The Northern Scots realisation */f/ for */wh/> is likely to be of Gaelic origin. Many uses of the Caithness form of the diminutive suffix <-ock> realised as */əg/, often written –*ag*, may be of Gaelic origin rather than the Scots –*ock*.

In eighteenth– and nineteenth–century literature, representations of how Gaelic speakers pronounced Scots were frequent, although more often than not they were simply clichéd literary stereotypes. Today Gaelic speakers are wholly bilingual and have access to the phoneme inventory of Scots through universal education in Scottish English.
Gaelic speakers historically may have had the following realisations:

The vowel /ɪ/ may be realised as /ʌ/.

A hae twa fush.
I have two fish.

The <th> /θ/, in a final position may be realised as /s/. Written <s> or <ss> below.

Hae ye seen Macbess? A sunk tare’s a flee un ma mooss.
Have you seen Macbeth? I think there’s a fly in my mouth.

A haed a het bass tus mornin.
I had a hot bath this morning.

At the beginning of words, <th> /θ/ may be realised as /ts/.

Tsun’s ussna whut tay seemt tae pe. Uss onytsun’ un t’ kustie?
Things aren’t what they seemed to be. Is anything in the chest?

The <th> /ð/ may be realised as /t/, /s/ and/or /sz/.

Tus uss ma hoose. T’ tusser day. Hut’s furszer doun t’ loan.
This is my house. The other day. It’s farther down the lane.

The consonant /z/ may be realised as /s/, written <ss> below.

Tus uss a yowe. He wuss takkin ut tae pe shuirn.
This is a ewe. He was taking it to be shorn.

T’ usser yowess wuss left un t’ pairk.
The other ewes were left in the field.

The /dʒ/ as in just may be realised as /ʃ/ as in shut.

Shaimass (Seumas) haes shust been made a sershant.
James has just been promoted to sergeant.

A /b/ may be realised as /p/.

Prung t’ pox un t’ capun.
Bring the box into the cabin.
A /d/ may be realised as /t/.

A haed a gut trunk wi hum.
I had a good drink with him.

A /g/ may be realised as /k/

Hae ye seen ma pet kait?
Have you seen my pet goat?

In Scots nouns have natural gender. Gaelic has grammatical gender, but only masculine and feminine nouns, so many neuter words may be referred to as she.

She’s no lang syne buggit. (The hoose)
It was built recently. (The house)

A common literary stereotype is where the adjective (or adverb) may be repeated for emphasis.

Ut’ss a weet, weet day.  She’ss a gut, gut lassie.
It’s a very wet day.       She’s a very good girl.

Tat laddie wunna dae ut at aw, at aw, at aw!
That boy won’t do it at all.

The pronoun *A* (I) may be replaced by masel, influenced by the Gaelic ‘mi-fhín’.

Masel wull raw ye tae yer shup.
I will row you to your ship.

In Gaelic the preposition ‘air’, while commonly equivalent to Standard English on, is also used where English would use alternative prepositions or even completely different constructions. Such instances may also occur as *on* in Gaelic–influenced Scots.

Ut’ss gut on ye.  Put a quaisten on me.
Well done.       Ask me a question about it.

In Gaelic–influenced varieties of Scots (as in varieties with an Irish Gaelic substrate), other such instances may have led to the emergence of *on* as a generalised pronoun of dis–advantage.

He wuss wirkin on me.  T’ dug dee’d on me.
He was nasty to me.     The dog died in spite of all my efforts.
A body dud sometsun' on me. Tsun'ss uss gaun wrang on me.
Someone did something to me. Things are going wrong for me.

T' horse run awa on me.
The horse ran away though I did my best to hold it.

Gaelic only has a single verb form 'tha' for am, is and are; similarly, Gaelic 'bha' means both wis (was) and war (were). This has undoubtedly had a reinforcing effect on native Scots verb concord.

Masel uss gauld. Ma haunds uss aw clarty.
I am cold. My hands are all dirty.

Tus dug uss gut, gut. Whut uss tsir?
This dog is very good. Which are these? T' pairnss wuss here.

Gaelic–influenced cleft sentences using that may be used emphatically in place of simple sentences.

Ut uss me tsat uss t' fermer and you tsat uss t' cottar.
I am the farmer and you are the cottager.

The verb 'to be' is the only Gaelic verb to have a present tense. In Gaelic the present tense is usually formed by using the present tense of the verb 'to be' and a verbal noun. As a result of substituting the Gaelic prepositions ‘ag’, ‘aig’ with at and ‘air’ with after (after), the following may occur:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaelic</th>
<th>Gaelic–influenced Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tha i ag ràdh.</td>
<td>She'ss at sayin.</td>
<td>She says.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tha i air ràdh.</td>
<td>She'ss efter sayin.</td>
<td>She has said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bha i ag ràdh.</td>
<td>She wuss at sayin.</td>
<td>She said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bha i air ràdh</td>
<td>She wuss efter sayin.</td>
<td>She had said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhitheadh i ag ràdh.</td>
<td>She wat pe at sayin.</td>
<td>She would say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhitheadh i air ràdh.</td>
<td>She wat pe efter sayin.</td>
<td>She would have said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bithidh i ag ràdh.</td>
<td>She wull pe at sayin.</td>
<td>She will say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bithidh i air ràdh.</td>
<td>She wull pe efter sayin.</td>
<td>She will have said.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scottish Standard English

SSE is essentially Standard English spoken with a Scottish accent. The phonology of SSE has its origins in Scots, the shift to Standard English resulting in many phonological compromises and lexical transfers. SSE as spoken by educated, middle-class urban Scots is described here. The pronunciation differs from that of most other varieties of English.

Vowels and Diphthongs

The Scottish Vowel-Length Rule also affects SSE (p. 21).

/i/  beak, bee, peer, weak, weir
/e/  bay, day, pair, pane
/ɛ/  bed, fern, heard, herd, merry
/ɪ/  bid, bird, bitter, wanted
/ʌ/  butter, fur, hurry, putt, sofa
/a/  bad, bard, calm, father, marry, palm, pam, path
/u/  boot, full, good, poor, pool, pull, put
/o/  boat, cord, hoard, soar, stole
/ɔ/  caught, cot, cough, fork, long, paw, pot, sword
/aɪ/  buy, rise, sly, tie, tied, why
/ai/  night, rice, sight, slide, tide, while
/ʌu/  brown, down, house, mouse, out
/oi/  boy, noise, toy

As SSE is rhotic, it has fewer vowels than other varieties, i.e. <r> is realised as /r/ after vowels and not vocalised to /aɪə/, /ɛə/, /ʊə/ and /ɜː/ as in RP. Thus the pairs sawed/soared and pores/paws are distinct, and the following are distinguished only by the presence of /r/.

bee  [bi:]  beer  [bɪ:r]
bay  [be:]  bear  [be:r]
fen  [fɛn]  fern  [fɜrn]
bid  [bɪd]  bird  [bɜrd]
bun  [bʌn]  burn  [bɜrn]
bad  [bæd]  bard  [bɑrd]
moo  [mu:]  moor  [mu:r]
row  [ro:]  roar  [rɔr]
pot  [pɒt]  port  [pɔrt]

There is also no /r/ liaison in collocations such as “law and order”; in some cases where speakers of RP would have such liaison, speakers of SSE may have glottal stops to separate words that end and begin with vowels.
The vowels in fern, bird and hurt may merge in some accents. In words such as serene—serenity and obscene—obscenity, the second syllable of serenity and obscenity may have /i/. RP has /ɛ/.

**Consonants**

Consonants are much like those of RP but:
SSE differentiates between <wh> /ʍ/ and <w> /w/, i.e. which [ʍɪʃ] and witch [wɪʃ]. /p/, /t/ and /k/ are not aspirated in SSE.
The consonant <r> is generally realised as /ɹ/, but some speakers have /ɾ/. These speakers usually merge /ɪ/, /ɛ/ and /ʌ/ before <r> to /ə/.
Non-initial /t/ may be realised as a glottal stop /ʔ/.
<ch>, realised as /x/ or /ç/, occurs only in a few specifically Scots words such as loch and dreich.

Some words may have a distinctive SSE pronunciation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSE</th>
<th>RP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December [dɛzəmɔr]</td>
<td>[dɪsəmə]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length [lɛŋθ]</td>
<td>[lɛŋθ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strength [strɛŋθ]</td>
<td>[strɛŋθ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luxury [lʌɡʒəri]</td>
<td>[lʌkʃəri]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raspberry [ræsəˈrɪ]</td>
<td>[raːzbrɪ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realise [rɪˈəlaiz]</td>
<td>[rɪəlaiz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>though [θəʊ]</td>
<td>[ðəʊ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tortoise [tɔːˈtoʊz]</td>
<td>[tɔːtəs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday [ˈwɛndzdi]</td>
<td>[wɛndzdi]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with [wɪθ]</td>
<td>[wɪð]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stress**

Many words may have different stress from RP. Porpoise and tortoise have equal stress on each syllable. Advertise, baptise, realise and recognise have the main stress in on the final syllable. Harassment, lamentable and preferably may have the main stress on the second syllable.

**Grammar and Vocabulary**

The grammar of SSE is much the same as Standard English, but SSE is influenced by Scots grammar and idiom to varying degrees. SSE has a range of legal and religious vocabulary not present in Standard English. These are often anglicised versions of Scots lexical items. The following are common examples of how Scots grammar influences SSE:
The modal verbs *shall* and *may* are not often used, as in Scots (p. 129). Many speakers use *would* rather than *should.*

*Might* and *will* maybe are used for possibility, and *have (got)* for compulsion.

*Need to, use to* and *dare to* are used as main verbs. *Need* may occur in the passive, and is also used non-progressively, as is *want.*

The verb *have* is used more like an auxiliary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSE</th>
<th>Anglo-English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will I see you after?</td>
<td>Shall I see you later?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I come as well?</td>
<td>May I come as well?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He'll maybe come later.</td>
<td>He may come later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would, if I was you.</td>
<td>I should, if I were you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He has got to come.</td>
<td>He must come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has to leave.</td>
<td>She must leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't need to do that.</td>
<td>I needn't do that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He didn't need to do that.</td>
<td>He needn't have done that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He doesn't dare to talk.</td>
<td>He didn't dare talk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My hair needs washed.</td>
<td>My hair needs washing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He'd a good time last night.</td>
<td>He had a good time last night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had you a good time last night?</td>
<td>Did you have a good time last night?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's been a dog did that.</td>
<td>A dog must have done that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The passive is usually expressed with *get,* for example, I got told off.

Some stative verbs are used progressively:

- He was thinking he'd get more pay. He thought he would get more pay.  
  I was hoping to see him. I (had) hoped to see him.  
  They were meaning to come. They (had) meant to come  
  I'm needing a cup of tea. I need a cup of tea.  

A well-known marker of SSE is the use of *not* rather than ‘-n't’ and the invariable first-syllable stress on *cannot:*

- He'll not come. He won't come.  
  You're not wanted. You aren't wanted.  
  Is he not coming? Isn't he coming?  
  Can you not come? Can't you come?  
  Do you not want it? Don't you want it?  
  Did he not come? Didn't he come?
Not also negates verbs, i.e. He isn't still not working. Nobody would dream of not coming.

Verbs of motion are often elided before adverbs of motion:

SSE  
Anglo–English

I'll away home then.  I'll go home then.
The cat wants out.  The cat wants to be let out.

The is used as in Scots, for example, To take the cold. To get sent to the hospital. To go to the church.

The pronoun self is used non–reflexively, for example, How's yourself today? and Is himself in?

Anybody, everybody, nobody and somebody are used in preference to anyone, everyone, no one and someone.

Yet may occur with non–perfective forms of the verb:

Did you buy one yet?  Have you bought one yet?
He is here yet.  He is still here.

The adverbial particle follows the verb:

He turned out the light.  He turned the light out.
They took off their coats.  They took their coats off.

Many Scots idioms and phrases have been carried over into SSE.

How are you keeping?  How are you?
I doubt he's not coming.  I expect he isn't coming.
Away to your bed.  Go to bed.
That's me away.  I'm going now.
I've got the cold  I've got a cold.
It's for your Christmas.  It's your Christmas present.
I gave her a row.  I scolded her.
He gave me a fright.  He frightened me.
I'm finished it.  I'm finished.
I'll get you home.  I'll take you home.
Cheerio just now!  Goodbye for now!
To go the messages.  To go shopping.
The back of nine.  Just after nine (o’ clock).
Grammar

Much eighteenth- and nineteenth-century and later written Scots followed the grammar conventions of Standard English. This is perhaps not surprising, since it was literature written in Standard English with which the Scots writers of the time were most acquainted and by which they were influenced—a literary model that they were to some extent endeavouring to emulate in Scots. Scots poetry often included Standard English forms in order to achieve rhyme or meter and archaic or Biblical verb forms such as ‘thou art’, ‘dost thou’ or ‘hath’, which were never part of the Scots vernacular. Many publishers also pressured writers into ‘watering down’ their Scots for an English audience. Such ‘Scots’ was very popular with an English readership at the time. Consequently, many English readers did not appreciate the very great difference between written and spoken Scots. David Crystal (1995:333), describing the twentieth-century ‘Lallans’ variety of revivalist Scots in the Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English language, commented that in “its grammar and spelling, it shows the marked influence of Standard English, more so than other Scots dialects.” One grammatical feature particularly absent in much written Scots is the Northern subject rule (p. 148) and one particularly prominent feature is the use of wha as a relative pronoun (p. 104) rather than the vernacular that. Here the grammar of the vernacular is described, a grammar that one would expect to be used when writing Scots rather than ‘anglicised’ Scots, which has, on the one hand, been described by Albert D. Mackie (1952:129) as a “literary dialect created by men of the pen” or “Scots of the book” and, on the other hand, been described by William Craigie (1924:9) as allowing “a thin veneer of Scottish spelling to pass muster as a genuine representation of the popular speech.” Of course a few centuries of schooling in—and influence from—Standard English has removed some of the more conspicuous manifestations of Scots grammar from the mouths of many Scots.
The Articles

The Indefinite Article

The indefinite article does not refer to a particular person or object.

1 The indefinite article is *a* [a], unstressed [ə], and may occur before both consonants and vowels. Before vowels *an* [an, an] is also used.

- Here’s a apple tae ye. Are ye haein a egg tae yer tea?
- Here’s an apple for you. Are you having an egg for dinner?
- He dee’d a fair strae deith. It wis a unco sicht he saw.
- He died of natural causes. It was a strange sight he saw.

A seen a ingine doun the railwey yaird.
I saw an engine down at the railway yard.

2 The indefinite article is generally used after *mony* [ˈmʌni], *sic* [ˈsɪk], *what*, [wʌt], also [kwɔt] in Insular varieties, or *whit*, [wɪt, wʌt], [fɪt, fʌt] in Northern varieties, and in some negative phrases.

- The drink haes caused mony a sair heid.
- Alcohol has caused many headaches.

- He wis misluckit tae be in sic a place at sic a time.
- He was unlucky to be in such a place at such a time.

- Whit a new hooses is bein biggit the nou.
- What a lot of new houses are being built now.

- Whit a tirrivee and stramash whan the twa set tae ither!
- Such rage and uproar when the two attacked each other!

- Deil a ane o thaim wad gie’s a haund.
- Not one of them would help me.

- Feint a ane o thaim wad she buy; thay’re oot o saison.
- Not one of them would she buy; they are out of season.

- Faither said niver a ane wad dae weel wi that ploy.
- Father said no one would do well in that enterprise.
Sometimes the indefinite article is omitted after *mony*, having been absorbed by the preceding `<y>`.

Thair’s mony ane dis that.  Mony time A thocht o her.
Many a one does that.  Many a time I thought of her.

3  *Ae*, [eː], [jeː] in Southern, South-east, West Central and Ulster Scots, also [iː] in Insular varieties, is the adjectival form of *ane* and means ‘single’ or ‘solitary’ or the ‘only one’; it is usually used before nouns.

The fermer gaed oot the uction wi an ae cou.  
The farmer left the auction with only one cow.

The cantie wee lassie wis Aidam’s ae dochter.  
The cheerful little girl was Adam’s only daughter.

4  The indefinite pronoun *some* [sʌm] is the plural of *a*, *ae*, *ane* and *an* and is used to refer to an unknown number of the things designated by the noun.

Some o thae flouers is wiltit.  Some fowk’s trystin at the kirk.
Some of those flowers are wilted.  Some people are meeting at church.

**The Definite Article**

The definite article *the* [ðə], [da] in Insular varieties, refers to a particular person or object.

1  Scots usage often prefers the definite article over the indefinite article or the absence of either.

He wis feelin hungert and eatit the bit breid.  Aw a body wants is the halth.
He was feeling hungry and ate a piece of bread.  All a person desires is health.

He telt her it wis throu, and she gaed aff wi the tear in her ee.  
He told her it was finished and she left with a tear in her eye.

Taiblet costs twal pennies the piece.  The maiter o twa–three pund.  
Tablet costs twelve pence a piece.  A matter of a few pounds.

For the maiter o a pund or twa.  She gat the reid face efter ye speirt aboot it.  
For the sake of a few pounds.  She blushed after you enquired about it.

The horse gaed by at the tap gallop.  It’s no the odd thing that ye mention it.  
The horse went past at full gallop.  It’s not odd that you mention it.
The definite article is often used colloquially instead of a possessive pronoun (p. 98) when referring to relatives, parts of the body and with the preposition (p. 210) o, [o, e], unstressed [ə] (of), meaning my, your, his, etc.

The wife wis in the gairden wi’s. Hou’s the guidman the day?
My (your or his) wife was in the garden with me. How is your husband today?

She haes muckle o the mither in her. Thay seen the faither doun the toun.
She is very much like her mother. They saw their father in town.

Whan things gangs agley, keep the heid. He slippit the fit and fell.
When things go off the rails, remain calm. His foot slipped, and he fell.

He wis ahint the haund wi his payments. He wad hae thrawn the neck o him.
He was in arrears with his payments. He would have wrung his neck.

A niver thocht siclike wad happen aw the days o me.
I never imagined in all my days that such a thing would happen.

Fair play tells the sel o it. She clawed the mutch aff me.
Fair play speaks for itself. She tore off my cap.

The sodger wis wantin the helm.
The soldier was without his helmet.

Scots often has the where Standard English has ‘to’, especially in a number of adverbial phrases.

A canna sort it the nou. Whaur ye gaun the day?
I can’t sort it just now. Where are you going today?

We’ll see tae it the morn. She’s at the dancin the nicht.
We’ll deal with it tomorrow. She’s going dancing tonight.

The morn come aicht day is his birthday.
Tomorrow week it’s his birthday.

The faimly’s awa tae the picturs the morn’s nicht.
Our family’s off to the cinema tomorrow night.

The streen the muin wis sheenin bricht.
Yesterday (evening) the moon was shining bright.

The morn’s morn(in) we’re awa tae the Broch.
Tomorrow morning we’re going to Fraserburgh.
Freedom and whisky gangs thegither. The corn’s guid the year.
Freedom and whisky belong together. The corn’s good this year.

4 The definite article generally occurs

Before the names of the seasons and the days of the week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ware</td>
<td>spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The simmer</td>
<td>summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hairst</td>
<td>autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The winter</td>
<td>winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Monanday</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tysday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wadensday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fuirsday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also Days, Months and Holidays p. 236.

Are ye gaun til the gemm on the Seturday?
Are you going to the game on Saturday?

Hit’s a cauld, snell wind that blaws in the winter.
It’s a cold, harsh wind that blows in winter.

In the ware the birds begins tae sing. Its awfu grand wather for the hairst.
In spring the birds begin to sing. Its extremely good weather for autumn.

Before the names of feast-days and religious holidays.

It wis teemin ower the Mairtinmas.
It was raining heavily during Martinmas.

Before nouns denoting public institutions, some aspects of the home, meals and commodities.

Awa til the kirk. At the schuil. Sent til the jyle. Wi the train.
Off to church. In school. Sent to jail. By train.
He sat in the coort till near fower. Doun the toun. Up the brae.
He sat in court until nearly four. In town. Up hill.
Up the stair. Doun the stair. Lyin seek in the bed is awfu wearisome.
Upstairs. Downstairs. Lying sick in bed is very tedious.
Sit doun for t il say the grace. Parritch for the brakfast and mince for the denner.
Sit down in order to say grace. Porridge for breakfast and mince for lunch.

The price o the milk and the butter’s aye gaun up.
The price of milk and butter is always increasing.

Before the names of diseases.

The maisles. The brounkaities. The haingles.
Measles. Bronchitis. Influenza.

The gulsoch. The cauld. The buffits. The rheumatis.

Before the names of trades, occupations, sports, sciences and departments of learning.

Ma son’s learnin the jinerin. A’m awa tae the gowf.
My son is learning carpentry. I’m off to play golf.

He kens the chemistry gey guid. A gemm at the bouls.
He knows chemistry very well. A game of bowls.

She’s guid at the Laitin. He canna speak the French.
She’s good at Latin. He can’t speak French.

Before the names of various pursuits and activities usually expressed as verbal nouns (p. 88).

He wis that pit aboot he teuk tae the greetin. She wisna awfu gleg at the jumpin.
He was so upset that he started crying. She wasn’t very good at jumping.

The daeless lassie wis a daub haund at the sleepin. He begoud the dalin.
The lazy girl was an expert at sleeping. He began trading.

5 Other uses of the definite article are:

The baith o ye can redd the graith. God bliss the baith o thaim.
Both of you can prepare the equipment. God bless both of them.

She haed the maist o the aiples. The maist o ye winna hae seen this.
She had most of the apples. Most of you won’t have seen this.

The niver he spak a ill wird aboot onybody.
He never said a bad thing about anyone.
Nouns

Nouns are words used as the name of a person, animal, object, place or quality, or a collection of these.

1 The gender of nouns is not grammatical, but is indicated by their meaning. Nouns are either male, female, common or neutral, depending on whether they denote a male, female, either sex, or an inanimate object.

2 Singular nouns.

Some nouns have different forms for male and female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>boar</td>
<td>sou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brither</td>
<td>sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bull</td>
<td>cou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cowt</td>
<td>filly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drake</td>
<td>deuk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dug</td>
<td>bick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eme/uncle</td>
<td>auntie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faither</td>
<td>mither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandfaither</td>
<td>grandmither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guidman</td>
<td>guidwife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keeng</td>
<td>queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lad</td>
<td>lass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loun</td>
<td>quean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>wumman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neffae</td>
<td>niece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staig</td>
<td>meir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuip</td>
<td>yowe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note *dug* may be realised as [dʌg] in North Northern varieties; *bick* may be realised as [bek, bɛk] in Insular varieties; *eme* [im] usually refers to the maternal uncle. Colloquial alternatives for *faither* are *da, dawdie*, or *daidie* and *paw*, and for *mither, maw, minnie* and *mam(mie)*. An alternaive to *grandfaither* is *guidsire*, usually in ther form *gutcher* ['gʌtʃə] and ['giːtʃə] in North Northern varieties, along with colloquial forms such as *granda(w)* and *gandpaw*. An alternative to *grandmither* is *aulddame*, along with colloquial forms such as *grandmaw* and *gran(nie)*. Both *quean*, with the realisation [kwain], and *loun* [lun] are typical of Northern varieties; *man* [man] may be unstressed [mɪn, mən].
Machines, ships and boats, countries and so on are often considered feminine and are referred to using the pronoun *she*.

She’s late the day. (The bus)
It’s late today. (The bus)

In Shetland varieties, some nouns are treated as either masculine, feminine or neuter. Examples of masculine nouns are *air* (oar), *steid* (foundation), *shear*, *spade* and *sun*. Examples of feminine nouns are *lamp*, *fish*, *kirk* (church), *muin* (moon) and *warld* (world). The neuter is generally used for uncountable objects such as *girse* (grass), *hey* (hay) and *muild* (mould).

Regular plurals are usually formed by adding <-s> The realisation is usually /s/ after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, t, θ, x/ and /ç/) and /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ŋ, g, l, m, n, r/ and /v/).

- haund—haunds
- kirk—kirls
- pirn—pirns
- hand—hands
- churn—churns
- bobbin—bobbins

Tell us whit kin o beasts and birds leeves thareawa.
Tell us what kind of beasts and birds live over there.

Note that in words such as *knife*, *laif*, *life*, *thief* and *wife*, the Scots plural is generally regular.

- knifes
- laifs
- lifes
- thieves
- wifes
- knives
- loaves
- lives
- thieves
- wives

If the singular noun ends in a sibilant consonant, /s, f, tʃ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/, the plural is usually formed by adding <-s> where the noun ends with an <e>. Otherwise it is <-es>, usually realised as [æz]. Where /s/ becomes medial before the inflection, it remains /s/ in words such as *hooses* ['husaz].

- hoose—hooses
- rash—rashes
- catch—catches
- house—houses
- rush—rushes
- catch—catches

A few plurals are formed by adding <-se>, especially where the sense is collective.

- oo—oose
- woolen fluff, dust
- taw—tawse
- a leather strap with thongs
- you—youse
- you (plural)

*Oo* [u:] may be realised as [(w)u:], *oose* [(w)u:z] and *us* in Central varieties. *Taw*, also *tew*, is usually realised as [t(j)aːv, tʃaːv]. In some Mid Northern varieties often written *t(ʃ)aːv*, it is well known as a verb meaning to work laboriously, to toil, to struggle.

tawse is the usual word used to refer to the infamous leather strap formerly used to discipline children in Scottish schools.

Some nouns are usually or only used in the plural or have a special meaning when used in the plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ess</td>
<td>ash(es)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bellaes</td>
<td>bellows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breeks</td>
<td>trousers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brose</td>
<td>soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broth</td>
<td>soup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duds</td>
<td>rags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lichts</td>
<td>lungs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brose</td>
<td>parritch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broth</td>
<td>plainstanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duds</td>
<td>several(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lichts</td>
<td>several</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nowt</td>
<td>cattle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cattle</td>
<td>porridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plains</td>
<td>pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongs</td>
<td>tangs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ess usually [ɛs, es] may also be realised as [as], sometimes spelt aise or ass. The form severals ['sɛvəralz] occurs when used as a noun to refer to several persons or things.

Some nouns denoting semi-liquid food are used only in the plural. They are often referred to as if they had constituent parts. The plural noun may be hidden by Scots verb concord (p. 148) or the plural noun replaced by a plural pronoun.

The brose is awfu het. Thay're gey and gustie.
The soup is awfully hot. It is very tasty.

The parritch! The're real guid the day. Thir kail will be ower cauld.
The porridge! It's really good today. This broth will be too cold.

4 Scots contains a number of irregular plurals. Some of the more common ones are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cauf</td>
<td>calf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cou</td>
<td>cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td>eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fit</td>
<td>foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guiss</td>
<td>goose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loose</td>
<td>louse</td>
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<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moose</td>
<td>mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owse</td>
<td>ox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shae</td>
<td>shoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuith</td>
<td>tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wumman</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caur</td>
<td>caur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kye</td>
<td>kye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>een</td>
<td>een</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feet</td>
<td>feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geese</td>
<td>geese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lice</td>
<td>lice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mice</td>
<td>mice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oxen</td>
<td>oxen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoes</td>
<td>shuin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teeth</td>
<td>teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weemen</td>
<td>women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The older forms brither (brother)—brether(en) (brothers) and tree (tree) —treen (trees) also existed and can still be encountered in literature.
5 Some nouns, mainly referring to animals or foodstuffs, have the same form in singular and plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>birse</td>
<td>bristle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cod</td>
<td>cod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deer</td>
<td>deer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gait</td>
<td>goat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groose</td>
<td>grouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grice</td>
<td>pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>herrin</td>
<td>herring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse</td>
<td>horse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pease</td>
<td>pea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saumon</td>
<td>salmon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swine</td>
<td>pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>troot</td>
<td>trout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the plural *fish* represents a mass of fish. The plural *fishes* [ˈfɪʃɪz] represents a quantity of individual ‘fishes’. The singular word *scissor* [ˈsɪzar, ˈʃɪzar] may also be used to refer to a pair of scissors.

Leuk at aw thae fish. A hae five fishes.
Look at all those fish. I have five fish(es).

6 Many nouns take the same form as the verb with which they are connected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blame</td>
<td>blame</td>
<td>fault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lauch</td>
<td>lauch</td>
<td>laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stap</td>
<td>stap</td>
<td>step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stap</td>
<td>stap</td>
<td>stop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It's no ma blame. That's an ill lauch. Tak tent o the stap.
It's not my fault. That's an evil laugh. Mind the step.

7 Nouns with a pejorative or contemptuous connotation may be formed by adding the suffix <-rel> [rəl].

Wha wis that sair idleset gamphrel at the mercat?
Who was that very lazy fool at the market?

Haud yer wheesht, ye muckle-mootht haiverel.
Be quiet, you big-mouthed chattering half-wit.
There’s been a gangrel snokin aboot the midden.  
There has been a vagrant prowling around the refuse heap.

8 Nouns may be formed with the suffix <-lin>, plural <-lins>, indicating something belonging in some way to the root element.

He wis a tousie, muckle-boukit hauflin.  
He was a tough, burly youth.

The fower wee gorblins skreichin in the nest.  
The four little hatchlings screeching in the nest.

The gaislins wis oot daiblin in the dub.  
The goslings were out dabbling in the pond.

The cat and the kittlewis playin wi a moose.  
The cat and the kittens were playing with a mouse.

9 Prepositions are often used in conjunction with nouns and verbs to form compounds.

Thair faither’s affcasts is made to fit them at smaw cost.  
Their father’s cast-off clothes are made to fit them at little cost.

He’s sair hauden doun wi a back-wecht o naething.  
He’s severely disadvantaged by the burden of poverty.

He’s nae byspell mair than me.  He durstna dae it for fear o the eftercast.  
He’s no better than I am.  He dare not do it for fear of the consequences.

A bien dounsettin and a suffeeciency o gear.  
A comfortable marriage settlement and a sufficiency of goods.

A bairn fell frae an oot-stair near the wyndheid.  
A child fell from the outside stairs near the top of the lane.

The owerplus wis pitten intae the box.  
The surplus was put into the box.

The dealer selt the gear for the tae-come.  That’s juist his tae-name.  
The dealer sold the equipment for profit.  That’s only his nickname.

It wis a stey brae and the upcome wis a sair taw.  
It was a steep incline and the ascent was a severe struggle.
10 Diminutives.

Diminutives expressing smallness, endearment or contempt are usually formed by adding <-ie> to the noun (<-ies> for plurals) and are often preceded by wee. (for pronunciation see p. 49). Diminutives may also be formed by adding <-ock> [ək, ɪk] or even <-ockie>

In some Northern varieties the suffix <-ock> has been replaced by <-och> [ɔx, əx] or <-ach> [æx], for example, beeach, browloch, flairach, gleamoch and yelloch. In Caithness the diminutive <-ock> in words such as bannock, hillock, lassieock is realised as /ag/, often written <-ag> in dialect writing. In Insular varieties, in particular Orkney, the diminutive <-ock> may be reduced to [o, u], often written <-o>, <-ou> or <-oo> in dialect writing, for example, bratto, midgo, runcho and sooro. A less frequent diminutive ending is <-(i)kin> [(ɪ)kɪn, (ɪ)kɛn].

The wee lassie. A wee duggie. The wee beastie.
The little girl. A little dog. The little beast.
A wee bittock mair. Ye wee saftie.
A little bit more. You little soft-headed person.
A hooseockie. The wifeockie. The muckle feardie.
A little house. The little woman. The big coward.
The pleuchie. He’s a daftie. Ma wee dearies.
The ploughman. He’s mad. My little darlings.

A mutchkin stowp hauds but dribs. His guid buits and cuitikins.
A mutchkin tankard merely contains drops. His good boots and splatterdashes.

The instrumental suffix <-le> [ʌl, al, l] may be used to form diminutives meaning ‘a thing for’.

He made stapples awmaist sae braid as a wean’s waist.
He made a bundle of straw as broad as a child’s waist.

The fermer cowpit the cairt hurlin the windles o strae.
The farmer overturned the cart transporting the bundles of straw.

The suffix <-in>, [ən], also [in] in Southern and Orkney Scots and [ɪn] in Caithness, may also be used to give nouns diminutive emphasis or form a collective noun.

That auld lass can milk aw the kye up the loanin.
That old maid can milk all the cows up at the pasture.

The hird druive the yowes doun the roadin.
The shepherd drove the ewes down the track.
Up ahint the mains is a steidin o ricklie hooses.
Up behind the outbuildings is a row of ramshackle houses.

11 Nouns of measure and quantity.

Number and quantity are sometimes designated by nouns and sometimes by adjectives (p. 111).
After cardinal numbers (p. 122), nouns of measure usually remain uninflected in the plural. The noun is usually followed by the preposition (p. 210) *o*, [o, e], unstressed [ə] (of), before a pronoun (p. 91), but *o* is often omitted before a following noun.

- Twa poke o tatties.  Fower acre o grund.  Twa month syne.
- Two bags of potatoes.  Four acres of land.  Two months ago.
- Three feet long.  Four miles away.  Five hundredweight.

The wifie bocht sax pund o tatties.
The woman bought six pounds of potatoes. (Weight)

- Twa gless o beer.  A guid wheen months.  A gied him twa pund.
- Two glasses of beer.  A good many months.  I gave him two pounds. (Money)
- She’s twal year auld.  Ten stane o hey.  Aicht score o sheep.
- She’s twelve years old.  Ten stones of hay.  Eight score sheep.
- Seven dozen eggs.  A little drop of oil.  A little bit of bread.

Nouns of quantity.

A small quantity may be expressed by:

- A wee, a bit.  Gie’s a wee thing(ie) ile.  A wee titch saut.
- A small, a little.  Give me a little (bit of) oil.  A little salt.
- Gie’s a wee drap kail.  A tait o oo.
- Give me a little drop of (cabbage) soup.  A (little) lock of wool.
- A wee thocht whisky.  A hair o aits.  A grain soordouk.
- A small whisky.  A small portion of oats.  A little buttermilk.
A few may be expressed by:

- A wheen neeps.  
- Twa–three weets.  
- A pickle nits.  
- A few turnips.  
- A few drinks.  
- A few nuts.

A somewhat larger quantity may be expressed by:

- A curn o fowk.  
- A guid wheen auld wifes.  
- A guid pickle fishes.  
- A few people.  
- A good few old women.  
- A good few fish.

A considerable quantity may be expressed by:

- A hantle stanes.  
- A great dale mair.  
- A muckle hott muck.  
- A large amount of stones.  
- A great deal more.  
- A large quantity of dung.

- A daud o kebbock.  
- A nievefu bere.  
- A rowth o pouts.  
- A chunk of cheese.  
- A fistful of barley.  
- An abundance of young game birds.

- A gowpanfu o grosets.  
  Two (cupped) hands full of gooseberries.

A contracted form of *full*, <-le> [ʌl, əl, l], may be used to form nouns of quantity, especially in Northern varieties.

- He wis on his wey hame wi a cairtle o auld beans.  
  He was on his way home with a cart-load of old beans.

- A cogle o brose fills a tuim wame.  
  A bowlful of soup fills an empty belly.

Other expressions of measurement and quantity are:

- She’s the wale o thaim aw.  
  She’s the pick of them all.  
  The feck o fowk thinks that.  
  Most people think so.

- The hale clamjamfrie.  
  The whole mob, all the odds and ends.  
  Gie’s the tither hauf.  
  Give me the other half.

- That wis juist the tae hauf o’t.  
  That was the one half of it.  
  A niver seen the likes o thae.  
  I never saw anything like those.  
  Juist a wee bit wean.  
  Only a little child.

- The lave can bide here.  
  The remainder may remain here.  
  He’d taen the tane, and she’d taen the tither.  
  He’d taken one, and she’d taken the other.
Nouns have three cases; nominative, objective and possessive. The nominative names the subject. The objective denotes an object. The possessive denotes possession. The nominative and the objective are the same.

The possessive singular is formed by adding <-'s> to the nominative. The realisation is usually /s/ after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, t, θ, x, ç/), /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ð, g, l, m, n, r/ and /v/), and [az] after a sibilant consonant (/s, ʃ, tʃ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/). Where /s/ becomes medial before the inflection, it remains /s/ in words such as hoose’s [ˈhusəz].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The bairn’s fit.</th>
<th>The wife’s ring.</th>
<th>The dug’s bane.</th>
<th>The horse’s heid.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The child’s foot.</td>
<td>The wife’s ring.</td>
<td>The dog’s bone.</td>
<td>The horse’s head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A hoose’s waw needna aye be gray.</td>
<td>The cooncil’s schames gangs aft agley.</td>
<td>A house’s wall needn’t always be grey.</td>
<td>The council’s plans often go awry.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the subtle difference in meaning of:

He said he seen a cou’s heid at the door.  
She said she seen a cou-heid at the door. 
(The head of a living cow looking in.)    
(The severed head of a slaughtered cow.)

The possessive plural is formed by adding <-s'> to the nominative. The realisation is usually /s/ after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, t, θ, x/ and /ç/), /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ð, g, l, m, n, r/ and /v/) and [az] after a sibilant consonant (/s, ʃ, tʃ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/). Where /s/ becomes medial before the inflection, it remains /s/ in words such as hooses’ [ˈhusəz].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The yowes’ bowly horns.</th>
<th>The wifes’ fylt washin.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ewes’ twisted horns.</td>
<td>The wives’ soiled washing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dugs’ chowed banes.</td>
<td>The hooses’ breuk windaes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dogs’ chewed bones.</td>
<td>The houses’ broken windows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where the plural is not formed by adding <-s> or <-es> to the singular, <-'s> is added to the nominative plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The men’s shauchelt buits.</th>
<th>The auld weemen’s clash.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The men’s buckled boots.</td>
<td>The old women’s gossip.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13 Nouns denoting inanimate objects do not usually take the possessive. In such cases a sense of belonging to, being connected with, or being used for is expressed:

By placing the governing noun before the governed noun with the preposition o [o, e, a] between them.

The heid o the toun. The fit o the toun.
The upper end of town. The lower end of town.

By simply forming a compound noun by placing the governed noun in front of the governing noun.

The braeheid. A heidsheet.
The top of the slope. A sheet for the top of a bed.
The hausebane. The guidman.
The collarbone. The husband.

By sometimes inserting a hyphen between the nouns.

The toun–heid. The brig–end.
The town centre. The end of the bridge.
The chimney top. Heartburn. The finger–tip.

