

Third Edition

Routledge Comprehensive Grammars

# Swedish

A Comprehensive Grammar

Philip Holmes and Ian Hinchliffe



# Swedish

## *A Comprehensive Grammar*

3<sup>rd</sup> edition

*Swedish: A Comprehensive Grammar* is an award-winning complete reference guide to modern Swedish grammar. This volume is organised to promote a thorough understanding of Swedish grammar, presenting the complexities of Swedish in a concise and readable form. Explanations are full, clear and free of jargon, and an extensive index, numbered paragraphs, cross-references and summary charts provide readers with easy access to the information they require.

Now in its third edition, the text has been comprehensively updated to conform to new standards set in the description of language and to reflect the recommendations of the Language Council of Sweden. It offers an improved layout, completely revised index and more user-friendly paragraph structure. Continuing the tradition of previous editions, the emphasis remains fixed on Swedish in everyday communication, drawing on modern corpus material, the internet and the media to provide high frequency words and expressions. Examples have been modernised throughout and new content takes account of recent trends resulting from the increasing democratisation of written Swedish.

Features include:

- detailed treatment of grammatical structures and parts of speech
- a wealth of examples from present-day Swedish
- particular attention to areas of confusion and difficulty for learners
- Swedish/English contrasts highlighted throughout the book
- chapters on word formation, orthography and punctuation.

*Swedish: A Comprehensive Grammar* is the most thorough and detailed Swedish grammar available in English and is an essential reference source for the learner and user of Swedish, irrespective of level. It is ideal for use in schools, colleges, universities and adult classes of all types.

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**Winner of the Swedish National Language Council's Erik Wellander Prize,  
2003**

**Praise for the first edition**

‘This grammar has great assets. The first is that it is compiled by English-speaking people who have an excellent command of Swedish but who know at first hand where the difficulties of learning Swedish lie ... The second is that it represents contemporary Swedish and draws attention to different styles and registers ... a good reliable guide to modern Swedish and should serve as a standard reference of many years.’

*Scandinavica*

‘The strong points of this grammar are: (a) it concentrates on everyday informal language; (b) it gives a wealth of examples; (c) by being “unashamedly comparative” it highlights some aspects of the Swedish language that are hardly ever touched upon in Swedish grammars written by native speakers.’

*Tijdschrift voor Skandinavistiek*

**Praise for the second edition**

‘A vital contribution to the presentation of Swedish to an international audience. The book adopts a valuable external perspective on Swedish, from which native speakers of Swedish can also benefit, and is a major source of knowledge for all of those either within or outside Sweden who teach Swedish as a second language or as a foreign language.’

*The Swedish Language Council*

‘We have in *Swedish: A Comprehensive Grammar* an extraordinarily workable teaching and reference tool that should continue to be a source of linguistic enrichment for many years to come.’

*Marilyn Johns Blackwell, Ohio State University, USA*

‘This is a reference work of the first rank ... Above all, however, this book constitutes the most important international work of reference for everyone with an interest in linguistics in search of detailed information about the morphology and syntax of Swedish.’

*Skandinavistik*

### **Praise for the third edition**

‘A thorough, clear guide to the rules of Swedish grammar... Holmes and Hinchliffe cover everything from basics such as nouns and adjectives to more advanced topics such as interjections and prepositions, and they do it all with ease and clarity. *Javisst*, this is the best reference book to Swedish grammar you’ll find in English.’

*B.J. Epstein, University of East Anglia, UK*

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# Swedish

*A Comprehensive Grammar*

*3<sup>rd</sup> edition*



**Philip Holmes and  
Ian Hinchliffe**

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# Preface

We have two aims in writing this book:

- To describe various style registers in contemporary written and spoken Swedish.
- To provide a source of reference for the student and teacher, in order to help non-native learners develop fluency when speaking and writing Swedish.

We have attempted to write an English-language grammar for Swedish with as comprehensive an approach as that found in grammars already available for major world languages.

A substantial index is provided to both Swedish and English key words as well as to grammatical concepts.

Where possible we have retained traditional linguistic terminology and a traditional structure. In Chapter 10 (Sentence structure and word order), however, users are advised to study Section A (now 10.1.1–10.1.8) before turning to the chapter as a source of reference. This is because, for the first time, the positional scheme for sentence structure developed by the Danish linguist, Paul Diderichsen, has been adapted for the English learner of Swedish.

Any grammar is a snapshot of something both multi-faceted and swiftly changing. Some of our observations will probably be invalid in twenty years' time; others (such as the acceptance of the written forms **ska** and **sa** or the increasingly widespread use of comparative constructions with **mer** and **mest**) would have raised eyebrows only a few years ago. However, we trust we have not been deluded into accepting uncritically some assumptions made about the language which we regard as unfounded. To take one example: the forms **mig**, **dig**, **sig** still hold the high ground in cultivated written Swedish. The trend towards **mej**, **dej**, **sej** is not as strong as some observers previously imagined.

The starting point in our account has been what Swedes write or say. We have used the findings of modern research to test traditional rules against actual practice. A living language is too complex to be embodied in a simple system of rules, and there are invariably a number of grey areas in syntax and grammar. Here we have attempted to guide learners towards what is generally considered to be good usage. To do this we have chosen to relegate outmoded expressions, slang and peripheral phenomena to notes within the text.

A book of this kind requires hundreds of examples. In some cases these have been specifically constructed to help in the learning/teaching process. In other cases examples from books, newspapers, radio and television have been adapted to simplify this process. Our own translations have been provided for the vast majority of examples and may be regarded as an additional aid in the task of learning how to render Swedish accurately into English.

*Swedish: A Comprehensive Grammar* is unashamedly comparative in nature. By concentrating on some of the questions most frequently raised by English learners of Swedish, we hope that this book may provide some practical answers.

We wish to thank Jyrki Pietarinen for many valuable suggestions for improvements.

We wish also to thank Peter Graves of Edinburgh University, Kersti Börjars of Manchester University, Els-Marie Widén-Karlsson of Växjö and, last but by no means least, Katie Lewis, for their invaluable assistance and advice in the final stages of this project. All remaining errors and omissions are ours alone. We would also like to thank the many undergraduate students of Swedish in the University of Hull's Department of Scandinavian Studies who, albeit unwittingly, have served as guinea-pigs.

Finally, we would like to thank our wives and families for tolerating our long-term, extra-marital relationships with various word processors.

## **Second edition**

The first edition of this book came out in 1994, and the 1998 reprint included a number of corrections and updates and some additional examples. These versions of the book preceded the publication of *Svenska Akademiens Grammatik* in 1999.

This second edition (2003) involves a number of major changes to the structure and content of the book, among which are:

- The addition of a new chapter, Chapter 11 Word Formation.

- The provision of a single Chapter 1 on Nouns rather than the original two: Nouns and Nouns – forms with articles.
- Substantial changes to Chapter 1, including a categorisation of noun declensions that accords with the new scheme proposed in *Svenska Akademiens Grammatik*.
- The addition to Chapter 10 of a section on phrases.
- Numerous changes of detail and examples throughout, with the overriding aim of simplifying the arguments and eliminating duplication.

Consequently, it should be noted that section numbering in this version differs from that in the first edition.

### Third edition

While this third edition involves no changes to the overall structure of the book, the text has been thoroughly and extensively revised. Users familiar with previous editions will notice some significant alterations.

- An entirely new paragraph numbering system has been employed and many new subheadings have been added to provide guidance for the reader.
- Some major changes have been made to the explanations and examples in the chapters on nouns, pronouns, prepositions, sentence structure and word formation. These changes update and clarify a number of rules and permit the inclusion of new information about current shifts and trends in usage by minimising duplication.
- Additionally, throughout the book we have made numerous amendments in detail to both the accounts and the examples, and more translations have been added to help the reader.

Written Swedish has been greatly democratised over the past decade as a consequence of the steep rise in the use of the internet as a largely unregulated medium for both interpersonal and more formal communication. Parallel with this development is the by no means negligible impact on Swedish of its use by the fifteen per cent or so of the country's population born outside the nation's borders. With immigration and its effect on the cultural landscape have come new words and a few subtle yet nonetheless perceptible changes in accepted forms of expression, such as the omission of the preposition after certain adjective phrases that are conventionally followed by an **att**-clause.

In a descriptive grammar such as this and in our ambition to demonstrate the diversity of Swedish usage in the early twenty-first century, many of our examples reflect changes to be found in the most recent edition of the

Swedish Academy's wordlist, which is the official normative description of the lexicon of Swedish, and the latest recommendations of *Språkrådet*, the Language Council of Sweden. In addition, hundreds of examples in this third edition have been culled from Swedish mainstream media, government and corporate websites and the extensive corpora of Swedish now available.

Finally, the authors owe a special debt of gratitude to Inga-Beth Hinchliffe for her many insightful comments on the form and content of this third edition at the manuscript stage. Our thanks also go to Irene Elmerot and Sofia Malmgård, whose generous assistance at a later stage with many of the more complex and contentious examples has greatly contributed to what we believe is a description of Swedish grammar and usage that is totally authentic, fully up-to-date and truly comprehensive.

Phil Holmes and Ian Hinchliffe,  
Kineton, England, and Killeberg, Sweden, 2013

# Symbols and abbreviations used in the text

<b>(att), nå(go)n</b>	word or part of a word is omitted or added		
<b>växt/vuxit</b>	alternatives		
<b>*designersarna</b>	incorrect usage		
<b>-C</b>	ends in a consonant		
<b>-V</b>	ends in a vowel		
<b>-ska, -inna, etc.</b>	word ending in <b>-ska, -inna, etc.</b>		
<b>/or, -t, -na</b>	inflectional endings		
<b>-0</b>	no plural ending		
<b>0</b>	no preposition (Chapter 7) or no verb ending		
<b>skriv/er</b>	verb stem + inflectional ending		
<b>x → y</b>	x changes into y		
<b>y ← → y</b>	y refers to or agrees with x		
<b>I, II, IIa, IIb, III, IV</b>	numbers of verb conjugations		
<b>hetat*</b>	irregular verb form		
<b>/sa/</b>	approximate pronunciation using standard Swedish spelling		
<b>mil</b> [approx. 6 miles]	clarification		
<b>dok'torer</b>	stress on syllable following mark		
<b>för be red ande,</b>	division into word formation elements or morphemes		
<b>bil tak</b>			
adj.	adjective	conjunct.	conjunctive
adv.	adverb	Cons.	consonant
art.	article	coord. conj.	coordinating
aux.	auxiliary		conjunction
C	complement	def.	definite
CA	clausal adverbial	DO	direct object
cf.	compare	end art.	end (definite)
coll.	colloquial		article
Conj.	conjugation	Eng.	English
conj.	conjunction	FE	first element



fem.	feminine	para.	paragraph
FS	formal subject	part.	participle
FV	finite verb	pl.	plural
gen.	genitive	prep.	preposition
H	head word	-prep.	no preposition
indef.	indefinite	+prep.	with preposition
inf.	infinitive	pron.	pronounced
intr.	intransitive	RS	real subject
IO	indirect object	S	subject
irr. (verb)	irregular	SC	1. subordinate clause, 2. subject complement
L	link position		
<i>lit.</i>	literally		
masc.	masculine	SE	second (or subsequent) element
MC	main clause		
n.	neuter		
neg.	negation		
NFV	non-finite verb	sing.	singular
n.-n.	non-neuter	sub. conj.	subordinating conjunction
NP	noun phrase		
O	object	subj.	subject
OA	other adverbial	T	topic
obj.	object(ive)	tr.	transitive
O/C	object/complement		

## Chapter I

# Nouns

## 1.1 Introduction

### 1.1.1 Different types of noun

Proper nouns:

**Björn; Stockholm; Sverige, Sweden; IKEA**

Common nouns:

Concrete nouns: **bil**, car; **dator**, computer; **hus**, house; **katt** cat; **kvinn**a, woman; **stol**, chair

Abstract nouns: **begåvning**, intelligence; **glädje**, joy; **mjukhet**, softness; **sorg**, grief; **sjukdom**, illness

Nouns may also be classified as:

Count nouns, i.e. concrete things and creatures: **bulle**, bun; **student**, student; **träd**, tree

– Some abstracts are count nouns: **färg**, colour; **leende**, smile; **skratt**, laugh

Non-count nouns, i.e. substances: **bensin**, petrol; **luft**, air; **vatten**, water

– Some abstract nouns are non-count nouns: **lycka**, happiness; **vithet**, whiteness. Also: **pengar**, money.

For noun compounds see 11.3.2–11.3.5.

### 1.1.2 **Genders**

Swedish nouns are of one of two genders, non-neuter and neuter shown by the form of the indefinite and definite article (1.9f.). Non-neuter nouns take the indefinite article **en** and the end article (definite article) **-(e)n**:

**en bil**, a car  
**bilen**, the car

**en kvinna**, a woman  
**kvinnan**, the woman

Some grammars use the term ‘common’ for ‘non-neuter’. Others use ‘**n**-word’ or ‘**en**-word’ for the non-neuter noun and ‘**t**-word’ or ‘**ett**-word’ for the neuter noun.

Neuter nouns take the indefinite article **ett** and the end article (definite article) **-(e)t**:

**ett bord**, a table  
**bordet**, the table

**ett yrke**, a profession  
**yrket**, the profession

About seventy-five per cent of all nouns occurring in newspaper text are non-neuter. In many cases either the form of the noun, usually its final syllable, or its meaning may provide a clue to its gender.

### 1.1.3 **Indefinite plural forms**

Plurals are indicated by a number of different endings according to declension. See 1.4.2–1.4.9.

**en hylla – hyllor**, a shelf – shelves; **en pärm – pärmar**, a folder – folders; **en dator – datorer**, a computer – computers; **en studio – studior**, a studio – studios; **ett tema – teman**, a theme – themes; **ett fönster – fönster**, a window – windows; **en cliffhanger – cliffhangers**, a cliffhanger – cliffhangers

### 1.1.4 **Cases**

There are two cases for Swedish nouns – a basic (unmarked) case and a genitive in **-s**. See 1.8.

*Unmarked*  
**en kvinna**, a woman  
**kvinnan**, the woman

*Genitive*  
**en kvinnas intressen**, a woman’s interests  
**kvinnans intressen**, the woman’s interests

**kvinnor**, women      **kvinnors intressen**, women's interests  
**kvinnorna**, the women   **kvinnornas intressen**, the women's interests

See also the noun phrase, 10.2.2.

## 1.2 Gender rules

It is often impossible to predict gender from meaning. For example, **en gård**, 'a farm', and **ett torp**, 'a croft', belong to the same general area of meaning but differ in gender. However, it is possible to generalise as in 1.2.1 and 1.2.3. But note that there are often exceptions.

Form is a more accurate way of predicting gender, but applies in fewer cases overall.

### 1.2.1 Non-neuter by meaning

The following types of noun are non-neuter by meaning:

#### 1.2.1.1 Nouns describing human beings

**en chef**, a manager; **en far**, a father; **en gäst**, a guest; **en lärare**, a teacher; **en svensk**, a (male) Swede; **en kvinna**, a woman

Note 1 – Exceptions: **ett barn**, a child; **ett biträde**, an assistant (and compounds in **–biträde**); **ett geni**, a genius; **ett helgon**, a saint; **ett original**, an eccentric; **ett proffs**, a professional; **ett snille**, a genius; **ett syskon**, a sibling; **ett spöke**, a ghost; **ett vittne**, a witness; nouns ending in **–ombud** and **–råd** when referring to people: **ett skyddsombud**, a safety representative; **ett statsråd**, a cabinet minister.

They are often pejorative: **ett fnask**, a prostitute; **ett fyllo**, a drunk, **ett fruntimmer**, a female [nowadays almost exclusively in a derogatory sense]

For how to use adjectives and pronouns with these nouns see 2.2.4.3f., 3.3.4.5f.

Note 2 – Nouns of neuter gender do not alter their gender when used to depict a human being:

**Han är stark som ett lejon.**      He's as strong as a lion.

## Han är som ett monster mot sin fru.

He is a monster to his wife.

### 1.2.1.2 Nouns describing animals

**en duva**, a dove; **en fisk**, a fish; **en hund**, a dog; **en spindel**, a spider

Note 1 – Exceptions: **ett bi**, a bee; **ett djur**, an animal (and others in **–djur**); **ett får**, a sheep; **ett föl**, a foal; **ett höns**, a hen; **ett kreatur**, a farm animal; **ett lamm**, a lamb; **ett lejon**, a lion; **ett sto**, a mare; **ett svin**, a pig (and compounds in **–svin**).

Note 2 – Higher animals are often treated as masculine irrespective of their true gender: **elefanten – han**, the elephant – he; **örnen – han**, the eagle – he.

Note 3 – Nouns ending in **–a** which denote animals are often treated as feminine irrespective of their true gender: **råttan – hon**, the rat – she; **åsnan – hon**, the donkey – she.

See also 1.3.1.

### 1.2.1.3 Days and parts of the day, months, seasons, festivals. See 4.5.2.

**en fredag**, a Friday; **en vardag**, a weekday; **en morgon**, a morning; **en timme**, an hour; **en minut**, a minute; **en sekund**, a second; **en mild januari**, a mild January; **våren**, (the) spring; **hösten**, (the) autumn; **sommaren**, (the) summer; **vintern**, (the) winter; **julen**, Christmas; **påskan**, Easter; **midsommaren**, Midsummer

Note – Exceptions: **ett dygn**, a day and a night [i.e. a 24-hour period]; **ett kvartal**, a quarter; and all expressions for periods of a year and longer: **ett år**, a year; **ett årtionde**, a decade; **ett sekel**, a century.

### 1.2.1.4 Trees, flowers, shrubs and bushes

**apeln**, the apple tree; **granen**, the fir tree; **rosen**, the rose; **ligustern**, the privet

Note – Exception: **ett träd**, a tree (and compounds in **–träd**) See 1.2.3.2.

**1.2.1.5** Lakes and rivers:

**Bodensjön**, Lake Constance; **Vänern**, Lake Vänern; **Umeälven**, River Ume; **Nilen**, the Nile; **Themsen**, the Thames

Note – Exceptions: Swedish lakes ending in **–träsk** or **–vatten**.

**1.2.1.6** Cardinal numbers, fractions See 4.2.1, 4.4.1f.

**en etta**, a (number) one; **en fjärdedel**, a quarter; **en åttondel**, an eighth

Note – Exceptions: **ett hundra**, a hundred; **ett tusen**, a thousand.

**1.2.1.7** Many tools

**en hammare**, a hammer; **en spik**, a nail; **en skruvmejsel**, a screwdriver; **en såg**, a saw

Note – Exceptions: **ett spett**, a handspike; **ett vattenpass**, a spirit level; **ett verktyg**, a tool (and compounds in **–järn**: **ett stämjärn**, a chisel).

**1.2.2** *Non-neuter by form*

Nouns with the following endings are non-neuter by form:

**–a** **en fluga**, a fly; **en lampa**, a lamp; **en saga**, a fairy tale

Note – Exceptions: **ett drama**, a drama; **ett delta**, a delta; **ett dilemma**, a dilemma; **ett hjärta**, a heart; **ett schema**, a timetable; **ett öga**, an eye; **ett öra**, an ear. See 1.4.7.

**–ans** **en ambulans**, an ambulance; **en leverans**, a delivery  
**–ant** **en fabrikant**, a manufacturer; **en praktikant**, a trainee  
**–are** **en läkare**, a doctor; **en mätare**, a meter, a gauge

Note – Exceptions: **ett altare**, an altar; **ett ankare**, an anchor.

**–dom** **kristendomen**, Christianity; **en sjukdom**, an illness  
**–else** **en rörelse**, a movement; **en styrelse**, a board of directors

Note – Exception: **ett fängelse**, a prison.

**-ens**      **en frekvens**, a frequency; **en konferens**, a conference  
**-het**      **en personlighet**, a personality; **en svaghet**, a weakness  
**-ik**        **en publik**, an audience; **trafiken**, the traffic

Note – Exceptions: **ett lik**, a corpse; **ett fik**, a café.

**-(n)ing**    **en parkering**, a car park

Note – Exceptions: **ett sting**, a twinge; **ett ting**, an object.

**-ion**        **en religion**, a religion; **en station**, a station

Note – Exception: **ett stadion**, a stadium.

**-ism**        **realismen**, realism; **socialismen**, socialism  
**-nad**        **en byggnad**, a building; **en tystnad**, a silence

### **1.2.3**    **Neuter by meaning**

The following types of nouns are neuter by meaning:

#### **1.2.3.1**    Many geographical locations

These are proper nouns (though lakes and rivers are often non-neuter, see 1.2.1.5), and their neuter gender is revealed in the ending of the adjective:

<b>Asien är överbefolkat.</b>	Asia is overpopulated.
<b>Sahara är torrt.</b>	The Sahara is dry.
<b>Småland är bergigt.</b>	Småland is rocky.
<b>Stockholm är stort.</b>	Stockholm is big.
<b>Sverige är avlångt.</b>	Sweden is oblong.

#### **1.2.3.2**    Trees ending in **-trääd** and berries

**ett plommonträäd**, a plum tree; **ett äppelträäd**, an apple tree; **ett hallon**, a raspberry; **ett körsbär**, a cherry; **ett lingon**, a lingonberry

#### **1.2.3.3**    Letters of the alphabet

**ett a**, an a; **ett z**, a z

#### 1.2.3.4 Other word classes used as nouns

Some nouns formed from pronouns, adverbs, interjections, conjunctions and prepositions:

**jaget**, the ego; **ett nej**, a no; **nuet**, the present

Note – When the infinitive phrase (usually with **att**) is used as a noun, a predicative adjective is inflected as if the infinitive phrase has neuter gender. See 5.2.1.

**Att bo på landet är ganska skönt.**

Living in the country is quite pleasant.

#### 1.2.4 Neuter by form

Nouns with the following suffixes are generally speaking neuter gender by form:

**–ande** (present participles used as abstract nouns):

**ett antagande**, an assumption; **ett ingripande**, an intervention

Note – Exceptions: In some cases nouns in **–ande** denote a person and are then non-neuter. See 1.4.7.4.

**en ordförande**, a chairperson; **en studerande**, a student;  
**en sökande**, an applicant

**–ende** (present participles used as abstract nouns):

**ett leende**, a smile; **ett utseende**, an appearance

Note – Exceptions: In some cases nouns in **–ende** denote a person and are then non-neuter (cf. 1.4.7.4): **en gående**, a pedestrian.

**–eri**

**bedrägeriet**, the fraud; **ett bryggeri**, a brewery

Note – Exception: **en periferi**, a periphery.

**–um/–eum/–ium** (bi- and polysyllabic nouns from Latin):

**ett faktum**, a fact; **ett gymnasium**, an upper secondary school;  
**ett museum**, a museum



### 1.2.4.1

Foreign loans ending in the following syllables are neuter gender:

– <i>em</i>	<b>ett problem</b> , a problem; <b>ett system</b> , a system
– <i>iv</i>	<b>ett adjektiv</b> , an adjective; <b>ett stativ</b> , a stand
– <i>tek</i>	<b>ett bibliotek</b> , a library; <b>ett diskotek</b> , a discotheque

## 1.3 Miscellaneous points of gender

### 1.3.1 *Masculine and feminine*

#### 1.3.1.1 Lexical distinctions

The sex of humans and animals is often shown lexically:

#### *Male*

**man**, man  
**kille**, boy  
**gubbe**, old man  
**far**, father  
**bror**, brother  
**kung**, king  
**prins**, prince  
**hingst**, stallion  
**tjur**, bull  
**tupp**, cockerel

#### *Female*

**kvinna**, woman  
**tjej**, girl  
**gumma**, old woman  
**mor**, mother  
**syster**, sister  
**drottning**, queen  
**prinsessa**, princess  
**märr**, mare  
**kviga**, heifer  
**höna**, hen

#### 1.3.1.2 –e and –a

The endings –e and –a on nouns denoting humans and animals often indicate masculine and feminine respectively. See also 2.3.2.3, 2.3.3.5.

**gubbe**, old man; **hane**, male (animal); **kille**, chap, guy; **make**, spouse [i.e. husband]; **oxe**, ox; **pojke**, boy; **tomte**, gnome

**flicka**, girl; **gumma** old woman; **hona**, female (animal); **häxa**, witch; **katta**, (female) cat; **kvinna**, woman; **maka**, spouse [i.e. wife]

### 1.3.1.3 –inna and –ska

The endings **–inna** and **–ska** normally indicate female:

**väninna**, a female friend; **värdinna**, hostess  
**en kassörska**, a (female) cashier; **en skådespelerska**, an actress

Note 1 – Feminine suffixes are still used for nationality, religion or ethnicity:

**en judinna**, a Jewish woman; **en svenska**, a Swedish woman;  
**en samiska**, a Sami woman; **en spanjorska**, a Spanish woman

Note 2 – Functional feminines (job titles indicating gender) are becoming less frequent:

**en lärarinna**, a woman teacher, is now **en lärare**

Note 3 – Matrimonial feminines (honorary titles accorded to the wives of professional or titled people) have almost died out, but were common until the early twentieth century:

**en biskopinna**, a bishop's wife; **en kejsarinna**, an empress;  
**en professorska**, a professor's wife

### 1.3.1.4 Gender-neutral nouns

(a) Many nouns that were formerly specifically male are now gender-neutral. This also applies to nouns ending in **–are**, **–er**, **–or** etc.:

**advokat**, lawyer; **författare**, author; **läkare**, doctor; **medborgare**, citizen; **professor**, professor; **präst**, priest, **regissör**, film director; **tekniker**, technician

When it is necessary to distinguish gender when using gender-neutral nouns, the qualifying words **manlig**, 'male', or **kvinnlig**, 'female', are added:

<b>en kvinnlig läkare</b>	a female doctor
<b>en kvinnlig skådespelare</b>	a female actor

Note 1 – Compare **kvinnoläkare**, 'gynaecologist' [of either gender] and **kvinnlig läkare**, 'woman doctor'. But note: **kvinnopräst**, 'woman priest'.

Note 2 – Most nationality nouns indicate gender, e.g. **en tysk** [masc.]/**en tyska** [fem.], a German person. See 2.4.3.

Note 3: In hospital terminology **en sjuksköterska**, ‘a nurse’, is of either gender, as is **en barnmorska**, ‘a midwife’.

(b) Alternative gender-neutral forms are now used for many nouns ending in **-man**:

<b>polisman</b>	→ <b>polis</b> , police officer
<b>riksdagsman</b>	→ <b>riksdagsledamot</b> , member of parliament
<b>talesman</b>	→ <b>representant, företrädare, språkrör</b> , spokesperson
<b>hallåman</b>	→ <b>programvärd</b> , presenter

(c) In some cases English possesses a gender-neutral equivalent, where Swedish retains the noun in **-man** for both genders:

<b>brandman/brandsoldat</b>	firefighter (or fireman)
<b>sjöman</b>	seafarer (or seaman)

#### 1.3.1.5 Människa

**Människa-n**, ‘human being’, is always referred to as **hon**, ‘she’.

#### 1.3.1.6 Klocka

**Klockan** [indicating time, see 4.6.1.1, 4.6.1.3] is referred to as **hon**, ‘she’, whereas **klockan**, ‘the clock’, is referred to as **den**, ‘it’:

**Hur mycket är klockan? Hon är fem.**  
What time is it? It’s five o’clock.

**Hur mycket kostar klockan? Den är gratis!**  
What does the watch cost? It’s free!

#### 1.3.1.7 Sol

**Solen** is also on occasion poetically referred to as feminine:

**Solen hon stod på himlen så klar...**  
The sun, she was so clear in the sky...

### 1.3.1.8 Ships and boats

**Efter kollisionen vände M/S Stockholm till New York där hon reparerades.**

After the collision the M/S Stockholm sailed into New York, where she was repaired.

### 1.3.2 *Particularly difficult suffixes*

#### 1.3.2.1 **–skap**

About fifty commonly used nouns end in **–skap**.

Non-neuter are:

**bekantskap**, acquaintanceship; **egenskap**, property; **gemenskap**, community; **kunskap**, knowledge; **vetenskap**, science

Neuter are:

**budskap**, message; **landskap**, province; **medlemskap**, membership; **mästerskap**, championship; **redskap**, tool; **sällskap**, society

#### 1.3.2.2 **–ent**

About fifty nouns end in **–ent**.

Non-neuter (mostly people) are:

**accent**, accent; **agent**, agent; **cement**, cement; **docent**, university lecturer; **klient**, client; **konsument**, consumer; **patient**, patient; **president**, president; **procent**, per cent; **student**, student

Neuter (mostly abstract concepts) are:

**argument**, argument; **departement**, department; **dokument**, document; **element**, element; **experiment**, experiment; **moment**, moment

### 1.3.2.3 –at

About twenty-five nouns end in **–at**.

Non-neuter (mostly people, animals, plants and instruments) are:

**advokat**, lawyer; **apparat**, piece of equipment; **soldat**, soldier; **senat**, senate; **tomat**, tomato; **traktat**, treaty; **undulat**, budgerigar

Neuter (mostly substances and abstract concepts) are:

**citat**, quotation; **format**, format; **klimat**, climate; **mandat**, parliamentary seat; **plakat**, placard; **preparat**, (chemical) preparation; **referat**, report; **resultat**, result; **sulfat**, sulphate

### 1.3.2.4 –al

A small number of nouns end in **–al**.

Non-neuter are:

**areal**, area; **liberal**, liberal; **lokal**, premises; **signal**, signal

Neuter are:

**ideal**, ideal; **kapital**, capital; **material**, material; **original**, original

### 1.3.3 Double forms

A number of nouns take either gender. These include the following (the more usual gender is given first):

<b>baconen/baconet</b> (pl. –0)	the bacon
<b>bolstern/bolstret</b> (pl. <b>bolstrar/bolster</b> )	the bolster
<b>borren/borret</b> (pl. –ar or –0)	the drill
<b>hemvistet/hemvisten</b> (pl. –er)	the abode
<b>jacket/jacken</b> (pl. –0 or –ar)	the socket
<b>kumminen/kumminet</b> (pl.–0)	the cumin
<b>mjället/mjällen</b> (pl.–0)	the dandruff
<b>näbben/näbbet</b> (pl. –ar or –0)	the beak
<b>paraplyet/paraplyn</b> (pl. –er or –n)	the umbrella
<b>tacket/tacken</b> (pl. –0)	(the) thanks
<b>testet/testen</b> (pl. –er)	the test

See 1.4.2–1.4.9 for plural endings.

### 1.3.3.1

Particularly uncertain are concrete non-count nouns indicating substances:

**fotogen** (-en/et), paraffin; **gin** (-en/et), gin; **kol** (-et/en), coal;  
**koffein** (-et/en), caffeine; **krom** (-en/et), chrome; **latex** (-en/et)  
latex; **morfin** (-et/en), morphine; **muslin** (-en/et), muslin; **nylon**  
(-et/en), nylon

Note – In regional colloquial language the gender of some nouns frequently differs from that found in standard written Swedish. This applies especially to the following:

Written Swedish has non-neuter gender for: **apelsin**, orange; **bakelse**, cream cake; **brunn**, well; **spik**, nail; **sylt**, jam; **såg**, saw; **tvål**, soap.

Written Swedish has neuter gender for: **grus**, gravel; **gång**, gang; **hekto**, hectogram; **kilo**, kilogram; **lasarett**, hospital; **lås**, lock; **rede**, nest; **snus**, snuff; **tjog**, score.

### 1.3.4 Gender of proper nouns

Like common nouns, proper nouns have grammatical gender. This is determined by their meaning, the gender of their hyperonym or the gender of their second element (see 1.3.4.3, 11.1.3, 11.3.1.1(b)).

#### 1.3.4.1 Meaning

(a) People have non-neuter gender:

**den duktiga Ylva**, (the) diligent Ylva

(b) Continents, countries, cities, etc. have neuter gender. See 1.2.3.1.

**ett renare Östersjön**, a cleaner Baltic  
**det underbara Paris**, wonderful Paris  
**Dalarna är vackert**, Dalarna is beautiful

#### 1.3.4.2 Hyperonym

Hyperonym-based gender implies that the gender is determined by the logical class or type word:

**en ny Jaguar**, a new Jaguar [**en bil**, ‘a car’, is understood].

**ett gott Chianti**, a good Chianti [**ett vin**, ‘a wine’, is understood].

#### 1.3.4.3 Second element

For compound nouns see 11.3.2–11.3.5.

The second or subsequent element (11.1.3, 11.3.1.1(b)) determines the gender of compound nouns:

**den smala Doverkanalen** (cf. **kanal-en**)  
the narrow Straits of Dover

**Gibraltarsundet är också smalt** (cf. **sund-et**)  
The Straits of Gibraltar are also narrow.

#### 1.3.4.4 Some common groups

The gender of some common groups of names is as follows:

(a) Non-neuter:

People and animals:

**Helena blev glad.** Helena was happy.  
**Kattungen blev sömnig.** The kitten grew sleepy.

Books, films and works of art, irrespective of their number/gender:

**Hemsöborna är skriven på 1880-talet.**  
*The People of Hemsö was written in the 1880s.*

**Blomsterfönstret är målad av Carl Larsson.**  
*The Flower Window was painted by Carl Larsson.*

Brand names:

**Min nya Volvo går bra.** My new Volvo is running well.

Planets:

**Mars är förhållandevis liten.** Mars is relatively small.

Streets:

**Kungsporsavenyn är lång.** Kungsporsavenyn is long.

(b) Neuter:

Continents, land areas, mountains, countries, provinces and towns.

**Asien är stort.** Asia is big.

Some organisations and companies:

**Electrolux är framgångsrikt.** Electrolux is successful.

### **1.3.5** Gender of abbreviations and foreign loans

#### **1.3.5.1** Abbreviations

(a) In most cases when the derivation of an abbreviation is no longer obvious there is a tendency to treat it as a neuter singular concept:

**LO (Landsorganisationen) är oenigt i frågan.**

LO (The Swedish Trade Union Confederation) is divided on the matter.

But: **Landsorganisationen är oenig.**

**FN (Förenta nationerna) är svagt.**

The UN is weak.

**SJ (Statens järnvägar) var alltid pålitligt.**

SJ was always reliable.

Note – For some indigenous words the gender is the same as for the unabbreviated noun.

**en mc = en motorcykel**

a motorcycle

**JO:n = Justitieombudsmannen**

the Ombudsman

**KB (= Kungliga Biblioteket) är stängt.** The Royal Library is closed.



(b) Foreign abbreviations, especially English ones, are generally treated as neuter:

**Jag fick ett långt sms.  
det mäktiga USA/FBI/CIA  
ett wc**

I received a long text message.  
the mighty USA/FBI/CIA  
a WC

### 1.3.5.2 Foreign loans

Most loans, like seventy-five per cent of all Swedish nouns, are non-neuter:

**en bulldozer  
en container  
Ryder-cupen**

a bulldozer  
a container  
the Ryder Cup

In cases where the loan takes neuter gender, this may be the result of influence from a cognate Swedish word:

**ett city**, a city centre  
**ett game**  
**ett jobb**  
**ett team**

cf. **ett affärscentrum**  
cf. **ett spel**  
cf. **ett arbete**  
cf. **ett lag**

## 1.4 Plural noun forms – the declensions

### 1.4.1 Introduction

Swedish has seven main ways of forming the plural of nouns. These noun *declensions* are outlined below and are treated in greater detail in paragraphs 1.4.2–1.4.9. Some irregular plural forms are also detailed in these paragraphs. There are in addition a few plurals with rare forms, e.g.: **fakta**, **huvuden**, **ögon**.

For a key to predicting the plural forms of nouns quickly and accurately, see 1.4.2.

First declension	Second declension	Third declension	Fourth declension
Ending in <b>–or</b>	Ending in <b>–ar</b>	Ending in <b>–er</b>	Ending in <b>–r</b>
<b>en apa, två apor</b> an ape, two apes	<b>en hund, två hundar</b> a dog, two dogs	<b>en park, två parker</b> a park, two parks	<b>en linje, två linjer</b> a line, two lines

Fifth declension	Sixth declension	Seventh declension
Ending in <b>-n</b>	Zero ending (no plural form)	Ending in <b>-s</b>
<b>ett yrke, två yrken</b> a profession, two professions	<b>ett barn, två barn</b> a child, two children	<b>en hit, två hits</b> a hit, two hits

Note – Grammars published before 1999, when *Svenska Akademiens Grammatik* first proposed seven declensions, tend to employ only five noun declensions, namely: 1 **-or**, 2 **-ar**, 3 **-er/-r**, 4 **-n**, 5 **zero**.

## 1.4.2 Nouns – plural indefinite forms: predictability

### 1.4.2.1 Factors in the choice of plural ending

Plurals of Swedish nouns are very largely predictable. The decisive factors in the choice of a plural ending are:

- 1 Gender – whether the noun is non-neuter or neuter gender.
- 2 Whether the non-neuter noun has stress on the final syllable.
- 3 Which of certain distinctive suffixes is found in the non-neuter noun without stress on the final syllable.
- 4 Whether the neuter noun ends in a vowel or a consonant.
- 5 Whether the neuter noun ending in a vowel has stress on the final syllable.

### 1.4.2.2 Rules

There are six main rules for predicting plural forms of nouns:

- 1 Non-neuter nouns ending in unstressed **-a** have a plural in **-or**:  
**en kvinna två kvinnor** woman/women
- 2 Non-neuter nouns ending in unstressed **-e** have a plural in **-ar**:  
**en kille två killar** boy(s)
- 3 Non-neuter nouns with stress on the final syllable have a plural in **-er**:  
**en armé två arméer** army (armies)

4 Neuter nouns ending in a stressed vowel have a plural in **-er**:

**ett geni**      **två genier**      genius(es)

5 Neuter nouns ending in an unstressed vowel have a plural in **-n**:

**ett yrke**      **två yrken**      profession(s)

6 Neuter nouns ending in a consonant have a plural in **-0** (i.e. no plural ending):

**ett barn**      **två barn**      child(ren)

### 1.4.2.3 Supplementary rules

It is possible to formulate a number of additional rules to improve the accuracy of prediction:

7 Non-neuter nouns ending in suffix **-are** have a plural in **-0**:

**en lärare**      **två lärare**      teacher(s)

8 Non-neuter nouns ending in suffix **-er** have a plural in **-0**:

**en tekniker**      **två tekniker**      technician(s)

9 Nouns (always non-neuter) ending in suffix **-(n)ing** have a plural in **-ar**:

**en tidning**      **två tidningar**      newspaper(s)

10 Nouns (always non-neuter) ending in the suffixes **-het**, **-nad**, **-tion** have a plural in **-er**:

**en nyhet**      **två nyheter**      news item(s)  
**en byggnad**      **två byggnader**      building(s)  
**en station**      **två stationer**      station(s)

Note 1 – It is often difficult to predict the plurals of monosyllabic non-neuter nouns ending in a consonant. Such nouns add either **-ar** or **-er**:

**en bil**      **två bilar**      car(s)  
**en färg**      **två färger**      colour(s)  
**en hund**      **två hundar**      dog(s)  
**en park**      **två parker**      park(s)

There is, however, a tendency for more recent loans to take **-er**:

<b>en kö</b>	<b>två köer</b>	queue(s)
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Note 2 – Nouns ending in unstressed **-el**, **-en**, **-er** tend to drop the **-e** in the final syllable and add **-ar**:

<b>en fröken</b>	<b>två fröknar</b>	unmarried woman (women)
<b>en fågel</b>	<b>två fåglar</b>	bird(s)
<b>en vinter</b>	<b>två vintrar</b>	winter(s)

Notice, however, that some loanwords ending in unstressed **-el**, **-en**, **-er** drop the **-e** in the final syllable and take **-er**:

<b>en muskel</b>	<b>två muskler</b>	muscle(s)
<b>en fiber</b>	<b>två fibrer</b>	fibre(s)

### **1.4.3** *The first declension: plurals in -or*

#### **1.4.3.1** Form and gender

First declension nouns comprise approximately eight per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The first declension includes:

- (a) Only non-neuter nouns.
- (b) Many bisyllabic and polysyllabic nouns in **-a**:

**gata**, street; **kvinn**a, woman; **känsla**, feeling; **lampa**, lamp; **pappa**, dad;  
**stuga**, cottage; **målarinna**, (female) painter; **skådespelerska**, actress

- (c) A very few nouns ending in a consonant:

**ros**, rose; **toffel**, slipper; **våg**, wave; **åder**, vein

#### **1.4.3.2** Basic rule

The final **-a** of first declension nouns is replaced by the plural ending **-or**:

<b>en blomma</b>	a flower	<b>två blommor</b>	two flowers
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<b>en gata</b>	a street	<b>två gator</b>	two streets
<b>en kvinna</b>	a woman	<b>två kvinnor</b>	two women

Note – A rare exception is:

<b>en historia, historier</b>	a history/story, histories/stories
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Nouns ending in a consonant (of which there are very few) simply add **–or** to the stem:

<b>en ros</b>	a rose	<b>två rosor</b>	two roses
<b>en våg</b>	a wave	<b>två vågor</b>	two waves

Note 1 – The following nouns have a common plural form for both of their singular forms:

<b>en flagg or en flagga</b>	<b>två flaggor</b>	two flags
<b>en spån or en spåna</b>	<b>två spånor</b>	two chips (of wood)

Note 2 – The following nouns properly belong to other declensions, but possess an alternative plural ending in **–or**:

<b>en katt, katter/kattor</b> [by analogy with <b>en katta</b> , a she-cat]	cat, cats
<b>en kollega, kolleger/kollegor</b>	colleague, colleagues
<b>en svan, svanar/svanor</b> [poetic]	swan, swans
<b>en vad, vader/vador</b>	calf, calves (of the leg)

### 1.4.3.3

First declension nouns ending in **–el**, **–er** drop the vowel of their final syllable before adding **–or**:

<b>en toffel</b>	a slipper	<b>två tofflor</b>	two slippers
<b>en åder</b>	a vein	<b>två ådror</b>	two veins

### 1.4.3.4

The following first declension nouns occur primarily in the plural:

**byxor**, trousers; **inålvor**, entrails; **sopor**, rubbish. See also 1.5.3.

#### 1.4.3.5

Even though the plural ending is always spelled **-or** in written Swedish, in the spoken language it is frequently pronounced as if it were spelled **-er**: /flicker/, /gater/, /kyrker/. In more formal words, however, the **-or** is retained in pronunciation: **galor**, **villor**.

#### 1.4.3.6

The definite plural form of first declension nouns is formed by adding **-na** to the plural form. See 1.10.3.1.

<b>gator</b>	streets	<b>gatorna</b>	the streets
<b>kvinnor</b>	women	<b>kvinnorna</b>	the women
<b>rosor</b>	roses	<b>rosorna</b>	the roses
<b>tofflor</b>	slippers	<b>tofflorna</b>	the slippers

#### 1.4.4 *The second declension: plurals in -ar*

##### 1.4.4.1 Form and gender

Second declension nouns comprise approximately twenty per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The second declension includes:

- (a) Only non-neuter nouns (with one exception, see 1.4.4.7), many of them of indigenous origin.
- (b) Many monosyllabic nouns ending in a consonant:

**arm**, arm; **bil**, car; **hund**, dog; **mun**, mouth; **park**, park; **sak**, thing;  
**vägg**, wall

- (c) Some monosyllabic nouns ending in a long vowel:

**bro**, bridge; **by**, village; **fru**, wife; **sjö**, lake; **sky**, cloud; **å**, river; **ö**, island

- (d) Nouns with unstressed endings in **-e**, **-el**, **-en**, **-er**, **-dom**, **-(n)ing**, **-lek**, **-is**:

**kille**, boy; **unge**, young one; **fröken**, unmarried woman; **fågel**, bird;  
**syster**, sister; **sjukdom**, illness; **tidning**, newspaper; **storlek**, size;  
**potatis**, potato

#### 1.4.4.2 Basic rule

Second declension nouns add the ending **–ar** to the stem to form the plural:

<b>en bro</b>	a bridge	<b>två broar</b>	two bridges
<b>en hund</b>	a dog	<b>två hundar</b>	two dogs
<b>en ö</b>	an island	<b>två öar</b>	two islands

#### 1.4.4.3 Nouns ending in **–e**

Nouns ending in **–e** drop this letter before adding the plural ending **–ar**:

<b>en hare</b>	a hare	<b>två harar</b>	two hares
<b>en kudde</b>	a pillow	<b>två kuddar</b>	two pillows
<b>en kille</b>	a boy	<b>två killar</b>	two boys

#### 1.4.4.4 Nouns ending in **–el, –en, –er**

Polysyllabic nouns ending in **–el, –en, –er** drop the vowel in the final syllable before adding **–ar** (see also 1.4.4.6):

<b>en fågel</b>	a bird	<b>två fåglar</b>	two birds
<b>en öken</b>	a desert	<b>två öknar</b>	two deserts
<b>en vinter</b>	a winter	<b>två vintrar</b>	two winters

Others: **cykel**, cycle; **nyckel**, key; **socken**, parish; **fröken**, unmarried woman; **botten**, bottom; **minister**, minister; **åker**, field

Note 1 – This group also includes a number of loans previously possessing an **–s** plural. See also 1.4.9.

**en blazer – blazrar; en container – containrar; en jumper – jumprar; en reporter – reportrar**

Note 2 – Some other nouns in unstressed syllables in **–l, –n, –r** also drop the final vowel:

<b>en djävul</b>	a devil	<b>två djävlar</b>	two devils
<b>en afton</b>	an evening	<b>två aftnar</b>	two evenings
<b>en morgon</b>	a morning	<b>två morgnar</b>	two mornings
<b>en sommar</b>	a summer	<b>två somrar</b>	two summers [one <b>m</b> ]

But notice the following exceptions: **en fjäril – två fjärilar**, a butterfly – two butterflies; **en rännil – två rännilar**, a rivulet – two rivulets.

#### 1.4.4.5 Nouns ending in unstressed vowels

A few nouns ending in unstressed vowels:

<b>en jojo</b>	a yo-yo	<b>två jojoar</b>	two yo-yos
<b>en byrå</b>	a bureau	<b>två byråar</b>	two bureaus

Note – The following nouns with stems ending in **–a** drop the **a** before taking the **–ar** plural ending:

<b>(en) lusta</b>	desire	<b>två lustar</b>	two desires
<b>en stadga</b>	a regulation	<b>två stadgar</b>	two regulations

#### 1.4.4.6 Two nouns ending in **–er**

Two nouns ending in **–er** modify the root vowel and drop the **–e** of their final syllable before adding **–ar**:

<b>en dotter</b>	a daughter	<b>två döttrar</b>	two daughters
<b>en moder</b>	a mother	<b>två mödrar</b>	two mothers

#### 1.4.4.7 Finger

There is one neuter noun in the second declension, which forms its plural like **vinter**. See 1.4.4.4.

<b>ett finger</b>	a finger	<b>två fingrar</b>	two fingers
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#### 1.4.4.8 Monosyllabic nouns ending in **–m, –n**

Monosyllabic nouns with a short vowel and ending in **–m** or **–n** double the final consonant before adding **–ar**:

<b>en dröm</b>	a dream	<b>två drömmar</b>	two dreams
<b>en gom</b>	a palate	<b>två gommar</b>	two palates
<b>en lem</b>	a limb	<b>två lemmar</b>	two limbs
<b>en stam</b>	a stem	<b>två stammar</b>	two stems
<b>en mun</b>	a mouth	<b>två munnar</b>	two mouths



#### 1.4.4.9

The following nouns occur primarily in the plural. See also 1.5.3.

**pengar**, money; **stadgar**, statutes

#### 1.4.4.10

The definite plural of second declension nouns is formed by adding **-na** to the indefinite plural form. See 1.10.3.1.

<b>hundar</b>	dogs	<b>hundarna</b>	the dogs
<b>fingrar</b>	fingers	<b>fingrarna</b>	the fingers
<b>munnar</b>	mouths	<b>munnarna</b>	the mouths
<b>mödrar</b>	mothers	<b>mödrarna</b>	the mothers

#### 1.4.5 *The third declension: plurals in -er*

##### 1.4.5.1 Form and gender

Third declension nouns comprise approximately thirty per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The third declension includes:

- (a) Both non-neuter and neuter nouns.
- (b) Many monosyllabic nouns ending in a consonant:

**en dam**, a lady; **en park**, a park

- (c) Many nouns of foreign origin, including most foreign nouns with final stress:

**en möbel**, a piece of furniture; **en regel**, a rule; **en armé**, an army;  
**en restaurang**, a restaurant; **en trottoar**, a pavement; **ett bryggeri**,  
a brewery; **ett paraply**, an umbrella

- (d) Many monosyllabic nouns ending in a consonant:

<b>en fest</b>	a party	<b>två fester</b>	two parties
<b>en film</b>	a film	<b>två filmer</b>	two films
<b>en rad</b>	a line	<b>två rader</b>	two lines

(e) A few monosyllabic non-neuter nouns ending in a stressed vowel:

<b>en kö</b>	a queue	<b>två köer</b>	two queues
<b>en vy</b>	a view	<b>två vyer</b>	two views

(f) Polysyllabic neuter nouns ending in a stressed vowel (including derivatives in **-eri**):

<b>ett kafé</b>	a café	<b>två kaféer</b>	two cafés
<b>en bistro</b>	a bistro	<b>två bistroer</b>	two bistros
<b>ett bryggeri</b>	a brewery	<b>två bryggerier</b>	two breweries

(g) A number of nouns that modify the root vowel in the plural. See 1.4.5.8–1.4.5.9.

<b>en bok</b>	a book	<b>två böcker</b>	two books
<b>en hand</b>	a hand	<b>två händer</b>	two hands

(h) Non-neuter nouns ending in **-het** and **-nad**:

<b>en dumhet</b>	a blunder	<b>två dumheter</b>	two blunders
<b>en byggnad</b>	a building	<b>två byggnader</b>	two buildings

#### 1.4.5.2 Basic rule

Third declension nouns add the plural ending **-er** to the stem:

<b>en månad</b>	a month	<b>två månader</b>	two months
<b>en park</b>	a park	<b>två parker</b>	two parks

#### 1.4.5.3

Polysyllabic nouns ending in a stressed syllable add the plural ending **-er** in accordance with the basic rule. These nouns are invariably of foreign origin:

<b>en armé</b>	an army	<b>två arméer</b>	two armies
<b>en autograf</b>	an autograph	<b>två autografer</b>	two autographs
<b>en direktör</b>	a director	<b>två direktörer</b>	two directors
<b>en emigrant</b>	an emigrant	<b>två emigranter</b>	two emigrants
<b>ett geni</b>	a genius	<b>två genier</b>	two geniuses
<b>en geolog</b>	a geologist	<b>två geologer</b>	two geologists

<b>en meny</b>	a menu	<b>två menyer</b>	two menus
<b>en miljö</b>	an environment	<b>två miljöer</b>	two environments
<b>en station</b>	a station	<b>två stationer</b>	two stations

#### 1.4.5.4

Non-neuter polysyllabic nouns ending in unstressed **-or** add the plural ending **-er** in accordance with the basic rule, but in the plural the stress shifts to the syllable containing the **-or**:

<b>en 'doktor</b>	a doctor	<b>två dok'torer</b>	two doctors
<b>en 'motor</b>	an engine	<b>två mo'torer</b>	two engines
<b>en pro'fessor</b>	a professor	<b>två profes'sorer</b>	two professors

Note 1 – Some words ending in **-or** already have the stress on the final syllable even in the singular form:

<b>en ma'jör</b>	a major	<b>två ma'jörer</b>	two majors
<b>en korri'dör</b>	a corridor	<b>två korri'dorer</b>	two corridors

Note 2 – This shift in stress is also found in the following nouns with other final syllables:

<b>en 'konsul</b>	a consul	<b>två kon'suler</b>	two consuls
<b>en 'kansler</b>	a chancellor	<b>två kans'lerer</b>	two chancellors

#### 1.4.5.5

Polysyllabic nouns ending in unstressed **-el**, **-en**, **-er** drop the **-e** of the final syllable before adding the plural ending **-er**:

<b>en muskel</b>	a muscle	<b>två muskler</b>	two muscles
<b>en sägen</b>	a legend	<b>två sägner</b>	two legends
<b>en fiber</b>	a fibre	<b>två fibrer</b>	two fibres

#### 1.4.5.6

Nouns of foreign origin ending in **-eum**, **-ium** drop the final syllable **-um** before adding the plural ending **-er**:

<b>ett stadium</b>	a stage	<b>två stadier</b>	two stages
<b>ett museum</b>	a museum	<b>två museer</b>	two museums

Others include: **ett jubileum**, an anniversary; **ett akvarium**, an aquarium; **ett gymnasium**, an upper secondary school; **ett laboratorium**, a laboratory

Nouns ending in unstressed **-a** drop this **-a** before adding the plural ending **-er**:

<b>ett drama</b>	a drama	<b>två dramer</b>	two dramas
<b>en historia</b>	a history	<b>två historier</b>	two histories

Note – **en kollega**, ‘a colleague’, has two alternative plural forms: **kolleger**, **kollegor**.

#### 1.4.5.7

The following nouns double their final consonant before adding the plural ending **-er**. This involves the shortening of the vowel except in the case of **vän** where the vowel is already short.

<b>en get</b>	a goat	<b>två getter</b>	two goats
<b>en gnet</b>	a nit	<b>två gnetter</b>	two nits
<b>en nöt</b>	a nut	<b>två nötter</b>	two nuts
<b>en vän</b>	a friend	<b>två vänner</b>	two friends

#### 1.4.5.8

The following nouns modify their root vowel as well as adding the plural ending **-er** or **-r**:

Vowel change:

A → Ä

<b>en and</b>	a duck	<b>två änder</b>	two ducks
<b>en brand</b>	a fire	<b>två bränder</b>	two fires
<b>en hand</b>	a hand	<b>två händer</b>	two hands
<b>ett land</b>	a country	<b>två länder</b>	two countries
<b>en natt</b>	a night	<b>två nätter</b>	two nights
<b>en rand</b>	a stripe	<b>två ränder</b>	two stripes
<b>en strand</b>	a beach	<b>två stränder</b>	two beaches
<b>en tand</b>	a tooth	<b>två tänder</b>	two teeth

A → Ä

<b>en bokstav</b>	a letter of the alphabet	<b>två bokstäver</b>	two letters of the alphabet
<b>en stad</b>	a town	<b>två städer</b>	two towns

Å → Ä

<b>en spång</b>	a plank	<b>två spänger</b>	two planks
<b>en stång</b>	a pole	<b>två stänger</b>	two poles
<b>en tång</b>	a pair of tongs	<b>två tänger</b>	two pairs of tongs

O → Ö

<b>en bot</b>	a penalty	<b>två böter</b>	two penalties, fines
<b>en ledamot</b>	a member	<b>två ledamöter</b>	two members
<b>en son</b>	a son	<b>två söner</b>	two sons

#### 1.4.5.9

The following nouns both modify and shorten their root vowel and double the final consonant before adding the plural ending **-er**:

<b>en bok</b>	a book	<b>två böcker</b>	two books
		[NB Spelling]	
<b>en fot</b>	a foot	<b>två fötter</b>	two feet
<b>en rot</b>	a root	<b>två rötter</b>	two roots

#### 1.4.5.10

Bi- and polysyllabic non-neuter nouns in **-al** normally take the plural ending **-er**. See also 1.3.2.4.

<b>en areal</b>	an area	<b>två arealer</b>	two areas
<b>en kanal</b>	a canal	<b>två kanaler</b>	two canals
<b>en pedal</b>	a pedal	<b>två pedaler</b>	two pedals

Others include:

**linjal**, ruler; **pokal**, (prize) cup; **signal**, signal; **vokal**, vowel

Note – The following nouns in **-al** are only found in the plural. See 1.6.2.1.

**arkivalier** archives; **kemikalier** chemicals; **viktualier**, victuals

### 1.4.5.11

A number of third declension nouns occur primarily in the plural:

**alger**, algae; **annaler**, annals; **böter**, fine; **kalsonger**, underpants;  
**kläder**, clothes; **kontanter**, cash; **memoarer**, memoirs; **polisonger**,  
sideburns; **repressalier**, reprisals. See also 1.5.3.

### 1.4.5.12

The definite plural of third declension nouns is formed by adding **-na** to the plural form:

<b>parker</b>	parks	<b>parkerna</b>	the parks
<b>arméer</b>	armies	<b>arméerna</b>	the armies
<b>muskler</b>	muscles	<b>musklerna</b>	the muscles
<b>museer</b>	museums	<b>museerna</b>	the museums
<b>händer</b>	hands	<b>händerna</b>	the hands

## 1.4.6 The fourth declension: plurals in *-r*

### 1.4.6.1 Form and gender

Fourth declension nouns comprise approximately two per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The fourth declension includes only non-neuter nouns ending in a vowel other than **-a**:

**en aktie**, a share; **en ko**, a cow; **en hustru**, a wife; **en tå**, a toe;  
**en fästmö**, a fiancée

### 1.4.6.2 Basic rule

Fourth declension nouns add **-r** to the stem to form the plural:

<b>en bakelse</b>	a cream cake	<b>två bakelser</b>	two cream cakes
<b>en studie</b>	a study	<b>två studier</b>	two studies
<b>en trio</b>	a trio	<b>två trior</b>	two trios
<b>en vrå</b>	corner	<b>två vrår</b>	two corners

### 1.4.6.3

Fourth declension nouns are of the following kinds:

(a) A few monosyllabic non-neuter nouns:

<b>en sko</b>	a shoe	<b>två skor</b>	two shoes
<b>en tå</b>	a toe	<b>två tår</b>	two toes

Also: **klo**, claw, and nouns in **-bo**: **Uppsalabo**, inhabitant of Uppsala; **sambo**, life partner

(b) Some non-neuter nouns ending in **-e**, particularly in **-ie**, **-je**:

<b>en same</b>	a Sami	<b>två samer</b>	two Sami
<b>en fiende</b>	an enemy	<b>två fiender</b>	two enemies
<b>en serie</b>	a series	<b>två serier</b>	two series
<b>en aktie</b>	a share	<b>två aktier</b>	two shares
<b>en linje</b>	a line	<b>två linjer</b>	two lines

Others: **ferie**, holiday; **genre**, genre; **kastanje** chestnut; **oboe**, oboe; **pinje**, pine; **prärie**, prairie

Note – **en bonde** – **två bönder**, a farmer – two farmers (vowel change!)

(c) Some non-neuter nouns ending in **-arie**, **-else**:

<b>en vikarie</b>	a stand-in	<b>två vikarier</b>	two stand-ins
<b>en rörelse</b>	a movement	<b>två rörelser</b>	two movements

Others: **bibliotekarie**, librarian; **kommissarie**, inspector; **böjelse**, inclination; **födelse**, birth; **varelse**, being

Note – **ett fängelse** – **två fängelser**, a prison – two prisons (neuter gender!)

(d) Some non-neuter nouns ending in other unstressed vowels, especially **-o**, **-u**:

<b>en bastu</b>	a sauna	<b>två bastur</b>	two saunas
<b>en studio</b>	a studio	<b>två studior</b>	two studios

Also: **duo**, duo; **expo**, exhibition; **radio**, radio; **skridsko**, skate; **vallmo**, poppy; **farstu**, porch; **hustru**, wife; **jungfru**, virgin

Note – Some neuter nouns in **-u** and **-o** take the plural ending **-n** however. See 1.4.7.

**ett kvitto – två kvitton**, a receipt – two receipts

Also with an **n**-plural: **tabu**, taboo; **fiasko**, fiasco; **intermezzo**; **motto**; **tempo**; **veto**. See 1.4.7.

With **-er** plural. See 1.4.5.3.

<b>en hindu</b>	a Hindu	<b>två hinduer</b>	two Hindus
<b>en zulu</b>	a Zulu	<b>två zuluer</b>	two Zulus

#### 1.4.6.4

The definite plural for fourth declension nouns is formed by adding **-na** to the indefinite plural form.

<b>bastur</b>	saunas	<b>basturna</b>	the saunas
<b>fiender</b>	enemies	<b>fienderna</b>	the enemies

#### 1.4.7 The fifth declension: plurals in *-n*

##### 1.4.7.1 Form and gender

Fifth declension nouns comprise approximately four per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The fifth declension includes:

- (a) Only neuter nouns.
- (b) Almost exclusively nouns ending in a vowel:

**hjärta**, heart; **meddelande**, communication; **ansikte**, face; **märke**, brand; **impromptu**, impromptu; **penry**, kitchenette; **rally**, rally; **strå**, straw; **frö**, seed; **metspö**, fishing rod

##### 1.4.7.2 Basic rule

Fifth declension nouns add the ending **-n** to the stem to form the plural:

<b>ett bi</b>	a bee	<b>två bin</b>	two bees
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<b>ett piano</b>	a piano	<b>två pianon</b>	two pianos
<b>ett knä</b>	a knee	<b>två knän</b>	two knees

Note – In South and West regional Swedish these nouns follow the sixth declension:

<b>Har du fem frimärke?</b>	Have you five postage stamps?
<b>några meddelande</b>	some messages

### 1.4.7.3

Notice the following irregular plural forms (and colloquial pronunciations) of three frequent nouns often regarded as belonging to the fifth declension:

<b>ett öga</b>	an eye	<b>två ögon</b>	two eyes
<b>ögat</b>	the eye	<b>ögonen</b>	the eyes
		<i>/ögonə/</i>	
<b>ett öra</b>	an ear	<b>två öron</b>	two ears
<b>örat</b>	the ear	<b>öronen</b>	the ears
<b>ett huvud</b>	a head	<b>två huvuden</b>	two heads
<i>/ett huvə/</i>		<i>/två huvən/</i>	
<b>huvudet</b>	the head	<b>huvudena</b>	the heads
<i>/huvət/</i>		<i>/huvənə/</i>	

### 1.4.7.4 Nouns in –e, –ande and –ende

Nouns in –e, –ande, –ende, the majority of which were originally present participles, are inflected according to the fifth declension. See also 1.2.4.

<b>ett möte</b>	a meeting	<b>två möten</b>	two meetings
<b>ett meddelande</b>	a message	<b>två meddelanden</b>	two messages
<b>ett beteende</b>	a behaviour	<b>två beteenden</b>	two behaviours

Others:

**ett anförande**, a statement; **ett yttrande**, an utterance; **ett leende**, a smile; **ett förtroende**, a confidence; **ett bete**, a pasture; **ett bygge**, a building site; **ett fiske**, a fishery; **ett måste**, a must

Note 1 – A small number of nouns in **–ande** denote persons and occupations, and they are then non-neuter and inflected according to the sixth declension with **–0** plural. See 1.4.8.1(c).

<b>en ordförande</b>	a chairperson	<b>två ordförande</b>	two chairpersons
<b>en resande</b>	a passenger	<b>två resande</b>	two passengers
<b>en sökande</b>	an applicant	<b>två sökande</b>	two applicants
<b>en studerande</b>	a student	<b>två studerande</b>	two students

Note 2 – Because of the large number and high frequency of the neuter nouns, it is common to find such contaminations as **två \*studeranden, två \*ordföranden**. See 1.2.4.

#### 1.4.7.5 Names of letters

The names of the letters of the alphabet belong to this declension:

<b>ett a</b>	an a	<b>två a:n</b>	two a's
<b>ett b</b>	a b	<b>två b:n</b>	two b's

#### 1.4.7.6

The following occur primarily in the plural:

**förhållanden**, conditions; **hängslen**, braces; **minnen**, memories; **strövanden**, wanderings; **stycken**, pieces; **ämnen**, substances

See also 1.5.3.

#### 1.4.7.7

The definite plural for fifth declension nouns is formed by adding **–a** to the indefinite plural form. See 1.10.3.3.

<b>ansikten</b>	faces	<b>ansiktena</b>	the faces
<b>teman</b>	themes	<b>temana</b>	the themes

Note – For three important exceptions: **öga** eye; **öra** ear, **huvud**, head, see 1.4.7.3.

### 1.4.8 The sixth declension: zero plurals

#### 1.4.8.1 Form and gender

Sixth declension nouns comprise approximately twenty per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The sixth declension includes:

- (a) Both neuter and some non-neuter nouns.
- (b) Many neuter nouns ending in a consonant:

**ett barn**, a child; **ett golv**, a floor; **ett hus**, a house; **ett recept**, a recipe

- (c) All non-neuter nouns ending in **–ande**, **–are**, **–ende**, **–iker** and some in **–er** denoting people and professions. See 1.2.4.

**en studerande**, a student; **en lärare**, a teacher; **en gående**, a pedestrian; **en elektriker**, an electrician; **en partner**, a partner

- (d) Neuter nouns ending in **–at**, **–gram**, **–ment**, **–skop**, **–tek**:

**ett lektorat**, a lectureship; **ett program**, a programme;  
**ett departement**, a department; **ett mikroskop**, a microscope;  
**ett bibliotek**, a library

- (e) Names of berries and fruits ending in **–on**:

**ett hallon**, a raspberry; **ett hjortron**, a cloudberry; **ett lingon**, a lingonberry; **ett smultron**, a wild strawberry

#### 1.4.8.2 Basic rule

Sixth declension nouns add the ending **–0** (zero) to the stem to form the plural, i.e. the indefinite plural is often identical to the indefinite singular form (cf. English ‘sheep’):

<b>ett får</b>	a sheep	<b>två får</b>	two sheep
<b>ett hus</b>	a house	<b>två hus</b>	two houses
<b>en lärare</b>	a teacher	<b>två lärare</b>	two teachers

### 1.4.8.3 Modification of root vowel

The following non-neuter nouns modify their root vowel in the plural form:

<b>en bro(de)r</b>	a brother	<b>två bröder</b>	two brothers
<b>en fa(de)r</b>	a father	<b>två fäder</b>	two fathers
<b>en gås</b>	a goose	<b>två gäss</b>	two geese
<b>en lus</b>	a louse	<b>två löss</b>	two lice
<b>en man</b>	a man	<b>två män</b>	two men
<b>en mus</b>	a mouse	<b>två möss</b>	two mice

### 1.4.8.4 Nouns ending in **-um**

Most neuter nouns of this declension ending in a consonant + **um** have two or more possible indefinite plural forms. See 1.10.2.7. They may remain unchanged (**-0** plural) or may replace the **-um**:

<b>ett datum</b>	a date	<b>två datum</b>	two dates
<b>ett faktum</b>	a fact	<b>två faktum/fakta</b>	two facts

### 1.4.8.5 Officer

**En officer** (alternative form: **officerare**) ‘an officer’, has the indefinite plural form (**två officerare**, ‘two officers’).

### 1.4.8.6

The following occur primarily in the plural:

**livsmedel**, provisions; **syskon**, siblings. See also 1.5.3.

### 1.4.8.7

Definite plural forms follow two basic rules. See 1.10.3.4.

(a) Neuter nouns of the sixth declension add **-en** to the indefinite plural.

<b>hus</b>	houses	<b>husen</b>	the houses
<b>problem</b>	problems	<b>problemen</b>	the problems

Note 1 – Neuter nouns of the sixth declension ending in unstressed **-el**, **-en**, **-er** drop the **-e** of the final syllable before adding the definite plural ending **-en**. See 1.10.3.5.

<b>två segel – seglen</b>	two sails – the sails
<b>två tecken – tecknen</b>	two signs – the signs
<b>två piller – pillren</b>	two pills – the pills

Note 2 – By analogy with other declensions some frequent neuter nouns of the sixth declension ending in a consonant possess an alternative form in colloquial Swedish. See 1.10.3.4 Note.

(b) Non-neuter nouns of the sixth declension add **-na** to the indefinite plural.

<b>musiker</b>	musicians	<b>musikerna</b>	the musicians
<b>studerande</b>	students	<b>studerandena</b>	the students

Note – Non-neuter nouns of the sixth declension ending in **-are** drop the final **-e** before adding the definite article **-na** in the plural. See 1.10.3.7.

<b>två fiskare – fiskarna</b>	two fishermen – the fishermen
<b>två lärare – lärarna</b>	two teachers – the teachers

**1.4.8.8**

The following sixth declension nouns have irregular plural or plural definite forms:

<b>broder</b>	<b>brodern</b>	<b>två bröder</b>	<b>bröderna</b>	brother
<b>fader</b>	<b>fadern</b>	<b>två fäder</b>	<b>fäderna</b>	father
<b>man</b>	<b>mannen</b>	<b>två män</b>	<b>männen</b>	man
				(See 12.2.2.3)
<b>gås</b>	<b>gåsen</b>	<b>två gäss</b>	<b>gässen</b>	goose
<b>lus</b>	<b>lusen</b>	<b>två löss</b>	<b>lössen</b>	louse
<b>mus</b>	<b>musen</b>	<b>två möss</b>	<b>mössen</b>	mouse
<b>mil</b>	<b>milen</b>	<b>två mil</b>	<b>milen</b>	Swedish mile
<b>tum</b>	<b>tummen</b>	<b>två tum</b>	<b>tummen</b>	inch
				(See 12.2.2.3)

### 1.4.9 The seventh declension: plurals in –s

#### 1.4.9.1 Form and gender

Seventh declension nouns comprise less than one per cent of nouns in newspaper text. The seventh declension includes:

Non-neuter loans (many from English) retaining their foreign character but with stress usually not on the final syllable:

<b>en happening</b>	a happening	<b>två happenings</b>	two happenings
<b>en designer</b>	a designer	<b>två designers</b>	two designers
<b>en workshop</b>	a workshop	<b>två workshops</b>	two workshops

Notice that, when the loan becomes familiar in Swedish, an indigenous plural may be employed as an alternative to the –s plural or a replacement. Sometimes there are several possibilities.

<b>blinkers</b>	→ <b>blinkrar/blinker</b>
<b>containers</b>	→ <b>containrar</b>
<b>designers</b>	→ <b>designer/designers</b>
<b>jumpers</b>	→ <b>jumprar</b>
<b>reporters</b>	→ <b>reportrar</b>
<b>royalties</b>	→ <b>royaltyer</b>

#### 1.4.9.2 Factors tending to favour the use of the –s plural with loans

- (a) A structure that does not easily allow the use of other plural endings such as –er:

##### **trailers, receivers**

*Svensk Ordbok*, 2009, prefers **containrar**, **trailrar** and **receivrar**, and in written Swedish these are indeed found, though for ease of pronunciation in spoken Swedish it is more convenient to retain the –s plural here.

In some cases of words ending in unstressed –er the the zero plural is used as an alternative or replacement for –s:

**två partner/partners**  
**två sprinkler**

(b) The loan has a meaning which rarely requires its use in the singular:

**odds, gags, pickels, cornflakes, pumps, shorts**

A major problem in employing many loans is the formation of a definite plural form, as the usual choices, **-na**, **-a**, **-en**, may all cause difficulties:

**\*designersen, \*designersarna**

Yet the alternative zero plural, e.g. **två designer**, is often still felt to be unnatural to many Swedes who use **designers** in the plural.

Where there is a collective sense in the plural, the **s**-plural ending is regarded as belonging to the stem. These nouns are then assumed to have a zero plural, and **-en** is added to form a plural definite:

**jeansen**                      the jeans              **gagsen**                      the gags

Note – In certain words ending in **-s** the borrowed **s**-plural has at some time in the past been regarded (falsely) as part of the singular stem and a Swedish plural ending added:

**en keps**                      a cap                      **två kepsar**                      two caps  
**en räls**                      a rail                      **två rälsar**                      two rails

**1.5 Miscellaneous points on indefinite plural forms**

**1.5.1 Types of noun with no plural form**

The following types of noun generally have no plural form:

**1.5.1.1 Verbal nouns describing an action**

**ett grymtande**              a grunt  
**ett bugande**              a bow                      (cf. **en bugning – två bugningar**)  
**ett mördande**              a murder                      (cf. **ett mord – två mord**)

Note – In cases where such verbal nouns have lost their original verbal significance they are inflected according to the fourth declension:

**ett leende**                      a smile                      **två leenden**                      two smiles  
**leendena**                      the smiles

Verbal nouns describing people belong to the sixth declension (cf. 1.4.8):

**en studerande** a student    **två studerande** two students  
**studerandena** the students

**1.5.1.2** Abstract nouns

**adel**, nobility; **glädje**, joy; **fattigdom**, poverty; **godhet**, goodness;  
**köld**, cold; **längtan**, longing; **sötma**, sweetness

Note – Plurals of abstract nouns express a countable quantity, and occur only infrequently:

**Hans döttrar var skönheter.** His daughters were beauties.  
**Du pratar dumheter!** You're talking nonsense!

**1.5.1.3** Substances and materials

**dagg**, dew; **grädde**, cream; **guld**, gold; **kol**, coal; **kött**, meat; **luft**, air;  
**mjölk**, milk; **nylon**, nylon; **rost**, rust; **snö**, snow

Plurals of such words, usually formed with **-er**, are used to indicate types or makes of a substance:

**teer**, teas; **tyger**, types of cloth; **viner**, wines

**1.5.1.4** Collective nouns

**avkomma**, offspring; **boskap**, cattle; **folk**, people

**1.5.1.5** Weights and measures

Weights and measures are not usually used in the plural after cardinal numbers (cf. English 'six foot tall', 'two pound of potatoes', see also 1.6.3f.):

**två kilo smör** two kilos of butter  
**fem tusen liter olja** five thousand litres of oil



### 1.5.1.6 Bi- and polysyllabic non-neuter nouns ending in **-an**

See also 1.10.2.3.

These nouns often ‘borrow’ a plural form from other synonymous words:

<b>en anmälan</b>	a report	<b>två anmälningar</b>	two reports
<b>en begäran</b>	a demand	<b>två krav</b>	two demands
<b>en början</b>	a beginning	<b>två inledningar</b>	two beginnings
<b>en predikan</b>	a sermon	<b>två predikningar</b>	two sermons
<b>en tävlan</b>	a competition	<b>två tävlingar</b>	two competitions
<b>en önskan</b>	a wish	<b>två önskningar</b>	two wishes

Note – **En gisslan**, ‘a hostage’ has only one form for both singular and plural and in the definite singular and plural.

### 1.5.2 *Nouns with special collective forms*

A few nouns possess a special collective (non-count) form, where the noun is primarily used in the ‘diffuse plural’, i.e. where the exact number is unknown or not explicit.

#### 1.5.2.1 **Ärt(a)**

Strictly speaking, there are two nouns involved: **en ärta – ärtor**, ‘pea’ as a vegetable; **en ärt – ärter**, ‘pea’ as a species.

*Count plural*

**två ärtor**, two peas

**Det ligger tio ärter kvar.**

There are ten peas remaining.

*Collective plural*

**ärter**, peas [in general]

**Vi åt ärter och fläsk.**

We ate pea soup and pork.

#### 1.5.2.2 **Mygga**

**Mygg** is often used collectively as an alternative to **myggor**:

*Count plural*

**två myggor**, two mosquitoes

**Det var två myggor i tältet.**

There were two mosquitoes in the tent.

*Collective plural*

**mygg**, mosquitoes [in general]

**Här finns mycket mygg.**

There are a lot of mosquitoes here.

### 1.5.2.3 Bräda

*Count plural*

**två brädor**, two planks

**Vi behöver tre brädor till.**

We need three more planks.

*Collective plural*

**bräder**, planks [in general]

**Vi säljer också bräder.**

We also sell planks.

### 1.5.2.4 Polis

**Polis** is often used collectively as an alternative to **polis**er.

*Count plural*

**två polis**er, two police officers

**Poliserna kom i två bilar.**

The police came in two cars.

*Collective plural*

**polis**, the police (force)

**Polisen kom i två bilar.**

The police came in two cars.

Cf. **Polisen kom i en bil.**

The police officer came in a car.

### 1.5.2.5 Man

In addition to the count plural form **män**, the noun **man** has two different collective forms.

*Count plural*

**två män**, two men

**Hon älskar två män.**

She loves two men.

*Collective plural*

**man** (organised group of men or women)

**mannar** (colloquial and for a group, often of soldiers)

**en officer och tio man**

one officer and ten men

**en besättning på 500 man**

a crew of 500

**Mannarna klarade strapatserna.**

The men coped with the hardships.

### 1.5.3 Nouns with no singular form

The following nouns are usually encountered only in the plural. Singular forms of the nouns marked † in the table below do exist in certain set phrases, and singulars are conceivable for some other nouns listed:

#### Declension

- 1 **anor**, lineage; **bannor**, scolding; **brillor**, glasses; †**byxor**, trousers; **inälvor**, bowels; †**matvaror**, foodstuffs; **skulor**, swill; **sopor**, rubbish; **åthävor**, gestures
- 2 †**föräldrar**, parents; †**pengar**, money; **småkillar**, small boys; **bränningar**, surf
- 3 **annaler**, annals; **arkivalier**, archives; **ferier**, holidays; †**finanser**, finances; **förfäder**, forefathers; **gotter**, sweets; †**grönsaker**, vegetables; **kalsonger**, underpants; **kemikalier**, chemicals; **kläder**, clothes; **later**, manners; **räkenskaper**, accounts; **ränker**, machinations; **specerier**, groceries; **viktualier**, victuals; **repressalier**, reprisals; **griller**, whims; †**böter**, fine
- 4 **choser**, affectations; **dubier**, doubts
- 5 **glasögon**, spectacles; †**hängslen**, braces
- 6 **livsmedel**, groceries
- 7 **shorts**, shorts; **jeans**, jeans

**Det köpte jag för en billig peng.** I bought it for a small sum.

(See also 1.6.1.9)

**finansens värld**

the world of finance

**Han ställdes till räkenskap.**

He was brought to book.

**räkenskapers dag**

the day of reckoning

**en slitstark byxa**

a hard-wearing trouser

### 1.5.4 Nouns – plural endings: summary

Alternative forms are shown in brackets. Numbers refer to sections.

	Singular	Plural	Section	Plural ending	Meaning
FIRST DECLENSION			1.4.3		
Non-neuter	<b>en gata</b> <b>en toffel</b> <b>en ros</b> –	<b>gator</b> <b>tofflor</b> <b>rosor</b> <b>sopor</b>		<b>–or</b>	streets slippers roses rubbish
SECOND DECLENSION			1.4.4		
Non-neuter	<b>en hund</b> <b>en ö</b> <b>en kille</b> <b>en tiger</b> <b>en dotter</b> –	<b>hundar</b> <b>öar</b> <b>killar</b> <b>tigrar</b> <b>döttrar</b> <b>småkillar</b>		<b>–ar</b>	dogs islands boys tigers daughters small boys
THIRD DECLENSION			1.4.5		
Non-neuter	<b>en park</b> <b>en meny</b> <b>en motor</b> <b>en muskel</b> <b>en hand</b> <b>en fot</b> <b>en hobby</b> –	<b>parker</b> <b>menyer</b> <b>motorer</b> <b>muskler</b> <b>händer</b> <b>fötter</b> <b>hobbyer</b> <b>kläder</b>		<b>–er</b>	parks menus engines muscles hands feet hobbies clothes
Neuter	<b>ett geni</b> <b>ett museum</b>	<b>genier</b> <b>museer</b>			geniuses museums
FOURTH DECLENSION			1.4.6		
Non-neuter	<b>en ko</b> <b>en linje</b> <b>en trio</b>	<b>kor</b> <b>linjer</b> <b>trior</b>		<b>–r</b>	cows lines trios
FIFTH DECLENSION			1.4.7		
Neuter	<b>ett ansikte</b> <b>ett foto</b> <b>ett öga</b> – <b>ett antagande</b> <b>ett schema</b>	<b>ansikten</b> <b>foton</b> <b>ögon</b> <b>glasögon</b> <b>antaganden</b> <b>scheman</b>		<b>–n</b>	faces photos eyes spectacles assumptions timetables

SIXTH DECLENSION		1.4.8		
Neuter	<b>ett får</b>	<b>får</b>	<b>-0</b>	sheep
	<b>ett segel</b>	<b>segel</b>		sails
	<b>ett centrum</b>	<b>centrum (centra)</b>		centres
	–	<b>livsmedel</b>		groceries
Non-neuter	<b>en lärare</b>	<b>lärare</b>		teachers
	<b>en studerande</b>	<b>studerande</b>		students
	<b>en hammare</b>	<b>hammare/hamrar</b>		hammers
	<b>en musiker</b>	<b>musiker</b>		musicians
	<b>en man</b>	<b>män</b>		men
SEVENTH DECLENSION		1.4.9		
Non-neuter	<b>en hit</b>	<b>hits</b>	<b>-s</b>	hit
	<b>en trailer</b>	<b>trailers (trailrar)</b>		trailers
	–	<b>jeans</b>		jeans

## 1.6 Special uses of the singular and plural

### 1.6.1 Nouns which are singular in English but plural in Swedish

In addition to those nouns listed in 1.5.3 which have no singular form in Swedish, the following differences in usage may be noted:

#### 1.6.1.1 Möbel

There was no furniture. **Det fanns inga möbler.**  
 I bought a new piece of furniture. **Jag köpte en ny möbel.**

#### 1.6.1.2 Upplysning

more information **närmare upplysningar**  
 I have been informed that . . . **Jag har fått upplysning om att . . .**

#### 1.6.1.3 Kunskap

A good knowledge of Swedish . . . **Goda kunskaper i svenska . . .**  
 The tree of knowledge . . . **Kunskapens träd . . .**

#### 1.6.1.4 Framsteg

He is making good progress.  
The victory was a step forward.

**Han gör stora framsteg.  
Segern var ett framsteg.**

#### 1.6.1.5 Nyhet

The news is on TV every night.  
I have some news (a piece of news) for you.

**Nyhetererna är på TV varje kväll.  
Jag har en nyhet för dig.**

#### 1.6.1.6 Affär

Business is good.  
A good piece of business . . .

**Affärerna går bra.  
En god affär . . .**

#### 1.6.1.7 Råd

I need some good advice.  
A good piece of advice . . .

**Jag behöver några goda råd.  
Ett gott råd . . .**

#### 1.6.1.8 Böter

A fine of 500 crowns . . .  
They are looking for a cure.

**Femhundra kronors böter . . .  
Man söker bot.**

#### 1.6.1.9 Pengar

I have no money.

**Jag har inga pengar.**

**Peng** in the singular is only encountered in idioms: **en vacker peng, en billig peng.** See 1.5.3.

#### 1.6.1.10 Läxor

I had finished my homework at six o'clock.  
**Jag var färdig med läxorna klockan sex.**

I have finished my history homework but I have my Swedish left.  
**Jag är färdig med historieläxan, men jag har svenskan kvar.**

### 1.6.1.11 Others

Other words that regularly occur in the plural in Swedish where English has a singular:

**applåder**, applause; **bevis** (pl.), evidence; **kontanter**, cash; **skällsord**, (pl.) abuse

Note – Swedish has a plural where English often uses a singular noun in certain expressions with **halva**, half (4.4.2.2):

**dela något i två halvor**                      divide something in half

### 1.6.2 Nouns which are singular in Swedish but plural in English

#### 1.6.2.1 Singular in Swedish, plural in English

Swedish has a number of singular nouns that correspond to plural ideas in English:

**aska-n**, ashes; **folk-et**, (the) people; **havre-n**, oats; **innehåll-et**, contents, ingredients; **lokal-en**, premises; **lön-en**, wages; **moral-en**, morals; **narkotika-n**, drugs, narcotics; **protokoll-et**; minutes; **rekvisita-n**, (stage) props; **sprit-en**, spirits; **statistik-en**, statistics; **tack-et**, thanks; **trappa-n**, stairs, steps

This applies especially to cases where English has ‘a pair of’:

**en bälg**, (a pair of) bellows; **en passare**, (a pair of) compasses;  
**en pincett**, (a pair of) tweezers; **en sax**, (a pair of) scissors;  
**en trappstege**, (a pair of) steps, stepladder; **en tang**, (a pair of) tongs;  
**en våg**, (a pair of) scales

Notice that ‘several pairs of scissors’ = **flera saxar**, and so on.

#### 1.6.2.2 Swedish singular, English plural in reciprocating constructions

**Ska vi byta plats?**                                      Shall we change places?

**De skakade hand.  
Hon blev vän med honom.**

They shook hands.  
She made friends with him.

**1.6.2.3** Others

**medeltiden  
medelklassen  
tull(en)**

the Middle Ages  
the middle class(es)  
(the) Customs Authorities

**1.6.3** *Singular for the quantity expressed*

In expressions such as those given below the noun indicating the measure of quantity is usually in the singular form regardless of the quantity involved. Notice that the English 'of' has no equivalent in these expressions. See 7.3.9.6.

<b>femtio kilometer</b>	fifty kilometres
<b>två mil</b>	two Swedish miles [= 20 km]
<b>tre meter (tyg)</b>	three metres (of cloth)
<b>fyra kilo (smör)</b>	four kilos (of butter)
<b>sex hekto (mjöl)</b>	six hectos (of flour) [600 grams]
<b>två fot</b>	two feet (or: foot)
<b>tre liter (mjölk)</b>	three litres (of milk)
<b>(Det kostade) femtio öre.</b>	(It cost) fifty öre.

Note – Exception: **krona**, krona [unit of currency, *lit.* 'crown']

<b>en krona</b>	one krona
<b>två kronor</b>	two kronor
<b>Det kostar hundra kronor.</b>	It costs a hundred kronor.

**1.6.4** *Plural for the measure of quantity*

Plural forms of the nouns in 1.6.3 are encountered when the measure of quantity rather than the quantity expressed is of prime importance:

**Nu har vi bara de sista kilometrarna kvar.**  
Now we only have the last kilometres left.

**Jag måste gå ner de sista kilona.**  
I have to lose the last kilos.



## 1.7 Noun homonyms

### 1.7.1 List of Swedish noun homonyms

Some Swedish nouns have either two different genders or two different plural forms or both, indicating differences of meaning. Sometimes the words have different accent (word stress) in the singular definite and indefinite forms. The following is a list of the most frequent homonyms.

Singular indefinite	Plural indefinite	Meaning
<b>en bak</b> <b>ett bak</b>	<b>bak</b> <b>bak</b>	behind, seat bake
<b>en bal</b> <b>en bal</b>	<b>balar</b> <b>baler</b>	bale ball, dance
<b>en bank</b> <b>en bank</b>	<b>bankar</b> <b>banker</b>	sandbank bank, financial institution
<b>en bas</b> <b>en bas</b>	<b>basar</b> <b>baser</b>	(1) foreman, (2) bass (voice) (1) base, (2) basic substance
<b>en bok</b> <b>en bok</b>	<b>bokar</b> <b>böcker</b>	beech tree book
<b>en byrå</b> <b>en byrå</b>	<b>byråar</b> <b>byråer</b>	bureau, chest of drawers bureau, office of government, department
<b>en bål</b> <b>ett bål</b>	<b>bålar</b> <b>bål</b>	(1) trunk, body, (2) bowl bonfire
<b>en damm</b> <b>damm (-et)</b>	<b>dammar</b> –	(1) dam, (2) reservoir, pond dust
<b>en fax</b> <b>ett fax</b>	<b>faxar</b> <b>fax</b>	fax machine fax message
<b>fil (-en/-et)</b> <b>en fil</b> <b>en fil</b>	– <b>filar</b> <b>filer</b>	soured milk, yoghurt file, rasp row, lane (of road)
<b>en form</b> <b>en form</b>	<b>formar</b> <b>former</b>	mould form, shape
<b>en grund</b> <b>ett grund</b>	<b>grunder</b> <b>grund</b>	reason, ground(s) shallow, sandbank
<b>en gång</b> <b>en gång</b> <b>en gång</b>	<b>gångar</b> <b>gångar</b> –	path time, occasion gait

en knäck ett knäck	knäckar knäck	toffee income from extra work
en kur en kur	kurar kurer	shed cure
en lag ett lag	lagar lag	law team, group
en lager en lager ett lager	lager lagrar lager	lager (beer) laurel (1) store, (2) layer
ett land ett land	länder land	country (1) plot of land, (2) province
en led ett led	leder led	(1) joint, (2) way, route (1) link, (2) row, (3) generation
en lock ett lock	lockar lock	lock of hair, curl lid
en lår ett lår	lårar lår	packing case thigh
en mask en mask	maskar masker	worm mask
en not en not	notar noter	seine net (1) musical note, (2) written note
en nöt ett nöt	nötter nöt	nut (edible) creature, beast
en plan ett plan	planer plan	(1) plan, (2) sports pitch (1) plane, (2) aeroplane, (3) floor
en pris ett pris ett pris	prisar priser pris	pinch (e.g. of salt, snuff) price prize, reward
en ras ett ras	raser ras	race of people or animals landslide
en regel en regel	regler reglar	rule, law (1) door bolt, (2) beam
en rev ett rev	revar rev	fishing line reef, sandbank
en slav en slav	slavar slaver	slave Slav
en stav en stav	stavar stäver	staff, pole (wooden) stave (in a barrel etc.)

<b>ett stånd</b> <b>ett stånd</b>	<b>stånd</b> <b>ständer</b>	status, class, level estate e.g. <b>de fyra ständerna</b>
<b>en val</b> <b>ett val</b>	<b>valar</b> <b>val</b>	whale (1) choice, (2) election
<b>en vad</b> <b>en vad</b> <b>ett vad</b>	<b>vader</b> <b>vadar</b> <b>vad</b>	calf (of leg) seine net (1) bet, (2) appeal, (3) ford
<b>en vals</b> <b>en vals</b>	<b>valsar</b> <b>valser</b>	roller waltz
<b>en våg</b> <b>en våg</b>	<b>vågar</b> <b>vågor</b>	balance, scales wave

## 1.8 The genitive

### 1.8.1 The form of the genitive

#### 1.8.1.1 Basic rule

Add **–s** to the indefinite or definite singular, indefinite or definite plural form. Unlike English, no apostrophe is used before the **–s**.

*Indefinite singular genitive*  
**en kvinnas** a woman's  
**ett barns** a child's

*Definite singular genitive*  
**kvinnans** the woman's  
**barnets** the child's

*Indefinite plural genitive*  
**kvinnors** women's  
**barns** children's

*Definite plural genitive*  
**kvinnornas** the women's  
**barnens** the children's

There are, however, other genitive endings listed below and also many periphrastic forms of the genitive. See 7.3.9.

#### 1.8.1.2 Scandinavian place names ending in a consonant usually take **–s**

See 1.8.1.4.

**Gripsholms slott**, Gripsholm Castle; **Dalslands kanal**, the Dalsland Canal

**1.8.1.3** Names ending in **–s**, **–x** and **–z** usually have no indication of genitive

Cf. 1.8.1.6 below.

**Lukas evangelium**, Luke's gospel; **Topelius dikter**, Topelius's poems;  
**Marx "Das Kapital"**; **Schweiz järnvägar**, Switzerland's railways

An apostrophe is, however, used if a misunderstanding might otherwise arise, in this case where **–s** is part of the name:

**Limoges' porslinsindustri är berömd.**

Limoges's porcelain industry is famous.

Note 1 – Names ending in an s-sound and silent **e** as well as those in **–sj**, **–tj** sounds usually take an **–s**:

**Alices äventyr i underlandet** Alice's Adventures in Wonderland  
**Sjostakovitjs fjärde symfoni** Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony

Note 2 – Genitives of acronyms are written with a colon +**s**:

**LO:s regler**

LO's rules

**1.8.1.4** Place names ending in a vowel

Some Scandinavian place names, especially those ending in a vowel, may have a genitive without **–s** in set phrases:

**Uppsala domkyrka**, Uppsala Cathedral; **Solna Centrum**, Solna Centre; **Huddinge sjukhus**, Huddinge hospital; **Visby ringmur**, Visby's Walls; **Malmö hamn**, the Port of Malmö

Note – **Falu gruva** [from **Falun**] Falun's mine

**1.8.1.5** Adjectival nouns may also take an **–s** genitive

See also 2.4.1.3.

**de gamlas besparingar**, the old people's savings; **den döendes sista ord**, the dying man's last words; **det godas seger**, the triumph of good

**1.8.1.6** Latin genitives are used in some loanwords and names

**Kristi himmelfärd**, the ascension of Christ; **Jesu liv**, the life of Jesus;  
**Berzelii park**, Berzelius Park; **Bacchi son**, son of Bacchus

Note 1– There is a tendency in recent years to use the genitive form **Jesus**:

**Jesus familj**, Jesus’s family.

Note 2 –

**Olaus Petris kyrka** (← **Petri**)      Olaus Petri’s Church  
**Pompejis sista dagar** (← **Pompeji**)      the last days of Pompeii

**1.8.1.7** **Till** + old genitive case

There are many remnants of the Old Swedish genitive case after the preposition **till**:

(a) With an **s**-genitive:

**till fots**, on foot; **till fjälls**, to the mountains; **till havs**, to/at sea; **till sjöss**, to/at sea; **till skogs**, to/in the forest; **gå till bords**, go to (the) table; **gå till sängs**, go to bed

Note – In some cases the stem vowel is shortened and the final consonant devoiced when the **–s** is added: **hav** (pronounced with long a), ‘sea’ → (**till**) **havs**, (pronounced with short a), ‘(to) sea’; **skog** (pronounced with long o, ‘forest’ → (**till**) **skogs** with short o, ‘to the forest’.

(b) With an **a**–, **o**– or **u**–genitive (old genitive plural) after **till**:

**gå till väga**, set about; **gå någon till handa**, be of help to someone;  
**vara till salu**, be for sale; **ta till orda**, start to speak

**1.8.2** *The use of the genitive*

**1.8.2.1** Swedish **–s** genitive = English ‘s/s’ or ‘of’ genitive

Swedish uses the genitive in **–s** much more often than English uses **s**-genitives. The **s**-genitive is very frequent in Swedish, especially in the written language, and corresponds both to English genitive constructions with ‘s or s’ and to expressions with ‘of’ (but cf. 7.3.9):

<b>killens far</b>	the boy's father
<b>killarnas far</b>	the boys' father
<b>Amerikas upptäckt</b>	the discovery of America
<b>en hjältes död</b>	the death of a hero
<b>Englands drottning</b>	the Queen of England
<b>Sveriges huvudstad</b>	the capital of Sweden
<b>Stockholms stad</b> (but cf. 7.3.9.5)	the city of Stockholm

### 1.8.2.2 No end article on the following noun

A noun that follows a noun in the genitive form does not take a definite article:

<b>bergets topp</b>	the top of the hill
<b>skolans rektor</b>	the headmaster of the school
<b>flickornas föräldrar</b>	the girls' parents

This often involves a conscious transformation from the English:

<i>Def. art.</i>	<i>No art.</i>	→	<i>Def. art.</i>	<i>No art.</i>
The end of summer			<b>Sommarens slut</b>	

Note – A rare exception is where the noun is a title or proper name:

#### **Jag tycker om Mobergs Utvandrarerna.**

I like Moberg's *The Emigrants*.

#### **En resa till sjöfåglarnas Färöarna.**

A journey to the Faeroes of the sea birds.

### 1.8.2.3 Group genitive

If a name comprises a group of words, the genitive is usually placed on the final word of the group, the group genitive:

**Bo Janssons far**  
Bo Jansson's father

#### **Kungen av Danmarks bröst-karameller**

King of Denmark's Cough Drops

[formerly a proprietary brand in Sweden]

#### **Karl den stores rike**

Charlemagne's kingdom

## Forskning och Framstegs redaktör

the editor of *Forskning och Framsteg*

Note 1 – In lists, however, each element should in correct written Swedish have an **–s**:

**\*Åke och Lisas lillayster → Åkes och Lisas lillasyster**

Åke's and Lisa's little sister

Note 2 – A noun or pronoun in apposition, when it is preposed, takes the same case as the noun to which it refers, in this example the genitive:

**Under ordförandens, doktor Svenssons, frånvaro ...**

During the Chairman, Dr Svensson's, absence ...

### 1.8.2.4 Special uses

Notice the following special uses of the **s**-genitive in Swedish:

(a) In certain set expressions to indicate a quality:

**medelålders herrar**

middle-aged men

**de stackars barnen**

the poor (unfortunate) children

**den satans sjukdomen**

the damned illness

**Vilket jädrans väder!**

What damned awful weather!

(b) The genitive of measurement:

**ett par timmars sömn**

a couple of hours' sleep

**en tvåliters vinflaska**

a two-litre wine bottle

**ett fyrtiominuters TV-program**

a forty-minute TV programme

(c) 'Kind(s) sort(s), type(s) of':

**En sorts, sorters** (from **en sort**), **ett slags, slags** (pronounced /slaks/, from **ett slag**):

**en sorts radiomottagare**

a sort of radio receiver

**sju sorters kakor**

seven kinds of biscuit(s)

**ett slags frukt**

a type of fruit

**Det finns två slags statsmän.**

There are two kinds of statesman.

Note how adjectives are used before and after **sorts** and **slags**. See also 2.3.7.1(b).

<b>en ny sorts vin/ett nytt slags vin</b>	a new type of wine
<b>en sorts egendomlig insekt</b>	a kind of strange insect

Note – **Ett slags** has now lost its status as a noun and functions in the same way as an indeclinable adjective cf. **allsköns** 2.1.6.3. A frequent mistake is to write e.g. **\*en slags ny blomma**, ‘a kind of new flower’, where the indefinite article agrees with **blomma**. This kind of attraction is grammatically incorrect. See also 2.2.7, 2.3.7.1(b).

(d) The explicative genitive:

<b>Lövens långa sjö</b>	the long lake Löven
<b>avhållsamhetens dygd</b>	the virtue of abstinence

(e) Genitives in names:

<b>Jag handlar hos Olssons.</b>	I always shop at Olsson’s.
<b>mitt emot Pettersons</b>	opposite Petterson’s house

**Överstens (familj) kommer på besök.**  
The colonel’s family are coming on a visit.

(f) –s genitive corresponding to English superlative + ‘in’ + place name:

<b>Sveriges rikaste man</b>	the richest man in Sweden
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(g) Most genitives are possessive: **Emmas stövlar**, ‘Emma’s boots’ = **Emma har stövlar**. However, genitives may also be subjective (**hennes föräldrars tillstånd**, ‘her parents’ consent’ = **Hennes föräldrar gav sitt tillstånd**) or objective (**fångens frisläppande**, ‘the prisoner’s release’ = **någon släpper fången fri**).

In some cases, the objective genitive may be confused with the subjective genitive. **Olof Palmes mord** might suggest that Palme committed murder. In such cases, a prepositional genitive is preferable: **mordet på Olof Palme**, ‘the murder of Olof Palme’.

### 1.8.2.5 Prepositional genitives

Particularly in spoken Swedish there are many different prepositional expressions corresponding to the English genitive construction with ‘of’. There are also some cases when the Swedish equivalent to English constructions with ‘of’ involves no genitive marker. For a detailed account of these, see 7.3.9.



## 1.9 The form of the indefinite article

### 1.9.1 The indefinite article

The indefinite article in Swedish is **en** for singular non-neuter nouns and **ett** for singular neuter nouns:

<b>en kvinna</b>	a woman	<b>ett äpple</b>	an apple
<b>en arm</b>	an arm	<b>ett barn</b>	a child

## 1.10 The form of the definite (end) article

### 1.10.1 The definite (end) article

In Swedish the definite article (or end article) singular is added to the end of the noun as a suffix: **-en/-n** for non-neuter nouns and **-et/-t** for neuter nouns. The definite (or end) article plural is **-na** for nouns ending in the plural indefinite in **-or, -ar, -er** (mostly non-neuter), **-en** for nouns ending in the plural indefinite in **-ö** and **-a** for nouns ending in **-n** (mostly neuter). See 1.10.3.

Singular		Plural	
<b>kvinnan</b> the woman	<b>äpplet</b> the apple	<b>kvinnorna</b> the women	<b>äpplena</b> the apples
<b>armen</b> the arm	<b>barnet</b> the child	<b>armarna</b> the arms	<b>barnen</b> the children

### 1.10.2 The form of the definite singular

#### 1.10.2.1 Basic rule

Most Swedish nouns ending in a consonant add **-en** or **-et** according to gender, while those ending in a vowel add **-n** or **-t** according to gender.

<b>en lön</b>	a salary	<b>lönen</b>	the salary
<b>en firma</b>	a firm	<b>firman</b>	the firm
<b>ett företag</b>	a company	<b>företaget</b>	the company
<b>ett yrke</b>	a profession	<b>yrket</b>	the profession

**1.10.2.2** Nouns ending in **-el, -en, -er, -or**

- (a) Non-neuter nouns ending in stressed **-el, -er** and **-or** (mostly loanwords) add **-en** according to the main rule:

**klientelen**, the clientele; **materielen**, the equipment; **officer(e)n**, the officer; **korridor**, the corridor; **metaforen**, the metaphor; **spanjoren**, the Spaniard

- (b) Non-neuter nouns ending in unstressed **-el, -er, -or** (see 1.4.3.3, 1.4.4.4, 1.4.4.5) add **-n**:

**fågeln**, the bird; **möbelen**, the piece of furniture; **brodern**, the brother; **dottern**, the daughter; **fadern**, the father; **modern**, the mother; **doktorn**, the doctor; **motorn**, the engine

Note 1 – **\*fadren** ‘the father’, **\*modren** ‘the mother’ are archaic.

Note 2 – In South and West Sweden the forms **cyklen, nycklen** are often found for **cykeln, nyckeln**.

Note 3: **En himmel** (‘heaven’ or ‘sky’) has several alternative forms with end article singular: **himlen/himmelen/himmeln**.

- (c) Neuter nouns ending in unstressed **-el, -er** add **-et** according to the main rule, but drop the final **-e** of the stem:

<b>ett exempel</b>	an example	<b>exemplet</b>	the example
<b>ett finger</b>	a finger	<b>fingeret</b>	the finger

Similarly: **alstret** the product; **bullret** the noise; **lagret** the store; **lägret** the camp; **mönstret** the pattern; **silvret** the silver; **vädret** the weather

Note: The small number of neuter nouns which end in stressed **-er** (loanwords) take **-et**:

**kvarteret**, the area, block; **maneret**, the manner

- (d) Nouns of both genders ending in unstressed **-en** drop the **-e** of the stem before adding the end article singular:

<b>en socken</b>	a parish	<b>socknen</b>	the parish
<b>ett tecken</b>	a sign	<b>tecknet</b>	the sign
<b>ett vapen</b>	a weapon	<b>vapnet</b>	the weapon
<b>en öken</b>	a desert	<b>öknen</b>	the desert

Note 1 – Exceptions: **bäcken** – **bäckenet**, pelvis; **siden** – **sidenet**, silk.

Note 2 – A few nouns in unstressed **-en** possess no special definite form:

<b>en examen</b>	a degree	<b>examen</b>	the degree
<b>en fröken</b>	an unmarried woman	<b>fröken</b>	the unmarried woman

Similarly: **borgen**, surety; **kulmen**, culmination; **lösen**, ransom; **orden**, order; **tentamen**, examination

Note 3 – A few nouns in stressed **-en** take the endings **-en** or **-et** according to gender:

**kaptenen**, the captain; **fenomenet**, the phenomenon

### 1.10.2.3 Nouns in **-an**

Many non-neuter nouns ending in **-an** have no special definite form. None of these nouns has a plural form, but see 1.5.1.6. These are often abstracts derived from verbs.

**ansökan**, application; **antydan**, hint; **fruktan**, fear; **förtvivlan**, desperation; **gisslan**, hostage; **inbjudan**, invitation; **längtan**, longing; **strävan**, striving; **tvekan**, doubt; **undran**, wonderment; **vägran**, refusal; **väntan**, expectation; **ängslan**, anguish

Note – Neuter nouns ending in **-an** do, however, possess a definite form:

<b>ett lakan</b>	a bedsheet	<b>lakanet</b>	the bedsheet
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### 1.10.2.4 Contractions in colloquial language

(a) In colloquial Swedish non-neuter nouns ending in **-are** drop the final **-e** before adding the end article:

<b>källaren</b>	→	<b>källarn</b>	the basement
<b>läraren</b>	→	<b>lärarn</b>	the teacher

Note 1 – A similar alternative short definite form is found in colloquial Swedish in the following nouns:

<b>aborren</b>	→	<b>aborrn</b>	the perch
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<b>ekorren</b>	→	<b>ekorrn</b>	the squirrel
<b>sommaren</b>	→	<b>sommarn</b>	the summer

Note 2 – There is a clear semantic distinction between **herrn**, ‘the gentleman’, and **Herren**, ‘the Lord’ [ i.e. God].

(b) Forms similar to those found in 1.10.2.2 above are the following colloquial alternatives to non-neuter nouns ending in **-l**, **-r**:

<b>karlen</b>	→	<b>karln</b>	the chap
<b>direktören</b>	→	<b>direktörn</b>	the director
<b>dörren</b>	→	<b>dörrn</b>	the door

Note – The final **-l** is not pronounced in any of the forms of **karl**.

(c) Notice the common contractions:

<b>staden</b>	→	<b>stan</b>	the town
<b>dagen</b>	→	<b>dan</b>	the day

The short forms of these words are always found in spoken and often in colloquial written Swedish. They are also found in many compounds: **verkstan**, ‘the workshop’; **riksdan**, ‘Parliament’.

#### 1.10.2.5 Nouns ending in stressed vowels

Nouns ending in stressed **é**, **-i**, **-ä** and **-ö** (loanwords) also vary in their definite singular form according to gender.

(a) Non-neuter nouns usually have the short form nowadays:

**armén**, the army; **europén**, the European; **filén**, the fillet;  
**kommittén**, the committee; **idén**, the idea; **industrin**, industry;  
**energin**, energy; **essän**, the essay (*but*: **Svenska Akademien**, the Swedish Academy)

(b) Neuter nouns usually retain the long form in written Swedish:

**kaféet** (*or less commonly kafét*), the café; **konditoriet** (*or konditorit*), the café; **fotografiet** (*or fotografit*), the photograph;  
**knäet** (*or knät*), the knee; **träet** (*or trät*), the wood; **fröet** (*or fröt*), the seed

### 1.10.2.6 Nouns ending in **-eum, -ium**

Bisyllabic or polysyllabic nouns ending in **-eum, -ium** (loanwords, see 1.4.5.6) usually drop the **-um** before adding any endings:

<b>jubileum</b>	<b>jubileet</b>	<b>två jubileer</b>	<b>jubileerna</b>	anniversary
<b>museum</b>	<b>museet</b>	<b>två museer</b>	<b>museerna</b>	museum
<b>auditorium</b>	<b>auditoriet</b>	<b>två auditorier</b>	<b>auditorierna</b>	auditorium
<b>decennium</b>	<b>decenniet</b>	<b>två decennier</b>	<b>decennierna</b>	decade
<b>seminarium</b>	<b>seminariet</b>	<b>två seminarier</b>	<b>seminarierna</b>	seminar

But cf.

<b>aluminium</b>	<b>aluminiumet (aluminiet)</b>	(no plural)	aluminium
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### 1.10.2.7 Nouns ending in **-um**

Nouns ending in **-um** usually add **-et** to the stem and may possess several alternative definite forms (cf. 1.4.8.4):

<i>Indef. sing.</i>	<i>Def. sing.</i>	<i>Indef. plural</i>	<i>Def. plural</i>
<b>album</b> album	<b>albumet</b>	<b>två album</b>	<b>albumen</b>
<b>datum</b> date	<b>datumet</b> <b>datum</b>	<b>två datum</b>	<b>datumen</b>
<b>faktum</b> fact	<b>faktumet</b> <b>faktum</b>	<b>två faktum</b> <b>fakta</b>	<b>faktumen</b> <b>fakta</b>
<b>forum</b> forum	<b>forumet</b> <b>forum</b>	<b>forum</b> <b>fora</b>	<b>forumen</b>
<b>centrum</b> centre	<b>centrumet</b> <b>centrum</b>	<b>två centrum</b> <b>centra</b>	<b>centrumen</b> <b>centra</b>

### 1.10.2.8 **Historia**

Notice the change of stem vowel in:

<b>en historia</b>	<b>historien</b>	<b>historier</b>	<b>historierna</b>
story			

### 1.10.2.9 Assimilation of the article

In some non-neuter nouns ending in **-n** the **-e** of the article drops and the **-n** of the article is assimilated in colloquial Central Swedish, especially in fixed expressions:

**Låt maten tysta mun/munnen!**

Don't talk with your mouth full!

[lit. Let your food silence your mouth!]

**Kapten/Kaptenen ropade order.**

The captain shouted orders.

### 1.10.2.10 Nouns ending in **-m** and **-n**

Nouns ending in **-m**, **-n** after a short vowel double the **m** or **n** before adding the end article or plural ending. See also 12.2.2.

<b>hem</b>	<b>hemmet</b>	<b>två hem</b>	<b>hemmen</b>	home
<b>medlem</b>	<b>medlemmen</b>	<b>två medlemmar</b>	<b>medlemmarna</b>	member
<b>man</b>	<b>mannen</b>	<b>två män</b>	<b>männen</b>	man
<b>vän</b>	<b>vänner</b>	<b>två vänner</b>	<b>vännerna</b>	friend

### 1.10.3 Choice of the definite plural ending

For plural indefinite forms see 1.4f. For plural definite forms by declension, see particularly 1.4.3.6, 1.4.4.10, 1.4.5.12, 1.4.6.4, 1.4.7.7, 1.4.8.7, 1.4.9.2(b). Gender and declension are, however, of little significance in determining the choice of the plural article form. The determining factor is the form of the plural indefinite.

#### 1.10.3.1 Plurals in **-or**, **-ar**

Plurals in **-or**, **-ar** (always non-neuter) add **-na**:

<b>en gata</b>	<b>två gator</b>	<b>gatorna</b>	the streets
<b>en väg</b>	<b>två vägar</b>	<b>vägarna</b>	the roads

Note – The plural definite ending **-ne**, which was previously used especially for masculine nouns with plurals in **-ar**, **-are** (**grannarne**, ‘the neighbours’; **hundarne**, ‘the dogs’; **lärarne**, ‘the teachers’; **pojkarne**, ‘the boys’), is now archaic.

### 1.10.3.2 Plurals in **-er**

Plurals in **-er** (non-neuter and neuter) add **-na**:

<b>en film</b>	<b>två filmer</b>	<b>filmerna</b>	the films
<b>ett vin</b>	<b>två viner</b>	<b>vinerna</b>	the wines

### 1.10.3.3 Plurals in **-n**

Plurals in **-n** (always neuter) add **-a**:

<b>ett antagande</b>	<b>två antaganden</b>	<b>antagandena</b>	the assumptions
<b>ett rike</b>	<b>två rikena</b>	<b>rikerna</b>	the kingdoms

### 1.10.3.4 Nouns with a zero plural

Most nouns of either gender with a zero plural add **-en**, except those in 1.10.3.7–1.10.3.8:

<b>ett bord</b>	<b>två bord</b>	<b>borden</b>	the tables
<b>en man</b>	<b>två män</b>	<b>männen</b>	the men
<b>en mus</b>	<b>två möss</b>	<b>mössen</b>	the mice

Note – By analogy with other declensions some sixth declension neuter nouns ending in a consonant with a zero plural possess an alternative plural definite form in colloquial Swedish. Forms in **-a** are still regarded as colloquial and are little used in writing.

<b>ett barn</b>	<b>två barn</b>	<b>barnen/barna</b>	the children
<b>ett hus</b>	<b>två hus</b>	<b>husen/husena</b>	the houses
<b>ett huvud</b>	<b>två huvud</b>	<b>huvuden/huvudena</b>	the heads
<b>ett träd</b>	<b>två träd</b>	<b>träden/träna</b>	the trees

For alternative plural definite forms of sixth declension nouns ending in **-er** see 1.10.3.6 Note.

### 1.10.3.5 Neuter nouns ending in **-el**, **-en**

Neuter nouns ending in **-el**, **-en** drop the **-e** of the stem before adding the plural end article **-en**:

<b>ett exempel</b>	<b>två exempel</b>	<b>exemplen</b>	the examples
<b>ett tecken</b>	<b>två tecken</b>	<b>tecknen</b>	the signs

### 1.10.3.6 Neuter nouns ending in **-er**

Neuter nouns ending in **-er** usually behave as those in 1.10.3.5 above:

<b>ett blomster</b>	<b>två blomster</b>	<b>blomstren</b>	the blooms
<b>ett hinder</b>	<b>två hinder</b>	<b>hindren</b>	the obstacles

Note – However, note that in spoken Swedish there is a tendency for some of these nouns to develop alternative plural definite forms:

<b>ett fönster</b>	<b>fönster</b>	<b>fönstren/ fönstrena/ fönsterna</b>	the windows
<b>ett nummer</b>	<b>nummer</b>	<b>numren/ numrena/ nummerna</b>	the numbers

Also: **bekymmer**, worry; **fruntimmer**, woman [derogatory]; **papper**, paper; **piller**, pill.

### 1.10.3.7 Nouns ending in **-are**

Nouns (non-neuter and neuter) with zero plurals and which end in **-are** drop the final **-e** before adding the plural end article **-na**:

<b>en bagare</b>	<b>två bagare</b>	<b>bagarna</b>	the bakers
<b>en läkare</b>	<b>två läkare</b>	<b>läkarna</b>	the doctors

Note – Only two nouns in **-are** are neuter:

<b>ett altare</b>	<b>två altare/altaren</b>	<b>altarna</b>	the altars
<b>ett ankare</b>	<b>två ankare/ankaren</b>	<b>ankarna</b>	the anchors

### 1.10.3.8 Non-neuter nouns ending in **-er**

Non-neuter nouns ending in **-er** with zero plurals add **-na**:

<b>en indier</b>	<b>två indier</b>	<b>indierna</b>	the Indians
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### 1.10.3.9 Nouns with a zero plural ending in –s

Nouns with a zero plural (neuter and non-neuter) ending in –s add –en:

<b>ett tricks</b>	<b>två tricks</b>	<b>tricksen</b>	the tricks
<b>ett par jeans</b>	–	<b>jeansen</b>	the jeans

### 1.10.3.10 Nouns with no special plural definite form

Some nouns have no special plural definite form (although some of these may possess alternative distinct plural definite forms, shown below). They comprise largely:

(a) Nouns with a plural indefinite ending in –a:

**data**, the data; **examina**, the degrees; **fakta**, the facts; **lexika** /**lexikonen**, the dictionaries; **pronomina/pronomenen**, the pronouns; **tentamina**, the examinations

(b) Nouns with a plural indefinite ending in –i:

**cembali/cembalorna**, the harpsichords; **tempi/tempona**, tempos or tempi

## 1.10.4 Nouns – forms with end article: summary

Alternative forms and selected stems are shown in brackets. Figures refer to sections in the text.

PARA.	NON-NEUTER SINGULAR	PARA.	NEUTER SINGULAR
1.10.2.1	<b>arm-en</b>	1.10.2.1	<b>barn-et</b>
1.10.2.1	<b>kvinn-a-n</b>	1.10.2.1	<b>äpple-t</b>
1.10.2.2	<b>fågel-n</b>	1.10.2.2	<b>exempl-et</b> (from <b>exempel</b> )
1.10.2.2	<b>moder-n</b>	1.10.2.2	<b>fingr-et</b> (from <b>finger</b> )
1.10.2.2	<b>rektor-n</b>		
1.10.2.2	<b>ökn-en</b> (from <b>öken</b> )	1.10.2.2	<b>vapn-et</b> (from <b>vapen</b> )
1.10.2.2	<b>materiel-en</b>	1.10.2.2	<b>kvarter-et</b>
1.10.2.2	<b>kapt-en</b>	1.10.2.2	<b>fenomen-et</b>
1.10.2.3	<b>början</b>		
1.10.2.4	<b>lärare-n</b> (or <b>lärar-n</b> )		
1.10.2.4	<b>direktör-en</b> (or <b>direktör-n</b> )		
1.10.2.4	<b>stad-en</b> (or <b>stan</b> )		

I.10.2.5	<b>industri-n</b> (or <b>industri-en</b> )	I.10.2.5	<b>fotografi-et</b> (or <b>fotografit</b> )
		I.10.2.6	<b>muse-et</b> (from <b>museum</b> )
		I.10.2.7	<b>centrum-et</b> (or <b>centret</b> or <b>centrum</b> )
		I.10.2.7	<b>faktum-et</b> (or <b>faktum</b> )
I.10.2.5	<b>armé-n</b>	I.10.2.5	<b>knä-t</b> (or <b>knä-et</b> )

PARA.	NON-NEUTER PLURAL	PARA.	NEUTER PLURAL
I.10.3.1	<b>armar-na</b>	I.10.3.4	<b>barn-en</b>
I.10.3.1	<b>flickor-na</b>	I.10.3.3	<b>äpplen-a</b>
I.10.3.2	<b>filmer-na</b>	I.10.3.2	<b>viner-na</b>
I.10.3.4	<b>män-nen</b> (from <b>man</b> )	I.10.3.4	<b>program-men</b> (12.2.2)
I.10.3.7	<b>bagar-na</b> (from <b>bagare</b> )	I.10.3.6	<b>fönstr-en</b> (coll. <b>fönster-na</b> )
I.10.3.8	<b>indier-na</b> (from <b>indier</b> )	I.10.3.5	<b>exempl-en</b> (from <b>exempel</b> )
I.10.3.10	<b>tricks-en</b>	I.10.3.4	<b>hus-en</b> (coll. <b>hus-ena</b> )

## 1.11 The use of the indefinite and definite (end) article

### 1.11.1 Introduction

In most cases the same principle applies in Swedish as in English, namely that concepts familiar from the context take a definite article whilst unfamiliar concepts take an indefinite article:

**Tjejen hade inte sett en ekorre tidigare. Ekorren sprang bort.**  
The girl hadn't seen a squirrel before. The squirrel ran away.

Swedish article use may be seen as a series of contrasts or choices between three forms of the noun:

#### 1.11.1.1 Noun without article

For count nouns, the form without article (**bil**, **hus**) is contrasted both with the form with indefinite article (**en bil**, **ett hus**) and with the form with definite article (**bilen**, **huset**). Use of count nouns without an article tends to imply an abstract sense, concentrating on the content or idea behind the noun rather than indicating one specific case of the noun.

*Generality*

**Vi åt kyckling till middag.**

We had chicken for dinner.

*Specific example*

**Vi åt en kyckling till middag.**

We had a chicken for dinner.

**Fru Lund var på resa.**

Mrs Lund was travelling.

**Fru Lund var på en resa.**

Mrs Lund was on a journey.

#### 1.11.1.2 Noun with indefinite article

This is usually found in the case of count nouns for concepts unfamiliar from the context (see example in 1.11.1 above). The distinction between articleless noun and noun with indefinite article also indicates that between general and specific:

*General*

**Bonden hittade bara sten på markerna.**

The farmer found only rock in his fields.

*Specific*

**Peter hittade en sten på stranden.**

Peter found a rock on the beach.

With count nouns indicating substances, etc., the use of the indefinite form indicates a limitation of the generality and stresses a type or sort:

*Type or sort*

**Granit är en hård sten.**

Granite is a hard rock.

In contrast with the noun without article, the noun with article may also have a figurative sense:

*Literal*

**Chaplin blev clown i Fred Karnos Fun Factory.**

Chaplin became a clown in Fred Karno's Fun Factory.

*Figurative*

**Han sa att domaren var en clown.**

He said the referee was [i.e. behaved like] a clown.

#### 1.11.1.3 Noun with definite article

When there is assumed common knowledge of a context, Swedish often has the definite form even in many cases where English does not:

**Han är i staden.**

He is in town.

A whole species or family may be denoted by either definite singular or indefinite plural:

**Älgen/Älgar finns över hela Sverige.**

The elk is/Elk are to be found throughout Sweden.

Note – **Svenskar/na älskar naturen**, ‘Swedes love the countryside’. The form without article (**svenskar**) stresses prototypical qualities, whilst the form with article (**svenskarna**) focuses more on the actual individuals.

**1.11.2 Swedish has a definite (end) article – English has no article**

**1.11.2.1** Abstract nouns in a general sense

**Han fruktade döden och helvetet.** He feared death and hell.

- (a) This applies especially to nouns depicting aspects of human life and thought such as:

**arbetet**, work; **eländet**, misery; **industrin**, industry; **kommunismen**, Communism; **litteraturen**, literature; **lyckan**, happiness; **mänskligheten**, humankind; **sömnen**, sleep; **ungdomen**, youth; **vetenskapen**, science; **äktenskapet**, marriage; **ödet**, fate

- (b) This applies also to words denoting human qualities and emotions:

**förnuftet**, reason; **hatet**, hate; **hälsan**, health; **kärleken**, love; **skönheten**, beauty; **stoltheten**, pride

- (c) The general sense may be linked to specific circumstances:

**Hur går affärerna?**

How is business?

**Erfarenheten visar det.**

Experience shows this.

- (d) Set phrases include:

**på modet**

in fashion

**i praktiken**

in practice

**enligt traditionen**

according to tradition

**till utseendet**

by appearance

**i verkligheten**

in reality

### 1.11.2.2 Proverbs

Proverbs are a special case of 1.11.2.1:

<b>Konsten är lång men livet är kort.</b>	Art is long but life is short.
<b>Kärleken är blind.</b>	Love is blind.
<b>Historien upprepar sig.</b>	History repeats itself.
<b>Sånt är livet.</b>	Such is life.
<b>Människan spår men Gud rår.</b>	Man proposes, God disposes.

### 1.11.2.3 Types and groups in a collective sense

<b>Människan är bara en naken apa.</b>	Man is only a naked ape.
<b>Priserna stiger jämt.</b>	Prices are constantly rising.

### 1.11.2.4 Institutions and locations

<b>Han har gått till arbetet.</b>	He has gone to work.
<b>Olle går i skolan/kyrkan.</b>	Olle goes to school/church.
<b>Lars åker till/är i sta(de)n.</b>	Lars is going to/is in town.
<b>Erik ligger på sjukhuset.</b>	Erik is in hospital.

### 1.11.2.5 Days of the week, seasons, festivals and mealtimes

See also 7.3.4ff.

<b>På fredagarna åker vi hem.</b>	On Fridays we go home.
<b>På vintern spelar vi ishockey.</b>	In winter we play ice-hockey.
<b>Hösten är vacker.</b>	Autumn is beautiful.
<b>Vi ses på nyårsdagen!</b>	See you on New Year's Day!
<b>förra veckan</b>	last week
<b>juldagen</b>	Christmas Day
<b>i gryningen</b>	at dawn
<b>i skymningen</b>	at dusk
<b>Middagen serveras klockan åtta.</b>	Dinner is served at eight o'clock.

Note – Exceptions: festivals ending in **–afton**:

**julafton**, Christmas Eve; **midsommarafton**, Midsummer's Eve;  
**nyårsafton**, New Year's Eve; **påskafton**, Easter Saturday

Note – With the verb **äta** and the preposition **till** expressions for mealtimes are used without the article:

**Vi äter middag klockan åtta.** We eat dinner at eight o'clock.  
**Vad äter du till frukost?** What do you eat for breakfast?

**1.11.2.6** Names of streets, lakes, squares, parks and public places

**Kungsgatan, Västerbron, Humlegården, Vänern, Storsjön,  
Siljan, Skansen**

Note 1 – Exceptions are street names ending in **–plan**: **Odenplan**

Note 2 – Street names including a proper name in the genitive are written as two words: **Gustav Adolfs torg, Frölunda torg, Fersens väg**

**1.11.2.7** Materials and substances

**vattnets fryspunkt** the freezing point of water  
**Bensinen är dyrare än förr.** Petrol is more expensive than before.

**1.11.2.8** Titles when not followed by a name

Titles and vocative expressions when not followed by a name:

**Tack, doktorn!** Thank you, doctor!  
**Hej, lilla gumman!** Hello, little lady!

**1.11.2.9** Titles comprising a noun

Titles comprising a noun or referring to a woman:

**prinsessan Estelle** Princess Estelle

But note the following titles without end article:

**direktör Olsson** Mr Olsson, the director  
**ingenjör Ågren** Mr Ågren, the engineer

### 1.11.2.10 Nouns after certain words

Nouns after the following words:

<b>båda</b> or <b>bägge</b>	<b>båda killarna</b>	both boys	3.9.15
<b>den där</b> , etc.	<b>den där hunden</b>	that dog	2.3.6.2, 3.7.1
<b>den, det, de</b> , etc.	<b>den mannen</b>	that man	3.7.1
<b>förra</b>	<b>förra veckan</b>	last week	2.3.8.1(e)
<b>hela</b>	<b>hela vintern</b>	all winter	2.3.8.1
<b>halva</b>	<b>halva priset</b>	half price	2.3.8.1
<b>vardera</b> , etc.	<b>på vardera sidan</b>	on each side	3.9.5

### 1.11.3 *Swedish has a definite (end) article – English has an indefinite article*

#### 1.11.3.1 Prices

**Osten kostar hundra kronor kilot.**  
The cheese costs a hundred crowns a kilo.

#### 1.11.3.2 Wages and frequency of occurrence

**Han tjänar femhundra kronor i timmen/veckan/månaden.**  
He earns five hundred crowns an hour/a week/a month.

**tio gånger om dagen/året**  
ten times a day/a year

### 1.11.4 *Swedish has no article – English has a definite article*

#### 1.11.4.1 Instruments and pastimes

Some idiomatic phrases involving instruments and pastimes after verbs like *lyssna på*, *titta på*, *spela*, *dansa*:

<b>Han spelar piano.</b>	He plays the piano.
<b>De lyssnar på radio.</b>	They listen to the radio.
<b>Tjejen dansade tango.</b>	The girl danced the tango.
<b>Han talar i telefon.</b>	He's on the phone.
<b>Ska vi gå på bio?</b>	Shall we go to the cinema?

**1.11.4.2** Grammatical terms

**Ordet får bestämd artikel.** The word takes the end article.  
**Det finns i preteritum.** It is found in the past tense.

**1.11.4.3** With certain expressions involving names

**Vi är bjudna till Janssons.** We're invited to the Janssons'.  
**Vi brukar bo på Hilton.** We usually stay at the Hilton.

This is also the case when using English proper names in Swedish:

**Jag läste detta i Times.** I read this in *The Times*.  
**John satt på British Library.** John was sitting in the British Library.

**1.11.4.4** Others (set phrases)

**tala sanning** speak the truth  
**i norr** in the North  
**till vänster** to the left  
**på höger sida** on the right-hand side  
**Han är son till Ingmar Bergman.** He is the son of Ingmar Bergman.  
**Dahl är författare till boken.** Dahl is the author of the book.  
**Han har inte fått tillfälle.** He has not had the chance.  
**Att han hade mage att göra det!** That he had the gall to do it!

Note – Expressions involving **ett flertal**:

**ett flertal studenter** a majority of the students

**1.11.4.5** After certain words

**nästa tåg** the next train  
**samma dag** the same day  
**fel hus** the wrong house  
**på rätt sätt** in the right way  
**följande år** the following year  
**föregående dag** the previous day  
**motsvarande uttryck** the corresponding expression  
**vederbörande tjänsteman** the appropriate official

See also 2.3.7.5.



**1.11.4.6** With some superlatives

See also 2.5.10.7.

<b>av bästa kvalitet</b>	of the best quality
<b>billigast möjliga schampo</b>	the cheapest possible shampoo
<b>till högsta pris</b>	at the highest price

**1.11.5** *Swedish has no article – English has an indefinite article*

**1.11.5.1** Nouns denoting nationality, profession, trade, religion or political belief used as a subject complement

<b>Sven-Göran är svensk.</b>	Sven-Göran is a Swede.
<b>Leif blev lärare.</b>	Leif became a teacher.
<b>Herr Weber är katolik.</b>	Mr Weber is a Catholic.
<b>Moberg var liberal.</b>	Moberg was a Liberal.

The noun does, however, take an indefinite article in three important instances:

(a) When preceded by a qualifier:

<b>Han är en god katolik.</b>	He is a good Catholic.
<b>Hon är en gammal socialist.</b>	She is an old Socialist.

(b) After certain prepositional expressions:

<b>Hon är gift med en lärare.</b>	She is married to a teacher.
<b>Hon är dotter till en präst.</b>	She is the daughter of a priest.

But:

**Han blev utbildad till arkitekt.** He was trained as an architect.

(c) When followed by a restrictive relative clause:

**Han var författare, men han blev så småningom kritiker.**  
He was a writer, but he eventually became a critic.

**Han var en författare som debuterade på 80-talet.**  
He was a writer who made his debut in the eighties.

### 1.11.5.2

When the noun follows **som** [= 'in the capacity of'], no article is used in Swedish:

**Som professor fick han tala vid mötet.**

As (a) professor he was allowed to speak at the meeting.

**Som barn var han alltid glad.**

He was always happy as a child.

**Som kristen måste du uppföra dig ordentligt.**

You must behave properly as a Christian.

Note – However, when the noun follows **som** (= 'like a') an indefinite article is used, as in English:

**Du talar som en professor.**

You speak like a professor.

**Han var glad som ett barn.**

He was as happy as a child.

**Han uppförde sig som en kristen.**

He behaved like a Christian  
[even though he was an atheist].

### 1.11.5.3 Idiomatic expressions when 'one' is inferred

In many idiomatic expressions with a singular count-noun when 'only one' is obvious and inferred:

**De väntar barn.**

They are expecting a child.

**Han kan inte skaffa arbete/bostad.**

He cannot find a job/a home.

**Han måste skaffa bil.**

He must get a car.

**Vi bygger villa.**

We are building a house.

**Eva måste skriva brev till dem.**

Eva must write a letter to them.

**Hon väntar på svar.**

She is waiting for an answer.

**Har du mobil?**

Do you have a mobile?

**Vi tog taxi.**

We took a taxi.

In this sense nouns denoting equipment and clothes are often found in the form without article in Swedish:

**Bilen har turbomotor.**

The car has a turbo engine.

**Huset har källare.**

The house has a basement.

**Hon har kjol på sig i dag.**

She is wearing a skirt today.

#### 1.11.5.4 Other idiomatic expressions

**med hög röst**, in a loud voice; **med stor majoritet**, with a large majority; **vid gott humör**, in a good mood; **i stor skala**, on a large scale; **få plats**, get a seat; **ta plats**, take a seat; **ha bråttom**, be in a hurry; **ha rätt att**, have a right to; **ha feber**, have a temperature; **röka pipa**, smoke a pipe; **det är fråga om**, it is a question of; **som följd av**, as a result of; **med vinst/förlust**, at a profit/loss; **på avstånd**, at a distance; **i nödfall**, in an emergency

#### 1.11.5.5 Expressions after certain words

**vilken**, etc.      **Vilken vacker dag!**      See 3.10.7  
What a beautiful day!

**mången**, etc.      **Mången diktare har skrivit om döden.** See 3.9.17  
Many a poet has written of death.      Note

**hur . . . än**      **Hur stor ledare han än är, måste han lyda lagen.**  
However great a leader he is, he must obey the law.

#### 1.11.5.6

In some expressions of quantity with **mycket**, **lite**, **hundra**, etc. See 4.1.4.

<b>mycket vin</b>	a lot of wine
<b>lite öl</b>	a little beer
<b>hundra män</b>	a hundred men
<b>tusen demonstranter</b>	a thousand demonstrators
<b>bara få människor</b>	only a few people

#### 1.11.5.7 'A piece of'

The indefinite article in Swedish corresponds in some instances to English 'a piece of':

<b>ett snöre</b>	a piece of string
<b>en tvål</b>	a piece of soap
<b>en möbel</b>	a piece of furniture
<b>en nyhet</b>	a piece of news
<b>en läxa</b>	a piece of homework

### **1.11.6** Swedish has an indefinite article – English has no article

Notice the following expressions in which **en** means ‘about’, ‘approximately’.

**Hon har en fyra, fem barn.** She has four or five children.  
**bara en femtio, sextio kronor** only fifty or sixty kronor or so

### **1.11.7** The use of the definite article to indicate possession

#### **1.11.7.1** Parts of the body and articles of clothing

The definite article is often employed in Swedish with parts of the body and articles of clothing if it is clear who these belong to (3.6.8); English uses a possessive adjective in these cases:

**Hon ska tvätta håret.** She is going to wash her hair/hands.  
**Han skakade på huvudet.** He shook his head.  
**Jag fryser om fötterna.** My feet are cold.  
**Nils bröt benet.** Nils broke his leg.  
**Barnen tog av sig skorna.** The children took off their shoes.

The possessive need not refer to the subject:

**Ha sa åt flickorna att tvätta händerna.**  
He told the girls to wash their hands.

However, where the precise ownership of an article of clothing or part of the body needs to be indicated to avoid ambiguity, Swedish like English has a possessive:

**Hon lade sin hand i min.**  
She placed her hand in mine.

**Tjuven stoppade sin hand i min ficka.**  
The thief put his hand in my pocket.

#### **1.11.7.2** Aches and pains

Notice the following construction locating various aches and pains, which requires different renderings in English. See 7.3.2.6(b).

**Han har ont i ryggen/magen/huvudet/benet.**

He has a pain in his back/stomach ache/headache/a pain in his leg.

