Meanings of Common Names and Name-Elements in Old Norse

Note that most names are compounds of the elements presented here, and that no particularly connected meaning is implied by compounding them together; they are only supposed to sound cool. Thus one should not read anything too meaningful into names like *Hildigunn,* "war-war," (or *Guðfrið,* "war-peace"!).

The gender which the name element is associated with is marked where applicable, but is only relevant to the second part of a compound name - e.g. *Gunnar* includes the feminine word *gunn* but is a masculine name because the second element *-ar* is masculine. Elements followed by -, e.g. *Ás-,* typically occur just as the first part of a compound; elements preceded by -, e.g. *-ung,* usually just occur as the second part of a compound.

Simple names may often be formed by taking most of the word elements below and adding an *-i* to make a man's name and an *-a* to make a woman's name (e.g. the man's name *Helgi* and the woman's name *Helga*).

Aðal, noble
Ald, ruler (masc.)
Alf, elf (masc.)
-ar, warrior (masc.)
Arin-, eagle
Arn, eagle (masc.)
Ás-, god
Auð-, rich
Ber, bear (fem.)
Bj-, bee
Bjark-, birch tree
Bjarn, bear (masc.)
Bjart, bright
Bjǫrk, birch tree (f.)
Bjǫrn, bear (masc.)
Bǫð, war
Brag, important
Brand, sword (m.)
Brók, pants (fem.)
Brún, eyelashes (f.)
Bryn-, armor
Brynj-, armor
Dag-, day
Dan, Dane
Dís, goddess (fem.)
Efni, quality/material
Egil, terrifier
Ei-, lone
Ein-, lone
Erp, dark-haired (m.)
Ey, island
Fjǫtl, foot
Freð, peace
Frey-, Freyr (a god)
Freyj-, Freyr (a god)
Frið, peace
Fróð, wise (masc.)
Fugl, bird (masc.)

Gand, staff (masc.)
Geir, spear (masc.)
Gerð, armor (fem.)
Gest, guest (masc.)
Gils, hostage
Gísl, hostage
Góð, good
Gram, fierce
Grán, gray
Grettir, frowner
Grim, grim
Grís, hog (masc.)
Guð-, war
Gunn, war (fem.)
Gutt-, war
Há-, high
Haf, ocean
Half-, half
Hall, hall
Hallar-, hall
Har, army (masc.)
Harð, hard (masc.)
Harða-, hard
Haug, grave (masc.)
Hauk, hawk (masc.)
Heðinn, warlike
Hel, Hell (fem.)
Helg, holy
Heljar-, Hell
Heri, soldier (m.)
Herj-, soldier
Hild, war (fem.)
Hildi-, war
Hǫð, war
Hǫgn, crafty
Hǫll, hall
Hǫtt, hat (masc.)
Hr-, famous
Hrafn, raven (m.)
Hroð-, famous

Hrol-, famous
Hug, thought
Hvat, bold
Ill, bad
-in, the
Ing-, Frey (a god)
Ingj-, Frey (a god)
Í-, shield
Ís-, ice
Jǫkul, glacier (m.)
Jǫrmun-, great
Karl, man (masc.)
Karls-, manly
Kel, helmet (masc.)
Ketil, helmet (m.)
Knút, knot (masc.)
Kol, coal
Kon, son (masc.)
Krak, pole
Krák, crow
Kveld-, evening
Laf, survivor (m.)
Lák, sport (masc.)
Laug, bath
Leif, survivor (m.)
Lið, sailor
Líf, life
Loð, shaggy
Morð, murder
Móð, wrath (masc.)
Mun, memory
Mund, hand (masc.)
Ný, new (fem.)
Ó-, ancestor
Óð, mad
Odd, spearpoint (masc.)
Ǫg-, terrifier
Old, ruler (masc.)
Olf, wolf (masc.)

Ǫr, arrow
Orm, worm (masc.)
Ǫrv-, arrow
Ótt, terrifier
Ráð, ruler
Ragn, ruler, god
Regin, ruler, god
Rek, king (masc.)
-ríð, beautiful (f.)
Rík, king (masc.)
Rǫð, order (fem.)
Rǫgn, ruler
Rún, rune (fem.)
Sám, dark (masc.)
Serk, shirt
Sig, victory (masc.)
Sin-, cinder
Skalla-, bald
Skarp-, sharp
Skegg, beard
Skeggj-, beard
Skúl, protector
Snorr, wise (masc.)
Sǫrl, cunning
Stein, stone (masc.)
Sterk, strong
Sturla, bull (masc.)
Súr, sour
Thjóð (Þjóð), clan
Thor (Þor), Thor
Thorð (Þórð), Thor-guardian (masc.)
Tryggv, trusty
Tunga, tongue
Ug, thought
Ugg, terrifier
Ulf, wolf (masc.)
-ung, -ness
Urð, guard (masc.)

Val, slaughtered
Vald, ruler (masc.)
Var, warrior (masc.)
Varð, guard (masc.)
Víga-, killer
Vin, friend
Vind, wind (masc.)
Vǫls, procreative organ (masc.)
Vǫr, warrior (fem.)
Yng-, Freyr (a god)

of Foreign Origin
Atli (*Attila*); Gothic
Kjartan, (m.); Irish
Kormák (m.); Irish
Magnús (m.); Latin
Njál (*Neal*); Irish

Pronunciation
á/å = o in New Y*o*rk
ð = the **th** in *then*
ei = the **ai** in *rain*
ey = Norwegian *øy;* similar to English *boy*
f = v unless 1st letter
g = always like in *go*
j = like *y* in *year*
ǫ = á/å
s = always **s**, never **z**
Þ = the *th* in *thin*

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