The use or non–use of a hyphen depends on word stress and morphological behaviour as well as individual practice.

14 The verbal noun (gerund) is a verb functioning as a noun.

In some peripheral varieties, especially among older speakers, the gerund is still differentiated from the present participle (p. 161) as it was in Older Scots, written <-ing> [in] and <-and> [an(d)]. In Southern and Orkney Scots, the gerund may be realised as [in] and the present participle [an], often written –een and –an in dialect writing. In Caithness the realisations may be [in] and [an]. A few revivalist writers have differentiated the gerund and present participle through employing the spellings <-in> and <-an> respectively.

Gerund: He’s fond o stravaigin aboot.
He likes roaming around.

Present Participle: He wis aye stravaigan aboot.
He was always roaming around.
By the twentieth century the realisations of the gerund and present participle had become indistinguishable in most dialects. The form <-in> added to the verb root, usually realised as [ən], is used here. As in Standard English, where it occurs, the final <e> of a verb is dropped.

The beirin o praisents is furthie. The beatin o dugs is ill-kindit.
The bearing of presents is generous. The beating of dogs is cruel.

He's fond o speakin til his feres. He's fond of speaking to his comrades.

The haddies wis fresh and lowpin in the creel. The haddocks were fresh and flopping about in the basket.

Bitin and scartin's Scots fowk's wooin. Biting and scratching are Scottish people's way of wooing.

Some verbal nouns usually occur exclusively in the plural. The plural suffix <-ins> [ɪnz, ənz] is sometimes mistakenly spelt <-ance>, having been conflated with a Latinate suffix.

easins eaves mudgins movements
efterins remainder owerins control, command, superiority
eildins equals in age newins news, something new, a novelty
haivins deportment sinderins a road-fork
lippenins trust, reliance wittins news, information, knowledge
lissins cessation, respite

The snaw wis drappin aff the easins. The quean strippit the efterins frae the udder. The snow was dropping from the eaves. The maid drew the last drops from the udder.

The auld man wis aw his lane efter aw his eildins haed dee'd. The old man was all alone after his peers had died.

For me tae speir wadna been guid haivins. For me to ask would not have been good manners.

A winna pit a gey lot o lippenins in whit he thocht. I wouldn't put a lot of trust in what he thought.

Micht the awmichty gie's some lissins frae this sair back. May the almighty give me some respite from this sore back.

A seen nae mudgins aboot the place whan A gaed by. I saw no movement about the place when I went past.
He disna hae the owerins o awthing in the hoose.
He doesn’t have control over everything in the house.

Its newins tae see ye doun the stair sae early.
Its a novelty to see you downstairs so early.

Elshinner speirt whit gate he maun tak at the sinderins o the roads.
Alexander asked which way he had to go at the fork of the road.

Janet is awfu keen for wittins o her brither in Americae.
Janet is very eager for news of her brother in America.

15 Most nouns describing occupations or the person carrying out the action implied by the verb were formed by adding <-ar> to the verb in Middle Scots. That pronunciation has become [ar], now usually spelt <-er>. Some older forms spelt <-ar> may still be encountered, especially the word *makar*.

cot  cottar  cottager
ferm  fermer  farmer
flesh  flesher  butcher
jine  jiner  joiner
lee  leear  liar
lowp  lowper  jumper
mak  makar  poet (verse-maker)
pent  penter  painter
saidle  saidler  saddler
shear  shearer  reaper

Note souter, a cobbler or shoemaker, ultimately from Latin *sutor*.

The names of some occupations or the person carrying out the action implied by the verb, adjective or noun are formed by adding <-ster>, which does not necessarily indicate a female agent.

gut  gutster  a female fish-gutter
heid  heidster  a skipper’s mate
lit  litster  a dyer of cloth
oo  ooster  a wooer or suitor
orra  orraster  a casual labourer
shew  shewster  seamstress
wab  wabster  weaver

Note the form baxter, a baker, from bak.
Pronouns

Pronouns are words used instead of nouns (p. 79), noun phrases, already known or understood from the context, or as a dummy subject or object (e.g. *it*) with little or no meaning.

Indefinite Pronouns

1 The indefinite pronoun refers to no particular person. In Scots it is traditionally *a body* ['bɔdi, 'bɔdi, 'bɔdɪ], ['bɔdɪ] in Orkney and some Mid Northern varieties, but *ane* [en], [-jɪn] in Southern, South–east, West Central and Ulster Scots and [-in] or [-ein] in Mid Northern varieties, also occurs as an indefinite pronoun. Note that in Scots a living or dead body is usually referred to as *the bouk*, while a dead body specifically, may also be *a corp*, plural *corpse* [kɔrp(s), kɔrp(s)].

That dis a body guid.  Gin a body trysts a body.
That does one good.  If one visits someone.

A body's sel.  A body wadna skaithe thairsel.
One's self.  One wouldn't injure oneself.

That winna dae a body ony hairm.  Thare's ane comin doun the street nou.
That won't do one any harm.  There's someone coming down the street now.

2 *Thaim* is also used indefinitely. Pronounced [ðɛm, ðɛm], unstressed [ðam], [dɛm] in Insular varieties. In Northern varieties [em] also occurs.

Thaim that wants tae eat parritch can eat parritch.  Gie't back til thaim that's aucht it.
Those who wish to eat porridge may eat porridge.  Give it back to whom it belongs.

3 Other indefinite pronouns are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>awbody</th>
<th>everyone</th>
<th>onybody</th>
<th>anyone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aw that</td>
<td>and so forth</td>
<td>onything</td>
<td>anything</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awthing</td>
<td>everything</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilk</td>
<td>each, every</td>
<td>somebody</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ocht</td>
<td>anything</td>
<td>something</td>
<td>something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ilk* [ɪlk] means each one or every, often expressed *ilk ane*, also meaning two or more, everybody or all and sundry.

In Central varieties the initial /θ/ in *thing* may be debuccalised to /h/ giving [hɪŋ] or [hɪŋ].

Ilk ane o ye tak a gun.  Awthing's ill.
Each one of you take a gun.  Everything is bad.
Jock stottert intae the hoose wi a lassie in ilk oxter.
Jock staggered into the house with a girl under each arm.

Whan ilk comes tae his ain we'll see the affcome.
When each one comes to his own we'll see the result.

Milkin kye and aw that. He'll be back wi the pent and aw that.
Milking cows and so forth. He'll be back with the paint and so forth.

Dae ye hae ocht for me? Something wis makkin a sair dirdum.
Do you have anything for me? Something was making a terrible noise.

Dis onybody ken whaur ma breeks is?
Does anyone know where my trousers are?

Awbody's wantin tae gang til the dance the morn's nicht.
Everyone wants to go to the dance tomorrow night.

Is thare onything guid at the picturs the nicht?
Is anything good on at the cinema this evening?
Demonstrative Pronouns

The demonstrative pronouns point out objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>this</td>
<td>thir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>thae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yon (thon)</td>
<td>yon (thon)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form *thon* arose by analogy with the other demonstrative pronouns, with whose initial <th> the form was conflated. Both *yon* and *thon* indicate something that is farther away in space or time than *that or thae*.

This dug’s awfu frichtsome. That hoose is gey and braw. This is a braw day.
This dog is very fearful. That house is very nice. This is a beautiful day.

That’ll dae fine. Thir’s guid neeps. Thae’s bonnie weans.
That’ll do nicely. These are good turnips. Those are pretty children.

Thir fowk canna thole the cauld. Thae fowk disna like the sun.
These people can’t bear the cold. Those people don’t like the sun.

Yon’s a muckle tree. Yon ben is happit wi snaw.
That’s a big tree over there. That mountain over there is covered in snow.

Thon wis grand times.
Those were great days (long ago).

In Mid Northern and North Northern Scots, *this* and *that* may be contracted to *’is* [is, ɪs] and *’at* [at], and are used as plurals rather than *thir* and *thae*.

This hooses is aucht the laird. That tuips is awfu veecious.
These houses belong to the landowner. Those rams are terribly vicious.

*Sic* ‘such’, expresses ‘such a person or thing’ or ‘one of the kind’.

A speak tae sic o ye as haes time and siller tae throw awa.
I speak to such of you as have money and time to throw away.

The’re nae sic a thing hereawa. Sic and sic a body’s gaun tae be mairit.
There’s no such thing hereabouts. So–and–so is going to be married.
The tither expresses ‘the other or second of two’, often used in opposition to the tane meaning ‘that one’.

Haud the bowt wi the ae haund and the nit wi the tither.
Hold the bolt with one hand and the nut with the other.

Ye canna tell the tane frae the tither. The tane wi yellae hair, the tither gray.
You can’t tell that one from the other. One had yellow hair, the other grey.
Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns refer to three sets of people.

The first person refers to the person or persons speaking.
The second person refers to the person or persons spoken to.
The third person refers to the person(s) or thing(s) spoken of.

1 Personal pronoun singular.

The nominative names the subject, and the objective names the object.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Person singular: A</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person singular: ye</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person singular: he</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person singular: she</td>
<td>she</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person singular: (h)it</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_A [a:] (always written with a capital letter) may be unstressed [a]. Ye [ji] may be unstressed [jɪ] or realised as you [ju], [jʌu] in Southern Scots. He [hi, hɪ] may also be [he] in South Central varieties, [hɛi] in Southern Scots or be unstressed [i, ɪ], and him [hɪm] may be unstressed [həm, hɪm]. She [ʃi, ʃe] may also be [ʃə] in peripheral varieties (p. 14) or be unstressed [ʃi, ʃe], and her [hɪr] may be unstressed [ær]. It [ɪt], also [ɪd] in East Central varieties and unstressed [t, d], has the more emphatic from hit [hɪt, hʌt] or [hɪd] in North Northern and Insular varieties.

The older forms _thoo_ (second person singular nominative) [ðu], Southern Scots [ðʌu], [du] in insular varieties, and _thee_ (second person singular objective) [ði(ː)], [ðei] in Southern Scots, [di(ː)] in Shetland, survived in most dialects until the mid–nineteenth century and still exist to some extent in Southern, North Northern and Insular Scots. Where _thoo_ and _thee_ are used as the familiar forms employed by parents speaking to children, elders to youngsters, or between friends or equals, _ye or you_ is the second person formal singular employed when speaking to a superior or when a youngster addresses an elder.

In Shetland, _thoo_ may be used with a verb taking the same form for the third person.

Thoo is ... Thoo haes ... Thoo will ... Thoo comes ...
You are ... You have ... You shall ... You come ...

When two pronouns referring to different persons are used together, the first person is generally placed first.

Me and you’ll gang thegither. Me and him’s guid pals. Wha wis here? A wis! or Me! You and I shall go together. He and I are good friends. Who was here? !!
It wis me that wis thare.  It wisna me that did it.  (Me,) A wisna thare.
It was me who was there.  It wasn’t I who did it.  I wasn’t there.

Baith you and her wis seen thareaboots.  Me or you canna be fautit for that.
Both she and you were seen around there.  Neither you nor I can be blamed for that.

She’s aulder nor him.  It wis him that bocht the dug.
She’s older than he is.  It was he who bought the dog.

You’ll no gar me dae ony o thae things.
You will not compel me to do any of those things.

The plural us, [ʌs, ɪs, ɪz], also [wɪz] in Insular varieties, is often used instead of the first person objective singular me in combination with verbs. It is often contracted to ’s [s] after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, t, ð, x/ and /ç/) and /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ð, g, l, m, n, r/ and /v/). The full form is usually used after a sibilant consonant (/s, ʃ, tʃ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/).

Gie’s the haimer.  Lat us gang oot the nicht.
Give me the hammer.  Let me go out tonight.

Are ye no gaun tae come wi’s?  Will ye hae’s, Bess?
Aren’t you going to come with me?  Will you marry me, Bess?

When two pronouns, one of which is it, are used together, it generally follows the other pronoun.

Gie’s it.  Gie him it.  A gied her it.  A’ll gie ye it.
Give it to me.  Give it to him.  I gave it to her.  I’ll give it to you.

Did ye tell him it?  Ye’ll no gie’s it back again.
Did you tell it to him?  You won’t give it back to me again.

It may be abbreviated to ’t [t] [d] in East Central varieties after a vowel or a voiced consonant.

A hae leukit awgates for’ t.  A dinna care aboot nane o’ t.
I’ve looked everywhere for it.  A don’t care for any of it.  You’ll see it before long.

A’ll gie ye’ t.  A coulna dae’ t.  That’ll pit him frae’ t.
I’ll give it to you.  I couldn’t do it.  That’ll put him off it.

He’s by wi’ t.  He shoud pou’ t oot the nou.
He’s past it.  (As good as dead.)  He ought to pull it out now.
2 Personal pronoun plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Person plural: we we us, hus us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person plural: ye ye you you you</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person plural: thay they thaim them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*We* is also realised as [u(ː)] in South Central varieties and may also be used as an unstressed substitute for *us*, often spelt *oo* or *ou* in dialect writing. *We* may also be unstressed [ə], and *us* [ʌs, ɪs, ɪz] may also occur as [wɪz] in Insular varieties. The more emphatic form *hus* [hʌz, ʰɪz, ʰɛz] may also replace *we* as a nominative before relative pronouns and nouns in apposition. *Ye* [jɪ] may be unstressed [jɪ]. *Thay* [ðe] may be unstressed [ðə] or elided to [e] in Northern varieties, where *thaim* [ðɛm, ðɛm] may be unstressed [ðəm] or elided to [em]. *Thaim* is often used indefinitely (not referring to a particular person) to represent ‘he’, ‘them’, ‘those’ and ‘whoever’.

In colloquial speech, the plural forms of *ye* and *you*, *yese* and *youse*, which probably originated in Ireland, are quite widespread in Scotland.

Come Yuil we'll gie’t thaim.
When Christmas comes, we'll give it to them.

Gin thay dinna gie’s it back, we'll caw on the polis.
If they don't give it back to us, we'll call the police.

Naebody speirt at us gin we wantit tae gang.
No one asked us if we wanted to go.

We aucht that.  It wisna thaim ava.  Thay gied me it.
We own that.  It wasn’t them at all.  They gave it to me.

Gie’t thaim that wants it.  She’ll gie thaim it.  Us and thaim is aye fechtin.
Give it to those who want it.  She’ll give it to them.  We and they are always fighting.

A’ll tell youse it.  Hus and thaim’s no awfu pally.
I'll tell it to you.  We and they are not very friendly.
Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns indicate who possesses (owns) something.

1 Used attributively

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Person: my my</td>
<td>oor our</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person: your your</td>
<td>your your</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: his his</td>
<td>thair their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: her her</td>
<td>thair their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: (h)its its</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My may be unstressed *ma* [ma, ma], which is often used in more colloquial writing and *oor* [uːr] also has the unstressed form *wir* [wɪr, wɔr, wir]. Your [yur] also has the unstressed form *yer* [jær, jɪr]. His [hɪz, hɪz] may be unstressed [ɪz, əz]. Her [hər] may be unstressed [ər], and *thair* may be unstressed [ðər, ðər], or elided to [er] in Northern varieties. Its [ɪts] may be [ɪdz] in East Central varieties (unstressed [ts, dz]). It may take the more emphatic form *hits* [hɪts, hɪts], [hɪdz] in North Northern and Insular varieties.

His may be contracted *'s* [z] in unstressed positions.

Jeams sang for's daily breid. He'll no tak ane o's dugs.
James sang for his daily bread. He'll not take one of his dogs.

He left wi's ain coat. He's awa tae's wark.
He left with his own coat. He's off to his work.

The older form *thy* (second person singular) [ðaɪ] in North Northern and [dəɪ] or *'dee'* [diː] in Insular varieties, survived in most dialects until the mid–nineteenth century and still exists to some extent in Southern, North Northern and Insular Scots.

Although the following quantitative nouns are singular, the possessive pronoun referring to them is used in the plural.

Awbody haes thair ain draff–poke tae cairy.
Everyone has his own draff–sack (i.e. fault) to carry.

Gin ye blether sic haivers, fowk will think ye’re wrang in the mind.
If you talk such nonsense, people will think that you’re deranged.

Somebody’s left thair fitmerks ahint thaim.
Someone has left his footprints behind him.
It’s no aft onybody finds thair wey here.
It is seldom that anyone finds his way here.

Ilk ane’s tae dae thair bit for the kirk fête.
Everyone has to do his bit for the church fête.

Note the following usage of possessive pronouns.

Come awa tae yer tea. A haena gotten ma denner ye t.
Come along to dinner. I haven’t had lunch yet.

He’s awa hame til his supper.
He has gone home for supper.

2 Used predictively or absolutely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Person singular:</td>
<td>mine(s)</td>
<td>mine oors ours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person singular:</td>
<td>yours</td>
<td>yours yours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person singular:</td>
<td>his</td>
<td>his thairs theirs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hers (h)its</td>
<td>its</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oors [uːrz] also has the unstressed form wirs [wɪrz, wɜːrz, wɜːrəz, wɜːrz]. His [hɪz, hɪz] may be unstressed [ɪz, əz] and hers [hərz] may be unstressed [ərz]. Thairs may unstressed [ðərəz, ərəz]. It may be [drərz] in Insular varieties or elided to [ərz] in Northern varieties. Its [ɪts], also [dz] in East Central varieties, may be unstressed [ts, dz] or take the more emphatic form hits [hɪts, həts], [hɪdz] in North Northern and Insular varieties.

The older form thine survives only in Insular varieties as [dain(s)], where thy [dai] and thine(s) are used as the familiar form by parents speaking to children, elders to youngsters, or between friends or equals, and your(s) is used formally when speaking to a superior or when a younger person addresses an elder.

That’s ma auld tour. That auld byre’s mines. Are ye siccar that’s yours?
That’s my old tower. That old cow shed is mine. Are you sure th’a yours?

Hit’s nae guid ava. Yer hoose is fawin doun, but thairs isna.
It’s no good at all. Your house is falling down, but theirs isn’t.

Thair schame for tae mak siller’s mair better nor his.
Their plan to make money is better than his.

Lippen til her; she kens wir thochties anent it.
Trust her; she knows our ideas about it.
3 *Ain*, [eːn], [eɪn] in some Buchan and North Northern varieties, ['eən] in some Insular [eː], [jeː] in Southern, South–east, West Central and Ulster Scots, also [iː] in Insular varieties, may be used after the attributive possessive pronouns in order to express ownership.

That’s ma ain dug.  
That’s my (own) dog.

She canna thole her ain fowk.  
She can’t endure her own people.

4 The definite article (p. 76) is often used colloquially instead of a possessive pronoun when referring to relatives or parts of the body.

Hae ye seen the wife?  
Have you seen my wife?

The airm is awfu sair.  
My arm is very sore.

Dinna loss the heid whan he wins hame fou as a puggie.  
Don’t lose your temper when he returns home as drunk as a lord.
Reflexive Pronouns

1 Reflexive pronouns indicate that the action turns back upon the subject.

The reflexive pronouns are formed by adding <-sel> [sɛl] to the possessives (p. 98). The suffix <-sel> is usually used collectively and the suffix <-sels> [sɛlz] individually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Person: mysel</td>
<td>oorsel(s),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Person: myself</td>
<td>ourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person: yoursel</td>
<td>yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Person: yoursel</td>
<td>yourselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: himsel,</td>
<td>thaimsel(s),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: himself</td>
<td>themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: hissel</td>
<td>thairsel(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: hersel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: herself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: (h)itsel</td>
<td>ownself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Person: itself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mysel [ˈmaɪsɛl] may have the unstressed form masel [mɑˈ-], which is often used in more colloquial writing. Oorsel(s) also has the unstressed form wirsel(s) [ˈwɜrsɛl, wɔr- wɔr-, wɪr-]. Yoursel(s) may be unstressed yersel(s) [jɔr-, jɪr-]. Himsel may be unstressed ['himsɛl, 'ɪmsɛl], and hissel may be [ɪz-, iz- az-] in unstressed positions. Hersel may be unstressed [ər-]. Itsel also takes the more emphatic from hitsel ['hɪtsɛl, ˈhʌtsɛl, ˈhʌdz-'] in North Northern and Insular varieties.

A telt ye A micht can mend it mysel. We can dae awthing wirsels.
I told you That I might be able to repair it myself. We can do everything ourselves.

A saw ye’d been early asteer yersel this mornin. Coud ye dae that yersels?
I saw that you’d been up and about early this morning. Could you do that yourselves?

Weel, it’ll no mend itsel. Ma brither kens fowk that mends awthing thairsels.
Well, it won’t repair itself. My brother knows people who repair everything themselves.

The reflexive pronouns mysel, unstressed masel, may often be used in place of the personal pronoun me.

He wis twa year younger nor masel. Masel and Dauvit gaed hame.
He was two years younger than me. David and I went home.

Gin it wisna for masel, it wadna hae happent.
If it wasn’t for me, it wouldn’t have happened.

Sel(s) may be used independently.

Gang awa ye twa sels. The denner wis saut’s sel.
Go away both of you. Lunch was the epitome of saltiness.
The roads wis glaur’s sel wi aw that rain.
The roads were just mud itself after all that rain.

Fair play tells the sel o it. Your lad’s juist the sel o ye.
Fair play speaks for itself. Your boy is just like you.

2 The reflexive pronoun may be intensified by inserting ain before sel(s). The forms my nain and ma nain is the result of re-analysis of mine ain.

A made it aw ma ain sel. We did it wir ain sels.
I made it entirely by myself. We did it on our own.

Gie’s the scissor, and A’ll cut it ma nain sel.
Give me the scissors, and I’ll cut it myself.

3 The word lane [len], [lin] in Northern varieties, or lee lane, plural lanes, is used in much the same way as sel.

She wis sittin her lane. A wis aw ma lee lane. We gaed wir lanes.
She was sitting by herself. I was by myself. (All alone.) We went by ourselves.

He leeved his lane. Thay stuid thair lane. Is she by her lane?
He lived alone. They stood by themselves. Is she on her own?

Gin ye’d hae telt him, he wad hae stuid by his lane.
If you had told him, he would have stood alone.
Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogatives ask questions.

1 Male and female, singular and plural.

Nominative: wha? who?
Objective: wha? whom?
Possessive: whase? whose?

Wha [ʍɑː, ʍɔː] is realised as [ʍeː] in some South–east Central and Southern Scots varieties and [faː] in Northern varieties. Whase [ʍɑːz, ʍɔːz] is realised as [ʍeːz] in some South–east Central and Southern Scots varieties and [faːz] in Northern varieties.

Wha's that? Wha did ye see? Wha belongs this hoose?
Who is that? Whom did you see? To whom does this house belong?

Wha's aucht the televeesion? Whase shuin's thae?
Whose is the television? Whose are those shoes?

2 The neuter in plural and singular nominative and objective, is what [ʍat, ʍɔt], [fat] in Northern varieties and [kwat] in Insular varieties. It may also take the form whit [ʍɪt, ʍʌt], [fɪt, fʌt] in Northern varieties. Whilk, [ʍɪlk, ʍʌlk], [fɪlk, fʌlk] in Northern varieties, which corresponds to Standard English ‘which’, is obsolete in speech, and whit may be used in its place.

Whit dae ye want tae yer tea? Whit dug haes the langest lugs?
What would you like for your dinner? Which dog has the longest ears?

Whit haund will ye tak? Whilk gate dae A tak til the bus stance?
Which hand will you take? Which road do I take to the bus stop?
Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns introduce information referring to the previous part of the sentence (clause). In the sentence:

The kemp that wun the gowd medal wis awfu prood.
The champion who won the gold medal was extremely proud.

The clause *that wun the gowd medal* provides information relative to the *kemp*.
These relative clauses are introduced by relative pronouns.

1 The relative pronoun for male and female and each case is *that*, [ðat, ðat] ([dat] in Insular varieties), meaning who, which, that, often contracted to ‘*at* [at, t], which is not to be confused with the preposition *at*. In Insular and Caithness Scots the form *at* [at, at], from Old Norse at, also occurs. Not to be confused with the preposition *at*.

The relative pronouns *wha* (who) and *wham* (whom) are often considered Anglicisms, and usually occur only in more formal writing and speech.

Thay are aw gluttons that little guid gets. The chield that steys neist door.
All who get little good are gluttons. The fellow who lives next door.

The fowk that’s comin tae veesit. Gie’t back tae thaim that’s aucht it.
The people who are coming to visit. Give it back to its owners.

She niver saw the man that she gied the siller tae.
She never saw the man to whom she gave the money.

The man, that she dined wi yestreen, wis her brither.
The man, with whom she dined last night, was her brother

*That* may be made possessive by adding <-’s> [s].

The rinners that’s feet is sair. The man that’s dig dee’d.
The runners whose feet hurt. The man whose dog died.

The laddies that’s baw’s tint. The wifie that’s washin wis duin.
The boys whose ball is lost. The woman whose washing was finished.

2 Shadow pronouns appear in constructions such as *that* plus a possessive pronoun (p. 98).

The lad that his dug’s deid. The wifie that her messages is tint.
The boy whose dog is dead. The woman whose shopping is lost.
The man that his darg’s duin.
The man whose work is done.

3 Sometimes the relative pronoun is omitted, particularly in sentences beginning with *thare’s*. Prepositions are frequently omitted at the end of a sentence.

Thare’s no mony fowk (that) steys in thon glen.
There are not many people who live in that valley.

Ma freend’s a dochter (that) uised tae be in the schuil.
My friend has a daughter who used to be at school.

We haed this Soothren lass (that) cam tae wir schuil.
We had this English girl who came to our school.

The machine (that) ye milk the kye (wi). The shap (that) A bocht it (frae).
The machine with which you milk the cows. The shop from which I bought it.

Thare’s juist the ane o us (that’s) been tae Cupar afore.
There’s only one of us who has been to Cupar before.

4 Although comparatively rare, *as* [az], unstressed [əz, z, s], may also be used as a relative pronoun.

The man as aucht the mains is awa. This is the man as telt me.
The man who owned the home farm has left. This is the man who told me.

Thaim as haes sheep tae coont will coont thaim.
Those who have sheep to count will count them.

5 *Whilk*, [ʍɪlk, wʌlk] ([fɪlk, fəlk] in Northern varieties) is now obsolete in speech but still occurs in literature. Consequently, the concept of ‘which’ may be conveyed by the use of *that* or the use of the conjunction *and*, often as *and that* or *but that*, with, if necessary, a corresponding recasting of the sentence.

The pat wi whilk the maid biles watter.
The pat that the maid biles watter wi.
The pot in which the maid boils water.

The wirkers howkit a sheuch in whilk the foonds wis liggit.
The wirkers howkit a sheuch that the foonds wis liggit in.
The workers dug a trench in which the foundations were laid.
He said that he haed tint it, whilk wisna whit we wantit tae hear.
He said that he haed tint it, and that wisna whit we wantit tae hear.
He said he had lost it, which was not what we wanted to hear.

The moniment that is ower thare is twa hunder year auld.
The monument which is over there is two hundred years old.

The pairty that A tel t yea aboot is at Eck’s hoose.
The party which I told you about is at Alex’s house.

The quaisten that we dinna hae and answer for haes aye confoondit me.
The question for which we have no answer has always confounded me.

Allowa, that many fowk haes written aboot, is Burns' cauf-kintra.
Alloway, about which many people have written, is Burns’ birthplace.

Zebr as, that’s strippit black and white, can whiles be fund in zoos.
Zebras, which are striped black and white, can sometimes be found in zoos.

Thon shoogly argiement, that he haed foondit his hale case on, didna insense the judge.
That shaky argument, on which he had built his whole case, did not convince the judge.

The stanes, that’s aw back on the cairn nou, wis awfu wechty.
The stones, all of which are back on the cairn now, were very heavy.

He said they war gaun oot, but that wis no whit she wantit tae dae.
He said they were going out, which was not what she wanted to do.

He wis cairyin his belangins, and mony o thaim wis braken.
He was carrying his belongings, many of which were broken.

He haed thousands o beuks, and he haed read the feck o thaim.
He had thousands of books, most of which he had read.

He haed twa caurs, and ane o thaim wadna stert.
He had two cars, one of which wouldn’t start.

Scotland haes mony herbours, and maist o thaim is uised by fishin boats.
Scotland has many harbours, most of which are used by fishing boats.

Thay mak whisky, and muckle o’t is exportit.
They make whisky, much of which is exported.
Life is fou o throucomes, and ilk ane maks us a better body.
Life is full of ordeals, each of which makes us a better person.

Thare’s twa weys tae dae this, and aither o thaim is fine.
There are two ways to do this, either of which is fine.
Negative Pronouns

naebody  no one  nane  none
naething  nothing  nocht  nothing

In Central varieties the initial /θ/ in thing may be debuccalised to /h/ giving [hɪŋ] or [hɪn] resulting in an unstressed pronunciation such as ['nəhɪn].

Naebody wad hae ocht tae dae wi her.
No one would have anything to do with her.

Nane o thae fowk wantit tae ken her aither.
None of those people wanted to know her either.

The’re naething for teenagers tae dae in the schames.
There is nothing for teenagers to do on the housing estates.

A gat nocht back frae ma tenner.    Ye’re aither awthing or naething wi him.
I got nothing back from my tenner.    You are either everything or nothing to him.
Other Pronouns

| ane anither | one another | ony | any |
| aw ither thing | everything else | ony ither body | anyone else |
| awbody | everyone | onybody | anyone |
| awthing | everything | some | some |
| baith | both | some ither body | someone else |
| ilka body | everyone | somebody | someone |
| ither | other, each other | some ither | some other |
| mony ane | many a one | something | something |
| ocht | anything | anything |

*Ilka* ['ɪlkə, 'ɪlki, 'ɪlke], meaning each, every, of two or more, derives from an Early Scots contraction of *ilk ane*, consequently constructions such as *ilka ane, ilka body* and *ilka thing* became common. The possessive pronoun referring to singular *awbody, ilka body, onybody* and *somebody is thair*.

The twa lassies wis bletherin awa tae ane anither.
The two girls were chatting away with one another.

Thare wis breid and cheese and aw ither thing in the aumrie.
There was bread and cheese and everything else in the pantry.

It’s no awbody that kens awthing aboot the fishin.
It’s not everyone who knows everything about fishing.

Ye’v tried awthing, and it still winna wirk.
You’ve tried everything, and it still won’t work.

The twa o ye can haud the raip in baith your haunds
The two of you can hold the rope with both hands.

Come oot o that, the baith o ye, afore A skelp yer lugs.
Stop that, the two of you, before I box your ears.

He wis that mad he gien a tellin tae ilka ane o us.
He was so angry that he reprimanded each one of us.

Ilka body kens thair ain best wey.
Everyone knows his best way.

The plenishin and ilka thing belangin the hoose.
The furniture and everything pertaining to the house.
Thay war aw ae oo; thay war baith like ither.
They were of one stock; they were like each other.

Caw canny the nicht; mony ane cheats at the cairts.
Be careful this evening; many people cheat at cards.

Thare’s niver ocht in his pootch but his haund.
There’s never anything in his pocket except his hand.

Wi a tuim wame, he speirt gin ony brose wis ower.
With an empty belly, he asked if there were any soup left.

A speirt him gin he haed ony haund in hit.
I asked him if he had anything to do with it.

He niver said a wrang wurd til her or ony ither body.
He never said a wrong word to her or anyone else.

It’s no aft onybody finds thair wey thare.
It isn’t often that anyone finds their way there.

Dae ye ken onybody that can mend the pleuch.
Do you know anyone who can repair the plough.

Somebody cam roond speirin efter ye.
Someone came round asking for you.

It wis some ither body that staw the ither caur.
It was someone else who stole the other car.

Thare wis something eldritch aboot that body.
There was something weird about that person.
Adjectives

Adjectives are words added to nouns (p. 79) to qualify them or to limit their denotation by reference to quality, number or position.

1 Adjectives may be formed from nouns and verbs, usually by adding <-ie> (for pronunciation see p. 49); where words are shared with or similar to Standard English, <-y> may be used. The internal inconsistency caused by using both <-ie> and <-y> will be found here. Some writers simply use one or the other.

   A creashie cloot.  A stany gate.  The duddie claes.
   A greasy cloth.  A stony road.  The ragged clothes.
   The reekie lum.  The stourie brace.  The grippy puggie.
   The smoky chimney. The dusty mantelpiece. The grasping monkey.

2 The past participles of verbs (p. 150), may also be used as adjectives, the forms ending in <-(e)n> being the most common.

   The droukit dug.  The feart laddie.  The soopit fluir.  The drucken man.
   The soaked dog.  The scared boy.  The swept floor.  The drunk man.
   The cuisten baw.  The shoddit horse.  The thrawn wifie.  The thruishen corn.
   The cast ball.  The shod horse.  The obstinate woman.  The threshed grain.

Past participles are often used in compound adjectives.

   The puir wee peelie-wallie bowlie-leggit sowel.
   The poor little wan bandy-legged soul.
   He wis a caurie-fistit cuif.  He wis fair lang-heidit.
   He was an awkward fool.  He was quite sagacious.

3 Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffixes <-n> and <-en> [ən] or <-ern> [ərn].

   The stanern waw.  The treen buirds.  A straen tattie-bogle.
   The stone wall.  The wooden boards.  A straw scarecrow.

4 Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffix <-le> [əl, əl, l], signifying 'having a tendency to' or 'able to'.

   Auld Jock is real forgettle growin nou.
   Old Jock is becoming really forgetful now.
The marls is sair smittle amang the bairns.
Measles is very infectious among children.

The bonny bit fodgle, reid-cheekit servand lassie.
The pretty little, buxom, rosy-cheeked servant girl.

Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffix <-lin(s)> [lɪn(z)] signifying ‘direction’, ‘manner’, ‘condition’ or ‘degree’.

It’s a snell eastlin wind. The hauflins laddie. He wis blindlins fou yestreen.
It’s a fierce east wind. The half-grown boy. He was blind drunk last night.

The caller nor’lin wind blew ’ithoot lissins.
The fresh north wind blew without respite.

The fishwifes wis sellin wastlin herrin.
The fishwives were selling west-coast herring.

Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffix <-fu> (see p. 51) implying the subjective condition.

Awfully dreary weather. A scornful fellow. An awful mishap.

Mind thae sellfu days. A fearfu wee dug. The suithfu chield.
Remember those happy days. A timid little dog. The honest fellow.

The waefu weedae. The thochtful dominie.
The melancholy widow. The thoughtful schoolmaster.

Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffix <-some> [sʌm] implying the subjective condition.

A gruesome carline.¹ A braw lichtsome day.
A ghastly old woman. A beautiful joyous day.

A winsome young man. A waesome ongaun.
A charming young man. A sad occurrence.

¹ [ˈkɪarlɪn, ˈkɛrlɪn]
8 Adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffix <-rif(e)> [rɪf, rəif] ‘abundant’ implying ‘full of the quality of’.

The bairn’s awfu waukrif. IT’S A Gey and cauld rif day the day.
The baby is awfully wakeful. IT’S An extremely cold day today.

9 In some Northern varieties adjectives may also be formed by adding the suffixes <-ach>, <-och> [əx] or <-ich(t)> [ɪç(t)], sometimes preceded by contracted <-ish> or with added <-y, -ie>, implying ‘somewhat’ or ‘inclining to’.

Glaumshach bodies aft rives thair wames. He wis and awfu cockach chield.
Gluttenous people often burst their stomachs. He was an awfully conceited fellow.

He haed a yallochie, paewae-leukin face. A wee greenichtie bird.
He had a yellowish, pallid-looking face. A small greenish bird.

She wis aye dainshach aboot her meat. The crumpshach bakes.
She was always fastidious about food. The brittle biscuits.

10 The suffix <-like>, [laɪk], unstressed [lɪk, lɛk], also [lek] in South–west Central and Ulster varieties, can be attached to adjectives to qualify the meaning.

She gied a wiselike ootcome, sae weel pitten on.
She presented a good appearance, being so well dressed.

The auld plane–tree wis vainisht–like.
The old sycamore tree had a shrunken appearance.

The nicht wis black–like. Siclike fowk gars me grue.
The night was blackish. Such people make me shudder.

11 The prefix <cam-> [kʌm, kʌm] signifies ‘awry’.

The camsheuch auld gowk wadna lat me see his dochter.
The ill–natured old fool wouldn’t let me see his daughter.

The raip wis sae camshauchelt A coulna unraivel’t.
The rope was so tangled that I couldn’t untangle it.

A cammelt crummock. Thae’s gey and camsteirie nowt.
A crooked walking–stick. Those are extremely unruly cattle.
12 Both *kind* [kain(d)] or *kin* [kɪn] can also be used after adjectives to qualify the meaning.

Wi aw the wark, it wis gaun tae be a lang kind o a day.
With all the work, it was going to be a longish day.

Thare wis nae muin tae be seen; it wis a black kin o a nicht.
There was no moon tae be seen; it was a blackish night.

13 *Siccan* (*sic kin*). With the indefinite article added, *siccan* ['sɪkən] becomes *sicna* ['sɪknə].

Sicna day as A hae haed, siccan cauld as it is.
Such a day as I’ve had, it being so cold.

14 Adjectives do not usually change their form in the plural, but the following exceptions exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>thae those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this</td>
<td>thir these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eneuch</td>
<td>enew enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mair</td>
<td>mae more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muckle</td>
<td>mony many</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*That* [ðat] may be elided to [at], *thir* is realised as [ðɪr], and *this* may be elided to [ɪs, ɪs] in Northern varieties. Both *eneu* and *mae* are recessive.

15 The demonstrative adjectives take the same form as the demonstrative pronouns (p. 93) and point out people and objects.

Definite demonstrative adjectives refer to a particular person or object.

Added to those are also *sic* ‘such’ and *(the) tither* ‘the other’.

A haena seen him this lang time. She haedna seen him this mony a year.
I haven’t seen him for a long time. She hadn’t seen him for many years.

The fermer bocht aw thir beasts frae me. Thir breeks o mine.
The farmer bought all these cattle from me. These trousers of mine.

Thir’s no the men he seen ere the streen. Whase bairns is thir?
These are not the men he saw the night before last. Whose are these children?

Thir days awthing’s ower dear.
These days everything is too expensive.
He kens aw thir things isna gaun tae lest for aye.
He knows that all those things won’t last for ever.

That yowe wis aye wandert on the braes.
That ewe was always lost on the slopes.

Thae fowk comes here aften.    A dinna like thae tatties.
Those people often come here.  I don’t like those potatoes.

