

Learning To Speak Faroese

Faroese has been spoken in the Faroes for about 600 years, when it separated itself from Old Norse. The first writing that show signs of a new language, however, was written in 1298. The closest relativ to Faroese is the now extinct Norn, spoken in the Orkneys until the 17th or 18th century and the Shetlands where it became extinct in the 2nd half of the 19th century. The last remains of Norn was actually written down by a Faroese man, Dr. Jakob Jakobsen in the 1880's. Shetland's Norn was actually so close to Faroese that the two languages were mutually intelligible.

Faroese has many retained grammatical structures from the old Norse and Germanic languages, 3 gender, 2 numbers, 4 cases, strongly and weakly bent nouns, verbs and adjectives. In grammatics, Faroese is closest to Icelandic, but in its vocabulary it is closest to many Western Norwegian dialects, although most loan words come from Danish/German. This is due to the fact that from the time of the Reformation, school-, church- and administrative language of the Faroes (and Norway) was Danish, although Luther's meaning with the Reformation was that every man should hear the Lord's words in his own language.

The Faroes today is multilingual, schoolwise. Besides Faroese, Danish must be learned, and English lessons start in the 5th grade. As all Faroese know Danish, they also understand Norwegian and Swedish. However, it is more difficult for the Faroese to understand Icelandic! Many Faroese also know other languages, like French, German and Spanish. Lately many foreigners have come to the islands, and some have taken up an interest in their language, for example, Romanian and Polish. Today, Faroese is spoken by approx. 60-70,000 people. 47,000 of these live in the Faroes, a big part of the rest in Denmark. But strangely you can find a Faroese in almost any country in the world. Currently, there are Faroese people in Mali, Ukraine and Australia.

Section 1: Some Basic Phrases (I can't fully write the pronounciations since the Faroese use accents to spell some sounds. Many letters also aren't pronounced the same all the time.)

Góðan morgun - *gouwan morgun* - Good morning

Góðan dag - *gouwan dae* - Hi/Good day

Gott kvøld - *gott kvuld* - Good evening

Góða nátt - *gouwa not* - Good night

Farvæl - *farrvael* - Goodbye

Góði/góða - *gouwe/gouwa* - Please (difference is gender)

Takk - *takk* - Thank you

Ger so væl - *jer so vael* - There you go

Ja/Nei - *yah/nai* or *noy* - Yes/No

Harra/Frúa/Frøkun - *harra/fruwa/froekun* - Mister/Misses/Miss

Hvussu gongur? - *Kvussu gongur* (*pronounce both g's*) - How are you? (Both in- and formal)

Eg eri troyttur - *eh ehre troyttur* - I'm tired

Eg eri sjúkur - *eh ehre shuwwkur* - I'm sick

Eg eri svangur - *eh ehre svengur/svangur* - I'm hungry (dialectal differences)

Eg eri tystur - *eh ehre tistur* - I'm thirsty

Gott/Væl/OK - *gott/vael/OK* - Good/Well/OK

Ringt/Illa - *ringt/idla* - Not Good/Well (Ringt also means bad and hard)

Hvussu eita tygum - *Kvussu aitah/oytah teeyum* - What is your name? (Formal)

Hvussu eitur tú? - *Kvussu aitur/oytur tuw?* - What is your name? (Informal) (Dialectal differences)

Eg eiti... - *eh aite/oyte...* - My name is...

Hvaðan eru tygum? - *Kva-an ehru teeyum?* - Where are you from (Formal)

Hvaðan ert tú? - *Kva-an ehrt tuw?* - Where are you from? (Informal)

Hvar búgva tygum? - *Kvaer bigvah teeyum?* - Where do you live? (Formal)

Hvar býrt tú? - *Kvaer bírt tú?* - Where do you live? (Informal) (I don't know of an English letter that has the same pronunciation as the Faroese í/ý.)

Eg eri úr USA. - *Eh ehri uwr Uuh-ess-ah.* - I'm from the USA.