**1.11.8** *Differences in the position of the articles in Swedish and English*

<b>en halv liter</b>	half a litre, a half-litre (See 4.4.2)
<b>en halvtimme (en halv timme)</b>	half an hour, a half-hour
<b>ett sådant svårt problem</b>	such a difficult problem (See 3.7.4)
<b>ett alltför fåfängt hopp</b>	too vain a hope
<b>en ganska lång väg</b>	rather a long way
<b>en lika fin föreställning</b>	just as fine a performance
<b>hela vintern</b>	the whole winter (See 3.9.8.3)

## Chapter 2

# Adjectives

## 2.1 Form and order

### 2.1.1 Introduction to forms and use

Adjectives are inflected in Swedish. Adjectives, both attributive and predicative, change form according to the gender and number (and in a few cases the form) of the noun or pronoun with which they are used. The indefinite forms of the adjective are used both attributively and predicatively, while the definite forms are only used attributively:

	<i>Indefinite</i>	<i>Definite</i>
<i>Attributive</i>	<b>en ung tjej</b> a young girl	<b>den unga tjejen</b> the young girl
	<b>unga tjejer</b> young girls	<b>de unga tjejerna</b> the young girls
	<b>ett stort hus</b> a big house	<b>det stora huset</b> the big house
	<b>stora hus</b> big houses	<b>de stora husen</b> the big houses
	<b>en ockuperad stad</b> an occupied city	<b>den ockuperade staden</b> the occupied city
	<b>ett ockuperat land</b> an occupied country	<b>det ockuperade landet</b> the occupied country
	<b>ockuperade länder</b> occupied countries	<b>de ockuperade länderna</b> the occupied countries

<i>Predicative</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
	<b>tjejen är ung</b> the girl is young	<b>tjejerna är unga</b> the girls are young
	<b>huset är stort</b> the house is big	<b>husen är stora</b> the houses are big
	<b>staden är ockuperad</b> the city is occupied	<b>städerna är ockuperade</b> the cities are occupied
	<b>landet är ockuperat</b> the country is occupied	<b>länderna är ockuperade</b> the countries are occupied

#### 2.1.1.1 Front article

Notice that the definite declension of the adjective usually employs the front (or adjectival) article **den, det, de**. See 2.3.6.

#### 2.1.1.2 –a and –e forms

In the definite declension the adjective has two forms, one ending in **–a**, and one ending in **–e**. See 2.3.1ff.

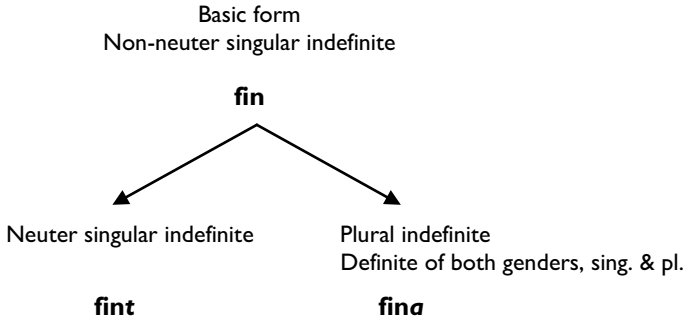
#### 2.1.1.3 Adjective as predicative complement

After *copular verbs* like **vara, bli, heta, verka, kallas** the adjective comprises a *predicative complement* (10.1.6) and is inflected according to the subject or object to which it refers (2.2.1.3f.).

### 2.1.2 The basic rule

#### 2.1.2.1 Markers for neuter singular and for plural

There is no distinctive marker for the non-neuter singular indefinite (basic or dictionary) form of the adjective, but the neuter singular form adds **–t**, and both the plural indefinite and the definite (singular and plural) add **–a**. The basic rule is shown for the adjective **fin**, ‘fine’, in the diagram:



Notice that there is no distinction made between the non-neuter and neuter plural form. Examples:

**en fin bok**      **ett fint vin**      **fina böcker, fina viner**  
a fine book      a fine wine      fine books, fine wines

### 2.1.2.2 The basic rule

The table is shown in this form for comparison with 2.1.3ff.

Ending:	Basic form	Neuter	Plural/Definite	
	<b>0</b>	<b>-t</b>	<b>-a</b>	
	<b>blek</b>	<b>blekt</b>	<b>bleka</b>	pale
	<b>vanlig</b>	<b>vanligt</b>	<b>vanliga</b>	common

The large group of adjectives which inflect according to this rule includes:

- (a) Many monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant or consonant group:

**arg**, angry; **bar**, bare; **dyr**, expensive; **ful**, ugly; **gul**, yellow; **hemsk**, horrible; **jämn**, even; **klok**, wise; **lugn**, calm; **mjuk**, soft; **norsk**, Norwegian; **rak**, straight; **sen**, late; **torr**, dry; **van**, accustomed

- (b) Polysyllabic adjectives ending in **-al**, **-bar**, **-ell**, **-ig**, **-isk/-esk**, **-iv**, **-är**, **-(i)ös**:

**normal**, normal; **dyrbar**, valuable; **aktuell**, topical; **fattig**, poor; **självisk**, selfish; **pittoresk**, picturesque; **aktiv**, active; **populär**, popular; **pompös**, pompous; **ambitiös**, ambitious



### 2.1.3 Variations – neuter form

The basic pattern shown in 2.1.2 displays a number of minor variations for a small number of adjectives, which are, however, relatively frequent. These are detailed in 2.1.3–2.1.5. (In the summary of form given below: –V = vowel, –V = long vowel, –C = consonant.)

Variations predominantly in the neuter form are found in 2.1.3.1–2.1.3.8.

#### 2.1.3.1 Adjectives ending in a long vowel

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	– <u>V</u>	–V+tt	– <u>V</u> +a	
	<b>fri</b>	<b>fritt</b>	<b>fria</b>	free

This group includes: **ny**, new; **blå**, blue; **grå**, grey; **rå**, raw; **slö**, dull

The vowel is shortened in the neuter form.

In the plural two words possess alternative forms: **blå/blåa**, **grå/gråa**

Note – Exception: **bra**. See 2.1.6.2.

#### 2.1.3.2 Monosyllabic adjectives ending in a long vowel +t

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending</i>	– <u>V</u> +t	–V+tt	– <u>V</u> +t+a	
	<b>vit</b>	<b>vitt</b>	<b>vita</b>	white

This group includes: **fet**, fat; **het**, hot; **slät**, smooth; **söt**, sweet; **våt**, wet

The vowel is shortened in the neuter form.

Note – Exception: **lat**, ‘lazy’. The word follows the pattern described in 2.1.3.3.

#### 2.1.3.3 Polysyllabic adjectives ending in a long vowel +t

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	– <u>V</u> +t	– <u>V</u> +t	– <u>V</u> +t+a	
	<b>konkret</b>	<b>konkret</b>	<b>konkreta</b>	concrete

This group includes many loanwords:

**absolut**, absolute; **adekvat**, adequate; **akut**, acute; **delikat**, delicate; **desperat**, desperate; **diskret**, discreet; **favorit**, favourite; **moderat**, moderate; **privat**, private; **separat**, separate

#### 2.1.3.4 Adjectives ending in a short vowel +tt

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-V+tt	-V+tt	-V+tt+a	
	<b>lätt</b>	<b>lätt</b>	<b>lätta</b>	easy

This group includes:

**blott**, mere; **flott**, smart; **komplett**, complete; **lätt**, easy; **mätt**, full; **nätt**, neat; **platt**, flat; **rätt**, correct; **tafatt**, clumsy; **trött**, tired; **violett**, violet

#### 2.1.3.5 Adjectives ending in a consonant +t

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-C+t	-C+t	-C+t+a	
	<b>tyst</b>	<b>tyst</b>	<b>tysta</b>	quiet

This group includes:

(a) A number of loanwords:

**abstrakt**, abstract; **briljant**, brilliant; **direkt**, direct; **elegant**, elegant; **exakt**, exact; **intelligent**, intelligent; **intressant**, interesting; **latent**, latent; **markant**, pronounced; **perfekt**, perfect; **permanent**, permanent; **robust**, robust; **strikt**, strict; **trist**, sad

(b) Some indigenous monosyllabic adjectives:

**brant**, steep; **fast**, firm; **kort**, short; **stolt**, proud

(c) The past participles of some second conjugation verbs (group II(b), see 5.1.3.4):

**köpt**, bought; **låst**, locked; **läst**, read; **sällsynt**, rare; **upplyst**, enlightened; **vidsträckt**, widespread

**2.1.3.6** Adjectives ending in a long vowel +d

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-V+d	-V+tt	-V+d+a	
	<b>glad</b>	<b>glatt</b>	<b>glada</b>	happy

This group includes:

**blid**, mild; **bred**, broad; **död**, dead; **god**, good; **röd**, red; **sned**, slanting; **solid**, solid; **spröd**, crisp; **vid**, wide

Note – Polysyllabic adjectives ending in -id do not, however, usually possess a neuter singular form. See 2.1.3.11.

**2.1.3.7** Adjectives ending in a short vowel +dd

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-V+dd	-V+tt	-V+dd+a	
	<b>högljudd</b>	<b>högljutt</b>	<b>högljudda</b>	loud
	<b>avskydd</b>	<b>avskytt</b>	<b>avskydda</b>	despised

This group includes:

(a) Past participles of third conjugation verbs. See 5.1.5.2.

**anförtrodd**, entrusted; **försmådd**, despised; **nådd**, reached; **obebodd**, uninhabited; **strödd**, strewn; **varskodd**, warned; **åtrådd**, desired

(b) Some others: **infödd**, indigenous; **omstridd**, disputed; **oavsedd**, unintended

Note – Exception: **rädd**, afraid. See 2.1.3.11.

**2.1.3.8** Adjectives ending in a consonant +d

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-C+d	-C+t	-C+d+a	
	<b>hård</b>	<b>hårt</b>	<b>hårda</b>	hard

This group includes:

(a) Past participles of second conjugation verbs (group II(a), see 5.1.3.3).

**använd**, used; **avspänd**, relaxed; **berömd**, famous; **bestämd**, determined; **byggd**, built; **frikänd**, acquitted; **fylld**, filled; **glömd**, forgotten; **lärd**, learned; **nöjd**, pleased; **oerhörd**, unprecedented; **skrämd**, frightened; **spänd**, tense; **stängd**, closed; **tänd**, lit; **utnämnd**, nominated

(b) Some others:

**absurd**, absurd; **avsevärd**, considerable; **blind**, blind; **blond**, fair; **enskild**, private; **grund**, shallow; **mild**, mild; **ond**, evil; **rund**, round; **sund**, sound; **vild**, wild; **värd**, worth, worthy

#### 2.1.3.9 Adjectives ending in a short vowel +nn:

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-V+nn	-V+n+t	-V+nn+a	
	<b>sann</b>	<b>sant</b>	<b>sanna</b>	true

This group includes: **grann**, attractive; **noggrann**, careful; **tunn**, thin

Note also: **allmän** – **allmänt** – **allmänna**, general

#### 2.1.3.10 Adjectives ending in a short vowel +m

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	-V+m	-V+m+t	-V+mm+a	
	<b>ensam</b>	<b>ensamt</b>	<b>ensamma</b>	alone

This group, which doubles the final -m of the basic form before adding the plural/definite ending, includes:

(a) Many monosyllabic adjectives:

**dum**, stupid; **from**, pious; **grym**, cruel; **ljum**, tepid; **skum**, dark; **stum**, dumb; **tom**, empty; **öm**, tender

(b) Adjectives ending in -sam:

**beslutsam**, decisive; **blygsam**, modest; **ensam**, alone; **hjälpssam**, helpful; **långsam**, slow; **painsam**, painful; **skämtsam**, jocular; **tacksam**, grateful; **tveksam**, doubtful; **våldsam**, violent

### 2.1.3.11

Some adjectives are not used attributively in the neuter singular form. These include:

(a) Polysyllabic adjectives ending in a long vowel +d:

**gravid**, pregnant; **hybrid**, hybrid; **rigid**, rigid; **timid**, timid

Note – Exception: **solid** – **solitt**, solid.

(b) A number of adjectives qualifying nouns denoting human beings:

**disträ**, absent-minded; **höger**, right; **kry**, healthy; **lat**, lazy; **ledsen**, sad; **pigg**, fit; **pryd**, prudish; **rädd**, afraid; **vred**, angry; **vänster**, left

Note – Rephrasing may be necessary with neuter nouns, for example \***ett rädd barn**, ‘a frightened child’, might be rephrased as ‘**ett skrämt barn**’.

### 2.1.4 Variations – plural and definite form

#### 2.1.4.1 Adjectives ending in –ad

Ending:	Basic form	Neuter	Plural/Definite	
	<b>–ad</b>	<b>–at</b>	<b>–ad+e</b>	
	<b>delad</b>	<b>delat</b>	<b>delade</b>	divided
	<b>sofistikerad</b>	<b>sofistikerat</b>	<b>sofistikerade</b>	sophisticated

Note the ending –e in the plural/definite form. This group includes:

(a) Past participles of first conjugation verbs. See 5.1.2.2f.

**aktad**, respected; **befriad**, liberated; **filmad**, filmed; **granskad**, checked; **krossad**, crushed; **laddad**, loaded; **missad**, missed; **rensad**, cleaned; **skadad**, injured; **testad**, tested; **övertygad**, convinced

**accepterad**, accepted; **dramatiserad**, dramatised; **koncentrerad**, concentrated; **nationaliserad**, nationalised

(b) Adjectives which are inflected like past participles in (a), some of which were originally past participles:

**befogad**, warranted; **besläktad**, related; **kortfattad**, concise;

**avancerad**, advanced; **engagerad**, committed; **mångfacetterad**, multi-faceted; **passionerad**, impassioned; **rutinerad**, experienced

**2.1.4.2** Adjectives ending in unstressed **-el/-er**

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	<b>-el/-er</b>	<b>-el+t/-er+t</b>	(drop e) <b>-l+a/-r+a</b>	
	<b>enkel</b>	<b>enkelt</b>	<b>enkla</b>	simple
	<b>vacker</b>	<b>vackert</b>	<b>vackra</b>	beautiful

This group includes:

(a) Many bisyllabic adjectives:

**dubbel**, double; **ädel**, noble; **bister**, forbidding; **bitter**, bitter; **mager**, thin; **munter**, merry; **nykter**, sober; **säker**, sure; **tapper**, brave

(b) Adjectives ending in **-abel, -ibel**:

**acceptabel**, acceptable; **diskutabel**, debatable; **veritabel**, veritable; **riskabel**, risky; **sensibel**, sensible; **flexibel**, flexible

**2.1.4.3** Adjectives ending in unstressed **-en**

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural/Definite</i>	
<i>Ending:</i>	<b>-en</b>	<b>-et</b>	(drop e) <b>-n+a</b>	
	<b>mogen</b>	<b>moget</b>	<b>mogna</b>	ripe
	<b>sliten</b>	<b>slitet</b>	<b>slitna</b>	worn

This group includes:

(a) Past participles of verbs of the fourth conjugation (strong verbs). See 5.2.1.4.

**begraven**, buried; **bjuden**, invited; **frusen**, frozen; **gripen**, seized; **skrivnen**, written; **slagen**, struck; **struken**, ironed; **stulnen**, stolen; **tagen**, taken; **tvungen**, forced; **vriden**, twisted; **vuxen**, adult

(b) Many other adjectives:

**angelägen**, urgent; **avlägsen**, distant; **belåten**, satisfied; **benägen**, disposed; **besviken**, disappointed; **egen**, own (see 2.3.7); **erfaren**, experienced; **förmögen**, wealthy; **galen**, mad; **gedigen**, solid;

**häpen**, astonished; **kristen**, Christian; **ledsen**, sad; **medveten**, conscious; **naken**, naked; **nyfiken**, curious; **sorgsen**, sad; **storslagen**, grandiose; **vaken**, awake; **öppen**, open

### 2.1.5 Variations – liten and gammal

#### 2.1.5.1 Liten

**Liten**, ‘little’, is unique in two respects:

(a) It changes stem in the plural:

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>	
<i>Indefinite</i>	<b>liten</b>	<b>litet</b>	<b>små</b>	little, small
	<b>en liten bil</b> a small car	<b>ett litet hus</b> a small house	<b>små bilar/hus</b> small cars/houses	

(b) Uniquely, it possesses a singular definite form, **lilla**, which differs from the plural indefinite and definite. Compare 2.3.1ff.

	<i>Basic form</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<i>Definite</i>	<b>lilla</b>	<b>lilla</b>	<b>små</b>
	<b>den lilla bilen</b> the small car	<b>det lilla huset</b> the small house	<b>de små bilarna/husen</b> the small cars/houses

Note 1 – It is possible to form a neuter indefinite form from **små**, namely **smått**, but this is usually found in set phrases or used nominally or adverbially:

<b>Allting är smått hemma.</b>	Everything is so small at home.
<b>smått och gott</b>	all kinds of nice little things
<b>Han är smått förälskad i henne.</b>	He’s a little in love with her.

Note 2 – The noun **lillan**, found only with the end article, means ‘the little girl’, while **lillen** means ‘the little boy’. Notice also: **en liten**, ‘a little baby’; **lite(t) av varje**, ‘a little of everything’.

#### 2.1.5.2 Gammal

**Gammal**, ‘old’, is unusual as regards its plural (and definite) form:

**gammal**                      **gammalt**                      **gamla** (one m, 12.2.2.1)

## 2.1.6 *Indeclinable adjectives*

The following types of adjective are indeclinable, i.e. do not add an inflexional ending in either the indefinite or the definite declension.

### 2.1.6.1 Adjectives ending in **-e**

<b>ett främmande språk</b>	a foreign language
<b>ett öde hedlandskap</b>	a desolate heath landscape

This group includes:

- (a) All present participles. See 5.2.15.

<b>en oroväckande utveckling</b>	a disturbing development
<b>ett påfallande intresse</b>	a marked interest
<b>de hotande översvämningarna</b>	the imminent floods

- (b) Many participial adjectives, i.e. adjectives that were originally participles, but have become isolated from the verb as the verb has changed:

**beklämmande**, depressing; **betryggande**, adequate; **enastående**, unique; **ovidkommande**, irrelevant; **rasande**, angry; **tidsödande**, time-consuming

- (c) Adjectives ending in **-e** that are not participles:

**ense**, agreed; **gängse**, current; **ordinarie**, usual, permanent; **respektive**, respective; **(bli) varse**, to notice; **vilse**, lost; **ömse**, mutual

- (d) Some adjectives denoting colours:

**beige**, beige; **gyllene**, gold(en); **orange**, orange (compare, however, 2.1.6.4 Note 2).

- (e) Comparative forms in **-are/-re**. See 2.5.1f., 2.5.9.

<b>ett vackrare landskap</b>	a more beautiful landscape
------------------------------	----------------------------



### 2.1.6.2 Adjectives ending in –a

**fem bra filmer**                      five good films

This group includes:

(a) Adjectives that are also adverbs. See 6.1.3.2.

**annorlunda**, different; **långväga**, long-distance; **noga**, careful; **sakta**, slow; **stilla**, calm

(b) Adjectives ending in –tida:

**fortida**, prehistoric; **framtida**, future; **medeltida**, medieval; **nutida**, present; **samtida**, latter-day, contemporary; **sentida**, of our time

(c) Other adjectives in –a:

**allehanda**, all kinds of; **allena**, alone; **barfota**, barefoot; **bra**, good; **enda**, only; **enstaka**, individual; **extra**, extra; **laga**, lawful; **lila**, mauve; **olaga**, illegal; **omaka**, ill-matched; **prima**, first class; **ringa**, insignificant; **rosa**, pink; **samma**, same; **stilla**, quiet; **udda**, odd; **äkta**, genuine

(d) A number of expletives. See also 9.7.

**djävla (jädra, jäkla)**, bloody (blooming)

### 2.1.6.3 Many adjectives ending in –s

**ett medelålders biträde**            a middle-aged assistant  
**många invärtes åkommor**        many internal complaints  
**flera gratis böcker**                several free books

This group includes:

(a) Adjectives ending in a consonant +s:

**allsköns**, diverse, all kinds of; **gammaldags**, old-fashioned; **(o)sams**, (dis)agreed; **stackars**, poor, pitiable; **tillfreds**, satisfied

(b) Adjectives ending in –es:

**avsidet**, secluded; **inbördes**, reciprocal; **inrikes**, domestic; **särdeles**, splendid; **utrikes**, foreign; **urminnes**, ancient

(c) Adjectives ending in a short **-is**:

**bergis**, sure; **brådis**, urgent; **poppis**, trendy

Note – Adjectives ending in long **-is**, **-os**, **-us**, **-(l)ös** inflect according to the basic rule (2.1.2):

<b>en nervös student</b>	<b>ett nervöst barn</b>	<b>nervösa studenter/barn</b>
a nervous student	a nervous child	nervous students/children

Other examples: **diffus**, diffuse; **grandios**, grandiose; **precis**, precise; **rastlös**, restless; **seriös**, serious; **vis**, wise; **diffus**, diffuse

#### 2.1.6.4 Others, including adjectives formed from nouns and adverbs

**bakom**, stupid; **bråttom**, urgent; **framåt**, go-ahead; **slut**, finished; **fel**, wrong; **fjärran**, distant; **idell**, sheer; **kul**, fun; **kvitt**, quits; **lagom**, just enough; **lönt**, worth; **pyton**, horrible; **redo**, prepared; **släkt** related; **solo**, solo; **sönder**, broken; **tillfreds**, satisfied; **toppen**, great

Note 1 – Some recent loans belong to this group:

**allround**, **gay**, **selfmade**, **up-to-date**

Note 2 – In colloquial Swedish one or two of the adjectives listed in 2.1.6.1–2.1.6.4 above are sometimes inflected:

<b>ett par lagoma vantar</b>	a perfect pair of gloves
<b>ett beig tyg, orangea byxor</b>	a beige material, orange trousers

#### 2.1.6.5

Some indeclinable adjectives may be used either attributively or predicatively:

<b>Hon är en bra konstnär.</b>	She is a good artist.
<b>Programmet var bra.</b>	The programme was good.
<b>Jag slog fel nummer.</b>	I dialled the wrong number.
<b>Det är fel att slå sina barn.</b>	It is wrong to hit your children.
<b>öde stränder</b>	deserted beaches
<b>Torpet var öde.</b>	The croft was uninhabited.

Also: **gratis**, free; **kul**, fun

### 2.1.6.6

Some indeclinable adjectives are only used attributively:

<b>de stackars föräldrarna</b>	the poor parents
<b>det dåtida Stockholm</b>	the Stockholm of that time
<b>i fjärran länder</b>	in foreign parts

Also: **avsides, allsköns, allehanda, enstaka, framtida, gyllene, idel, inbördes, laga, långväga, olaga, ömse** (for meanings see 2.1.6.1–2.1.6.4).

### 2.1.6.7

Some indeclinable adjectives are only used predicatively:

<b>Fönstret är sönder.</b>	The window is broken.
<b>Jag är ense med dig om detta.</b>	I am in agreement with you on this.
<b>Arbetet var slut för dagen.</b>	Work was over for the day.
<b>De är släkt med varandra.</b>	They are related to each other.

Also: **bråttom, varse, kvitt, samma, sams, osams, redo, släkt, tillfreds** (for meanings see 2.1.6.1–2.1.6.4).

## 2.1.7

### *Order of adjective attributes*

#### 2.1.7.1

#### General guidelines

The order of adjective attributes in Swedish is not always as in English. It is only possible to provide some general guidelines for this:

- (a) The more permanent the quality indicated, the closer it is placed to the noun it qualifies:

**uppstruket svart hår = svart hår som är uppstruket**  
black hair combed up

**den pittoreska svenska staden = den svenska staden som är pittoresk**  
the picturesque Swedish town

**en arg rödhårig grabb = en rödhårig grabb som är arg**  
an angry, red-haired lad

Sometimes adjective and noun form a fixed expression and cannot be separated:

**det världsberömda Röda korset** the world-famous Red Cross

- (b) Generally speaking, the longer or more complex adjective is placed closest to the noun. Participles are often found in this position:

**det mörka omoderna rummet** the dark, old-fashioned room  
**en rik prisbelönt författare** a rich, prize-winning author

- (c) Adjectives indicating size or quantity *are not* placed closest, while those indicating nationality and colour *are* placed closest to the noun:

**det stora vita huset** the big, white house  
**det tjocka gröna gräset** the thick, green grass  
**en liten svensk bil** a small, Swedish car

- (d) **Liten, ung, gammal** are *not* generally placed nearest the noun, although they may occupy this position when the noun indicates a person. Compare:

**en liten röd stuga** a small, red cottage  
**en intelligent ung man** an intelligent young man  
**en trevlig gammal gubbe** a nice old man

Translation of English expressions such as ‘a little old house’ thus presents some difficulty. One solution is to expand the Swedish to **ett litet och gammalt hus** or to use a relative clause. Swedish speakers tend to avoid this kind of juxtaposition.

#### 2.1.7.2 Differences between English and Swedish

Notice the difference between English and Swedish word order in:

**en så(dan) lång tid** such a long time cf. 3.7.4  
**ett halvt kilo** half a kilo cf. 4.4.2

Note – In remnants of archaic expressions or in colloquial or dialectal use the attribute is sometimes placed after the noun:

**”Han vattnar sina fålar fem.”** ‘He waters his five steeds.’  
**i dagarna tre** for three days  
**sak samma** never mind  
**Eva lilla** little Eva

Cf. the inversion of the possessive in: **Fader vår** ('Our Father' in the introduction to earlier versions of the Lord's prayer) and in colloquial use in: **far min** 'my father'; **bror din** 'your brother'; **gården deras** 'their farm'; **frugan min** 'my wife' (the last two with the noun in the definite).

## 2.2 The indefinite declension

### 2.2.1 The use of the indefinite form

#### 2.2.1.1

The indefinite form of the adjective may be used attributively with no word preceding the adjective + noun if the noun is non-count (1.1.1) or plural:

**god mat**  
good food

**vackert väder**  
beautiful weather

**långa, raka vägar**  
long, straight roads

#### 2.2.1.2

The indefinite form of the adjective may be used attributively after:

- 1 the indefinite articles **en, ett**
- 2 indefinite pronouns or adjectives: **många, någon, ingen, varje, var, varannan, varenda, en annan, en sådan** (and their inflected forms, 3.7.4, 3.9.2ff., 3.9.9ff., 3.9.12ff.)
- 3 **vilken, sådan** (and their inflected forms) in exclamations (3.10.7, 3.7.4)
- 4 **flera, alla, många, få** (3.9.8, 3.9.17, 3.9.19.2, 3.9.22)
- 5 cardinal numbers from two upwards (4.1.3–4.1.6)

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural
<b>I en ny bil</b> a new car	–	<b>två nya bilar</b> two new cars
–	<b>ett nytt hus</b> a new house	<b>två nya hus</b> two new houses
–	–	<b>många onda gärningar</b> many bad deeds

<b>2</b>	<b>någon älskvärd kille</b> some kind boy	<b>något älskvärt barn</b> some kind child	<b>några älskvärda killar/barn</b> some kind boys/children
	<b>ingen verklig vinnare</b> no real winner	<b>inget verkligt hot</b> no real threat	<b>inga verkliga vinnare/hot</b> no real winners/threats
	<b>en annan ung man</b> another young man	<b>ett annat ungt par</b> another young couple	<b>andra unga män/par</b> other young men/couples
	<b>en sådan rolig film</b> such a fun film	<b>ett sådant roligt jobb</b> such a fun job	<b>sådana roliga filmer/job</b> such fun films/jobs
	<b>varje nybyggd båt</b> every newly built boat	<b>varje nybyggt höghus</b> every newly built block of flats	
<b>3</b>	<b>Vilken fin utsikt!</b> What a fine view!	<b>Vilket fint slott!</b> What a fine castle!	<b>Vilka fina utsikter/slott!</b> What fine views/castles!
	<b>Sådan dålig service!</b> What poor service!	<b>Sådant tråkigt väder!</b> What boring weather!	<b>Sådana tråkiga dikter/hus!</b> What boring poems/houses!
<b>4</b>	–	–	<b>flera vackra tavlor</b> several beautiful paintings
		–	<b>få dumma studenter</b> few stupid students
<b>5</b>	–	–	<b>tio nya böcker</b> ten new books

### 2.2.1.3 Predicative use

The indefinite form of the adjective may be used predicatively:

(a) As a subject complement:

**Dikten är svår.** The poem is difficult.  
**Dramat är också svårt.** The drama is also difficult.  
**Dikterna/dramerna är svåra.** The poems/dramas are difficult.

(b) As an object complement:

**Han målade stolen grön, bordet grönt och väggarna gröna.**  
 He painted the chair green, the table green and the walls green.

(c) As a predicative attribute:

**Han gick bedrövad bort.** He left dejected.  
**De dog lyckliga.** They died happy.

#### 2.2.1.4 Agreement in predicative use

- (a) When used predicatively the adjective (complement, see 10.1.6) normally agrees with the noun (subject or object):

**Tavlan är vacker.** The picture is pretty.  
*Subject ↔ Subject complement*

**Huset är vackert.** The house is attractive.  
*Subject ↔ Subject complement*

**Tavlorna/Husen är vackra.** The pictures/houses are attractive.  
*Subject ↔ Subj comp*

**Vi gjorde lärarna ledsna.** We made the teachers sad.  
*Subject Object ↔ Object complement*

- (b) However, in 2.2.2–2.2.8 below various cases are detailed in which agreement deviates from this norm. An important case is that in which the adjective as subject complement agrees with a subordinate clause or an infinitive phrase as subject (in other words agreement is not with a noun phrase). In this case the adjective takes a neuter ending:

*Subordinate clause as subject*

**Att han aldrig kommer att vinna Nobelpriset är otänkbart.**  
It is unthinkable that he will never win the Nobel Prize.

*Infinitive phrase as subject*

**Att få vandra i skogen i skymningen är magiskt.**  
To wander in the forest at dusk is magical.

#### 2.2.2 The double subject

##### 2.2.2.1

When there are two or more subjects the complement is usually in the plural form:

**Erik och Anders var hemskt smutsiga.**  
Erik and Anders were awfully dirty.

**Kungen och drottningen är älskade av många.**  
The King and Queen are loved by many people.

#### 2.2.2.2

There are, however, a number of important cases where the form of the adjective is determined by the meaning of the subject:

- (a) When the double subject is regarded as one indivisible idea, the adjective is found in the singular:

**Allt buller och jäkt är bannlyst här.**

All bustle and stress is banned here.

**Lag och rätt är hotad.**

Law and order is threatened.

- (b) **Både . . . och.** Here two alternatives out of two are implied, and a plural complement is therefore required:

**Både han och hon var bjudna.**

Both he and she were invited.

- (c) **Såväl . . . som.** Again, two alternatives out of two requires a plural complement:

**Såväl hans mor som hans syster är rödhåriga.**

Both his mother and his sister are red-haired.

- (d) **Antingen . . . eller, varken . . . eller.** Here one alternative or no alternative is implied, so the the complement is usually in the singular. However, when one or both of the subjects is plural, the complement is plural:

**Varken han eller hon var bjuden.**

Neither he nor she was invited.

**Varken läraren eller barnen var intresserade.**

Neither the teacher nor the children were interested.

If the subject comprises nouns of different gender an expression using the complement is best avoided (although it may occasionally be found in the plural):

**\*Varken modern eller barnet är rödhåriga.**

Neither the mother nor child is red-haired.



This might be rephrased as:

**Varken modern eller barnet har rött hår.**

Neither mother nor child had red hair.

### **2.2.3** *The complement precedes the subject*

It is now common to find the complement – when placed at the beginning of the sentence – in the neuter form irrespective of the gender or number of the noun it qualifies. In these cases the complement is a subject complement, but is regarded as an object complement. It is used to provide emphasis. This is especially true of adjectives like **karaktäristiskt**, **typiskt**, **gemensamt**, **viktigt**, **väsentligt**:

**Karaktäristiskt för isländskan är de många böjningsändelserna.**

Characteristic of Icelandic are the many inflexional endings.

**Gemensamt för de tre nordiska folken är deras tro på demokrati.**

Common to the three Nordic peoples is their belief in democracy.

**Inte minst viktigt är allmänhetens inställning till de mentalsjuka.**

Not least important is the public's attitude to the mentally ill.

This type of construction may be considered to be a form of ellipsis:

**(Det som är) karaktäristiskt för isländskan är de många böjningsändelserna.**

(What is) characteristic of Icelandic is its many inflexional endings.

### **2.2.4** *Constructions according to meaning*

In these cases the inherent meaning of the subject overrides its grammatical number; in other words, sense overrides form. Therefore, with subjects denoting a collective, the complement is often found in the plural.

#### **2.2.4.1** **Man**

The pronoun **man** (3.9.1) is singular, but is often found with a plural complement, especially in spoken Swedish:

**Man var eniga/enig om beslutet.**

They were united on the decision.

**Man var tvungna/ tvungen att göra något.**

They were forced to do something.

#### 2.2.4.2 Folk

**Folk** possesses a plural complement when it denotes people, individuals:

**Folk var klädda i flera lager kläder.**

People were dressed in several layers of clothes.

**Svenska folket är trötta på allt vad politik heter.**

The Swedish people are tired of everything to do with politics.

Notice, however, when the adjective is used attributively it has neuter gender:

<b>lite(t) folk</b>	few people	[not <b>få</b> ]
<b>ungt folk</b>	young people	[not <b>unga</b> ]

#### 2.2.4.3 Par, barn

Complements to these nouns are found in the neuter.

(a) **Par** can be found with either a neuter singular or plural complement:

**Paret var bosatt i Ystad.**                      The couple lived in Ystad.

**Paret var gifta.**                                      The couple were married.

When referring to **par**, **de** is, however, often used (see below):

**Ett ungt par kom in. De var lyckliga.**

A young couple came in. They were happy.

(b) **Barn** (in the singular) may have either a neuter or non-neuter complement:

**Barnet var född där.**                              The child was born there.

**Barnet var friskt.**                                      The child was healthy.

When referring to **barn**, however, **han** or **hon** is often used according to the gender of the child:

**Vem ska hålla barnet när prästen döper honom/henne?**

Who will hold the child when the priest christens him/her?

#### 2.2.4.4 Nouns ending in **-råd** and **-biträde**

With neuter nouns denoting people a neuter form is used attributively, but a non-neuter predicative complement is often used. There are a number of nouns ending in **-råd** ('secretary in the civil service'), **-biträde** ('assistant') which often cause confusion. Here natural gender tends to override grammatical gender as regards complement and pronominal reference. When referring to these nouns the pronouns **han** and **hon** respectively are used:

**ett ungt statsråd**  
a young government minister

**Det unga statsrådet var säker eftersom hon hade läst på.**  
The young cabinet minister was certain as she had read up on it.

**ett oroligt affärsbiträde**  
an uneasy shop assistant

**Affärsbiträdet var fackligt engagerad. Hon är nu politiker.**  
The shop assistant was active in the trade union. She is now a politician.

Note – With past participles these kinds of nouns are sometimes found with a neuter complement:

**Statsrådet är övertygat om detta.**  
The minister is convinced of this.

#### 2.2.4.5 Titles of published works

Titles of published books and newspapers which are plural are regarded as non-neuter singular for purposes of agreement:

**Dagens Nyheter är pålitlig.** *Dagens Nyheter* is reliable.

**Heidenstams Karolinerna är något långrandig.**  
*Heidenstam's The Charles Men* is somewhat long-winded.

#### 2.2.5 Words indicating measurement or degree

These cases are rather similar to those in 2.2.2.2. If the whole (group or collective) is intended rather than the part, the singular form of the complement should be used:

**Antalet stipendier är otillräckligt.**

The number of grants is insufficient.

If the individual parts are intended, then the plural is used:

**Över hälften av killarna var sjuka.**

Over half of the boys were sick.

**Ett flertal poliser blev skadade.**

Several of the police officers were injured.

**2.2.6** Ärter är gott; engelska är tråkigt

In cases where the subject has a general, abstract or collective sense, the neuter indefinite form of the adjective is often used:

**Ärter är gott.** (NB **ärter** plural) Peas are nice.  
**Sill är gott.** (NB **sill-en**) Herring is nice.

Here it is not the peas/herring itself which is good, but the idea of (eating) peas/herring. Such expressions may be regarded as ellipted forms, for example:

Cf. **Färsk sill är gott.** Fresh herring is good.  
**Att äta färsk sill är gott.** Eating fresh herring is good.  
**Det är gott med färsk sill.** Fresh herring tastes good.

The use of the neuter complement is also found with school subjects, sports and pastimes, etc.:

**Engelska är tråkigt.** English is boring.  
**Ishockey är populärt i Sverige.** Ice hockey is popular in Sweden.

This lack of agreement occurs only when the noun is in the form without article (singular or plural) or in the indefinite singular with article. It is especially frequent with subjects not normally found in the plural:

**Politik är roligt.** Politics is fun.  
**Röda hund är smittsamt.** German measles is contagious.  
**Gympa har blivit populärt.** Keep-fit has become popular.  
**Stövlar är omodernt.** Boots are old-fashioned.  
(= **Det är omodernt att gå i stövlar.**)

But when the meaning is more closely defined, by the end article or an additional complement, then the complement usually agrees:

**Svensk ishockey är populär.**

**Hans engelska är tråkig.**

**Torkade ärter är hållbara.**

**All sill är god.**

**Sillen var god.**

Swedish ice hockey is popular.

His English (style) is boring.

Dried peas will keep.

All herring is good.

The herring was good.

### **2.2.7** Cases of attraction

Involuntary lack of agreement is often caused by the writer or speaker losing sight of the subject. In the cases below, the writer has inflected the complement according to a word other than the subject. The word causing the attraction is juxtaposed with the complement. This is frequent in structurally complex sentences or when the order is varied for emphasis.

**\*En stor del av brevet var oläsligt.**

A large part of the letter was illegible.

Should read *oläslig* to agree with **en del**.

**\*Är något av rummen lediga?**

Is one of the rooms free?

Should read *ledigt* to agree with **något**.

**\*På kyrkogården ligger en av lärarna begravna.**

One of the teachers is buried in the churchyard.

Should read *begraven* to agree with **en**.

### **2.2.8** The independent adjective

The adjective is normally used either attributively or predicatively, and subordinated to the noun. Sometimes, however, the adjective functions independently. There are various intermediate stages between adjective and noun (see Adjectival nouns 2.4 below). One or two types of independent adjective occur in the neuter indefinite form.

#### **2.2.8.1** Colours

**Finns också i blått och grönt.**

Also available in blue and green.

## I finska inbördeskriget besegrades de röda.

In the Finnish Civil War the Reds were defeated.

See also adjectival nouns 2.4.2.3(d).

### 2.2.8.2 Nominalised adjective retaining its adjectival ending

These are always in the neuter form.

**Man skall löna ont med gott.** You should reward evil with good.

**Inget nytt hade kommit fram.** Nothing new had transpired.

### 2.2.9 Indefinite use of adjectives: summary

(Not including the comparative and superlative)

Non-neuter singular	Neuter singular	Plural
<b>ATTRIBUTIVE</b>		
2.2.1.1 <b>god mat</b>	<b>vackert väder</b>	<b>långa raka vägar</b>
2.2.1.2 <b>en</b> – <b>någon</b> <b>ingen</b> <b>en annan</b> <b>en sådan</b> <b>varje</b> <b>vilken</b>	<b>ett</b> – <b>något</b> <b>inget</b> <b>ett annat</b> <b>ett sådant</b> <b>varje</b> <b>vilket</b>	<b>två</b> <b>många</b> <b>några</b> <b>inga</b> <b>andra</b> <b>sådana</b> <b>alla</b> <b>vilka</b>
<b>ny säng</b>	<b>nytt bord</b>	<b>nya sängar/bord</b>
<b>PREDICATIVE</b>		
2.2.1.3	<b>Bilen är stor men huset är litet.</b> <b>Han målade bordet brunt och stolarna gröna.</b> <b>Han levde sitt liv lugn och lycklig.</b>	
2.2.2.2(b)	<b>Både han och hon var bjudna.</b>	
2.2.3	<b>Karakteristiskt för isländskan är de många böjningsändelserna.</b>	
2.2.4.2	<b>Folk var tokiga.</b>	
2.2.6	<b>Färsk sill är gott.</b>	
2.2.8	<b>Rött och vitt vore vackert.</b>	
2.1.6	<b>Det var ett äkta gammaldags julfirande.</b>	

## 2.3 The definite declension

### 2.3.1 Introduction

The ending denoting the definite declension of the adjective has two possible forms:

- 1 An **a**-form: **den roliga historien** the funny story
- 2 An **e**-form: **den roligaste filmen** the funniest film

In most cases **-a** is used, but in some well-defined cases **-e** is compulsory. There is one area in which **-e** and **-a** alternate, namely in adjective + noun constructions denoting male persons or where the noun can refer to either gender. The rules indicating the choice of ending are set out in 2.3.2–2.3.4.

Note 1 – **Små** does not take the definite ending **-a**:

**de små killarna** the small boys

Note 2 – The ending in **-a** is optional for **blå, grå**. See 2.1.3.1.

**den blå(a) himlen** the blue sky

### 2.3.2 Compulsory ending in **-a**

The ending in **-a** is compulsory in the following cases, except with indeclinable adjectives (2.1.6) and those described in 2.3.3.

#### 2.3.2.1 Adjectives qualifying plural nouns

See 2.3.3 for exceptions.

**de fina blommorna** the fine flowers  
**de långa breven** the long letters  
**de unga killarna** the young boys  
**de glada damerna** the happy ladies

Note – In older written language **-e** forms occur for the plural of male individuals:

**de lärde**, the learned (In modern Swedish: **de lärda**)

**2.3.2.2** All adjectives qualifying neuter nouns

See 2.3.3 for exceptions.

<b>det vackra trädet</b>	the beautiful tree
<b>det handskrivna brevet</b>	the hand-written letter
<b>landets nya statsråd</b>	the country's new cabinet minister

**2.3.2.3** All adjectives qualifying non-neuter nouns referring to female persons

<b>den gamla (kvinnan)</b>	the old woman
<b>den sjuka (kvinnan)</b>	the sick woman
<b>den äldsta (kvinnan)</b>	the oldest woman
<b>Kära Ulla!</b>	Dear Ulla
<b>den svenska drottningen</b>	the Swedish Queen

**2.3.2.4** With **människa**

<b>den goda människan</b>	the good person
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**2.3.3** *Compulsory ending in –e*

The ending in –e is compulsory in the following cases:

**2.3.3.1** After **–ad**, i.e. in past participles of first conjugation verbs

<b>den nymålade stugan</b>	the newly painted cottage
<b>det nymålade huset</b>	the newly painted house
<b>de nymålade båtarna</b>	the newly painted boats

**2.3.3.2** In present participles, which are indeclinable.

See 2.1.6.1(a).

<b>den nuvarande kungen</b>	the present king
<b>det leende ansiktet</b>	the smiling face
<b>de badande turisterna</b>	the bathing tourists



**2.3.3.3** In comparative forms, which are indeclinable.

See 2.5.2f., 2.5.9.

<b>den varmare rocken</b>	the warmer coat
<b>det grövre brödet</b>	the coarser bread
<b>de större äpplena</b>	the larger apples

**2.3.3.4** After **–ast**, i.e. in some superlatives.

See 2.5.2, 2.5.10.

<b>den vackraste tavlan</b>	the prettiest picture
<b>det mjukaste täcket</b>	the softest quilt
<b>de senaste nyheterna</b>	the latest news

**2.3.3.5** In adjectival nouns referring to male persons.

See 2.4.1.1, 2.4.2.2(b).

<b>den gamle</b>	the old man
<b>den sjuke</b>	the sick man
<b>den äldste</b>	the oldest man

**2.3.3.6** With proper nouns (fixed expressions) denoting male persons

**Erik den helige** Saint Erik; **Karl den store**, Charlemagne; **Galne Kung George**, Mad King George; **Käre Lars!**, Dear Lars

**2.3.3.7** In some fixed titles **–e** is used for either sex

<b>förste bibliotekarie</b>	Chief Librarian
<b>andre styrman</b>	Second Mate

**2.3.4** *Variations between –e and –a*

See also 2.3.2f.

### 2.3.4.1 –e in formal language

In written and formal spoken language (and in the spoken language of South and West Sweden) –e is usual when describing a male person, although the –a form is becoming increasingly common.

**den unge killen**                      the young boy  
**Evas trevlige kusin**                Eva's nice (male) cousin

Note that –e often has a higher stylistic value than –a.

**hennes gamle make**                her elderly spouse  
cf. **hennes gamla gubbjäväl**       her old devil of a husband

### 2.3.4.2

When the noun describes an individual without specific reference to gender, usage varies:

**den genomsnittlige/genomsnittliga TV-tittaren**  
the average TV viewer

**den vanlige/vanliga medborgarens rättigheter**  
the rights of the average citizen

This also applies to words such as:

**biskop**, bishop; **elev**, pupil; **kollega**, colleague; **lärare**, teacher;  
**minister**, minister; **patient**, patient

### 2.3.5 *The use of the definite declension – introduction*

There are four types of definite construction in which adjective and noun may be combined:

	Front article, etc.	Definite adjective	Noun	End article	Section
TYPE I	Front article, etc. and end article (double definition)				
	<b>den</b> the	<b>långa</b> long	<b>resa</b> journey	<b>–n</b>	2.3.6
	<b>det där</b> that	<b>fina</b> fine	<b>hus</b> house	<b>–et</b>	

TYPE 2 No end article after certain words					
<b>Peters</b>	<b>långa</b>	<b>resa</b>	–		2.3.7
Peter's	long	journey			
<b>hennes</b>	<b>fina</b>	<b>hus</b>	–		
her	fine	house			
<b>denna</b>	<b>kalla</b>	<b>vinter</b>	–		
this	cold	winter			
TYPE 3 No front article but an end article					
–	<b>Röda</b>	<b>kors</b>	–et		2.3.8
the	Red	Cross			
–	<b>hela</b>	<b>år</b>	–et		
the	whole	year			
TYPE 4 Neither a front article nor an end article					
–	<b>kära</b>	<b>barn</b>	–		2.3.9
	dear	child			
–	<b>(med) största</b>	<b>nöje</b>	–		
	(with) greatest	pleasure			

### **2.3.6** *Front article and end article (double definition)*

#### **2.3.6.1** Front article

When the adjective precedes the noun in the definite form, an additional definite article is usually added in front of the adjective.

This front (or adjectival) article has the following forms:

(a) **den** for non-neuter singular nouns:

<b>resan</b>	the journey
<b>den långa resan</b>	the long journey

(b) **det** for neuter singular nouns:

<b>huset</b>	the house
<b>det stora huset</b>	the big house

(c) **de** for plural nouns of both genders:

<b>resor – de långa resorna</b>	journeys – the long journeys
<b>hus – de stora husen</b>	houses – the big houses

This is the most frequent use of the definite declension.

Note – It is only in spoken Swedish that one can distinguish between the unstressed front article in **den begåvade studenten** ('the gifted student') and the stressed demonstrative in '**den begåvade studenten** ('that gifted student'). See also 3.7.1f. No such ambiguity is present in the form '**den studenten** which can only be demonstrative ('that student').

### 2.3.6.2 Den här, den där, etc.

The noun also takes an end article after demonstratives **den här, den där, det här, det där, de här, de där**. See 3.7.1f.

<b>den här långa resan</b>	this long journey
<b>det där stora huset</b>	that big house
<b>de där långa resorna</b>	those long journeys
<b>de här stora husen</b>	these big houses

### 2.3.6.3 Double definition

The presence of both a front article and an end article is termed 'double definition' because the noun and the adjective both possess their own article. These two correspond to a single article in English:

<i>the new car</i>	<b>den nya bilen</b>
<i>the old ladies</i>	<b>de gamla damerna</b>

'Double definition' might be considered a misnomer since the noun is actually defined three times, once by adding the definite ending to the adjective:

<b>den nya bilen</b>	cf. <b>en ny bil</b>
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### 2.3.7 No end article after certain words

After the types of word in 2.3.7.1–6 the adjective takes the definite ending but the noun does not take an end article.

### 2.3.7.1 The genitive

See 1.8.1f.

<b>Svenssons nya bil</b>	Svensson's new car
<b>bilens nya däck</b>	the car's new tyres
<b>killarnas gamla mormor</b>	the boys' old grandmother

Note – Exceptions: in the following cases the adjective is inflected according to the indefinite declension (0, –t, –a). See 2.1.2ff.

(a) The genitive of measurement. See 1.8.2.4(b).

<b>ett trettio minuters långt program</b>	a 30-minute-long programme
<b>tre timmars mödosam vandring</b>	three hours' strenuous walk
<b>ett fem våningars nybyggt hus</b>	a newly built five-storey building

(b) With **en sorts**, **ett slags**. See 1.8.2.4(c).

<b>en sorts mörk choklad</b>	a kind of dark chocolate
<b>ett slags grönt tyg</b>	a sort of green material
<b>flera slags persiska mattor</b>	several kinds of Persian rug

(NB plural noun in Swedish)

(c) After a genitive or possessive **egen** is inflected according to the indefinite declension (0, –t, –a). See 2.1.4.3.

<b>mammans egen lilla hemlighet</b>	Mummy's own little secret
<b>deras eget fina hus</b>	their own fine house

Note 1 – After the indefinite article and when not preceded by an article **egen**, 'own', behaves as a normal adjective in the indefinite:

<b>Han har ett eget hus.</b>	He has a house of his own.
<b>Egna barn är en fröjd att ha.</b>	It is a joy to have children of one's own.

Note 2 – After a front article **egen** does take a definite ending:

<b>kärlek till den egna torvan</b>	the love of one's own plot
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Note 3 – When **egen** = **säregen**, 'peculiar', it does take a definite ending even after a genitive or possessive:

<b>Hans egna uppträdande förvånade alla.</b>
His peculiar behaviour astonished everyone.

**2.3.7.2** The possessive

See 3.6.1ff.

<b>min vackra flickvän</b>	my beautiful girlfriend
<b>hans tunga väska</b>	his heavy suitcase
<b>dess höga tak</b>	its high ceiling
<b>deras okunniga lärare</b>	their ignorant teacher

Note – The definite adjective ending is increasingly omitted after **var sin**, **var sitt**, etc. See 3.6.5.

**De båda universiteten har var sin ny forskningsmiljö.**  
The two universities each have their own new research centre.

**2.3.7.3** The demonstrative **denna, detta, dessa**.

See 3.7.2.2(b).

<b>denna mörka skog</b>	this dark wood
<b>detta vackra träd</b>	this beautiful tree
<b>dessa mörka skogar</b>	these dark woods
<b>dessa vackra träd</b>	these beautiful trees

Note – In Southern and Western Swedish dialects **denna, detta, dessa** are followed by the end article:

<b>denna nya skolan</b>	this new school
<b>detta nya huset</b>	this new house

**2.3.7.4** The relative pronoun **vars**

See 3.11.4.

**Mannen, vars lilla dotter är sjuk, är mycket orolig.**  
The man, whose little daughter is ill, is very concerned.

**2.3.7.5** **Samma**, etc.

The words **samma**, the same; **nästa**, the next; **följande**, the following; **föregående**, the previous; **vederbörande**, the (person) concerned. See 1.11.4.5.

**samma dumma fråga**  
**nästa fina helg**

the same silly question  
the next fine weekend

**2.3.7.6** The personal pronoun (rare)

**Du gamla, du fria, du fjällhöga Nord**

Thou ancient, thou free, thou mountainous North

[From the Swedish national anthem, 1844.]

**2.3.8** *No front article but an end article*

This is an abbreviated form of double definition (2.3.6) in which the front article is omitted when the expression becomes familiar, assuming the nature of a set phrase, or before certain words. Notice also that the construction without front article forms one concept and therefore has a single stress:

<b>Vita 'huset</b>	the 'White House (in Washington)
<b>det 'vita huset i skogen</b>	the white house (in the forest)
<b>svenska 'folket</b>	the Swedish people [a familiar concept]
<b>det 'peruanska 'folket</b>	the Peruvian people [a less familiar concept]

This construction is becoming widespread and is very common in newspaper style, especially in headlines. It also found with certain common adjectives in their basic forms as well as in the comparative and superlative form:

**gammal**, old; **god**, good; **hög**, high; **liten**, small; **låg**, low; **ny**, new;  
**stor**, big; **sen**, late; **ung**, young; adjectives in **-(i)sk**; adjectives in **-(l)ig**.

**2.3.8.1** The front article is often omitted in the following types of fixed expression

(a) In names denoting geographical locations:

<b>Kungliga slottet</b>	the Royal Palace
<b>Gamla stan</b>	the Old Town
<b>Stilla havet</b>	the Pacific Ocean
<b>Förenata staterna</b>	the United States

(b) With nationality adjectives:

<b>Svenska Akademien</b>	the Swedish Academy
<b>franska revolutionen</b>	the French Revolution
<b>brittiska flottan</b>	the British fleet

(c) With words denoting location:

<b>på högra sidan</b>	on the right-hand side
<b>på övre våningen</b>	on the upper floor
<b>i yttre skärgården</b>	in the outer skerries
<b>i mellersta lådan</b>	in the middle drawer

(d) With compass points:

<b>Norra Ishavet</b>	the Arctic Ocean
<b>Södra stambanan</b>	the southern main line
<b>östra delen av staden</b>	the eastern part of town
<b>västra halvklotet</b>	the western hemisphere

(e) With ordinal numbers and other words denoting series. See also 2.3.9.2.

<b>på tredje våningen</b>	on the third floor
<b>första världskriget</b>	the First World War
<b>för andra gången</b>	for the second time
<b>förra tisdagen</b>	last Tuesday
<b>sena natten</b>	late at night
<b>senaste numret av tidningen</b>	the latest issue of the newspaper

(f) With some superlatives. See 2.3.9.3.

<b>mesta tiden</b>	most of the time
<b>största delen</b>	the largest part
<b>högsta beloppet</b>	the greatest sum

(g) With colours:

<b>gula febern</b>	yellow fever
<b>Röda korset</b>	the Red Cross
<b>Svarta havet</b>	the Black Sea
<b>gröna vågen</b>	the green movement
<b>ljusa dagen</b>	broad daylight
<b>bleka döden</b>	pallid Death



(h) In some forms of address. See 2.3.9.1.

**Bäste rektorn!**  
**lilla gumman**

Dear Headmaster, [in a letter]  
my dear

(j) Others:

**Gamla testamentet** the Old Testament  
**Karolinska Universitetssjukhuset** the Karolinska University Hospital  
**heta stolen** the hot seat

### 2.3.8.2 Sjalva

No front article is used with the words **själva**, ‘the very’; **rena rama** or **blotta**, ‘sheer’, before a noun.

**i själva verket** in reality  
**Sjalva drottningen kom.** The queen herself came.  
**Det är rena rama sanningen.** It is the plain and simple truth.  
**med blotta ögat** with the naked eye

### 2.3.8.3 Hela, halva

Normally these words are used without a front article:

**hela året om** all year round  
**till halva priset** at half price

But note also that:

(a) When **hela**, ‘the whole’, is used with a front article, the front article follows immediately after **hela**. See 3.9.8.3.

**hela den anslagna tiden** the whole of the time allocated

(b) The possessive also comes immediately after **hela**, and is in the indefinite form. See 3.6.2.4, 3.9.8.3.

**hela mitt liv** throughout my life

(c) Compare the following constructions:

<b>Ge mig hela kakan!</b>	Give me the whole [entire] cake!
<b>Ge mig den hela kakan!</b>	Give me the whole [uncut] cake!
<b>Ge mig halva äpplet!</b>	Give me half the apple! [The apple is whole.]
<b>Ge mig det halva äpplet!</b>	Give me the half apple! [The apple has already been cut.]

### **2.3.9** *Neither a front article nor an end article*

This is a relatively infrequent construction. There are three main types:

#### **2.3.9.1** In some forms of address, with proper nouns and other expressions denoting relationships

See. 2.3.8.1(h).

<b>Käre far!</b>	Dear Dad!
<b>Snälla farmor</b>	Dear Gran
<b>Lilla vän!</b>	My dear!
<b>Gamle herr Nilsson</b>	Old Mr Nilsson
<b>Lille Albert</b>	Little Albert

#### **2.3.9.2** With some ordinal numbers

See 2.3.8.1(e).

<b>åka första klass</b>	go first class
<b>i andra hand</b>	(at) second hand

#### **2.3.9.3** With some superlatives

See also 2.5.13.

<b>i sista stund</b>	at the last moment
<b>med största nöje</b>	with great pleasure

### 2.3.10 The definite use of adjectives: summary

(Not including the comparative and superlative)

	Non-neuter singular	Neuter singular	Plural
<b>I Double definition</b>			
2.3.4.1	<b>den gamle gubben</b>	–	–
	<b>den gamla gubben</b>	–	–
2.3.6.1	<b>den</b>	<b>det</b>	<b>de</b>
2.3.6.2	<b>den här</b>	<b>det här</b>	<b>de här</b>
	<b>den där</b>	<b>det där</b>	<b>de där</b>
	} <b>nya bilen</b>	} <b>nya huset</b>	} <b>nya bilarna/ husen</b>
<b>2 No end article</b>			
2.3.7.1	<b>Svens</b>	<b>Svens</b>	<b>Svens</b>
	<b>firmans</b>	<b>firmans</b>	<b>firmans</b>
2.3.7.2	<b>min</b>	<b>mitt</b>	<b>mina</b>
2.3.7.3	<b>denna</b>	<b>detta</b>	<b>dessa</b>
2.3.7.4	<b>vars</b>	<b>vars</b>	<b>vars</b>
2.3.7.5	<b>samma</b>	<b>samma</b>	<b>samma</b>
	<b>nästa</b>	<b>nästa</b>	<b>nästa</b>
	<b>följande</b>	<b>följande</b>	<b>följande</b>
	<b>föregående</b>	<b>föregående</b>	<b>föregående</b>
	} <b>nya bil</b>	} <b>nya hus</b>	} <b>nya bilar/hus</b>
<b>3 No front article</b>			
2.3.8.1(a)	<b>Gamla stan</b>		
2.3.8.1(b)	<b>svenska språket</b>		
2.3.8.1(c)	<b>högra sidan</b>		
2.3.8.1(d)	<b>östra stadsdelen</b>		
2.3.8.1(e)	<b>andra gången</b>		
2.3.8.1(f)	<b>största delen</b>		
2.3.8.1(g)	<b>Röda korset</b>		
2.3.8.1(h)	<b>lilla gumman</b>		
2.3.8.3	<b>hela dagen</b>		
<b>4 Neither front article nor end article</b>			
2.3.9.1	<b>Käre far!</b>		
2.3.9.2	<b>första klass</b>		
2.3.9.3	<b>i sista stund</b>		

## 2.4 Adjectival nouns

### 2.4.1 Introduction

The adjective is normally subordinated to the noun, but in certain cases it may attain a degree of independence. In the following cases the adjective is used independently of the noun.

**2.4.1.1** The noun may readily be supplied

**Gamla bilar är billigare än nya (bilar).**

Old cars are cheaper than new ones.

**De sålde ett litet bord och ett stort (bord).**

They sold a small table and a large one.

**Jag har en gammal bil och skulle gärna köpa en ny (bil).**

I have an old car and would like to buy a new one.

**Vill du köpa den stora tårten? Nej, jag tar den lilla (tårten).**

Do you want to buy the big cake? No, I'll take the small one.

**Alla de äldre (människorna) var trötta.**

All the older people were tired.

In these cases the adjectival noun retains its adjectival inflexion in singular and plural:

**en långhårig man – den långhårige (mannen) – de långhåriga**

a long-haired man – the long-haired man – the long-haired men

**2.4.1.2** The noun is not usually supplied.

This is the type usually regarded as the ‘adjectival noun’.

**en anhörig**, a relative; **an arbetslös**, an unemployed person; **en blind**, a blind person; **en döv**, a deaf person; **en handikappad**, a person with a disability; **en kristen**, a Christian; **en liten**, a baby; **en mentalsjuk**, a person with a mental illness; **en oskyldig**, an innocent person; **en sakkunnig**, an expert

**de blinda**, the blind; **de döva**, the deaf; **de handikappade**, the people with disabilities

Note that in the singular definite of such expressions the form in **–e** is always used to indicate masculines. See also 2.3.2f.

**den blinde = den blinde mannen**

the blind boy/man

**den blinda = den blinda kvinnan**

the blind girl/woman

A non-neuter form is generally used to refer to a person or to a non-neuter noun omitted but understood:

<b>en blind</b>	a blind person
<b>den okände</b>	the stranger
<b>Du är den ende.</b>	You are the only one.

**Schuberts bästa symfoni är Den ofullbordade.**

Schubert's best symphony is *The Unfinished*.

A neuter form generally refers to an unlimited, unspecified amount or quantity or to a neuter noun that is omitted but understood:

<b>det enda vi kan göra</b>	the only thing we can do
<b>det sista han gjorde</b>	the last thing he did
<b>det nya i boken</b>	the new element in the book
<b>det svåraste att förstå</b>	the most difficult thing to understand
<b>det bästa jag vet</b>	the best thing I know

**2.4.1.3** An adjectival noun may take a genitive in –s

<b>den okändes ansikte</b>	the face of the stranger
<b>det möjligas konst</b>	the art of the possible

**Ingen verkar intressera sig för de gamlas problem.**

No one seems to be interested in the problems of the old.

**Pappan la armen om den lilles axlar.**

The father put his arm around the little boy's shoulders.

**2.4.2** *The forms and use of the adjectival noun*

**2.4.2.1** Plural adjective noun to denote persons

Both English and Swedish often use adjectival nouns in the plural definite to indicate persons:

**de arbetslösa**, the unemployed; **de döda**, the dead; **de fattiga**, the poor; **de gamla**, the old; **de sjuka**, the sick; **de unga**, the young

#### 2.4.2.2 Swedish uses an adjectival noun in the singular

However, as may be seen from the examples in 2.4.1, Swedish has gone much further than English, as the article form and adjectival ending alone indicate number *and* gender. In Swedish adjectival nouns are formed from:

(a) The indefinite form of the adjective:

**en bekant**, an acquaintance; **en blind**, a blind person; **en död**, a dead person; **ett ont**, an evil

(b) The non-neuter singular form of the adjective:

**den gamle**, the old man; **den gamla**, the old woman; **den lille**, the little boy; **den lilla**, the little girl

(c) The neuter singular form of the adjective:

**det goda**, the good thing; **det fatala**, the fatal thing; **det löjliga**, the stupid thing; **det nya**, the new thing

(d) The superlative form of the adjective:

**Det var det minsta vi kunde göra.**  
It was the least we could do.

(e) Present participles:

**en gående**, a pedestrian; **de närvarande**, those present;  
**en studerande**, a student; **de sörjande**, the mourners

(f) Past participles:

**den okände**, the unknown man, the stranger; **undertecknad**, the undersigned

#### 2.4.2.3 English equivalents

Adjectival nouns in Swedish may also correspond to the following in English:

(a) A common noun:

**majoriteten av de röstande** the majority of the voters

(b) An abstract noun:

**det fördelaktiga i detta**      the advantage of this

(c) A clause:

**Detta är det betydelsefulla.**      This is what is important.

(d) Adjectives that are now treated as nouns, with a plural in **–s**:

**de gröna**, the Greens; **de intellektuella**, the intellectuals; **de nygifta**, the newly-weds; **de vuxna**, the adults

#### 2.4.2.4 'An old one'

Unlike English, Swedish does not require the additional word 'one' in cases where the count noun (1.1.1) is omitted. See 2.4.1.1 and 3.9.25.

**Olle köpte en ny bil men jag hade bara råd med en gammal.**  
Olle bought a new car, but I could only afford an old one.

**Olle har två bilar. Hans favorit är den röda men jag gillar den blå bäst.**  
Olle has two cars. His favourite is the red one, but I like the blue one best.

**De nygifta var de enda utan bil.**  
The newly married couple were the only ones without a car.

#### 2.4.3 *Nationality words*

##### 2.4.3.1 Nationality words

In most cases, the noun for the language is identical with that for the female inhabitant, both of them inflecting according to the first declension.

Adjectives and nouns of nationality are not written with capital letters unless they begin a sentence. See 12.3.1.2.

Country	Adjective	Male inhabitant	Female inhabitant	Language
1 Male inhabitant = nationality adjective				
Sverige	svensk	en svensk pl. –ar	en svenska	svenska
Danmark	dansk	en dansk pl. –ar	en danska	danska
Tyskland	tysk	en tysk pl. –ar	en tyska	tyska
2 Male inhabitant different from adjective (notice the wide variety of forms for male inhabitants)				
England	engelsk	en engelsman pl. –män	engelska	engelska
Frankrike	fransk	en fransman pl. –män	fransyska	franska
Norge	norsk	en norrman pl. –män	norska	norska
Ryssland	rysk	en ryss pl. –ar	ryska	ryska
Spanien	spansk	en spanjor pl. –er	spanjorska	spanska
Finland	finsk	en finländare pl. –ö	finska	finska
Island	isländsk	en finne pl. –ar	isländska	isländska
Belgien	belgisk	en belgare pl. –ö	belgiska	
USA/Förenta staterna	amerikansk	en amerikan pl. –er	amerikanska	engelska
Kina	kinesisk	en kines pl. –er	kinesiska	kinesiska

### 2.4.3.2

English nationality expressions of the type ‘the English’, ‘the Greeks’, ‘the French’, ‘the Norwegians’ are never translated using the adjectival noun in Swedish. There are separate common nouns for these in Swedish:

**engelsmännen**, the English; **fransmännen**, the French; **holländarna**, the Dutch; **irländarna**, the Irish, etc.

### 2.4.4 Complete nominalisation

#### 2.4.4.1 The adjective has nominal inflexion

Examples of complete nominalisation of the adjective vary in form. Some, such as **unge**, have all of the forms of the noun, while others, such as **höger** only take one form, the definite singular:

**De har en unge/två ungar.** They have one kid/two kids.  
**De har just fått en liten.** They have just had a baby.



<b>lillan</b>	small female child
<b>lillen</b>	small male child
<b>högern</b>	the Right [in a political sense]
<b>vänstern</b>	the Left [in a political sense]
<b>gulan, vitan</b>	the yolk, white [of an egg]
<b>djup-et</b>	the deep
<b>fett-et</b>	fat
<b>grund-et</b>	the shallows
<b>vilt-et</b>	game [wild animals]

Note – To express the plural of **en liten**, **lillen** and **lillan** one would use **små** or **de små**:

**En mamma kom in med sina små.**  
A mother came in with her little ones.

Notice the following:

**en död**, a dead person; but also: **en död**, a death; **döden**, (the) death;  
**den döde**, the dead man; **den döda**, the dead woman; **de döda**, the dead (people)

#### **2.4.5** *Intermediate forms*

Some adjectival nouns represent forms intermediate between adjective and noun:

- (a) **En fullmäktig**, ‘a delegate’, has a definite form in **–en** but an adjectival collective plural in **–e**, which in English usually corresponds to ‘the local council’.
- (b) **En anhörig**, ‘a next of kin’, has no end article form, but an adjectival plural in **–a**.
- (c) **Nästa**, ‘a neighbour’, is only singular. **Närmaste**, ‘nearest and dearest’, is only plural.

**Man skall älska sin nästa.**                      One shall love one’s neighbour.  
**mina närmaste**                                      my nearest and dearest

- (d) **Käraste –n, –0**, ‘[male or female] sweetheart’, and **käresta –n, –or**, ‘[female] sweetheart’.

## 2.5 Comparison of adjectives

### 2.5.1 Introduction

Swedish adjectives possess a basic (positive) form which is inflected according to number, gender and definite/indefinite (2.2f.), a comparative form which is uninflected and a superlative form which is inflected according to the definite declension alone. There are four main types of adjective comparison:

- 1 The endings **–are**, **–ast** are added to the positive. See 2.5.2.

**glad, gladare, gladast**                      happy, happier, happiest

- 2 The endings **–re**, **–st** are added to the positive and its root vowel is modified. See 2.5.3.

**stor, större, störst**                      big, bigger, biggest

- 3 A different stem from that of the positive is used (irregular comparison). See 2.5.4.

**liten, mindre, minst**                      small, smaller, smallest

- 4 The words **mer**, **mest** are used with the positive. See 2.5.5.

**typisk, mer typisk, mest typisk** typical, more typical, most typical

There is an increasing tendency to use **mer**, **mest** as an alternative to inflexional comparisons, particularly in spoken Swedish:

**Det är mest troligt/troligast att premiärministern avgår.**

It is most likely that the Prime Minister will resign.

Note – See also 2.5.5.2 for inflection of the adjective with **mer**, **mest**.

### 2.5.2 Comparison with the endings **–are**, **–ast**

Most Swedish adjectives add **–are** to the positive in order to form the comparative, and **–ast** to the positive to form the superlative. This group includes all new adjectives. Adjectives ending in **–are**, **–ast** include those whose indefinite declension is noted in 2.1.2, 2.1.3.1–2.1.3.6, 2.1.3.8–2.1.3.10. Past participles ending in **–dd** (2.1.3.7) compare using **mer**, **mest** (2.5.5.1). For the comparison of adverbs see 6.1.7.

**2.5.2.1** The vast majority of adjectives simply add **-are** and **-ast**

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>ny</b>	<b>nyare</b>	<b>nyast</b>	new
<b>populär</b>	<b>populärare</b>	<b>populärast</b>	popular
<b>rolig</b>	<b>roligare</b>	<b>roligast</b>	amusing
<b>sen</b>	<b>senare</b>	<b>senast</b>	late
<b>snabb</b>	<b>snabbare</b>	<b>snabbast</b>	quick

**2.5.2.2** Some ending in **-el**, **-en**, **-er** drop the final **-e** of the stem.

See 2.1.4.2f.

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>dunkel</b>	<b>dunklare</b>	<b>dunklast</b>	dark
<b>riskabel</b>	<b>riskablare</b>	<b>riskablast</b>	risky
<b>häpen</b>	<b>häpnare</b>	<b>häpnast</b>	surprised
<b>mogen</b>	<b>mognare</b>	<b>mognast</b>	mature, ripe
<b>mager</b>	<b>magrare</b>	<b>magrast</b>	thin
<b>vacker</b>	<b>vackrare</b>	<b>vackrast</b>	pretty

But, as regards past participles in **-en**, see also 2.5.5.1(a) Note 4.

**2.5.2.3** Some adjectives ending in **-m** double the **-m** before adding **-are**, **-ast**

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>dum</b>	<b>dummare</b>	<b>dummast</b>	stupid
<b>långsam</b>	<b>långsammare</b>	<b>långsammast</b>	slow

Others include: **hälsosam**, healthy; **trivsamt**, congenial. See 2.1.3.10.

**2.5.2.4** Adjectives ending in unstressed **-a** drop the **-a** before adding **-are**, **-ast**

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>sakta</b>	<b>saktare</b>	<b>saktast</b>	slow

For comparison of the adjectival adverb **nära** see 6.1.7.3.

### 2.5.3 Comparison with the endings *-re, -st* plus modification of the root vowel

The following adjectives form a small but frequently encountered group:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative	Vowel change	Meaning
<b>stor</b>	<b>större</b>	<b>störst</b>	<b>o → ö</b>	big
<b>grov</b>	<b>grövre</b>	<b>grövt</b>	<b>o → ö</b>	coarse
<b>låg</b>	<b>lägre</b>	<b>lägst</b>	<b>å → ä</b>	low
<b>lång</b>	<b>längre</b>	<b>längst</b>	<b>å → ä</b>	long, tall
<b>trång</b>	<b>trängre</b>	<b>trängst</b>	<b>å → ä</b>	narrow
<b>få</b>	<b>färre</b>	–	<b>å → ä</b>	few
<b>små</b>	<b>smärre</b>	–	<b>å → ä</b>	small
<b>ung</b>	<b>yngre</b>	<b>yngst</b>	<b>u → y</b>	young
<b>tung</b>	<b>tyngre</b>	<b>tyngst</b>	<b>u → y</b>	heavy
<b>hög</b>	<b>högre</b>	<b>högst</b>		high

(*hög* has no vowel change)

### 2.5.4 Irregular comparison

#### 2.5.4.1 Different stems

The following adjectives form their comparative and superlative by employing a different stem (so-called *suppletion*). They form a small but frequently encountered group.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative	Meaning	See also
<b>god, bra</b>	<b>bättre</b> <b>(godare)</b>	<b>bäst</b> <b>(godast)</b>	good	2.5.4.2
<b>dålig</b>	<b>sämre</b> <b>värre</b> <b>(dåligare)</b>	<b>sämst</b> <b>värst</b> <b>(dåligast)</b>	bad	2.5.4.4 2.5.4.4 2.5.4.3
<b>ond</b>	<b>värre</b> <b>(ondare)</b>	<b>värst</b> <b>(ondast)</b>	bad	
<b>gammal</b>	<b>äldre</b>	<b>äldst</b>	old	
<b>liten</b>	<b>mindre</b>	<b>minst</b>	little	
<b>många</b>	<b>fler</b>	<b>flest</b>	many	2.5.4.5
<b>mycket</b>	<b>mer</b>	<b>mest</b>	a lot	2.5.4.5

#### 2.5.4.2 Good – better

The usual equivalents are: **god – bättre – bäst**. The alternative **godare – godast** is used to indicate ‘pleasant tasting’.

#### **Finns det något godare än färskpotatis?**

Is there anything better than new potatoes?

#### 2.5.4.3 Bad – worse

The usual equivalents are: **dålig – sämre – sämst**. The alternative **dåligare – dåligast** is found in informal Swedish but is not recommended in normal written style. It is often used of poorer health or morality.

**Vi skriver allt dåligare.  
Jag känner mig dåligare.**

We write worse and worse.  
I feel worse.

#### 2.5.4.4 Worse – worst

The choice is: **värre – värst** or **sämre – sämst**.

**Värre – värst** indicates that something negative is endowed with more of a bad property:

**ett annat, värre lidande**  
another, worse suffering

**Det var den värsta lögn jag hört.**  
That was the worst lie I've heard.

**Sämre – sämst** indicates that something neutral or positive is endowed with less of a good property:

**de sämre lottade i livet**                      those worse-off in life  
**byxor av sämre kvalitet**                trousers of worse quality

**Bostadssituationen ser allt sämre ut.**  
The housing situation is looking worse and worse.

Compare:

**Vädret är värre i dag.**                      The weather is worse today.  
[i.e. The weather was already bad yesterday.]

**Vädret är sämre i dag.**                      The weather is worse today.  
[i.e. The weather was good yesterday.]

**2.5.4.5**    More – most

The choice is: **mer(a) – mest** or **fler – flest**. **Mer(a) – mest** are used with non-count nouns. See 1.1.1.

**Vill du ha mer kaffe?**                      Would you like more coffee?  
**Han fick mest pengar.**                      He got most money.  
**Det mesta arbetet gör han själv.**    Most of the work he does himself.

**Fler – flest** are used with count nouns. See 1.1.1.

**De var många fler människor än vi.**    They were many more than us.  
**Jag måste köpa fler böcker.**              I must buy more books.  
**De flesta svenskar tycker om sill.**        Most Swedes like herring.

Note 1 – **flera** = ‘several’, ‘a number of’, ‘various’, ‘different’. See 3.9.19.2(b). In a sense it is an absolute comparative. See 2.5.12.

**flera unga studenter**                      several young students

Note 2 – If a comparison is implied when using **de flesta**, the noun following takes an end article (see 3.9.20.3f.):

**Vem fick de flesta rösterna?**    Who got most votes?

If no comparison is implied (i.e. if **de flesta** is an absolute superlative, see 2.5.12) the noun has no article:

**De flesta visste inget.**  
Most people did not know anything.

**De flesta bilar har blinkers nuförtiden.**  
Most cars have indicators nowadays.

**2.5.5**    *Comparison with mer(a), mest*

Normally the forms **mer** and **mera** are synonymous and interchangeable. In a few fixed expressions, however, one or the other is preferred, for example **mer och mer**, ‘more and more’ but **med mera**, ‘et cetera’.

### 2.5.5.1 Adjectives comparing with **mer(a)**, **mest**

Different groups of adjective have varying tendencies to compare with an ending or with **mer**, **mest**. Generally, the longer and more complex an adjective is, the more likely it is to compare using **mer** and **mest**.

Adjectives comparing with **mer(a)** and **mest** form a large and varied group, including:

- (a) Most past participles, and all past participles and other adjectives ending in **-ad** (2.1.4.1, 5.2.14).

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>
<b>komplicerad</b> complicated	<b>mer komplicerad</b> more complicated	<b>mest komplicerad</b> most complicated
<b>snabbfotad</b> fleet-footed	<b>mer snabbfotad</b> more fleet-footed	<b>mest snabbfotad</b> most fleet-footed
<b>blåslagen</b> bruised	<b>mer blåslagen</b> more bruised	<b>mest blåslagen</b> most bruised

Note 1 – Exception: adjectives ending in a long **-a + d**:

<b>glad</b> happy	<b>gladare</b> happier	<b>gladast</b> happiest
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Note 2 – Past participles ending in **-d**, **-t** may compare either with **mer(a)**, **mest** or with inflexional endings:

<b>en mer bortskämd (bortskämdare) son</b>	a more spoiled son
<b>en mer förskräckt (förskräcktare) man</b>	a more terrified man

Note 3 – Those adjectives ending in **-d**, **-dd**, **-t**, **-en** formed with non-verbal suffixes but appearing to have the form of past participles, tend to have inflexional comparatives:

<b>en högljuddare församling</b>	a noisier gathering
<b>en vidsyntare person</b>	a more broad-minded person
<b>angelägnare frågor</b>	more urgent questions

Note 4 – Past participles ending in **-en** compare using inflexional endings rather more commonly by analogy with those adjectives ending in **-en** that are not formed from verbs:

<b>en allt frusnare (mer frusen) brevbärare</b>
an increasingly cold postman

Many participles of strong verbs used as adjectives have become remote from the original verb. In cases where their meaning becomes specialised there is a tendency to adopt an inflexional comparative:

**Psykiatrין gör oss galnare.** Psychiatry makes us crazier.

Similarly: **avlägsen**, remote; **drukken**, drunk; **storslagen**, grandiose; **svullen**, swollen; **vuxen**, adult

(b) All present participles (in **–ande**, **–ende**). See 2.1.6.1, 5.2.15.

<b>motbjudande</b> repulsive	<b>mer motbjudande</b> more repulsive	<b>mest motbjudande</b> most repulsive
<b>ingående</b> detailed	<b>mer ingående</b> more detailed	<b>mest ingående</b> most detailed

(c) Most adjectives ending in **–isk**. See 2.1.2.2(b).

<b>fantastisk</b> fantastic	<b>mer fantastisk</b> more fantastic	<b>mest fantastisk</b> most fantastic
<b>typisk</b> typical	<b>mer typisk</b> more typical	<b>mest typisk</b> most typical

Note 1 – An exception is **frisk**:

<b>frisk</b> healthy	<b>friskare</b> healthier	<b>friskast</b> healthiest
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(d) Many (in the positive indeclinable) adjectives ending in **–a**, **–e**, **–s**. See also 2.1.6.

<b>annorlunda</b> different	<b>mer annorlunda</b> more different	<b>mest annorlunda</b> most different
<b>gängse</b> customary	<b>mer gängse</b> more customary	<b>mest gängse</b> most customary
<b>gammaldags</b> old-fashioned	<b>mer gammaldags</b> more old-fashioned	<b>mest gammaldags</b> most old-fashioned

Note – Some adjectives ending in **–a** (see also 2.1.6.2) which are normally indeclinable in the positive (indefinite declension) optionally add **–re**, **–st**:

<b>noga</b> , careful	<b>nogare</b>	<b>nogast</b>
<b>stilla</b> , peaceful	<b>stillare</b>	<b>stillast</b>



ringa, lowly

ringare

ringast

- (e) The adjectives **lik**, **värd** and **van**:

**Den är mera lik fabriken andra produkter.**

It is more like the factory's other products.

**En dansk hundralapp är mer värd än en svensk.**

A Danish hundred kroner note is worth more than a Swedish one.

**Han är mera van vid utomhusarbete.**

He is more accustomed to working outdoors.

Note – The adjective **van** occasionally compares with **–are**, **–ast**:

**dagens allt vanare resenärer**

today's more seasoned travellers

- (f) Compound adjectives and adjectives derived from other word classes (especially those with stressed suffixes) may use either **mer**, **mest** or **–are**, **–ast**:

**mer framgångsrik, mest framgångsrik**

or **framgångsrikare, framgångsrikast**

successful

**mer formell, mest formell**

or **formellare, formellast**

formal

#### 2.5.5.2 Indefinite and definite declension with **mer(a)**, **mest**

Note particularly that adjectives comparing with **mer(a)**, **mest** are inflected according to the indefinite or definite declension:

**ett mer/mest komplicerat fall**, a more/most complicated case

**mer komplicerade fall**, more complicated cases

**det mer/mest komplicerade fallet**, the more/most complicated case

**de mer/mest komplicerade fallen**, the more/most complicated cases

**en mer/mest ingående skildring**, a more/most detailed description

**mer ingående skildringar**, more detailed descriptions

**den mer/mest ingående skildringen**, the more/most detailed description

**de mer/mest ingående skildringarna**, the more/most detailed descriptions

## 2.5.6 Comparison of compound adjectives

Compound adjectives comprising two adjectival elements (see 11.3.6f.) form their comparisons in one of three ways as detailed below.

### 2.5.6.1 Final element inflects

The final element compares by adding **-are/-ast** or **-re/-st**. For those adjectives that compare in this way see 2.5.2f.

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>kortvarig</b>	<b>kortvarigare</b>	<b>kortvarigast</b>	brief
<b>träffsäker</b>	<b>träffsäkrare</b>	<b>träffsäkrast</b>	accurate

### 2.5.6.2 Final element compares with **mer(a)**, **mest**

The whole compound is compared with **mer(a)**, **mest** if the final element would normally be compared with **mer(a)**, **mest**. See 2.5.5.

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<b>kortfattad</b>	<b>mer kortfattad</b>	<b>mest kortfattad</b>	concise
<b>långsökt</b>	<b>mer långsökt</b>	<b>mest långsökt</b>	far-fetched

### 2.5.6.3 Optional comparative forms

Some compound adjectives can compare either inflexionally or periphrastically:

<b>mer/mest felaktig</b> more/most incorrect	or:	<b>felaktigare, felaktigast</b>
<b>mer/mest meningslös</b> more/most meaningless	or:	<b>meningslösare, meningslösast</b>

### 2.5.6.4 First element compares

In a few well-defined instances of compound adjectives the first element may compare. Note that the first element in these expressions then becomes an independent adverb and is thus inflexible.

**glesbefolkad**    **de glesare befolkade öarna/  
de mer glesbefolkade öarna**  
the more sparsely populated islands

**det glesast befolkade området**  
the most sparsely populated area

**mörkblå**        **en mörkare blå kostym**  
a darker blue suit

**2.5.7**    **Adjectives deficient in the positive, positive and comparative, or superlative**

**2.5.7.1**    No positive form

Some adjectives with a comparative in **-re**, superlative in **-erst/-st** and which denote place have no positive form, but derive from an adverb or preposition. See 6.2.2.3, 6.3.3.1. These adverbs or prepositions are given in brackets in the table below.

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>	<i>Superlative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Place in relation to other elements and to the speaker:			
<b>(borta)</b>	<b>bortre</b>	<b>borterst</b>	(away), further, furthest away
<b>(hit)</b>	<b>hitre</b>	<b>hiterst</b>	(here), nearer, nearest
Place in relation to other elements and the centre:			
<b>(inne)</b>	<b>inre</b>	<b>innerst</b>	(in), inner, innermost
<b>(ute)</b>	<b>yttre</b>	<b>ytterst</b>	(out), outer, outermost
<b>(i mitten)</b>	–	<b>mitterst</b>	(in the centre)
<b>(mellan)</b>	–	<b>mellerst</b>	(between), in the middle
Place in vertical order in relation to something:			
<b>(under)</b>	<b>undre</b>	<b>underst</b>	(below), lower, at the bottom
<b>(över)</b>	<b>övre</b>	<b>överst</b>	(above), upper, at the top
<b>(nere)</b>	<b>nedre</b>	<b>nederst</b>	(down), lower, at the foot of
Place in horizontal order in relation to something:			
<b>(bakom)</b>	<b>bakre</b>	<b>bakerst</b>	(behind), back, at the very back
<b>(framme)</b>	<b>främre</b>	<b>främst</b>	(forward), front, at the very front

Examples:

**på en av de främre bänkarna**    on one of the front benches  
**Han sitter i det inre rummet.**    He is sitting in the inner room.  
**i mellersta Sverige**            in central Sweden  
**på övre våningen**            on the upper storey

Note 1 – The comparative form may not be used predicatively.

Note 2 – The adverbs **borta**, **in**, **ut**, **ner**, **upp**, **fram** may be compared with **längre** and **längst**:

**borta**, away – **längre bort**, further away – **längst bort**, furthest away

**2.5.7.2** Some adjectives exist only in the superlative form

**näst**, next; **sist**, last

Note that **sist** usually means ‘last’ in the sense of ‘final’. ‘Last’ in the sense of ‘latest, most recent’ is properly rendered in Swedish by **senast**. See 2.5.7.2.

<b>Hollywoods senaste stjärnskott</b>	Hollywood’s latest rising star
<b>Chaplins sista film</b>	Chaplin’s last film

But this distinction is not clear cut:

**Sista gången vi sågs var hon optimistisk.**

The last time we met she was optimistic.

**På sista tiden har jag inte sett henne.**

I haven’t seen her recently.

**Tack för senast** [*lit.*] Thank you for last time

[a Swedish phrase used when meeting someone again after having been entertained by them.]

**2.5.7.3** Some adjectives possess no superlative form

<b>få, färre</b>	few, fewer
<b>små, smärre</b>	small, smaller (minor)

**2.5.8** *Adjectives which do not compare*

Because of their absolute meaning, some adjectives possess no comparative or superlative form:

**allsmäktig**, almighty; **död**, dead; **barhuvad**, bare-headed; **barnlös**, childless; **enögd**, one-eyed; **fyrkantig**, square; **gratis**, free; **gravid**, pregnant; **medeltida**, medieval; **äkta**, genuine

This group includes adjectives combined with, for example, the (colloquial) prefixes **jätte-**, **toppen-**, **ur-**, **skit-**, **as-**:

**jättestor**, gigantic; **toppenbra**, fantastic; **urdålig**, terrible; **skitbillig**, dirt cheap; **aspackad**, dead drunk; **dödstrött**, dead tired; **stenrik**, filthy rich; **älsklingsbok**, favourite book

### **2.5.9**    *The comparative is indeclinable*

The comparative formed with **-are/-re** retains the same form for both indefinite and definite irrespective of gender or number:

**Han har en äldre bror. Den äldre brodern heter Lars.**  
He has an older brother. The older brother is called Lars.

**Han har ett äldre hus. Det äldre huset ligger vid sjön.**  
He has an older house. The older house is by the lake.

**de äldre bröderna/husen**  
the older brothers/houses

See also indeclinable adjectives in **-e**, 2.1.6.1.

### **2.5.10**    *Inflexion of the superlative*

#### **2.5.10.1**    *Predicative use*

When used predicatively the superlative in **-ast/-st** may be left uninflected (indefinite declension) or inflected (definite declension):

**Hans gröt är tjockast.**  
His porridge is thickest.

**Min gröt är den tjockaste i Sverige.**  
My porridge is the thickest in Sweden.

#### **2.5.10.2**    *Attributive use*

When used attributively the superlative is always inflected (definite declension):

**den tjockaste gröten**                      the thickest porridge

<b>det tjockaste trädet</b>	the thickest tree
<b>de tjockaste vantarna</b>	the thickest mittens

Notice that one may say either of the following:

<b>den yngsta av de två barnen</b>	[ <i>lit.</i> ] the youngest of the two children
<b>den yngre av de två barnen</b>	the younger of the two children

### 2.5.10.3 –ast + –e

When used attributively, superlatives whose uninflected form ends in **–ast** (2.5.2) add **–e**:

<b>Den där tavlan var vackrast.</b>	That picture was most beautiful.
<b>den vackraste tavlan</b>	the most beautiful picture

### 2.5.10.4 –st + –a

When used attributively, superlatives whose uninflected form ends in **–st** with modification of the root vowel (2.5.3) add **–a** (masculines either **–e** or **–a**, see 2.3.4):

<b>Den där tårtan är störst.</b>	That cake is biggest.
<b>den största tårtan</b>	the biggest cake
<b>Den där killen är längst.</b>	That boy is tallest.
<b>den längste/längsta killen</b>	the tallest boy

Notice that superlatives whose stem differs from that of the positive (2.5.4) also take **–a** (masculines in **–e** or **–a**, see 2.3.4f.):

<b>Deras bil var äldst.</b>	Their car was oldest.
<b>den äldsta bilen</b>	the oldest car
<b>Deras son var äldst.</b>	Their son was oldest.
<b>den äldste/äldsta sonen</b>	the eldest son

### 2.5.10.5 mest + present participle

Superlatives formed using **mest** + present participle (2.5.5.1(b)) are uninflected because the present participle is never inflected:

<b>den mest ingående skildringen</b>	the most detailed depiction
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### 2.5.10.6 **mest** + past participle

Superlatives formed from **mest** + past participles (2.5.5) vary as to their inflected form according to the conjugation of the verb from which the participle derives (see also 5.2.14). Notice that the adjective in this construction is always inflected in the definite:

<b>den mest älskade prinsessan</b>	the most beloved princess
<b>det mest berömda dansstället</b>	the most famous dance hall
<b>den mest sjungna visan</b>	the most sung folk song

Masculines take either **-e** or **-a**. See 2.3.4.

<b>den mest berömde/berömda detektiven</b>	the most famous detective
<b>den mest avskydde/avskydda tyrannen</b>	the most detested tyrant

Used predicatively, the superlative with **mest** + past participle, etc. inflects according to number, unlike superlatives in **-ast/-st**:

**Det fallet var mest komplicerat.**  
That case was most complicated.

**De fallen var mest komplicerade.**  
Those cases were most complicated.

### 2.5.10.7 No front article

The superlative is often used in the definite form without the front article. See 2.3.5, 2.3.8.1(e),(f), 2.3.9.2f.

<b>minsta barnet</b>	the smallest child
<b>högsta kortet</b>	the highest card
<b>äldste sonen</b>	the eldest son
<b>yngsta dottern</b>	the youngest daughter
<b>bästa sättet</b>	the best method
<b>senaste modet</b>	the latest fashion
<b>närmaste/närmsta vägen</b>	the shortest route

This is especially frequent with adjectives denoting place. See 2.5.7.

<b>översta hyllan</b>	the top shelf
<b>nedersta trappsteget</b>	the lowest step
<b>yttersta vänstern</b>	the extreme left

In some set phrases the superlative may be used without either the front article or end article. See 2.3.9.

<b>Stig av vid närmaste station!</b>	Get off at the nearest station.
<b>i största hast</b>	in great haste
<b>i bästa fall</b>	at best

Note – The superlative after **som** is generally used when a person or thing is compared with itself under different circumstances. This often corresponds to ‘at its’ in English:

**Trafiken är som värst vid midsommarhelgen.**  
The traffic is at its worst over the Midsummer weekend.

**Då vattnet stod som högst blev vi rädda.**  
When the water was at its deepest, we got scared.

## **2.5.11** *Similarity, dissimilarity and reinforcement*

### **2.5.11.1**

Phrases with **som** are used to link two elements that are similar.

<b>Han är lika intelligent som jag.</b>	He’s as intelligent as me/I (am).
<b>Din mössa är likadan som min.</b>	Your cap is like mine.

Note – Subordinate clauses expressing similarity often begin with **som om** with the past tense:

**Sven låter som om han var/vore full.**  
Sven sounds as if he was/were drunk.

### **2.5.11.2**

The adjective **lik**, **-t**, **-a** and the verb **likna** are also used to express similarity.

<b>Jag är lik min bror.</b>	I am like my brother.
<b>Jag liknar min bror.</b>	I resemble my brother.



### 2.5.11.3

In order to express dissimilarity the particle **än** is used.

**Whisky är starkare än öl.** Whisky is stronger than beer.

### 2.5.11.4

The adjective **olik**, **-t**, **-a** is also used to express dissimilarity.

**Hans dialekt är olik din.** His dialect is unlike yours.  
**Det är olik honom.** It is unlike him.  
**Bröderna är olika varandra.** The brothers are not alike.

### 2.5.11.5

The words **ännu**, **mycket**, **ändå**, **allt** may sometimes be used to reinforce the comparative

**De har en ännu bättre bil än vi (har).**  
They have an even better car than us.

### 2.5.11.6

The word **allra** may be used to reinforce the superlative. See 6.2.7.2.

**den allra vackraste kvinnan** the most beautiful woman  
**den allra första blomman** the very first flower

### 2.5.11.7 'The more..., the more...'

Expressions with 'the more..., the more...' are rendered in Swedish by the bracketing expression **ju** + comparative, **desto** + comparative (or alternatively **ju ... ju ...** or **ju ... dess ...**) Notice the inverted word order (10.3.2f.) in the second clause.

**Ju mer hon äter, desto mer vill hon ha.**  
The more she eats, the more she wants.

**Ju fullare han blir, desto pratsammare blir han.**  
The more drunk he gets, the more talkative he becomes.

### **2.5.12** *The absolute comparative*

When the second part of the comparison is not stated in Swedish, the element of comparison may disappear in part or in whole. This is known as the absolute comparative. English has no absolute comparative, and the Swedish construction is often translated as ‘rather X’, ‘quite Y’.

*Relative comparative*

**Penningsumman han vann var större än väntat.**

The sum of money he won was larger than expected.

*Absolute comparative*

**Han har vunnit en större penningssumma.**

He has won a fairly large sum of money.

Other examples of the absolute comparative:

**Det har inte blivit någon större temperaturförändring.**

There has been no great change in temperature.

**De åkte in i ett mindre samhälle.**

They came into a fairly small community.

**Det kom en grupp högre tjänstemän.**

A group of senior officials arrived.

**Han har ådragit sig en lättare hjärnskakning.**

He has suffered a mild concussion.

**De tog sig en längre promenad.**

They went for quite a long walk.

Note also:

**en kortare tid**

rather a short time

**mindre vatten (= små sjöar)**

smallish lakes

**smärre skador**

minor injuries

**en äldre herre**

an elderly gentleman

### **2.5.13** *The absolute superlative*

The absolute superlative is used when the speaker/writer wishes to show that something possesses a quality to a very high degree, without directly comparing it to anything else. The use of the superlative in this way is an exaggeration. Notice that the absolute superlative rarely occurs with the end article and may not have a front article.

*Relative superlative*

**Ultra var den största hemligheten under andra världsskriget.**  
Ultra was the greatest secret during the Second World War.

*Absolute superlative*

**De fick träffas i (allra) största hemlighet.**  
They had to meet in the greatest secrecy.

Note – Other examples of the absolute superlative in set phrases, some of which have no front article. See 2.3.9.3.

<b>den (allra) största försiktighet</b>	the greatest care
<b>den djupaste tystnad</b>	the deepest silence
<b>i högsta grad</b>	to a very high degree
<b>i värsta fall</b>	in the worst case
<b>inte den minsta aning</b>	not the slightest inkling
<b>med varmaste hälsningar</b>	kindest regards
<b>med största nöje</b>	with great pleasure
<b>med den minsta möjliga tidsspillan</b>	with the least possible delay

**2.5.14** *Adjectives – use of the positive, comparative and superlative: summary*

<b>Attributive</b>	<b>Predicative</b>
<b>A POSITIVE</b>	
<b>Indefinite (2.1.2–2.1.5, 2.2.1–2.2.9)</b>	
en rolig man en rolig film en skadad arm ett roligt program roliga filmer roliga program	<b>Mannen är rolig. Filmen är rolig. Armen är skadad. Programmet är roligt. Filmerna är roliga. Programmen är roliga.</b>
<b>Definite (2.3.1–2.3.10)</b>	
den rolige mannen den roliga filmen den skadade armen det roliga programmet de roliga filmerna de roliga programmen de skadade armarna	

## **B COMPARATIVE**

### **Indefinite (2.5.1–2.5.6, 2.5.9)**

en roligare man  
en roligare film  
ett roligare program  
ett större fel  
en mer ingående skildring  
ett mer komplicerat fall  
roligare filmer  
roligare program  
större fel  
mer ingående skildringar  
mer komplicerade fall

Mannen är roligare.  
Filmen är roligare.  
Programmet är roligare.  
Felet är större.  
Skildringen är mer ingående.  
Fallet är mer komplicerat.  
Filmerna är roligare.  
Programmen är roligare.  
Felen är större.  
Skildringarna är mer ingående.  
Fallen är mer komplicerade.

### **Definite (2.5.9)**

den roligare mannen  
den roligare filmen  
det roligare programmet  
det större felet  
den mer ingående skildringen  
det mer komplicerade fallet  
de roligare filmerna  
de roligare programmen  
de mer ingående skildringarna  
de mer komplicerade fallen

## **C SUPERLATIVE**

### **Indefinite (2.5.10)**

Mannen är roligast.  
Filmen är roligast.  
Armen är mest skadad.  
Skildringen är mest ingående.  
Programmet är roligast.  
Filmerna är roligast.  
Programmen är roligast.

### **Definite (2.5.10)**

den roligaste mannen  
den roligaste filmen  
den mest skadade armen  
den mest ingående skildringen  
det roligaste programmet  
de roligaste filmerna  
de roligaste programmen

## Chapter 3

# Pronouns

### 3.1 Personal pronouns

#### 3.1.1 Personal, reflexive and possessive pronouns – form, table

The table that follows on this and the following page does not include neuter and plural forms of the possessive pronouns. See 3.6.1ff. Subject and object pronouns are dealt with in 3.3.1ff., reflexive pronouns in 3.4.1ff.

	Subject	Object	Possessive	Reflexive
Singular				
1 person	<b>jag</b> I	<b>mig</b> me	<b>min</b> my, mine	<b>mig</b> myself
2 person familiar	<b>du</b> you	<b>dig</b> you	<b>din</b> your, yours	<b>dig</b> yourself
2 person formal	<b>ni</b> you	<b>er</b> you	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>er</b> yourself
3 person masculine	<b>han</b> he	<b>honom</b> him	<b>hans/sin</b> his	<b>sig</b> himself
3 person feminine	<b>hon</b> she	<b>henne</b> her	<b>hennes/sin</b> her, hers	<b>sig</b> herself
3 person non-neuter	<b>den</b> it	<b>den</b> it	<b>dess/sin</b> its	<b>sig</b> itself
3 person neuter	<b>det</b> it	<b>det</b> it	<b>dess/sin</b> its	<b>sig</b> itself

Plural				
1 person	<b>vi</b> we	<b>oss</b> us	<b>vår</b> our, ours	<b>oss</b> ourselves
2 person familiar	<b>ni</b> you	<b>er</b> you	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>er</b> yourselves
2 person formal	<b>ni</b> you	<b>er</b> you	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>er</b> yourselves
3 person masc., fem. n.-n., n.	<b>de</b> they	<b>dem</b> them	<b>deras/sin</b> their, theirs	<b>sig</b> themselves

Observe the following notes on the form, spelling and pronunciation of personal pronouns:

Note 1 – **Jag** is almost invariably pronounced /ja/, i.e. without the final **-g**.

Note 2 – Although **mig**, **dig**, **sig** are the most commonly encountered forms in written Swedish, they are usually pronounced /mej/, /dej/, /sej/. The written forms **mej**, **dej**, **sej** were widely used in personal correspondence and contemporary fiction in the 1960s and 1970s, but are rarely seen today.

Note 3 – In spoken Swedish and informal written Swedish the singular forms of the possessive pronouns for the first and second persons plural (**vår/vårt**, **er/ert**) have colloquial forms (**våran/vårat**, **eran/erat**), which exist alongside the standard written forms. See 3.6.1.4.

Note 4 – In most forms of spoken Swedish the third person plural pronouns **de** and **dem** are both pronounced /dom/ (with a short vowel), except in liturgical and formal language and in South Sweden and Finland, where **de** is often pronounced as if written /di/ (with a long vowel). For a number of years the written form **dom** has been generally accepted as an alternative to **dem** (object) in personal correspondence and in dialogue in contemporary fiction, although standard Swedish retains **dem**. This practice has not extended to writing **dom** to reflect the standard pronunciation of the front article before a plural adjective as in **de rika** /dom rika/, ‘the rich’.

Note 5 – Formerly the second person pronouns were written with capital initial letters in correspondence. This practice is now less common in personal correspondence, but capital letters are still occasionally used in business correspondence. See 12.3.1.1(c) Note.

Note 6 – The antiquated second person plural pronoun **I** (subject), **eder** (object) corresponds roughly to English ‘ye’ and is now used only in some

dialects and occasionally in liturgical language. The possessive pronoun **I** is always capitalised and combined with a special form of the verb ending in **-n** (5.1.17). The possessive forms (**eder**, **edert**, **edra**) may still be encountered in very formal language. See 3.3.3.1, Note 2.

Note 7 – In very informal colloquial Swedish the **d-** of **du** and **dig** (pronounced /dej/) is frequently omitted after a verb form that ends in **-r**:

**Ser'u nåt? (= Ser du något?)** Can you see anything?

Note 8 – In some dialects **han**, **hon**, **den** are pronounced /en/, or /n/ after a vowel. **Det** is pronounced /et/ (/at/ in southern Swedish dialects), or /t/ after a vowel. **Honom** is pronounced /en/, or /n/ after a vowel, or sometimes /han/ like the subject form. **Henne** is pronounced /na/.

<b>Jag har aldrig sett 'en/han.</b>	I've never seen 'im.
<b>Jag gav 'na pengarna</b>	I gave 'er the money.
<b>Ta't lugnt, grabben!</b>	Take it easy, mate!

## 3.2 Function and reference of personal pronouns

### 3.2.1 Function

As in English, Swedish personal pronouns replace nouns or noun phrases.

**Killen är sjuk. Hjälp honom!** The boy is ill. Help him!

**Vi köpte två stora härligt röda äpplen, men de var inte mogna.**  
We bought two big, beautifully red apples, but they weren't ripe.

The neuter pronoun **det** can also replace infinitives and clauses. See 3.3.5.5.

### 3.2.2 Reference

As in English, Swedish personal pronouns that replace nouns or noun phrases usually refer back to a previously mentioned noun (*anaphora*).

**Barnen tittar alltid på tv när de kommer hem.**  
The children always watch TV when they come home.

In contrast to English, Swedish almost invariably states the noun before replacing it with a pronoun. Swedish personal pronouns rarely refer to a noun that follows (*cataphora*), except occasionally in spoken language, as in the second example below.

**När barnen kommer hem, brukar de titta på tv innan de äter.**

When *they* come home, *the children* usually watch TV before they eat.

**Han är jätteduktig på att spela piano, den lille killen.**

He's really good at playing the piano, *that little lad*.

### 3.3 Subject and object pronouns

#### 3.3.1 The first person – jag, vi

##### 3.3.1.1 Singular

**Jag** (subject) and **mig** (direct and indirect object and prepositional complement) refer to the speaker in the singular:

**Jag heter Jan.**

My name is Jan.

**Kalla mig inte för Janne!**

Don't call me Janne!

**De skrev ett brev till mig.**

They wrote a letter to me.

##### 3.3.1.2 Plural

**Vi** (subject) and **oss** (direct and indirect object and prepositional complement) refer to the speaker in the plural:

**Vi är tvillingar.**

We are twins.

**Kan du skilja mellan oss?**

Can you tell us apart?

**Du gav oss en blomma.**

You gave us a flower.

Note 1 – **Vi** may also be used as *pluralis majestatis*, the 'royal we':

**Vi, Carl XVI Gustav, med Guds nåde ...**

We, Carl XVI Gustav, by the grace of God...

Note 2 – **Vi** is also occasionally used as a form of address. See 3.3.3.3(b).

**Och hur mår vi i dag?**

And how are we feeling today?



### 3.3.2 The second person – *du, ni*

There are two pairs of second person singular pronouns in Swedish: **du** (subject), **dig** (object) and **ni** (subject), **er** (object). Both render English ‘you’. For differences in usage, see 3.3.2.1 and 3.3.2.2 below. The second person plural pronoun is **ni** (subject), **er** (object). See 3.3.2.3 below.

#### 3.3.2.1 Singular – standard mode

**Du, dig** is the standard, familiar form used to address people or animals. Following the erosion of old class barriers in Sweden, **du** has become almost universally accepted as a form of address in Sweden. But see 3.3.2.2 below.

**Är det du, mamma?** Is that you, Mum?  
**Jag vill gärna träffa dig igen.** I would like to meet you again.

The use of **du** instead of **man** (3.9.1) is becoming increasingly frequent.

**När du dyker blir världen som förvandlad.**  
When you go diving the world seems transformed.

Note 1 – When used in certain emotive expressions, English ‘you’ is sometimes rendered by the possessive adjective in Swedish. See 3.6.6.

**Din jäkla idiot!** You damned idiot!

Note 2 – The verbs **dua/nia** mean ‘to refer to someone as **du/ni**’, best approximated in English by being/not being on first-name terms.

**Goda vänner duar varandra.** Good friends are on first-name terms.

Note 3 – Some Swedish idiomatic expressions with **du/ni**:

**Kära du, har du inte hört?** My dear fellow/girl, haven’t you heard?  
**Du milde, vad här ser ut!** My word, what a mess!  
**Snälla du, hjälp mig!** Please, help me!

#### 3.3.2.2 Singular – formal mode

When used in the singular **ni** (subject) and **er** (object) provide a formal mode of address not unlike German *Sie* and French *vous*. They are used:

(a) When speaking to a stranger (especially an older person) whose name is not known. Compare 3.3.3.1.

**Ni har slagit fel nummer.**      You've dialled the wrong number.

- (b) In formal business correspondence to a firm or an individual with whom the writer is not on first-name terms. Very occasionally an initial capital letter is used for **Ni/Er** in this context. See also 12.3.1.1(c).

**Som kund är ni välkommen att besöka vår fabrik.**

As a customer you are welcome to visit our factory.

- (c) However, the use of **ni/er** is no longer perceived positively in many sectors of society today. **Ni/er** can sound old-fashioned, impersonal and even condescending or patronising. For this reason, many Swedes now use **du/dig** to address strangers. Even companies, organisations and government authorities sometimes address customers, members, etc. individually with **du/dig** rather than collectively with **ni/er**.

**Som företagsmedlem får du tidskriften fyra gånger om året.**

As a corporate member you receive our magazine four times a year.

### 3.3.2.3 Plural

**Ni** (subject) and **er** (direct and indirect object and prepositional complement) may generally be used in the plural wherever English 'you' refers to two or more people.

**Hör av er, alla ni tjejer som vill träna på gym!**

Let's hear from all you girls who want to work out in the gym.

### 3.3.3 *Forms of address in Swedish*

**Du** and **ni** are not the only modes of address in Swedish. There are a number of alternative conventions.

#### 3.3.3.1 Titles

A conspicuously polite, albeit somewhat old-fashioned, mode of address in Swedish is to use a person's name and/or title in a third person construction, as if speaking of the person rather than to the person. When the title alone is used, it appears in the definite form:

**Har fru Ek bokat rum?**

Have you booked a room, Mrs Ek?

**Vill Jan Eriksson komma fram, tack!**

Jan Eriksson, would you please step forward.

**Skulle herrn/damen vilja prova byxorna?**

Would you like to try the trousers, sir/madam?

**Kan doktorn skriva ut ett recept åt mig?**

Can you write a prescription for me, doctor?

**Vill herrarna vara vänliga och gå den här vägen!**

Kindly step this way, gentlemen.

Note 1 – Most Swedish titles (**herr, fru, professor, direktör**, etc.) do not have an initial capital letter unless they start a sentence. See 12.3.1.2(d).

Note 2 – Note the idiomatic third person constructions used to address certain high ranks:

**Har Ers Majestät/Ers Höghet/Ers Nåd varit här förr?**

Has Your Majesty/Your Highness/Your Grace been here previously?

Note 3 – Note the following colloquial uses of ‘titles’ in the definite form. See also 2.3.8.2(h).

**Har du en rök, grabben?**

Have you got a fag, mate? [*lit.* the boy]

**Ska du åka med, tjejen?**

Want a lift, love? [*lit.* the girl]

**3.3.3.2** Impersonal and passive constructions

Uncertainty about appropriate forms of address has led Swedes to use impersonal and passive constructions to avoid the issue. Especially when asking a question, these provide a neutral – but by no means unfriendly or impolite – form of address between people who are not personally acquainted.

**Vad får det lov att vara?**

What would you like? / Can I help you?

**Hur var namnet?**

What is [*lit.* was] your name?

**Önskas socker?**

Would you like sugar?

**Ska det vara ett kex till?**

Would you like another biscuit?

**3.3.3.3** Other pronouns used as terms of address

**Man** and **vi** (and less frequently **han/hon**) are also used as terms of address.

- (a) **Man** (3.9.1) is a familiar term of address (in place of **du**) with a touch of ironical politeness and formality:

**Varför är man alltid så sur?** Why are you always so grumpy?

**Man** is also used in the same way as the English ‘you’ meaning ‘one’:

**Man kan komma dit med tåg.** You can get there by train.

**Man kan aldrig veta.** You never can tell.

- (b) **Vi** (3.3.1.2) is a familiar form of address, almost avuncular and a little patronising in tone, as ‘we’ is when used in this way in English. For this reason it is often used when addressing children. **Vi** may refer to one or more persons.

**Ska vi ta på oss skorna?** Shall we put our shoes on?

Note – **Han, hon** (3.3.4.1) have an old-fashioned, rustic flavour when used as terms of address. In some dialects they remain a polite form of address, whereas in standard Swedish they tend to sound derogatory:

**Vill han veta hur man gör, så ska han få se.**

If you want to know what to do, you can have a look.

### **3.3.4** *The third person*

#### **3.3.4.1** **Han**

**Han** (subject) and **honom** (direct and indirect object and prepositional complement) refer primarily to:

- (a) Male persons:

**Han var en stor man.** He was a great man.

**Jag vet inget om honom.** I know nothing about him.

- (b) Male animals:

**Se på tjuren! Han är enorm.** Look at the bull! He’s gigantic.

Note – **Han** may also refer to so-called ‘higher animals’ (1.2.1.2 Note 2) irrespective of their true gender.

### 3.3.4.2 Hon

**Hon** (subject) and **henne** (object) refer primarily to:

(a) Female persons:

**Min mor är gammal. Hon är sjuk så jag hälsar på henne ofta.**  
My mother is old. She is ill, so I often visit her.

(b) Female animals, and occasionally also nouns ending in **-a** that describe animals (1.2.1.2 Note 3), irrespective of their true gender:

**Kon äter inte. Hon är sjuk.** The cow won't eat. She's ill.

(c) The nouns **människa**, 'human being, humankind', and **klocka** (used when asking or telling the time). See 1.3.1.5f and 4.6.1.1.

**Människan är född fri och överallt är hon i bojar.**  
Man was born free, and everywhere he is in chains.

**– Hur mycket är klockan? – Hon är halv fem.**  
'What time is it?' 'It's half past four.'

Note – In some dialects and poetic language **han/hon** may refer to other nouns with no natural gender (e.g. **sol**, 'the sun'). This usage sounds provincial, quaint, or romantically poetic.

(d) Boats

### 3.3.4.3 Den, det

**Den** serves as both subject and object form, and refers to a previously mentioned singular noun of non-neuter gender which does not describe a person:

**Jag har en bok. Jag har läst den. Den står i bokhyllan.**  
I have a book. I have read it. It is in the bookcase.

**Det** serves as both subject and object, and refers to a previously mentioned singular neuter noun that does not describe a person (but see also 3.3.5ff.).

**Jag har ett hus. Jag köpte det i fjol. Det är stort.**  
I have a house. I bought it last year. It is big.

#### 3.3.4.4 De, dem

**De** (subject) and **dem** (object) refer to one or more previously mentioned plural nouns, or two or more previously mentioned singular nouns, irrespective of gender:

**Jag har flera hus. De är gamla. Jag vill sälja dem.**

I have several houses. They are old. I want to sell them.

**Jag hade ett hus och en bil. De var gamla så jag sålde dem.**

I had a house and a car. They were old, so I sold them.

#### 3.3.4.5 Han, hon and nouns indicating a person but not a gender

- (a) Many Swedish non-neuter nouns indicate a person but not a gender (**gästen**, the guest; **konsumenten**, the consumer; **kusinen**, the cousin; **läsaren**, the reader; **släktingen**, the relative; **ägaren**, the owner; etc.) while a smaller number of neuter nouns refer to people (**barnet**, the child; **statsrådet**, the cabinet minister; **hembiträdet**, the home help; etc.) See also 1.2.1.1 Note 1. Nouns from these two categories are usually referred to by **han** or **hon** depending on context and meaning. See also 2.2.4.3f.

**Patienten har lidit av blodbrist sedan hon fick sitt första barn.**

The patient has suffered from anaemia since she had her first child.

**Gäller försäkringen för mitt barn även om han reser ensam?**

Does the insurance cover my child, even if he travels alone?

- (b) In cases where there is any doubt, or where the noun refers collectively to people of either sex, Swedish has traditionally used either **han** or **hon** individually, or **han eller hon**, **han/hon** or **han respektive hon**:

**Vet konsumenten vilka rättigheter han har?**

Does the consumer know what his rights are?

**Studenten ska skriva om ett ämne som han eller hon väljer.**

The student is to write on a subject of his or her choice.

- (c) In recent years the use of a new invented gender-neutral third person singular pronoun, **hen** (object form **henom**), has been advocated to replace **han** or **hon** in certain circumstances:

**Föraren måste bevisa att hen behärskar trafikreglerna.**

The driver must show that he or she is familiar with the traffic rules.

The Swedish Language Council, *Språkrådet*, does not yet prescribe the use of **hen** in such instances but continues to recommend the impersonal pronoun **den**.

**Den som har parkerat här kan inte ha läst skylten ordentligt.**  
The person who has parked here cannot have read the sign properly.

Note, however, that **den** tends to be perceived as derogatory when used to refer to a person:

**Anna? Äsch, den!**

Anna? Huh, her!

### 3.3.4.6 Ett ungt par – det or de?

Sometimes formal numerical congruence of noun and pronoun sounds affected. A suitable plural form of the pronoun is readily used in spoken Swedish and all but the most formal written language when a singular noun refers to a collective idea, especially when people or animals are involved (for example, **allmänheten**, the public; **befolkningen**, the population; **paret**, the couple; **laget**, the team; **familjen**, the family). See also 2.2.4.1–2.2.4.3.

**Ett ungt par skadades vid en bilolycka. De kom från Malmö.**  
A young couple were injured in a car accident. They came from Malmö.

**Det svenska folket har sig själva att skylla för sina problem.**  
The Swedish people have *themselves* to blame for their problems.

### 3.3.5 Major uses of det

In many instances, **det** refers back to a previously mentioned singular noun of neuter gender (3.3.4.3):

**Jag har ett hus. Det är stort.** I have a house. It is large.

However, as the table below shows, **det** also serves many other functions in Swedish. In these instances **det** does not always correspond to English 'it'.

Function of <b>det</b>	Used with	English equivalent	Refer to
refers to neuter noun	any verb	it	3.3.4.3
complement of <b>vara, bli</b>	<b>vara, bli</b>	it, that	3.3.5.1
complement of <b>vara, bli</b>	<b>vara, bli</b> + noun	it, this, that or any 3rd pers. pron.	3.3.5.1

demonstrative pronoun	demonstrative	that, it, that one	3.7.1 ff.
formal subject, place-holder	<b>vara, bli</b> + adj.	it	3.3.5.3(a), 10.1.3, 10.6.8
formal subject	<b>vara, finnas</b>	there is/are	3.3.5.3(b)
formal subject/place-holder when the real subject of the sentence is 'postponed'	any intransitive verb	0, there is/are + '-ing'	3.3.5.3(c) 10.1.3, 10.6.8
formal subject in passive constructions lacking a real subject	passive verb	there, 0	3.3.5.3(d) 5.5.10, 5.5.12.2
subject in a cleft sentence			3.3.5.4, 10.8.5
refers to infinitive, adverbial clause or sentence to avoid repeating the same	any verb	it, that, 0	3.3.5.5(a)
object function	verbs expressing 'think', 'hope', 'say'	so	3.3.5.5(b)
object function	<b>också</b> to mean 'also'	so	3.3.5.5(c)
refers to a previous question:			3.3.5.6
predicate of <b>vara, bli</b>	<b>vara, bli</b>	0	
object of auxiliary verbs	auxiliary verbs	0	
object of <b>göra, veta, tro</b>	<b>göra, veta, tro</b>	0, so	
refers to noun, adj. or clause:			3.3.5.7
predicate of <b>vara, bli</b>	<b>vara, bli</b>	0, that	
predicate of <b>heta, kallas</b>	<b>heta, kallas</b>	that	
impersonal subject	impersonal verbs	it, there	3.3.5.8, 10.1.3
indeterminate object	set phrases	0	3.3.5.9

### 3.3.5.1 Complement of **vara, bli**

**Det** is used as a complement with the verbs **vara, bli**:

<b>Vad är det?</b>	What is it/What is that?
<b>Vem är det?</b>	Who is it/Who is that?
<b>Är det du, mamma?</b>	Is it you, mum?

When **vara, bli** has a noun phrase or pronoun as a complement, **det** is used regardless of the gender or number of the noun or pronoun:

<b>Vad är det? Det är en hund.</b>	What is it? It's a dog.
<b>Jag har en bil. Det är en Ford.</b>	I have a car. It's a Ford.
<b>Det var härliga tider!</b>	Those were the days!
<b>Vem slog dig? Var det han?</b>	Who hit you? Was it him?

Note – **Hon**, not **det**, is used with **vara** in clock time expressions. See also 3.3.4.2(c), 4.6.1.1.

<b>Vad är klockan? Hon är tre.</b>	What time is it? It's three o'clock.
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### 3.3.5.2 Demonstrative pronoun

**Det** is used as a demonstrative pronoun. See 3.7.1ff.

### 3.3.5.3 Formal subject

**Det** is used as a formal subject, or as a place-holder in existential sentences. See 10.1.3, 10.6.8.

- (a) With the verbs **vara**, **bli** + adjective. The adjective appears in the neuter indefinite form (2.1.2) to agree with the impersonal **det**.

**Det är dumt att fuska.** It's silly to cheat.  
**Det blir svårt att sluta röka.** It will be difficult to stop smoking.

- (b) With the verbs **vara**, **finnas**, **fattas**, **saknas** to render English 'there is', 'there is not', etc.

**Det fanns en kvinna i bilen.** There was a woman in the car.  
**Det fattas en bit.** There's a piece missing.

- (c) As a formal subject (10.1.3) when the real subject is postponed in the sentence (10.6.8). There is not always an English equivalent for **det** used in this way, although it may sometimes be rendered by 'there is/are' + '-ing' form of the verb.

**Det har hänt en olycka.** There's been an accident.  
**Det bor många danskar här.** There are a lot of Danes living here.

- (d) In impersonal passive constructions. See 5.5.12.2.

**Det hörs att du är svensk.** I can hear you're Swedish.

### 3.3.5.4 In cleft sentences

**Det** is used as the subject in cleft sentences (10.8.5), which are much more frequent in Swedish than in English, especially when asking questions:

**Det var han som slog mig!** He was the one who hit me!  
**Är det nötter du inte gillar?** Is it nuts you don't like?

**3.3.5.5** Refers back to infinitive, clause, sentence, etc.

- (a) **Det** is used to refer back to an infinitive, infinitive phrase, adverbial phrase, clause or sentence, to avoid having to repeat it. There is not always an English equivalent for **det** used in this way:

**Att träna är kul men det kan vara farligt.**

Working out is fun, but it can be dangerous.

**Du sa att han bor i USA men det gör han inte.**

You said he lives in USA, but he doesn't.

**– Jag behöver två exemplar redan i dag. – Varför det?**

'I need two copies today.' 'Why?'

**Kaffe med grädde. Det smakar härligt.**

Coffee and cream. That tastes delicious.

- (b) Used in this way as the object of verbs like 'think', 'believe', 'hope', 'say', etc. **det** may usually be rendered in English by 'so':

**– Har han åkt hem? – Det tror jag./Jag hoppas det./Det sa han.**

'Has he gone home?' 'I think so./I hope so./He said so.'

- (c) **Det ... också** and the more colloquial **det ... med** may usually be rendered by 'so' in English, while **det ... heller** is often rendered by 'neither' or 'nor' in negative constructions:

**Han var hungrig. Och det var vi också/med.**

He was hungry. And so were we.

**Hon ljuger inte, och det gör inte jag heller.**

She doesn't tell lies and neither do I.

**3.3.5.6** In answers to questions

**Det** is used as the complement of **vara**, **bli** or the object of **ha** or one of the modal auxiliaries or **bruka**, **göra**, **veta**, when answering a question (or command) formulated with one of these verbs. English usually has no equivalent to **det** in these 'short answers'. **Det** usually starts the clause when used in this way.

**– Är du rädd? – Det är jag kanske.**

'Are you afraid?' 'Maybe I am.'

– **Kunde hon svenska? – Nej, det kunde hon inte.**  
'Did she know Swedish?' 'No, she didn't.'

– **Brukar du bli åksjuk på tåget? – Ja, det brukar jag.**  
'Do you usually feel travel sick on the train?' 'Yes, I do.'

As in English, the verb **göra**, 'do', replaces lexical verbs (i.e. verbs that are neither auxiliaries nor modals) in responses of this kind. Other verbs such as **veta**, 'know', or **tycka/tro**, 'think', are also used according to context.

– **Känner du min fru? – Ja, det gör jag.**  
'Do you know my wife?' 'Yes I do.'

– **Hur mycket tjänar hon? – Det vet jag inte.**  
'How much does she earn?' 'I don't know.'

– **Kommer du hem sent? – Nej, jag tror inte det.**  
'Will you be home late?' 'No, I don't think so.'

**3.3.5.7** Complement of **vara, heta** referring to noun, adjective, clause

**Det** is used as a complement of **vara, bli, heta, kallas** to refer back to a noun, adjective or clause. See also 3.3.5.5. There is usually no equivalent in English when **det** is used in this way with **vara, bli**.

**Hon ser snäll ut och det är hon också.**  
She looks kind and she is, too.

**Han heter Karl men han kallas sällan det.**  
His name is Karl, but he is rarely called that.

**3.3.5.8** Impersonal constructions

**Det** is used, as 'it' in English, with a number of impersonal constructions. See 10.1.3.

**det händer att**, it happens that; **det syns att**, it is obvious that; **det tycks som om**, it seems as if

These include many impersonal verbs that refer to weather conditions:

**det blixtrar**, there's lightning; **det blåser**, it's windy; **det fryser**, it's freezing; **det haglar**, it's hailing; **det mulnar**, it's clouding over; **det regnar**, it's raining; **det snöar**, it's snowing; **det åskar**, it's thundering

Impersonal constructions are more common in Swedish than in English, and are often used where English has a personal subject:

<b>Det var roligt att ...</b>	I'm/We're glad that ...
<b>Det var tråkigt att ...</b>	I'm/We're sorry that ...
<b>Det är bäst att du går.</b>	You'd better go.

### 3.3.5.9 Indeterminate object

**Det** is used as an indeterminate object in certain set expressions in Swedish:

<b>ha det bra/dåligt (ställt)</b>	to be fortunate/badly off
<b>ha det bättre än ...</b>	to be better off than ...
<b>ha det roligt/tråkigt</b>	to have fun/to be bored

### 3.3.6 *Personal pronouns in comparative constructions with än, som*

In Swedish as in English it is common to omit the finite verb after **än** and **som** in comparative constructions. See 10.9.3.2. If the second comparative element consists of a personal pronoun, the object form of the pronoun is often used in spoken and informal written Swedish.

<b>Du är yngre än mig.</b>	You're younger than I/me.
<b>Jag är lika glad som dig.</b>	I'm as happy as you.

If the finite verb is retained, two clauses are formed and the second comparative element, as the subject of the verb, must be in the subject form:

<b>Du är yngre än jag är.</b>	You are younger than I am.
<b>Jag är lika glad som du är.</b>	I am as happy as you are.

In written Swedish and cultivated spoken Swedish, the choice of subject or object form is also determined by the function that the personal pronoun would have if the clause were rendered completely.

Compare the following examples:

**Hon känner inte dig lika bra som jag (känner dig).**

She doesn't know you as well as I do.

**Hon känner inte dig lika bra som (hon känner) mig.**

She doesn't know you as well as (she knows) me.

For the use of **sin**, **sitt**, **sina** in similar constructions, see 3.6.4.7.

## 3.4 Reflexive pronouns

### 3.4.1 The use of reflexive pronouns

See table in 3.1.1 for forms.

There are no special reflexive pronouns for the first and second persons in Swedish. The ordinary object forms of the personal pronoun are used in a reflexive sense for these persons (as they sometimes are in English). Only third person pronouns have a separate reflexive form, namely **sig** (singular and plural). Note that **själv** (**själv**, **själva**) is not a reflexive pronoun, but is used only for emphasis. See 3.5.2.

The reflexive pronouns are never used as the subject of a clause (for expressions such as 'I myself am grateful', see 3.5.2), but they always refer to (i.e. 'reflect') the subject. Reflexive pronouns are used only as the object of a verb or after a preposition.

**Du har skurit dig.**

Subject ←————→ Object

You have cut yourself.

**Jag stängde dörren efter mig.**

Subject ←————→ Prepositional object

I closed the door behind me.

**Hon hade hunden med sig.**

Subject ←————→ Prepositional object

She had the dog with her.

Compare the following, which shows how the existence of a separate third person reflexive form enables Swedish to distinguish between third person correlatives in cases where English can not always do so:

**Han stängde dörren efter sig.**

*Sig* refers to the subject of the clause.

He closed the door behind him.

**Han stängde dörren efter honom.** He closed the door behind him.  
*Honom* refers to another man, who is not the subject of the clause.

**Hon sköt sig.** She shot herself.  
*Sig* refers to the subject of the clause.

**Hon sköt henne.** She shot her.  
*Henne* refers to another woman, who is not the subject of the clause.

Note – A number of verbs used without reflexive pronouns in English are rendered by reflexive verbs in Swedish (5.4.3): **gifta sig**, get married; **koncentrera sig**, concentrate; **känna sig**, feel; **lägga sig**, lie down/go to bed; **skynda sig**, hurry; **sätta sig**, sit down.

### 3.4.2 Some special cases

#### 3.4.2.1 Object and infinitive constructions

After verbs followed by an object and infinitive construction (5.2.1.1(c)) the reflexive pronoun normally refers to the object, and the personal pronoun refers to the subject of the main clause. This is because these constructions are generally regarded as ellipted forms. See also 10.9.2.2.

**Patienten bad sjuksköterskan förbereda henne för operationen.**

Subject ←————→ Object ←————→ Personal pronoun

The patient asked the nurse to prepare her for the operation.

Compare: **Hon bad att sjuksköterskan skulle förbereda henne.**

**Läkaren bad sjuksköterskan förbereda sig för operationen.**

Subject ←————→ Object ←————→ Reflexive pronoun

The doctor asked the nurse to prepare herself for the operation.

Compare: **Han bad att sjuksköterskan skulle förbereda sig.**

**Han hörde dem förbanna honom.** He heard them curse him.

**Jag såg honom resa sig.** I saw him stand up.

**Jag bad barnen hjälpa mig.** I asked the children to help me.

#### 3.4.2.2 Implied subjects

The reflexive pronoun is sometimes used to refer not to the grammatical subject of a finite verb in a clause, but to the implied subject of an infinitive or noun phrase. See also 3.6.4.4(c, d, e).

**Det är viktigt att kunna försvara sig.**  
It is important to be able to defend oneself.

**Hans försök att köpa sig samvetsfrid misslyckades.**  
His attempt to buy himself peace of mind failed.

### 3.4.2.3 Sig in idioms

<b>i och för sig</b>	in/by itself
<b>en typ för sig</b>	a peculiar type, one on his/her own
<b>De/Vi bor var för sig.</b>	They/We each live on our own.

### 3.4.2.4 Indirect reflexive object

Reflexive pronouns are sometimes used in an obliquely reflexive manner as a kind of indirect object. This usage is not without parallel in English, but is more common in Swedish.

<b>Gör dig inga bekymmer!</b>	Don't make problems for yourself!
<b>De har skaffat sig en båt.</b>	They have got themselves a boat.
<b>Han fick sig en omgång.</b>	He got a good hiding.
<b>Jag vet mig ingen råd.</b>	I'm at my wits' end.

### 3.4.3 'Each other, one another' – reciprocal pronouns

**Varandra** (colloquial form: **varann**) is a reciprocal pronoun that denotes a mutual feeling, action, etc. It is usually rendered in English by 'each other', 'one another'. **Varandra** may be used with any plural personal pronoun or plural noun. **Varandras** is the genitive form for both **varandra** and **varann**.

<b>Vi kände inte varandra då.</b>	We didn't know one another then.
<b>Tvillingarna avskyr varandra.</b>	The twins detest each other.
<b>De föll i varandras armar.</b>	They fell into each other's arms.

Note – Some Swedish verbs take on a special reciprocal function by adding an **–s**. See 5.5.3. In such instances **varandra** is redundant and is omitted.

<b>De slåss.</b>	They are fighting one another.
<b>Vi träffades i Lund.</b>	We met each other in Lund.

## 3.5 Emphatic pronouns

### 3.5.1 *Emphatic pronoun in English – personal pronoun in Swedish*

#### 3.5.1.1

Swedish has no special emphatic (disjunctive) form of the pronoun, unlike, for example, French (*moi, toi*, etc.), but uses the personal pronouns for this function. However, while English tends to use the object forms of the pronouns in emphatic positions, Swedish prefers the subject.

'Who said that?' 'Him!'	<b>– Vem sa det? – Han!</b>
'Hey, you!' 'Who, me?'	<b>– Hallå där! – Vem, jag?</b>
She saw that it was only us.	<b>Hon såg att det bara var vi.</b>

#### 3.5.1.2

Nevertheless Swedish does use an object form of the pronoun rather than a subject form in certain instances.

(a) With a preposition:

**– Jag vill åka. – Inte utan mig!** 'I want to go.' 'Not without me!'

(b) In constructions where a following verb or preposition linked with the pronoun makes the pronoun an object in the mind of the speaker:

<b>Är det mig du vill träffa?</b>	Is it me you want to see?
<b>Var det henne vi skällde på?</b>	Was it her we told off?

(c) With expressions using **stackars**:

<b>stackars mig/dig/honom</b>	poor me/you/him
-------------------------------	-----------------

### 3.5.2 *Själv*

#### 3.5.2.1

Swedish **själv** (plural **själva**) corresponds to the emphatic 'myself', 'yourself', etc. There is a neuter singular form **självt**, but the basic form **själv** is often used even when referring to a singular neuter noun or pronoun.



<b>Jag kan göra det själv.</b>	I can do it myself.
<b>Barnet själv(t) sa ingenting.</b>	The child himself said nothing.
<b>Låt barnen själva bestämma.</b>	Let the children decide for themselves.
<b>Hon är godheten själv.</b>	She is kindness itself.

**Själv** is always stressed in spoken Swedish. This is because **själv** is not used in a reflexive sense but merely emphasises the pronoun or noun to which it refers. Swedish uses **själv** in sentences where ‘myself’, etc. can be left out of the English without altering the meaning. (Note – This does not apply in the case of reflexive verbs. See 5.4.3.)

Compare:

<b>Jag skar brödet själv.</b>	I cut the bread myself. [emphatic]
<b>Jag skar mig.</b>	I cut myself. [reflexive]

### 3.5.2.2

For extra emphasis, **själv** sometimes precedes a pronoun or noun to which it refers. Used thus **själv** (definite and plural form; **själva**) begins the sentence or clause and is followed by the inverted verb and subject. Used before a noun **själva** (invariable) immediately precedes the noun, which appears in its definite form, if it has one. For further emphasis colloquial Swedish sometimes uses **självaste** (invariable) and the noun in the definite form.

<b>Själv vågar jag inte säga något.</b>	Myself, I daren’t say anything.
<b>Själva tanken är skrämmande.</b>	The very thought of it is terrifying.
<b>Vi bor i själva London.</b>	We live in London itself.
<b>Självaste kungen är på besök.</b>	The (very) king himself is visiting.

### 3.5.2.3

‘Myself’, etc. may be reflexive and emphatic at the same time. In Swedish this is rendered by using the reflexive pronoun + **själv**, **–t**, **–a**.

<b>Han hjälper bara sig själv.</b>	He helps only himself.
<b>Det säger sig själv(t).</b>	It speaks for itself.
<b>Han går och pratar för sig själv.</b>	He is talking to himself.

### 3.5.2.4

**Själv** is used in a number of idiomatic expressions:

<b>i själva verket</b>	in actual fact
------------------------	----------------

**det är självaste den att...**  
**Han är inte sig själv i dag.**  
**Tack själv.**

it's a devil of a nuisance that...  
He is not himself today.  
Thank you, too!