Hou coud thae twa hae been fechtin?
How could those two have been fighting?

In thae days fowk wad wirk ower the Christenmas and aw.
In those days people would work over Christmas too.

*Thae* may occasionally have the meaning ‘these’.

He’s been gane thae twa oor and mair.
He’s been gone these two hours and more.

It’s been in ma auld cornkist thae thirty year.
It’s been in my old grain chest for these thirty years.

*Yon* and *thon* indicate something that is farther away in space or time than *that* or *thae*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dae ye see yon tree?</th>
<th>A aft mind o yon time.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you see that tree over there?</td>
<td>I often think of that time (long ago).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>He’s a richt timmer–heid, thon.</th>
<th>He didna aye weir sic braw black cloth.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That man is an absolute blockhead.</td>
<td>He didn’t always wear such fine black clothing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nae wunner, than, in sic a case, at sic a time, in sic a place.
No wonder then, in such a case, at such a time, in such a place.

*Sic* followed by the indefinite article (p. 74) and a plural noun may also express ‘what a lot of’.

Sic a flouers we hae in oor gairden.
What a lot of flowers we have in our garden.

*The tither* expresses ‘an alternative, the second of two (or more), another, the previous or recent’ or ‘just gone’ and ‘additional, extra or yet another’

On the tither haund, A didna care tae stilp upo’ my cuits.
On the other hand, I didn’t care to parade around.
The wife isna sae richt; she rackit her side the tither nicht.
My wife isn’t so well; she twisted her side the previous night.

He aye cut the tither sclice frae aff the kebbock heel.
He always cut an additional slice from the rind of the cheese.

Indefinite demonstrative adjectives do not refer to any particular person or object.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ony any</td>
<td>ony any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anither another</td>
<td>ither(s) others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some some</td>
<td>some some</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

He didna hae ony ither anes. Are thare ony parritch left?
He didn’t have any others. Is any porridge left?

She coft anither poke aiples. A wad liefer hae the ither.
She bought another bag of apples. I would rather have the other.

The chields speirt whit ither haed.
The fellows enquired what each other had.

He’s been amang the nieces and ither(s) o Kirsten’s kin.
He’s been among the nieces and Christina’s other relations.

Some fowk are awfu ticht and gie ither thair due and naething mair.
Some people are awfully stingy and give others their due and nothing more.

A think A’ll gie that caffie some ile. Pit some watter in the cruet, its tuim.
I think I’ll give that (chaff) bed some oil. Put some water in the carafe, its empty.

16 Adjective comparisons.

Comparisons are usually formed by suffixing <-er> [ə]r (comparative) and <-est> [o(ə)]st (superlative). The comparative expresses the greater or higher degree. The superlative expresses the greatest or highest degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>braw</td>
<td>fine</td>
<td>brawer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heich</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>heicher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laich</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>laicher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang</td>
<td>long</td>
<td>langer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>little</td>
<td>littler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muckle</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>muckler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near</td>
<td>near</td>
<td>nearer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Laich tends to be used spatially and law figuratively. An alternative for near is naur, naur(d)er and naur(d)est.

If the adjective ends in <ee>, the comparative and superlative are formed by adding <-er> and <-est> respectively, for example, wee (small), wee-er, wee-est. Note the comparative of like—liker, [ˈləikər], also [ˈlekə] in South-west Central and Ulster varieties, meaning more like.

In words of two or more syllables, the comparative may also be formed by prefixing mair, and the superlative is formed by suffixing maist.

The tree’s mair muckle nor the hoose. He pit the beuk on the nethermaist skelf.
The tree is larger than the house. He put the book on the lowest shelf.

The hoose is the mucklemaist biggin in the toun.
The house is the largest building in town.

She traivelt tae the yondermaist neuks o the warld.
She travelled to the furthest corners of the world.

Sometimes double comparatives are used.

He’s mair aulder nor me. It’s mair sweeter nor hinnie. The maist bonniest lassie.
He’s older than me. It’s sweeter than honey. The prettiest girl.

Irregular comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>guid</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hint</td>
<td>rear</td>
<td>hinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ill</td>
<td>bad</td>
<td>waur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>little</td>
<td>less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mony</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>mair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muckle</td>
<td>much</td>
<td>mair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near</td>
<td>near</td>
<td>nearer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Traditionally mair [me:r] refers to more in quantity while mae refers to more in number. Mair and maist [mest, mɛst], are used with countable and uncountable nouns. Muckle is used with uncountable nouns.

The meenister afore the kirk said, “the mair sinner, the mair welcome”.
The minister in front of the church said, “the more of a sinner the more welcome”.

The nearer nicht, the mae beggars. The mair siller, the mae cares.
The nearer night, the more beggars. The more money, the more worries.
A hae been throu Fraunce and maist feck o Germany.
I have been through france and the greater part of Germany.

She didna hae muckle skeel in whit you caw philosophy.
She didn't have much skill in what you call philosophy.

17 Adjectives of number, quantity and size. Number and quantity may also be described by cardinal and ordinal numbers (p. 122) or nouns of number and quantity (p. 85). Some examples of adjectives expressing number, quantity and size are:

My fowks aw dee’d whan A wis wee. He wis nae mair guilty nor ocht man we’ll meet. My family all died when I was small. He was no more guilty than any man we’ll meet.

It was an awfu wee shap that she haed. A seen him a guid bit syne. It was a very small shop that she had. I saw him a good while ago.

A guid wheen fowk cam tae the waddin. A fair number of people came to the wedding.

Thare’s a great heap o flees aboot the midden. There are a great many flies around the dung-heap.

It’s a gey while nou sin it wis sae weet. Thare’s no mony fowk come. It’s been a long time since it was so wet. There are only a few people who have come.

A speirit him gin he haed ony haund in hit. A’v seen little guid come o his plans. I asked him if he had anything to do with it. I’ve seen little good result from his plans.

Sandy wis wirrin awa til himsel aw forenicht. Alexander was growling to himself all evening.

He uised tae come here ilka simmer for a while. He used to come here every summer for a while.

She said nae mair tae him anent the maiter. She said no more to him about the matter.

Contrair tae juist richts and laws A’v suffert muckle wrang. Contrary to just rights and laws I’ve suffered great wrong.

She’s a wee thing daft. A wis hindert a wee thing. She’s a little touched. I was somewhat delayed.

The hale tot, I maun tell ye, haes nae wecht wi me. The sum total, I must say, carries no weight with me.
Braw touns will rise, wi hooses mony a ane, aw biggit wi aislar stane.  
Splendid towns shall arise, with houses in great number, all built from ashlar stone.

_Eneuch_ traditionally refers to quantity in the singular and _enew_ for number in the plural.

Ay, ye need say nae mair aboot it, thare's eneuch said awready.  
Yes, you needn't say more about it, there's enough been said already.

Thare's eneuch aitmeal cakes, traicle and cheese tae haud ye gaun.  
There's enough oatmeal, cakes, treacle and cheese to keep you going.

Eneuch o siller suin brings enew o freends.  
Enough money soon brings enough friends.

Gin thare's no brigs enew, canna thay big mair o thaim?  
If there's not bridges enough, can't they build more of them?

18 Several nouns (p. 79), adverbs (p. 166) and prepositions (p. 202) of place are used as adjectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comparative</th>
<th>Superlative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abuin</td>
<td>above</td>
<td>buiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ablo</td>
<td>below</td>
<td>nether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>afore</td>
<td>before</td>
<td>hinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahint</td>
<td>behind</td>
<td>hinder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aneath</td>
<td>beneath</td>
<td>nether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ben</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>benner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doun</td>
<td>down</td>
<td>nether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>east</td>
<td>east</td>
<td>easter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>inner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oot</td>
<td>out</td>
<td>ooter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up</td>
<td>up</td>
<td>upper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wast</td>
<td>west</td>
<td>waster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Ben_ is usually only used to refer to the inner room of a dwelling; _in_ may be contracted to _i’_ in unstressed positions before consonants. Note forms such as _nethermaist_ for the lowest or undermost and _bennermaist_ for the furthest in of all.

19 The interrogative adjectives _whit_ and _whilk_ ask questions.

Whit kintra dae ye come frae?  
Whit like is it?  
Whit's the time?  
Which (part of the) country do you come from?  
How is it?  
What time is it?

Whit year wis thay mairit in?  
A dinna ken whit bit o me’s the sairest.  
In which year were they married?  
I don’t know which part of me hurts most.
The older *whilk, [ʍɪlk, ʍʌlk], [fɪlk, fʌlk] in Northern varieties, corresponding to Standard English ‘which’, is now obsolete in speech but may occur in literature. *Whilk may nowadays be replaced by *whit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whilk cou’s that?</td>
<td>Whilk haund will ye tak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whit cou’s that?</td>
<td>Whit haund will ye tak?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which cow is that?</td>
<td>Which hand will you take?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Whatten [*mat(ə)n, 'mat-], also ['kwat(ə)n] in Insular varieties, or *whitten, ['mat(ə)n, 'mat-], ['fat(ə)n, 'fɪt- 'fʌt-] in Northern varieties, a contracted form of *whit kin a, is used both singularly and in the plural and can mean, depending on situation or context, ‘what kind of?’ or ‘what sort of?’ With the indefinite article added, *whitten becomes *whitna, ['matnə, 'matnə], also ['kwatnə] in Insular varieties, or *whit, ['mat(ə)n, 'mat-], ['fatnə 'fɪt-, 'fʌt-] in Northern varieties and ['atnə] on the Black Isle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whitten baccie’s that?</td>
<td>Whitten fowk dis siclike?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of tobacco is that?</td>
<td>What kind of people do that sort of thing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitna body’s yon?</td>
<td>Whitna cou’s it ye hae?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kind of a person is he (or she)?</td>
<td>What kind of a cow is it that you have?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20 Negative adjectives

The negative prefix <wan–> [wan, wʌn] denotes a lack or absence of the quality denoted by the following word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That wis ae wanchanie mishanter.</td>
<td>Thon bourtree is awfu wanshapen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was a singularly unfortunate accident.</td>
<td>Yonder elder tree is terribly deformed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tint gear wis wanawnt.</td>
<td>Yer dochter’s a wansonsie wee lassie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lost belongings were unclaimed.</td>
<td>Your daughter is a mischievous little girl.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The negative adjective *nae [neː] is used before nouns, also *nane [nen], [nin] in Mid, North Northern and some Insular varieties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A hae nae siller in ma pootch.</td>
<td>It’s nae guid greetin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no money in my pocket.</td>
<td>It’s no good crying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nae dout ye’ll weir yer flannen wrapper.</td>
<td>Nane o the twa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No doubt you’ll wear your flannel smock.</td>
<td>Neither of the two.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nane o thaim.</td>
<td>Thare’ll nane o the twa o ye’ll gang.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of them.</td>
<td>Neither of you shall go.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Negative attributes can be expressed by adding –/less [ləs] to the noun or verb.

The careless wee laddie. The fushionless sodger.
The careless little boy. The faint–hearted soldier.

A hairmless wee lamm. A thochtless thing tae dae.
A harmless little lamb. A thoughtless thing to do.
Numbers

1 The cardinal and ordinal adjectives are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Ordinal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ae/ane</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twa</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fower</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sax</td>
<td>six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seiven</td>
<td>seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aicht</td>
<td>eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nine</td>
<td>nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eleven</td>
<td>eleven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twal</td>
<td>twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirteen</td>
<td>thirteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fowerteen</td>
<td>fourteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fifteen</td>
<td>fifteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twinty</td>
<td>twenty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twinty–ane</td>
<td>twenty–one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twinty–twa</td>
<td>twenty–two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirty</td>
<td>thirteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fowerty</td>
<td>forty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hunder</td>
<td>hundred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoosand</td>
<td>thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>million</td>
<td>million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ae [eː] is usually [jeː] in Southern and many Central Scots varieties, and [iː] in Mid Northern and some Insular varieties. Ane [en], also [wan], is usually [jɪn] in Southern, South–east, western and Ulster Scots and [in] or [ein] in Mid Northern varieties. Twa may be [kwɔː] in parts of Lothian, Fife and Perthshire, and [tweː] in South Central and Southern Scots. Fower [ˈfʌwr] may be realised as [fuwr] in Galloway. Nine [nain] may be [nin] in Dumfriesshire. Twal may be [twɛl] in some North–east Central varieties. Thirteen and third may undergo metathesis, giving thritteen [θrɛˈtɪn] and thrid [θrɪd], [trɪd] in Insular varieties.

As in older English, cardinals were once expressed as ane and twinty, twa and twinty.
As in American English, occasionally the cardinal is used for the ordinal.

The seiventeen September.
The seventeenth of September.

We will read the aichteen chapter, fowerteen and fifteen verses.
We shall read the eighteenth chapter, fourteenth and fifteenth verses.

Ae is the form of *ane* usually used before nouns. In Western and Ulster varieties *ae* may be replaced by *ane*, perhaps due to influence from Irish and contemporary Standard English. However, in other varieties *ae* and *ane* are not interchangeable.

Ae day we'll hae a vacance. There wis juist the ae body in the hoose, anely ane.
One day we'll have a holiday. There was just one person in the house, only one.

A wis juist wantin ae nummer for t il win the bingo.
I only needed one number in order to win the bingo.

She juist needit ae egg for tae mak oot the dizzen and a hauf.
She just needed one egg to complete one and a half dozen.

Ae may be used to indicate the only or single ‘one’.

Jeanie’s oor ae wee wean. The ae body that cam til the pairty.
Jeanie is our only little child. The only person who came to the party.

It’s the ae dug A hae. That’s the ae ane A hae. Dinna loss it!
It’s the only dog I have. That’s the only one I have. Don’t lose it!

Ae may also be used before a superlative (p. 116) for emphasis.

Ma faither mairit the ae warst wumman the warld haed iver seen.
My father married the very worst woman the world had ever seen.

That wis the ae best dance A hiv iver haed.
That was the very best dance I have ever had.

Ae may also be used to indicate ‘one of two, as opposed to the other, one as opposed to another, others or the others’ and ‘another of two or more’, often as *the ae*.

At the sheddin, Tam teuk ae gate, and Rab the ither.
At the fork, Tom went one way, and Rob the other.

As she stachert, her airms flew ae wey and her elbucks anither.
As she stumbled, her arms flew in one direction and her elbows in another.
The sodger wuir his new Glengarry on the ae side o his brou.
The soldier wore his new Glengarry to one side.

He leukit at it frae the ae side, and syne frae the tither.
He looked at it from one side, and then from the other.

Ae may also be used to indicate that things are ‘the same’.

She wisna awthegither ae wey wi him in some o his views.
She didn’t completely concur with some of his views.

Fowk in Aiberdeen’s no aw ae breed nou, tho.
People from Aberdeen are not all the same now, though.

Hielanders and Lawlanders is aw ae man’s bairns ower the Scots’ Dyke.
Highlanders and Lowlanders are one family over Scots’ Dike.

The merle and blackie is the ae and ane bird.
The merle and blackbird are one and the same bird.

Ae may also be used to mean ‘approximately’, ‘as much as’ and ‘as long as’.

Thay got the ae aichty mile afore the sun gaed doun.
They got about eighty miles before the sun went down.

Thare’s ae a ton o manur on the midden.
There’s as much as a ton of manure on the dung-heap.

A’m shuir it’ll be ae eleiven year syne A saw ye last.
I’m sure it’ll be as long as eleven years since last I saw you.

The abbreviated forms of the ordinal adjectives are:

1st, 2nt, 3rd or 3d, 4t.
1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th.

2 Plural numerals can be used in the plural to signify groups.

anes twas threes fowers fives saxes seivens aichts ...
ones twos threes fours fives sixes sevens eivens aichts ...

The fowk cam ben in anes and twas.
The people entered in ones and twos.
He sprauchelt forrit on his aw fowers.
He scrambled forward on all fours.
3 The adverbial numbers are *ance, twice, thrice* then *fower times*, etc. Ance [ens, wans], is usually [jɪns] in Southern, South–east, West Central and Ulster Scots, [ins] in Mid Northern and some Insular varieties and [eins] in Caithness. *Twice* [twais], in some Mid Northern varieties also [twaez]. Further to those literary forms are also the dialect forms ‘*yinst* [jɪnst] in Southern, South–east, West Central and Ulster Scots, ‘*wanst*’ [wanst] in and around Glasgow, and parts of Ulster, and *twice’*[twaist] in West Central varieties.

Fairweel sair tuith, for ance and aye.
Farewell sore tooth, henceforth and for ever.

Juist bide still ance and awa, and we'll hae that skelf oot.
Just keep still for a moment, and we'll have that splinter out.

She wis lang a servand in the ae hoose, ance and twice awa, and aye fees back.
She was long a servant in the same house, left once or twice, but always hired back.

A wad hae the fother brocht in at twice insteid o aw at ance.
I would have the fodder brought in two parts instead of it all at once.

4 Multiples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Dooble</th>
<th>Treeple</th>
<th>Three-ply.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>single</td>
<td>dooble</td>
<td>treeple</td>
<td>three-ply.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form *treeple* [θripl] may occur for *treeple* [tripl].

5 Groups of people arranged by number in games or activities are denoted by suffixing <some> [sʌm].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Twasome</th>
<th>Threesome</th>
<th>Fowersome</th>
<th>Aichtsome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A twasome at the glessy bouls.</td>
<td>A threesome at the gowf.</td>
<td>Two people playing marbles.</td>
<td>Three people playing golf.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Will we dance the aichtsome reel? Hou aboot a fowersome at the cairts?
Shall we dance the eightsome reel? How about the four of us playing cards?

6 Fractions are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hauf</th>
<th>Third or thrid</th>
<th>Fowert or quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>half</td>
<td>third</td>
<td>quarter ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continuing the same as the ordinal adjectives.
7 Other expressions involving numbers are:

- Aefauld: onefold, single
- Twafauld: bent over, folded double
- Threefauld: three times as great or as numerous
- Twa–three: a few
- Twal–oors: midday meal (denner)
- Fower–oors: afternoon meal (tea)
- The tane: the one

Note that the tane becomes the tae before nouns.

The aefauld yairn wis taen awa. He wis twafauld frae eild.
The single yarn was taken off (by the reel). He was bent double with age.

Ills comes thick and threefauld on him. Twa–three pals is comin roond.
Trouble frequently befalls him. A few friends are coming round.

Come hame for yer twal–oors. It’s aither the tane or the tither.
Come home for dinner. It’s either one or the other.

Dinna forget and be hame by fower–oors.
Don’t forget to be home for dinner.

8 Telling the time.

Time is divided into.

- Seicont(s) ['sekənt(s), 'sikənt(s)] (second(s))
- Meenit(s) ['minɪt(s)] and ['minad(s)] in Caithness (minute(s))
- Oor(s) [ʊːr(z)] (hour(s))

Directly after cardinal numbers, nouns (p. 85) of measurement usually remain unmarked in the plural.

He coud rin a hunder yaird in fowerteen seicont.
He was able to run a hundred yards in fourteen seconds.

A telt ye tae be here on the meenit heid. She shoud be here at the meenit.
I told you to be here on the dot. She ought to be here right now.

It teuk him eleiven meenit for tae rin twa mile. A s’ bide a wee meenit langer.
It took him eleven minutes to run two miles. I’ll stay a little longer.
We'll win tae in guid oor.  A'v been waitin on her twa oor the nou. Dinna fash
We'll get there in good time. I've now been waiting for her for two hours. Don't worry.

The kirk bell jowes oorly.  Ye'v been haiverin for oors and oors.
The church bell rings hourly.  You've been waffling on for hours and hours.

It used to be standard practice in Scots to reckon the half-hour before the next hour, but
this has largely been replaced by the Standard English practice of reckoning the half-hour
after the hour, no doubt encouraged through media and educational pressure. A full hour
is called a stricken- or strucken-oor.

Whit's the time?  What time is it?
To which possible answers are:

Twa oors.  Sax oors.  Ane oors.
Two o'clock.  Six o'clock.  One o'clock.


Risin twal.  Twa meenit afore twal.
Approaching twelve.  Two minutes to twelve.

Twinty til fower.  A quarter til three.  'Gin ten oors.
Twenty to four.  Quarter to three.  Before ten o'clock.

The back o fiv.  Ten efter seiven.  Twinty frae sax.
Shortly after five.  Ten past seven.  Twenty to six.

Other expressions connected with times of the day are:

Daw(in)  dawn  midstich  midnight
dayligaun  dusk  mirknin  dusk
even(in)  evening  mornin  morning
efternuin  afternoon  nuin  noon
foreenicht  evening  skreich o day  crack of dawn
forenuin  morning  sindoun  sunset
gloamin  just after sunset  twal–oors  midday
keek o day  crack of dawn  wee oors  early morning

Dayligaun is a reduced form of daylicht gaun. Even(in) ['i(v)o(ə)n(ə)n] may be contracted to
e'en(in) ['i(ə)n(ə)n].
See also adverbs of time and number p. 180, and Days, Months and Holidays p. 236.
The paitricks wis skreichin lood at e’en.
The partridges were screeching loudly in the evening.

The muin gied us licht thon mirk Seturday e’en.
The moon gave us light that dark Saturday evening.

The mornin and forenuin wis awa cantie–like.
The (early and late) morning passed pleasantly.

The morn we’re gaun tae hae a forenicht thegither.
Tomorrow we are going to have a soirée together.

The freenge o the lift’s reid in the late gloamin.
The fringe of the sky is red in the late twilight.

A wis up oot ma bed for t il wirk at the keek o day.
I was up and out of my bed in order to work at the crack of dawn.

A hae a tryst at the keek o nuin. A wis set on wi a dug this efternuin.
I have an appointment at mid–day. I was set upon by a dog this afternoon.
Auxiliary and Modal Verbs

Auxiliary verbs may best be explained by using the following sentence as an example:

Andra micht hae been biggin a bield.
Andrew might have been building a shelter.

Biggin is the main verb conveying the major elements of meaning in the sentence. Auxiliary verbs add elements of meaning to the main verb biggin. The action may then be presented as:

• possible—micht [mɪçt] and in some Mid Northern varieties [mɪθ].
• having been in the past—hae [he] and [he] in Southern Scots also hiv [hɪv, hʌv] and [hɛv] in North–east and West Central varieties, which may be contracted to ‘v, much as the Standard English contraction of have to ’ve.
• being in progress rather than as complete—been [bin, bɪn].

Auxiliary verbs have two important properties:

• they can be negated by adding <-na> (see p. 51).
• they can occur at the beginning of a question.

All auxiliary verbs are modal verbs except be, dae (do) and hae (have). Modal verbs cannot act alone as the main verb in a sentence. Modal verbs indicate whether an event or state is possible or necessary or whether a desire to do something is being expressed. These verbs have:

• no <-in> ending (see p. 161).
• no <-s> ending (see p. 148).
• the general properties of auxiliary verbs.

In Scots the auxiliary verbs, and their moods and tenses, are much the same as they are in Standard English except that:

• they are rarely used in the subjunctive mood (used to expresses the mode or manner of an action or a state of being). The indicative (the mood of the verb that expresses fact) is preferred in its place.

  Subjunctive: A wiss (that) his threap war sooner.
  Indicative: I wiss (that) his threap wis sooner.

• the active infinitive (the subject of the verb (p. 145) is the doer of the action, the verbal idea being expressed without reference to person, number or time) is used in preference to the passive infinitive (the subject is the person or thing that sustains rather than performs the action of the verb, the verbal idea once again being...
expressed without reference to person, number or time).

Active infinitive: He’s no tae lippen til. Is this hoose tae lat?
Passive infinitive: He’s not to be trusted. Is this house to be let?

• the present participle (in or of the present tense) with the verb *tae be* (to be) is frequently used.

A’m thinkin. A’m no sayin that. A’m no carin.
I imagine. I won’t say that. I don’t care.

1 The auxiliary verbs are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>wis (was), war (were)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hae (have)</td>
<td>haes (has)</td>
<td>haed (had)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>coud (could)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mey (may)</td>
<td>nicht (might)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maun (must)</td>
<td>buid (had to)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>wad (would)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dae (do)</td>
<td>daes (does)</td>
<td>did</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daur (dare)</td>
<td>daurs (dares)</td>
<td>daured (dared)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Be* [bi(ː)] may be unstressed [bɪ]. *Was* [waz, wez] also occurs as the unstressed *wis* [wɪz, wʌz], which is used in more colloquial styles, and *war* [war] may be unstressed [wɔr, wɔr].

*Hae* [he] is [hɛ] in Southern Scots and *hiv* [hɪv, hʌv], [hɛv] in North-east and West Central varieties, while *haes* [hez, hɛz] is often unstressed [hɪz, hʌs], and *haed* [hɛd, hʌd] may be unstressed [hɪd, hʌd]. *Can* [kan] may be unstressed [kɪn, kɑːn], and *coud* [kud] may often have the emphatic realisation [kʌd]. The realisation may also be [kwɪd] in Mid Northern varieties. *Mey* [məi], unstressed [məi], is now generally replaced by *can*, and *micht* [mɪt] may be realised as [mɪt] in Mid Northern varieties. *Maun* [mɑːn, mʌn] may be unstressed [mən], and the final consonant of *buid* may also be realised as /t/. *Wad* [wʌd] is often unstressed [wɪd, wʌd]. *Sall* [sal] is now probably obsolete and replaced by *will*. *Sud* [sud, sʌd, sʊd] is also probably obsolete having been replaced by *shoud* [ʃud] and may often have the more emphatic realisation [ʃɪd, ʃʌd]. *Dae* can also be encountered as the emphatic *div* [dɪv], while *daes* also has the more frequent spelling *dis* [dɪz].

Much as in Standard English, particularly after pronouns (p. 91), *is* may be contracted to ’s, usually [s] after a voiceless consonant and [z] after a vowel or voiced consonant, but after a sibilant consonant the full form *is* is used. Similarly, *haed*, *hiv*, *will* and *wad* may be contracted to ’d, ’v, ’l and ’d. *Haes* may also be contracted to ’s, except after a singular pronoun, where it is usually *haes or hiv*. After pronouns such as *A, you/ye, thay* and *we, hiv* may be contracted to ’v.
2 The present and past tense of the auxiliary verb be [biː, beː, bɪ].

After a single pronoun, the first person singular is am [am], also contracted to ’m, the third person singular is is, also contracted to ’s as described above, and the plural in all persons is are [əˈr], unstressed [ər], also contracted to ’re.

The plural present of be is the same as for the third person singular, is or ’s, after any subject except after the pronouns we, ye/you and thay, where it is usually we are or we’re, etc. Similarly, the plural present of hae is haes, except after the first person pronoun we, where it is usually we hae, we hiv or we’v.

The past tense of the auxiliary verb be is generally wis in the singular and plural, except after the pronoun thay, where it is usually thay war, and occasionally thay wis in more colloquial styles.

A’m awa oot tae mend the ruif. A’m no duin yet.
A’m off out to repair the roof. I’m not finished yet.

Thair theology, A’m telt, is aw ajee. When A wis younger nor A am the day.
Their theology I’m told, is quite deranged. When I was younger than I am today.

Thay are some o the heid anes frae Belfast. Thay are the best peers.
They are some of the bigwigs from Belfast. They are the best pears.

Thay’re no comin ben this hoose wi thair tuips and yowes.
They’re not entering this house with their rams and ewes.

Thay’re aw comin tae veesit for a sennicht in Aprile. She’s here nou.
They’re all coming to visit for a week in April. She’s here now.

She is the bonniest lass A hiv iver seen. He’d duin it afore. That’ll be awricht.
She is the prettiest girl I have ever seen. He’d done it before. That’ll be alright.

Mony o the lamms haes dee’d. Ma glesses is breuken. He and him haes haed a gemm.
Many of the lambs have died. My glasses are broken. He and I have had a game.

A’v been thare aften. He’s gane awa hame. We wis gaun hame.
I’ve often been there. He’s gone off home. We were going home.

Beasts wis cheaper than. Thay war baith ben the hoose. The year’s ower.
Cattle were cheaper then. Both of them were in the house. The year’s over.

The windaes wis aw steekit. Thir’s bonnie flouers. That’s fine nowt.
The windows were all closed. These are pretty flowers. Those are fine cattle.
Me and him’s no chief. We wis aw asleep. The swallaes is come.
Him and I are not on friendly terms. We were all asleep. The swallows have come.

The lamms is oot in the pairk. Thaim that comes first's first serred.
The lambs are out in the field. Those who come first are served first.

The schuil bairns wis alloued hame. Hou mony horse hae ye nou?
The school children were allowed to go home. How many horses do you now have?

3 Usage of the present and past tense.

*Be for* indicates the sense of ‘want’.

A'll no be for that the nou. A'm no for nae mair.
I don't want that at the moment. I don't want any more.

The taxi driver speirt, “Whaur ye for?”
The taxi driver enquired, “Where do you want to go?”

The form *bes* [biːs, beːs, bɪs] may occur in subordinate clause after conjunctions such as *gin, gif, or and till.*

Gin ony ane o you bes unwillint tae fecht, lat him leave the hoose.
If any one of you is unwilling to fight, let him leave the house.

Gif you is or bes no. He'll bide in the jyle till peyment bes made.
If you are or are not. He'll stay in jail until payment is made.

In Ulster varieties the present habitual *be and bes* may be used for repeated habitual actions.

Thay be playin fitbaw on Saturday. It bes rainin here aft.
They play football on Saturdays. It often rains here.

Burns Nicht bes celebrate in Ulster. Fish bes selt at the mercat ilka Friday.
Burns Night is celebrated in Ulster. Fish are sold at the market every Friday.

We bes at the dancin ilka Seturday. The weans bes up late at nicht.
We go dancing every Saturday. The children are up late at night.

In Ulster varieties *wad be* may be used to give polite emphasis to a statement of fact which usually highlights a permanent or semi-permanent characteristic.

We wad be fermin fowk. A wad be thare whiles. She wad be aboot a lock.
We are of farming stock. I am there occasionally. She is around a lot.
The kye wad be milkit ivery mornin afore the choukies is fed.
The cows are milked every morning before the chickens are fed.

In colloquial speech, *hae, hiv or haed* may also be ommited before *been* when used in the perfect or past perfect tense.

Shame faw me, gin A been up tae the lugs in a moss hole.
Shame on me, if I had been up to the ears in a marsh pit.

Fickelt as we are here, oor weird midst been a waur ane.
Troubled as we are here, our fate might have been a worse one.

The chield that daured tae raise ye shoud been ticht.
The fellow who dared to raise you should have been competent.

In Shetland varieties the perfect and past perfect tenses are formed with the verb *tae be* rather than the verb *tae hae*, i.e.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Shetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A’m been at the fishin.</td>
<td>Thay war been at the fishin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been fishing.</td>
<td>They had been fishing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In colloquial speech, *hae* is often omitted after *wad* and often contracted to ‘a’ after *coud, haed, micht, shoud* and *wad*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Shetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He coud hae gien ye whisky.</td>
<td>A coud hae telt ye that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He could have given you whisky.</td>
<td>I could have told you that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ye wad (hae) thocht he haed duin it.
You would have thought that he had done it/would have done it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Shetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wha wad (hae) thocht it?</td>
<td>A daursay it midst hae been waur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who would have thought it?</td>
<td>I daresay it might have been worse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I kent the days whan less wad (hae) serred him.
I knew the days when he would have been satisfied with less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Shetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She fain wad ‘a’ haen him.</td>
<td>A wad ‘a’ haed tae dae’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She would gladly have married him.</td>
<td>I would have had to do it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Shetland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He coud ‘a’ duin it.</td>
<td>A wad ‘a’ coud ‘a’ duin it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He could have done it.</td>
<td>I would have been able to have done it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Owing to *hae* being omitted after *wad*, the contracted form ‘*d* has been reinterpreted as a contraction of *haed*, the full form *haed* then being used in its place.
Haed A pitten it in ma poutch, A haed taen it wi me.
Had I put it in my pocket, I would have taken it with me.

Haed we niver been sae slaw, we haed gotten thare suiner.
Had we not been so slow, we would have got there sooner.

As well as ability, permission is expressed by infinitive use of can rather than the old-fashioned may, and by get tae or get plus the gerund (p. 88. The pronunciation of get is generally [get], also [gət], so that it is often written git, realised as [git] in Southern and [gjɪt] in Insular Scots.

As well as ability, permission is expressed by infinitive use of can rather than the old-fashioned may, and by get tae or get plus the gerund (p. 88. The pronunciation of get is generally [get], also [gət], so that it is often written git, realised as [git] in Southern and [gjɪt] in Insular Scots.

A’ll no can gang the morn.
I won’t be able to go tomorrow.

Ilka bairn in the schuil will can say that.
Every child in school will be able to say that.

Ye can hae the day aff the morn.
You may have the day off tomorrow.

Thay gat gaun til the gemm.
They were allowed to go to the match.

Ye can hae the day aff the morn.
You may have the day off tomorrow.

Thay gat gaun til the gemm.
They were allowed to go to the match.

Thay get daffin ootby till aicht in the e’en.
They are allowed to play outside until eight in the evening.

The schuil-bairns gets tae come ben whan it teems.
The school children are allowed to come in when it rains heavily.

Maun only expresses the conclusive meaning.

Ye maun gang hame.
You must go home.

Ye maun be forfochten.
You must be exhausted.

(It is time to ...) (judging by your appearance)

Ye maun speir anent the job by nine.
You must enquire about the job by nine.

(Otherwise someone else will get it.)

Verbs of motion may be elided after maun.

But gin ye maun tae yon toun.
But if you must go to that town.

A maun awa.
I must leave.

Obligation is expressed by hae tae, hiv tae, its contracted form ’v, and need tae.

A hae tae tak the kye oot.
I must take the cows out(side).

A hae tae dae’t nou.
I must do it now.

A hiv tae gang tae ma wark.
I must go to work.

She’ll hae tae can lauch.
She must be able to laugh.
A’v tae hae this redd suin. We’v tae be thare at sax.
I must have this prepared soon. We must be there at six.

Ye need tae pent the hoose. A need tae caw ma grannie.
You must paint the house. I must call my grandmother.

The past tense of *maun* is *buid*, denoting a logical, moral or physical necessity. It is generally used with a personal subject and is usually followed by the preposition *tae*.

It buid tae be. An tae the sodgerin A buid tae gang.
It had to be. And a-soldiering I had to go.

*Will* and *wad* are generally used where Standard English has ‘shall’ or ‘should’, except where *shoud* is used in the sense of ‘ought to’.

Bairns shoud haud thair tongues. Ye shoud learn tae leuk afore ye lowp.
Children ought to keep quiet. should to learn to look before you leap.

In the first person *will* indicates the simple future.

Thay will dae it the morn. She will dae that efter.
They will do it tomorrow. She will do that later.

A’ll daur him dae’t gin A come ower him in the toun.
I’ll dare him to do it if I meet him in town.

*will* is also used to indicate supposition.

A see a body will hae been speakin wi ye.
I see that someone has been speaking to you.

Ye will be the same lad that wis here yestreen.
You are likely to be the same boy who was here yesterday evening.

It will be aboot fowerty mile atween Edinburgh and Glesgae.
It is about forty miles between Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Ye will hae haed yer tea.
You will no doubt already have dined.

*Wad be* generally corresponds to Standard English ‘would be’.

It wad be terrible wastery tae spend sae muckle on a goun.
It would be terribly extravagant to spend so much on a gown.
However, *wad be*, when followed by the gerund or *tae* with the infinitive may also express the sense of is or was ‘bent on’ or ‘very inclined to’.

When she cam back frae England she wad be to caw her faither and me Papa and Mamm.
When she came back from England she was bent on calling her father and me Papa and Mamma.

In ilka kintra dance and reel wi her he wad be babbin.
In every country dance and reel he is bent on bopping with her.

The older *sall* (shall) is now probably obsolete, having been replaced by *will* as described above. *Sall* was used in the first person to express a will or intention on the part of the speaker. In the second and third persons *sall* expressed a simple future as well as obligation, necessity, or the speaker’s own determination. *Sall* is often contracted to *s’*[z] after personal pronouns (often written without regard to its etymology as ‘*se*’).

A s’ wad. A s’ gie ye ma warrandice. A s’ uphaud.
I shall wager. I’ll give you my guarantee. I shall uphold.

A s’ warrand he’ll be nane the waur o’t at the hinder end.
I’ll bet he’ll be none the worse for it in the long run.

Ye s’ no be here—A s’ aye be thare.
You will not be here—I shall still be there.

The past tense of *daur* is *daured* or *durst*, the former usually in the sense of a ‘dare’ and the latter usually in the sense of a ‘challenge’ or ‘venture’.

Sic wis her pouer that naebody daured tae enter.
Such was her power that no one dared enter.

A niver daured tae gang forrit intae the mirk room.
I did not dare go forward into the dark room.

Upon the green nane durst him brag. He ne’er again durst iver taigle wi her.
Upon the lawn no one dared challenge him. He never again dared tangle with her.

4 Double modal constructions may also occur, in particular south of the Forth.

He micht can come the morn. He micht coud dae’t.
He may be able to come tomorrow. He may be able to do it. (in the future)

A shoud can mend the skathie. She’ll can tent the bairn.
I ought to be able to repair the fence. She’ll be able to look after the child.
That’s duin. A will can gang awa hame saitisfee’d. That’s finished. I ought to be able to go home satisfied.

He’ll hae tae coud dae’t. He’ll have to be able to do it. (in the future)

He shoud coud tak it wi him. He ought to be able to take it with him. (in the future)

The lad maun coud muck the byre. The lad should be able to clean the cow shed. (condition)

The horse maun can hurl the cairt. Ilka bairn in the toun will can say that. The horse can surely pull the cart. Every child in town ought to be able to say that.

She wad coud milk the kye gin she ettelt. She would be able to milk the cows if she tried.

Thay uised tae coud soum faur, but no the nou. They used to be able to swim far, but not now.

5 Negating the verb.

The auxiliary verbs are usually negated by affixing <-na> (for pronunciation see p. 51).

**Infinitive**

be | binna | be not/don’t be
---|---|---
can | canna | can’t
da | daena | don’t
daur | daurna | daren’t
ha | haena | haven’t
maun | maunna | mustn’t
need | needna | needn’t
sall | sanna | shan’t
will | winna | won’t

*Dæna* may also take the more frequent alternative spelling *dinna*. *Divna* [ˈdɪvnə] is an emphatic form. *Haena* may also take the alternative spelling *hinna*, also *hivna*. *Maunna* may be unstressed [*ˈmaːnə*]. *Sanna* is probably obsolete, having been replaced by *winna*, sometimes *willna*, although *will* and the contracted form *’l* may be negated using the adverb *no*, particularly in Ulster and adjacent areas of Scotland.