Eg búgvi í - *Eh bigve í* - I live in... (Note: that when talking about Faroese villagenames, í can be replaced with á and við)

Hvussu gamal eru tygum? - *Kvussu gaemahl ehru teeyum?* - How old are you? (Formal)

Hvussu gamal ert tú? - *Kvussu gaemahl ehrt tuw?* - How old are you? (Informal)

Hvussu mong eru áriini? - *Kvussu mongh ehru ahrine?* - How old are you? (Both)

Eg eri --- ára gamal/gomul - *Eh ehri --- aara gaemahl/gohmul.* - I'm --- years old (Male/Female)

Dugir tú føroyskt? - *Duwur tuwe foerist?* - Do you speak Faroese? (Informal)

Duga tygum enskt? - *Duwa teeyum ensgt?* - Do you speak English? (Formal)

Franskt, Italienskt, Spanskt, Russiskt, Japanskt, Danskt - *frans(k)t, italiens(k)t, spahns(k)t, russis(k)t, yahpahns(k)t, dahnskt* - French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Japanese, Danish

Eg tosi... - *eh toh-se...* - I speak...

Eg dugi ikki... - *eh duwi itje...* - I don't speak...

Eg skilji [ikki]. - *eh schilji [itje]...* - I [don't] understand.

Orsaka meg - *Ohrsaka meh* - Excuse me

Tað harmar meg / Orsaka - *Taeh harm-ar meh / Ohrsaeka* - I'm sorry (Sad / excuse)

Síggjast seinni/skjótt - *síghast saidni/sjøtt* - See you later/soon

Hey/Bei - *hey/bai* - Hi/bye

Eg elski teg - *eh elshe teh* - I love you

Pronunciation

a ah short like f(a)r the long sound sounds like æ

á á New Yorker a f(a)r

b beh

d deh

ð edd, silent, but also w, j, g, and other sounds

e like German e

f eff

g Like the German word "geh"

h hah

i ee

j yodd

k kaw (roughly)
l ell
m emm
n enn
o oh, but more flat
ó o
p peh
r err
s ess
t teh as in Teh-eran
u as in through
ú as ou in you
v German word "weh"
y like i, but sometimes ü
ý like í
æ aeh
ø uh like in Duh
ei i or oy (Dialects)
ey ay
oy oy

Note, that the Faroese words are spelled in a way so they look like the old Norse words. Hence do some letters also have different pronounciations. This depends on where in the word the letter is.

When k is in front of e, i, or ey it makes the ch sound.

When g is in front of e, i, or ey it makes the English j-sound.

dj is pronounced as the English j-sound.

Of other things that might be extremely important are **numbers**.

0 Null null
1 Eitt aitt/oytt
2 Tvey tvay
3 Trý truy
4 Fýra fuyrah
5 Fimm fimm
6 Seks sex (this can cause misunderstanding) :)
7 Sjey shay
8 Átta otta
9 Níggju nuyg-gju
10 Tíggju tuyg-gju
11 Ellivu edl-li-vu

12 Tólv tölv
13 Trettan tret-tann
14 Fjúrtafjór-tann
15 Fimtan fimh-tann
16 Sekstan sex-tann
17 Seytjan say-chann
18 Átjan ah-chann
19 Nítjan nuy-chann
20 Tjúgu chuv-vu
21 Einogtjúgu ain-o-chuv-vu/oynd-o-chuv-vu
22 Tveyogtjúgu tvay-o-chuv-vu
30 Tredivu/Tríati treh-de-vu/truy-at-tee
40 Fjóruti/Fýrati fjuh-ru-tee/fuyr-at-tee
50 Hálvtrýss/Fimmti holv-truysh/fimm-tee
60 Trýss/Seksti tuysh/sex-tee
70 Hálvfjers/Sjeyti holv-fjehrs/shay-tee
80 Fýrs/Áttati fuhrs/Ott-ah-tee
90 Hálvfems/Níti holv-fehms/nuy-tee
100 Hundrað hunn-drah
1.000 (Eitt) túsund/(aitt/oytt) tuw-sunnd

. is used as a thousand separator and not , as in English. Therefore what is 5,798.34\$ is English is 5.798,34\$ is Faroese (and most other Germanic languages but you probably know that)

Days

Sunday sunnudagur sunn-uuh-dae-wur

Monday mánadagur maah-nah-dae-wur

Tuesday týsdagur tuysh-dae-wur

Wednesday mikudagur mee-kuu-dae-wur (in Suðuroy: ónsdagur ons-dae-wur)

Thursday hósdagur hoes-dae-wur (in Suðuroy: tórsdagur toas-dae-wur)