[Stressed 'you' in English, when someone has already thanked you for something.]

### 3.5.2.5

Today **själv** is also increasingly used to signify 'alone', especially when being on one's own is a voluntary state of affairs. Compare **ensam**, which means both 'alone' and 'lonely'.

**Jag gillar att vara själv hemma.** I like being on my own at home.

## 3.6 Possessive adjectives and pronouns

### 3.6.1 Possessive adjectives and pronouns

Swedish possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns have the same form. 'My' and 'mine' are both translated by **min** (**mitt**, **mina**), 'your' and 'yours' by **din** (**ditt**, **dina**), etc. In the following section the expression 'possessive pronoun' is used as a common term to include both types of word.

Most possessive pronouns agree in gender and number with the noun to which they refer (see 3.6.2.1), but the third person forms **hans**, **hennes**, **dess** and **deras** are indeclinable. Possessive pronouns have no definite form (see 3.6.2.4).

In attributive use possessive pronouns precede the noun in Swedish, except rarely in antiquated forms and dialectal or lexicalised usage, such as **Fader vår**, 'Our Father', in some older versions of the Lord's Prayer.

Form	Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural
Singular			
1 person	<b>min</b> my, mine	<b>mitt</b>	<b>mina</b>
2 person familiar	<b>din</b> your, yours	<b>ditt</b>	<b>dina</b>

2 person formal	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>ert</b>	<b>era</b>
3 person masculine	<b>hans/sin</b> his	<b>hans/sitt</b>	<b>hans/sina</b>
3 person feminine	<b>hennes/sin</b> her, hers	<b>hennes/sitt</b>	<b>hennes/sina</b>
3 person non-n, n.	<b>dess/sin</b> its	<b>dess/sitt</b>	<b>dess/sina</b>
Plural			
1 person	<b>vår</b> our, ours	<b>vårt</b>	<b>våra</b>
2 person familiar	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>ert</b>	<b>era</b>
2 person formal	<b>er</b> your, yours	<b>ert</b>	<b>era</b>
3 person all genders	<b>deras/sin</b> their, theirs	<b>deras/sitt</b>	<b>deras/sina</b>

### 3.6.1.1 **Din, ditt, dina**

**Din** (**ditt**, **dina**) is the possessive pronoun corresponding to the familiar second person singular pronoun **du**. **Er** (**ert**, **era**) is the possessive pronoun corresponding to the formal second person singular pronoun **ni**. See 3.3.2ff.

### 3.6.1.2 **Er, ert, era**

The formal second person possessive pronoun **er** (**ert**, **era**) has an alternative form **Eder** (**Edert**, **Edra**), almost invariably written with a capital initial letter. This form is now antiquated and encountered only in liturgical and very formal language. It is also the possessive pronoun used in conjunction with the antiquated second person pronoun **I**. See 3.1.1 Note 6.

### 3.6.1.3 **Sin, sitt, sina**

The possessive pronoun **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) is reflexive and used only to refer to a third person subject of the clause in which it occurs. See 3.6.4ff.

#### 3.6.1.4 Colloquial forms: **våran, eran**

In spoken Swedish the possessive pronouns **vår/vårt** and **er/ert** have colloquial singular forms which exist alongside the standard written forms.

**Det är våran/eran skola.**      It's our/your school.  
**Det är erat/vårat hus.**      It's your/our house.

#### 3.6.2 *The use of possessive pronouns*

##### 3.6.2.1

The choice of the possessive pronoun is determined by the pronoun or noun representing the possessor. The form (where more than one exists) is determined by the gender and/or number of the noun representing the possession:

<b>Jag har en bil.</b> I have a car.	<b>Min bil är röd.</b> My car is red.	<b>Bilen är min.</b> The car is mine.
<b>Vi bor i ett hus.</b> We live in a house.	<b>Vårt hus är stort.</b> Our house is big.	<b>Huset är vårt.</b> The house is ours.
<b>Du har två katter.</b> You have two cats.	<b>Dina katter är gamla.</b> Your cats are old.	<b>Katterna är dina.</b> The cats are yours.

##### 3.6.2.2

On many occasions Swedish has the definite article where English uses a possessive pronoun. See 3.6.8, 1.11.7.

##### 3.6.2.3

Adjectives preceded by a possessive pronoun take the definite form (2.3.7.2).

<b>min röda bil</b>	my red car
<b>ditt gamla hus</b>	your old house

### 3.6.2.4

Possessive pronouns are used only in the indefinite form (2.2.1), even with words that normally require a definite form of the adjective/noun (2.3.5ff):

<b>av hela mitt hjärta</b>	with all my heart
<b>detta ditt förbiseende</b>	this oversight of yours

Note 1 – The possessive pronouns have no genitive form:

**Det är min mors pengar, inte din mors.**  
It's my mother's money, not your mother's.

For English expressions such as 'a friend of mine', see 3.6.7.

Note 2 – In their plural and neuter singular forms Swedish possessive pronouns have been lexicalised in a range of idiomatic usages:

<b>jag och de mina</b>	my family and I
<b>Hälsa de dina!</b>	Give my regards to your family.
<b>Allt mitt är ditt.</b>	All that I have is yours.
<b>Han har gjort sitt.</b>	He has done his bit.
<b>Jag sköter mitt, du sköter ditt.</b>	I'll mind my business, you mind yours.

Note 3 – The phrases 'Yours sincerely', 'Yours faithfully', etc. in English letters are usually rendered in Swedish by **Med vänlig(a) hälsning(ar)**.

### 3.6.3 Dess

#### 3.6.3.1

The possessive pronoun **dess**, 'its', is reserved for formal use:

<b>teatern och dess roll i dag</b>	the theatre and its role today
<b>USA och dess allierade</b>	the USA and its allies

#### 3.6.3.2

In colloquial and informal written Swedish **dess** is usually replaced by:

- (a) Omitting the possessive pronoun and using the definite form of the noun.  
See 3.6.8.

**Hunden har stått här hela dagen och ingen vet var ägaren finns.**

[Not \***dess ägare**]

The dog has been here all day, but no-one knows where its owner is.

(b) A prepositional construction and a pronoun:

**Jag läste det i någon tidning men jag minns inte namnet på den.**

[Not \***dess namn**]

I read it in some newspaper or other, but I can't remember its name.

(c) Repeating the noun in its genitive form:

**Vi såg hunden men hundens husse såg inte oss.**

We saw the dog, but its owner didn't see us.

(d) An idiomatic usage of **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**). See also 3.6.4.8.

**Läraren ställde tillbaka boken på sin plats.**

The teacher put the book back in its place.

Note – **Dess** is also used in a number of adverbial expressions in written and spoken Swedish:

**innan dess**

before then, prior to that

**(in)till dess**

up to that time

**sedan dess**

since then, since that time

**till dess (att)**

until [conjunction: see 8.3.3.5]

**dessbättre/dessvärre**

so much the better/the worse

### **3.6.4** *Hans or sin?*

In contrast to English, Swedish has two distinct ways of rendering the third person possessive pronouns: a non-reflexive form with **hans**, **hennes**, **dess**, **deras** and a reflexive form with **sin**, **sitt**, **sina**. Failure to observe the distinction between how these forms are used will almost inevitably cause confusion.

#### **3.6.4.1** The basic use of **hans**, **hennes**, **dess**, **deras**

**Hans**, etc. is used when *either* of the following conditions is met:

Condition 1      **Hans**, etc. modifies (and forms part of) the subject of the clause.

Condition 2      **Hans**, etc. refers to an individual or possession that is not the subject of the clause in which it is used.

Examples:

**Han och hans barn är mycket duktiga.**

He and his children are very clever.

Condition 1: **hans** modifies and forms part of the subject of the clause.

**Lena är Elin's väninna. Hon kör ofta hennes bil.**

Lena is Elin's friend. She often drives her car.

Condition 2: **hennes** cannot refer to the subject of the clause. In Swedish it is clear that Lena drives Elin's car. In English the 'her' is ambiguous.

**Elin trodde att Lena körde hennes bil.**

Elin thought that Lena was driving her car.

Condition 2: **hennes** cannot refer to the subject of the clause: i.e. Lena. It must refer to Elin, the subject of the main clause, or another woman.

**De tycker att deras lärare är tråkiga.**

They think that their teachers are boring.

Condition 1: **deras** is used to modify the subject of a subordinate clause.

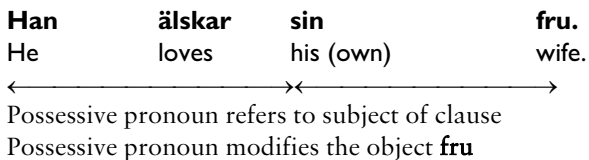
**3.6.4.2** The basic use of **sin**, **sitt**, **sina**

**Sin (sitt, sina)** agrees in gender and/or number with the noun it modifies or replaces. Although there are some idiomatic uses (3.6.4.4), basically **sin (sitt, sina)** is used only when *both* of the following conditions are fulfilled:

- Condition 1 **Sin (sitt, sina)** refers to the third person subject of the clause (i.e. to the 'possessor').
- Condition 2 **Sin (sitt, sina)** modifies a constituent other than the subject of the clause in which it is used. This may be, for example, a direct or indirect object, subject complement or prepositional complement.

As a rule of thumb, **sin (sitt, sina)** can be used if it is possible to insert the word 'own' before the object or complement in English.

Examples:



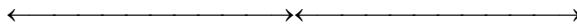
**De**            **gav**            **sitt barn**            **ett ovanligt namn.**  
 They            gave            their (own) child            an unusual name.



Possessive pronoun refers to subject of clause

Possessive pronoun modifies the indirect object **barn**

**Hon**            **är**            **sin egen**            **värsta fiende.**  
 She            is            her own            worst enemy.



Possessive pronoun refers to subject of clause

Possessive pronoun modifies the subject complement **fiende**

**De**            **tittade på sin far.**  
 They            looked at            their father



Possessive pronoun refers to subject of clause

Possessive pronoun modifies the prepositional complement **far**

The above rules also apply when **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) precedes the subject to which it refers, as part of the constituent it modifies:

**I sin bok skriver han om samer.** In his book he writes about Sami.  
**Sina betyg är hon inte nöjd med.** She's not satisfied with her grades.

### 3.6.4.3 The importance of choosing correctly

- (a) As shown above, the use of **hans**, etc. or **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) often changes the meaning of a clause. Consider the following examples:

<b>Eva älskar sin hund.</b>	Eva loves her (own) dog.
<b>Ulla älskar också hennes hund.</b>	Ulla loves her [i.e. Eva's] dog, too.
<b>Mia och Emil bor hos hans far.</b>	Mia and Emil live with his father.
<b>Mia och Emil bor hos sin far.</b>	Mia and Emil live with their father.

- (b) Extra care is required when a sentence consists of more than one clause, since **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) cannot have a correlative outside the clause in which it belongs:

**Lenas man vet att chefen gillar hans arbete.**  
 Lena's husband knows the boss likes his [i.e. Lena's husband's] work.

**Lenas man vet att chefen gillar sitt arbete.**  
 Lena's husband knows the boss likes his (own) job.



- (c) While the examples in (a) and (b) above demonstrate how Swedish avoids the ambiguity of corresponding English constructions, the use of **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) can itself give rise to ambiguity in Swedish, since these forms do not distinguish between masculine and feminine gender. Compare:

**Hon gav honom hans pengar.** She gave him his money.  
**Hon gav honom sina pengar.** She gave him his/hers money.

In the first example above **hans** (masculine) cannot refer to the subject **hon** (feminine), so the meaning is clear. In the second example, strictly speaking, **sina** before the direct object refers back to the subject of the clause, **hon**. However, in such instances there is often uncertainty among native speakers and **sina** is sometimes used instead of **hans** or **hennes**.

#### 3.6.4.4 **Sin, sitt, sina** in constructions with implied subjects

According to the basic rule (3.6.4.2) **sin, sitt, sina** refer to the third person subject of a clause. While this is the case in simple clauses, there may sometimes be complications in more complex clauses, in clauses without a subject and in clauses with an implied subject.

- (a) Object and infinitive constructions


The most notable example of this occurs in object and infinitive constructions (see the corresponding rule for the use of the reflexive pronoun **sig** in 3.4.1ff.). In these constructions **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) usually refers to the subject of the infinitive, whereas **hans**, etc. may be used to refer to the subject of the finite verb.

**Mia såg honom mata sin katt.** Mia saw him feed his cat.

Initially, it may seem that the use of **sin** to refer to **honom** contradicts the basic rule, as it is **Mia** that is the subject of the clause. However, this apparent anomaly is explained by the fact that the construction above is a contracted form of expression that, when expanded as below, shows the true relationship between the possessive pronoun and its correlative:

**Mia såg att han matade sin katt.**

Mia saw that he fed his cat.



Note how the use of **hans**, etc. or **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) signifies a difference in meaning in the following examples:

**Tina bad städerskan flytta hennes grejor.**

←—————→  
Tina asked the cleaner to move her [i.e. Tina's] things.

**Tina bad städerskan flytta sina grejor.**

←—————→  
Tina asked the cleaner to move her [i.e. the cleaner's own] things.

In this way the use of **hans**, etc. or **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) in complement clauses may be said to conform to the basic rule, although many native speakers find such examples ambiguous.

(b) Infinitive constructions without a correlate

Similarly **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) frequently replace **ens** (3.9.1) in infinitive constructions without a correlate:

**Det är inte alltid lätt att hålla sina löften.**

It's not always easy to keep one's promises

Compare: **Det är inte alltid lätt att man håller sina löften.**

(c) Implied subject in clauses with a participle

Where a clause contains a participle in a construction that may be seen as a contracted version of a relative clause + a finite form of the verb, the choice of **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) may also be logically reasoned:

**Bilden visar en man omgiven av sin familj.**

The picture shows a man surrounded by his family.

Compare: **Bilden visar en man som är omgiven av sin familj.**

In the example above **sin** refers to the subject of a relative clause, which in turn represents **en man**, the object of the main clause. The significance of the implied subject is made clear in the following examples:

**Elin öppnade dörren och såg en tjej sittande vid sin dator.**

Elin opened the door and saw a girl sitting at her (own) computer.

**Elin öppnade dörren och såg en tjej sittande vid hennes dator.**

Elin opened the door and saw a girl sitting at her [i.e. Elin's] computer.

**Elin öppnade dörren och såg en tjej vid sin dator.**

Elin opened the door and saw a girl sitting at her [whose?] computer.

- (d) Implied subject with a prepositional complement

Where a clause contains a prepositional phrase that may be seen as a contracted version of a relative clause + a finite form of the verb, the choice of **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) may also be logically reasoned:

**Han såg inte fabriksvakten i sin vaktstuga.**

He didn't see the factory gateman in his hut.

Compare: **Han såg inte fabriksvakten som satt i sin vaktstuga.**

In the example above **sin** refers to the subject of a relative clause, which in turn represents **fabriksvakten**, the object of the main clause.

- (e) Implied subject with a genitive correlative

Consider the following example:

**Evas kärlek till sin man visar hennes sanna känslor.**

Eva's love for her husband shows her true feelings.

Here the use of **sin** appears to be at odds with the basic rule as **sin** refers not to the subject of the clause (**kärlek**), but to **Evas** – a genitive that modifies the subject. But note that **sin** forms part of a prepositional phrase that modifies the subject and that the possessive pronoun attached to the object (**känslor**) is not **sin** but **hennes**. Transforming the sentence demonstrates the true relationship between **sin** and its correlative **Evas**, while showing that **hennes**, which also refers to **Evas**, cannot be replaced by **sina**. Compare the hypothetical expanded form:

**Den kärlek som Eva känner till sin man visar hennes känslor.**



The love that Eva feels for her husband shows her feelings.

**3.6.4.5 Sin, sitt, sina in passive sentences**

The use of **sin**, **sitt**, **sina** in passive sentences conforms to the basic rule. See 3.6.4.2. Note, however, that this often means a change of possessive pronoun from the corresponding active sentence.

Compare:

**Deras hund räddade dem.**      Their dog saved them.  
**De räddades av sin hund.**      They were saved by their dog.

#### 3.6.4.6 **Sin, sitt, sina** in cleft sentences

**Sin (sitt, sina)** is used as a predicate of the verbs **vara** and **bli** in cleft sentences (10.8.5) where **sin (sitt, sina)** would be used in the unexpanded version of the sentence.

Compare the following sentences:

**Det var sin bil (som) hon sålde, inte sina cyklar.**  
It was her car (that) she sold, not her bikes.

**Hon sålde sin bil, inte sina cyklar.**  
She sold her car, not her bikes.

#### 3.6.4.7 **Sin, sitt, sina** in comparative constructions

As part of the comparative element following **än** and sometimes **som** in comparative constructions, **sin, sitt, sina** is used in broad accordance with the basic rule. See 3.6.4.2.

When the finite verb following the second comparative element is omitted, the construction is perceived as a single clause and the normal rules apply.

**Han vet mer än sin son.**      He knows more than his (own) son.  
**De är lika fattiga som sin far.**      They are as poor as their father.

If the finite verb is retained after **än/som**, there are two clauses; in this case **sin, sitt, sina** cannot be used as the correlative is in another clause.

**Han vet mer än hans son vet.** He knows more than his son knows.

In some comparative constructions, the choice between **hans**, etc. and **sin, sitt, sina** can influence the meaning. In the first example below, **hans fru** is perceived as the subject of a separate clause (in which the verb **gör** has been omitted). In the second example **sin fru** is an object in the clause in which **han** is the subject and the correlative for **sin**.

**Han älskar sin båt mer än hans fru. [= mer än hans fru gör]**

He loves his boat more than his wife (does).

**Han älskar sin båt mer än sin fru. [= mer än han älskar sin fru]**

He loves his boat more than (he loves) his wife.

**3.6.4.8 Sin, sitt, sina in some common expressions**

In a number of common idiomatic phrases the normal rules for the use of **sin**, **sitt**, **sina** do not apply:

<b>Det tar oss på sin höjd 5 år.</b>	It will take us 5 years at the most.
<b>Har du ställt boken på sin plats?</b>	Have you put the book in its place?
<b>Det blir snö på sina håll.</b>	There will be snow in places.
<b>Publicera artikeln i sin helhet!</b>	Publish the article in its entirety.

**3.6.4.9 Other third person pronouns and sin, sitt, sina**

The third person pronouns listed below have their own genitive forms, but also ‘borrow’ **sin**, **sitt**, **sina** as reflexive possessives. The distinction is the same as that between **hans** and **sin** in 3.6.4ff.: **sin**, **sitt**, **sina** refer only to the subject of the clause and qualify the object, subject complement or prepositional complement of the clause.

Pronoun	Section	Genitive	Possessive
<b>man</b>	(3.9.1)	<b>ens</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>var och en</b>	(3.9.2.2)	<b>vars och ens</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>alla</b>	(3.9.8)	<b>allas</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>andra</b>	(3.9.9)	<b>andras</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>någon</b>	(3.9.10)	<b>någons</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>ingen</b>	(3.9.12)	<b>ingens</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>båda</b>	(3.9.15)	<b>bådas</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>många</b>	(3.9.17)	<b>mångas</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>vem</b>	(3.10.2)	<b>vems</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>
<b>vilka</b>	(3.10.2)	<b>vilkas</b>	<b>sin, sitt, sina</b>

### 3.6.5 *Var sin, var sitt, var sina*

Swedish expresses regular distribution of an item or items by using the idiomatic **var sin** (**var sitt, var sina**), sometimes written as one word (**varsin**, etc.). **Var** is indeclinable in this usage, while the choice of **sin, sitt, sina** is determined by the gender and number of the following noun or the correlative. **Sin, sitt** or **sina** are also used with first and second person subjects in this context. See also 2.3.7.2 Note.

<b>Barnen fick var sin dator.</b>	The children got a computer each.
<b>De sprang åt var sitt håll.</b>	They ran off in different directions.
<b>Vi satt och läste i var sin bok.</b>	We sat reading a book each.
<b>Köp två, så har ni var sitt.</b>	Buy two, so you have one each.

### 3.6.6 *Possessive pronouns in emotive expressions*

Swedish uses the possessive (not the personal) pronoun in certain emotive expressions addressed directly to a person. This gives rise to a wide range of expressions such as:

**Din dumbom!** You knucklehead!; **Din dumma åsna!** You stupid ass!;  
**Era latmaskar!** You [plural] lazybones! [*lit.* 'lazy worms']; **Din sentimentalä tok!** You old softie!; **Era stackare!** You poor things!

The possessive pronoun is also used in similar expressions when the speaker addresses him/herself:

**Jag, min dumsnut, läste inte det finstilta.**  
I, fool that I am, didn't read the small print.

Note – There is, however, no equivalent third person usage of the possessive pronoun in this sense.

**Han, den dumma åsnan, vägrade hjälpa mig.**  
He, the stupid fool, refused to help me.

### 3.6.7 *'A friend of mine'*

Swedish has no direct equivalent to possessive pronoun constructions of the type: 'a friend of mine', 'a brother of hers', etc. These are expressed in various ways in Swedish.

He's a friend of mine.  
 Aren't you a neighbour of ours?  
 She's a sister of theirs.  
 He has no children of his own.  
 That's no business of yours.

**Han är vän till mig.  
 Är inte du granne till oss?  
 Hon är syster till dem.  
 Han har inga egna barn.  
 Det angår dig/er inte.**

**3.6.8** *Possessive pronoun in English – definite article in Swedish*

English possessive pronouns modifying nouns that denote parts of the body or articles of clothing are usually rendered by the definite article in Swedish where there is no doubt about the ownership.

I've not broken my leg, have I?  
 Take your shoes off!  
 He has lost his memory.

**Jag har väl inte brutit benet?  
 Ta av dig skorna!  
 Han har tappat minnet.**

The same often applies with nouns that denote parts of or qualities of inanimate objects. Compare 3.6.3.

The car lost one of its wheels.  
 Trees shed their leaves in autumn.  
 Rubies don't lose their sparkle.

**Bilen tappade ett av hjulen.  
 Träden faller löven på hösten.  
 Rubiner förlorar inte glansen.**

**3.7** **Demonstrative pronouns**

**3.7.1** *The form of demonstrative pronouns*

The form of the demonstrative pronoun is determined by the gender and number of the correlative.

Non-neuter singular	Neuter singular	Plural (non-neuter and neuter)	Meaning
<b>den här</b>	<b>det här</b>	<b>de här</b>	this (one), these
<b>den där</b>	<b>det där</b>	<b>de där</b>	that (one), those
<b>denna/denne</b>	<b>detta</b>	<b>dessa</b>	this (one), these
<b>den</b>	<b>det</b>	<b>de/dem</b> See 3.7.2.3(b)	that (one), those

Note 1 – The form **denne** is occasionally used when referring to a person of male gender. See 2.3.4, 3.7.2.3 Notes 2 and 3.

Note 2 – The demonstrative pronouns **den, det, de** are identical in form with the front article (2.3.6.1), but are pronounced with greater stress.

### **3.7.2**    *The use of demonstrative pronouns*

#### **3.7.2.1**    ‘This’ and ‘that’

- (a) There are basically two Swedish alternatives corresponding to English ‘this’, ‘these’:
- 1 **Den här, det här, de här** are common in spoken and informal written Swedish.
  - 2 **Denna/denne, detta, dessa** occur mostly in written Swedish.
- (b) There are basically two Swedish alternatives corresponding to English ‘that’, ‘those’:
- 1 **Den där, det där, de där** are common in spoken and informal written Swedish, and usually refer to something tangible or present to which the speaker can point.
  - 2 **Den, det, de, dem** are equally common in both spoken and written Swedish. While these forms often refer to something concrete, they are also the preferred alternative when referring to something of an abstract nature, something to which one cannot point, etc. **Den, det, de, dem** are frequently preferred when the correlative is in a previous clause. See 3.7.2.3.

**Jag föddes i det där huset år 1992. Senare det året flyttade vi.**  
I was born in that house in 1992. Later that year we moved.

**Jag har en macka kvar. Den tänker jag spara för att äta senare.**  
I have one sandwich left. I intend to save that (one) to eat later.

#### **3.7.2.2**    Attributive use

- (a) **Den här, den där**, etc. + noun + end article  
**Den, det, de** + noun + end article

All nouns that can take an end article do so when modified by one of these demonstrative pronouns:



<b>Den dagen kommer aldrig.</b>	That day will never come.
<b>Vill du köpa det där huset?</b>	Do you want to buy that house?
<b>Jag gillar de förslagen.</b>	I like those suggestions.
<b>Hon gifte sig med den där Erik.</b>	She married that Erik (guy).

- (b) **Denna/denne, detta, dessa** + noun (without an end article)

A noun modified by one of these demonstratives generally takes no end article. In colloquial Swedish, however, the end article may sometimes be added. See 2.3.7.3 Note.

<b>Denna värld är inte rättvis.</b>	This world is not just.
<b>Dessa barn vet inte bättre.</b>	These children know no better.
<b>Har du sett denne man?</b>	Have you seen this man?

### 3.7.2.3 Nominal use

- (a) Demonstrative pronouns may be used independently of a noun. They then usually assume the gender and number of the noun that they imply. Note that ‘one’ in ‘this one’, ‘that one’ has no equivalent in Swedish.

**Ta det här äpplet, inte det där.**  
Have this apple, not that one.

**Jag brukar tycka om bär men de här smakar inte alls gott.**  
I usually like berries, but these don’t taste nice at all.

**Detta, det här** may also refer to a previous clause. See also 3.11.3.4.

**Han sa att han hade gift sig. Detta visste jag förut.**  
He said he had got married. I already knew that.

- (b) Note that **de**, ‘those’, has the object form **dem** in nominal use:

**Jag tar de här skorna, inte dem.** I’ll have these shoes, not those.

Note 1 – Where English uses ‘this’, ‘that’, ‘these’, ‘those’ as subject of the verb ‘to be’ with a following noun as predicate, Swedish uses the neuter singular **det här**, **det där**, **detta**, **det** regardless of the gender or number of the following noun. See 3.3.5.1.

<b>Detta var hans sista ord.</b>	These were his last words.
<b>Det här är min fru.</b>	This is my wife.
<b>Vad är det för en bil?</b>	What kind of car is that?

Note 2 – **Denna, denne, detta, dessa** have genitive forms in **-s**, although these are commonly replaced by a possessive pronoun in modern Swedish.

Note 3 – In written Swedish the demonstrative **denna**, etc. (but not **den här**, etc.) is used in much the same way as the English expression ‘the latter’. This can sometimes avoid ambiguities. In such instances **denne** is sometimes used to refer to a male in the singular.

**Han skrev ett tal för presidenten som denne läste upp inför FN:s generalförsamling.**

He wrote a speech for the president that the latter read before the UN General Assembly.

The English ‘the former ... the latter’ is rendered in Swedish by **den förra** (masculine form: **den förre**) ... **den senare**.

Note 4 – Demonstrative pronouns have numerous lexicalised uses:

<b>herr den och den</b>	Mr so and so
<b>på den och den platsen</b>	at such and such a place
<b>vid den och den tiden</b>	at such and such a time
<b>så här, så där</b>	like this, like that
<b>sålunda</b>	in this/that way

**3.7.3** *Samma, densamma*

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Meaning
<b>samma/samme</b>	<b>samma</b>	<b>samma</b>	(the) same
<b>densamma/densamme</b>	<b>detsamma</b>	<b>desamma</b>	the same

**3.7.3.1** **Samma**

**Samma** is only used attributively. There is no article in Swedish before **samma** and no end article on the following noun. **Samme** exists as a formal masculine singular form, but it is rarely encountered.

**Vi ses imorgon. Samma tid, samma plats.**

See you tomorrow. Same time, same place.

**Det är samma gamla lösningar på samma gamla problem.**

They are the same old solutions to the same old problems.

### 3.7.3.2 Densamma

**Densamma**, etc. – written as one word – is used nominally. **Densamma**, etc. is generally reserved for more formal written Swedish. In spoken Swedish it is more common to use **samma** + appropriate noun. **Densamme** is used when referring to a male in the singular. See 2.3.4.1.

**Hon är alltid densamma.** She's always the same.  
**Alla frågar detsamma.** Everyone is asking the same thing.  
**Behoven är alltid desamma.** Our needs are always the same.

Note – **Detsamma** is used in a number of idiomatic expressions:

**(Tack) detsamma!** (Thanks,) the same to you.  
**Det gör mig detsamma.** It's all the same to me.  
**med detsamma** immediately, at once  
**i detsamma** at that very moment

### 3.7.4 Sådan, dylik

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Meaning
<b>sådan</b>	<b>sådant</b>	<b>sådana</b>	such
<b>dylik</b>	<b>dylikt</b>	<b>dylika</b>	similar, such

**Sådan**, **sådant** and **sådana** are often pronounced and occasionally spelled **sån**, **sånt** and **såna** (short vowel sound). **Sådan**, like the much less frequently encountered **dylik** (Note 2 below), has both attributive and nominal uses.

**Sluta med sådana dumheter!** Put a stop to such silly ideas!  
**Köp en slips eller något sådant.** Buy a tie or some such thing.

When used with a singular or non-count noun, **sådan** or **sådant** is usually preceded by the indefinite article. In contrast, English has 'such a/an' only before a count noun.

**Han kände ett så(da)nt hat.** He felt such hatred.  
**Du är en så(da)n bra förebild!** You're such a good example!

**Sådan**, **sådant**, **sådana** also serve the function of English expressions such as 'like this/that', and when followed immediately by **här** or **där** often render 'this/that kind of':

<b>Jag vill gärna ha en sådan dator.</b>	I'd love a computer like that.
<b>Sådana här frågor är svåra.</b>	Questions like these are difficult.
<b>Ett sådant där fel är vanligt.</b>	That kind of error is common.
<b>Sånt händer.</b>	Things like that happen.

Note 1 – **Sådan**, etc. may be translated into English in various other ways:

<b>Jag tar fem sådana.</b>	I'll have five of those/these.
<b>Sånt är livet!</b>	That's life!
<b>Ett sånt liv!</b>	What a commotion! See 3.10.7
<b>Sådan är han!</b>	That's the kind of person he is.

Note 2 – **Dylik** is archaic, but is still used in some formal expressions or when the speaker wishes to be slightly ironic.

**Student söker möblerat rum eller dylikt.**  
Student seeks furnished room or similar.

**Dylika metoder godkänns inte i dag.**  
Methods like those are unacceptable today.

## 3.8 Determinative pronouns

### 3.8.1 *Determinative pronouns*

Swedish uses a determinative pronoun (corresponding to English 'this, that, these, those' or 'the' + noun, depending on context) when information that follows – typically a restrictive relative clause introduced by **som** or **där** – is essential to the meaning of the sentence. Frequently some kind of contrast is stated or implied. If, on the other hand, the information that follows is merely parenthetical – often signalled in English by the fact that it is presented within commas – a demonstrative is used. See 3.7.1.

The determinative pronoun **den** (non-neuter singular), **det** (neuter singular), **de** (plural) is used either with or without a following noun. See 3.8.1.1 and 3.8.1.2. A noun used with a determinative pronoun has no end article.

In spoken Swedish determinatives are usually stressed. See 3.8.1.1 Note 2.

### 3.8.1.1 Attributive use

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural
<b>den</b> + noun without end article <b>+ som ...</b>	<b>det</b> + noun without end article <b>+ som ...</b>	<b>de</b> + noun without end article <b>+ som ...</b>

*Determinative*

**De elever som åkte till Island fick mycket sol, medan den skolklass som åkte till Italien fick regn varje dag.**

Those pupils who went to Iceland got a lot of sun, while the school class that went to Italy had rain every day.

Compare:

*Demonstrative*

**De eleverna fick mycket sol.**

Those pupils got a lot of sun.

*Determinative*

**De bilar som jag gillar bäst tillverkas i Japan.**

The cars I like best are made in Japan.

Compare:

*Demonstrative*

**De bilarna, som tidigare tillverkades i Japan, säljs inte längre.**

Those cars, which were previously made in Japan, are no longer on sale.

A Swedish determinative is often rendered in English by the definite article 'the', rather than the demonstrative 'this/that', especially with a singular noun.

**Island har mycket att erbjuda den turist som gillar äventyr.**

Iceland has a lot to offer the tourist who likes adventure.

Increasing numbers of native speakers use the definite form of the noun rather than the determinative, especially in spoken and informal Swedish. However, the determinative + noun without end article is still often preferred when the correlative is generic or hypothetical:

**Den läkare som tar hand om fler än 40 patienter om dagen kan omöjligen göra ett ordentligt jobb.**

The doctor who attends to more than 40 patients a day cannot possibly do a proper job.

Note 1 – **Som** as an object or prepositional object is frequently omitted after determinatives. See also 3.11.2.

**Har du sett den film jag pratade om?**

Have you seen the film I spoke about?

Note 2 – In spoken Swedish the determinative is almost invariably stressed, unless followed by an adjective, in which case the adjective is stressed:

**'Den bok hon läser heter Utvandrarerna.**

The book she's reading is *The Emigrants*.

**Den 'enda bok hon har läst är Utvandrarerna.**

The only book she's read is *The Emigrants*.

### 3.8.1.2 Nominal use

Subj	Obj	Gen	Subj	Obj	Gen	Subj	Obj	Gen
<b>den</b>	<b>den</b>	<b>dens</b>	<b>det</b>	<b>det</b>	<b>(dess)</b>	<b>de</b>	<b>dem</b>	<b>deras</b>

The determinative pronoun used independently corresponds in all but its genitive forms (which are now rarely used in Swedish and missing in English) with the third person non-neuter and neuter pronouns. See 3.1.1. In cases where Swedish uses a determinative pronoun in this way, English may have 'this/that', 'these/those', 'the one(s)', 'he/him', 'she/her', 'anyone' or a noun (e.g. 'the man who', 'the person who', etc.).

**De här husen är mycket bättre än de som har rivits.**

These houses are much better than the ones that have been pulled down.

**Det är dens uppgift som går sist att släcka ljuset.**

It's the job of the person who leaves last to switch off the light.

**Island har mycket att erbjuda dem som gillar äventyr.**

Iceland has a lot to offer those who like/anyone who likes adventure.

Note 1 – In nominal use the determinative **de som** is now widely accepted as an object form in place of **dem som**.

**Staten straffar de som bryter mot lagen.**

The state punishes those who break the law.

Note 2 – After a preposition both the subject and object form of the plural determinative are found. This depends on the role the speaker allocates to the determinative. Does the preposition govern the determinative (object form only: example 1) or is the determinative regarded as an integral part of the following relative clause (as subject: example 2; or object: example 3)?

- 1 **Av dem som sökte läkarhjälp blev bara fem allvarligt sjuka.**  
Of those who sought medical help only five became seriously ill.
- 2 **Av de som sökte läkarhjälp blev bara fem allvarigt sjuka.**  
Of those who sought medical help only five became seriously ill.
- 3 **Av dem som läkaren hjälpte blev bara fem allvarligt sjuka.**  
Of those whom the doctor helped only five became seriously ill.

### 3.9 Indefinite pronouns

#### 3.9.1 *Man*

Subject	Object	Possessive	Reflexive possessive	Reflexive
<b>man</b>	<b>en</b>	<b>ens</b>	<b>sin</b> (3.9.1.2)	<b>sig</b> (3.4.1)

#### 3.9.1.1

**Man** (object form **en**; reflexive form **sig**) is a third person singular pronoun used to refer generally to human beings. However, **man** is far more common in Swedish than its most obvious equivalent, ‘one’, is in English. It is encountered in both written and spoken Swedish in many instances where English uses ‘you’, ‘we’, ‘they’, ‘people’, etc.

**Man bör inte röka om man är gravid.**

You shouldn't smoke if you are pregnant.

**Vem hjälper en om man blir sjuk?** Who helps you if you become ill?  
**Man använder ätpinnar i Kina.** People use chopsticks in China.

Note – In many instances where previously **man**, **en** would have been used, there is a tendency today – even in business and official communication – to prefer **du**, **dig**. See 3.3.2.2ff.

**Det är viktigt att du alltid har ditt pass med dig på flygplatsen.**  
It's important to always have your passport with you at the airport.

### 3.9.1.2

**Man** has two alternative possessives, **ens** and **sin** (**sitt**, **sina**), both of which correspond to English 'one's'. However, these forms are not interchangeable.

- (a) **Ens** modifies a noun, but is never used to refer to **man** as the subject of the clause.

**Det är jätteroligt när ens barn lyckas i skolan.**  
It's wonderful when one's/your children succeed at school.

- (b) **Sin** (**sitt**, **sina**) refers to **man** when **man** is the subject of the clause. See 3.6.4ff.

**Man måste göra sin plikt.** One must do one's duty.

### 3.9.1.3

**Man** is sometimes used in colloquial Swedish as a polite or mildly ironical substitute for **jag**:

**Får man vara med?** May I join you?  
**Man är väl bara människa!** I'm only human.

Note – **En** used as a subject instead of **man/jag** is now used only in dialect or in jest:

**En skulle kunna tro att ...** One might think that...



### 3.9.1.4

Although **man** is formally singular, it often has plural associations. For this reason, colloquial and informal written Swedish has many examples of plural predicates/correlates with **man**. See also 2.2.4.1.

**Enkla rätter att laga när man är många.**

Easy meals to prepare when there are a lot of people.

**Man var tvungna att fly från stormen.**

People were forced to escape the storm.

**Man ser inte lika mycket av varandra i dag.**

People don't see as much of one another today.

### 3.9.1.5

**Man** is also used as a term of address in Swedish. See 3.3.3.3.

### 3.9.2 *Varje, var, varenda, etc. – table of forms and use*

Form			Use	
Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Attributive	Pronominal
<b>varje</b>	<b>varje</b>	–	yes	after preposition
<b>var</b>	<b>vart</b>	–	yes	yes
<b>var och en</b>	<b>vart och ett</b>	–	–	+ <b>av</b> + noun/pronoun
<b>varenda</b>	<b>vartenda</b>	–	yes	rare
<b>varenda en</b>	<b>vartenda ett</b>	–	–	+ <b>av</b> + noun/pronoun
<b>varannan</b>	<b>vartannat</b>	–	yes	yes
–	–	<b>varandra</b>	–	yes

#### 3.9.2.1 **Varje, var**

**Varje** (indeclinable) and **var/vart** correspond to English ‘every’, ‘each’. These two forms differ in usage.

(a) Attributive use

**Varje** is more common before a noun, especially in spoken Swedish:

**Jag brukar gå dit varje dag.** I usually go there every day.  
**Varje språk har sin historia.** Every language has its history.

**Var/vart** is preferred before an ordinal number:

**Val äger rum vart fjärde år.** Elections take place every four years.  
[*lit.* 'every fourth year']

Note – A special form, **varannan**, **vartannat**, is used to render English 'every other/every second/every two'. See 3.9.3.

(b) Nominal use

Used without a following noun **var** usually signifies 'each' in the sense of 'per person'. See also **var sin** 3.6.5. For 'each' in prices, see 3.9.6.

**Tjejerna fick ett äpple var.** The girls got an apple each.  
**Vi betalade femtio kronor var.** We paid fifty kronor each.

In nominal use **varje** occurs only after a preposition:

**Fem påsar med två ägg i varje.** Five bags with two eggs in each.  
**lite(t) av varje** a little bit of everything

Note – The expressions **var för sig**, **vart för sig** correspond to English expressions such as 'separately', 'individually'.

**De bor var för sig.** They each live on their own.

**3.9.2.2** **Var och en, varenda, etc.**

**Var och en** and **varenda** and their neuter forms **vart och ett** and **vartenda** are more emphatic than **var**. They correspond to English 'each one/every one' and 'each and every/every single', etc.

(a) **Var och en** is only used nominally, but may frequently be followed by **av** + a pronoun or a plural noun with the end article.

**Var och en betalade för sig.** Each person paid for himself.  
**Ge var och en av dem ett kex!** Give each one of them a biscuit.  
**Vart och ett av barnen mår bra.** Every one of the children is well.

**Varenda** is followed by a noun without an end article:

**Det finns fel på varenda sida.** There are errors on every single page.  
**Vartenda hus ska målas.** Each and every house is to be painted.

Note 1 – ‘Every single one’ is rendered by **varenda en, vartenda ett**.

**Han hade ärvt många tavlor men sålde varenda en.**

He had inherited many paintings, but sold every single one.

Note 2 – **Var och en**, but not **vart och ett**, has a genitive form **vars och ens**.

**Det är vars och ens plikt att...** It is everyone’s duty to...

**Det är vars och ens ensak.** That’s every one’s own private affair.

Note 3 – Formerly **envar, ettvart** had the same range of usage as **var och en, vart och ett**. Today it is little used, apart from in **alla och envar**, ‘every man jack’, and generally refers only to people.

**Envar svarade för sig.** Everyone answered for himself.

### 3.9.3 *Varannan*

**Varannan** (non-neuter) and **vartannat** (neuter) are used with the singular indefinite form of the noun and correspond to English ‘every other’, ‘every second’, ‘every two’. For forms such as ‘every third’, etc. see 3.9.2.1(a).

**Hon kom varannan dag.** She came every other day.

**Vartannat hus var rött.** Every other house was red.

Note – **Vartannat** (indeclinable) is used idiomatically to indicate a haphazard order.

**Allting låg om vartannat.** Everything was higgledy-piggledy.

### 3.9.4 *Varandra*

**Varandra** is the plural form of **varannan/vartannat**, but is, however, limited in meaning to ‘one another’, ‘each other’ and is only used nominally.

**De älskar varandra.** They love each other.

**Alla blev trötta på varandra.** Everyone grew tired of one another.

**Varandra** has a genitive form **varandras**:

**Vi läser varandras bloggar.** We read each other’s blogs.

See also reciprocal verbs, 5.5.3.



**3.9.6** *Prices: ‘50 euros each’*

Swedish **styck** or **stycket** is often used where English has ‘each’ in the sense ‘apiece’.

**Slipsar för 99 kronor styck(et)**      Ties for 99 kronor each  
**Priset per styck är...**              The price per unit (each) is...  
**biljetter à 50 euro styck**              tickets at 50 euros each

**3.9.7** *Distribution: ‘One MP for every 20,000 voters’*

Swedish has no distributive particle (compare, for example, German *je*) and thus no convenient way of expressing numerically equal distribution. However, Swedish sometimes uses **varje** in such instances, even though **varje** is otherwise found only before singular nouns. See 3.9.2.1.

**Man får en halvtimmes rast på varje tre timmars föreläsning.**  
 You get one half-hour break in every three-hour lecture.

**en riksdagsman för (varje) 20 000 väljare**  
 one member of parliament for every 20,000 voters

**1 000 kronor i skatt för varje 5 000 kronor i inkomst**  
 1,000 kronor in tax for every 5,000 kronor in income

**3.9.8** *All, allt, alla and hela*

**All, allt, alla** may be followed by a noun with or without the end article. These alternative forms correspond closely to English ‘all the’ and ‘all’ respectively. In addition **allt** and **alla** may be used on their own, without a noun correlative. See 3.9.8.4 and 3.9.8.5.

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Meaning
<b>all</b> + noun	<b>allt</b> + noun	<b>alla</b> + noun	all ( <i>universal</i> )
<b>all</b> + noun + end art.	<b>allt</b> + noun + end art.	<b>alla</b> + noun+end art.	all (of the) ( <i>specific</i> )
<b>hela</b> + noun + end art.	<b>hela</b> + noun + end art.	<b>hela</b> + noun+end art.	the whole/all (of the)
–	<b>allt</b>	<b>alla</b>	all, everything, everyone

**3.9.8.1 All, allt, alla + noun without end article (universal application)**

**All, allt, alla** followed by a noun without the end article has a universal application.

<b>All mat är dyr nuförtiden.</b>	All food is expensive these days.
<b>Allt hopp är ute.</b>	All hope is gone.
<b>Alla barn gillar glass.</b>	All children like ice-cream.

**All** or **allt** followed by a singular count noun without the end article often corresponds to English 'every':

<b>Han har all utsikt att lyckas.</b>	He has every prospect of success.
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Note also:

<b>Tåg går alla dagar utom söndag.</b>	Trains run every day but Sunday.
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Note – **allehanda, allsköns** (both indeclinable), 'all manner of' (+ noun in indefinite form).

**3.9.8.2 All, allt, alla + noun + end article (specific application)**

**All, allt, alla** followed by a noun with the end article has a specific application.

<b>All maten blev förstörd.</b>	All the food was spoiled.
<b>Alla barnen åt glass.</b>	All (of) the children ate ice cream.

**All, allt, alla** also have a specific application when followed by a determinative (3.8.1), demonstrative (3.7.1) or possessive pronoun (3.6.1).

<b>Du får all den hjälp som krävs.</b>	You get all the help you need.
<b>Åt du upp allt det där själv?</b>	Did you eat all (of) that yourself?
<b>Hon förlorade alla sina vänner.</b>	She lost all (of) her friends.

**3.9.8.3 Hela + noun + end article**

**Hela** followed by the definite singular form of the noun renders English 'all', 'all of the', when this may be replaced by 'the whole'. See 2.3.8.3.

<b>Han jobbar hela dagen.</b>	He works all day.
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**Jag sprang genom hela staden.** I ran all through the town.  
**Har du läst hela boken?** Have you read all of the book?

Note that the noun has no end article when **hela** is used together with a possessive pronoun.

**Älska av hela ditt hjärta!** Love with all of your heart!

Note 1 – **Hela** is used with a front article only when an adjective precedes the noun. The front article follows **hela**:

**Hela det gamla huset ska renoveras.**  
The whole of the old house is to be renovated.

Note 2 – Used in the indefinite form with count nouns **en hel** (neuter, **ett helt**; plural, **hela**) corresponds to English ‘(a) whole’:

**Grisen åt en hel banan, ett helt äpple och tre hela grapefrukter.**  
The pig ate a whole banana, a whole apple and three whole grapefruits.

Note 3 – Notice forms like **hela två liter**, ‘a full two litres’, where **hela** followed by an expression of measurement takes the indefinite form of the noun.

#### **3.9.8.4 Allt, allting = ‘everything’**

**Allt** and **allting** as a subject, object or prepositional complement correspond to English ‘all’ in the sense of ‘everything’:

**Allt/Allting jag har är ditt.** All/Everything I have is yours.  
**Tro inte på allt du läser.** Don’t believe everything you read.  
**Du är mitt allt.** You’re my everything.

Notice that these neuter forms are used even when referring to a non-neuter noun:

**Det fanns ingen mat kvar. Han hade ätit upp precis allt.**  
There was no food left. He had eaten absolutely everything/all of it.

In most instances **allt** and **allting** are interchangeable. **Allt** is, however, preferred with the neuter form of an adjective as in the examples that follow. For **allt** as an amplifier with adjectives, see 6.2.7.2.

**Allt roligt är förbjudet.  
Han tycker om allt svenskt.  
Jag är allt annat än glad.**

Everything that's fun is forbidden.  
He likes everything Swedish.  
I'm anything but happy.

Note also:

**allt som allt  
hans allt i allo  
överallt  
allt emellanåt**

all in all  
his right-hand man  
everywhere  
every now and then

### 3.9.8.5 **Alla** = 'everyone'

**Alla** (plural) as a subject, object or prepositional complement corresponds to English 'all' in the sense of 'all people', 'everyone', 'everybody'. **Alla** also has a genitive form, **allas**. See also 3.6.4.9.

**Alla var trötta och smutsiga.** Everyone was tired and dirty.  
**Hon överraskade oss alla.** She surprised us all.  
**Han skakade hand med alla.** He shook hands with everyone.  
**föremål för allas blickar** the object of everyone's gaze  
**allas vår vän** a friend of us all

### 3.9.8.6 **Alltsamman(s), alltihop, allesamman(s), allihop(a)**, etc.

**Alltsamman(s)** and **alltihop** are third person singular pronouns and correspond to English 'everything', usually in the sense of 'the whole lot'.

**Allesamman(s)** and **allihop(a)** are third person plural pronouns and correspond to English 'everybody', 'all of us/you/them'.

These pronouns are encountered almost exclusively in colloquial and informal written Swedish, and are far more restricted in use than **allt**, **allting** (3.9.8.4) and **alla** (3.9.8.5).

**Släng alltsammans i soptunnan.** Chuck everything in the bin.  
**Hur började alltihop?** How did it all start?  
**God natt allesamman(s)!** Good night, everybody!  
**Allihop(a) gömde sig i skogen.** All of them hid in the forest.



### 3.9.9 *Annan, den andra*

	Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Meaning
Indefinite	<b>(en) annan</b>	<b>(ett) annat</b>	<b>andra</b>	another (one), others
Definite	<b>den andra</b>	<b>det andra</b>	<b>de andra</b>	the other(s)

Instead of **den andra** Swedish sometimes prefers **den andre** when referring to a masculine noun. See 2.3.3f.

### 3.9.9.1 **Annan**, etc. = ‘other(s)’, ‘another’, ‘the other(s)’

**Annan**, etc. is used both attributively and nominally and agrees in gender and number with their correlative.

<b>Eva och en annan tjej vann.</b>	Eva and another girl won.
<b>Köp inte det! Köp ett annat!</b>	Don't buy that one. Buy another.
<b>Din andra kjol är snyggare.</b>	Your other skirt is nicer.
<b>Var är de andra?</b>	Where are the others?

In nominal use **annan** and **andra** may take a genitive **–s**. See also 3.6.4.9.

<b>Jag använde en annans mobil.</b>	I used another person's mobile.
<b>Stjäl inte andras idéer!</b>	Don't steal other people's ideas!

Note 1 – In familiar speech **en annan** used attributively sometimes has a meaning similar to English ‘regular’, ‘proper’. In nominal use it provides a circumlocutive (usually ironic) form for **jag**.

<b>som en annan idiot</b>	like a proper fool
<b>som en annan Tarzan</b>	like a regular Tarzan
<b>Här går en annan och sliter.</b>	Here I am, working myself to death.

Note 2 – In expressions of time English ‘(the) other’, etc. is rendered idiomatically in Swedish:

the other day/evening	<b>häromdagen/häromkvällen</b>
the other year	<b>häromåret</b>

### 3.9.9.2 **Annan**, etc. = ‘else’

**Annan**, etc. after an interrogative or indefinite pronoun often corresponds to English ‘else’. **Annan** and **andra** have genitive forms in **–s**.

<b>Någon annan har varit här.</b>	Someone else has been here.
<b>Vilka andra var på festen?</b>	Who else [plural] was at the party?
<b>Det är alltid alla andras fel.</b>	It's always everyone else's fault.

Also: **någoting annat**, something else; **ingenting annat**, nothing else; **allt annat**, everything else; **mycket annat**, much else; **lite(t) annat**, little else.

Note 1 – **Annars**, which means ‘otherwise’, – not **annan**, **annat**, **andra** – is combined with the interrogative pronouns **vem**, **vad**, **var**, **vart**, **hur** in expressions corresponding to English ‘who else?’, ‘what else?’, etc. Note the word order in such instances:

<b>Vem kunde det annars vara?</b>	Who else could it be?
<b>Var kan vi annars leta?</b>	Where else can we look?

Note 2 – When English ‘else’ means ‘in addition’ rather than ‘instead’ Swedish sometimes uses **mer/mera** with **vem** and **vad**. **Mera** is never used in this way with **vilken**, **alla**, **allt**, **litet**.

<b>Vad sa han mer(a)?</b>	What else did he say?
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Note 3 – Note the idiomatic renderings:

<b>någon/ingen annanstans</b>	somewhere else/nowhere else
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### 3.9.9.3 (The) One ... the other'

The Swedish expression **den/det ena ... den/det andra** corresponds to English ‘(the) one ... the other’. **Ena** and **andra** have masculine forms in **-e**. See 2.3.3f. An **-s** is added to form the genitive.

**Den ena gick ut när den andra kom in.**  
One went out when the other came in.

**Den enes död, den andres bröd.**  
One man's meat is another man's poison.  
[*lit.* ‘One man's death, the other's bread.’]

**Å ena sidan ... , å andra sidan ...**  
On (the) one hand ... , on the other hand ...

### 3.9.9.4 Translating ‘another’ into Swedish

Swedish has three forms of expression that correspond to the different connotations of English ‘another (one)’. In none of these cases is there a Swedish equivalent to English ‘one’ that is sometimes added after ‘another’.

(a) Another = ‘a different (one)’ = **en annan, ett annat**

Gender is determined by the noun referred to, whether present or implied. **Andra** (sometimes **några andra**) provides a corresponding plural form.

**Jag vill ha en annan bil.** I want another [i.e. a different] car.  
**Sälj huset och köp ett annat!** Sell the house and buy another (one).

**Jag tycker inte om de här skorna. Jag köper andra i stället.**  
I don’t like these shoes. I’m going to buy some others instead.

(b) Another = ‘an additional (one)’ = **en/ett ... till**

Gender is determined by the noun referred to, whether present or implied. **Några till** provides a corresponding plural form. Although frowned upon by language purists, it is becoming increasingly common to use **till** to precede the noun.

**Vi behöver en bil till.** We need another [an additional] car.  
**Fem fel och här är ett till!** Five errors and here’s another (one)!  
**Ta en till kaka om du vill.** Take another biscuit if you want.

**Jag tycker om de här äpplena. Jag tror jag köper några till.**  
I like these apples. I think I’ll buy some more.

Note 1 – **Ytterligare** is sometimes used instead of **till** with a numeral and a plural noun. Note the difference in the positions of **till** and **ytterligare**.

**Koka i 5 minuter till.** Boil for another 5 minutes.  
**Koka i ytterligare 5 minuter.** Boil for a further 5 minutes.

(c) ‘One another’ = **varandra**. See 3.9.4.

(d) Note also:

<b>på ett eller annat sätt</b>	somehow or other
<b>ett eller annat</b>	something or other
<b>Jag har annat att göra.</b>	I've other/better things to do.
<b>bland andra (bl.a.)</b>	among others [i.e. people]
<b>bland annat (bl.a.)</b>	among other things
<b>en och annan gång</b>	now and again
<b>gång efter annan</b>	time after time

**3.9.10** Någon, något, några

Non-neuter sing.	Neuter sing.	Plural	Meaning
<b>någon</b>	<b>något</b>	<b>några</b>	some, any

Note the following written and spoken colloquial forms: **nån** (for **någon**), **nåt** (for **något**), **nånting** (for **någonting**), **nånstans** (for **någonstans**), all with a short vowel; and **nåra** (for **några**), with a long vowel.

**3.9.10.1** Attributive use

- (a) **Någon, något, några** are used attributively before a noun without the end article. The form is determined by the gender and number of the following noun. Used in this way **någon, något, några** usually render English 'some' or 'any' in questions and negative statements.

**Några barn satt och lekte.** Some children sat playing.  
**Har du någon mat hemma?** Have you any food at home?

- (b) In Swedish questions **någon, något** are often used with a count noun in the singular where English has either 'a/an' + singular, or 'any' + plural.

**Finns det någon skola i byn?** Is there a school in the village?  
**Har du någon bror?** Do you have a brother/any brothers?

However, Swedish **en/ett** before a noun is retained where English has 'one'. **En/ett** used in this way is stressed when spoken.

**Har du <sup>1</sup>en bror eller flera?** Do you have one brother or several?

Note – In attributive use **någon, något, några** may also signify 'a few'.

Sometimes this is made explicit in the plural form, **några få**, which is also used nominally.

**om någon vecka/något år** in a week/year or so  
**för några dagar/veckor sedan** a few days/weeks ago  
**Jag har bara några få år kvar.** I only a few years left.

### 3.9.10.2 Nominal use

- (a) **Någon, något, några** are also used nominally. The gender and number depend on the correlative.

**Vi är utan mat. Har du någon?** We've no food. Do you have any?  
**Vi är utan vatten. Har du något?** We've no water. Do you have any?  
**Några av oss gick hem.** Some of us walked home.

- (b) **Någon** = 'someone', 'somebody', 'anyone', 'anybody'. **Någon** is a third person singular non-neuter pronoun. The plural form **några** renders 'some people'. **Någon** and **några** have the genitive forms in **–s**. See 3.6.4.9. For the use of **någon** in negative statements, see 3.9.13f.

**Någon har glömt sin hatt.** Someone has forgotten his hat.  
**Har någon ringt?** Has anyone phoned?  
**Jag måste prata med någon.** I have to talk to somebody.  
**Några menar att han är galen.** Some people think he's mad.  
**enligt någras mening** in some people's opinion

Note 1 – **Någon** meaning 'someone', etc. is not used nominally with an adjective. Swedish prefers a construction with a relative clause instead.

**Gift dig med någon som är rik!** Marry someone rich.

Note 2 – **Någon annan** = 'someone else', **någon annans** = 'someone else's'.

Note 3 – 'Anyone' = 'anyone at all' is usually rendered in Swedish by **vem som helst**. See 3.9.24.

- (c) **Något** = 'something'. In nominal use **något** and **någotting** are synonymous and render English 'something', 'anything'. Both are third person singular neuter pronouns. As in English, they may be combined with an adjective. For **något** in negative statements, see 3.9.13f.

**Hör du något?** Can you hear anything?  
**Du har någotting jag vill ha.** You have something I want.

**Har du något gott att äta?**

Do you have anything nice to eat?

**Hitta på något annat att göra!**

Find something else to do!

Note – **Något** (but not **någoting**) is also used adverbially to translate the English ‘somewhat’ = ‘slightly’, ‘a little’, as an alternative to **lite(t)**.

**Kjolen kunde vara något längre.**

The skirt could be slightly longer.

**Vi saktade farten något.**

We reduced our speed somewhat.

**3.9.11** *Somlig*

Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Meaning
<b>somlig</b>	<b>somligt</b>	<b>somliga</b>	some

Although **somlig** corresponds to English ‘some’, it is no longer common in Swedish and should not be regarded as a synonym of **någon**. The idiomatic usages of these words differ considerably. **Somlig** often implies some form of comparison (i.e. ‘some, but not others’). The singular forms, used only with non-count nouns, are rarely encountered. The plural form has a genitive in **–s** in nominal use.

**Somliga gör si, andra gör så.**

Some do this, others do that.

**Somlig kritik är befogad.**

Some criticism is justified.

**enligt somligas mening**

in some people’s opinion

**3.9.12** *Ingen, inget, inga*

Non-neuter singular	Neuter singular	Plural	Meaning
<b>ingen</b>	<b>inget/intet</b>	<b>inga</b>	no, none, not ... any

The alternative neuter singular form, **intet**, is rarely used in modern Swedish outside a limited range of set phrases such as **intet ont anande**, ‘unsuspectingly’, and **intetsägande**, ‘non-committal’. Added to **ingen**, **inget**, **inga** the word **alls** has the force of English ‘at all’. See also 3.9.24.

### 3.9.12.1 Attributive use

In attributive use **ingen**, **inget**, **inga** correspond to English ‘no’, ‘not a’, ‘not any’. The form is dependent on the gender and number of the following noun.

<b>Ingen människa är fullkomlig.</b>	No man is perfect.
<b>Det var ingen dum idé.</b>	That’s not a bad idea.
<b>Har vi inget bröd?</b>	Haven’t we got any bread?
<b>Han har inga pengar alls.</b>	He has no money at all.

**Inte ... någon**, etc. must sometimes be used instead of **ingen**, etc. See 3.9.13f.

### 3.9.12.2 Nominal use

(a) In nominal use **ingen**, **inget**, **inga** correspond to English ‘none’, ‘not any’, ‘not ... one’. The form agrees in gender and number with the correlative.

<b>Ingen av oss förlorade jobbet.</b>	None of us lost our job.
<b>Ingen av hennes föräldrar kom.</b>	Neither of her parents came.
<b>Vill du ha pengar så har jag inga.</b>	If you want money, I don’t have any.
<b>Hellre ett skitjobb än inget alls.</b>	Sooner a lousy job than none at all.

**Inte ... någon**, etc. must sometimes be used instead of **ingen**, etc. See 3.9.13f.

Note – When the idea is that of ‘not (a single) one’, **ingen**, **inget** in the subject position may be replaced by **inte en/ett** (stressed **en/ett**) + **av** + noun or pronoun. In the object position it may be replaced by **inte en/ett enda** (stressed **enda**):

**Inte 'en av eleverna klarade ett 'enda prov.**  
Not (a single) one the pupils passed a single test.

(b) **Ingen** = ‘no-one’, ‘nobody’. **Ingen** is a third person singular non-neuter pronoun. The plural form **inga**, ‘nobody’, ‘no people’, ‘none’, enables Swedish to maintain a distinction that English does not have. **Ingen** has a genitive form **ingens**. See also 3.6.4.9.

<b>Ingen kan tjäna två herrar.</b>	No one can serve two masters.
<b>Jag såg ingen jag kände igen.</b>	I saw no-one I recognised.
<b>Det var inga alls jag kände.</b>	There was nobody at all I knew.
<b>Det var ingens fel att han dog.</b>	It was no-one’s fault that he died.

**Inte ... någon**, etc. must sometimes be used instead of **ingen**, etc. See 3.9.13f.

- (c) **Inget** = ‘nothing’. In nominal use **inget** (**intet**) or **ingenting** may also render ‘nothing’, ‘not anything’.

**Vi letade men fann ingenting.** We searched but found nothing.  
**Han äger inget av värde.** He owns nothing of value.

**Inte ... någon**, etc. must sometimes be used instead of **ingen**, etc. See 3.9.13f.

- (d) In nominal use **inget**, ‘nothing’ and **inga**, ‘no people’ may be combined with an adjective. However, the non-neuter singular **ingen**, ‘no-one’, is rarely used in this way. Swedish usage prefers a relative clause instead.

**Inget gott kan komma av det.** No good can come of it.  
**Det finns inga gamla i byn.** There are no old folk in the village.

but:

**Ingen som är allvarligt sjuk får vänta för länge.**  
No one (who is) seriously ill must wait too long.

- (e) Note the following idiomatic expressions:

<b>ingen annan/ingen annans</b>	no-one else/no-one else’s
<b>inget (ingenting, intet) annat</b>	nothing else
<b>Det är inget annat än elakt.</b>	It’s nothing short of wicked.
<b>Han försvann i tomma intet.</b>	He disappeared into thin air.
<b>Han är en riktig nolla.</b>	He’s a real nobody.

### **3.9.13** *Ingen or inte någon?*

**3.9.13.1** ‘No’/‘not ... any’: Swedish maintains a distinction similar to English

**Inga nyheter är goda nyheter.** No news is good news.  
**Jag har inte fått några nyheter.** I have not received any news.

As the table in 3.9.13.2 shows, **ingen**, etc. is consistently preferred to **inte ... någon**, etc. in the subject position. In the object position, however, **ingen**, etc. generally appears only in a main clause with simple verb forms. In other cases:

<b>ingen</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte någon</b>
<b>inget/intet</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte något</b>
<b>inga</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte några</b>



<b>ingenting</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte någonting</b>
<b>ingendera</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte någondera</b>
<b>intetdera/ingetdera</b>	is replaced by	<b>inte någotdera</b>
<b>ingenstans</b> (adverb)	is replaced by	<b>inte någonstans</b>

### 3.9.13.2 **Ingen** or **inte någon** – a schematic summary

Main clause		Subordinate clause
Subject position		
<b>Ingen såg mig.</b>	Simple verb	<b>Jag sa att ingen såg mig.</b>
<b>Ingen har sett mig.</b>	Complex tense	<b>Jag sa att ingen hade sett mig.</b>
<b>Ingen kan se mig.</b>	Modal aux. + verb	<b>Jag sa att ingen kunde se mig.</b>
Object position		
<b>Jag såg ingen.</b> (Note 1)	Simple verb	<b>Jag sa att jag inte såg någon.</b> (Note 4)
<b>Jag har inte sett någon.</b> (Note 2)	Complex tense	<b>Jag sa att jag inte hade sett någon.</b>
<b>Jag vill inte se någon.</b> (Note 2)	Modal aux. + verb	<b>Jag sa att jag inte ville se någon.</b>
<b>Jag tyckte inte om någon.</b>	Object after compound verb	<b>Jag sa att jag inte tyckte om någon.</b>
<b>Jag talade inte med någon.</b>	Object after verb + prep.	<b>Jag sa att jag inte talade med någon.</b>

Note 1 – When used as an object of a simple verb **ingen**, etc. (with or without a noun) is often replaced by **inte någon**, etc. in spoken Swedish.

<b>Jag såg inte någon bil.</b>	I didn't see a car.
<b>Jag såg inte någon.</b>	I didn't see anyone.

Note 2 – In more formal situations **ingen**, etc. as an object is occasionally placed before the main verb in complex tenses or with a modal auxiliary. However, in most instances this usage now has a rather antiquated ring to it.

In a main clause **ingen**, etc. (and, if applicable, its correlative) then precedes the main verb. See 10.6.6.5.

<b>Han har ingenting sagt om affären och vill ingenting säga.</b>
He has said nothing about the deal and doesn't wish to say anything.

In a subordinate clause **ingen**, etc. (and, if applicable, its correlative) then precedes the finite verb. See 10.6.6.5.

**Hon sa att hon inga fler barn ville ha.**

She said she wanted no more children.

Note 3 – Note that there is a degree of flexibility in the word order when expressions with **inte ... alls** (3.9.12) are used in subordinate clauses:

**Jag sa, att jag inte hade någon lust alls att delta.**

**Jag sa, att jag inte alls hade någon lust att delta.**

I said I didn't feel (in the slightest) like taking part.

### **3.9.14** Translation of 'some' and 'any' into Swedish

Swedish does not maintain the same idiomatic distinctions between 'some' and 'any' as English. The rules for the translation of English 'some' and 'any' and their compound forms into Swedish are summarised below.

#### **3.9.14.1** 'Some' = **någon**, etc.

Most often English 'some' and compound forms with 'some' are rendered by Swedish **någon**, etc. and compound forms. See 3.9.10ff.

Surely someone somewhere knows something.

**Någon någonstans måste ju veta någonting.**

Can I be of some use?

**Kan jag vara till någon nytta?**

I have some flowers for you.

**Jag har några blommor till dig.**

#### **3.9.14.2** 'Some' = 'a little' = **lite(t)**

When English 'some' is used partitively to signify 'an unspecified amount of' rather than 'any at all' (i.e. the opposite of 'none') it is usually rendered in Swedish by the indeclinable pronoun **lite** (sometimes written **litet**). See 3.9.21. Sometimes **lite** may be omitted, especially before items in a list.

I've brought some cheese.

**Jag har tagit lite ost med mig.**

Buy some cheese, bread and wine. **Köp (lite) ost, bröd och vin.**

Pour some for me, please.

**Slå upp lite åt mig, är du snäll!**

May I offer you some grapes?

**Kan jag få bjuda på lite druvor?**

Note – **Någon**, etc. is retained in instances where ‘some’ suggests ‘some ... or other’:

**Jag har någon ost hemma, men jag vet inte vad det är för sort.**  
I’ve some cheese at home, but I don’t know what kind it is.

**3.9.14.3** ‘Some’ = ‘some (but not all) of’

(a) ‘Some of’ + a plural count noun is rendered by **några av** in Swedish.

Some of the the residents are ill. **Några av de boende är sjuka.**

Note 1 – ‘One of’ + a plural count noun is rendered by **någon/något av** in Swedish when the exact quantity is of no concern. See 3.9.10.1(b). Compare:

**Du borde läsa någon av hans böcker.**  
You ought to read one (or more) of his books.

**Jag har redan läst en av hans böcker.**  
I’ve already read one of his books [i.e. one only].

Note 2 – ‘Either of’ + plural count noun is usually rendered by **någon/något av** in Swedish.

Ask either of the twins. **Fråga någon av tvillingarna!**

(b) ‘Some of’ + a plural count noun in negative sentences is often rendered in Swedish by **vissa av**, ‘certain of’.

I am attracted by your faith, but I can’t accept some of its teachings.  
**Jag lockas av din tro men kan inte acceptera vissa av dess läror.**

(c) ‘Some (of)’ + a non-count noun or singular count noun is rendered by Swedish **en del (av)** (literally: ‘a part of’):

Some food went to waste. **En del mat gick till spillo.**  
I saw some of the film. **Jag såg en del av filmen.**

**3.9.14.4** ‘Some’ + numeral = ‘approximately’

‘Some’ before a cardinal number is rendered by **ungefär** or **omkring**, ‘approximately’. See also 4.1.7.

He died some fifty years later. **Han dog ungefär 50 år senare.**

#### 3.9.14.5 'Some ... others'

The expressions 'some ... some' and 'some ... others' are usually rendered by **somliga ... somliga** and **somliga ... andra**. See also 3.9.11.

Some people give, some take. **Somliga ger, somliga tar.**  
Some men wept, others prayed. **Somliga män grät, andra bad.**

#### 3.9.14.6 'Any' in negative statements

In negative statements and statements expressing doubt or uncertainty 'any' and its compound forms are usually translated by a form of **inte ... någon** or **ingen**. **Ingen**, etc. is only used with a simple verb. See 3.19.3.1.

He has not spoken to anyone. **Han har inte talat med någon.**  
I haven't any money. **Jag har inga pengar.**

Before a non-count noun or **mer/fler** in negative statements Swedish seldom uses a word that corresponds to English 'any':

She has never eaten any pork. **Hon har aldrig ätit fläsk.**  
I don't want any more presents. **Jag vill inte ha fler presenter.**

Note –

hardly/scarcely any	<b>nästan ingen/inget/inga</b>
hardly/scarcely anyone	<b>nästan ingen</b>
hardly/scarcely anything	<b>nästan ingenting</b>

#### 3.9.14.7 'Any' in interrogative statements

In positive interrogative statements 'any' and its compound forms are usually translated by a form of **någon**. Note, however, that when used in a partitive sense in interrogative statements 'any' is usually rendered by **lite**. See 3.9.14.2.

Have you any letters for me? **Har du några brev till mig?**  
Did you find anything? **Hittade du något?**  
Do you have any spare change? **Har du lite småpengar över?**

### 3.9.14.8 'Any' in conditional statements

In conditional statements 'any' and its compound forms are usually rendered by a form of **någon**.

Had there been any elk in the park, we would no doubt have seen them.  
**Hade det funnits några älgar i parken hade vi nog sett dem.**

### 3.9.14.9 'Any of'

- (a) 'Any of' + a plural count noun is rendered by **några av** in positive interrogative sentences, or by **någon/något av** if the sense is clearly 'a single one of'.

Did you meet any of the children? **Träffade du några av barnen?**  
Did any of them apologise? **Bad någon av dem om ursäkt?**

- (b) 'Not any of' + a plural count noun is usually rendered by **inte några av** or **inga av** in negative sentences, or by **inte ... någon/något av** or **ingen/inget av** if the sense is 'not a single one of'. For details of the usage of **inte några** and **inga** respectively, see 3.9.13.1f.

I didn't meet any of your friends at the party.  
**Jag träffade inga av dina vänner på festen.**

Haven't you seen any of Bergman's films?  
**Har du inte sett någon av Bergmans filmer?**

- (c) 'Any of' + a non-count noun or singular count noun may be rendered in Swedish by **någon del av**, 'any part of', when the noun refers to something which is made up of various components.

Do we need to replace any of the equipment?  
**Behöver vi byta ut någon del av utrustningen?**

Otherwise a form of **någon** is used, or **ingen** in a negative clause. For details of the usage of **någon** and **ingen** respectively, see 3.9.13.1f.

Has he lost any of his hair yet? **Har han tappat något hår än?**

Put a lid on the pan. That way you don't lose any of the heat.  
**Sätt ett lock på kastrullen. På så sätt förlorar du ingen värme.**

**3.9.14.10** 'Any' = 'no matter which'

'Any' meaning 'no matter which' is usually rendered in Swedish by a suitable pronoun + **som helst**. See 3.9.24.

'Which train do I take?' 'Any.'  
– **Vilket tåg tar jag? – Vilket som helst.**

Anyone can see you're ill.  
**Vem som helst kan se att du är sjuk.**

Note, however:

If anyone can do it, he can!  
**Om någon kan göra det, så är det han!**

**3.9.14.11** 'Any' = 'all/every'

'Any' in the sense of 'all', 'every' is translated by **alla** + the plural form of the noun (3.9.8) or **varje** + the singular form of the noun (3.9.2.1).

a familiar voice to any listener      **en välkänd röst för alla lyssnare**  
at any rate, anyway, in any case      **i varje fall**

**3.9.14.12** 'Any' + comparatives

(a) 'Any' before an adverbial comparative has no equivalent in Swedish:

He couldn't walk any further.      **Han kunde inte gå längre.**

(b) 'Any' after a comparative + 'than' is rendered by a form of **någon**:

I know more than any teacher.      **Jag vet mer än någon lärare.**

(c) 'Any' before an adjectival comparative is usually rendered by a form of **någon** or **ingen**. For details of the usage of **någon** and **ingen** respectively, see 3.9.13.1f.

Is there any more beautiful spot on Earth than this one?  
**Finns det något vackrare ställe på jorden än det här?**

There isn't any better playground than the great outdoors.  
**Det finns ingen bättre lekplats än naturen.**

**3.9.14.13** 'Any' = 'any possible', 'any ... that you may have'

A suitable form of the adjective **eventuell** is used to translate 'any' in phrases such as the following:

Any profit is taxed.	<b>Eventuell vinst beskattas.</b>
Who resolves any disputes?	<b>Vem löser eventuella tvister?</b>

**3.9.14.14** 'Any' = 'any (single) one'

'Any one', written as two separate words and pronounced with strong emphasis on 'one', does not translate readily into Swedish.

You can have any one of these books.  
**Du kan få vilken som helst av de här böckerna (men bara en).**

**3.9.15** *Båda*

Swedish **båda** and its variant **bägge** are indeclinable plural pronouns and correspond to English 'both', 'both of', 'the two'.

**3.9.15.1** Attributive use

In attributive use **båda/bägge** is usually followed by the definite form of the noun, except after a possessive pronoun or genitive expression. But see also Note 2 below.

<b>Båda bilarna är röda.</b>	Both (of the) cars are red.
<b>Han har kört bägge bilarna.</b>	He has driven both of the cars.
<b>Båda hans söner är gifta.</b>	Both his sons are married.
<b>diken på vägens båda sidor</b>	ditches on both sides of the road

If preceded by the front article (2.3.6f.), a possessive pronoun or a demonstrative pronoun, **båda/bägge** has less stress in spoken Swedish and corresponds to the English 'the two', 'these two', etc.

<b>Dessa båda bilar krockade.</b>	These two cars crashed.
<b>De båda bröderna dog.</b>	The two brothers died.
<b>Deras båda systrar överlevde.</b>	Their two sisters survived.

In attributive use **båda/bägge** has no genitive form. This is indicated instead by the noun.

<b>båda bilarnas motorer</b>	both the cars' engines
<b>mina båda systrars barn</b>	my two sisters' children

Note 1 – If an adjective follows **båda, bägge** the front article (2.3.6f.) is added immediately before the adjective:

**Båda de nya bilarna är röda.** Both (of the) new cars are red.

Note 2 – Idiomatic usage does not always require the definite (end) article on nouns following **båda, bägge**. The end article is generally omitted where English would have 'both' rather than 'both of the'.

**En gång med dörrar i bägge/båda ändar.**  
A corridor with doors at both ends.

### 3.9.15.2 Nominal use

(a) In nominal use **båda/bägge** is often followed by **två**. See also 3.9.5 Note 2. As a pronoun **båda/bägge** has a genitive form in **–s**.

<b>Båda (två) var uttröttade.</b>	They were both worn out.
<b>Det låg i bådas intresse.</b>	It was in the interest of both of them.

(b) While both **båda/bägge** and **båda två/bägge två** may be used in front of subject complements and adverbials, only **båda två/bägge två** normally follows these.

<b>Vi blev båda (två) lika glada.</b>	We were both equally happy.
<b>Vi blev lika glada båda två.</b>	We were equally happy, both of us.
<b>Ni skriver snyggt båda två.</b>	The two of you write neatly.

(c) As a direct/indirect object or prepositional complement **båda (två)/bägge (två)** is frequently preceded by a personal pronoun to which it refers.

<b>Jag känner dem båda väl.</b>	I know them both well.
<b>Jag litar på er båda två.</b>	I'm relying on both of you.

(d) As shown by certain of the examples above, Swedish has no direct equivalent to 'both of us/you/them'. **Båda/bägge** is sometimes replaced by **två** in expressions with a personal pronoun.

<b>Jag tänker ofta på er två.</b>	I often think of both of you.
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Note the following. See also 8.5.1.5.

**Hon är både lat och dum.** She is both lazy and stupid.  
**Både du och jag jobbar hårt.** Both you and I work hard.

### **3.9.16** *Mycket*

For the most part the uses of Swedish **mycket** and English ‘much’ run parallel. **Mycket** can generally translate ‘much’ in nominal use or before a singular non-count noun. **Mycket** also renders English phrases such as ‘a lot (of)’, ‘a good deal of’, etc. **Mycket** is used idiomatically with the plural noun **pengar**, ‘money’.

**Vi äter inte mycket kött.** We don’t eat much meat.  
**Mycket återstår att göra.** There’s a lot left to be done.  
**De spenderar mycket pengar.** They spend a lot of money.

Note 1 – **För mycket** is used idiomatically in expressions like the following. See also 3.9.22(a) Note.

**Studenten fick tre poäng för mycket.**  
The student got three marks too many.

Note 2 – Swedish **mycket** also corresponds to the English adverb ‘very’. See 6.2.7.

**Schäfern är en mycket hängiven hund.**  
The Alsatian is a very devoted dog.

Note 3 – ‘Very much’ is usually rendered in Swedish by **väldigt mycket**. Note also the idiomatic expression **Tack så väldigt mycket**, ‘Thank you very much’.

Note 4 – The non-neuter form **mycken** is now rare. **Mycket** is used with substances, materials, etc. regardless of number and gender. See also 3.9.18.

**Vi behöver mycket ost, mycket vatten och mycket ärter.**  
We need a lot of cheese, a lot of water and a lot of peas.

Note 5 – The definite form **myckna** sounds contrived in modern Swedish:

**På grund av det myckna regnandet blir årets skörd dålig.**  
Because there has been so much rain, this year’s harvest will be poor.

Note 6 – Some other expressions with **mycket** or ‘much’:

<b>Vi tjänar lika mycket.</b>	We earn the same.
<b>Jag vill tjäna dubbelt så mycket.</b>	I want to earn twice as much.
<b>Du är inte så mycket att se på.</b>	You’re not much to look at.
<b>Jag är inte så mycket för kaffe.</b>	I’m not all that fond of coffee.
<b>Han är inte mycket till politiker.</b>	He’s not much of a politician.

### **3.9.17** *Många*

For the most part the uses of Swedish **många** and English ‘many’ run parallel. **Många** may also be rendered as ‘a lot of’, ‘lots of’ followed by a plural noun (but see also 3.9.18). **Många** is used nominally in the plural and attributively before a plural noun. **Många** has a genitive form in **–s** meaning ‘many people’s’. See also 3.6.4.9.

<b>Hon har många datorspel.</b>	She has lots of computer games.
<b>Jag har inte hittat många fel.</b>	I’ve not found many errors.
<b>Hur många av er kan simma?</b>	How many of you can swim?
<b>Många av bilarna var stulna.</b>	Many of the cars were stolen.
<b>I mångas ögon är han skyldig.</b>	In many people’s eyes he is guilty.

Note 1 – **Mången** (non-neuter) and **månget** (neuter) followed by a singular noun without an article correspond to English ‘many a’ + noun. However, these forms sound contrived in modern Swedish and are easily avoided.

**Mången soldat dör förgäves.** Many a soldier dies in vain.  
Better is: **Många soldater ...**

Note 2 – The neuter form **mångt** now occurs only in **i mångt och mycket**, ‘in many respects’.

### **3.9.18** *Inte för mycket ärter, tack!*

Swedish often uses **mycket** before a collective or plural noun where the emphasis is on the quantity as a whole rather than the individual items that make up the whole. See 1.5.2. English renders this in various ways. See also **litet** (3.9.21) and **få** (3.9.22).

<b>Det finns mycket fisk i havet.</b>	There’s a lot of fish in the sea.
<b>Hur mycket pengar har du?</b>	How much money do you have?
<b>Inte för mycket ärter, tack!</b>	Not too many peas for me, please!
<b>Det är mycket bilar på vägen.</b>	There are a lot of cars on the road.
<b>Det var inte mycket folk där.</b>	There weren’t many people there.

Note that, conversely, **många** is rendered by ‘much’, ‘a lot of’ in English when Swedish plurals correspond to English non-count nouns. See 1.6.1.

There is much evidence of this. **Det finns många bevis på detta.**  
I received a lot of information. **Jag fick många upplysningar.**

**3.9.19** *Mer, fler*

**3.9.19.1** **Mer/mera**

(a) **Mer/mera** appears with or without a following non-count noun, and is usually rendered by ‘more’ in English. See also 2.5.4.5. The choice of **mer** or **mera** is determined by convention, euphony or personal preference.

**Du har mer tålamod än jag.** You have more patience than me.  
**Han vill alltid ha mer.** He always wants more.

(b) In spoken Swedish **mer** is frequently used even with plural nouns, instead of the more grammatically correct **fler**. See 3.9.19.2.

**Mer vägar innebär mer bilar.** More roads mean more cars.

(c) Note the following expressions used with singular and non-count correlatives:

**med mera** [abbreviated **m.m.**] and so on/etc.  
**alltmer** more and more

Note – For **mer** in adjectival comparisons, see 2.5.5. For **mer** in adverbial comparisons, see 6.1.7.5.

**3.9.19.2** **Fler/flera**

**Fler/flera** relates to a plural noun and is used with or without a following noun in both a comparative and an absolute sense. The choice of **fler** or **flera** is determined by convention, euphony or personal preference.

(a) Comparative **flera/flera** = ‘more’. See also 2.5.4.5.

**Fler män röstar grönt.** More men vote for green parties.  
**Många fler jobbar hemma.** Many more (people) work at home.

Note, however:

**Alla vill ha mer pengar.**            Everyone wants more money.

- (b) Absolute **fler/flera** = ‘several’, ‘a number of’, ‘quite a few’, etc.  
Used nominally (especially of people) **flera** is often interchangeable with **många**. See 3.9.17. Nominal **fler/flera** has a genitive form in **–s**.

**Hon har flera vänner i Kina.**    She has several friends in China.  
**Flera av er har klagat.**            A number of you have complained.  
**på fleras begäran**                    at the request of many people

- (c) Note the following expressions used with plural correlatives:

**med flera** [abbreviated **m.fl.**]    and so on/etc.  
**alltfler**                                    more and more

### 3.9.19.3 ‘The more ..., the more ...’

‘The more ..., the more ...’ is generally rendered by Swedish **ju mer/fler ... ju mer/fler ...**. See 3.9.19.1 and 3.9.19.2 for the use of **mer** and **fler** respectively before a noun. The second **ju** may be replaced by **dess** or **desto**. Notice the inverted word order in the second clause.

**Ju mer arbete jag gör, ju mer verkar jag få.**  
The more work I do, the more I seem to get.

**Ju fler appar du laddar ner, desto fler vill du ha.**  
The more apps you download, the more you want.

### 3.9.20 ‘Most’, *mest*, etc. – a schematic overview of Swedish use

English expressions with ‘most’, ‘most of’ are rendered in a number of ways in Swedish, as shown in the summary below. It is important to remember that **mest/mesta** is used with singular nouns and **flest/flesta** with most plural nouns. See also 3.9.19.1 and 3.9.19.2.

For ‘most’ used with superlatives, see 2.5.5 and 6.1.7.5.

- (a) ‘Most’, **mest**, etc. – summary of attributive use  
(Numbers in brackets refer to subsections under 3.9.20)

Non-neuter	3.9.20	Neuter	3.9.20	Plural	3.9.20
most + noun					
<b>den mesta glassen</b>	(1)	<b>det mesta regnet</b>	(1)	<b>de flesta barn</b>	(3)
most of + noun					
<b>största delen av dagen</b>	(2)	<b>största delen av vinet</b>	(2)	<b>de flesta rösterna</b>	(4)

- (b) ‘Most’, **mest**, etc. – summary of nominal use  
(Numbers in brackets refer to subsections under 3.9.20)

	Singular	3.9.20	Plural	3.9.20
most (subj.)	<b>det mesta</b>	(5)(c)	<b>de flesta</b>	(5)(d)
most (obj.)	<b>mest</b>	(5)(b)	<b>flest</b>	(5)(e)
most of it, most of them	<b>största delen</b>	(5)(a)	<b>de flesta</b>	(5)(d)

Note – In addition to what is outlined in 3.9.20.1–3.9.20.5 below, there are a large number of idiomatic usages of **mest/flest** and other renderings of ‘most’ in Swedish.

<b>Han sover mest hela dagen.</b>	He sleeps practically all day.
<b>De är som folk är mest.</b>	They are like most people.
<b>Gör det bästa av situationen.</b>	Make the most of the situation.
<b>Vad vill du helst göra?</b>	What would you most like to do?
<b>För det mesta är han pålitlig.</b>	For the most part he’s reliable.
<b>Det var på sin höjd tio kvar.</b>	There were at (the) most ten left.

### 3.9.20.1 ‘Most’ + singular noun

- (a) English ‘most’ + singular noun or non-count noun may be rendered in Swedish by **den/det mesta** + singular noun + end article:

Most rain falls in the autumn.  
**Det mesta regnet faller på hösten.**

I make most food at home.  
**Jag lagar den mesta maten hemma.**

In many instances, however, such constructions sound contrived in Swedish, so a different mode of expression is preferred, often using **för det mesta**, which means ‘for the most part’:

### **Regnet faller för det mesta på hösten.**

The rain falls mostly in the autumn.

- (b) Sometimes the form **mest** + noun without end article is used, when **mest** qualifies the object of a clause and indicates some kind of comparison. In written Swedish this may lead to ambiguity with the use of **mest** as an adverb (6.2.2.4). In spoken Swedish, however, the meaning is made clear by where the speaker chooses to place the stress.

**Han åt 'mest glass.**

He ate most ice cream.

**Han åt mest 'glass.**

He ate mostly ice cream.

#### **3.9.20.2** 'Most of' + singular noun

English 'most of' + singular or non-count noun may be rendered by Swedish **största delen av** + singular noun in the definite form.

Most of the criminality in the suburbs is petty crime.

**Största delen av brottsligheten i förortererna är småbrott.**

#### **3.9.20.3** 'Most' + plural noun

English 'most' + plural noun signifying 'most X in general' or 'X as a whole' is generally rendered by Swedish **de flesta** + noun in the indefinite plural form. (See also the absolute superlative, 2.5.13.) Note, however, that this construction is usually seen only in subject positions. See 3.9.20.4 Note.

Most children like animals.

**De flesta barn tycker om djur.**

#### **3.9.20.4** 'Most of'/'The most' + plural noun

When English 'most of' + plural noun or 'the most' + plural noun implies a specific comparison, this is generally rendered in Swedish by **de flesta** + plural noun + end article.

Most (of the) children said they like animals.

**De flesta barnen sa att de gillar djur.**

Her party got the most votes in the parliamentary elections.

**Hennes parti fick de flesta rösterna i parlamentsvalet.**

Note – When modifying the object or prepositional object of a clause, **de flesta** + plural noun + end article is sometimes replaced by **flest** + noun in the indefinite plural form:

**Namnet som får flest röster vinner!**

The name that receives (the) most votes wins!

**3.9.20.5** 'Most' – nominal use

- (a) **Största delen** is used to refer to a singular or non-count noun, irrespective of gender. **Största delen** renders 'most (of it)':

**Han har mycket pengar men största delen har han ärvt.**

He has a lot of money, but he has inherited most of it.

- (b) **Mest** renders 'most' as an indefinite pronoun, usually in the object form:

**Han åt mest – som vanligt.** He ate most – as usual!

Note – When referring to a plural noun, however, **de flesta** or **flest** is used. See (d) and (e) below.

- (c) **Det mesta** renders 'most' as an indefinite pronoun, usually in the subject form. **Det mesta** is often followed by **av** + clause:

**Vi har inga pengar kvar. Det mesta försvinner i skatt.**

We have no money left. Most (of it) disappears in tax.

**Det mesta av vad jag har på mig i dag är tillverkat i Kina.**

Most of what I'm wearing today is made in China.

- (d) **De flesta** (subject and object form) renders 'most' in the sense 'most of them', 'most people' when referring to a plural noun:

**De flesta gick efter en timme.** Most people left after an hour.

**Han samlar på svenska frimärken. Han har de flesta.**

He collects Swedish stamps. He has most of them.

- (e) **Flest** renders 'most', 'the most' to refer to a plural noun when a comparison is intended. **Flest** is generally used only as the object or prepositional object of a clause. **Flest** is not used to render 'most people'/'most of them'. See (d) above.

**Alla mina vänner samlar på dataspel men jag har flest.**

All my friends collect computer games, but I have (the) most.

**3.9.21** *Lite, litet*

**Lite** and its more formal alternative **litet** (also usually pronounced /lite/) are used to render the meanings of both ‘little’ and ‘a little’. When used to modify non-count nouns, **lite(t)** specifies quantity or degree and may therefore be regarded as the singular equivalent of **få**. See 3.9.22.

The difference between English ‘little’ and ‘a little’ is expressed in spoken Swedish by the degree of stress. **Lite(t)** corresponding to ‘little’ is stressed, or prefaced by **bara** for emphasis. **Lite(t)** meaning ‘a little’ is unstressed. To avoid confusion, **lite grann** or **lite grand** is sometimes used to express the sense of ‘a little’.

All these forms are indeclinable and are used attributively and nominally.

<b>Gör litet och säg ännu mindre!</b>	Do little and say even less.
<b>Det är (bara) lite mjölk kvar.</b>	There’s little milk left.
<b>Jag har lite grann hemma.</b>	I have a little at home.

Note 1 – **Lite(t)** is frequently used with substances, materials, etc. regardless of number and gender. It is also used with the plural noun **pengar**, ‘money’. See also **mycket** 3.9.16.

**Vi har bara lite ost, lite vatten och lite grönsaker kvar.**  
We have only a little cheese, a little water and a few vegetables left.

**Hon har mycket lite pengar.**      She has very little money.

Note 2 – **Lite(t)** corresponds to English ‘few’ in expressions such as the following. See also 3.9.22(a) Note.

**Av misstag fick eleven tre poäng för lite.**  
By mistake, the pupil got three marks too few.

Note 3 – Note the following expressions and phrases:

<b>Är det inte lite svårt?</b>	Isn’t it rather difficult?
<b>Jag gjorde det lilla jag kunde.</b>	I did what little I could.
<b>Tyvärr är det föga vi kan göra.</b>	Sadly, there is little we can do.
<b>Använd den lilla svenska du kan.</b>	Use what little Swedish you know.



### 3.9.22 Få

- (a) **Få** is used attributively and nominally, and is usually rendered by English ‘few’ or ‘few people’ (but not ‘few things’, which is **få saker**). However, **få** is more literary in style than English ‘few’, and constructions with **inte många**, ‘not many’, are often preferred in spoken Swedish.

<b>Få saker irriterar mig mer.</b>	Few things irritate me more.
<b>Man ser få sådana bilar i dag.</b>	You see few cars like that today.
<b>Få har lidit som du.</b>	Few have suffered as you have.
<b>Du är en av de få han litar på.</b>	You’re one of the few he trusts.

Note – **Lite(t)**, not **få**, corresponds to English ‘few’ in expressions such as the following. See also 3.9.21 Note 2.

**Hellre en gång för mycket än en för lite!**  
Better once too often than one time too few.

- (b) Swedish uses **några få** or **några stycken** where English has ‘a few’. **Några få** most often modifies a plural noun and **få** may sometimes be omitted. In nominal use **några stycken** refers to a plural noun.

<b>Jag har flugit några (få) gånger.</b>	I have flown a few times.
<b>Varsågod, ta några stycken!</b>	Please, take a few.

Note 1 – Sometimes **ett fåtal**, ‘a small number’, is used in more formal Swedish, especially when the impression is of an exact quantity having been counted. **Ett fåtal** may be followed by a noun in the plural indefinite form:

**Bara ett fåtal platser kvar!**      Only a few seats left!

Note 2 – **Rätt många** corresponds to English ‘quite a few’.

**Du har gjort rätt många fel.**      You’ve made quite a few errors.

### 3.9.23 *Mindre, färre, minst*

Swedish **mindre**, **minst** correspond to English ‘less’, ‘least’ used attributively with a non-count noun or nominally. **Färre** corresponds to English ‘fewer’ referring to a count noun. However, as no form of **färre** corresponding to English ‘fewest’ exists in standard Swedish, **minst** is used instead.

**Du har bara lite mat, hon har mindre, men jag har minst.**

You have only a little food, she has less, but I have least.

**Här bor inte många människor, men snart blir de ännu färre.**

There aren't many people living here, but soon there will be even fewer.

**3.9.24** **Constructions with som helst, 'whoever', 'whatever', etc.**

To render the sense of English 'at all' or the compounded '-ever' in certain usages of 'whoever', etc., some indefinite and interrogative pronouns (3.10ff.) – as well as certain interrogative adverbs (6.2.4.3) – may be followed in Swedish by the indeclinable **som helst**. English sometimes adds tag phrases such as 'you like', 'you want', etc. instead of 'at all'. In Swedish, phrases such as **vem du vill**, **vad du vill** are occasionally used as alternatives to **vem som helst**, **vad som helst**, etc.

(a) Nominal function only:

<b>vem som helst</b>	anyone at all
<b>vad som helst</b>	anything at all
<b>någon som helst</b>	anyone at all
<b>något som helst</b>	anything at all
<b>ingensting som helst</b>	nothing whatsoever, nothing at all

(b) Attributive and nominal function:

<b>vilken som helst</b> (n-n.)	} whatever, whichever,
<b>vilket som helst</b> (n.)	
<b>vilka som helst</b> (pl.)	} no-one at all, none/not ... any at all
<b>ingen som helst</b>	

Note 1 – When these expressions are used attributively the noun generally appears between **vilken/ingen**, etc. and **som helst**, although it may also occupy other positions. See 3.9.24.2.

Note 2 – **Inte någon ... som helst** is sometimes preferred to **ingen som helst**. See 3.9.13.1f.

(c) Adverbial function:

<b>när som helst</b>	at any time at all, whenever you like
<b>var/vart som helst</b>	anywhere at all, wherever you like

**hur ... som helst**  
**hur som helst**

however [+ adj./adv.] you like  
any way at all

(d) Examples:

**Vem som helst kan lära sig.**  
**Hon äter vad som helst.**  
**Ta vilken bil som helst.**  
**ingen som helst anledning**

Anyone can learn.  
She eats anything at all.  
Take any car you want.  
no reason at all

**3.9.24.1** Translating 'whoever'

	Meaning	Singular	Plural	See example
Whoever	= no matter who	<b>vem (som) än</b>	<b>alla som ...</b>	1, 2, 3, Note 1
Whoever	= anyone who/ everyone who	<b>den som ...</b>	<b>alla som ...</b>	3, 4, 5
Whoever	= whoever you like/want, etc.	<b>vem som helst</b>	<b>vilka som helst</b>	6
Who ever?	= who on earth?	<b>vem i all världen</b>	–	7

- 1 **Öppna inte dörren, vem som än kommer!**  
Don't open the door, whoever comes!
- 2 **Vem du än är, så kom fram med detsamma!**  
Come out at once, whoever you are!
- 3 **Säg till alla som kommer att jag är sjuk.**  
Tell whoever comes that I'm ill.
- 4 **Den som/Alla som stjal åker förr eller senare fast.**  
Whoever steals is caught sooner or later.
- 5 **Jag vill tala med den som har hand om reklamationer.**  
I want to speak to whoever deals with complaints.
- 6 **Fråga vilka som helst som var med i kören.**  
Ask whoever you like who was in the choir.
- 7 **Vem i all världen gjorde det?**  
Who ever did that?

Note 1 – **Vem som än** is used only as the subject of the clause. When this phrase is used as a predicate of the verb **vara** or **bli** (i.e. with a noun or personal pronoun), the **som** is generally omitted and **så** introduces the following clause. See example 2 above.

Note 2 – Note how Swedish renders the following type of phrase:

The boss, or whoever it was... **Chefen, eller vem det nu var...**

### 3.9.24.2 Translating 'whatever'

English	Meaning	Swedish	See example
Whatever	= no matter what	subj. <b>vad som än ...</b>	1
		obj. <b>vad ... än ...</b>	2
Whatever	= everything = anything	subj. <b>allt som ...</b>	3
		obj. <b>allt</b>	4
Whatever	= the thing which	subj. <b>det som ...</b> obj. <b>vad, det som ...</b>	11
Whatever you like	= whatever you want	subj. <b>vad som helst</b> obj. <b>vad som helst</b>	4
What ever?	= what on earth	nominal usage <b>vad i all världen</b> <b>är/var det som ...?</b> + noun	9
		<b>vad i all världen</b> <b>är/var det för ...?</b>	10
Whatever + noun	= no matter what kind of + noun	subj. <b>vilken vilket,</b> <b>vilka</b> + noun <b>som än ...</b> obj. <b>vilken vilket,</b> <b>vilka</b> + noun <b>... än ...</b>	7
Whatever + noun	= all/any + noun = which that	subj. <b>all allt, alla</b> + noun <b>som ...</b>	5
		obj. <b>all allt, alla</b> + noun	5
Nothing whatever	= nothing whatsoever	<b>ingenting<sup>1</sup> alls</b>	6
No + noun whatever	= no + noun + at all	<b>ingen<sup>1</sup> som helst</b> + noun	
		<b>ingen<sup>1</sup></b> + noun <b>alls</b> neuter: <b>inget/intet<sup>1</sup>,</b> plural: <b>inga<sup>1</sup></b>	8

<sup>1</sup> **Inte ... någon**, etc. must sometimes be used instead of **ingen**, etc. See 3.9.13.1f.

I **Vad som än händer, tappa inte modet!**  
Whatever happens, don't be discouraged!

- 2 **Vad man än säger, tappa inte modet!**  
Whatever people say, don't be discouraged!
- 3 **Allt som smakar gott blir man tjock av.**  
Whatever tastes good makes you fat.
- 4 **Man får inte göra allt man vill eller säga vad som helst.**  
You can't do whatever you like or say whatever you want.
- 5 **Hans fru öppnar all post som kommer/all post han får.**  
His wife opens whatever post comes/whatever post he gets.
- 6 **Han sa ingenting alls.**  
He said nothing whatsoever.
- 7 **Vilka böcker du än har läst, så har du fått det om bakfoten.**  
Whatever books you've read, you've got it all wrong.
- 8 **Jag har ingen som helst lust att åka dit.**  
I've no desire whatever to travel there.
- 9 **Vad i all världen är det som har hänt?**  
What ever has happened?
- 10 **Vad i all världen är det för böcker du har där?**  
What ever books have you got there?
- 11 **Låt mig hämta det som du behöver!**  
Let me fetch whatever you need.

Note also:

**Jag försöker, kosta vad det vill.** I'll try, whatever the cost.  
**Jag gör det ändå.** I'll do it, whatever.

**Stenen eller vad det nu var träffade bilen.**  
The stone, or whatever it was, hit the car.

**Ring eller skriv! Vilket som går lika bra.**  
Phone or write. It's the same to me, whatever.

**– Ska jag gå eller inte? – Vilket som!**  
'Shall I go or not?' 'Please yourself.'

### 3.9.24.3 Translating 'whichever'

English	Meaning	Swedish	See example
Whichever + noun	= the + noun who/which See also 3.8.1ff.	<b>den, det, de</b> + noun + <b>som</b>	1
Whichever you like	= any one you wish	<b>vilken, vilket, vilka</b> (+ noun) <b>som helst</b>	2, 3
Which ever + noun?	= which?	<b>vad är/var det för...?</b> + noun	4

- 1 **Den lärare som sa det ljuger.**  
Whichever teacher said that is lying.
- 2 **Rösta på vilken kandidat som helst.**  
Vote for whichever candidate you like.
- 3 **Jag har tre pennor. Du får ta vilken som helst.**  
I have three pens. You can take whichever one you want.
- 4 **Vad var det för en lärare som sa det?**  
Which ever teacher said that?

### 3.9.25 'One' used to replace a noun

English 'one/ones' may be used idiomatically in place of a noun, in order to avoid a repetition of that noun. Swedish employs various techniques to express this idea.

#### 3.9.25.1 English indefinite article + adjective + 'one'

My mobile phone has broken, but I can't afford a new one.  
**Min mobil är sönder, men jag har inte råd med en ny.**

There's only one hotel and it's an expensive one.  
**Det finns bara ett hotell och det är dyrt.**

These shoes are too small, but I haven't any larger ones.  
**De här skorna är för små men jag har inte några större.**

**3.9.25.2** English definite article + adjective + 'one'

His production of *The Magic Flute* is the best one I have seen.

**Hans uppsättning av Trollflöjten är den bästa jag har sett.**

**3.9.25.3** English 'one', standing alone

He's a policeman, but he doesn't look like one.

**Han är polis men ser inte ut som en sådan.**

**3.9.25.4** Other translations of 'one'

Other usages in English, where 'one' replaces a noun, are indicated below.

English	Swedish	See section
another one = a different one	<b>en annan</b>	3.9.9.4(a)
another one = an additional one	<b>en till, en till</b>	3.9.9.4(b)
one another	<b>varandra</b>	3.9.4
any one	<b>vilken som helst</b>	3.9.24
each/every one	<b>varenda en</b>	3.9.2.2
every other one	<b>varannan</b>	3.9.3
which one?	<b>vilken ... ?</b>	3.10.5
this one, that one	<b>den här, den där</b>	3.7.1ff.
the one that	<b>den som</b>	3.8.1.2
the only one	<b>den enda</b>	2.4.1.2, 2.4.2.4

Note also:

one after the other

**den ena efter den andra**

We knew one Mr Ek, who...

**Vi kände en (viss) herr Ek, som ...**

No one man can hope to achieve so much on his own.

**Ingen kan hoppas uppnå så mycket ensam.**

## 3.10 Interrogative pronouns

### 3.10.1 Interrogative pronouns, introduction and form

Interrogative pronouns introduce some form of a question. Interrogative pronouns in main clauses introduce a direct question (v-question, see 10.6.11.2), indicated by a question mark placed at the end of the sentence. Interrogative pronouns in subordinate clauses introduce an indirect question.

Usage	Meaning	Non-neuter	Gen.	Neuter	Gen.	Plural	Gen.
3.10.2	who, whom, whose	<b>vem</b>	– <b>vems</b>	–	–	<b>vilka</b>	<b>vilkas</b>
3.10.3	what	–	–	<b>vad</b>	–	<b>vad, vilka</b>	
3.10.5	which	<b>vilken</b>	<b>+s</b>	<b>vilket</b>	<b>+s</b>	<b>vilka</b>	<b>+s</b>
3.10.4	what kind of	<b>vad för en</b>		<b>vad för ett</b>		<b>vad för (ena)</b>	
3.10.4		<b>vad för någon</b>		<b>vad för något</b>		<b>vad för några</b>	
3.10.4		<b>vad för sorts</b>		<b>vad för sorts</b>		<b>vad för sorts</b>	
		<b>hurdan</b>		<b>hurdant</b>		<b>vad för slags</b>	<b>hurdana</b>
3.10.5	which (of two)	<b>vilkendera</b>	<b>+s</b>	<b>vilketdera</b>	<b>+s</b>	–	

### 3.10.2 Vem? vilka? in direct questions

**Vem, vilka** may be either the subject or object of a direct question. Swedish maintains a distinction between singular **vem** and plural **vilka** that English does not have.

**Vem vann guldet?**

Who won the gold (medal)?

**Vilka tog silver och brons?**

Who got silver and bronze?

**Vem träffade du?**

Who(m) did you meet?

**Vem** and **vilka** add **–s** to form a genitive. See also 3.6.4.9.

**Vems är hatten?**

Whose hat is it?

**Vilkas bilar står därute?**

Whose cars are outside?

**Vem/vems** and **vilka/vilkas** may be preceded by a preposition but, even in written Swedish, it is far more common for the preposition to stand at the end of the clause. This is almost invariably so in colloquial Swedish.



<b>Vem är gift med vem?</b>	Who is married to who(m)?
<b>Vilka har du mejlat till?</b>	Who(m) have you e-mailed to?
<b>Vems son blev hon kär i?</b>	Whose son did she fall in love with?

### **3.10.3** *Vad? in direct questions*

**Vad** is a neuter singular pronoun and is used as either the subject or object of a direct question. **Vad** is only rarely used with a noun (see Note 2 below): in such instances a form of **vilken** (3.10.5) is usually preferred.

<b>Vad har hänt?</b>	What has happened?
<b>Vad gör ni?</b>	What are you doing?

While **vad** is frequently used to refer to things in the plural, **vilka** is preferred when some aspect of enumeration is present. Compare the following:

<b>Vad har du i fickan?</b>	What have you got in your pocket?
<b>Vilka är de fyra årstiderna?</b>	What are the four seasons?

Note 1 – In nominal use **vad** is rarely preceded by a preposition: the preposition is placed at the end of the clause instead. In formal style a compound interrogative pronoun comprising **var** and preposition is sometimes used.

<b>Vad skär man ost med?</b>	What does one cut cheese with?
<b>Vari ligger problemet?</b>	Wherein lies the problem?

Note 2 – In attributive use **vad** occurs only in certain idiomatic expressions, where it may be preceded by a preposition:

**I vad mån kan man som aktieägare påverka viktiga beslut?**  
In what way can one influence key decisions as a shareholder?

Note 3 – In colloquial Swedish **vad** may replace **eller hur** to avoid repeating the verb and subject in constructions akin to English tag questions. See 10.6.11.3. Used thus, **vad** is sometimes written **va** and invariably pronounced /va/ with a short vowel.

**Det gjorde väl inte ont, va?** That didn't hurt, did it?

Note 4 – Swedes commonly use **Vad?** (invariably pronounced /va/ with a short vowel) to indicate that they have not heard what the speaker has said. A form more akin to English 'I beg your pardon' but rarer in Swedish is **Hursa?**, a contraction of **Hur sade du?** The expressions **Förlåt (mig)** and **Ursäkta (mig)** are usually reserved for genuine apologies.

Note 5 – **Vilken, vilket, vilka** may be used as a predicate of the verb **vara** in preference to **vad**. In such instances the form agrees in number and gender with its correlative.

**Vilken är nästa hållplats?**      What is the next stop?

### **3.10.4** *Vad för?* expressions in direct questions

#### **3.10.4.1**

Swedish questions formulated with **vad för** + noun, **vad för en**, **vad för någon**, **vad för slags/sorts** correspond to English forms with ‘what’ + noun, meaning ‘what kind of?’. These forms, especially **vad för någon**, are colloquial in tone, but also occur in informal written Swedish. Because of their colloquial tone, they are rarely preceded by a preposition.

#### **3.10.4.2** **Vad för, vad för slags/sorts?**

**Vad för, vad för sorts, vad för slags** (all indeclinable) are used with singular non-count nouns and plural nouns. **Vad** may be separated from **för, för slags, för sorts** by other words such as a finite verb, subject, etc.

<b>Vad för sorts lim funkar bäst ?</b>	What sort of glue works best?
<b>Vad för slags mat gillar du?</b>	What (kind of) food do you like?
<b>Vad har du för planer i dag?</b>	What are your plans today?

**Vad för sorts, vad för slags** may be used without an accompanying noun.

– **Vi säljer bilar. – Vad för slags?** ‘We sell cars.’ ‘What kind?’

The two indeclinable expressions **vilken sorts** and **vilket slags** have the same function and usage as **vad för sorts, vad för slags** but belong more to written Swedish than the spoken language. See also 1.8.2.4(c).

#### **3.10.4.3** **Vad för en, vad för ett?**

**Vad för en/ett** are used before singular non-neuter and neuter count nouns respectively. The plural form **vad för ena** is now rare and restricted to colloquial Swedish: more common is **vad för några** (with or without a following noun).

<b>Vad för en bok är det?</b>	What kind of (a) book is that?
<b>Vad för ett hus köpte han?</b>	What kind of (a) house did he buy?
<b>Vad för några planer har du?</b>	What kind of plans have you made?

Note the following idiomatic expressions:

<b>Vad är han/hon för en?</b>	What kind of person is he/she?
<b>Vad är de för ena?</b>	What kind of people are they?
<b>Vad är det för dag i dag?</b>	What day is it today?

#### 3.10.4.4 Hurdan

In recent years **hurdan**, **hurdant**, **hurdana** have lost ground to expressions such as those in 3.10.4.2 and 3.10.4.3 and to the indeclinable adverbial form **hur**. Today they are rarely encountered except in a few set expressions.

<b>Hurdant var vädret?</b>	What was the weather like?
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#### 3.10.5 Vilken? in direct questions

**Vilken**, **vilket**, **vilka** correspond to English ‘which (one)’ and are used both attributively and nominally. The form is determined by the correlative. **Vilken**, **vilket**, **vilka** form a genitive by adding **–s**. **Vilka** serves as the plural of **vem** (3.10.2) and under certain conditions as a plural for **vad** (3.10.3). Although **vilken**, etc. may be preceded by a preposition, it is more common for the preposition to stand at the end of the clause, especially in spoken Swedish.

<b>Vilken skola går de i?</b>	Which school do they go to?
<b>Vilket av husen är hans?</b>	Which (one) of the houses is his?
<b>Vilka skor är dina?</b>	Which shoes are yours?
<b>Vilkas är alla dessa skor?</b>	Whose are all these shoes?
<b>En av er ljuger – men vilken?</b>	One of you is lying, but which one?

Note 1 – **Vilkendera** (non-neuter) and **vilketdera** (neuter) may be used to indicate a choice between two or more alternatives, although **vilken**, **vilket** normally suffices. See also 3.9.5. In attributive use **vilkendera**, **vilketdera** are followed by the noun in the singular definite form, or **av** + the noun in the plural definite form. **Vilkendera** and **vilketdera** have genitive forms in **–s**.

<b>Vilkendera inspelning/Vilkendera av inspelningarna föredrar du?</b>	Which of the recordings do you prefer?
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### **Vilketdera alternativet valde du?**

Which alternative did you choose?

Note 2 – **Vilken, vilket, vilka** also serve other functions. See 3.10.7 for exclamations with **vilken**, and 3.11.3 for **vilken** as a relative pronoun.

#### **3.10.6** *Interrogative pronouns in indirect questions*

Interrogative pronouns may be used in indirect questions, where they invariably introduce a subordinate clause. See 8.4.2.

As the subject of a subordinate clause Swedish interrogative pronouns – with the exception of **vad för, vad för slags/sorts, vilken slags/sorts** and **hurdan** – are followed by **som** (3.11.2) which in this context has no equivalent in English.

In direct questions **som** is usually omitted after sentence elements other than the subject.

#### **3.10.7** *Vilken, vilket, vilka = ‘What (a)’ + noun in exclamations*

**Vilken, vilket, vilka** followed by a noun correspond to exclamations with ‘what (a)’ in English. See also **sådan**, 3.7.4 Note 1. Note that Swedish has no indefinite article in such expressions.

<b>Vilken härlig dag!</b>	What a lovely day!
<b>Vilket dåligt väder!</b>	What awful weather!
<b>Vilken tur vi hade!</b>	What luck (we had)!
<b>Vilka dumma idéer!</b>	What stupid ideas!

### **3.11** **Relative pronouns**

#### **3.11.1** *Relative pronouns, introduction and form*

Relative pronouns introduce relative clauses. They refer back to and agree in gender and number with an antecedent (correlative) in the preceding clause. The antecedent may be a noun, noun phrase or clause.

	Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	Usage see
Subject	<b>som</b>	<b>som</b>	<b>som</b>	3.11.2
Object	<b>som</b>	<b>som</b>	<b>som</b>	3.11.2
Formal style: subject	<b>vilken</b>	<b>vilket</b>	<b>vilka</b>	3.11.3
Formal style: object	<b>vilken</b>	<b>vilket</b>	<b>vilka</b>	
Subject	–	<b>vad som</b>	–	3.11.5.2
Object	–	<b>vad</b>	–	3.11.5.1
Formal style: genitive	<b>vars</b>	<b>vars</b>	<b>vilkas</b>	3.11.4.1
Formal style: genitive	<b>vilkens</b>	<b>vilkets</b>	<b>vilkas</b>	3.11.4.2

### **3.11.2** Som

The indeclinable relative pronoun **som** is very versatile. It is used as a subject, object or prepositional complement to correspond to English ‘who(m)’, ‘which’ or ‘that’, and to ‘as’ after ‘such’ and ‘the same’. It is practically the only relative pronoun used in conversation and is also common in all forms of written Swedish.

**Som** may be omitted when used as an object (see example 4, below), but in contrast to English usage **som** is never omitted when occupying the subject position (examples 2 and 5).

When **som** is governed by a preposition, the preposition comes at the end of the clause (example 7). If the length or complexity of the clause makes it impractical to place a preposition at the end of the clause, **som** is replaced by a suitable form of **vilken**, which, unlike **som**, may be preceded by a preposition. See 3.11.3.1.

- 1 **Mannen, som bor i Malmö, har fyra barn som han aldrig sett.**  
The man, who lives in Malmö, has four children whom he has never seen.
- 2 **Mindre än 5 procent av det kött som äts i Sverige är renkött.**  
Less than 5 per cent of (the) meat eaten in Sweden is reindeer meat.
- 3 **Tack för din e-post som jag läste med stort intresse.**  
Thank you for your e-mail, which I read with great interest.
- 4 **Pengar (som) vi inte använder återinvesteras i företaget.**  
Money (that) we don’t use is reinvested in the company.

- 5 **Pojken som står därborta är min son.**  
The boy (who is) standing over there is my son.
- 6 **Jag har samma lärare som min syster.**  
I have the same teacher as my sister.
- 7 **Vi vill ha en soffa som är bekväm att sitta i.**  
We want a sofa that is comfortable to sit on.

Note also the use of **som** in expressions such as:

**Jag glömmer aldrig den dagen som jag vann Vasaloppet.**  
I'll never forget the day when I won the Vasaloppet ski race.

### **3.11.3** *Vilken, vilket, vilka*

The gender and/or number of the correlative determine which form of **vilken**, **vilket** or **vilka** is used as a relative pronoun. As a relative pronoun forms of **vilken** are rarely used except in formal written Swedish and as described in 3.11.3.4. **Vilken**, **vilket**, **vilka** are not used as relative pronouns after **ingen**, **någon**, **sådan**, **samma** or a superlative; **som** is used in such instances.

#### **3.11.3.1** **Vilken**, etc. in long or complex relative clauses

A suitable form of **vilken** is used instead of **som** (3.11.2) when the length and complexity of a relative clause make it impractical to place a preposition at the end of the clause.

**Detta är brevet i vilket hon skrev om sina upplevelser i Polen.**  
This is the letter in which she wrote about her experiences in Poland.

**... en här, i spetsen för vilken stod en utmärkt general**  
... an army, at the head of which was a distinguished general

#### **3.11.3.2** **Vilken**, etc. for clarification

A suitable form of **vilken** may be used instead of **som** to clarify the relationship between the relative pronoun and its correlative. Compare the following sentences:

**I lådan finns ett mynt och en nål, vilken har glidit ner i en springa.**  
In the drawer is a coin and a needle, which has slipped into a crack.

**I lådan finns ett mynt och en nål, vilka har glidit ner i en springa.**

In the drawer are a coin and a needle, which have slipped into a crack.

### 3.11.3.3 **Vilken**, etc. in attributive use

A suitable form of **vilken** is used instead of **som** when a noun or adjective is added after the relative pronoun. This attributive usage of the relative pronoun is rare outside formal written Swedish. **Som** is never used in these instances.

**Rovdjuren omfattar katt- och hundfamiljen samt hyenorna, vilka sistnämnda utgör en övergångsform mellan de två andra.**

Beasts of prey include the cat and dog families as well as the hyenas, which latter comprises an intermediate form between the other two.

### 3.11.3.4 **Vilket** to refer to a preceding clause

The neuter singular form of the pronoun, **vilket**, is used when the relative pronoun refers to a complete clause. As a rule **som** is not used in this context, but **något som** is occasionally encountered in place of **vilket** as the subject of the relative clause.

**Momsen ska sänkas, vilket har överraskat många ekonomer.**

VAT is to be reduced, which has surprised many economists.

**Alla reste sig när jag kom in, något som rörde mig till tårar.**

Everyone stood up when I came in, which moved me to tears.

Note, however, the idiomatic usage of **som** in the following lexicalised expression:

**Nu mår jag bra igen, som väl är.**

Now I feel well again, which is a good thing.

### 3.11.4 **Vars and other genitive forms of the relative pronoun**

Genitive forms of the relative pronoun are followed by the indefinite form of the noun and the definite form of the adjective. See 2.3.7.4.

#### 3.11.4.1 Vars

The indeclinable relative pronoun **vars** serves as the genitive singular form of **som** (3.11.2). **Vars** may be preceded by a preposition. The plural form is **vilkas** (3.11.4.2).

**Vi har en granne vars lilla hund står och skäller halva natten.**

We have a neighbour whose little dog spends half the night barking.

**Familjen i vars hus vi bor kommer snart tillbaka.**

The family in whose house we are living will soon be back.

#### 3.11.4.2 Vilkens, vilkets, vilkas

These genitive forms of the relative pronouns **vilken**, **vilket**, **vilka** (3.11.3) may be preceded by a preposition. The singular forms are rarely used today except in formal written Swedish.

**Välkommen till Skara stift, vilkets första biskop vigdes år 1014.**

Welcome to Skara Diocese, the first bishop of which was ordained in 1014.

**Barn vilkas föräldrar arbetar kommer hem till ett tomt hus.**

Children whose parents work come home to an empty house.

#### 3.11.4.3 Som + preposition or relative clause

In colloquial Swedish **vars** and **vilkas** are often replaced by constructions with the relative **som** (3.11.2) + preposition or a relative clause.

**Någon vars namn du vet. → Någon som du vet namnet på.**

Someone whose name you know

**Alla vilkas yrke hotas borde protestera. → Alla som har ett yrke som hotas borde protestera.**

Everyone whose profession is under threat ought to protest.

#### 3.11.5 Vad and vad som

**Vad** and **vad som** (both indeclinable) represent an indefinite neuter singular concept. **Vad** is not used attributively, except in very colloquial language.



### 3.11.5.1 Vad

**Vad** is used as a relative pronoun in the object form or after a preposition in a sense that corresponds to English ‘what’ or ‘that which’.

**Uppskjut inte till morgondagen vad du kan göra i dag.**

Do not put off until tomorrow what you can do today. [Swedish proverb]

**Av vad du säger verkar problemet vara löst.**

From what you say the problem seems to be solved.

### 3.11.5.2 Vad som

When used as the subject of a relative clause **vad** is followed by **som**.

**Säg alltid vad som är sant.**      Always say what is true.

**Vad som göms i snö kommer upp i tö.**

What is hidden in the snow comes up in the thaw. [Swedish proverb]

In a few lexicalised expressions in which **vad** alone serves as the subject of a relative clause, the verb adopts a position at the end of the relative clause.

**Vad mig angår är jag inte intresserad.**

As far as I am concerned, I'm not interested.

**Han fuskar och, vad mera är/vad värre är, han ljuger!**

He cheats – and what's more/what's worse, he tells lies!

### 3.11.5.3 Allt vad

In a relative clause following **allt**, the word **vad** may be used as an object instead of **som**, although this usage is rather formal.

**Hon ger allt vad hon äger till de fattiga.**

She gives everything she owns to the poor.

## Chapter 4

# Numerals

### 4.1 Forms of numerals

#### 4.1.1 Cardinal and ordinal numbers

See 12.4.2 for advice about the use of figures and words.

Cardinal numbers			See section		Ordinal numbers
0	<b>noll</b>	zero, nought, nil, 'oh' nothing, love, duck			
1	<b>en, ett</b>	one	4.1.2	<b>första</b>	first
2	<b>två</b>	two	4.1.3	<b>andra</b>	second
3	<b>tre</b>	three		<b>tredje</b>	third
4	<b>fyra</b>		Note 6 below	<b>fjärde</b>	
5	<b>fem</b>			<b>femte</b>	
6	<b>sex</b>			<b>sjätte</b>	
7	<b>sju</b>			<b>sjunde</b>	
8	<b>åtta</b>			<b>åttonde</b>	
9	<b>nio</b>		Note 6 below	<b>nionde</b>	
10	<b>tio</b>		Note 6 below	<b>tionde</b>	
11	<b>elva</b>			<b>elfte</b>	
12	<b>tolv</b>			<b>tolfte</b>	
13	<b>tretton</b>			<b>trettonde</b>	
14	<b>fjorton</b>			<b>fjortonde</b>	
15	<b>femton</b>			<b>femtonde</b>	
16	<b>sexton</b>			<b>sextonde</b>	
17	<b>sjutton</b>			<b>sjuttonde</b>	
18	<b>arton</b>		Note 5 below	<b>artonde</b>	
19	<b>nitton</b>			<b>nittonde</b>	
20	<b>tjugo</b>		Note 6 below	<b>tjugonde</b>	
21	<b>tjugoen (-ett)</b>		4.1.2.1	<b>tjugoförsta</b>	
22	<b>tjugotvå</b>		Note 6 below	<b>tjugoandra</b>	
30	<b>trettio</b>		Note 6 below	<b>trettionde</b>	
40	<b>fyrtio</b>		Note 6 below	<b>fyrtionde</b>	
50	<b>femtio</b>			<b>femtionde</b>	

60	<b>sextio</b>		<b>sextionde</b>
70	<b>sjuttio</b>		<b>sjuttionde</b>
80	<b>åttio</b>		<b>åttionde</b>
90	<b>nittio</b>		<b>nittionde</b>
100	<b>(ett) hundra</b>	4.1.4	<b>(ett)hundra</b>
101	<b>(ett) hundraen (-ett)</b>		<b>(ett)hundraförsta</b>
1000	<b>(ett) tusen</b>	4.1.4	<b>(ett) tusende</b>
1001	<b>(ett) tusenen (-ett)</b>	4.1.4	<b>(ett) tusenförsta</b>
3 285	<b>tretusentvåhundraåttiofem</b>	Note 3 below	<b>tretusentvåhundra- åttiofemte</b>
1 000 000	<b>en miljon</b>	4.1.5	<b>en miljonte</b>
1 000 000 000	<b>en miljard</b>	4.1.5	

Note 1 – There is no **och** between elements in compounded cardinal and compounded ordinal numbers except in a very limited number of set phrases such as **Tusen och en natt**, ‘A Thousand and One Nights’.

Note 2 – With the occasional exception of round hundreds and **ett tusen** (4.1.4), numbers under a million are usually written out as one word. If this becomes inordinately long, a gap may be inserted after the thousands:

**niohundra nittionio tusen tvåhundra fjorton**

nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand two hundred and fourteen

Note 3 – Numbers written in figures in Swedish texts frequently have a gap after the thousands where English has a comma. See 13.1.2.10(b):

Swedish: **3 285**

English: **3,285**

Note 4 – Cardinal numbers may take a genitive in **-s**:

**de Nios Stora Pris**

The Nine’s Grand (Literary) Prize

Note 5 – **Arton** is a contraction of the older form **aderton**. This older form is still retained in more formal usage. The eighteen members of **Svenska Akademien** (the Swedish Academy) are referred to as **De aderton**.

Note 6 – The pronunciation of some numerals does not always correspond to their spelling.

When counting, **fyra** is often pronounced without the final **-a**: /fyr/.

**Nio**, **tio** and compounds in **-nio**, **-tio** are often pronounced /nie/, /tie/.

**Tjugo** is often pronounced /tjugi/, /tjugu/ or /tjuge/. **Tjugoett**, **tjugotvå**, etc. are often pronounced /tjuett/, /tjutvå/, etc. **Tjugonde** is pronounced

/tjugonde/, but notice: **tjugoförsta** /tjuförsta/, **tjuogoandra** /tjuandra/, etc. **Trettio, fyrtio**, etc. are usually pronounced and sometimes written without the final **-o**: **tretti** /tretti/, **fyrsti** /förti/, etc. **Trettionde, fyrtionde**, etc. are pronounced /trettionde/, /förtionde/, etc., but notice **trettioförsta** /trettiförsta/, **fyrtioandra** /förtiandra/, etc.

#### 4.1.2 En, ett or end?

##### 4.1.2.1

The choice of **en** or **ett** to translate the English word ‘one’ is determined by the gender of the noun that follows or is implied. See 1.1.2, 1.9.1.

**en buss**, one bus; **ett tåg**, one train; **en av mina systrar**, one of my sisters; **ett av bolagets kontor**, one of the company’s offices

**– Kan jag få en av dina cigaretter? – Jag har bara en kvar.**  
 ‘Can I have one of your cigarettes?’ ‘I only have one left.’

However, when compounded in forms such as **tjuogoen, trettioen, hundrasextioen**, etc., **–en** tends to be used regardless of the gender of the noun that follows: **tjuogoen skåp, trettioen barn**, etc.

Forms such as **tjuogoett**, etc. generally occur only with a few words of neuter gender that are frequently associated with numbers:

**Han är tjuogoett (år).** He’s twenty-one (years old).  
**Han väger 61 [sextioett] kilo.** He weighs 61 kilos.

Note 1 – The usual rules for the use of **en** and **ett** do not always apply when these are used as the first element in compound words:

<b>en enrumslägenhet</b>	a one-roomed flat	cf. <b>ett rum</b>
<b>enögd, enbent</b>	one-eyed, one-legged	cf. <b>ett öga/ett ben</b>

Note 2 – Note the use of the singular form of the Swedish noun in expressions such as:

<b>en och en halv dag</b>	one and a half days	not <b> dagar</b>
<b>ett och ett halvt finger</b>	one and a half fingers	not <b> fingrar</b>

#### 4.1.2.2

**Ett** is used alone and in compound numbers in general counting, calculating and time by the clock:

<b>ett, två, tre...</b>	one, two, three...
<b>samhällets fiende nummer ett</b>	public enemy number one
<b>Klockan är ett.</b>	It's one o'clock.

**Tåget avgår 12.51 [tolv och femtioett] från perrong tre.**  
The train departs at 12:51 from platform three.

#### 4.1.2.3

When the English '(the) one' is used as a pronoun or an attributive adjective the equivalent Swedish expression **den/det ena** is used. See 3.9.9.3. **Ena** has a masculine form **ene**.

**Två bilar kraschade. Den ena körde in i den andra bakifrån.**  
Two cars crashed. One drove into the other from behind.

**De har två söner. Den ene är rik, den andre är pank.**  
They have two sons. One is rich, the other is broke.

<b>Jag har ont i (det) ena ögat. en stol, vars ena ben är sönder från det ena till det andra</b>	One of my eyes hurts. a chair, one leg of which is broken from one thing to another
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#### 4.1.3 *Två, tve- and ett par*

##### 4.1.3.1 'The two', 'my two'

English 'the two' + noun is often rendered in Swedish by **de båda** + noun + end article. See 3.9.15.

English 'my two', 'your two', etc. + noun is often rendered in Swedish by the possessive adjective + **båda** + noun without the end article:

<b>de båda bröderna</b>	the two brothers
<b>mina båda systrar</b>	my two sisters

#### 4.1.3.2 Tu, tvenne

Two archaic forms of **två** that are very occasionally encountered are **tvenne** and **tu**, the latter of which is still used in certain lexicalised expressions. These include:

<b>på tu man hand</b>	privately, between the two of us
<b>ett, tu, tre</b>	all of a sudden
<b>ett tudelat land</b>	a country divided in two

#### 4.1.3.3 Tve- and två- in compounds

The prefix **tve-** (no longer used to form new words) is found in some words to indicate **två**:

**tveggad**, two-edged; **tvehågsen**, in two minds; **tvetydig**, ambiguous

Otherwise **två-** is generally used as the first element in a compound:

**tvåfärgad**, two-tone; **tvåglasfönster**, double glazing; **tvåmanstält**, two-man tent; **tvåspråkig**, bilingual

#### 4.1.3.4 Ett par

Swedish uses **ett par** in much the same way as English uses ‘a pair (of)’, ‘a couple (of)’, etc:

<b>ett par skor</b>	one pair/a pair of shoes
<b>1900 kronor paret</b>	1,900 kronor a pair/the pair
<b>ett par hundra anställda</b>	a couple of hundred employees
<b>ett par, tre gånger om året</b>	two or three times a year
<b>Jag har ett par, tre stycken.</b>	I have one or two. See 4.2.1.2
<b>ett äkta par</b>	a married couple

#### 4.1.4 Hundra, tusen

(a) **Hundra** and **tusen** are sixth declension neuter nouns with no separate plural form. While round hundreds and thousands are usually written in two separate words (except in compound nouns and adjectives), other numbers are usually written as one word in Swedish. See 4.1.1, Note 2.

As a rule of thumb, ‘a hundred’ is rendered in Swedish by **hundra** (1.11.5.6), whereas ‘one hundred’ is **ett hundra**. Similarly ‘a thousand’ is **tusen**, while ‘one thousand’ is **ett tusen**.

Note that Swedish uses a space or full stop to separate thousands from hundreds in numbers written in figures, not a comma as in English. See 13.1.2.10(b).

<b>tre hundra år senare</b>	three hundred years later
<b>femtio tusen åskådare</b>	fifty thousand spectators
<b>trehundrafemtio kronor</b>	three hundred and fifty crowns
<b>femtusentrehundra</b>	five thousand three hundred
<b>en femhundra lapp</b>	a five-hundred (crown) note

- (b) Numerals between 1100 and 1999 in dates and prices are usually expressed in terms of **hundra**. Usage varies when expressing year dates from 2000 to 2099:

<b>1 500 kronor</b>	<b>femtonhundra kronor</b>
<b>(år) 1 968</b>	<b>nittonhundrasextioåtta</b>
<b>(år) 2 005</b>	<b>tjugohundrafem, tvåtusenfem</b>

- (c) In modern Swedish ‘hundreds (of)’ and ‘thousands (of)’ are usually expressed by **hundratals** and **tusentals** respectively. See also 4.1.7.1. However, occasionally an old form, **tusenden**, the plural of the fourth declension neuter noun **tusende**, is used to express ‘thousands’:

**De kan räknas i tusenden.**

They can be counted in (their) thousands.

- (d) The archaic form **hundra** is today encountered only in a traditional Swedish birthday song:

**Ja, må han/hon leva uti hundra år!**  
May he/she live for a hundred years!

**4.1.5** *Miljon, miljard, biljon*

**Miljon, miljard, biljon** are third declension non-neuter nouns with a plural in **-er**. Swedish **miljard** corresponds to ‘billion’ in modern English (i.e.  $10^9$ ) and Swedish **biljon** to ‘trillion’ (i.e.  $10^{12}$ ).

Note that Swedish uses a space or full stop to separate millions, etc. from thousands in numbers written in figures, not a comma as in English.

See 13.1.2.10(b).

<b>en miljon</b>	one/a million
<b>tre miljarder människor</b>	three billion people

Numbers over one million are rarely written out in words, but if they are, the word **miljon**, **miljard**, **biljon** usually stands alone:

**fyrtiofem miljarder trehundraåttiotre miljoner**

#### **4.1.6** *Some less commonly used numbers*

##### **4.1.6.1** **Ett dussin**

Although Swedish **ett dussin** corresponds to English ‘a dozen’, it is far less common in use. Where English uses ‘a dozen’ or ‘dozens of’ as an approximate value, Swedish prefers **ett tiotal** (‘approximately ten’) or **tiotal** (‘tens of’) to fulfil this purpose. See also 4.2.2.1.

<b>ett dussin knivar</b>	a dozen knives
<b>ett halvt dussin</b>	half a dozen (Word order, 4.4.2.1)
<b>Tiotal skadades i slagsmålet.</b>	Dozens were hurt in the fight.

##### **4.1.6.2** **Ett tjog, ett gross, ett ris**

These forms are now little used:

<b>ett tjog ägg</b>	a score of eggs [i.e. 20]
<b>ett gross häftstift</b>	a gross of drawing pins [i.e. 144]
<b>ett ris papper</b>	a ream of paper [i.e. 500 sheets]

#### **4.1.7** *Approximate numerical values*

##### **4.1.7.1**

Swedish often indicates an approximate value in excess of ten by adding the suffix **-tal** to a cardinal number. See 4.2.2.1.

<b>ett femtiotal träd</b>	around fifty trees, fifty-odd trees
---------------------------	-------------------------------------



#### 4.1.7.2

In some instances **en** is used, regardless of the gender or number of the noun that follows, to signify ‘about’ or ‘approximately’. See 1.11.6.