In Aberdeenshire the older forms *cannin* (can’t) and *divnin* (didn’t) used interrogatively may also occur.
Negated auxiliary verbs usually occur:

In all persons of the plural except immediately following a personal pronoun (p. 95); where the subject is a plural noun (p. 79); or where the plural pronoun is separated from the verb by some other word or words. See The verb ending <-s> (p. 148).

Binna feart. Nou binna sayin A’m ill bred.
Don’t be scared. Now don’t say that I’m ill bred.

He canna heeze thon muckle stane.
He can’t lift that great stone over there.

Ye canna shuive yer grannie aff a bus.
You (simply) can’t shove your grandmother off a bus.

A dinna ken yer brither. Dinna dae that ben the hoose.
I don’t know your brother. Don’t do that inside the house.

A divna ken whit’s come up his back nou.
I don’t know what’s come into his mind now.

Daena, which may also take the more frequent alternative spelling dinna, is often contracted to dae’[de] or di’[dt, da] in colloquial speech, and canna, often contracted to ca’[ka, ka].

Di’ dae that. A di’ ken wha it wis.
Don’t do that. I don’t know who it was.

He ca’ tell ye whaur it is. A ca’ dae that.
He can’t tell you where it is. I can’t do that.

The negation of daur is daurna or durstna.

He daurna tell her he wis on the bash.
He daren’t tell her that he was on a drinking binge.

A daurna speak abuin ma braith, for fear A roose the bairn.
I daren’t speak above my breath in case I awaken the child.

You durstna say it tae ma face. A durstna say a wurd aboot it tae onybody.
You daren’t say it to my face. I dare not say a word about it to anyone.

The sense of ‘don’t have’ or ‘haven’t’ may be expressed by haena and hivna, or its contracted form ‘v followed by the negative adverb no.
A haena ony ingans or kail for the brose.
I don’t have any onions or cabbage for the soup.

A hivna ony time for that kin o cairy-on.
I don’t have any time for that kind of behaviour.

A’v no been tae Auchtermuchty for a lang while.
I haven’t been to Auchtermuchty for a long time.

The sense of ‘must not’ is expressed by *maunna* and ‘shall not’ by *sanna*, the latter now generally replaced by *winna* or *willna*.

He maunna tak mair aiples. Ye maunna gang.
He must not take more apples. You must not go.

He needna craw sae crouse aboot his winnins.
He needn’t crow so proudly about his winnings.

She sanna wash the fluir wi that auld cloot.
She shall not wash the floor with that old rag.

A sanna hinder ye a meenit o yer time.
I shall not delay you for a moment of your time.

We winna be deaved wi her for a whilie.
We shall not be regaled by her talk for a while.

A willna write ony mair till A hae mair accoont.
I shall not write any more until I have more details.

Ye’ll no be comin here again gin ye cairy on like that.
You’ll not be coming here again if you carry on like that.

Certain other other verbs, functioning as auxiliaries, may also be negated with <-na>, such as *carena* (care not), *downa* (not able to), *wistna* (knew not), a negated past form of *wat* (to know). Such forms are, however, recessive. (See the negation of verbs p. 164)

A carena tae find thaim whitiver gate ye micht gang.
I don’t care to find them whatever way you may go.

Weel A ken ye carena ae doit aboot the kye.
Well I know you don’t care one doit about the cows.

A downa tak muckle siller at ance.
I am unable to take much money at once.
He downa bide nae mean or twafauld airt.
He was unable to abide any mean or deceitful art.

He wistna whaur he wis gaun.
He didn’t know where he was going.

6 Negative present.

Present
am amna am not
is isna isn’t
are arena aren’t
haes haesna hasn’t
daes daesna doesn’t

*Daesna* may also take the more frequent alternative spelling *disna*.

In Aberdeenshire the older form *amnin* (am not) used interrogatively may also occur.

*Am*, its contracted form *’m* and the contracted forms of *are*, *’re* and *is*, *’s*, are now usually negated using the adverb *no*.

A amna gaun hame acause she isna comin and aw. A’m no weel.
I am not going home because she isn’t coming too. I’m unwell.

A’m no eatin that soss. He isna comin hame the morn.
I’m not eating that soggy mess. He isn’t coming home tomorrow.

That’s no awfu guid. She’s no gaun oot the day.
That’s not very good. She’s not going out today.

You arena helpin ava wi aw yer greetin.
You aren’t helping at all with all your crying.

Ye’re no blate whan it comes tae tellin awbody whit tae dae.
You’re not shy when it comes to telling everyone what to do.

She haesna seen him, and he disna ken whaur he’s at.
She hasn’t seen him, and he doesn’t know where he is.

He disna ken his erse frae his elbuck.
He doesn’t know the first thing about it.
In the negative present, as described above, certain other, usually monosyllabic verbs, functioning as auxiliaries, may also be negated with <-na> (For pronunciations see p. 51). Such forms are, however, recessive. (See the negation of verbs p. 164)

He caresna whit ails fowk, sae lang as he’s no findin it.
He doesn’t care what ails people as long as he isn’t feeling it.

He needsna care, for he is still tae the fore.
He does not need care because he is still in good health.

7 Negative past.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Hasn't</th>
<th>Weren't</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wis</td>
<td>wisna</td>
<td>wasn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war</td>
<td>warna</td>
<td>weren't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haed</td>
<td>haedna</td>
<td>hadn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did</td>
<td>didna</td>
<td>didn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sud</td>
<td>sudna</td>
<td>shouldn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wad</td>
<td>wadna</td>
<td>wouldn't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coud</td>
<td>coudna</td>
<td>couldn’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>micht</td>
<td>michtna</td>
<td>mightn’t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unstressed wasna may be wisna ['wɪznə, 'wʌznə], which is used in more colloquial styles. Unstressed warna may be unstressed ['wɪrnə, 'wɜːnə]. Haedna may take the alternative spelling hidna. Daedna may take the alternative spelling didna, also the emphatic form divna. Sudna ['sʊdnə, 'sɪdnə, 'sɔdna], and the form sanna, are probably obsolete, having been replaced by Shoudna ['ʃʊdnə], which often has the emphatic realisation ['ʃɪdnə, 'ʃɒdnə]. Unstressed wadna may be ['wɔdnə, 'wʌdnə etc.]. Coudna may have the more emphatic realisation ['kɔdnə] or ['kwɪdnə] in Mid Northern varieties.

In Aberdeenshire, older forms such as wisnin (wasn’t), divnin (didn’t) and michtnin ['mɪðtnɪn] (mightn’t) used interrogatively may also occur.

The past tense wisna is generally used in the singular and plural, except before or after the pronoun thay, where it is usually thay warna and, occasionally, thay wisna in more colloquial styles.

A wisna gaun tae big a hoose in the winter. Thay warna gaun tae gie’s a haund aither.
I wasn’t going to build a house in winter. They weren’t going to help me either.

Dinna speir at him. He michtna ken whaur’t is.
Don’t ask him. He may not know where it is.

Divna abuse that dug, or A’ll tak the stick tae ye.
Don’t abuse that dog, or I’ll beat you with a stick.
A haedna gien the seetiation muckle thocht.
I hadn’t given the situation much thought.

His new sark didna ser. He shoudna fash hissel.
His new shirt didn’t fit. He shouldn’t bother his head.

He wadna come. A wadna eat it gin ye peyed me.
He wouldn’t come. I wouldn’t eat it if you paid me.

A coudna say a hot aboot it. A coudna dae’t.
I couldn’t say much about it. I couldn’t do it.

A coudna beir thinkin on it. A michtna hae tae.
I couldn’t bear to think about it. I mightn’t have to.

In colloquial speech, before a past participle *hae* is often absorbed into the negative particle <-na> of conditional auxiliary verbs.

The hird fund a lamm that shoudna been thare.
The shepherd found a lamb that shouldn’t have been there.

He wadna been muckle mismade wi oors aither.
He wouldn’t have been bothered much by ours either.

A wadna thocht a muirland dult lik him kent ocht aboot it.
I wouldn’t have thought a bog-trotting dolt like him knew anything about it.

In Ulster varieties, the negative form of *wad be*, when used to give polite emphasis to a statement of fact which usually highlights a permanent or semi-permanent characteristic, is *wadna be*.

A wadna be in the toun aften. Thay wadna be thare aften. She wadna be here lang.
I am not in town often. They wouldn’t be there often. She isn’t here long.

Interrogative sentences (questions) usually begin with one of the auxiliary verbs followed by the subject, unless they begin with an interrogative pronoun (p. 103) or adverb (p. 166).

Am A no richt? Are ye siccar? Wha did ye see?
Am I not right? Are you sure? Whom did you see?
Dinna ye ken? Dae ye no hae it? Dae A hae tae come?
Don’t you know? Don’t you have it? Do I have to come?
Divna ye ken? Div ye no hae ony? Div A hae tae come? Don’t you know? Do you have any? Do I have to come?


Is thae yours? Jock says thir’s kittle times. Are those yours? Jock says these are perplexing times.

Is the bairns beddit yet? Are ye duin? Have the children been put to bed yet? Are you finished?

Whaur ye gaun wi that gun in your haund? Where are you going with that gun in your hand?

You wis thare, wis ye no? Whaur wis ye gaun? You were there, were you not? Where were you going?

War thay baith thare? Wis the baith o them thare? Were both of them there? Were both of them there?

Wis thare ony guid bargains at the rowp? Were there any good bargains at the auction?

Whit are ye for nou? Wha’s aw yon fowk? What will you have now? Who are all those people over there?

In the first person, will indicates the simple future.

Will ye help him caw the sheep tae the bucht? Will the brock howk a new bourie suin? Will you help him drive the sheep to the pen? Will the badger dig a new burrow soon?

Will it no be a haimer (that) ye need? Wad it no be better pentin the inside first? Might it not be a hammer that you need? Wouldn’t it be better to paint the inside first?

In questions, will is used to express ‘do you wish me to?’

Will A gang and get ane? Will A come roord the morn? Shall I go and get one? Shall I come around tomorrow?

In Ulster varieties, wad ... be may be used to ask questions.

Wad thay be raised aften? Wad he be yokin tae aicht? Are they enraged often? Is he starting at eight?
Wad the be ony chance o a hurl in yer motor?
Is there any chance of a lift in your car?

Wad ye be in on Friday efternuin?
Would you be in (at home) on Friday afternoon?

The affirmative answer is *ay* [aɪ] and the negative answer is *na* [nɑ] or *nae* [ne], or more colloquially *naw* [nɑː, nɔː] ([naː] in Northern and Insular varieties).

D’ye want an ice? Ay, thanks!
Would you like an ice cream? Yes, please!

D’ye want yer heid duntit? Nae!
Would you like your head bashed? No!

D’ye ken whaur Rab is? Na.
Do you know where Robert is? No.

As in Early Modern English, sometimes the past tense of a verb is used rather than the auxiliary *did*.

Whaur haurd ye that?
Where did you hear that?

Whaur gat ye yer schuilin?
Where did you go to school?

If no auxiliary verb is used, interrogative sentences (questions) may begin with a verb.

Think ye sae?
Do you think so?

Cam ye by Fawkirk?
Did you come past Falkirk?
Verbs

Verbs indicate an action, occurrence or state. Events can be placed:
in present time, i.e. the present tense, *is* [iz];  
in past time, i.e. the past tense, *was* [waz, wɛz] or the unstressed *wis* [wɪz, wʌz] used in  
more colloquial styles; or  
as having taken place in the past but relevant to the present time, the perfect, *haes* [hez,  

1 The suffix <-(e)n> [(a)n] may be used to form verbs from adjectives and nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>fatten</th>
<th>fatten</th>
<th>lichten</th>
<th>lighten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>frichten</td>
<td>frighten</td>
<td>saften</td>
<td>soften</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haurden</td>
<td>harden</td>
<td>strauchten</td>
<td>straighten</td>
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<tr>
<td>hichten</td>
<td>highten</td>
<td>tichen</td>
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<td>kirsten</td>
<td>christen</td>
<td>whiten</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>laichen</td>
<td>lower</td>
<td>widen</td>
<td>widen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pou the lempet aff the rock, tae fatten and tae mend ye.  
Pull the limpet off the rock, to fatten and to grow you.

Dinna frichten the bairns wi thae auld yairns.  
Don’t frighten the children with those old yarns.

That’ll no hichten onybody’s opeenion o ye.  
That will not raise anyone’s opinion of you.

Here’s a gless o whisky for tae kirsten the boat.  
Here’s a glass of whisky to name the boat.

Laichen yer wird or awbody will can hear us.  
Lower your voice or everyone will be able to hear us.

Mair coal wad saften the airm. The gowans whiten the gress–green brae.  
More coal would soften the iron. The daisies whiten the green hillside.

The wirkers cam for tae widen the lade.  
The workers came to widen the mill–race.

2 The suffix <-le> [ʌl, əl, l] alternating with <-er> [ər] may be added for frequentative or  
diminutive emphasis.

The bee that bummles kens its skep.  
The bee that hums knows its hive.
The cushat croodles day and nicht throu the wids.
The wood-pigeon coos day and night through the woods.

Aiblins experience will knusle some wit intae ye.
Perhaps experience will squeeze some wisdom into you.

Whan winter cauld is bitin sair, couter up at the ingle-cheek.
When winter’s cold is really biting, nestle round the fireside.

Are thay gaun tae allou the warld tae sotter like tatties in a pat?
Are they going to let the world boil like potatoes in a pot?

3 The prefix <be–> [bɪ, ba] can be used before verbs to strengthen them and to make nouns (p. 79) into verbs.

A begrudge no gaun tae see ma grannie.
I regret not going to visit my grandmother.

The Pape’s gaun tae besaunt thon mairtyr.
The Pope is going to canonise that martyr.

She beteacht aw her siller til the man frae the insurance.
She entrusted all her money to the insurance agent.

Ye’ll hae tae besmairtren yersel afore ye gae oot.
You’ll have to tidy yourself up before you go out.

The reivers bewaves thair veectims. Dinna ettle tae begowk me.
The robbers lay in wait for their victims. Don’t attempt to fool me.

4 The infinitive marker, for tae or for til means ‘in order to’.

He cam for tae eat his denner. A gaed for til get it.
He came to eat his lunch. I went to get it.

The war room for tae get yer haund in. Ye’ll come for tae mak up a gemm.
There was space to get your hand in. You’ll come to make up a game.

He ettelt for til gang. Thay aw gaed for tae see’t.
He meant to go. They all went to see it.
Adae is used as a compliment of the predicate after certain nouns and pronouns. With regard to ‘work’ it means ‘to do’ and after naething, little, whit, and other expressions of indefinite amount, depending always on the verb tae hae meaning ‘have no’ or ‘little dealings, concern, connection or right to meddle with’. After the verb be it means ‘the matter with’, ‘a-doing’ or ‘going on’.

The thing that’s duin the day winna be adae the morn.
The thing that’s done today, won’t need doing tomorrow.

Hey, caw throu, caw throu, for we hae muckle adae.
Hey, push on, push on, for we have much to do.

Whit haes that adae wi hou oor hoose is bein biggit?
What has that to do with how our house is being built?

Whit’s adae wi Auley the day?
What’s the matter with Oliver today?

She cam rinnin tae speir whit wis adae.
She came running to enquire what was going on.

5 The present indicative (the mood of the present tense expressing fact).

The present indicative is usually formed by adding <-s> or <-es> to the infinitive. <-s> is usually /s/ after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, s, ţ, t, ɣ, x/ and /ʃ/) and /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ŵ, g, dʒ, l, m, n, ŋ, r/ and /v/). If the infinitive ends with a sibilant consonant (/s, Ŵ, tʃ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/), the present indicative is formed by adding <-s> where the infinitive ends with an <-e>. Otherwise the form is <-es>, usually realised as [əz].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Present indicative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>eat</td>
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<tr>
<td>gie</td>
<td>give</td>
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<tr>
<td>greet</td>
<td>cry</td>
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<td>hae</td>
<td>have</td>
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<td>juidge</td>
<td>judge</td>
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<td>ken</td>
<td>know</td>
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<td>leuk</td>
<td>look</td>
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<tr>
<td>lowp</td>
<td>leap</td>
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<td>pech</td>
<td>pant</td>
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<td>pey</td>
<td>pay</td>
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<td>seem</td>
<td>seem</td>
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<tr>
<td>skail</td>
<td>spill</td>
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<tr>
<td>skelloch</td>
<td>scream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shak</td>
<td>shake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He kens whaur tae gang. It leuks like thay winna come.

He knows where to go. It looks as if they won’t come.

It peys tae tak tent o yer caur. It seems like naebody’s hame.

It pays to look after your car. It looks like no one is at home.

She washes the fluir ilka Monanday. A guid strang hauch helps tae redd the thrapple.

She washes the floor every Monday. A good strong cough helps to clear the throat.

6 Present tense verbs.

When a verb immediately follows a personal pronoun (p. 95) in the present tense, the verb remains the same.

A come first. We gang thare. A ken that fine. We dae that aw the time.

I come first. We go there. I know that very well. We do that all the time.

Thay come for tae dae’t. Thay say he’s ower auld.

They come to do it. They say that he’s too old.

Thay are comin and aw. The laddies? Thay’v gane.

They are coming too. The boys? They have gone.

Present tense verbs may take the inflection <-s> or <-es> (known as the Northern subject rule) in the following circumstances.

The inflection <-s> is usually realised as /s/ after a voiceless consonant (/f, h, k, p, s, f, t, θ, x/ and /ç/) and /z/ after a vowel or voiced consonant (/b, d, ð, g, dʒ, l, m, n, η, r/ and /v/). If the verb ends with a sibilant consonant (/s, ʃ, θ, z, ʒ/ and /dʒ/) the inflection may be <-s> where the verb ends with an <-e>. Otherwise <-es>, usually realised as [əz].

The inflection <-s> occurs:

In all persons of the plural except immediately following a personal pronoun (p. 95).

Thaim that says he’s ower auld tae draw straes afore thair een.

Those who say he is too old to hoodwink them.
It’s us that gangs til the schuil. Us auld fowk kens that fine. 
It’s we who go to school. We old people know that very well.

You anes says that ilka day. It’s thaim and us that haes aw the graith. 
You lot say that every day. It’s they and we who have all the equipment.

Thaim that dis thair hamewark gets sweeties efter. 
Those who do their homework get sweets afterwards.

Where the subject of the verb includes two pronouns.

Me and you kens that fine. Thaim and us gangs thegither. 
You and I know that very well. Us and them go together.

Him and her gies nae grief. 
He and she don’t cause any trouble.

Me and her dis bonnie pentins. Thaim and him haes braw motors. 
She and I do nice paintings. He and they have fine cars.

Where the subject is a plural noun (p. 79).

Weemen kens that fine. Ma brakes haes gane. Whan the kye comes hame. 
Women know that very well. My brakes have gone. When the cows come home.

Fowk that comes unbidden sits unserred. Auld men dees, and bairns suin forgets. 
People who come uninvited sit unserved. Old men die, and children soon forget.

The bairns wisses that Santae will come suin. 
The children wish that Santa would come soon.

As the days lenthens, the cauld strengthens. 
As the days get longer, the cold gets stronger.

Fowk that haes sair feet canna daunder. Bairns that dis guid gangs tae Heiven. 
People who have sore feet can’t go for walks. Children who do good go to Heaven.

Where the plural pronoun (p. 91) is separated from the verb by some other word or words.

Us twa whiles gangs thare. Us three whiles haes pizza. 
We two sometimes go there. We three sometimes have pizza.

You anes says whit you mean. You anes aye dis that on a Seturday. 
You lot say what you mean. You lot always do that on a Saturday.
Some fowk frae Jethart thinks he’s richt, but ithers frae here mainteens the contrair.
Some people from Jedburgh think he’s right, but others from here maintain the contrary.

In the narrative present, the verb sometimes takes the inflection <-s> or <-es>, even in the first person singular and after a single personal pronoun (p. 95).

A niver sees him nou. An in we comes.
I never see him now. And in we came.

Cut that oot the nou A says. A says no tae come the morn.
Stop that now I said. I said not to come tomorrow.

In some Ulster varieties the habitual sense may be indicated by the verb inflection <-s> or <-es>, which also occurs immediately following personal pronouns.

Thay aye caws on the meenister on the Saubath. Thay drives tae thair wark.
They always visit the minister on Sunday. They drive to their work.

We catches the bus at the brae-fit. A gets ma messages ivery Wadensday.
We catch the bus at the bottom of the hill. I do my shopping every Wednesday.

7 In Older Scots, the past tenses of most weak verbs were usually formed by adding <-it> or <-yt> to the present tense. Since the Older Scots period, an ongoing process of simplification has been occurring whereby the past tense has become <-t> or <-d>. In Modern Scots, the inflection <-it> now usually occurs only after the consonants /b, d, g, k, p/ and /t/, and is generally realised as /ɪt/ or /ət/ (/it/ may occur in Southern Scots and /d/ and /ɪd/ or /əd/ in Caithness and Orkney). That is usually written <-it>, including verbs with a final silent <e>, which isropped. Some weak verbs also have strong forms (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bend</td>
<td>bend</td>
<td>bendit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>build</td>
<td>biggit, bug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drap</td>
<td>drop</td>
<td>drappit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreed</td>
<td>dread</td>
<td>dreedit</td>
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<tr>
<td>flit</td>
<td>move home</td>
<td>flittit</td>
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<td>keek</td>
<td>peep</td>
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<td>load</td>
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<td>licht</td>
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<tr>
<td>lift</td>
<td>lift</td>
<td>liftit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lig</td>
<td>lay</td>
<td>liggit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As a consequence of the continuing process of past tense simplification, the inflection <-it> may be <-t>, usually realised as /t/, in words such as drap (drop), keek (peep), keep, leuk (look), like, lowp (jump), rap, slip, soop (sweep) and stap (step, stop), giving drapt, keekt, keept, leuk’t, lowpt, rapt, slipt, soopt and stapt. Where the verb root ends in a /d/ or /t/ the past tense inflection is assimilated in words such as bend, laid (load), mend, mind (mind, remember), spreid (spread), tread, treat and wad (wed), giving the past tense forms bent, laid, ment, mint, spreid, tread, treat and wad. Only the simplified past tense forms of beat, redd (arrange) and send now exist, giving beat (and the past participle form beaten), redd and sent.

Note that Like, when unstressed is realised [lɪk or lɛk]. Lowp [lʌp] may also be realised [lʊp]. In some Mid Northern varieties the simple past and past participle of need are supplied by note [nɒt, not]. The simple past of shape may also be shape. Want [want] is usually realised as [wʌnt, wɔnt] in Mid Northern varieties. Yird [jɪrd] may also be realised [ɛrd] and [ɪrθ] in Southern Scots, and [ɛrt, irt] in Insular varieties.

Note that want and need are regularly followed by a past participle.

The bairn wants taen hame at four oors. Ma caur needs washt.
The child wants to be taken home at four o’ clock. My car needs to be washed.
In Scots, besides 'to wish, to desire', *want* also has the meaning 'to be in need', 'to be lacking', 'to do without' or 'to go without'.

He downa see a puir man want.
He can't bear to see a poor man in need.

Naebody kent whether she haed or wantit.
Nobody knew whether she was a have or have-not.

A didna want the will, but A wantit the means.
I didn't lack the will, but I lacked the means.

Sae lang's fowk's born barefit, the souter winna want a job.
As long as people are born barefoot, the cobbler won't lack a job.

The lanesome maiden wants a man.
The lonely maid lacks a husband.

That chield wants a penny o the shillin.
That fellow is not the full shilling (i.e. "backward").

We canna want the powny the day. The hungert bairn wantit the meat.
We can't do without the pony today. The hungry child couldn't do without the food.

After /ç/ and /x/ (<ch>), /ʃ/ (<sh>), /θ/ (<th>), the inflection is usually realised as /t/, except in Caithness, where it is /d/. After /l, m, n/ and /ŋ/ (<ng>), the realisation is also usually /t/, although /d/ may also occur, especially in Central and Southern Scots. After /m, n/ and /ŋ/, a few inflections in <-it> may occur in some varieties. The /t/ realisation is written <-t>. After a final silent <e>, the usual inflection is <-et>, also usually realised as /t/ or /d/ as above, but a /t/ realisation may be indicated by dropping the final silent <e> before inflecting <-t>, where it is unlikely to indicate a change of vowel, or by inflecting <-t> after a final silent <e>. In some words a double <e> is rendered single, and verbs that end with <-le> after a consonant are inflected by substituting <-elt>. That is generally realised as [alt] and [ald] in Caithness. A /d/ realisation may be written <-et>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>airm</th>
<th>arm</th>
<th>airmt</th>
<th>airmt</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>bile't</td>
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<td>claiicht</td>
<td>claiicht</td>
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<td>vibrate</td>
<td>dirlt</td>
<td>dirlt</td>
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<td>drount, drount</td>
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</tr>
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<td>fasht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fyle</td>
<td>foul</td>
<td>fylt</td>
<td>fylt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note the alternative forms *airmt* or *airmed*, *birselt* or *birsled*, * bile’t* or *biled*, *dirlt* or *dirled*, *drount* or *drouned*, *ettelt* or *ettled*, *fylt* or *fyled*, *fillt* or *filled*, *kent* or *kend*, *killt* or *killed*, *meant* [mint] or *meaned*. *Selt* or *selled* are more prevalent than *sauld*. *Skailt* may also take the form *skailed*. *Soum* may take the form *sweem* in some Northern and Insular varieties, the past tense forms being *soumt* or *soumed* and *sweemt* or *sweemed* and *swam* [swam, swʌm] in some Northern and Insular varieties. *Spile’t* and *stangt* may take the forms *spiled* and *stanged*. *Teem* is the verbal form of the adjective *tuim*, the past tense having the forms *teemt* or *teemed*. *Telt* or *telled* are more prevalent than *tauld*. *Turnt* may also take the form *turned*. *Wale* [wel] may be realised as [wal] in South–West Central and Insular varieties and [wəil] in Northern varieties. *Warstelt* [ˈwarslt] may also take the form *warstled*.

After /dʒ/ (<(d)ge>), /ð/ (<th(e)>), /v/ and /z/ (<se>, <z(e)>), the realisation is generally /d/, written <-(<e)d>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>forms</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bairge</td>
<td>barge</td>
<td>bairged</td>
<td>bairged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kerve</td>
<td>carve</td>
<td>kerved</td>
<td>kerved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deave</td>
<td>deafen</td>
<td>deaved</td>
<td>deaved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jalouse</td>
<td>suspect</td>
<td>jaloused</td>
<td>jaloused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowse</td>
<td>loose(n)</td>
<td>lowsed</td>
<td>lowsed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ludge</td>
<td>lodge</td>
<td>lugged</td>
<td>lugged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pruive</td>
<td>prove</td>
<td>pruived</td>
<td>pruived, pruiven</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note the difference between the verb *uise* (use) and the noun *uiss* (use) ([jøs] in peripheral varieties, [jɪs] in Central varieties, [jus] in Ulster varieties and [ís] in Northern varieties). *Uised wi* means ‘used to’ in the sense of being in the habit of or familiar with. *Uised tae*, pronounced [ˈjɪste], means ‘used to’ in the habitual sense.

After /r/, both /t/ and /d/ may occur, the latter being more frequent in the Southern and Central Scots. In Caithness the realisation is /d/. Consequently, written forms are inflected either <-t> or <-(e)d>.

Note that *durst* occurs only in the sense of ventured. The past perfect of *daur* when followed by a noun or complex verb phrase is *haed daured*. Note also *feart* or *feared*, *gart* or *garred*, *gaithert* or *gaithered*, *leart* or *leared*, *sert* or *serred*, and *speirt* or *speired*.

Some verbs have assimilated the /t/ or /d/ inflection and/or changed the vowel or undergone metathesis.

Note that *leave* has the contracted form *lea’* [liː, leː]. The forms of *wirth* are pronounced [wɜːθ, wɔːθ], *wort* [wort], *word* [word].
Some verbs have vowel gradation in the past tenses.

awe | owe | aucht | aucht
---|---|---|---
buy | buy | bocht | bocht
bring | bring | brocht(en), brang | brocht(en), brung
catch | catch | caucht, catcht, | caucht, catcht, cotch, cotch(en)
icleek | hook, link | claucht, cleekit | claucht, cleekit
dow | to be able to | docht | docht
seek | seek | socht | socht(en)
strreek | stretch | straucht, streekit | straucht
teach | teach | taucht, teacht | taucht, teacht
think | think | thocht | thocht
wirk | work | wrocht | wrocht

Note that *brocht* is more prevalent than *brang* and *brung*, that *catcht* is more prevalent than *cotch* and *cotchen*, that *think* may be debuccalised to [hɪŋk, hɪŋ], especially in Central varieties, and that the noun form of *wirk* is *wark* (work) [wark].

Some Verbs of Latin origin traditionally have no inflection in the past participle.

acquent | acquaint | acquentit | acquent
calculate | calculate | calculatit | calculate
execute | execute | executit | execute
impignorate | pawn | impignoratit | impignorate
insert | insert | insertit | insert
seetuate | situate | seetuatit | seetuate

Verbs that end with a vowel are usually inflected with a /d/. However, in some varieties /t/ also occurs. The inflection is usually written <-ed>, except after digraphs ending with <e>, which are inflected <-d>, and final <ee>, which is inflected <-'d>.

allou | allow | alloued | alloued
bou | bow, bend | boued | boued
caw | call, drive | cawed | cawed
dee | die | dee’d | dee’d
gae | go | gaed | gane, went
hae | have | haed | haed, haen
lee | lie (fib) | lee’d | lee’d
lue | love | lued | lued
pey | pay | peyed | peyed
pou | pull | poued | poued
rowe | roll | rowed | rowed
saw | saw (wood) | sawed | sawn
say | say | said | said, sain
Note that *allowed*, when followed by an adverb or adverbial phrase, does not add ‘to go’ to indicate motion towards. The alternatives *gang* and *gan*, the latter found in Central and Southern Scots, may be used in place of *gae*, *hae* has the alternative form *hiv* in North-east and West Central varieties, contracted to ‘v, and *said* is more prevalent than the rarer *sain*.

In varieties which have an unstressed realisation, such as /ɪ/ or /a/, of final <-ae>, <-ie> or <-y>, the realisation is often /t/, with /d/ occurring after stressed realisations (see p. 49 ff.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>buiry</th>
<th>bury</th>
<th>buirit, buiried</th>
<th>buirit, buiried</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cairy</td>
<td>carry</td>
<td>cairit, cairied</td>
<td>cairit, cairied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuilyie</td>
<td>wheedle</td>
<td>cuilyit, cuilyied</td>
<td>cuilyit, cuilyied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>follae</td>
<td>follow</td>
<td>follit, follaed</td>
<td>follit, follaed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gullie</td>
<td>knife</td>
<td>gullit, gullied</td>
<td>gullit, gullied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>houie</td>
<td>barter</td>
<td>houit, houied</td>
<td>houit, houied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurry</td>
<td>hurry</td>
<td>hurrit, hurried</td>
<td>hurrit, hurried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jundie</td>
<td>jostle</td>
<td>jundit, jundied</td>
<td>jundit, jundied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mairy</td>
<td>marry</td>
<td>mairit, mairied</td>
<td>mairit, mairied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marrae</td>
<td>match</td>
<td>marrit, marraed</td>
<td>marrit, marraed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skavie</td>
<td>gad about</td>
<td>skavit, skavied</td>
<td>skavit, skavied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skellie</td>
<td>squint</td>
<td>skellit, skellaed</td>
<td>skellit, skellaed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spulyie</td>
<td>despoil</td>
<td>spulyit, spulyied</td>
<td>spulyit, spulyied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stishie</td>
<td>banter</td>
<td>stishit, stishied</td>
<td>stishit, stishied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarrae</td>
<td>delay</td>
<td>tarrit, tarraed</td>
<td>tarrit, tarraed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wirry</td>
<td>worry</td>
<td>wirrit, wirried</td>
<td>wirrit, wirried</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Strong verbs usually form their past tenses by a change of vowel and in the past participle usually add <-en>. Some strong verbs also have weak forms (see above).

Some verbs change <i-e> to <a-e> to form the simple past and to <i> + <-en> to form the past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bide</th>
<th>stay, endure</th>
<th>bade, bid</th>
<th>bid(den), bade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bite</td>
<td>bite</td>
<td>bate</td>
<td>bitten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flyte</td>
<td>altercate</td>
<td>flate, flytit</td>
<td>flitten, flytit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide</td>
<td>hide</td>
<td>hade, hod</td>
<td>hidden, hodden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ride</td>
<td>ride</td>
<td>rade</td>
<td>rid(den)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rise</td>
<td>rise</td>
<td>rase, ris</td>
<td>ris(en)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slide</td>
<td>slide</td>
<td>slade</td>
<td>slidden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slit</td>
<td>slit</td>
<td>slate</td>
<td>slitten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stride</td>
<td>stride</td>
<td>strade</td>
<td>stridden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write</td>
<td>write</td>
<td>wrat(e)</td>
<td>written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writhe</td>
<td>writhe</td>
<td>wrathe</td>
<td>writhen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarly in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>ate, eat(it)</td>
<td>eaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read</td>
<td>rade</td>
<td>read(en)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set</td>
<td>set, sot</td>
<td>setten, sotten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The simple past of *set* may be *sot* and the past participle *sotten* in North-east Central varieties.

Some verbs change <i–e> to <ui> to form the simple past, adding <-en> to form the past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drive</td>
<td>druive, driv</td>
<td>druiven, driv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rive</td>
<td>ruive, rived</td>
<td>riven, rived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strive</td>
<td>struive</td>
<td>striven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrive</td>
<td>thrive</td>
<td>thiven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weave</td>
<td>wuive, weaved</td>
<td>wuiven, weaved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form *druive* generally occurs in Ulster varieties. *Riven* may be contracted to *ri’en* [rɪ(ə)n], while *thiven* may be contracted to *thr’i’en* [θrɪən].

Some verbs change the vowel in the present to <o> to form the simple past, adding <-en> to form the past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chaise</td>
<td>chose, chuse</td>
<td>chosen, chuisen, chuised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fecht</td>
<td>focht, feucht, fechtit</td>
<td>fochten, feuchten, fechtit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freeze</td>
<td>froze</td>
<td>frozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shuit</td>
<td>shot, shuitit</td>
<td>shot(ten), shuitit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Choise* and *chise* are the usual forms of *chaise*, and *feucht* the usual from of *focht* in Southern Scots; *fechtit* is a rarer form.

Some verbs, especially after /m, n/ and /ŋ/ (<ng>), change <i> to <a> to form the simple past and to <u> to form the past participle, but do not add <-en>:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bind</td>
<td>band</td>
<td>bund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ding</td>
<td>dang</td>
<td>dung, dinged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>fand</td>
<td>fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fling</td>
<td>flang</td>
<td>flung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hing</td>
<td>hang, hingit</td>
<td>hung, hingit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rin</td>
<td>ran, run</td>
<td>run, ran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sclim</td>
<td>sclam, sclimm(it)</td>
<td>sclum, sclimmt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sing</td>
<td>sang, sing(it)</td>
<td>sung, sing(it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>win</td>
<td>wan</td>
<td>wun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
wind wind, spool wand, windit, wint wund, windit

Similarly in:

begin begin begoud began

Note that sing(i)t is rare.

Some verbs change <ea> or <ei> to <ui> to form the simple past and to <o> + <-n> to form the past participle:

beir bear, carry buir born
shear shear, clip shuir shorn
swear shear, clip swuir sworn
teir tear tuir torn
weir wear wuir worn

Similarly in:

steal steal staw, steal stole stowen, steal

Some verbs change the vowel to <a> to form the simple past and to <u> + <-en> to form the past participle:

burst burst barst, burstit bursten, bursten
creep creep crap, creepit cruppen, creepit
drink drink drank drunk(en), drucken

greet cry (tears) grat grutten
grip seize grap, grippit gruppen, grippit
leap leap leap(e), leapit lumpen, leapit
sweat sweat swat(tit), sweitit swutten, swatten, sweitit
heet wet wat, weetit wutten, wat(tit), weetit

Similarly in:

come come cam, comed come(n), comed

Note that burst may undergo metathesis to brust, brast, brusten.

Some verbs ending with <e(e)> or <ie> change the vowel to form the simple past but only add <-e(n)> to form the past participle:

be be wis, war been
gie give gae, gied gien, gied
see see saw, see’d seen
Note that be may be unstressed [bɪ], was [waz, wɛz] is often unstressed wis [wɪz, wʌz], and war [war] is often unstressed [wʌr, wɔr].

The verb see is used colloquially to indicate a desire to be passed or given something.

See’s ower thon jurnal.    Coud ye see’s the teapat?
Pass me that magazine over.  Could you pass me the teapot?

Some verbs change the vowel to <a> to form the simple past and <o> + <-en> to form the past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>forget</td>
<td>forgat</td>
<td>forgotten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get</td>
<td>gat</td>
<td>gotten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speak</td>
<td>spak</td>
<td>spoken</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form foryet [fərˈjet] for forget [fərˈgɛt] may occur in Mid Northern and Insular varieties.

Some verbs change <i> to <a> to form the simple past and to <-en> to form the past participle, but may also change <i> to <u> + <-en>:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bid</td>
<td>bid</td>
<td>bad(e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pit</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>pat, pit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quit</td>
<td>rid, quit</td>
<td>quat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smit</td>
<td>smit</td>
<td>smat(e), smittit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spit</td>
<td>spit</td>
<td>spat, sput, spittit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stick</td>
<td>stick</td>
<td>stack, stickit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strick</td>
<td>strike</td>
<td>strack, strake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some verbs change <a> to <ui> to form the simple past, adding <-en> to form the past participle:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cast</td>
<td>cast</td>
<td>cuist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lat</td>
<td>let</td>
<td>luit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thrash</td>
<td>thrash</td>
<td>thruish, thrasht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash</td>
<td>wash</td>
<td>wuish, washt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

similarly in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fesh</td>
<td>fetch</td>
<td>fuish, fesht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>haud</td>
<td>hold</td>
<td>huil(l)d, held,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staund</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>stuid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that *thrash* may take the form *thresh*, that *held* is the prevalent form, although *huid* may occur in Insular varieties as [ḥød] and in Caithness varieties as [hid], that *huild* occurs in Insular varieties as [ḥoild] and in Mid Northern varieties as [hild], and that *hauden* is the prevalent form, although *huiden* may occur in Insular varieties as [ˈhødən].