Friday fríggjadagur fruydj-ah-dae-wur

Saturday leygardagur lay-yar-dae-wur

day dagur dae-wur

morning morgun morr-gunn

afternoon seinnapart saidn-a-parrt

evening kvöld kvoeld

night nátt not

today í dag uy dae

tomorrow í morgin uy morr-gin

tonight í kvöld uy kvoeld

yesterday í gjár uy gjahr

last night í gjárkvøldi uy gjahr-kvoeld-e

week vika vih-ka

weekend vikuskifti vih-ku-shift-e

daily dagliga dagg-lee-a

weekly viku fyri viku vih-ku fee-ri vih-ku

Note: to say *on* a certain day or to express "on Mondays, etc." make the day definite: sunnudagin, mánadagin, etc. All days and months are masculine, so they all use the same form of these words: **hvønn** - every, **næsta** - next, **síðsta** - last, **undarfarna** - previous. **Í vikuni** is the expression for "during the week". "During the weekend" and "in the weekend" is expressed **í vikuskiftinum**.

Months

January januar yah-nuh-ar or yahn-vahr

February februar feh-bruh-ar

March mars marsh (with a very short a)

April apríl a-pruyl

May mai my

June juni yuh-nee

July july yuh-lee

August august av-guhst

September september sep-tehm-bur

October oktober ok-toh-bur

November november noh-vehm-bur

December desember deh-sehm-bur

month mánaði mah-nah-yih

year ár ahr

monthly mánaðarlíga mah-na-varr-lee-a

yearly árlíga orr-lee-a

Note: to say *in* a certain month, use *í*.

Seasons:

Winter vetur veh-tur

Spring vár vahr

Summer sumar sum-marr

Autumn heyst hest

Note: to say *in the* (any season) use *í*. Vetur is masculine, and the other seasons are neutrum.

Directions:

North norður

North East landnyrðingur

East eystur

South East landsynningur

South suður

South West útsynningur

West vestur

North West útnyrðingur

There are other eight directions: f.ex. East South East, landsynningur eystan.

National Anthem

Tú, alfagra land mítt,
mín dýrasta ogn,
á vetri so randhvítt,
á sumri við logn,
tú tekur meg at nær
so tætt í tín favn,
tít oyggjar so mætar,
Gud signi tað navn,
sum menn tykkum góvu,
tá teir tykkum sóu,
Ja, Gud signi Føroyar, mítt land.

You, my beautiful country,
My precious belonging,
In winter so white
In summer at peace
You take me to you
So close in your arms
You, islands, so mighty,
God bless the name,
That men gave you,
When they saw you,
Yes, God bless Føroyar, my country

(Needless to say, Føroyar is the Faroese name for the Faroe Islands.)

Hin roðin, sum skínur
á sumri í líð,
hin ódnin, sum týnir
mangt lív vetrartíð,
og myrkrið, sum fjalir
mær bjartasta mál,
og ljósið, sum spælir
mær sigur í sál:
Alt streingir, ið tóna
sum vága og vóna,
at eg verji Føroyar, mítt land.

The red sun that shines
in summer in líð (líð is what behind the walls, you have to see it to know what it is)

the storm, that kills
much life wintertime
and the darkness, that hides
from me the brightest goal
and the light, that plays
it say in my soul:
All strings, that sound
that dare and hope
that I defend Føroyar, my land. (Country to be totally correct)

Eg nígi tí niður
í bøn til tín, Guð:
Hin heilagi friður
mær falli í lut!
Lat sál mía tváa
sær í tíni dýrd!
So torir hon vága
- av Guði væl skírd -
at bera tað merki,
sum eyðkennir verkið,
ið varðveitir Føroyar, mítt land!

I kneel therefore down
in pray'r to you, God
The holy peace
you may give to me!
Let my soul cleans (tváa means wash)
her in your grace!
Then will she dare
- from God væl ? - (let me look that word up for you)
to carry the banner
that symbolizes the work, (not entirely correct)
that protects Føroyar, mítt land!

Símun av Skarði

To the word "skírd". When a person is made an icon, (like the holy Mother Mary, and Mother Therese) he/she is "skírd" an icon. Perhaps you can translate that better than me. I guess you could use the word "blessed", since in the Anthem it's sort of meant that way.