**en tjugo, trettio hus**                      about twenty or thirty houses

#### 4.1.7.3

**Nå(go)nting** is sometimes used with a cardinal number to indicate an approximate value in the same way as ‘something’ in English:

**en man på trettio nånting**            a man of thirty-something

#### 4.1.7.4

The nonsense number **femti(o)elva** and its ordinal equivalent **femti(o)elfte** correspond to the English ‘umpteen’ and ‘umpteenth’ respectively:

**Det är hans femtielfte försök att ta körkort.**  
It’s his umpteenth attempt to pass his driving test.

## 4.2 The use of cardinal numbers

### 4.2.1 Notes on the use of cardinal numbers

#### 4.2.1.1 En etta, en tvåa, etc.

The cardinal numbers themselves are regarded as neuter concepts in Swedish. However, Swedish has special forms of the cardinal numbers up to twelve that are used as non-neuter nouns, i.e. **en etta, en tvåa, en trea, en fyra, en femma, en sexa, en sju, en åtta, en nia, en tia, en elva, en tolv** (plurals **ettor, tvåor, treor**, etc.).

These forms and their compound forms in larger numbers (see examples in (e) and (g) below) are used to indicate:

- (a) A numeral, i.e. ‘a one’, ‘two threes’:

**Jag kan inte skilja på hans fyror och hans sjuor.**

I can't tell his fours from his sevens.

The forms **etta**, **tvåa**, etc. are occasionally used for clarification; for example, when speaking on the phone. See 12.1.2.

Notice that: **en nolla** means both ‘a nought/a zero’ and ‘a nobody/an unimportant person’.

- (b) The number of a house, bus, train, road, school-class, hospital ward, etc.:

**Jag tar tvåan till arbetet.** I take the number two [bus] to work.

**Följ E6:an [E-sexan] till Oslo.** Follow the E6 highway to Oslo.

- (c) The size of an apartment. In Sweden this is almost invariably expressed as the number of rooms excluding the kitchen and bathroom:

**De hyr en trea i Tensta.**

They are renting an apartment in Tensta with three rooms [plus a kitchen and a bathroom].

- (d) A position in a race, or some other form of ranking:

**Han kom tvåa i tävlingen.  
växla från ettan till tvåan**

He came second in the contest.  
change from first to second (gear)

- (e) Size of clothes, shoes, etc.:

**Fyrtiättorna passar bäst.**

The size forty-one [shoes] fit best.

- (f) Some coins and bank notes:

**en femma** a five-crown coin; **en tia** a ten-crown coin

But note: **en tjugolapp**, a twenty-crown note. Also: **femti(o)lapp**, **hundralapp**, **tusenlapp**.

- (g) The last two digits in a year of birth, manufacture or publication:

**Den stulna bilen är en grå nitti(o)åtta.**

The stolen car is a grey (19)98 model.

- (h) The expression **en nollåtta** (also written **en 08:a**) is sometimes used in a mildly pejorative sense to denote a resident of Stockholm. This derives from the fact that 08 is the area code for Stockholm telephone numbers.

#### 4.2.1.2 **Stycken**

The noun **stycken**, (plural of **ett stycke**, ‘a piece’) is often added after cardinal numbers, particularly in informal spoken Swedish and when numbers are used without a following noun. Used in this sense **stycken** has no English equivalent. In lists **stycken** is sometimes abbreviated **st**.

**Vi har beställt hundra stycken.** We ordered a hundred.  
**Sänd fem stycken genast.** Send five (of them) straightaway.

#### 4.2.1.3 Frequency: **två gånger**, etc.

To indicate frequency **gång** (plural **gångar**) is used with a cardinal number:

**en gång**, once; **två gånger**, twice; **tre gånger**, three times, etc.

See also 4.3.1.6.

#### 4.2.1.4 Twofold, etc.

Multiplication is indicated by adding the suffixes **–faldig(t)**, **–dubbel(t)** to a form of the respective cardinal number. The suffix **–faldig(t)** corresponds to the English ‘–fold’ in ‘twofold’, ‘sixfold’, etc. and is generally used in expressions where English has ‘in duplicate’, ‘in triplicate’, etc. Used on its own **dubbel(t)** corresponds to the English ‘double’. Used as a suffix to cardinal numbers from three and upwards it corresponds to ‘triple (treble)’, ‘quadruple’, etc. Note also: **flerfaldigt/flerdubbelt**, ‘several times’; **mångfaldigt/mångdubbelt**, ‘many times’.

**Det kostar dubbelt så mycket som förra året.**  
It costs twice as much as last year.

**Syftet med resan var tvåfaldigt.**  
The purpose of the trip was twofold.

**Alla nybyggda hus borde ha tredubbla fönster.**  
All newly built houses ought to have triple-glazed windows.

### **Han är flerfaldig svensk mästare i simning.**

He has been Swedish swimming champion on many occasions.

Note – **Enfaldig** corresponds to ‘stupid’, ‘simple-minded’ in English. The English adjective ‘single’ is expressed in various ways in Swedish depending on its meaning: **enda** renders ‘only one’; **enkel, enkelt, enkla** render ‘one way’; **ensamstående** (indeclinable) renders ‘unmarried’.

<b>Vi träffades en enda gång.</b>	We met on one single occasion.
<b>En enkel (biljett) till Luleå, tack.</b>	A single (ticket) to Luleå, please.
<b>ensamstående mammor</b>	single mums

#### **4.2.2 Nouns formed with –tal**

Neuter nouns may be formed by adding **–tal** to cardinal numbers. These nouns are used to express various meanings, as shown in 4.2.2.1f.

##### **4.2.2.1 Approximate number**

<b>ett hundratals män</b>	about a hundred men
<b>ett tjugotal bilar</b>	some twenty (or so) cars

Expressions indicating an indefinite number of tens, hundreds, thousands, etc. may be derived from these nouns by adding **–s**:

**tusentals personer på hundratals ställen i tiotal länders**  
thousands of people in hundreds of places in tens of countries

##### **4.2.2.2 Decade or century**

<b>Han dog på femtiotalet.</b>	He died in the fifties. [i.e. 1950s]
<b>på 300-talet/trehundratalet</b>	in the fourth century, in the 300s
<b>2000-talet/tjugohundratalet</b>	the twenty-first century

Note 1 – A similar construction is also used to indicate the decade of a person’s birth:

<b>sjutti(o)talister</b>	people born in the 1970s
--------------------------	--------------------------

Note 2 – Swedish literary historians often divide periods according to decades:

**åttio- och nittioalets litteratur** literature of the 80s and 90s  
**tioalister/fyrtioalister** writers active in the 1910s/1940s

Note 3 – Centuries may also be expressed with **århundrade/-t** or **sekel**, **seklet** but these forms are no longer in common use:

**1800-talet = det nittonde århundradet/seklet**

#### **4.2.3** Age

There are a number of ways of expressing age:

<b>Anton är tio år (gammal).</b>	Anton is ten (years old).
<b>Anton är i tioårsåldern.</b>	Anton is (about) ten (years old).
<b>Anton är en tioåring.</b>	Anton is a ten-year-old.
<b>Anton är en tioårig kille.</b>	Anton is a ten-year-old boy.
<b>Anton, en kille på tio år, ...</b>	Anton, a boy of ten, ...
<b>Han är i femtiårsåldern.</b>	He's (somewhere) in his fifties.
<b>Han har fyllt femtio.</b>	He's over fifty.
<b>Hon är trettio något/nånting.</b>	She's thirty-something.

#### **4.2.4** Temperature

Swedes use the centigrade scale: **0° C (Celsius) = 32° F**:

**Termometern visar -5° C/fem minusgrader.**  
It's minus five (degrees) on the thermometer.

**I dag är det fem grader kallt/minus fem grader.**  
Today it's minus five.

**Termometern visar +15° C/femton plusgrader.**  
It's plus fifteen on the thermometer.

**I dag är det femton grader varmt.**  
Today it's fifteen degrees/plus fifteen.

**I dag är det 0° C/noll grader.**

Today it is zero.

**Jag hade 40/fyrtio graders feber.**

I had a temperature of 40 degrees [104° F].

#### **4.2.5 Money**

In Swedish currency **100 ören = 1 krona**. Some coins and notes are frequently referred to by special names. See 4.2.1.1(f). In written price information **kronor** may be separated from **ören** by either a colon or a comma, the latter being the form recommend by the Language Council of Sweden, *Språkrådet*:

**103,50**

**etthundratre kronor och femti(o) öre/  
etthundratre och femti.**

**3,00**

**tre kronor**

#### **4.2.6 Telephone numbers**

The digits after the regional/mobile dialling code are frequently expressed in pairs:

**0709 – 12 34 56**

**noll sju noll nio tolv trettifyra femtisex.**

#### **4.2.7 Mathematical expressions**

(a) Note that there are some differences in Swedish and English mathematical symbols:

*Swedish*

*English*

*Swedish*

add to

**lägga till**

**4 + 5 = 9**

equals

**4 + 5 = 9**

**är (lika med)**

**fyra plus fem är (lika med) nio**

subtract from

**12 – 2 = 10**

**12 – 2 = 10**

**subtrahera från**

**tolv minus två är (lika med) tio**

$6 \cdot 3 = 18$	multiply by times $6 \times 3 = 18$	<b>multiplicera med gång</b> sex gånger tre är (lika med) arton
$25:5 = 5$	divide by $25 \div 5 = 5$	<b>dela med/dividera med</b> tjugofem delat med/dividerat med fem är (lika med) fem
$2^2 = 4$	$2^2 = 4$	<b>kvadraten på två är fyra</b>
$10^3 = 1000$	$10^3 = 1000$	<b>tio upphöjt till tre är (lika med) tusen</b>
$\sqrt{16} = 4$	$\sqrt{16} = 4$	<b>roten/kvadratroten ur sexton är</b>
$5 \text{ m}^2$	$5 \text{ m}^2/5 \text{ sq.m.}$	<b>fem kvadratmeter</b>
$5 \text{ m}^3$	$5 \text{ m}^3/5 \text{ cu.m.}$	<b>fem kubikmeter</b>
%	%	<b>procent</b>
‰	‰	<b>promille</b>

- (b) Some other points to note are that Swedish uses a decimal comma, **decimalkomma**, where English has a decimal point (13.1.2.10(a)) and a space or full stop to separate thousands and millions, etc. in numbers written in figures, not a comma as in English. See 13.1.2.10 (b). Note also that the English multiplication sign  $\times$  is generally used in Swedish only as measurement of area:  $200 \times 45 \text{ mm}$ , ‘200 mm by 45 mm’.

## 4.3 The use of ordinal numbers

### 4.3.1 Notes on the use of ordinal numbers

#### 4.3.1.1

Ordinal numbers are found with the front article, or after a possessive or noun in the –s genitive form. See also, however, 2.3.8.1(e).

<b>Det är den första i dag.</b>	It is the first (of the month) today.
<b>Det var Majas andra försök.</b>	It was Maja’s second attempt.
<b>Vi väntar vårt tredje barn.</b>	We are expecting our third child.

The front article is often omitted before an ordinal in a noun phrase in the definite form:

<b>Tredje gången gillt.</b>	Third time lucky.
<b>Vi bor på sjätte våningen.</b>	We live on the sixth floor.

### **Efter (det) fjärde försöket gav han upp.**

After the fourth attempt he gave up.

#### 4.3.1.2

In **första**, **andra** (and compounds ending in **–första**, **–andra**) the **–a** is often replaced by an **–e** when referring to males. See 2.3.3.7.

**förste stadsläkare**                      principal medical officer [in a town]

All other ordinals have one form only, ending in **–e**.

#### 4.3.1.3

**Andra** meaning ‘second’ should not be confused with **andra** (the definite form of **annan**) meaning ‘other’ (3.9.9). Compare the following:

**Många har en andra bil.**                      Many people have a second car.  
**Vi har sålt den andra bilen.**                      We have sold the other car.

#### 4.3.1.4

Notice that ‘firstly’, ‘secondly’, ‘thirdly’ = **för det första**, **för det andra**, **för det tredje**.

#### 4.3.1.5

Ordinal numbers (frequently written in figures) are used in the names of kings, popes, etc.:

**Erik den fjortonde**                      (King) Erik XIV  
**Benedictus XVI/den sextonde** (Pope) Benedict XVI

#### 4.3.1.6

In contrast to English usage, Swedish uses ordinal numbers to indicate frequency of occurrence. See also 3.9.2.1.

**en gång var femte dag**                      once every five days



Notice, however:

**varannan vecka**

every two weeks See 3.9.3.

#### 4.3.1.7

**1:a, 2:a, 3:e** are common abbreviations for **första, andra, tredje** and this series may be extended: **101:a, 225:e**. The colon and the final letter of the ordinal number may be omitted if the context makes it clear that an ordinal number is being used. See also 4.5.2.1(c,d).

**3 pers. pres. = tredje person presens**

3rd person present tense

**21 lönegraden = tjugoförsta lönegraden**

the 21st point on the salary scale

#### 4.3.1.8

Most fractions are formed from ordinal numbers (4.4.1). The following nouns are also derived from ordinal numbers. See also 4.2.2.2.

**ett årtionde**

a decade

**ett århundrade**

a century

**ett årtusende**

a millennium

#### 4.3.1.9

Note the following differences in use of ordinals in Swedish and English:

**ettans/tvåans växel**

first/second gear

**första sidan**

the front page

**vid första bästa tillfälle**

at the first available opportunity

**Vad heter du i förnamn?**

What's your first name?

**Ta sakerna i tur och ordning.**

First things first.

**min näst bästa kostym**

my second best suit

**Tänk inte närmare på det.**

Don't give it a second thought.

## 4.4 Fractions

### 4.4.1 Fractions formed from ordinal numbers

The numerator in Swedish fractions is a cardinal number and the denominator is an ordinal number to which is added the noun suffix **-del** (**en del** = ‘a part’, ‘share’).

$\frac{1}{4}$  = **en fjärdedel**  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  = **tre fjärdedelar**  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  l. = **en fjärdedels liter**

However, in ordinals ending in **-onde** (4.1.1), the **-de** ending of the ordinal is assimilated: **en åttondel**, 1/8; **tre tiondelar**, 3/10; **en tjugondel**, 1/20; etc.

In fractions constructed from ordinals such as **tjugoförsta**, **trettioandra**, etc. the suffixes **-första**, **-andra** are replaced by **-ente-** and **-tvåon-**:

**en tjugotentedel**, 1/21                      **en trettiotvåondel**, 1/32

Note – Swedish often uses fractions in examples such as the following where English has a cardinal number:

**dela något i sjättedelar**                      divide something into six

### 4.4.2 ‘Half’, ‘one and a half’, ‘quarter’

#### 4.4.2.1 ‘Half’ = **halv**, **-t**, **-a** [adjective]

<b>en halv sida</b>	half a page Note word order
<b>halva sidan</b>	half (of) the page
<b>ett halvt äpple</b>	half an apple
<b>halva äpplet</b>	half (of) the apple
<b>en och en halv månad</b>	1½ months [ <i>lit.</i> ‘month’]
<b>ett och ett halvt år</b>	1½ years [ <i>lit.</i> ‘year’]
<b>två och en halv månad(er)</b>	2½ months
<b>Halva arbetsstyrkan måste gå.</b>	Half of the workforce must go.
<b>Klockan är halv tio.</b>	It’s half past nine. See 4.6.1f.

Note also the archaic forms **halvannan månad**, 1½ months; **halvtannat år**, 1½ years.

4.4.2.2 'Half' = **hälft**, **-en**, **-er** [noun]

**Hälften** is a non-neuter noun that means 'a/the half share of something'. It is most common in the definite form:

<b>hälften av hans pengar</b>	half (of) his money
<b>första hälften av boken</b>	the first half of the book
<b>ta hälften var</b>	take half each
<b>hälften så stor som</b>	half as big as
<b>Hälften av eleverna blev sjuka.</b>	Half of the pupils became ill.

Note plural adjective, see 2.2.4.

Note also the following:

<b>en halva brännvin</b>	a half bottle of schnapps
<b>dela något i två halvor</b>	divide something in half [lit. 'into two halves']

**Han gjorde fem mål i (den) första halvlek(en).**

He scored five goals in the first half (of the game).

4.4.2.3 'Half' = **halvt** [adverb]

<b>halvt vansinnig</b>	half insane
<b>halvt på skämt</b>	half jokingly, half in jest
<b>halvt om halvt lova något</b>	to half promise something

4.4.2.4 'A quarter'

'A quarter' may be rendered in Swedish by **en fjärdedel** or **en/ett kvarts**. In many instances these two alternatives are synonymous when followed by a noun. Note that the use **en** or **ett** before **kvarts** is governed by the gender of the following noun:

**en fjärdedels mil**, a quarter of a (Swedish) mile [approx. 1½ English miles]; **ett kvarts kilo kaffe**, ¼ kg of coffee; **ett kvarts sekel**, a quarter of a century; **en kvarts miljon människor**, a quarter of a million people; **tre kvarts/fjärdedels liter**, ¾ litre

But notice:

<b>en kvart</b>	a quarter of an hour
<b>trekvart</b>	three quarters of an hour
<b>dela något i fjärdedelar</b>	divide something into quarters

## 4.5 Dates

### 4.5.1 Years

#### 4.5.1.1

Years are most often written in figures in Swedish. See 12.4.2. However, when written in full they appear as one word. Swedish never omits the word **hundra** in year dates, and there is no equivalent in Swedish to the optional English ‘and’ in year dates. Usually **tusen** is used only in dates for the years 1000–1099. Usage varies between **hundra** and **tusen** when expressing year dates from 2000 to 2099:

**1984 = nittonhundraåttiofyra**      nineteen eighty-four  
**1295 = tolvhundra nittiofem**      twelve ninety-five

**Huset blir betalt först 2030 [tvåtusentrettio/tjugohundrettio].**  
The house will not be paid for until 2030.

For centuries see 4.2.2.2.

#### 4.5.1.2

The preposition ‘in’ before years in English has no equivalent in Swedish. See 7.3.4.4. However, before years expressed in numerals written Swedish frequently has **år**, ‘(in the) year’. This is almost invariably the case when such dates begin a sentence and is also common with small and round numbers. Year dates used with the noun **år** can take a genitive form.

**Sverige gick med i EU 1995.**      Sweden joined the EU in 1995.  
**År 1995 gick Sverige med i EU.** In 1995 Sweden joined the EU.  
**Island blev kristet år 1000.**      Iceland was Christianised in 1000.  
**2014 års val**      the election of 2014  
**1924 års olympiska mästare**      the Olympic champion of 1924

**år 9 f.Kr.** [före Kristus] / **f.v.t** [före vår tideräkning]  
In (the year) 9 BC/BCE

**år 35 e.Kr.** [efter Kristus] / **e.v.t** [efter vår tideräkning]  
In (the year) 35 AD/CE

### 4.5.1.3

The preposition ‘of’ before years in English has no equivalent in Swedish in expressions such as the following:

<b>sommaren 68</b>	the summer of 68
<b>julen 2012</b>	the Christmas of 2012
<b>storbranden 1864</b>	the great fire of 1864

### 4.5.1.4

Swedish uses an adjective construction where English has a noun construction in examples such as the following:

<b>en treårig kurs</b>	a three-year course
<b>en femårigt avtal</b>	a five-year agreement

## 4.5.2 *Months, weeks, days*

### 4.5.2.1 Months

(a) Months of the year do not have a capital letter in Swedish unless they begin a sentence:

**januari, februari, mars, april, maj, juni, juli, augusti, september, oktober, november, december**

(b) Months have non-neuter gender and do not possess a plural form. See 1.2.1.3.

**en kall januari**                      a cold January

(c) As in English the corresponding ordinal number is used to express the date in a particular month. Notice that Swedish does not generally indicate an equivalent for ‘th’, ‘rd’ or ‘st’ in English dates or for the word ‘of’ before the month in English idiom.

**den 3 [tredje] januari 2012**    3rd [the third of] January 2012

(d) The preposition ‘on’ before dates in English has no equivalent in Swedish. See 7.3.4.4.

**Han föddes den 12 maj.**                      He was born on the 12th of May.  
**Vi ses den nionde!**                         See you on the ninth!

(e) Swedish dates are usually written year-month-day **2013-10-04** or **4 oktober 2013**. See 13.3.

#### 4.5.2.2 Days

(a) Days of the week do not have a capital letter in Swedish unless they begin a sentence:

**söndag, måndag, tisdag, onsdag, torsdag, fredag, lördag**

(b) Days of the week are non-neuter second declensions nouns and possess a plural form in **–ar**. See 1.4.4.

**en helt vanlig måndag**                      a perfectly ordinary Monday  
**Jag avskyr fredagar.**                        I detest Fridays.

#### 4.5.2.3 Weeks

Frequent use is made of the fact that Swedish diaries and calendars generally number the weeks of the year for ease of reference:

**Jag är i Rom vecka 20.**                      I’m in Rome week 20. [i.e. mid-May]

#### 4.5.2.4

Note the difference in usage of Swedish plural and English singular forms in the following expressions. See also 4.5.1.4.

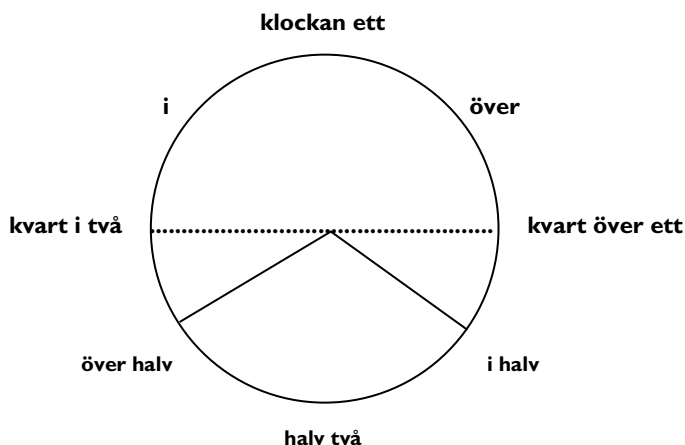
**en tvådagars kurs**                            a two-day course  
**en treveckors semester**                      a three-week holiday  
**ett sexmånaders avtal**                        a six-month contract

Note also:

**en tiominuters bilresa**                      a ten-minute car journey  
**ett femtimmars uppehåll**                      a five-hour stop

## 4.6 Telling the time

### 4.6.1 Clock time



#### 4.6.1.1 'What is the time?'

- (a) There are two important differences between the standard English and Swedish ways of telling time by the clock. As indicated by the diagram above, the first is that 'half past' an hour in English is always expressed as 'half (to)' the next hour in Swedish, although no preposition is used in Swedish. The second is that times between twenty-one minutes past the hour and twenty-one minutes to the hour are usually expressed as minutes before and after the half-hour. Note that in the examples that follow, the use of the word **minuter** is optional in most cases.

**Hur mycket är klockan?**

**Vad är klockan?**

**Klockan/Hon är ett.**

**Klockan är tolv.**

**Klockan är en minut över ett.**

**Klockan är fem över tre**

**Klockan är kvart över fem.**

**Klockan är fem (minuter) i halv sex.**

**Klockan är halv sex.**

**Klockan är åtta (minuter) över halv sex.**

What time is it?

What is the time?

It's one o'clock. (See 3.3.4.2 (c))

It's twelve o'clock.

It's one minute past one.

It's five past three.

It's (a) quarter past five.

It's twenty-five (minutes) past five.

It's half past five/It's five-thirty.

It's twenty-two (minutes) to six.

**Klockan är tjugo i sex.**  
**Klockan är kvart i sex.**

It's twenty to six.  
It's a quarter to six.

- (b) The word **en** is usually omitted before **kvart** in expressions like **kvart i fem**, **kvart över fyra**, etc.
- (c) The international 24-hour clock is used in Sweden. In contrast to English, Swedish inserts the word **och** between hours and minutes when expressing times with the 24-hour clock, except for exact hours. The words for hours and minutes are excluded:

**17.30 = sjutton och trettio**

5:30 p.m. [Cf. seventeen-thirty]

**17.00 = sjutton noll noll**

5:00 p.m. [Cf. seventeen oh-oh/  
seventeen hundred hours]

- (d) Note the following abbreviations:

**fm = förmiddag**

a.m.

**em = eftermiddag**

p.m.

**kl. = klockan X**

at X o'clock

**kl. 14.25**

at 14:25, at twenty-five past two

#### 4.6.1.2 'What time . . . ?'

The preposition 'at' before expressions of clock time in English has no equivalent in Swedish. For this reason **klockan** or, in written Swedish, its abbreviated form **kl.** is usually retained, unlike English 'o'clock':

**Hur dags går tåget?**

What time does the train leave?

**När går tåget?**

When does the train leave?

**Klockan elva och femtio.**

At eleven fifty.

**Klockan tio minuter i tolv.**

At ten to twelve.

**kl. 11.50**

(at) 11.50

**Möt mig klockan fem.**

Meet me at five (o'clock).

**Flyget lyfter klockan sju.**

The plane leaves at seven.

**Man åker 07.00 [noll sju noll noll] och är framme i Göteborg  
10.25 [tio och tjugofem].**

You leave at 07:00 and arrive in Gothenburg at 10:25.

Note – **Hur dags** is pronounced /hurdaːx/.



### 4.6.1.3

Some other useful expressions of time:

<b>vid ett-tiden</b>	around one (o'clock)
<b>vid halvtretiden</b>	around half (past) two
<b>Klockan/Hon är över tio.</b>	It is after ten.
<b>på slaget sex</b>	on the stroke of six
<b>prick åtta/på pricken åtta</b>	at eight o'clock sharp
<b>Klockan är mycket.</b>	It's (getting) late.
<b>ett dygn</b>	a day = a 24-hour period
<b>en halvtimme</b>	half an hour
<b>Min klocka går rätt/före/efter.</b>	My watch is right/fast/slow.
<b>i dag om åtta dagar</b>	one week today
<b>på måndag åtta dagar</b>	a week on Monday
<b>fjorton dagar</b>	a fortnight/two weeks

## Chapter 5

# Verbs

## 5.1 Form

### 5.1.1 Principal parts and generalised endings

#### 5.1.1.1 Principal parts

The principal parts of the verb (given below for the verb **arbeta**, ‘work’) are the most useful forms for learners to memorise, namely the three inflexional forms: infinitive, past and supine – since all the other forms may easily be derived from them. See 5.1.2–5.1.14.

#### Principal parts

<i>Infinitive</i>	<i>Past</i>	<i>Supine</i>
<b>arbeta</b>	<b>arbetade</b>	<b>arbetat</b>

#### Other forms

<i>Imperative</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Present participle</i>	<i>Past participle</i>
<b>arbeta!</b> neuter	<b>arbetar</b>	<b>arbetande</b>	<b>arbetad</b> non- <b>arbetat</b> neuter <b>arbetade</b> plural/def.

The *stem* is that part of the verb to which inflexional endings (marked in italic in tables) are added. Swedish has both *vowel stems*:

<b>arbeta/</b> <b>sy/</b>	conjugation I conjugation III	work sew
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and *consonant stems*:

<b>kör/</b> <b>skriv/</b>	conjugation II conjugation IV	drive write
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The *supine* is indeclinable and used together with forms of the auxiliary verb **ha**, namely the infinitive form **ha** to form the perfect infinitive, the present **har** to form the perfect tense and the past **hade** to form the pluperfect tense. See 5.2.6f.

**Jag har/hade målat huset.** I have/had painted the house.

The *past participle* functions largely as an adjective and helps to form one type of passive construction. See 5.2.14, 5.5.6, 5.5.8f.

**Huset är målat.** The house is/has been painted.  
**Huset blev målat förra veckan.** The house was painted last week.

The *present participle* is most often used as an adjective or noun. See 5.2.15.

**Boken är en bitande satir.** The book is a biting satire.  
**Ej gående.** No pedestrians.

The infinitive functions either as a verb together with a modal auxiliary or as a noun. See 5.2.1.

**Vi ska spela fotboll.** We shall play football.  
**Att spela fotboll är kul.** Playing football is fun.

The simple tenses, namely present and past, are those indicated by inflexion alone, e.g. **gå**, go; **han går**, he goes; **han gick**, he went.

The complex tenses, namely the perfect and pluperfect, are those indicated by both inflexion and the use of an auxiliary verb, e.g. **att ha gått**, to have gone; **han har gått**, he has gone; **han hade gått**, he had gone.

### 5.1.1.2 Conjugations

The classification of Swedish verbs into four conjugations is an attempt to reduce and simplify a great number of different patterns of inflexion and variations of stem into a system it is possible to memorise. There are twenty-four such patterns in the summary in 5.1.14. The major division is into three conjugations of weak verbs (I, II, III) and one of strong verbs (IV). The division is made largely on the basis of the past tense form, as in English: ‘work’ is a weak verb (‘works, worked’, cf. **arbetar, arbetade**); ‘drink’ is a strong verb (‘drinks, drank’, cf. **dricker, drack**). Weak verbs in Swedish add an inflexional ending to the stem. Strong verbs in Swedish add no inflexional ending in the past, but change the stem vowel.

## Weak past tenses

Conjugation	Infinitive	Past	Meaning
I	<b>arbeta/</b>	<b>arbetade</b>	work/worked
IIa	<b>kör/a</b>	<b>körde</b>	drive/drove
IIb	<b>köp/a</b>	<b>köpte</b>	buy/bought
III	<b>sy/</b>	<b>sydde</b>	sew/sewed

## Strong past tenses

Conjugation	Infinitive	Past	Meaning
IV	<b>bit/a</b> <b>bjöd/a</b>	<b>bet</b> <b>bjöd</b>	bite/bit invite/invited

About seventy per cent of Swedish verbs in written texts belong to Conjugation I, and this is a growing group; about twenty per cent belong to Conjugation II, one per cent to Conjugation III and twelve per cent to Conjugation IV, but strong verbs (Conjugation IV) are more frequent in actual use (at about thirty per cent) than one might assume from this.

### 5.1.1.3 Generalised endings

It is possible to arrive at a generalised pattern of endings for Swedish verbs. The supine generally provides the most reliable indicator of conjugation.

Infinitive : vowel, usually <b>-a</b>	Present: <b>-r</b>	Past: <b>-de/-te, 0</b>
<b>-a</b> I, II, IV	<b>-ar</b> I <b>-er</b> II, IV	<b>-ade</b> I consonant <b>-de</b> IIa
other vowel III, IV	other vowel <b>-r</b> (IIa), III, IV	consonant <b>-te</b> IIb vowel <b>-dde</b> (IIa), III vowel change IV
Supine: <b>-t</b>	Past participle: <b>d/-t/en</b>	Present Participle: <b>-nde</b>
<b>-at</b> I consonant <b>-t</b> II vowel <b>-tt</b> III, II (vowel change) <b>-it</b> IV	<b>-ad</b> I consonant <b>-d</b> IIa consonant <b>-t</b> IIb vowel <b>-dd</b> III, II, IV (vowel change) <b>-en</b> IV	<b>-ande</b> II, IV <b>-ende</b> III

Other forms dealt with in subsequent paragraphs are: subjunctives in 5.3.3, **-s** forms in 5.5.1f., the now virtually extinct plural forms in 5.1.17 and particle verbs in 5.6.3ff.

## 5.1.2 First conjugation

### 5.1.2.1 Frequency

The first conjugation contains most verbs in Swedish, approximately two-thirds of all verbs and half of frequent verbs. It is the conjugation to which all new verbs belong, i.e. all new verbs with stems in **-a**:

**jobba**, work; **lif**, hitch a lift; **mejla**, (send an) e-mail; **shoppa**, shop;  
**surfa**, surf the internet; **texta**, send a text message

### 5.1.2.2 Main paradigm

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine participle	Past participle	Present	Meaning
<b>visa/</b>	<b>visa/r</b>	<b>visa/de</b>	<b>visa/t</b>	<b>visa/d</b>	<b>visa/nde</b>	show
<b>citera/</b>	<b>citera/r</b>	<b>citera/de</b>	<b>citera/t</b>	<b>citera/d</b>	<b>citera/nde</b>	quote

### 5.1.2.3 Form

The infinitive = the stem. To the stem – which always ends in **-a** – are added the endings **-r** (present), **-de** (past), **-t** (supine), **-d** (past participle – this form also inflects for number and gender: see 5.2.14), **-nde** (present participle). The inflexion of the first conjugation is the most regular of all.

### 5.1.2.4 Colloquial pronunciation

In colloquial Swedish the **-de/-t** ending is often omitted in pronunciation of the past and supine in Central and Northern Sweden:

**Vet ni vad han berättat då?**      Do you know what he said then?  
**Palm har ropat revolution.**      Palm has proclaimed the revolution.

### 5.1.2.5 Verbs in **-era**

All verbs ending in **-era** belong to this conjugation, including for example:

**acceptera**, accept; **analysera**, analyse; **citera**, quote, **decentralisera**,

decentralise; **existera**, exist; **fundera**, think; **hantera**, manage; **identifiera**, identify; **konstatera**, state; **motionera**, exercise; **organisera**, organise; **parkera**, park; **prenumerera**, subscribe; **rationalisera**, rationalise; **variera**, vary

#### 5.1.2.6 Frequent verbs

Some of the most frequent verbs of the first conjugation (not ending in **-era**) are, in order of frequency:

**visa**, show; **fråga**, ask; **börja**, begin; **tala**, speak; **mena**, mean; **berätta**, tell; **verka**, appear; **bruka**, usually do; **spela**, play; **bygga**, build; **skapa**, create; **rätta**, correct; **kosta**, cost; **kalla**, call; **räkna**, calculate; **arbeta**, work; **sakna**, miss; **lämna**, leave; **vänta**, wait; **handla**, shop; **svara**, answer; **öka**, increase; **betrakta**, look at; **förklara**, explain; **öppna**, open

### 5.1.3 *Second conjugation*

#### 5.1.3.1 Frequency

Approximately 300 simple verbs and a number of compound verbs belong to this conjugation. No new verbs are being added to this group.

#### 5.1.3.2 Form

Second conjugation verbs possess a stem ending in a consonant. There are two main types: verbs with stems ending in voiced consonants and those with stems ending in voiceless consonants.

Verbs ending in voiced consonants are called IIa verbs (5.1.3.3); those ending in voiceless consonants are called IIb verbs (5.1.3.4). As shown below, each of these main divisions is further subdivided. The second conjugation is a large and complex group of frequent verbs. The infinitive = consonant stem + **a**. To the stem are added the endings **-er** (present), **-de/-te** (past), **-t** (supine), **-d/-t** (past participle – NB. This form also inflects for number and gender: see 5.2.14), **-ande** (present participle).

5.1.3.3 Ila: Main paradigm

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>häll/a</b>	<b>häll/er</b>	<b>häll/de</b>	<b>häll/t</b>	<b>häll/d</b>	<b>häll/ande</b>	pour

These verbs have stems in **-d, -g, -gg, -j, -l, -ll, -m, -mm, -n, -nn, -r, -v**, i.e. the voiced consonants. The past tense ends in **-de** and the past participle in **-d** (NB. This form also inflects for number and gender: see 5.2.14). There are some other important variations on the main paradigm; see (b)–(h) below.

Note – Two verbs with a stem in **-l** have no present tense ending; see (e) below.

(a) Stems ending in:

- g:** **hänga**, hang; **ringa**, ring; **slänga**, throw; **stänga**, close; **väga**, weigh; **äga**, own
- gg:** **bygga**, build; **tigga**, beg
- j:** **avslöja**, reveal **böja**, bend; **dröja**, delay; **nöja sig med**, be pleased with; **röja**, clear (but see also (h) below);
- l:** **anmäla**, report; **kyla**, chill (but see (e) below)
- ll:** **fylla**, fill; **gälla**, apply to; **skylla**, blame; **ställa**, place
- m:** **döma**, judge; **värma**, heat
- n:** **nämna**, mention
- v:** **leva**, live; **väva**, weave

(b) Stems in **-r**, see 5.1.13.

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>kör/a</b>	<b>kör/</b>	<b>kör/de</b>	<b>kör/t</b>	<b>kör/d</b>	<b>kör/ande</b>	drive

These verbs assimilate the **-er** ending in the present tense, and thus present tense = stem:

**begära**, desire; **föra**, lead; **hyra**, rent; **höra**, hear; **lära**, learn; **nära**, nourish; **röra**, move; **styra**, govern; **störa**, disturb; **tära**, consume

(c) Stems in vowel + **d**:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>tyd/a</b>	<b>tyd/er</b>	<b>tyd/de</b>	<b>ty/tt</b>	<b>tyd/d</b>	<b>tyd/ande</b>	interpret

These double the **-d** and shorten the vowel in the past tense and past participle according to the main paradigm, but also lose the **-d** and double the **-t** in the supine:

**antya**, hint; **betyda**, mean; **föda**, give birth; **glöda**, glow

Note – **breda**, spread; **kläda**, clothe; **råda**, advise; **späda**, dilute; **träda**, step also possess short infinitive, imperative and present tense forms e.g. **klä**, **klä!**, **klär**, etc. These verbs can therefore be classified as third conjugation. See 5.1.6, 5.1.5.2.

(d) Stems in consonant + **d**:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>vänd/a</b>	<b>vänd/er</b>	<b>vänd/e</b>	<b>vän/t</b>	<b>vänd</b>	<b>vänd/ande</b>	turn

These verbs assimilate the **-d** of the past tense **-de** ending and drop the stem **-d** in the supine. In the past participle the **-d** is assimilated:

**anlända**, arrive; **använda**, use; **hända**, happen; **sända**, send; **tända**, ignite; **vända**, turn

(e) Two verbs with stems in **-l** cf. 5.1.11f.:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>mal/a</b>	<b>mal/</b>	<b>mal/de</b>	<b>mal/t</b>	<b>mal/t</b>	<b>mal/ande</b>	grind
<b>tål/a</b>	<b>tål/</b>	<b>tål/de</b>	<b>tål/t</b>	<b>tål/d</b>	<b>tål/ande</b>	endure

These verbs possess an unusual present tense form without an **-r** ending.



(f) Stems in **-mm**:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>glömm/a</b>	<b>glömm/er</b>	<b>glöm/de</b>	<b>glöm/t</b>	<b>glöm/d</b>	<b>glömm/ande</b>	forget

These verbs drop one **-m** in the past tense, supine and past participle. See 12.2.2.1.

**bestämma**, decide; **drömma**, dream; **gömma**, conceal; **klämma**, squeeze; **rymma**, run away; **skrämma**, frighten; **tömma**, empty

(g) Stems in **-nn**:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>känn/a</b>	<b>känn/er</b>	<b>kän/de</b>	<b>kän/t</b>	<b>kän/d</b>	<b>känn/ande</b>	know

These verbs drop one **-n** in the past, supine and past participle. See 12.2.2.1.

**bränna**, burn; **erkänna**, admit; **påminna**, remind; **spänna**, stretch

(h) Stems in a short mutated vowel with intrusive **-j** in the infinitive and present tense, and a long vowel in other tenses:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>välj/a</b>	<b>välj/er</b>	<b>val/de</b>	<b>val/t</b>	<b>val/d</b>	<b>välj/ande</b>	choose

**dölja**, conceal; **kvälja**, nauseate; **skilja**, separate; **smörja**, grease; **vänja**, accustom

(j) Stems in a mutated vowel in the infinitive and present only:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>bör/a</b>	<b>bör/</b>	<b>bor/de</b>	<b>bor/t</b>	–	–	ought

Verbs like **böra** with stems in **-r** assimilate the **-er** in the present. Cf. (b) above.

**töras**, dare [Deponent, see also 5.5.4].

5.1.3.4 Ilb: Main paradigm

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>köp/a</b>	<b>köp/er</b>	<b>köp/te</b>	<b>köp/t</b>	<b>köp/t</b>	<b>köp/ande</b>	buy

These verbs have stems ending in **-k**, **-ck**, **-n**, **-p**, **-pp**, **-s**, **-ss**, **-t**, **-x**, i.e. largely the voiceless consonants. The past tense ends in **-te** and the past participle in **-t**. (NB. This form also inflects for number: see 5.2.14.)

Some verbs with stems in a consonant **+n** are IIa, see 5.1.3.3(a) above.

(a) Examples:

- k -ck**: **leka**, play; **märka**, notice; **rycka**, snatch; **räcka**, reach; **röka**, smoke; **skänka**, donate; **släcka**, extinguish; **steka**, fry; **styrka**, support; **stärka**, strengthen; **söka**, seek; **trycka**, press; **tycka**, think; **täcka**, cover; **tänka**, think; **väcka**, waken; **åka**, travel
- n**: **begynna**, begin; **kröna**, crown; **röna**, experience; **syna**, inspect
- p**: **hjälpa**, help; **köpa**, buy; **löpa**, run; **skärpa**, sharpen
- pp**: **klippa**, cut; **knäppa**, button; **släppa**, release;
- s**: **resa**, travel; **frysa**, freeze; **låsa**, lock; **läsa**, read; **lösa**, solve
- ss**: **kyssa**, kiss
- x**: **växa**, grow. See also 5.1.4, 5.1.16.5.

(b) Verbs with stems ending in a vowel **+t**, whilst inflecting according to this paradigm, shorten the stem vowel in the past tense, supine and past participle forms (cf. also stems ending in consonant **+t** in (c) below):

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>möt/a</b>	<b>möt/er</b>	<b>möt/te</b>	<b>möt/t</b>	<b>möt/t</b>	<b>möt/ande</b>	meet

Examples:

**byta**, exchange; **mäta**, measure; **sköta**, look after; **stöta**, prod

(c) Special cases with deviant forms are stems in consonant +t:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>mist/a</b>	<b>mist/er</b>	<b>mist/e</b>	<b>mist/</b>	<b>mist/</b>	<b>mist/ande</b>	lose

The –t is assimilated in the past tense, supine and past participle:

**fästa**, fix; **gifta**, get married; **lyfta**, lift; **smälta**, melt. Also: **vetta**, face onto. See also 5.1.16.2.

#### 5.1.4 Irregular verbs of the second conjugation

Some verbs conform broadly to the inflexion of the second conjugation (with largely regular present tense and past tense forms) but possess one or more irregular forms. A hyphen before a past participle form in the table below indicates that it usually only occurs as a compound.

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>glädja</b>	<b>gläder</b>	<b>gladde</b>	<b>glatt</b>	–	please
<b>göra</b>	<b>gör</b>	<b>gjorde</b>	<b>gjort</b>	<b>gjord</b>	do, make
<b>gitta</b>	<b>gitter</b>	<b>gitte</b>	<b>gittat</b>	–	be bothered
<b>ha</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>hade</b>	<b>haft</b>	<b>-havd</b>	have
<b>heta</b>	<b>heter</b>	<b>hette</b>	<b>hetat</b>	–	be called
<b>kunna</b>	<b>kan</b>	<b>kunde</b>	<b>kunnat</b>	–	can, be able
<b>lägga</b>	<b>lägger</b>	<b>la(de) /la/</b>	<b>lagt /lakt/</b>	<b>lagd</b>	lay, place
–	<b>måste</b>	<b>måste</b>	<b>måst</b>	–	must, have to
<b>skilja</b>	<b>skiljer</b>	<b>skilde</b>	<b>skilt</b>	<b>skild</b>	separate, part
<b>skola</b>	<b>ska(II)</b>	<b>skulle</b>	<b>skolat</b>	–	shall, will
<b>stöd(j)a</b>	<b>stöd(j)er</b>	<b>stödde</b>	<b>stött</b>	<b>stödd</b>	support
See 5.1.16.4					
<b>säga</b>	<b>säger</b>	<b>sa(de) /sa/</b>	<b>sagt /sakt/</b>	<b>sagd</b>	say
<b>sälja</b>	<b>säljer</b>	<b>sälde</b>	<b>sålt</b>	<b>såld</b>	sell
<b>sätta</b>	<b>sätter</b>	<b>satte</b>	<b>satt</b>	<b>satt</b>	place
<b>(varda)</b>	<b>(varder)</b>	<b>vart</b>	–	<b>(vorden)</b>	be, become
See note 5					
<b>veta</b>	<b>vet</b>	<b>visste</b>	<b>vetat</b>	–	know
<b>vilja</b>	<b>vill</b>	<b>ville</b>	<b>velat</b>	–	want
<b>välja</b>	<b>väljer</b>	<b>valde</b>	<b>valt</b>	<b>vald</b>	choose
<b>vänja</b>	<b>vänjer</b>	<b>vande</b>	<b>vant</b>	<b>vand</b>	grow accustomed
<b>växa</b>	<b>växer</b>	<b>växte</b>	<b>växt</b>		grow
See 5.1.16.5					
			<b>vuxit</b>	<b>vuxen</b>	

Note 1 – Some grammars either have a separate group for all irregular verbs or group all strong and irregular verbs together.

Note 2 – Today the written form **sade** is perceived as old-fashioned in certain texts and **sa** is increasingly regarded as stylistically more neutral. As regards **lägga** on the other hand **lade** remains the usual form in written Swedish.

Note 3 – The verbs **kunna**, **skola**, **vilja**, **veta** are modal auxiliary verbs (see also 5.3.2).

Note 4 – The forms **skola** and **skolat** are rarely used nowadays.

Note 5 – **Varda**, **varder** and **vorden** are rarely used. But see 5.5.8 Note.

### 5.1.5 Third conjugation

#### 5.1.5.1 Frequency

About forty single verbs and some derivatives and compound verbs belong to this conjugation. The conjugation is no longer productive, except for compounds, e.g. **skräddarsy**, tailor-make.

#### 5.1.5.2 Main paradigm

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Present participle	Meaning
<b>sy</b>	<b>sy/r</b>	<b>sy/dde</b>	<b>sy/tt</b>	<b>sy/dd</b>	<b>sy/ende</b>	sew

The stem ends in a stressed vowel other than **-a**. As in the first conjugation the infinitive = the stem. Endings are **-r** (present), **-dde** (past), **-tt** (supine), **-dd** (past participle) and **-ende** (present participle). The vowel is long in the infinitive but is shortened in the past, supine and past participle. (NB. This last form also inflects for number and gender: see 5.2.14.) The stem vowels involved are:

- e: **bete sig**, behave; **förete**, show; **ske**, occur; **te (sig)**, appear
- o: **anfötrto**, confide; **bo**, live; **bero**, depend; **glo**, stare; **gno**, rub; **gro**, sprout; **ro**, row; **sno**, twist; **tro**, believe
- y: **avsky**, detest; **bry sig**, care; **fly**, flee; **gry**, dawn; **spy**, vomit
- å: **flå**, flay; **förebå**, reproach; **förmå**, be capable of; **klå**, thrash; **må**, feel; **nå**, reach; **spå**, predict; **så**, sow; **åtrå**, desire
- ö: **förströ**, entertain; **strö**, sprinkle

Note – The third conjugation also includes the deponent verb **brås (på)**, ‘take after’. See 5.5.4.

### 5.1.6 Irregular verbs of the third conjugation

Some verbs conform broadly to the inflexion of the third conjugation (with largely regular present, supine and past participle forms) but possess one or more irregular forms. These irregular forms are marked \* in the table. A hyphen before a past participle form in the table below indicates that it usually only occurs in a compound.

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
be*	ber*	bad*	bett	-bedd	ask
dö	dör	dog*	dött	–	die
få	får	fick*	fått	–	get, receive
ge*	ger*	gav*	gett/givit*	given*	give
gå	går	gick*	gått	–	walk, go
le	ler	log*	lett	–	smile
se	ser	såg*	sett	sedd	see
stå	står	stod*	stått	-stådd	stand
förstå	förstår	förstod*	förstått	förstådd	understand
påstå	påstår	påstod*	påstått	påstådd	assert
klä(da)*	klä(de)r*	klädde	klätt	klädd	dress
bre(da)*	bre(de)r*	bredde	brett	bredd	spread
rå(da)*	rå(de)r*	rådde	rätt	rådd	advise
spä(da)*	spä(de)r*	spädde	spätt	spädd	dilute
trä(da)*	trä(de)r*	trädde	trätt	-trädd	step

Note 1 – These irregular verbs are sometimes classified as Conjugation IV.

Note 2 – In colloquial Swedish **stod** is sometimes pronounced /stog/.

Note 3 – The last five of these irregular verbs may be variously classified, see also 5.1.15.2.

### 5.1.7 Fourth conjugation

#### 5.1.7.1 Frequency

About 130 verbs belong to the fourth conjugation. There are few strong verbs, but many are of high frequency.

### 5.1.7.2 Form

Nearly all strong verbs have stems ending in a consonant, and their infinitives have a consonant stem **+a**. The present tense ends in **-er**, the supine in **-it**, the past participle in **-en** and present participle in **-ande**. (A very few verbs have supines in **-t/-tt** and one, **ligga**, has a supine in **-at**.) There is no inflexional ending for the past tense. What nearly all these verbs have in common is that they form the past tense form by changing the stem vowel, which may be changed again in the supine (but see 5.1.13). The same vowel is often found for the infinitive and present and for the supine and past participle.

Strong verbs are sub-divided into groups possessing the same vowel gradation series, i.e. the same vowels in the same principal parts. In the following lists arranged alphabetically within each gradation series, the irregular forms are marked \*. A hyphen before a past participle form in the table below indicates that it usually only occurs as a compound.

### 5.1.8 Fourth conjugation: gradation series *i – e – i – i*

Infinitive Present	Past	Supine	Past part.	Meaning	
<b>bita</b>	<b>biter</b>	<b>bet</b>	<b>bitit</b>	<b>biten</b>	bite
<b>bli*</b>	<b>blir*</b>	<b>blev</b>	<b>blivit</b>	<b>bliven</b>	be, become
<b>driva</b>	<b>driver</b>	<b>drev</b>	<b>drivit</b>	<b>driven</b>	drive, drift
<b>glida</b>	<b>glider</b>	<b>gled</b>	<b>glidit</b>	–	glide
<b>gnida</b>	<b>gnider</b>	<b>gned</b>	<b>gnidit</b>	<b>gniden</b>	rub
<b>gripa</b>	<b>griper</b>	<b>grep</b>	<b>gripit</b>	<b>gripen</b>	catch
<b>kliva</b>	<b>kliver</b>	<b>klev</b>	<b>klivit</b>	–	step, climb
<b>knipa</b>	<b>kniper</b>	<b>knep</b>	<b>knipit</b>	<b>knipen</b>	pinch
<b>kvida</b>	<b>kvider</b>	<b>kved/ kvidde</b>	<b>kvidit</b>	–	whimper
<b>lida</b>	<b>lider</b>	<b>led</b>	<b>lidit</b>	<b>-liden</b>	suffer
<b>niga</b>	<b>niger</b>	<b>neg</b>	<b>nigit</b>	–	curtsy
<b>pipa</b>	<b>piper</b>	<b>pep</b>	<b>pipit</b>	–	chirp
<b>rida</b>	<b>rider</b>	<b>red</b>	<b>ridit</b>	<b>riden</b>	ride
<b>riva</b>	<b>river</b>	<b>rev</b>	<b>rivit</b>	<b>riven</b>	tear, demolish
<b>skina</b>	<b>skiner</b>	<b>sken</b>	<b>skinit</b>	–	shine
<b>skrida</b>	<b>skrider</b>	<b>skred</b>	<b>skridit</b>	<b>skriden</b>	glide
<b>skrika</b>	<b>skriker</b>	<b>skrek</b>	<b>skrikit</b>	<b>-skriken</b>	shout
<b>skriva</b>	<b>skriver</b>	<b>skrev</b>	<b>skrivit</b>	<b>skriven</b>	write
<b>slita</b>	<b>sliter</b>	<b>slet</b>	<b>slitit</b>	<b>sliten</b>	wear out
<b>smita</b>	<b>smiter</b>	<b>smet</b>	<b>smitit</b>	–	run away
<b>sprida</b>	<b>sprider</b>	<b>spred</b>	<b>spritt/ spridit</b>	<b>spridd</b>	spread
See also 5.1.16.1					
<b>stiga</b>	<b>stiger</b>	<b>steg</b>	<b>stigit</b>	–	step, climb
<b>strida</b>	<b>strider</b>	<b>stred /stridde</b>	<b>stridit/ stritt</b>	<b>-striden</b>	fight

<b>svida</b>	<b>svider</b>	<b>sved</b>	<b>svidit</b>	–	smart
<b>svika</b>	<b>sviker</b>	<b>svek</b>	<b>svikit</b>	<b>sviken</b>	fail, desert
<b>tiga</b>	<b>tiger</b>	<b>teg</b>	<b>tigit</b>	<b>-tegen</b>	be silent
See also 5.1.16.1					
<b>vika</b>	<b>viker</b>	<b>vek</b>	<b>vikit</b>	<b>viken</b>	fold, yield
<b>vina</b>	<b>viner</b>	<b>ven</b>	<b>vinit</b>	–	whine
<b>vrida</b>	<b>vrider</b>	<b>vred</b>	<b>vridit</b>	<b>vriden</b>	twist

**5.1.9** Fourth conjugation: gradation series *y/(j)u – ö – u – u*

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past part.	Meaning
<b>bjuda</b>	<b>bjuder</b>	<b>bjöd</b>	<b>bjudit</b>	<b>bjuden</b>	invite
<b>bryta</b>	<b>bryter</b>	<b>bröt</b>	<b>brutit</b>	<b>bruten</b>	break
<b>drypa</b>	<b>dryper</b>	<b>dröp</b>	<b>drupit/drypt</b>	–	drip
<b>duga</b>	<b>duger</b>	<b>dög</b>	<b>dugit</b>	–	be suitable
<b>flyga</b>	<b>flyger</b>	<b>flög</b>	<b>flugit</b>	<b>flugen</b>	fly
<b>flyta</b>	<b>flyter</b>	<b>flöt</b>	<b>flutit</b>	<b>-fluten</b>	float
<b>frysa</b>	<b>fryser</b>	<b>frös</b>	<b>frusit</b>	<b>frusen</b>	freeze [intr.], be cold
<b>gjuta</b>	<b>gjuter</b>	<b>göt*</b>	<b>gutit</b>	<b>guten</b>	cast [metal]
<b>hugga</b>	<b>hugger</b>	<b>högg</b>	<b>huggit</b>	<b>huggen</b>	chop
<b>klyva</b>	<b>klyver</b>	<b>klöv</b>	<b>kluvit</b>	<b>kluven</b>	split, cleave
<b>knyta</b>	<b>knyter</b>	<b>knöt</b>	<b>knutit</b>	<b>knuten</b>	tie, knot
<b>krypa</b>	<b>kryper</b>	<b>kröp</b>	<b>krupit</b>	<b>-krupen</b>	creep
<b>ljuda</b>	<b>ljuder</b>	<b>ljöd</b>	<b>ljudit</b>	–	sound
<b>ljuga</b>	<b>ljuger</b>	<b>ljög</b>	<b>ljugit</b>	<b>-ljugen</b>	tell a lie
<b>ljuta</b>	<b>ljuter</b>	<b>ljöt</b>	<b>ljutit</b>	–	suffer [death]
<b>njuta</b>	<b>njuter</b>	<b>njöt</b>	<b>njutit</b>	<b>-njuten</b>	enjoy
<b>nypa</b>	<b>nyper</b>	<b>nöp</b>	<b>nupit</b>	<b>nupen</b>	pinch
<b>ryta</b>	<b>ryter</b>	<b>röt</b>	<b>rutit</b>	–	roar
<b>sjuda</b>	<b>sjuder</b>	<b>sjöd</b>	<b>sjudit</b>	<b>sjuden</b>	simmer
<b>sjunga</b>	<b>sjunger</b>	<b>sjöng</b>	<b>sjungit</b>	<b>sjungen</b>	sing
<b>sjunka</b>	<b>sjunker</b>	<b>sjönk</b>	<b>sjunkit</b>	<b>sjunken</b>	sink [intr.]
<b>skjuta</b>	<b>skjuter</b>	<b>sköt*</b>	<b>skjutit</b>	<b>skjuten</b>	shoot
<b>skryta</b>	<b>skryter</b>	<b>skröt</b>	<b>skrutit</b>	<b>-skruten</b>	boast
<b>sluta</b>	<b>sluter</b>	<b>slöt</b>	<b>slutit</b>	<b>sluten</b>	close
<b>smyga</b>	<b>smyger</b>	<b>smög</b>	<b>smugit</b>	<b>-smugen</b>	slink
<b>snyta (sig)</b>	<b>snyter (sig)</b>	<b>snöt (sig)</b>	<b>snutit (sig)</b>	<b>snuten</b>	blow one's nose
<b>stryka</b>	<b>stryker</b>	<b>strök</b>	<b>strukit</b>	<b>struken</b>	stroke, delete
<b>suga</b>	<b>suger</b>	<b>sög</b>	<b>sugit</b>	<b>sugen</b>	suck
<b>supa</b>	<b>super</b>	<b>söp</b>	<b>supit</b>	<b>-supen</b>	drink alcohol
<b>tjuta</b>	<b>tjuter</b>	<b>tjöt</b>	<b>tjutit</b>	–	howl
<b>tryta</b>	<b>tryter</b>	<b>tröt</b>	<b>trutit</b>	–	run short

**5.1.10** *Fourth conjugation: gradation series i – a – u – u*

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>binda</b>	<b>binder</b>	<b>band</b>	<b>bundit</b>	<b>bunden</b>	bind, tie
<b>brinna</b>	<b>brinner</b>	<b>brann</b>	<b>brunnit</b>	<b>brunnen</b>	burn [intr.]
<b>brista</b>	<b>brister</b>	<b>brast</b>	<b>brustit</b>	<b>brusten</b>	burst
<b>dricka</b>	<b>dricker</b>	<b>drack</b>	<b>druckit</b>	<b>drucken</b>	drink
<b>finna</b>	<b>finner</b>	<b>fann</b>	<b>funnit</b>	<b>funnen</b>	find
<b>finnas</b>	<b>finns</b>	<b>fanns</b>	<b>funnits</b>	–	be
<b>förnimma</b>	<b>förnimmer</b>	<b>förnam</b>	<b>förnummit</b>	<b>förnummen</b>	perceive
<b>försvinna</b>	<b>försvinner</b>	<b>försvann</b>	<b>försvunnit</b>	<b>försvunnen</b>	disappear
<b>hinna</b>	<b>hinner</b>	<b>hann</b>	<b>hunnit</b>	–	have time
<b>rinna</b>	<b>rinner</b>	<b>rann</b>	<b>runnit</b>	<b>runnen</b>	run, flow
<b>sitta</b>	<b>sitter</b>	<b>satt</b>	<b>suttit</b>	<b>-sutten</b>	sit
<b>slinka</b>	<b>slinker</b>	<b>slank</b>	<b>slunkit</b>	–	slink
<b>slinta</b>	<b>slinter</b>	<b>slant</b>	–	–	slip
<b>slippa</b>	<b>slipper</b>	<b>slapp</b>	<b>sluppit</b>	<b>-sluppen</b>	avoid
<b>spinna</b>	<b>spinner</b>	<b>spann</b>	<b>spunnit</b>	<b>spunnen</b>	spin, purr
<b>spricka</b>	<b>spricker</b>	<b>sprack</b>	<b>spruckit</b>	<b>sprucken</b>	burst, crack
<b>springa</b>	<b>springer</b>	<b>sprang</b>	<b>sprungit</b>	<b>sprungnen</b>	run
<b>spritta</b>	<b>spritter</b>	<b>spratt</b>	–	–	give a start
<b>sticka</b>	<b>sticker</b>	<b>stack</b>	<b>stuckit</b>	<b>stucken</b>	prick, sting, run away
<b>stinga</b>	<b>stinger</b>	–	<b>stungit</b>	<b>stungen</b>	sting
<b>stinka</b>	<b>stinker</b>	<b>stank</b>	–	–	stink
<b>tvinga</b>	<b>tvingar*</b>	<b>tvang*</b>	<b>(tvungit)</b>	<b>tvungen</b>	force
See 5.1.16.7(d)					
<b>vinna</b>	<b>vinner</b>	<b>vann</b>	<b>vunnit</b>	<b>vunnen</b>	win

**5.1.11** *Fourth conjugation: gradation series a – o – a – a*

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>dra*</b>	<b>drar*</b>	<b>drog</b>	<b>dragit</b>	<b>dragen</b>	pull
<b>fara</b>	<b>far*</b>	<b>for</b>	<b>farit</b>	<b>-faren</b>	travel
<b>gala</b>	<b>gal*</b>	<b>gol</b>	<b>galit/galt</b>	–	crow
<b>ta* (taga)</b>	<b>tar*</b>	<b>tog</b>	<b>tagit</b>	<b>tagen</b>	take



### 5.1.12 Fourth conjugation: gradation series ä – a – u – u

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
bära	bär*	bar	burit	buren	carry
skära	skär*	skar	skurit	skuren	cut
stjåla	stjål*	stal	stulit	stulen	steal
svälta	svälter	svalt	svultit	svulten	starve [intr.]

### 5.1.13 Fourth conjugation: minor gradation series

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
falla	faller	föll	fallit	fallen	fall
hålla	håller	höll	hållit	hållen	hold
gråta	gråter	grät	gråtit	-gråten	weep
låta	låter	lät	låtut	-låten	allow
komma	kommer	kom	kommit	kommen	come
sova	sover	sov	sovit	–	sleep
ligga	ligger	låg	legat*	-legad	lie
slå*	slår*	slog	slagit	slagen	hit
slåss*	slåss*	slogs	slagits	–	fight
svära	svär*	svor	svurit	svuren	swear
vara	är*	var	varit	–	be
äta	äter	ät	ätit	-äten	eat

### 5.1.14 Verbs – forms: summary charts

(a) Weak verbs (excluding irregular verbs)

Conj.	Para.	Stems	Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle
I	5.1.2	–a	arbeta/	arbeta/r	arbeta/de	arbeta/t	arbeta/d
IIa	5.1.3.3	–g, –gg, –j, –l, –ll –m, –n	böj/a	böj/er	böj/de	böj/t	böj/d
	5.1.3.3(b)	–r	kör/a	kör/	kör/de	kör/t	kör/d
	5.1.3.3(d)	Vowel+d	betyd/a	betyd/er	betyd/de	bety/tt	betyd/d
	5.1.3.3(d)	Cons.+d	använd/a	använd/er	använd/de	använ/t	använd
	5.1.3.3(e)	–l	tål/a	tål/	tål/de	tål/t	tål/d
	5.1.3.3(f)	–mm	glömm/a	glömm/er	glöm/de	glöm/t	glöm/d

	5.1.3.3(g)	<b>-nn</b>	<b>känn/a</b>	<b>känn/er</b>	<b>kän/de</b>	<b>kän/t</b>	<b>kän/d</b>
	5.1.3.3(h)	<b>-j+mut-</b> ation in inf.	<b>välj/a</b>	<b>välj/er</b>	<b>val/de</b>	<b>val/t</b>	<b>val/d</b>
	5.1.3.3(i)	mutation in inf. and present	<b>bör/a</b>	<b>bör/</b>	<b>bor/de</b>	<b>bor/t</b>	
IIb	5.1.3.4(a)	<b>-k, l, -n,</b> <b>-p, -pp,</b> <b>-s, -ss, -x</b>	<b>köp/a</b>	<b>köp/er</b>	<b>köp/te</b>	<b>köp/t</b>	<b>köp/t</b>
	5.1.3.4(b)	Vowel +t	<b>möt/a</b>	<b>möt/er</b>	<b>möt/te</b>	<b>möt/t</b>	<b>möt/t</b>
	5.1.3.4(c)	Cons.+t	<b>mist/a</b>	<b>mist/er</b>	<b>mist/e</b>	<b>mist</b>	<b>mist</b>
III	5.1.5.2	Vowels other than <b>-a</b>	<b>sy/</b>	<b>sy/r</b>	<b>sy/dde</b>	<b>sy/tt</b>	<b>sy/dd</b>

(b) Strong verbs

Conj. Para.	Vowel change	Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past part.
IV 5.1.8	i e i i	bit/a/	bit/er	bet	bit/it	bit/en
5.1.9	y/(j)u ö u u	bjud/a	bjud/er	bjöd	bjud/it	bjud/en
5.1.10	i a u u	finn/a	finn/er	fann	funn/it	funn/en
5.1.11	a o a a	dra(ga)	dra/r	drog	drag/it	drag/en
5.1.12	ä a u u	bär/a	bär/	bar	bur/it	bur/en
5.1.13	a ö a a	fall/a	fall/er	föll	fall/it	fall/en
5.1.13	i ä e e	ligg/a	ligg/er	låg	leg/at	leg/ad
5.1.13	o o o o	komm/a	komm/er	kom	komm/it	komm/en
5.1.13	å ä ä ä	gråt/a	gråt/er	grät	gråt/it	gråt/en
5.1.13	ä ä ä ä	ät/a	ät/er	ät	ät/it	ät/en

**5.1.15** Long and short forms

5.1.15.1 Short forms

A number of frequent verbs possess shortened forms in the infinitive, present and imperative, while retaining the original longer form as an alternative that is now generally regarded as formal or archaic:

Infinitive	Present	Imperative	Past	Supine	Meaning
be (bedja)	ber (beder)	be (bed)	bad	bett	ask
dra (draga)	drar (drager)	dra (drag)	drog	dragit	pull
ta (taga)	tar (tager)	ta (tag)	tog	tagit	take
bli (bliva)	blir (bliver)	bli (bliv)	blev	blivit	be(come)
ge (giva)	ger (giver)	ge (giv)	gav	gett/givit	give
ha (hava)	har (haver)	ha (hav)	hade	haft	have

Note 1 – In colloquial Swedish there is often further syncope in forms of the supine of the above verbs: **dragit** → **dratt**, **tagit** → **tatt**, **blivit** → **blitt**. These forms are usually avoided in writing.

Note 2 – The longer forms are more frequently encountered in the integral forms of separable compound verbs (see 5.6,1, 5.6.3): **avtaga**, **bedraga**, **omgiva**, **utebliva**.

Note 3 – The longer forms are still found in religious language:

**”Gud som haver barnen kär ...”** ‘God who loves children ...’  
**Guds ord förbliver evinnerligen.** God’s words remain eternally.  
**de bedjande** those at prayer

### 5.1.15.2 Stem in –d

Second conjugation verbs with stems ending in a vowel + –d (5.1.3.3(c)) may in some cases drop this –d in the infinitive and present and are then classified as third conjugation. See also 5.1.6.

Infinitive	Present	Imperative	Past	Supine	Meaning
<b>klä (kläda)</b>	<b>klär (kläder)</b>	<b>klä (kläd)</b>	<b>klädde</b>	<b>klätt</b>	dress
<b>bre (breda)</b>	<b>brer (breder)</b>	<b>bre (bred)</b>	<b>bredde</b>	<b>brett</b>	spread
<b>rå (råda)</b>	<b>rår (råder)</b>	–	<b>rådde</b>	<b>rått</b>	advise
<b>trä (träda)</b>	<b>trär (träder)</b>	<b>trä (träd)</b>	<b>trädde</b>	<b>trätt</b>	step
<b>spä (späda)</b>	<b>spär (späder)</b>	<b>spä (späd)</b>	<b>spädde</b>	<b>spätt</b>	dilute

### 5.1.16 Verbs with alternative forms

#### 5.1.16.1

Some verbs may possess either (i) two distinct sets of principal parts, each belonging to a different conjugation, or (ii) differing forms within the same conjugation, or (iii) one part which varies. A hyphen before a past participle form in the table indicates that it usually only occurs in a compound.

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
(i) <b>sprida</b>	<b>sprider</b>	<b>spred (IV)</b> <b>spridde (II)</b>	<b>spridit (IV)</b> <b>spritt</b>	<b>spridd</b>	spread

(ii) <b>svälja</b>	<b>sväljer</b>	<b>svalde (II)</b> <b>sväljde (II)</b>	<b>svalt (II)</b> <b>sväljt (II)</b>	<b>svald (II)</b>	swallow
(iii) <b>tiga</b>	<b>tiger</b>	<b>teg</b>	<b>tigit (IV)</b> <b>tegat (I)</b>	<b>-tegen (IV)</b>	keep silent

Variations are often dialectal, poetic or archaic in nature. In the following paradigms the most usual form is given first.

#### 5.1.16.2 Either first or second conjugation in the past tense and supine

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>frälsa</b>	<b>frälsar (I)</b> <b>frälsar (II)</b>	<b>frälsade (I)</b> <b>frälste (II)</b>	<b>frälsat (I)</b> <b>frälst (II)</b>	<b>frälst</b>	save, redeem
<b>fästa</b>	<b>fästar (I)</b> <b>fäster (II)</b>	<b>fästade (I)</b> <b>fäste (II)</b>	<b>fästade (I)</b> <b>fäst (II)</b>	<b>fäst</b>	fasten, fix
<b>koka</b>	<b>kokar (I)</b>	<b>kokade (I)</b> <b>kokte (II)</b>	<b>kokat (I)</b> <b>kokt (II)</b>	<b>kokt</b>	boil

NB. Present tense in **-ar**.

Others: **mena**, mean (past part. **menad/ment**); **skapa**, create (past part. **skapad/skapt**); **spara**, save (pres. **sparar/spar**; past part. **sparad/spart**); **spela**, play (past part. **spelad/spelt**); **svara**, reply (past tense **svarade/svarte**)

Notice:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>betala</b>	<b>betalar</b>	<b>betalade (I)</b> <b>betalte (II)</b>	<b>betalat (I)</b> <b>betalt (II)</b>	<b>betalad (I)</b> <b>betald (II)</b>	pay
<b>bringa</b>	<b>bringar</b>	<b>bragte (II)</b> <b>bringade (I)</b>	<b>bragt (II)</b> <b>bringat (I)</b>		bring

**5.1.16.3** Either second or first conjugation in the past tense and supine

Infinitive Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning	
<b>mista</b>	<b>mister</b>	<b>miste (II)</b> <b>mistade (I)</b>	<b>mist (II)</b> <b>mistat (I)</b>	<b>mist (II)</b> <b>mistad (I)</b>	lose

NB. present tense in **-er**.

Others: **leva**, live (past **levde**)

**5.1.16.4** Variations within the second conjugation

(a) Alternative past tense, supine:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>förtälja</b>	<b>förtäljer</b>	<b>förtäljde</b> <b>förtalde</b>	<b>förtäljt</b> <b>förtalt</b>	<b>förtäljd</b> <b>förtald</b>	tell

Others: **svälja**, swallow; **tämja**, tame (past **tämjde/tämde**); **dväljas**, dwell (Deponent, see 5.5.4)

(b) Alternative present:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past participle	Meaning
<b>stöda</b> <b>stödja</b>	<b>stöder</b> <b>stödjer</b>	<b>stödde</b>	<b>stött</b>	<b>stödd</b>	support

**5.1.16.5** Second or fourth conjugation in the supine or past tense or both

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past part.	Meaning
<b>växa</b>	<b>växer</b>	<b>växte (II)</b>	<b>växt (II)</b> <b>vuxit (IV)</b>	<b>-växt (II)</b> <b>vuxen (IV)</b>	grow
<b>begrava</b>	<b>begraver</b>	<b>begravde (II)</b>	<b>begravt (II)</b>	<b>begravd</b> <b>begraven</b>	bury
<b>rysa</b>	<b>ryser</b>	<b>ryste (II)</b> <b>rös (IV)</b>	<b>ryst (II)</b>	<b>-</b>	shudder

<b>sprida</b>	<b>sprider</b>	<b>spridde (II)</b> <b>spred (IV)</b>	<b>spritt (II)</b> <b>spridit (IV)</b>	<b>spridd (II)</b>	spread
<b>duga</b>	<b>duger</b>	<b>dugde (II)</b>	<b>dugt (II)</b> <b>dög (IV)</b>	–	suit, suffice
<b>strypa</b>	<b>stryper</b>	<b>strypte (II)</b>	<b>strypt (II)</b> <b>ströp (IV)</b>	<b>strypt (II)</b>	throttle

Others:

Like **rysa**: **dyka**, dive; **fnysa**, snort; **lyda**, obey; **nysa**, sneeze (supine **nyst**)

Like **sprida**: **(be)strida**, dispute.

5.1.16.6 Either first or fourth conjugation in the past tense and supine

Infinitive Present	Past	Supine	Past part.	Meaning
<b>simma</b> <b>simmar (I)</b>	<b>simmade (I)</b> <b>sam (IV)</b>	<b>simmat (I)</b> <b>summit (IV)</b>	– <b>summen (IV)</b>	swim

Also: **stupa**, fall (past tense **stöp**)

5.1.16.7 Some difficult verbs

(a) **Sluta** – **slutade**, ‘finish’, is used intransitively:

**Dagen slutade med ett kallt öl.** The day ended with a cold beer.

**Sluta** – **slöt**, ‘close’, is used transitively.

**Hon slot sina ögon.** She closed her eyes.

(b) **Frysa** – **frös**, ‘freeze’, ‘feel cold’, is used intransitively:

**Jag stod och frös i en timme.** I stood feeling cold for an hour.

**Frysa** – **fryste (in/ner)**, ‘freeze’, is used transitively:

**Sedan fryste jag in blåbären.** Then I froze the bilberries.

(c) **Besluta**, ‘decide’, may be either Conj. I or Conj. IV:

**beslutade – beslutat (I)      beslöt – beslutit (IV)**

(d) **Tvinga**, ‘force’, has an alternative past participle: **tvingad** or **tvungen**.  
The forms **tvang – tvungit** are archaic:

**Jag är tvingad att stanna (av någon).**

I am forced to stop (by someone).

**Jag är tvungen att gå nu. = Jag måste gå nu.**

I am forced to/must go now.

### **5.1.17** *Plural forms*

#### **5.1.17.1** History and forms

Until the early 1900s written Swedish possessed a plural form for the tenses of the verb. Since that time these plural forms have gradually been abandoned, first in the spoken language, then in fiction in the early 1900s, then in 1945 in newspaper language, and post 1945 in legal and biblical language. With very few exceptions, what was previously the singular form is now used throughout the tense. However, some familiarity with plural forms facilitates the reading of older texts, and plurals are occasionally found in set expressions:

**Obehöriga äga ej tillträde**      No unauthorised admittance  
Compare modern Swedish **äger**.

In the passage below taken from the 1917 Bible translation (Luke 2, 8–10) the plural forms of the verbs have been italicised:

**I samma nejd voro då några herdar ute på marken och *höll* vakt om natten över sin hjord. Då stod en Herrens ängel framför dem, och Herrens härlighet kringstrålade dem; och de *blevo* mycket förskräckta. Men ängeln sade till dem: »Varen icke förskräckta».**

The table below gives the now archaic plural forms in brackets after their present-day equivalents.

Conj. I	Conj. II	Conj. III	Conj. IV	Plural ending
Present tense				
1st person				
<b>vi kallar (kalla)</b>	<b>köper (köpa)</b>	<b>tror (tro)</b>	<b>skriver (skriva)</b>	= infinitive
2nd person				
<b>ni kallar (I kallen)</b>	<b>köper (köpen)</b>	<b>tror (tron)</b>	<b>skriver (skriven)</b>	= stem +n/en
3rd person				
<b>de kallar (kalla)</b>	<b>köper (köpa)</b>	<b>tror (tro)</b>	<b>skriver (skriva)</b>	= infinitive
Notice the exception <b>är (äro)</b>				
Past tense				
1st person				
–	–	–	<b>vi skrev (skrevo)</b> <b>vi drack (drucko)</b>	past sing. +o vowel change+o See 5.1.17.2f.
2nd person				
<b>ni kallade (I kalladen)</b>	<b>köpte (köpten)</b>	<b>trodde (trodden)</b>	<b>skrev (skreven)</b> <b>drack (druckten)</b>	past sing. +en/n
3rd person				
–	–	–	<b>de skrev (skrevo)</b> <b>de drack (drucko)</b>	past sing. +o vowel change See 5.1.17.2f.
<b>+o</b> Notice: <b>var (voro)</b>				
Imperative				
1st person				
<b>tacka (tackom)* följ (följom)*</b>			–	<b>låt (låtom)*</b> stem +om
2nd person				
<b>kalla (kallen)</b>	<b>köp (köpen)</b>	<b>tro (tron)</b>	<b>skriv (skriven)</b>	stem +en/n

\* These forms corresponded roughly to ‘Let us...’ in English:

**Tackom och lovom**

Let us give thanks and praise

See 5.3.4.1 Note.

### 5.1.17.2 Strong and irregular verbs

In the past tense the plural forms of some strong and irregular verbs show a change of root vowel from the singular forms:

short **a** → short **u**

**brann (brunno), fann (funno)**

long **a** → long **u**

**skar (skuro), bar (buro)**



long a → long å  
long a → long o

**bad (bådo), gav (gåvo)**  
**var (voro)**

### 5.1.17.3 Irregular plural forms

Notice also the following irregular plural forms in the past tense:

**fick (fingo), gick (gingo)**

## 5.2 The use of the tenses

### 5.2.1 The infinitive – major uses

For form see 5.1.1. The infinitive is the basic form of the verb and its dictionary form. It is inflexible, but is often preceded by the particle **att** (often pronounced /å/). The infinitive is not identical in form to the stem (5.1.1). Note that some verbs have no infinitive form, e.g. **lär, må, måste**. See 5.3.2.1. Sometimes the distinction is made between the present infinitive, e.g. **att köpa**, ‘to buy’, and the perfect infinitive, e.g. **att ha köpt**, ‘to have bought’. The infinitive can take an **-s** passive ending. See 5.5.1.

#### 5.2.1.1 Verbal use

The following types of two-verb constructions involve the infinitive without **att**:

- (a) Infinitive after modal auxiliaries: **kunna**, be able; **skola**, will, shall; **vilja**, want to; **måste**, have to; **böra**, should; **tör**, should; **må**, may; **mätte**, may; **mände**, may; **lär**, is said to; **låta**, let; **få**, be permitted to. See 5.3.2.

**Han kan komma ikväll.**  
**Måste du göra det?**

He can come tonight.  
Do you have to do that?

- (b) Infinitive after verbs which are modal equivalents: **behöva**, need to; **besluta**, decide to; **bruka**, usually (do); **börja**, begin to; **fortsätta**, continue; **förmå**, be able to; **försöka**, attempt to; **hoppas**, hope to; **lova**, promise to; **lyckas**, succeed in; **låtsas**, pretend to; **nödgas**, be forced to; **orka**, be able to; **råka**, happen to; **slippa**, avoid; **törs**, **våga**, dare to; **sluta**, stop; **tänka**, intend to; **verka**, appear to; **vägra**, refuse to; **ämna**, intend to; **önska**, wish to

**Du behöver väl inte gå.  
Han började förstå.**

Surely you don't need to go.  
He began to understand.

**De brukar resa utomlands på sommaren.**

They usually travel abroad in the summer.

Note 1 – After the following verbs **att** is optional: **beslutar (att)**, decide; **börjar (att)**, begin; **försöker (att)**, try; **slutar (att)**, stop; **planerar (att)**, plan.

Note 2 – In spoken Swedish, newspaper style and informal written language there is a growing tendency to omit the **att** after **kommer** in the future construction **kommer att**. See 5.2.8.2.

**Det kommer inte göra stor skillnad.**

It won't make a big difference.

(c) Infinitive in object and infinitive constructions. See 10.9.2.2. Here the pronoun is the object of the finite verb, but the subject of the infinitive. This construction is often found after the verbs **se**, see; **höra**, hear; **låta**, allow; **tillåta**, allow; **anse**, consider:

**Ingen såg honom göra det.**

No one saw him do that.

**Vi har hört henne sjunga.**

We have heard her sing.

(d) Infinitive in passive object and infinitive constructions (or subject and infinitive: see 10.9.2.3):

**Han sågs göra det.**

He was seen to do that.

**Hon hordes skrika.**

She was heard to scream.

(e) Infinitive in reflexive object and infinitive constructions (10.9.2.2). In these the verb is usually: **anse sig**, consider; **påstå sig**, claim; **säga sig**, claim; **tro sig**, think; **tycka sig**, think:

**Han anser sig vara förbigången.** He considers himself (to be) passed over.

**Han trodde sig höra röster.** He thought he heard voices.  
(= **Han trodde att han hörde röster**)

### 5.2.1.2 Nominal use

The infinitive frequently functions as if it were a noun, and in these cases is usually found with **att**.

(a) Infinitive as subject. See 3.3.5.3, 10.1.3.2, 10.6.8.1.

**Att fela är mänskligt, att förlåta är gudomligt.**

To err is human, to forgive divine.

Notice that the predicative adjective is inflected as if the infinitive were a neuter noun. Notice also that **det** is often found as a formal and anticipatory subject in addition to the (grammatical) subject in the infinitive phrase:

<b>Det</b>	<b>är skönt</b>	<b>att bada i havet.</b>
It	is lovely	to bathe in the sea.
<i>Formal subject</i>		<i>Real subject</i>

(b) Infinitive as object. See 10.1.5.5(c).

**Hon älskar att köra bil.** (Cf. **Hon älskar mat.**)

She loves driving the car.

**Jag föredrar att avgå.** (Cf. **Jag föredrar öl.**)

I prefer to resign.

(c) Infinitive preceded by a preposition. See 5.2.2.3(d), 10.9.2.1.

**Han gick utan att säga något.**

He left without saying anything.

**Han har lärt sig språket genom att läsa mängder med böcker.**

He has learnt the language by reading masses of books.

The infinitive is preceded by a preposition after many adjectives:

<b>Han är galen i att simma.</b>	He is mad about swimming.
<b>Är du orolig för att uppträda?</b>	Are you anxious about appearing?
<b>Var säker på att släcka ljuset!</b>	Make sure you switch off the light.

NB. With expressions indicating intention **för att** (8.3.7.1) should be used rather than **att**:

<b>Han kom hit för att vila sig.</b>	He came here (in order) to rest.
--------------------------------------	----------------------------------

(d) Infinitive qualifying a noun, pronoun or adjective as attribute:

<b>Konsten att vinna krig.</b>	The art of winning wars.
<b>Jag har ingenting att säga.</b>	I've nothing to say.

## **5.2.2** *The infinitive in English and Swedish and the English gerund*

### **5.2.2.1** English infinitive = Swedish infinitive

The use of the infinitive in the two languages is often identical:

(a) In two-verb constructions. See 5.2.1.1(a):

You really must come.                      **Ni måste verkligen komma.**

(b) In adjectival constructions:

It is not easy to do it.                      **Det är inte lätt att göra det.**

(c) In object and infinitive constructions. See 10.9.2.2:

He promised her to write.                      **Han lovade henne att skriva.**

### **5.2.2.2** English infinitive = Swedish full clause

(a) With object and infinitive constructions verbs like ‘want’, ‘wish’, ‘allow’:

What do you want me to do?                      **Vad vill du att jag ska göra?**

(b) After ‘wait for’, ‘long for’, ‘count on’, ‘rely on’:

Were they waiting for the rain to stop?  
**Väntade de på att regnet skulle upphöra?**

Can we count on you to give us a hand?  
**Kan vi räkna med att du ska ge oss ett handtag?**

(c) After an interrogative:

They don’t know what to do.                      **De vet inte vad de ska göra.**

(d) After ‘too’ + adjective, or adjective + ‘enough’:

It was too dark for us to set out.  
**Det var för mörkt för att vi skulle kunna ge oss iväg.**

(e) After ‘had better’:

You had better hurry up!

**Det är bäst (att) du skyndar dig!**

**5.2.2.3** Swedish has no gerund (or verbal noun)

Unlike English, which has a gerund in “The proof of the pudding is in *the eating*,” Swedish has an infinitive or a full clause in instances such as the following:

(a) English infinitive or gerund = Swedish infinitive

He began to read/reading.

**Han började läsa.**

I can’t bear to see/seeing you suffer.

**Jag står inte ut med att se dig lida.**

Do you intend to leave/leaving today?

**Tänker du resa i dag?**

I prefer to travel/travelling by train.

**Jag föredrar att åka tåg.**

I like swimming.

**Jag tycker om att bada.**

Also after verbs meaning ‘continue’, ‘finish’, ‘give up’, ‘avoid’, ‘escape’, ‘want’, ‘need’ (5.2.1.1(b)):

It has stopped raining.

**Det har slutat regna.**

We can’t get out of going.

**Vi kan inte slippa gå.**

(b) English gerund = Swedish full clause

We proposed postponing the trip.

**Vi föreslog att vi skulle senarelägga resan.**

(c) English possessive adjective + gerund = Swedish full clause

My/Me being his brother has nothing to do with it.

**Att jag är hans bror har ingenting med saken att göra.**

He did it without my/me knowing it.

**Han gjorde det utan att jag visste om det.**

(d) English preposition + gerund = Swedish preposition + infinitive

After having eaten lunch, we went for a walk.

**Efter att ha ätit lunch, gick vi en promenad.**

Note – A common mistake is to change the subject unwittingly after an expression of this kind:

**\*Efter att ha kört bilen i fem år, förstördes den i en krock.**  
After having driven the car for five years it was destroyed in a crash.  
(Should read: **Efter det att han/hon hade kört bilen...**)

(e) English preposition + gerund = Swedish preposition + **att**-clause

Here Swedish inserts the new subject, compare (c) above.

We thanked him for coming.  
**Vi tackade honom för att han kom.**

They were arrested for stealing a car.  
**De arresterades för att de hade stulit en bil.**

### **5.2.3**    *The present tense*

For form, see 5.1.1.3, 5.1.2–5.1.14. For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1. The present tense is used much as in English. The present tense has five main uses in Swedish.

#### **5.2.3.1**    Instantaneous present

The emphasis is on what is happening here and now:

<b>Vad gör du Anders?</b>	What are you doing, Anders?
<b>Jag sitter och läser tidningen.</b>	I'm sitting reading the newspaper.
<b>Jag bifogar min ansökan.</b>	I enclose my application.

#### **5.2.3.2**    State present

The emphasis is on the general and timeless:

<b>Jorden går runt solen.</b>	The Earth goes round the sun.
<b>Jönköping ligger vid Vättern.</b>	Jönköping is on Lake Vättern.
<b>Vatten kokar vid 100° Celsius.</b>	Water boils at 100° Celsius.

### 5.2.3.3 Habitual present

The emphasis is on regular repetition over a period:

**Lektionerna börjar klockan åtta.** Lessons begin at eight o'clock.  
**Vi åker till Frankrike varje vår.** We go to France every spring.

### 5.2.3.4 Future action

This is especially found with **bli**, **vara**, verbs of motion and phrases involving a distinct marker for future time (5.2.8.1):

**Om en vecka reser jag bort.** I leave in a week.

### 5.2.3.5 Historic (dramatic) present

This is used:

- (a) To create a dramatic illusion of ‘now’ in a narrative about the past. This is often the case in newspaper headlines or literary works:

**Fem dör i gårdagens jordbävning.**  
Five die in yesterday’s earthquake.

**”Den 27 november 1896 bryter Strindberg upp från Klam och reser över Berlin och Danmark hem.”**

‘On 27 November 1896 Strindberg leaves Klam and travels home via Berlin and Denmark.’

- (b) When the result of an action in the past is important, especially when relating to a book, play or work of art:

**Strindberg skildrar det svenska samhället på 1870-talet.**  
Strindberg depicts Swedish society in the 1870s.

## 5.2.4 *The present tense in English and Swedish and the English progressive (or continuous) tense*

### 5.2.4.1 Differences in usage

Although the use of the present is often identical in the two languages (see 5.2.3) there are some minor differences of usage:

(a) Present in Swedish = past in English:

This is found with the past participle and is used when an action is completed in the past, but the (tangible) result of the action remains:

**Operan är komponerad år 1860.**

The opera was composed in 1860.

**Slottet är byggt på 1300-talet.**

The castle was built in the fourteenth century.

A very common example of this is the use of the present tense with **föda(s)** and **vara född**, ‘(be) born’, when people are still alive:

**När är du född?**

When were you born?

**Jag är född 1944.**

I was born in 1944.

Notice, however, that with persons now dead the past tense of **föda(s)** is used:

**Strindberg föddes 1849.**

Strindberg was born in 1849.

(b) Present in Swedish = perfect in English in the following cases when the action is continuing:

**Det är första gången jag är här.**

It is the first time I have been here.

**Jag känner honom sedan tio år.**

I have known him for ten years.

(c) Present in Swedish = future in English when there is a time marker:

**Imorgon blir det regn.**

There will be rain tomorrow.

#### **5.2.4.2** Swedish equivalents of the English progressive tense

The English progressive tense (expressing a limited but not necessarily complete process that is in progress at a given time) is rendered in various ways in Swedish:

(a) Simple present tense. See 5.2.3.1.

**Vart går du?**

Where are you going?



**Jag sitter på arbetsrummet.** I am sitting in the study.

- (b) Two verbs in the present linked by **och**. These are typically a verb of location and a verb of action, the sense of location in the first verb having become weakened:

**Han sitter och läser.** He is (sitting) reading.  
**Du står och ljuger!** You are (standing there) lying!

- (c) **Hålla på att** + infinitive equates to English ‘be busy/involved with/in the process of’ and stresses the fact that the action is still in progress:

**Han håller på att skriva brev.** He is (busy) writing letters.  
**Huset håller på att byggas.** The house is (in the process of) being built.

Notice that **håller på att** sometimes means ‘be on the point of/about to’:

**Vi håller på att dö av hunger.** We are dying of hunger.

### **5.2.5** *The past tense*

For form see 5.1.1.1, 5.1.2–5.1.14. For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1. The past tense in Swedish, sometimes called the preterite (Swedish **preteritum**), is used to express a completed action at a point of time in the past. Use of the past tense is largely as in English.

#### **5.2.5.1** Time marker

The past tense often involves an expression to mark this point in the past, i.e. a time marker, often a temporal adverbial (10.1.7.5(c), 10.7.7.2):

**I fjol reste vi till Grekland.** Last year we went to Greece.

This time marker may be understood in a longer narrative text:

**När vi kom till Aten i somras var det förskräckligt varmt. Det första vi gjorde var att köpa solglasögon. Det var så bländande ljust. Sedan åkte vi upp i bergen. Där var det lite svalka.**  
When we arrived in Athens last summer it was awfully hot. The first thing we did was to buy sunglasses. It was so bright it was dazzling. Then we went up into the mountains. It was a bit cooler there.

### 5.2.5.2 Repeated action

The past tense expresses a repeated action in the past; English uses ‘used to/would’:

**Som liten gallskek han varje gång han inte fick sin vilja fram.**

As a small child he used to yell/would yell every time he didn’t get his own way.

Note – Swedish often prefers **brukade** + infinitive to emphasise a sense of customary or repeated action. See 5.2.1.1(b).

### 5.2.5.3 Politeness

The past tense injects a note of politeness or caution into a demand or intention with the modal auxiliary. See 5.3.2:

**Kunde du tänka dig göra det?** Do you think you could do it?

[Instead of: **Kan du göra det?**]

### 5.2.5.4 Unreal situations

The past tense may have a modal sense, indicating an unreal situation (cf. past subjunctive 5.3.3.3):

**Om jag var president, skulle jag avskaffa alla skatter.**

If I were president I would abolish all taxes.

### 5.2.5.5 First impressions or feelings

In some impersonal expressions describing first impressions or feelings the past tense is used in Swedish where English would use the present tense:

**Det var verkligen synd!**

That is a real shame!

**Det var dyrt!**

That is expensive!

**Det var varmt, det här!**

This is hot!

**Det var riktigt gott kaffe!**

This is really good coffee!

**Det var roligt att höra det!**

I am glad to hear that!

**Det var en annan sak ...**

There is another thing ...

**Hur var namnet?**

What is your name, please?

### 5.2.5.6 Höll på att

**Höll på att** + infinitive either means ‘was about to (do something), ‘kept on (doing something)’ or ‘just avoided (doing something)’ or ‘nearly managed to (something)’. See 5.2.4.2(c).

<b>Hon höll på att gråta.</b>	She was about to cry.
<b>Huset höll på att brinna upp.</b>	The house very nearly burned down.
<b>Vi höll på att frysa ihjäl.</b>	We nearly froze to death.

### 5.2.6 The perfect tense

For form see 5.1.1.1, 5.1.1.3, 5.1.2–5.1.14. For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1.

The perfect tense in Swedish is used to indicate a link between past and present, the relevance of a completed action in the past to a present situation. The tense indicates an indeterminate length of time and point in time, but the point of reference is usually the present.

#### 5.2.6.1 Time adverbial

The time adverbial (10.1.7.5(c)) is always vague or includes the present (cf. time adverbials with the past tense):

**Vi har rest till Grekland förr, men nu föredrar vi Spanien.**  
We have been to Greece before, but now we prefer Spain.

<b>Jag har bott här länge.</b>	I (have) lived here for a long time.
<b>Nu har jag avslutat boken.</b>	Now I have finished the book.

#### 5.2.6.2 Omission of **har**

Notice that the auxiliary verb **har** may be omitted in subordinate clauses. See 5.2.14.3(b).

**Då jag inte (har) fått svar på mitt förra brev, skriver jag en gång till.**  
As I haven't had a reply to my previous letter, I am writing again.

**Vi ska ha fest, eftersom vi inte (har) haft roligt på ett tag.**  
We're going to have a party as we haven't had fun for a while.

#### 5.2.6.3 Inclusive perfect

With a suitable adverbial the perfect may indicate that an action has taken place and is still taking place:

**De har varit gifta i många år.**

They have been married for many years [and are still married].

cf. **De har varit gifta.**

They used to be married [but are no longer married].

See also 5.2.6.7.

#### 5.2.6.4 Repeated or customary action

The perfect may express a repeated or customary action. Swedish sometimes uses **har brukat** + infinitive to emphasise a sense of customary action.

**Jag har plockat svamp här i många år.**

I have been picking mushrooms here for many years.

**Det har brukat gå bra för oss.**

Things have usually gone well for us.

#### 5.2.6.5 Two events in the future

The perfect may express the relationship between two events in the future when one completed action precedes another action. See 5.2.1.2.

**När jag har tvättat bilen kan vi dricka kaffe.**

When I have washed the car we can have coffee.

#### 5.2.6.6 Swedish perfect = English future perfect

The Swedish perfect is often used to express the English future perfect. See 5.2.9.

**När du kommer har jag nog avslutat boken.**

When you come I will probably have finished the book.

**5.2.6.7** Swedish perfect = English past tense

This is used when some action completed in the past has a connection with the present.

**Vem har skrivit Röda rummet?**

Who wrote *The Red Room*? [The novel still exists and is read.]

**Var har ni lärt er svenska?**

Where did you learn Swedish? [The knowledge of Swedish still exists.]

It is especially frequent in questions, particularly those including **aldrig**, 'never' and **någonsin**, 'ever':

**Det har jag aldrig tänkt på.**

I never thought of that.

**Har ni sovit gott i natt?**

Did you sleep well last night?

**5.2.6.8** Swedish perfect = English present

This is found when the English present is used idiomatically to express a past action:

**Jag har glömt vad han heter.** I forget what he's called.

**Jag har hört att de ska skiljas.** I hear that they are getting divorced.

**5.2.7** *The pluperfect tense*

For form, see 5.1.1.1, 5.1.2–5.1.14. For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1.

**5.2.7.1** Pluperfect preceded the past tense

As in English, the Swedish pluperfect tense expresses an action in the past taking place before another action expressed by the past tense:

**Innan han kom hit, hade han köpt blommor.**

Before he came here he had bought flowers.

**Sedan vi hade lagat bilen, åkte vi.**

After we had repaired the car, we left.

**5.2.7.2** Result

The pluperfect may express the result of a completed action:

**Då hade vi redan gett upp allt hopp.**

By that time we had already given up all hope.

**5.2.7.3** Inclusive pluperfect

The pluperfect may indicate that an action had taken place and at some point in the past was still taking place (cf. 5.2.6.3):

**De hade varit gifta i många år, när de skildes.**

They had been married for many years when they got divorced.

**5.2.7.4** Conditional or unreal sense

The pluperfect (like the past: 5.2.5.4) may have a conditional sense, sometimes indicating an unreal situation:

**Om det bara inte hade varit så halt på vägen och om föraren hade varit nykter, hade de klarat sig.**

If only it had not been so icy on the road and if the driver had been sober, they would have been all right.

**5.2.7.5** **Hade** may be omitted

Notice that the auxiliary verb **hade** may be omitted in subordinate clauses. See 5.2.14.3(b).

**Jag vet inte vad jag hade gjort, om jag inte (hade) hittat dig.**

I don't know what I would have done if I hadn't found you.

### 5.2.8 The future tense

As in English, there is no inflexional form of the verb in Swedish to indicate future. Future is more often expressed by the present tense than by the future tense proper, i.e. than **ska** + infinitive, **kommer att** + infinitive. For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1.

#### 5.2.8.1 Present tense to express future

See also 5.1.1.3, 5.1.3–5.1.14, 5.2.3.4.

(a) This often requires a time marker (10.1.7.5(c)) to avoid confusion:

<b>Jag kommer snart.</b>	I will come soon.
<b>Tåget går om fem minuter.</b>	The train leaves in five minutes.

(b) A time marker is not always necessary with the verbs **blir**, ‘be’; **får**, ‘have’; **kommer**, ‘come’:

<b>Blir det regn?</b>	Will there be rain?
<b>Får du tid att göra det?</b>	Will you have time to do it?

Note – The verbs **tänker**, **ämnar**, ‘intend’, used in the present tense indicate future intention:

**Jag tänker/ämnar sätta potatisen nästa vecka.**  
I am thinking of planting/intending to plant the potatoes next week.

(c) In both temporal subordinate clauses (8.3.3) and conditional clauses (8.3.5), the present tense is often used to indicate the future as in English:

<b>Så snart semestern börjar, åker vi ut på landet.</b>	Temporal
As soon as the holidays start we’re off to the countryside.	
<b>Om det snöar i dag, går jag inte ut.</b>	Conditional
If it snows today, I’m not going out.	

#### 5.2.8.2 Kommer att + infinitive

This construction is used to indicate simple future and is often used with a non-personal subject in objective expressions. The speaker intends nothing, nor does he take responsibility for the statement:

<b>Det kommer att regna senare.</b>	It will rain later.
<b>Kommer det att funka?</b>	Will it work?
<b>Ni kommer att bli förvånade.</b>	You will be surprised.

Note – In spoken Swedish there is a growing tendency to omit the **att**. See 5.2.1.1.

<b>Det kommer inte hända mer.</b>	It won't happen any more.
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### 5.2.8.3 Ska + infinitive

- (a) This construction does not only indicate future but in addition has a modal sense (5.3.2.(d)). In contrast to **komma att** (5.2.8.2) this form, especially when used with a personal subject, indicates a firm intention of committing the action described at some point in the future:

<b>Jag ska titta på TV ikväll.</b>	I shall watch TV tonight.
<b>Ska du resa imorgon?</b>	Are you leaving tomorrow?

- (b) In the third person **ska**, ‘will’, ‘shall’ often indicates simple future, i.e. it is merely temporal, especially when the subject is impersonal:

<b>Ska tåget gå snart?</b>	Will the train be leaving soon?
<b>Det ska bli dans på fredag.</b>	There will be a dance on Friday.
<b>Det ska bli så skönt att resa.</b>	It will be so nice to travel.

Note – **Vill** = ‘want to’. See 5.3.2.4. This verb never expresses simple future. Compare the different ways of expressing the future in Swedish and English in the following examples:

**Det blir/kommer att bli mörkt snart.**  
It will be dark soon.

**Du ska förstås inte följa med, Nils.**  
You will not be coming, of course, Nils.

**Men jag vill ju följa med, pappa.**  
But I want to come, Dad.

### 5.2.8.4 Skulle + infinitive

- (a) This construction is used to indicate the future in the past, i.e. something viewed as future from a point of reference in the past:



**I går sa jag att han skulle ringa mig i dag.**

Yesterday I said that he should ring me today.

**Jag skulle just ringa honom, när han knackade på dörren.**

I was just about to ring him when he knocked at the door.

(b) It is also used in conditional clauses. See 5.3.2.2(b).

**Om jag vore rik, skulle vi kunna köpa en bättre bil.**

If I were rich we would be able to buy a better car.

**Om vi hade studerat mera, skulle vi ha klarat tentan.**

If we had studied harder we would have passed the exam.

#### **5.2.8.5** Perfect tense

The perfect tense occasionally indicates an action taking place before another action in the future. See 5.2.6.5, 5.2.7.

**När jag har ätit frukost, går jag till skolan. [= ska jag gå ... ]**

When I have eaten breakfast I will go to school.

**Nästa vecka vid den här tiden har vi nog kommit till Spanien.**

[= att vi nog ska ha kommit ... ]

By this time next week we will probably have arrived in Spain.

**Tror du att du har läst boken före skrivningen?**

[= kommer att ha läst ... ]

Do you think you will have read the book before the exam?

#### **5.2.9** *The future perfect tense*

The future perfect tense is realised by the form **ska + ha** + supine of the main verb or **kommer att + ha** + supine of the main verb. It expresses a state or action lasting up to a point in time in the future. See perfect tense, 5.2.6.

**När ditt tåg ankommer, ska jag redan ha gått.**

When your train arrives, I will already have left.

**Innan nästa val kommer en förbättring av läget förmodligen att ha ägt rum.**

Before the next election an improvement in this situation will presumably have taken place.

### 5.2.10 *The future of the past*

The future of the past is a tense realised by **skulle** + infinitive. It expresses a future state or action in relation to a point in time in the past and is often used in indirect speech:

**Då han äntligen kom skulle jag just gå och lägga mig.**

When he finally arrived I was just about to go to bed.

**Ingenting skulle gå som vi tänkt oss.**

Nothing would turn out as we anticipated.

### 5.2.11 *The future perfect of the past*

The future perfect of the past is a tense realised by **skulle** + **ha** + supine of the main verb. It expresses a state or action lasting between two points in time, both in the past. It is often found in indirect speech. This construction is also used in conditional expressions.

**Han sa att han skulle ha målat om gästrummet innan vi kom.**

He said he would have repainted the guest room before we arrived.

**Om jag hade vetat att du var sjuk, skulle jag ha hälsat på dig.**

If I'd known you were ill, I would have visited you.

### 5.2.12 *Time planes*

There are two basic time planes in Swedish, a *now* plane and a *then* plane. The *now* plane includes the present, perfect, future and future perfect tenses, the *then* plane includes the past, pluperfect and future of the past (**skulle** + infinitive):

NOW plane		
Before now	Now	After now
Perfect: <b>Jag har skrivit</b> I have written	Present: <b>Jag skriver</b> I write/am writing	Future: <b>1 Jag skriver i morgon</b> I will write tomorrow <b>2 Jag kommer att skriva i morgon</b> I will write tomorrow <b>3 Jag ska skriva i morgon</b> I will write tomorrow

		Perfect: <b>När jag har druckit kaffe, ska jag skriva till honom.</b> When I have had coffee, I will write to him.
		Future perfect: <b>Innan nyår kommer vi att ha skrivit boken.</b> Before New Year we will have written the book.
THEN plane		
Before then	Then	After then
Pluperfect: <b>Jag hade skrivit</b> I had written	Past: <b>Jag skrev</b> I wrote	Future of the past: <b>Jag skulle skriva</b> I was to write

### 5.2.13 *Compatibility of tenses*

It is not usual to change from one time plane to another (see time planes in 5.2.12 above) in mid-utterance. If a sentence begins in one plane, it is usually completed in the same plane:

NOW plane:	<b>Jag säger,</b> I am saying	<b>att jag har tvättat bilen.</b> that I have washed the car.	Before now
	<b>Jag säger,</b> I am saying	<b>att jag tvättar bilen.</b> that I am washing the car.	Simultaneous with now
	<b>Jag säger,</b> I am saying	<b>att jag ska tvätta bilen.</b> that I will wash the car.	After now
	<b>Jag har nog tvättat bilen, när du kommer.</b> I will probably have washed the car when you arrive.		After now
THEN plane:	<b>Sven skrev,</b> Sven wrote	<b>att han hade målat huset.</b> that he had painted the house.	Before then
	<b>Sven skrev,</b> Sven wrote	<b>att han målade huset.</b> that he had painted the house.	Simultaneous with then
	<b>Sven skrev,</b> Sven wrote	<b>att han skulle måla huset.</b> that he would paint the house.	After then

The main function of the tense is to express not the time plane itself, but the relation of the speaker/writer to the plane by expressing 'before', 'simultaneous with' or 'after'. On occasion a change of plane is possible when indicated by an adverbial expression of time:

*Comparative*

**Vädret var [then] bättre i fjol än det har varit [now] i år.**

The weather was better last year than it has been this year.

*Indirect speech*

**Sven skrev [then] för en vecka sedan att han kommer [now] i dag.**

Sven wrote a week ago that he is/will be coming today.

Sometimes one may change plane in mid-sentence when a following clause has a new subject:

**De åkte [then] till pyramiderna, som ligger [now] utanför Kairo.**

They went to the pyramids, which are situated outside Cairo.

### 5.2.14 The supine and past participle

#### 5.2.14.1 Summary table of forms

See also 5.1.1.1, 5.1.1.3, 5.1.2–5.1.14.

Conjugation	Supine	Past participle			Meaning
		Non-neuter	Neuter	Plural	
I	<b>arbetat</b>	<b>arbetad</b>	<b>arbetat</b>	<b>arbetade</b>	worked
IIa	<b>böjt</b>	<b>böjd</b>	<b>böjt</b>	<b>böjda</b>	bent
IIb	<b>köpt</b>	<b>köpt</b>	<b>köpt</b>	<b>köpta</b>	bought
III	<b>sytt</b>	<b>sydd</b>	<b>sytt</b>	<b>sydda</b>	sewn
IV	<b>bjudit</b>	<b>bjuden</b>	<b>bjudet</b>	<b>bjudna</b>	invited

#### 5.2.14.2 Notes on forms

- In Conj. I, II, III the supine = the neuter past participle.
- In Conj. IV the supine usually ends in **-it**, the neuter past participle in **-et**.
- The past participle in Conj. IV drops the final **-e** of its ending in the plural. See 2.1.4.3(a).

**Jag är bjuden.**

I am invited.

**Vi är bjudna.**

We are invited.

- (d) Both the non-neuter and neuter singular of Conj. IIb past participles end in **-t**:

**en nyköpt limpa**  
**ett nyköpt hus**

a recently purchased loaf  
a recently purchased house

- (e) The past participle of strong verbs usually has the same stem vowel as the supine:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Past part.	Meaning
<b>bjuda</b>	<b>bjuder</b>	<b>bjöd</b>	<b>bjudit</b>	<b>bjuden</b>	invite
<b>skriva</b>	<b>skriver</b>	<b>skrev</b>	<b>skrivit</b>	<b>skrivnen</b>	write

- (f) The plural and definite form of the past participle of first conjugation verbs ends in **-e**, whereas those forms of the past participles of all other conjugations end in **-a**. See 2.3.3.1.

#### 5.2.14.3 Supine and past participle

The distinction between supine and past participle in Swedish is that the supine is used with the auxiliary verb **ha** to form the perfect and pluperfect tenses (5.2.6, 5.2.7), while the past participle is used with the auxiliary **vara** in a passive or adjectival manner (2.1.3.5(c), 2.1.3.7(a), 2.1.3.8(a), 2.1.4.1(a), 2.1.4.3(a)). Swedish is the only Germanic language to make this precise distinction and it is a distinction of recent date. Below are some notes on usage:

- (a) The supine is indeclinable. With the auxiliary **har/hade** it forms the perfect and pluperfect tenses (5.2.6, 5.2.7):

**Han har köpt en bil.**  
**De hade köpt en bil.**

He has bought a car.  
They had bought a car.

- (b) The supine is frequently used without the auxiliary **har/hade** in all kinds of subordinate clauses, especially relative clauses (8.4.3.1ff):

**Som du redan hört, ska vi resa i morgon.**  
As you have already heard, we will be leaving tomorrow.

**Han sa, att han varit onykter.**

He said he had been drunk.

- (c) The past participle inflects as an adjective, and is used both predicatively and attributively. When used attributively it may take both definite and indefinite forms. See also 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.3.2.2, 2.3.3.1.

	Indefinite	Definite
Conj. I	<b>en nytvättad bil</b> a newly washed car	<b>den nytvättade bilen</b> the newly washed car
	<b>ett nymålat kök</b> a newly painted kitchen	<b>det nymålade köket</b> the newly painted kitchen
Conj. IIa	<b>en stängd dörr</b> a closed door	<b>den stängda dörren</b> the closed door
	<b>ett stängt samhälle</b> a closed society	<b>det stängda samhället</b> the closed society
Conj. IIb	<b>en nyköpt dator</b> a newly purchased computer	<b>den nyköpta datorn</b> the newly purchased computer
	<b>ett nyköpt månadskort</b> a newly purchased travel card	<b>det nyköpta månadskortet</b> the newly purchased travel card
Conj. III	<b>en obebodd stuga</b> a deserted cottage	<b>den obebodda stugan</b> the deserted cottage
	<b>ett obebott torp</b> a deserted croft	<b>det obebodda torpet</b> the deserted croft
Conj. IV	<b>en välskriven uppsats</b> a well written essay	<b>den välskrivna uppsatsen</b> the well written essay
	<b>ett välskrivet brev</b> a well written letter	<b>det välkrivna brevet</b> the well written letter

- (d) The past participle is also used as an adjectival noun:

**Den okände trädde in.**

The stranger entered.

**De inbjudna började anlända.**

Those invited began to arrive.

**en älskades ansikte**

the face of a loved one

- (e) The past participle is also used with forms of **vara** and **bli** to construct one type of passive. See 5.5.6.2, 5.5.8f.

**Bilen blev förstörd i kraschen.** The car was destroyed in the crash.

**Huset är nymålat.**

The house is newly painted.

## 5.2.15 The present participle

### 5.2.15.1 Form

The present participle is formed by adding (a) **–ande** to stems in unstressed **–a** (which lapses), or stems ending in a consonant; or (b) **–ende** to stems in a stressed final vowel:

Stem	Present participle	Conj.	Meaning
(a)			
<b>arbeta/</b>	<b>arbet/ande</b>	I	work
<b>böj/a</b>	<b>böj/ande</b>	IIa	bend
<b>köp/a</b>	<b>köp/ande</b>	IIb	buy
<b>skriv/a</b>	<b>skriv/ande</b>	IV	write
(b)			
<b>betel/</b>	<b>bete/ende</b>	III	behave
<b>trol/</b>	<b>trol/ende</b>	III	believe
<b>gå/</b>	<b>gå/ende</b>	III irr.	walk
<b>dö/</b>	<b>dö/ende</b>	III irr.	die

See also 5.1.1.1, 5.1.1.3, 5.1.2–5.1.14.

### 5.2.15.2 Use

(a) As an adjective (note that Swedish usage sometimes prefers a present participle where English has a past participle):

Attributively (see 2.1.6.1)

<b>omfattande kunskaper</b>	wide-ranging knowledge
<b>en ingående beskrivning</b>	a detailed description
<b>en ensamstående mor</b>	a single mother

Predicatively

<b>Utvecklingen är oroväckande.</b>	The development is disturbing.
<b>Melodierna är spännande.</b>	The tunes are exciting.
<b>Vissa tonåringar är beroende av energidrycker.</b>	Some teenagers are addicted to energy drinks.

(b) As a noun:

Fifth declension neuter: **ett erbjudande**, an offer; **ett inflytande**, an influence; **ett påstående**, a statement. See 1.4.7.4. Sixth declension non-neuter: **en ordförande**, a chairperson; **en studerande**, a student; **en sökande**, an applicant. See 1.4.8.7(b). Participles used as non-neuter nouns usually indicate people.

(c) As an adverb (6.1.2.4):

**Han var påfallande lat.**

He was strikingly lazy.

**Vädret var övervägande mulet.**

The weather was predominantly cloudy.

**Tavlan var så förtjusande vacker.**

The picture was so exquisitely beautiful.

(d) As a verb after **komma**, come; **gå**, go; **bli**, remain:

**Han gick visslande nerför vägen.**

He walked down the street whistling.

**Vi blev sittande.**

We remained seated.

Note – In speech and informal writing a form with added **–s** is found, primarily as a free particle and after the verb **komma**. See also 5.5.1.3(a).

**Hon kom medförandes en korg med ägg.**

She arrived, bringing a basket of eggs.

## **5.2.16** *Renderings of the English present participle into Swedish*

For translations of the other English ‘-ing’ forms see 5.2.2.3(a) (gerund) and 5.2.4 (continuous tense).

### **5.2.16.1** Swedish uses two verbs in the same form

See 5.2.4.2(b).

She sat reading for hours.

He lay sleeping.

**Hon satt och läste i timmar.**

**Han låg och sov.**



They stood watching the train. **De stod och tittade på tåget.**

**5.2.16.2** Swedish uses a finite verb and an infinitive

See 5.2.2.3(b)–(d).

He continued writing.  
Do you like skiing?

**Han fortsatte att skriva.  
Tycker du om att åka skidor?**

**5.2.16.3** Swedish uses an object and infinitive construction

See 5.2.2.1(c).

I heard her shout(ing).  
They saw him run(ning) away.

**Jag hörde henne ropa.  
De såg honom springa bort.**

**5.2.16.4** Swedish has a full clause; English has a contracted sentence

A woman wearing a green dress came up to me.  
**En kvinna som hade en grön klänning på sig kom fram till mig.**

Alec left early, promising to be back later.  
**Alec gick tidigt och lovade att komma tillbaka senare.**

## **5.3** Ways of expressing mood

### **5.3.1** Introduction

Mood is the attitude of the speaker to the activity expressed by the verb. Mood is expressed in a number of different ways, but primarily by using the following:

#### **5.3.1.1** Modal auxiliary verbs

Modal auxiliary verbs (5.3.2) are used together with the main verb in the infinitive:

**Vi ska komma.  
Jag måste gå.**

We shall come.  
I must go.

### 5.3.1.2 Modal forms

These comprise the indicative, imperative (5.3.4) and subjunctive (5.3.3):

**Han äter middag.** He's eating his dinner. Indicative  
**Var inte dum nu, Olle!** Don't be silly now, Olle! Imperative  
**Det vore roligt att komma.** It would be nice to come. Subjunctive

### 5.3.1.3 Conditional constructions

See 5.3.5.

**Om jag hade sparat mer pengar, kunde jag ha rest utomlands.**  
If I had saved more money, I could have travelled abroad.

**Hade vi inte haft katten kunde vi ha rest mer.**  
If we hadn't had the cat we could have travelled more.

## 5.3.2 Modal auxiliary verbs

### 5.3.2.1 Form

These verbs express mood when used together with the infinitive of the main verb. Note that the forms **skall** and **skolat** are now rare.

Infinitive	Present	Past	Supine	Meaning
<b>skola</b>	<b>ska (skall)</b>	<b>skulle</b>	<b>(skolat)</b>	shall, will
<b>kunna</b>	<b>kan</b>	<b>kunde</b>	<b>kunnat</b>	be able
<b>vilja</b>	<b>vill</b>	<b>ville</b>	<b>velat</b>	will, want to
–	<b>måste</b>	<b>måste</b>	<b>måst</b>	must, have to
<b>böra</b>	<b>bör</b>	<b>borde</b>	<b>bort</b>	should, ought to
–	<b>tör</b>	<b>torde</b>	–	is probably
–	<b>må</b>	<b>måtte</b>	–	may, must
–	<b>månde</b>	–	–	may
–	<b>lär</b>	–	–	is said to
<b>låta</b>	<b>låter</b>	<b>lät</b>	<b>låtitt</b>	let
<b>få</b>	<b>får</b>	<b>fick</b>	<b>fått</b>	may, be allowed to, must, have to

### 5.3.2.2 Ska

The spelling **skall** is falling out of use; past tense **skulle**. See 5.2.8.3 above on the future tense, and note also the following uses:

(a) Polite use

**Jag skulle vilja be dig om en tjänst.**

I would like to ask you a favour.

(b) The conditional (compare 5.3.2.6 **bör** ‘ought to’, below)

**Om jag hade tid, skulle jag följa med.**

If I had time I would come.

(c) Necessity, duty

**Man ska tvätta håret ofta.**

You must wash your hair often.

(d) ‘Be about to’

**Hon skulle just ringa.**

She was on the point of phoning.

(e) Opinion, assumption, possibility:

**Ska det här vara roligt?**

Is this supposed to be funny?

### 5.3.2.3 Kan

**Kan** (past tense **kunde**) has the following uses:

(a) Possibility

**Kan du komma?**

Can you come?/

Is it possible for you to come?

(b) Ability

**Jag kan köra bil.**

I can drive.

(c) Concession

**Det kan du ha rätt i.**

You may be right.

Note – When not used as an auxiliary **kan** indicates ability in a language or field of knowledge:

**Hon kunde italienska.**

She knew Italian.

**Han kan allt om bilar.**

He knows everything about cars.

#### 5.3.2.4 Vill

**Vill** (past tense **ville**) has the following uses:

(a) Polite use

**Jag vill/ville helst åka utomlands.** I want/would prefer to go abroad.

(b) Subject's wishes

**Vill du ha ett glas öl?** Would you like a glass of beer?

Notice the difference between **vill** (= 'wish') and **ska** (= simple futurity: cf. 5.2.8.3):

**Vill du gå på bio?** Do you want/Would you like to go to the cinema?

**Ska du gå på bio?** Are you going to the cinema?

#### 5.3.2.5 Måste

**Måste** has the following uses:

(a) Compulsion

In positive expressions **måste = får = 'must', 'have to', 'be forced to':**

**Jag måste tyvärr gå nu. = Jag får tyvärr gå nu.**

Unfortunately, I have to go now.

(b) Concession

In negative expressions **måste inte = behöver inte = 'do not have (need) to':**

**Du måste ju inte röka.**

You don't have to smoke, you know.

Note – **får inte = 'must not':**

**Du får inte röka härinne.**

You must not/are not allowed to smoke in here!

### 5.3.2.6 Bör

**Bör** (past tense **borde**). The past tense form **borde** is more polite and tentative than the present **bör**.

(a) Suitability or strong recommendation

**Du bör/borde absolut se hans senaste film.**

You really should see his latest film.

**Man bör göra sin plikt.**

One should do one's duty.

Note – English 'you should' indicating suitability is never translated as **skulle**, which is conditional (5.3.5):

**Du bör/borde få lite frisk luft.**

You should get some fresh air.

Cf. **Jag skulle få lite frisk luft, om jag bara kunde komma ut.**

I would get some fresh air if only I could get out.

**Du borde verkligen skriva en bok.**

You really ought to write a book.

(b) Assumption, possibility

**Jag bör vara hemma vid sextiden.**

I should be home around six.

### 5.3.2.7 Torde

**Torde** is used for assumption or possibility. It is present tense and usually found only in written Swedish:

**Leveransen torde bli nästa vecka.**

Delivery should be next week.

**Borgen torde ha byggts på 1100-talet.**

The stronghold was probably built in the 12th century.

### 5.3.2.8 Må

(a) **Må** is used for wishes, hopes, possibilities in many fixed expressions:

<b>Vad som än må hända ...</b>	Whatever may happen ...
<b>Det må jag säga!</b>	I must say!
<b>Länge må hon leva!</b>	Long may she live!

(b) **Måtte** has the following uses:

- 1 Wish  
**Måtte du aldrig glömma det!**  
May you never forget it!
- 2 Certainty  
**Han måtte väl ha blivit lite försenad.**  
He must have been slightly delayed.

### 5.3.2.9 Månde

**Månde**: similar to **må**, **måtte** (5.3.2.8), usually only in set phrases. Now old-fashioned or stylised:

**Gör det, vad han än månde säga!**  
Do it whatever he may/might say.

**Bäva månde arabvärlden!**      The Arab world should tremble!

### 5.3.2.10 Lär

**Lär** is used for assumption or possibility, and is usually found only in written Swedish.

**Hon lär skriva dikter.**      She is said to write poetry.  
**Vinsten lär vara liten.**      The profits are said to be meagre.

### 5.3.2.11 Låter

**Låter** (past tense: **lät**) has the following uses:

- (a) Permit, give someone leave to  
**Låt mig fortsätta!** Let me/Allow me to continue!
- (b) Refrain from changing (leave/let be)  
**Låt cykeln stå kvar.** Leave the bike where it is.
- (c) Commission, undertaking  
**Hon lät sy om sin klänning.** She had her dress altered.

See also 5.3.4.1 Note 1.

### 5.3.2.12 Får

**Får** (past tense: **fick**) has the following uses:

- (a) Ask or receive permission  
**Får jag gå ut ikväll?** May I go out tonight?
- (b) Necessity  
**Jag fick ligga kvar på sjukhuset.** I had to stay in hospital.
- (c) Be compelled  
**Vi fick stå ute i snön.** We had to stand out in the snow.
- (d) Have cause to  
**Jag får tacka er så mycket.** I must thank you so much.
- (e) Get to  
**Vi fick aldrig se pyramiderna.** We never got to see the pyramids.

NB. The usual non-modal sense of **få** is 'receive', but it can also mean 'get someone to do something':

- Jag fick en present i går.** I got a present yesterday.
- Vi fick henne att spela piano.** We got her to play the piano.

### 5.3.3 The subjunctive

#### 5.3.3.1 Form

	Infinitive	Present subjunctive	Past subjunctive	Supine	Meaning
I	<b>välsigna</b>	<b>välsigne</b>	–	–	bless
II	<b>leva</b>	<b>leve</b>	–	–	live
III	<b>ske</b>	<b>ske</b>	–	–	happen
IV	<b>vara</b>	<b>vare</b>	<b>vore</b>	–	be

The past subjunctive only has a special form for strong verbs, where it is formed from the past plural form (5.1.17). Whilst a century ago the subjunctive was frequently found in written Swedish, it is now rare.

#### 5.3.3.2 Present subjunctive

The present subjunctive has a very restricted use in modern Swedish, largely to express a wish or prayer. It is found exclusively in fixed expressions:

<b>Leve konungen!</b>	Long live the king!
<b>Gud välsigne dig, mitt barn!</b>	God bless you, my child!
<b>Gud ske lov!</b>	Thank heavens!
<b>Tack vare din hjälp!</b>	Thanks to your help!
<b>Bevare mig väl!</b>	Goodness gracious!
<b>Det vete fan!</b>	The devil alone knows!

The role previously played by the subjunctive has been taken over by the modal auxiliary verbs (**skulle**, **bör**), adverbs (**nog**, **väl**, 6.4.1.6) or certain phrases (e.g. **Det är troligt att**, ‘It is likely that’).

#### 5.3.3.3 Past subjunctive – **vore**

The past subjunctive is extremely rare in modern Swedish, and, outside dialect usage, is now found as a distinct form only in **vore** (from **vara**). It may be used to indicate a range of modal meanings, often the difficulty or impossibility of fulfilling something imagined.



### **Vore jag ung igen, skulle jag göra mycket annorlunda.**

Were I young again, there are many things I would do differently.

### **Vad vore julen utan traditionella julsånger?**

What would Christmas be without carols?

The past subjunctive is often used together with **om** in conditional clauses, but the conjunction is, strictly speaking, unnecessary. Increasingly the past indicative (5.2.5.4) is used in constructions with **om**. Swedish use conforms quite closely to English in this regard.

**Om jag vore ung igen...**

If I were young again...

**Om jag var ung igen...**

If I was young again...

## **5.3.4**    *The imperative*

### **5.3.4.1**    Form

The imperative is the same as the stem of the verb. This means that it ends in **-a** like the infinitive in Conj. I, and in a stressed vowel in Conj. III and some irregular verbs, otherwise in a consonant. Swedish imperative sentences usually end with an exclamation mark, unless the actual imperative is very far from the end of the sentence. See 13.1.5.

Conj.	Stem/Infinitive	Imperative	Meaning
I	<i>arbeta/</i>	<b>Arbeta hårdare!</b>	Work harder!
IIa	<i>släng/a</i>	<b>Släng bort dem!</b>	Throw them away!
IIa	<i>känn/a</i>	<b>Känn på kvaliteten!</b>	Feel the quality.
IIb	<i>hjälp/a</i>	<b>Hjälp mig!</b>	Help me!
III	<i>tro/</i>	<b>Tro mig eller inte!</b>	Believe me or not!
IV	<i>skriv/a</i>	<b>Skriv en uppsats!</b>	Write an essay.
irregular	<i>gå/</i>	<b>Gå ut härifrån!</b>	Get out of here!
irregular	<i>gör/a</i>	<b>Gör något!</b>	Do something!
irregular	<i>var/a</i>	<b>Var inte dum!</b>	Don't be stupid!

For use with the negative, see 10.6.6.1.

Note – In medieval Swedish the imperative had separate plural forms. These are now only found in fixed expressions. See also 5.1.17.

1st person plural: **-om**: **Sjungom studentens lyckliga dar**, 'Let's sing of the student's happy days!'; **Låtom oss bedja**, 'Let us pray'.

2nd person plural: **–en**. Compare these examples from the 1917 and 2000 Bible translations: **Bedjen och eder skall varda givet!** [1917]; **Be, så skall ni få.** [2000], ‘Ask and it shall be given unto you’.

#### 5.3.4.2 Use

The imperative expresses a command, wish or piece of advice. It always represents the 2nd person present tense:

##### **Koka upp såsen och låt den sjuda.**

Bring the sauce to the boil and allow it to simmer.

The subject is strictly speaking redundant, but it is inserted on occasion either to underline a contrast or to give the command a friendly or encouraging tone:

**Laga du maten, så ska jag städa!** You cook and I will tidy up.

**Kom du, det är inte farligt!** Come on now, it’s not dangerous.

The imperative may be made less strident by the addition of a phrase meaning ‘please’:

**Var snäll och ge mig ett äpple!/Ge mig ett äpple, är du snäll.**

Please give me an apple!

**Var god dröj!**

Please hold the line. [Said by telephonists]

#### 5.3.5 *Conditional constructions*

A further means of expressing mood is to use one of the common kinds of conditional construction found in 5.3.5.1– 5.3.5.4.

##### 5.3.5.1 Conditional clause

See also 10.7.2.2(b), 10.7.3.2, 10.7.6.

**Om vi hade råd skulle vi köpa en ny bil.**

If we could afford it, we would buy a new car.

**Om/Ifall du inte äter upp din smörgås, får du ingen efterrätt.**

If you don’t eat up your sandwich, you won’t get any dessert.

### 5.3.5.2 Question clause expressing condition

The conditional can also be expressed by using question word order (10.7.6.2) as English may do on occasions.

**Äter du inte upp din smörgås får du ingen efterrätt.**

If you don't eat up your sandwich you won't get any dessert.

**Hade du inte kommit nu (så) skulle jag ha ringt till polisen.**

Had you not come now I would have phoned the police.

### 5.3.5.3 Imperative clause

See 5.3.4, 10.3.3.3.

**Ät upp din smörgås, så får du efterrätt.**

Eat up your sandwich, then you'll get some dessert.

### 5.3.5.4 Adverbial expression

A further means of expressing condition is to use an adverbial expression:

**Har du inte ätit upp din smörgås? I så fall får du ingen efterrätt.**

Haven't you eaten up your sandwich? In that case you'll get no dessert.

## 5.4 Transitive, intransitive and reflexive verbs

### 5.4.1 Introduction

#### 5.4.1.1 Transitive and intransitive

The distinction between transitive and intransitive is not always clear.

Transitive verbs usually have a direct object:

**John köpte huset.**

John bought the house.

**Vi har inte målat dörren.**

We have not painted the door.

Intransitive verbs do not usually have a direct object:

**Barnen sov.**

The children slept.

**Han ljög.**

He lied.

Some transitive verbs may, however, appear without an object when the object is implicit:

<b>Killen åt.</b>	The boy ate.
<b>Zoë spelade länge.</b>	Zoë was playing for a long time.
<b>De stänger klockan elva.</b>	They close at eleven.

Some intransitive verbs may appear with an object that is cognate with the verb:

<b>Han log ett brett leende.</b>	He smiled a broad smile.
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Note that only transitive verbs can form the passive, and that the direct object of a transitive verb becomes the subject when the verb changes from active to passive (5.5.6 and 10.6.7).

<b>John</b>	<b>köpte</b>	<b>huset.</b>	→	<b>Huset</b>	<b>köptes</b>	<b>av John.</b>
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Active verb</i>	<i>Object</i>		<i>Subject</i>	<i>Passive verb</i>	<i>Agent</i>
John	bought	the house.		The house	was bought	by John.

#### 5.4.1.2 Reflexive

Reflexive verbs (5.4.3) are formed using reflexive pronouns (3.1.1, 3.4.1f.) and are intransitive, as the action reflects back on the subject:

<i>Reflexive</i>	
<b>Han rakade sig slarvigt.</b>	He shaved carelessly.

<i>Transitive</i>	
<b>Frisören rakade honom.</b>	The hairdresser shaved him.

#### 5.4.1.3 Ditransitive

Certain verbs are ditransitive, i.e. they have two objects, a direct object and an indirect object:

<b>Ingvar</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>Olle</b>	<b>boken.</b>
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>IO</i>	<i>DO</i>
Ingvar	gave	Olle	the book.

There is a small group of verbs of this kind, including:

**berätta**, tell; **bevisa**, prove; **visa**, show; **(er)bjuda**, offer; **föreslå**, recommend; **ge**, give; **lova**, promise; **lämna**, leave; **låna**, lend; **meddela**, communicate; **räcka**, hand; **skicka**, send; **skänka**, donate; **säga**, tell; **sända**, send; **tillfoga**, append; **undanhålla**, withhold from

The indirect object can also be expressed by means of a prepositional phrase (7.2.12.4, 7.3.7.13). In the sentence below it can be seen that **Olle** is linked only indirectly, via a preposition, to the verb:

<b>Ingvar</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>boken</b>	<b>till Olle.</b>
<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>DO</i>	<i>IO</i>
Ingvar	gave	the book	to Olle.

## 5.4.2 Transitive and intransitive verbs

### 5.4.2.1 Related pairs

Transitive and intransitive verbs often occur in pairs with very similar meanings and forms. In many cases the transitive verb is a weak verb (Conj. I, II) while the intransitive is a strong verb (Conj. IV):

<i>Transitive</i>	<i>Intransitive</i>
<b>bränna</b> IIa, burn	<b>brinna</b> IV, burn
<b>fälla</b> IIa, fell	<b>falla</b> IV, fall
<b>lägga</b> IIa, lay, place	<b>ligga</b> IV, lie
<b>spräcka</b> IIb, split, cleave	<b>spricka</b> IV, burst, split
<b>ställa</b> IIa, stand, place upright	<b>stå</b> IV, stand
<b>sätta</b> IIa, place, set	<b>sitta</b> IV, sit
<b>sänka</b> IIb, (cause to) sink	<b>sjunka</b> IV, sink
<b>söva</b> IIa, anaesthetise, put to sleep	<b>sova</b> IV, sleep
	cf. <b>somna</b> I, fall asleep

In some cases both equivalents are weak:

<b>dränka</b> IIb, drench, drown	<b>drunkna</b> I, drown
<b>kyla</b> IIa, chill, cool	<b>kallna</b> I, get cold, cool
<b>släcka</b> IIb, extinguish (flame)	<b>slockna</b> I, go out (flame)
<b>röka</b> IIb, smoke	<b>ryka</b> IIb, give off smoke
<b>trötta</b> I, tire, make tired	<b>tröttna</b> I, tire, get tired
<b>väcka</b> IIb, awaken, rouse	<b>vaka</b> I, stay awake
<b>vakna</b> I, wake up	

Some intransitive verbs may be made transitive by adding the prefix **be-**:

<b>lysa</b>	→	<b>belysa</b>
shine		illuminate

See also: **bearbeta**, treat; **bebo**, inhabit; **begränsa**, limit; **besegra**, defeat; **besvara**, answer; **bevaka**, guard

### 5.4.2.2 Either transitive or intransitive

A few Swedish verbs (**dricka**, drink; **handla**, shop; **sluta**, finish) may be either transitive or intransitive:

**Filmen slutade klockan fem.** The film *finished* at 5 o'clock. [intr.]  
**Jag slutade boken i går.** I *finished* the book yesterday. [tr.]

### 5.4.2.3 Transitive or intransitive in English

Whereas Swedish often maintains quite firm distinctions between transitive and intransitive, employing two different (but occasionally related) verbs (cf. 5.4.2.1), many English verbs may be either. Compare:

They *burned* the waste paper. **bränna, -er, -de, bränt** [tr.]  
The house *burned* down. **brinna, -er, brann, brunnit** [intr.]

Other examples:

He *drowned* the kittens. **dränka, -er, -te, -t** [tr.]  
He *drowned* in the lake. **drunkna, -r, -de, -t** [intr.]

Soldiers *blew* up the bridge. **spränga, -er, -de, -t** [tr.]  
The bomb *blew* up. **explodera, -r, -de, -t** [intr.]

We *froze* the plums. **frysa, -er, -te, -t** [tr.]  
The lake has *frozen* over. **frysa, -er, frös, frusit** [intr.]

Mary *left* this letter for you. **lämna, -r, -de, -t** [tr.]  
Mary *left* early. **gå, -r, gick, gått** [intr.]

They *are growing* potatoes. **odla, -ar, -de, -t** [tr.]  
The potatoes *are growing*. **växa, -er, -te, -t** [intr.]

They *sank* the ships. **sänka, -er, -te, -t** [tr.]  
The Vasa *sank* quickly. **sjunka, -er, sjönk, sjunkit** [intr.]

The explosion *split* his eardrum. **spräcka, -er, -te, -t** [tr.]  
His trousers *split*. **spricka, -er, sprack, spruckit** [intr.]