Some verbs change <a> to <eu> to form the simple past, adding <-en> to form the past participle:

- brak break breuk, brak breken, brak(ken)
- mistak mistake misteuk mistaen
- shak shake sheuk, shakkit sheuken, shakken, shakkit
- tak tak teuk teuken, takken, taen

similarly in:

- bak(e) bake beuk, bak(k)it beuk, bak(k)en
- lauch laugh leuch, laucht leuchen, laucht

Note that *bakit* and *baken* are more common than *beuk* and that *laucht* is preferred to *leuch* and *leuchen* or *lauchen*.

Some verbs change final <aw(e)> to <ew> to form the simple past but only add <-n> to form the past participle:

- blaw blow blew blawn
- craw crow crew, crawt crawn
- draw draw drew drawn
- faw fall fell fawn
- maw mow mew, mowed mawn
- sawe sow sew, sawed sawn, sawed
- shaw show shew, shawed shawn
- shew sew shewed shewen, shewed
- sawn snow sew, sawed sawn, sawed
- straw strew strawed strawn
- throw throw, twist threw, threwed thrawn, threwen

similarly in:

- flee fly flew, flee'd flowen, flewen
- growe grow grew, growed growen, growed

Note that *fled* may occur for *flewen* and *flowen* in Shetland varieties.

In colloquial speech, the past participle is sometimes used for the past tense, for example, *duin* (done) in place of *did*, *durst* (dared) in place of *daur*, *gane* (gone) in place
of *gaed* (went) and *seen* in place of *saw*.

In simple sentences, Scots prefers the word order subject—verb—adverb—(adjective)—object, whereas Standard English prefers subject—verb—(adjective)—object—adverb.

- He sneckit aff the licht. She hingit oot the washin.
- He switched the light off. She hung the washing out.

The wirkers heezed up the wechty stanes.
The workers lifted the heavy stones up.

9 The present participle refers to an action that is more or less contemporaneous. As previously described, in some peripheral varieties, especially among older speakers, the present participle is still differentiated from the gerund (p. 88) as it was in Older Scots, with the forms written `<and>` [an(d)] and `<ing>` [ɪn] respectively. In Southern and Orkney Scots, the present participle may be realised as [an] and the verbal noun [in], often written `− an` and `− een` in dialect writing. In Caithness, the realisations may be [an] and [ɪn]. A few revivalist writers have differentiated the present participle and gerund with the spellings `− an` and `− in`.

**Present participle:** He wis aye stravaig an aboot. He was always roaming around.

**Gerund:** He’s fond o stravaigin aboot. He likes roaming around.

By the twentieth century, the realisations of the present participle and the gerund had become indistinguishable in most dialects, for which reason the form `− in` added to the verb root, usually realised as [an], is used here. As in Standard English, where it occurs, the final `<e>` of a verb is dropped.

- He cam beirin praisents. The man wantin a leg isna at the fishin.
- He came bearing presents. The man missing a leg isn’t a fisherman.

- She wis beatin the dug. He wis bidin ootby.
- She was beating the dog. He was staying outside.

He’s aye cairyin on lik a daft fuil body. He’s always behaving like a stupid fool of a person.

The dug wis couryin doun whan the thunner clappit. The dog was cowering when the thunder clapped.

The regular present participle of *gae* is *gaein* and of *gang*, *gangin*. However, the irregular present participle *gaun*, [ɡən, ɡɔːn] in Southern, Central and Ulster Scots and [ɡ(ʃ)aːn] in...
Northern varieties, is the most prevalent form.

A’m gaun hame; thare’s nocht tae dae.  The hale family is gaun furrin in Julie. I’m going home; there’s nothing to do.  The whole family is going abroad in July.

Scots often uses the continuous tense with stative verbs where Standard English would have a simple tense.

A’m thinkin means much the same as ‘I imagine’ in Standard English. A’m doutin expresses the sense of ‘I suspect’ or ‘to anticipate something undesired’.

A’m thinkin we wad been telt tae gang.  I imagine that we would have been told to leave.

A’m doutin that thare will be wittins anent the mishanter.  I suspect that there will be news about the accident.

He wis hatin haein tae wirk on the Saubath.  He hated having to work on Sunday.

He wisna likin it, and the lassie he wis wi wisna likin it.  He didn’t like it, and the girl he was with didn’t like it.

We warna wantin tae big a new hoose.  He’s no liftin a wurd ye say.  We didn’t want to build a new house.  He doesn’t understand a word you say.

Ye’re no intendin tae appen thon bottle o wine the nicht, are ye?  You don’t intend to open that bottle of wine tonight, do you?

That also occurs with other tenses and verbs.

A’ll pit ma buits on the morn and be rinnin ower the muir.  I’ll put my boots on tomorrow and run over the moor.

Ye wad get a sair fricht gin he wis comin alive again.  You would get a terrible fright if he came back to life.

Scots prefers the use of the present participle to the infinitive.

Thay aye conteenas wirkin till the whistle blaws.  They always continue to work until the whistle blows.

He stertit speakin til his feres.  Ettle at eatin less gin ye’re ower wechty.  He started to speak to his comrades.  Try to eat less if you’re overweight.
It was thoughtless to leave the dog in the house on its own.

In a few words, the older present participle survives in various forms such as *appearand*, now often *appearant* [əˈpirənt], from *appear, awnd* [əːn(d), ɔːn] and [(j)aːn] in Northern varieties, now usually *awin* [əːn] from *awe* ‘to owe money’, *farrand*, originally the present participle of *fare*, now often *farrant* [fərənt(t), ‘fərand] ‘of a certain disposition’ qualified by a preceding adjective, *willant*, usually *willint* [ˈwɪlənt, ˈwʌlənt] now often *willin* [ˈwɪlən, ˈwʌlən] ‘willing’, and the fossilised *bydand* ‘abiding, steadfast’ as the motto of the Gordon Highlanders, now *bidin* [ˈbədən].

It’s clearly apparent that dogs don’t like cats.

The day in court apparently went well.

A ken fine wh’ ’m awnd ye. I know very well what I owe you. The creditor must receive all that’s owing.

Throu the pend is a wee auld-farrant crame. Through the arch is a little old-fashioned merchant’s stall.

His laddie wis nou a weel-farrant young man. His boy was now a pleasant young man.

That auld body wis sic a ill-farrant, feckless craitur. That old person was such an uncomely, incompetent creature.

He wis ay willint tae dae’t. He was always willing to do it. The lambs gaed willint til the slauchter.

The prefix <a-> [ə] may be used before the present participle. The meaning may be active after the verbs *tae be, tae set, tae gang*, etc.

The wintry wind’s a-souchin and a-sichin throu the trees. The wintry wind is rustling and sighing through the trees.

Peggy begoud a-biggin up the peats on the fire. Peggy began building up the peats on the fire.

The wee laverock keeps a-singin faur abuin the lea. The little lark keeps singing far above the meadow.
It may also form a continuous passive with the verb *tae be*

The morn, aw day, papers will be a-readin. Her braw bridal dress is a-makkin.
Tomorrow, all day, papers will be being read. Her fine bridal dress is being made.

**10 Negation of verbs.**

Single-syllable verbs may be negated by affixing *<-na>* (For pronunciations see p. 51). Such forms are, however, recessive. See below.

Syne haste ye back, Jamie, and bidena awa! A’l bidena the licht o morn.
Then return soon, Jamie, and don’t stay away! I’ll not await daybreak.

The door wis appen, but he camna ben. The bygane he dochtna weel beir!
The door was open, but he didn’t come in. The past he couldn’t well bear!

Awa and comena back, like a rung that is sneddit. Thae twa gaedna thegither.
Be off and don’t return, like a pruned branch. Those two didn’t match.

The sun comesna oot, but he’s no in a fang.
The sun doesn’t come out, but he’s not in a jam.

A weird ye, gangna thare! He kensna whaur she is.
I solemnly exhort you, don’t go there! He doesn’t know where she is.

She gangsna cled in a goun o gray, nor in bricht cramasie.
She goes not clad in a gown of grey, nor in bright crimson.

Latna Cluitie and his sneck-drawin owerthraw me.
Let not the Devil and his craftiness be my downfall.

Ye rich fowk, leukna wi disdain upon the puir!
You rich people, don’t look upon the poor with disdain!

Ye ochtna tak things in haund sae rash. I watna hou it cam tae pass.
You ought not to take things on so rashly. I know not how it came to pass.

Whit recks hou ye sing and ye singna back.
What does it matter how you sing if you don’t sing back.

Whan ye pray, uisena vain owercomins, as the haithens dis.
When you pray, do not use vain refrains, as the heathens do.

The spike and mattock wantna docht tae dig.
The spike and mattock lack not the strength to dig.
Those are now generally obsolete, having, on the whole, been replaced by modal verb (p. 129) forms or constructions with the negative adverb *no*.

Syne haste ye back, Jamie, and dinna bide awa! A’ll no bide the licht o morn.
Then return soon, Jamie, and don’t stay away! I’ll not await tomorrow’s light.

The usual negative with past tense verbs is *niver*.

A nearhaund coft the haliday, but A coudna gang till the hint–end o August, sae A niver coft it.
I nearly bought the holiday, but I couldn’t go until the end of August, so I didn’t buy it.

A niver gotten sterit till nine. A will niver, iver dae drogs.
I didn’t get started until nine. I will never, ever take drugs.

Negative or unpleasant attributes may be indicated by the prefix *<mis–>* [mts].

That wickit man mislippens his bairns.
That wicked man neglects his children.

The mediciner miskent the seemptoms.
The physician mistook the symptoms.

A misdout wir lads’ll win the gemm.
I doubt that our boys will win the game.

The penter wis sair mistrystit wi the onding.
The painter was absolutely dismayed by the downpour.
Adverbs

Adverbs are words added to verbs (p. 145), adjectives (p. 111) or other adverbs that express some modification of the meaning or accompanying circumstance.

1 Many adverbs take the same form as the verb root or adjective, especially when they are placed after verbs.

   It’s real guid yill.       A’m awfu fauchelt.       He’s clean daft.       Ony ither thing.
   It’s really good ale.     I’m terribly tired.      He’s quite mad.      Anything else.
   Mind and caw cannie.     A’m terrible obleeged tae ye.
   Remember to proceed carefully. I’m terribly obliged to you.

   A wis fair dumfoondert.   The dug wis near wuid.    A’m real weel the day.
   I was quite dumbstruck.   The dog was nearly mad.   I’m very well today.
   He’s richt fou the nicht. She wis greetin sair.      He’s no sair pleased.
   He’s very drunk tonight. She was crying bitterly.   He’s not greatly pleased.
   A haed clean forgotten.   Her tongue gangs constant. Nae ither body.
   I had quite forgot.       Her tongue is constantly wagging. No body else.

2 Adverbs are formed mostly by suffixing <-ly> or <-lies> (for pronunciations see p. 50). Where the adjective ends in <-ie>, the adverb may be formed by changing <-ie> to <-i> and adding <-ly>. Some writers may use <-lie>.

   alanerly   entirely  geyly   a good deal
   brawly    very well  geylies  rather much
   brawlies   very well  haurdly  hardly, barely
   cannonly  cautiously likely  probably
   feckly     mostly    shuirly  surely
   freely     completely uncoly  very much
   fully      fully

   Brawly and brawlies also express the sense of ‘thoroughly’ or ‘excellently’. Fully ['fɔli] expresses the sense of ‘quite’, ‘rather more than’, ‘a good deal’ and ‘on the whole’. Haurdly may also take the form hairdly.

   A kent him brawly.      Coorser fully nor the floor.   Fully that.
   I knew him very well.   A good deal courser than flour.   Quite that.
   A s’ likely be thare.   A could haurdly thole the dule.   No michty muckle.
   I shall probably be there. I could barely endure the suffering. Not very much.
He would surely give it to whom it belongs. That whisky goes down splendidly.

Fleetch him cannily and wise aff him aw ye want.
Flatter him cautiously and coax from him all you want.

Wha leave longest sees the maist. A’m geylies abuin aichty.
He who lives longest sees the most. I’m well past eighty.

3 Some adverbs are formed by suffixing <-s>, for example, *mebbes* [ˈmɛbɪz] ‘maybe, perhaps’ and *whiles* ‘sometimes’.

    Tak tent tae the glaur, or you’ll mebbes get your cuits slairt.
    Beware of the mud, or you may smear your ankles.

    He whiles teuk a drap o the maut-bree.
    He sometimes took a drop of whisky.

4 The suffix <-in> or <-ins> may be added to some adverbs.

    Ye aiblins micht come ower. She didna like the new dress aitherin.
    Perhaps you might come over. She didn’t like the new dress either.

    A dinna like naitherins o thaim. That dug is seendlins feart fae onybody.
    I don’t like neither of them. That dog is seldom scared of anyone.

5 Some adverbs are formed by suffixing <-lins> [lɪnz, lənz] to nouns indicating in the direction of, and to adjectives to indicate direction, manner, condition or degree.

    blindlins blindly naurlins nearly
    erselins backwards scarcelins scarcely
    hauflins half, partially sidelins sideways
    hidlins secretly uplins upwards
    maistlins almost

    He fell erselins and speldert hissel on the fluir.
    He fell backwards and went sprawling across the floor.

    The sodgers gaed blindlins tae the fechtin.
    The soldiers went blindly into battle.

    He hauflins wisses he haed niver met the wumman he mairit.
    He almost wishes that he had never met the woman he married.
She creepit hidlins throu the whins for til see the lintie.
She stealthily crept through the gorse to see the linnet.

The shearer’s darg wis maistlins duin.
The reaper’s work was almost finished.

A sicht that naurlins pat him oot o his mind.
A sight that nearly sent him mad.

He gien the bonnie lass a sidelins glence.
He gave the pretty girl a sideward glance.

Its scarcelins three hundert year syne the Union.
Its scarcely three hundred years since the Union.

The gled toved uplins throu the air.
The hawk soared upwards through the air.

6 Some adverbs are formed by suffixing <-gate(s)> and <-wey(s)>.

awgate(s)    everywhere
awwey(s)    everywhere
endweys    straight on
naegate(s)    nowhere
naewey(s)    nowhere
onygate(s)    anywhere, anyhow, anyway
onywey(s)    anyway, anywhere
somegate(s)    somewhere, someplaces, somehow
 somewey(s)    somewhere, somehow

When adjectives such as *nae*, *ony* and *some* are used to modify nouns such as *gate* and *wey* in order to express the sense of ‘in some method, manner, fashion or ‘in some way’, they are generally written as separate words.

She leukit awgates for her wee baudrons. He’s awgate and kens awthing.
She looked everywhere for her little kitty. He’s everywhere and knows everything.

We’ll no g endweys wi this bit wark wi your haiverin.
We’ll never finish this work with your chattering.

He coud lead the cou bi the neb onygate he chuise. Feenish the job ony gate ye like.
He could lead the cow by the nose anywhere he chose. Finish the job any way you like.
We hae mair wind here nor thay hae somegates.
We have more wind here than they have in some places.

The Spey rises somegate in the Hiелands.
The Spey rises somewhere in the Highlands.

He somegate managed tae wring gowd oot o’it.
He somehow managed to make a success of it.

She’s his aunt some wey.
She had in some way lost their respect,
She’s his aunt in some form.
She had in some way lost their respect.

He wis cracky and homely, and in nae weys prood ava.
He was chatty and homely, and was in no way proud at all.

7 Some adverbs are formed using the prefix <a-> [a] before nouns and verbs.

The bairns follaed the fishermen’s walk a wee aback.
The children followed a little behind the fishermen’s procession.

Haud aback frae the cairt for fear it cowps.
Keep away from the cart lest it overturn.

The best-laid schames o mice and men gangs aft agley.
The best-prepared plans of mice and men often go awry.

Whan he comes athort the Spey he aye bides here a nicht.
When he comes across the Spey he always stays here for a night.

She haed niver seen him atween the een.
She had never seen him with her own eyes.

The fishwife wis rowin her barrae adoun the herbour wynd.
The fisher woman was rolling her barrow down the harbour lane.

Draw in a cheer and rest yer hochs awhile.
Take a seat and rest your legs (lit. “thighs”) for a short time.

Juist bide yer time. A’ll be alang the nicht.
Just be patient. I’ll come tonight.

Speak afore the maiters gangs further alenth.
Speak before the matters proceed further.
We haena wun faur alenth wi the shearin.
We haven’t made much progress with the shearing.

8 Some adverbs are formed using the prefix <be-> [bɪ, bə].

The shielin’s bewast the brig ower the burn.
The shepherd’s hut is to the west of the bridge across the stream.

The fowk that bides benorth o the glen speaks the Gaelic.
The people who live to the north of the valley speak Gaelic.

Betimes ye hear a gowk in the shaw.
Sometimes you hear a cuckoo in the copse.

9 The frequentative suffix <-le> [ʌl, əl, l] also implies direction towards:

He gaed twa mile eastle. The muinlicht gart aw the ripples glentle.
He went two miles eastwards. The moonlight caused the ripples to sparkle.

10 Adverbs may also be formed from many adjectives when they are preceded by the preposition for [fɔr, for], unstressed [fɪr, far, fər].

The politeecian gied a better speech nor for ordinar. Ay, that’s the fare for ordinar.
The politician gave a better speech than usual. Yes, that’s the ordinary fare.

Jeanie’s a guid bairn for uisual. A telt ye that disna come on for common.
Jeanie’s usually a good child. I told you that doesn’t normally happen.

11 Relative, Interrogative and Demonstrative adverbs.

Relative adverbs refer to the preceding part of the sentence with respect to place, time, manner or case.

hou how this wey in this way
whaur where (for) why for what reason, why
whan when whit wey in what way

Hou may be used as Standard English ‘how’ or in the the sense of ‘the reason for’.

Neist mornin he gaed up for tae see hou she wis was keepin.
Next morning he went up to see how she was doing.

A want tae ken hou ye selt the the kye for sae little.
I want to know why you sold the cows for so little.
That wis the shaw whaur we first trystit.
That was the copse where we had our first romantic assignation.

He staved his thoum whan he lowpit the pairk waw.
He sprained his thumb when he jumped (over) the park wall.

A dinna think weel o this wey o howkin tatties.
I don’t think much of this method of digging potatoes.

He coudna unnerstaund why they warna plain and evendoun.
He couldn’t understand why they weren’t plain and sincere.

A dinna see for why thay dinna get a caur for ye.
A don’t see why they don’t get a car for you.

Naebody kent whit wey the eels cam frae the sea.
No one knew how the eels came from the sea.

Demonstrative adverbs point something out with respect to place, time, manner or case.

| here | here | thare | there |
| nou  | now  | this  | this  |
| sae  | so   | that  | that  |
| than | then | yon,  | yonder, thonder |

The plurals of *this* and *that* are *thir* (these) and *thae* (those) except in Mid Northern varieties where *this* and *that* may be used as plurals.

*Yon* or *thon* and *yonder* or *thonder* refer to things at a distance.

*Sae, than* and *thare* may be unstressed [sa], [ðən] and [ðər]. *This* and *that* may be contracted to ‘*is* [ɪs, ɪs] and ‘*at* [at] in Northern varieties.

After *here*, before a noun, the verb ‘to be’ may be elided. *Thare is* may also be elided to *thare’s* or simply reduced to *thare*.

Here a puckle sweeties atween haunds.
Here are a few sweets in the meantime.

Thare’s nou twal fowk whaur seiven uised tae bide.
There are now twelve people where seven used to live.

Its no a prent beuk but sae like as the jotters frae the schuil.
Its not a printed book but more like a school exercise book.
Dinna eat sae muckle breid afore yer denner.  
Don’t eat so much bread before your lunch.

It wis teemin, sae she bade unner the easins.  
It was pouring rain, so she stayed under the eaves.

Ye’re a uggsome wee tyke, sae ye are!  
You’re an abhorrent little cur, indeed you are!

The bairn wis supposed tae be asleep or than.  
The child was supposed to be asleep before then.  
Thare no nae time at nicht.  
There’s no time at night.

Thare a wee dug ootby bowfin its heid aff.  
There is a small dog outside barking its head off.  
Thare a man doun thare.  
There’s a man down there.

Thare a body askin efter ye.  
There is someone asking about you.

Bide thare while A redd this raivelt raip.  
Stay there while I untangle this knotted rope.

Ye speir hou A think thareanent!  
You ask what I think concerning the matter.

Reid thareoot and white tharein, and aw the guts abuin the skin.  
Red outside and white inside, and all the guts above the skin.

His faither is seiventy year auld, or thareby.  
His father is seventy years old, or thereabouts.

In colloquial speech an unstressed or contracted pronunciation of thare [ðə], in Insular varieties [ðə], sounds much like the definite article the or the unstressed realisation of the pronoun thay [ðə] (they). Consequently it is usually written the (also de or dey in Shetland dialect writing). The reduced form the occurs in constructions such as:

*The’re* meaning ‘there are’.
*The wis* meaning ‘there was’.
*The war* meaning ‘there were’ or ‘there was’.
*The’l meaning* ‘there will’ or ‘there shall’.

Also the interrogative forms:

*Are the?, meaning* ‘are there?’ or ‘is there?’
*War the?, meaning* ‘were there?’ or ‘was there?’
There was hardly a breath of wind all night.

There was soon a crowd gathered at the baker's shop.

There wasn't enough water.

There will be no peace in the house.

There wasn't half as much cleaning done then.

Are the anyone in?  Are the many more of your sort?

This qualifies an adjective in the sense of ‘so’, ‘to such a degree or extent’.

A'm so old, and I never yet had aching bones.

We’ve done well and thrived for many a year.

I haven’t heard you sing for some time.

That conveys the sense of ‘so’, ‘to such a degree’, ‘to that extent’ and very’.

She was so proud of winning the competition.

I'll do so.

Yon, yonder or thonder indicate something that is farther away in the sense of ‘that place over there’.

A little farther over there he lost his way.

Over there by the stream you can hear the song thrush sing.
Interrogative adverbs ask questions with respect to place, time, manner or case.

whaur  where  whit for  for what reason
whan  when  whit wey  why, how
why, hou  why, how

Hou is often used to ask for a reason, as is why and whit for.
Whit wey is often used to ask ‘for what reason’ or ‘in what manner’. Are may be elided after whaur, especially before ye or you.

Whaur ye gaun, ye crowlin ferlie? Whan did he come? Hou’s aw wi ye?
Where are you going, you crawling marvel? When did he come? How do you do?

The owersman telt us hou tae redd the brander. Hou no tak thon road?
The foreman told us how to prepare the gridiron. Why not take that road?

Hou did ye no speir at him? Hou come ye teuk the job? Why wis ye no comin?
Why didn’t you ask him? Why did you take the job? Why weren’t you coming?

Whit for blaws the wind, and whaurfraf comes the rain?
Why does the wind blow, and where does rain come from.

Whit for hae ye coft thae flouers? Whit for maun ye gang hame?
Why have you bought those flowers? Why must you go home?

Whit for did ye no theik the ruif afore the winter?
Why did you not thatch the roof before winter?

Whit for no shoud A gie him it back? Whit wey no tak the dug wi ye?
Why shouldn’t I give it back to him? Why not take the dog with you?

Whit wey did it happen? Whit wey will A dae this?
How did it happen? How will I do this?

Adverbs of place.
Many prepositions are used adverbially.

aback  behind  hame  at home
abeich  aloof  hereawa  hereabouts
ablo  below  hyne  at a distance
aboot  about  in  in
abreed  abroad  inby  inside
abuin  above  inower  inside
aff  off  oot  out
afore  before  ootby  outside
ahint   behind   ootower   at a distance
aside   beside   ower   over, farther off
ayont   beyond   owerby   over there
ben     inside   thegither   together
but     outside   up   up
by      by, near   yont   along, through

*By* [bət, be] may be unstressed [br, ba], *faur* may take the form *fer*, in Southern Scots *[fər, fær]*, *inower* may be unstressed [*ənˈʌr*], and *ootower* may be unstressed [*ətˈʌr*, *ətˈuːr*], sometimes written *atour*.

*Aback* expresses the sense of ‘behind’, ‘in the rear’, ‘away’, ‘aloof’ or ‘off’.

Mind the cuddie and haud aback. The riven sleeve hauds the haund aback.
Be careful of the donkey and keep back. The torn sleeve hinders the hand.

*Abeich* expresses the sense of ‘aloof’, ‘aside’, ‘away’ or ‘apart from others’.

Thay hid thaimsels amang the corn for tae keep the lads abeich.
They hid themselves in the corn in order to fend off the boys.

The faither casts his heid abeich and leuks a kennin soor.
The father casts his head aloof and looks slightly sour.

*Ablo* expresses the sense of ‘below’, ‘beneath’ or ‘lower down’.

It’s slaistery and sliddery doun ablo amang the glaur.
It’s wet, dirty and slippery down below in the mud.

The sea burst faur ablo him in aw its witchin glamourie.
The sea burst far beneath him in all its bewitching power.

*Aboot* expresses the sense of ‘on the outside’, ‘on every side’ or out of the way’, ‘in all directions round’, ‘through or over a place’, ‘here and there’.

He’s up aboot Buchan somewey. He ran aboot bare-leggit in a wee bit tairtan kilt.
He’s somewhere up in Buchan. He ran around bare-legged in a little tartan kilt.

Haud by the lunkart at the stripe. It’s nae a bit aboot.
Continue past the hunting lodge at the rill. It’s just a little away.
Aboot also expresses the sense of being ‘on the move’ or ‘going about’, especially after an illness.

She’s aboot again efter a spell o the haingles.
She’s on her feet again after a bout of influenza.

Aboot also expresses the sense of ‘turned’.

He set tae me whan ma back wis aboot.
He set about me when my back was turned.

In aboot expresses the sense of ‘close to’, ‘close together’ or ‘under control’.

Can ye no haud yer bairn in aboot. It’s a sair horse tae keep in aboot.
Can’t you keep your child under control. It’s a difficult horse to control.

Abreed expresses the sense of ‘over a wide area’ or ‘abroad’.

Grandfather’s ess wis scaitert abreed tae the fower winds.
Grandfather’s ashes were scattered abroad to the four winds.

Abuin expresses the sense of ‘above’ or ‘overhead’ and ‘in the upper storey’ or ‘higher up a valley or river’.

The muin abuin leuks doun upon a sleepin warld.
The moon above looks down upon a sleeping world.

Gang up the brae and ower the tap, and ye’re abuin the toun.
Go up the slope and over the top, and you’re above the town.

This wee dram shoud keep your hert abuin.
This little nip should keep your spirits up.

Afore expresses the sense of ‘before’, ‘in front’ or ‘in advance’.

Thay’re faur afore that daurna leuk back.
Thay’re far in advance who won’t look back.

Aff expresses the sense of ‘off’, ‘away’ or ‘at or to a distance’.

A canna pit aff time whan A’v business adae.
I can’t beat about the bush when I’ve business to do.

The bairn’s best freend bides twa doors aff.
The child’s best friend lives two doors away.
She’s aff tae Lunnon the morn’s nicht. She coud sair lay aff aboot horse. She’s going to London tomorrow night. She could really hold forth about horses.

_Ahint _expresses the sense of ‘behind’ or ‘towards the rear’.

The wee mowpie wis courin ahint the dry-stane dyke. The little rabbit was cowering behind the dry-stone wall.

He wis left faur ahint and coudna follae. He was left far behind and couldn’t follow.

_Aside _expresses the sense of ‘close by’ or ‘beside’.

Thay war sittin aside ither. He cam in aside me in the cairt. They were sitting side by side. He came close beside me in the cart.

_Ayont _expresses the sense of ‘beyond’.

A burn ran in the laich ayont the brae. A stream ran through the low ground beyond the slope.

_Ben _expresses the sense of ‘inside’, ‘indoors’, ‘within’ or ‘farther into a dwelling’, in particular ‘in or to the best room’.

Come awa ben. A’ll be ben sae suin as A gie ma hair a redd. Come on in. I’ll be in as soon as I’ve fixed my hair.

_But _expresses the sense of ‘out’ and ‘into the kitchen or outer room’.

Gang but, Faither, and tak Mither wi ye. Go out, Father, and take Mother with you.

A bide but and ben wi him. He and I live together in the same dwelling.

_By _expresses the sense of ‘near’ or ‘in the neighbourhood of’.

The sheep wis staundin by the auld bourtree. The sheep were standing by the old elder.

_Hame _expresses the sense of ‘at home’.

Hit wad hae been better gin thay haeed bidden hame. It would have been better if they had stayed at home.
Hereawa expresses the sense of ‘this neighbourhood’, ‘in these parts’ or ‘hereabouts’.

Whit kin o fowk bides hereawa?
What sort of people live hereabouts?

A’v been thinking by your tongue ye’re no a hereawa man.
It’s occurred to me from your accent that you’re not from these parts.

Hyne expresses the sense of ‘away’, ‘far (off)’ or ‘at a distance’.

Far hyne ootower the lea. The fields hyne by Afflochy.
Far off beyond the pasture. The fields over by Afflochy.

She scoored hyne awa for til find the richt goun.
She scoured far away in order to find the right gown.

In expresses the sense of ‘in’ or ‘inside’.

The’re naebody in. He gaed in the shap for tae coff a neep.
There’s no one in. He went into the shop to buy a turnip.

Inby expresses the sense of ‘closer’, ‘inside’, ‘within’ or ‘in doors’.

On weet and snell nichts the horse is brocht inby.
On wet and chilly nights the horse(s) is/are brought inside.

Come inby. He teuk her inby tae him.
Come indoors. He took her inside to him.

Inower expresses the sense of ‘inside’, ‘within’ or ‘in towards’.

Juist wait till A fling your gear inower.
Just wait until I throw your belongings inside.

She fuish inower the bottle and pat doun the kebbock.
She brought the bottle inside and put the cheese down.

Come inower the lowe and beek yer feet.
Come nearer the hearth and warm your feet.

She wis taen inower by the swick. Ye canna tak inower sicna mensefu chield.
She was deceived by the swindle(r). You can’t deceive such a sensible fellow.
*Oot* expresses the sense of ‘out’ or ‘outside’.

She wirks oot, at the mains.  
The bairn's wantin oot.  
She works outside, at the home farm.  
The child wants to go outside.

*Ootby* expresses the sense of ‘outside’ or ‘at a distance’.

He wrocht ootby for the feck o the year.  
He worked out of doors for the best part of the year.

The verra pickmaws ootby yonder at the Bass haes ten times thair sense.  
The very black-headed gulls over there at the Bass Rock have ten times their sense.

*Ootower* expresses the sense of ‘at a distance’, ‘aside’, ‘apart’ or ‘some distance away’.

A hamely cot ootower frae din and bustle.  
Haud ootower frae the fire.  
A homely cottage far from the din and bustle.  
Keep away from the fire.

Mind ye, ten thoosand pund is a heap for a ootower tenant fermer.  
Mind you, ten thousand pounds is a lot for a remote tenant farmer.

*Ower* expresses the sense of ‘over’ or ‘across’ and is generally used with prepositions to indicate position or direction.

The bus staps ower the road.  
The schuil stuid ower ayont the burn.  
The bus stops across the street.  
The school stood away beyond the stream.

We’ll haud on ower abuin the watter.  
Gang intil the clachan ower anent ye.  
We’ll keep going over there above the river.  
Go into the hamlet over there facing you.

*Owerby* expresses the sense of ‘over’ or ‘across’ at a distance.

Haste ye owerby for til see whit we’re daein.  
Hurry on over here to see what we are doing.

A wis takkin a daunter tae the linn owerby.  
I was having a stroll to the waterfall over there.

*Thegither* expresses the sense of ‘together’.

Thae twa wis aye thegither, sidie for sidie.  
Those two were always together, side by side.
Yont expresses the sense of ‘yonder’, ‘over there’, ‘thither’ or ‘on or to the other side’ and ‘farther away or along’, ‘onwards beyond’, ‘at a distance’, ‘aside’ or ‘apart’.

Sit yont a bittock. Hirle yont.
Sit a little farther along. Shuffle along to the other end.

Are ye comin yont the clachan?
Are you coming over there to the village?

13 Adverbs of time and number.
Many prepositions are used adverbially.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aback</td>
<td>since, ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aboot</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aft(en)</td>
<td>oft(en)</td>
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<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td>again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ahint</td>
<td>behind</td>
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<tr>
<td>awee</td>
<td>a little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aye</td>
<td>always, still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belive</td>
<td>quickly, soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iver</td>
<td>ever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niver</td>
<td>neist</td>
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<tr>
<td>nou</td>
<td>now</td>
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<tr>
<td>sin</td>
<td>since</td>
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<td>suin</td>
<td>soon</td>
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<td>till</td>
<td>until</td>
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<tr>
<td>whiles</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yet</td>
<td>yet</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note that aft [aft] but aften ['afn]. Again [a'gen, a'gɛn] may take the form agin [a'ɡɪn], iver may be contracted to e'er [er], and niver may be contracted to ne'er [ner], also [nur] in North Northern varieties. Syne is realised as [sain]. See also times of the day, p. 127, and days, months and holidays, p. 236.

Aback expresses the sense of ‘since’ or ‘ago’.

No mony days aback A coud say mair.
Not that long ago I could say more.

Bide awee. We maun juist gang on awee.
Stay for a little while. We must just continue a little way.

Aboot expresses the sense of ‘approximately’.

The bus’ll gang in aboot sax meenit. Hit’s aboot ten efter aicht.
The bus will leave in approximately six minutes. It’s about ten past eight.

Aft(en) expresses the sense of ‘oft’ or ‘often’.

Ower aft oor pig gaed tae the wall. It’s no aften that A gang frae hame.
Our pig went to the well too often. It’s not often that I leave home.
A canna mind hou aft he haes clappit me on the heid.
I can’t remember how often he has patted me on the head.

*Again* expresses the sense of ‘at an indefinite time (in the future)’.

This will learn ye, again, ye young ramshackle.
That will teach you again, you young ragamuffin.

*Ahint* expresses the sense of ‘in time past’, ‘at a later time’, ‘late’ and ‘too late’.

But thare, ma simmer’s weel ahint. A’m growin auld.
But there, my prime is past. I’m growing old.

Lat thaim care that comes ahint. Haste ye, ye’re gaun tae be clean ahint.
Let them care who come late. Hurry, you’re going to be too late.

Aye wise ahint the haund. The knock’s ahint.
Always wise after the event. The clock’s slow.

*Awee* expresses the sense of ‘a little while’.

When A wis weary A wad rest awee. Pit a tether tae his tongue for awee.
When I was weary I would rest a little while. Put a stop to his tongue for a while.

*Aye* expresses the sense of ‘always’, ‘ever’, ‘continually’ or ‘on all occasions’.

The hert’s aye the pairt that maks us richt or wrang.
The heart is the part that makes us right or wrong.

He’s aye til the fore. A’m aye warstlin on.
He’s still alive. I’m still struggling on.

She’s for aye glaiberin tae hersel. Tae drap for aye the trams o warldly care.
She’s continually babbling to herself. To drop for ever the load of worldly care.

*Belive* expresses the sense of ‘speedily’, ‘quickly’, ‘at once’ or ‘soon’ and ‘in order’ or ‘next’.

Thair weel–swalt kytes belive wis bent like drums.
Their well–swollen bellies were quickly bent like drums.

First twa and syne three, and fower comes belive.
First two and then three, and four comes next.
Iver expresses the sense of ‘ever’.

No as iver A haurd ony wey. Hiv ye iver seen ocht like it?
Not that I ever heard at any rate. Have you ever seen anything like it?

Niver or ne’er expresses the sense of ‘never’ and ‘not yet’.

He’ll niver lat it licht that A’m richt. I waitit the hale day, but he niver cam.
He’ll never let it be known that I’m right. I waited the whole day but he didn’t come.

She haes ae ee that niver steeks whe she’s sleepin or wauken.
She has one eye that never shuts whether she’s asleep or awake.

Auld Ayr, that ne’er a toun surpasses. An niver a mony ootsiders cam tae see us.
Old Ayr, that not a town surpasses. And not many outsiders came to see us.

Neist expresses the sense of ‘next’.

Whan the wind’s in the east, cauld and snaw comes neist.
When the wind is from the east, cold and snow come next.

Nou expresses the sense of ‘the momentary present’.

A dinna mind thaim aw nou. He’ll no want ane nou.
I don’t remember them all now. He’ll not want one now.

Lat me pit aboot me nou that the cauld air is begun.
Let me wrap up well now that the cold weather has begun.

Sin expresses the sense of ‘since’, ‘ago’, ‘from now’ or ‘from that time’.

It wis mebbes three year sin he gaed. The doctor gaed by o the muir an oor sin.
It was perhaps three years since he left. The doctor went past the moor an hour ago.

Ance on a day, a while sin, thare leeved three wee swine.
Once upon a time, a while back, there lived three little pigs.

Suin expresses the sense of ‘in the near future’.

Ae day suin we’ll gang oot thegither. Winter will suin be the laird o the glen.
One day soon we’ll go out together. Winter will soon be lord of the valley.
He s’ get his ain skin tichtly het for him suin or syne. A wad suiner gang hame.
He’ll get a sound thrashing sooner or later. I would rather go home.
Suin also expresses the sense of ‘early’, ‘betimes’, ‘before it is late’.

He rises suin and gangs tae his bed suin.
He rises early and goes to bed early.

He is as weel tae tell ye suin as syne.
He might as well tell you sooner rather than later.

Syne expresses the sense of ‘ago’, ‘since’ or ‘before now’.

The train gaed eleiven meenit syne. Auld lang syne we wis pals.
The train left eleven minutes ago. Long, long ago we were friends.

A'v haed back–sets syne, as ony chield micht hae.
I've had setbacks since, as any fellow might.

Nae dout ye'll hae heard aw aboot it ere syne.
No doubt you'll have heard all about it before now.

Syne also expresses the sense of ‘thereupon’, ‘directly after’, ‘next’ or ‘afterwards’.

It is a gate we aw maun gang, suin or syne.
It is a path we all must follow, sooner or later.

Syne he cam ben. Did he dae it syne? It’s a gey lang while sin syne.
Then he came in. Did he do it then? It’s a very long time since then.

Alang the pad he pipit a tuin, syne ower the auld stane brig.
Along the path he piped a tune, then over the old stone bridge.

Till expresses the sense of ‘until’.

He laid at him till he coud haurdly staund. Ye’d better wait till the yett’s ajee.
He laid into him until he could hardly stand. You’d better wait until the gate’s open.

Whiles expresses the sense of ‘sometimes’, ‘at times’ or occasionally’.

Whiles ay and whiles na. He comes here whiles.
Sometimes yes and sometimes no. He comes here sometimes.

A hae a pine whiles in my ain stamack.
I have a pain at times in my own stomach.
Yet expresses the sense of ‘up to now’, ‘now as before’, ‘at the present time’ or ‘still’.

She wis ower young tae mairy yet. Are ye at the schuil yet?  
She was still too young to get married Are you still at school?

14 Adverbs of quantity, manner and degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aboot</td>
<td>about</td>
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<tr>
<td>abroad</td>
<td>abroad</td>
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<tr>
<td>alike</td>
<td>alike</td>
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<tr>
<td>anely</td>
<td>only</td>
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<tr>
<td>awmaist</td>
<td>almost</td>
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<tr>
<td>awthegither</td>
<td>altogether</td>
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<tr>
<td>back</td>
<td>back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>belike</td>
<td>probably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brawly</td>
<td>likely very well, thoroughly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>but, merely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by</td>
<td>past, finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by-ordinar</td>
<td>extraordinary, extraordinarily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean</td>
<td>absolutely, completely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deed</td>
<td>indeed, to be sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eneuch</td>
<td>enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ense</td>
<td>else, otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fair</td>
<td>fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fine</td>
<td>fine, very well,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forby</td>
<td>besides, in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forrit</td>
<td>forward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Addition to up  
Addition to up

Note that awmaist may be contracted to ‘maist’, that backwart(s) may also be realised as ['bakart(s)], and that even may be contracted to e’en.

Aboot expresses the sense of ‘approximately’.

Juist a bottle and aboot hauf a teacuppiefu. 
Just a bottle and about half a teacupful.

Abred expresses the sense of ‘to pieces’ or ‘in pieces’.

Oor boy teuk his cycle abreed and coudna pit it thegither again. 
Our boy took his cycle apart and couldn’t put it together again.
**Alike** expresses the sense of ‘in a like manner’.

Haud the day and the nicht alike lang. Hersel and her hoose alike tousie.
Burn the candle at both ends. She and her house are both dishevelled.

**Anely** expresses the sense of ‘only’.

It’s anely five mile tae Glesgae. He’s anely an aichteent part o the Toon Cooncil.
It’s only five miles to Glasgow. He’s only an eighteenth part of the Town Council.

**Awmaist**, and the contracted form ‘*maist*’, express the sense of ‘almost’.

In trowth A’m awmaist feart tae leuk at it. He cam oot ’maist greetin wi anger.
In truth I’m almost afraid to look at it. He came out almost sobbing with anger.

**Awthegither** expresses the sense of ‘altogether’.

The warld’s gane wrang awthegither.
The world’s gone to pieces.

Gin A dinna caw cannie, A’ll tine ma feet awthegither.
If I don’t proceed carefully, I’ll lose my footing altogether.

**Back** also expresses the sense of ‘backwards’.

He lowpit back and forrit. Efter stacherin he fell back on a seck.
He jumped backwards and forwards. After staggering he fell backwards onto a sack.

**Belike** expresses the sense of ‘perhaps’, ‘probably’, ‘maybe’, ‘surely’, ‘as it were’ or ‘seemingly’.

It wis but the ither day, belike, and he wis young and fere.
It was just the other day, probably, and he was young and healthy.

**Brawly** expresses the sense of ‘very well’, ‘thoroughly’, ‘excellently’ or ‘fairly’.

A kent him brawly. He kent whit it wis fou brawly.
I knew him very well. He knew very well what it was.

Thay’re baith brawly ill, sae faur as A think.
They’re both very ill, as far as I’m concerned.

The cluds wis brawly close tae the muin.
The clouds were fairly close to the moon.
But expresses the sense of ‘merely’.

The puir thing is but a feckless body. The quean wis but aichteen year auld.
The poor thing is but a weak person. The lass was only eighteen years old.

By expresses the sense of ‘past’.

She gaed by 'ithoot speakin. Coud ye lay that by for me?
She went past without speaking. Could you reserve that for me?

By-ordinar expresses the sense of ‘extraordinarily’ or ‘unusually’

Deed, Ay! It is a maist by-ordinar bonnie nicht.
Yes, indeed! It is a most extraordinarily beautiful night.

Clean expresses the sense of ‘quite’, ‘absolutely’ or ‘completely’.

He’s clean daft. A’m clean duin.
He’s quite mad. I’m quite exhausted.

Det and drink haes dri ven him clean wuid.
Debt and drink have driven him absolutely mad.

Deed expresses the sense of ‘indeed’.

Deed, ay! It wisna that wey ava. Deed No! A wadna leuk at the like o thon.
Yes, indeed! It wasn’t like that at all. Indeed not! I wouldn’t look at the like of that.

Eneuch expresses the sense of ‘enough’.

That’s guid eneuch. Ye’v deaved wir lugs mair nor eneuch.
That’s good enough. You’ve wearied our ears more than enough.

The phrase like eneuch expresses the sense of ‘likely’ or ‘possible’.

Like eneuch A’ll be thare. It’s like eneuch that he’ll be fautit for that
I shall very likely be there. It’s most likely that he’ll be blamed for that.

It’ll like eneuch be dreich wather the morn.
It will most likely be dreary weather tomorrow.

Bein steekit up here, ma freends is like eneuch tae forget me.
Because of my being imprisoned here, my friends are likely to forget me.
Ense expresses the sense of 'else' or 'otherwise'.

Ye’d better get in ablo; ense ye’ll be dreepin wat.
You’d better get underneath; otherwise you’ll get soaking wet.

It’s aither hunger or ense a burst in that hoose.
It’s either a feast or (else) a famine in that house.

Fine expresses the sense of ‘very well’, ‘perfectly well’, ‘nicely’ or ‘very much’.

A ken him fine. A fine mind o’t. He can dae't fine.
I know him well. I remember it very well. He can do it easily.

He wis fine pleased tae see him. His breeks wis fine and ticht.
He was very pleased to see him. His trousers were nice and tight.

A wad like fine tae say ane or twa things.
I would very much like to say one or two things.

Fair expresses the sense of ‘completely’, ‘absolutely’, ‘quite’ or ‘simply’.

A wis fair dumfoondert. He’s fair clean fou the nicht.
I was quite dumbstruck. He’s quite drunk tonight.

The toun wis fair asteer, wi the weans rinnin doun the street.
The town was quite astir, with the children running down the street.

Forby expresses the sense of ‘besides’, ‘in addition’, ‘as well’ or ‘what is more’.

Ay, and forby, it was real threidbare aneath the table.
Yes, and besides, it was really threadbare under the table.

He haes a hoose and a caur, and siller forby.
He has a house and a car, and money as well.

Forby also expresses the sense of ‘unusually’, ‘extraordinarily’ or ‘exceptionally’ in South–west Central and Ulster varieties.

He wis kent as a forby richtous man.
He was known as an unusually righteous man.

She’s a forby thrifty, sensible winch.
She’s an exceptionally industrious, sensible wench.
*Forrit* expresses the sense of ‘forward(s)’, ‘ahead’ or ‘on(ward)’.

Whit for are ye no gettin forrit wi the sowans? Jock cam forrit for tae tak the aith. Why are you not getting on with the porridge? Jock came forward to take the oath.

*In* expresses the sense of a gathering, meeting, or the like ‘being assembled’, ‘going on’ or being ‘in session’. *Oot* then expresses the sense of ‘finished’ or ‘adjourned’.

Dae ye ken gin the schuil’s in? Lay intae yer darg. Do you know if school’s assembled? Commence your work.

Ye war sair fair wabbit that ye sleepit in. You were so tired that you overslept.

*Juist* expresses the sense of ‘really’, ‘quite’, ‘absolutely’ or ‘simply’.

A'll juist say ye’re no comin, than. Ay! Juist that. I’ll only say you’re not coming, then. Yes! Quite so.

A’m juist kind o middlin throu. The bairns is juist the trauchle o ma life. I’m just kind of muddling through. The children are truly the drudge of my life.

Gie him juist eneuch raip tae hing hissel. A’v juist new haed ma denner. Give him just enough rope to hang himself. I’ve just had my dinner.

*Like* expresses the sense of ‘so to speak’ or ‘as it were’ and ‘likely’, ‘probably’ or ‘as if about to’.

He aye spak grummly-like efter he ris frae his bed. He always spoke in a rather grumbling manner after he got out of bed.

A’m no verra weel, like, the day. Tak aff whit A’ll like be awin ye. I’m not very well, as it were, today. Take off what I owe you, as it were.

Thare wis heaps, like. We’ll ken, verra like, in the coorse o a ouk. There was a lot, as it were. We’ll know, very likely, in the course of a week.

*Mebbe* expresses the sense of ‘perhaps’ or ‘possibly’.

Mebbe ay, mebbe na. Ye’re mebbe juist as weel no tae meddle wi it. Perhaps yes, perhaps no. You are perhaps better off not meddling with it.

It’s mebbe no a flech. It’s mebbe a hornie-gollach. Perhaps it’s not a flea. Perhaps it’s an earwig.
*Muckle* expresses the sense of ‘to a great degree or extent’, ‘much’ or ‘greatly’.

She wis muckle thocht o in the clachan.
She was very well thought of in the hamlet.

A shoud be muckle obleeged tae ye for giein us a haund.
I should be much obliged to you for helping me.

The thocht o trustin ye muckle gars me erch.
The idea of trusting you much causes me to hesitate.

He wis muckle pleased tae see her. Ye hae pitten inower muckle saut.
He was very pleased to see her. You have put in too much salt.

*Naither* expresses the sense of ‘not one or the other’.

Here A am wi naither man nor bairn. Lang syne, news travelt naither fest nor faur.
Here I am with neither man nor child. Long ago, news travelled neither fast or far.

*Near* or *naur* expresses the sense of ‘nearly’ or ‘almost’.

A’m gey and near the end o ma towe. A naurhaund cowpit.
I’m very nearly at the end of my tether. I nearly collapsed.

The wee droukit speugie wis near deid wi cauld.
The little soaked sparrow was almost dead from cold.

The watter rins near three mile afore it wins tae the sea.
The river runs nearly three miles before it reaches the sea.

It’s naur aboot a towmond syne we last saw ilk ither.
It’s almost twelve months since we last saw each other.

*Ney* expresses the sense of ‘nigh’, ‘nearly’ or ‘almost’.

The skreich o day wis drawin ney. The orra loun wis weel ney taibitless wi scunner.
The peep of day was getting nearer. The odd-job boy was almost numb with disgust.

*On* is used idiomatically with various verbs.

A winna lat on that A ken aboot it. Dinna mak on ye can write.
I won’t divulge that I know about it. Don’t pretend that you can write.

He wis sair pit on. He wis a pitten-on kin o a body.
He was extremely ill. He was a kind of stuck-up person.
A jaloused thay wis takkin me on.
I suspected that they were pulling my leg.

Peyin the auld and takkin on the new.
Paying the old and getting the new on credit.

_Oot_ expresses the sense of ‘extracting something out of’.

Can ye redd oot whit ye war daein in the wids?
Can you explain what you were doing in the woods?

Jurnalists speirs oot the wittins thay’re efter.
Journalists enquire after the information that they seek.

He cam oot wi a frichtfu skelloch.  Dinna cast oot wi yer wee brither.
He uttered a frightful scream.      Don’t quarrel with your little brother.

_Ower_ expresses the sense of ‘over’, ‘overmuch’ or ‘excessively’.

Whan ye’re auld it’s haurd tae faw ower.    Dae A hae tae threap ower ye aw the time?
When you’re old it’s hard to fall asleep.     Do I have to insist all the time?

A coudna come ower siclike wirds afore a leddy.
I couldn’t repeat such words in front of a lady.

Ye hae comed ower suin.       That lassie is ower wee.
You’ve come too early.         That girl is too small.

_Sae_ expresses the sense of ‘so’, much as in Standard English.

Ye that’s sae guid yoursel, sae peeous and sae haly.
You who are so good yourself, so pious and so holy.

Oor rucks o corn is baith awa, and sae’s the timmer brig.
Our ricks of corn are both gone, and so is the timber bridge.

Dinna eat sae muckle breid afore yer tea.
Don’t eat so much bread before dinner.

We gaed hame sae as tae keuk the denner.  The fish wis sae lang as ma airm.
We went home in order to cook lunch.          The fish was as long as my arm.
Tae or til imply the sense of ‘direction towards’, ‘closeness’ or ‘contact’.

Tak the door tae ahint ye whan ye gang oot. He’s no tae lippen til.  
Close the door behind you when you leave. He’s not to be trusted.

The hert that’s leal will aye lie tae.  
The loyal hert will always be well disposed.

Til is used with verbs implying ‘setting to work’ or ‘getting into action’.

She stertit til mak preparations for the waddin.  
She started to prepare for the wedding.

Than ye faw til and lay aff aboot the wey that ye’re treat.  
Then you get started and hold forth about the way that you are treated.

That expresses the sense of ‘so’, ‘to such a degree’, ‘to that extent’ or ‘very’.

The skaith ye’v met wi’s no that smaw.  
The harm you’ve met with isn’t that small.

It wis that a cauld mornin A juist keepit ma bed.  
It was such a cold morning that I just stayed in bed.

A wis that feart A thocht A wadna find ma wey back.  
I was so scared I thought I wouldn’t find my way back.

Tho expresses the sense of ‘then’, ‘indeed’, ‘all the same’, ‘for all that’ or ‘still’.

Wis it, tho? He cam in a wee whilie, tho.  
Was it, indeed? He came after a little while, however.

Throu expresses the extent or direction of a journey from starting point to destination.

The faimily wis gaun throu tae Aiberdeen for seiven days.  
The family was going to Aberdeen for seven days.

Throu also expresses the sense of ‘finished’, ‘at or near one’s end’ or ‘done for’.

Is the kirk throu? His time wis throu.  
Is the church (service) finished? His time was over.

A’m no throu yet. A’m no throu aither.  
I haven’t finished yet. I’m not finished either.
*Up* is used after various verbs.

- Gang and cleek up wi thae childer. Dinna fash yersel. It'll suin cast up.
- Go and hook up with those children. Don’t trouble yourself. It will soon turn up.

*Weel* expresses the sense of ‘very’, ‘quite’ or ‘much’.

- He's verra weel kent and weel wirthy o sicna office. He's very well known and extremely worthy of such an office.
- Gin ye tak that wey, it'll be weel waur. If you take that path, it'll be much worse.

The concept of ‘very’, ‘remarkably’, ‘thoroughly’ can be expressed using a number of adverbs.

Note *awfu* ([ˈɑːfu], ˈɔfu], may also be variously realised as [ˈɑːfeə, ˈɔfeə, ˈɑːfeː, ˈɔfeɪ] and in Northern varieties [(j)aːfa].

- He wis taen awa awfu suddent. Ma horse is fell weel comed in nou. He was taken from us very suddenly. My horse is very well trained now.
- She follaed him fast and fell. That laddie wis brocht up richt fell. She followed him fast and furiously. That boy was raised really harshly.

- The bairn sat thare fou snug and said naething. The child sat there very snugly and said nothing.
- A'll hae tae guide ye ower the burn. It rins fou fast. I'll have to guide you across the stream. It is very fast-flowing.

- A’m gey (an) thrang the nou. That wis a gey queer quaisten he speirt. I’m very busy just now. That was a rather strange question he asked.

- He haed taen a gey early brakfast that mornin. He had taken a very early breakfast that morning.
- He'll be real wuid at me for no waukenin him. He'll be extremely mad at me for not waking him.
- He's real doutfu, but he'll juist hae tae howp for the best. He’s really doubtful, but he’ll just have to hope for the best.
- He was aye real yare and acteeve. He was always really eager and active.
Thae’s real fine neeps that’s been howkit the day.
Those are very fine turnips that have been dug up today.

She was a richt hackit auld besom.            She wis telt richt oot.
She was a very ugly old hussy.              She was told straight out.

He cawed the spree richt frank and free.
He whipped up the quarrel with brazen abandon.

He gaed guddlin and richt naur catcht a troot.
He went tickling fish and very nearly caught a trout.

That’s a richt auld ane.   He’s no sair pleased wi it.
That’s a very old one.     He’s not greatly pleased about it.

Thae’s terrible fine nowt ye coft at the mairt.
Those are exceedingly fine cattle that you bought at market.

She’s unco queer.      Her craig wis lang and unco smaw.
She’s very eccentric.  Her neck was long and very thin.

We sit bousin at the nappie, gettin fou and unco happy.
We sit swilling at the strong ale, getting drunk and very happy.

The unco guid haes sworn tae bainish drinkin.
The sanctimoniously pious have sworn to banish drinking.

A’m no verra weel like, the day.
I’m not very well, as it were, today.

15 Some adverbial expressions are:

A heap [ɑ hip, –hep], meaning ‘a great deal’, ‘very much’ or ‘a lot’.

She felt an awfu heap better efter she haed taen the taiblets.
She felt an awful lot better after she had taken the tablets.

He cam a heap aboot Ainster.
He often came to Anstruther.

A maiter o [ə ‘metər ə], meaning ‘as much as’

He gaed awa a maiter o twinty poond in ma det.
He departed as much as twenty pounds in my debt.
A sicht [ə sɪçt], [ə sɛiçt] in Southern Scots, referring to ‘a number’, ‘quantity’ or ‘amount’.

A wee sicht whisky. She’s a hantle sicht better.
A little drop of whisky. She’s much better.

The hoose’s no feenisht by a guid sicht yet.
The house isn’t finished by a long chalk yet.

A thocht [ə θoxt], [-θʌoxt] in Southern Scots, [-toxt] in Insular varieties, referring to an ‘amount’, the diminutive a thochtie referring to a very small amount of a substance, time or distance.

The wee thocht o siller that A hae scrapit thegither.
The small amount of money I have scraped together.

That’s a thocht ower lang. The hird wis at the byre a thochtie afore us.
That’s a little too long. The shepherd was at the cow shed just before us.

An aw meaning ‘also’, ‘as well’ or ‘too’.

The feel o the baurley will refresh ma saul and aw.
The smell of the barley will refresh my soul as well.

He brocht his sin and aw. Big an strang and aw as she is.
He brought his son too. Big and strong as she is too.

To be at ane mair (wi) or at ane mae (wi) means to be at breaking point, at the end of one’s tether, or at the point of death.

He raither leuks as he wis at ane mae wi’t.
He rather looks as if he is at the end of his tether with it.

Aff-luif, [af lɔf, -lyf] in peripheral varieties, [-lɛf, -lef] in Central and some Ulster varieties, [-lɪf] in South-west Central, some Ulster and Northern varieties, and Northern [-lɪv], means ‘without delay’, ‘at once’, ‘on the spur of the moment’ or ‘by heart’.

A'll juist gie ye the thick o the story clean aff-luif.
I’ll just give you the gist of the story straight off the cuff.

A canna tell aff-luif whit’s gane wrang wi fowk ava.
I can’t tell off-hand what has gone wrong with people at all.
Ance eerant [ɪnsˈiːrənt, ˈiːrən(d), ensˈerənt, insˈiːrənt] is used with verbs of motion implying 'for the single purpose mentioned'.

She gaed hersel, ance errant, for tae see yer mither.  
She went herself, for that alone, in order to see your mother.

Awa, [əˈwaː, əˈwɔː] in Central and eastern and central Ulster varieties, [əˈweː] in Southern and some South and West Central Scots varieties, [əˈwaː] in west Ulster and Northern varieties, occurs in a number of expressions.

Margit, come awa tae your bed nou.  
Margaret, come on to bed now.  
He’s awa tae skin and bane.  
He’s awa aff.  
He’s reduced to a skeleton.  
He’s leaving.

She came awa ben, and syne gaed but.  
She came on into the inner room, then went into the outer room.

Hereawa, thereawa, haud awa hame.  
Hither, tither, make for home.  
She liftit the spleuchan and wis awa wi’t.  
She picked up the purse and was off with it.

A'll awa by.  
A'm awa for til howk tatties.  
Gang awa hame.  
I’m going home.  
I’m off in order to dig for potatoes.  
Go along home.

Dinna ettle for tae slip awa.  
He wis awa frae the tattie howkin.  
It’s thritty year awa.  
Don’t try to leave quietly.  
He was unable to dig for potatoes.  
It’s thirty years ago.

Ava [əˈvaː, əˈvɔː], [əˈvaː] in Northern varieties, expresses the sense of 'at all'.

Lang and smaw, guid for naething ava.  
Long and thin, good for nothing at all.  
That’s nae guid ava.  
That’s no good at all.

By wi (it) refers to a person or undertaking that is over and done with or finished.

She juist gied a sab and wis by wi it.  
She just gave a sob and died.

Even it and the contracted form e’en’t [iːnt, eːnt] are used as an emphatic affirmation in the sense of ‘indeed’.

That’s no whit I bade ye dae! It’s e’en’t!  
That’s not what I asked you to do! It is indeed!

A will e’en’t sae, juist sae suin as A throw on ma duds.  
I will indeed do so, just as soon as I put my clothes on.
Even expresses the sense of ‘in an even, steady manner or direction’, usually occurring in phrases such as even doun, even forrit, even on, even oot, even ower, even up and even throu meaning ‘straight forward’, ‘continuously, without ceasing, straight on, head on’, ‘unreservedly, without restraint’, ‘level, flat, smooth’, ‘straight up’ and ‘straight through’.

Efter the knowe, haud even forrit t il the burn.
After the knoll, keep going straight forward to the stream.

Gang even on till ye come tae three staps.
Continue straight on until you come to three steps.

The wean did nocht but greet and blirt even on.
The baby did nothing but continuously cry and whimper.

She juist gabbert even on.       Juist tell me even oot, and hae duin wi’t.
She simply jabbered incessantly. Just tell me straight out, and be done with it.

The greenswaird howe and seggy den is straikit even ower.
The greensward hollow and sedged valley are spread level.

The pyot flew even up intil the lift.       Juist gang even throu tae the spence
The magpie flew straight up into the sky.    Just go straight through to the parlour.

Even nou [ˈiːvən–] has the contracted form e’en nou [i(n)’nu].

Your pride is aiblins a thochtie stobbit even nou.
Perhaps your pride is a little wounded at the moment.

A wad gang furth e’en nou and gaither whit A can.
I would go forth immediately and gather what I can.

Faur back means ‘long ago’, and faur ben ‘intimate’, ‘friendly’ or ‘in great favour (with)’.

Ae time faur back A kent him.     Ye’v been ower faur ben wi us for that.
At one time long ago I knew him.    You’ve been too intimate with us for that.

For aw that means ‘notwithstanding’ or ‘nevertheless’. It is ometimes contracted to [fri’dat] or [fraːt].

For aw that, we ken ye’re a mensefu chield.    We catcht twa–three fish for aw that.
Nevertheless, we know you are a sensible fellow. We caught a few fish nevertheless.
**Hale on** [hel ɔn, -on], [hjɛl-] in Southern Scots and [hiːl] in Insular varieties, means ‘steadily’ or ‘without pause’.

The hens haes been layin hale on the feck o the winter.
The hens have been laying steadily for most of the winter.

**Housomeiver** ['huːsəmˈɪvə] means ‘notwithstanding’, ‘nevertheless’ or ‘however’.

Housomeiver, it has turnt oot for the warst for me this time.
However, it has turned out for the worst for me this time.

**Kind o** [kain(d) o] and the contracted form **kin o** [kɪn a] mean ‘somewhat’, ‘rather’, ‘as it were’, ‘after a fashion’, ‘to some degree’ and ‘by way of’.

He wis a kind o queer craitur. He was a somewhat eccentric creature.
She wis kind o gaun awa tae tak a man.
She was sort of going away to find a husband.

Her faither wis kind o ill aboot it. Her father was rather unhappy about it.
Her mither kind o kent o it and aw. Her mother knew something of it too.

A wis kin o (weys) feart like.
I was somewhat afraid.

**Lat abee** [lat əˈbiː], and **lat be** mean to ‘leave undisturbed’, ‘to let alone’ or ‘let be’.

But tho the wey be sair, I'll lat the drink abee.
But though the way is difficult, I'll leave the drink alone.

He's haurdly fit tae be a birlie man, lat be a bailie.
He's hardly fit to be an arbiter, let alone a magistrate.

It's oor duty tae misken and lat be thir maiters.
It's our duty to ignore and leave those matters be.

**Lood oot** [lud ut] means speaking ‘aloud’ or ‘in a loud voice’, as opposed to speaking **laich doun**, meaning ‘in a low voice’ or ‘under one's breath’.

Thay wis aw speakin lood oot like thay wis deaved.
They were all speaking loudly as if they were deafened.

The wee lassie read the beuk lood oot. She whispers laich doun til hersel.
The little girl read the book aloud. She whispers quietly to herself.
Mair by taiken [ˈtekən], also [ˈtjakən] in Mid Northern varieties, means ‘especially’, ‘in particular’, ‘moreover’, ‘besides’, ‘what is more’ and ‘in addition’.

Dinna speak ill o the deid or, mair by taiken, o ane’s neebours.  
Don’t speak ill of the dead or, moreover, of one’s neighbours.

Mony time, mony’s the time [−təim] and unstressed [−tɪm], means ‘many times’ or ‘often’.

This mony a day he haes been late for his darg.  
For many a day now, he has arrived at work late.

A hiv eaten thare that mony time A canna thole it ony mair.  
I’ve eaten there that often that I can’t bear it any more.

He haed been thare mony time and likit the place odious weel.  
He had been there many a time and was terribly fond of the place.

Onywey means ‘anyhow’ or ‘in any way’.

It’s wirth twa pund, onywey.  
The tinklers wis gaun awwey and onywey.

It’s worth two pounds, at any rate.  
The tinkers were going all over the place.

A can come doun aff it ony wey A like.  
I can come down off it any way I like.

Still and on means ‘yet’, ‘nevertheless’, ‘notwithstanding’ and ‘all the same’.

Still and on, he kent the Greek and Laitin.  
Nevertheless, he knew Greek and Latin.

Lang and lendth, at lenth [−lɛnθ], [−lænθ] in Southern Scots, [−lɛnt] in Insular varieties, means ‘at last’ or ‘in the end’.

At lenth the bairn’s wun ower.  
At last the baby has fallen asleep.

At lang and lenth A’v thocht awwee, and syne hae written a merry sang.  
At last I’ve thought a little, and since have written a merry song.

The lendth o means ‘as far as’ a certain distance.

The rinawa bairns gat the lendth o the burn.  
The runaway children got as far as the stream.
The *nou* meaning ‘just now’, ‘at present’, ‘at the moment’ or ‘just a moment ago’.

Can ye gie’s a haund wi this? Naw! No the nou. He cam in juist the nou.  
Can you help me with this? No! Not just now. He came in a moment ago.

There’s no muckle faut tae find wi the wather the nou.  
There’s not much fault to find with the weather at the moment.

*Nous and thans* means ‘now and then’, ‘now and again’ or ‘from time to time’.

The meenister caws in nous and thans.  
The minister calls in from time to time.

*Throuither* means ‘a state of muddle’, ‘confusion’ or ‘disorder’.

Ye hae pitten me that throuither A dinna ken whit A’m daein.  
Ye have got me so confused I don’t know what I’m doing.

The hale hoose wis throuither.  
The whole house was disorderly.

16 Negative adverbs.

Adjectives, verbs and adverb are negated by *no* [noː] or *nae* [neː] in Northern varieties. *No* or *nae* often combine with the comparatives *sae* and *that*.

*It’s no aft sae wairm.*  
*Weemin are no sae blate nou.*

*It’s rarely so warm.*  
*Women aren’t so shy now.*

*There is something no that cannie aboot thon horse.*  
*There is something not quite safe about that horse.*

*She’s no sae gyte as ye think.*  
*He’s no that ill.*  
*He’d been richt nae weel.*

*She’s not as mad as you think.*  
*He’s not that ill.*  
*He had been very unwell.*

*We want kail, nae tattie soup.*  
*We arena fou.*  
*We’re nae that fou.*

*We want cabbage, not potato soup.*  
*We aren’t drunk.*  
*We’re not that drunk.*

The adverb *na* [nɑː], [naː] in Northern and also [niː] in Insular varieties, more colloquially *naw* [nɑː; nɔː], or *nae* [ne], meaning ‘no’ is often used in negative replies to indicate denial, disagreement, refusal or contradiction. It is often doubled or followed by an interjection (p. 241), word or phrase for emphasis.

*Na, na, it wisna you A wis talkin tae.*  
*Na, feth, sup thae parritch up.*

*No, no, it wasn’t you I was talking to.*  
*No, faith, sip up that porridge.*
Na, my leddy, it's no that. Naw, A dinna ken whaur yer glesses is.
No, madam, it's not that. No, I don't know where your glasses are.

Nae, nae, A'm no gaun tae pey that. No, no, I'm not going to pay that.

In colloquial speech the above became conflated with an unstressed form of *nou* used at the end of a statement when asking questions or making an earnest request, in the sense of 'now then'.

Whit kin o a dug wad ye caw that, nae? What sort of a dog would you call that, now then?
Ye'll be thrang pittin in the seed, nae? She will hae been writin raigular, na? You'll be busy planting the seed, now then? She has been writing regularly, now then?

*Nane* [nen], in Northern varieties [nin], is used emphatically to mean 'not at all', 'in no way' or 'by no means'.

He wis nane surpreesed tae see her. A'm nane sae feart as ye wad trowe. He was not at all surprised to see her. I'm in no wise as scared as you would think.

She wis nane informed regairdin the maiter. She was by no means informed regarding the matter.

*Niver* ['nɪvər, 'nɛvər], and the contracted form *ne'er* [ner], also [nur] in North Northern varieties, means 'at no time' or 'not at all'.

A niver heard that ye war set at wi a pig. Niver a beck at the mistress. I hadn't heard that you were attacked by a pig. Never a curtsey to the mistress.

Double negatives are very common.

No nae ither thing. She haedna nane naither. Nothing else. She hadn't any either.
A niver eats nae beef. A haena seen her naegate. I never eat beef. I haven't seen her anywhere.
A dinna care aboot nane o't. He's no nae waur. I don't care for any of it. He's no worse.
A dinna tak nae mair nor a gless. The're no nae time at nicht. I don't take more than a glass. There's no time at night.
Ye canna lippen on him wi naething. The horns niver gets nae size.
You can’t trust him in any respect. The horns never grow to any size.

A’m no gaun tae gie ye naething. The’re nae sic a thing nae place nou.
I’m not going to give you anything. There’s no such thing anywhere now.

Thare niver wis naething like it. A niver haurd it get naething else.
There never was anything like it. I have never heard it called anything else.

17 Comparison of adverbs.

Adverbs form their comparative and superlative in the same way as adjectives. See under adjective comparisons (p. 116).
Prepositions

Prepositions are words that are used before pronouns, nouns or their equivalents to express position, movement or circumstance relative to or affecting them.

Prepositions are frequently omitted at the end of relative clauses.

The mercat staund (that) A bocht it (frae).
The market stall from which I bought it.

At the wall’s a raip (that) ye can pou the bucket back up (wi).
At the well is a rope with which you can pull the pail back up.

A haena been til a dance yet that A haena gotten hame (frae) the sel–same nicht.
I haven’t been to a dance yet from which I haven’t got home the same night.

1 Prepositions of position and movement.

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Note that *again* [əˈɡɛn, əˈɡɛn] may also take the form *agin* [əˈɡɪn], that *ootwith* ['ʊtˈwɪθ] may often take the form *ootwi* ['ʊtˈwɪ], that *wi* [wɪ, wi, we] may be unstressed [wa], that *upon* may be contracted to *upo* ['aʊpəʊ], that *within* [wɪˈθɪn] is often contracted to *'ithin* [ɪˈθɪn, əˈθɪn], and that *withoot* [wɪˈθʊt] is often contracted to *'ithoot* [ɪˈθʊt, əˈθʊt] or *wioot* [wɪˈʊt].
Particular syntax and idiom are connected to many prepositions.

**Ablo** expresses the sense of ‘under’ or ‘below’ and is often preceded by **in**.

The burn wis dingin ablo the brig.
The stream was flowing rapidly under the bridge.

He pit ane o his haunds in ablo the tails o his coat.
He put one of his hands under the tails of his coat.

**Aboot** expresses the sense of ‘on every side of’, ‘round’, ‘all over’, ‘here and there’ or ‘being near to’ a place or person.

The tither’s no bad, but thay’re aboot it.
The other’s not bad, but they’re about the same.

She bides aboot Cowlraine.       He bade oot aboot Brochty.
She lives near Coleraine.         He resided near Broughty Ferry.

Tak yer auld plaid aboot ye.     He’s no gaein muckle oot aboot yet.
Wrap your old plaid around you.  He’s not out and about much yet.

Come in aboot the hoose.         He gaed aboot the pairk.
Come into the house.             He went around the field.

**Abuin** expresses the sense of ‘above’, ‘over’ or ‘higher than’.

He aye held his neb abuin the watter. You shoudna gar him lauch abuin his braith.
He always held his nose above the water. You shouldn't make him laugh out loud.

**Aff** generally expresses the sense of ‘off’, ‘away’, ‘at a distance’ or ‘to a distance’.

A daursay he wad gar thaim keep haunds aff me.
I daresay he would make them keep their hands off me.

Tak a few feet aff the lenth o’t.    She’s no faur aff the toun yet.
Take a few feet off the length of it. She’s not far away from the town now.

He juist fell asleep and slippit aff.
He just fell asleep and died.
Aff often expresses the source of something and in some cases can be used in a manner equivalent to by and wi, which introduce the agent in a passive sentence.

The lad wisna wantin beaten aff that man. He wis fashin hissel aff you.
The boy didn’t deserve to be beaten by that man. He was worrying because of you.

Aff is often used in the sense of ‘from’.

He teuk the coat aff me. A gat the breid aff ma mither. A teuk it aff him.
He took my coat from me. I got the bread from my mother. I took it from him.

She poued a puckle berries frae aff the buss.
She plucked a few berries from the bush.

Aff o is used in the sense of ‘(away) from’.

Tak thon joug aff o the tap bink. This yill isna drinkable; it’s juist aff o the baurm.
Take that jug off the top shelf. This ale isn’t drinkable; it’s just finished fermenting.

Keep aff o kittle braes and kittle roads. A bit collop aff o the sou.
Keep off troublesome slopes and troublesome paths. A small cut from the pig.

Afore expresses the sense of ‘before’, ‘in front of’, ‘in advance of’ or ‘in or into the presence of’.

He stuid afore the door. He rade thirty mile afore me.
He stood in front of the door. He rode thirty miles in front of me.

Peter teuk the smith afore the shirra.
Peter brought the smith before the sherrif.

Again or agin express the sense of ‘against’.

The cycle’s agin the waw. She fell agin the bink.
The bicycle is against the wall. She fell against the bench.

His caur cam agin mines. At lang and last the law gaed agin him.
His car collided with mine. At long last the law acted against him.

Alang expresses the sense of ‘along’.

The troot soumed alang the shallaes.
The trout swam along the shallows.
*Amang* often expresses the sense of ‘amid’, ‘amidst’ or ‘in’ with regard to place or a composite substance otherwise regarded as a whole.

He wrocht ootby amang the rain.  
He worked outside in the rain.

Ower the muir amang the heather.  
Over the moor in the heather.

The bairns wis oot amang the snaw.  
The children were out in the snow.

She tint her gowd ring amang the saund.  
She lost her gold ring in the sand.

*Aneath* expresses the sense of ‘under’, ‘below’ or ‘beneath’.

The dug’s liggin aneath the buird.  
The dog’s lying under the table.

Keek aneath the kail-pat’s lid.  
Peep under the soup pot’s lid.

*Anent* expresses the sense of ‘fronting’, ‘over against’ or ‘opposite to’.

He bides anent the auld kirk.  
He lives opposite the old church.

He’s appearin anent the juidge the morn.  
He’s appearing before the judge tomorrow.

A rin anent her doun the brae.  
I ran alongside her down the slope.

He turnt anent her.  
He turned to face her.

*Aside* expresses the sense of ‘at, on, or to the side of’, ‘alongside of’, ‘close to’ or ‘in the neighbourhood of’.

The birks aside the burn.  
The birches beside the stream.

He left him staundin doun aside the byre.  
He left him standing down near the cow shed.

*At* expresses the sense of ‘by’ or ‘within reach of’.

He stuid at the yett.  
He stood by the gate.

She wis at him.  
She was by him.

In South–west Central and Mid Northern varieties, *at the* and *o the* may be contracted to *ee e* [i e] or simply *ee* [iː] in colloquial speech.

Ee back ee dyke.  
At the back of the stone wall.

Ee back end ee year  
At the end of the year.

*At* is often used where Standard English may use a different preposition.

Angry at him.  
Angry with him.

Whit are ye at?  
What do you mean?

A canna come at a name for’t.  
I can’t think of a name for it.
She lat at him 'ithoot lissins. Ye can tak the grue at her. 
She attacked him without respite. You may become disgusted with her.

That drunken man wantit tae lay at me. A need tae speir at ye hou ye war late. 
That drunk man wanted to lay into me. I must ask you why you were late.

Thay war aye at me anent it. We are haen a gemm at the rummy. 
They were always on at me about it. We are having a game of rummy.

The train cam in aboot sax at e'en. 
The train arrived at approximately six in the evening.

A niver mint at gaun agin him. 
I never intended to go against him.

Thay'll ettle at fortuin and freedom in the new launds faur awa. 
They'll strive for fortune and freedom in the new lands far away.

_Athort_ expresses the sense of ‘across’, ‘across in various directions’, ‘all over’ or ‘about’.

The touel athort his thees is aw crumpelt up. 
The towel across his thighs is all crumpled.

Sae mony travelers gaun back and forrit athort the kintra. 
So many travellers going back and forth the country.

Dinna lea’ yer gear liggin athort the hoose. 
Don’t leave your belongings lying all over the house.

_Atween_ and _atweesh_ express the sense of ‘between’.