### 5.4.3 Reflexive verbs

#### 5.4.3.1 Form

For reflexive pronouns and other reflexive constructions see 3.1.1, 3.4.1f. The reflexive pronoun refers to the subject:

*Transitive*

**Han lägger boken på bordet.**

[**boken** = *object*]

He places the book on the table.

**Jag lär honom svenska.**

[**honom** = *object*]

I teach him Swedish.

*Reflexive*

**Han lägger sig tidigt.**

[**sig** = *reflexive object*]

He goes to bed early.

**Han lär sig svenska.**

[**sig** = *reflexive object*]

He learns Swedish.

#### 5.4.3.2 Transitive or reflexive

A number of verbs in Swedish may be used either transitively (with an object) or reflexively (with a reflexive object):

**böja/böja sig**, bend, submit; **gömma/gömma sig**, hide; **hejda/hejda sig**, stop/stop oneself; **känna/känna sig**, feel; **raka/raka sig**, shave; **skära/skära sig**, cut/cut oneself; **tvätta/tvätta sig**, wash

*Transitive*

**Tjuven gömde stöldgodset.**

The thief hid the stolen property.

**Läkaren tvättade patienten.**

The doctor washed the patient.

*Reflexive*

**Tjuven gömde sig på vinden.**

The thief hid in the attic.

**Läkaren tvättade sig.**

The doctor washed/had a wash.

#### 5.4.3.3 Only reflexive

Some verbs are only found in the reflexive form in Swedish. Notice that many of these have a prefix in **för-**, **be-** or a verb particle.

**befatta sig med**, concern oneself (with); **bege sig**, go; **bära sig åt**, set about; **förirra sig**, get lost; **förivra sig**, get carried away; **förkyla sig**, catch a cold; **gifta sig**, get married; **infinna sig**, present oneself; **tilldra sig**, occur

#### 5.4.3.4 Reflexive in Swedish, not reflexive in English

Many verbs which are reflexive in Swedish are not reflexive in English:

<b>John reste sig.</b>	John got up.
<b>Han satte sig igen.</b>	He sat down again.
<b>Jag känner mig dålig.</b>	I feel ill.
<b>Hon klädde sig i svart.</b>	She dressed in black.
<b>De måste skynda sig.</b>	They must hurry up.
<b>Hon klarar sig nog i USA.</b>	She'll cope, I'm sure, in the USA.
<b>Vi lär oss franska.</b>	We are learning French.
<b>Paret ska gifta sig.</b>	The couple are getting married.
<b>Mannen tog av sig hatten.</b>	The man took off his hat.
<b>Oroa dig inte!</b>	Don't worry!
<b>Vi har förlovat oss.</b>	We've got engaged.
<b>Koncentrera dig på jobbet.</b>	Concentrate on the job!

A number of these verbs indicate movement:

**lägga sig**, lie down; **närma sig**, approach; **röra sig**, move [intr.];  
**vända sig**, turn [intr.]

Others include:

**avhålla sig**, abstain; **beklaga sig**, complain; **bemöda sig**, endeavour;  
**dra sig tillbaka**, withdraw, retire; **föreställa sig**, imagine; **förvåna sig**,  
wonder; **förändra sig**, alter, change; **glädja sig**, rejoice; **uppföra sig**,  
behave; **visa sig**, appear; **ångra sig**, repent

#### 5.4.3.5 Reflexive or –s form

In some cases an alternative to the reflexive form is an intransitive –s form of the verb. See 5.5.1.

<b>Folkmassan skingrades/skingrade sig.</b>	The crowd dispersed.
<b>Hans ögon tåras/tårar sig.</b>	His eyes water.

Also:

**harmas/harma sig**, be indignant; **förargas/förarga sig**, get annoyed;  
**glädjas/glädja sig**, be happy



## 5.5 –s forms of the verb and the passive

### 5.5.1 –s forms of the verb: form

Irregular forms are marked \* in the table, but see also 5.5.1.1.

	Infinitive	Meaning	Present	Past	Supine
I	<b>baka/s</b>	be baked	<b>baka/s</b>	<b>baka/des</b>	<b>baka/ts</b>
IIa	<b>böj/as</b>	be bent	<b>böj/s</b>	<b>böjd/es</b>	<b>böj/ts</b>
	– stems in –mj, –nj: <b>vämj/as</b>	be disgusted	<b>vämj/es*</b>	<b>vämj/des</b>	<b>vämj/ts</b>
IIb	<b>köp/as</b>	be bought	<b>köp/s</b>	<b>köp/tes</b>	<b>köp/ts</b>
	– stems in –s: <b>läs/as</b>	be read	<b>läs/es*</b>	<b>läs/tes</b>	<b>läst/s</b>
III	<b>sy/s</b>	be sewn	<b>sy/s</b>	<b>sy/ddes</b>	<b>sy/tts</b>
IV	<b>bjud/as</b>	be invited	<b>bjud/s</b>	<b>bjöd/s</b>	<b>bjud/its</b>

#### 5.5.1.1 Adding –s or –es

With the exception of the present tense, the –s form of the verb is formed simply by adding an –s to the active form of the verb (but see 5.5.1.2). In the present tense, however, –s or –es is added to the stem according to the conventions in (a), (b) and (c) below.

In the present tense:

(a) The –s ending is always added after a vowel stem:

**kallas**, is called; **ses**, is seen

(b) The –es ending is always added after a stem ending in –s:

**kysses**, is kissed; **löses**, is solved

- (c) Other verbs with stems ending in **-mj**, **-nj** and **-st** often add **-es** to facilitate pronunciation:

**tänjes/tänjs**, is stretched; **fästes/fästs**, is attached

### 5.5.1.2 Formal use of **-es**

After stems ending in consonants other than **-s** (see 5.5.1.1(b)) the short ending **-s** is most commonly used in spoken or normal written language, but a form in **-es** is found in formal Swedish, particularly on signs:

<b>Bär köpes/säljes här.</b>	Berries bought/sold here.
<b>Rum uthyres.</b>	Room to let.
<b>Butikspersonal sökes.</b>	Shop assistants needed.

Note – The verb **synas** has two present tense forms depending on the meaning:

**Brevbäraren syns vid svängen.**  
The postman appears by the bend in the road.

**Det synes som om han kommer hit.**  
It seems he is coming here.

### 5.5.1.3 Participles

The participles (5.2.14f.) do not usually possess an **-s** form, but see 5.5.4.3. There are some exceptions as regards the present participle, though these retain an active sense:

- (a) Verbal use after the verbs **bli**, **ha**, **komma** in colloquial Swedish:

<b>Han kom åkandes i sin bil.</b>	He arrived driving his car.
<b>Eva kom inrusandes för sent.</b>	Eva came dashing in late.

- (b) Adverbial use in some set phrases, both colloquial and archaic:

<b>både lovligt och olovandes skam till sägandes</b>	both legally and illegally shame to say
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#### 5.5.1.4 Imperative

The imperative (5.3.4) is unusual with **–s** verbs and always retains its active sense. See also 5.5.3–5.5.5.

<b>Andas djupt!</b>	Take a deep breath!
<b>Djävlas inte med din lilla syster!</b>	Don't annoy your little sister!
<b>Skäms inte för ditt barn!</b>	Don't be ashamed of your child!

#### 5.5.2 **–s forms of the verb: summary of use**

The **–s** forms of the verb have the following four distinct uses:

- 1 The reciprocal: **De kysstes.** They kissed. See 5.5.3.
- 2 The deponent: **Vi trivs här.** We like it here. See 5.5.4.
- 3 Absolute use: **Nässlan bränns.** The nettle stings. See 5.5.5.
- 4 The passive: **Huset målades.** The house was (being) painted. See 5.5.6f.

Note – There are two other distinct ways of forming the passive other than the **–s** form, namely with forms of **bli** + past participle (5.5.8) and with forms of **vara** + past participle (5.5.9). These are known as ‘periphrastic forms’.

#### 5.5.3 **The reciprocal**

An **–s** verb may indicate reciprocity, i.e. the subject both carries out an action and is the object of an action. The **–s** may be replaced by the pronoun **varandra** ‘each other’ (see 3.9.4). These verbs have, of necessity, a plural subject:

**Vi träffas och kramas.**  
**= Vi träffar varandra och kramar varandra.**  
We meet (each other) and hug (each other).

Common reciprocal verbs are:

**brottas** I, wrestle; **enas** I, unite; **förlikas** I, be reconciled; **försonas** I, become reconciled; **följas åt** Ila, accompany (one another); **hjälpas åt** I Ib, help (one another); **kivas** I, squabble; **kramas**\* I, hug; **kyssas**\* I Ib,

kiss; **mötas**\* IIb, meet; **pussas**\* I, kiss; **råkas** I, meet; **skiljas åt** IIa, part; **retas**\* I, tease; **samlas**\* I, gather; **ses**\* V, meet; **slåss**\* IV, fight; **tampas** I, tussle; **träffas** I, meet

Those verbs marked \* above also occur in an active form without –s.

**De slåss om en plats i OS-finalen.**

They are fighting for a place in the Olympic final.

**5.5.4**    *The deponent*

**5.5.4.1**    Passive form but active meaning

Some –s verbs have an active meaning and are intransitive.

**Jag hoppas att de kommer.**            I hope they come.  
**Det finns ingenting mer att säga.** There is nothing more to say.

Common deponent verbs include:

Conjugation I: **andas**, breathe; **avundas**, envy; **fattas**, be missing; **handskas**, treat; **hoppas**, hope; **lyckas**, succeed; **låtsas**, pretend; **misslyckas**, fail; **saknas**, be lacking; **svettas**, sweat; **turas om**, take turns; **åldras**, age

Conjugation IIa: **minnas**, remember, recall; **skämmas**, be ashamed; **trivas**, be happy; **trängas**, jostle; **töras**, dare; **vantrivas**, be unhappy

Conjugation IIb: **kräkas**, vomit; **synas**, appear; **tyckas**, seem

Conjugation III: **brås på**, take after

Conjugation IV: **umgås**, be in the company of

Deponent verbs do not normally possess a form without –s. If such a form exists, then there is usually a marked difference in meaning between the verb with and the verb without –s. To all intents and purposes they are two distinct verbs. Compare:

**Han saknar sin fru.**                    He is missing his wife.  
**Saltet saknas.**                         There is no salt.

**Hon tyckte att han var stilig.**        She thought he was handsome.  
**Hon tycktes inte veta det.**            She didn't seem to know that.

#### 5.5.4.2 Transitive deponents

Most deponent verbs are intransitive. Transitive deponents include:

**andas in något**, breathe something in; **avundas någon/något**, envy someone/something; **minnas någon/något**, remember someone/something; **nalkas någon/något**, approach someone/something

#### 5.5.4.3 Participles of deponents

Deponents rarely form participles, but when they do, they first drop the **-s**:

**åldras** → **en åldrande kvinna**, an ageing woman  
**lyckas** → **ett lyckat försök**, a successful attempt

#### 5.5.5 Absolute use of the **-s** verb

A few **-s** verbs have an active meaning, like the reciprocal (5.5.3), but the action is unidirectional and the object understood. The meaning often incorporates the idea of habit or tendency. There are often forms without **-s** that have similar meanings:

**Deras hund bits!**                      Their dog bites!  
**= Deras hund brukar bita folk.**

**Vissa maneter bränns.**              Some jellyfish sting.

Other **-s** verbs with this kind of absolute use are: **knuffas**, jostle; **luras**, deceive; **narras**, fool; **nypas**, pinch; **retas**, tease; **rivas**, scratch; **stickas**, bite [of insects]

#### 5.5.6 The passive: introduction

##### 5.5.6.1 Subject and agent

(a) While active verbs often have a subject and an object, passive verbs may have a subject and an agent. In the transformation from active to passive the subject of the active construction becomes the agent of the passive construction, while the object of the active construction becomes the subject of the passive construction. See 10.6.7.

Active	1	<b>En polis</b> <i>Subject</i> A police officer	<b>körde</b> drove	<b>bilen</b> <i>Object</i> the car
↓				
Passive	2	<b>Bilen</b> <i>Subject</i> The car	<b>kördes</b> was driven	<b>av en polis</b> <i>Agent</i> by a police officer

Notice that what has changed here is not the underlying meaning, as in both 1 and 2 a police officer is driving the car, but the focus of the sentence has changed. In 1 the topic is the police officer, in 2 it is the car. See also Topicalisation 10.6.2.

- (b) Many passive constructions have no agent, however. The reason for this is that in many cases the agent (or real subject) is unknown, unimportant or obvious from the context, and it is the action itself, expressed by the verb, or the object of the action (subject of the passive) that is the dominating idea:

<b>Bilen kördes försiktigt.</b>	The car was driven carefully.
<b>Lunch serveras klockan elva.</b>	Lunch is served at eleven.
<b>Han dödades i en bilolycka.</b>	He was killed in a car accident.
<b>Mötet hölls i skolan.</b>	The meeting was held in the school.

- (c) Impersonal passive constructions never have an agent. There is no direct English equivalent to these. See 5.5.12.2.

<b>Nu ska det arbetas!</b>	Now there will be some work done!
<b>Här ska dansas, ser jag.</b>	There'll be some dancing here, I see.
<b>Det spelades mycket poker.</b>	A lot of poker was played.

#### 5.5.6.2 Three ways of expressing the passive (and one circumlocution)

- (a) The **–s** passive (**–s** is added to the active form of the verb, see 5.5.1):

<b>Äpplena skalas.</b> See 5.5.7.	The apples are (being) peeled.
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- (b) Forms of **bli** + past participle (i.e. periphrastic forms. For forms of the past participle, see 5.2.14.1):

<b>Äpplena blir skalade.</b> See 5.5.8.
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(c) Forms of **vara** + past participle (i.e. periphrastic forms. For forms of the past participle, see 5.2.14.1):

**Äpplena är skalade.** See 5.5.9.

(d) **Man** etc. + active verb:

**Man skalar äpplena.** See 5.5.10.

### **5.5.7** *The –s passive*

In this, the most frequent type of passive construction, the **–s** form (5.5.1f.) stresses the action of the verb. Time is often unimportant in **–s** passive constructions, and the agent often unknown, immaterial or obvious from the context. This form is often found in the infinitive, and is very common in the past tense. An **–s** passive construction frequently indicates repetition, command or instruction. These constructions are rather more common in written Swedish than in spoken, and are especially found in newspaper style. In spoken Swedish, constructions with **bli** + past participle (5.5.8) or **man** + active verb (5.5.10) are often preferred.

**Ordet "vadmal" uttalas med korta vokaler.**

The word 'vadmal' is pronounced with short vowels.

**Felparkering straffas med böter.**

Illegal parking is punishable by a fine.

**Staden förstördes under kriget.**

The town was destroyed during the war.

**Boken måste läsas av alla studenter.**

The book must be read by all students.

### **5.5.8** *Forms of bli + past participle*

The **bli**-passive usually expresses a definite isolated occurrence, often together with an adverbial expression of time or manner (6.2.2.1f.) and/or an agent. This form portrays an occurrence in which there is a transition from one state to another. In the present tense **blir** can indicate future (5.2.8.1) and the **bli**-passive is thus more common in the past, perfect and pluperfect. It is common in the spoken language and in informal written Swedish.

**Han blev påkörd av en bil i går och ena benet blev brutet.**  
He was hit by a car yesterday and one of his legs was broken.

**Han har blivit vald till ordförande i klubben.**  
He has been elected chairman of the club.

**England blev slaget av Sverige i finalen.**  
England was beaten by Sweden in the final.

**Saken blir avgjord vid sammanträdet imorgon.**  
The matter will be decided at the meeting tomorrow.

Note – In colloquial Central Swedish **vart**, the past tense of the verb **varda** and the only form still in use, is sometimes heard in cases where one might expect **blev**. This form is not used in written Swedish.

**Han vart påkörd av en bil i går.** He was hit by a car yesterday.

### **5.5.9** *Forms of vara + past participle*

The **vara**-passive provides a picture of an object or state and stresses the result of an action or a completed transition. The past participle (5.2.14) possesses a strongly adjectival sense. This form is often found together with an agent and/or an adverbial expression of time or place (6.2.2.1, 6.2.2.3).

**Hon är plågad av mygg.**

She is tormented by mosquitoes.

**Säden är förstörd.**

The grain has been ruined.

**Vi är bortbjudna i kväll.**

We are invited out tonight.

**Han har varit gift tidigare.**

He has been married before.

### **5.5.10** *Man + active verb*

See also 3.9.1. This construction is used as an alternative to the impersonal construction **det** + **-s** passive in which **det** is the formal as opposed to the real subject. See 3.3.5.3, 10.1.3.

**Man skriver mycket om det i tidningarna.**

**= Det skrivs mycket om det i tidningarna.**

A lot is written about it in the papers.

**Man säger att det ska bli en ändring.**

**= Det sägs att det ska bli en ändring.**

They say there'll be a change.



**Man drack brännvin hela natten.**  
**= Det dracks brännvin hela natten.**  
Brandy was being drunk all night.

Other impersonal active subjects frequently used are:

<b>Någon sa det i går.</b>	Cf. passive:	<b>Det sades i går.</b>
<b>Folk sa det i går.</b>		<b>Det sades i går.</b>
<b>De sa det i går.</b>		<b>Det sades i går.</b>
<b>Ingen sa det i går.</b>		<b>Det blev inte sagt i går.</b>

### **5.5.11** *Factors underlying the use of different passive forms*

The reason why one particular form rather than another is used in a particular case is often difficult to discern. A number of different factors underlie the choice, as detailed in 5.5.11.1–5.5.11.3.

#### **5.5.11.1** The subject

There is a tendency to use **bli**-passives with personal subjects and **–s** passives with non-personal subjects:

**Presidenten blev skjuten i sin bil.**  
The president was shot in his car.

**Det anses vara av sämre kvalitet.**  
It is considered to be of inferior quality.

This does not apply, however, to the perfect and pluperfect tenses:

**Hon har korats till Sveriges bästa spelare.**  
She has been voted Sweden's best player.

#### **5.5.11.2** The agent

With a concrete agent, either **bli**-passives or **–s** passives are used, while with an abstract agent **–s** passives are used. Compare:

**Han överfölls/blev överfallen av rövare.**  
He was attacked by robbers.

**Mördaren överfölls av ånger.**

The murderer was overcome by remorse.

In cases where the **av** expression does not indicate the real agent of the activity but merely a means or cause (the diffuse passive), **–s** passives or **vara**-passives are used:

**Läget präglas/är präglat av sto oro.**

The situation is characterised by great anxiety.

**5.5.11.3** Tense

- (a) In the infinitive, and especially together with modal auxiliaries (5.3.2) **–s** passives dominate:

**Rummet ska städas innan pappa kommer hem.**

The room must be tidied before Dad comes home.

**Rapporten måste skrivas i dag.**

The report must be written today.

- (b) With the present tense **–s** passives are more common than periphrastic forms.

- 1 **Bli** + past participle often denotes future.

**Dörrarna blir öppnade (om en timme).**

The doors will be opened (in an hour).

*Terminative*

- 2 **Vara** + past participle has an adjectival sense.

**Dörrarna är öppnade (nu).**

The doors are opened (now).

*Durative*

- 3 **–s** passive denotes a repeated action with terminative verbs, and a continuing action with durative verbs. Compare:

**Dörrarna öppnas (klockan tio).**

The doors open (at ten o'clock).

*Terminative*

**Diktatorn fruktas av alla.**

The dictator is feared by everyone.

*Durative*

(c) Past tenses with –s passives:

- 1 can be used instead of **bli**-passives with *terminative* verbs:

**Bilen stals/blev stulen.**

The car was stolen.

**Han utnämndes/blev utnämnd till professor.**

He was appointed professor.

- 2 are more common with *terminative* verbs when a repeated action is involved:

**Rättsregler skapades ofta utifrån det konkreta fallet.**

Laws were often created from the concrete case.

- 3 are frequent with *durative verbs* or cases in which the action is stressed:

**Borgar byggdes, nya städer grundades, källare grävdes.**

Castles were built, new towns were founded, cellars were dug.

**När dagen firades, kom folk från hela bygden.**

When the day was celebrated, people came from the whole district.

- 4 are also very common in cases of a single occurrence:

**Ett rymningsförsök stoppades i sista stund.**

An escape attempt was prevented at the last moment.

- 5 are more common with modal auxiliary verbs:

**Äldrevården måste förbättras.**

The care of the elderly must be improved.

(d) Past tenses with **bli**-passives:

- 1 are more common when stressing the result of an action, especially when a qualifier is introduced:

**Jag blev alltid vänligt mottagen.**

I was always courteously received.

- 2 are more common when stressing the result of an action, especially when there is a conditional:

**Om man stal ett får blev man hängd.**

If one stole a sheep one was hanged.

- 3 are more common when stressing the result of an action, especially when an action was beginning:

**Premiärministern blev (så småningom) älskad av folket.**  
The Prime Minister (eventually) came to be loved by the people.

- (e) **Vara**-passives tend to be adjectival:

**Vikingarna var fruktade över hela Europa.**  
The Vikings were feared throughout Europe.

- (f) Perfect, pluperfect:

- 1 **-s** passives dominate for single occurrences and completed actions whereas **bli**-passives are used to stress a single completed event:

**Det sista glaset hade tömts för timmar sedan.**  
The last glass had been emptied hours before.

**Han har som bekant blivit åtalad för rattonykterhet.**  
He has, as you know, been charged with drunken driving.

- 2 **Bli**-passives also draw attention to the subject:

**Dessa skogar har blivit besparade tätbebyggelse [i motsats till andra skogar].**  
These forests have been spared urban development [as opposed to other forests].

**Presidenten har blivit skjuten.**  
The president has been shot.

- 3 **Bli**-passives are also used in the absolute passive construction (i.e. one lacking any adverbial of time or manner):

**Det var ett under om en tavla blev såld.**  
It was a miracle if a picture was sold.

### **5.5.12** *Differences in the use of the passive in English and Swedish*

In many cases the use of the passive is much the same in the two languages. These notes concentrate on major differences.

### 5.5.12.1 English passive = Swedish active

(a) Swedish has **man** + active verb (5.5.10):

It is more difficult than is generally supposed.

**Det är svårare än man i allmänhet tror.**

(b) ‘There’ + passive infinitive construction = Swedish active infinitive construction:

There was nothing to be done. **Det fanns ingenting att göra.**

(c) ‘Be said to’, ‘be reputed to’ = Swedish **lär, ska(II)** (5.3.7.2, 5.3.10):

The food there is said to be good. **Maten där lär vara god.**

### 5.5.12.2 Swedish passive = English active

(a) **Det** + passive (impersonal passive) = ‘there is/was’ + noun (5.5.6.1(b)). The sense here is roughly equivalent to **man** + active verb.

**Det dansades hela natten.**      There was dancing all night.  
**= Man dansade hela natten.**

**Det talades om en ny giv.**      There was talk of a new deal.  
**= Man talade om en ny giv.**

(b) Some Swedish agentless →s passives = English intransitive verbs:

**Dörren öppnades.**      The door opened.  
**Hennes ögon fylldes med tårar.**      Her eyes filled with tears.  
**Läget har förändrats.**      The situation has changed.  
**En kö bildades snart.**      A queue soon formed.  
**Bilen behöver tvättas.**      The car needs washing.

## 5.6 Compound verbs

### 5.6.1 Introduction

A compound verb is one prefixed by a particle (11.3.2). In some compounds the particle forms an integral and inseparable part of the verb and remains attached to it in all circumstances. This kind of compound is

known as inseparable (5.6.2). Such verbs inflect in the same way as in the uncompound form.

Compare:

**stå – stod – stått**, stand      **bistå – bistod – bistått**, support, assist

However, in other verbs the particle (an adverb or preposition) may become separated from the verb under some circumstances and in certain forms of the verb. This kind is known as a separable compound (5.6.3).

Compare:

**uppstiga, stiga upp**, rise, get up

The verb may be either separable or inseparable without any major difference in meaning:

**gå förbi**, go past      **förbigå**, pass over

Alternatively the two forms may differ considerably in meaning:

**bygga upp**, build up      **uppbygga**, edify

### **5.6.2** *Inseparable compound verbs*

Inseparable compound verbs (11.3.8.2(b)) comprise:

#### **5.6.2.1** Verbs compounded with nouns

**fickparkera**, parallel park; **hungerstrejka**, (go on) hunger strike;  
**kedjeröka**, chain smoke; **matvägra**, refuse to eat; **rådfråga**, consult;  
**tjuvlyssna**, eavesdrop; **övningsköra**, practise driving

Note – Some inseparable verbs are only used with a direct object:

**Han bokförde dagens inkomster varje kväll.**

He entered the day's takings in the book every evening.

In sentences with no direct object the separable form is used, the particle taking the place of the direct object:

**Han har fört bok i 20 år.**      He has kept the books for 20 years.

5.6.2.2 Verbs compounded with adjectives

**fullända**, complete; **godkänna**, approve; **småle**, smile; **rengöra**, clean; **snabbspola**, (wind) fast forward; **storskratta**, guffaw

Note – Some adjective + verb compounds may be separated for stylistic reasons. In such instances the adjectival element reverts to its role as an adjective and agrees in number and gender with its predicate:

**Rengör mina stövlar nu med en gång!** Clean my boots at once!  
**Gör mina stövlar rena nu med en gång!**

5.6.2.3 Verbs compounded with other verbs

**brännmärka**, brand; **sprutmåla**, spray paint

5.6.2.4 Verbs compounded with numerals

**tredela**, trisect; **fyrdubbla**, quadruple

5.6.2.5 Verbs compounded with **själv**–

**självdö**, die naturally, die out; **självspricka**, chap (skin)

5.6.2.6 Some verbs compounded with adverbs or prepositions

**förbigå**, ignore; **genomföra**, carry out; **undervisa**, teach, **uppnå**, achieve; **utse**, appoint, **vidröra**, touch upon; **överreagera**, over-react

5.6.2.7 Verbs compounded with certain prefixes

(a) Unstressed prefixes:

<i>be</i> –	<b>betala</b>	pay, pay for
<i>ent</i> –	<b>entlediga</b>	dismiss
<i>för</i> –	<b>förklara</b>	explain

(b) Stressed prefixes:

<i>an-</i>	<b>anställa</b>	appoint
<i>bi-</i>	<b>bistå</b>	help, assist
<i>er-</i>	<b>erhålla</b>	receive
<i>före-</i>	<b>föredra</b>	prefer
<i>här-</i>	<b>härstamma</b>	originate
<i>miss-</i>	<b>missunna</b>	begrudge
<i>o-</i>	<b>oroa</b>	worry
<i>när-</i>	<b>närvara</b>	be present
<i>sam-</i>	<b>samtycka</b>	consent
<i>um-</i>	<b>umgås</b>	associate with
<i>und-</i>	<b>undkomma</b>	escape
<i>van-</i>	<b>vanhedra</b>	disgrace
<i>väl-</i>	<b>välsigna</b>	bless
<i>å-</i>	<b>åberopa</b>	refer to

#### 5.6.2.8

Some inseparable compound verbs only exist in the integral form:

**avbilda**, depict; **underkänna**, reject

These include cases where the second part of the verb does not exist as an independent verb:

**inlemma**, incorporate

#### 5.6.3 Separable compound verbs

These comprise two main groups, those that are usually separated into verb and particle (5.6.3.1) and those that are found in both separated or integral form (5.6.3.2). See also 11.3.8.

##### 5.6.3.1 Always separated

Certain Swedish verbs are always separated except in the participial forms, i.e. present and past participles. (5.2.14f.) According to modern usage this group comprises verbs whose particles are:

<b>av</b>	<b>duka av</b>	clear (table)
	<b>Bordet var avdukat.</b>	The table was cleared.



<b>bort</b>	<b>resa bort</b> <b>Han är bortrest.</b>	go away He has gone away.
<b>igen</b>	<b>känna igen</b> <b>ett igenkännande leende</b>	recognise a smile of recognition
<b>ihjäl</b>	<b>slå ihjäl</b> <b>Han blev ihjälslagen.</b>	kill He was killed.
<b>lös</b>	<b>släppa lös</b> <b>den lössläppta fången</b>	release the released prisoner
<b>omkull</b>	<b>falla omkull</b> <b>ett omkullfallet träd</b>	fall over a fallen tree
<b>om</b>	<b>köra om</b> <b>den omkörda lastbilen</b>	overtake the overtaken lorry
<b>upp</b>	<b>slå upp</b> <b>den uppslagna boken</b>	open the opened book
<b>vilse</b>	<b>gå vilse</b> <b>en vilsegången kille</b>	get lost a lost boy

#### 5.6.3.2 Either separated or integral forms

Swedish verbs which may be either separated or integral indicate three general areas of meaning:

(a) Place:

<b>in</b>	<b>räkna in</b>	<b>inräkna</b>	include
<b>till</b>	<b>strömma till</b>	<b>tillströmma</b>	flock together
<b>av</b>	<b>resa av</b>	<b>avresa</b>	depart
<b>från</b>	<b>ta ifrån</b>	<b>frånta</b>	deprive
<b>ut</b>	<b>låna ut</b>	<b>utlåna</b>	lend out
<b>(i)genom</b>	<b>gå genom</b>	<b>genomgå</b>	go through
<b>över</b>	<b>svämma över</b>	<b>översvämma</b>	flood

(b) Time:

<b>för</b>	<b>förvarna</b>	<b>varna för</b>	warn
<b>före</b>	<b>föregå</b>	<b>gå före</b>	precede

(c) Action:

1 Beginning an action:

<b>till</b>	<b>skruva till</b>	<b>tillskruva</b>	screw tight
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2 Ending an action (integral in past participle only):

<b>av</b>	<b>stänga av</b>	<b>avstängd</b>	shut off, switch off
<b>upp</b>	<b>äta upp</b>	<b>uppäten</b>	eat up
<b>ur</b>	<b>dricka ur</b>	<b>urdrucken</b>	drink up
<b>ut</b>	<b>sälja ut</b>	<b>utsåld</b>	sell out

#### **5.6.4** *Separable or inseparable forms – stylistic differences*

In many cases in Swedish the separated and integral forms are identical in meaning. The separated forms are now used in the spoken language and in everyday written Swedish. The integral forms are reserved almost solely for official documents and more formal usage. Compare:

**lägga ned/nedlägga**, to lay down

<b>Hon lade ned böckerna.</b>	She laid down the books.
<b>Kungen nedlade en krans.</b>	The king laid a wreath.

Others:

**medtaga**, bring along; **sammanföra**, bring together; **tillsäga**, inform; **uppsöka**, seek out

Notwithstanding these stylistic differences, the verbs are always compounded in their participial forms:

<b>Fabriken är nedlagd.</b>	The factory is closed down.
<b>ett vänligt mottagande</b>	a friendly reception
<b>uppsökande journalistik</b>	investigative journalism

#### **5.6.5** *Separable or inseparable forms – semantic differences*

Certain Swedish verbs have separated and integral forms with different meanings (cf. English: ‘take over’ and ‘overtake’). In Swedish the separated form usually has a literal meaning (physical or concrete), whereas the corresponding integral form has a figurative meaning:

*Separated = Literal*

**Jag bröt av kvisten.**

I broke off the branch.

*Integrated = Figurative*

**Jag avbröt samtalet.**

I interrupted the conversation.

**De steg över diket.**

They stepped over the ditch.

**Det överstiger mina krafter.**

It exceeds my strength.

**Han strök under ordet.**

He underlined the word.

**Han underströk ordets betydelse.**

He emphasised the meaning of the word.

Sometimes the semantic difference is so great as to warrant regarding the two forms as two distinct verbs:

**Bordsbenet gick av.**

The table leg broke off.

**Statsministern avgick.**

The Prime Minister resigned.

Others:

**gå över**, go over; **övergå**, exceed; **se över**, review; **överse**, overlook; **ställa fram**, put out; **framställa**, present

Notwithstanding any semantic differences, the verbs are always compounded in their participial forms:

**en avbruten kvist**

a broken branch

**(bryta av)**

**ett avbrutet samtal**

an interrupted conversation

**(avbryta)**

### 5.6.6

#### **Separable verbs – the position of the particle**

#### 5.6.6.1

##### Verb + particle juxtaposed

See also 10.5.1. The two parts of a separable verb, i.e. verb + particle, are usually juxtaposed in a clause or sentence:

**Många brev har kommit bort.**

Many letters have gone astray.

**Har du aldrig tyckt om henne?**

Have you never liked her?

**Stryk under ordet!**

Underline the word!

**Jag tar på mig mina finaste kläder.** I will put on my best clothes.

This is frequently at variance with English usage:

**Skriv upp det!**

Write it down!

**Jag ringer upp dem.**

I will ring them up.

**Låt mig stänga av den!**

Let me switch it off.

### 5.6.6.2 Verb + particle not juxtaposed

(a) In a main clause with simple tense and a clausal adverbial. See 10.1.7.

<b>Jag tyckte aldrig om henne.</b>	I never liked her.
<b>Jag känner inte igen dig.</b>	I don't recognise you.
<b>Bordsben av stål går sällan av.</b>	Steel table legs rarely break.

(b) Where the subject follows the verb in a main clause:

Inversion in a main clause with simple tense means that the subject follows immediately after the verb:

<b>Tycker du om henne?</b>	Do you like her?
<b>Kände ni igen honom?</b>	Did you recognise him?
<b>Då skrevs pundet ner.</b>	Then the pound was devalued.

(c) In imperatives constructed with a clausal adverbial:

<b>Slå inte ihjäl honom!</b>	Don't kill him!
<b>Gå aldrig förbi hans hus!</b>	Never walk past his house!

## 5.7 Some problem verbs

In this section some problems of meaning are briefly outlined which are not dealt with in Modal verbs (5.3.2), Transitive and intransitive verbs (5.4.2) or Reflexive verbs (5.4.3.9). For problems of inflexion, double forms, etc., see 5.1.15f.

### 5.7.1 Translation into Swedish of some problem verbs

These notes isolate only very common problems. They are not dictionary definitions.

#### 5.7.1.1 Arrive/leave

- 1 arrive [of people], **anlända, komma**  
They arrive on Monday. **De kommer på måndag.**
- 2 arrive [of trains, boats, planes, etc.], **ankomma**  
The boat gets in today. **Båten ankommer i dag.**

- 3 leave [intransitive], **avgå, resa, åka, gå**  
They left early. **De gick tidigt.**
- 4 leave [transitive], **lämna**  
They left the dog at home. **De lämnade hunden hemma.**

**5.7.1.2** Ask

- 1 enquire, **fråga**  
We asked him about Jan. **Vi frågade honom om Jan.**
- 2 ask [someone to do something], **be**  
We asked him to come. **Vi bad honom komma.**
- 3 ask [questions], **ställa**  
The police asked many questions. **Polisen ställde många frågor.**

**5.7.1.3** Change

- 1 alter, **ändra, förändra**  
The law changed recently. **Lagen ändrades nyligen.**
- 2 change one's mind, **ändra sig**  
He changed his mind several times. **Han ändrade sig flera gånger.**
- 3 exchange [something for something else], **byta**  
He changed trains at Hallsberg. **Han bytte tåg i Hallsberg.**
- 4 change gear, change money, **växla**  
The driver changed down. **Föraren växlade ner.**

**5.7.1.4** Drive

- 1 drive a vehicle [i.e. sit behind the wheel], **köra**  
Olle drives a bus. **Olle kör buss.**
- 2 travel [i.e. be driven], **åka**  
We drove to Norway. **Vi åkte till Norge.**
- 3 to provide the power for something, **driva**  
What is it that drives you? **Vad är det som driver dig?**

5.7.1.5 Feel

- 1 feel [transitive], **känna**  
Suddenly he felt the pain. **Plötsligt kände han smärtan.**
- 2 feel [intransitive], **känna sig**  
He felt tired. **Han kände sig trött.**
- 3 feel [deponent], **kännas**  
It feels cold. **Det känns kallt.**

5.7.1.6 Go

- 1 go by vehicle, **åka, resa, fara**  
I am going to America. **Jag reser till Amerika.**
- 2 go [in a general sense, especially on foot or in the sense of 'leave'], **gå**  
I really must go. **Jag måste verkligen gå.**

5.7.1.7 Grow

- 1 grow [intransitive], **växa**  
Rice grows in China. **Ris växer i Kina.**
- 2 grow [transitive], **odla**  
People grow rice in China. **Folk odlar ris i Kina.**
- 3 increase in size, **öka**  
The number is growing all the time. **Antalet ökar ständigt.**

5.7.1.8 Know

- 1 know [facts], **vet**  
Do you know what he is called? **Vet du vad han heter?**
- 2 know [people], **känna**  
Do you know him? **Känner du honom?**
- 3 know [languages, specialisms], **kunna**  
Do you know French? **Kan du franska?**

5.7.1.9 Live

- 1 dwell, reside, **bo**  
He lives in Stockholm. **Han bor i Stockholm.**
- 2 be alive, **leva**  
Linnaeus lived in the 18th century. **Linné levde på 1700-talet.**

5.7.1.10 Put

- 1 place horizontally **lägga**  
Put the book on the table! **Lägg boken på bordet!**
- 2 place upright, **ställa**  
Put the bottle on the table! **Ställ flaskan på bordet!**
- 3 fix, **sätta**  
Put the curtains up! **Sätt upp gardinerna!**
- 4 insert into **stoppa**  
Put it in your pocket! **Stoppa det i fickan!**

5.7.1.11 See

- 1 see, **se**  
Can you see me from here? **Kan du se mig härifrån?**
- 2 meet, **träffa**  
Did you see Mr Smith? **Träffade du herr Smith?**
- 3 realise, **förstå**  
I see what you mean. **Jag förstår vad du menar.**

5.7.1.12 Stop

- 1 movement, **stanna**  
She stopped the car. **Hon stannade bilen.**
- 2 cease doing, **sluta**  
He stopped talking. **Han slutade tala.**

### 5.7.1.13 Think

- 1 hold an opinion, **tycka**  
I think the film is boring. **Jag tycker filmen är tråkig.**
- 2 ponder, **tänka**  
She sat thinking about it. **Hon satt och tänkte på det.**
- 3 intend, **tänka**  
He is thinking of buying a car. **Han tänker köpa en bil.**
- 4 believe, **tro**  
I think that it is true. **Jag tror att det är sant.**

### 5.7.1.14 Want

- 1 want [to do], **vilja**  
I want to go home. **Jag vill gå hem.**
- 2 want [to have], **vilja ha**  
I want a new car. **Jag vill ha en ny bil.**

### 5.7.2 Translation into Swedish of the verb 'to be'

In addition to **vara**, five other Swedish verbs are regularly used to translate different senses of the English verb 'to be'.

#### 5.7.2.1 Ligga

This is used of towns, buildings, places and objects lying horizontally:

<b>Sverige ligger i Skandinavien.</b>	Sweden is in Scandinavia.
<b>Kläderna låg på golvet.</b>	The clothes lay on the floor.

#### 5.7.2.2 Sitta

This is used of objects that are fixed in position:

<b>Sitter nyckeln i låset?</b>	Is the key in the lock?
<b>Dina glasögon sitter på näsan.</b>	Your glasses are on your nose.



### 5.7.2.3 Stå

This is used of objects that stand vertically, and when 'is' etc. indicates 'is written':

**Bordet står i hörnet.** The table is (stands) in the corner.  
**Detta står på sidan tio i boken.** This is on page ten of the book.

### 5.7.2.4 Finnas

In order to indicate existence or non-existence **finnas** is used:

**Det finns många sjöar i Sverige.** There are lots of lakes in Sweden.  
**Där finns det inte ett enda hus.** There is not a single house there.

### 5.7.2.5 Bli

In order to indicate transition (change of state) **bli** is used in preference to **vara**:

**Vad blev resultatet?** What was the result?  
**ifall det blir storm** in case there is a storm

# Adverbs

## 6.1 Form

### 6.1.1 Introduction

While many of the words that are traditionally classed as adverbs have very little in common in terms of form or function, from a formal point of view they can be broadly divided into three main groups: adverbs derived from adjectives, adverbs that are simple and invariable in form, and adverbs that are compounds.

### 6.1.2 *Adverbs derived from adjectives*

#### 6.1.2.1 Form

The majority of adverbs are formed from adjectives, and in principle all adjectives – except indeclinable adjectives (2.1.6) – may form an adverb by adding the ending **-t** to the non-neuter singular form (2.1.2ff.).

<i>Adjective</i>		<i>Adverb</i>	
<b>snabb</b>	= quick	<b>snabbt</b>	= quickly

Non-neuter forms of the adjective that end in **-t** do not add the ending **-t** (2.1.3.2ff.).

<b>absolut</b>	= absolute	<b>absolut</b>	= absolutely
<b>rätt</b>	= correct	<b>rätt</b>	= correctly

The adverb and the neuter singular form of the adjective are often identical. It is, therefore, important to distinguish between them, especially when translating into English.

Compare the following:

**Huset är vackert.**                      The house is beautiful.  
**vackert** = adjective, neuter form

**Huset ligger vackert.**                The house is beautifully situated.  
**vackert** = adverb

### 6.1.2.2    Function

Adverbs in **-t** have two main functions in the sentence. They are usually used as adverbs of manner or as amplifiers qualifying adjectives or adverbs. See 10.1.7.5(a), 10.5.4 and 6.2.7.1.

**Sov gott!**                                  Sleep well!  
**Jag kom hem sent i går kväll.**    I came home late last night.  
**De var otroligt vackra.**              They were incredibly beautiful.  
**Han åkte hemskt fort.**                He drove awfully fast.

Note – Occasionally, instead of an adverb of manner, Swedish prefers to use a predicative adjective. There is, as the English shows, a subtle difference in meaning:

**Han gick bedrövat bort.**              He left dejectedly  
**bedrövat** = adverb

**Han gick bedrövad bort.**              He left dejected.  
**bedrövad** = predicative complement, 10.1.6, 2.2.1.3

### 6.1.2.3    Adjectives ending in **-lig** form adverbs in three different ways

(a) By adding **-t**. See 6.1.2.1. Adverbs formed in this way are usually adverbs of manner. See also 6.2.2.2, 10.1.7.5(a).

**Jag såg dig tydligt.**                      I saw you clearly.  
**Är du naturligt rödhårig?**              Are you naturally red-haired?

(b) By adding **-en**. In some instances (marked <sup>1</sup> below) this is the only option; in some instances (marked <sup>2</sup> below) there is no adjectival counterpart for these adverbs. Adverbs formed in this way are usually clausal adverbs. See also 6.2.5, 10.1.7.2, 10.5.3.

**antagligen**<sup>1</sup>, presumably; **bokstavligen**, literally; **dagligen**, daily;  
**egentligen**<sup>1</sup>, really; **möjligen**, possibly; **nyligen**<sup>1</sup>, recently; **nämligen**<sup>2</sup>,

actually; **onekligen**, indubitably; **slutligen**, finally; **synnerligen**, exceedingly; **troligen**, probably; **tydligt**, clearly; **tämligen**<sup>1</sup>, fairly; **ursprungligen**, originally; **verkligen**, actually; **äntligen**<sup>2</sup>, finally

Note – two adjectives that do not end in **-lig** take the suffix **-erligen**:

**sannerligen**, indeed; **visserligen**, admittedly

(c) By adding **-vis** (= ‘way’, ‘manner’) to the neuter form of the adjective. Adverbs formed in this way are usually clausal adverbs. See also 6.2.5, 10.1.7.2, 10.5.3.

**lyckligtvis**, happily; **möjligtvis**, possibly; **naturligtvis**, naturally; **rimligtvis**, reasonably; **vanligtvis**, usually

Also: **nödvändigtvis**, necessarily

Note that **-vis** may also be added to some nouns to form adverbs:

**delvis**, partly; **förhoppningsvis**, hopefully; **förhållandevis**, relatively, proportionately; **förslagsvis**, tentatively; **gradvis**, gradually; **händelsevis**, by accident; **inledningsvis**, by way of introduction; **jämförelsevis**, comparatively; **undantagsvis**, exceptionally

(d) Notice, therefore, that in some cases the same adjectival stem may sometimes produce two or three different adverbial forms:

<b>tydlig</b>	<b>Jag såg dig tydligt.</b>	<i>Adverb of manner</i>
clear	<b>Du såg tydligt inte vad som hände.</b>	<i>Clausal adverb</i>

<b>lycklig</b>	<b>Han är lyckligt gift.</b>	<i>Adverb of manner</i>
happy/fortunate	<b>Han är lyckligtvis gift.</b>	<i>Clausal adverb</i>
	<b>Han var lyckligen ovetande om sitt öde.</b>	<i>Clausal adverb</i>

#### 6.1.2.4 Present participles may form adverbs

For present participles, see 5.2.1.5.

<b>Han är påfallande lat.</b>	He is remarkably lazy.
<b>Hon såg forskande på oss.</b>	She regarded us quizzically.
<b>ett strålande vackert leende</b>	a radiantly beautiful smile
<b>svara undvikande</b>	answer evasively

**6.1.2.5** Past participles in the neuter form may form adverbs

For past participles, see 5.2.14.

**De lyssnade hängivet.** They listened devotedly.  
**Han dök upp helt oväntat.** He appeared unexpectedly.

**6.1.3** *Other adverbs which are derivatives*

**6.1.3.1** Forms in **-s, -es**

**alldeles**, completely; **alls**, at all; **annars**, otherwise; **avsidet**, secluded;  
**baklänges**, backwards; **dags**, time; **dels ... dels ...**, partly ... partly ...;  
**förgäves**, in vain; **halvvägs**, halfway; **medsols/medurs**, clockwise;  
**motsols**, counter-clockwise; **nyss**, recently; **någonstans**, somewhere;  
**särdeles**, particularly; **tvärs**, directly, straight

**6.1.3.2** Forms in **-a, -e**

**allena**, alone; **bara**, only; **barfota**, barefoot; **föga**, little; **illa**, badly;  
**inte**, not; **lika**, in the same way; **länge**, for a long time; **noga**, carefully;  
**respektive**, respectively; **ända**, as far as, all the way

This category includes a number of adverbs of place. See 6.2.2.3.

**borta**, away; **framme**, there (in front); **hemma**, at home; **inne**  
in(side); **nära**, close

**6.1.3.3** Forms in **-an, -en, -om**

**bakom**, behind; **fjärran**, distant; **förresten**, by the way; **lagom**, just  
right; **nästan**, nearly, almost; **ovan**, above; **redan**, already; **samman**,  
together; **småningom**, gradually; **sällan**, rarely; **undan**, aside

**6.1.3.4** Forms in **-stans** expressing location

See also 6.2.2.3.

**annanstans**, elsewhere; **ingenstans**, nowhere; **någonstans**,  
somewhere; **varstans**, everywhere

Also related to this category are adverbs of place in **–städes**. These are, however, little used in modern Swedish.

**allestädes**, everywhere; **annorstädes**, elsewhere; **därstädes**, there; **härstädes**, here; **ingenstädes**, nowhere

#### 6.1.3.5 Forms in **–ledes** and **–lunda** expressing manner

See also 6.2.2.2.

The suffix **–ledes** is still productive, but **–lunda** is no longer productive.

**annorledes**, differently; **brevledes**, by letter; **likaledes**, likewise; **således**, accordingly; **annorlunda**, differently; **ingalunda**, by no means; **någorlunda**, fairly; **sålunda**, thus

#### 6.1.3.6 Forms in **–sin** expressing time

See also 6.2.2.1.

**någonsin**, **nånsin**, ever

#### 6.1.3.7 Forms in **–vart** expressing direction

These are little used in modern Swedish.

**ingenvart**, nowhere; **någonvart**, somewhere

### 6.1.4 *Some simple adverbs which are not derivatives*

#### 6.1.4.1 Adverbs of time

**aldrig**, never; **alltid**, always; **då**, then; **då och då**, now and then; **förr**, previously; **genast**, immediately; **igen**, again; **just**, just; **nu**, now; **strax**, soon; **ännu**, yet

#### 6.1.4.2 Adverbs of place

See 6.3.1ff.

**bort**, away; **där**, **dit**, there; **fram**, forward; **hem**, home; **här**, **hit**, here; **in**, in; **ner**, down; **upp**, up; **ut**, out; **var**, **vart**, where

#### 6.1.4.3 Adverbs of manner

**bra**, well; **fort**, quickly; **hur**, how; **något**, somewhat; **precis**, precisely

#### 6.1.4.4 Modal adverbs (or discourse particles)

See 6.4.1.6ff.

**ej**, **icke**, **inte**, not; **ju**, you know; **nog**, probably; **väl**, I suppose

#### 6.1.4.5 Conjunctional adverbs

**alltså**, therefore; **också**, also; **så**, so; **dock**, however

#### 6.1.4.6 Adverbs of degree

**föga**, not very; **ganska**, fairly, quite; **lite(t)**, somewhat, a little; **mycket**, much, very; **nästan**, almost; **rätt**, quite

### 6.1.5 *Compound adverbs*

Most compound adverbs are formed from a simple adverb (6.1.4) and a preposition or another adverb. The first element is usually an adverb.

#### 6.1.5.1 Some common compound adverbs

**alltjämt**, still; **dessutom**, besides; **dessbättre**, fortunately; **dessvärre**, unfortunately; **därnäst**, next; **häromdagen**, the other day; **ibland**, sometimes; **jämväl**, likewise; **kanske**, perhaps; **likväl**, nevertheless; **mittemellan**, in between; **nuförtiden**, nowadays; **numera**, nowadays;

**omkring**, around; **så här**, like this; **tyvärr**, unfortunately; **ånyo**, anew; **ännu**, still; **ändå**, yet

6.1.5.2 + av

**härav** [= **av detta**], **därav**, of that; **varav**, of which

6.1.5.3 + efter

**härefter** [= **från denna stund**], after this; **därefter**, after that; **hädanefter**, henceforth; **varefter** [= **efter vilket**], after which

6.1.5.4 + emot

**häremot** [= **emot detta**], against this; **däremot**, however; **varemot**, against which

6.1.5.5 + för

**därför**, therefore; **nedanför**, below; **nedför**, down; **uppför**, up; **varför**, why

6.1.5.6 + hän

**därhän**, so far; **dithän** [= **till den punkten**], so far; **varthän** [= **till vilken punkt**], where

6.1.5.7 + ifrån

**bakifrån**, from behind; **bortifrån**, from away; **därifrån**, from there; **hemifrån**, from home; **häriifrån**, from here; **inifrån**, from inside; **varifrån**, where . . . from; **västerifrån**, from the west

6.1.5.8 + med

**härmед** [= **med detta**], with this; **därmed** [= **med detta**], with that; **varmed** [= **med vilken**], with which



6.1.5.9 + om

**härom** [= **om detta**], about this; **därom**, about that; **varom**, about which

6.1.5.10 + på

**härpå** [= **på/efter detta**], on/after this; **därpå**, after that; **varpå**, whereupon

6.1.5.11 + till/tills

**därtill**, to that; **dittills** [= **till då**], up to that point; **härtill** [= **till detta**], to that; **hittills** [= **till nu**], hitherto; **intill**, close to; **nedtill**, at the foot of; **uptill**, at the top of; **vartill**, to which

6.1.5.12 + ut

**norrut**, northwards; **söderut**, southwards; **österut**, eastwards; **västerut**, westwards; **förrut**, before

6.1.5.13 + (ut)i

**däruti/däri**, inside, in that, in that respect; **häruti/häri**, inside, in this, in this respect; **inuti/ini**, inside; **vari**, in which

6.1.5.14 + vid

**härvid** [= **ifråga om detta**], in this connection; **därvid**, with that; **varvid**, at which

6.1.5.15 + åt

**bakåt**, backwards; **ditåt/däråt**, in that direction; **efteråt**, afterwards; **framåt**, forwards; **hitåt/häråt**, in this direction; **nedåt**, downwards; **uppåt**, upwards

### 6.1.6 Other common adverbials

A distinction should be made between adverbs and adverbials. Adverbs can be defined formally and functionally and, apart from a few exceptions, are usually single-word units. While adverbials can have the same function in the clause as adverbs do, they are purely functional units with wide variations in internal syntactic structure. Many frequently used adverbials in Swedish are prepositional phrases or coordinated adverbials (adverb + coordinating conjunction + adverb).

Examples of prepositional phrases as adverbials:

**för det mesta**, mostly, generally; **på det hela taget**, everything considered; **på köpet**, into the bargain; **under alla omständigheter**, in any case; **under inga omständigheter**, under no circumstances

Examples of coordinated adverbials:

**av och till**, now and again; **först och främst**, primarily; **här och nu**, here and now; **i och för sig**, actually; **titt som tätt**, time and again

### 6.1.7 Comparison of adverbs

#### 6.1.7.1

Adverbs derived from adjectives possess the same comparative and superlative forms as their adjectival counterparts (cf. 2.5.2ff.), i.e. the adverbial **-t** ending is dropped before adding the comparative ending **-are** or the superlative ending **-ast**:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
<b>tidigt</b> early	<b>tidigare</b>	<b>tidigast</b>
<b>sent</b> late	<b>senare</b>	<b>senast</b>
<b>högt</b> highly	<b>högre</b>	<b>högst</b>
<b>långt</b> <sup>1</sup> far	<b>längre</b>	<b>längst</b>
<b>länge</b> <sup>1</sup> highly	<b>längre</b>	<b>längst</b>

<sup>1</sup> The adjective **lång** has two basic adverbial forms: **långt**, 'far' (of distance) and **länge**, 'long' (of time). See 6.4.1.7. The comparative and superlative forms are the same for both.

### 6.1.7.2

Adverbs derived from adjectives which have an irregular comparison compare in the same way as their adjectival counterparts. See also 2.5.4.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
<b>väl, bra</b> well	<b>bättre</b>	<b>bäst</b>
<b>dåligt, illa</b> poorly	<b>sämre</b>	<b>sämst</b>
<b>dåligt, illa</b> badly	<b>värre</b>	<b>värst</b>
<b>lite</b> (a) little	<b>mindre</b>	<b>minst</b>
<b>mycket</b> much	<b>mer(a)</b>	<b>mest(a)</b>

### 6.1.7.3

Some other adverbs also compare by adding an ending **-are**:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
<b>fort</b> quickly	<b>fortare</b>	<b>fortast</b>
<b>ofta</b> often	<b>oftare</b>	<b>oftast</b>
<b>sakta</b> slowly	<b>saktare</b>	<b>saktast</b>

Note also:

**gärna** willingly  
**nära** close

**hellre**  
**närmare**

**helst**  
**närmast**

### 6.1.7.4

Adverbs ending in **-ligen**, **-(t)vis** do not usually compare.

### 6.1.7.5

Adverbs formed from participles compare with **mer**, **mest** (cf. 2.5.5):

**Du har det mest förtjusande vackra leendet.**

You have the most enchantingly beautiful smile.

### 6.1.7.6

The adverbs **borta, in, ut, ner, upp, fram** may be compared with **längre** and **längst**. For these and other comparisons of adverbs of place, see 2.5.7.1. The comparative and superlative forms are usually regarded as adjectives:

**Hans namn stod främst på listan.**

His name was first on the list.

## 6.2 Meaning and function

### 6.2.1 Introduction to adverbial meaning and function

Adverbs can be divided into several categories as regards meaning and use. Traditionally adverbs have been categorised as adverbs of time, manner, place or degree and as modal or clausal adverbs.

Adverbs may, however, also be categorised according to their function as adjuncts, conjuncts and disjuncts.

Adjuncts (typically adverbs of time, manner, place and degree) usually form an integral part of the structure of the clause, whereas conjuncts and disjuncts are peripheral to the clause structure. In the following examples, the adverbs **hårt** and **otroligt** are adjuncts:

**Hon jobbar hårt.**

She works hard.

**Filmen var otroligt populär.**

The film was incredibly popular.

Conjuncts establish a connection between a clause or phrase and a previous part of the same sentence or sequence. In the following examples, the adverbs **ändå** and **följaktligen** are conjuncts:

**Han var täppt i näsan men ändå pigg nog att spela fotboll.**

He had a blocked nose but was fit enough to play football nonetheless.

**Vi samtycker inte och har följaktligen röstat emot.**

We disagree with you and have consequently voted no.

Disjuncts express the speaker's attitude or evaluation. In the following examples, the adverbs **tyvärr** and **sannolikt** are disjuncts:

**Lampan är tyvärr sönder.**

The lamp is broken, unfortunately.

**Huset är sannolikt till salu.**

The house is probably for sale.

As the examples below show, an adverb can modify a verb, adjective, other adverb, clause or a noun phrase or prepositional phrase:

<b>Hon sprang fort.</b>	She ran quickly.
<b>Du är mycket snäll.</b>	You are very kind.
<b>Han vinner ovanligt ofta.</b>	He wins exceptionally often.
<b>Det blir troligen regn ikväll.</b>	It will probably rain tonight.
<b>Nästan inga barn kom dit.</b>	Hardly any children turned up.
<b>Han dog redan på 60-talet.</b>	He died way back in the 60s.

### 6.2.2 Adverbs classified by meaning

The following paragraphs provide examples of some of the most common adverbs and adverbials, grouped according to traditional classification. The lists are by no means exhaustive.

#### 6.2.2.1 Time: answering the questions **När?** 'When?'; **Hur länge?** 'How long?'; **Hur ofta?** 'How often?'

**aldrig**, never; **alltid**, always; **av och till**, now and again; **då**, then; **då och då**, now and then; **efter(åt)**, after(wards); **emellanåt**, occasionally; **fortfarande**, still; **förr**, previously; **först**, first; **förut**, previously; **genast**, immediately; **ibland**, sometimes; **igen**, again; **i årtal**, for years; **jämt**, all the time; **länge**, for a long time; **nu**, now; **nyligen**, recently; **någonsin**, ever; **ofta**, often; **redan**, already; **sedan**, then; **sist**, finally; **snart**, soon; **strax**, soon; **sällan**, seldom; **tidvis**, from time to time; **ursprungligen**, originally; **vanligen**, usually; **ännu**, still

- (a) Point in time: **nu, då, förr, förut**, etc.
- (b) Period of time: **i årtal, länge, jämt**, etc.
- (c) Frequency: **aldrig, ofta, alltid, sällan, emellanåt**, etc.

#### 6.2.2.2 Manner: answering the question **Hur?** 'How?'

**bra**, well; **fort**, quickly; **illa**, badly; **långsamt**, slowly; **noga**, carefully; **ogärna**, unwillingly; **sakta**, slowly; **sålunda**, thus (+ others in **-lunda**, **-ledes**: 6.1.3.5); **väl**, well (6.4.1.6(d))

**6.2.2.3** Place: answering the question **Var?/Vart?** ‘Where?/Where to?’

See also 6.3.1ff.

**annanstans**, elsewhere (+ others in **–stans** and **–städes**: 6.1.3.4); **bakom**, behind; **bort, borta**, away; **ditåt**, that way (+ others in **–åt**: 6.1.5.15); **där, dit**, there; **därifrån**, from here (+ others in **–ifrån**: 6.1.5.7); **efter**, after; **emellan**, between; **emot**, against; **fjärran**, distant; **fram, framme**, forward; **förbi**, past; **före**, in front of; **halvvägs**, halfway; **hemma**, at home; **hem**, home; **här, hit**, here; **igenom**, through; **in, inne** in; **innanför**, inside; **intill**, close to; **inuti**, inside; **kvar**, behind; **mitt**, halfway; **nedanför**, below; **ner, nere**, down; **nära**, close to; **omkring**, around; **ovan**, above; **ovanför**, above; **ovanpå**, on top of; **samman**, together; **tillbaka**, back; **undan**, away; **upp, uppe**, up; **ur**, out; **utanför**, outside; **ut, ute**, out; **utomhus**, outdoors; **utomlands**, abroad; **överallt**, everywhere

**6.2.2.4** Degree: answering the question **Hur mycket?** ‘To what extent?’

See also 6.2.7.

**föga**, little; **ganska**, rather; **helt**, completely; **högst**, extremely; **lagom**, just enough; **litet**, (a) little; **mest**, mostly; **mycket**, a lot; **nästan**, almost; **synnerligen**, extremely; **så pass**, this much; **särskilt**, particularly; **till stor del**, largely; **tämligen**, rather; **ungefär**, approximately; **utomordentligt**, exceedingly; **väldigt, ytterst**, extremely

**6.2.2.5** Cause: answering the question **Varför?** ‘Why?’

**alltså**, therefore; **därför**, which is why; **sålunda**, thus; **nämligen** (6.4.1.6(b)); **följaktligen**, consequently

### **6.2.3** *Adverbs classified by function*

The heterogeneity of adverbs is most apparent with regard to their different functions. While some adverbs are semantically independent, for example the adverbs of manner (adjuncts) in 6.2.2.2, others need a context in order for their meaning to be established.

Compare:

**Han försvann plötsligt.**  
**Därmed var kriget slut.**

He disappeared suddenly.  
With that the war was over.

**Plötsligt** modifies the action of the verb; it tells us *how* he disappeared. **Därmed** refers back to a previous statement which establishes the *reason* why the conversation ended. In 6.2.4–6.2.7 the main types of adverbs are classified by their function.

#### **6.2.4** *Pronominal adverbs*

As in the case of pronouns, the meaning of these adverbs is determined by their context. They may:

- (a) point out: **Den där giraffen är lång.**  
That giraffe is tall.
- (b) refer back: **Först åt vi. Därefter beställde vi kaffe.**  
First we ate. Then we ordered coffee.
- (c) refer forward: **Fortsättningsvis ska frågan prioriteras.**  
From now on the issue will be given priority.

Whereas pronouns replace nouns, pronominal adverbs replace prepositional phrases:

<b>Bilen</b>	<b>stannade</b>	<b>framför huset.</b>
<i>Noun</i>		<i>Prepositional phrase</i>
The car	stopped	in front of the house.

<b>Den</b>	<b>stannade</b>	<b>där.</b>
<i>Pronoun</i>		<i>Pronominal adverb</i>
It	stopped	there.

The following paragraphs illustrate the major types of pronominal adverb:

##### **6.2.4.1** Demonstrative

<b>Res dit innan det är för sent!</b>	Go there, before it's too late!
<b>Hon åkte snart efteråt.</b>	She left soon after(wards).

Others include **här**, **där**, **dit**, **då** and compounds in **här-**, **hit-**, **där-**, **dit-**. See 6.1.5.

#### 6.2.4.2 Relative

**Stället där runstenen står heter Rök.**

The place where the runestone stands is called Rök.

**Han ville veta vad det rörde sig om.**

He wanted to know what it was about.

For function as a subordinator, see 8.4.1ff.

#### 6.2.4.3 Interrogative

Notice that interrogative adverbs introduce both direct and indirect questions, i.e. both main and subordinate clauses. As a result, the word order varies. See also 8.4.2, 10.7.1.2, 10.7.3.2.

**Var är ni någonstans?**

Where are you?

**Jag vet inte var vi är.**

I don't know where we are.

**Vart gick han?**

Where did he go?

**Jag vet inte vart han gick.**

I don't know where he went.

**När kom du hem?**

When did you come home?

**Jag vet inte när jag kom hem.**

I don't know when I came home.

#### 6.2.4.4 Indefinite

**Det måste finnas här någonstans.**

It must be here somewhere.

**Aldrig någonsin har jag sett på maken.**

I have never ever seen the like.

**Vi betalade ett någorlunda skäligt pris.**

We paid a fairly reasonable price.

#### 6.2.5 Clausal adverbials

These adverbs (conjuncts or disjuncts) modify the clause as a whole rather than a particular word or phrase in the clause. For their position in the clause see 10.1.7, 10.5.3, 10.6.1f., 10.6.6, 10.7.7, 10.8.2.



Clausal adverbials include:

- (a) Adverbs formed by adding **-en**, **-tvis** to adjectives ending in **-lig**. See 6.1.2.3.

**Är detta möjligt en utveckling som går att förhindra?**

Is this possibly a development that can be prevented?

Compare: **Det är möjligt att utvecklingen går att förhindra.**

**Olyckligtvis tycker vi inte om hans filmer.**

Unfortunately, we don't like his movies.

Compare: **Det är olyckligt att vi inte tycker om hans filmer.**

- (b) Some other adverbs:

**ju, nog, väl** (for translations, see 6.4.1.6); **kanske**, perhaps; **tyvärr**, unfortunately; **gärna**, willingly; **alltså**, therefore; **kanhända**, perhaps; **ingalunda**, by no means; **icke**, not; **inte**, not; **ej**, not; **knappast**, scarcely

Paragraphs 6.2.5.1–6.2.5.3 illustrate the major types of clausal adverbial.

#### 6.2.5.1 Negations (and equivalents)

Negations are sometimes regarded as modal adverbs. See 6.2.5.2. The most common negating adverb is **inte**, 'not'. Its synonyms, **ej** and **icke**, are not always interchangeable with **inte**. **Ej** is usually only found in the written language: **ej genomfart**, 'no thoroughfare'. **icke** (not **inte**) is used in compounds: **en icke-rökare**, 'a non-smoker'; **icke-våld**, 'non-violence'; **icke-angreppspakt**, 'non-aggression pact'.

**aldrig**, never; **icke, inte, ej**, not; **ingalunda**, by no means; **knappt/knappast**, hardly; **omöjligen**, not possibly

**Det är knappt 15° i rummet.** It is scarcely 15° in the room.

**Det kan omöjligen vara sant.** That cannot possibly be true.

#### 6.2.5.2 Modal adverbs

These show the speaker's attitude to the statement, degree of certainty, involvement or reservation. They include:

**ju, nog, väl** (for translations, see 6.4.1.6); **lyckligtvis/dessbättre**,

fortunately; **minsann**, indeed; **sannolikt**, likely; **säkert**, surely; **tyvärr/dessvärre**, unfortunately; **visserligen**, to be sure

**Han har säkert rätt.**

I'm sure he's right.

**Det är minsann inte så lätt.**

It is not that easy, believe me!

### 6.2.5.3 Conjunctional adverbs

These adverbs are conjuncts and link clauses in a similar way to coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. See also 8.1ff. However, a clause beginning with a conjunctional adverb has inverted word order. See also two-part constructions in (e) below. Conjunctional adverbs also occur within a clause:

**Jan är student. Han reser alltså för halva priset.**

Jan is a student. Therefore, he travels at half price.

**Hon arbetar heltid. Dessutom har hon fem barn.**

She works full-time. In addition she has five children.

The main relationships expressed using conjunctional adverbs are:

#### (a) Opposition

**dock**, moreover; **emellertid**, however; **ej heller**, not . . . either; **likväl**, even so, all the same; **ändå**, nevertheless

**Det var besynnerligt. Emellertid var det sant.**

It was strange. However, it was true.

**Förslaget var lockande, men likväl oacceptabelt.**

The proposal was attractive, yet unacceptable all the same.

#### (b) Consequence or inference

**alltså**, therefore; **därför**, for that/this reason; **följaktligen**, consequently; **fördenskull**, for that reason; **således**, consequently; **sålunda**, thus

**Olle ligger sjuk för tillfället. Därför kan han inte komma.**

Olle is ill at present. That is why he cannot come.

(c) Explanation or motivation

**ju, nämligen** (for translations, see 6.4.1.6)

**Han vaknade först sent på dagen. Han hade nämligen glömt att ställa väckarklockan.**

He did not wake up until late in the day. He had forgotten to set his alarm clock, you see.

(d) Sequel

**dessutom**, in addition; **slutligen**, finally; **sammanfattningsvis**, to sum up; **till syvende och sist**, at the end of the day; **vidare**, furthermore

**Han teg länge. Slutligen sa han nej.**

He was silent for a long time. Finally he said no.

(e) Notice that in two-part constructions of the type **både ... och**, ‘both ... and’; **såväl ... som**, ‘both ... and’; **antingen ... eller**, ‘either ... or’; **varken ... eller**, ‘neither ... nor’; **vare sig ... eller**, ‘either ... or’, the first element is a conjunctive adverb, while the second is a coordinating conjunction (see 8.2.1). In the constructions **dels . . . dels**, ‘partly ... partly’ and **än ... än**, ‘sometimes ... sometimes’, both elements are conjunctive adverbs.

**På semester vill jag både utforska omgivningen och ta det lugnt. Dels av nyfikenhet, dels av ren lathet.**

On holiday I want both to explore my surroundings and take it easy. Partly out of curiosity, partly out of pure laziness.

### **6.2.6** *Adverbs restricting the noun phrase*

These adverbs emphasise or restrict a particular noun phrase by making its significance in the statement more precise. They include:

**alldeles**, completely; **bara**, only; **däremot**, on the other hand; **endast**, only; **inte ens**, not even; **inte heller**, nor; **just**, just; **också**, too; **redan**, already; **särskilt**, especially; **åtminstone**, at least; **ännu**, still; **även**, also, too, as well

**Redan nästa år hoppas han gå i pension.**

He is hoping to retire as early as next year.

**Bara stora författare får Nobelpriset i litteratur.**

Only great writers receive the Nobel Prize in Literature.

## 6.2.7 Adverbs qualifying the adjective/adverb phrase

### 6.2.7.1 Amplifiers and diminishers

A number of adverbs, particularly those denoting degree or kind, are used to modify adjectives or other adverbs by amplifying or diminishing their meaning. Many amplifiers and diminishers are ephemeral in nature, remaining in vogue for a few years before virtually disappearing from use. Current examples include **sjukt** and **grymt**.

**absolut**, absolutely; **aldeles**, completely; **alltför**, far too, much too; **allt(mera)** + comparative, increasingly; **bra**, well; **för**, too; **ganska**, rather; **helt**, completely; **inte alls**, not at all; **lagom**, just right; **lite(t)**, (a) little; **mycket**, very, much; **nog**, sufficiently; **rätt**, rather; **särdeles**, extremely; **synnerligen**, exceedingly; **väldigt**, very; **ännu**, even

<b>Du skriver mycket fort.</b>	You write very quickly.
<b>Han är ganska ful.</b>	He is rather ugly.
<b>Maten var lagom varm.</b>	The food was just warm enough.
<b>Det gick inte alls bra.</b>	It did not go at all well.
<b>Idén är helt vansinnig!</b>	The idea is totally crazy!

In colloquial Swedish, as in colloquial English, adverbs formed from adjectives used in this way frequently acquire a meaning that no longer reflects their original sense:

<b>Tiden gick rysligt fort.</b>	Time passed terribly quickly.
<b>Jag har hemskt bråttom.</b>	I'm in an awful hurry.
<b>De har försvinnande lite mat.</b>	They have desperately little food.

In colloquial Swedish prefixes such as **jätte-**, **super-**, **döds-**, **skit-** and ephemeral current forms such as **as-**, **mega-**, **ap-** are sometimes added to adjectives as amplifiers:

<b>Jag känner mig dödstrött.</b>	I feel dead tired.
<b>Hon är jättesnäll.</b>	She's incredibly kind.

### 6.2.7.2 The amplifiers **allt**, **alltmer** and **allra**

The amplifiers **allt**, **alltmer(a)**, 'more and more' and **allra**, '(most) of all' are used only before the comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs respectively (2.5). **Alltmer(a)**, not **allt**, is used before adjectives and adverbs that form their comparatives with **mer(a)**. See 2.5.5

<b>Vädret blev allt sämre.</b>	The weather got worse and worse.
<b>Saken blev alltmer invecklad.</b>	The affair grew ever more complex.
<b>Han brukar komma allra sist.</b>	He usually comes last of all.
<b>de allra flesta svenskar</b>	the great majority of Swedes

### 6.2.7.3 **Mycket** as an amplifier

When qualifying an adjective in the positive or an adverb, **mycket** = ‘very’. For negative ‘not very’, see 6.2.7.4.

<b>Han är mycket lång.</b>	He is very tall.
<b>Du springer mycket snabbt.</b>	You run very quickly.

When qualifying an adjective in the comparative, or a verb, **mycket** = ‘(very) much’, ‘a lot’:

<b>Vi är mycket äldre än du.</b>	We’re much older than you.
<b>Han springer mycket.</b>	He runs a lot.

### 6.2.7.4

‘Not very’ and corresponding English phrases are usually rendered in Swedish by **inte så väldigt**, **inte så hemskt**, **inte särskilt**, **inte vidare**:

<b>Hon är inte så väldigt ung.</b>	She’s not all that young.
<b>Han ser inte vidare glad ut.</b>	He doesn’t look very happy.

**Inte mycket** = ‘not much’, ‘not a lot’.

<b>Vi är inte mycket äldre än du.</b>	We’re not much older than you.
<b>Han springer inte mycket.</b>	He doesn’t run much.

## 6.3 Location and movement

### 6.3.1 *Location and motion towards*

#### 6.3.1.1 Forms of adverbs expressing location and motion towards

A small number of adverbs denoting place (6.2.2.3) have two distinct forms. One form is used with verbs indicating location, or rest or movement *within* a specific area (**vara**, be; **bo**, live; **finnas**, be; **sitta**, sit; **stå**,

stand; **ligga**, lie; **stanna**, stop, etc.). One form is used with verbs indicating motion, whether actual or imagined, *towards* another place (**åka**, go; **fara**, travel; **resa**, travel; **gå**, go/walk; **komma**, come; **springa**, run; **ringa**, phone; **mejla**, e-mail; **längta efter**, long for, etc.). Adverbs of this type are:

Location		Motion towards		See also:
<b>var (?)</b>	where (?)	<b>vart (?)</b>	where (to)	6.3.1.2(d), 6.4.2.4
<b>här</b>	here	<b>hit</b>	(to) here	6.3.1.2(e)
<b>där</b>	there	<b>dit</b>	(to) there	6.3.1.2(e), 6.4.2.4
<b>inne</b>	in(side)	<b>in</b>	in(side)	6.3.1.2(f)
<b>ute</b>	out(side)	<b>ut</b>	out(side)	6.3.1.2(h)
<b>uppe</b>	up	<b>upp</b>	up	6.3.1.2(c), 6.3.1.2(h)
<b>ner</b>	down	<b>ner/ned</b>	down	6.3.1.2(g)
<b>hemma</b>	at home	<b>hem</b>	home	
<b>borta</b>	away	<b>bort</b>	away	6.3.1.2(c), 6.3.1.2(h)
<b>framme</b>	there, in front	<b>fram</b>	forward(s)	6.3.1.2(c), 6.3.1.2(h)

Examples:

**Hon bor här hos oss. Hon kommer hit imorgon.**

She lives here with us. She is coming here tomorrow.

**Barnen leker ute. De går ut tidigt varje dag.**

The children are playing outside. They go out early every day.

**Pappa fiskar nere vid ån. Spring inte dit ner och stör honom!**

Dad is fishing down by the river. Don't go down there and disturb him!

### 6.3.1.2 Notes on use

(a) Note that physical movement is not always necessary to imply motion:

**Jag ringde/mejlade dit i går.** I rang/e-mailed there yesterday.

**Jag längtar hem.** I'm longing to get back home.

(b) Movement *within* a specific area is regarded as location, not as motion towards:

**Vi tillbringade hela dagen med att springa runt hemma.**

We spent all day running around at home

**Kan du vara snäll och springa hem med det här paketet?**

Can you run home with this parcel, please?

- (c) Not infrequently, differences between concepts of motion towards and location are expressed idiomatically and are not always immediately apparent to non-native speakers. Compare the following, for example:

**Luleå är långt borta.** Luleå is far away/a long way off.

**Hon bor tre kilometer bort.** She lives three kilometres away.

Here the idea is one of motion from the speaker towards home.

**När är vi framme?** When will we be there?

**När kommer vi fram?** When do we get there?

Both express the basic idea of ‘When will we reach our destination?’

**Fåglarna bor uppe på taket.** The birds live (up) on the roof.

**De bor tre trappor upp.** They live (up) on the third floor.

Here the idea is one of motion, ascending the stairs to the third floor.

- (d) **Var, vart** are interrogatives and are not to be confused with the relative adverbs, **där, dit**, which also correspond to English ‘where’. See 6.4.2.4.

**Var är Lukas?** Where is Lukas?

**Vart har han gått?** Where has he gone?

**Jag undrar, var han är.** I wonder where he is.

**Jag undrar vart han har gått.** I wonder where he has gone.

Note that in the spoken language in many parts of Sweden and particularly among younger speakers, the form **vart** is used to express both motion and location.

- (e) **Hit, dit** are semantic matches with the archaic English forms ‘hither’ and ‘thither’, but these words remain in common use even in modern Swedish.

- (f) **Inne** also means ‘in’ in the sense of ‘popular’, ‘trendy’, ‘in vogue’:

**Det är inne med fuskpäls i år.** Imitation fur is ‘in’ this year.

- (g) **Nere** also means ‘down’ in the sense of ‘depressed’, ‘in low spirits’:

**Jag känner mig trött och nere.** I feel tired and downhearted.

- (h) After the superlatives **högst** and **längst** colloquial Swedish often has **ut, upp, bort, fram** rather than **ute, uppe, borta, framme**:

**Han bor högst upp.** He lives on the top floor.

**Det ligger längst ut vid havet.** It is right out by the sea.

### 6.3.2 **Compounded forms indicating location, motion, time**

By means of compounding and the addition of derivational suffixes, certain adverbs in 6.3.1.1 can be given special locational, directional or temporal significance. See also 6.1.5.

#### 6.3.2.1

The particle **–åt** is added to **hit**, **dit** to emphasise the directional meaning:

**De är på väg hitåt.**  
**Jag sneglade ditåt.**

They're heading this way.  
I cast a glance over there.

#### 6.3.2.2

The particle **–tills** is added to **hit**, **dit** to denote temporal motion:

**mitt bästa resultat hittills**  
**ett dittills förbjudet verk**

my best result to date  
a work banned until then

#### 6.3.2.3

Similarly **–stans** or **–sin** is added to some indefinite pronouns to denote indeterminate place or time:

**någonstans**, somewhere; **ingenstans**, nowhere; **ingen annanstans**, nowhere else; **någon annanstans**, somewhere else; **någonsin**, ever

## 6.4 **Translating adverbs**

### 6.4.1 **Translation from Swedish**

#### 6.4.1.1 **Därför**

**Därför** (literally: 'therefore') is an adverb usually rendered in English by a phrase that expresses a meaning similar to 'for this reason', 'consequently':

**Det är sent. Därför är jag trött.** It's late. That's why I'm tired.



In some circumstances **därför** may be followed by a relative clause introduced by **som**. It is important to distinguish between this usage and the conjunction **därför att**, which means ‘because’, ‘on account of’, ‘owing to’ and introduces a subordinate clause. See also 8.3.4.1.

**Det är sent. Det är därför som jag är trött!**

It's late. That's the reason (that) I'm tired!

**Jag är trött därför att det är sent.**

I am tired, because it is late.

#### 6.4.1.2 Först

- 1 first: **Tänk först, tala sedan!** Think first, speak later!
- 2 only: **Först då sa han något.** Only then did he say anything.  
**Vi kom först i går.** We only arrived yesterday.
- 3 only when, not until (with conjunction):

**Det var först när vi kom hem som vi blev sjuka.**

It was not until we got home that we became ill.

#### 6.4.1.3 Redan

- 1 already: **Ska du redan gå?** Are you going already?
- 2 as early as: **I norr brukar snön falla redan i september.**  
In the north the snow usually falls as early as in September.
- 3 even: **Redan en ytlig granskning klargör skillnaderna.**  
Even a superficial examination makes the differences clear.

#### 6.4.1.4 Förstås

**Förstås** (pronounced as if spelled /förståss/) derives from the **-s** form (5.5.1) of the verb **förstå**. As an adverb **förstås** is synonymous with **givetvis**, **självklart** and **självfallet**, all of which can be rendered in English by ‘of course’, ‘naturally’, and are used within a clause as modal adverbs:

**Han tänker förstås vinna.**  
**Det förstås!**

He's intending to win of course.  
That's obvious!

#### 6.4.1.5 **Gärna, hellre, helst, heller**

##### (a) **Gärna**

1 willingly, readily, by all means, with pleasure:

**– Dricker du te? – Ja tack, gärna!**  
'Do you drink tea?' 'Yes, with pleasure!'

2 likes to: **Han tar sig gärna en öl.**  
He likes to have a beer.

3 well: **Jag kan lika gärna bo i staden som på landet.**  
I can just as well live in the city as in the countryside.

4 certainly: **Du får gärna försöka.**  
You can certainly try.

(b) **Hellre** is the comparative form of **gärna** and corresponds to English 'rather', 'prefers to':

**Jag dricker hellre kaffe än te.**  
I prefer (drinking) coffee to tea.

**Jag skulle hellre dö än att tala offentligt.**  
I would rather die than speak in public.

(c) **Heller**, originally a variant of **hellre**, is now used only after a negative, usually in the same way as English 'neither', 'not either', etc. Sometimes it is used together with **väl** as a discourse particle. See 6.4.1.6.

**Jag hade inga pengar, och det hade inte han heller.**  
I had no money, and he hadn't either.

**Jag är väl inte döv, heller!**      I'm not deaf, you know!

(d) **Helst** is the superlative form of **gärna** and corresponds to 'preferably', 'most of all':

**– När vill du åka? – Helst i dag.**  
'When do you want to leave?' 'Preferably today/Today, if possible.'

**– Vill du att jag gör det? – Helst inte.**  
'Do you want me to do it?' 'Preferably not.'

#### 6.4.1.6 **Ju, nog, väl, nämligen, liksom**

When unstressed, these modal adverbs are employed as discourse particles to introduce a subtle change in the sense of a statement or question by indicating the speaker's attitude to it. Note that, when stressed, **nog** = 'enough', 'sufficient'; **väl** = 'well'.

- (a) **Ju** indicates that the speaker expects the listener to agree or to be familiar with what he is saying. **Ju** corresponds to English phrases such as 'you know', 'you see', 'of course':

<b>Där kommer han ju!</b>	You see, there he is!
<b>Det har jag ju aldrig sagt!</b>	I've certainly never said that!
<b>Jag har ju varit där tidigare.</b>	I've been there before, of course.

- (b) Whereas **ju** implies 'as you already know', **nämligen** provides new information of which the listener has previously been unaware and has the sense of 'as I am now telling you by way of explanation'. In many instances **nämligen** corresponds to the same kind of English phrases as **ju** – 'you understand', 'you see', etc. – but the sense is quite different, as the following contrasting examples indicate:

**Du får komma i dag, i morgon är jag nämligen i Uppsala.**

You'll have to come today, as I'm in Uppsala tomorrow, you see.

**Du får komma i dag, i morgon är jag ju i Uppsala.**

You'll have to come today. As you know, I'm in Uppsala tomorrow.

**Nämligen** can also mean 'namely':

**Det fattas något här, nämligen en underskrift.**

There is something missing here, namely a signature.

- (c) **Nog** often injects a note of doubt or uncertainty, in some cases conciliation. It corresponds to English phrases such as 'probably', 'I expect', 'I daresay', etc.

<b>Han kommer nog snart.</b>	He'll probably soon be here.
<b>Det är nog sant, men ...</b>	That's probably true, but ...
<b>Du har nog rätt.</b>	I daresay you're right.
<b>Det tror jag nog!</b>	I should think so!

- (d) **Väl** generally expresses a hope, expectation or desire that the listener will agree, and as such corresponds to English phrases such as 'surely', 'I suppose', 'I hope', 'I expect'. It may simply strengthen a statement (like **ju**) or express conciliation (like **nog**).

<b>Du kommer väl?</b>	I hope you will come.
<b>Du är väl inte sjuk?</b>	You are not ill, are you?
<b>Du har väl hört, att ...</b>	You must have heard that ...
<b>Det var väl det jag trodde.</b>	That's just what I thought.

- (e) **Liksom** used as an adverb is often an empty filler found in colloquial Swedish corresponding to English 'sort of', 'kind of', 'so to speak':

**Det ligger liksom i tiden att satsa på sin hälsa.**

It's sort of the thing to do right now to invest in your health.

**Det skulle vara liksom en överraskning.**

It was meant to be a surprise, so to speak.

#### 6.4.1.7 Långt, länge

- (a) **långt** = far (distance):

**Hur långt är det till Kiruna?** How far is it to Kiruna?

- (b) **länge** = long (time):

**Hur länge bodde du där?** How long did you live there?

#### 6.4.2 Translation into Swedish

This section outlines some common ways of rendering frequently encountered English adverbs in Swedish.

##### 6.4.2.1 'So'

The English adverb 'so' is rendered in various ways in Swedish depending on how it is used.

- (a) In comparatives after a negative = **så**. See also 8.5.1.3.

He is not so quick as he used to be.

**Han är inte så snabb som han brukade vara.**

- (b) Before result clauses = **så**:

I was so tired I went straight to sleep.

**Jag var så trött att jag somnade omedelbart.**

(c) Pronominal adverb, referring back = **det**. See 3.3.5.6.

'Is he married?' 'I think so.' – **Är han gift? – Jag tror det.**  
I told you so. **Jag sa väl det.**

(d) In exclamations = **så**:

So nice to see you again! **Så trevligt att träffas igen!**

(e) 'So' = 'too' = **det . . . också/med**. See 3.3.5.5(c).

I'm cold and so are you. **Jag fryser och det gör du med.**

#### 6.4.2.2 'Then'

'Then' is rendered by **då**, **sedan** or **så** in Swedish depending on the context.

(a) **Då** = 'at that time', 'at that moment', 'on that occasion', 'in that case':

You should have been with us then. **Du skulle ha varit med då.**  
She was then fifty years old. **Hon var femtio år gammal då.**

Are you awake? Then you had better get up at once.  
**Är du vaken? Då bör du stiga upp med detsamma.**

(b) **Sedan** = 'after that', 'subsequently' (= **därefter**, **efteråt**):

First we mowed the lawn. Then we did some weeding.  
**Först klippte vi gräsmattan. Sedan rensade vi ogräs.**

(c) **Så** = 'after that', 'subsequently' (= **därefter**, **efteråt**):

First Emma came, then Malin. **Först kom Emma, så Malin.**

#### 6.4.2.3 'Too'

(a) When 'too' qualifies an adjective or adverb and expresses an excessive degree of something, it is rendered in Swedish by **för**:

**De här byxorna är för korta.** These trousers are too short.  
**Gå inte för fort!** Don't walk too fast!

(b) When 'too' means 'also', 'as well', it is rendered by **också** (written and spoken form), **även** (written and formal spoken form) or **med** (spoken form only). See 6.4.2.1(e).

**Han fick en bok också.  
Det tycker jag med.**

He received a book, too.  
I think so, too.

#### 6.4.2.4 'Where'

When translating 'where' one must ask two questions:

- 1 Is 'where' used as an interrogative or a relative adverb?
- 2 Does it indicate location? Or movement towards a place? See 6.3.1.1

The choices involved are as follows:

WHERE			
Interrogative:			
1 location	<b>var (?)</b>	<b>Var är han? Jag undrar var han är.</b>	Where is he? I wonder where he is.
2 motion	<b>vart (?)</b>	<b>Vart går han? Jag undrar vart han går.</b>	Where's he going? I wonder where he's going.
Relative:			
1 location	<b>där</b>	<b>Jag känner till ett kafé där vi kan äta.</b>	I know of a café where we can eat.
2 motion	<b>dit</b>	<b>Jag känner till ett kafé dit vi kan gå.</b>	I know of a café where we can go.

In colloquial Swedish **där**, **dit** are often replaced by **som** + preposition:

**Jag känner till ett ställe som vi kan äta på.**

I know of a place (that) we can eat at [cf: where we can eat].

**Jag känner till ett ställe som vi kan gå till.**

I know of a place (that) we can go to [cf: where we can go to].

#### 6.4.2.5 'Whenever', 'wherever'

English	Remarks	Swedish	Example
'Whenever'	= 'at any time you like'	<b>när som helst</b>	1
'Whenever'	= 'no matter when' + clause = 'every time (that)' + clause	<b>varje gång</b>	2

'When ever?' = 'When on earth?'	<b>när (i all världen)?</b>	3
'Wherever' = 'anywhere you like'	<b>var/vart som helst</b>	4
'Wherever' = 'no matter where' + clause = 'everywhere (that)' + clause	<b>var/vart . . . än</b>	5
'Wherever?' = 'Where on earth?'	<b>var/vart i all sin dar?</b>	6

Note: for rules governing the choice of **var/vart**, see 6.3.1.1ff.

- 1 **Du kan få komma när som helst.**  
You can come whenever you like.
- 2 **Varje gång jag ser honom tänker jag på dig.**  
Whenever I see him I think of you.
- 3 **När i all världen tror du att jag har tid att träna på gym?**  
Whenever do you think I have time to work out at the gym?
- 4 **Lägg det var som helst!**  
Put it wherever you like.
- 5 **Jag är med dig var du än är, vart du än går.**  
I am with you, wherever you are, wherever you go.
- 6 **Var i all sin dar har du varit?**  
Where ever have you been?

#### 6.4.2.6 'However'

While 'however' in the sense of 'nevertheless' is rendered by Swedish **emellertid**, **dock**, Swedish has a number of other ways of rendering English idioms with 'however'.

English	Remarks	Swedish	Example
'However'	= 'no matter how + adjective or adverb'	<b>hur . . . än</b>	1, 2
'How ever?'	= 'How on earth ... ?'	<b>hur i all sin dar?</b>	3
'However you wish'	= 'in whatever way you wish'	<b>hur som helst</b>	4
'However much/little'	= 'as much/little as'	<b>så mycket/lite(t) (som)</b>	5
'However much/little'	= 'no matter how much/little'	<b>hur mycket/lite(t) än</b>	6

- 1 **Jag kommer att köpa tavlan, hur dyr den än är.**  
I'm going to buy the picture, however dear (it is).
- 2 **Hur tidigt jag än stiger upp äter jag alltid frukost.**  
However early I get up, I always have breakfast.
- 3 **Hur i all sin dar vet du det?**  
How ever do you know that?
- 4 **Gör hur som helst!**  
Do however you choose!
- 5 **Ta så mycket du behöver!**  
Take however much you need.
- 6 **Ta vara på varje möjlighet, hur liten den än är!**  
Make use of every opportunity, however little it is.

English often omits 'however' in phrases with 'much' or 'little'. This is not so in Swedish.

Much as we like you ...

**Hur mycket vi än gillar dig ...**

English sometimes omits the finite verb after 'however' + adjective or adverb. This is not so in Swedish.

**All kritik – hur vass den än är – tas tacksamt emot.**

All criticism – however scathing – is gratefully received.

**Hur som helst** also renders English 'anyway', 'be that as it may' when followed by a clause.

**Hur som helst önskar jag dig väl.**

Anyway, I wish you well.



# Prepositions

## 7.1 Introduction

### 7.1.1 Introduction to prepositions

Prepositions are indeclinable words. Some seventy prepositions are among the most common words in the Swedish language, and fifteen of them are among the most frequently used of all Swedish words. See 7.2.1–7.2.15. The most easily identifiable kinds of prepositional relationship are those of time, place and manner. However, as in English, the choice of preposition in Swedish is frequently governed by the head word preceding the prepositional phrase, in which case the preposition itself has little semantic significance. Compare, for example: **skydd mot värme**, ‘protection against heat’; **trött på värme**, ‘tired of heat’; **van vid värme**, ‘accustomed to heat’. Prepositions may be categorised in four different types according to form.

#### 7.1.1.1 Simple prepositions

Simple prepositions comprise a single morpheme: **av, i, på, om**.

#### 7.1.1.2 Compounded prepositions

There are two types of compounded prepositions:

- (a) adverb + preposition compounds, where the adverb modifies the meaning of the simple preposition: **bakom, inunder, uppå**.

- (b) preposition + preposition, which usually offer merely a stylistic variation of an equivalent simple preposition: **utav, omkring**.

### 7.1.1.3 Complex prepositions

Complex prepositions encapsulate the meaning of a phrase in two or more words (including a preposition) which together form a unit of meaning with a function similar to that of a preposition: **för ... sedan, på grund av, i och med, i fråga om**.

### 7.1.1.4 Prepositions derived from other word classes

Prepositions may also be formed from verbs, adjectives, nouns or other parts of speech (7.3.8): **angående, frånsett, likt, enligt, tack vare**.

## 7.1.2 Prepositional complements

In most instances Swedish prepositions precede the prepositional complement. The most common exceptions are noted under 7.1.3.2 and 7.1.3.3. A preposition governs its complement, which is most commonly a noun, a pronoun in the object form, an infinitive phrase, an adverbial, or a subordinate clause.

### 7.1.2.1 Preposition + noun/pronoun

- (a) The prepositional complement in Swedish is most commonly a noun or the object form of the pronoun:

**av misstag**, by mistake; **i bilen**, in the car; **med glädje**, with pleasure; **utan honom**, without him; **för ett år sedan**, a year ago; **sedan min fars tid**, since my father's time

- (b) Notice, however, that the prepositions **utom** and **förutom** take the subject form of the pronoun, when the correlative itself is in the subject form. See 7.3.7.6 and 7.3.7.12.

**Alla utom jag gick hem.**

Everyone but me went home.

**Jag träffade alla utom henne.**

I met everyone but her.

- (c) In a small number of fossilised phrases, certain nouns used as prepositional complements still retain old case endings after the prepositions **till** (7.2.12) and **i** (7.2.6).

#### 7.1.2.2 Preposition + **att** + infinitive phrase

- (a) Swedish has **att** + an infinitive phrase as a prepositional complement, when the subject of the finite verb is the same as the hypothetical subject of the infinitive. This construction is only rarely possible in English, although the use of a preposition followed by the ‘-ing’ form of the verb is an approximate equivalent. English expressions with ‘by/in’ + the ‘-ing’ form of the verb are often rendered by **genom att** + infinitive phrase in Swedish.

**Han gick utan att säga någonting.**

He left without saying anything.

**Han är upptagen med att laga bilen.**

He is busy (with) mending the car.

**Jag gjorde ett stort fel genom att låta dörren stå öppen.**

I made a big mistake in leaving the door open.

- (b) However, by no means all Swedish prepositions may be combined with an infinitive in this way. Prepositions which exclusively indicate place, and the prepositions **före**, **innan** are not used with **att** + an infinitive phrase as a prepositional complement. In formal usage **efter** (as a preposition of time) sometimes occurs with **att** + the perfect infinitive as a prepositional complement.

**De ber bördsbön innan de äter.** They say grace before eating.

**Efter att ha ätit lade han sig.** After eating, he went to bed.

- (c) Sometimes the use of a preposition before **att** + infinitive is optional. It is rapidly becoming the norm to omit the preposition after certain common verbs such as **be (om) att**, ‘ask to’; **hoppas (på) att**, ‘hope to’ and after common adjectives such as **rädd (för) att**, ‘afraid to’; **beredd (på) att**, ‘prepared to’. See 7.1.2.3(c).

### 7.1.2.3 Preposition + subordinate clause

- (a) In Swedish a subordinate clause introduced by **att** or an interrogative word may be a prepositional complement. This is often the case with the prepositions **av, efter, för, genom, i, med, (e)mot, på, till, trots, utan, åt, över**. Although in English a preposition can only govern a ‘that’-clause in combinations such as ‘except that’ or ‘in that’, in many instances, an approximate English equivalent is the use of preposition + ‘the fact that’.

**Vänligen se till att du kommer i god tid till flygplatsen!**

Please see to it that you come to the airport in good time.

**Är du säker på att han hotade dig?**

Are you sure (of the fact) that he threatened you?

**Allting beror på om han vill hjälpa oss.**

Everything depends on whether he wants to help us.

- (b) A preposition may also follow a noun before **att** + subordinate clause:

**Många hyser förhoppningar om att läget snart blir bättre.**

Many people entertain hopes that the situation will soon get better.

- (c) Sometimes the use of a preposition before **att** + subordinate clause is optional. It is rapidly becoming the norm to omit the preposition after certain common verbs such as **be (om) att**, ‘request’/‘ask to’; **hoppas (på) att**, ‘hope to’; **varna (för) att** ‘warn that’, after common adjectives such as **rädd (för) att**, ‘afraid to’; **beredd (på) att**, ‘prepared to’, and before exclamations such as the following:

**Tack (för) att du är så snäll!** Thank you for being so kind.

### 7.1.2.4 Preposition + prepositional phrase

A preposition may have a prepositional phrase as a complement.

**Mycket har förändrats sedan i våras.**

A lot has changed since last spring.

#### 7.1.2.5 Preposition + adverbial phrase

A preposition may have an adverbial phrase as a complement. Note that when the adverb is an adverb of place, it precedes the preposition in an adverb + preposition compound, as in the three final examples below:

<b>Det håller jag för osannolikt.</b>	I consider that to be unlikely.
<b>Varifrån kommer du?</b>	Where do you come from?
<b>Han kröp inunder täcket.</b>	He crept under the cover.
<b>Kom fram, därunderifrån!</b>	Come out from under there!

Note – Swedish uses special adverbial forms to render English preposition + adverbial phrases of place meaning ‘where ... to’, **vart**, ‘to there’, **dit** (6.3.1) and preposition + adverbial phrases of time such as ‘until now’, **hittills**, and ‘after that’, **därefter**.

#### 7.1.2.6 Preposition without complement

When used without a complement, prepositions often assume an adverbial role.

<b>Ägg är gott med kaviar på.</b>	Egg is nice with caviar on.
<b>Bilen hittades dagen efter.</b>	The car was found the day after.

#### 7.1.3 *Place of the preposition in Swedish*

Swedish prepositions may be divided into three groups according to the position they assume with regard to the prepositional complement:

- 1 Preposed prepositions precede the prepositional complement.
- 2 Parenthetical prepositions surround the prepositional complement.
- 3 Postposed prepositions follow the prepositional complement.

##### 7.1.3.1 Preposed prepositions

The majority of the 150 or so Swedish prepositions precede the prepositional complement, as most prepositions do in English.

**bakom bilen**, behind the car; **framför datorn**, in front of the computer; **hos Olssons**, at the Olssons'; **utan vatten**, without water; **i augusti**, in August; **trots hans hjälp**, despite his help

### 7.1.3.2 Parenthetical prepositions

A small number of complex prepositions enclose the prepositional complement:

**för ... sedan**, ago; **för ... skull**, for ... sake; **(p)å ... vägnar**, on behalf of; **sedan ... tillbaka**, for + expression of time (7.3.3.11); **åt ... till**, towards, on the way to; **i ... ställe**, in place of, instead of; **på ... när**, to within

Parenthetical prepositions have a noun, noun phrase, pronoun or pronominal phrase as a prepositional complement:

<b>för ett år sedan</b>	one year ago
<b>i hans ställe</b>	in his place
<b>för mina barns skull</b>	for my children's sake

### 7.1.3.3 Postposed prepositions

(a) Postposed prepositions occur only in certain idiomatic expressions, where, as in English, they are stressed in the spoken language.

<b>året om, året runt</b>	all year round, through(out) the year
<b>jorden runt, jorden över</b>	the whole world over
<b>hela natten igenom</b>	all night long, all through the night
<b>oss emellan</b>	between you and me

(b) When compounded with adverbs of place (6.3.1) prepositions appear as the final element of the compound. Most of these compounds are reserved for more formal written Swedish and are rarely encountered in the spoken language.

**däribland**, among which; **därigenom**, thereby; **däremot**, on the other hand; **därutöver**, in addition; **hemifrån**, (away) from home; **hittills**, up to now

- (c) A form of postposing is also seen when the prepositional complement is emphasised by being moved into the initial (topic) position in the sentence or clause (see 10.6.2). In such instances the postposed preposition appears as the last word in the sentence or clause, i.e. not immediately after the prepositional complement. Sometimes there is no prepositional complement at all.

<b>Honom är du väl inte rädd för?</b>	Surely you're not scared of him.
<b>Det ska jag fundera på.</b>	I'll think about that.
<b>Säg ifrån om det gör ont!</b>	Tell me if it hurts.

- (d) The same process is often seen in v-questions (10.6.11.2), exclamations, and infinitive and relative clauses. Unlike formal English, Swedish has no prejudice against postposed prepositions.

<b>Vad kan vi laga det med?</b>	What can we mend it with?
<b>Vilket rörigt hus du bor i!</b>	What a messy house you live in.
<b>Båten vi reste med var röd.</b>	The boat we travelled on was red.

Note 1 – A form of postposing is present in certain passive sentences (5.5.6ff.) although in this case the preposition usually follows the passive verb:

**Han har inte hörts av sedan i somras.**  
He's not been heard of since last summer.

Note 2 – Postposed **på** is used idiomatically (with no English equivalent) after the phrase **ett sätt att** + infinitive in instances such as the following. See also 7.2.11.7 Note.

<b>ett sätt att bli rik på</b>	a way of getting rich
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#### **7.1.4** *Prepositions and stress*

Prepositions are usually unstressed except when postposed. See 7.1.3.3. A number of Swedish prepositions are stressed, however, when used as particles in a phrasal verb. Here verb + stressed particle constitute a single unit of meaning and the preposition functions in much the same way as an adverb, especially in cases where no prepositional complement is required. See 5.6.3ff.

Compare:

**tycka om någonting** = have an opinion of something  
*Preposition*

**Vad tycker du om Sverige?** What do you think of Sweden?

and:

**tycka om någonting** = like something  
*Particle*

**Jag tycker mycket om Sverige.** I like Sweden a lot.

Particles comprise both stressed prepositions (*hälsa på*, ‘visit’; *hålla med*, ‘agree with’; *köra om*, ‘overtake’; *tycka om*, ‘like’, etc.) and stressed adverbs (*skriva ner*, ‘annotate’; *gå bort*, ‘die’, *säga emot*, ‘contradict’, etc.).

## 7.2 The fifteen most common Swedish prepositions

This section examines how fifteen of the most common Swedish prepositions are used. The correct use of prepositions is one of the biggest challenges facing non-native speakers of a language. While there are a number of correspondences in the basic meanings of many Swedish and English prepositions, there are also many subtle differences. It is impossible to provide an exhaustive treatment of prepositional usage and meaning within the scope of this chapter. For more detailed information and further examples, see Per Montan and Håkan Rosenqvist, *Prepositionsboken*.

### 7.2.1 Av

Basically the preposition **av** implies some kind of source or origin, or a starting-point. However, **av** is rarely used to express physical spatial relationships (i.e. actual location: see, for example, 7.2.1.4) and is rarely used with expressions of time. See **från**, 7.2.3.

**Av** is used chiefly of materials which provide a starting point for a manufactured product or a creation in the widest sense, and also indicates the source (i.e. the cause) of a reaction.

Beyond this, **av** serves to indicate one type of quantity expression (the relationship of a part to the whole).

Another important use of **av** is to introduce the passive agent in Swedish. See 5.5.6ff.



**Av** is sometimes replaced in colloquial Swedish by **utav**, especially when used as in 7.2.1.2 and 7.2.1.3(a, b).

Agent	Origin material	Origin cause	Origin place	Measure	Possession
by	of/from	from/with by/for	off/from	of	of

#### 7.2.1.1 Agent

by                      **en tavla av Zorn**                      a painting by Zorn  
                              **brev skrivna av ett barn**                      letters written by a child

Note – **Av** is also used as the agent in expressions of the following type, which may be regarded as ellipted forms in which the verb (**gjort, sagt, tänkt**, etc.) is missing:

**Det var dumt/snällt av dig.**                      That was silly/kind of you.

#### 7.2.1.2 Origin: material

(a) of                      **en ring av rent guld**                      a ring of pure gold  
                              **en man av kött och blod**                      a man of flesh and blood

(b) from                      **göra guld av järn**                      to make gold from iron

#### 7.2.1.3 Origin: cause

(a) from                      **göra nåt av gammal vana**                      to do something from habit  
                              **Lär dig av erfarenhet!**                      Learn from experience!

(b) with                      **gråta av glädje/av rädsla**                      to cry with joy/with fear

(c) by                      **av misstag**                      by mistake  
                              **av en händelse**                      by chance

(d) for	<b>av brist på pengar av vilken orsak?</b>	for lack of money for what reason?
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**7.2.1.4** Origin: (figurative) place

off/from	<b>Du kan köpa/låna/få det av honom.</b> You can buy/borrow/get it from him.
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**7.2.1.5** Measure

of	<b>ingen av, några av en del av, hälften av i nio fall av tio</b>	none of, some (plural) of part of, half of nine times out of ten
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Note – In this sense **av** usually indicates only an incomplete portion of something. For that reason Swedish has **alla eleverna, hela klassen, båda eleverna** even where English idiom has ‘all of the pupils’, ‘all of/the whole of the class’, ‘both of the pupils’. See 3.9.8.2f., 3.9.15. Similarly, more precise expressions of measure (**ett kilo potatis**, ‘a kilo of potatoes’; **ett halvt glas mjölk**, ‘half a glass of milk’; etc.) do not require **av**. See also 1.6.3f.

**7.2.1.6** Possession

of	<b>en art av hjortsläktet i utkanten av staden folk av samma ras/tro en tavla av stort värde kungen av Sverige</b>	a species of the deer family on the outskirts of town people of the same race/faith a painting of great value the king of Sweden
----	--	--

Note, however, that **av** does not always replace the possessive genitive. See 7.3.9.

**7.2.1.7** Coupled with nouns

After nouns **av** frequently indicates some kind of result or trace of a past action.

**i egenskap av**, in the capacity of; **frukten av**, the fruit(s) of; **förekomsten av**, the occurrence of; **minnet av**, the memory of; **resultatet av**, the result of; **utfallet av**, the outcome of

**7.2.1.8** Unstressed **av** coupled with verbs

**bestå av**, consist of; **leva av**, live off; **lida av**, suffer from; **njuta av**, enjoy

**7.2.1.9** Stressed **av** coupled with verbs

Stressed **av** often has a meaning corresponding to English ‘off’. In some cases verb + stressed **av** constitute a phrasal verb in which **av** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**betala av**, pay off; **hålla av**, be fond of; **klä av (sig)**, take (one’s) clothes off; **stiga av bussen**, get off the bus; **slappna av**, relax

**7.2.2** *Efter*

**Efter** suggests ‘following upon’ and is frequently used in expressions of time (‘after’) and of place (‘behind’) to express some kind of sequence or succession. Compare the use of **bakom** in 7.3.1.2.

Place	Time when	Succession	Reference	Object of desire
behind, after	after, since	after	(according) to; by	verb/noun +for

**7.2.2.1** Place

(a) behind      **Han körde efter vår bil.**      He drove behind our car.  
                      **Stäng dörren efter dig!**      Shut the door behind you.

(b) after      **K kommer efter J i alfabetet.**  
                      K comes after J in the alphabet.

- (c) of/from      **Spår efter tio smutsiga små fingrar.**  
Traces of ten dirty little fingers.

Note – In certain instances **efter** is synonymous with **utefter** (7.3.1.17):

**Han gick efter staketet tills han kom till en grind.**  
He walked beside the fence until he came to a gate.

**7.2.2.2** Time

- (a) after      **efter klockan tre**      after three o'clock  
                 **efter jul**      after Christmas  
                 **år 800 efter Kristus**      (the year) 800 AD/CE
- (b) since      **Hon har varit sjuk efter olyckan.**  
                 She's been ill since the accident.

**7.2.2.3** Succession

- after      **mil efter mil**      mile after mile  
                 **den ena efter den andra**      one after the other

**7.2.2.4** Reference

- (a) (according) to      **Gå efter reglerna!**      Stick to the rules!  
                                 **efter bästa förmåga**      to the best of one's ability  
                                 **sortera efter storlek**      sort according to size
- (b) by      **segla efter stjärnorna**      sail by the stars  
                 **spela efter gehör/noter**      play by ear/read music

### 7.2.2.5 Coupled with nouns

Used with nouns **efter** often indicates a desire or search for something:

**längtan efter**, desire/longing for; **skicka bud efter**, send for; **strävan efter**, aspiration for; **sökandet efter**, the search for

### 7.2.2.6 Unstressed **efter** with verbs

(a) indicates the object of a desire, search or similar purposeful action (often 'for' in English):

**fråga efter**, inquire about; **leta/söka efter**, search for; **längta efter**, long for; **ringa efter**, phone for; **sträva efter**, strive for; **Vad är du ute efter?** What are you after?

(b) indicates 'according to' (7.2.2.4): **rätta sig efter**, adapt to

### 7.2.2.7 Stressed **efter** with verbs

In several cases verb + stressed **efter** constitutes a phrasal verb in which **efter** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**ge efter**, give in; **ligga efter**, lag behind; **ta efter**, take after/imitate; **se efter**, look after, check; **Se efter om du hitta något spännande!**  
Take a look to see whether you find anything exciting!

### 7.2.3 *Från*

**Från** suggests origin, a point of departure or vantage, or marks the beginning of a period in time. **Ifrån** is preferred as the latter element in compounded prepositional forms, as a stressed particle after verbs, and in heavily stressed positions.

Origin: time	Origin: place	Origin: source
(with effect) from	from	from

**7.2.3.1** Origin in time

- (a) from                    **en pjäs från 60-talet**                    a play from the 60s  
                                  **röster från det förflutna**                    voices from the past
- (b) with effect from  
                                  **från juni till september**                    from June to September  
                                  **från och med i dag**                            from today

**7.2.3.2** Origin in place

- from                        **ett brev från Amerika**                    a letter from America  
                                  **Jag kommer från Sverige.**                    I come from Sweden.

**7.2.3.3** Source

- from                        **en gåva från min mor**                    a gift from my mother  
                                  **från min synvinkel**                            from my point of view  
                                  **direkt från hjärtat**                            straight from the heart  
                                  **undantaget från regeln**                    the exception to the rule

**7.2.3.4** Unstressed **från** with verbs

**avstå från**, abstain from; **bortse från**, disregard; **bortsett från**, apart from, except for; **skona någon från något**, spare someone from something

**7.2.3.5** Stressed (**i**)**från** with verbs

The form **ifrån** is preferred when used as a stressed particle with verbs. In a few cases verb + stressed **ifrån** constitute a phrasal verb in which **ifrån** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**gå ifrån**, leave; **komma ifrån**, get away from; **springa ifrån**, run away (from); **säga ifrån**, speak out

## 7.2.4 För

**För** corresponds in usage to English ‘for’ in a wide range of senses, but special care is needed when rendering English ‘for’ + expression of duration in Swedish. See 7.3.5. Note that the construction **Vad ... för?** (with postposed **för**) is commonly used in colloquial Swedish as an alternative to **varför?**

**Vad gråter han för?**

What’s he crying for?

**Vad säger du det för?**

Why do you say that?

Time	Place	Manner	Intention, purpose	Indirect object	Genitive
for, at, <b>0</b>	(in front) of	by, with	for	to, from	of

### 7.2.4.1 Time

- (a) for      **vänner för livet/för evigt**      friends for life/for eternity  
              **ett rum för natten**                      a room for the night  
              **för första gången**                        for the first time
- väder för fem dygn framåt**  
              weather for the next five days

Note – In many instances English ‘for’ + time expression is **not** translated by Swedish **för**. See 7.3.5.

- (b) at        **för ögonblicket**                              at the moment  
              **för närvarande**                              at present
- (c) **0**        **nuförtiden**                                      nowadays

### 7.2.4.2 Place

- (a) in front of    **Håll handen för munnen när du gäspar!**  
                          Put your hand in front of your mouth when you yawn!

- (b) of                    **Stå inte i vägen för dem som jobbar!**  
Don't get in the way of those who are working!

**7.2.4.3** Manner

- (a) by                    **skriva för hand**                    write by hand  
(b) with                    **köpa för egna pengar**                    buy with one's own money

**7.2.4.4** Beneficiary, intention

- (a) for                    **dataspel för vuxna**                    computer games for adults  
                              **hem för äldre**                    homes for the elderly  
                              **pizza för avhämtning**                    pizza to go

- (b) **För** + complement functioning as an indirect object may often be rendered by 'to' in English. See also **till** 7.2.12.4.

**berätta/beskriva något för någon**, tell/describe something to someone; **förklara/läsa något för någon**, explain/read something to someone; **tala om något för någon**, tell someone (about) something; **vara till hjälp för någon**, to be of help to someone

Also:

<b>Han pratar för sig själv.</b>	He's talking to himself.
<b>Det är nytt för mig.</b>	That's new(s) to me.
<b>Han är främmande för mig.</b>	He's a stranger to me.

Note – A similar usage is seen in expressions such as:

<b>Elden slocknade för oss.</b>	The fire went out on us.
<b>Någon stal plånboken för honom.</b>	Someone stole his wallet.

- (c) **För** is often linked with **att** + infinitive to express purpose:

<b>Han stannade för att hjälpa oss.</b>	He stopped to help us.
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**7.2.4.5** Concealment

from                    **Göm det för honom!**                    Hide it from him!  
                              **ha hemligheter för dig**                    keep secrets from you

**7.2.4.6** Genitive

**chefen för företaget**                    the boss of the company  
**tiden för avresan**                    the time of departure

**7.2.4.7** Replacive

(a) (in exchange) for

**Kött för 99 kronor kilot.**  
Meat for 99 kronor a kilo.

**Öga för öga och tand för tand.**  
An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

**Vad är det engelska ordet för lagom?**  
What's the English word for 'lagom'?

Note – **Betala** is followed by **för** when it means 'to pay in exchange for'. However, when the sum is not specified or when **betala** means 'to pay off', it is usually followed by the direct object without **för**:

**Vad har du betalat för bilen?**                    What did you pay for the car?  
**Har du betalat bilen?**                    Have you paid for the car?

(b) for, on behalf of

**Hon arbetar för två.**                    She works for two.  
**Jag talar för alla.**                    I speak for everyone.  
**en gång för alla**                    once and for all

**7.2.4.8** Distributive

(a) by                    **dag för dag**                    day by day  
                              **steg för steg**                    step by step

(b) for **ord för ord** word for word

7.2.4.9 Enumeration

0 **för det första, andra, etc.** firstly, secondly, etc.

7.2.4.10 'Considering'

**Han är lång för sin ålder.** He's tall for his age.  
**varmt för årstiden** warm for the time of year

7.2.4.11 Coupled with nouns

**ha användning för något**, to have a use for something; **vara föremål för något**, be the object of something; **ett intresse för**, an interest in

7.2.4.12 Coupled with adjectives

**anklagad för**, accused of; **berömd för**, famous for; **dålig för**, bad for; **glad för**, happy about; **känd för**, renowned for; **orolig för**, worried about; **rädd för**, frightened of; **typisk för**, typical of

Note also:

**ha lätt/svårt för något**, to find something easy/difficult

7.2.4.13 Unstressed **för** with verbs

See also 7.2.4.4(b).

**akta sig för något**, watch out for something; **anklaga någon för något**, accuse someone of something; **dö för**, die for; **intressera sig för**, be interested in; **misstänka någon för något**, suspect someone of something; **slåss för**, fight for; **straffa någon för något**, punish

someone for something; **tacka någon för något**, thank someone for something; **varna någon för något**, warn someone about something

#### 7.2.4.14 Stressed **för** with verbs

In a few cases verb + stressed **för** constitute a phrasal verb in which **för** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**dra för gardinerna**, draw the curtains; **se sig för**, look out, take care;  
**ta för sig**, help oneself

#### 7.2.5 *Genom (igenom)*

**Genom** and **igenom** correspond generally to English ‘through’ in all its prepositional meanings (place, time and manner). **Genom** is preferred when the meaning is clearly prepositional. **Igenom** is preferred as the latter element in a compounded preposition, or when the meaning is more or less adverbial, or when the preposition is stressed. When followed by **hela** + a noun in the definite form, **(i)genom** corresponds to English ‘throughout’.

Place	Time duration	Manner
through	through(out)	through, by

#### 7.2.5.1 Place

(a) through      **Katten kom in genom fönstret.**  
The cat came in through the window.

(b) others      **en resa genom Asien**      a journey across Asia  
**Åk dit genom Italien.**      Drive there via Italy.

**Pesten spred sig genom hela landet.**  
The plague spread throughout the country.

**7.2.5.2** Time: ‘through’

**konsten genom tiderna** art through the ages  
**genom hela året** throughout the year

Note – US English ‘through’ meaning ‘up to and including’ is rendered by **till och med** (sometimes abbreviated **t.o.m.** or **tom**) in Swedish:

**Öppet från mars till och med juni**

Open (from) March through June

**7.2.5.3** Manner

(a) through **genom hans hjälp** through/thanks to his help  
**få hjälp genom vänner** get help through friends

(b) by **förökning genom delning** propagation by fission

Note – **Genom att** + infinitive frequently corresponds to English ‘by’ + the –ing form of the verb:

He saved her by running as fast as he could.

**Han räddade henne genom att springa så fort han orkade.**

(c) over/divided by [in mathematics]:

**3/4 [tre genom fyra]** 3 divided by 4

**7.2.5.4** Stressed (**i**)genom with verbs

**gå igenom en operation**, undergo an operation; **gå igenom någons ägodelar**, go through someone’s possessions

**7.2.6** /

The preposition **i** is the second most common word in the Swedish language (after **och**, ‘and’). In addition to indicating certain locations in space and

time (7.3.2, 7.3.4–7.3.6) **i** has a wide range of idiomatic usages.

Place	Time when	Time duration	Frequency	Material	Condition
in, at, on, <i>etc.</i>	in, to	for	0, per	in	in

### 7.2.6.1 Place

- (a) in
- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>i ett hus i staden</b>   | in a house in (the) town |
| <b>i Lund/Skåne/Sverige</b> | in Lund/Skåne/Sweden     |
| <b>ett virus i datorn</b>   | a virus in the computer  |
| <b>i en bok, i bilen</b>    | in a book, in the car    |
| <b>kaffe med mjölk i</b>    | coffee with milk (in)    |

Note 1 – In many instances English ‘in’ indicating a place relationship is rendered by **på** in Swedish. See 7.2.11, 7.3.2.

Note 2 – The use of the preposition **i** in the following examples (‘from’ or no preposition in English) indicates clearly that not all of the book/newspaper is being read, but only excerpts:

**Han läser i boken varje dag.** He reads the book every day.

**Jag satt och läste i tidningen.** I was reading the paper.

- (b) at
- |                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Båten lade till i Åhus.</b>   | The boat docked at Åhus.  |
| <b>Han är i skolan/i kyrkan.</b> | He’s at school/at church. |
| <b>Betala i kassan!</b>          | Pay at the check-out.     |
- (c) on
- |                               |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Han talar i telefonen.</b> | He’s on the phone.         |
| <b>en rapport i radio/TV</b>  | a report on the radio/TV   |
| <b>Vi satte oss i gräset.</b> | We sat down on the grass.  |
| <b>Hon sitter i soffan.</b>   | She’s sitting on the sofa. |
- (d) of
- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>borgmästare i Wadköping</b> | mayor of Wadköping          |
| <b>mitt i staden</b>           | in the middle of (the) town |
| <b>golvet i huset</b>          | the floor of the house      |
- (e) from
- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Lampan hänger i taket.</b> | The lamp hangs from the ceiling. |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|

(f) to **gå i skolan/i kyrkan** go to school/church

Note – The use of **i** in (f) above suggests that one is a pupil at a school (**elev i skolan**) or a member of a church (**medlem i kyrkan**). Note, however, **läsa på/vid universitet(et)**, ‘to study at university’. If actual direction or mode of transport is of prime importance, it is possible to use **till skolan**, etc., especially with verbs other than **gå**.

**Han cyklar till skolan varje dag.** He cycles to school every day.

(g) into **Stoppa det i fickan!** Put it into your pocket.  
**Kasta dem i fängelset!** Throw them into prison!

Note – ‘Into’ is, however, generally translated by **in i** in Swedish:

**Kör rakt in i garaget!** Drive straight into the garage.

As Swedish is generally much more precise about expressing direction than English, **upp i**, **ned i**, **ut i** are often used as more exact Swedish equivalents for English ‘into’:

**klättra upp i ett träd**, climb (up) into a tree; **klättra ned i en brunn**, climb (down) into a well; **gå ut i trädgården**, go (out) into the garden

‘Into the kitchen’ is idiomatically translated as **ut i köket**, unless the movement is clearly from outside the house into the kitchen, or unless the speaker is in the kitchen, i.e. the movement is towards the speaker. Thus:

**Jag fick lämna gästerna i hallen och springa ut i köket.**

I had to leave the guests in the hall and run out into the kitchen.

but:

**Jag var i trädgården och fick springa in i köket när du ringde.**

I was in the garden and had to run into the kitchen when you phoned.

#### **7.2.6.2** Place (with parts of the body)

With expressions with parts of the body Swedish often uses **i** (especially with reflexive verbs) while English typically has the relevant part of the body as a direct object (without a preposition). See also **om** (7.2.10), **på** (7.2.11) and 7.2.6.7(b).

**dra någon i håret**, pull someone's hair; **få ont i magen**, get stomach-ache; **göra sig illa i foten**, hurt one's foot; **klia sig i huvudet**, scratch one's head; **slå sig i pannan**, hit one's forehead; **ta någon i handen**, take someone by the hand; **tvätta sig i ansiktet**, wash one's face

### 7.2.6.3 Time-when

See also 7.3.4.1ff.

(a) in	<b>i april, aldrig i livet</b>	in April, never in my life
(b) at	<b>i början/slutet av året</b>	at the start/end of the year
(c) of	<b>den femtonde i månaden</b>	(on) the 15th of the month
(d) per, <b>0</b>	<b>en gång i veckan</b> <b>90 km i timmen</b> See 7.3.6.1.	once a week 90 km per hour
(e) to	<b>fem minuter i tio</b>	five minutes to ten
(f) <b>0</b>	<b>i fredags, i våras</b> <b>i dag, i år</b>	last Friday/last spring today, this year

### 7.2.6.4 Time – duration

See also 7.3.5.2(a).

for	<b>Jag bodde där i sex år.</b>	I lived there for six years.
-----	--------------------------------	------------------------------

### 7.2.6.5 Material: 'in'

<b>en staty i brons</b>	a statue in bronze
<b>måla i olja/arbeta i trä</b>	paint in oils/work in wood
<b>klädd i grönt/i ylle</b>	dressed in green/in wool

**7.2.6.6** Condition, state

- (a) in **i en förfärlig röra** in a terrible mess  
**i gott skick** in good condition  
**Han är i trettioårsåldern.** He's in his thirties.  
**leva i fattigdom/lyx** live in poverty/luxury  
**dela i tre delar** divide into three (parts)
- (b) at **vara i fred/krig** be at peace/at war
- (c) on **vara i tjänst** be on duty

**7.2.6.7** Means or instrument

- (a) in **uttrycka känslor i ord** express feelings in words
- (b) by **Han grep mig i kragen.** He seized me by the collar.  
**Jag tog henne i handen.** I took her by the hand.
- (c) at **i full fart** at top speed

**7.2.6.8** 'In the form of'

- (a) in **få för lite i dricks/lön/understöd**  
get too little in tips/salary/social security benefits
- ha mycket i kontanter/småpengar**  
have a lot (of money) in cash/in small change
- (b) **0** **betala i kontanter** pay cash  
**få i present** receive as a present  
**draget i skatt** deducted as tax

**7.2.6.9** Coupled with nouns

**ha del i**, have a share in; **ta del i**, take part in; **en föreläsning i**, a lecture on; **kunskaper i**, a knowledge of; **en lektion i**, a lesson in;



**(en) lärare/professor i**, a teacher/professor of; **läxor i**, homework in;  
**ha rätt/fel i något**, be right/wrong about something

**7.2.6.10** Coupled with adjectives

Used after adjectives **i** often denotes predominantly positive feelings towards people and things. Compare **på** (7.2.11.9).

**förtjust/glad i**, fond of; **kär i**, in love with; **tokig i**, crazy about

Note, however: **sjuk i**, ill with

**7.2.6.11** Unstressed **i** with verbs

**dö i**, die off/from; **ha ont i**, have a pain in [+ part of the body]; **ta fatt i**, get hold of

**7.2.6.12** Stressed **i** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **i** constitute a phrasal verb in which **i** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**hålla i något**, keep hold of something; **ligga i**, work hard

**7.2.7** *Med*

The preposition **med** covers many of the basic meanings of English ‘with’, although in some cases English renders **med** with other prepositions.

Manner	Possession	Measure
with, by, in,	with, of, in	by

### 7.2.7.1 Manner

- (a) (together) with **Åk med hela familjen!** Travel with all the family.  
**kaffe med grädde** coffee with cream

Note 1 – The combination **tillsammans med** is more frequent in Swedish than ‘together with’ is in English:

#### **Jag besökte mässan tillsammans med tre kollegor.**

I visited the trade fair with three of my colleagues.

Note 2 – When describing the major and minor component of something that together are considered to form a whole, Swedish sometimes uses **med** where English has ‘and’:

**korv med bröd** sausage and breadroll/hot dog  
**biff med lök** steak and onions

- (b) with **äta med fingrarna** eat with your fingers  
[i.e. ‘using’] **se med blotta ögat** see with the naked eye

- (c) in **prata med hög röst** speak in a loud voice  
[i.e. ‘using’] **med andra ord** in other words  
**skriva med blyerts** write in pencil

- (d) by **åka med buss/bil/tåg** travel by bus/car/train  
[i.e. ‘using’] **betala med kreditkort** pay by credit card  
**skicka med e-post** send by e-mail

### 7.2.7.2 Possession

with **en man med fem barn** a man with five children  
**en smörgås med ägg** a sandwich with egg

of **en korg med blommor** a basket of flowers

in **en tjej med bruna skor** a girl in brown shoes

7.2.7.3 Measure: 'by'

<b>förlängt med 2 meter</b>	extended by two metres
<b>dela/multiplicera med 3</b>	divide/multiply by 3
<b>Priserna föll/steg med 5%.</b>	Prices fell/rose by 5%.
<b>seger med 5 mål mot 3</b>	victory by 5 goals to 3

7.2.7.4 Ellipsis: 'with'

<b>Upp med händerna!</b>	Hands up!
<b>Ned med monarkin!</b>	Down with the monarchy!
<b>Ut med er!</b>	Out with you!/Get out!

7.2.7.5 Coupled with nouns

**i förbindelse med**, in connection with; **i jämförelse med**, in comparison with; **likhet med**, similarity to; **medlidande med**, compassion for; **nackdelen/fördelen med**, the dis/advantage with/of

7.2.7.6 With adjectives and participles

(a) with

**bekant med**, acquainted with; **belåten med**, satisfied with; **enig med**, in agreement with; **färdig med**, finished with; **förknippad med**, connected/associated with; **försiktig/noga/noggrann med**, careful with; **missnöjd med**, dissatisfied with; **nöjd med**, satisfied with

(b) to

**förlovad med**, engaged to; **gift med**, married to; **identisk med**, identical to; **jämfört med**, compared to/with; **släkt med**, related to

(c) Others:

**full med**, full of; **ha dåligt med något**, have little of something; **ha tillräckligt** [indeclinable] **med något**, have enough (of) something; **jämnårig med**, the same age as

Note 1 – **Med** is often used after an adjective, frequently without an English equivalent, when the speaker or writer is making a value judgement:

<b>Det är svårt med svenska.</b>	Swedish is difficult.
<b>Det är roligt med gamla namn.</b>	Old-fashioned names are fun.
<b>Det är gott med lite mat.</b>	It's nice to have a bite to eat.

Note 2 – **Med** corresponds to English 'about' in adjectival phrases such as:

<b>Det bästa/roliga med dig är...</b>	The best/funny thing about you is...
<b>något underligt/fint med det</b>	something strange/good about it

#### **7.2.7.7** Unstressed **med** with verbs

(a) with

**börja med**, begin with; **gräla med**, quarrel with; **lyckas med**, succeed with; **nöja sig med**, be content with; **sluta med**, end with; **stå ut med**, put up with; **vara tillfreds med**, be satisfied with

(b) to [describing some kind of mutual activity]

**förlova sig med**, get engaged to; **gifta sig med**, get married to; **prata/tala med**, talk to

(c) Others:

**ha råd med**, afford; **minska med**, decrease by; **räkna med**, count on; **slösa med**, waste; **öka med**, increase by

### 7.2.7.8 Stressed **med** with verbs

Used with verbs stressed **med** usually indicates some kind of accompaniment or solidarity. In some cases verb + stressed **med** constitute a phrasal verb in which **med** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**följa med**, accompany; **hålla med**, agree with; **vara med**, be present

### 7.2.7.9 Some idiomatic expressions with **med**

<b>med en gång, med detsamma</b>	at once
<b>med stor sannolikhet</b>	in all probability
<b>gå med vinst/förlust</b>	run at a profit/loss
<b>vara med barn</b>	be pregnant
<b>Hur går det med dig?</b>	How are you?
<b>Jag har inte tid med det just nu.</b>	I've no time for that now.
<b>Det är inte mer med den saken.</b>	There's no more to it.

### 7.2.8 *Mellan*

**Mellan** (or its variant, **emellan**, 7.2.8.5) corresponds to English 'between' as a preposition of place, time and manner.

#### 7.2.8.1 Place

**Jag bor/reser mellan Malmö och Lund.**

I live/travel between Malmö and Lund.

#### 7.2.8.2 Time

**Vi brukar träffas mellan åtta och nio.**

We usually meet between eight and nine o'clock.

#### 7.2.8.3 Manner

**Det löser vi mellan vänner.**

We'll solve that between friends.

#### 7.2.8.4 Quantity

**Mellan 200 och 250 människor väntas komma.**  
Between 200 and 250 people are expected to come.

#### 7.2.8.5 Emellan

**Emellan** is preferred as the latter element in compounded prepositions and whenever the preposition is placed immediately after the complement for emphasis or effect:

**mittemellan**, halfway between; **sinsemellan**, between themselves;  
**oss emellan**, between ourselves; **vänner emellan**, between friends

#### 7.2.8.6 Coupled with nouns

**förhållandet mellan**, the relationship between; **skillnaden mellan**,  
the difference between; **ett val mellan**, a choice between

#### 7.2.8.7 Unstressed mellan with verbs

**skilja mellan**, distinguish between; **välja mellan**, choose between

#### 7.2.9 Mot

**Mot** suggests actual or figurative movement towards a point in space or time, but it may also express contrast and comparison.

Traditionally **mot** has been used with a number of verbs, nouns and adjectives to suggest a reaction against or opposition towards something. See, for example 7.2.9.9(a). Today, however, **mot** is increasingly used in contexts where the aim of the action is positive. For example, it is reasonable to assume that **arbetet mot diskriminering** is ‘work *against* discrimination’, whereas **arbetet mot större jämlikhet** is ‘work *towards* greater equality’. But how is one to interpret the actions of employees who **arbetar mot företagets mål**? Are they working for or against the corporate goals? As this usage can cause confusion, it should be avoided.

**Emot** rather than **mot** is combined with adverbs to form compounded prepositions (7.2.9.11) and is used as the stressed particle after certain verbs (7.2.9.10). Sometimes **emot** is also seen instead of **mot** when a preceding word ends in a consonant.

The form **gentemot** is sometimes used, especially in formal language, when the meaning is ‘compared to’ (7.2.9.5), or after certain nouns (7.2.9.7).

Direction	Place	Time-when	Opposition	Comparison
towards, to	against	towards	against	to

#### 7.2.9.1 Direction

- (a) towards      **Kör först mot Lund.**      First drive towards Lund.
- (b) to/for      **Tåget mot Malmö.**      The train to/for Malmö.

#### 7.2.9.2 Place

- (a) against      **Förbjudet att ställa cyklar mot fönstret.**  
Leaning cycles against the window is prohibited.
- (b) others      **ansikte mot ansikte**      face to face  
**gränsen mot Norge**      the border with Norway

#### 7.2.9.3 Time

- towards      **mot slutet av augusti**      towards the end of August
- Det blir allt kallare fram mot jul.**  
It gets gradually colder towards Christmas.

Note – Two verbs combine **mot** + expression of time in set phrases:

- Det lackar mot jul.**      Christmas is a-coming.  
**Det lider mot kväll.**      Night is drawing on.

#### 7.2.9.4 Opposition

against	<b>mot mina principer</b> <b>mot min vilja</b> <b>mot bättre vetande</b>	against my principles against my will against my better judgement
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#### 7.2.9.5 Comparison

(compared) to **De kostar 50 kronor i dag mot 40 i går.**  
They cost 50 crowns today compared to 40 yesterday.

**Det är ingenting mot vad jag har sett.**  
That's nothing compared to what I have seen.

**Förslaget godkändes med tio röster mot två.**  
The proposal was approved by ten votes to two.

#### 7.2.9.6 Replacive

in exchange for	<b>mot kontant betalning</b> <b>mot legitimation</b>	against cash payment on proof of identity
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#### 7.2.9.7 Coupled with nouns

Used with nouns, **mot** often denotes conduct, reaction or attitude towards something:

**ett anfall/angrepp mot**, an attack on/against; **ha allergi mot**, have an allergy to; **ett brott mot**, a crime against; **ett hot (gente) mot**, a threat to/against; **kampen mot**, the fight against; **kritik mot**, criticism of; **ett medel mot**, a remedy for; **i riktning mot**, in the direction of



#### 7.2.9.8 Coupled with adjectives

Used with adjectives, **mot** usually denotes some form of conduct, reaction or attitude towards something:

**allergisk mot**, allergic to; **artig mot**, polite to; **elak/grym mot**, nasty/cruel to; **kritisk mot**, critical of; **rättvis mot**, fair to; **skeptisk mot**, sceptical about; **snäll mot**, kind to; **sträng mot**, strict with; **tacksam mot**, grateful to; **trevlig/vänlig mot**, friendly towards

#### 7.2.9.9 Unstressed **mot** with verbs:

(a) denotes a (usually negative) reaction towards something or someone:

**demonstrera mot**, demonstrate against; **försvara/skydda sig mot**, defend/protect oneself against; **invända mot**, protest against; **kämpa mot**, fight against; **le mot någon**, smile at someone; **opponera sig mot**, oppose; **reagera mot**, react against/towards

(b) Others:

**byta något mot något**, exchange something for something; **gränsa mot**, border (onto); **vetta mot**, face, look onto

#### 7.2.9.10 Stressed (**e**)**mot** with verbs

In many cases verb + stressed (**e**)**mot** constitute a phrasal verb in which **emot** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**säga emot**, contradict; **ta emot**, receive; **rusa (e)mot**, come rushing towards; **streta emot**, resist

#### 7.2.9.11 Examples of compounded prepositions with **emot**

**Han kom framemot tiotiden.**

It was getting on for ten when he came.