Thare’s nae luve tint atween thae twa. He stuid atweesh the door and the winnock. 
There’s no love lost between those two. He stood between the door and the window.

Hou are ye keepin? Oh, juist atweesh and atween. 
How are you doing? Oh, just so so.

_Awa_ is often used as a preposition where Standard English would use a different one.

He wun awa hame. The boat wis awa wi’t. 
He slipped off home. The boat was done for.

The auld man wis awa wi’t. Weel, that’s awa wi’t. 
The old man was out of his senses/ill/dead. Well, that’s it lost/done for.
A’m awa doun the toun for a cairy-oot. Onybody want a poke o chips? I’m going to town for a take-away. Does anyone want a bag of chips?

*Ayont* expresses the sense of ‘on the farther side of’ or ‘beyond any limit’.

He wrocht ayont the brae. He drank till he wis donnert and daised ayont ony uiss.
He worked beyond the hill. He drank until he was stupefied and incapable.

*Back* expresses the senses of ‘towards the back’ and ‘at a loss’.

Back the close.
In the entrance, back from the street.

Come and gie’s a haund, for A’m clean at a back.
Come and help me, for I’m completely at a loss.

*Ben* indicates movement into the inner or best room or towards or nearer the speaker or a given point.

Gang ben the hoose. Come ben the hoose.
Go into the inner room. Come in(to) the house.

*But* indicates movement out or away from the speaker or spectator or in the sense of ‘across’ or ‘along’.

It’s but the hoose. Thay cam hodgin but the fluir.
It’s in the outer room (kitchen). They came hobbling across the floor.

*By* expresses the sense of ‘by’ or ‘beside’.

He wis by hissel. By the glesses.
He was beside himself. Beside the glasses.

*Doun* is not usually in conjunction with ‘to’ as in Standard English ‘down to’.

A’m gaun doun the shaps. Doun the hoose. Doun the watter.
I’m going down to the shops. In the best room. Down (along) the river.

*Efter* generally expresses the sense of ‘behind’ or ‘in the rear’.

He ran efter the dug. We gaed efter him up the brae.
He ran after the dog. We went after him up the slope.
Efter also expresses the sense of ‘following the direction of’.

He fell efter the back doun the stair.
He fell backwards down the stairs.

She’d fawen doun efter the heid atween it and the waw.
She’d fallen down head first between it and the wall.

Endlang expresses the sense of ‘along’, ‘from end to end of’ or ‘across’.

Throu the yett and endlang the pad. She cam endlang the brig.
Through the gate and along the path. She came across the bridge.

Forenent or forenenst express the sense of ‘opposite (to), ‘in front of’, ‘over against’ or ‘facing’.

The meenister sat forenent me at the table. Whan A cam forenenst the gap.
The minister sat opposite me at the table. When I arrived in front of the gap.

Whan Bonaparte gaithert his airmy forenent the English coast.
When Bonaparte gathered his army facing the English coast.

He saw me howkin tatties forenent oor back-shap windae.
He saw me digging potatoes opposite our rear workshop window.

Frae, expressing the sense of ‘from’, is a literary form, fae [fe:] being common in speech, except in South–west Central Scots. In Southern Scots the pronunciation is thrae [θreː].

Hear, brither Scots frae Maidenkirk tae John o Groats.
Hear, fellow Scots from Maiden Kirk to John o’ Groats.

Whaur d’ye come frae? He’s awa frae his wark.
Where do you come from? He’s off sick.

In used with verbs of motion expresses the sense of ‘into’.
In colloquial speech in is often contracted to i’ before consonants.

The weans wis heavin the sweeties in pokes. Lay yer luif in mines, lass.
The children were heaving sweets into bags. Lay your palm in mine, girl.

She ran in the hoose. Wha pat that in your heid?
She ran into the house. Who put that into your head?
In used after verbs of motion may also express the sense of ‘along (a road)’ or ‘by way of’.

Did ye come in the Mearns’ Howe?
Did you come by way of the Mearns’ Howe?

Tak a drap wairm tea. That’ll help ye in the road again.
Have a drop of warm tea. That will help you along the road again.

In may also express a position ‘on’, ‘upon’ or ‘along’ some place or something ‘suspended on’.

He haed been killt in that hill the year afore.
He had been killed on that hill the year before.

It’s the pairt o honesty tae lat ye ken the road ye’re in.
It’s only fair to let you know what path you’re on.

She haed a bit ring hingin in a black ribbon.
She had a little ring hanging on a black ribbon.

In also occurs in a few phrases.

The maister gien thaim a ouk’s halidays in a bit.
The master gave them a week’s holidays from time to time.

A gat it in a praisent. He did it in a mistak.
I got it as a present. He did it by mistake.

In coorse she’s grand by the like o me.
Of course she’s fine compared with the likes of me.

The gorblin wis in o its nest. A winna gang in ower her door.
The fledgling was inside its nest. I won’t go inside her door.

In some varieties, in the may be contracted to ee e [i e] or simply ee [iː] in colloquial speech.

Ee e toun. Ee e mornin. Wrang ee heid. Ee gloamin. Ee mornin.
In the town. In the morning. Soft in the head. In the twilight. In the morning.

Ee muckle hoose. Twice ee day. Ee back ee dyke.
In the big house. Twice a (in the) day. At the back of the stone wall.
*Intae* and *intil* express the sense of ‘into’ and ‘in’ or ‘within’.
*Intae* is more commonly used in Southern and Central Scots than *intil*.

She wis a secretar intae Dundee.  
She was a secretary in Dundee.

Sit intae the table and help yoursel.  
Sit at the table and help yourself.

A’ll lea’ the ingle fire alowe tae bleize awa intae the mornin.  
I’ll leave the hearth alight to blaze away into the morning.

A niver pit a fit intil’.  
I never put a foot inside it.

Gang intil the caller air.  
Go out into the fresh air.

Sit intil the ingle.  
Draw nearer the fire.

She haes and ill tongue intil her heid.  
She has a malevolent tongue in her head.

Nothing would keep him in his room.  
Nothing would keep him in his room.

She didna want ither fowk tae hear, sae she said it intil hersel.  
She didn’t want other people to hear, so she whispered.

In colloquial speech *intae the* is often contracted to *ee*.

A haena been ee toun yet.  
I haven’t been into (the) town yet.

Pit it ee the byne.  
Put it into the washtub.

*Near* and *naur* express the sense of ‘near’, ‘close to’ or ‘beside’.

A puckle headstanes near us providit us wi leeteratur.  
A few headstones near us provided us with reading material.

Dinna come naur that ledder.  
Don’t come near that ladder.

A wis vext. A’d naebody naur us tae speak tae.  
I was vexed. I’d no one beside me to speak to.

*O* expresses ‘of’.

That wis the warst o it.  
That was the worst of it.

The best laid schames o mice and men.  
The best prepared plans of mice and men.

In some varieties, *o the* may be contracted to *ee e* [i e] or simply *ee* [iː] in colloquial speech.

Ee back ee dyke.  
At the back of the stone wall.

The heid ee toun.  
The highest part of town.
On expresses the sense of ‘on’.

Set yersel on the bink. He pit his bunnet on his heid.
Seat yourself on the bench. He put his bonnet on his head.

In South-west Central and Mid Northern varieties, on the may be contracted to ee e [i e] or simply ee [iː] in colloquial speech.

Thay wis rowin ee fluir. A skelp ee lug. Ee conter.
They were rolling on the floor. A slap on the ear. On the contrary.

He bides ee ither side o Crief. It fell oot his haund ee fluir.
He stays on the other side of Crief. It fell from his hand onto the floor.

On is generally used with verbs of ‘calling’, ‘crying’, ‘shouting’, ‘knocking’, where Standard English has ‘to’.

Teuk, teuk, teuk is the caw on the choukies.
Tuck, tuck, tuck is the call to the chickens.

Cry on Willie tae come ower. Shoot on him afore he gangs.
Call Willie to come over. Shout to him before he goes.

On is often used where Standard English uses a different preposition.

Hou lang maun A wait on thon train? Think on whaur she is.
How long must I wait for that train? Think about where she is.

Waitin on a bus. She’s sair on her shuin. She’s mairit on ma brither.
Waiting for a bus. She mistreats her shoes. She’s married to my brother.

A waitit an oor on him. Can ye no mak up on him?
I waited an hour for him. Can’t you overtake him?

Dinna mak on ye can write. Can ye no mind on thon chield?
Don’t pretend that you can write. Can’t you remember that fellow?

A wadna lippen on a politeecian. She wis fair on me efter A duntit her caur.
I wouldn’t trust a politician. She was fair to me after I hit her car.

Ma grandfaither gaed on a stick. He did it on himsel.
My grandfather walked with a stick. He did it on his own account.

He wis blind on a ee. Lief is me on thon braw lassie.
He was blind in one eye. I am fond of that beautiful girl.
Whaur’d ye faw on thon auld plaid? A happent tae faw on Hamish in the toun. 
Where did you discover that old plaid? I happened to bump into Hamish in town.

Ye winna can mak muckle on’t. Ye aye yoke on the prentice. 
You won’t be able to make much of it. You always start on the apprentice.

Mony lees is made on thon auld limmer. Many lies are told about that old hussy.

She left her mither on the care o a neebour. She left her mother in the care of a neighbour.

He cam ower his freend staundin on the street. He came across his friend standing in the street.

The grocer left a tuim baurel oot on the street. The grocer left a barrel out in the street.

Oot expresses the sense of ‘beyond’ or ‘outside of’. When used with verbs of motion, *oot* expresses the sense of ‘out of’ or ‘from’.

It is oot oor pouer tae dae ocht aboot it. It is beyond our power to do anything about it.

We cam oot the shap and gaed ower the brig. We came out of the shop and went across the bridge.

He teuk the thocht oot a beuk. He gaed oot the road. He took the idea from a book. He went along the road.

Dinna juist stand thare. Come oot the door. Don’t just stand there. Come in from the door.

He cam oot unner the bunnet o the caur. He came from under the bonnet of the car.

*Oot by* [ˈut bai] expresses the sense of ‘outside’ or ‘just beyond’.

Ablo the waws, oot by the toun o Montrose. Below the walls, outside the town of Montrose.

A wis gaun a lang vaige, oot by o ma faither’s knawledge. I was going on a long journey, without my father’s knowledge.
Oot o expresses the sense of ‘out of’, ‘from out’, ‘outside’ or ‘beyond’.

He haed danced till he wis oot o braith.
He had danced until he was out of breath.

Weel, gae and see yer grannie oot o the yett.
Well, go and accompany your grandmother from the gate.

The professor oot o Edinburgh can dae me nae guid.
The professor from Edinburgh can do me no good.

Oot on expresses the sense of ‘out of’ or ‘outside’. In colloquial speech, the unstressed form is oot’n [ˈutən].

Ye shoud shuirly get twa guid anes oot’n the fowerteen.
You surely ought to get two good ones out of the fourteen.

Aʹv gotten little guid ootʹn it. Yeʹre aye tryin tae mak an auld wumman ootʹn me.
Iʹve got little good out of it. Youʹre always trying to make an old woman of me.

Ootower expresses the sense of ‘outwards and over’, ‘over the top of’, ‘over to the other side of’ and ‘across’. The unstressed form [ətˈʌər] is sometimes written atour.

He wis seek and coudna win ootower the bed.
He was ill and couldn't manage to get out of bed.

Thay wad thraw thaim ootower the windae.
They would throw them out of the window.

Keek ootower the door yont the road. Heʹs airtin haurd ootower the braes o whin.
Peep outside the door along the road. Heʹs heading haurd across the slopes of gorse.

He bides ootower the mains ower by the heuch.
He lives beyond the home farm over the way from the quarry.

Ootwith [ˈut̪wiθ], often ootwi [ˈut̪wi], expresses the sense of ‘outside’, ‘out of’ or ‘beyond’.

The lea rigs thonder is ootwi the mains.
The fallow fields over there are outside the home farm.

Thay shoud tak thairsels ootwi the hoose. The maiter wis ootwi his owerins.
They ought to leave the house. The matter was beyond his control.
Ower generally expresses the sense of ‘over’ or ‘across’.

The wife hit me ower the heid. A spak til him ower the phone.
My wife hit me across the head. I spoke to him by telephone.

Ower is used in reference to a door, window or bed and expresses the sense of ‘out of’.

The bairn haed thrawn the baw ower the windae.
The baby had thrown the ball out of the window.

A’m no gaun tae get ower the bed for tae dae it.
I’m not going to get out of bed to do it.

Tae, generally [tə, ty] in peripheral varieties, [teː] in Central and Ulster varieties and [tiː] in Northern varieties, is used in the sense of ‘to’ or ‘towards’ with the infinitive (the mood that expresses the verbal idea without reference to person, number or time). Til [tɪl, tʌl] is usually used before nouns, with the definite or indefinite article and in Central and Southern Scots usually before words that begin with a vowel or the letter <h>.

A’m awa tae ma bed. He up and tae the dancin.
I’m going to bed. He got up and joined the dancing.

The meenister gaed awa til the kirk. He cam til a hoose amang thae braes.
The minister went off to church. He came to a house in those hills.

In colloquial speech tae the is often contracted to t’ee.

A’m gaun awa t’ee wall for watter. He wis in t’ee craig. Near til his dochter.
I’m off to the well for water. He was up to (his) neck (in it). Near his daughter.

Throu expresses the sense of ‘through, from one side or end to the other’.

Send that paircel throu the post. We gaed throu auld times thegither.
Send that parcel by post. We talked about old times together.

A wis waukrif and gat up throu the nicht.
I was unable to sleep and got up during the night.

Up used with verbs of motion expresses the sense of ‘up’.

Are ye gaun up the braeheid?
Are you going up to the crest of the hill?

Are ye gaun tae redd up yer accoant? Coud ye redd up ma carburettor?
Are you going to settle your account? Could you adjust my carburettor?
Upon, often contracted to upo’, is commonly used much as on above.

Thay baith cam ower ither upon the street.
They met each other in the street.

A mind upo’ bein sent tae the neist mediciner.
I remember being sent to the nearest physician.

Keep yer haunds upo’ ye, ye ill–daein auld gowk.
Keep your hands to yourself, you badly behaved old fool.

Within [wɪˈθɪn], often ‘ithin [ɪˈθɪn, aˈθɪn], sometimes written ‘athin’, expresses the sense of ‘within’ or ‘inside of’.

The new causey wisna ‘ithin the schame. Juist ‘ithin the door.
The new causeway wasn’t part of the plan. Just inside the door.

Without [wɪˈθʊt] or wioot [wɪˈut], often ‘ithoot [ɪˈθʊt, aˈθʊt], sometimes written ‘athoot’, expresses the sense of ‘without’.

A gaed awa ‘ithoot ae bawbee in ma pootch. He’d be a hale sicht better aff ‘ithoot it.
I left without a penny in my pocket. He’d be a lot better off without it.

Yont expresses the sense of ‘beyond’ or ‘on or to the other side of’.

Thare’s muckle lyin yont the Tay that’s mair tae me nor life.
There’s much lying beyond the Tay that’s dearer to me than life.

Yestreen A met her yont a knowe.
Yesterday evening I met her on the other side of a knoll.

Yont also expresses the sense of ‘along’, ‘farther along’ and ‘onwards through’ or ‘over’.

We heard somebody rinnin yont the road.
We heard some one running along the road.

A aften gang yont the glen and sit aside the wee burn.
I often go along the valley and sit beside the little stream.

Are ye comin yont the toun on yer wey here?
Are you coming through town on your way here?
2 Prepositions of time.

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Note or us usually unstressed [ə], *again* [a'gen, a'gɛn] may take the form *agin* [a'gɪn]. *Syne* is realised as [sain].

**Afore** expresses the sense of ‘what is ahead of one and still to be done or suffered’, ‘confronting’ or ‘in store for’.

A hae a lang day’s darg afore me. A thocht little on whit wis afore us.
I have a long day’s labour ahead of me. I thought little about what was in store for us.

**Again or agin**, and the contracted form *gin* [gɪn, gɛn], express the sense of ‘by’, ‘before’, ‘by the time that’.

His saidleclaiith maun be ready agin the Kelsae races.
His saddlecloth must be ready in time for the Kelso races.

The auld man dee’d ’gin eleiven.
The old man died shortly before eleven.

He set aff ’gin the gloamin. ’Gin we get thare it’ll be daurk.
He set off before dusk. By the time we get there it will be dark.

The souter will tak him as a prentice ’gin the simmer.
The cobbler will take him as an apprentice before the summer.

**At** expresses the sense of a ‘continued or repeated action’ or ‘when’.

Sae aw the ladis is ooin at her. He’s awa at the fishin the hale ouk.
So all the ladis are a-wooing her. He’s off fishing for the whole week.

Whit time’s the dance at?
When does the dance begin?
Atween expresses the sense of ‘between’.

It’ll tak atween twinty and thrifty meenit langer.
It’ll take between twenty and thirty minutes longer.

Ayont expresses the sense of ‘past’ or ‘later than’.

She’s juist awee ayont sixteen. He leev a hunder year.
She’s just a little past sixteen. He lived past a hundred.

The bell strack some wee short oor ayont the twal.
The bell struck at some early hour later than twelve.

By expresses the sense of ‘before or no later than a specified time’ or ‘past’.

Tak tent o yersel and be hame by twal.
Take care of yourself and be home by twelve.

A thocht the comatee meetin wad be throu by seiven.
I thought the committee meeting would be finished by seven.

The bus wis real weel fillt by the time it wan tae Foggieloan.
The bus was really full by the time it reached Foggieloan.

Thae aiples is by thair best.
Those apples are past their best.

Efter expresses the sense of ‘past’ when telling the time.

It’s ten efter twal, and she’s no hame yet.
It’s ten past twelve, and she’s not home yet.

Efter may be used in Gaelic- and Irish-influenced varieties with all tenses of the verb ‘to be’ governing the gerund to denote a (recently) completed action.

Dae ye ken whit he’s juist efter tellin me? He’s efter writin a letter.
Do you know what he has just told me? He has written a letter.

Frae expresses the sense of ‘to’ or before an hour ‘concerning the time of day’ or ‘since’.

It’s five meenit frae nine. Whaur is he nou?
It’s five to nine. Where is he now?

Some o the sheep haedna seen a dug frae thay war lamms.
Some of the sheep hadn’t seen a dog since they were lambs.
In expresses the sense of ‘during’, ‘in the course of’, ‘on’ or ‘at’ with regard to time.

- The lecture starts in twelve minutes. A shuirly thocht that in the time.
- She aye haed the kail–pat on in a cauld day.
- Near or naur express the sense of ‘nearly’.
- It’s very nearly midnight. It’s nearly dusk.
- Or expresses the sense of ‘before’ or ‘until’.
- A biggit the waw lang or nuin. Ye’ll see’t or lang.
- I built the wall long before noon. You’ll see it soon.
- Ye shoud hae haed aw that duin or nou. You ought to have had all that finished before now.
- Ye’ll hae tae wait or the morn at e’en. You’ll have to wait until tomorrow evening.
- We wrocht or near ten o’clock at nicht. We worked until nearly ten o’clock at night.
- Sin expresses the sense of ‘since’, ‘from the time of’ or ‘after’.
- Thay haena seen him sin he gane awa. Thay haven’t seen him since he left.
- The war niver a richt crap in Orkney sin that day. There was never a good crop in Orkney from that day forth.
- A hae aften thocht on her sin syne. I have often thought about her since then.
- Syne also expresses the sense of ‘since’ or ‘since the time of’.
- He’s been tawin awa brawly syne this mornin. He’s been working away splendidly since this morning.
- Iver syne that pairty A canna get that lassie oot ma heid. Ever since that party I can’t get that girl out of my head.
Till expresses the sense of ‘until’.

Weel, haud merry till A see you. Frae early morn till the gloamin.
Well, stay merry until I see you. From early morning until dusk.

Within [wriˈθɪn], often ’ithin [ɪˈθɪn, aˈθɪn] sometimes written ‘athin’, expresses the sense of ‘within’ or ‘inside’.

The war sic a deray within the door. Can ye come ’ithin the neist oor?
There was such a disturbance inside the door. Can you come within the next hour?

3 Prepositions of manner are:

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<tr>
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<th>about</th>
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<td>f(r)ae</td>
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<td>binna</td>
<td>except, unless</td>
<td>maugre</td>
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<td>but</td>
<td>without, except</td>
<td>maugre o despite</td>
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<td>by</td>
<td>by, in comparison</td>
<td>o of</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with, concerning, except</td>
<td>tae/til to, in comparison</td>
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<tr>
<td>efter</td>
<td>want, for</td>
<td>wi</td>
<td>with</td>
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<td>for</td>
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</table>

Aboot expresses the sense of ‘relating to’ or ‘concerning’.

A dinna ken onything aboot the rich. The’re nae dout aboot that.
I don't know anything about the rich. There’s no doubt about that.

Thare wis a muckle stramash aboot the maiter.
There was a great uproar concerning the matter.

Anent expresses the sense of ‘concerning’.

A s' write the provost anent thae ongauns. She speirt at me anent ma wark.
I will write to the mayor concerning those going-ons. She asked me about my work.

Binna expresses the sense of ‘except’ or ‘besides’.

Thay war aw at the fitbaw binna Tam.
They were all watching the/playing football except Tom.

A hae nae horse binna ma cuddie and wee Donal.
I have no horses besides my donkey and little Donald.
But expresses the sense of ‘without’.

A will dree ma weird but care or pine.
I shall endure my fate without care or pain.

By expresses the manner of something, and is also encountered in the sense of ‘in comparison with’ or ‘as distinct from’, ‘concerning’, ‘except’ or ‘besides’.

The beuk wis written by Shuggie Broun. She's auld by me.
The book was written by Hugh Brown. She’s old compared with me.

Thare’s juist twa fowk steyin here, by masel.
There’s only two people living here, besides me.

Dinna fash yersel lass. Thare’s mony by him.
Don’t trouble yourself girl. There are others besides him.

A cam by the wey o Perth. A ken nocht waur by her.
I came via Perth. I know nothing worse concerning her.

A’ll tak thaim aw by that ane. We haed ither kins by thae.
I’ll take them all except that one. We had other kinds besides those.

In colloquial speech by the is often contracted to b’ee.

Ye hae the wrang sou b’ee lug.
You have the wrong pig by the ear, i.e. You’ve got hold of a red herring.

Byes [baɪz, biːz], unstressed [bɪz], expresses the sense of ‘except’, ‘instead of’ or ‘compared with’.

He sees naebody byes his ain faimily. Ye’re auld byes me.
He sees no one except his own family. You’re old compared with me.

Aiblins ye wad like tae inveet some ither body byes him.
Perhaps you would like to invite someone else instead of him.

After may express the sense of what someone ‘wants’.

Whit ye efter? Chap and aks efter her.
What do you want? Knock and ask for her.

A wis juist ettlin efter that same thing masel.
I was just striving for that same thing myself.
For, with the noun uiss, expresses the sense of ‘with the object or purpose of’ or ‘with the end in view of’, corresponding to Standard English ‘of’.

It’s no for ony uiss. It’s for nae mainer o uiss.
It’s not of any use. It’s of no use.

For also expresses the sense of ‘for the sake of’, ‘with desire for’ or ‘desirous of’.

Shoud we gang roond and caw for wir pals?
Shall we go round and call on our friends?

A’m for a cauld yill. Whit ye for? Will ye no speir for her?
I’d like a cold ale. What would you like? Won’t you ask after her?

Tell yer brither A wis aksin for him.
Tell your brother that I was asking after his well-being.

Thir horse is gaun daft for watter.
These horses are going mad for want of water.

It’s makkin for snaw. A wis stervin for hunger.
It looks like it’s about to snow. I was starving of hunger.

A will speir for her haund. Tell Jock A wis speirin for him.
I shall ask for her hand in marriage. Give my regards to Jock.

For also expresses emotion where Standard English usually uses ‘of’.

A’m no feart for you, onywey. The craitur wis terrifee’d for him and ran awa.
I’m not scared of you, anyhow. The creature was terrified of him and ran away.

He winna taigle for fear he’ll miss the bus.
He won’t dawdle for fear of missing the bus.

A winna kneel doun for fylin ma breeks.
I won’t kneel down for fear of muddying my trousers.

Forby expresses the sense of ‘except’ or ‘let alone’.

Thare wis naebody forby masel in the wids.
There was no one except me in the woods.

Thon pridefu wifie wadna leuk the wey o ye, forby speak til ye.
That snobbish woman wouldn’t look at you, let alone speak to you.
The phrase *forby that* expresses the sense of ‘besides (the fact) that’.

Forby that, we’ll aye still hae tae dae better.  
Apart from that, we’ll still have to do better.

Forby that he is a dunderheid, he whiles haes a guid grip o the maiter.  
Quite apart from the fact that he is a simpleton, he sometimes has a good grasp of the matter.

*Frae* often expresses manner, cause or condition.

A’m no feart frae speeders. A’m gaun tae get killt frae ma faes.  
I’m not scared of spiders. I’m going to be killed by my enemies.

Ma sister wis skelpit frae the teacher. The auld carle dee’d frae the cauld.  
My sister was smacked by the teacher. The old man died of the cold.

A hae been pitten frae that thochtie.  
I’ve been put off that idea.

*Maugre* expresses the sense of ‘notwithstanding’, and *(in)* *maugre o* expresses the sense of ‘in spite of’ or ‘despite’.

Maugre aw the cummer thay haed tae warstle wi, thay held on gaun.  
Notwithstanding the distress they had to wrestle with, they kept going.

We’ll dae it in maugre o whit thay say aboot it.  
We’ll do it in spite of what they say bout it.

Maugre o his sair fit, he traipsed til the shaps.  
Despite his sore foot. he trudged to the shops.

Gang oot maugre o the rain.  
Go out despite the rain.

*O* expresses ‘of’.

Whit dae ye think o ma aicht score o sheep? A mi and ance tellin him o’t.  
What do you think of my eight score of sheep? I remember once telling him of it.

*O* is often used where Standard English employs a different preposition or governing phrase.

A’m the better o that. He’s the waur o drink.  
I’m the better for that. He’s the worse for drink.

Tak a swatch o this. Take a look at this.

Can ye mind o wha’t wis?  
Can you remember who it was?

He wisna blithe o wir meetin John.  
He wasn’t pleased with us meeting John.
The bairns is awfu crouse o the Yuil. Gie's a lend o yer beuk.
The children are excited about Christmas. Lend me your book.

A'm bored o this beuk. We canna mak a better o't, A daursay.
I'm bored with this book. I suppose we can't improve on it.

Nane the better o yer speirin. Thare's a queer thing o that lassie.
None the better for your asking. There's a strange thing about that girl.

Efter aw thon ettle ye'd be better o a rest.
After all that endeavour you'd be the better for a rest.

Whaur ye gaun at this time o a Sunday morning?
Where are you going at this time on a Sunday morning?

He'll no be sae blithe o oor meetin as o oor pairtin.
He'll not be as pleased with our meeting as with our parting.

_Tae or til expresses the sense of 'to'. Following a consonant, tae may be contracted to 'ae._

A telt her tae dae that. A telt her tae dicht the bink. A spak til him ower the phone.
I told her to do that. I told her to wipe the shelf. I spoke to him by telephone.

_Tae or til are often used where Standard English uses a different preposition or phrase._

Ma faither's a jiner til his tred. Dauvit wrocht tae Mr Gourlay.
My father is a joiner by trade. David worked for Mr Gourlay.

She haed a bairn til ma cuisin. She wis dochter tae the Shirra.
She had a baby by my cousin. She was the Sherrif's daughter.

_A'm juist a puir man tae you. A maun leuk gin thare's a bit post tae him._
_I'm a poor man compared with you. I must check if there's any mail for him._

The toun is thrang tae whit it ance wis, twinty year syne.
The town is crowded in comparison with what it once was, twenty years ago.

_A'm gaun tae hae a wheen fried eggs til ma tea. Ma mither shewed it tae me._
_I'm going to have a few fried eggs for dinner. My mother sewed it for me._
Leuk tae thon bonnie pictur. Quate wi ye, and hear til the laverock!
Look at that pretty picture. Be quiet, and listen to the lark!

*Wi* expresses the sense of ‘with’.

He wis awa wi a pal. He cam wi a fremmit chield.
He was away with a friend. He came with a strange fellow.

*Wi* is often used where Standard English uses a different preposition.

A didna speak wi him. A wrocht wi him fower year.
I didn’t speak to him. I worked for him for four years.

The aits wis eaten wi the mice. She’ll gang wi the bus.
The oats were eaten by the mice. She’ll go by bus.

It wis thair weans that gat battert wi some ither weans.
It was their children who got battered by some other children.

She wis rin ower wi a bus forenent the hoose. She’s gaun til mairy wi ma brither.
She was run over by a bus in front of her house. She’s going to marry my brother.

We misst the bus wi sleepin in. She wis gey pitten on wi the wey ye dresst.
We missed the bus because we overslept. She was impressed by the way you dressed.

The wind’s sae snell ye coud dee wi cauld. Tak tent nou—dinna faw wi bairn!
The wind is so severe you could die of cold. Take care now—don’t get pregnant!

The bairn coudna get sleepit wi the lichtnin. The child couldn’t sleep owing to the lightning.

The polis wis set on wi a muckle dug. The policeman was attacked by a large dog.

Ye’re aither awthing or naething wi him. You’re either everything or nothing to him.

In colloquial speech, *wi the* is often contracted to *w’ee*.

Tae sowp w’ee Deil. He cam w’ee menister.
To sup with the Devil. He came with the minister.
Conjunctions

Conjunctions are words that connect sentences, clauses and words.

1 As in Standard English, many common adverbs and prepositions are also used as conjunctions.

- **afore** before, tae/til to
- **after** after, whan when
- **f(r)ae** from, whaur where
- **hou** how, why

**Afore** expresses the sense of ‘before (of time)’ or ‘rather than’.

A’ll be hame afore ye. He wis thare afore A cam up.
I’ll be home before you. He was there before I came up.
A’d bide in a hoose by masel afore A’d bide wi a man o that kin.
I’d stay in a house on my own rather than live with a man like that.

**Efter** expresses the sense of ‘after’, much as in Standard English.

Ye’ll no be wantin yer denner efter ye’v eaten thae sweeties.
You’ll not want your dinner after eating those sweets.

**Frae**, expressing ‘from the time that’, is a literary form, *fae* [feː] being common in speech, except in South–west Central Scots. The pronunciation in Southern Scots is *thrae* [θreː].

Frae it waukens the bairn is greetin.
The child is crying from the time that it wakes up.

He’s duin nocht but eat frae he gaed in.
He’s done nothing but eat since he went in.

**Hou** expresses the sense of ‘how’ or ‘why’.

Allou me tae speir at ye hou ye did that. A aye wunnert hou he gaed til Norawa.
Allow me to ask you how you did that. I always wondered why he went to Norway.

**Tae** express the sense of ‘until’.

A’ll no gae hame tae A see the doctor comin oot.
I’ll not go home until I see the doctor coming out.
Til expresses the sense of 'before', 'when' or 'in order that'.

It wisna lang til she haed me cosie in ma bed.
It wasn’t long before she had me snug and warm in bed.

A wisna lang hame til he cam tae see me.
I wasn’t home long when he came to see me.

Gie’s a lunt til A licht the gas.
Give me a match so that I can light the gas.

Whan expresses the sense of ‘when’, much as in Standard English.

A niver sang weel whan A wis in the kirk.
I never sang well when I was in church.

Whaur expresses the sense of ‘where’, much as in Standard English.

Ye are white but whaur ye are beld.
You are white except where you are bald.

Why, whit for and whit wey express the sense of ‘why’.

The meenister speirt why he wisna at the kirk on the Saubath.
The minister enquired why he wasn’t at church on Sunday.

He didna richt ken whit for Jean haes taen up the walkin.
Me didn’t really know why Jean has taken up walking.

She winna lat licht whit wey she haesna mairit.
She won’t divulge why she hasn’t got married.

2 Other conjunctions are:

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<thead>
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<th>again</th>
<th>before</th>
<th>gif</th>
<th>if, whether</th>
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<tr>
<td>aither</td>
<td>either</td>
<td>gin</td>
<td>if, whether</td>
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<tr>
<td>acause</td>
<td>because</td>
<td>naither</td>
<td>neither</td>
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<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>nor</td>
<td>than</td>
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<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td>as/than/that or</td>
<td>or</td>
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<tr>
<td>baith</td>
<td>both</td>
<td>or</td>
<td>before, until</td>
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<tr>
<td>by</td>
<td>in comparison with, sin</td>
<td>since</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>besides, before</td>
<td>syne</td>
<td>since</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>binna</td>
<td>unless, except that</td>
<td>that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>but, except, without tho</td>
<td>(al)though</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ere before, until while while
for for without unless

Note that *acause* may be contracted to *'cause* [kaːz, kɔːz, kaːz] and unstressed [kaz, kiz, kaz]. *And* [an(d)] usually unstressed [an, n]. *By* [bə, be] may be unstressed [bɪ, ba]. *Or* [ɔr, or, ar], used to introduce an alternative, should not be confused with *or* [ɔr] meaning before or until, which may be indistinguishable from the unstressed realisation of *ere* [eə, ər, ar] with similar meanings. *Gif* [ɡɪf, ɡɪv], which is now obsolete, still occurs as a literary form. *Nor* [nər] may be unstressed [nər, na]. In Insular and Caithness Scots the form *at* [at, ət], from Old Norse *at*, also occurs. Not to be confused with the preposition *at*.

*Again or agin*, which may be contracted to *'gin*, express the sense of ‘before’, ‘by that time that’, ‘when’ or ‘until’.

A wis reddin the graith agin the morn’s wark.
A was preparing the equipment before tomorrow’s work.

The crap will breird *'gin* the ware returns.  
Ye’ll sit thare *'gin* A tell the dominie.

The crop will sprout when spring returns.  
You’ll sit there until I tell the headmaster.

The contracted form *'gin* may express the sense of ‘than’ in South and Mid Northern varieties.

Awa til yer bed. Ye’re waur *'gin* a bairn.
Go to bed. You are worse than a child.

*Aither* expresses the sense of ‘one or the other of two choices’.

He haed tae aither restreen the bull or keep it awa frae the cou.
He had either to restrain the bull or keep it away from the cow.

*Acause*, often contracted to *'cause*, expresses the sense of ‘by or for the cause that’, ‘on this account that’ or ‘for the reason that’.

I didna gang acause A wisna bidden.  
I didn’t go because I wasn’t invited.

He wadna gang acause he wis feart.  
He wouldn’t go because he was scared.

*And* expresses the sense of ‘and’, much as in Standard English.

The louns and queans comes oot tae play.
The boys and girls come out to play.

Set tae the gate, and ance we’re thare we’ll tak a dram.
Get on the way, and once we arrive we’ll have a tipple.
The train stappit suddent, and his wee heid wis thrawn ajee. The train stopped suddenly, and his little head was thrown to one side.

*And* plus a verb is used in infinitive phrases.

Ettle and mend the gairden yett by the morn. Gang and tell the wife A'll be hame at ower.  
Try to repair the garden gate by tomorrow. Go tell the wife I'll be home at four.  
Mind and bring her back afore twal. She canna mind and dae whit she’s telt.  
Remember to bring her back before twelve. She can't remember to do what she's told.

*And* is used to introduce verbless subordinate clauses (i.e. those that cannot function as sentences in their own right but perform an adjectival, adverbial or nominal function) expressing logical contradiction, surprise or indignation.

He haed tae heeze aw thae pallets, and him wi his sair airm. He had to hoist all those pallets, although he had a sore arm.  
She haed tae daunter fower mile, and her aicht month biggen. She had to wander for four miles, although she was eight months pregnant.

He played me sic a trick, and me the elder’s dochter! He perpetrated such mischief, although I am the elder's daughter!  
Hou can ye mak sic dirdum, and me wi ma sair heid? How can you make such a racket, despite my having a headache?

*And* may express ‘if’ conditionally or in an indirect question.

See and ony o thaim’ll come til the fitbaw wi me. See if any of them’ll come to the football match with me.

Whit seegnifees the life o man, and it warna for the lasses? What matters the life o man, if it weren’t for the girls?

*As* is generally used much as in Standard English.

He michna be so saft as he lats on. He’s auld gettin as time slips on.  
He may not be so weak–minded as he makes out. He’s getting old as time passes by.

We saw her passin naur Heuch–heid as cantie as ye like. We saw her passing Heugh–Head as happy as one could imagine.
As may be used to introduce a circumanstance by way of contrast or objection after an expression of feeling, often an exclamation, or a rhetorical question.

Sic a braw mornin, and aw oor hens cleckin, as the hale o thaim haed been layin eggs. Such a splendid morning, with all our chickens clucking, as if they had all been laying eggs.

As with a negative may express the sense of ‘if’.

Guid bliss me, boy. As A didna ken ye better!
God bless me, boy. If I didn’t know you better!

As may express the sense of ‘than’.

Thare wis mair as seiven hunder fowk come til the gaitherin.
More than seven hundred people had come to the gathering.

A’d rather sell as buy wi things sae dear the nou.
I would rather sell than buy with things so expensive now.

As may express the sense of ‘that’.

A’ll see as he gets the lawyer’s brief. She sang sae lood as A micht hear.
I’ll see that he gets the lawyer’s writ. She sang so loud that I might hear.

Baith expresses the sense of ‘both’, much as in Standard English.

An aiken cheer, baith auld and dweibly.
An oaken chair, both old and wobbly.

By expresses the sense of ‘before’ or ‘by the time that’.

A wis awmaist droukit by A wun the lenth o the hoose.
I was almost soaked before I got home.

By also expresses the sense of ‘compared with’ or ‘than’.

Siller’s rife nou by’t wis in oor day. Ye are auld by me.
Money is plentiful now compared with how it was in our day. You are older than me.

Byes [baɪz, baːz], unstressed [bɪz], expresses the sense of ‘compared with’.

Yer raip is langer byes mines. Ye’re an auld man byes A thocht ye wis.
Your rope is longer that mine. You’re an older man than I thought.
Binna expresses the sense of ‘except’ or ‘unless’.

A niver see Tam binna whan A gang tae the toun.
I never see Tom except when I go into town.

Ye’ll no get ben binna ye weir yer kirk–claes.
You’ll not get in unless you wear your Sunday best.

But expresses the sense of ‘except’ or ‘unless’.

Awbody but ma freends cam.
Everyone except my friends came.