**Eurons värde gentemot dollarn har sjunkit.**

The euro has fallen in value against the dollar.

**Vi bor mittemot skolan.** We live opposite the school.

**Vi bor snett emot skolan.** We live almost opposite the school.

**agera tvärtemot givna order** to act contrary to orders

**7.2.10** Om

The basic meaning of the preposition **om** suggests encompassment (7.2.10.1–3), but **om** also has a wide range of idiomatic usages, particularly with regard to expressions of time. See 7.3.4.13 and 7.3.6.2.

Place	Subject matter	Time	Frequency
round, around	about, on	in	per, <b>0</b>

**7.2.10.1** Place

round

around

about

See 7.3.2.6

compass point

+ of

**Han vek om hörnet.**

**en scarf om halsen**

**smutsig om öronen**

**vara kall om händerna**

**norr om Stockholm**

He went round the corner.

a scarf (a)round your neck

dirty about the ears

have cold hands

north of Stockholm

**7.2.10.2** Subject matter

about, on

**ett program om samer**

**en bok om Sverige**

**Det är synd om henne.**

a programme about Sami

a book on Sweden

It's a shame about her.

### 7.2.10.3 Distribution

#### **De var tre om belöningen.**

There were three of them to share the reward.

#### **Vi var alldeles för många om de få platserna.**

There were far too many of us for the few seats.

### 7.2.10.4 Time-when

in **Kom om en vecka!** Come in a week.

**Om** in ‘time-when’ expressions usually indicates a future occurrence, as shown above, although it is rarely used with days of the week and never with dates or the names of the months. See also 7.3.4.2. Observe, however:

#### **Ugglan jagar om natten och sover om dagen.**

The owl hunts by night and sleeps by day.

**långt om länge** at long last

Note – Postposed **om** in the phrase: **året om (= hela året)** ‘all year round’.

### 7.2.10.5 Frequency

See 7.3.6.2. **Vi åker dit tre gånger om dagen (om året).**  
We go there three times a day/a year.

Note – Postposed **om** in the phrase: **många gånger om** = ‘over and over’.

### 7.2.10.6 Coupled with nouns

As in 7.2.10.2, when used with a noun **om** is usually followed by a complement indicating subject matter:

**ansökan om**, a request for; **begäran om**, a desire for; **ett beslut om**, a decision on; **drömmen om**, the dream of; **en fråga om**, a question

of; **historien om**, the story of; **hoppet om**, the hope of; **löftet om**, the promise of; **ett vad om**, a bet on

**7.2.10.7** Coupled with adjectives

**gott om**, plenty of; **ont om**, a shortage of; **medveten om**, aware of; **rädd om** in phrases such as **Var rädd om dig!** Take care of yourself; **övertygad om**, convinced of

**7.2.10.8** Unstressed **om** with verbs

(a) Subject matter: ‘about’, ‘with regard to’:

**be om**, ask for request; **bråka/gräla om**, quarrel about; **drömma om**, dream about; **fråga om**, ask about; **handla om**, concern/be about; **komma överens om**, agree about; **prata/tala om**, talk about; **tävla om**, compete for; **övertyga om**, convince about

(b) After verbs expressing pervasive sensory qualities such as:

**Det luktar om honom.**            He smells.  
**Det skiner om hans skor.**      There’s a shine on his shoes.

(c) Others

**bry sig om**, care about; **ta hand om**, take care of; **tycka synd om**, feel sorry for; **det är synd om**, it’s a shame/a pity about

**7.2.10.9** Stressed **om** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **om** constitute a phrasal verb in which **om** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**hålla om någon**, embrace someone; **köra om**, overtake; **tycka om**, like

In many instances stressed **om** signifies that something is done anew (often rendered by an expression with ‘re-’ + verb in English):

**De har möblerat om.**

They have refurnished.

**Tänk om!**

Think again!

**Gör om det, om du törs!**

Do that again, if you dare!

### 7.2.11 På

**På** is a very common Swedish preposition that is rendered in many ways in English. In recent years **på** has also taken over some of the functions of other prepositions. For example, **vid universitetet** 'at the university' now sounds old-fashioned or pedantic; most Swedes prefer to say **på universitetet**. Phrases such as **i mitten av**, 'in the middle of' are being replaced by **i mitten på**, while prepositional expressions such as **namnet på någonting**, 'the name of something' provide a paradigm for analogous constructions, such as **en bild på**, 'a picture of' and **titeln på**, 'the title of'.

Place	Direction	Time-when	Time-duration	Measure	Possession
on, in, at	to	on + day in + season at + festival	in (not) for	of, with	of

#### 7.2.11.1 Place

See 7.3.2 for an explanation of the difference in usage between **i** and **på** in expressions of location.

- (a) on
- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>på ett bord, på väggen</b>  | on a table, on the wall   |
| <b>på en båt, på tåget</b>     | on a boat, on the train   |
| <b>Vi bor på Storgatan.</b>    | We live on Storgatan.     |
| <b>Vi kör på höger sida.</b>   | We drive on the right.    |
| <b>Läs texten på sidan 35!</b> | Read the text on page 35! |
| <b>Har han pengar på sig?</b>  | Has he any money on him?  |
- (b) in
- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>på landet, på gården</b>    | in the country, in the yard |
| <b>Jag jobbar på en bank.</b>  | I work in a bank.           |
| <b>på ett hotellrum</b>        | in a hotel room             |
| <b>inte ett moln på himlen</b> | not a cloud in the sky      |

(c) at	<b>på apoteket/biblioteket</b>	at the chemist's/the library
	<b>på 600 meters höjd</b>	at a height of 600 metres

Note – In a few instances, especially after verbs such as **hämta**, **låna**, **ta**, etc., Swedish has a preposition of place where English has a preposition of direction:

<b>Hämta salt i köket!</b>	Fetch some salt from the kitchen.
<b>Jag tog en bok på hyllan.</b>	I took a book from the shelf.
<b>Låna pengarna på banken.</b>	Borrow money from the bank.

#### 7.2.11.2 Direction: 'to', 'on(to)'

See 7.3.2.4 for an explanation of the difference in usage between **till** and **på** in expressions of motion/direction:

<b>Jag gick på bio/matchen.</b>	I went to the cinema/game.
<b>Han hoppade på bussen.</b>	He jumped onto the bus.
[Stressed <b>på</b> ]	

#### 7.2.11.3 Time-when

See 7.3.4.2 for the differences in usage between **på** and other prepositions in time-when expressions:

(a) on + day	<b>på söndag</b>	on Sunday
(b) in + season	<b>på våren</b>	in spring
+ part of day	<b>på kvällen</b>	in the evening
+ decade	<b>på 90-talet</b>	in the 90s
+ century	<b>på 1100-talet</b>	in the 1100s
(c) at (+ festivals)	<b>på julen</b>	at Christmas
	<b>på den tiden</b>	at that time

#### 7.2.11.4 Duration

**På** renders 'in' in expressions which may be considered to answer the question 'How long does it take?' and 'for' in a negative clause expressing

the length of time during which a state, action or experience has **not** taken place. See 7.3.5.4.

**Han gör allt på väldigt kort tid.**

He does everything in a very short time.

**Kan man köra härifrån till Lund på en timme?**

Can you drive from here to Lund in an hour?

**Jag har inte sett henne på länge/på flera år.**

I haven't seen her for a long time/several years.

**7.2.11.5** Measure

**På** is frequently used with expressions of measure containing some kind of numerical information.

of	<b>en försening på två dygn</b>	a delay of two days
	<b>ett fartyg på 3000 ton</b>	a vessel of 3,000 tonnes
	<b>ett barn på fyra år</b>	a child of four (years)
	<b>en rabatt på 25 procent</b>	a reduction of 25 per cent
	<b>ett ord på sju bokstäver</b>	a word of seven letters

Also: **en lägenhet på 3 rum och kök**  
an apartment with three rooms and a kitchen

**7.2.11.6** Genitive: 'of

**På** in this sense is used primarily with object to object relationships, rather than with people (note, however: **namnet på** + noun indicating a person, 7.3.9.4(b)). **På** is common after many nouns that express the visible qualities and characteristics of objects (**färg, form, mått, bredd, höjd, djup, längd, storlek**, etc.) and after **pris, styrka, smak, kvalitet**, etc.

<b>färgen på huset</b>	the colour of the house
<b>namnet på gatan</b>	the name of the street
<b>priset på bensin</b>	the price of petrol
<b>den bästa tiden på året</b>	the best time of the year
<b>början/slutet på loppet</b>	the start/end of the race

But compare:

**i början/slutet av...** at the beginning/end of...

Note – **På** may also express so-called objective genitives. See 7.3.9.4(a).

**mordet på ärkebiskopen** the murder of the archbishop

#### 7.2.11.7 Manner

The use of **på** as a preposition expressing relationships of manner is restricted to a few common phrases and idioms:

<b>Vad heter det på svenska?</b>	What's that in Swedish?
<b>Det var bara på skämt.</b>	It was only in jest.
<b>på samma sätt, på detta sätt</b>	in the same way, in this way
<b>på måfå</b>	at random
<b>på nytt</b>	anew, again
<b>på förhand</b>	in advance

Note also the use of **på** (with no English equivalent) in sentences such as:

**Det är ett sätt att beskriva det på.**

That's one way of describing it.

**Vi måste hitta ett bättre sätt att göra det på.**

We must find a better way of doing it.

#### 7.2.11.8 Coupled with nouns

See also 7.2.11.6.

**anfall på**, attack on; **bevis på**, proof of; **brist på**, lack of; **exempel på**, example of; **fortsättning på**, continuation of; **lösning på**, solution to; **prov på**, sample of; **svar på**, answer to; **tanke på**, thought of; **tillgång på**, supply of; **överskott/överflöd på**, surplus of



### 7.2.11.9 Coupled with adjectives

Used after adjectives **på** often denotes negative feelings towards people or things. Compare i, 7.2.6.10.

**arg på**, angry with; **avundsjuk på**, envious of; **besviken på**, disappointed in/with; **sur på**, annoyed with; **svartsjuk på**, jealous of; **trött på**, tired of

But note also: **beredd på**, ready for; **bra på**, good at; **dålig på**, bad at; **nyfiken på**, curious about; **osäker på**, unsure about; **pigg på**, keen on; **rik på**, rich in; **säker på**, certain about

### 7.2.11.10 Unstressed **på** with verbs

- (a) **På** is frequently encountered with verbs indicating one of the five senses when these are followed by a direct object, especially when the action involved is deliberate. Compare, for example:

<b>Ser du månen?</b>	Can you see the moon?
<b>Ja, jag ser på den nu.</b>	Yes I'm looking at it now.

**höra/lyssna på**, listen to; **känna på**, feel, touch; **lukta på**, smell; **smaka på**, taste; **ta på** touch; **titta/se på** look at

- (b) **På** is used with a number of verbs indicating movements of parts of the body:

**höja på ögonbrynen**, raise one's eyebrows; **rycka på axlarna**, shrug one's shoulders; **rynka på näsan**, turn up one's nose; **ruska på/skaka på huvudet**, shake one's head

- (c) **På** often denotes some kind of target or object for one's feelings:

**bero på**, depend upon; **hoppas på**, hope for; **hälsa på**, greet; **kasta på**, throw at; **klaga på**, complain about; **koncentrera sig på**, concentrate on; **lita på**, rely on; **reagera på**, react to; **rösta på**, vote for; **skylla på**, blame; **tro på**, believe in; **tröttna på**, grow tired of; **tvivla på**, doubt; **tänka på**, think about; **vänta på**, wait for

(d) Others:

**brås på någon**, take after someone; **bjuda på något**, offer something;  
**klara sig på något**, manage on something; **livnära sig på något**, make  
a living out of something

#### 7.2.11.11 Stressed **på** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **på** constitute a phrasal verb in which **på** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**hitta på**, think up; **hålla på att** + verb, be in the process of doing something; **hälsa på**, visit; **komma på**, come across, encounter, hit upon an idea; **skjuta på**, push; **skriva på**, sign; **slå på/sätta på**, switch on; **ta på**, put on

#### 7.2.12 Till

Principally the preposition **till** indicates a movement in time or space towards or up to something. Often the idea of movement is figurative, and in this sense **till** may serve as part of a prepositional phrase expressing an indirect object relationship, especially with persons.

**Till** is also commonly used before time-when expressions, chiefly to express English ‘until’, but also in a number of other senses.

**Till** has retained remnants of old noun case-endings in a number of set phrases still commonly used in Swedish. See 7.2.12.12.

Direction	Time-when	Indirect object	Possession
(up) to	until, for	to/for	of

#### 7.2.12.1 Direction

(a) to                      **tåget till Lund**                      the train to/for Lund  
                                 **Vi gick tidigt till sängs.**                      We went to bed early.  
                                 **Då kom han till makten.**                      Then he came to power.

(b) **0**                    **Vi reser ofta till utlandet.**    We often travel abroad.

Note – In a few well defined instances **till** may also express location:

<b>till höger/till vänster</b>	on the right, on the left
<b>till havs/till bords</b>	at sea/at table
<b>anlända till en plats</b>	to arrive in/at a place

**7.2.12.2** Progression to an end point

<b>15 till 20 personer</b>	15 to 20 people
<b>öppet från mars till juli</b>	open from March to July

**7.2.12.3** Time-when

(a) until	<b>Stanna till i morgon.</b>	Stay until tomorrow.
	<b>tills vidare</b>	until further notice
	<b>till dess</b>	until then (by then)

Note also:

<b>natten till tisdag</b>	the night before Tuesday
<b>till sist</b>	at last

(b) in time for    **Kom inte för sent till middagen!**  
Don't be late for dinner!

**Jag åker hem till jul/till våren.**  
I'm going home for Christmas/in the spring.

See 7.3.4.14 for further uses of **till** + expressions of time.

**7.2.12.4** Indirect object (**till** + complement)

(a) to, <b>0</b>	<b>Vad sa du till henne?</b>	What did you say to her?
	<b>Du skrev ett brev till mig.</b>	You wrote a letter to me.
	<b>Ring till dina föräldrar.</b>	Phone your parents.

(b) for	<b>Ta med några till oss!</b>	Bring some for us.
	<b>Köpte du en till mig?</b>	Did you buy one for me?

Note – For more on the use of the indirect object, see 10.5.2.

**7.2.12.5** 'Intended for'

<b>en gåva till mina barn</b>	a present for my children
<b>en ny skärm till datorn</b>	a new screen for the computer
<b>soppa till middag</b>	soup for dinner
<b>till låns, till salu</b>	on loan, for sale
<b>vara till hjälp/nytta/hinder</b>	be of help/use/a hindrance

**7.2.12.6** 'By way of'

<b>Hon är barnmorska till yrket.</b>	She's a midwife by profession.
<b>Han är blyg till naturen.</b>	He's shy by nature
<b>känna någon till utseendet</b>	know someone by sight/appearance
<b>känna någon till namnet</b>	know someone by name
<b>Vad får vi till middag?</b>	What's for dinner?
<b>till en början</b>	for a start
<b>till exempel</b>	for example
<b>en jätte till karl</b>	a giant of a man

**7.2.12.7** Genitive: 'of'

See also 7.3.9.4(d).

<b>en förstad till Stockholm</b>	a suburb of Stockholm
<b>författaren till boken</b>	the author of the book
<b>dörren till huset</b>	the door of the house
<b>en vän/släkting till mig</b>	a friend/relation of mine

**7.2.12.8** Coupled with nouns

(a) denotes conduct towards, attitude towards or relations with:

**en anknytning till**, a connection with; **hat till**, hatred of; **hänsyn till**, consideration for; **kärlek till**, love of

(b) denotes the cause or reason for something:

**anledningen till**, the reason for; **bakgrunden till**, the background to; **början till**, the start of; **förklaringen till**, the explanation for; **ett förslag till**, a suggestion for; **idén till**, the idea for; **en källa till**, a source of; **orsaken till**, the cause of; **skälet till**, the reason for

(c) denotes a comparison with or contrast to:

**ett alternativ till**, an alternative to; **en motsats till**, a contrast to; **en motsvarighet till**, a counterpart to; **en synonym till**, a synonym for

**7.2.12.9** Coupled with adjectives

**användbar till**, usable for; **färdig till**, ready to; **knuten/bunden till**, attached to; **(o)skyldig till**, (not) guilty of

**7.2.12.10** Unstressed **till** with verbs

(a) denotes a connection (figurative or physical), or a result or effect:

**anknyta till**, connect with; **ansluta sig till**, join; **användas till**, be used for; **binda till**, tie to; **duga till**, be of use as; **hänvisa till**, refer to; **koppla till**, connect to; **leda till**, lead to; **tvinga någon till**, force someone (in)to; **utveckla sig till**, develop into

(b) denotes a change in status:

**befordra till**, promote to; **degradera till**, relegate to; **förvandla till**, change into; **upphöja till**, raise to; **utse till**, appoint to; **välja någon till**, elect someone to the position of; **översätta till**, translate into

### 7.2.12.11 Stressed **till** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **till** constitute a phrasal verb in which **till** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**bli till**, come into existence; **gå till**, come about (**Hur gick det till?**, How did that happen?); **hjälpa till**, lend a hand; **känna till**, be familiar with; **lägga till**, add; **se till**, look after; **Hur står det till?**, How do you do?

### 7.2.12.12 Other usages

<b>Vi kom till fots.</b>	We came on foot.
<b>till min stora förvåning</b>	to my great surprise
<b>till följd av</b>	as a result of
<b>till ett pris av</b>	at a price of
<b>till varje pris</b>	at any price

### 7.2.13 *Under*

The preposition **under** has three chief functions: to express duration, place (physical and figurative) and inferiority. Swedish is often more precise than English when expressing prepositional relationships of place. **Under** is thus used to express location. **Under** expresses movement generally only if the movement is below something and then out again on the other side. Otherwise Swedish often prefaces **under** with an adverbial qualifier.

**Hunden ligger under soffan.**

The dog is lying under the sofa.

**Hunden kröp in under soffan och låg kvar där.**

The dog crept under the sofa and stayed there.

**Båten måste segla under fem låga broar.**

The boat has to sail under five low bridges.



**7.2.13.4** Inferiority, subjection

(a) beneath	<b>under hans värdighet</b> <b>under all kritik</b>	beneath his dignity beneath contempt
(b) under	<b>Sverige under Karl XII</b> <b>under poliskontroll</b> <b>under hans beskydd</b>	Sweden under Charles XII under police control under his protection

**7.2.13.5** Manner

**Under** is used in a number of instances to introduce the accompanying circumstances to an action or occurrence:

<b>under fullständig tystnad</b>	in complete silence
<b>under allmänt jubel</b>	amid general merriment
<b>under förutsättning att</b>	on condition that
<b>under dessa förhållanden</b>	in/under these circumstances
<b>resa under falskt namn</b>	travel under a false name
<b>känd under ett annat namn</b>	known by/under another name
<b>under vägen</b>	en route, on the way

**7.2.13.6** Unstressed **under** with verbs

**lyda under**, be subject to; **tjäna under**, serve under

**7.2.13.7** Stressed **under** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **under** constitute a phrasal verb in which **under** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**gå under**, be ruined, perish; **ligga under**, be losing (in a sporting connection); **skriva under**, put a signature to



## 7.2.14 Vid

The preposition **vid** suggests adjacency or proximity to some point in space (see also **bredvid** 7.3.1.6) or time, but it also has a number of other uses.

Place	Time-when
by	around

### 7.2.14.1 Place

- (a) by, beside      **sida vid sida**                      side by side  
                          **Han satt vid fönstret.**                      He sat by the window.  
                          **Värm dig vid brasan.**                      Warm yourself by the fire.
- (b) at, on            **sitta vid bordet**                      sit at the table  
                          **en stad vid kusten**                      a town on the coast  
                          **ett hus vid torget**                      a house on the square

Note – **Invid**, usually used only of actual physical location, suggests closer proximity than **vid**, an idea that is often strengthened by an adverb, **tätt invid**, **alldeles invid**:

**en stuga alldeles invid vägen**    a cottage (right) next to the road

- (c) Attachment to an institution: ‘at’, ‘in’:

- studenter vid universitetet**    students at the university  
**vara vid marinen/polisen**      be in the navy/police force
- (d) Others            **slaget vid Waterloo**                      the battle of Waterloo  
                          **uppträda vid rätten**                      to appear in court

### 7.2.14.2 Time

- (a) around            **Vi ses vid tiotiden.**                      I’ll see you around ten-ish.  
                          **vid 20 års ålder**                      around 20 years of age

**vid början/slutet av dagen** at the start/end of the day  
**vid den tiden** by that time

(b) in the event of, on the occasion of

**vid sjukdom/krig** in the event of illness/war  
**vid regn/halka** in rain/slippery conditions  
**vid ankomst/avgång** on arrival/departure  
**vid detta tillfälle** on this occasion  
**vid första ögonkastet** at first sight

**7.2.14.3** 'In possession of'

In certain lexicalised phrases **vid** suggests 'having' or 'being in possession of', but this usage is no longer productive:

**en man vid namn Ek** a man by the name of Ek  
**De är vid god hälsa.** They're in good health.  
**Han är vid gott lynne.** He's in good spirits.  
**hålla något vid liv** keep something alive

**7.2.14.4** Coupled with adjectives

**ovan vid**, unaccustomed to; **van vid**, accustomed to

**7.2.14.5** Unstressed **vid** with verbs

**binda vid**, tie to; **fästa vid**, fasten to/attach to; **hålla fast vid**, hold onto, to insist; **leda någon vid handen**, lead someone by the hand; **stå fast vid**, stand by (figurative); **vänja sig vid**, accustom oneself to

**7.2.14.6** Stressed **vid** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **vid** constitute a phrasal verb in which **vid** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**bränna vid**, burn fast (i.e. stick to the pan); **ta vid**, follow on

### 7.2.15 Över

The preposition **över** suggests ‘at a higher level than’ and often renders English ‘over’ as a preposition of place and of measure. **Över** is common after adjectives and verbs, where it is beginning to assume many of the usages of **av** and **för**.

Place/Direction	Time duration	Time-when	Measure
over, above, across	over	past	over

#### 7.2.15.1 Place

- (a) over            **lampan över bordet**            the lamp over the table
- (b) above            **30 meter över havet**            30 metres above sea level  
                          **göra sig hörd över bullret**            be heard above the din

(c) From one side to the other: ‘across’, ‘over’

**gå över bron/gatan**            walk over the bridge/road  
**bred över axlarna**            broad across the shoulders  
**Hoppa över staketet!**            Jump over the fence!

- (d) via            **Tåget till Köpenhamn går över Malmö.**  
                          The train to Copenhagen goes via Malmö.

Note – **överallt** = ‘everywhere’:

**Han har bott överallt i Norge.**            He’s lived everywhere in Norway.

#### 7.2.15.2 Time

- (a) over            **stanna över helgen**            stay over the weekend  
                          **arbeta över julen**            work over Christmas  
                          **spara över en lång period**            save over a long period
- (b) past            **Klockan är fem över sex.**            It’s five past six.  
                          **Klockan är över åtta.**            It’s gone eight o’clock.

### 7.2.15.3 Measure or superiority

- (a) over            **Det kostar över 200 euro.** It costs over 200 euros.  
                      **över 50 000 åskådare**            over 50,000 spectators  
                      **över 100 år gammal**            over 100 years old
- (b) above            **över genomsnittet**            above average
- (c) beyond            **Utsikten var vacker över all beskrivning.**  
                              The view was beautiful beyond description.

### 7.2.15.4 Coupled with nouns and adjectives

- (a) Many nouns, adjectives and participles combined with **över** express an emotion or state of mind:

**chockad över**, shocked about; **entusiasm över**, enthusiasm for;  
**förvånad över**, surprised at; **glad över**, happy about; **glädje/lycka över**, happiness over/at; **häpen över**, amazed at; **ilska över**, anger over; **ledsen över**, sorry about; **stolt över**, proud of

- (b) Others suggest superiority:

**inflytande över**, influence over; **kontroll över**, control of; **makt över**, power over; **seger över**, victory over

- (c) Others suggest 'containing', 'comprising', 'showing':

**en karta över**, a map of; **en lista över**, a list of; **ett minnesmärke över**, a monument to; **en översikt över**, an outline/summary of

### 7.2.15.5 Unstressed **över** with verbs

- (a) expresses superiority or control over:

**bestämma över**, rule over; **disponera/förfoga/råda över**, be in charge of; **vinna över**, win against

(b) denotes the cause of an emotion or state of mind:

**förvånas över**, be surprised at; **grubbla över**, ponder; **klaga över**, complain about; **skryta över**, boast about; **skämmas över**, be ashamed at; **undra över**, wonder at

#### 7.2.15.6 Stressed **över** with verbs

In some cases verb + stressed **över** constitute a phrasal verb in which **över** functions as an adverb. See 7.1.4.

**gå över**, exceed; **hoppa över**, omit (**Hoppa över sidorna 1–20**, Skip pages 1–20); **koka över**, boil over; **ligga/sova över**, stay the night; **se över**, inspect, check; **ta över**, take over

## 7.3 Prepositional usage

### 7.3.1 *Some other prepositions of place*

Note that many of these prepositions also fulfil other functions (prepositions of time, manner, etc.).

#### 7.3.1.1 Prepositions of place

	Main meaning	Refer to	See also
<b>bakom</b>	behind	7.3.1.2	
<b>bland</b>	among	7.3.1.3	
<b>bortemot</b>	in the direction of	7.3.1.4	7.3.3.3
<b>bortom</b>	(on) the other side of	7.3.1.5	
<b>bortåt</b>	in the direction of	7.3.1.4	7.3.3.3
<b>bredvid</b>	beside, next to, by	7.3.1.6	
<b>framför</b>	before, in front of	7.3.1.7	
<b>förbi</b>	past	7.3.1.8	
<b>före</b>	before, in front of	7.3.1.9	7.3.3.4
<b>hitom</b>	(on) this side of	7.3.1.5	

<b>hos</b>	at (the home of)	7.3.1.10	
<b>inför</b>	before	7.3.1.11	
<b>innanför</b>	within, inside	7.3.1.12	
<b>inom</b>	within	7.3.1.13	7.3.3.6
<b>intill</b>	close by	7.3.1.14	7.3.3.7
<b>inuti</b>	inside	7.3.1.15	
<b>jämte</b>	beside	7.3.1.16	
<b>kring</b>	round, around	7.3.1.16	7.3.3.8
<b>längs, längsmed</b>	along	7.3.1.17	
<b>nedanför</b>	at the foot/bottom of	7.3.1.18(b)	
<b>nedför, nerför</b>	down	7.3.1.20	
<b>omkring</b>	round, around	7.3.1.16	7.3.3.8
<b>ovan, ovanför</b>	above	7.3.1.18(a)	
<b>ovanpå</b>	on top of	7.3.1.18(a)	
<b>runt</b>	round, around	7.3.1.16	7.3.3.8
<b>undan</b>	away from	7.3.1.19	
<b>uppför</b>	up	7.3.1.20	
<b>ur</b>	out of	7.3.1.21	
<b>utanför</b>	outside	7.3.1.12	
<b>utanpå</b>	on the outside of	7.3.1.22	
<b>utefter</b>	along	7.3.1.17	
<b>utför</b>	down	7.3.1.20	
<b>utmed</b>	along	7.3.1.17	
<b>utom</b>	beyond	7.3.1.23	7.3.7.12
<b>åt</b>	to, towards	7.3.1.24	7.3.7.13

### 7.3.1.2 **Bakom**

**Bakom** suggests ‘behind’ with either literal or figurative spatial meaning and can express both place and motion. See also **efter** (7.2.2).

- Hon stod bakom dig i kön.** She stood behind you in the queue.  
**Ställ dig bakom honom!** (Go and) stand behind him.  
**Han är hjärnan bakom idén.** He is the brain behind the idea.

### 7.3.1.3 **Bland**

**Bland** suggests ‘among’. If motion is implied, **bland** is often combined with an adverb as in the final example below:

**Jag är bara en bland många.** I am just one among many.  
**bland annat, bland andra** among other things, among others  
**Han försvann in bland träden.** He disappeared (in) among the trees.

#### 7.3.1.4 Bortemot, bortåt

**Bortemot** and **bortåt** suggest movement towards or proximity to some kind of target, but are far less common than **till** (7.2.12) in expressions of motion, or than **omkring**, etc. (7.3.1.16) with expressions of place or quantity. **Inemot** is sometimes used in the same sense with time and numbers:

**De gick bortemot torget.** They walked off towards the square.  
**Stället ligger bortåt Eslöv till.** The place isn't far from Eslöv.  
**Vi väntade (i) bortemot ett år.** We waited for getting on for a year.

#### 7.3.1.5 Bortom, hitom

**Bortom** and **hitom** indicate location (or occasionally motion) 'beyond' and 'this side of' a given point respectively. However, modern Swedish usually prefers **på andra sidan** + noun with end article and **på den här sidan** + noun with end article respectively:

**Han bor bortom kyrkan.** He lives beyond the church.  
**Han bor hitom gränsen.** He lives (on) this side of the border.

#### 7.3.1.6 Bredvid

**Bredvid** (like its rather archaic and much less common synonym, **jämte**) indicates 'beside' and is used both literally and figuratively:

**Sätt dig bredvid Olle.** Sit beside Olle.

**Bredvid dig verkar jag vara ganska dum.**  
Compared to you, I seem to be rather stupid.

### 7.3.1.7 Framför

**Framför** indicates ‘in front of’ and is used both literally and figuratively:

**Bussen stannar framför affären.**

The bus stops in front of the shop.

**Plikten framför allt.**

Duty before all else.

**Jag föredrar kaffe framför te.**

I prefer coffee to tea.

### 7.3.1.8 Förbi

**Förbi** indicates movement past a point in space, or occasionally location. For ‘past’ in clock-time expressions, see 4.6.1f.

**Vi har väl inte åkt förbi huset?**

Surely, we’ve not driven past the house?

**Båten var redan förbi udden när den sjönk.**

The boat was already past the headland when it sank.

### 7.3.1.9 Före

**Före** suggests ‘before’, usually in some kind of deliberate sequence:

**Han stod före mig i kön.**

He was before me in the queue.

**Polisbilen körde före oss.**

The police car drove in front of us.

### 7.3.1.10 Hos

**Hos** suggests ‘at the house of’ (cf. French *chez*, German *bei*). It is also used figuratively to indicate ‘in the works of’, when referring to a writer, or ‘in the soul of’, when referring to a person’s nature. See also 7.3.2.7.

**I går var jag först hos Olssons och sedan hos min bror.**

Yesterday I was at the Olssons’ first and then at my brother’s.



**Det kan man läsa om hos Ibsen.**

You can read about that in Ibsen/in Ibsen's works.

**Det är något hos honom jag inte gillar.**

There's something about him I don't like.

**Hos** is usually replaced by **till** (7.2.12) with verbs of motion, but notice:

**Sätt dig hos mig i soffan!**

Sit next to me on the sofa.

### 7.3.1.11 **Inför**

**Inför** suggests 'in the presence of' or 'at the prospect of/ahead of':

**Han står åtalad inför rätta.**

He is appearing in court.

**Vi ställs inför ett nytt problem.**

We are faced with a new problem.

**förberedelser inför ett möte**

preparations ahead of a meeting

### 7.3.1.12 **Innanför, utanför**

**Innanför, utanför** suggest 'inside' and 'outside' respectively in the sense of restriction within or exclusion from an area. See also **inom** (7.3.1.13), **inuti** (7.3.1.15) and **utanpå** (7.3.1.22). **Utanför** also suggests 'outside' in the sense of 'in front of' a place. See also **framför** (7.3.1.7).

**innanför stadsmurarna**

within the city walls

**innanför Sveriges gränser**

within the borders of Sweden

**utanför storstadsområdena**

outside the main cities

**utanför västkusten**

off the west coast

**utanför ingången**

in front of the entrance

### 7.3.1.13 **Inom**

**Inom** suggests 'within' in the sense of restriction to an area, often in a figurative sense. See also **innanför** (7.3.1.12) and **inuti** (7.3.1.15).

**inom synhåll/hörhåll/räckhåll** within sight/earshot/reach

<b>ett stort namn inom IT</b>	a big name in IT
<b>Något inom mig säger ...</b>	Something inside me tells me ...
<b>inom ramen för vårt projekt</b>	within the framework of our project

Note – **Inom** is compounded with certain nouns to form certain lexicalised adverbial expressions:

<b>De får inte leka inomhus.</b>	They're not allowed to play indoors.
<b>Han har mycket inombords.</b>	He has got a lot in him.
<b>inomskärs</b>	landward of the skerries

#### 7.3.1.14 Intill, invid

**Intill** (also **invid**, 7.2.14.1 Note) suggests adjacency to a location.

<b>ett hus intill kyrkan</b>	a house (close) by the church
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#### 7.3.1.15 Inuti

**Inuti** suggests 'inside' in the sense of restriction within a volume. Compare **innanför** (7.3.1.12). Although semantically synonymous, **uti** has a quaint, old-fashioned ring to it and is reserved mostly for poetry or deliberately affected language. **Inom** (7.3.1.13) rather than **inuti** is preferred when expressing a corresponding idea in an abstract sense.

<b>Titta inuti flaskan/paketet!</b>	Look inside the bottle/packet!
-------------------------------------	--------------------------------

#### 7.3.1.16 Kring, omkring, runt

**Kring, omkring, runt** all suggest '(a)round', both in the sense of 'encircling' and in the sense of 'in the vicinity of'. **Omkring** gives a slightly less precise, less 'circular' impression than **kring** and **runt**. As an extension of this basic meaning, **kring** is also being used increasingly commonly to indicate a relation to all sorts of subject matter, although **om** (7.2.10.2) is usually preferable in this context.

<b>Vi satt runt bordet.</b>	We sat round the table.
<b>Det var fuktigt omkring sjön.</b>	It was damp around the lake.

<b>dansa kring granen</b>	dance around the Christmas tree
<b>en temperatur runt noll</b>	a temperature around freezing
<b>åsikter/diskussioner kring</b>	opinions/discussions about
<b>Studier kring Ibsens drama</b>	Studies in Ibsen's drama

**Runt** is postposed in a few set phrases:

<b>resa jorden runt</b>	travel (round) the world
<b>åka land och rike runt</b>	drive the length and breadth of a country

### 7.3.1.17 **Längs, längsmed, utmed, utefter**

**Längs** corresponds to English 'along' to express location or movement parallel with something. **Utmed**, **längsmed** and **utefter** are synonymous, but often suggest a more pervasive presence or movement (cf. English 'all along').

<b>Vi såg inga hus längs vägen.</b>	We saw no houses along the road.
<b>Vakter går utefter gränsen.</b>	Guards patrol (along) the frontier.
<b>Vi rodde utmed kusten.</b>	We rowed along the coast.

### 7.3.1.18 **Ovan, ovanför, ovanpå and nedanför**

(a) In expressions of place **ovan**, **ovanför**, **ovanpå** all suggest 'above', but these words are not synonymous in Swedish. **Ovan** sounds poetic and affected in modern Swedish and may generally be replaced by **över** (7.2.15). **Ovanför** suggests 'at a higher level than'; it is more common than **ovan** but may also be replaced by **över** in most instances. **Ovanpå** suggests location 'on top of' something else.

**Ballongen svävade högt ovan molnen.**  
The balloon hovered high above the clouds.

**Benet gick av strax ovanför knäet.**  
His leg was broken just above the knee.

**Ovanpå leran ligger ett tunt lager grus.**  
Above the clay is a thin layer of gravel.

- (b) **Nedanför** is *not* the opposite of **ovanför**. See **under** (7.2.13). **Nedanför** suggests a location corresponding to English ‘at the foot of’ or, ‘at the bottom of’.

**Han stod och väntade nedanför trappan.**

He stood waiting at the bottom of the stairs.

Informal Swedish uses **ovanför**, **nedanför** to indicate ‘north of’, ‘south of’ respectively, but this tends to be frowned upon by language purists:

**Tåget spårade ur strax ovanför/nedanför Gävle.**

The train was derailed just north/south of Gävle.

**7.3.1.19 Undan**

**Undan** may render English ‘away from’ but its usage is restricted to a relatively small number of verbs. Stressed **undan** with a verb usually corresponds to English ‘away’.

**Han är på flykt undan lagen.** He’s on the run from the law.

**Lägg undan era böcker.** Put your books away.

**sätta undan, ställa undan** to put away

**7.3.1.20 Uppför, nedför, utför**

**Uppför** and **nedför/nerför** suggest movement up and down an incline respectively. **Utför** suggests precipitous, often uncontrolled movement down an incline or from a high point. All three words are also used adverbially.

**Kör uppför/nerför backen.** Drive up/down the hill.

**Vi gick uppför/nerför trappan.** We walked up/down the stairs.

**Hon ramlade utför trappan.** She fell down the stairs.

**7.3.1.21 Ur**

**Ur** suggests movement ‘out of’, sometimes with an adverbial qualifier (**ut ur**, **fram ur**, etc.) for added emphasis.

**Dra kontakten ur väggen.** Pull the plug out of the wall.

**Kom ut ur garderoben!**            Come out of the closet!  
**Jag dricker direkt ur burken.**    I drink straight from the can.

Ur also has a number of figurative uses:

**måla ur egen fantasi**, paint from imagination; **berätta ur minnet**,  
recite from memory; **vara ur balans**, be unbalanced; **vara ur form**,  
be out of sorts; **ur funktion**, out of order; **ur tjänst**, off duty

#### 7.3.1.22 Utanpå

**Utanpå** suggests ‘on the outside of’ in the sense of being affixed to the outside of something. **Utanpå** is also used adverbially.

**Etiketten satt (utan)på flaskan.**

The label was on the outside of the bottle.

**Han drog stövlarna utanpå byxorna.**

He pulled his boots on over his trousers.

#### 7.3.1.23 Utom

**Utom** suggests ‘beyond’ in expressions of place, frequently in a figurative sense and only in a number of set phrases. Note that the English phrase ‘out of doors’ is rendered by the Swedish adverb **utomhus** or **ute**:

**utom allt tvivel**, beyond all doubt; **utom fara**, out of danger; **utom hörhåll**, out of earshot; **utom räckhåll**, out of reach; **utom synhåll**, out of sight; **vara utom sig av rädsla/sorg/glädje**, be beside oneself with fear/grief/joy

#### 7.3.1.24 Åt

**Åt** usually suggests motion in the direction of a point in space. While this role has in many instances been taken over by **mot** (7.2.9) and **till** (7.2.12), **åt** is still the only correct choice in the examples below. **Åt** may also be combined with **till** to form a parenthetical preposition, **åt ... till**, which means ‘in the direction of’.

<b>Åt vilket håll går vi nu?</b>	Which direction are we going in now?
<b>Det går åt skogen/helvete.</b>	This is going to pieces/hell.
<b>Rummet vetter åt norr.</b>	The room faces north.
<b>De gick åt staden till.</b>	They walked towards the town.

Expressions with **åt sidan** may often be rendered by ‘away’ or ‘aside’ in English. See also **undan** (7.3.1.19).

<b>Han lade boken åt sidan.</b>	He put the book aside.
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**7.3.2** *I or på? How to render English ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘at’, ‘to’ as a preposition of place in Swedish*

Care must be taken when rendering the English prepositions of place ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘at’, ‘to’ into Swedish. Dictionary definitions are insufficient to cover the wide range of idiomatic renderings, and it is difficult to formulate practical rules for the usage of **på** and **i** as prepositions of place. What follows therefore is a list of hints rather than hard and fast rules, and some alternatives have been intentionally omitted. Only a keen observation of the idiomatic usages of **på** and **i** will lead to a thorough understanding of the way in which these two common prepositions are used.

**7.3.2.1** A first rule of thumb

(a) The first of two rules of thumb (albeit each with many exceptions, see 7.3.2.3–7.3.2.7) is that Swedish uses:

- på** + a (two-dimensional) surface (cf. English ‘on’ + surface)
- i** + a (three-dimensional) volume (English ‘in’ + volume/enclosed space)

<b>på</b> = ‘on’ + surface	<b>i</b> = ‘in’ + volume
<b>tavlan på väggen</b> the picture on the wall	<b>möss i väggen</b> mice in the wall
<b>duken på bordet</b> the cloth on the table	<b>duken i lådan</b> the cloth in the drawer
<b>parabolen på taket</b> the satellite dish on the roof	<b>tv:n i huset</b> the TV in the house

(b) However, some common expressions require special care:

<b>på landet</b> in the country(side)	<b>i landet</b> in the country [= nation/state]
<b>möta någon på gatan</b> meet someone in the street	<b>ett hål i gatan</b> a hole in the road
<b>möta någon på gården</b> meet someone in the yard	<b>i trädgården</b> in the garden
<b>inte ett moln på himlen</b> not a cloud in the sky	<b>i himlen</b> in heaven
<b>båtar seglar på havet</b> boats sail on the sea	<b>fiskar simmar i havet</b> fish swim in the sea
<b>på hörnet</b> on the corner	<b>i hörnet</b> in the corner
<b>på åkrarna</b> in the fields	<b>i skogen</b> in the forest
<b>sitta på en stol</b> to sit on a (dining) chair	<b>sitta i en fåtölj/soffa</b> to sit in an easy chair/sofa
<b>Jag bor på Storgatan.</b> I live in High Street.	<b>Hon bor i staden.</b> She lives in town.
<b>på Nordpolen</b> at the North Pole	<b>i öknen</b> in the desert
<b>ett program på radio/tv</b> a programme on the radio/TV	<b>tala i telefon/radio/tv</b> to speak on the phone/radio/TV

(c) **I** is usually used with geographical names (compare English ‘in’, ‘at’), unless referring to an island that is not a large nation state, in which case **på** is used (cf: English ‘on’). Both **i** and **på** are used with **Island**, ‘Iceland’, whereas **i** is always used with, for example, **Australien**, **Japan** and **Storbritannien**.

**Anna bor i Lund/i Sverige/i Europa.**  
Anna lives in Lund/in Sweden/in Europe.

**Erik har bott på Gotland/på Färöarna/på Cypern/på Mallorca.**

Erik has lived on Gotland/on the Faeroes/on Cyprus/on Majorca.

**De bor i Australien men har hus i Storbritannien och i Japan.**

They live in Australia but have houses in Britain and Japan.

**7.3.2.2** A second rule of thumb

- (a) The second rule of thumb (albeit with many exceptions) is that the larger the object governed by the preposition (i.e. the prepositional complement), the more likely the choice will fall on **på**. In many instances this parallels English usage, as seen below:

**på ett tåg/ett flygplan**

on a train/a plane

**i en bil/en taxi**

in a car/a taxi

**på en färja/ett kryssningsbåt**

on a ferry/a cruise ship

**i en roddbåt/en kanot**

in a rowing boat/a canoe

**på ett slott/ett hotell**

in a castle/a hotel

**i ett hus/ett tält**

in a house/a tent

- (b) When something is physically on top of another object, **på** is used, regardless of the size of the prepositional complement:

**på en cykel/på en hylla/på en stig/på trottoaren**

on a bicycle/on a shelf/on a footpath/on the pavement

- (c) The observation that **på** is used with larger objects and **i** with smaller ones also appears to be borne out by the following examples. However, in these instances **på** actually functions as a genitive marker, as shown by the analogous examples on the right. See also 7.3.9.4(b).

**i baren/foajén på hotellet**

in the bar/lobby at the hotel

cf. **i hotellets bar/foajé**

**i väntrummet på sjukhuset**

in the waiting room at the hospital

cf. **i sjukhusets väntrum**

**i rökrutan på flygplatsen**

in the smoking booth at the airport

cf. **i flygplatsens rökruta**



### 7.3.2.3 På + public buildings, institutions, etc. in terms of their function

Except in a few set phrases, Swedish generally uses **på** to signify location ('in', 'at', 'on') and sometimes also motion ('to', see 7.3.2.4) with nouns that describe institutions, public or commercial buildings and places of work, study or entertainment in terms of their function:

**på flygplatsen, på hotellet, på sjukhuset, på stationen**

at the airport, at the hotel, at the hospital, at the station

**på apoteket, på banken, på fabriken, på snabbköpet**

at the chemist's, at the bank, at the factory, at the supermarket

**på dagiset, på gymnasiet, på universitetet, på jobbet**

in/at (the) kindergarden, at high school, at university, at work

**på bio(n), på bröllopet, på festen, på hockeymatchen**

at the cinema, at the wedding, at the party, at the hockey match

**på museet, på restaurangen, på utställningen, på IKEA**

at the museum, at the restaurant, at the exhibition, at IKEA

**På** is also used with many expressions indicating time off from work, etc.:

**på lunch**, at lunch; **på kafferast**, on a coffee break; **på en kurs**, on a course; **på permission**, on leave; **på semester**, on holiday; **på utflykt**, on an excursion

The main difference between **på** and **i** when used about buildings is that **på** (like English 'at') emphasises the address or function, while **i** (like English 'in') is associated only with the physical interior of the building. There are, however, some exceptions to this basic rule.

Note 1 – The preposition **i** is usually used with **skola** and **kyrka**:

**Vilken skola/kyrka går du i?** Which school/church do you go to?

**Vi träffades i skolan.** We met at/in school.

**Han brukar städa i kyrkan.** He usually cleans up in the church.

Note 2 – **Hos** is invariably preferred to **på** to render English 'at', 'in' when the prepositional complement is a noun or pronoun referring to a person.

Compare:

**Hon jobbar på vårdcentralen.** She works at the health centre.

**Hon jobbar hos läkaren.** She works at the doctor's.

Note 3 – Sometimes **vid** is used instead of **på** + place of work (see **vid**, 7.2.14):

**De är lärare vid universitetet.** They are teachers at the university.

**Jag arbetar vid järnvägen.** I work for the railway.

**På järnvägen** could imply work on the tracks as a navvy.

**Jag arbetar vid gruvan.** I work at the mine.

**I gruvan** would imply work as a miner in the actual mine shafts.

**7.3.2.4** **På** = English 'to' indicating motion towards

(a) Frequently English 'to' + a public or commercial building, a place of entertainment or enjoyment (but not a place of work or study: see **till**, 7.2.12) is rendered by Swedish **på**:

**gå på biblioteket**, go to the library; **gå på ett bröllop** go to a wedding; **gå på en fotbollsmatch**, go to a football match; **gå på IKEA**, go to IKEA; **gå på lunch**, go to lunch; **gå på museet**, go to the museum; **gå på teatern**, go to the theatre

Only when the idea of movement towards such a place is significant does Swedish use **gå** + **till**. In such instances **gå** is stressed in spoken Swedish to emphasise the idea of movement towards a destination. (See below.) This often corresponds to the difference between 'go to' and 'walk to' in English:

**Jag gick på 'bio i går.** I went to the cinema yesterday  
**Jag 'gick till bion i går.** I walked to the cinema yesterday.

**Jag brukar gå på 'stan en gång i veckan.**  
I usually go to town once a week. [to walk around the shops]

**Jag brukar 'gå till stan en gång i veckan.**  
I usually walk to town once a week. [instead of taking the bus]

- (b) **Hos** is invariably preferred to **på** to render English ‘to’ when the prepositional complement is a noun or pronoun referring to a person. See also 7.3.2.3 Note 2.

**Har du varit hos tandläkaren?** Have you been to the dentist’s?

**7.3.2.5** **På** or **i** + mode of transport = English ‘on’, ‘in’

In much the same way as in English, Swedish uses **på** to render ‘on’ with public transport and **i** to render ‘in’ with personal means of transport, unless the user is mounted physically on top of this personal form of transport:

**på bussen**, on the bus; **på båten**, on the boat; **på ett flygplan**, on a plane; **på färjan**, on the ferry; **på spårvagnen**, on the tram; **på T-banan**, on the underground; **på tåget**, on the train

**i en bil**, in a car; **i en kanot**, in a canoe; **i en eka**, in a rowing boat;  
**i en taxi**, in a taxi

**på en cykel**, on a bike; **på en motorcykel**, on a motorcycle; **på en häst**, on a horse; **på en surfbräda**, on a surfboard; **på skidor**, on skis; **på skridskor**, on skates

Note – English ‘by’ + mode of transport is generally rendered by Swedish **med** (7.2.7.1(d)), or with a form of the verb **åka** + no preposition:

<b>Jag reser helst med tåg.</b>	I prefer to travel by train.
<b>Frakta varorna med flyg.</b>	Ship the goods by air.
<b>Vi åkte buss/bil/tåg dit.</b>	We went there by bus/car/train.

**7.3.2.6** ‘In’, ‘on’ + parts of the body

- (a) The basic rule of thumb is **på** + surface; **i** + volume. See 7.3.2.1.

<b>ha utslag på ryggen</b>	have a rash on your back
<b>ha ett sår på läppen</b>	have a sore on your lip
<b>ha smuts i ögat</b>	have dirt in your eye
<b>ha löss i håret</b>	have lice in your hair

Note, however:

<b>ett slag i ansiktet</b>	a blow in/to the face
<b>en bula i pannan</b>	a bump on the forehead

- (b) However, **i** is always used with the expressions **att ha ont i** ('to have a pain in', 'to have ... ache') and **det gör ont i** ('my ... hurts'). See 1.11.7.2.

<b>Jag har ont i magen/knäet.</b>	I have stomach ache/a pain in my knee.
<b>Det gör ont i ryggen.</b>	My back hurts.

- (c) Note the use of **i** + parts of the body (or occasionally **om**, if the meaning is clearly 'around') to render English 'by' in expressions such as:

**hålla någon i armen**, hold someone by the arm; **gripa någon i håret**, seize someone by the hair; **ta någon i handen**, take someone by the hand

- (d) **Om** (*not på*) is commonly used before parts of the body after certain adjectives and verbs where English has a possessive construction with no preposition:

**Han är ren/smutsig/varm/kall/torr/våt/brun om fingrarna.**  
His fingers are clean/dirty/warm/cold/dry/wet/brown.

**Jag fryser om tårna och svettas om händerna.**  
My toes are cold and my hands are sweaty.

**Han torkade sig om fötterna och tvättade sig om händerna.**  
He dried his feet and washed his hands.

However, note the use of **i** in the following instances:

<b>Du är röd i ansiktet.</b>	Your face is red.
<b>Han är våt i pannan.</b>	His forehead is wet.

In some instances Swedish, like English, has no preposition:

<b>Jag behöver tvätta håret.</b>	I need to wash my hair.
<b>Du bör borsta tänderna.</b>	You ought to brush your teeth.

**7.3.2.7** Other hints on translating ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘to’

Some further hints on how to translate the English prepositions of place ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘to’ into Swedish follow:

(a) ‘At’ + homes = **hos**

English ‘at’ with names, titles or professions used to signify people’s homes or place of work, is rendered by Swedish **hos**. See 7.3.1.10. Note, however, that the expression ‘at home’ is rendered by **hemma**. See 6.3.1.1.

<b>Vi var hos Olssons i går.</b>	We were at the Olssons’ yesterday.
<b>Han bor hos sin syster.</b>	He lives at his sister’s.
<b>hos juveleraren/tandläkaren</b>	at the jeweller’s/dentist’s
<b>ett inbrott hos professor Ek</b>	a burglary at Professor Ek’s

(b) ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’ + address = **på**

<b>Han har en affär på Bygatan.</b>	He has a shop on/in Bygatan.
<b>De bor på nummer 12.</b>	They live at number 12.
<b>Jag bor på rum 220.</b>	I’m staying in room 220.

(c) ‘At’ + places extending lengthways = **vid**

**Han stod vid disken/baren/gränsen/staketet.**  
He stood at the counter/bar/border/fence.

**Karlstad ligger vid Klarälven.** Karlstad is on the River Klarälven.

Compare, however:

<b>vid sidan av</b>	at/by the side of
<b>på kanten av/på randen av</b>	at the edge of/on the rim of

(d) ‘To’ indicating destination = **till**

**Reste du ensam till Venedig?** Did you travel to Venice alone?

**Jag behöver adressen och telefonnumret till hotellet.**  
I need the address and phone number to the hotel.

(e) However, Swedish generally uses an adverb + **i** or **på** (according to the principle described in 7.3.2.1) when English ‘to’ denotes actual entry

into a building or place (cf. ‘into’):

**Vi gick in på banken/in i kyrkan/ut i köket.**

We went into the bank/church/kitchen.

- (f) English ‘to’ is rendered by Swedish **i** or **på** (according to the principle described in 7.3.2.1) in the following instances:

**Detta är mitt första besök i staden/i Sverige/på ön.**

This is my first visit to the city/to Sweden/to the island.

- (g) ‘To’ + verbs of fastening, tying, etc. = **vid**. See 7.2.14.5.

**Jag band hunden vid stolpen.** I tied the dog to the post.

**Jag fäste repet vid masten.** I fastened the rope to the mast.

### **7.3.3** *Some other prepositions of time and quantity*

Note that many of these prepositions also fulfil other functions, for example as prepositions of place or manner.

#### **7.3.3.1** Prepositions of time and quantity

	Main meaning	Paragraph	See also
<b>à</b>	at a price of	7.3.3.2	
<b>alltsedan</b>	ever since	7.3.3.10	
<b>bortemot</b>	close to	7.3.3.3	7.3.1.4
<b>bortåt</b>	close to	7.3.3.3	7.3.1.4
<b>framemot</b>	towards, close to	7.3.3.3	
<b>för ... sedan</b>	ago	7.3.3.5	
<b>före</b>	before, by	7.3.3.4	7.3.1.9
<b>inemet</b>	close to	7.3.3.3	
<b>innan</b>	before	7.3.3.4	8.3.3.4
<b>inom</b>	within, in	7.3.3.6	7.3.1.13
<b>intill</b>	until	7.3.3.7	7.3.1.14
<b>(om)kring</b>	(a)round	7.3.3.8	7.3.1.16

<b>på ... när</b>	to within	7.3.3.9	
<b>runt</b>	(a)round	7.3.3.8	7.3.1.16
<b>sedan</b>	since	7.3.3.10	
<b>sedan ... tillbaka</b>	since	7.3.3.11	

### 7.3.3.2 À

The preposition **à** (a loan word from French) suggests ‘at a price of’ or ‘to a quantity of no more than’. In this latter usage **à** is rapidly losing ground to **till** (7.2.12), which today is much more frequently used in such contexts.

<b>biljetter à 500 kronor styck</b>	tickets at 500 crowns each
<b>5 à 10 kilometer österut</b>	5 to 10 kilometres to the east

### 7.3.3.3 Bortemot

**Bortemot**, **bortåt**, **framemot** and **inemot** suggest proximity to some kind of target.

<b>Jag väntade bortemot en timme.</b>	I waited for about an hour.
<b>Han är bortåt/inemot 80 år.</b>	He is close to 80 years old.
<b>framemot sekelskiftet 1800</b>	towards the end of the 1700s

### 7.3.3.4 Före, innan

**Före** and **innan** both mean ‘before’, although **innan** is more limited in use. **Före** (not **innan**) is used in a number of lexicalised expressions as shown in the examples below. Note also **före detta** (often abbreviated **f.d.**), an indeclinable expression which renders English ‘former’, ‘erstwhile’, ‘one-time’, etc. **Innan** also functions as a conjunction (8.3.3.4).

<b>Vi träffas igen före/innan jul.</b>	We’ll meet again before Christmas.
<b>År 55 f.Kr. (= före Kristus)</b>	In the year 55 BC (before Christ)
<b>Högmod går före fall.</b>	Pride goes before a fall.
<b>en före detta statsminister</b>	a former Prime Minister
<b>min före detta</b>	my ex

### 7.3.3.5 För ... sedan

**För ... sedan** brackets the prepositional complement, and corresponds to English ‘ago’.

**Jag kom hit för 10 år sedan.** I came here ten years ago.

### 7.3.3.6 Inom

**Inom** denotes ‘within’ referring to a future period of time.

**Jag flyttar inom en vecka.** I am moving house within a week.  
**Vi ses igen inom kort.** We’ll be seeing one another shortly.

### 7.3.3.7 Intill

**Intill** suggests adjacency, usually translated into English as ‘until’ + a point in time or ‘up to’ + a quantity.

**Jag älskar dig intill döden.** I’ll love you until I die.  
**Intill 20 procent av vinsten** up to 20 per cent of the profit

### 7.3.3.8 Kring, omkring, runt

**Kring, omkring, runt** suggest ‘(a)round’. **Omkring** perhaps gives a slightly less precise impression than **kring** and **runt**. **Runt** is postposed in some set phrases.

**runt jul** around Christmastime  
**kring femtiden** around five o’clock  
**omkring 20 000 deltagare** around 20,000 participants  
**Öppet dygnet runt året runt** Open 24/7/365

Note – The adverbs **cirka** (often abbreviated **ca** when written) and **ungefär** (sometimes abbreviated **ung.**) are both commonly used before numbers in much the same way as the preposition **omkring**.

**Väskan väger cirka 25 kilo.** The case weighs around 25 kilos.



### 7.3.3.9 På ... när

**På ... när** brackets the complement and renders ‘(to) within’ + expression of measure. It is only used to express ideas such as the following:

**Den här elektroniska vågen är exakt på ett gram när.**

These electronic scales are exact to within one gram.

**Du är inte på långt när så stark som du tror.**

You’re nowhere near as strong as you think.

### 7.3.3.10 Sedan

**Sedan** marks the beginning of a period of past time and may usually be rendered by English ‘since’. **Ända se(da)n** (less commonly **alltse(da)n**) renders English ‘ever since’ + time-when expression. **Sedan** is abbreviated to **sen** (short vowel) in spoken and sometimes also in informal written Swedish. **Sedan** is also used adverbially (6.2.2.1, 6.4.2.2(b)) and as a conjunction (8.3.3.2).

**De har varit borta sedan mars.** They’ve been away since March.

**Ända sedan barndomen** ever since childhood

Note the following common expressions:

**se(da)n dess, alltsedan dess** since then

**ända sedan dess** ever since

**för ... sedan** ago See 7.1.3.2.

### 7.3.3.11 Sedan ... tillbaka

**Sedan ... tillbaka** brackets the prepositional complement. It is used where English has ‘for (the past/last)’ + duration when the action or state still prevails. While English usually employs ‘has been’ + the ‘-ing’ form of the verb in such instances, Swedish typically – but not always – uses the present tense. Otherwise ‘for’ + a period of time is rendered in Swedish by **i** or no preposition at all (7.3.5.1), but such constructions do not always make clear whether or not the action or state still prevails.

## Han bor utomlands sedan 30 år tillbaka.

He has been living abroad for the past thirty years [and still is].

### 7.3.4 Prepositions and time

Relationships of time in Swedish are the object of much idiomatic variation, especially in the spoken language. Swedish also differentiates between a point in time (7.3.4.1ff.) and a period of time (7.3.5). For advice on how to render certain English prepositions governing time expressions into Swedish, refer to the sections below that summarise Swedish usage:

in, at, on + definite time	7.3.4.2(b)
in, at, on + indefinite time/habitual occurrences	7.3.4.3(d)
Swedish usage summarised	7.3.4.15
for (not . . . for) + duration	7.3.5.2
during, over + duration	7.3.5.3
in + duration	7.3.5.4
in + frequency	7.3.6.3
clock time	4.6.1, 7.3.4.4

#### 7.3.4.1 Time-when

When considering which prepositions to use with Swedish ‘time-when’ expressions, it is often necessary to observe the difference between definite time (7.3.4.2) and indefinite time or habitual occurrences (7.3.4.3).

#### 7.3.4.2 Definite time

- (a) Definite time may refer to past, present or future, and specifies when a particular event has taken place, is taking place or will take place. In English this is usually achieved by specifying a date of some sort, or by stating the season, month, weekday or other unit of time by using a word such as ‘this’, ‘last’, or ‘next’.
- (b) The main preposition used with definite time-when expressions in Swedish is **i**. However, as the table below shows, no preposition is used with dates or with clock time (7.3.4.4), and **på** is sometimes used with the days of the week.

Definite time	Paragraph	Swedish prep.	English prep.
years	7.3.4.4	<b>o</b>	in
dates	7.3.4.4	<b>o</b>	on
clock time	7.3.4.4	<b>o</b>	at
months	7.3.4.5	<b>i</b>	in
seasons	7.3.4.6	<b>i, på</b>	in
festivals	7.3.4.6	<b>i, på</b>	at
weekdays	7.3.4.8	<b>i + past</b> <b>på + future</b>	on
parts of the day	7.3.4.10	<b>i</b>	various
other future time	7.3.4.13f	<b>om/till</b>	in/(in time) for

### 7.3.4.3 Indefinite time and habitual occurrences

- (a) Indefinite time and habitual occurrences may refer to past, present or future.
- (b) Expressions of indefinite time may often be replaced by ‘one’ in English: ‘I last saw him at night/on a Sunday/in (the) summer’ = ‘I last saw him one night/one Sunday/one summer’.
- (c) Time expressions describing habitual occurrences may often be replaced by ‘every’ in English: ‘I see him on Thursday(s)/in (the) summer/at night’ = ‘I see him every Thursday/every summer/every night’.
- (d) English prepositions used with expressions of indefinite time and habitual occurrences are usually rendered by **på** in Swedish. However, as the table below shows, no preposition is used with dates or clock time (7.3.4.4), and **i** is used with months.

Indefinite time/habitual	Paragraph	Swedish prep.	English prep.
dates	7.3.4.4	<b>o</b>	on
clock time	7.3.4.4	<b>o</b>	at
months	7.3.4.5	<b>i</b>	in
seasons	7.3.4.7	<b>på</b>	in
festivals	7.3.4.7	<b>på</b>	at
weekdays	7.3.4.9	<b>på</b>	on
parts of the day	7.3.4.11	<b>på</b>	in

**7.3.4.4** Time-when expressions + dates, years, clock time

- (a) English ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘at’ are rendered in Swedish without the use of a preposition in all time-when expressions (definite time and habitual occurrence) with exact dates, years and clock time (4.5.1ff.). Note, however, that written Swedish frequently prefaces year dates with **år** (= ‘(in the) year’), especially when such dates begin a sentence:

**Alfred Nobel föddes i Sverige 1833. År 1896 dog han i Italien.**

Alfred Nobel was born in Sweden in 1833. In 1896 he died in Italy.

**Han kom söndagen den femtonde juli.**

He came on Sunday the fifteenth of July.

**Vi får lön den tjugofemte i varje månad.**

We get our wages on the twenty-fifth every month.

**De brukar ringa prick klockan tre.**

They usually phone at three o’clock sharp.

**Fakturan betalades den tredje i femte.**

The invoice was paid on the third of the fifth [third of May].

- (b) When the year date is not exact, but expressed with a construction using the suffix **-tal**, Swedish uses **på** to correspond to English ‘in’:

**Hon föddes på 40-talet.**

She was born in the forties.

**Han levde på 1200-talet.**

He lived in the 13th century.

**7.3.4.5** Time-when expressions + months

When referring to months without a date (in expressions of both definite time and habitual occurrence), English ‘in’ is rendered by **i** in Swedish. The preposition **i** is occasionally omitted if the name of the month is followed by a year date (7.3.4.4), especially if the sense is one of duration (7.3.5.2).

**Han kom i maj.**

He came in May [i.e. last May].

**Han brukar komma i maj.**

He usually comes in May.

**Han kommer i maj.**

He is coming in May [i.e. next May].

**Vi var på Färöarna juli 2012.**

We were on the Faeroes in July 2012.

#### 7.3.4.6 Definite time + seasons and festivals

- (a) When expressing definite time in connection with seasons and festivals, the main rule is that English 'in', 'at' is rendered by **i** in Swedish. The suffixation of **-as** to the names of the seasons and the main Swedish festivals signifies recent past time.

**Våra öppettider i påsk.** Our opening hours at Easter.  
**De gifter sig i vår.** They are getting married in spring  
[i.e. this coming spring].

**i julas**, last Christmas; **i midsomras**, last midsummer; **i påskas**, last Easter; **i våras** last spring; **i somras**, last summer; **i höstas**, last autumn; **i vintras**, last winter

- (b) However, **på** is often used with the names of the seasons (definite form) to signal past or future time. **På** is also occasionally used with festivals (definite or indefinite form) to signal past time. **Till** is often used with festivals (definite or indefinite form) to signal future time. See also 7.3.4.14.

**Kom tillbaka på våren!** Come back in the spring.  
**Han var sjuk på midsommar.** He was ill at midsummer.  
**De tänker gifta sig till påsk.** They intend to get married at Easter.

Note that when a date is given, the noun denoting the season or festival appears in the definite form, usually with no preposition. See also 7.3.4.4.

**De emigrerade våren 1887.** They emigrated in the spring of 1887.

#### 7.3.4.7 Indefinite time and habitual occurrences + seasons and festivals

When expressing indefinite time or habitual occurrences in connection with seasons and festivals, the main rule is that English 'in', 'at' are rendered by **på** in Swedish. In this context the noun takes the definite form after **på**, although this is sometimes optional after a festival. The definite plural form of the noun can also be used (especially with seasons and parts of the day) to indicate a habitual occurrence:

**Han kom på sommaren/julen.**  
He came in the summer/at Christmas.

### **Påskliljorna slår ut tidigt på våren i Sydsverige.**

The daffodils bloom early in the spring in the south of Sweden.

### **Han brukar komma på somrarna.**

He usually comes in summer.

#### **7.3.4.8** Definite time + weekdays

- (a) English ‘on’ to indicate definite time referring to a weekday in the immediate past is rendered by **i** + weekday + **s** (i.e. ‘last Sunday’, etc.). However, where English ‘on Sunday’, etc. refers to a particular but unspecified Sunday in the past, Swedish has **på söndagen**. No preposition is used if the weekday is followed by a date. See 7.3.4.4.

<b>Han kom i söndags.</b>	He came on Sunday/last Sunday.
<b>På söndagen sa en talesman ...</b>	A spokesperson said on Sunday ...
<b>i söndags morse/kväll</b>	(on) last Sunday morning/evening

- (b) English ‘on’ indicating definite time with a day of the week in the immediate future (i.e. ‘next Sunday’, etc.) is rendered by **på** + the indefinite form of the weekday. The addition of **nu** before **på** corresponds closely to English ‘this coming Sunday’, etc.:

<b>Jag arbetar på söndag.</b>	I’m working on Sunday/next Sunday.
<b>Rean börjar nu på måndag.</b>	Our sale starts this coming Monday.
<b>på söndag morgon/kväll</b>	on (next) Sunday morning/evening

#### **7.3.4.9** Indefinite time and habitual occurrences + weekdays

English ‘on’ indicating indefinite time and habitual occurrences with regard to weekdays – ‘on Sunday(s)’, ‘every Sunday’ or ‘one (unspecified) Sunday’ – is generally rendered by **på** in Swedish. The definite plural form of the noun is often used to indicate a habitual occurrence. When the indefinite article is used before the weekday to indicate indefinite time, the preposition may be omitted, especially if a following phrase adds more detail, such as ‘many years ago’ or ‘several years earlier’.

### **Han kommer på fredagen/på fredagarna.**

He comes on Friday/on Fridays.

### Han föddes på en söndag.

He was born on a Sunday.

### Det hände (på) en måndag för länge sedan.

It happened one Monday a long time ago.

#### 7.3.4.10 Definite time + parts of the day

- (a) While English often uses an adverbial expression to express definite time in relation to parts of the day, Swedish uses constructions with **i** + noun in the indefinite form. See (b) below. **I går** and **i dag** are sometimes written as one word, **igår** and **idag**.
- (b) Swedes are generally more precise than English speakers when referring to parts of the day.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Part of day</i>	<i>Greeting</i>
06:00–09:00	<b>morgon</b>	<b>God morgon</b>
09:00–12:00	<b>förmiddag</b>	<b>God dag</b>
12:00–18:00	<b>eftermiddag</b>	<b>God dag/God middag</b>
18:00–bedtime	<b>kväll</b>	<b>God kväll</b>
bedtime	<b>läggdags</b>	<b>God natt</b>
bedtime–06:00	<b>natt</b>	

(c)

Past time	Present time	Future time
<b>i förrgår</b> the day before yesterday		<b>i övermorgon</b> the day after tomorrow
<b>i går</b> yesterday	<b>i dag</b> today	<b>i morgon</b> tomorrow
<b>i morse/i förmiddags</b> (earlier) this morning	<b>i förmiddag</b> this morning	<b>i morgon bitti</b> tomorrow morning
<b>i eftermiddags</b> (earlier) this afternoon	<b>i eftermiddag</b> this afternoon	<b>i eftermiddag</b> (later) this afternoon
<b>i kväll</b> (earlier) this evening	<b>i kväll</b> this evening	<b>i kväll</b> (later) this evening
<b>i natt</b> last night	<b>i natt</b> tonight	<b>i natt</b> (later) tonight

cf. also

**i fjol**  
last year

**i år**  
this year

**i år**  
(later) this year

Note – Where English has ‘in the morning’, etc. Swedish usually has **på förmiddagen** or occasionally **under** (‘during’, see also 7.2.13). In journalistic style **på eftermiddagen**, etc. is usually preferred to **i eftermiddags**:

**Väderleksrapporten lovar sol på eftermiddagen.**

The weather forecast promises sun in the afternoon.

**Begränsad tågtrafik under kvällen och natten.**

Limited train services during the evening and night.

**FN:s generalsekreterare landade på Arlanda på förmiddagen.**

The UN Secretary General landed at Arlanda this morning.

(d) Note also the following expressions referring to times of the day:

**i går morse, i går eftermiddag, i går kväll, i går natt**

yesterday morning, yesterday afternoon, yesterday evening, last night

**i morgon eftermiddag, i morgon kväll**

tomorrow afternoon, tomorrow evening

**vid midnatt, vid middagstiden**

at midnight, around midday (past, present and future)

**7.3.4.11** Indefinite time and habitual occurrences + parts of the day

English ‘in’ indicating indefinite time and habitual occurrences with regard to parts of the day is rendered by **på** in Swedish. The definite plural form of the noun is often used to indicate a habitual occurrence:

**Jag brukar läsa e-post på morgnarna.**

I usually read my e-mail in the mornings.



**7.3.4.12** ‘This first’, ‘this next’, ‘this last’ in definite time-when expressions

(a) Swedish often expresses ideas such as ‘last spring’, ‘this January’, ‘next Easter’, etc. prepositionally. See also 7.3.4.5–7.3.4.8. In many instances, however, these ideas may also be expressed adverbially.

(b)

Paragraph	Past time ( <b>förra</b> + noun + end art.) ‘last’	Present time ( <b>denna, detta</b> + noun) ‘this’	Future time ( <b>nästa</b> + noun) ‘next’
7.3.4.10(c)	<b>förra året</b>	–	<b>nästa år</b>
	<b>förra månaden</b>	<b>denna månad</b>	<b>nästa månad</b>
	<b>förra veckan</b>	<b>denna vecka</b>	<b>nästa vecka</b>
	<b>förra helgen</b>	<b>denna helg</b>	<b>nästa helg</b>
7.3.4.6	<b>förra våren</b>	–	<b>nästa vår</b>
7.3.4.6	<b>förra julen</b>	–	<b>nästa jul</b>
7.3.4.8	<b>förra söndagen</b>	–	<b>nästa söndag</b>
7.3.4.5	<b>i maj förra året</b>	<b>i maj i år</b>	<b>i maj nästa år</b>

(c) Sometimes **i** is used before **förra**, **nästa**, **denna** in expressions like those above to make clear that something has happened (is happening, will happen) ‘in the course of ...’. This usage is most common in journalese:

**Regeringen förbereder sig på en ny lärarstrejk i nästa vecka.**

The government is preparing for a new teachers’ strike next week.

(d) Note that Swedish uses **sista veckan**, **sista söndagen**, etc. to render ‘last’ only when this means the final one in a series. Compare:

**Jag såg dem sista veckan i maj.** I saw them the last week in May.

**De strejkade förra veckan.** They went on strike last week.

(e) Note the following. See also 7.3.4.13.

**i dag för en vecka sedan** this day last week/a week ago today

**i dag om en vecka** this day next week/a week today

(f) Swedish has no preposition before ordinals + weekday or unit of time, or before expressions with **förra**, ‘the previous’ and **följande**, ‘the following’:

**öppet första veckan i maj** open (in) the first week in May

**Han skadades förra fredagen.** He was hurt on the previous Friday.  
**Han dog följande söndag.** He died on the following Sunday.

**7.3.4.13 Om + future point in time**

**Om** (7.2.10) corresponds to English ‘in’ when referring to a future point in time that is not expressed as a month, weekday or part of the day. Compare 7.3.4.5, 7.3.4.8(b) and 7.3.4.10(c).

**Vi flyttar om en vecka.** We’re moving house in a week.  
**Om två år börjar han skolan.** In two years he’ll be starting school.  
**Det blir bättre om några år.** Things will be better in a few years.

**7.3.4.14 Till + future point in time**

**Till** (7.2.12) is sometimes used to indicate that an event is planned to take place ‘in time for’ a festival or season:

**Hon fyller sju år till hösten.** She will be seven in the autumn.  
**Jag börjar jobba till hösten.** I’ll be starting work in the autumn.  
**Jag tror vi åker hem till jul.** I think we’ll go home for Christmas.

**7.3.4.15 Summary of prepositional usage with expressions of time**

(a) Definite time

	Past	Present	Future	Paragraph
centuries	<b>på 1900-talet</b>	<b>på 2000-talet</b>	<b>på 2100 talet</b>	7.3.4.4(b)
decades	<b>på 90-talet</b>	<b>på 10-talet</b>	<b>på 20-talet</b>	7.3.4.4(b)
years	<b>(år) 1996</b>		<b>(år) 2025</b>	7.3.4.4(a)
	<b>i fjol</b>	<b>i år</b>	–	7.3.4.10
	<b>förra året</b>	–	<b>nästa år</b>	7.3.4.12
seasons	<b>i våras</b>	<b>i vår</b>	<b>i vår</b>	7.3.4.6
	<b>förra våren</b>		<b>nästa vår</b>	7.3.4.12
	<b>(på) våren 1955</b>	<b>nu på våren</b>	<b>(på) våren 2025</b>	7.3.4.6
months	<b>i januari</b>	<b>i januari</b>	<b>i januari</b>	7.3.4.5
dates	<b>den 15 juli</b>	<b>den 15 juli</b>	<b>den 15 juli</b>	7.3.4.4
weekdays	<b>i söndags</b>		<b>på söndag</b>	7.3.4.8

festivals	<b>i julas</b>	<b>i jul</b>	<b>i jul</b>	7.3.4.6
	<b>förra julen</b>	–	<b>nästa jul</b>	7.3.4.12
	<b>på jul</b>	–	<b>till jul(en)</b>	7.3.4.6, 14
day	<b>i går</b>	<b>i dag</b>	<b>i morgon</b>	7.3.4.10
parts of day	<b>i morse</b>	<b>i förmiddag</b>	<b>i morgon bitti</b>	7.3.4.10
	<b>i eftermiddags</b>	<b>i eftermiddag</b>	<b>i eftermiddag</b>	7.3.4.10
clock time	<b>klockan tio</b>	<b>klockan tio</b>	<b>klockan tio</b>	7.3.4.4
	<b>vid tiotiden</b>	<b>vid tiotiden</b>	<b>vid tiotiden</b>	7.2.14.2
when?	<b>för en vecka sedan</b>	<b>i detta ögonblick</b>	<b>om en vecka</b>	7.3.3.5, 7.3.4.13

(b) Indefinite time and habitual occurrences

	Indefinite time	Habitual occurrences	Paragraph
years	–	<b>varje år</b>	
seasons	<b>på våren</b>	<b>på våren/på vårarna</b>	7.3.4.7
months	<b>i januari</b>	<b>i januari</b>	7.3.4.5
dates		<b>den 15 (varje månad)</b>	7.3.4.4
weekdays	<b>på en tisdag</b>	<b>på tisdagen/tisdagarna</b>	7.3.4.9
weeks	–	<b>varje vecka</b>	
part of week	–	<b>varje helg</b>	
festivals	<b>på jul(en)</b>	<b>på jul(en)/jularna</b>	7.3.4.7
parts of day	<b>på kvällen</b>	<b>på kvällen/kvällarna</b>	7.3.4.11
clock time	<b>klockan tio</b>	<b>klockan tio</b>	7.3.4.4
when?	<b>någon gång</b>	<b>gång på gång</b>	

### 7.3.5 Duration

#### 7.3.5.1 Introduction

In principle three Swedish prepositions are used to express duration:

- (a) **i** corresponds to English ‘for’ in answer to the (hypothetical) question **Hur länge?**, ‘How long?’. See 7.3.5.2 for examples, alternatives and exceptions.
- (b) **under** corresponds to English ‘during’ in answer to the (hypothetical) question **När?**, ‘When?’. See 7.3.5.3 for examples, alternatives and exceptions.

- (c) **på** corresponds to English ‘in (the course of)’ in answer to the (hypothetical) question **Hur lång tid krävs?**, ‘How much time is needed?’. See 7.3.5.4 for examples, alternatives and exceptions.

**7.3.5.2** ‘For’ + duration = **i**

- (a) In most instances English ‘for’ + expression of time indicating duration can be translated into Swedish by **i**. However the Swedish preposition **i** may frequently be omitted, especially before **hela** (cf. omission of ‘for’ in such instances in English). **I** is usually retained, however, when the prepositional phrase introduces a sentence or clause.

**Jag jobbar i tre dagar till.** I’m working for three more days.  
**Jag har bott här (i) sex år.** I have lived here for six years.  
**Hon har varit blind hela livet.** She has been blind all her life.  
**I många år var jag lärare.** For many years I was a teacher.

- (b) In positive expressions with **länge**, ‘for a long time’, the preposition **i** is always omitted. Compare (c) below.

**Jag har bott här länge.** I’ve lived here for a long time.

- (c) **På** (not **i**) is used in Swedish to correspond to English ‘for’ in expressions of duration with ‘not ... for’:

**Vi har inte träffats på årtal.** We’ve not met for years.  
**Jag har inte sett dig på länge.** I’ve not seen you for a long time.

- (d) ‘For’ + future duration is rendered by **för** only in a small number of set phrases:

**för alltid, för evigt, för gott** for always, for ever, for good  
**vädret för fem dygn framåt** the weather for the next five days

**7.3.5.3** ‘During’ = **under**

- (a) In most instances English ‘during’ + expression of time is rendered in Swedish by **under** (7.2.13.12). Sometimes **under** used in this sense is rendered by other prepositions in English.

**Bron rasade under stormen.** The bridge fell during the storm.

**Aktierna steg under dagen.** Stocks rose during the day.  
**under tiden 10–15 maj** during the period 10 to 15 May

- (b) ‘Throughout’ + duration = **under hela** + expression of time. In this context **under** is sometimes omitted or replaced by the postposed preposition **igenom**. See 7.2.5.2.

**Det snöade under hela dagen.** It snowed throughout the day.  
**Jag ringde hela natten igenom.** I phoned throughout the night.

- (c) With seasons, festivals, days and parts of the day, **över** may be used as an alternative to **under**. Compare English ‘over’:

**stanna över påsken/över sommaren/över helgen/över natten**  
stay over Easter/over the summer/over the weekend/overnight

- (d) Note also, ‘from ... to’ = **från (och med) ... till (och med)**:

**Vi reste runt i Australien från mars till juni.**  
We travelled around (in) Australia from March to June.

**Flyg för halva priset från och med 1 maj till och med 30 juni!**  
Fly for half price from 1 May to 30 June!

#### **7.3.5.4** ‘In’ + duration = **på**

English ‘in’ + expression of time used to indicate ‘during the course of’ or to answer the (hypothetical) question ‘In what length of time?’ is rendered by **på** in Swedish. See also 7.3.6.3.

**Jag målade huset på två dagar.** I painted the house in two days.

Note, however: **i minnet** (with)in living memory

#### **7.3.6** **Frequency**

Expressions of frequency answer the (hypothetical) question ‘How often?’. Swedish usually uses **i** in this context. See 7.3.6.1. However, there are some exceptions to this. See 7.3.6.2f.

### 7.3.6.1 I + unit of time

Swedish usually uses **i** + unit of time to express frequency:

**två gånger i sekunden/i minuten/i timmen/i veckan/**

**i månaden/i seklet/i livet**

twice a second/a minute/an hour/a week/a month/a century/

in a lifetime

Note also:

**Bilen körde om oss i 160 kilometer i timmen.**

The car overtook us at 160 kilometres an hour.

### 7.3.6.2 Om + unit of time

Swedish uses **om** + unit of time to express frequency with the following three commonly used nouns:

**två gånger om dagen/om året/om dygnet**

twice a day/a year/a day [= 24 hrs]

### 7.3.6.3 På + unit of time

Swedish uses **på** + unit of time to express frequency when the clause contains a superlative (2.5.1ff.) or an ordinal (4.3):

**Det var det roligaste jag har hört på länge/på många år.**

That's the funniest thing I've heard in a long time/for many years.

**Det är andra gången på tio dagar som han är sjukskriven.**

This is the second time in ten days that he's been off sick.

### 7.3.7 Some other prepositions of manner, etc.

Note that some of these prepositions also fulfil other functions (prepositions of time, place, etc.).

### 7.3.7.1 Prepositions of manner, etc.

	Meaning	Paragraph	See also
<b>apropå</b>	talking of	7.3.7.2	
<b>enligt</b>	according to	7.3.7.3	
<b>exklusive</b>	excluding	7.3.7.4	
<b>för ... skull</b>	for ...'s sake	7.3.7.5	
<b>förutom</b>	in addition to	7.3.7.6	
<b>inklusive</b>	including	7.3.7.4	
<b>i ... ställe</b>	in ...'s place	7.3.7.7	
<b>plus</b>	plus	7.3.7.4	8.2.2.4
<b>per</b>	per	7.3.7.8	
<b>på/å ... vägnar</b>	on ...'s behalf	7.3.7.9	
<b>trots</b>	of	7.3.7.10	
<b>utan</b>	without	7.3.7.11	
<b>utom</b>	except for	7.3.7.12	7.3.1.23
<b>åt</b>	for + indirect object	7.3.7.13	7.3.1.24

### 7.3.7.2 **Apropå**

**Apropå**, from the French *à propos*, but with Swedified spelling, is commonly used in Swedish.

**Apropå sociala medier ...** On the issue of social media ...

**Apropå dem, visste du att ...** Talking of them, did you know that ...

**Apropå ingenting ...** To change the subject ...

### 7.3.7.3 **Enligt**

**Enligt** corresponds to English ‘according to/in accordance with’, but is more common in written Swedish than in the spoken language.

**Enligt vad vi fick veta ...** According to what we have learnt ...

**lön enligt avtal** wages according to contract

#### 7.3.7.4 Exklusive, inklusive

**Exklusive, inklusive** render ‘excluding’, ‘including’, but these words are more or less restricted to commercial Swedish, where they are often abbreviated **exkl.**, **inkl.** when written. In place of **exklusive** spoken and informal Swedish prefers **utan** (7.3.7.11), **utom** (7.3.7.12) or **plus**. In place of **inklusive** it is possible to use **med** (7.2.7) or **medräknat** (indeclinable).

**Flygbiljetten kostar 750 euro exklusive/inklusive moms.**

The plane ticket costs 750 euros excluding/including VAT.

#### 7.3.7.5 För ... skull

**För ... skull** corresponds to English ‘for X’s sake’ and brackets the prepositional complement, which is typically the **-s** genitive form of a noun or a possessive adjective in the non-neuter singular form.

**Vi flyttade för barnens skull.** We moved for the children’s sake.

**Älska mig för min egen skull.** Love me for what I am.

**Du gör allt för pengars skull.** You’ll do anything for money.

**för säkerhets skull** for safety’s sake

#### 7.3.7.6 Förutom

(a) **Förutom** suggests ‘in addition to’. It is synonymous with **utöver**, which suggests ‘over and beyond’.

**Jag ärvde aktierna förutom/utöver allt annat.**

I inherited the shares in addition to everything else.

(b) **Förutom** is followed by the subject form of a pronoun when the correlate in the clause is itself a subject.

**Det bor inga utlänningar här förutom jag.**

There are no foreigners living here except for me.



### 7.3.7.7 I ... ställe

**I ... ställe** corresponds to English ‘in X’s place’ and brackets the prepositional complement, which is typically the **–s** genitive of a noun or a possessive adjective in the neuter singular form. In most instances **i ... ställe** may be replaced by **i stället för** + noun or possessive pronoun. **I stället för** is usually preferred with nouns referring to inanimate objects.

<b>Han kom i kungens ställe.</b>	He came instead of the king.
<b>Om jag vore i ditt ställe ...</b>	If I were you ...
<b>Du kan åka i stället för mig. margarin i stället för smör</b>	You can go in my place. margarine instead of butter

### 7.3.7.8 Per

**Per** renders the equally versatile English ‘per’ to express agent, frequency, distribution and other prepositional relationships. Originally restricted to commercial Swedish, **per** has now spread to general use.

<b>Vi ordnar upp det per telefon</b>	We’ll sort it out by phone.
<b>20 kilo bagage per person</b>	20 kilos of baggage per person
<b>160 kilometer per timme</b>	160 kilometres an hour
	See also 7.3.6.1.

Note, however, that when distribution and frequency occur together Swedish prefers **per ... och**:

<b>Svenskarna dricker 140 liter kaffe per person och år.</b>
Swedes drink 140 litres of coffee per person per year.

### 7.3.7.9 På/å ... vägnar

**På/å ... vägnar** are formal expressions corresponding to English ‘on behalf of’. The expression brackets the complement, typically the **–s** genitive of a noun or a possessive adjective in the plural form.

<b>å styrelsens vägnar</b>	on behalf of the board
<b>Tacka dem på våra vägnar.</b>	Thank them on our behalf.

### 7.3.7.10 Trots

**Trots** suggests some form of concession, like English ‘in spite of’, ‘despite’. **Oaktat** is synonymous, but formal and archaic in tone, corresponding in style to English ‘notwithstanding’.

**De kom fram trots strejken.** They got there despite the strike.

The expression **trots allt** usually has the sense of English ‘after all’ or ‘when all said and done’:

**Politiker är trots allt bara människor.**

Politicians are only human, when all said and done.

### 7.3.7.11 Utan

**Utan** (like the poetic archaism **förutan**) renders English ‘without’. **Utan** is also used as a conjunction. See 8.2.4.2, 8.5.1.6. Where there is no ambiguity, the article or possessive adjective is frequently omitted after **utan**.

**Jag klarar mig bra utan dig.** I’m getting on well without you.

**Gå inte ut utan hatt!** Don’t go without your hat!

Note also the following phrases:

**att vara utan arbete** to be out of work

**utan jämförelse** beyond comparison

### 7.3.7.12 Utom

(a) **Utom** renders English ‘except (for)’. **Utom** rarely begins a sentence or clause. Swedish prefers prepositional phrases such as **med undantag av** in initial positions.

**Jag känner alla utom henne.** I know everyone except her.

(b) **Utom** is followed by the subject form of a pronoun when the correlate in the clause is itself a subject.

**Alla utom jag har bil.** Everyone but me has a car.

### 7.3.7.13 **Åt**

**Åt** often corresponds to English ‘for’ before an indirect object in Swedish. Compare *till*, 7.2.12.4.

**Sätt fram lite mat åt katten.** Put out some food for the cat.

**Jag köpte en slips åt pappa.** I bought a tie for father.

**Åt** is also used after a number of verbs:

**anförtro sig åt**, to confide in; **glädja sig åt**, to look forward to;

**le/skratta åt**, to smile/laugh at; **ägnat sig åt**, to devote oneself to

Note also: **två/tre/flera åt gången**, ‘two/three/several at a time’.

### 7.3.8 **Other parts of speech used as prepositions**

A number of other parts of speech, primarily participles, have taken on the role of prepositions in Swedish.

#### 7.3.8.1 **Angående, beträffande, rörande**

While **beträffande**, **rörande**, ‘concerning’, ‘re’, are usually confined to commercial and official language, **angående**, ‘concerning’, ‘with regard to’, is not uncommon elsewhere in more formal Swedish.

**Beträffande vår order på trävaror**

Re: our order for timber products

**Meningarna är delade angående hans trovärdighet.**

Opinions are divided with regard to his credibility.

#### 7.3.8.2 **Nära**

**Nära** is primarily an adverb (6.2.2.3), but it often replaces the prepositional phrase **i närheten av**, ‘near (to)’, ‘in the vicinity of’. **Nära** is particularly common when there is little emphasis on actual geographical proximity.

<b>Han var nära döden.</b>	He was close to death.
<b>Det var nära ögat!</b>	That was a close shave!
<b>Vi bor nära flygplatsen.</b>	We live near the airport.

### 7.3.8.3 Näst

**Näst** (an abbreviated form of the prepositional expression **näst efter**) corresponds to English ‘next to’, ‘after’ used figuratively. Modern Swedish often prefers **efter** (7.2.2) to **näst** in this context.

**Han är bäst i klassen näst dig.**

He’s best in the class after you.

**Näst Stockholm är Uppsala Sveriges största studentstad.**

Next to Stockholm, Uppsala is Sweden’s biggest student city.

### 7.3.8.4 Oavsett, oansett

The participles **oavsett** and **oansett** render ‘regardless of’. The prepositional phrase **oberoende av** is synonymous, but less common.

**Alla är välkomna oavsett ålder.**

Everyone is welcome regardless of age.

### 7.3.8.5 Tack vare

**Tack vare** means ‘thanks to’. If the circumstances described are unfavourable, one of the prepositional phrases **till följd av**, ‘as a consequence/result of’ or **på grund av**, ‘on account of’ should be used instead:

**Vi är fria tack vare din hjälp.** We’re free thanks to your help.

**Han avgick till följd av krisen.** He resigned as a result of the crisis.

### 7.3.8.6 Visavi

**Visavi**, loaned from the French ‘vis-à-vis’, has long been used to render three distinct meanings in Swedish: ‘opposite’, ‘towards’ and ‘concerning’.



possessive genitive		<b>vid</b>	7.3.9.4(f), 7.2.14
		<b>över</b>	7.3.9.4(g), 7.2.15
		<b>av</b>	7.3.9.4(h), 7.2.1.6
double genitive	a friend of yours	<b>till</b>	7.3.9.4(d), 7.2.12.7
appositive genitive	the city of London	<b>0</b>	7.3.9.5
partitive genitive	a cup of tea	<b>0</b>	7.3.9.6(a)
	both of (all of, the whole of)	<b>0, av</b>	7.3.9.6(b)
	some/many/none/half of	<b>0, av</b>	7.3.9.6(c)
material	a heart of stone	<b>av</b>	7.3.9.7, 7.2.1
+ number	interest/tax of 10 per cent	<b>på</b>	7.3.9.8, 7.2.11.5
with dates	the first of May	<b>0</b>	7.3.9.9
origin	the king of Sweden	<b>av, från</b>	7.3.9.10
geographical position	east of Eden	<b>om</b>	7.3.9.11
	the north of England	<b>0</b>	7.3.9.11
subject matter	dreams of success	<b>om</b>	7.3.9.12
after:			
- demonstrative pronoun	that of/those of	<b>-s genitive</b>	7.3.9.13
- pejorative	that idiot of a policeman!	<b>till</b>	7.3.9.14
- verb/adjectives + 'of'		various	7.3.9.15

### 7.3.9.2 Genitive 'of' in English = Swedish **-s** genitive

'Of' used as a genitive marker in English is rendered in various ways in Swedish depending on context. Many English 'of' genitive constructions correspond to Swedish **-s** genitive forms. See 1.8.1.

the meaning of life	<b>livets mening</b>
the contents of the book	<b>bokens innehåll</b>
the kingdom of the dead	<b>de dödas rike</b>
the cover of the mattress	<b>madrassens överdrag</b>

### 7.3.9.3 Genitive 'of' in English = Swedish compound noun

Swedish makes much greater use of compound nouns (11.3.2ff.) than English does. In many instances Swedish compound nouns may serve as alternatives to **-s** genitives. Consequently many English 'of' genitives are rendered by compound nouns in Swedish:

the cover of the mattress	<b>madrassöverdraget</b>
the tops of the mountains	<b>bergstopparna</b>
the leg of the table	<b>bordsbenet</b>

#### 7.3.9.4 Genitive 'of' in English = Swedish preposition

- (a) English 'of' expressing a possessive/genitive relationship may also be rendered in Swedish by one of a number of prepositions. Such prepositional renderings may have alternatives with Swedish **–s** genitive constructions (1.8.1 and 7.3.9.2) and/or compound nouns (7.3.9.3 and 11.3.2ff).

However, **–s** genitive constructions are usually perceived as more colloquial than most prepositional constructions, except for those with **på**.

Also, **–s** genitive constructions are rare (in English and Swedish) with so-called 'objective genitives'. In an objective genitive 'of' precedes a noun which fulfils the role of a weak object in the sentence or clause: for example, **mordet på Gustav III**, 'the murder of Gustav III', indicates that someone murdered Gustav III and that Gustav III was only passively involved in (i.e. was the 'weak object' of) the action. Examples of objective genitive constructions in the sections below (b–h) are marked [obj. gen.].

- (b) **På** is often used where English 'of' may be replaced by 'on'. Often **på** in such instances has a more colloquial ring than the **–s** genitive. (See also 7.2.11.)

the roof of the school	<b>taket på skolan</b>
the names of the children	<b>namnen på barnen</b>
the start/end of the affair	<b>början/slutet på historien</b>
the price of butter	<b>priset på smör</b>
the solution to the problem	<b>lösningen på problemet</b> [obj. gen.]
the pursuit of happiness	<b>jakten på lyckan</b> [obj. gen.]

- (c) **För** is often used where English 'of' may be replaced by 'for'. See 7.2.4.6.

a representative of the school	<b>en representant för skolan</b>
the boss of the company	<b>chefen för firman</b>
the time of departure	<b>tiden för avgång</b>

- (d) **Till** (7.2.12) is often used in connections where a person is clearly the actual owner or possessor, and after nouns indicating the cause of or reaction to something. Note also the use of **till** + noun/personal pronoun in Swedish where English has a double genitive with 'of' + possessive adjective/–s genitive noun:

the owner of the car	<b>ägaren till bilen</b>
a father of twins	<b>en far till tvillingar</b>
the key to the house	<b>nyckeln till huset</b>
the cause of the fire	<b>orsaken till branden</b> [obj. gen.]
a friend of mine/yours/his	<b>en vän till mig/dig/honom</b>
a sister of Leif's/my uncle's	<b>en syster till Leif/till min farbror</b>

- (e) **I** renders English 'of' in instances where 'in' is also acceptable, as well as in a number of idiomatic phrases. See also 7.2.6.

the hero of the book	<b>hjälten i boken</b>
a professor of mathematics	<b>en professor i matematik</b> [obj. gen.]
your knowledge of Swedish	<b>dina kunskaper i svenska</b> [obj. gen.]

**I** is used after a superlative in Swedish in expressions such as:

the world's richest man	<b>den rikaste mannen i världen</b>
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- (f) **Vid** often renders 'of' with individual battles + place names. However, when the prepositional object not only describes the location of the battle but the prize that is being fought for, **om** is used. (Compare English 'for'):

the battle of Lützen	<b>slaget vid Lützen</b>
the Battle of Britain/for Berlin	<b>slaget om Storbritannien/Berlin</b>

- (g) **Över** may be used to render English 'of' after nouns suggesting something composed or drawn up to give a survey of (i.e. 'over') a particular subject. See also 7.2.15.

a survey of sports injuries	<b>en översikt över idrottsskador</b>
a map of Lapland	<b>en karta över Lappland</b>
a view of the town	<b>en utsikt över stan</b>

- (h) **Av** is not commonly used to render English possessive genitive 'of', but it does frequently signify an objective genitive:

the invasion of Norway	<b>invasionen av Norge</b> [obj. gen.]
a glimpse of the sun	<b>en skymt av solen</b> [obj. gen.]
a feeling of wellbeing	<b>en känsla av välbefinnande</b> [obj. gen.]



**7.3.9.5** 'The city of London': appositive genitives

Swedish generally does not use a preposition corresponding to English phrases where a proper noun is linked to a noun phrase with 'of' (appositive genitive constructions):

the city of Rome	<b>staden Rom</b>
the month of May	<b>månaden maj/maj månad</b>
the Christmas/summer of '98	<b>julen/sommaren 98</b>
a man by the name of Ekholm	<b>en man vid namn Ekholm</b>

**7.3.9.6** English partitive expressions with 'of'

- (a) Swedish generally has no preposition corresponding to English 'of' in partitive expressions that refer to measure, shape, etc.:

a cup of tea	<b>en kopp te</b>
two kilos of cod	<b>två kilo torsk</b>
a pair of trousers	<b>ett par byxor</b>
a large number of Swedes	<b>ett stort antal svenskar</b>
a sheet of paper	<b>ett ark papper</b>

Note also:

a sort of computer	<b>en sorts/ett slags dator</b>
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- (b) 'All/both/the whole of' are usually rendered in Swedish without a preposition. See also 3.9.8, 3.9.15.

He met all of the participants.	<b>Han träffade alla deltagarna.</b>
He met all of them.	<b>Han träffade dem alla.</b>
Both of the men are married.	<b>Båda männen är gifta.</b>
Both of them are married.	<b>Båda två är gifta.</b>
He saw the whole of the country.	<b>Han såg hela landet.</b>

Note, however:

<b>allt av värde/vikt</b>	everything of value/importance
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- (c) English 'of' after numbers, nouns and pronouns that indicate part of a 'whole' is rendered in Swedish by **av** + pronoun or noun. As in English, a noun used as a prepositional complement in this kind of construction

is in the definite form unless preceded by an -s genitive or a possessive pronoun.

this part of the book	<b>den här delen av boken</b>
the majority of our members	<b>flertalet av våra medlemmar</b>
Half of the men have resigned.	<b>Hälften av männen har avgått.</b>
Two of them were Swedes.	<b>Två av dem var svenskar.</b>
Some of them ate lunch.	<b>Några av dem åt lunch.</b>
Many/None of the girls are rich.	<b>Många/Inga av tjejerna är rika.</b>
Which of the books do you want?	<b>Vilka av böckerna vill du ha?</b>
Much of our home was destroyed.	<b>Mycket av vårt hem förstördes.</b>

**7.3.9.7** Material: English 'of' = **av** in Swedish

Where English uses 'of' to indicate the material that makes up an object, physical or figurative, Swedish has **av** or uses a compound noun:

a chest of oak	<b>en kista av ek</b>
a heart of stone	<b>ett hjärta av sten</b>
a house of cards	<b>ett korthus</b>
a piece of wood	<b>en träbit</b>

**7.3.9.8** Numerical expressions: English 'of' = **på** in Swedish

English 'of' signifying 'comprising' or 'amounting to' when followed by a number is rendered in many cases by Swedish **på**:

a salary/a rent of 50,000 dollars	<b>en lön/en hyra på 50 000 dollar</b>
tax/interest of ten percent	<b>skatt/ränta på tio procent</b>
of a boy of sixteen	<b>en kille på sexton år</b>

**7.3.9.9** Dates, months, etc.: English 'of' = no preposition in Swedish

See also 4.5.2.1(c), 7.3.4.4 and 7.3.9.5.

the twenty-third of January	<b>den tjugotredje januari</b>
the month of May	<b>månaden maj/maj månad</b>

But note:

the fourth of the fifth

**(den) fjärde i femte**

**7.3.9.10** Origin: English ‘of’ = **av, från** in Swedish

The sense of origin is stronger with **från** than with **av**. Compare the following:

the king of Sweden

**kungen av Sverige**

the Wizard of Oz

**trollkarlen från Oz**

of humble origin

**av ringa härkomst**

He comes from a good family.

**Han kommer från en god familj.**

born of Swedish parents

**född av svenska föräldrar**

Mr Ek of our Swedish office

**Herr Ek från vårt svenska kontor**

**7.3.9.11** Geographical location: English ‘of’ = **om** in Swedish

east of Eden

**öster om Eden**

a town to the south of Umeå

**en stad söder om Umeå**

But note how Swedish expresses ‘the north(ern part) of’, etc.:

the north of England

**norra England, Nordengland**

the west of Sweden

**västra Sverige, Västsverige**

**7.3.9.12** Subject matter: English ‘of’ = **om** in Swedish

When English ‘of’ indicates ‘about’, ‘on the subject of’, it is often rendered by **om** in Swedish. See also 7.2.10.2.

dreams of success/the future

**drömmar om framgång/framtiden**

the story of Sweden

**historien om Sverige**

I’ve never heard of that!

**Jag har aldrig hört talas om det!**

**7.3.9.13** English ‘that of’ = Swedish **–s** genitive

English ‘that of’ is usually rendered by the **–s** genitive in Swedish:

The melting point of ice is lower than that of iron.

**Isens smältpunkt är lägre än järnets.**

British submarines are old. Those of the USA are newer.

**Brittiska u-båtar är gamla. Förenta staternas är nyare.**

#### 7.3.9.14 English 'of' in pejorative expressions

**Till** is sometimes used to render English 'of' in certain types of pejorative expressions and analogous expressions, although it is perhaps more common to use a suitable adjective + noun expression in Swedish:

That idiot of a policeman! **Den idioten till polis!** [Note – no article]  
cf. **Den där dumma polisen!**

a giant of a man                      **en jätte till karl**

#### 7.3.9.15 English 'of' coupled with verbs and adjectives

The use of Swedish prepositions corresponding to English 'of' coupled with verbs and adjectives is idiomatic, as these examples illustrate:

**bestå av något**, consist of something; **bota någon från något**, cure someone of something; **misstänka någon för något**, suspect someone of something; **påminna någon om något**, remind someone of something; **skryta över något**, boast of something; **tänka på något**, think of something; **vara full med**, be full of; **förtjust i**, fond of; **kritisk mot**, critical of; **medveten om**, conscious of; **rädd för**, afraid of; **skyldig till**, guilty of; **stolt över**, proud of; **trött på**, tired of

Note that **av** is used in expressions such as:

That's unkind of you.                      **Det var elakt av dig.**

#### 7.3.10 *Preposition in English – no preposition in Swedish*

In a number of instances English has a preposition where Swedish has no preposition. The most common examples of this are listed below.

**7.3.10.1** In many expressions of time

But see also 4.5.1ff. and 7.3.4ff.

She was born at six o'clock on the third of May in 1942.

**Hon föddes klockan sex den tredje maj år 1942.**

**7.3.10.2** In partitive genitives

See also 7.3.9.6.

a glass of/litre of milk

**ett glas mjölk/en liter mjölk**

**7.3.10.3** In appositive genitives

See also 7.3.9.5.

He visited the town of Lund in the spring of 1917.

**Han besökte staden Lund (på) våren 1917.**

**7.3.10.4** After **åka**, 'travel by' and some other common verbs

(a) Swedish frequently has no preposition corresponding to English 'by' after **åka** (go) + means of transportation used in a general sense. However, see also 7.2.7.1(b) and 7.3.2.5.

travel by bus/boat/train/car/ski

**åka buss/båt/tåg/bil/skidor**

But note:

We went in a car/in my car.

**Vi åkte i en bil/i min bil.**

(b) Note also that Swedish has no preposition corresponding to English 'to' after certain common verbs:

**besvara**, reply to; **hända någon**, happen to someone; **lova någon något**, promise something to someone; **lära någon något**, teach something to someone; **tillhöra**, belong to

### **7.3.11** Preposition in Swedish – no preposition in English

In a number of instances – chiefly those outlined in 7.3.11.1–7.3.11.7 – Swedish has a preposition where English has no preposition.

#### **7.3.11.1** Before verb complement (often **till** in Swedish)

See also 7.2.12.10.

<b>Hon blev vald till president.</b>	She was elected president.
<b>Han döptes till Hans</b>	He was christened Hans.
<b>Vi kallade honom för Hasse.</b>	We called him Hasse.

#### **7.3.11.2** With many verbs + part of the body

See also 7.3.2.6(d).

<b>Vi tvättade oss om händerna.</b>	We washed our hands.
<b>De bara rycker på axlarna</b>	They just shrug their shoulders.

#### **7.3.11.3** Time expressions with ‘last’ and ‘this’

See also 7.3.4.6 and 7.3.4.12.

<b>i fredags, i januari</b>	last Friday, last January
<b>i natt, i fjol</b>	last night, last year
<b>i kväll</b>	this evening

#### **7.3.11.4** Prepositions after ‘as early/far as’, etc.

Swedish retains prepositions of time and place after expressions such as ‘as early/late as’, ‘as far as’, etc.

<b>Vi fick snö så sent som i maj.</b>	We had snow as late as (in) May.
<b>De åkte så långt som till Kina.</b>	They travelled as far as (to) China.

**7.3.11.5** In expressions of frequency.

See 7.3.6.

<b>en gång i timmen</b>	once an hour
<b>en gång om året</b>	once a year

**7.3.11.6** In absolute phrases

The preposition **med** is usually retained in absolute phrases of the following type in Swedish, where ‘with’ is not always necessary in English:

**Han satt där med en hund vid fötterna.**

He was sitting there, a dog at his feet.

**7.3.11.7** In certain verb constructions

Certain common verb constructions in English where a transitive verb has a direct object are rendered in Swedish by intransitive verbs with a prepositional object:

<b>Hon har gift sig med en ryss.</b>	She has married a Russian.
<b>Tryck på knappen!</b>	Press the button!
<b>Det tvivlar jag på.</b>	I doubt that.

Note also:

**be om något**, request something; **bjuda på något**, offer something;  
**dra i**, pull (on); **gå in i**, enter; **imponera på**, impress; **njuta av**, enjoy;  
**svara på**, answer; **öva sig i**, practise

## Chapter 8

# Conjunctions

### 8.1 Coordination and subordination

Conjunctions are elements that are outside the actual clause and have a linking function. For main clauses (MC) and subordinate clauses (SC), see 10.3.1ff., 10.4.1ff.; for link position, see 10.6.10; for the form, function and position of subordinate clauses, see 10.7.1–10.7.7.

#### 8.1.1 Coordination

Coordination involves the linking together of two clauses or elements of a similar kind. The link used is often a *coordinating conjunction* placed between the elements to be linked. See 8.2.1ff.

*Subjects coordinated*

**Alice och Albin gillar opera.** Alice and Albin like opera.

*Verbs coordinated*

**De sitter och lyssnar.** They are sitting and listening.

*Main clauses coordinated*

**Jag hjälper dig och du hjälper mig.**

I help you and you help me.

*Subordinate clauses coordinated*

**De sa att de var trötta och att det var dags att åka hem.**

They said that they were tired and that it was time to go home.



### 8.1.2 Subordination

Subordination involves the incorporation of a subordinate clause (indicated by brackets in the examples below) into a main clause sentence (indicated by < >). The link word used is often a *subordinating conjunction* (8.3.1ff.) or other *subordinator* (8.4.1ff.) placed at the beginning of the subordinate clause. In the example below, the subordinating conjunction is **därför att**. The subordinate clause in the example is subordinated to (i.e. dependent on) the main clause and forms part of the larger main clause sentence. See 10.7.5.

**<Jag hjälper dig**

I help you

Main clause – Independent

**(därför att du hjälper mig)>.**

because you help me.

Subordinate clause – Dependent

There is often a hierarchy of clauses, one within another, by which clauses are subordinated. In the example below, the subordinate clause marked [C–C] is subordinated to the subordinate clause (B–B), which in turn is subordinated to the main clause sentence <A–A>. See 10.7.5.

**< Jag är glad (att ingen blev skadad /när bussen krockade/) >.**

I am happy that no one was hurt when the bus crashed.

<A

(B

[C

C] B) A>

### 8.1.3 Position of conjunctions

#### 8.1.3.1 Coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions are usually found between the two sentence elements, phrases or clauses to be coordinated. See 8.1.1 above and 10.6.10. The use of a coordinating conjunction does not usually affect the word order in the clause that follows.

**Min bror och jag är tvillingar.**

My brother and I are twins.

**Jag bor här och han bor i Kina.**

I live here and he lives in China.

Very occasionally coordinating conjunctions occur at the beginning of a sentence. Certain conjunctions, however, never start a sentence; these include explanative and conclusive coordinating conjunctions. See 8.2.5 and 8.2.6.

**Och jag som litade på honom!**

And I (who) trusted him!

### 8.1.3.2 Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions introduce a subordinate clause and are found between the main and subordinate clauses when the order is MC + SC:

<b>Vi</b>	<b>tänker hälsa på Olssons,</b>	<b>om vi hinner.</b>
We	are thinking of visiting the Olssons	if we have time.
MC		Sub.conj. SC

They can also occur at the start of the sentence: then the order is SC + MC:

<b>Om</b>	<b>vi hinner,</b>	<b>tänker vi hälsa på Olssons.</b>
If	we have time,	we are thinking of visiting the Olssons.
Sub.conj.	SC	MC

In the case of attributive clauses, certain consecutive clauses and indirect questions, the subordinate clause cannot precede the main clause, so a conjunction or other subordinator (8.1.4ff.) cannot begin the sentence:

<b>Min lärare,</b>	<b>som är svensk,</b>	<b>är mycket trevlig.</b>
My teacher,	who is Swedish,	is very nice.
	<i>Other subordinator</i>	<i>Attributive clause</i>

<b>Han frös</b>	<b>så att</b>	<b>han skakade.</b>
He was so cold	that	he was shaking.
	<i>Sub. conj.</i>	<i>Consecutive clause</i>

<b>Vi frågade dem</b>	<b>om</b>	<b>de ville följa med.</b>
We asked them	whether	they wanted to go along.
	<i>Sub. conj.</i>	<i>Indirect question</i>

### 8.1.4 Conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs and other subordinators

#### 8.1.4.1 Conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions normally consist of a single word, (**och, men, eller:** 8.2.1), whereas subordinating conjunctions frequently consist of several words, often a combination of adverb or preposition + subordinating conjunction (**därför att, efter det att:** 8.3.1.1f.).

#### 8.1.4.2 Conjunctional adverbs

Phrases may also be linked by a conjunctional adverb (6.2.5.3) in a separate main clause. Compare:

**Jag måste gå för det är sent.** I must go because it's late.  
*Coordinating conjunction*

**Jag måste gå. Det är nämligen sent.** I must go. It's late, you see.  
*Conjunctional adverb*

The function is the same in both cases, but the conjunctional adverb often comes first in the clause, causing inversion: finite verb – subject (FV–S). See 10.3.4f. Subordinating conjunctions are found with subordinate clause word order: subject – clausal adverb – finite verb (S–FV). See 10.4.1f.

**Olle klarade inte provet. Ändå fick han mycket hjälp.**  
*Conjunctional adverb FV S*  
Olle didn't pass the test. Even so, he got a lot of help.

**Olle klarade inte provet trots att han fick mycket hjälp.**  
*Conjunction S FV*  
Olle didn't pass the test, even though he got a lot of help.

#### 8.1.4.3 Other subordinators

Other subordinators include interrogative and relative pronouns/adverbs. These differ from conjunctions in that they introduce a subordinate clause and constitute a sentence element within that clause at the same time:

**Jag undrar vem som sa det.** I wonder who said that.  
*Subordinator = subject*

**Jag frågade vad han ville.** I asked what he wanted.  
*Subordinator = object*

**Jag vet var hunden är.** I know where the dog is.  
*Subordinator = adverbial*

#### 8.1.4.4 Indicators of subordination

Not all subordinate clauses are introduced by a conjunction or other subordinator. Some have no introductory word because the words **att** or

**som** have been omitted (see (d) below). There are, however, various *indicators of subordination*. These are not necessarily a word class or sentence element; they can also be a marker showing the clausal relationship. Such indicators include:

- (a) An introductory word in the subordinate clause: for example, a subordinating conjunction, interrogative pronoun or adverb, or relative pronoun or adverb. See 8.3.1ff. and 8.4.1ff.

<b>Han säger att han vill fly.</b>	He says <i>that</i> he wants to flee.
<b>Fråga varför han vill fly.</b>	Ask <i>why</i> he wants to flee.
<b>Jag vet vart han vill fly.</b>	I know <i>where</i> he wants to flee to.

- (b) The position of the clausal adverbial immediately before the finite verb. See 10.3.1.5.

**Han sa att han aldrig skulle återvända.**  
He said he would never return.

- (c) The omission of **har** or **hade** where there is a supine. See 5.2.6.2, 10.3.1.4.

**Vi visste att han gått och tänkt på det i flera år.**  
We knew he had been thinking about it for several years.

- (d) But note that in the following examples the subordinate clauses have no specific indicator of subordination:

**Barnen tyckte det var jätteroligt.** [**att** omitted: see 10.7.4.1]  
The children thought it was great fun.

**Filmen vi såg var svensk.** [**som** omitted: see 10.7.4.2]  
The film we saw was Swedish.

## 8.2 Coordinating conjunctions

### 8.2.1 Introduction

There are very few coordinating conjunctions, but the conjunctive adverbs (8.1.4.2, 6.2.5.3) fulfil almost the same function. Coordinating conjunctions are classified according to their function into copulative, disjunctive, adversative, explanative and conclusive conjunctions.

Section	Term	Example
8.2.2	Copulative	<b>och, samt</b> , and; <b>plus</b> , plus
8.2.3	Disjunctive	<b>eller</b> , or
8.2.4	Adversative	<b>men</b> , but; <b>fast</b> , though; <b>(inte ... ) utan</b> , (not) ... but
8.2.5	Explanative	<b>för</b> , for; <b>ty</b> , for
8.2.6	Conclusive	<b>så</b> , so

### 8.2.2 Copulative conjunctions

Copulative means ‘connecting’.

#### 8.2.2.1 Och – ‘and’

**Och** (‘and’) is the most frequent word in Swedish. In stressed positions it is pronounced as /ock/; in unstressed positions as /å/.

**Och** is used to link two main clauses. As in English, in lists and enumerations **och** is often only inserted before the final item:

**Han älskar henne och hon älskar honom.**  
He loves her and she loves him.

**Han bar kavaj, byxor och hatt.**  
He was wearing a sports jacket, trousers and hat.

#### 8.2.2.2 Samt – ‘as well as’

**Samt** renders ‘and’, ‘together/along with’, ‘as well as’ but differs in usage from **och**. The most important difference is that **samt** cannot link clauses. Although usually restricted to formal style, **samt** is often used on occasions when **och** has already been used in the sentence or when **och** would render the meaning unclear. When **samt** conveys the sense of ‘as well as’, it is often used together with **även** or **också** (both of which mean ‘also’).

**Hon har bott i Kina och Indien samt i Malmö i Sverige.**  
She has lived in China and India and in Malmö in Sweden.  
**Samt** here because only Malmö is in Sweden.

**Hon är expert på svensk historia och litteratur samt konsthistoria.**

She's an expert in Swedish history and literature as well as in the history of art.

**Samt** here because her knowledge is not restricted to Swedish art.

**De arbetar på tre sjukhus i Sverige samt också på ett i Norge.**

They work at three hospitals in Sweden and at one in Norway.

**8.2.2.3 Både ... och – 'both ... and'**

The coordination of two elements may be strengthened by the addition of the conjunctive adverb **både** to form **både ... och**, a construction that emphasises that both elements have equal weight. (See also 8.5.1.5.) Swedish links more than two elements using **både ... och ... och**. Often, however, only one **och** is used in such constructions.

**Både du och jag gillar sill. Vi äter den både inlagd och stekt.**

Both you and I like herring. We eat it both pickled and fried.

**Ta en tablett både innan du äter och innan du lägger dig.**

Take one tablet both before you eat and before you go to bed.

**Både Malin (och) Moa och Emil följde med på resan.**

Malin, Moa and Emil all went with us on the trip.

Other constructions with double conjunctions include:

**såväl ... som**, both ... and [more formal than **både ... och**];

**dels ... dels**, partly ... partly; **inte bara ... utan också**, not only ...

but also; **ömsom ... ömsom**, sometimes ... sometimes

**8.2.2.4 Plus – 'plus'**

In colloquial and informal written Swedish **plus** is used increasingly commonly as a conjunction.

**Hitta din drömresa plus många fler reseerbjudanden på nätet!**

Find your dream trip plus many other travel offers on the (inter)net.

### 8.2.3 Disjunctive conjunctions

Disjunctive means ‘alternative’. In addition to **eller** (‘or’), a number of double conjunctions consist of a conjunctive adverb + **eller**. These strengthen the element of choice.

#### 8.2.3.1 Eller – ‘or’

**Vill du köpa eller sälja?  
Pengarna eller livet!**

Are you wanting to buy or sell?  
Your money or your life!

#### 8.2.3.2 Antingen ... eller – ‘either ... or’

**Antingen ... eller (också)** usually causes inversion of the verb in both clauses. However, when used in a way that parallels **vare sig ... eller** (8.2.3.4) meaning ‘whether or not’, it is followed by straight word order.

**Antingen är han verkligen sjuk eller (också) skolkar han i dag.**  
Either he really is ill or (else) he is playing truant today.

**Du får äta upp din mat antingen du vill eller inte.**  
You must eat up your food whether you want to or not.

#### 8.2.3.3 Varken ... eller – ‘neither ... nor’

This expression implies negation (‘neither ... nor’), so no additional negative in the form of **inte** is necessary. Note that **varken ... eller** may be extended to link more than two elements.

**På den tiden fanns varken datorer eller mobiltelefoner.**  
At that time there were neither computers nor mobile phones.

**Jag har varken tid eller ork eller lust att göra det.**  
I haven’t the time or the energy or the desire to do it.

#### 8.2.3.4 **Vare sig ... eller** – ‘either ... nor’

Strictly speaking, **vare sig ... eller** does not in itself imply negation (compare **varken ... eller**, 8.2.3.3), so an additional negative in the form of **inte**, **knappast**, **aldrig** is necessary. However, it is becoming increasingly frequent to see **vare sig ... eller** used without a negative.

**Jag vill inte resa vare sig i dag eller i morgon.**

I don't want to travel either today or tomorrow.

**Våra möten är (inte) vare sig effektiva eller trivsamma.**

Our meetings are neither effective nor enjoyable.

#### 8.2.4 **Adversative conjunctions**

Adversative means ‘opposite’ and expresses a contrast, restriction or correction. Note that opposition can also be expressed by the conjunctive adverbs **dock**, yet; **likväl**, yet; **emellertid**, however, nevertheless; **ändå**, yet. See 8.1.4.2 and 6.2.5.3.

##### 8.2.4.1 **Men** – ‘but’

**Men** (‘but’) links words, phrases or clauses. **Men** is sometimes strengthened by the addition of the conjunctive adverbs **ändå** or **visserligen** (8.1.4.2), in which case the adverbs cause inversion of the verb.

**Hon är rik men hemskt snål.** She is rich but awfully mean.

**Människan spår men Gud rå.** Man proposes, but God disposes.

**Vädret var dåligt, men ändå hade vi det bra.**

The weather was poor, but we had a good time nonetheless.

**Visserligen var du sjuk, men du kunde ha ringt.**

Admittedly you were ill, but you could have phoned.

##### 8.2.4.2 **Utan** – ‘but’

**Utan** (‘but’) is similar to **men** but follows a negative (**inte**, **aldrig**, **sällan**, **knappst**) and introduces a second element that contradicts the first. See also 8.5.1.6. Unlike **men**, **utan** requires the same subject in both clauses.



**Hon var inte sjuk utan bara trött.** She wasn't ill but just tired.  
**Vi lagar aldrig mat utan äter ute.** We never cook but eat out.

#### 8.2.4.3 **Fast** – ‘but’

**Fast** (‘but’) is often similar in use to **men**, but is colloquial and restrictive:

**Vi har fått en lägenhet, fast den är bara liten.**  
We have got a flat but it is only small.

Note – **Fast**, or more correctly **fastän**, (‘although’) is also used as a subordinating conjunction. See 8.3.6.1. Compare the word order when **fast** is used as a coordinating conjunction in the second example:

**Vi bor här fast(än) huset inte är vårt.**  
We live here, although the house isn't ours.

**Vi bor här fast huset är inte vårt.**  
We live here, but the house isn't ours.

#### 8.2.5 **Explanative conjunctions**

Explanative means ‘explaining’. The conjunctive adverbs **ju**, **nämligen** also express explanation. See 6.4.1.6.

#### 8.2.5.1 **För** – ‘for’, ‘as’

**För** (‘for’, ‘as’) and its archaic synonym **ty** always link two main clauses:

**Han kommer inte för han är sjuk.**  
He isn't coming as he is ill.

#### 8.2.6 **Conclusive conjunctions**

Conclusive indicates ‘conclusion, result’. Conclusion may also be expressed by means of conjunctive adverbs such as **alltså**, therefore; **därför**, consequently; **följaktligen**, consequently.

### 8.2.6.1 Så – ‘so’

Så (‘so’) links clauses and expresses a conclusion or result:

**Det är sent, så det är nog dags för oss att åka hem.**

It’s late, so I suppose it’s time for us to go home.

**Bilen är sönder, så jag måste ta bussen i dag.**

The car has broken down so I have to take the bus today.

## 8.3 Subordinating conjunctions

### 8.3.1 Introduction

#### 8.3.1.1

Subordinating conjunctions are more complex than coordinating conjunctions. In addition to the general subordinators (**att**, **om**, **som**), they often comprise a compound (**eftersom**, **såvida**, **liksom**) or a word group that, in many cases, is a combination of an adverb or preposition + **att** (**därför att**, **genom att**, **utan att**). In this way they are able to express many subtle semantic distinctions.

The general subordinators may introduce subject and object clauses and clauses constituting the predicative complement, attribute or adverbial in the sentence. The semantically differentiated subordinators (8.3.3.1–8.3.9.5) may only introduce adverbial clauses, see 10.7.2.2.

### 8.3.1.2 Subordinating conjunctions

#### 8.3.2 General subordinators

Explicative

- indirect speech    **att** that
- indirect question    **om** whether

See also **som** (8.4.3.1).

### Semantically differentiated subordinators – some examples

8.3.3ff. Temporal	<b>då</b> , when; <b>när</b> , when; <b>tills</b> , until; <b>inte ... förrän</b> , not ... until; <b>innan</b> , before; <b>medan</b> , while; <b>sedan</b> , after, since; <b>alltsedan</b> , ever since; <b>efter det att</b> , after; <b>i och med att</b> , in that; <b>så snart som</b> , as soon as; <b>så ofta som</b> , as often as
8.3.4ff Causal	<b>för att</b> , because; <b>eftersom</b> , as, because; <b>därför att</b> , because; <b>då</b> , as; <b>emedan</b> , because; <b>genom att</b> , in that; <b>på grund av att</b> , because; <b>som</b> , as
8.3.5ff Conditional	<b>om</b> , if; <b>ifall</b> , in case; <b>såvitt</b> , in so far as; <b>såvida</b> , provided that; <b>på villkor att</b> , on the condition that; <b>förutsatt att</b> , provided that; <b>bara i den mån som</b> , only in so far as
8.3.6ff Concessive	<b>fastän</b> , although; <b>fast</b> , although, <b>trots att</b> , though; <b>även om</b> , even though; <b>om ... så</b> , even if; <b>medan</b> , whereas; <b>utan att</b> , without
8.3.7ff Final	<b>för att</b> , in order that; <b>så att</b> , so that; <b>genom att</b> , as a result of, by the fact that; <b>i det att</b> , in view of the fact that
8.3.8ff Consecutive	<b>så ... att</b> , so ... that
8.3.9ff Comparative	<b>lika ... som</b> , as ... as; <b>såsom/liksom</b> , as; <b>än</b> , than; <b>ju ... desto</b> , the ... the; <b>som om</b> , as if

### 8.3.2 General subordinators

The general subordinators **att**, ‘that’, and **om**, ‘whether’, merely indicate that the clause they introduce is a subordinate clause.

#### 8.3.2.1 Att

**Att** (‘that’) is as important among subordinating conjunctions as **och** is among coordinating conjunctions. The conjunction **att** is always pronounced /att/, unlike the infinitive marker **att** (5.2.1), which is often pronounced /å/. As in English the conjunction **att** may often be omitted (10.7.4.1). **Att** is used most often to introduce a statement in indirect speech, and follows a verb of saying or reporting:

**Han sa (att) han arbetade hårt.**

He said (that) he was working hard.

Compare direct speech: **Han sa: Jag arbetar hårt.**

**Att** introduces subordinate clauses that have a nominal function. These clauses function in much the same way as a noun phrase, subject, object or prepositional object.

**Att andra fuskar gör det inte rätt att fuska själv.**

That others cheat doesn't make it right for you to do so.

**Vi såg att planet girade.**

We saw that the plane swerved.

**Du kan lita på att allt ordnar sig.**

You can trust that everything will be alright.

See also 10.7.5 for main clause order after **att**.

### 8.3.2.2 Om

**Om** corresponds to **att** but is used to introduce indirect yes/no questions. See 10.6.11.1. Unlike **att**, **om** may not be omitted. Note that **om** can also be used elliptically to respond to real or presumed questions. **Om** is also used as a conditional or a concessive conjunction. See 8.3.5.1, 8.3.6.4.

**Vi undrade om han arbetade hårt.**

We wondered whether he was working hard.

Compare direct question: **Vi undrade: Arbetar du hårt?**

**Om jag kan laga köttbullar! Jajamänsan!**

Can I make meatballs! You bet I can!

### 8.3.3 Temporal conjunctions

Temporal means 'time-based'.

#### 8.3.3.1 När, då – 'when'

As a temporal conjunction **när** is more common in spoken Swedish and **då** in written Swedish. Note that **nu när** usually corresponds to English 'now that'. **Då** is also a causal conjunction ('as'). See 8.3.4.2.

**När/Då han hade parkerat bilen gick han fram till grinden.**

When he had parked the car he walked up to the gate.

**Nu när vintern är här ser allting ganska trist ut.**

Now that winter has arrived everything looks rather sad.

Note – **När** and **då** also both function as adverbs. See 6.2.4.3 and 6.4.2.2(a).

**8.3.3.2 Sedan – ‘after’**

**Sedan** as a temporal conjunction corresponds to both ‘since’ and ‘after’ in English:

**Sedan han hade parkerat bilen gick han in.**

After he had parked the car he went in.

**Hon har varit deppig ända sedan han försvann.**

She has been depressed ever since he disappeared.

Note – **Sedan** also functions as an adverb (6.4.2.2(a)) and a preposition (7.3.3.10).

**8.3.3.3 Medan – ‘while’**

**Barnen får leka inomhus medan det regnar.**

The children may play indoors while it is raining.

Other expressions indicating roughly the same idea include: **under det att; under tiden som; så länge som; just som**

**8.3.3.4 Innan, inte förrän – ‘before’, ‘not before’**

The English conjunction ‘before’ is translated by **innan** in Swedish, or by **förrän** if there is a negative in the main clause or after **knappt**. **Inte förrän** can also mean ‘not until’:

**Innan vi gick hem tackade vi värdinnan.**

Before we went home we thanked the hostess.

**Du kan inte springa förrän du har lärt dig att gå.**

You can’t run until you’ve learnt to walk.

**Jag hade knappt börjat måla huset förrän regnet öste ner.**

I had hardly started to paint the house before the rain poured down.

### 8.3.3.5 Tills – ‘until’

**Tills** (‘until’) is a contraction of the prepositional phrase **till dess att** and serves exactly the same function. Note that ‘not until’ is rendered in Swedish by **inte förrän**. See 8.3.3.4 and 8.5.1.10(b).

**Vänta tills vi kommer!**  
Wait until we get there!

### 8.3.3.6 Efter det att – ‘after’

(a) English ‘after’ used as a conjunction before a clause with a finite verb is rendered by **efter det att**. Either **det** or **att** may be omitted, but not both. Used alone, **efter** is a preposition. See 7.2.2.

**Efter det att vi hade handlat åt vi lunch.**  
After we had done our shopping we ate lunch.

(b) As a conjunction before a non-finite clause, **efter att** is used:

**Vi åt lunch efter att ha handlat.**  
We ate lunch after having done our shopping.

### 8.3.4 Causal conjunctions

Causal means ‘expressing reason, cause’.

#### 8.3.4.1 För att, därför att, eftersom – ‘because’

**För att**, **därför att** and their more old-fashioned, formal and high-flown synonym **emedan** (‘because’, ‘as’, ‘since’) usually begin a subordinate clause following a main clause. **Eftersom** clauses, on the other hand, may either precede or follow the main clause. **För att** is more informal and colloquial in style. **Därför att** and **eftersom** are more frequent in written Swedish.

**Det här ska du få (där)för att du har varit så snäll.**  
You shall have this as you have been so kind.

**Eftersom han var försenad började vi utan honom.**  
As he was delayed, we began without him.

**Vi måste börja utan honom eftersom han är försenad.**

We will have to begin without him as he is delayed.

Note – **Därför att** should not be confused with the conjunctive adverb **därför**, ‘which is why’, ‘for that reason’. Compare:

**Vi åkte till Sverige därför att vi ville besöka Stockholm.**

We went to Sweden because we wanted to visit Stockholm.

**Vi ville besöka Stockholm. Därför åkte vi till Sverige.**

We wanted to visit Stockholm. That’s why we went to Sweden.

See also 6.2.5.3(b).

#### **8.3.4.2** **Då** – ‘as’

**Då** as a causal conjunction corresponds to English ‘as’ in the sense of ‘in view of the fact that’. **Då** is also a temporal conjunction 8.3.3.1 and an adverb. See 6.4.2.2(a) and 8.5.1.2(a).

**Då han inte svarade på mitt brev, ringde jag honom.**

As he didn’t answer my letter I phoned him.

#### **8.3.4.3** **Genom att** – ‘as a result of/by the fact that’

**Han räddades enbart genom att en förbipasserande ingrep.**

He was saved only by the fact that a passer-by intervened.

#### **8.3.4.4** **I det att** – ‘in so far as’, ‘in (view of the fact) that’

**Städerna har vissa likheter i det att båda har universitet.**

The towns share certain similarities in that both have a university.

#### **8.3.5** **Conditional conjunctions**

Conditional means ‘expressing a condition’. See 10.7.6 for different kinds of conditional clause.

### 8.3.5.1 **Om, ifall, såvida, såvitt** – ‘if’, ‘whether’, ‘as long as’

- (a) The most common conditional conjunction is **om** (‘if’, ‘whether’). The synonymous **ifall** is common in spoken and informal written Swedish. **Såvida** and **såvitt** (‘as long as’, ‘provided that’) serve much the same function and are used in the same way.

**Om du är snäll ska du få godis.**

If you are good you can have some sweets.

**De undrade ifall vi ville följa med.**

They wondered whether we wanted to go along.

**Jag följer med såvida ni inte har någonting emot det.**

I'll come too if you haven't any objections.

**Allt kommer att gå bra såvida inga problem uppstår.**

Everything will be fine as long as no problems arise.

- (b) **Huruvida** is a synonym for **om** as a conditional conjunction. Despite its decidedly old-fashioned ring, it can be conveniently used to avoid duplication of **om** in instances such as the following:

**Det är fråga om huruvida han kommer att lyckas.**

It is a question of whether he will succeed.

### 8.3.5.2 **Förutsatt att** – ‘provided that’

**Förutsatt att informationen är korrekt är huset nu till salu.**

Provided that the information is correct, the house is now for sale.

### 8.3.5.3 **Om ... inte** – ‘unless’

**Om du inte ger dig med detsamma, så skjuter vi.**

Unless you surrender at once, we'll shoot.

### 8.3.6 **Concessive conjunctions**

Concessive means ‘expressing a concession’.



### 8.3.6.1 **Fast, fastän, trots att** – ‘although’

**Fast** is the most common form in spoken Swedish. **Fastän** is usually reserved for the written language. **Trots att** often conveys the sense of ‘even though’.

**Han är på gott humör fast han är sjuk.**

He’s in good spirits although he’s ill.

**Reformen genomfördes trots att/fastän regeringen var oenig.**

The reform was implemented even though the government was split.

### 8.3.6.2 **Medan** – ‘whereas’

As a concessive conjunction **medan** expresses a strong contrast:

**Emil läser mycket poesi medan Moa föredrar deckare.**

Emil reads a lot of poetry whereas Moa prefers detective stories.

### 8.3.6.3 **Utan att** – ‘without’

Note that while **utan att** functions as a subordinating conjunction in Swedish, its English equivalent ‘without’ (followed by the ‘-ing’ form of the verb) is a preposition:

**Man kan spara utan att man behöver dra ner på välfärden.**

Savings can be made without cutting back on welfare.

Note – **Inte utan att** (‘not that’ + negative). This rather convoluted form, by no means uncommon in Swedish, is rendered in English using a variety of formulations depending on context:

**Det är inte utan att jag känner en viss oro.**

I must admit that I feel a certain degree of concern.

**Det är inte utan att man blir arg när man anklagas för plagiat.**

It can’t be denied that one is angry when accused of plagiarism.

#### 8.3.6.4 **Om än, hur ... än** – ‘however’

Note also how concessive expressions such as the following express one sense of ‘however’ in English. See also 6.4.2.6.

**Det var ett rum, om än aldrig så litet.**

It was a room, however little.

**Han blir aldrig arg, hur mycket man än irriterar honom.**

He never gets angry, however much one annoys him.

#### 8.3.7 **Final conjunctions**

Final in this sense means ‘expressing an intention or purpose’.

##### 8.3.7.1 **För att** – ‘in order to’

**Några jobb måste gå för att vi ska kunna rädda fabriken.**

Some jobs will have to go in order for us to be able to save the factory.

##### 8.3.7.2 **Så att** – ‘so that’

**Vi byggde en bro så att vi kunde komma över ån.**

We built a bridge so that we could get across the river.

#### 8.3.8 **Consecutive conjunctions**

Consecutive means ‘expressing a result or consequence’.

##### 8.3.8.1 **Så ... att** – ‘so ... that’

**Han sprang så fort att han blev alldeles röd i ansiktet.**

He ran so fast that he became quite red in the face.

### 8.3.8.2 **Så (att)** – ‘in order that’, ‘so’; **så (att) ... inte** – ‘lest’

When the conjunction **så** is used to express a result there are two possible word order patterns:

- (a) **Så att** (‘in order that’) used as a subordinating conjunction causes subordinate clause word order (subject – clausal adverbial – finite verb: see 10.4.1), as signalled by the position of **inte** in the example below. Note that in spoken Swedish **att** is often omitted in these **så att** constructions.

#### **Ta mormor i armen så (att) hon inte snubblar.**

Take grandma’s arm so (that) she doesn’t trip/lest she trips.

- (b) **Så** (without **att**) is also used as a coordinating conjunction (8.2.6.1), which causes main clause word order (subject – finite verb – clausal adverbial). See 10.3.1ff.

#### **Jag hade glömt min mobil, så jag kunde inte ringa.**

I had forgotten my mobile phone, so I couldn’t ring.

### 8.3.9 **Comparative conjunctions**

Comparative means ‘expressing a comparison’. See also 2.5.11.

#### 8.3.9.1 **Lika ... som** – ‘as ... as’. See also 8.5.1.3.

**Jag är lika lång som min bror.** I’m as tall as my brother.

#### 8.3.9.2 **(Så)som** – ‘as’, ‘in the way that’

**Såsom** is frequently abbreviated to **som** in spoken Swedish in constructions like those that follow.

**Gör (så)som jag säger!**

Do as I say!

**Döm såsom du vill bli dömd.**

Judge as you wish to be judged.

#### 8.3.9.3 **Liksom** – ‘(just) as’, ‘just like’

**Liksom** is sometimes abbreviated to **som** in spoken Swedish.

**De har ett tydligt mål liksom de har haft så många gånger förr.**  
They have a clear goal just as/like they have had so many times before.

**8.3.9.4** **Än** – ‘than’

**Filmen var mindre spännande än vi hade föreställt oss.**  
The film was less exciting than we had imagined.

**8.3.9.5** **Ju ... desto** – ‘the more ... the more’

Notice the fixed order of clauses; the subordinate clause introduced by **ju** + comparative must come first and the main clause with **desto** + comparative has inversion. There is no difference in style or meaning between expressions formulated with **ju ... desto** and **ju ... ju**.

**Ju mer jag lär känna dem, desto bättre tycker jag om dem.**  
The more I get to know them, the better I like them.

**Ju högre löner vi har, ju högre standard kommer vi att få.**  
The higher our salary, the higher will be our standard of living.

## **8.4** **Other subordinators**

### **8.4.1** **Other subordinators, introduction**

Pronouns and adverbs used to introduce a subordinate clause are also subordinators.

8.4.2 Interrogative pronouns	<b>vem</b> , who; <b>vad</b> , what; <b>vilken</b> , which; <b>vilket</b> , which; <b>vilka</b> , which, who
8.4.2 Interrogative adverbs	<b>när</b> , when; <b>var</b> , where; <b>vart</b> , where ... to; <b>hur</b> , how; <b>varför</b> , why; <b>varifrån</b> , where ... from
8.4.3 Relative pronouns	<b>som</b> , who, which, that; <b>vars</b> , whose; <b>vilken</b> , which; <b>vilket</b> , which; <b>vilka</b> , which, who
8.4.3 Relative adverbs	<b>där</b> , where; <b>dit</b> , where ... to

#### **8.4.2** *Interrogative pronouns and interrogative adverbs*

Interrogative pronouns (3.10.1ff.) and interrogative adverbs (6.2.4.3) introduce v-questions. See 10.6.11.2. When they are used to form subordinate clauses, i.e. indirect questions, no other conjunction is required before them.

**Jag undrade, vart han hade tagit vägen.**  
I wondered where he had got to.

Compare direct question:

**Jag undrade: Vart har han tagit vägen?**

However, when an interrogative pronoun is the subject of a subordinate clause, **som** (3.10.6f.) is introduced as a subject marker:

**Jag undrar vem som kysser henne nu.**  
I wonder who is kissing her now.

#### **8.4.3** *Relative pronouns and adverbs*

See also 3.11 for relative pronouns and 6.2.4.2 for relative adverbs.

##### **8.4.3.1** **Som** – ‘that’, ‘which’

**Som** is the most common of all subordinators, and introduces relative clauses. Note that **som** may be omitted when used as the object of the relative clause.

**Studenten som vann priset heter Anna.**  
The student who won the prize is called Anna.

**Brevet (som) jag skickade till honom var skrivet för hand.**  
The letter that/which I sent him was written by hand.

See also 3.11.2 and 8.5.1.9.

#### 8.4.3.2 **Vilken, vilket, vilka** – ‘which (one(s))’

**Jag behöver veta vilken dag/vilka veckor du vill ta ledigt.**

I need to know which day/which weeks you want to have off.

#### 8.4.3.3 **Vars, vilkas** – ‘whose’

**Vars** (3.11.4) supplies a genitive form for **som**, when referring to a singular noun or pronoun. **Vilkas** supplies a genitive form for **som**, when referring to a plural noun or pronoun. These forms are usually restricted to written Swedish. In spoken Swedish the construction **som** + preposition is preferred.

**en man vars ansikte/två män vilkas ansikten jag känner igen**

a man whose face/two men whose faces I recognise

#### 8.4.3.4 **Där, dit** – ‘where’, ‘where to’

**Där** indicates location, **dit** indicates motion towards a place. See 6.4.2.4.

**Vi har hittat en skog där det finns massor av svamp.**

We have found a forest where there are lots of mushrooms.

**Vi har hittat en skog dit vi kan gå för att plocka svamp.**

We have found a forest where we can go to pick mushrooms.

## 8.5 Some problem conjunctions

### 8.5.1 *Translation into Swedish of some problem conjunctions*

Many English conjunctions have direct equivalents in Swedish, e.g. ‘that’ = **att**, ‘if’ = **om**, etc. However, the same word in English is often a conjunction, preposition and adverb, with each part of speech possessing at least one equivalent in Swedish. The conjunction introduces a clause with a finite verb. While many Swedish prepositions may govern an infinitive, they can only do so if there is no change of subject. If there is a change of subject, the sense can only be conveyed by means of a conjunction and a following clause.

Compare:

**Alla måste göra sitt för att rädda planeten.**

Everyone must play their part in order to save the planet.

**Alla måste göra sitt för att planeten ska räddas.**

Everyone must play their part in order for the planet to be saved.

**8.5.1.1** 'After'

- (a) As a conjunction before a full clause (i.e. one with a finite verb), use **efter det att** (8.3.3.6). Either **det** or **att** – but not both – can be omitted:

We took the train to Lund after we had eaten lunch.

**Vi åkte tåg till Lund efter det att vi hade ätit lunch.**

- (b) As a conjunction before a non-finite clause (10.9.2), use **efter att**:

We took the train to Lund after having eaten lunch.

**Vi åkte tåg till Lund efter att ha ätit lunch.**

- (c) As a preposition, use **efter** (7.2.2).

after lunch

**efter lunch**

**8.5.1.2** 'As'

- (a) When 'as' = 'because', use **eftersom/då** (8.3.4.2 and 6.4.2.2(a)).

As he isn't here, we will have to begin without him.

**Eftersom/Då han inte är här får vi börja utan honom.**

- (b) When 'as' = 'for', use **för** (8.2.5.1):

He disappeared as he was afraid.

**Han försvann för han var rädd.**

- (c) When 'as' = 'while', use **medan** (8.3.3.3):

The fire alarm went off as he was speaking.

**Brandlarmet gick medan han talade.**

(d) When 'as' = 'like', use **(lik)som** (8.3.9.3):

Now as before it is difficult.

**Nu (lik)som förr är det svårt.**

(e) Notice also:

Blind as he is, he can still find his way home.

**Fastän han är blind/Blind som han är, kan han ändå hitta hem.**

### 8.5.1.3 'As ... as'

When a comparison is made in a positive clause, use **lika ... som** (8.3.9.1).

When a comparison is made in a negative clause, use **så ... som**.

You are as gifted as your sister.

**Du är lika begåvad som din syster.**

You are not as gifted as you think.

**Du är inte så begåvad som du tror.**

### 8.5.1.4 'Before'

(a) As a conjunction after a positive main clause, use **innan** (8.3.3.4):

We ate before you came home. **Vi åt innan du kom hem.**

(b) As a conjunction after a negative main clause, use **förrän** (8.3.3.4):

Don't eat before I come home. **Ät inte förrän jag kommer hem.**

(c) As an adverb = 'earlier', 'previously', use **förr, förut, tidigare**:

Have you been here before? **Har du varit här förut?**

(d) As a preposition of time, use **före, innan** (7.3.3.4):

We met just before Christmas. **Vi träffades strax förelinnan jul.**

(e) As a preposition of place = 'in front of', use **före** or **framför** or **inför** according to context. See 7.3.1.9, 7.3.1.7 and 7.3.1.11.

He stood before me in the queue. **Han stod framför mig i kön.**



**8.5.1.5** 'Both'

- (a) As a conjunction use **både ... och** (8.2.2.3):

Both you and I like music.      **Både du och jag tycker om musik.**

- (b) As an indefinite pronoun, where 'both' can be replaced by 'the two', use **båda** (3.9.15.1f.):

Both students are intelligent.      **Båda studenterna är intelligenta.**

**8.5.1.6** 'But'

- (a) As a conjunction after a positive main clause, use **men** (8.2.4.1):

The film is long but it is good.  
**Filmen är lång men den är bra.**

- (b) As a conjunction after a negative main clause when the second clause does not directly contradict the first, use **men**:

The film is not long but it is good.  
**Filmen är inte lång men den är bra.**

- (c) As a conjunction after a negative main clause when the second clause directly contradicts the first, use **utan** (8.2.4.2):

The film is not Swedish but (it is) Norwegian.  
**Filmen är inte svensk utan (den är) norsk.**

- (d) When 'but' is a preposition and can be replaced by 'except', use **utom** (7.3.1.23):

All his sons but one are married.      **Alla hans söner utom en är gifta.**

**8.5.1.7** 'Either'

- (a) As a conjunction 'either ... or' (meaning 'only one of A or B') after a positive, use **antingen ... eller** (8.2.3.2):

He must be either fifty or fifty-one years old.  
**Han måste vara antingen femtio eller femtioett år gammal.**

- (b) As a conjunction ‘either ... or’ (meaning ‘both A and B’) after a comparative, use **både ... och**. See also 8.2.2.3 and 8.5.1.5.

I’m older than either Mia or Nils. **Jag är äldre än både Mia och Nils.**

- (c) As a conjunction, ‘either ... or’ (meaning ‘both A and B’) after a negative, use **varken ... eller** (8.2.3.3):

He did not come either yesterday or today.

**Han kom varken i går eller i dag.**

- (d) As an adverb, use **heller** (6.4.1.5(c)):

He cannot come either. **Han kan inte komma heller.**

- (e) As an indefinite pronoun meaning ‘one of A or B’, use **vilken som helst** (3.9.24):

Take either of them. **Ta vilken som helst.**

- (f) As an indefinite pronoun meaning ‘both A and B’, use **båda** (3.9.15):

a river with houses on either side **en å med hus på båda sidorna**

### **8.5.1.8** ‘Since’

- (a) As a conjunction, when ‘since’ = ‘after’, use **sedan** (8.3.3.2):

How long is it since you saw your father?

**Hur länge är det sedan du såg din pappa?**

- (b) As a conjunction, when ‘since’ = ‘because’, ‘as’, use **eftersom** (8.3.4.1) or **då** (8.3.4.2):

Since you are here anyway, you could help wash up.

**Då du ändå är här, kan du hjälpa till och diska.**

- (c) As a preposition, when ‘since’ = ‘after’, use **sedan** (7.3.3.10):

We’ve not been there since 2010. **Vi har inte varit där sedan 2010.**

(d) As an adverb, when ‘since’ = ‘since that time’, use **sedan dess**:

We haven’t been there since.      **Vi har inte varit där sedan dess.**

#### **8.5.1.9** ‘That’

(a) As a conjunction, use **att** (8.3.2.1):

I said (that) we were pleased.      **Jag sa att vi var glada.**

(b) As a relative pronoun, when ‘that’ = ‘which’, ‘who(m)’, use **som** (3.11.2). For the use of **som** and **att** in cleft sentences and existential sentences, see 10.8.5 and 10.6.8 respectively.

He bought the house (that) we liked so much.  
**Han köpte huset (som) vi tyckte så mycket om.**

(b) For the use of ‘that’ as a demonstrative pronoun in Swedish, see 3.7.1f.

#### **8.5.1.10** ‘Till’, ‘until’

(a) As a conjunction, when ‘till’ occurs in a positive clause, use **tills** (8.3.3.5):

We are waiting till the rain stops.      **Vi väntar tills det slutar regnar.**

(b) As a conjunction, after a negative, use **inte ... förrän** (8.3.3.4). For stylistic reasons **först när** is sometimes preferred to **inte ... förrän**:

Don’t start until we have arrived.      **Börja inte förrän vi har kommit.**

Only when everyone has gathered does the party begin in earnest.  
**Först när alla har samlats börjar festen på allvar.**

(c) As a preposition, use **till** (7.2.12.3):

from morning to night      **från morgon till kväll**

8.5.1.11 'When'

- (a) As a temporal conjunction, use **när** or **då** (8.3.3.1). Note that **när** can also be used as an interrogative adverb (6.2.4.3):

Tell me when you're ready.      **Tala om för mig när du är klar.**  
In 1975, when he was just ten ...    **År 1975 då har var bara tio år...**

- (b) As a concessive conjunction, use **fastän** (8.3.6.1):

How could you do it, when you knew it was wrong?  
**Hur kunde du göra det, fastän du visste att det var fel?**

- (c) 'Hardly ... when' = 'no sooner than' = **knappt ... förrän**:

I had hardly sat down when the telephone rang.  
**Jag hade knappt satt mig förrän det ringde i telefonen.**

- (d) 'Since when?' = **Sedan när, Hur länge?**

Since when have you been smoking cigars?  
**Sedan när/Hur länge har du rökt cigarr?**

- (e) As a relative pronoun, in cases where 'when' can be replaced by 'that', use **som** (3.11.2):

I will never forget the day when/that I won the Vasalopp Race.  
**Jag glömmer aldrig den dag som jag vann Vasaloppet.**

## Chapter 9

# Interjections

## 9.1 Introduction

### 9.1.1

Interjections belong primarily to the spoken language. They are frequently spontaneous exclamations representing a type of word that goes back to the earliest stages of human language. At the same time some interjections are ephemeral in nature, adopted into the language and becoming common for a while before sliding into neglect or acquiring a decidedly archaic ring. Interjections are indeclinable but vary in form. They often possess a simple phonological structure of either vowel + consonant (**oj!**) or consonant + vowel (**fy!**). They are independent of the clause structure, often coming first in the sentence, where they are marked off from other information by a comma.

**Aj, det gör ont!**

Ow, that hurts!

### 9.1.2

Interjections represent a very economical use of language. They are minimal expressions the meaning of which can be restated more explicitly.

Compare:

**Aj!**

Ow!

With

**Jag slog huvudet i väggen.**

I banged my head on the wall!

**Jag har ont i magen.**

My stomach hurts.

**Jag har blivit stungen.**

I've been stung.

### 9.1.3 Primary and secondary interjections

The distinction is sometimes made between *primary* and *secondary* interjections. The former are purely spontaneous exclamations (**aj**, ‘ow’; **usch**, ‘ugh’), the latter are words from other parts of speech employed as interjections (**hjälp!**, ‘help’; **snälla**, ‘please’). These derived interjections are often greetings (**välkommen**, ‘welcome’), expletives (**fy också!**, ‘darn it!’) or imperatives (**grattis!**, ‘congratulations!’).

## 9.2 Affirmations and denials

### 9.2.1 Basic uses of ja/nej

The Swedish equivalents to ‘yes’ and ‘no’ represent a reaction to a yes/no question (10.6.11.1). They occur alone or with a following clause.

**Har du varit i Sverige?**  
Have you been to Sweden?

**Ja./Ja, det har jag.**  
Yes./Yes, I have.

**Nej./Nej, det har jag inte.**  
No./No, I haven’t.

**Känner du Jan Karlsson?**  
Do you know Jan Karlsson?

**Ja./Ja, det gör jag.**  
Yes./Yes, I do.

**Nej./Nej, det gör jag inte.**  
No./No, I don’t.

### 9.2.2 Uses of ja/jo

#### 9.2.2.1 Two variants for ‘yes’

Swedish has two variants of the English affirmative ‘yes’: **ja** and **jo**. In general, **jo** is used when the question contains a negation (**inte**, **ingen**, **aldrig**, etc.). Otherwise **ja** is used. Note, however, that in Northern Sweden and in Finland-Swedish **jo** is widely used for **ja**.

– **Har du sett filmen? – Ja, det har jag.**  
‘Have you seen the film?’ ‘Yes, I have.’

– **Du har inte sett filmen, eller hur? – Jo, det har jag.**  
‘You haven’t seen the film, have you?’ ‘Yes, I have.’

– **Går du aldrig på bio? – Jo, det gör jag.**  
‘Don’t you ever go the cinema?’ ‘Yes, I do.’

#### 9.2.2.2

**Jo** is also used to contradict a negative statement.

– **Det kommer inte att regna i dag. – Jo, vänta och se bara!**  
‘It won’t rain today’. ‘Oh yes, (it will). You just wait and see.’

#### 9.2.2.3

**Jo** may sometimes be used to express a degree of hesitation. In this case it corresponds closely to ‘well’ in English.

– **Vill du ha lite mer? – Jo, kanske, men bara lite.**  
‘Would you like a little more?’ ‘Well, perhaps. But just a little.’

#### 9.2.2.4

**Ja, jo** are used interchangeably in colloquial Swedish to introduce a positive statement or question:

**Ja/Jo, det kan vara sant förstås.** Well, that may be true of course.  
**Ja/Jo, vad ska vi göra nu?** Well, what shall we do now?

#### 9.2.2.5

**Nåja** may be used to introduce a warning or correction, or alternatively to suggest a conciliatory tone:

**Nåja, nu får det vara nog här!** Now (then), that’s enough of this!  
**Nåja, gör som du vill då!** Okay, do as you wish then!

#### 9.2.2.6

**Såja** is often used to calm down children when they are upset:

**Såja, det blir snart bra.** There, there. It’ll soon be alright

### 9.2.3 Use of *javisst*, *jaha*, *jaså*

A stronger form of agreement with the question corresponding to English phrases such as ‘(most) certainly’, ‘you bet’, etc. is indicated by **javisst** or **jovisst** respectively. See 9.2.2.1. for the difference in usage between **ja** and **jo**. Agreement with a statement containing new information is often indicated by **jaha** in colloquial Swedish. Surprise at a statement is sometimes indicated by **jaså**, but this interjection can have several shades of meaning from surprise to indifference or mild disapproval.

### 9.2.4 Other forms expressing affirmation or denial

#### 9.2.4.1 Variants

There are many other variants, especially in the spoken language, where the degree of affirmation or denial is expressed in part by differences in intonation. These variants include: **jaa**, **jaja**, **jajamän(san)** (‘yes indeed’, ‘most certainly’, ‘you bet!’), **jojo**, **nää**, **nähä**, **tja** (‘well!’), **nja** (a hybrid formed from **nej** + **ja** and used to express grudging agreement) and **okej** (‘okay’).

#### 9.2.4.2 Både och

Particularly interesting in this connection is the use of **både och** (literally ‘both and’) in colloquial Swedish to express a response to a question that corresponds to English ‘yes and no’, ‘I do and I don’t’, etc.

**– Tyckte du om filmen? – Både och.**  
‘Did you like the film?’ ‘Yes and no.’

## 9.3 Reactions in conversation

### 9.3.1 Reactions

Some interjections express the reaction of one partner in a conversation to what is said by the other, or are used to attract attention or ask for repetition:

**Hörni, ungar! Nu är det dags att ni går och lägger er.**  
Now then, kids. It’s time for you to go to bed.



**Hallå! Vad fasen gör du däruppe?**

Hey, you! What in heaven's name are you doing up there?

**– Det är en dålig telefonförbindelse. Hör du mig? – Hursa?**

'It's a poor phone line. Can you hear me?' 'What (did you say)?'

### 9.3.1.1 Va?

The interjection **va?** (short vowel sound) has several current uses:

- (a) To ask the speaker to repeat a message. Used in this way **va?** is a less polite way of saying **hursa?**, the two interjections corresponding roughly to 'What?' and 'I beg your pardon' respectively:

**– Kan du höra vad jag säger i det här oljudet! – Va?**

'Can you hear what I'm saying amid this racket?' 'What?'

- (b) Unstressed **va?** at the end of an utterance requests confirmation. Used in this way **va?** replaces but is generally regarded as less polite than **eller hur:**

**Vi går neråt stan, va?**

Let's go down to town, eh?

- (c) Unstressed **va** at the end of an utterance may also denote a command:

**Sakta i backarna, va!**

Slow down, will you!

- (d) **Va** is sometimes used in speech to mark the introduction of a new topic:

**Min gamle lärare, va, han var ju otroligt korkad.**

My old teacher, you know, he was unbelievably dumb.

### 9.3.1.2 Typ

The Swedish word **typ** is now used not only in its basic meaning (**diabetes typ 2**, 'type 2 diabetes') but also – in much the same way as an interjection – to express two other meanings. These correspond roughly to English 'sort/kind of', 'as it were', 'so to speak' and 'approximately', and can usually be replaced by **liksom** and **ungefär** respectively in Swedish. As an interjection in the spoken language, **typ** frequently assumes an unexpected place in the word order.

**Min kille är typ lite galen.**

My boyfriend is kinda crazy.

**Festen börjar klockan tio, typ.** The party starts at ten, or so.  
**Många kom från typ Lund.** A lot came from around Lund.

### 9.3.1.3 Ba

In today's youth argot Swedish **ba** (a contraction of **bara**) is a new lexicalisation frequently used as a verbal marker of reported speech. This usage, paralleled by English '(to be) like' is not widely accepted and is disparaged by many older users of the language.

**Och då kom chefen ut och, ba: "Vad tror ni att ni håller på med?" och jag, ba: "Förlåt då, typ".**

And then the boss came out and he was like, 'What d'you think you're doin'?' and I was like, 'Sorry and stuff'.

### 9.3.2 Expressions of feeling, exclamations

Interjections often signal a spontaneous reaction to a situation, positive or negative.

#### 9.3.2.1 Positive feelings

(a) Delight (**åh, oj, ojoj**) or joy (**hurra, bravo**):

**Oj, vad vackert!**

Oh, how beautiful!

(b) Surprise: **ojdå, hoppsan, nämen, va**:

**Hoppsan! Eva har ramlat.**

Whoops! Eva has fallen over.

(c) Pleasure linked to food: **mums**, scrumptious!; **namnam**, yum-yum.

(d) Relief: **gudskelov**:

**Han överlevde, gudskelov!**

He survived, thank goodness.

(e) Religious feeling and magical spells: **halleluja, amen, hokuspokus, simsalabim**.

### 9.3.2.2 Negative feelings

(a) Annoyance or disapproval: **fy**:

**Fy, skäms!/Fy dig!** Shame on you!  
**Fy, vad du bär dig illa åt!** Tut-tut, stop behaving so badly!

(b) Mild discomfort: **puh**, or the archaic **ack**:

**Puh, vad det var varmt i dag!** Phew, it's hot today!

(c) Disagreement: **pytt(san)**, rubbish, nonsense

(d) Disgust: **usch**:

**Usch, vad hemskt!** Ugh, how horrible!

(e) Disparagement: **asch, äsch, bah, bu**.

(f) Doubt: **hm, äh**.

(g) Pain, discomfort: **aj, o, å**:

**Aj, det gör ont!** Ow, that hurts!

## 9.4 Commands

These often overlap with imperatives (5.3.4), and may be classified depending on whom they are directed to:

- To animals: **apport** [dogs], fetch!; **kusch, hut** [dogs], (lie) down!; **fot** [dogs], heel!; **ptro** [horses], whoah!
- To children: **sch**, shh!; **hyssj**, hush; **ajabaja**, naughty, naughty!
- To soldiers: **halt**, halt; **giv akt**, attention!; **lediga**, (stand) at ease; **framåt marsch**, march!
- To people in general: **pst!** psst; **varsågod**, here you are/help yourself; **hjälp**, help!; **förlåt (mig)**, I'm sorry/I beg your pardon; **ursäkta (mig)**, excuse me!; **såja**, there, there!, come, come

## 9.5 Imitations

These interjections are onomatopoeic, i.e. they imitate sounds of different kinds.

### 9.5.1 *Sounds made by animals and humans*

<b>bää</b>	[sheep]	<b>mu</b>	[cow]
<b>gnägg</b>	[horse]	<b>nöff</b>	[pig]
<b>krax</b>	[crow]	<b>pip</b>	[bird]
<b>kuckeliku</b>	[rooster/cockerel]	<b>surr</b>	[bee]
<b>kvitt</b>	[bird]	<b>tralala</b>	[singer]
<b>miau, mjau</b>	[cat]	<b>vov(vov)</b>	[dog]

### 9.5.2 *Sounds made by man-made objects*

**pang**, bang; **tick-tack**, tick tock; **bing-bång**, ding-dong; **klang**, boing;  
**krasch**, crash; **dunk**, thud

### 9.5.3 *Other sounds*

**plask**, splash; **pladask**, flop; **svisch**, **vips**, swish

### 9.5.4 *Verbs from interjections*

Some verbs have been formed from onomatopoeic interjections:

**bräka**, bleat; **gala**, crow [of rooster, etc.]; **gnägga**, whinny; **jama**, miaouw, mew; **klucka**, gurgle [of water]; **knaka**, creak; **knarra**, creak;  
**kvittra**, chirp, twitter; **pipa**, cheep, squeak, whistle; **prassla**, rustle;  
**skvalpa**, splash, slop; **spraka**, crackle; **susa**, sigh; **vina**, whine

### 9.5.5 *Nouns from interjections*

Nouns, too, may be formed from interjections of this type:

**en krasch**, a crash; **ett pip**, a peep/chirp; **ett plask**, a splash

## 9.6 Polite expressions

### 9.6.1 Expressions on meeting

**hej**, hello; **hejsan**, hi there; **goddag**, good morning, how do you do?; **tjänare**, hi; **välkommen** (pl. **välkomna**), welcome

### 9.6.2 Expressions on parting

**adjö**, goodbye; **farväl**, farewell; **hej då**, bye; **hej, hej** [in response to **hej då**]

### 9.6.3 Expressions at mealtimes

**skål**, cheers; **smaklig måltid**, bon appétit, enjoy your meal; **hugg i**, tuck in; **tack för maten**, thank you for the meal

### 9.6.4 Seasonal greetings

**god jul**, Happy Christmas; **gott nytt år**, Happy New Year; **glad påsk/pingst/midsommar**, Happy Easter/Whitsun(tide)/Midsummer

### 9.6.5 Thanks and apologies

**förlåt**, sorry; **ursäkta (mig)**, pardon me, excuse me; **för all del**, don't mention it; **tack**, thank you; **tack för maten**, thank you for the meal; **tack för sist**, thank you for the last time [a polite Swedish phrase used when meeting someone again after having previously been entertained by them]

### 9.6.6 Other expressions

**grattis/gratulerar**, congratulations; **grattis på födelsedagen**, Happy Birthday!; **har den äran**, Happy Birthday!; **prosit**, bless you!/gesundheit! [after someone has sneezed]; **varsågod**, here you are; **hursa?** what did you say?; **hallå**, hey there!/I say!

### 9.6.7 'Please'

Swedish has no word corresponding exactly to English 'please'. A number of constructions apply in different circumstances:

<b>Varsågod ta plats!</b>	Please take a seat.	Formal
<b>Vänligen rök inte!</b>	Please do not smoke.	Formal
<b>Var god, dröj!</b>	Please hold the (phone) line.	Formal
<b>Var snäll och hjälp mig!</b>	Please give me a hand.	Informal
<b>Snälla, stäng av teven!</b>	Please turn off the TV.	Informal

### 9.7 Expletives

Expletives are typically used to intensify the strength of a speaker's feelings. While for many people expletives are now devoid of meaning and have become little more than formulaic expressions, they are still frowned upon by others and not considered part of polite conversation.

#### 9.7.1 Swearwords

Most swearwords and many coarse exclamations are interjections. The following list is not exhaustive. For a full treatment of this kind of word, see Magnus Ljung, *Svordomsboken*.

(a) Independent exclamations:

**förbannat; fy katten; Gode Gud; (dra åt) helvete; kors; fan; fasen; himmel; jävlar; jävlaranamma; skit; satan, etc.**

(b) Intensifiers with an adverbial function:

**skit**— as in **skitroligt, skitförbannad, skitförnäm**, etc.  
**jävla** as in **jävla roligt, jävla arg, jävla dum**, etc.  
**—jävel** as in **biljävel**, 'bloody car', **hundjävel**, 'damned dog', etc.

#### 9.7.2 Euphemisms

A variety of milder euphemisms, some derived from or modelled on coarser expletives, may be used to avoid causing offence. Compare 9.7.1(a).

**förbaskat; fy farao; jesses; helsicke; dra åt Hälsingland; fanders; fasingen; fasicken; jäklar; järnspikar; sjutton, etc.**

# Sentence structure and word order

## 10.1 Clause elements

### 10.1.1 Word classes and clause elements

Previous chapters of this book have been concerned with *word classes*, that is with classification according to the form or meaning of words. In this chapter the functions of words and word groups in the sentence, i.e. *clause elements*, are examined. A comparison of the two viewpoints can be made from the following sentence:

	<b>Du</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>tvättat</b>	<b>bilen</b>	<b>ännu.</b>
	You	have	not	washed	the car	yet.
<b>WORD CLASS</b>	<i>Pronoun</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adverb</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Noun</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
<b>CLAUSE ELEMENT</b>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Adverbial</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Adverbial</i>

In section 10.1 the different clause elements (or ‘building blocks’) are each examined in some detail, whilst in 10.1.8 these are located in a scheme showing their relative order in the sentence. Section 10.2 examines phrases built around each of a number of word classes, and shows how these phrases form clause elements. The sentence scheme, with its seven positions, is explained for the main clause in section 10.3, for the subordinate clause in section 10.4. The seven positions are analysed in greater depth in section 10.5, whilst possible movement of elements to other positions (transformations) and possible additional positions are dealt with in section 10.6.

## 10.1.2 Subject

### 10.1.2.1 Form

In a Swedish clause, as in English, the subject is usually explicit. The form of the subject varies considerably. It may be:

(a) A noun phrase. See 10.2.2.

<b>Regnet föll i timmar.</b>	The rain fell for hours.
<b>Sven åkte skidor.</b>	Sven went ski-ing.
<b>Den lilla tjejen i röd kjol sjöng.</b>	The little girl in a red skirt sang.

(b) A pronoun:

<b>De sjöng luciasången.</b>	They sang the Lucia song.
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(c) An adjective:

<b>Blått är vackert.</b>	Blue is beautiful.
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(d) An infinitive phrase. See 10.2.7.

<b>Att ljuga är ju fult.</b>	It is bad to lie.
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(e) A subordinate clause:

<b>Att han aldrig fick Nobelpriset förvånade mig.</b>	
That he never received the Nobel Prize surprised me.	

### 10.1.2.2 Position

The subject (S) is usually placed next to the finite verb (FV) – the verb indicating tense, mood or voice – and its position relative to the verb often helps to indicate sentence type:

<b>Adam vann loppet.</b> <i>S – FV = Statement</i>	Adam won the race.
<b>Vann Adam loppet?</b> <i>FV – S = Yes/No question</i>	Did Adam win the race?



But notice also that Swedish has inverted statements when a non-subject begins the clause:

**I fjol vann Adam två gånger.** Last year Adam won twice.  
X – FV – S = Statement

Imperative clauses often have no subject:

**Gå härifrån!** Get out of here!  
**Var försiktig!** Be careful!

### **10.1.3** Det as impersonal or formal subject (place-holder)

#### **10.1.3.1** Det as subject

As a subject in many descriptions of weather and some other constructions, **det**, ‘it’, lacks any real meaning. Its function is, by means of its position, to indicate sentence type, i.e. statement or question.

**Det regnar/snöar/haglar.** It’s raining/snowing/hailing. Statement  
**Det blir mörkt snart.** It will be dark soon. Statement  
**Det är bullersamt.** It’s noisy. Statement  
**Är det inte för kallt härinne?** Isn’t it too cold in here? Question

**Det** used in this way is also known as the *impersonal subject*.

#### **10.1.3.2** Postponement of the subject

When the subject of a sentence is postponed, i.e. moved to the right in the sentence, an anticipatory **det**, ‘there’, ‘it’, must be inserted. This additional subject is known as the *formal subject* (FS) and the postponed subject is then known as the *real subject* (RS).

**Det sitter två patienter i väntrummet.**

FS RS

There are two patients sitting in the waiting room.

Compare:

**Två patienter sitter i väntrummet.**

S

This kind of construction is known in English as an *existential sentence* (see 10.6.8) as it is found with the verb ‘to be’, thus expressing existence. Its use

in Swedish is more frequent, and many different intransitive verbs are used. The real subject may be of two kinds. Type 1 is often used to anticipate an indefinite noun phrase, i.e. a new idea. In Type 2 **det** is used to anticipate a postponed 'heavy' (i.e. long or stressed) subject. See 10.6.8.

Type 1 Real subject = Indefinite noun phrase: Formal subject = 'there':

**Det ligger inga brev på ditt skrivbord.**

FS RS

There are no letters on your desk.

Type 2 Real subject = Infinitive phrase: Formal subject = 'it':

**Det är intressant att resa utomlands.**

FS RS

It's interesting travelling abroad.

Compare: **Att resa utomlands är intressant.**

#### **10.1.4** Finite and non-finite verbs

##### **10.1.4.1** Finite forms

A Swedish clause usually contains a finite verb, i.e. a verb showing tense, mood or voice.

Finite forms include:

- |                              |   |                                      |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| (a) Present tense            | <b>Han kör långsamt.</b>                | He drives slowly.                    |
| (b) Past tense               | <b>Han körde långsamt.</b>              | He drove slowly.                     |
| (c) Imperative               | <b>Kör långsamt!</b>                    | Drive slowly!                        |
| (d) Present and past passive | <b>Bilen körs/kördes långsamt.</b>      | The car is/was driven slowly.        |
| (e) Subjunctive              | <b>Det vore kul att kunna köra bil.</b> | It would be fun to be able to drive. |

##### **10.1.4.2** Several finite verbs

There may be more than one finite verb in the sentence. These verbs are then coordinated.

**Barnen ligger och sover.  
Pappa satt och läste.  
Gå ut och tvätta bilen!**

The children are (lying) asleep.  
Dad was (sitting) reading.  
Go out and wash the car.

When there is more than one finite verb the subject is placed either immediately before or immediately after the first verb (FV1):

**Barnen ligger och sover.**  
S – FV1

The children are asleep.

**Nu ligger barnen och sover.**  
FV1 – S

Now the children are asleep.

**Ligger barnen och sover?**  
FV1 – S

Are the children asleep?

#### 10.1.4.3 Finite verb as auxiliary

If there are both finite and non-finite verbs in the clause, the finite verb is usually an auxiliary verb and, as in English, comes first in the verb phrase.

#### 10.1.4.4 Non-finite forms

Non-finite verb forms usually occur in a verb phrase together with a finite verb. (For one exception, the omission of **har/hade** in the subordinate clause, see 10.9.3, 5.2.6.2.)

Non-finite forms include:

- |                        |   |                                   |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| (a) Infinitive         | <b>Jag måste springa.</b><br><b>Jag tycker om att sjunga.</b> | I have to run.<br>I like singing. |
| (b) Supine             | <b>De har sprungit bort.</b>                                  | They've run away.                 |
| (c) Present participle | <b>De kom springande.</b>                                     | They came running.                |
| (d) Past participle    | <b>Huset är övergivet.</b>                                    | The house is abandoned.           |

#### 10.1.4.5 Several infinitives

Several infinitives may occur together:

**Han säger sig inte kunna börja skriva på rapporten ännu.**  
He says that he is not able to begin writing the report yet.

#### 10.1.4.6 Infinitive and supine

In some cases after a modal auxiliary both an infinitive and a supine may be found:

**Han borde ha tänkt på det.** He should have thought of that.

**Han borde ha kunnat tänka på det.**  
He should have been able to think of that.

Note – The presence of two supines is, however, a colloquialism:

**\*Han hade kunnat gjort det.** He would have been able to do it.

In written Swedish this is: **Han hade kunnat göra det.**

#### 10.1.5 Direct and indirect objects

##### 10.1.5.1 Transitive verbs

Direct objects are found with transitive verbs. See 5.4.2.

**Farfar byggde stugan själv.** Grandpa built the cottage himself.  
**Någon har stulit hans cykel.** Someone has stolen his bike.

##### 10.1.5.2 Ditransitive verbs

Both direct and indirect objects are found with ditransitive verbs (see 5.4.1.3). The *direct object* (DO) is usually an inanimate object affected by the action of the verb, while the *indirect object* (IO) is an animate being that is the recipient of the action:

**De skickade mormor en vacker julklapp.**  
IO DO  
They sent grandma a beautiful Christmas present.

As in English, the indirect object in Swedish precedes the direct object.  
Compare:

**Jag lånade studenten min bok.** I lent the student my book.  
IO DO

**Jag lånade honom min bok.** I lent him my book.  
IO DO

When both objects are pronouns, the order in Swedish is, unlike English,  
always IO – DO:

**Ge mig den!** Give it me!/Give me it!  
IO DO

If the indirect object is a prepositional phrase, the direct object precedes the  
indirect object:

**Jag lånade min bok till studenten.** I lent my book to the student.  
DO IO

#### 10.1.5.3 Prepositional object

The prepositional object consists of a preposition + noun phrase:

**Jag bjöd honom på en kopp te.** I invited him to a cup of tea.  
Prep. Obj.

#### 10.1.5.4 Position

The object usually comes directly after the finite or non-finite verb:

**Jag läser boken.** I am reading the book.  
**Jag har läst boken.** I have read the book.

It may, however, begin the sentence:

**Den boken har jag inte läst.** I haven't read that book.

Object clauses (10.7.3.1) generally come at the end of the sentence:

**Hon har inte frågat i dag om vi vill komma.**  
She hasn't asked today whether we want to come.

But: **Att han aldrig kommer i tid kan jag inte fatta.**

I can't fathom why he never comes on time.

For the position of unstressed object pronouns and the reflexive object pronoun see also 10.5.2.5.

#### 10.1.5.5 Form

The form of the object varies. It may be:

(a) A noun phrase

<b>De köpte det gamla huset.</b>	They bought the old house.
<b>Olle träffade tjejen i går.</b>	Olle met the girl yesterday.

(b) A pronoun

<b>Olle träffade henne då.</b>	Olle met her then.
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(c) An infinitive phrase

<b>De fortsatte (att) skriva.</b>	They continued writing.
<b>Hon började sjunga.</b>	She began singing.

(d) A phrase in direct speech

<b>Han sa: "Eva är sjuk".</b>	He said, 'Eva is sick.'
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(e) A subordinate clause

<b>Jag frågade om vi fick komma.</b>	I asked whether we could come.
<b>Jag vet att han är dum.</b>	I know he is stupid.

#### 10.1.6 Complements

##### 10.1.6.1 Position

The predicative complement is usually found in the same position as the object. It is found with a *copular* verb. Copular verbs fulfil two main functions:

(a) They describe a state: **förbli**, remain; **heta**, be called; **se ... ut**, look (like); **tyckas**, seem; **vara**, be; **verka**, seem

<b>Det är vår.</b>	It is spring.
<b>Han är gammal.</b>	He is old.
<b>Han verkade yngre.</b>	He seemed younger.

- (b) They result in a change: **bli**, be, become; **göra ... till**, make into; **utse ... till**, appoint to

<b>Han blir gammal.</b>	He is growing old.
<b>Han utsågs till statsråd.</b>	He was appointed minister.

- (c) Other intransitive verbs may also be used as copular verbs: **gå**, go; **leva**, live; **ligga**, lie; **låta**, let; **stå**, stand; **sitta**, sit

<b>Per går arbetslös.</b>	Per is out of work.
<b>Hon lät glad.</b>	She sounded happy.
<b>Huset stod tomt.</b>	The house stood empty.
<b>Snön låg djup.</b>	The snow lay deep.
<b>Vi satt tysta.</b>	We sat in silence.

- (d) Some passives may also be used as copular verbs:

**Hjalmar kallades Frida av sina skolkamrater.**  
Hjalmar was called Frida by his fellow pupils.

- (e) Notice that **se ... ut** as a copular brackets the complement:

<b>Hon ser mycket trevlig ut.</b>	She looks very nice.
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#### 10.1.6.2 Types of complement

Complements are of three types and agree in gender and number with either subject or object:

- (a) Subject complements

<b>Tjejen är ung.</b>	The girl is young.
<b>Huset är gammalt.</b>	The house is old.
<b>Väggarna är vita.</b>	The walls are white.
<b>Hon är professor.</b>	She is a professor.
<b>De är sjuksköterskor.</b>	They are nurses.

- (b) Object complements

<b>Det gjorde dem ledsna.</b>	It made them sad.
<b>De har målat huset rött.</b>	They have painted the house red.

<b>Carlsson utsågs till ordförande.</b>	Carlsson was elected chair.
<b>Har du fått boken färdig än?</b>	Have you finished the book yet?
<b>De kallade honom för Frida.</b>	They called him Frida.

(c) Free complements

**Som ung var hon mycket livlig.**  
As a young woman she was very lively.

**Växten överlevde vintern oskadad.**  
The plant survived the winter unharmed.

**Trött och nervös gick hon på semester.**  
Tired and nervous she went on holiday.

### 10.1.6.3 Phrases as complement

Complements may be:

(a) A noun phrase

<b>Bilen var en skrothög.</b>	The car was a heap.
<b>Vem är det? Det är han.</b>	Who is it? It's him.

(b) An adjective phrase

<b>Datorn var splitterny.</b>	The computer was brand new.
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(c) A subordinate clause

<b>Det är vad jag sa.</b>	That's what I said.
<b>Resultatet blir att priserna stiger.</b>	The result is that prices will rise.

### 10.1.7 Adverbial

#### 10.1.7.1 Types of adverbial

Adverbials are of two types: *clausal adverbials* (sometimes called 'sentence adverbials') and *other adverbials* (sometimes called 'content adverbials'):

(a) Clausal adverbials usually modify the sense of the clause as a whole:

**Vi brukar inte åka båt till Frankrike på sommaren.**  
We don't usually go by boat to France in the summer.



- (b) Other adverbials generally answer the questions: how? where? when? why? and express manner, place, time, cause, condition, etc.:

**Vi brukar inte åka båt till Frankrike på sommaren.**  
Where? When?

**10.1.7.2** Clausal adverbials are usually adverbs

**Är han egentligen så intelligent som han tror?**  
Is he really as intelligent as he believes?

**Följer hon kanske med på bio ikväll?**  
Is she maybe coming to the cinema tonight?

**10.1.7.3** Phrases as Other adverbials

- (a) Adjective phrase **Rädd och hungrig bröt han sig in i stugan.**  
Afraid and hungry he broke into the cottage.
- (b) Adverb phrase **Han arbetar mycket fort.**  
He works very quickly.
- (c) Noun phrase **Han arbetar hela kvällen.**  
He works all evening.
- (d) Prepositional phrase **Han arbetar i verkstan.**  
He works in the workshop.
- (e) Subordinate clause **Han arbetar om han får betalt.**  
He works if he gets paid.

**10.1.7.4** Types of clausal adverbial

- (a) Modal adverbs **Han är tyvärr dum.**  
He is, alas, stupid.
- (b) Pronominal adverbs **Jag har därför ringt honom.**  
I have therefore rung him.
- (c) Conjunctive adverbs **Jan är student. Han reser alltså billigt.**  
Jan is a student. That's why he travels cheaply.

(d) Prepositional phrases **Han är trots allt bäst.**  
He is nevertheless best.

(e) Negations **De är inte här.**  
They are not here.

#### 10.1.7.5 Types of Other adverbial

(a) Manner adverbial **Han arbetar långsamt.**  
He works slowly.

(b) Place adverbial **Han arbetar hemma.**  
He works at home.

(c) Time adverbial **Han arbetar nästa vecka.**  
He works next week.

(d) Condition adverbial **Han arbetar om han får tid.**  
He works if he has time.

(e) Cause adverbial **Han arbetar därför att han måste.**  
He works because he has to.

(f) Instrument **Han arbetar med en dator.**  
He works with a computer.

(g) Comparison **Han sliter som ett djur.**  
He works like a dog. [*Lit.* like an animal]

#### 10.1.7.6 Position of clausal adverbials

Clausal adverbials come *after* the finite verb (or after the subject in inverted word order) in the main clause, and *before* the finite verb in the subordinate clause:

*Main clause*

**Vi hade inte parkerat olagligt.**  
We had not parked illegally.

*Subordinate clause*

**Vi förklarade, att vi inte hade parkerat olagligt.**  
We explained that we had not parked illegally.

### 10.1.7.7 Position of Other adverbials

Other adverbials usually come either at the end of the sentence or at the beginning of the sentence:

**Vi hade parkerat där hela dagen.**      We had parked there all day.  
**Där hade vi parkerat hela dagen.**  
**Hela dagen hade vi parkerat där.**

Note – Occasionally, in more formal Swedish, the Other adverbial is moved to the position usually occupied by the clausal adverbial. See 10.6.4.

**De misstänker att han under lång tid har dopat sig med anabola steroider.**  
 They suspect that he has, for a long time, been taking anabolic steroids.

### 10.1.8 The order of clause elements

The account of Swedish word order presented here is based largely on a positional scheme originally developed by Paul Diderichsen for Danish, a syntactically very similar language. Whilst most other systems for learning word order are based on rules indicating the relative location of only two elements, Diderichsen's scheme has the great advantage of being a topographical scheme which maps the entire clause (in principal the sentence), indicating the relative positions of all the elements simultaneously. The names of the positions have been changed in the account that follows in order to adapt more closely to traditional grammatical terminology.

Main clause (MC)						
Topic	Finite verb	Subject	Clausal adverbial	Non-finite verb	Object/ Complement/ Real subject	Other adverbial
T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>I dag</b> Today	<b>hade</b> she	<b>hon</b> had	<b>inte</b> not	<b>packat</b> packed	<b>väskan</b> her case	<b>när vi kom.</b> when we arrived.

Subordinate clause (SC)						
Con- junction	Subject	Clausal adverbial	Finite verb	Non- finite verb	Object/ Complement	Other adverbial
conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
... <b>då</b> ... as	<b>jag</b> I	<b>inte</b> had	<b>hade</b> not	<b>sett</b> seen	<b>barnet</b> the child	<b>tidigare</b> before

For Topic see 10.6.2. For definitions of clause see 10.3.2. This scheme and its significance for word order and sentence construction are examined in detail in 10.3ff.

## 10.2 Phrases

### 10.2.1 Introduction

Phrases form different clause elements.

#### 10.2.1.1 Head words and modifiers

Phrases consist of a head word (H) alone or have a head word with optional modifiers coming before or after the head (preposed or postposed). There are specific rules for the five different kinds of phrase (10.2.2ff.). The head word is in italics.

**två lärare från Hull**

*H (Noun phrase)*

two teachers from Hull

**ganska nöjd med resultatet**

*H (Adjective phrase)*

fairly pleased with the work

**nästan skrika åt honom**

*H (Verb phrase)*

almost shout at him

**mycket fort**

*H (Adverb phrase)*

very quickly

**ett stycke innanför staketet**

*H (Prepositional phrase)*

a little way inside the fence

### 10.2.1.2 Types of modifier

- (a) Functional modifiers express quality or degree. These usually come before the head:

**en man**, a man; **några män**, some men; **gamla män**, old men, **tio män**, ten men; **kungens män**, the king's men

- (b) Descriptive modifiers modify the headword. These usually come after the headword:

**flickorna från Finland**, the girls from Finland; **slutet på boken**, the end of the book

Occasionally they come before the head:

**milt grön**, pale green; **hånfullt leende**, smiling mockingly

### 10.2.1.3 Endocentric and exocentric phrases

- (a) *Endocentric* phrases have a head word plus possible modifiers and may have the same function as the head alone. These include the noun phrase (with a noun or pronoun as head), the adjective phrase (with an adjective or participle as head) and the adverb phrase (with an adverb as head). The head word is in italics in the following:

**Den lilla *tjejen* är söt.**                      The little girl is pretty.  
noun phrase = noun

***Hon* är intelligent också.**                She is also intelligent.  
noun phrase = pronoun

***ganska dålig***                                fairly bad  
adjective phrase

***just nu***                                         just now  
adverb phrase

- (b) *Exocentric* phrases have a combination of words that cannot be dissolved without altering the syntactic function. These include the prepositional phrase (with a preposition + noun phrase as head) and verb phrase (with the main verb as head). The head word is in italics :

**killen med *den vita mössan***    the lad with the white cap  
**Hon lär kunna *spela fiol.***        She is said to be able to play the violin.

#### 10.2.1.4 Nexus

Characteristic of the clause (10.3ff.) is a combination of phrases, with the verb phrase and noun phrase forming a *nexus* (the relationship of subject + finite verb). The only exception is the command using the imperative where there is no explicit subject: **Kom!** ‘Come along!’, **Sluta!** ‘Stop!’, **Sjung ut!** ‘Speak your mind!’ The order of elements in the nexus is important in determining which type of clause we are dealing with (Cf. **Det regnar** ‘It’s raining’, with **Regnar det?** ‘Is it raining?’). The nexus is the core of the clause.

#### 10.2.2 The noun phrase

##### 10.2.2.1 Structure

A noun phrase (NP) comprises a noun or pronoun as head word with possible determiners (10.2.2.5) and/or other modifiers. The modifiers may be preposed or postposed. If the noun phrase is a pronoun, the modifiers can only be postposed. The head word is in italics below:

<b>nyfikna barn</b>	inquisitive children
<b>folk som pratar för mycket</b>	people who talk too much
<b>alla människor</b>	all people
<b>min cykel</b>	my cycle
<b>perioden innan 1900</b>	the period before 1900
<b>i Kalles plånbok</b>	in Kalle’s wallet
<b>förslaget att ge upp</b>	the proposal to give up
<b>första dagen</b>	the first day
<b>denna fråga</b>	this question
<b>hon som skrattade</b>	she who laughed

##### 10.2.2.2 Syntactical functions

The noun phrase is the building block used in many different constructions. The syntactical functions of the noun phrase are:

(a) Subject (10.1.2)

**Den nya bilen har luftkonditionering.**  
The new car has air conditioning.

(b) Direct (accusative) object (10.1.5.1f.)

**Ylva köpte Svenska Akademiens grammatik.**  
Ylva bought the Swedish Academy Grammar.

(c) Indirect (dative) object (10.1.5.2)

**Han gav sin fru pärlor på bröllopsdagen.**  
He gave his wife pearls for their wedding anniversary.

(d) Subject complement (10.1.6.2(a))

**Hon är den bästa lärare jag har haft.**  
She is the best teacher I have had.

(e) Object complement (10.1.6.2(b))

**Alla kallar henne Charlie.**      Everyone calls her Charlie.

(f) Adverbial (10.1.7)

**Han pluggade hela natten.**      He was studying all night.

(g) Modifier

**Den där cykeln vill jag ha.**      I want that bike.

(h) Quality attribute

**Vi köpte ett kilo kaffe.**      We bought a kilo of coffee.

(j) Epithet

**Danskarna gillar drottningen.**      Danes like the queen.

(k) Apposition

**Charlie, den nya institutionschefen, är enormt flitig.**  
Charlie, the new head of department, is very hard-working.

(l) Governed by a preposition

**Uppsatsen ligger i det bruna kuvertet.**  
The essay is in the brown envelope.

### 10.2.2.3 Preposed determiners and attributes

The relative order of determiners and attributes coming before the noun as head word is shown in this diagram:

Determiners						Adjective	Head
Totality	Demonstrative	Possession	Quantity	Selection	Comparison	attribute	word
			en				dag
			två			unga	barn
		Olles	många			nya	vänner
alla	dessa	mina				minsta	bröder
	denna			sista			gång
inga					sådana	gamla	filmer

Translations: one day; two young children; Olle's many new friends; all these, the least of my brothers; this final time; no such old films

(a) Adjective attribute (2.2.1.2)

This comes before the head.

**en glad man**, a happy man; **ett stormande hav**, a stormy sea;  
**en avbruten gren**, a broken branch; **en röd liten stuga**, a little red  
cottage; **pigga svenska tjejer**, lively Swedish girls

**den från daghemmet bortsprungne killen**  
the boy who had run away from the day centre

(b) Genitive attribute:

**Eriks bil**, Erik's car; **gårdens ägare**, the owner of the farm

(c) Measurement attribute:

**ett kilo mjöl**, a kilo of flour; **en hel meter tyg**, a whole metre of cloth

(d) Epithet:

**farbror Olof**, Uncle Olof; **diktaren Fröding**, the poet Fröding



#### 10.2.2.4 Postposed attributes

(a) General postposed attribute:

Adverb

**resan hem**

the journey home

Prepositional phrase

**mannen från Mallorca**

the man from Majorca

Pronoun

**rånaren själv**

the robber himself

Relative clause

**kvinnan som jag känner**

the woman whom I know

Att-clause

**tanken att man ska dö**

the idea that one will die

Indirect question clause

**frågan om hur det skulle gå**

the question of how it would go

Comparative clause

**en sådan fin bil som du har**

a fine car like you have

Conjunctive subordinate clause

**tiden innan du kom**

the time before you arrived

Infinitive phrase

**löftet att återvända**

the promise to return

Comparative phrase

**en lika stor lön som din**

a salary as big as yours

(b) Apposition

These are reduced clauses in which the head of the apposition acts as a complement:

**Olle (som var), min skolkamrat under många år**

Olle (who was) my school friend for many years

**Anna (som är), vår lärare, har blivit sjuk.**

Anna (who is) our teacher, has fallen ill.

**Satsdelarna, t.ex. subjekt och objekt, är problematiska.**  
The clause elements, e.g. subject and object, are problematical.

(c) Predicative attribute:

**en krigsman, (som var) rustad till tänderna**  
a warrior, (who was) armed to the teeth

(d) **Med**-phrase attribute:

**killen med händerna i fickorna (= killen som har/hade...)**  
the boy with his hands in his pockets (= the boy who has/had...)

#### 10.2.2.5 Definite and indefinite noun phrases

See 2.2.1f., 2.3.

Indefinite noun phrases introduce a new idea while definite noun phrases refer back to a familiar (given) idea:

<b>Jag mötte en ljus och en mörk tjej.</b>	←	<b>Den ljusa tjejen var svensk.</b>
<i>Indefinite NP</i>		<i>Definite NP</i>
I met a fair and a dark girl.		The fair girl was Swedish.

(b) Indefinite noun phrase (2.2.1)

The indefinite noun phrase may consist of a naked noun:

<b>Köpte du smör?</b>	Did you buy butter?
<b>Hästar är trevliga djur.</b>	Horses are lovely animals.

It may also consist of a noun preceded by:

An indefinite article	<b>en bil</b> , a car
An adjective attribute(s)	<b>billigt danskt smör</b> , cheap Danish butter
A measurement attribute	<b>en liter vin</b> , a litre of wine
A combination of these	<b>många nya hus</b> , many new houses

Only indefinite noun phrases may form the real subject (i.e. when the subject is postponed, 10.1.3):

**Det inträffade en olycka på motorvägen.**  
An accident happened on the motorway.

(c) Definite noun phrase

The definite noun phrase consists of a proper noun (name) or a noun with end article:

**Nilsson har blivit sjuk.**  
**Hittade du smöret?**

Nilsson has fallen ill.  
Did you find the butter?

The noun in the definite noun phrase may occur alone. Alternatively it may be preceded by a definite attribute expressing totality, possession, selection, or by a demonstrative:

**alla människor**, all people; **min cykel**, my bicycle; **i Kalles plånbok**, in Kalle's wallet; **första dagen**, the first day; **denna fråga**, this question

Definite noun phrases allow a complement that agrees (2.2.1):

**Äpplena är goda.**

The apples are good.

Only definite noun phrases may be duplicated (10.8.4):

**Cykeln, den har blivit stulen.** The bike, it's been stolen.

### **10.2.3** The verb phrase

#### **10.2.3.1** Structure

The verb phrase may contain a finite verb or a combination of several verbs (5.1.1). As is clear from word order rules (10.1.8), the verb phrase may therefore be discontinuous, that is it may bracket other words.

**I går blev han utsparkad.** Yesterday he was thrown out.

#### **10.2.3.2** A narrow view of the verb phrase

Compare 10.2.3.9 for a broader view.

(a) finite verb alone (FV)  
(10.1.4)

**Han skriver brev.**  
He is writing letters.

- (a) FV + one or more non-finite verbs (NFVs) (5.2.6ff., 5.2.1.1) **Han har skrivit flera brev.**  
He has written several letters.
- Han måste kunna skriva ett brev.**  
He must be able to write a letter.
- (c) FV (+ NFV) + verb particle: particle verbs (5.6.3) **Han har skrivit ut allt för hand.**  
He has written everything out by hand.
- (d) FV (+ NFV) + preposition: prepositional verbs **Han hade letat efter boken.**  
He had looked for the book.
- (e) FV (+ NFV) + reflexive pronoun (5.4.3) **Han har inte rakat sig på en vecka.**  
He hasn't shaved for a week.

### 10.2.3.3 Stressed and unstressed prepositions

Verb phrases consisting of a finite (+ non-finite) verb plus preposition are of two kinds:

- (a) Those with a stressed preposition (or adverb), 'particle verbs':

**Tycker du verkligen 'om Sverige?** Do you really like Sweden?

- (b) Those with an unstressed preposition, 'prepositional verbs':

**Vad 'tycker du om Sverige?** What do you think of Sweden?

Some further examples:

	<i>Unstressed preposition – Prepositional verb</i>	<i>Stressed preposition – Particle verb</i>
<b>av</b>	<b>njuta av</b> , enjoy	<b>hålla av</b> , be fond of
<b>efter</b>	<b>fråga efter</b> , enquire about	<b>se efter</b> , look after
<b>(i)från</b>	<b>avstå ifrån</b> , abstain from	<b>säga ifrån</b> , speak out
<b>för</b>	<b>intressera sig för</b> , be interested in	<b>ta för sig</b> , help oneself
<b>i</b>	<b>dö i</b> , die from something	<b>hålla i något</b> , keep hold of
<b>med</b>	<b>syssla med</b> , busy oneself with	<b>hålla med</b> , agree with
<b>(e)mot</b>	<b>reagera mot</b> , react to	<b>ta emot</b> , receive
<b>om</b>	<b>tycka synd om</b> , feel sorry for	<b>måla om</b> , repaint
<b>på</b>	<b>hälsa på</b> , greet	<b>hälsa på</b> , visit
<b>till</b>	<b>duga till</b> , be of use	<b>hjälpa till</b> , lend a hand
<b>under</b>	<b>krypa under</b> , creep underneath	<b>stryka under</b> , underline
<b>över</b>	<b>klaga över</b> , complain about	<b>se över</b> , inspect

**10.2.3.4** A few verbs take both a reflexive pronoun and a particle

**Vi bryr oss inte om det.**                      We don't bother about it.

**10.2.3.5** Copular verbs

Copular verbs (e.g. **vara**, **bli**) (10.1.6.1) are devoid of real meaning and take an obligatory subject complement:

<b>De är sjuka.</b>	They are ill.
<b>Vi är studenter.</b>	We are students.
<b>Han blev president.</b>	He became president.

**10.2.3.6** Transitive verbs

Generally speaking, transitive verbs have a direct object; intransitive verbs have no object, and ditransitive verbs have both an indirect and direct object. See 5.4.1.

<b>Jag slog bollen.</b>	I hit the ball.	Transitive
<b>Vi sov i tio timmar.</b>	We slept for ten hours.	Intransitive
<b>Han gav henne en guldring.</b>	He gave her a gold ring.	Ditransitive

**10.2.3.7** Kinds of auxiliary

We also use the terms *main verb* (i.e. head in the verb phrase) and *auxiliary verb*, of which there are two kinds:

(a) Temporal auxiliary (**vara**, **ha**, 5.2.6ff.)

<b>Han har redan gått.</b>	He has already left.
<b>Vi har jobbat hårt med bilen.</b>	We have worked hard on the car.

(b) Modal auxiliary (**ska**, **vill**, **måste**, **bör**, etc., 5.3.2)

<b>Vi måste gå nu.</b>	We have to leave now.
<b>Du får inte ge upp!</b>	You mustn't give up!

### 10.2.3.8 Tense, aspect, mood and voice

- (a) Tenses include the infinitive, present, past, perfect, pluperfect and future. See 5.2.
- (b) Aspect expresses the viewpoint from which the user regards the action of the verb, and is of three kinds:

(i) *Perfective* indicates that the action is completed:

**Plötsligt började det regna.** Suddenly it began to rain.

Notice that the adverbial of time often indicates completion:

**Fia köpte en ny bil i går.** Fia bought a new car yesterday.

(ii) *Imperfective* indicates that the action is not yet completed:

**Jan har varit borta i tre veckor (och är fortfarande borta).**  
Jan has been away for three weeks (and is still away).

(iii) *Progressive* indicates an action that is continuing:

**Han håller på att laga bilen.**

He is [in the process of] repairing the car.

This can also be shown by ‘pseudo-coordination’ with **och**:

**Männen stod och väntade.** The men stood waiting.

- (c) Mood is the relationship between the speaker and listener (5.3.1–5.3.5), i.e. how the speaker wishes his utterance to be regarded. This can be expressed in many ways, e.g. word order, clause structure, use of adverbials, use of modal verbs or use of inflexion.

(i) Statements and questions often use a simple verb or an auxiliary plus main verb:

**Staden har 250 000 invånare.** The town has 250,000 inhabitants.

**Har alla studenterna kommit?** Have all the students come?

**Borde jag ringa honom?** Should I phone him?

(ii) Commands often use an imperative:

**Sitt ner!**

Sit down!

**Håll tyst!**

Keep quiet!

(iii) Hypothetical statements may use a simple verb in the past subjunctive:

**Om jag vore miljonär skulle jag köpa ett franskt vinslott.**

If I were a millionaire I would buy a wine chateau in France.

(iv) Wishes can be expressed by a simple verb in the present subjunctive or the verb **må**. See 5.3.3.2.

**Gud bevara oss!**

God protect us!

**Må det gå dig väl!**

May you fare well!

(v) Uncertainty as to the reliability of a statement is expressed using **lär**. See 5.3.2.10.

**Han lär inte klara sin examen.** They say he won't get his degree.

(vi) Possibility or ability is expressed using **kunna** plus infinitive. See 5.3.2.3.

**Han kan springa fort.**

He can run fast.

**Det kan bli sol imorgon.**

It may be sunny tomorrow.

(d) Voice is the distinction between active and passive (5.5.6ff.). In the active voice the grammatical subject and the agent (person or thing causing the action) are the same. Notice the direction of the action shown by the arrows:

**En gubbe körde taxin.**

An old man was driving the taxi.

*Subject+Agent → Object*

In the passive voice the subject is the patient (person or thing acted upon by the verb) and there may be an agent preceded by **av**:

**Taxin kördes av en gubbe.**

The taxi was driven by an old man.

*Subject+Patient ← Agent*

Agentless passives are frequent:

**Taxin kördes fort.**

The taxi was driven fast.

*Subject+Patient*

### 10.2.3.9 A broader view of the verb phrase

When objects and complements are included in the verb phrase, the phrase looks like this:

Head/Verb	Particle	Indirect object/ Bound subject/ complement/ Real subject	Direct object/ Bound object complement/ Nexus infinitive	Bound adverbial	Free adverbial
<b>sätta</b> hang up a picture	<b>upp</b>		<b>en tavla</b>	<b>i hallen</b>	<b>i kväll</b>
<b>beröva</b> deprive the children of their hope		<b>barnen</b>	<b>deras hopp</b>		
<b>bli</b> get tired		<b>trött</b>			
<b>göra</b> make him happy		<b>honom</b>	<b>glad</b>		
<b>höra</b> hear the girls arrive		<b>flickorna</b>	<b>komma</b>		
<b>rakade</b> shaved (himself)			<b>sig</b>		

### 10.2.4 The adjective phrase

#### 10.2.4.1 Structure

The adjective phrase consists of an adjective or participle alone as head or with possible adverbial modifiers (6.2.7). These modifiers are primarily adverbs.

**ganska lång**, rather long; **två meter lång**, two metres long; **fruktansvärt lång**, terribly long; **tidvis mycket lång**, occasionally very long

In a few cases adjectives have postposed modifiers: **gott nog**, 'good enough.'



#### 10.2.4.2 Function

Adjective phrases function as:

- (a) Predicative complement (i.e. subject or object complement). See 2.2.1.3f.

<b>De är lyckliga.</b>	They are happy.
<b>Hon gör honom mycket stolt.</b>	She makes him very proud.

- (b) Preposed adjective attribute to the head in a noun phrase. See 2.2.1.2.

<b>en inte särskilt spännande middag</b>	a not very exciting dinner
<b>ett alltför långsamt tempo</b>	too slow a tempo
<b>en för en dans olämplig lokal</b>	an unsuitable venue for a dance

#### 10.2.5 The adverb phrase

##### 10.2.5.1 Structure

The adverb phrase often consists of an adverb alone, though it may have adverbial modifiers. Only adverbial modifiers may be preposed. See 6.2.7.

<b>mycket långsamt</b>	very slowly
<b>helt tillfälligt</b>	completely by chance

Prepositional phrases used adverbially may be postposed:

<b>ute på landet</b>	out in the country
<b>ut genom fönstret</b>	out through the window

##### 10.2.5.2 Function

The adverb phrase functions primarily:

- (a) As clausal adverbial. See 10.1.7.

<b>Han betalar aldrig.</b>	He never pays.
<b>De tycker egentligen inte om det.</b>	They don't really like it.



(c) Clausal adverbial. See 10.1.7.

**Utan tvekan är det beklagligt.** It is, without doubt, regrettable.

(d) Prepositional object. See 10.1.5.3.

**Han väntade tåligt på sin tur.** He waited patiently for his turn.

(e) Complement. See 10.1.6.

**Han är på dåligt humör.** He is in a bad mood.

## **10.2.7** The infinitive phrase

### **10.2.7.1** Structure

The infinitive phrase consists of an infinitive preceded by the infinitive marker **att**, e.g. **att köpa**, plus objects and/or modifiers, some of which precede and others of which follow the infinitive phrase:

**(Kom ihåg) att aldrig köpa dyr bensin på motorvägen.**  
(Remember) never to buy expensive petrol on the motorway.

The clausal adverbial comes before the infinitive but after **att**:

**Jag avskyr verkligen att inte ha kontroll på situationen.**  
I really detest not having control over the situation.

**Utan att egentligen ha planerat det hamnade jag på puben.**  
Without really having planned it, I ended up in the pub.

After the infinitive come the object, Other adverbial and complement:

**Det är intressant att följa den politiska debatten.** Object  
It is interesting to follow the political debate.

**Det är dyrt att köpa kaffe i England.** Other adverbial  
It is expensive to buy coffee in England.

**Jag gillar inte att vara sjuk.** Complement  
I don't like being ill.

### 10.2.7.2 Function

The infinitive phrase can function as:

(a) Subject:

**Att gnälla på andra hjälper inte.**

Grumbling about other people doesn't help.

(b) Object:

**Hjälp mig att hitta bilnycklarna!**

Help me find the car keys.

(c) Complement:

**Det vore att skjuta sig själv i foten.**

That would be shooting yourself in the foot.

(d) Attribute:

**Tjänster köps enligt principen att ta det lägsta anbudet.**

Services are procured on the principle of accepting the lowest bid.

(e) Adverbial:

**Sådant är bra att veta.**

That is good to know.

## 10.3 Main clause word order – basic positions

### 10.3.1 Main clause and subordinate clause

#### 10.3.1.1 Introduction

A *clause* is a sentence or part of a sentence usually including a subject and a finite verb, though in, for example, most imperative constructions (5.3.4) the subject is not explicit. A *sentence* consists of a main clause on its own or several coordinated main clauses with one or more subordinate clauses. While a *main clause* (MC) can occur on its own, a *subordinate clause* (SC) usually occurs together with a main clause and may be regarded as forming part of that clause.

Compare the following:

**Hon får godkänt i sin skrivning och det gläder oss.**

MC + MC Two MCs

She will pass her exam, and that pleases us.

**Att hon får godkänt i sin skrivning gläder oss.** MC includes SC

SC = Subject FV O

That she will pass her exam pleases us.

**Jag vet ännu inte om jag kan göra det.**

MC includes SC

SC = Object

I don't know yet whether I can do it.

**Jag betalar dig när vi träffas.**

MC includes SC

SC = OA-time

I'll pay you when we meet.

However, some subordinate clauses do occur as sentences without a main clause. See 10.7.7.

**Om jag bara kunde göra det! Det vore toppen!**

If only I could do it!

That would be great!

SC

MC

### 10.3.1.2 Subordinating conjunctions

Many subordinate clauses are introduced by a subordinating conjunction. See 8.3.1.1f., 10.7.1, but cf. 10.7.4.

**Jag vet inte om han kommer i dag.**

I don't know whether he's coming today.

**Jag vet inte när han kommer.**

I don't know when he is coming.

But notice that **att** may be optional:

**Vi tyckte (att) det var en vacker sång.**

We thought (that) it was a beautiful song.

### 10.3.1.3 Beginning of the clause

The main clause may in principle begin with any clause element (10.3.4, 10.6.2) while the subordinate clause usually begins with the subordinating conjunction (if present), followed by the subject. See 10.3.1.4. Notice that inverted word order (verb – subject) is much more common in Swedish than in English.

Main clause							
Topic	FV		S	CA		NFV	
	<b>I dag</b>	<b>måste</b>		<b>jag</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>arbeta.</b>	
	Today I have to work.						
Subordinate clause							
Matrix	Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
	<b>Han sa</b>	<b>att</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>måste</b>	<b>arbeta</b>	<b>– i dag.</b>
	He said that he had to work today.						

### 10.3.1.4 Omission of **har/hade**

In subordinate clauses the temporal auxiliary **har/hade** may be omitted in formal written Swedish:

**Vi tackar för det varuprov (som) du (har) skickat.**

We thank you for the sample of merchandise (that) you have sent.

### 10.3.1.5 Position of the clausal adverbial

In main clauses the clausal adverbial is usually placed after the finite verb, whereas in subordinate clauses it comes before the finite verb:

MC **Han kan inte dansa.**

FV CA

He can't dance.

SC **Han sa, att han inte kunde dansa.**

CA FV

He said that he couldn't dance.

For the structure of clauses, see 10.3.4ff.

### 10.3.2 FV1, FV2 and the position of the subject

Swedish main clauses can be divided into two main types according to the position of the finite verb (FV) in the clause (10.1.4): in FV1 clauses the finite verb comes first in the clause, and in FV2 clauses it comes second. Notice, however, that in the word order scheme below the finite verb always occupies position 2 in FV1 clauses, and the initial position (Topic, 10.6.2, 10.8.2) remains unfilled.

Put simply, FV1/FV2 refer to the *surface* word order, i.e. what actually appears in the sentence, rather than the *underlying* order (the theoretical positions in the scheme) which works with unfilled positions.

Type	1 Topic	2 Finite verb	3 Subject	4 Clausal adverbial	5 Non-finite verb	6 Object
<b>FV1</b>						
1	–	<b>Läser</b>	<b>du</b>	–	–	<b>svenska?</b>
Can you read Swedish?						
2	–	<b>Läs</b>	–	–	–	<b>dina läxor!</b>
Do your homework!						
3	–	<b>Måtte</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	<b>ångra</b>	<b>ditt beslut!</b>
May you never regret your decision!						
<b>FV2</b>						
4	<b>Han</b>	<b>läser</b>	–	–	–	<b>svenska.</b>
He reads Swedish.						
5	<b>I dag</b>	<b>läser</b>	<b>han</b>	–	–	<b>svenska.</b>
Today he's reading Swedish.						
6	<b>Varför</b>	<b>läser</b>	<b>han</b>	–	–	<b>svenska?</b>
Why does he read Swedish?						

From these examples it is clear that FV1/FV2 distinguish certain sentence types. See 10.3.3.

FV1 clauses (clauses without a topic) are either yes/no questions (1), commands (2) or optative clauses using **må/måtte** or the subjunctive (3).

FV2 clauses are either statements (4, 5) or v-questions (6). See 10.6.11.2.

While FV1 clauses often have inverted word order (FV – S), FV2 clauses may have either straight (S – FV) or inverted (FV – S) order. In subordinate clauses (10.4) straight word order (S – FV) is usual.

### **10.3.3** Sentence types

See 10.3.2 for a definition of FV1/FV2. The main sentence types in Swedish are as follows:

#### **10.3.3.1** Statement

(a) FV2 straight

**Han kommer hem imorgon.**  
He's coming home tomorrow.

(b) FV2 inverted

**Imorgon kommer han hem.**  
Tomorrow he's coming home.

#### **10.3.3.2** Question

See 10.6.11.

(a) Yes/no question FV1 inverted

**Kommer han hem imorgon?**  
Is he coming home tomorrow?

(b) V-question FV2 inverted

**När kommer han hem?**  
When is he coming home?

#### **10.3.3.3** Command

(a) FV1, usually no subject (inverted)

**Kom hem nu!**  
Come home now!

(b) FV1, inversion with a subject

**Diska du så lagar jag maten!**  
You wash up and I'll cook.

#### **10.3.3.4** Optative

Usually FV1 inverted

(a) **Må, måtte:**

**Må det gå dig väl!**  
May everything go well for you!



(b) Subjunctive:

**Vore jag bara ung igen!**  
Were I but young again!

**10.3.4 Main clause positions**

The following table shows different kinds of main clause word order according to the basic scheme.

Topic	Finite verb	Subject	Clausal adverbial	Non-finite verb	Object/ Comp.	Other adverbial
<b>STATEMENT</b>						
1	Han packar	–	–	–	väskorna.	
2	Han hade	–	ännu inte	packat	väskorna	i morse.
3	I morse hade	han	ännu inte	packat	väskorna.	
4	Väskan hade	–	ännu inte	packats	–	i morse.
5	Vi ger	–	–	–	Olle boken	i kväll.
6	Sedan blev	de	tyvärr	–	arga.	
7	Det sitter	–	redan	–	en polis	i köket.
8	Det har	–	redan	kommit	tre poliser.	
9	Det regnade	–	–	–	–	kraftigt.
10	När vi kom, hade	mor	redan	hunnit laga	middag.	
<b>V-QUESTION</b>						
11	När brukar	de	–	komma	–	till byn?
<b>YES/NO QUESTION</b>						
12	– Brukar	de	aldrig	komma	–	till byn?
<b>COMMAND</b>						
13	– Ring	–	inte	upp	dem	nu!
<b>OPTATIVE</b>						
14	– Må	du	aldrig	få ångra	dig!	
15	– Vore	jag	bara	–	ung	igen!

Translation of examples: 1 He is packing the cases. 2 He still hadn't packed the cases this morning. 3 This morning he still hadn't packed the cases. 4 The case still hadn't been packed this morning. 5 We will give Olle the book this evening. 6 Then, alas, they got angry. 7 There is

already a policeman sitting in the kitchen. 8 Three policemen have already arrived. 9 It rained hard. 10 When we arrived mother had already had time to make dinner. 11 When do they usually come to the village? 12 Don't they ever come to the village? 13 Don't ring them up now! 14 May you never regret it! 15 If only I were young again!

#### 10.3.4.1 Notes on main clause positions

- (a) Main clause statements and questions always have a finite verb and usually a subject. All other positions may be left vacant. The subject may occupy the topic position (Examples 1, 2, 4, 5 above). Even with impersonal verbs a subject must be inserted (9). The subject may alternatively occupy the position immediately following the finite verb (3, 6, 10–12, 14, 15). When there is both a formal subject and a real subject, the latter is postponed to the object position (7, 8).
- (b) The initial (topic) position is always occupied in statements and v-questions (1–11), but is vacant in yes/no questions (12), commands (13) and optatives (14, 15), i.e. in FV1 clauses. Only one clause element may occupy the topic position at any one time (1–11).
- (c) There may be more than one non-finite verb (10, 14: for verb particles see 10.5.1).
- (d) There may be more than one clausal adverbial (2, 3, 4).
- (e) There may be more than one other adverbial (9).
- (f) There may be more than one object or complement (5).
- (g) There may be a link position preceding the topic and occupied by a coordinating conjunction in cases with several coordinated main clauses. See 10.6.10.
- (h) There may be an extra position inserted before the topic position but after any link, or after the other adverbial position or both. See 10.6.9.

## 10.4 Subordinate clause word order – basic positions

### 10.4.1 Subordinate clause positions

The following table shows examples of different kinds of subordinate clause word order.

Matrix	Conj. Subj	Clausal adverbial	Finite verb	Non-finite verb	O/C	Other adverbial	X <sub>2</sub>
1	Vi frågade	om han	inte (hade)	packat	bilen.		
2		Då de	inte (hade)	sagt	ett ord,	– visste vi inget.	
3	Vi tyckte	(att) det	inte var	–	roligt	längre.	
4	Om vi är tysta, och	om vi	inte busar,	– –	–	får vi se på teve.	
5	Hon undrar	om det	inte finns	–	någon mat	hemma.	
Independent clause							
6		Om du	bara visste	–	allt!		
7		Att ni	aldrig blir	–	trötta!		
8	Kanske	– han	inte sitter	kvar	–	så länge.	

Translation of examples: 1 We asked whether he hadn't packed the car. 2 As they hadn't said a word, we didn't know anything. 3 We thought (that) it wasn't fun any longer. 4 If we are quiet and if we do not misbehave we can watch TV. 5 She wonders whether there isn't any food in the house. 6 If you only knew everything! 7 How come you never get tired! 8 Perhaps he will not stay in his job so long.

#### 10.4.1.1 Notes on subordinate clause positions

- The subject position is always occupied. If there are both a formal and a real subject the latter is postponed to the object position (5).
- The finite verb **har**, **hade** may be omitted when acting as a temporal auxiliary, i.e. when there is a supine (1, 2).
- The subordinating conjunction **att** may sometimes be omitted (3). See 10.7.4.

- (d) There is a link position preceding the conjunction, sometimes occupied by a coordinating conjunction (10.6.10). See example 4 above.
- (e) For independent clauses (with subordinate clause word order) see 10.7.7.
- (f) There is an extra position inserted after the other adverbial position. For extra positions see 10.6.9.

#### **10.4.2 Differences between main and subordinate clause positions**

There are two major differences. See also 10.3.4 and 10.4.1.

##### **10.4.2.1 Subject–verb order**

While the main clause begins with any clause element (the topic), the subordinate clause almost invariably begins with the conjunction and subject (and needs no topic). Occasionally, however (10.4.1 example 3 and 10.7.4), the conjunction **att** may be omitted in the subordinate clause. Thus, while main clause word order may either be subject–verb (straight) or verb–subject (inverted), subordinate clause order is usually subject–verb (straight).

##### **10.4.2.2 Position of clausal adverbial**

In the main clause the clausal adverbial comes immediately *after* the finite verb. In the subordinate clause the clausal adverbial comes immediately *before* the finite verb.

### **10.5 Order within positions**

In many sentences there is more than one element in the CA, NFV, O/C and OA positions. This section examines the relative order of elements within these positions.

#### **10.5.1 Order of non-finite verbs and verb particles**

See also 10.1.4.

### 10.5.1.1 Position of the separable particle

In the case of separable compound verbs (5.6.3ff.) the verb particle occupies the non-finite verb position. When the separable verb is in the non-finite form, both verb and particle occupy this position.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>Vi</b>	<b>ringde</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>upp</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>i går.</b>
We didn't ring him up yesterday.						
<b>Vi</b>	<b>brukar</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>ringa upp</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>på kvällen.</b>
We don't usually ring him up in the evening.						
<b>Han</b>	<b>blir</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>uppringd</b>	–	<b>på kvällen.</b>
He doesn't get rung up in the evening.						

### 10.5.1.2 Position of the particle with a non-finite verb

When a non-finite verb follows the particle verb, the particle immediately precedes it in the NFV position.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>Han</b>	<b>ser</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>ut att vara</b>	<b>en brottsling.</b>	
He doesn't look like a criminal.						

### 10.5.2 Order of objects, complements and real subjects

All of these come in the O/C position. See also 10.1.5f., 10.1.6.1f. Below is a summary of the relative order of elements within the object/complement position:

Real subject –	Subject complement –	Indirect object –	Direct object –	Object complement
10.5.2.4	10.5.2.3	10.5.2.1	10.5.2.2	10.5.2.2

### 10.5.2.1 Order of objects

The order of objects is usually as in English, i.e. the indirect object precedes the direct object and the prepositionless object precedes the object with a preposition.

<b>Han lånade</b>	<b>Nils</b>	<b>boken.</b>	He lent Nils the book.
	<i>IO</i>	<i>DO</i>	
<b>Han lånade</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>den.</b>	He lent him it.
	<i>IO</i>	<i>DO</i>	
<b>Han lånade</b>	<b>boken</b>	<b>till Nils.</b>	He lent the book to Nils.
	<i>-Prep.</i>	<i>+Prep.</i>	
<b>Vi bad</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>(att) skynda sig.</b>	We asked him to hurry up.
	<i>IO</i>	<i>DO = Infinitive phrase</i>	

Note – When the object is a subordinate clause, the prepositional object may precede the prepositionless object:

<b>Han sa</b>	<b>till alla</b>	<b>att Eva var sjuk.</b>	
	<i>IO</i>	<i>DO = SC</i>	
He told everyone that Eva was ill.			

### 10.5.2.2 The direct object precedes the object complement

<b>Partiet omvalde i dag</b>	<b>Olof Olsson</b>	<b>till ordförande.</b>	
	<i>DO</i>	<i>OC</i>	
The Party today re-elected Olof Olsson as chair.			

### 10.5.2.3 The subject complement usually precedes all objects

<b>Han är värd en belöning.</b>	He is worthy of a reward.
<i>SC</i>	<i>DO</i>

Note – There are some exceptions in set phrases:

**Det är mödan värt.**  
It is worth the effort.

**Han var alltid situationen vuxen.**  
He was always equal to the occasion.

**10.5.2.4** The real subject in existential sentences precedes the subject complement

**Det finns inte många lägenheter outhyrda i Stockholm.**

RS SC

There aren't many flats vacant in Stockholm.

**10.5.2.5** Unstressed object pronouns and reflexive pronouns are placed in the subject position

Unlike stressed object pronouns, which go in the O/C position, unstressed object pronouns and reflexive pronouns, which are themselves a kind of unstressed object pronoun, go in the S position.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>Jag</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>honom den</b>	<b>inte.</b>			
I didn't give him it.						
<b>Då</b>	<b>lärde</b>	<b>han sig</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>språket.</b>	
Then he never learned the language.						

Note – An exception to this is a clause with a complex verb. See 10.6.5.

### **10.5.3 Order of clausal adverbials**

See also 6.2.5, 10.1.7.

The order is usually:

1 Short modal adverbs (6.2.5(b)):

**då, ju, nog, väl**

2 Short pronominal adverbs (6.2.4) or conjunctive adverbs (6.2.5.3):

**alltså, dock, därför, ändå**

3 Longer modal adverbs (6.2.5(b)) or prepositional phrases:

**antagligen, egentligen, faktiskt, verkligen**

**Han var under lång tid chef för polisen.**

He was for a long time police chief.

4 Negations:

**aldrig, inte**

The relative order when all of these are present in the sentence is shown by these examples:

De har <sup>1</sup> **ju** <sup>2</sup> **därför** <sup>3</sup> **faktiskt** <sup>4</sup> **aldrig** rest utomlands.  
They have therefore actually never travelled abroad.

Vi får **väl** **ändå** **trots allt** **inte** **ge upp**.  
We must nevertheless despite everything not give up.

#### **10.5.4** Order of other adverbials and the passive agent

See also 10.1.7.

##### **10.5.4.1** Order of other adverbials

(a) The order of other adverbials is rather flexible. Two rules of thumb apply:

- (i) adverbials of manner usually precede those of place and time (manner–place–time = MPT)
- (ii) long adverbials usually follow the MPT group

(b) The order is, therefore, usually:

1 Adverbial expressions of *manner* (6.2.2.2) or *degree*

**försiktigt**, carefully; **långsamt**, slowly; **noga**, carefully; **ordentligt**, properly; **i hög grad**, to a high degree; **i ringa omfattning**, to a very limited extent

2 Adverbial expressions of *place* (6.2.2.3)

**här**, here; **där** there; **hemma**, at home; **på Öland**, on Öland; **i staden**, in town



3 Adverbial expressions of *time* (6.2.2.1)

**i går**, yesterday; **på förmiddagen**, in the morning; **nästa vecka**, next week; **år 2013**, in 2013; **dagen därpå**, on the following day

4 Long adverbial expressions, such as *cause, condition*, etc.

**av ett eller annat skäl**, for one reason or another; **på goda grunder**, for good reasons; **om du håller med**, if you agree

Notice the alternatives in the table below (and see 10.6.3f.) which are the result of a desire to emphasise the final element in the sentence.

Order of adverbial expressions				
1	2	3	4	
Manner	Place	Time	Other long adverbials	
<b>Han reste</b>	<b>plötsligt</b>	<b>bort</b>	<b>i går</b>	<b>av någon anledning.</b>
He suddenly left yesterday for some reason. Cf. <b>Han reste av någon anledning plötsligt bort i går.</b>				
<b>Vi träffades</b>	<b>av en händelse</b>	<b>i Lund</b>	<b>förra året.</b>	
We met by chance in Lund last year. Cf. <b>Vi träffades av en händelse förra året i Lund.</b>				
<b>Han skadades svårt</b>	<b>i London</b>	<b>år 1940</b>	<b>under en tysk bombräd.</b>	
He was badly injured in London in 1940 during a German bombing raid. Cf. <b>Han skadades svårt under en tysk bombräd år 1940 i London.</b>				

#### 10.5.4.2 Position of the passive agent

Notice that the passive agent (5.5.6) usually comes immediately before the other adverbial expressions:

**Vi blev uppringda av Svenssons på hotellet häromdagen.**  
*Agent OA-Place OA-Time*

We were rung up by the Svenssons at the hotel the other day.

The agent comes immediately after the object:

**Han beviljades avsked av styrelsen i går.**  
*O Agent OA-Time*

His resignation was accepted by the board yesterday.

### 10.5.5 Order within positions – summary

1	Topic	any element from 2–7 in the table in 10.6
2	Finite verb	present or past or imperative or subjunctive
3	Subject	reflexive pronoun – subject – unstressed object
4	Clausal adverbial	short modal adverb – short pronominal adverb – longer modal adverb – negation
5	Non-finite verb	infinitive(s) or supine(s) or participle, or (infinitive or supine +) verb particle
6	Object/Complement	reflexive pronoun – real subject – subject complement – indirect object – direct object – object complement
7	Other adverbial	passive agent – manner adverbial – place adverbial – time adverbial – long adverbial

## 10.6 Main clause transformations

This section deals in detail with movements within the (very flexible) Swedish main clause. These transformations are often made for stylistic reasons.

### 10.6.1 The base clause

For the purposes of applying transformation rules a basic main clause structure for Swedish is assumed, as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Topic	Finite verb	Subject	Clausal adverbial	Non-finite verb	Object/ Complement	Other adverbials
<b>Han</b>	<b>tänker</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>köpa</b>	<b>bil</b>	<b>i vår.</b>
He's not thinking of buying a car this spring.						

This base clause begins with the subject, i.e. has straight word order, and has all other positions filled (except the subject). In the paragraphs below possible variations of this order are examined. In paragraphs 10.6.2–10.6.5 these variations largely involve changes for stylistic effect, whereas in paragraphs 10.6.7–10.6.9 the changes involve a more radical re-disposition of elements.

## 10.6.2 Topicalisation

See also 10.3.1f., 10.8.2. For the base clause, see 10.6.1.

### 10.6.2.1 Introduction

- (a) Topicalisation involves placing one of the clause elements from positions 2 to 7 of the base clause in the topic position, thus displacing the subject to position 3. The most frequent topicalisation is of adverbial expressions indicating when or where the action of the clause is taking place. This is usually done when the intention is to emphasise an element by placing it in the *topic* position or for stylistic reasons. Notice that, in the first four examples below, the meaning is the same.

1 T	2 FV	3 S	4 CA	5 NFV	6 O/C	7 OA
Base sentence						
<b>Han</b>	<b>tänker</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>köpa</b>	<b>bil</b>	<b>i vår.</b>
He's not thinking of buying a car this spring.						
1 OA in Topic						
<b>I vår</b>	<b>tänker</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>köpa</b>	<b>bil.</b>	
2 Object in Topic						
<b>Bil</b>	<b>tänker</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>köpa</b>	–	<b>i vår.</b>
3 CA in Topic						
<b>Inte</b>	<b>tänker</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>köpa</b>	<b>bil</b>	<b>i vår.</b>
4 NFV + Object in Topic						
<b>Köpa bil</b>	<b>tänker</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>göra</b>	–	<b>i vår.</b>
5 Direct speech (object)						
<b>Tusan!</b>	<b>skrek</b>	<b>han.</b>				
'Blast!', he shouted.						
6 Complement (this may sound affected)						
<b>Vackert är</b>		<b>det</b>				<b>ändå.</b>
Nevertheless, it's beautiful.						
7 Finite verb in spoken Swedish in Topic. See also 4 above.						
<b>Skriver gör</b>		<b>han</b>	<b>sällan.</b>			
= <b>Han skriver sällan.</b>						
He seldom writes.						

(b) Place-holder **gör/gjorde**

Notice that, in examples 4 and 7 in the table above when the non-finite or finite verb is topicalised, an additional verb – a suitable form of **göra** – must replace it as the ‘place-holder’. The function of the place-holder verb is to indicate sentence type but often gives the topicalised verb *contrastive stress*.

Compare:

**Skriver han inte?** = yes/no question **Doesn't he write?**  
**Skriver gör han inte.** = statement [*Lit. Write he does not.*]

This also occurs in the past tense:

**Drack, gjorde han aldrig.** He never drank.

In example 4 both the object and the finite verb or the entire non-finite verb phrase is moved. Other examples of this are:

**Liknar sin bror gör han inte.** He isn't like his brother.  
**Cykla i Alperna gör jag aldrig.** I never cycle in the Alps.

**10.6.2.2** Adverbial subordinate clause as topic

It is common to find as topic a subordinate clause which is an Other adverbial.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>När vi kom</b>						
<b>hem</b>	<b>drack</b>	<b>vi</b>	<b>alltid</b>	–	<b>kaffe.</b>	
When we got home we always drank coffee.						
Cf. <b>Vi</b>	<b>drack</b>	–	<b>alltid</b>	–	<b>kaffe</b>	<b>när vi kom hem.</b>
<b>Om Olle</b>						
<b>är snäll</b>	<b>får</b>	<b>han</b>	–	–	<b>en glass.</b>	
If Olle is good he can have an ice cream.						
Cf. <b>Olle</b>	<b>får</b>	–	–	–	<b>en glass</b>	<b>om han är snäll.</b>

### 10.6.2.3 Only one clause element as topic

Notice that (with the exception of example 4 in 10.6.2.1(a)) only one clause element usually occupies the topic position at any one time. This means, for example, that only one adverbial may be topicalised as in the following transformations:

**Vi åkte till Stockholm i våras.**

OA-Place                      OA-Time

We went to Stockholm last spring.

→1 **I våras åkte vi till Stockholm.**

OA-Time                      OA-Place

→2 **Till Stockholm åkte vi i våras.**

OA-Place                      OA-Time

### 10.6.3 The weight principle

#### 10.6.3.1 Introduction

The weight principle can be formulated as follows: unstressed familiar information (a short element) tends to be placed to the left in the sentence, while heavy new information (a long element) tends to be placed to the right in the sentence. Thus the natural balance in most sentences accords with 'end weight'. This applies to spoken and most informal written Swedish.

**Dagerman blev redaktör för tidningen år 1945 när han var 21 år.**

T                      FV   C                      OA                      OA

Dagerman became editor of the paper in 1945 when he was 21 years old.

#### 10.6.3.2 Implications

The implications of the weight principle are summarised here and explained in greater detail in the paragraphs that follow and in 10.8.1ff.

- (a) Elements losing their stress may move leftwards.
- (b) Occasionally, as in the case of **inte**, this leftward movement is not accommodated within the positional scheme. See 10.6.6.



- 2a **Han har de senaste dagarna stannat hemma.**  
*OA-Time* *OA-Place*  
 The last few days he has stayed at home.
- 3 **Han kommer att ta kontakt med firman när tiden är mogen.**  
*OA = SC*  
 He will get in touch with the firm when the time is ripe.
- 3a **Han kommer när tiden är mogen att ta kontakt med firman.**  
*OA = SC*  
 When the time is ripe he will get in touch with the firm.
- 4 **Vi väntar med att ge honom nyheten tills imorgon.**  
*DO* *OA-Time*  
 We will wait to give him the news until tomorrow.
- 4a **Vi väntar tills imorgon med att ge honom nyheten.**  
*OA-Time* *DO*  
 We will wait until tomorrow to give him the news.

#### 10.6.4.2 'Light' adverbials

Other adverbials which are relatively 'light' can be placed in the CA position without disturbing the balance of the sentence:

**Vi ska så småningom bygga en sommarstuga.**

We will eventually build a summer cottage.

**Är vi då mogna för beslut?**

Are we ready then to take a decision?

**Han började snabbt gå förbi busskön.**

He began to walk quickly past the bus queue.

#### 10.6.4.3 Leftward movement of adverbials of time

Adverbials of place are not moved to the CA position, whilst adverbials of time are often moved in this way. Compare:

**Han har bott i norra England i tio år.**

He has lived in the North of England for ten years.

**Han har i tio år bott i norra England.**

He has lived for ten years in the North of England.

#### 10.6.4.4 Clausal adverbial moves to other adverbial position

A movement in the opposite direction, i.e. movement of the clausal adverbial to the other adverbial position, is largely restricted to the spoken language, and is undertaken in order to provide the otherwise unstressed clausal adverbial with a measure of stress:

1 **Han har *faktiskt* studerat svenska i tre år.**  
CA

He has actually studied Swedish for three years.

1a **Han har studerat svenska i tre år *faktiskt*.**  
CA

He has studied Swedish for three years, actually.

2 **Det finns ju *också rätt många iranier*.**  
There are also, of course, quite a lot of Iranians.

2a **Det finns ju *rätt många iranier också*.**  
There are of, course, quite a lot of Iranians too.

3 **Du är *alltså inte klok!***  
You must be mad!

3a **Du är *inte klok alltså!***  
You are mad, you know!

#### 10.6.5 'Light' elements

Light elements are short unstressed clause elements, usually object or reflexive pronouns. (In the table DO = Direct object, IO = Indirect object). In constructions without a non-finite verb (examples 2, 3, 4, 6 below) these tend to move leftwards to occupy the S position, thus preceding the clausal adverbial. Stressed words are shown with <sup>1</sup> below.

	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
1	<b>Jag</b>	<b>känner</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	–	<sup>1</sup> honom.	
	I don't know him.						
2	<b>Jag</b>	<b>känner</b>	<b>honom</b>	<sup>1</sup> inte.			
	I don't know him. (light DO)						



3	<b>Jag</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>honom</b> (light IO)	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>'boken.</b> (DO)
	I didn't give him the book.					
4	<b>Jag</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>honom</b> (light IO)	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>'den.</b> (DO)
	I didn't give him it.					
5	<b>Jag</b>	<b>har</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	<b>gett</b>	<b>'honom den.</b> (IO – DO)
	I haven't given him it.					
6	<b>Jag</b>	<b>gav</b>	<b>honom den</b>	<b>inte.</b>		<b>(light IO-light DO)</b>
	I didn't give him it.					
7	<b>Då</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>lärt</b>	<b>sig svenska.</b>
	Then he hasn't learned Swedish.					
8	<b>Då</b>	<b>läorde</b>	<b>han sig</b> (light IO)	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>svenska.</b> (DO)
	Then he didn't learn Swedish.					

In a sentence with a complex verb or two objects (5, 7 above) in which the DO is unstressed, it occupies only the O/C position. This word order is thus obligatory in such cases. In a sentence with a finite verb alone, the DO occupies the object position only when it is relatively stressed (see also 1, 4 above). This is often the case when expressing a contrast:

**Jag känner inte 'honom, men jag känner 'henne.**

I don't know him but I do know her.

Compare this case with the emphatic (i.e. heavily stressed) topic. See 10.8.2.2.

**'Honom känner jag inte, men 'henne känner jag.**

### **10.6.6** *Negation*

#### **10.6.6.1** *Form*

The main ways of expressing negation in Swedish are with the clausal adverbs **icke**, **inte**, **ej**, **aldrig**, **ingalunda**, **knapp**, **knappast** (see also 6.2.5). When these negate the entire clause, they occupy the clausal adverbial (CA) position. Consider the following examples of negative sentences with different forms of the verb:

- (a) Present tense            **Jag äter inte ost.**  
I don't eat cheese.
- (b) Past tense                **De sa aldrig något.**  
They never said anything.
- (c) Future                    **Jag ska inte göra det.**  
I won't do that.
- Det kommer aldrig att hända.**  
That will never happen.
- (d) Perfect, pluperfect      **Jag har/hade knappast sett honom.**  
I have/had scarcely seen him.
- (e) Imperative                **Gör aldrig det!**  
Never do that!
- (f) Infinitive                 **Vi uppmanade dem att aldrig göra det.**  
We urged them never to do that.

Notice in this last example that in Swedish the negative ‘splits’ the infinitive, i.e. comes between the infinitive marker **att** and the infinitive itself. See 10.9.2.4(a).

#### 10.6.6.2 Position of the negative

The negative occupies different positions relative to the finite verb in main and subordinate clauses.

Main clause							
T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	
Ikväll	<i>tänker</i>	Per	<i>inte</i>	<i>laga</i>	mat.		
Per	<i>tänker</i>	–	<i>inte</i>	<i>laga</i>	mat	i kväll.	
Per is not thinking of making dinner tonight.							
Subordinate clause							
Matrix	Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
Per sa	<b>att</b>	han	<i>inte</i>	<i>tänkte</i>	<i>laga</i>	mat	i kväll.
Per said that he was not thinking of making dinner tonight.							

### 10.6.6.3

Only light elements (10.6.5) and the subject in inverted clauses may intrude between the negative and the finite verb.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	OC	OA
Han	tvättade	sig (light IO)	inte	–	–	i går kväll.
He didn't wash yesterday evening.						
Han	fick	den (light DO)	inte	–	–	förrän i går.
He didn't receive it until yesterday.						
I går	fick	han den (S, light DO)	inte.			
Yesterday he didn't get it.						

### 10.6.6.4

In inverted statements the negative may on occasion come between the finite verb and the subject. This accords with the weight principle (10.6.3) in so far as the word that receives particular emphasis in Swedish comes last. The stressed word is marked <sup>1</sup> below.

**I dag kommer Peter <sup>1</sup>inte.** Peter is *not* coming today.

**I dag kommer <sup>1</sup>inte Peter.** Peter isn't coming today.

### 10.6.6.5 Negating pronouns and the negated object

For **ingen**, etc. and **inte någon**, etc. see 3.9.12ff. Notice, however, that **inte någon**, etc. rather than **ingen**, etc. must be used:

Either:

1 When there is both a FV and NFV in the clause.

or:

2 When the negated pronoun is the object/complement of a subordinate clause.

Main clause							
T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	
Jag	hade	–	inte	gjort	någonting.		
I hadn't done anything.							
Subordinate clause							
Matrix	Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
Jag sa,	att	jag	inte	hade	gjort	någonting.	
I said that I hadn't done anything.							

Note – When qualifying objects or real subjects, **ingenting** is sometimes found in the CA position. When **ingen**, etc. + the noun it qualifies are found in the CA position, this is widely regarded as a stylised construction. There is, however, some variation in dialects.

Main clause							
T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	
Jag	har	–	ingenting	hört	–	om detta.	
Jag	har	–	inte	hört	någonting	om detta.	
I haven't heard anything about that.							
Jag	hade	–	inga pengar	fått	–	den veckan.	
Jag	hade	–	inte	fått	några pengar	den veckan.	
I hadn't received any money that week.							
Subordinate clause							
Matrix	Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
Han påstår att		det	ingen Gud	finns.			
Han påstår att		det	inte	finns	–		någon Gud.
He claims that there is no God.							
Han sa att		han	inga pengar	hade.			
Han sa att		han	inte	hade	–		några pengar.
He said that he didn't have any money.							

### 10.6.7 *Passive transformation*

- (a) For passive forms and usage, see 5.5.6ff. The transformation from active to passive is a method for moving ‘light’ information leftwards and ‘heavy’ information rightwards in the sentence. There are two main reasons for passive transformation:
- (i) The object in the base (active) sentence is unstressed and some other element needs to be emphasised, or:
  - (ii) The subject in the base sentence is unknown or unimportant (‘agentless passive’).
- (b) In the examples of passive transformations below italics indicate stressed words):

	<b>Active</b>		<b>Passive</b>
1	<b>Man stal bilen.</b> Someone stole the car.	→	<b>Bilen stals.</b> The car was stolen.
2	<b>Man omvalde honom.</b> They re-elected him.	→	<b>Han omvaldes.</b> He was re-elected.
3	<b>Man har bjudit oss.</b> They have invited us.	→	<b>Vi har blivit bjudna.</b> We have been invited.
4	<b>Janne slog honom.</b> Janne hit him.	→	<b>Han slogs av Janne.</b> He was hit by Janne.

In examples 1–3 an expression containing an unimportant subject becomes an agentless passive expression with emphasis on the verb. In example 4 the subject in the base is important, and to emphasise it, it is moved right according to the weight principle. See 10.6.3.

- (c) If the object of the base sentence in 5 below (**henne**) is not to receive emphasis, but this is rather to be placed on some other element, then passive transformation moves this object leftwards to become a natural (unstressed) topic. Now the verb (**omtyckt**) is emphasised, or alternatively the agent (**av eleverna**) if it is present.

5	<b>Eleverna tyckte mycket om henne.</b> S The pupils liked her a lot
5a	<b>Hon var mycket omtyckt.</b> S She was very well liked.

- 5b **Hon var mycket omtyckt av eleverna.**  
 S Agent  
 She was very well liked by the students.

(d) Of the two methods possible for radically altering emphasis in the sentence, topicalisation (10.6.2, 10.8.2) is possible only for the main clause, while passive transformation is possible for both main and subordinate clause:

- 6a **Eleverna tyckte mycket om henne.**  
**Henne tyckte eleverna mycket om.**

**Hon var mycket omtyckt av eleverna.**  
 Passive MC

- 6b **Det sägs, att hon var mycket omtyckt av eleverna.**  
 Passive SC

### **10.6.8** Existential sentences and the place-holder

See also 10.1.3.

#### **10.6.8.1** Postponing the subject

When the subject consists of new, heavy information that is not intended to be introduced immediately at the beginning of the sentence, it is possible to postpone it, i.e. to move the subject rightwards. The postponed subject is then referred to as the *real subject* (RS). An extra subject known as the *formal subject* (FS) or place-holder subject, usually **det**, is in this case inserted in the vacant Topic or Subject position. It is clear from the examples below that there are two main types of existential sentence:

Type 1 has a real subject that is an indefinite noun phrase (example 1b).

Type 2 has a real subject that is either an infinitive phrase (example 2b), an indirect question (example 3b) or a subordinate clause (example 4).

- |    |   |                                |
|----|---|--------------------------------|
| 1a | <b>En massa folk sitter där.</b><br>S         | A crowd is sitting there.      |
| 1b | <b>Det sitter en massa folk där.</b><br>FS RS | There's a crowd sitting there. |
| 2a | <b>Att sluta röka är svårt.</b><br>S          | Stopping smoking is difficult. |

- 2b **Det är svårt att sluta röka.** It's difficult to stop smoking.  
 FS RS
- 3a **Vad du säger spelar ingen roll.** What you say doesn't matter.  
 S
- 3b **Det spelar ingen roll vad du säger.** It doesn't matter what you say.  
 FS RS
- 4a **Att han vann glädde mig mycket.** It pleased me a lot that he won.  
 S
- 4b **Det glädde mig att han vann.** It pleased me that he won.  
 FS RS

**10.6.8.2** Order in the existential sentence

The order in the existential sentence is as follows:

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub> (10.6.9)
Type 1 (see 10.6.8.1)							
1	Det	sitter	–	ofta	–	en katt	på taket.
There is often a cat sitting on the roof.							
2	På taket	sitter	(det)	ofta	–	en katt.	
There is often a cat sitting on the roof.							
3	I morgon	kommer	(det)	kanske	–	en hel skolklass.	
Tomorrow perhaps a whole school class will come.							
4	Sitter	(det)	–	–	–	en polis	i köket?
Is there a policeman sitting in the kitchen?							
5	Det	har	–	–	skrivits	mycket strunt	i tidningen på sistone.
There's been a lot of rubbish written in the paper lately.							
Type 2 (see 10.6.8.1)							
6	Det	är	–	–	–	svårt	– att sluta röka.
It's difficult to stop smoking.							
7	Det	gör	–	–	–	inget	– vad du än säger.
It doesn't matter what you say.							
8	Det	förvånade	–	–	–	mig	– att du vann.
It surprised me that you won.							

When an adverbial expression is topicalised, **det** is sometimes omitted (examples 2, 3). **Det** and the verb may be inverted in yes/no questions (4), and **det** is found in passive constructions (5). In these examples **det** is devoid of real meaning.

Note – In South and West Swedish dialects **där**, **här** often replace **det** as place-holder:

**Där finns inga ägg i kylskåpet.** There are no eggs in the fridge.

### 10.6.9 Extra positions

Extra positions are necessary in the word order scheme on occasion in order to accommodate either free elements outside the clause, clauses as real subject, or object clauses. They are located as follows (X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>):

X <sub>1</sub>	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
1	<b>Olof,</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>är</b>	–	–	–	<b>sjuk.</b>	
	Olof, he is ill.							
2	<b>Den</b>	<b>karlen,</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>har</b>	<b>jag</b>	–	<b>sett</b>	– <b>förut.</b>
	That fellow, I've seen him before.							
3	<b>Ja,</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>kan</b>	–	–	<b>ta</b>	<b>med hunden.</b>	
	Yes, you can bring the dog.							
4	<b>När han</b>	<b>kommer,</b>	–	<b>vill</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>kyssa</b>	<b>oss,</b> – <b>Maja och mig.</b>
	When he arrives he wants to kiss us, Maja and me.							
5		<b>Det</b>	<b>har</b>	–		<b>förvånat</b>	<b>mig</b>	– <b>att han kunde vara så fräck.</b>
	It has surprised me that he could be so cheeky.							
6		<b>Det</b>	<b>är</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>sant</b>	– <b>att tiden läker alla sår.</b>
	It's not true that time heals all wounds.							
7		<b>Det</b>	<b>är</b>	–	–	–	<b>roligt</b>	– <b>att cykla.</b>
	It's fun cycling.							
8		<b>De</b>	<b>frågade</b>	–	–	<b>honom</b>	<b>i går</b>	<b>om Lasse var hemma.</b>
	They asked him yesterday whether Lasse was at home.							

The extra position(s) may be added to the scheme in order to accommodate duplicates (see 10.8.4). This is the case in examples 1 and 2 above. Also found in the extra position are heavy elements such as subordinate clauses



and infinitive phrases, usually represented in the main clause by a formal subject **det** (10.1.3, 10.6.8) as in examples 5–8 above. The different elements occupying the extra positions in these examples are as follows:

- X<sub>1</sub> 1 Correlative to topicalised subject.
- X<sub>1</sub> 2 Correlative to topicalised object.
- X<sub>1</sub> 3 Free adverbial.
- X<sub>2</sub> 4 Correlative to object.
- X<sub>2</sub> 5 Real subject, subordinate clause.
- X<sub>2</sub> 6 Real subject, subordinate clause.
- X<sub>2</sub> 7 Real subject, infinitive phrase.
- X<sub>2</sub> 8 Object clause.

### 10.6.10 Link position

A link position (L) is added before all other positions in cases of coordination of main or subordinate clauses (see 8.1.1, 8.2). The link position itself is, however, not regarded as part of the clause but as a unit between clauses.

The link position may be occupied by a coordinating conjunction (8.2). For the conjunction position in the subordinate clause see 10.4.1.1. There is also an extra position (X<sub>2</sub>) in the subordinate clause after the OA position.

Main clause									
L	X <sub>1</sub>	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
... <b>och</b>	–	<b>vi</b>	<b>brukade</b>	–	<b>alltid</b>	<b>leka</b>	–	<b>på gatan,</b>	<b>vi.</b>
... and we always used to play in the street, we did.									
... <b>men</b>	<b>Olle,</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>är</b>	–	–	–	<b>dum.</b>		
... but Olle, he's stupid.									
... <b>så</b>	–	<b>därför</b>	<b>lekte</b>	<b>vi</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	–	<b>med honom.</b>		
... that's why we never played with him.									
Subordinate clause									
L		Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
<b>(Jag hoppas</b>	<b>att han vinner)</b>	<b>och att</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>slår</b>	–	<b>rekord</b>	<b>i kväll,</b>	<b>Janne.</b>
(I hope that he wins) and that he breaks the record tonight, Janne.									
For extra positions X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub> see 10.6.9.									

### 10.6.11 Questions

See also 10.3.2. This section deals with direct questions. For indirect questions, see 8.4.1f., 10.7.1.2, 10.7.2.1(b). For answers to positive and negative questions, see 9.2.

There are four different question constructions (10.6.11.1–10.6.11.4).

#### 10.6.11.1 Yes/no question

(a) This is so called because of the expected answer – **ja/nej** or **jo, kanske, tyvärr**, etc. Such questions contain a suggestion and anticipate affirmation or denial. They have inversion of finite verb and subject.

(b)

X <sub>1</sub>	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
–	–	<b>Åker</b>	<b>du</b>	–	–	–	<b>bort i morgon?</b>	
Are you leaving tomorrow?								
		<b>Sålde</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>huset?</b>		
Didn't you sell the house?								
–	–	<b>Har</b>	<b>ni</b>	<b>aldrig</b>	<b>läst</b>	<b>bibeln,</b>	–	<b>Eva?</b>
Have you never read the Bible, Eva?								
–	–	<b>Kan</b>	<b>jag</b>	–	<b>få se</b>	<b>hennes brev?</b>		
Can I see her letter?								
–		<b>I morgon, åker</b>	<b>du</b>	–	–	–	<b>bort då?</b>	
So tomorrow, you'll be leaving then?								
		<b>Huset, (då)</b>	<b>sålde</b>	<b>du</b>	<b>inte</b>	–	<b>det?</b>	
The house, you didn't sell it then?								
For extra positions X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub> see 10.6.9.								

(c) Alternative questions are sometimes regarded as a separate type, but usually represent a duplication of the yes/no question:

X <sub>1</sub>	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
<b>Janne,</b>	–	<b>ska</b>	<b>vi</b>	–	<b>ta</b>	–	<b>till vänster eller till höger här?</b>
Janne, shall we turn right or left here?							
For extra positions X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub> see 10.6.9.							

**10.6.11.2** V-question

- (a) This is so called because of its form. The topic is an interrogative adverb or pronoun, most but not all of which begin with **v-**: **vad**, **vem**, **vilken**, **var**, etc. plus **hur**, **när**. Notice that the v-question requests information about a specific clause element, e.g. in (1) object, (2) predicative complement, (3) OA-place, (4) OA-time, (5) OA-condition. V-questions usually have inversion of the finite verb and subject, but see examples 6–8 below where the v-word is subject.

X <sub>1</sub>	T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
1 –	<b>Vad</b>	<b>såg</b>	<b>han</b>	–	–	–	<b>därborta?</b>	
What did he see over there?								
2 –	<b>Vem</b>	<b>är</b>	<b>den här Olsson?</b>					
Who is this Olsson?								
3 –	<b>Vart</b>	<b>åker</b>	<b>vi</b>	–	–	–	<b>på våren?</b>	
Where are we going in the spring?								
4 –	<b>När</b>	<b>kommer vi</b>		–	–	–	<b>hem i kväll?</b>	
When will we get home tonight?								
5 –	<b>Hur</b>	<b>vågade</b>	<b>hon</b>	–	<b>säga</b>	<b>det,</b>	–	<b>Mia?</b>
How did she dare say that, Mia?								
6 –	<b>Vem</b>	<b>gick</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>ut just nu?</b>	
Who went out just now?								
7 –	<b>Vad</b>	<b>händer</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>på kontoret?</b>	
What happens at the office?								
8 –	<b>Vilka barn</b>	<b>kommer</b>	–	<b>inte</b>	–	–	<b>i morgon?</b>	
Which children are not coming tomorrow?								
9 –	<b>Hur</b>	<b>var</b>	<b>vädret</b>	–	–	–	<b>i Grekland?</b>	
How was the weather in Greece?								
For extra positions X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub> see 10.6.9.								

- (b) In some complex questions there is a combination of yes/no question and indirect question:

Q: **Vet du, när han kommer?** Cf. **Vet du det? När kommer han?**  
Do you know when he's coming? Do you know? When is he coming?

A: **Ja, det vet jag.** Yes, I know.

or:

**Ja, han kommer i morgon.** Yes, he's coming tomorrow.

### 10.6.11.3 Questions in statement form

Sometimes question intonation plus the possible addition of an adverbial particle (**ju, väl**, etc.) or tag (**inte sant, eller hur, va**, etc.) is sufficient to indicate a question:

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
<b>Du</b>	<b>är</b>	–	<b>väl</b>	–	<b>trött</b>	<b>nu?</b>	
You must surely be tired now?							
<b>Du</b>	<b>reser</b>	–	<b>alltså</b>	–	–	<b>i morgon?</b>	
You're leaving tomorrow, then?							
<b>Han</b>	<b>röker</b>	–	<b>inte,</b>	–	–	–	<b>va?</b>
He doesn't smoke, does he?							
<b>Leif Eriksson</b>	<b>upptäckte</b>	–	–	–	<b>Amerika,</b>	–	<b>inte sant?</b>
Leif Eriksson discovered America, didn't he?							
<b>Du</b>	<b>kommer</b>	–	–	–	<b>hem i dag,</b>	–	<b>eller hur?</b>
You will be coming home today, won't you?							
For extra positions X <sub>1</sub> , X <sub>2</sub> see 10.6.9.							

### 10.6.11.4 Other types of question

(a) Some exclamations are in question form with inversion (FV – S):

**Ska jag ha tagit mutor?**

Am I supposed to have taken bribes?

**Hur vackert är det inte här!**

How beautiful it is here! [*Lit.* 'is it not here?']

But notice that most exclamations with **vilken** have straight word order (S – FV).

**Vilken båt han har!**

What a boat he has!

Compare questions with **vilken**, etc.:

**Vilken båt har han?**

Which boat does he have?

(b) Some commands are in question form:

<b>Olle, vill du komma genast!</b>	Olle, will you come right away?
<b>Kan du vara snäll och komma!</b>	Can you please come here?

## 10.7 Subordinate clauses

See also 8.1ff. (coordination and subordination) and 10.4.1f. This section comprises a brief introduction to the form and function of subordinate clauses (10.7.1f.), their position in the sentence (10.7.3), and an account of some problem areas as regards the word order and structure of subordinate clauses (10.7.4–10.7.7).

### 10.7.1 Form of the subordinate clause

Some characteristics of subordinate clauses and basic positions within the subordinate clause are given in 10.4.1f. Most subordinate clauses have an introductory word termed *(subordinating) conjunction*. A common classification of subordinate clauses is by the nature of this introductory word. The main types of subordinate clause are as follows.

#### 10.7.1.1 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are introduced by a relative pronoun or relative adverb:

**Kvinnan som jag träffade i går var mycket vacker.**  
The woman that I met yesterday was very beautiful.

**Ön dit han åkte i fjol ligger i skärgården.**  
The island where he went last year is in the archipelago.

#### 10.7.1.2 Indirect questions

Indirect questions are introduced by an interrogative pronoun, interrogative adverb or interrogative conjunction:

**Jag vill veta, vad han gör.**  
I want to know what he's doing.

**De frågade varför vi inte kom till festen.**

They asked why we didn't come to the party.

**Vi undrar om det är möjligt.**

We wonder whether it's possible.

### 10.7.1.3 Conjunctional clauses

Conjunctional clauses are introduced by a subordinating conjunction:

**Anna sa att hon inte ville dansa.**

Anna said that she didn't want to dance.

**När vi kommer dit äter vi middag.**

When we get there, we'll have dinner.

**Om vädret är fint tänker vi åka till sommarstugan.**

If the weather is fine we're thinking of going to the summer cottage.

### 10.7.2 Function of the subordinate clause

Subordinate clauses can be classified according to their function in relation to the sentence, i.e. according to the clause element they represent in the larger main clause sentence.

#### 10.7.2.1 Subject and object clauses

See 10.1.2, 10.1.5.

These include:

(a) Most **att**-clauses, often postponed:

**Det är troligt att han dräptes.**

It is probable he was killed.

Subject

**Det spelar ingen roll om man är jude eller muslim.**

It doesn't matter whether you are a Jew or a Muslim.

Subject

**Att du är frisk gläder mig.**

I am pleased that you are in good health.

Subject

**Jag tycker inte om att du ljuger.** Object  
I don't like your lying.

**Vi vill att han kommer hem nu.** Object  
We want him to come home now.

Formerly **att**-clauses as object often used to be preceded by an adjective phrase (adjective + preposition) (5.2.1.2(c)). In many cases the preposition can now be omitted:

**Jag är säker (på) att du kommer att vinna.**  
I'm certain you'll win.

**Vi är oroliga (för) att hon misslyckas.**  
We are worried that she will fail.

This construction is also possible with other subordinators:

**Jag är osäker (på) hur vi klarar det.**  
I'm unsure how we will manage it.

(b) Indirect question clauses:

**Det är okänt vem som kommer.** Real subject  
It is not known who is coming.  
Cf. V-question: **Vem kommer?**

**Jag frågade henne vad jag skulle göra.** Object  
I asked her what I should do.  
Cf. V-question: **Vad ska jag göra?**

**Han frågade om jag ville följa med.** Object  
He asked whether I wanted to go along.  
Cf. Yes/no question: **Vill du följa med?**

Subject clauses are often the real subject in an existential sentence. See 10.6.8.

### **10.7.2.2** Adverbial clauses

See 10.1.7.

These are conjunctive clauses and include:

(a) Temporal clauses (indicating time):

These are introduced by **medan**, **innan**, **sedan**, **under**, **när** or **då**:

**Vi åker när Olle kommer.**

We will leave when Olle arrives.

**Vi kunde alla simma innan vi började skolan.**

We could all swim before we started school.

**Medan vi åt, pratade John hela tiden.**

While we were eating John talked the whole time.

(b) Conditional clauses (indicating condition):

These often begin with **om** or **ifall**:

**Om du är snäll, ska du få en kola.**

If you are good you can have a toffee.

**Ifall du kan göra det själv, är det bra.**

If you can do it yourself, that's fine.

Some conditional clauses have no subordinating conjunction but instead have FV – S (or yes/no question) word order. See 10.7.6.2.

**Snöar det, åker jag tåg.**

If it snows, I will take the train.

(c) Comparative clauses (indicating comparison):

**Han är inte så stark som man tror.**

He is not as strong as you think.

**Han är starkare än han var förr.**

He is stronger than he was before.

(d) Consecutive clauses (indicating consequence):

**Jag var så arg att jag genast gick därifrån.**

I was so angry that I left immediately.

Note – In colloquial Swedish **att** may be omitted:

**Han låste skåpet så (att) det inte gick att öppna igen.**

He locked the cupboard so it could not be opened again.



(e) Causal clauses (indicating cause):

These often begin with **eftersom** or **därför att**. While clauses beginning with **eftersom** can go in the T or OA positions, clauses beginning with **därför att** must take the OA position.

**Eftersom han var snäll fick han en kola.**

As he was good he got a toffee.

**Han fick en kola därför att han var snäll.**

He got a toffee because he was good.

**Jag beställde en hamburgare eftersom jag var hungrig.**

I ordered a hamburger because I was hungry.

(f) Final clauses (indicating intention):

These usually begin with **för att** or **så att**, and the clause always has as its finite verb **ska/skulle**:

**Vi måste stödja honom för att han inte ska snubbla.**

We have to support him so that he doesn't fall over.

**Jag har redigerat texten så att det ska bli lättare att läsa.**

I have edited the text so that it will be easier to read.

(g) Concessive clauses (indicating concession):

These usually begin with **fastän** or **även om**:

**Fastän han inte var snäll, fick han ändå en kola.**

Although he wasn't good, he still got a toffee.

**Även om jag hade råd, skulle jag inte köpa bil.**

Even if I could afford it, I wouldn't buy a car.

**Vi åker oavsett om det är bra väder eller inte.**

We'll go, whether the weather is good or not.

### 10.7.2.3 Attributive clauses

(a) Relative clauses with **som**:

**Jag vill köpa en sådan bil som Olssons har.**

I want to buy a car like the Olssons have.

A useful distinction is made between **som**-clauses forming a unit of meaning together with the noun phrase to which they refer, i.e. *restrictive relative clauses*, which restrict the meaning of the noun phrase, and those which are merely an afterthought or parenthesis, i.e. *non-restrictive relative clauses*. Restrictive relative clauses use a determinative pronoun (without end article on the noun; see 3.8) while non-restrictive clauses use a demonstrative pronoun or end article. Restrictive relative clauses are sometimes called *necessary relative clauses*. Non-restrictive relative clauses are sometimes called *unnecessary relative clauses*.

*Restrictive*

**(De elever som ska följa med på bussen) bör samlas här.**

(Those pupils coming on the bus) should assemble here.

*Non-restrictive*

**De eleverna (, som förresten, är mycket unga, ) är naiva.**

Those pupils (, who are very young by the way,) are naive.

To test, ask the question: **Vilka bör samlas här?** Answer: **De elever som ska följa med på bussen.** But the answer to the question: **Vilka är naiva?** is: **De or Eleverna.**

(b) Relative clauses without **som**:

**Det är den vackraste ros jag någonsin har sett.**

It is the most beautiful rose I have ever seen.

(c) Some **att**-clauses:

**Risken att vi skulle förlora matchen var mycket liten.**

The risk that we might lose the match was very small.

(d) Some indirect question clauses:

**Frågan om vi borde gå med i facket har diskuterats.**

The question whether we should join the union has been discussed.

### **10.7.3** *Position of the subordinate clause in the sentence*

See also 10.3.4, 10.4.1f. for main and subordinate clause positions, and 10.7.2 for functions of subordinate clauses. Subordinate clauses in most cases comprise clause elements in larger main clause sentences. See 8.1.2.

**10.7.3.1** Subject and object clauses occupy the T or X<sub>2</sub> position

For extra positions see 10.6.9.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X2
<b>Att du är frisk</b>	<b>gläder</b>	-	-	-	<b>mig.</b>		
S							
I'm glad that you are in good health.							
<b>Det</b>	<b>gläder</b>	-	-	-	<b>mig</b>	-	<b>att du är frisk.</b>
FS							RS
<b>Att du ljuger</b>	<b>tycker</b>	<b>jag</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>om.</b>			
O							
I don't like your lying.							
<b>Jag</b>	<b>tycker</b>	-	<b>inte</b>	<b>om</b>	-	-	<b>att du ljuger.</b>
							O

**10.7.3.2** Most adverbial clauses (temporal, conditional, causal, comparative, concessive) occupy the T, CA or OA positions

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
Temporal clause						
<b>När du kommer</b>	<b>åker</b>	<b>vi</b>	-	-	-	<b>ut till stugan.</b>
When you arrive we will go out to the cottage.						
<b>Vi</b>	<b>åker</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>ut till stugan när du kommer.</b>
Conditional clause						
<b>Om du är snäll</b>	<b>ska</b>	<b>du</b>	-	<b>få</b>	<b>godis.</b>	
If you are good you shall have some sweets.						
<b>Du</b>	<b>ska</b>	-	-	<b>få</b>	<b>godis</b>	<b>om du är snäll.</b>

Notice that subordinate clauses occupying the CA position are stressed and are only found in written Swedish:

**Lokalerna kan även om de renoveras aldrig möta kraven.**

The premises can, even if renovated, never meet the requirements.

**10.7.3.3** Some adverbial clauses (final, consecutive) usually occupy the OA position

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA
Final clause						
<b>Man</b>	<b>måste</b>	–	–	<b>stödja</b>	<b>honom</b>	<b>för att han inte ska snubbla.</b>
You have to support him so that he doesn't trip over.						
Consecutive clause						
<b>Jag</b>	<b>blev</b>	–	–	–	<b>så arg</b>	<b>att jag genast gick därifrån.</b>
I got so angry I left immediately.						

**10.7.3.4** Attributive clauses which are associated with subject, object or complement occupy the same position as these, i.e. T, S or O/C

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C
<b>Min bror, som är läkare, tjänar</b>	–	–	–		<b>mycket pengar.</b>
S	My brother, who is a doctor, earns a lot of money.				
<b>I går</b>	<b>kom</b>	<b>min bror,</b>	<b>som är läkare.</b>		
		S			
Yesterday my brother, who is a doctor, arrived.					
<b>En sån bil, som din</b>	<b>tänker vi</b>	–	–	<b>köpa.</b>	
O	We're thinking of buying a car like yours.				
<b>Vi</b>	<b>tänker</b>	–	–	<b>köpa</b>	<b>en sån bil som din.</b>
<b>Han</b>	<b>är</b>	–	–	–	<b>den trevligaste man jag någonsin har träffat.</b>
					C
He's the nicest man I've ever met.					

#### **10.7.4** Clauses with no indicator of subordination

See 8.1.4.4 for indicators of subordination. Some subordinate clauses do not begin with an introductory word that marks them as subordinate, nor do they have clausal adverbials whose position would indicate them as subordinate. These clauses are of two chief types. See 10.7.4.1 and 10.7.4.2.

#### 10.7.4.1 Clauses corresponding to **att**-clauses

These often contain verbs of saying, thinking and perceiving e.g. **säga**, ‘say’; **tro**, **tycka**, ‘think’; **se**, ‘see’.

*MC base*

**Jag tror det alltid blir tråkigt.**

I think it'll always be boring.

**Det blir alltid tråkigt.**

It'll always be boring.

**Vi tycker det ofta är tråkigt.**

We think it's often boring.

**Det är ofta tråkigt.**

It's often boring.

The subordinate clause in the following case has the same main clause structure as the base.

**Hon sa hon hade läst brevet.**

She said she had read the letter.

**Hon hade läst brevet.**

She had read the letter.

Note – **Att** is retained after forms of **veta**:

**Vet du att han är sjuk?**

Do you know he's ill?

#### 10.7.4.2 Clauses corresponding to **som**-clauses

In some relative clauses it is possible to omit **som** if the **som**-clause is a restrictive relative clause (10.7.2.3(a)) and if it has its own subject, i.e. when **som** is object or prepositional object:

**Boken (som) du lånade mig var mycket spännande.**

The book you lent me was very exciting.

**Här är en rolig historia (som) ni säkert kommer att skratta åt.**

Here's a joke you're bound to laugh at.

#### 10.7.5 *Main clause word order in att-clauses*

For main and subordinate clause order see 10.3.1, main clause order 10.3.4, subordinate clause order 10.4.1, and for major differences 10.4.2.

### 10.7.5.1 Written Swedish

The following statements hold good for most subordinate clauses in written Swedish:

- (a) There is no topic, unlike the main clause, and the order is usually both straight and fixed: conjunction – subject – finite verb, but see 10.7.5.2(a).
- (b) If there is a clausal adverbial, it usually precedes the finite verb.
- (c) An adverbial subordinate clause may itself form the topic of a main clause sentence (10.7.3.2):

**Eftersom de inte kom gick han.** As they didn't come, he left.  
T FV S

### 10.7.5.2 Spoken Swedish and informal written Swedish

- (a) In spoken Swedish and informal written Swedish main clause order is frequently found, especially in clauses introduced by **att**, **därför att**, **för att**, **så att** (sometimes also **eftersom**, **fastän**) and after verbs of understanding, saying, believing or knowing:

**Uno tror att han ska snart behöva måla om stugan.**  
Uno thinks he will soon have to repaint the cottage.

In formal written Swedish this would be:

**Uno tror att han snart ska behöva måla om stugan.**

- (b) The main clause order shows itself in two ways:
  - 1 A non-subject follows the conjunction as a kind of 'topic' in the **att**-clause, and therefore inverted (FV – S) word order is used:

<b>Nils sa,</b>	<b>att</b>	<b>i dag</b>	<b>kommer</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>hit.</b>
	<i>Conj.</i>	<i>'Topic'</i>	<i>FV</i>	<i>S</i>	
Nils said	that	today	he's coming		here.

This is frequently the case where an adverbial clause comes after the subordinating conjunction. In this case main clause word order often preceded by **så** (see 10.8.4.3) feels more natural.

**Jag tycker att om det inte blir varmare så måste jag tända brasan.**  
I think that if it doesn't get any warmer then I will have to light the stove.

Here there is inversion (**måste jag**).

2 The clausal adverbial follows the finite verb in the **att**-clause:

<b>Nils sa,</b>	<b>att</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>kommer</b>	<b>inte</b>	<b>i morgon.</b>
	<i>Conj.</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>FV</i>	<i>CA</i>	
Nils said	that	he	isn't coming	tomorrow.	

In these cases the conjunction **att** functions almost as a colon, and the second clause is regarded as a main clause, i.e. a statement in direct speech. The reported speech retains the MC word order of the original.

**Nils sa: "I dag kommer jag dit."**

Cf. **"I dag kommer jag dit."**

**Nils sa: "Jag kommer inte i morgon."**

Cf. **"Jag kommer inte i morgon."**

Note – This main clause word order only appears in the **att**-clause when the sentence (e.g. **Nils sa**) is a positive statement (10.7.5.1). Should the sentence be a negative statement, then the usual order in the subordinate clause, subject – clausal adverbial – finite verb, is found:

**Han sa aldrig, att vi alltid måste vara uppmärksamma.**

He never said that we always had to be attentive.

### 10.7.5.3 Fronting of adverbial clause

When an adverbial (temporal, conditional) clause is moved in front of an **att**-clause, two structures are possible as alternatives to the base sentence. Type 1 is common in spoken Swedish (10.7.5.2(b)), while Type 2, which retains subordinate clause order, emphasises the subject of the **att**-clause.

Base sentence

**Jag tror att jag ska köpa en båt om jag vinner på tipset.**

I think I'll buy a boat if I win the pools.

Type 1 **Jag tror att, om jag vinner på tipset, så ska jag köpa en båt.**

For the use of **så** in such cases see 10.8.4.3.

Type 2 **Jag tror att jag, om jag vinner på tipset, ska köpa en båt.**

### **10.7.6** Conditional clauses

See also 5.3.5. There are two main types of conditional clause.

#### **10.7.6.1** Clause introduced by **om/ifall**

These clauses usually occupy the T or OA position, see 10.7.3.2. If the **om**-clause comes first in the sentence, it is often duplicated by the word **så**. See 10.8.4.3.