An, but ye read it richt, ye winna lift it.
And, unless you read it correctly, you won’t understand it.

Ere expresses the sense of ‘before’ or ‘until’.

He wis a cantie fallae ere she left him. Wait ere ye see it.
He was a cheerful fellow before she left him. Wait until you see it.

For is used much as in Standard English.

A haed tae dae it for ye masel. He’s owerwecht, for he eats ower mony bakes.
I had to do it for you myself. He’s overweight, for he eats too many biscuits.

For aw expresses the sense of ‘although’ or ‘notwithstanding’.

A’m no ’ithoot wits, for aw A’m a wumman.
I’m not without wits, although I am a woman.

For as gash as he wis amang oorsels, he wadna speak afore the kirk–fowk.
Notwithstanding his volubility among us, he wouldn’t address the congregation.

For as ... as expresses the sense of ‘however’.

The girse leukit green, for as drouthy as the wather haed been.
The grass looked green, however dry the weather had been.

For fear expresses the sense of ‘lest’ or ‘in case’.

Dinna gang ower the field for fear the nettles scaums yer legs.
Don’t go over the field in case the nettles sting your legs.
*For* may also express the sense of ‘until’ in Insular varieties.

She coud dae nae mair nou for daylicht cam.
She could do no more now until daylight came.

*Gif*, which is now obsolete but still occurs as a literary form, expresses the sense of ‘if’ or ‘whether’.

Dinna fash yersel. Gif Jeams says it’s weel, it’s weel.
Don’t worry yourself. If James says it’s alright, it’s alright.

*Gin* also expresses the sense of ‘if’ or ‘whether’.

Och, gin thay war awa, A coud hae some peace tae masel.
Oh, if only they would leave, I could have some peace on my own.

Whit will A dae gin ma caur winna stert?
What shall I do if my car won’t start?

*Naither* expresses the sense of ‘neither’.

Here A am wi naither man nor bairn.
Here I am with neither husband nor child.

Lang syne news traivels naither fast nor faur.
Old news travels neither fast or far.

*Nor* expresses the sense of ‘than’.

He haes mair nor A thocht. Hauf a cuithe is better nor nae fish.
He has more than I thought. A coalfish fry is better than no fish.

Whiles cheap gear dis better nor dear.
Sometimes cheap possessions serve better than expensive ones.

The meenister coud dae little mair nor read a chapter o the Bible.
The minister could do little more than read a chapter of the Bible.

*Or* is used to introduce an alternative, much as in Standard English.

Shoud A tak this ane or that ane? Wheesht or ense A’ll belt ye.
Should I take this one or that one? Be quiet or else I’ll hit you.
Or, from Old Norse, has a similar range of meaning to that of ere, from Old English, which expresses the sense of ‘before’ or ‘until’.

Ye’ll see’t or lang. Bide here or A retour.
You’ll see it before long. Wait here until I return.

Ye’ll be droukit or ye win hame.
You’ll be soaked before you get home.

Or also expresses the sense of ‘sooner than’ or ‘rather than’.

An or A wad anither jaud, A’ll wallop in a towe.
And sooner than I wed another jade, I’ll dance on the end of a rope.

A wad sterve or A wad be obleeged tae the like o him.
I would starve rather than be obliged to the likes of him.

Or may expresses the sense of ‘than’ in Insular varieties.

Nou A’m been mairit mair or twice.
Now I’ve been married more than twice.

Sin expresses the sense of ‘since’ or ‘from the time that’.

Sin ye’re gaun awa the morn, A'll see nae mair o ye e'en nou.
Since you’re leaving tomorrow, I’ll see no more of you soon.

It’s the feck o three oor sin ye wan here.
It’s the best part of three hours since you arrived.

He wis auld sin A mind.
He’s been an old man for as long as I can remember.

Syne [sain] also expresses the sense of ‘since’ or ‘from the time that’.

A towmond’s gane syne the ship set sail for Africæ.
Twelve months have passed since the ship set sail for Africa.

The mice gaed throu the bore and syne begoud tae eat the aits.
The mice went through the hole and then began to eat the oats.

That is used much as in Standard English.

He telt me that the beuk wis a gey guid read.
He told me that the book wis a very good read.
Tho expresses the sense of ‘although’.

That is the pth o wickitness, tho some cries it the road til Heiven.
That is the path of wickedness, although some call it the road to Heaven.

While expresses the sense of ‘until’ or ‘up to the time that’.

Haud him back frae his intent while ma guidman wins hame.
Hold him back from his intention until my husband gets home.

Will ye be lang while ye come back?
Will it take long until you return?

The phrase aye and while has its origin in legal usage meaning ‘until such time as’, but is sometimes used to mean ‘during the time that’.

He waitit aye and while until he repentit.
He waited until such time as he repented.

We war gaun tae Sautcots, and aye and while we drew nearer it rained.
We were going to Saltcoats, and during the time that we drew nearer it rained.

Withoot [wɪˈθʊt] or wioot [wɪˈʊt], often ’ithoot [ɪˈθʊt, əˈθʊt] sometimes written ‘athoot’, expresses the sense of ‘unless’.

Whit a sicht for sair een. Ye wadna believe wioot ye saw it.
What a sight for sore eyes. You wouldn’t believe it unless you saw it.

A’ll no gang wioot A’m peyed for it. We can dae naething ’ithoot we hear frae him.
I’ll not leave unless I’m paid for it. We can do nothing unless we hear from him.
Greetings

1. The various dialects have their expressions for ‘how do you do?’:

   | Hou’s aw wi ye? | Hou’s yer dous? | Whit fettle? (Borders) |
   | Hou’s everything with you? | How are your pigeons? | What state (are you in)? |
   | How are you lasting? | How are you managing? | What (are things) like? |
   | Whit wey are ye? (Ulster) | Whit aboot ye? (Ulster) |
   | How are you? | How are you? |

To these may be answered:

   | Brawly—Thank ye. | No bad, conseederin. | A canna compleen. |
   | Nicely—Thank you. | Not bad, considering. | I can’t complain. |
   | Hingin by a threid. | A hae been waur. | Sae faw ye. |
   | Just managing. | I’ve been worse. | May the same befall you. |

The common informal greetings are *hullo* and *hiya* ['haija] used much like ‘hello’ and ‘hi’.

Other greetings are:

   | Fair guid mornin. | Fair guid day. | Fair guid e’en. |
   | Good morning. | Good day. | Good evening. |

‘How nice to see you again!’ may be expressed with:

   | Guid tae see yee. | Sell on yer face. | Weel’s me on the sicht o ye. |
   | Nice to see you. | Blessings on your face. | I am pleased to see you. |

   | Fair faw ye. | Fair faw your honest hert. |
   | May good fortune befall you. | May good fortune befall your honest heart. |

2. Common invitations to join in or enter are:

   | Come intil the body o the kirk. | Come awa ben (the hoose). |
   | Join the company. | Come in (the house). |

3. When parting:

   | Return soon. | See you later. | Cheerio. | Farewell. |
4 When writing letters, the usual form of address is *Ma freend, Ma fere* or *Guid billie* corresponding to Standard English ‘Dear’. Formal letters begin with *Guid Sir, Guid Mr (Maister) or Mem (Madam)*, corresponding to Standard English ‘Dear’.

Other terms of address are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miss</th>
<th>Miss (Ms)</th>
<th>Maister</th>
<th>Mister (Mr)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dame</td>
<td>Lady</td>
<td>Chield</td>
<td>Gentleman or fellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistress</td>
<td>Mistress (Mrs)</td>
<td>Guidman</td>
<td>Husband or male head of household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir</td>
<td>Sir</td>
<td>Guidwife</td>
<td>Female head of household</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that *Mistress* is realised as [ˈmɪstrɪs] and that *Dame* [dem] may be realised as [dim] in some Mid Northern and Insular varieties.

Letters may be ended with the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aefauldly</td>
<td>Sincerely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yours aye faithfully</td>
<td>Fair faw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fare ye weel</td>
<td>Farewell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Best/good wishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cheery–bye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See ye efter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>See you later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Days, Months and Holidays

1 The days of the week and months of the year are:

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monanday</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Januar</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tysday</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Februar</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadensday</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Mairch</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuirsday</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Apire</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Mey</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seturday</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Juin</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saubath</td>
<td>Sabbath</td>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>September</td>
<td>September</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>October</td>
<td>October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>December</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Januar ['dʒanəwər] may take the form Jenewarie ['dʒenəwər], while December ['dəsəmbər] may also be realised as ['dɪzəmbər].

Other words concerning days, weeks and months are:

Day [de(:)] and the day [də de(:)], which means today.
The morn [də mɔrn, −morn], which means tomorrow.
Yesterday ['jɛstərdə(:)] and yestreen [jɛ'strin], also the streen [də strin] [də–] in Insular varieties, which refer to last night or yesterday (evening). The phrases ere yestreen [eːr–, ɛr–] and ere the streen refer to the night before last.
An ouk [uk], which is a week, is now probably obsolete, having been replaced by week.
A sennicht ['sɛnɪçt] is a period of seven nights, a week, and a fortnicht ['fɔrnɪçt] is a fortnight i.e. two weeks, a period of fourteen consecutive days.
Month [mʌnθ], [mʌnt] in Insular varieties and a muin [mɔn, myn] in peripheral varieties, [mɪn] in Central and Ulster varieties, [min] in Northern varieties, which is a lunar month.
A year [(j)ɪr] and a fernyear ['fɛrn(ɪ)ər, 'fɛrn(ɪ)ɔr], which may refer to last year or the preceding year(s).
A towmond ['tɔumʌn(d), 'tɔmən(d), −mʌnθ] is a period of twelve months or a year.
See also times of the day p. 127, and adverbs of time and number p. 180.

The definite article the is often used before the days of the week.

We'll tryst on the Monday efternuin efter wark.
We'll meet on Monday afternoon after work.

Ance fowk didna wirk on the Saubath day. Come roond Seturday first.
Once people didn’t work on the Sabbath. Come round next Saturday.
A canna—hoo aboot Saturday neist?  
I h aena seen him this year past.

I can’t—how about next Saturday but one?  
I haven’t seen him in the past year.

It wis awfu het and smochie aboot August month.  
It was extremely hot and sultry around August.

He’d no seen his fowks thir last sax towmond.  
He hadn’t seen his people for these last six years.

2 The important festivals and holidays are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festival</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ne’er’s Day</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>Beltane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handsel Monanday</td>
<td>First Monday of the New Year</td>
<td>Whitsunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns’ Nicht</td>
<td>25th January</td>
<td>Michelmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caunlemas</td>
<td>Candlemas</td>
<td>Hallowe’en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bannock nicht</td>
<td>Shrove Tuesday</td>
<td>Martinmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fasten e’en</td>
<td>Shrove Tuesday</td>
<td>Christmas Eve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ess Wadensday</td>
<td>Ash Wednesday</td>
<td>Christenmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace</td>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Yule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunt the Gowk</td>
<td>April Fool’s Day</td>
<td>Hogmanay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pronunciations are generally: Ne’er’s Day [nirz de, nerz de], Handsel Monanday ['han(d)sal 'mʌnændɪ], Caunlemas ['kaːnlmas 'kɔːnlmas], [ˈkaːnlmas] in Northern and Insular varieties, unstressed –mas [–mɪs, –məs], Fasten or Fastern’s e’en [ˈfastən ɪːn, ‘fastərnz ɪːn], Ess Wadensday [es, es] or [ɑːs ‘wa(d)nzde, ‘wɛnzde], Pace [pes], [peis] in North Northern varieties, Hunt the Gowk [hʌnt ðə ɡaʊk, –ɡoːk], often contracted to Huntegowk [ˈhʌntəɡəʊk], Beltane [ˈbɛltən, ’bɛltən], Whitsunday [ˈwɪtsənd], ‘wɔtsənd], also [ˈwɪtsənd] in Mid Northern varieties, Lammas [ˈlʌməs], Michelmas [ˈmɪçəlməs], Hallae e’en [hɔl(a)ɪːn, hæle–], Mairtinmas [ˈmərtəməs], Sowans nicht [ˈsuːnz nɪtʃ] in South Central, [ˈsuːnz–] in East Central, [ˈsʌnz–] in Mid Northern and [swinz–] in some West Central varieties, Christenmas [ˈkrɪsənməs], Yuil [jʊl, jyl] in peripheral varieties, [jɪl] in Central and [ˈjɪl] in Northern varieties, Hogmanay [hɔgˈmə(neː)] also Yearsmas [ˈjɜrəmsəz].

The definite article the is often used before the names of feast-days and religious holidays.

Singin’ at the fair on the day the birkies caw the Lammas.  
Singing at the fair on the day that the lively young men call Lammas.

Thare’ll be rowth o dancin on the Whitsunday.  
What did ye get for your Christenmas?  
There will be plenty of dancing at Whitsun.  
What did you get for Christmas?
3 The seasons of the year are:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ware</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The simmer</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The hairst</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The winter</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The ware* [ðə wer] has the Insular form *the voar* [ðə voːr]. *Spring* and *autumn* are also used in Scots.

The definite article *the* is used before the names of the seasons.

Whan the simmertime comes, the bumbees bizzes.
When summertime comes, the bumble-bees buzz.

The ware evenin is lang and teuch.
The spring evening is long and tough.

The hairst evenin rins suin ower the heuch.
The autumn evening soon runs over the precipice.

The cauld winter's trees strippit o thair simmer bluim.
Cold winter’s trees stripped of their summer bloom.

Wi the winter comin, the nichts is fairly creepin in.
With winter coming, the nights are really drawing in.
Aspects of Colloquial Speech

1 Tags.

Tags are added to questions in order to prompt the person addressed to agree with the speaker’s statement. In requests, tags ask the person addressed to agree with and act on the speaker’s request.

Tag questions:

- Did ye stert tae jouk the schuil, did ye? Is Shona hame, is she?
- Did you start to play truant, did you? Is Shona at home, is she?
- Are ye aye at the scaffie’s yaird, are ye?
- Are you still working at the rubbish dump, are you?
- Ye hivna juist haed yer teeth oot, hiv ye?
- You haven’t just had your teeth removed, have you?

The negative tag usually contains *no*. It indicates that the person speaking expects a positive response.

- Jimmie haes gane, haes he no? Fiona can soum, can she no?
- Jimmy has gone, hasn’t he? Fiona can swim, can’t she?
- Jock will gie’it ye, will he no? Jock will give you it, won’t he?

The tag *eh* [ɛ, e] is often added to questions and requests.

- Lat me pit ma coat on, eh? We ken him gey and weel nou, eh?
- Let me put my coat on, won’t you? We know him quite well now, don’t we?
- It’s no ower muckle, eh? Ye are takkin her til the picturs, eh no?
- It’s not too big, is it? You are taking her to the cinema, aren’t you?
- Pit the kist doun thare, eh? Be guid til ma dochter, eh?
- Put the chest down there, won’t you? Be good to my daughter, won’t you?

Other frequently used tags are:

- Ye dinna gang for that kin o lassie, na? Ye telt her anent it, ay?
- You don’t go for that sort of girl, no? You told her about it, yes?
He’s no ettlin tae tak aw o’t, no really? A’ll be wi ye Monanday, richt?
He’s not trying to take all of it, not really? I shall be with you on Monday, right?

Ye’re no mint tae win hame in this wather, shuirly?
You aren’t intending to reach home in this weather, surely?

Great confidence is expressed by speakers who use the tags *eh* [ɛ, e] or *shuir* at the beginning of a statement. This invites the person addressed to confirm the speaker’s expectation, producing what is in effect a tag question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shuir the rain is weet?</th>
<th>Eh Kairien’s bairn’s a laddie?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of course the rain is wet?</td>
<td>Of course Kairien’s baby is a boy?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Focusing devices are used to introduce items into the conversation or to give prominence to items which the person speaking wishes to introduce into the conversation. The most frequently used words for these purposes are *see*, *ken* and *like*.

See thae auld hooses. Ma faither bug ane.
See those old houses. My father built one.

See you, pal. Gin ye dae that again, A’l dunt ye!
See you, chum. If you do that again, I’ll thump you!

Ken Morag. She juist wadna dae’t.
You know Morag. She just wouldn’t do it.

She’s in the infirmary, ken, tae hae a neer transplantit.
She’s in the hospital, you know, to have a kidney transplanted.

A gaed doun the toun like, and the polis wis thare.
I went into town, and the police were there.

It wis, weel, like fower year sin A seen him. He haes his dug, like, gies him company.
It was, well, four years since I saw him. He has his dog that gives him company.

3 *Nut*, a form of Standard English *not*, meaning ‘no’, is used in many varieties, often as a one word answer to questions. That may be contradicted by the emphatic correlative *sut*, from Standard English *so* altered to rhyme with *nut*, meaning ‘on the contrary, far from it’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are ye gaun oot the morra? Nut!</th>
<th>It wis nut! But it wis sut!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you going out tomorrow? No!</td>
<td>It was not! But it was so!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A wisna a grain feart. Ye wis sut. Ye ran like the rest o’s.
I wasn’t the least bit scared. You were so. You ran like the rest of us.
4 Interjections.

The summoning interjection is *hey* or *haw*.

| Hey, you wi the reid heid! | Haw, whaur d'ye think ye're gaun? |
| Hey, you with the red hair! | Hey, where do you think you are going? |

Some of the common assertive interjections are:

- **atweel** indeed
- **by fegs** by faith, truly
- **certes** certainly
- **deed** indeed
- **haudd on** stop

Some of the most common interjections of surprise and astonishment are:

- **bletheration** nonsense
- **crivens** Christ defend us
- **fegs** faith
- **haivers** nonsense

Some of the interjections used to express disgust are:

- **dozen't** feech, feuch
- **confound it** fie

Impatience is often expressed using the interjection *och* [ox], also *ach* [ax] and *ooch* [ux]. Troubles or worry are often expressed by using the interjections *och*, *huit(s)* and *hoot(s)*. *Struith* and *strowth* are contracted forms of *God's truth*.

Resignation or submission to something that can’t be avoided may be expressed with *aweel*, a contracted form of *ah weel!* or *oh weel!*

Assent is often expressed using *weel-a-weel* [wila'wil], a contracted form of *weel ah weel* or *weel oh weel*.

| Och! Whaurawa gat ye that auld creukit penny? |
| Oh! Whereabouts did you get that crooked old penny? |
Sympathy and sorrow are often expressed by using the following interjections.

ochone  nounae! nounae!
woe is me!  now then!
Idioms

Idioms are distinctive expressions peculiar to a language whose meaning is not always determinable from their individual words. Scots is especially rich in such expressions.

A bonnie fechter. An intrepid fighter, a game chicken.
A cadger's curse. A worthless thing.
A fiddler's biddin. A last-minute invitation.
A kent face. An acquaintance.
A'll big nae saundy-mills wi ye. I'll not be friendly to you.
A new tout on an auld horn. Old hat.
A seed in the teeth. A flea in the ear.
A tee'd baw. Cut and dry, all sewn up.
A thocht shame tae be seen wi him. I was ashamed to be seen with him.
A tongue that would clip cloots. Talk the hind legs off a donkey.
A tulchan. A stuffed shirt.
A wad liefer dae this as that. I would rather do this than that.
A'll gar ye claw whaur it's no yeukie. I'll give you what for.
A'll see day aboot wi ye. I'll get even with you.
A'm no that faur ben wi him. I'm not so familiar with him.
Abuin yer feet. Beyond one's means.
Aff the fang. Not in the mood, out of humour.
Aff the gleg. Off the mark.
Ahint the haund. In arrears, after the event.
Are you takkin me on? Are you pulling my leg?
A peelt egg. A windfall.
As weel suin as syne. The sooner the better.
Atween the wind and the waw. In the horns of a dilemma.
Auld claes and parritch. One's daily routine.
Auld in the horn. Astute.
Aw ae oo. All the same, birds of a feather.
Aw yer pith. With all one's energy.
Awa tae fremd. Gone away from home.
Awbody's body. A sycophant, a sail trimmer.
Aks a blissin. Say grace.
Aye til the fore. Still be around (alive).
Be at ae wurd. Stick to one's story.
Be at the knag and the widdie. Be at loggerheads.
Be at twa. Be at variance.
Be daein wi't. Be content with it.
Be in the wey o. Be in the habit of.
Beck and bou. Curry favour.
Be taen til the fair. Be led up the garden path.
Better suin as syne. Better sooner than later.
Birl the wilkies. Turn somersault.
Bou yer hoch. Sit down.
By his wey o’t. According to him.
Cairy saut til Dysart. Carry coals to Newcastle.
Caw yer gird. Do one’s thing.
Cadgers is aye crackin on creuk saidles. Always talking shop.
Cauf kintra. Native district.
Caukin the claith afore the wab be in the luim. Counting your chickens before they are hatched.
Caw kannie. Proceed carefully.
Caw the crack. To chat.
Chowk for jowl. Cheek by jowl.
Cleek in wi. Associate with.
Cock the wee finger. Have a tipple (drink).
Come (back) wi the blind cairier. Return only after a long time.
Cown somebody’s hurl. Upset someone’s plans.
Crap and ruit. Root and branch.
Creash the luif. To pay, tip or bribe.
Crouse in the craw. Confident in speech.
Cry parley-fummle. Ask for a truce.
Cuttin afore the pint. Counting your chickens before they are hatched.
Dee a fair strae deith. Die a natural death.
Doun the stank. Down the drain.
Draw straes afore the een. To hoodwink or deceive.
Dree yer weird. Suffer one’s fate.
Droun the miller. Put the miller’s eye out.
Faw oot (up) on. Lose one’s temper with.
Feel black affrontit. Feel deeply ashamed.
Fell twa dugs wi the ae bane. Kill two birds with one stone.
Flee laich. To act with prudence and caution, be unambitious.
Flee laich and flee lang. Keep your ambitions within bounds.
First come, first serred. First come is first served.
Gae til the bent. Abscond.
Gang and whistle on yer thoum. Go and chase yourself.
Gang ance eerant. Go for that alone (specially for that purpose).
Gang doun the brae. To deteriorate in health or circumstances.
Gang hale-heidit for. Be absolutely engrossed in.
Gang the messages. Do the shopping.
Gang til the gate. Be ruined.
Gaupin like a raw gorb. Gaping like an unfledged bird.
Get amends o. Get one’s own back.
Get intae. Get familiar with.
Get laldie. Get a beating.
Get on the crack wi. Start a conversation with.
Get the bree o’ t.
Get the wissel o yer groat.
Get yokit til.
Gie it lairdie.
Gie’s yer crack.
Glack yer mittens.
Guid gear in smaw bouk.
Hae an ee til.
Hae ither towie on ane’s rock.
Hae yer ain adae.
Hae nae brou o this.
Haud yer wheesht.
Haud the cuddie reekin.
Haud tryst.
Haund for nieve.
He haes a crap for aw corn.
He kens the laid frae the croun
o the causey.
He kens whilk side his bannock’s
buttern.
He’s no the berry (nor yet the
buss it growed on).
He stummmles at strae and lowps
ower a linn.
He’s war til watter nor til corn.
He wad skin a loose for the tauch.
He winna rive his faither’s bunnet.
Hing the lugs.
Hingin in the brecham.
His/her breid’s baken.
His mither canna see daylicht til him.
Keep something for a sair fit.
Ilka body disna hae the like o that.
Ilka hicht hae its howe.
Ill comes upo waur’s back.
In room o.
In the wey o.
It winna pottie.
It’ll cost ye a bonnie penny.
It’s a gey while nou.
It’s a tee’d baw.
It’s drappin suit.
It’s mony a needless preen
ye hae pitten in.
It’s weel wared on him.

Bear the brunt of it.
Be paid in one’s own coin.
Get started with/married to.
Set to with vigour, give it a beating.
Give me your news.
Grease one’s palm.
Much in little.
Have a liking for.
Have other fish to fry.
Have one’s hands full.
Have no liking for this.
Be silent.
Keep the pot boiling.
Keep one’s word.
Hand in hand, side by side, abreast.
All is fish that comes to his net.
He knows how many beans make five.

He knows which side his bread is buttered on.
He’s not the clean potato.
He finds difficulties only where he wants to.

He’s fonder of drink than food.
No source of gain is beneath his miserly attention.
He’ll never fill his father’s shoes.
To be crestfallen, to mope.
Pulling one’s weight.
He’s/she’s arrived, made the grade.
He’s his mother’s blue-eyed boy.
Keep something for a rainy day.
Not everyone has that sort of thing.
Every height has its hollow.
It never rains it pours.
In place of.
To be in the habit of.
It won’t wash.
It’ll cost you a lot.
It’s a fairly long time ago now.
It’s all cut and dry/It’s all sewn up.
Walls have ears.
You needn’t have taken so
much trouble to dress up.
It serves him right.
Jock Tamson’s bairns,
The children of Adam, common humanity.  
People united by a common sentiment,  
interest or purpose.

Jouk and lat the jaw gang by.  
Lie low until it blows over.
Juist aw the like o thae things.  
Just all that sort of thing.
Kaim somebody’s hair backwarts.  
To annoy or tease someone.
Lad o pairs.  
Talented youth.
Lang mey yer lum reek.  
A long and happy life.
Lat his ain wand ding him.  
Let him be hoist by his own petard.
Lat licht.  
Let it be known, disclose a fact.
Lat sit.  
Leave alone or leave off.
Lat that flee stick til the waw.  
Drop a particularly embarrassing subject.
Lat the bairns fend for thairsels.  
Let the children look after themselves.
Lay something in saut for.  
Have a rod in pickle for. Get revenge.
Leein like a horse cowper.  
Lying pathologically.
Lief is me on ...  
I am fond of ... 
Like a hen on a het girdle.  
Like a cat on hot bricks.
Like a set mill.  
At a standstill.
Like a slug stane.  
Like a bolt from the blue.
Like yer meat.  
Well–fed looking.
Like wha but him.  
Pleased with.
Made up wi.  
Make or mar, make what you will of it.
Mak saut tae yer kail.  
Earn a living.
Mak wey o anesel.  
Commit suicide.
Ma tongue isna unner yer belt.  
You can’t silence me.
Mebbe ay and mebbe umhum.  
Perhaps yes and perhaps doubtful.
Mony wirds, muckle drouth.  
Much talking makes one thirsty.
Muckle guid mey it dae ye.  
Much good may it do you.
Nae faurer gane nor ...  
As recently as ...
Nae great cowp.  
No great shakes.
Naither eechie nor ochie.  
Neither one thing or another.
Naither tae dance nor haud the caunle.  
To sit on the sidelines.
No able for.  
Having no appetite for, incapable of.
No sae deif as he lats on.  
Not as deaf as he pretends.
No see daylicht til.  
Be blind to one’s faults.
O that ilk.  
Of the same name.
On the heid o.  
Occupied with.
Oot o thocht.  
Beyond belief.
Pit his gas at a peep.  
Put in his place, snubbed, rebuffed.
Pit on a sair face.  
Look sorry for oneself.
Pit oot yer ee.  
Put one’s nose out of joint.
Pith o hemp.  
Hangman’s noose.
Pease brose and pianaes.  
A state of genteel poverty.
Play Jock Needle Jock Preen.  
Plunk the schuil.  
Raise the tuin.  
Rax somebody’s craig.  
Redd yer crap.  
Rin wuid.  
Rive the kirk tae theik the queir.  
Sae black’s a slae.  
Sae boss’s a baurel.  
Sae broun’s a berry.  
Sae cantie as a sou amang glaur.  
Sae fou as a piper.  
Sae plain as parritch.  
Sae teuch’s a widdie.  
Sae eith as kiss ma luif.  
Saut somebody’s brose/kail.  
Set doun the barrae.  
She’s better nor she’s bonnie.  
She’s her mither’s t’ae ee.  
Smaw fowk.  
Smilin like a bile’t haddie.  
Souk in wi.  
Staund like a stoukie.  
Staund yont.  
Steek yer hert.  
Tae hae a guid conceit o yersel.  
Tak a notion o.  
Tak a rise oot o.  
Tak a tellin.  
Tak yer wird again.  
Tak ower the coals.  
Tak something ill oot.  
Tak tent.  
Tak the bit and the buffet.  
Tak the dorts/dods.  
Tak the hert.  
Tak the lend o.  
Tak the rue.  
Thare’s a flae in ma hose.  
Thare’s mair room ’ithoot nor ’ithin.  
That liddit his mill.  
That’ll no set the heather alicht.  
That pat the branks on him.  
That’ll niver craw in yer crap.  
That’s gey naur the bit.  

Play fast and loose.  
Play truant.  
Start the tune.  
Hang someone.  
Get it off your chest.  
Act with reckless abandon.  
Rob Peter to pay Paul.  
As black as a sloe.  
As empty as a barrel.  
As brown as a berry.  
As happy as a pig in the mud.  
As drunk as a piper.  
As clear as crystal.  
As tough as a withy.  
As easy as winking.  
Have a rod in pickle for. Get revenge.  
Failed in business.  
She’s better than she’s pretty.  
She’s the apple of her (mother’s) eye.  
People of humble rank, the little guys.  
Smiling like a boiled haddock.  
Ingratiate oneself with.  
Rooted to the spot (lit. stand like a plaster cast).  
Keep one’s distance.  
Harden one’s heart.  
To have a good opinion of oneself.  
Develop a liking for.  
Make fun off.  
Heed a warning.  
Change one’s tune.  
Call to account.  
Be upset about something.  
Pay attention.  
To swallow one’s pride.  
To sulk.  
Affect deeply.  
Make a fool of.  
Feel remorse, have second thoughts.  
I’m in trouble.  
An apology for passing wind.  
That shut him up.  
That won’t set the Thames on fire.  
That cut him down to size/shut him up.  
You’ll never taste or smell that.  
That’s nearly right.
The common five-aichts. The average man, the hoi-polloi.
The Deil's gane ower Jock Wabster. The fat's in the fire. All hell has broken loose.
The stang o the trump. The life and soul of the affair.
Thare wis naither tap, tail nor main til't. I couldn’t make head nor tail of it.
Thare's a drap in the hoose. Walls have ears.
Thare's a wap in the raip. There's a snag.
Thare's ma thom on that. Let shake hands on it.
Think anesel nae sheep's shank. Consider oneself no small beer.
This side o time. In this world.
Trail the poke. Beg.
Trail the weeng. Have an illicit love affair.
Turn the crack. Change the subject.
Tyne the heid. Lose one's temper.
Tyne time on. Waste time on.
Up tae. Equal to, able for.
Up tae hie doh. In a state of extremely agitated excitement.
Wairm the lugs. Beat the ears.
Wauk yer wits. Sharpen one's wits.
We niver dee'd o winter yet. We'll survive.
Weel tae. Well on time.
Weemen's kittle cattle. Women are capricious creatures.
Whan it comes til the bit. When the crunch comes.
Whan it comes up ma back. When it occurs to me.
Whit ails ye at ... What do you dislike about ... 
Whit's yer will? What did you say?
Win awa. Die/leave
Win ower. Fall asleep.
Ye coud hae bund me wi strae. You could have knocked me down with a feather.
Ye cut lang whangs aff ither fowk's laither. You make very free with other people's property.
Ye are feart for the day ye niver seen. You are worrying unnecessarily.
Ye needna fash yer thom. You needn't bother your head.
Ye shape shuin by yer ain shauchelt feet. You judge others by yourself.
Ye wad wheedle a laverock frae the lift. You could charm the birds from the trees.
Yer breid's bakkit. Ye can hing up yer girdle. You have achieved all you aimed at.
Yer mind's aye chasin mice. Your wits are wool-gathering.
Yer tongue gangs like a lamm's tail. You are never done talking.
Proverbs

Proverbs, called *provribs, freits* or *sawes* in Scots, are short familiar sayings expressing a supposed truth or moral lesson.

A bonnie bride is suin buskit, and a short horse is suin wispit.
A pretty bride needs little decoration; a small horse little grooming.

A cauld needs the keuk sae muckle the doctor.
Nutritious food can cure a cold as effectively as medicine.

A gien cou shoudna be leukit in the mou.
Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.

A greedy gutsie ee ne'er gat a fou wame.
Greedy persons are never satisfied.

A guid dug ne'er barkit aboot a bane.
Good servants don't look for rewards.

A guid name’s suiner tint nor wun.
A good name is sooner lost than gained.

A hungersome wame haes nae lugs.
A hungry person can't listen to reason.

A rowin stane gaithers nae fog.
A rolling stone gathers no moss.

A shored tree staunds lang.
Threatened folk live long.

A smaw buss is better nor nae bield.
Any port in a storm.

Ae man’s meat is anither man’s pushion.
One man’s food is another man’s poison.

Early creuk the tree that guid crummock wad be.
If at first you don’t succeed, try, try and try again.

An ill shearer ne’er gat a guid heuk.
A bad workman always blames his tools.
As ae door’s steekit, anither appens.
As one door closes, another one opens.

As daft as a yett on a windy day.
As mad as a hatter.

Auld sawes speaks suith.
Old proverbs tell the truth.

Auld speugies is ill tae tame.
You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.

Aw compleen o want o siller but nane o want o mense.
If they had more sense, they would soon have more money.

Aw things haes an end, and a pudden haes twa.
All things have an end, and a sausage has two

Aye tae eild but niver tae wit.
Always growing older but never wiser.

Bairns maun creep or thay gang.
Don’t try to walk before you can crawl.

Better a fremmit freend nor a freend fremmit.
Better friendly stranger than a friend estranged.

Better a moose in the pat nor nae flesh.
A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.

Better a tuim hoose nor an ill tenant.
Better an empty house than a bad tenant. (Said when letting wind)

Better a wee buss nor nae bield.
Any port in a storm.

Better hauf an egg nor a tuim dowp.
Better half a loaf than no bread.

Better ma freends thinks me fremmit as fashious.
Better my that friends think me a stranger owing to infrequent visits than troublesome

Better mak yer feet yer freends.
Show a clean pair of heels.
Better suin nor syne.
Better sooner rather than later.

Beauty's muck whan honour's tint.
Beauty is of no value when honour's lost.

Claw ye ma back, and A'll claw yours.
If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

Craft maun hae claes but suith gangs nakit.
Cunning must have clothes but truth goes naked.

Dinna speak o raip til a chield that's faither wis hingit.
Don't talk of rope to a man whose father was hanged.

E'enin orts is guid mornin's fother.
Today's rain is tomorrow's whisky.

Facts is chields that winna ding.
Facts are stubborn things.

Gie a beggar a bed, and he'll pey ye wi a loose.
Give a beggar a bed, and he'll pay you with a louse.

Gie yer tongue mair halidays nor yer heid.
Give your tongue more holidays than your head.

He shoud hae a hale powe that caws his neebour neetie nou.
People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

He that's angry appens his mou and steeks his een.
The angry man speaks inadvisedly, without investigating the matter.

He that's scant o braith shoudna meddle wi the chanter.
Never begin anything for which you have no aptitude.

He that blaws in stour fills his ain een.
He who stirs up trouble finds himself in it.

He that sleeps wi dugs maun rise wi flaes.
He who keeps bad company will be the worse for it.

He that will til Cupar maun til Cupar.
A wilful man must have his way.
Ilk blad o girse keeps its ain dew.
Mind your own business.

It's a bare muir that ye gang throu and no find a heather cou.
It's a long lane that has no turning.

It's a blate cheetie that maks a prood moose.
A shy cat makes a proud mouse.

It's an ill bird that fyles its ain nest.
Don't foul your own nest.

It's better tae hear the laverock sing nor the moose cheep.
The outdoor life is the better.

It's guid tae begin weel, but better tae end weel.
Make hay while the sun shines.

It's ill bringin but whit's no ben.
You can't have your cake and eat it.

It's like butter in the black dug's hause.
It's no use crying over spilt milk.

It's no the rummlin cairt that faws ower the brae.
It's not the likeliest person who dies first.

It's past joukin when the heid's aff.
It's too late to lock the stable door after the horse has bolted.

Keep yer ain fish-guts tae yer ain seamaws.
Charity begins at home.

Kinnle a caunle at baith ends, and it'll suin be duin.
Go to bed late and rise early, and you'll soon be dead.

Lat the belled wedder brak the snaw.
Tried leaders are best in emergencies.

Lig the heid o the sou til the tail o the grice.
Balance gains and losses.

Makna tuim ruise.
Bestow no empty praise.
Mony ane for laund taks a fuil by the haund.
Many marry for money.

Mony a puckle maks a muckle.
Every little helps.

Muckle whistlin for little redd laund.
Much cry for little wool.

Nae gairdener iver lichtlied his ain leeks.
No man speaks ill of what he values most.

Ne’er find faut wi ma shuin unless ye pey ma souter.
Don’t criticise something you know nothing about and which is none of your business.

Ne’er gang til the Deil wi a dish-cloot on yer heid.
As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb. In for a penny, in for a pound.

Ne’er lat yer feet rin faster nor yer shuin.
Don’t outstrip your resources.

Ne’er lat yer gear owergang ye.
Pride not yourself in your riches.

Ne’er pit yer haund oot faurer nor yer sleeve will rax.
Spend no more than you can afford.

Niver tak a forehaimer tae brak an egg (whan ye can dae’t wi the back o a knife).
To crack a nut with a sledgehammer.

Oot the hiegate is aye fair play.
Honesty is the best policy.

Pit twa pennies in a pootch, and thay’ll creep thegither.
Look after the pennies, and the pounds will look after themselves.

Raise nae mair deils nor ye can lig.
Don’t start anything you can’t stop.

Reek follaes the fairest; beir witness tae the creuk.
Excellence is accompanied by envy.

Set a stoot hert til a stey brae.
The harder the task, the more determination is needed.
Tak help at yer elbucks.
Heaven helps those who help themselves.

The eemock bites sairer nor the clock.
It is dangerous to interfere with a man seriously engaged in business.

The keeng ligs doun, and the warld rins roond.
No man is indispensable.

The pruif o the pudden’s in the the preein o’ t.
The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

The thing that’s duin is no tae dae.
There’s no time like the present.

Thare’s a dub at ilka door.
There’s a skeleton in every cupboard.

Thare’s aye some watter whaur the stirkie drouns.
No smoke without fire.

Thay are fremmit freends that canna be fasht.
They are strange friends who can’t be bothered.

Thay gang faur that disna meet ae day.
It’s a small world.

We can shape wir bairns’ wyliecoat but canna shape thair weird.
We can shape our children’s clothes but not their fate.

Ye canna gaither berries aff a whinbuss.
Don’t go to ill-tempered people for favours.
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