**Om du skriver till honom, (så) får du veta vad som har hänt.**

If you write to him, you'll find out what has happened.

Cf. **Du får veta vad som har hänt om du skriver till honom.**

#### **10.7.6.2** Conditional clause with question word order

Some conditional clauses omit **om/ifall** and express the condition solely by means of inversion. These are FV1 clauses. Such clauses with question word order are very common. They always come first in the sentence and represent an intermediate form between main and subordinate clause structure. They possess inverted word order (FV – S). An inserted clausal adverbial will follow the finite verb, unlike the case with most subordinate clauses. This kind of inversion to indicate condition also occurs in written English, where conditionals formed with the subjunctive sometimes have inverted word order: 'Were you to agree to this, it would be disastrous.' ('If you were to...').

**Snöar det, tänker jag inte ta bilen.**

If it snows, I'm not thinking of taking the car.

Cf. **Om det snöar, tänker jag inte ta bilen.**

**Kommer du i morgon, kan du träffa henne.**

If you come tomorrow, you can meet her.

Cf. **Om du kommer i morgon, kan du träffa henne.**



**Vore jag rik, kunde jag köpa villan.**

If I were rich, I could buy the house.

Cf. **Om jag vore rik, kunde jag köpa villan.** See 5.3.3.3.

**Hade vi inte haft bråttom, skulle vi ha kunnat stanna.**

If we hadn't been in a rush, we could have stayed.

Cf. **Om vi inte hade haft bråttom, skulle vi ha kunnat stanna.**

Note – Some main clauses following an imperative resemble conditional clauses. The main clause normally begins with **så**:

**Satsa på forskning, så går affärerna bättre i längden.**

Invest in research, then business will go better in the long term.

**Kom hit Anna, så kan du ge mig ett handtag.**

Come here, Anna, and you can give me a hand.

**Fråga honom, (så) får du veta vad som har hänt.**

Ask him, then you'll find out what has happened.

A similar function may often be expressed by a statement:

**Vi tittar i tidningen, så får vi se, vad vi har att välja på.**

We'll look in the paper, then we'll see what we can choose from.

### **10.7.7** *Independent clauses*

There are several types of sentence in which the order is that of the subordinate clause, but in which there is a superordinate clause. These clauses with subordinate clause order and main clause function are called independent clauses.

#### **10.7.7.1** Using **(där)för att** to answer questions

In instances such as that below, the question is understood.

**(Varför åker ni inte bort i år?) För att/Därför att vi inte har råd.**

(Why aren't you going away this year?) Because we can't afford it.

10.7.7.2 Clauses introduced by **kanske**, **månne** and **männtro**

**Månne en ny slips skulle passa?**

Perhaps a new tie might go well?

Note – **Kanske**, etc. may also introduce a main clause, causing inversion:

**Kanske har han redan gjort det.** Perhaps he has already done it.

T FV S

10.7.7.3 Clauses expressing an exclamation

A main clause verb may on occasion be understood in these constructions:

**(Tänk) Att det alltid ska bli så här!**

(Fancy) That it always has to be like this!

**(Det förvånar mig) Att du inte skäms!**

(I'm surprised) That you're not ashamed of yourself!

**Som han pratade hela kvällen!**

How he talked all evening!

10.7.7.4 Clauses beginning with **om** and expressing strong affirmation

**– Tycker du om jordgubbar? – Om (jag gör)!**

'Do you like strawberries?' 'You bet (I do)!'

**– Vi badar i sjön om du vågar. – Om!**

'We'll bathe in the lake if you dare.' 'You bet!'

10.7.7.5 Clauses expressing a wish

These are introduced by **om** or **bara**. The wishes expressed in such clauses are often unreal and the verb is sometimes found in the past or subjunctive without any introductory word:

**Om jag ändå kunde sjunga!** If only I could sing!

**Bara han inte sviker oss!** As long as he doesn't let us down!

**Vore det ändå så lätt!** If it were only so easy!

Note – Occasionally such exclamations are introduced by **den som**:

**Den som ändå kunde spela piano!** If only I could play the piano!

## 10.8 Emphasis

### 10.8.1 Emphasis and positions

#### 10.8.1.1 Familiar and new information

- (a) A governing principle in the utterance is that information supplied by a real or implied context ('familiar' information) is placed before new information. See 10.6.3f.

*Implied context*

**Vad gjorde Helena i går?**      What did Helena do yesterday?

**Helena köpte rosor i går.**      Helena bought roses yesterday.

*Familiar    New*

*Implied context*

**Helena köpte rosorna i går.**      Helena bought the roses yesterday.

**De var hemskt vackra.**      They were awfully pretty.

*Familiar    New*

- (b) The familiar information, often the 'jumping off point' for the sentence, is called the *theme*, and the new information imparted, the point or message, is called the *focus*.

**Helena köpte rosor i går.**

*Theme    Focus*

**I går köpte Helena rosor.**

*Theme    Focus*

- (c) As the new information often tends to be longer or 'heavier' than the familiar information, the focus tends to follow the weight principle of *end-weight*. See 10.6.3.1f.

**Helena köpte rosorna på blomsterhandeln i byn.**

*Theme    Focus*

Helena bought the roses at the florist's in the village.

- (d) So it is normal for emphasis to be placed on words at the end of the sentence. The end of the sentence is a natural stress position and a term often used is *end-focus*:

**Han körde bil i torsdags.**      He drove last Thursday.

**Han körde i torsdags en gammal bil med rostiga dörrar.**

Last Thursday he drove an old car with rusty doors.

Notice that in this last example the principles of end-weight and end-focus override the normal word order, as the very long object is preceded by an adverbial expression of time.

**10.8.1.2** Intonation

In spoken Swedish it is possible to use intonation to place emphasis (marked by italics in the examples below) on any element in the sentence without altering the word order:

- Helena köpte blommor i går.** Helena (i.e. not Eva) bought flowers  
**Helena köpte blommor i går.** i.e. the flowers were not free  
**Helena köpte blommor i går.** i.e. flowers not fruit  
**Helena köpte blommor i går.** i.e. yesterday not today

This is not, of course, possible in written Swedish and therefore various different strategies must be adopted to provide an unequivocal marking of elements (marked elements are in italic):

- (a) Fronting                    **Blommor köper Helena varje lördag.**  
See 10.8.2                    Helena buys flowers every Saturday.
- (b) Raising                    **Den filmen tycker jag inte var så spännande.**  
See 10.8.3.                    In my opinion that film wasn't very exciting.
- (c) Duplication                **Helena, hon köpte blommor i går.**  
See 10.8.4.                    **Hon köpte blommor i går, Helena.**
- (d) Cleft sentence             **Det var Helena som köpte blommor i går.**  
See 10.8.5.                    **Det var i går som Helena köpte blommor.**  
                                      **Det var blommor som Helena köpte i går.**

**10.8.1.3** Stress in initial position

The end of the sentence is not the only stress position in Swedish. The initial position can accommodate a stressed element. See 10.8.2.2.

- Mig lurar ni inte så lätt!**                    Me you can't fool so easily!  
**I Luleå trivdes jag inte.**                    In Luleå I didn't feel at home.  
**Inte gör vi det i dag!**                        We're not doing that today!

## **10.8.2** Fronting

### **10.8.2.1** Natural topics

The topic or fronted element most frequently represents given information with which the reader/listener is already familiar, i.e. an element which is 'light' in information, often the theme. See 10.8.1.1.

The topic may comprise familiar personal and demonstrative pronouns, pronominal adverbs, nouns in the definite and adverbial expressions of time. These frequently serve to link sentences together. Of these, the adverbial expressions, while not strictly speaking comprising familiar information, do present background information of less significance than what follows.

Examples of natural topics:

**Vi hade länge behövt semester, så i våras åkte vi till Stockholm. Där träffade vi våra goda vänner Olssons och vi trivdes väldigt bra. De har en stor villa på Lidingö. Villan har femton rum och egen swimmingpool. I en hel vecka låg vi bredvid poolen. Det var härligt må du tro! Sedan måste vi tyvärr åka hem.**

We had needed a holiday for a long time, so last spring we went to Stockholm. There we met our good friends the Olssons and had a great time. They have a big house on Lidingö. The house has fifteen rooms and its own swimming pool. For a whole week we lay beside the pool. It was lovely, you know! Then, sadly, we had to come home.

### **10.8.2.2** Emphatic topics

A different kind of topic is one representing new information, i.e. an element 'heavy' in information, the focus. Such emphatic topics often include the object, verb phrases, infinitive phrases and negations, most of which already have emphasis, but in this way gain extra emphasis.

**Öl gillar han inte, men vin älskar han.**

Beer he does not like, but he does like wine.

**Han brukar skriva felfritt, men ett fel gjorde han.**

He usually writes flawlessly, but he did make one mistake.

**Aldrig ses vi mer i detta liv.**

Never again will we meet in this life.

**Pengar hade han inga.**  
He didn't have any money.

**Springa efter flickor kan han men arbeta vill han inte.**  
He can chase after girls but he won't work.

**Att skriva en så ogrammatisk svenska borde vara straffbart.**  
Writing such ungrammatical Swedish should be a punishable offence.

### **10.8.3** Raising

#### **10.8.3.1** Introduction

- (a) Raising (Swedish *satsfläta*) is a kind of fronting (10.8.2) for emphasis. Raising takes an element from a subordinate clause and makes it the topic in the sentence (matrix), thereby 'raising' it from its original clause. As seen in 10.8.2 above, fronting in the main clause involves moving a clause element from its usual position in the base clause to the initial position within the same clause.

1     **Jag tror inte (att) det slags program är så lyckat.**  
      *Matrix*                   *Subordinate clause*  
      I don't think       that kind of programme is so successful.

1a    **Det slags program tror jag inte är så lyckat.**  
      That kind of programme I don't think is so successful.

In this case the subject of the subordinate clause, **det slags program**, has become the topic in the sentence and is emphasised. The effect is to split subject and predicate in the original subordinate clause and to conflate this with the main clause (See cleft sentence, 10.8.5). The word order is also changed from straight to inverted. Notice that **att** is deleted in the new clause. The construction is common, especially in spoken Swedish. It is frequently unproblematic.

**Det trodde vi du redan förstod.**  
We thought you already realised that.

- (b) The subject in the subordinate clause may be the complement in a question:

**Vad var det hon sa vi skulle köpa?**  
What was it she said we should buy?

- (c) Raising frequently occurs in **att**-clauses and infinitive phrases that are complements to the verbs **anse**, ‘consider’; **säga**, ‘say’; **tänka**, **tro**, ‘think’; **veta**, ‘know’:

**Honom vet jag att du inte kan stå ut med.**

Cf. **Jag vet att du inte kan stå ut med honom.**

Him I know you can't stand.

**Nästa vecka tror jag att jag åker på semester.**

Cf. **Jag tror att jag åker på semester nästa vecka.**

Next week I think I'll go on holiday.

### 10.8.3.2 Raising in cleft sentences

A certain kind of raising may also occur in cleft sentences. See 10.8.5. In this instance the object may be raised to become the complement in the cleft sentence.

*Base sentence, Main clause*

**Han har lånat din bil.**

He has borrowed your car.

*Cleft sentence. See 10.8.5.*

**Det är din bil han har lånat.**

It's your car he has borrowed.

*Subordinate clause*

**Jag tror det är din bil han har lånat.**

I think it's your car he has borrowed.

*Raising*

**Det är din bil jag tror han har lånat.**

It's your car I think he has borrowed.

### 10.8.4 Duplication

#### 10.8.4.1 Pronominal duplication

The duplication of a clause element by means of a pronominal word is common in spoken Swedish. Most frequently duplicated in this way are indefinite or article-less forms. The effect of duplication is to emphasise the free element placed in the extra position outside the clause. See 10.6.9.

**Giriga bankdirektörer, de kör landet i botten.**

*Free element*

*Pronoun*

Greedy bank directors, they are ruining the country.

### 10.8.4.2 Duplication at the front or end of the sentence

- (a) Most elements can be duplicated at the front of the sentence, rather fewer at the end of the sentence.

<i>Duplication at the front</i>	<i>Duplication at the end</i>
<i>Subject</i>	
<b>Olof, han är rolig.</b> Olof, he's funny.	<b>Han är rolig, Olof.</b> He's funny, Olof.
–	<b>Jag kan inte göra det, jag heller.</b> Me? I can't do it either.
<i>Object</i>	
<b>En ny jacka, det skulle jag verkligen behöver.</b> A new jacket, that I really do need.	<b>Jag tycker inte om dem, Olssons.</b> I don't like them, the Olssons.
<i>Complement</i>	
<b>En rik man, det har han alltid varit.</b> A rich man he has always been.	–
<i>Clausal adverbial</i>	
–	<b>Inte är det till salu nu, inte.</b> It's not for sale now, it isn't.
<i>Other adverbial</i>	
<b>Förr så spelade jag mycket golf.</b> Previously I played a lot of golf.	–
<b>I Uppsala, där trivdes jag under min studietid.</b> In Uppsala I enjoyed my student days.	–
–	<b>Då gör vi det, då.</b> Then we'll do that, then.
–	<b>Du sjunger så vackert, så.</b> You sing so beautifully.
<i>Verb</i>	
<b>Sjunga, det kan jag minsann inte.</b> Sing is something I certainly can't do.	–
<b>Röker, det gör hon inte numera.</b> Smoke, she doesn't do that now.	–

- (b) When a finite verb is duplicated, the construction **det + gör** (gjorde) usually represents it. See 10.6.9, 10.6.2.1 Example 7. The non-finite verb is represented in the main clause by **det + är/var**:

**Tala ryska, det är ju inte lätt, det inte!**  
Speaking Russian, that isn't easy, that!



### 10.8.4.3 Pro-forms

When a subordinate clause precedes a main clause, the subordinate clause may be duplicated in the main clause by a so-called ‘pro-form’ (here an adverb, e.g. **så**, **där**). This may be due to the desire to avoid confusion with a question.

*SC = OA-Time*

**När vi kom fram, så kokade vi kaffe.**

When we got there we made coffee.

*SC = OA-Place*

**Därute i skogen vid sjön, där vill jag bo.**

Out in the forest by the lake, that’s where I want to live.

### 10.8.5 Cleft sentence

#### 10.8.5.1 Focus on a particular element

It is possible to focus on a particular element by using the construction **Det är/var X som ...**, ‘It is/was X who/which/that ...’

**Han skickade mig tolv e-brev förra veckan.**

**Det var han som skickade mig tolv e-brev förra veckan.**

(It was) he (who) sent me twelve e-mails last week.

The subject in the base sentence has become the predicative complement in a new main clause and is emphasised, while the remainder of the base sentence is appended in the form of a relative clause. The original sentence is thus cleft in two, the transformation involving both a kind of topicalisation and an addition to the base sentence. Elements of the base sentence other than the subject may also be emphasised in this way.

*Direct object in base*

**Det var tolv e-brev (som) han skickade mig förra veckan.**

*Indirect object in base*

**Det var till mig (som) han skickade tolv e-brev förra veckan.**

*Other adverbial in base*

**Det var förra veckan (som) han skickade mig tolv e-brev.**

**10.8.5.2** The clause element extracted retains its original form

The element of the base sentence to be emphasised retains its original form.

**Hon skrattade.** → **Det var hon som skrattade.**  
She laughed. It was she who laughed.

**10.8.5.3** The entire prepositional phrase is moved

(a) In most instances the prepositional phrase remains intact when moved:

**Det var i Värmland som jag träffade honom.**  
Cf. **Jag träffade honom i Värmland.** It was in Värmland I met him.

(b) With separable compound verbs and prepositional verbs, however, the preposition remains with the verb, not the noun phrase:

**Det var en gammal buss som vi körde om.**  
Cf. **Vi körde om en gammal buss.** It was an old bus we overtook.

**10.8.5.4** Cleft sentence in questions

The cleft sentence is very common in questions:

<b>Var det du som kritiserade oss?</b>	Was it you who criticised us?
<b>Är det jag som måste välja?</b>	Is it I who must decide?
<b>Är det på söndag hon kommer?</b>	Is it on Sunday she's coming?
<b>Är det öl han dricker?</b>	Is it beer he's drinking?
<b>Är det där vi ska träffa dem?</b>	Is it there we're meeting them?

## **10.9** Ellipsis

### **10.9.1** Introduction

A clause normally contains a subject and a finite verb. There are, however, exceptions to this pattern as shown in the paragraphs below.

### 10.9.1.1 Commands

Commands may often lack a subject:

**Rök inte härinne!**

Don't smoke in here!

### 10.9.1.2 Omission of *har/hade*

In some subordinate clauses *har/hade* is omitted before the supine. See 5.2.6.2.

**De sa att de gift sig i fjol.**

They said they had married last year.

### 10.9.1.3 Clauses with no finite verb or no subject

There are a number of cases in which the clause contains an object or other adverbial but has no finite verb and most often no subject. See 5.2.1.2, 10.9.2.2. These are cases where the alternative is a subordinate clause.

**Vi bad dem om vi skulle få följa med.**

We asked them whether we would be allowed to go along.

**Vi bad dem om att få följa med.**

We asked them to be allowed to go along.

In 10.9.2.1–10.9.2.4 only a selection of common constructions of this type is given. Many are infinitive phrases, and the internal order in such phrases and their position in the sentence are shown in the table in 10.9.2.4.

## 10.9.2 *Non-finite clauses*

Non-finite clauses have no finite verb.

### 10.9.2.1 Ellipted adverbial clauses

In order for this ellipsis to be possible the subject must be the same in both the sentence and the subordinate clause. These clauses include:

(a) Temporal clauses

**Efter det att vi drack snapsen, somnade vi.**

After we drank the schnapps, we feel asleep.

**Efter att ha druckit snapsen, somnade vi.**

After having drunk the schnapps we fell asleep.

(b) Final clauses

**Han reste sig för att han skulle kunna se bättre.**

He stood up so that he could see better.

**Han reste sig för att kunna se bättre.**

He stood up so as to be able to see better.

(c) Most comparative clauses

**Det är bättre att han dör än att han ger sig.**

It's better that he dies than that he surrenders.

**Det är bättre att dö än att ge sig.**

It's better to die than surrender.

(d) Clauses after certain prepositions

**Han klarade provet genom att han pluggade varje kväll.**

He got through the test by having studied every night.

**Han klarade provet genom att plugga varje kväll.**

He got through the test by studying every night.

**Han gick utan att han sa adjö.**

He left without having said goodbye.

**Han gick utan att säga adjö.**

He left without saying goodbye.

#### 10.9.2.2 Object and infinitive constructions

See 5.2.1.1(c).

With some verbs of perception, saying and thinking (**höra**, 'hear'; **se**, 'see'; **känna**, 'feel'; **säga**, 'say'; **påstå**, 'claim'; **anse**, 'consider'; **tro**, **tycka**, 'think'; etc.) the object phrase may take the form of an object + infinitive:

**Vi såg att han åkte bort.**

We saw that he left.

**Vi såg honom åka bort.**

We saw him leave.

**Jag hörde att du sjöng.**

I heard that you were singing.

**Jag hörde dig sjunga.**

I heard you sing.

### 10.9.2.3 Subject and infinitive constructions

These may be seen as a development of the object + infinitive construction in 10.9.2.2. The object of the object + infinitive construction is topicalised, becoming the subject of a passive:

<b>Man påstår att han är intelligent.</b>	People say he's intelligent.
<b>Man påstår honom vara intelligent.</b>	Object + infinitive
<b>Han påstås vara intelligent.</b>	Subject + infinitive

Here the subject of the sentence and the non-finite clause is the same. The infinitive **vara** may be omitted with the verbs **anse**, 'consider'; **förefalla**, 'seem'; **tyckas**, 'seem'; **verka**, 'seem'.

<b>Han verkar (vara) intelligent.</b>	He seems (to be) intelligent.
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### 10.9.2.4 Word order in non-finite clauses

The positional scheme is that of the subordinate clause.

(a) Positions within subordinate clauses and elliptical constructions

Matrix	Conj.	S	CA	FV	NFV	O/C	OA
	<b>Efter det</b>						
	<b>att</b>	<b>vi</b>	–	–	<b>drack</b>	<b>snapsen</b>	– <b>(sommnade vi.)</b>
	<b>Efter</b>	–	–	–	<b>att ha</b>	<b>druckit snapsen</b>	– <b>(sommnade vi.)</b>
<b>Vi såg</b>	<b>att</b>	<b>han</b>	–	<b>åkte</b>	–	–	<b>bort.</b>
<b>Vi såg</b>	–	–	–	–	–	<b>honom</b>	<b>åka bort.</b>
<b>Han verkar</b>	–	–	–	–	<b>(vara)</b>	<b>intelligent.</b>	

For translation of examples see 10.9.2.1–10.9.2.3.

Notice that the adverbial may split the infinitive in Swedish:

<b>Jag hoppas att jag snart får träffa dig igen.</b>
<b>Jag hoppas att snart få träffa dig igen.</b>
I hope to meet you again soon.

Even heavy OAs may do this:

**Jag hoppas att i min nuvarande ställning kunna fortsätta att tjäna mitt land.**

I hope in my present position to be able to continue to serve my country.

(b) Position of non-finite clauses in the main clause sentence: See 10.7.3.

T	FV	S	CA	NFV	O/C	OA	X <sub>2</sub>
<b>Efter att ha druckit snapsen somnade vi.</b>							
Han kunna	steg	-	-	upp	-	-	för att se bättre.
Han	verkar	-	-	(vara)	intelligent.		
Vi	såg	-	-	-	honom åka bort.		

### 10.9.3 Verb omission and subject omission

#### 10.9.3.1 Omission of verbs of movement

Some verbs expressing general movement (e.g. **gå, åka, springa, resa**) may be omitted between certain auxiliaries, e.g. **vill, ska, måste**, and adverbs of motion. See 6.3.

<b>Han vill åka hem.</b> → <b>Han vill hem.</b>	He wants to go home.
<b>Hon ska bort.</b>	She is going away.
<b>Han vill ut.</b>	He wants to get out.
<b>Måste vi till staden?</b>	Do we have to go to town?

#### 10.9.3.2 Omission of finite verb

(a) The finite verb is usually omitted in comparative clauses:

<b>Du sjunger som en fågel (sjunger).</b>	You sing like a bird (sings).
<b>Hon är äldre än jag (är).</b>	She is older than I (am).

(b) In the ellipted clause the pronoun must have the same form it would have in the complete clause.(3.3.6) Compare, for example:

**Mari älskar orientering mer än mig.** (= mer än hon älskar mig)  
*Object form*

Mari loves orienteering more than me. (= more than she loves me)

**Mari älskar orientering mer än jag.** (= mer än jag gör)  
*Subject form*

Mari loves orienteering more than me. (= more than I do)

### 10.9.3.3 Omission of **har/hade**

The verbs **har/hade** may be omitted in formal written Swedish. before a supine in the subordinate clause. See 5.2.6.2.

**De berättade, att de (hade) skrivit en rapport om ämnet.**  
They said that they had written a report on the subject.

### 10.9.3.4 Omission of identical subject

Omission of the second of two identical subjects is possible only when both of the following conditions are fulfilled:

1 The subject precedes the verb

and:

2 The clauses concerned are main clauses coordinated with the conjunctions **och**, 'and'; **men**, 'but'; **eller**, 'or'; **utan**, 'but'.

**Mari bor i Umeå och (hon) trivs jättebra där.**  
Mari lives in Umeå and (she) loves it there.

**De stannade inte i Belgien utan reste vidare.**  
They did not stop in Belgium, but travelled on.

Compare:

**Mari bor i Umeå och där trivs hon jättebra.**

The conjunction **att** may be deleted together with the subject:

**Jag vet att hon bor i Umeå och (att hon) studerar där.**  
I know that she lives in Umeå and (that she) is studying there.

#### **10.9.4** *Apposition and the predicative attribute*

Postposed qualifiers often equate to a relative clause.

##### **10.9.4.1** Apposition

**Åkes bil, (som är) en Volvo, har gått 1000 mil.**

Åke's car, (which is) a Volvo, has done 6,000 miles.

**Institutionens nuvarande chef, (som heter) Åke Svensson ...**

The present head of the department, (who is called) Åke Svensson ...

##### **10.9.4.2** Predicative attribute

**Hon gick genom skogen (och var) klädd i jacka och stövlar.**

She walked through the forest (and was) dressed in a jacket and boots.

**en buss (som är) full med passagerare**

a bus, (which is) full of passengers



## Chapter 11

# Word formation

### 11.1 Introduction

#### 11.1.1 Indigenous words

Many words in Swedish are directly descended from Proto-Indo-European, Common Germanic or Common Norse, i.e. the languages from which Swedish itself has developed. Examples of such indigenous words are:

**man, kvinna, far, mor, bror, syster, fisk, get, gås, hund, ko, älg, al, ask, bok, hassel, lind, rönn, berg, dal, en, två, tre – tio, jag, mig, du, dig, vad, arm, fot, kind, knä**

#### 11.1.2 Processes of change

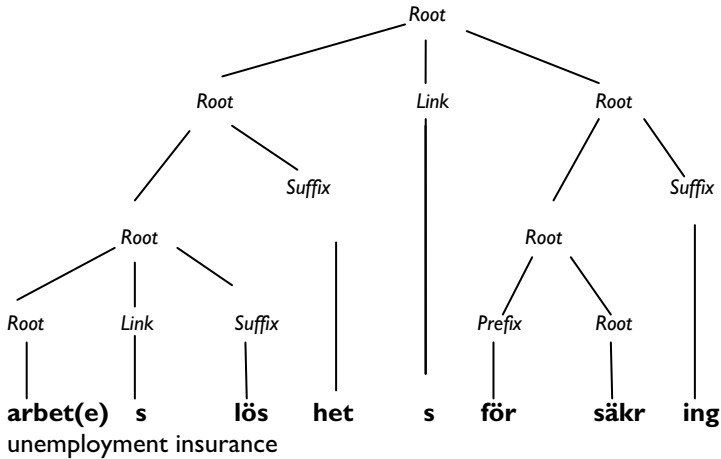
##### 11.1.2.1 Terminology

The *root* is the form of a word stripped of all *affixes*, e.g. **bil, man, stor, grön, böj, köp**. In some linguistic studies this is called the *stem*. A root can form a word and is also called a *free morpheme*. *Affixes* (prefixes or suffixes, e.g. **o-**, **be-**, **för-**, **-het**, **-skap**, **-inna**) which can only exist together with a root are also called *bound morphemes*.

Swedish also possesses a link morpheme that is sometimes inserted between the roots in a compound and often consisting of **-s-** or **-e-**:

<b>röd + vin + flaska</b>	→	<b>rödvin</b> + <b>flaska</b>	red wine bottle
<b>skatt + lättnad</b>	→	<b>skattelättnad</b>	tax relief

Below is a tree diagram showing the order in which the various morphemes are combined in a complex Swedish word:



### 11.1.2.2 Processes

New words in Swedish have arisen by a number of different processes

- 1 Affixation – adding a prefix/suffix to an existing root
- 2 Compounding – adding a root to a root
- 3 Expressive formation – e.g. forming a pet name or imitating a sound
- 4 Abbreviation – shortening words, sometimes to their initial letters
- 5 Borrowing – importing words from other languages
- 6 Conversion – i.e. using a word from one word class as if it belonged to a different class.

These processes may be illustrated by the following examples, many based on the root **vän**, friend:

#### 1 AFFIXATION 11.2

<i>Prefix</i>		<i>Root</i>		<i>Derivative</i>
<b>o-</b>	+	<b>vän</b>	→	<b>ovän</b>
<b>un-</b>	+	friend		enemy
<i>Root</i>		<i>Suffix</i>		<i>Derivative</i>
<b>vän</b>	+	<b>-lig</b>	→	<b>vänlig</b>
friend	+	-ly		friendly

<i>Root</i>		<i>Suffix</i>		<i>Derivative</i>
<b>vän</b>	+	<b>-skap</b>	→	<b>vänskap</b>
friend	+	-ship		friendship

## 2 COMPOUNDING 11.3

<i>Root</i>		<i>Root</i>		<i>Compound</i>
<b>djur</b>	+	<b>vän</b>	→	<b>djurvän</b>
animal	+	friend		animal lover

<i>Root</i>		<i>Root</i>		<i>Compound</i>
<b>användar(e)</b>	+	<b>vänlig</b>	→	<b>användarvänlig</b>
user	+	friendly		user friendly

<i>Root</i>		<i>Root</i>		<i>Compound</i>
<b>vän</b>	+	<b>ort</b>	→	<b>vänort</b>
friend		town		twin town

## 3 EXPRESSIVE FORMATION 11.4

<i>Root</i>		<i>Abbreviated root</i>		<i>Suffix</i>	
<b>kompanjon</b>	→	<b>komp</b>	+	<b>-is</b>	<b>kompis</b>
partner					chum

## 4 ABBREVIATION 11.5

**fotografi** → **foto**  
 photograph photo

**television** → **tv**  
 television television

## 5 BORROWING 11.6

from German **bundsförvant**, ally, friend  
 from French **kompanjon**, (business) companion, friend  
 from English **partner**, (business) partner, friend  
 from other languages **kollega**, colleague, friend [from Latin]

## 6 CONVERSION 11.7

<i>Adjective</i>		<i>Noun</i>
<b>främmande</b>	→	<b>en främmande</b>
foreign/strange		a stranger/guest

### 11.1.3 Modification of word class

Notice that the first element (FE) in a compound typically modifies the second or subsequent element (SE): **hustak**, **biltak**, **skiffertak** are all kinds of **tak**, roof.

In both derivatives and compounds it is the final element to which any inflexional ending is attached, and consequently this element which usually determines the word class:

Adj		Noun		Noun	
<b>fri</b>	+	<b>tid</b>	→	<b>fritid</b>	<b>fritiden</b>
free		time		spare time	
Prefix		Adjective		Adjective	
<b>o-</b>	+	<b>van</b>	→	<b>ovan</b>	<b>ovana</b>
un-	+	accustomed		unaccustomed	
Noun		Adjective		Adjective	
<b>rost</b>	+	<b>fri</b>	→	<b>rostfri</b>	<b>rostfritt</b>
rust	+	free		stainless	
Adjective		Noun suffix		Noun	
<b>god</b>	+	<b>-het</b>	→	<b>godhet</b>	<b>godheten</b>
good	+	-ness		goodness	

While prefixes rarely alter the word class (e.g. in **van** → **ovan** both are adjectives), suffixes are frequently used for this very purpose (e.g. in **god** → **godhet** adjective changes to noun with the addition of a noun suffix).

Note – In a few rare cases the SE does not determine the word class:

<b>ett krypin</b>	[ <b>in</b> is a preposition]
<b>ett farväl</b>	[ <b>väl</b> is an adverb]
<b>därför</b>	[ <b>för</b> is a preposition]

### 11.1.4 Lexicalisation

When the sense of a word is no longer analysable from its parts, the word is said to have been *lexicalised*, that is its has acquired a meaning different from its constituent parts, for example, **ett ögonblick**, ‘a moment’, is no longer related to **en blick**, ‘a glance’.

Here one might talk of a sliding scale:

1. Fully analysable and immediately transparent:

<b>fisk ben</b>	fish bone
<b>bil tak</b>	car roof

2. Not in the dictionary but still transparent:

<b>vinter förkylning</b>	winter cold
<b>lamm burgare</b>	lamb burger

3. The meaning is no longer transparent by analysis:

<b>grönsaker</b>	[not all green things, but ‘vegetables’]
<b>ogräs</b>	[not grass, but ‘weed’]
<b>mjukvara</b>	[not soft goods but ‘computer software’]

## 11.2 Affixation

### 11.2.1 Swedish and foreign affixes

#### 11.2.1.1 Chronology

- (a) Early Swedish had different means of forming words from those used nowadays. Many of these word formation elements disappeared during major linguistic developments as early as the Viking Age, but a few of them have remained productive over the centuries, e.g.: **-ing/-ning** in early Swedish, e.g. **viking**, **drottning**, **penning**, **skilling** and in more recent formations, e.g. **snygging**, **hårding**, **mobbning**, **stalkning**.

The number of affixes was later severely reduced and many of them became non-productive. In medieval Swedish new affixes developed to take their place, which were of two main kinds:

- 1 Indigenous final elements in compounds became *productive* affixes (see 11.2.2):

**liker** = ‘body’, ‘figure’, ‘appearance’ → **-lig** [‘-ly’] in:  
**barnslig**, childish; **daglig**, daily; **dödlig**, deadly; **kroppslig**, bodily

**samber** = ‘same’ → **-sam** in:

**ensam**, lonely; **fridsam**, peaceable; **fruktsam**, fruitful; **långsam**, slow

**dumber** [meaning varies, abstract] → **-dom** in:

**kristendom**, Christianity; **mandom**, manhood; **sjukdom**, illness

**skaper** = ‘form’, ‘type’ → **-skap** in:

**boskap**, cattle; **dårskap**, folly; **vänskap**, friendship

**leker** [meaning varies, abstract] → **-lek** in:

**kärlek**, love; **storlek**, size; **tjocklek**, thickness; **väderlek**, weather

- 2 A great number of words, especially abstract terms, were borrowed from Low German in the Middle Ages. Many of these provided affixes that became productive together with Swedish stems at that and later periods:

**betala**, **bilägga**, **förlåta**, **fördärva**, **samåkning**, **meddelande**, **ordförande**, **varaktig**, **uppenbar**, **välsignelse**, **konfirmera**, **bedrägeri**, **kyskhet**, **furstinna**, **synderska**

- (b) In more recent times Swedish has received a fresh wave of productive affixes via loanwords of Latin or Romance origin including:

**antikropp**, **riskabel**, **normal**, **lutheran**, **intelligent**, **intressant**, **citāt**, **kulturell**, **politiker**, **realism**, **aktiv**, **regissör**, **servitris**, **vicevärd**

### 11.2.1.2 Germanic and Romance affixes

The introduction into the language of foreign affixes has often resulted in two word formation elements with the same meaning existing side by side in the lexicon. A major distinction can be made here between Germanic affixes (i.e. indigenous words + German loans) and Romance affixes (mostly Latin and French loans, some having been borrowed via English):

#### PREFIXES

Germanic			Romance	
<b>o-</b>	<b>olaglig</b>	=	<b>in-</b>	<b>ineffektiv</b> ineffective
<b>sam-</b>	<b>samarbete</b>	=	<b>ko-</b>	<b>kooperation</b> cooperation
<b>själv-</b>	<b>självlärd</b>	=	<b>auto-</b>	<b>autodidakt</b> self-taught
<b>åter-</b>	<b>återuppbygga</b>	=	<b>re-</b>	<b>rekonstruera</b> reconstruct

Note – **Själv-** and **åter-** are not strictly speaking prefixes, see 11.2.2.2.

## SUFFIXES

Verb - Germanic  
**granska**  
inspect

Noun (Person)  
**granskare**  
inspector

Noun (Activity)  
**granskning**  
inspection

Verb - Romance  
**inspektera**  
inspect

Noun (Person)  
**inspektör**  
inspector

Noun (Activity)  
**inspektion**  
inspection

Verb - Germanic  
**tillverka**  
produce

Noun (Person)  
**tillverkare**  
producer

Adjective  
–

Noun (Abstract)  
**tillverkning,**  
**tillverkande**  
production

Verb - Romance  
**producera**  
produce

Noun (Person)  
**producent**  
producer

Adjective  
**produktiv**  
productive

Noun (Activity)  
**produktivitet**  
productivity

### 11.2.2 Productivity

#### 11.2.2.1 Productive affixes

Theoretically it is possible to add a productive affix to any word of a particular grammatical or semantic type. A productive affix or word element has two features:

- 1 It is possible to describe grammatically and/or semantically the elements that can be included.
- 2 The affix produces a derivative whose meaning is easily discerned from the meaning of the basic word.

For example, **–bar** is an adjective suffix meaning ‘**möjlig att X**’ where X is a verb. Thus **–bar** can potentially be added to all transitive verb stems. It is an adjective suffix but is also *deverbal*, see 11.2.5.1(c). So it is possible to form:

<b>användbar</b> , usable	= <b>möjlig att använda</b> , possible to use
<b>bärbar</b> , portable	= <b>möjlig att bära</b> , possible to carry
<b>förnyelsebar</b> , renewable	= <b>möjlig att förnya</b> , possible to renew

### 11.2.2.2 Root becomes affix

Some roots frequently found in compounds may come to be regarded as productive affixes. This happened frequently in Old Swedish (11.2.1.1(a)) and is still occurring. The meaning of the root usually becomes vaguer and more generalised when it is used as an affix, e.g.:

–**vänlig** originally an independent root – an adjective – meaning ‘friendly’, was used first in compounds such as **barnvänlig** = ‘**vänlig mot barn**’, child-friendly.

Nowadays it is found in the less easily discernable:

**användarvänlig, fotvänlig, figurvänlig, miljövänlig, sittvänlig**

This conversion to affix can be seen in words with the following affixes:

(a) Prefixes	<b>själv–</b>	<b>självdeklaration, självdö, självfinansiera</b>
	<b>åter–</b>	<b>återanvända, återbäring, återförena</b>
(b) Suffixes	<b>–artad</b>	<b>lavinartad, vulkanartad</b>
	<b>–fattig</b>	<b>kalorifattig, solfattig</b>
	<b>–fri</b>	<b>alkoholfri, trafikfri, vapenfri</b>
	<b>–full</b>	<b>praktfull, värdefull</b>
	<b>–lös</b>	<b>föräldralös, livlös, mållös, tandlös, uddlös</b>
	<b>–nära</b>	<b>figurnära, hudnära, kustnära</b>
	<b>–riktig</b>	<b>funktionsriktig, moderiktig, sittriktig</b>

Root-forming prefixes are marked in the table in 11.2.4 thus /*efter*/ *efterskrift*.

### 11.2.2.3 Vogue affixes

Some vogue affixes and word elements of recent years from the cultural and political debate are listed below. See also the lists of productive affixes in 11.2.4, 11.2.5, 11.2.6.

<b>anti–</b>	<b>antihjälte, antikropp, antirasist</b>
<b>bio–</b>	<b>biobränsle, biocid, biosfär, biomassa, biotop</b>
<b>hyper–</b>	<b>hyperaktiv, hyperkorrekt, hyperventilation</b>
<b>köns–</b>	<b>könsroll, könsdiskriminering, könsneutral</b>
<b>miljö–</b>	<b>miljöförstöring, miljövård, miljöfarlig, miljöskydd</b>
<b>mini–</b>	<b>minibil, minidator, minimjolk, miniräknare</b>



post-	postgymnasial, postindustriell, postmodern
pseudo-	pseudonym, pseudohändelse
ärke-	ärkebov, ärkefiende, ärkereaktionär, ärkerival
-cid	herbicid, pesticid, biocid, ekocid, genocid
-krati	aristokrati, demokrati, byråkrati
-mat	tankomat, bankomat, tvättomat

### 11.2.3 Prefixes

#### 11.2.3.1 Introduction

A prefix is a morpheme which introduces a word. It comes before the root, but cannot itself form a root:

<i>Prefix</i>		<i>Root</i>			
<b>o-</b>	+	<b>ro</b>	→	<b>oro</b>	cf. English un + rest → unrest

#### 11.2.3.2 Several different prefixes may express the same basic meaning

Negation (11.2.4(1)), for example, can be expressed by a number of different prefixes:

<b>o-</b>	<b>olycklig</b>	<b>il-</b>	<b>illegal</b>
<b>dis-</b>	<b>disharmoni</b>	<b>in-</b>	<b>intolerant</b>
<b>icke-</b>	<b>icketroende</b>	<b>non-</b>	<b>nonstop</b>

#### 11.2.3.3 Same prefix with different word classes

The same prefix may also occur in derivatives of a number of different word classes. Unlike suffixes (11.2.5), prefixes do not alter the word class:

<i>Neg. prefix</i>	<i>Noun</i>		<i>Noun</i>		<i>Neg. prefix</i>	<i>Adjective</i>	<i>Adjective</i>
<b>o</b>	+	<b>djur</b>	→	<b>odjur</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>lycklig</b>	→ <b>olycklig</b>
		animal		beast		happy	unhappy
<i>Neg. prefix</i>	<i>Verb</i>		<i>Verb</i>		<i>Neg. prefix</i>	<i>Adverb</i>	<i>Adverb</i>
<b>o</b>	+	<b>gilla</b>	→	<b>ogilla</b>	<b>o</b>	<b>gärna</b>	→ <b>ogärna</b>
		like		dislike		willingly	unwillingly

### 11.2.3.4 Unstressed/Stressed prefixes

Prefixes are either stressed or unstressed.

(a) Stressed prefixes (marked <sup>1</sup> in the examples below) comprise a large group, forming nouns, adjectives and verbs:

stressed indigenous prefixes: <sup>1</sup>otrevlig, <sup>1</sup>misstolka, <sup>1</sup>samarbete  
 stressed loan prefixes: <sup>1</sup>antihjälte, <sup>1</sup>illegal, <sup>1</sup>prorektor

(b) Unstressed prefixes are few and are used primarily to form verbs, for example **be-** and **för-**, both originally borrowed with Low German loans in the Middle Ages: **besvara**, **förvara**

### 11.2.4 Table of prefixes

In this table prefixes are classified according to the way in which they modify the meaning of the stem to which they are added.

There are three different kinds of combinations in the table below:

- 1 Foreign prefix + foreign root: **kor|relat**
- 2 Indigenous prefix + indigenous root: **ny|år**, **tve|tydig**
- 3 Combination of foreign and indigenous elements: **mång|miljonär**,  
**hyper|dålig**, **vice|ordförande**

This is not an exhaustive list. The symbol / / = root forming compound. See 11.2.2.2 for explanation.

Prefix	Sense	Examples	Translation
<b>I NEGATIVE and PEJORATIVE</b>			
<b>o-</b>	not	<b>olycklig</b>	unhappy
	not	<b>ovän</b>	enemy
	not	<b>ogilla</b>	dislike
Note 1 – Used especially with adjectives ending in <b>-bar</b> , <b>-lig</b> , <b>-ig</b> , <b>-isk</b> , <b>-sam</b> and with some nouns.			
Note 2 – Nouns may either be negative, <b>olycka</b> , ‘accident’, or pejorative <b>ogräs</b> , ‘weed’.			
<b>in-</b>	not	<b>intolerant</b>	intolerant
<b>il-</b>	not	<b>illegal</b>	illegal
<b>im-</b>	not	<b>impopulär</b>	unpopular

<b>ir-</b>	not	<b>irreparabel</b>	irreparable
<b>non-</b>	not	<b>nonaggression</b>	non-aggression
<b>a-</b>	not	<b>asymmetrisk</b>	asymmetrical
<b>/icke-/</b>	not	<b>icke-europeisk</b>	non-European
Note – <b>icke-</b> is often used for English loan translations, <b>icke-rökare</b> , ‘non-smoker’.			
<b>miss-</b>	not	<b>misslyckad</b>	failed
	bad	<b>missljud</b>	discord
<b>van-</b>	badly	<b>vansköta</b>	look after badly
		<b>vantolka</b>	misinterpret
<b>des-</b>	wrongly	<b>desillusionerad</b>	disillusioned
<b>dis-</b>	wrongly	<b>disharmonisk</b>	disharmonious
<b>2 PEJORATIVE</b>			
<b>kvasi-</b>	falsely	<b>kvasivetenskaplig</b>	quasi-scientific
<b>pseudo-</b>	falsely	<b>pseudoklassisk</b>	pseudo-classical
<b>krypto-</b>	secretly	<b>kryptofascist</b>	crypto-fascist
<b>3 REVERSATIVE or PRIVATIVE</b>			
<b>de-</b>	reverse action	<b>denationalisera</b>	denationalise
<b>des-</b>	deprive of	<b>desarmera</b>	disarm
<b>/av-/</b>	deprive of	<b>avfolka</b>	depopulate
<b>4 ATTITUDE</b>			
<b>kon-</b>	together with	<b>konkurrera</b>	compete
<b>kor-</b>	together with	<b>korrelat</b>	correlative
<b>kom-</b>	together with	<b>kompensation</b>	compensation
<b>kol-</b>	together with	<b>kollaborera</b>	collaborate
<b>ko-</b>	together with	<b>koordinera</b>	coordinate
<b>sam-</b>	together with	<b>samarbeta</b>	work together
<b>/med-/</b>	together with	<b>medresenär</b>	fellow passenger
<b>sär-</b>	separate from	<b>särbeskattning</b>	separate taxation
<b>pro-</b>	in favour of	<b>prokommunist</b>	pro-Communist
<b>anti-</b>	against	<b>antikommunist</b>	anti-Communist
<b>gen-</b>	against	<b>genstridig</b>	rebellious
<b>/mot-/</b>	resistance to	<b>motståndare</b>	opponent
<b>kontra-</b>	corresponds to against	<b>kontrapunkt</b>	counterpoint
		<b>kontrarevolution</b>	counter-revolution
<b>5 SIZE or DEGREE</b>			
<b>för-</b>	extremely	<b>försupen</b>	alcoholised
<b>hyper-</b>	beyond	<b>hypermodern</b>	hypermodern
<b>super-</b>	beyond	<b>supermakt</b>	superpower
<b>ultra-</b>	beyond	<b>ultramodern</b>	ultramodern
<b>ärke-</b>	beyond	<b>ärkefiende</b>	arch-enemy
<b>makro-</b>	big	<b>makrokosmos</b>	macrocosmos
<b>mikro-</b>	little	<b>mikrokosmos</b>	microcosmos
<b>mini-</b>	little	<b>minisemester</b>	mini-break
<b>maxi-</b>	big	<b>maxipack</b>	large pack
<b>ur-</b>	big	<b>uridiot</b>	big idiot
<b>under-</b>	too little	<b>undernär</b>	undernourished
<b>över-</b>	too much	<b>överansträngd</b>	overwrought

## 6 LOCATION (time or place)

<b>ante-</b>	before	<b>antedatera</b>	predate
<b>/för(e)-/</b>	before	<b>företrädare</b>	predecessor
<b>post-</b>	after	<b>postskriptum</b>	postscript
<b>/efter-/</b>	after	<b>efterskrift</b>	postscript
<b>sub-</b>	under, below	<b>subtropisk</b>	subtropical
<b>/under-/</b>	under, below	<b>underjordisk</b>	subterranean
<b>bi-</b>	beside	<b>biprodukt</b>	by-product
<b>ur-</b>	original	<b>urskog</b>	virgin forest
<b>/medel-/</b>	between	<b>medelvärde</b>	median value
<b>neo-</b>	new	<b>neoklassicism</b>	neoclassicism
<b>/ny-/</b>	new	<b>nyår</b>	New Year
		<b>nyanställa</b>	recruit [verb]
<b>ex-</b>	former	<b>exkung</b>	ex-king

## 7 LOCATION or DIRECTION

<b>trans-</b>	across	<b>transportera</b>	transport
<b>/över-/</b>	across	<b>överföra</b>	transmit
<b>ex-</b>	from	<b>export</b>	export
<b>/ut-/</b>	from	<b>utförsel</b>	export

## 8 DIRECTION (time or place)

<b>an-</b>	to, towards	<b>ankomma</b>	arrive
<b>/till-/</b>	to, towards	<b>tillsända</b>	remit
<b>för-</b>	away from	<b>fördriva</b>	drive away
<b>/bort-/</b>	away from	<b>bortgång</b>	death
<b>/borta-/</b>	away	<b>bortamatch</b>	away match
<b>/undan-/</b>	away from	<b>undanta</b>	exclude
<b>und-</b>	away from	<b>undgå</b>	escape
<b>re-</b>	back, again	<b>regruppera</b>	regroup
<b>gen-</b>	back, again	<b>gengångare</b>	ghost
<b>/åter-/</b>	back, again	<b>återse</b>	see again
<b>fort-</b>	further	<b>fortplanta</b>	reproduce
<b>/vidare-/</b>	further	<b>vidareutbildning</b>	further education
<b>/slut-/</b>	end	<b>slutskede</b>	end stage
<b>pre-</b>	before	<b>preludium</b>	prelude
<b>post-</b>	after	<b>postmodernism</b>	post-modernism

## 9 NUMBER

<b>/halv-/</b>	half	<b>halvcirkel</b>	semicircle
<b>mono-</b>	one	<b>monoteism</b>	monotheism
<b>/en-/</b>	one	<b>ensidig</b>	biased
<b>bi-</b>	two	<b>bilateral</b>	bilateral
<b>di-</b>	two	<b>dikotomi</b>	dichotomy
<b>tve-</b>	two	<b>tvetydig</b>	ambiguous
<b>/två-/</b>	two	<b>tvåspråkig</b>	bilingual
<b>/dubbel-/</b>	two	<b>dubbelbeskattning</b>	double taxation
<b>poly-</b>	many	<b>polygami</b>	polygamy
<b>/fler-/</b>	many	<b>flerfärgad</b>	multicoloured
<b>/mång-/</b>	many	<b>mångmiljonär</b>	multimillionaire
<b>multi-</b>	many	<b>multifärgad</b>	multicoloured

<b>pan-</b>	all	<b>panamerikansk</b>	pan-American	
<b>/all-/</b>	all	<b>allsidig</b>	comprehensive	
<b>10 RANK, TIME RELATION</b>				
<b>bi-</b>	secondary	<b>biroll</b>	minor role	
<b>ex-</b>	former	<b>exhustru</b>	ex-wife	
<b>ur-</b>	first	<b>urmänniska</b>	primitive human	
<b>11 OTHERS</b>				
<b>auto-</b>	self	<b>autodidakt</b>	autodidact	
<b>/själv-/</b>	self	<b>sjävlärd</b>	self-taught	
<b>vice-</b>	deputy	<b>vicepresident</b>	vice-president	
<b>pro-</b>	instead of	<b>prorektor</b>	pro-rector	
<b>12 TRANSITIVISATION</b>				
<b>be-</b>	<b>svara</b>	reply	→ <b>besvara</b>	respond to
<b>för-</b>	<b>neka</b>	refuse	→ <b>förneka</b>	deny

### 11.2.5 Suffixes

#### 11.2.5.1 Introduction

- (a) A suffix is a morpheme which ends a word. It comes after the root, but cannot itself form a root:

<i>Root</i>		<i>Suffix</i>		<i>Adjective</i>
<b>vetenskap</b>	+	<b>-lig</b>	→	<b>vetenskaplig</b>
science		-ly		scientific

- (b) Unlike prefixes, suffixes are frequently used in order to alter the word class:

<i>Noun</i>		<i>Adjective suffix</i>		<i>Adjective</i>
<b>ludd</b>	+	<b>-ig</b>	→	<b>luddig</b>
fluff		-y		fluffy, vague

<i>Noun</i>		<i>Verb suffix</i>		<i>Verb</i>
<b>färg</b>	+	<b>-a</b>	→	<b>färga</b>
colour				colour

<i>Adjective</i>		<i>Noun suffix</i>		<i>Noun</i>
<b>klar</b>	+	<b>-het</b>	→	<b>klarhet</b>
clear				clarity

- (c) It is sometimes useful to be able to denote not only the nature of the converting suffix – noun suffixes form nouns – but also the word class of the original word. Thus *denominal* words are formed from nouns, *deverbal* words from verbs and *deadjectival* words from adjectives.

Productive deadjectival noun suffixes include **–het**, **–ism**, **–itet**:

**svag**, weak – **svaghet**, weakness; **huligan**, hooligan – **huliganism**, hooliganism; **populär**, popular – **popularitet**, popularity

Productive deverbal adjective suffixes include **–bar**, **–ig**, **–sam**:

**stapl[a]**, stack – **stapelbar**, stackable; **tål[a]**, tolerate – **tålig**, patient; **prat[a]**, talk – **pratsam**, talkative

Productive deverbal suffixes include: **–ande**, **–are**:

**rengör[a]**, clean – **självrengörande**, self-cleaning; **jogg[a]**, jog – **joggare**, jogger

A large group of deverbal nouns have the suffix **–ing/–ning**:

**när[a]**, nourish – **näring**, nourishment; **mobb[a]**, bully – **mobbning**, bullying

Productive deadjectival verb suffixes include **–na**:

**blek**, pale – **blekna**, grow pale; **lik**, like – **likna**, resemble; **ljus**, light – **ljusna**, grow lighter; **sval**, cool – **svalna**, cool down

- (d) The same suffix may in combination with different stems result in different meanings: **arbetare**, ‘worker’, is a person who carries out an activity, work; **mätare**, ‘meter’, is an agent of an action, measuring. The converse is also true; several suffixes may express the same basic meaning, e.g. **utvandrare**, **emigrant**, **resande**, **konduktör** are all people carrying out some activity, e.g. **utvandra**, **emigrera**, **resa**, etc. See 11.2.6.
- (e) The same suffix may also occur in derivatives of several different word classes, for example **–ing** (**–ling**, **–ning**) may be added to:

proper nouns	<b>Småland</b>	→	<b>småläanning</b>
adjectives	<b>sjuk</b>	→	<b>sjukling</b>
verbs	<b>uppkomm[a]</b>	→	<b>uppkomling</b>

In the table in 11.2.6 suffixes are classified according to the word class of the resultant derivative and further sub-classified according to *either* the way they modify the meaning of the stem to which they are added *or* the word class of the stem.

### 11.2.5.2 Variation in the stem vowel

In some cases the derivative may have a different stem vowel from its base word:

NOUN	→	NOUN	<b>Värmland</b>	<b>värmlänning</b>
ADJECTIVE	→	NOUN	<b>lång</b>	<b>längd</b>
			<b>tung</b>	<b>tyngd</b>
ADJECTIVE	→	VERB	<b>tom</b>	<b>tömma</b>
			<b>full</b>	<b>fylla</b>

### 11.2.5.3 Zero suffix

In some cases it is possible to talk of a zero-suffix (0-suffix, 11.2.8). The base is a verb and the derivative its stem, which may often form an abstract noun:

**lyft[a]** → **lyft** e.g. **lönelyft**, (salary) increase

## 11.2.6 Table of suffixes

This is not an exhaustive list. V = verb, N = noun, A = adjective, V- = Verb ending in ... , N- = noun ending in ... , L = Latin derivation, F = French derivation

Group/Suffix	Added to stem	Sense	Examples	Notes
<b>I NOUN-FORMING</b>				
<b>PEOPLE</b>				
<b>Masculine and feminine</b>				
<b>-an, -ian</b>	N	inhabitant	<b>afrikan, columbian</b>	
<b>-are</b>	V-a	person agent of action	<b>läsare mätare</b>	

- <b>ande</b>	V-a	agent	<b>studerande</b>
- <b>ende</b>	V-vowel	agent	<b>gående</b>
- <b>ant/-ent</b>	V-era	agent	<b>emigrant, konsument</b>
- <b>(a)tor</b>	V-era	agent	<b>diktator</b>
- <b>graf</b>		agent	<b>fotograf</b>
- <b>is</b>		agent	<b>kompis</b>
			hypocorism, see 11.4.1.1
- <b>ist</b>	V-a, N	occupation	<b>cyklist</b>
		philosophy	<b>marxist</b>
- <b>iker</b>	N-ik	occupation	<b>kritiker</b>
- <b>log</b>		occupation	<b>sociolog</b>
- <b>an</b>		nationality	<b>amerikan</b>
- <b>es</b>		nationality	<b>kines</b>
- <b>(i)er</b>		nationality	<b>belgier</b>
- <b>it</b>		nationality	<b>muskovit</b>
- <b>at</b>		person	<b>demokrat</b>
- <b>är/</b>	N-tion	occupation	<b>funktionär</b>
- <b>jär</b>		occupation	<b>pionjär</b>
			see also 2 below
<b>Masculine</b>			
- <b>are</b>		occupation	<b>lärare</b>
- <b>ör</b>	V-era	occupation	<b>regissör</b>
- <b>ing/-ling</b>	V, N, A	origin	<b>värmlänning</b>
<b>Feminine</b>			
- <b>(ar)inna</b>	V-a, N	occupation	<b>värdinna</b>
- <b>(er)ska</b>	V-a, N-are	occupation	<b>sjuksköterska</b>
- <b>(ö)rsk</b>		occupation	<b>frisörsk</b> , <b>kassörsk</b>
- <b>essa/-issa</b>	N	occupation	<b>prinsessa</b> , <b>abbedissa</b>
- <b>ös</b>	N-ör	occupation	<b>dansös</b>
- <b>ris</b>	N-ör	occupation	<b>servitris</b>
<b>ACTIVITY</b>			
- <b>an</b>	V-a	abstract	<b>början</b>
- <b>ande</b>	V-a	result of activity, ongoing activity	<b>skrivande</b>
- <b>ende</b>	V-vowel	result of activity	<b>leende</b>
- <b>else</b>	V	abstract	<b>jämförelse</b>
- <b>eri</b>	V-a	activity	<b>spökeri</b>
- <b>(n)ing</b>	V-a	activity	<b>skrivning</b>
- <b>(a)tion, -sion,</b>			
- <b>ition</b>	V-era	abstract	
	<b>inform/era</b>	→	<b>information</b>
	<b>explod/era</b>	→	<b>explosion</b>
	<b>kompon/era</b>	→	<b>komposition</b>
- <b>grafi, -ologi</b>		abstract	<b>fotografi, sociologi</b>
Zero suffix	V-a		<b>glid, lyft</b>
			see 11.2.8
<b>STATUS</b>			
- <b>het</b>	A	status	<b>brottslighet, svaghet</b>
- <b>lek</b>	A	quality	<b>kärlek</b>



-dom	N, A	status	ålderdom, sjukdom
-skap	N	condition	vänskap
-ska	A	abstract	ondska
-an	see Activity	feelings	önskan
-else		feelings	frestelse
-sel		feelings	blygsel
-ande		feelings	medlidande
-nad	A		tystnad
-(n)ing	V		förvåning
-itet	A	status	neutralitet
-ism		views	socialism
<b>2 ADJECTIVE-FORMING</b>			
From verbs			
-bar	V-a	possible	hörbar
-lig	V-a, V-vowel		rörlig, trolig
-abel	V-era	possible	diskutabel
-aktig	V	tendency	varaktig
-ig	V	inclination	slarvig
-sam	V	inclination	arbetsam
-sk	V	inclination	glömsk
-en	V	inclination	närgången
-sen		inclination	överlägsen
-(a)tiv	V-era	inclination	kontemplativ
From nouns			
-(a)d/t	N	which have X	enarmad
-(is)erad	N	which have X	transistoriserad
-ig	N	which have X	tvåstavig
-enlig	N	according to	lagenlig
-mässig	N	corresponding to	planmässig
-aktig	N	characteristic of	dåraaktig
-artad	N	of	granitartad
-(i)sk	N	belonging to	brittisk
-lig	N	belonging to	mänsklig, vänlig
-al	N-um	belonging to	central
-ell	N	belonging to	kulturell
-ant	N-ans/-ens	L, F	elegant
-ent	N	L, F	intelligent
-iv	N-ion/-sion	F	aktiv
-är	N	F	reaktionär
-ös	N	F	nervös
From adjectives			
-lig/-lik	A	tendency to	sjuklig, jämlik
-aktig	A	close to	gulaktig
			often colours
-artad	A	having the property of	storartad

### 3 VERB-FORMING

#### From nouns

<b>-a/-era</b>	N	treat, provide with	<b>färga, adressera</b>
	N	remove	<b>avfrosta</b> (addition of prefix)
<b>-a/-era</b>	N	do, produce,	<b>tvätta, golfa, producera</b>
	N	make the object of use	<b>kritisera</b>
	N	be, act as	<b>cykla</b> <b>basa</b> <b>vikariera</b>
	N	make into	<b>förklara</b> (addition of prefix) <b>amerikanisera</b>

#### From adjectives

<b>-a</b>	A	make, change into	<b>lugna</b>
<b>-na</b>	A	become X	<b>mörkna, gulna, blekna</b>
<b>-a (+ mutation)</b>	A	make X	<b>värma</b>
<b>-ja (+ mutation)</b>	A	make X	<b>glädja</b>

#### Others

Pronoun		address as	<b>dua</b>
Interjection		say	<b>heja</b>

### 11.2.7 Retrogradation

The usual method of word formation is for nouns to be formed from verbs:

<i>Verb</i>		<i>Noun</i>		<i>Noun</i>
<b>skriva</b>	→	<b>skrivning</b>	→	<b>skrivande</b>
write		writing, test		writing

Sometimes the process is reversed and compound verbs are formed from compound nouns:

<i>Verb</i>		<i>Noun</i>		<i>Compound noun</i>		<i>Compound verb</i>
<b>läsa</b>	→	<b>läsning</b>	→	<b>korrekturläsning</b>	→	<b>korrekturläsa</b>
read		reading		proof reading		proof read
<b>röka</b>	→	<b>rökare</b>	→	<b>kedjerökare</b>	→	<b>kedjeröka</b>
smoke		smoker		chain smoker		chain smoke

This process is known as retrogradation or ‘back-formation’ and is very common in newspaper style:

**folkparksturnera, hjärntvätta, julhandla, momsbelägga, storspela, svartlista, textbehandla**

### 11.2.8 Zero suffix

Nouns are occasionally formed directly from the stem of verbs after deletion of the infinitive –a ending:

<i>Noun</i>		<i>Verb</i>		<i>Noun</i>		<i>Verb</i>
<b>dropp</b>	←	<b>dropp[a]</b>		<b>flyt</b>	←	<b>flyt[a]</b>
drip		drip		fluency		flow

Others include: **fusk, glid, riv, smäll, spill, start, stöt, sug, svinn, åk**

Many new formations of this kind are compounds: **avhopp, lönelyft, påhitt, sandsug, säsongstart, utsläpp, uttag**

## 11.3 Compounding

### 11.3.1 Introduction

#### 11.3.1.1 Integrated compounds

(a) Whereas in English compounds are either written as one or two words or sometimes hyphenated, Swedish usually writes them as one word:

bed room	<b>sov rum</b>
local train	<b>lokal tåg</b>
user-friendly	<b>användar vänlig</b>
flower pot/flower-pot/flower pot	<b>blom kruka</b>

Note – There is an increasing tendency (strongly resisted by linguists) to separate compounds in some varieties of Swedish in the English manner.

**\*personal matsal** [should be **personalmatsal**], staff cafeteria

This may result in some strange (and comic) phrases:

**\*rök fritt** should be **rökfritt**; **\*en lång hårig flicka** should be **en långhårig flicka**; **\*en sjuk gymnast** should be **en sjukgymnast**; **\*en kyckling lever** should be **en kycklinglever**

- (b) Compounds may be formed from all word classes. In nearly every instance the second or subsequent element (SE) determines the word class, as it is this element that usually takes inflexional endings.

Compound nouns are most frequent, and within this group nouns are the most frequent type of first element (FE): **sol|sken**, **Volvo|ägare**

The FE may be a derivative or compound: **fotboll|s|spelare**, **hörsel|klinik**, **skrivning|s|resultat**

Nouns also form the most common FE in compound adjectives: **kväll|s|öppen**

On occasion a phrase may form the FE in a compound: **hundraår|s|minne**, **tvåvåning|s|hus**

The SE may be a derivative or a compound: **matte|skrivning**, **svamp|handbok**

- (c) An unusual group of noun compounds consists entirely of an imperative phrase: **ett far|väl**, **en förgät|-mig|ej**, **en giv|akt**, **ett kom|i|håg**, **ett kryp|i|n**

Combinations of word class are found for compound nouns in 11.3.2.1, for compound adjectives in 11.3.6.2 and for compound verbs in 11.3.8.1.

### 11.3.1.2 Head and descriptor

Compounds consist of two (or more) elements each of which may occur as an independent word, but the relationship between the elements does not often represent equal weight. In most compounds there is a *head word*, usually the SE, which indicates the basic meaning, accompanied by a *descriptive element*, the FE:

<i>Head</i>	
<b>hus tak</b>	house roof

Other possible tangible types of **tak**, ‘roof’ are: **bil|tak**, **sol|tak**, **vagn|tak**, **halm|tak**, **skiffer|tak**, and in a figurative sense **löne|tak**, ‘wage ceiling’.

### 11.3.1.3 Types of syntactical relationship

The main types of syntactical relationship between the elements in a compound are:

(a) *Determinative*, i.e. where one element determines or describes the type of head word, as in **hus|tak** above.

1. The FE restricts or modifies the main meaning of the SE which is the head word:

<b>bil tak</b>	= <b>taket på bilen, bilens tak</b>	car roof
<b>blå svart</b>	= <b>en blå nyans av en svart färg</b>	blue black
<b>idrott sklubb</b>	= <b>klubb för idrott</b>	sports club

2. The FE is subject:

<b>jord skalv</b>	= <b>jorden skälver</b>	earthquake
<b>snö fall</b>	= <b>snön faller</b>	snowfall

3. The FE is object:

<b>råd givare</b>	= <b>någon som ger råd</b>	adviser
<b>epok görande</b>	= <b>något som gör epok</b>	epoch-making

4. The FE is agent:

<b>skräddar sydd</b>	= <b>sydd av en skräddare</b>	tailor-made
<b>sol bränd</b>	= <b>bränd av solen</b>	sunburnt

Determinative compounding is most frequent among compound nouns and adjectives. Many compound verbs are not compounds proper but are formed by retrogradation (11.2.7). Many compound verbs are separable compounds comprising a stressed particle + verb (11.3.8.2(c)). For compound adjectives see also 11.3.6f., and for compound adverbs see 11.3.9.

(b) *Copulative* (also known as *dvandva* compounds), i.e. where the two elements are of equal status, e.g. **döv|stum**, **lång|smal**. Here the

compound can be substituted by FE *and* SE or FE = SE. They have two heads.

<b>klock radio</b>	= <b>klocka + radio</b>	clock radio
<b>söt sur</b>	= <b>söt + sur</b>	sweet and sour

Note – This group also contains certain cases regarded as pseudo-compounds, as they are too close to phrases to be regarded as true compounds. See 11.3.7.3(b).

### **Sverige-Norgeavtal (= ett avtal mellan Sverige och Norge)**

(c) *Possessive* (also known as *bahuvrihi* compounds). This type expresses some characteristic feature of a person or animal, providing a metonymic image (i.e. the part stands for the whole). Such compounds have no head:

<b>grå ben</b>	<b>(djur) som har grå ben</b>	wolf
<b>röd strumpa</b>	<b>kvinnor som bär röda strumpor</b>	feminist
<b>svart skjorta</b>	<b>person som bär svart skjorta</b>	fascist

Others include many names for plants, animals and birds: **gull|regn**, ‘laburnum’; **präst|krage**, ‘oxe-eye daisy’; **röd|stjärt**, ‘redstart’.

#### **11.3.1.4** Productive elements

Some recent very productive first and final elements that work in much the same way as prefixes and suffixes are:

##### *First element*

<b>engångs</b>	<b>engångs bestick, engångs rakhyvel</b>
<b>fick</b>	<b>fick dator, fick parkera</b>
<b>mjuk</b>	<b>mjuk start, mjuk valuta</b>
<b>noll</b>	<b>noll ställa, noll tillväxt, noll taxera</b>
<b>när</b>	<b>när demokrati, när köp, när radio</b>
<b>snabb</b>	<b>snabb köp, snabb mat, snabb frysa</b>
<b>trivsel</b>	<b>trivsel hörna, trivsel skapande</b>

##### *Second or subsequent element*

<b>bank</b>	<b>blod bank, organ bank</b>
<b>getto</b>	<b>betong getto, stor stad s getto</b>
<b>landskap</b>	<b>kontor s landskap, kultur landskap</b>
<b>medveten</b>	<b>miljö medveten, mode medveten</b>
<b>riktig</b>	<b>mode riktig, stil riktig</b>

**roll**                      **kvinno|roll, kön|s|roll, nyckel|roll**  
**åldern**                    **data|åldern, guld|åldern**

**11.3.2**    *Compound nouns – forms by word class*

**11.3.2.1**    Word classes as FE

Compound nouns may have as their FE a number of different word classes:

<i>FE</i>	<i>Examples</i>
NOUN	<b>gatu belysning, parkering s mätare</b>
PROPER NOUN	<b>Ericsson direktör, Strindberg s pjäs</b>
ADJECTIVE	<b>fri tid, hög hus, sjuk kassa, små barn</b>
VERB	<b>gå gata, ha begär, sov rum, tvätt medel</b>
VERB PHRASE	<b>slit-och-släng- samhället, kom i håg, ståupp are</b>
PREPOSITION	<b>kring tjänst, mellan vägg, över klass</b>
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	<b>dygnetrunt service, mellankrig s åren</b>
NUMERAL	<b>fem kamp, fyr takt, åtti talet</b>
ADVERB	<b>hemma marknad, när polis, ute liggare, väl stånd</b>
PRONOUN	<b>all rum, hon kön, jag roman</b>
INTERJECTION	<b>ja sägare, nej kampanj</b>

**11.3.2.2**    Form of the FE

Some general guidelines apply to the form of the FE:

- (a) Nouns are usually found in their basic form, without inflexional endings. See also 11.3.3f. for vowel reductions and links.

<b>finans politik</b>	← <b>finanser + politik</b>	finance policy
<b>atlant flyg</b>	← <b>Atlanten + flyg</b>	Atlantic flight

Note – Exceptions: A small number of loanwords whose plural ends in **-a**, and most FEs using **ögon**, **öron** are found in the plural form:

**data|operatör, fakta|blad, ögon|bryn, öron|inflammation**

(b) Adjectives are usually found in their basic form, without inflexional endings:

<b>grov arbete</b>	cf. <b>ett grovt arbete</b>	manual work
<b>fin byxor</b>	cf. <b>finna byxor</b>	best trousers

Note – Exceptions. Some adjectives as FE are found in an inflected form:

**lille|bror, stora|system, små|företagare, fler|pack, äldre|omsorg, andre|styrman**

(c) Verbs as FE are found in their stem form, or in the case of Conj. I verbs like **betala, älska**, the stem minus **-a**:

<b>gå gata</b>	← <b>gå + gata</b>	pedestrian precinct
<b>sök motor</b>	← <b>söka + motor</b>	search engine
<b>betal kanal</b>	← <b>betala + kanal</b>	pay channel
<b>älsk värd</b>	← <b>älska + värd</b>	kind

Note – To facilitate pronunciation some verb stems add **-e** or more rarely **-s** when used as FE:

<b>läs e sal</b>	← <b>läs[a] + sal</b>	reading room
<b>drick s pengar</b>	← <b>drick[a] + pengar</b>	tip

(d) When the FE in a compound adjective is an adverb formed from an adjective this FE is found in the adjectival form, i.e. without **-t**:

<b>högt utbildad</b>	← <b>högt + utbildad</b>	highly educated
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### **11.3.3** *Compound nouns – form of links*

In this paragraph and 11.3.4 only compound nouns are discussed. See 11.3.2.2 for methods of linking in compound adjectives and verbs. The linking of compound nouns is complex and no hard and fast rules exist; all that can be given are some guidelines.



### 11.3.3.1 Two-element compounds

NOUN (with or without modification) + NOUN

(a) Five main methods are employed:

1 NOUN + NOUN

<b>ett bil däck</b>	← <b>en bil</b>	+	<b>ett däck</b>
<b>en turist byrå</b>	← <b>en turist</b>	+	<b>en byrå</b>
<b>ett trä hus</b>	← <b>(ett) trä</b>	+	<b>ett hus</b>

2 NOUN minus final **-a/-e** + NOUN (but cf. 5 below)

<b>en bond gård</b>	← <b>en bonde</b>	+	<b>en gård</b>
<b>en käll sortering</b>	← <b>en källa</b>	+	<b>en sortering</b>
<b>ett pojke namn</b>	← <b>en pojke</b>	+	<b>ett namn</b>
<b>en lärar lön</b>	← <b>en lärare</b>	+	<b>en lön</b>

Note – Exceptions:

(i) Many modern nouns in short **-a** retain the **-a**:

**ett kassa|skåp, en pizza|deg, ett villa|område**

(ii) Some nouns in **-e** retain the **-e**:

**linje|spel, ordförande|post**

(iii) Many neuter nouns in **-e** retain the **-e** or add **-s**:

**kaffe|bryggare, vete|mjöl, yrke|erfarenhet**

(iv) FEs ending in **-mme** also drop one **m**:

**en tim|arbetare** ← **en timme** + **en arbetare**

3 NOUN + **s** + NOUN

**ett parkering|s|hus** ← **en parkering** + **ett hus**  
**en skriv|bord|s|lampa** ← **ett skriv|bord** + **en lampa**

(see also 11.3.3.2)

4 NOUN in **-ja, -ia, -inna, -erska** + NOUN

In these FEs the **-a** becomes **-e**:

**en historie|professor** ← **en historia** + **en professor**  
**ett sömmerske|tips** ← **en sömmerska** + **ett tips**

5 NOUN in **-a** + case ending in **-o, -u, -a** + NOUN

Some nouns which in Old Swedish were feminine and had a genitive ending in **-o, -u**, or in the case of neuters in **-a**. This is largely non-productive.

**en kvinno|klinik** ← **en kvinna** + **en klinik**  
**ett vecko|slut** ← **en vecka** + **ett slut**  
**ett varu|lager** ← **en vara** + **ett lager**  
**(en) barn|a|vård** ← **ett barn** + **en vård**

But notice some new formations by analogy: **en gatu|miljö, ett kvinno|parti, ett lycko|piller, en skilsmäso|förhandling**

(b) Minor methods include:

6 NOUN in consonant + **-la, -ra** (modification of root → consonant + **-el, -er**) + NOUN

**ett våffel|järn** ← **en våffla** + **ett järn**  
**en skaller|orm** ← **en skallra** + **en orm**

Note – Exceptions: words in **-lla** and a few others:

**en käll|förteckning** ← **en källa** + **en förteckning**  
**ett pärl|fiske** ← **en pärla** + **ett fiske**

7 POLYSYLLABIC NOUN in **-te** (modification of root → **-ts** + NOUN)

**en arbet|s|narkoman** ← **ett arbete** + **en narkoman**

Bisyllabic nouns retain the **-e**: **lyte – lyte|s|komik, bete – bete|s|mark**

The way in which the ending is determined by the form of the link is shown in greater detail in the guide to noun links in 11.3.4.

### 11.3.3.2 Three-element compounds

Notice that compound nouns whose FEs themselves are compounds tend to employ the link **–s–** after the second element:

<b>en fot + en boll</b>	→	<b>en fot boll</b>	NOUN + NOUN
<b>en boll + en plan</b>	→	<b>en boll plan</b>	NOUN + NOUN
<b>en fotboll + en plan</b>	→	<b>en fot boll s plan</b>	NOUN + s + NOUN

Note 1 –The use of **–s** is limited by the nature of the final syllable of the FE, See 11.3.4.

Note 2: When the final element in a compound FE naturally drops a final **–a**, this is sometimes replaced by an **–e** before subsequent elements are added:

<b>en skola + en inspektör</b>	→	<b>en skol inspektör</b>
	→	<b>en grund skol e inspektör</b>

For information on whether or not to use the **–s**–link, see 11.3.4.6f.

### 11.3.4 Guide to noun links

#### 11.3.4.1 Noun + noun

<i>FE</i>	<i>Examples</i>
FE in consonant	<b>bank kort, bok hylla, mat sal, sol stråle</b>
FE in stressed vowel	<b>bi kupa, bastu bad, sjö gräs</b>
FE in <b>–s</b>	<b>ras diskriminering, stress faktor</b>
FE in <b>–‘sj’</b> sound	<b>bransch avtal, garage port, kurs ändring</b>
FE in <b>–s + consonant</b>	<b>disk bänk, plast kort</b>
FE in unstressed <b>–el, –en, –er, –ar, –on</b>	<b>segel båt</b> but: <b>handel s balans</b> <b>vatten glas</b> but: <b>tentamen s prov</b> <b>finger avtryck</b> but <b>fader s gestalt</b> <b>sommar lov, hallon buske</b>
FE in participial <b>–ande, –ende</b>	<b>yttrande frihet, boende kostnad</b>
FE in <b>–else</b>	<b>rörelse mönster, fängelse straff</b>
FE in stressed <b>–eri, –i</b>	<b>bryggeri chef, konditori kund</b>
FE in stressed <b>–ist</b>	<b>turist byrå, nudist läger</b>

FE in stressed **-ad, -all, -an, -at, -ell, -em, -et, -ett, -ik, -iv, -log, -om, -on, -ur, -yr**

**promenad|skor, kravall|polis, vulkan|utbrott, internat|skola, kapell|mästare, problem|barn, tapet|våd, biljett|lucka, fysik|bok, arkiv|bild, katalog|pris, ekonom|utbildning, person|bevis, kultur|krock, martyr|död**

**11.3.4.2** Noun in unstressed **-e/-a** (loses **-e/-a**) + noun

FE is bisyllabic non- **flick|skola, handsk|fack**

neuter in **-a/-e**

But:

**mästare + kock → mäster|kock**

**mästare + kupp → mäster|kupp**

Note – Exceptions: FE in **tanke-**, **ande-**: **tanke|form, ande|mening**

**11.3.4.3** Noun in **-ja** (changes to **-je**) + noun

**kedje|reaktion, olje|plattform**

**11.3.4.4** Noun in **-erska, -inna** (changes to **-erske, -inne**) + noun

**sjuksköterske|elev, grevinne|titel**

**11.3.4.5** Noun + **s** + noun

FE is a compound

**last|bil|s|förare, spår|vagn|s|trafik**

Note – This does not apply to elements ending in **-are** in three (plus) element compounds: **yrkeslärar|utbildning**

FE ends in **-an**

**samverkan|s|avtal**

FE ends in **-ator, -tor**

**diktator|s|fasoner, kontor|s|personal**

(referring to people)

FE ends in **-dom, -het,**

**visdom|s|ord, likhet|s|tecken,**

**-lek, -skap**

**kärlek|s|bevis, sällskap|s|resa**

FE ends in **-eum**

**museum|s|besök**

FE ends in **-(n)ing, -ling**

**parkerings|s|plats, tidning|s|bud,**

but: **camping|plats, shopping|center**

FE ends in stressed <b>-itet</b>	<b>nationalitet s beteckning</b>
FE ends in <b>-(t)ion</b>	<b>motion s cykel, religion s kunskap</b>
FE ends in <b>-ment</b>	<b>departement s sekreterare</b>
FE ends in stressed <b>-är</b>	<b>karaktär s drag, pensionär s träff</b>
FE ends in <b>-nad</b>	<b>byggnad s firma, marknad s föring,</b>
FE begins with a prefix	<b>besök s tid, bidrag s givare, förkör s rätt</b>

#### 11.3.4.6 Noun + noun or noun + s + noun?

In the majority of these cases the form with an **-s-** link represents a genitive relationship **bord|s|ben** = **bordets ben** (table leg = the leg of the table), whereas without the **-s-** link the FE often denotes a type and the SE is its head word: **bord|tennis** is a type of tennis played on a table. The group includes nouns with a monosyllabic FE ending in a consonant:

**hund|koppel, tall|barr, tåg|resenär**

But note the following with a shortened vowel in the FE:

**hav|s|utsikt, kök|s|golv, stad|s|mur**

Note – Some 120 nouns, many of them monosyllabic, may form compounds either with **-s-** or without. These include the following FEs:

<b>bord</b>	<b>bord s dryck</b>	but <b>bord duk</b>
<b>död</b>	<b>död s annons</b> (shortened vowel in FE)	but <b>död grävare</b>
<b>skog</b>	<b>skog s industri</b> (shortened vowel in FE)	but <b>skog rikedom</b>
<b>år</b>	<b>år s bok</b>	but <b>år tionde</b>

#### 11.3.5 Compound nouns – meaning

In this section all kinds of FEs are dealt with, unlike 11.3.2f. The syntactical and semantic relationship between the FE and SE in a compound can be clarified by expanding the compound into a phrase. See 11.3.1.2f.

FE denotes material, content  
**plast|hink** = **hink av plast** plastic bucket

SE = adverbial of place  
**arbet|s|rum** = **rum där man arbetar** study

FE is subject of activity in SE

**barn|skrik** = **barns skrik** child's cry

Various classifications can be made on this basis. See 11.3.5.1–11.3.5.4

#### 11.3.5.1 Verbal activity in SE

(a) FE is subject

**hund|skall** = **hunden skäller** dog's bark

(b) FE is object

**sjuk|vård** = **man vårdar sjuka** health care

(c) FE is adverbial

**en tåg|resa** = **man reser med tåg** train journey

#### 11.3.5.2 Verbal activity in FE

(a) SE is subject

**rull|trappa** = **en trappa som rullar** escalator

(b) SE is object

**rid|häst** = **en häst man rider på** riding horse

(c) SE is adverbial

**skriv|redskap** = **redskap man skriver med** writing implement

#### 11.3.5.3 No verbal activity in either FE or SE

(a) Adverbial relationship

place  
**äng|s|mark** = **mark på en äng** meadowland

time  
**höst|vecka** = **vecka under hösten** autumn week

means  
**el|visp** = **visp som drivs med el** electric whisk

(b) Material or content

**bras|ved** = **ved för brasan** firewood

(c) Possessive relationship

**fisk|ben**

= **en fisks ben**

fishbone

**11.3.5.4** FE is an adjective

FE is complement:

**små|barn**

= **barn som är små**

small children

**hög|hus**

= **hus som är högt**

tower block

For possessive compounds, see 11.3.1.3(c).

**11.3.6** *Compound adjectives and numerals – forms by word class*

**11.3.6.1** Links

The same types of links used to form compound nouns (see 11.3.3) also apply in the formation of compound adjectives. The FE is here often a noun:

- |   |   |                                |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | FE + adjective                                | <b>blixt snabb</b>             |
| 2 | FE minus <b>-a/-e</b> + adjective             | <b>pojkt aktig</b>             |
| 3 | FE + <b>s</b> + adjective                     | <b>närings s riktig</b>        |
| 4 | FE + link in <b>-e/-a</b> + adjective         | <b>olje skadad</b>             |
| 5 | FE + case ending + adjective                  | <b>veckol lång, gatu smart</b> |
| 6 | FE in <b>-la</b> (→ <b>-el-</b> ) + adjective | <b>våffel mönstrad</b>         |
| 7 | FE in <b>-te</b> (→ <b>-ts-</b> ) + adjective | <b>arbet s skygg</b>           |

**11.3.6.2** FE

Compound adjectives may have as their FE a number of different word classes:

*FE*

NOUN

ABBREVIATION

NOUN PHRASE

ADJECTIVE

*Examples*

**is|kall, miljö|vänlig, rost|fri,**

**cp-skadad**

**iögonen|fallande**

**mörk|grön, ny|rik, snar|lik**

VERB	kör klar, skriv kunnig, älsk värd
PRONOUN	hel svensk, själv säker
ADVERB	väl behövlig, ut fattig
PREPOSITION	under jordisk, över full
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	pånytt född
NUMERAL	fem faldig, fyr stämmig

For general rules applying to the form of the FE, see 11.3.2.2(b), 11.3.3f.

### 11.3.7 Compound adjectives – meaning

#### 11.3.7.1 FE is a noun

The FE may represent various elements in an underlying clause:

(a) FE is the agent (SE is a participle)

**fukt|skadad** = **skadad av fukt** damaged by damp

(b) FE is the object (SE is a participle)

**ro|ingivande** = **som ger ro** soothing

(c) FE is an adverbial

time

**natt|öppet** = **öppet på natten** open all night

place

**värld|s|erfaren** = **erfaren om världen** worldly wise

manner

**hand|skriven** = **skriven för hand** handwritten

degree, type

**brand|gul** = **gul som brand** flame-coloured

(d) FE is an amplifier. See 6.2.7.1.

**beck|svart** = **svart som beck** pitch-black

#### 11.3.7.2 FE is an adjective (SE is a participle)

**lätt|lurad** = **lätt att lura** easily fooled

**snabb|tänkt** = **som tänker snabbt** quick-thinking



### 11.3.7.3 FE is an adjective

(a) These are often copulative compounds. See 11.3.1.3(b).

<b>ny gammal</b>	= <b>ny och gammal</b>	new and old
<b>hård kokt</b>	= <b>hård och kokt</b>	hard-boiled

(b) Note also the pseudo compound **svenskt-engelskt samarbete** (= **svenskt och engelskt samarbete**) but: **svensk-engelskt lexikon** (**svenska till engelska**). See also 11.3.1.3(b) Note.

### 11.3.7.4 FE is a verb (SE is an adjective defining the FE)

<b>kör säker</b>	= <b>säker att köra</b>	road-worthy
<b>sitt vänlig</b>	= <b>vänlig att sitta i</b>	comfortable to sit in

## 11.3.8 *Compound verbs – forms by word class and particle verbs*

For general rules applying to the form of the FE see 11.3.2.2. For verbs formed by retrogradation see 11.2.7. The types of links used to form compound nouns (11.3.3) also apply in the formation of compound verbs.

### 11.3.8.1 FE

Compound verbs may have as their FE a number of different word classes:

<i>FE</i>	<i>Examples</i>
NOUN	<b>data behandla, lyck önska,</b> <b>pirat kopiera, övning s köra</b>
ABBREVIATIONS	<b>hiv testa</b>
ADJECTIVE	<b>god känna, små le, svart måla</b>
NUMERAL	<b>fyr dubbla, halv sova</b>
PRONOUN	<b>själv dö</b>
ADVERB	<b>upp söka, bort kasta, ut se, väl signa</b>
VERB	<b>frys torka, sprut måla, ös regna</b>
PREPOSITION	<b>genom skåda, på tvinga, över glänsa</b>
PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE	<b>ifråga sätta, omhänder ta</b>
ADVERBIAL PHRASE	<b>smyg röka</b>

### 11.3.8.2 Two types

(a) Most compound verbs belong to one of two main types:

1 Verbs whose FE is a noun or adjective:

**damm|suga, del|ta, kal|hugga, klar|göra, sjö|sätta, sol|torka**

2 Verbs whose FE is a particle (*particle verbs*), see also 5.6.1, 5.6.3.

A verb particle is a preposition or adverb which is stressed and used together with a verb, the two elements together comprising one unit of meaning:

**Han skrev <sup>1</sup>under avtalet.** He signed the agreement.

In the participial forms (present and past participle) the verb particle forms a prefix to the verb:

**Bilen som körde om oss krockade med en buss.**

The car that overtook us crashed into a bus.

**Den omkörande bilen krockade med en buss.**

The car overtaking crashed into a bus.

(b) Some compound verbs are always written as one word, i.e. the prefix is inseparable:

**om|ge, till|tala, ut|bilda**

(c) Some compound verbs are always written as two words (except in the participial forms); the prefix is separable:

**koka över, hålla med, slå ihjäl** (cf. *ihjälslagen*)

(d) Sometimes the integral and separated forms of compound verbs exist side by side. In such instances they form three distinct types:

1 the one-word and two-word forms indicate a stylistic distinction:

*Formal*

**igen|känna**, recognise

*Informal*

**känna igen**, recognise

- 2 the one-word and two-word forms indicate a semantic and stylistic distinction:

*Figurative*

**av|bryta**, interrupt

*Literal*

**bryta av**, break off

- 3 sometimes the semantic distinction is so great that the two forms can be regarded as two completely distinct verbs:

**av|gå**, resign

**gå av**, break in two

### **11.3.9** *Compound adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions*

#### **11.3.9.1** Three main kinds of compound adverb

##### 1 ADVERB + ADVERB

Most indicate location or motion towards a place:

**här|uppe, där|nere, hit|upp, dit|in, här|hemma**

##### 2 ADVERB + PREPOSITION

The usual prepositions forming the SE are **-ifrån, -åt, -efter, -på, -för, -emot**:

**här|ifrån, ned|åt, var|efter, här|på, upp|för, där|emot**

In formal written Swedish there are many compounds in FE **där-** (= **detta**). These are rarely found in spoken Swedish:

**där|av, där|efter, där|med, där|på, där|till, där|vid**

##### 3 PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE (i.e. preposition + noun/adjective)

**i|stället, till|freds, till|väga**

#### **11.3.9.2** Compound conjunctions

Compound conjunctions in which only the FE is a conjunction include:

**där|för, så|vida, så|vitt**

### 11.3.9.3 Compound prepositions

Compound prepositions include:

**fram|emot, allt|sedan**

### 11.3.10 Derivational compounding

An element in a compound may itself be a derivative of another word.

(a) The FE is a derivative

**olycksdag** ← <sup>Derivative</sup> **olycka** + **s** + **dag**

(b) The SE is a derivative

**tryckfrihet** ← <sup>Derivative</sup> **tryck** + **fri** + **-het**

#### 11.3.10.1 Co-formation

Some words are reminiscent of derivational compounding but differ in that their derived SE does not exist as an independent word. There is no word \***knackare**, \***börjare**, \***förande**, \***tagare**, \***ryckare**, or \***åring** for example. The following words are based on phrases such as: **knacka på dörren**, **ta priset**, **rycka en väska**, **(som är) fem år**. They have been formed by a composite process of compounding and affixation.

**dörrknackare, nybörjare, ordförande, pristagare, väskryckare, femåring, tacksägelse**

The same principle also applies to some adjectives:

**barbent, blåögd, gudfruktig, rödnäst, tremotorig, tvåspråkig**

## 11.4 Expressive formation

### 11.4.1 *Hypocorism*

Hypocorisms are familiar or pet forms. They derive in three different ways as shown in 11.4.1.1–11.4.1.3.

#### 11.4.1.1 Addition of suffix **-is**, often to abbreviations

This involves the loss of part or all of a morpheme.

<b>daghem</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>dagis</b>	crèche
<b>loppmarknad</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>loppis</b>	flea market
<b>mellanmål</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>mellis</b>	snack
<b>skådespelare</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>skådis</b>	actor
<b>gratulerar</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>grattis</b>	congrats
<b>känd</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>kändis</b>	celebrity [noun]
<b>brådskande</b>	+ <b>-is</b>	→ <b>brådis</b>	urgent

Note also the loan words **fringis**, ‘fringe benefits’; **poppis** (indeclinable adjective), ‘popular’.

#### 11.4.1.2 Nicknames

Note the derivation of the following nicknames:

**Bo** → **Bosse**; **Karl** → **Kalle**; **Jan** → **Janne**; **Joakim** → **Jocke**; **Nils** → **Nisse**; **Ulf** → **Uffe**; **Lars** → **Lasse**; **Margareta** → **Maggan**; **Sigurd** → **Sigge**; **Susanne** → **Sussi**; **Tobias** → **Tobbe**

#### 11.4.1.3 Addition of **-(s)a/-e** to an abbreviated form

Note also the following:

**brorsa** ← **bror**; **syrra** ← **syster**; **matte** ← **matematik**; **moppe** ← **moped**; **sosse** ← **socialist**

### 11.4.2 Onomatopoeitic formation

Onomatopoeitic formation includes imitations of various sounds (9.5) and verbs formed from such imitations:

**vovvov, miau, nöff, bing-bång, plask, bräka, pipa, prassla**

### 11.4.3 Contamination, euphemism, folk etymology

#### 11.4.3.1 Contamination

Contamination involves conflating two words of similar meaning to form a new word. It can thus be creative:

**medelsnitt** ← **medeltal** + **genomsnitt**

**undersam** ← **underlig** + **sällsam**

#### 11.4.3.2 Euphemism

Euphemism involves the replacement of a word (often an interjection) which may cause offence by one less likely to do so. See 9.7.2.

**fy fasingen** ← **fy fan**; **jäklar** ← **djävlar**

#### 11.4.3.3 Folk etymology

Folk etymology involves a misinterpretation of the original meaning often of a loan from a foreign language: **följetong**, ‘serial’ from French *feuilleton*, originally a newspaper supplement; **ungkarl**, ‘bachelor’ from German *Junker*, member of the landed aristocracy; **fogsvans**, ‘saw’, from German *Fuchsschwanz* (= fox tail).

## 11.5 Abbreviation

### 11.5.1 Clippings and blends

Clipping involves the reduction of a morpheme or part of a morpheme:

**blyerts** ← **blyertspenna**  
**bio** ← **biograf**

#### 11.5.1.1 Initial reduction (the beginning of a word disappears)

*Reduction of a whole morpheme*  
**(bi)cykel**

*Reduction of part of a morpheme*  
**(automo)bil, (omni)buss**

#### 11.5.1.2 Final reduction (the end of a word disappears)

*Reduction of a whole morpheme*  
**doa(kör), flyg(plan)**  
**livs(medelsaffär), snus(tobak)**  
**spark(stötting)**

*Reduction of part of a morpheme*  
**bio(graf), chark(uteri),**  
**el(ektricitet), foto(graft),**  
**kolla(tionera), rea(lisation)**

#### 11.5.1.3 Blend

When the middle of a word disappears this is known as a *blend* ('telescope' or 'medial' reduction):

*Reduction of a whole morpheme*  
**te(kopps)fat**  
**brand(kårs)chef**  
**öppet(hållande)tider**

*Reduction of part of a morpheme*  
**m(er)oms(ättnings)skatt**  
**flex(ibel arbets)tid**  
**Sä(kerhets)po(lisen)**  
**doku(mentär)såpa**

### 11.5.2 Acronyms and initialisms

When the process of reduction leaves only an initial letter or letters in a word, the result is known as an acronym or initialism depending on how it is pronounced.

### 11.5.2.1 Initialisms

These are words formed from initials and pronounced as letters of the alphabet:

**fp** (**F**olkpartiet **l**iberalerna); **LO** (**L**and|s|**o**rganisation); **OS** (**O**lympiska **s**pelen); **sms**, text message; **UD** (**U**trike|s|**d**epartementet); **vd** (**v**erkställande **d**irektör); **VM** (**v**ärld|s|**m**ästarskap)

### 11.5.2.2 Respelling of initialisms

These are words formed from initials but written (and sometimes inflected) as words in their own right:

**be|hå** (from **b**ysthållare), bra(ssiere); **teve** (from **t**elevision), TV

### 11.5.2.3 Acronyms

These are words formed from initials but pronounced as words in their own right:

**SAS**, **SAAB**, hiv(-smittad), **AIDS**, prao-elev (praktisk arbetslivsorienteringselev)

## 11.6 Foreign influences on Swedish

### 11.6.1 Types of foreign influence

#### 11.6.1.1 Foreign words/loanwords

A distinction is often made in Swedish between *foreign words* and *loanwords*. Foreign words retain some feature of spelling, pronunciation or inflexion which are obviously alien to Swedish.



Foreign spelling and/or pronunciation:

**boulevard, copyright, cowboy, cocktail, game, layout, manager, müsli, outstanding, playa, service, stroke, team, thriller, workshop**

Foreign inflexion:

<b>jeans, cornflakes, boots</b>	–s plural	See 1.4.9
<b>designer</b>	–s plural (or <b>designer</b> )	See 1.4.9
<b>faktum</b>	pl. <b>fakta</b> (or <b>faktum</b> )	See 1.4.8.4

In the case of word groups from foreign sources it is possible to talk of *loan phrases* or *quotations*:

**anno dazumal, comme il faut, doggy bag, fighting spirit, sales promotion, selfmade man, sudden death, up to date**

### 11.6.1.2 Loanwords

Loanwords are those assimilated into Swedish patterns of spelling, pronunciation or inflexion. They are therefore often, within a short time, regarded as Swedish. For example, the following French loans have been adapted to Swedish spelling so as to retain approximately the same sound:

balcon → **balkong**; corps → **kår**; fabrique → **fabrik**; famille → **familj**;  
juste → **schysst**; pièce → **pjäs**; régisseur → **regissör**

### 11.6.1.3 Keps-words

Sometimes the wrong form of a word is borrowed, as in the so-called *keps-words* borrowed from English, where an English plural form is used as a Swedish singular:

caps (pl.) → **en keps**; potatoes (pl.) → **en potatis**; babies (pl.) → **en bebis**; pyjamas (pl.) → **en pyjamas**

A *keps*-word is often provided with a Swedish plural form:

**bebisar, kepsar, potatisar, pyjamasar**

#### 11.6.1.4 Calques

*Calques* (loan translations) represent a borrowing of the underlying idea(s) in a word, usually a compound or derivative, and the translation of these ideas into the target language. Calques are relatively rare in Swedish. Some examples are:

English	iron curtain	→	<b>järnridån</b>
English	home page	→	<b>hemsida</b>
English	money laundering	→	<b>penningtvätt</b>
English	chain smoke	→	<b>kedjeröka</b>
German	Schadenfreude	→	<b>skadeglädje</b>
German	Haßliebe	→	<b>hatkärlek</b>
German	Gastarbeiter	→	<b>gästarbetare</b>
French	marché aux puces	→	<b>loppmarknad</b>
French	le tiers monde	→	<b>tredje världen</b>
French	humour noir	→	<b>svart humor</b>

#### 11.6.1.5 Semantic extension

*Semantic extension* is the borrowing of a meaning from a foreign language and its addition to the meaning of an existing indigenous word. For example, **en duva** and **en hök** in Swedish meant ‘a dove’ and ‘a hawk’, two types of bird, but gained the meanings ‘peace lover’ and ‘warmonger’ from American English in the 1960s. The expression **få kalla fötter** now means ‘to have doubts about doing something’. Note also: **Det är upp till dig** ‘It’s up to you’, and **ett album**, which used to be ‘a book for collecting photos or stamps’, and is now also ‘a collection of musical pieces on a record, tape or CD/DVD’. **Ett paraply** is not merely an umbrella but something protective covering several things: **paraplyorganisation**. **En ikon** is not just an Orthodox religious painting but a graphic symbol on a computer screen or a person or phenomenon typical of something of value. **En baby** (itself a loan) is not merely a small child but also a cherished project.

For neologisms that do not exist in the supposed donor language, e.g. **Han är fit for fight**, see 11.6.6.2(b).

## 11.6.2 Latin and Greek

### 11.6.2.1 Early Latin and Greek loans

Very early loans into the Germanic languages include **kärra** (L carrus) and **marknad** (L mercatus). Christian missionaries speaking Anglo-Saxon or Friesian introduced many Latin and Greek words into Swedish in the Viking Age. Many Greek words were transmitted via Latin:

**altare** (L altare); **kyrka** (G kyriakon); **kloster** (L claustrum); **kristen** (L christianus); **mynt** (L moneta); **påsk** (medieval Latin pascha); **påve** (L papa); **präst** (L presbyter); **skola** (L schola)

Other loans from Latin and Greek include:

**fikon, frukt, kittel, koppar, källare, kök, lejon, mur, peppar, persika, planta, ros, senap, vin, öre**

### 11.6.2.2 Post-reformation Latin and Greek loans

Latin and Greek loans since the Reformation tend to be via High German, French and English and are of high frequency in the arts and sciences:

Architecture	<b>sockel</b> (L), <b>plint</b> (G), <b>villa</b> (L), <b>kamin</b> (L)
Printing	<b>manus</b> (L), <b>ark</b> (L), <b>kursiv</b> (L), <b>korrektur</b> (L)
Philosophy	<b>ateism</b> (G), <b>humanism</b> (L), <b>hypotes</b> (G)
Chemistry	<b>aluminium</b> (L), <b>fosfor</b> (G), <b>kemi</b> (G), <b>radium</b> (L)
Medicine	<b>anatomi</b> (G), <b>astma</b> (G), <b>bacill</b> (L), <b>nerv</b> (L)
Linguistics	<b>dialekt</b> (G), <b>etymologi</b> (G), <b>fonetik</b> (G)

Neologisms using Latin and Greek stems include:

**akupunktur, astronaut, agronom, megafon, olympiad, prenumerera, radio, socionom, telefon**

### 11.6.2.3 Productive Latin and Greek affixes

Many Latin and Greek affixes have proved productive in Swedish. This is seen, for example, in Swedish words such as:

**kontrabas, kvasivetenskaplig, mammografi, litografi, fysik, politik, kardiologi, radiologi, automat, bankomat, bibliotek, diskotek**

### **11.6.3 German**

#### **11.6.3.1 Medieval Low German**

The total number of Low German (i.e. North German) words of all kinds borrowed into Swedish, mostly in the fourteenth century, is very high, but tends to be concentrated in the following fields:

Courtly life	<b>adel, hov, kamp, krig, slott, stolt, ära</b>
Trade	<b>betala, frakt, handel, köpman, räkna, tull, vara</b>
Urban life	<b>borgmästare, borgare, fogde, rådhus, stad</b>
Crafts, guilds	<b>bagare, gesäll, hantverk, verkstad</b>
Trades	<b>skräddare, skomakare, slaktare, snickare</b>
Foodstuffs	<b>krydda, medvurst, sirap, skinka, socker</b>
Tools, goods	<b>hyvel, läder, verktyg</b>
Titles	<b>fru, fröken, herre, hertig</b>

#### **11.6.3.2 Replacement of Swedish words by German loans**

The influence of Low German led to the replacement of Old Swedish words e.g. ‘vardha’ was replaced by **bli(va)**; ‘tholikin’ by **sådan**, ‘vindöga’ by **fönster**, ‘let’ by **färg**.

Often a Low German word and an Old Swedish word exist side by side in modern Swedish, considerably enhancing the richness of the language:

<i>From Low German</i>	<i>From Old Swedish</i>	<i>English</i>
<b>ansikte</b>	<b>anlete</b>	face
<b>fråga</b>	<b>spörja</b>	ask
<b>skön</b>	<b>fager</b>	fair
<b>släkt</b>	<b>ätt</b>	family
<b>skicka</b>	<b>sända</b>	send
<b>språk</b>	<b>mål</b>	language
<b>våg</b>	<b>bölja</b>	wave
<b>ära</b>	<b>heder</b>	honour

### 11.6.3.3 Low German loan affixes

The introduction via many loanwords of frequent loan affixes later used to form new derivatives is as important as lexical borrowing. See 11.2.1ff.

**ankomst, betala, bistå, förstå, undkomma, krögare, kokerska, godhet, lärarinna, fängelse, rolig, läsbar, pojkaktig**

### 11.6.3.4 High German loans

Since the sixteenth century most loans from German have been from High German, and have included many originally French words. High German loans tend to concentrate in the following fields:

Military	<b>fänrik, furir, fäste, stab</b>
Mining	<b>blyerts, granit, schakt, skiffer, skikt</b>
Banking	<b>bank, kassa, rabatt</b>

German loans from later periods include:

16th century	<b>artig, blank, dunkel, ordentlig, väsentlig ankomma, förolämpa, omkomma, ordna, trotsa</b>
17th century	<b>fantastisk, forell, hurtig, inbilla, offentlig, porslin, putsa, riktig, träffa, ungefär, ur, överraska</b>
18th century	<b>avträde, drivhus, forska, katrinplommon, mutter, skärp, snaps, stadshus, synpunkt, upplysning, vals</b>
19th century	<b>stormakt, ståndpunkt, utlandet, bestick, förvånansvärd, pilsner, referat, tomat, vemod</b>
20th century	(calques) <b>kedjehus, kombivagn, mindervärdighetskänsla, triviallitteratur, upparbeta, utvecklingsland, hudnära</b> (and others in -nära)

## 11.6.4 Other Nordic languages and Finnish

### 11.6.4.1 Danish

(a) Loans from Low German in the late Middle Ages were often transmitted to Swedish via Danish:

**belåten, beveka, bågare, drabba, förlora, förmögen, koger, svag**

(b) Danish loans into Swedish from later periods include:

17th century	<b>klöver, ruter</b> [in a pack of cards]
18th century	<b>dana, eftermäle, undvara</b>
19th century	<b>dis, förståelse, försändelse, förälskelse, slank, genombrott, gräll, hänsyn, inlägg, lyhörd, obönhörlig, omvärlden, säregen, spydig, tillnärmelsevis, upplevelse, övergrepp</b>
20th century	<b>besvikelse, bil, begivenhet, häleri, samfärdsel, upphovsrätt</b>

#### 11.6.4.2 Norwegian

It is only over the past hundred years or so that written Norwegian has become readily distinguishable from written Danish, and only a few loans are easily attributable:

**huldra, luftled, rabalder, samröre, slalom**

An early loan is **lämmel**; a recent loan phrase is **Ha det!**, Be seeing you!

#### 11.6.4.3 Finnish

From the Middle Ages **pojke**  
More recent loans **jenka, känga, pjäxa, rappakalja, sauna, sisu**

#### 11.6.5 French

##### 11.6.5.1 Areas of meaning of French loans

French loans entered Swedish particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and tend to concentrate in the following fields:

Architecture and furnishings	<b>bassäng, fåtölj, garderob, möbel</b>
Diplomacy	<b>allians, ambassadör</b>
Family	<b>kusin, familj, mamma, tant</b>
Fashion	<b>parfym, frisy, väst</b>
Food and drink	<b>choklad, glass, kotlett, supé</b>
Furniture	<b>byrå, möbel, fåtölj, persienn</b>
Literature and theatre	<b>balett, pjäs, replik, ridå, scen</b>

Military  
Music

**kasern, kår, manöver**  
**klarinet, konsert, serenad, uvertyr**

### 11.6.5.2 End stress in French loans

Many French loans still have end stress:

**bru<sup>1</sup>tal, engage<sup>1</sup>mang, ho<sup>1</sup>tell, intre<sup>1</sup>ssant, i<sup>1</sup>dé, ingen<sup>1</sup>jör, me<sup>1</sup>dalj**

### 11.6.5.3 Respelling of French loans from 1801

The assimilation of pronunciation and spelling of French loans into Swedish were greatly facilitated by Carl Gustaf af Leopold's *Afhandling om svenska stafsättet*, 1801, which made many astute recommendations for re-spelling, subsequently adopted by nineteenth-century dictionary compilers:

#### *Adaptation of French spelling*

hard c	→	k
silent -e	→	zero
-que	→	-k
-ce	→	-s
-ll	→	-lj
-ch	→	-sch
-ai	→	-ä
-eu	→	-ö
-ou	→	-u
-u	→	-y

#### *Swedish word*

**kaffe, klass, konsert, kopia, kredit**  
**princip, not**  
**bank, fabrik, risk**  
**balans, existens, polis**  
**biljett, briljant, familj, fåtölj**  
**affisch, broschyr, marsch, nisch**  
**affär, porträtt, suverän**  
**adjö, aktör, möbel**  
**kusin, kuvert**  
**byrå, staty**

### 11.6.6 English

#### 11.6.6.1 Areas of meaning

English loans into Swedish date back to the seventeenth century. They are found mainly in the following fields:

Communications  
Cloth, clothing  
Food, drink

**cykel, lok, sliper**  
**pläd, ulster**  
**biff, paj, whisky**

Games, sport  
 Business  
 Press, politics  
 Others

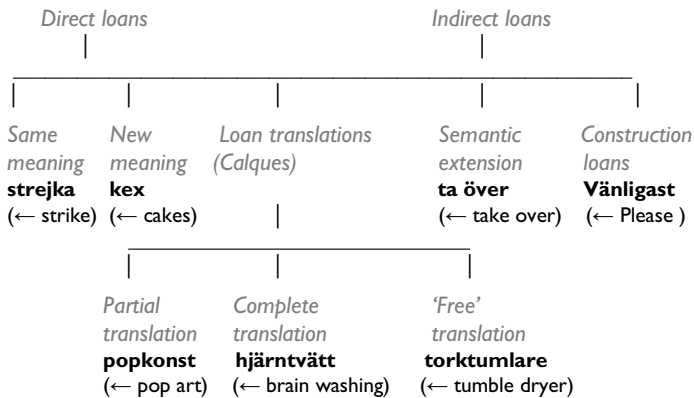
**bridge, krocket, sport, träna  
 bojkott, check, jobb(a), strejk  
 intervju, konservativ, reporter  
 manager, slum, turist**

20th century  
 Transport and communications  
 Clothes  
 Foods  
 Others

**radio, frukost-TV, jetmotor  
 blazer, bikini, jeans, jumper, shorts  
 chips, cola, juice, ketchup  
 hobby, outsider, spray(a)**

### 11.6.6.2 Types of English loan

#### Types of modern English loans in Swedish



(a) *Direct loans* may be divided into:

- 1 those that have the same meaning as the original: **team, image**
- 2 those in which some semantic change has taken place: **city** in Swedish refers only to the town centre, **kex** are not cakes but biscuits, **soul** is only a kind of music.
- 3 loan phrases: **practical joke**

(b) *New English formations* are those where a new formation in Swedish is based on English patterns but does not originate from an English-speaking country: **en babysitter** is not someone who looks after a baby but a kind of baby chair. Swedes use **after ski** where the English use 'après ski'.



(c) *Indirect loans* may be divided into loan translations, semantic extensions and construction loans. Loan translations may in their turn be:

- 1 a partial translation: **grapefrukt, hårdrock, stretchbyxor**
- 2 a complete translation which is literal: **befolkningsexplosion**, ‘population explosion’; **kedjereaktion**, ‘chain reaction’; **soffpotatis**, ‘couch potato’; **utvärdera**, ‘evaluate’
- 3 a free translation: **allsång**, ‘community singing’; **krockkudde**, ‘air bag’

(d) *Semantic extension* involves imparting a new meaning to an existing Swedish word:

**Det är inte min huvudvärk om du inte köper mitt argument.**  
It’s not my headache if you don’t buy my argument.

**Det är upp till dig!**                      It’s up to you!

(e) *Construction loans* involve borrowing a structure type rather than a word or phrase. There are several major new developments of this type:

- 1 The introduction of the English apostrophe (Swedish usually has no apostrophe before the genitive **-s**):

**\*Köp maten hos Kalle’s!**      Buy your food at Kalle’s!

- 2 Writing compounds as two separate words (Swedish properly has them as one word). See also 11.3.1.1(a) Note.
- 3 The use of **mer**, **mest** with adjectives where an inflexional comparison might have been expected. See 2.5.5.1, 2.5.6.

**De visade sig vara mer formella än vi hade väntat oss.**  
They proved to be more formal than we had expected.

- 4 Verbs with the redundant particle **upp**, **ner**:

**Han startar (upp) ett nytt företag.**  
He is starting (up) a new company.

**De har stängt (ner) fabriken.**  
They have closed (down) the factory.

### 11.6.6.3 Adaptation of English loans

#### (a) Pronunciation and spelling

1 In many cases vowels (diphthongs) remain unchanged

**make-up, milkshake, mountainbike, sound**

2 In some cases there is adaptation to Swedish pronunciation

*Swedish pronunciation*

/ä/

/a/

/u/

/y/

/sj/

/j/

/v/

/t/

*Swedish spelling*

**blazer, raid, spraya, mejla, strejka, tejp**

**stalkning**

**lunch, muffin, punk**

**city, jury, rally**

**charter, chips, choke**

**jet, juice, jogga**

**show, swing**

**thriller, thinners**

#### (b) Form

Plural forms of nouns may be retained (–s plurals) or adapt to Swedish inflexion:

**sweatshirts, revolverar, guider, jobb** (see also **keps-words**, 11.6.1.3)

Adjectives are in many cases easy to adapt to Swedish patterns:

–al → –ell: **audiovisuell, virtuell**

–y → –ig: **snobbig, trendig**

Verbs easily adapt to Swedish patterns: **coacha, fightas (fajtas)**

–ate → –era: **indikera, laminera**

–ise → –isera: **miniatyrisera, organisera, standardisera**

### 11.6.7 Other languages

Arabic

Greenlandic

Italian

Japanese

**alkohol, amiral, aprikos, kaffe, madrass, sifra**

**anorak, iglo(o), kajak**

**fiasco, konto, pasta, piano, saldo, vendetta**

**judo, karate, kimono, origami**

Romany	<b>tjej</b>
Russian	<b>bolsjevik, gulag, kosmonaut, pogrom, vodka</b>
Spanish	<b>albino, guerilla, junta, kokos, paella, siesta, silo</b>
Turkish	<b>kebab, kiosk, kalabalik</b>

## 11.7 Conversion

For conversion from one word class to another by means of affixation see 11.2.5f.

### 11.7.1 Adjective to noun

#### 11.7.1.1 Complete/Partial nominalisation See 2.4.4.

This occurs when the adjective takes an end article or plural ending:

**en unge – ungen – ungar – ungarna** (young →) young person

Often, however, only some of these endings are used:

**en liten, de små, lillen/lillan, gula–n, vita–n, höger–n, vänster–n, fett–et, vilt–et, djup–et, grund–et, ljus–et, hög–en, lugn–et**

Certain nationality words (see 2.4.3.1) and other words describing persons are derived from adjectives:

**en svensk, en tysk, en dansk; en liberal, en konservativ**

#### 11.7.1.2 Noun understood

In many cases of adjectival nouns (2.4.1.1) the noun is understood but not usually supplied. Swedish differs from English in that the adjectival noun is also found in the singular:

**en döv**, a deaf person; **den dove** (masc.), the deaf man; **den döva** (fem.), the deaf woman; **de döva**, the deaf people

Notice especially singular adjectival nouns of the following kinds:

**det enda**, the only thing; **det sista**, the last thing; **det bästa**, the best thing; **det goda**, the good thing

### 11.7.2 Noun to adjective

Some colour words and others have converted from nominal to adjectival use. They are usually indeclinable: **rosa**, ‘pink’ (from Latin *rosa*), **beige** (from Italian *bambagia*, ‘cotton’, via French). Others include: **slut**, **släkt**, **tabu**. Colloquialisms of this kind include: **botten**, **pyton**, **toppen** (only used predicatively).

### 11.7.3 Noun to adverb

This small group includes nouns that have converted to adverbial use in **–vis**: **delvis**, **portionsvis**, **gradvis**.

### 11.7.4 Verb to noun

- (a) The noun (usually neuter) denotes the action of the original verb: **besök-et**, **bygg-et**, **flyt-et**, **glid-et**, **köp-et**, **lyft-et**, **åk-et**
- (b) The noun denotes a tool with which the action is carried out (usually non-neuter): **fläkt-en**, **hiss-en**, **lyft-en**, **tork-en**
- (c) Nouns formed from an imperative verb phrase include: **krypin**, **farväl** (also interjection), **givakt** (also interjection), **förgätmigej**, **hålligång**

### 11.7.5 Noun to verb

See also 11.2.6 (3).

- (a) With suffix **–a**:

**en bil** → **bila**; **en buss** → **bussa**; **en cykel** → **cykla**; **en färg** → **färga**;  
**en gödsel** → **gödsla**; **ett jobb** → **jobba**; **ett krig** → **kriga**;  
**en pump** → **pumpa**

(b) With vowel mutation:

**ett band** → **binda**; **ett dråp** → **dräpa**; **en kamp** → **kämpa**

(c) With suffix **-era**:

**en marsch** → **marschera**; **en revolt** → **revoltera**

(d) With suffix **-isera**:

**en central** → **centralisera**; **en kanal** → **kanalisera**; **en magnet** → **magnetisera**

### **11.7.6** *Adjective to verb*

(a) The following verbs mean to ‘make + adjective’: **bleka**, **runda**, **söta**, **trötta**, **värma**

(b) The following verbs are formed from adjectives in **-en**: **kristna**, **mogna**, **ruttna**, **vakna**, **vissna**

(c) Some verbs have a vowel change in the stem: **fästa** from **fast**; **skärpa** from **skarp**; **tynga** from **tung**; **tömma** from **tom**; **väta** from **våt**

## Chapter 12

# Orthography

## 12.1 Symbols and sounds

### 12.1.1 Letters of the alphabet

#### 12.1.1.1

There are twenty-nine letters in the Swedish alphabet:

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z Å Ä Ö**

#### 12.1.1.2 Q, W

In modern Swedish **Q** and **W** only occur in proper names (**Willy Granquist**, **Qatar**, **Wales**) and loanwords (**quisling**, **know-how**, **wellpapp**).

The letter **W** (**dubbelve**) is regarded as a variant of the letter **V**. The word **wc**, for instance, is pronounced as if written **vc**, and in web addresses **www** is pronounced as if spelt **vvv**. However, a difference in spelling with **w** and **v** respectively sometimes signals a difference in meaning between homophones. Compare, for example, **kivi**, ‘kiwi’ (bird) and **kiwi**, ‘kiwi’ (fruit); **tvist**, ‘dispute’ and **twist**, ‘twist’ (dance). The letter **W** is frequently omitted when listing the letters of the alphabet, and is often integrated with **V** in entries in dictionaries, phone books, encyclopaedias, etc. This is not the case, however, in *Svensk ordbok*, published by the Swedish Academy.

### 12.1.1.3 C, K

In phone books and many other listings of names the surname **Carlsson** (and variants) is integrated with entries for **Karlsson**. See also 12.2.1.3.

### 12.1.2 Clarification of letters of the alphabet and numerals

When it is necessary to clarify spelling, the following names are used for letters and numerals:

<b>A</b>	<b>Adam</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Bertil</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>Cesar</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>David</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Erik</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Filip</b>
<b>G</b>	<b>Gustav</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>Helge</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Ivar</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>Johan</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>Kalle</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>Ludvig</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>Martin</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Niklas</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>Olof</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>Petter</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>Quintus</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Rudolf</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>Sigurd</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Tore</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>Urban</b>
<b>V</b>	<b>Viktor</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>Wilhelm</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Xerxes</b>
<b>Y</b>	<b>Yngve</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>Zäta</b>	<b>Å</b>	<b>Åke</b>
<b>Ä</b>	<b>Ärlig</b>	<b>Ö</b>	<b>Östen</b>		
<b>0</b>	<b>nolla</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>etta</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>tvåa</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>trea</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>fyra</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>femma</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>sexa</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>sjua</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>åtta</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>nia</b>				

### 12.1.3 Diacritics

The Swedish letters **Å, å, Ä, ä, Ö, ö** are separate letters, not accents or diacritics on **A, O**. The diacritics in 12.1.3.1–12.1.3.4 are, however, found in Swedish.

#### 12.1.3.1 Acute accent

This is found in around one hundred loans from French: **idé**, ‘idea’; **kafé**, ‘café’; **armé**, ‘army’; **entré**, ‘entrance’; **succé**, ‘success’ (notwithstanding the French spelling *succès*). It is also found in some Swedish names: **Linné**, **Wessén**, **Tegnér**. It is also used with upper-case letters: **LINNÉ**.

### 12.1.3.2 Grave and circumflex accents

With the exception of the grave accent on the preposition **à** (a loan from French, see 7.3.3.2, pronounced as short **a**) neither of these accents is common in modern Swedish.

**tre biljetter à 50 kronor**      three tickets at 50 kronor

Also: **crème fraîche**.

But without diacritics: **ampere, kortege, entrecote, hotel**

### 12.1.3.3 Indigenous accents

In certain loanwords, especially names and titles from European languages, indigenous accents are retained.

**São Paulo, señor, müsli, Dvořak**

### 12.1.3.4 Internet and e-mail addresses

In internet and e-mail addresses the Swedish letters **å, ä, ö** are usually written **a, a, o**. **Skåne** becomes **Skane**, **Södertälje** becomes **Sodertalje**, **Växjö** becomes **Vaxjo**, etc. Very occasionally the old telegraphese forms **aa, ae, oe** are used instead.

## 12.2 Spelling

### 12.2.1 Miscellaneous spelling rules

#### 12.2.1.1 Compound words

One of a potential sequence of three identical letters is dropped in compound and inflected forms.

<b>cigarr + rök</b>	= <b>cigarrök</b>	cigar smoke
<b>damm + moln</b>	= <b>dammoln</b>	dust cloud
<b>lätt + tuggad</b>	= <b>lättuggad</b>	easy to chew
<b>till + låta</b>	= <b>tillåta</b>	allow



### 12.2.1.2 –ck and –kk

The combination **–kk–** occurs very rarely in a single phoneme in Swedish and only in loanwords (e.g. **akkja**, ‘sledge’, from Sami) and names (**Jokkmokk**, **Pekka**). Instead **–ck** is used to indicate a preceding short vowel.

**koka**, cook [verb]      *but* **kock**, chef  
**tak**, roof              *but* **täcka**, cover [verb]  
**lok**, locomotive      *but* **lock**, lid

However, the combination **–kk–** may occur in compound words, as the final letter of one word and the initial letter of another.

**bankkonto**, bank account; **bokklubb**, book club; **kokkonst**, art of cooking; **takkonstruktion**, roof construction

### 12.2.1.3 C and k

Except when used in the combination **–ck** or in a number of common given and family names (**Camilla**, **Carina**, **Carl**, **Charlotta**, **Claes**, **Carlsson**, etc.), the letter **c** is encountered relatively infrequently in Swedish. **C** is usually pronounced hard in Swedish (as in English ‘cog’), but there are exceptions, especially before the soft vowels **e – i – y**: **ceder**, **cell**, **citron**, **cyberrymd**, **cykel**, **cynisk**, etc. In loanwords hard **c** is often changed to **k** in spelling over a period of time:

**karusell**, **kompakt**, **helikopter**, **disko**, **diktator**, **skoter**  
*but:* **camping**, **clown**, **container**, **controller**, **curry**

### 12.2.1.4 Z

The letter **z** on its own (pronounced /s/) or in **zz** (usually pronounced /ts/) is generally seen only in loanwords and proper names.

**azalea**, **zigenare**, **zink**, **zodiak**, **zulu**, **pizza**  
**Mai Zetterling**, **Anders Zorn**, **Zambia**, **Nya Zeeland**

Where English has **z**, many corresponding words in Swedish have **s**.

**Sion**, **gasell**, **Brasilien**, **hasselnöt**

**12.2.1.5** Some orthographical points mentioned elsewhere in this book

- (a) **industrien** or **industrin**? see 1.10.2.5
- (b) **knäet** or **knät**? see 1.10.2.5
- (c) **staden** or **stan**? see 1.10.2.4
- (d) **dagen** or **dan**? see 1.10.2.4
- (e) inflection of adjectives in **-id** see 2.1.3.6 Note, 2.1.3.11
- (f) adjectives ending in long vowel see 2.1.3.1
- (g) personal pronoun forms see 3.1.1, Notes
- (h) **någon**, **sådan**, etc. see 3.9.10, 3.7.4
- (j) verbs with long and short forms see 5.1.15

**12.2.2** *M and N spelling rules*

**12.2.2.1** Final **-m**

Apart from three exceptions (**damm**, ‘dust’; **lamm**, ‘lamb’; **ramm**, ‘battering ram’), a final **m** is not doubled in the spelling of Swedish words even after a short vowel:

**dum, gym, hem, program, rum**

**12.2.2.2** Final **-n**

A final **n** is not doubled in the spelling of many common Swedish words, even after a short vowel:

<b>allmän</b>	<b>han</b>	<b>kan</b>	<b>män</b>
<b>an</b>	<b>hon</b>	<b>man</b>	<b>sen</b> [from <b>sedan</b> ]
<b>den</b>	<b>innan</b>	<b>min</b>	<b>sin</b>
<b>din</b>	<b>in</b>	<b>mun</b>	<b>vän</b>
<b>en</b>	<b>igen</b>	<b>men</b>	<b>än</b>

But note the following:

**grann, sann, tunn, fann** [from **finna**], **hann** [from **hinna**], **känn**  
[from **känna**]

### 12.2.2.3 –m and –n between vowels

Between vowels **m** and **n** are doubled when the preceding vowel is short.

**dumma** [from **dum**], **programmet** [from **program**], **hemma** [from **hem**], **mannen** [from **man**], **kunna** [cf. **kan**], **inne** [cf. **in**]

Exceptions: **pilgrim** – **pilgrimen** – **pilgrimer** and words derived from **dom**, ‘judgement’, such as **döma**, **domare**, etc. and from **Rom**, ‘Rome’, such as **romersk**, **romare**, etc.

### 12.2.2.4 In inflected forms

- (a) In most cases a word containing a double **m** or double **n** drops one **m** or **n** if a consonant is added immediately afterwards in an inflected form of the word. For exceptions see (b) and (c) below and 12.2.2.5.

<b>ett nummer</b>	<b>numret</b>	<b>en sommar</b>	<b>somrar</b>
<b>gammal</b>	<b>gamla</b>	<b>glömma</b>	<b>glömde</b>
<b>hammare</b>	<b>hamrar</b>	<b>känna</b>	<b>kände</b>
<b>tunn</b>	<b>tunt</b>	<b>sann</b>	<b>sant</b>

- (b) This does not apply when an **–s** is added to a noun to form the genitive.

**ett lamms bräkande**

- (c) This does not apply when an **–s** is added to a verb to give the **s**-form. See 5.5.1.1.

**jag minns inte; det känns varmt; det finns inte**

### 12.2.2.5 Stems ending in –nn or –mm

- (a) When the stem of a word ends in **–nn**, the double **n** is retained before the endings **–bar**, **–het**, **–sam** and other endings beginning with **–l** or **–r**.

**kännbar, tunnhet, gynnsam, kvinnlig, sinnrik**

Before other endings a single **–n** is used.

**bränsle** (compare **bränna**), **känslig** (compare **känna**)

- (b) When the stem of a word ends in **-mm** the double **m** is usually replaced by single **-m** before suffixed endings (except for **-are/-erska**).

**förnimbar** (compare **förnimma**), **glömsk** (compare **glömma**),  
**simning** (compare **simma**) but **simmare/simmerska**

#### 12.2.2.6 Compound words with **-mm** and **-nn**

In compound words **-mm** and **-nn** are retained (unless the ‘three identical letters’ rule in 12.2.1.1 applies).

**dammkorn, lammkött, brunnsvatten, tunnbröd**

### 12.3 Upper-case and lower-case letters

#### 12.3.1 Upper-case or lower-case letters?

The complexities of this issue, compounded by a lack of agreement and conflicting advice on correct practice, preclude a full treatment of the use of upper-case and lower-case letters in this grammar. More detailed information can be found in, for example, Språkrådets *Svenska skrivregler* (see Bibliography).

The general rule, however, in Swedish as in English is that upper-case capital initial letters (**versaler**) are used in proper nouns, and lower-case small initial letters (**gemena bokstäver**) are used in common nouns. Problems arise, however, because of a lack of correspondence between the two languages as to what exactly constitutes a proper noun (1.1.1).

#### 12.3.1.1 Major similarities between Swedish and English

Swedish and English use upper-case letters in the same way in the following instances:

- (a) to start a sentence. Note, however, that names like **von Linné**, **af Geijerstam**, etc. and dates and numbers are best avoided at the beginning of a sentence.

(b) to introduce direct speech. See 13.1.4.1.

**De frågade: ”Vad gör du?”** They asked, ‘What are you doing?’

(c) to show respect when addressing or referring to deities, royalty, etc:

**Allah, Buddha, Fadern, Frälsaren, Gud, Herren, Jesus Kristus, Oden, Shiva, Skaparen**

**Leve Hans Majestät Konungen!** Long live His Majesty the King!

Other titles and epithets are normally rendered with lower-case letters (12.3.1.2(d)), but there are exceptions, especially when the title has acquired the status of a name.

**Birger Jarl**, Earl Birger [founder of Stockholm]; **Sankta Lucia**, Saint Lucy

Note – Swedish second person pronouns are occasionally written with an upper-case initial letter (**Ni**, **Er**, **Du**, **Din**, etc.) in formal notices and correspondence. The archaic Swedish second person plural pronoun **I** (‘ye’, see 3.1.1, Note 6) is always written as an upper-case letter.

### 12.3.1.2 Major differences: Swedish lower-case – English upper-case

There are six main areas where Swedish uses a lower-case initial letter while English has an upper-case initial letter:

(a) days of the week, months, festivals, national holidays

**måndag**, Monday; **mars**, March; **jul**, Christmas

(b) nouns and adjectives denoting nationality or derived from place-names.  
But see also 12.3.4.1.

**svensk**, Swedish; **en engelsman**, an Englishman; **en ryska**, a Russian woman; **en stockholmare**, a Stockholmer; **atlantisk**, Atlantic; **uropeisk**, European; **en flaska beaujolais(vin)**, a bottle of Beaujolais (wine); **falukorv**, Falun sausage

(c) nouns and adjectives denoting religious or political persuasion

**en kristen**, a Christian; **en jude**, a Jew; **kristendomen**, Christianity; **islam**, Islam; **en socialist**, a Socialist; **katolsk**, Catholic; **kommunistisk**, Communist

(d) people's titles. But see 12.3.1.1(c).

**herr Alm**, Mr. Alm; **fru Ek**, Mrs. Ek; **fröken Asp**, Miss Asp; **professor Lind**, Professor Lind; **kung Carl XVI Gustaf**, King Carl XVI Gustaf; **president Kennedy**, President Kennedy

(e) many nouns and adjectives derived from personal names

**darwinist/darwinistisk**, a Darwinist; **en chippendalemöbel**, a piece of Chippendale furniture; **en sanktbernhard(shund)**, a St Bernard (dog); **röntgen**, X-ray

Over time many nouns originally derived from personal names tend to lose the sense of being a name. This process also occurs in English, as the following examples show:

**watt**, **ampere**, **ohm**, **becquerel** (but **Fahrenheit**, **Celsius**);  
**en dieselmotor**, a diesel engine; **en judaskyss**, a kiss of death;  
**en quisling**, a quisling

(f) Compound nouns for many species of animals, plants, etc. which have a geographical proper noun as their first element:

**gotlandsruss**, Gotland pony; **islandshäst**, Icelandic horse; **ölandstok**, potentilla; **kinakål**, Chinese leaves

### **12.3.2** *Upper-case letters in Swedish proper nouns – the basic rule*

A proper noun is written with an upper-case initial letter. Swedish has five main categories of proper nouns, described in 12.3.2.1–12.3.2.5.

#### **12.3.2.1** Names of people, animals, boats, cars, houses, etc.

**Adam**, **Alice**; **Karo**, **Simba**; **Titanic**; **Jaguar**; **Tallbacken**

#### **12.3.2.2** Place-names

This category includes not only geographical place-names but also public buildings and street names written as one word.

**Sverige**, **Stockholm**, **Vänern**, **Klarälven**, **Skåne**, **Kebnekaise**,  
**Atlanten**, **Östersjön**, **Norden**, **Europa**, **Alperna**, **Nordpolen**,  
**Nationalmuseum**, **Vasaparken**, **Kungsgatan**, **Järntorget**

### 12.3.2.3 Names of firms, institutions, organisations, etc.

While lower-case letters are usually used for **riksdagen**, ‘the Swedish parliament’, **armén**, ‘the Army’, **flottan**, ‘the Navy’ and **flyget**, ‘the Air Force’, the names of most other institutions, organisations and commercial companies are written with an upper-case initial letter. In many instances this also applies to nouns used eponymously to describe a company’s products.

**Volvo**; **Landsorganisationen**, the Swedish Trade Union Confederation; **Socialstyrelsen**, the Swedish National Board of Health & Welfare; **Riksbanken**, the Swedish Central Bank

**Jag har köpt en ny Ford.**                    I have bought a new Ford.  
**Vi flög i en Boeing.**                    We flew in a Boeing.

### 12.3.2.4 Heavenly bodies, etc.

While **jorden**, ‘the Earth’, **solen**, ‘the sun’, and **månen**, ‘the moon’, are usually written with a lower-case initial letter in Swedish, the names of most other heavenly bodies are written with an upper-case initial letter.

**Merkurius**, Mercury; **Saturnus**, Saturn; **Karlavagnen**, the Plough

### 12.3.2.5 Titles of books, plays, films and other works of art

**Bibeln**, **Fadren**, **Smultronstället**, **Nattvakten**, **Ödessymfonin**

## 12.3.3 *Upper-case letters in proper nouns of two or more words*

### 12.3.3.1 The basic rule

The basic rule is that only the first word of a Swedish proper noun that comprises two or more words takes an upper-case letter. But see 12.3.3.2.

**Förenta staterna**, the United States; **Flickan som lekte med elden**, *The Girl Who Played With Fire* [book title]; **Röda havet**, the Red Sea; **Klippiga bergen**, the Rocky Mountains; **Göta kanal**, the Göta Canal; **Vita huset**, the White House; **Örebro läns landsting**, Örebro County Council

This means that, as the first word in the expression, it is often the article alone that takes the initial upper-case letter.

**Den flygande holländaren**, the Flying Dutchman; **Det sjunde inseglet**, *The Seventh Seal* [film title]; **Ett drömspel**, *A Dream Play* [drama title].

#### 12.3.3.2 Three common exceptions to the basic rule

- (a) If a word in a proper noun expression is itself a proper noun (12.3.2.1–12.3.2.5), it too is capitalised.

**Republiken Sydafrika**, the Republic of South Africa; **Ön Man**, the Isle of Man; **August Strindberg**; **Ford Mondeo**; **Gösta Berlings saga**, *The Tale of Gösta Berling* [book title]

- (b) Points of the compass used adjectivally have lower-case letters. But see also 12.3.4.2.

**norra England**, Northern England; **västra Sverige**, Western Sweden

- (c) Historical events and periods generally have lower-case letters:

**första världskriget**, the First World War; **tidig järnålder**, (the) Early Iron Age; **franska revolutionen**, the French Revolution

#### 12.3.3.3 Names of firms, institutions, organisations, etc.

There are no hard and fast rules for how to capitalise the names of firms, etc. when these comprise more than one word. Names of institutions preceded by **Kungliga** ('The Royal': often abbreviated **Kungl.** when written), **Föreningen/Sällskapet** ('Society'), **Sveriges**, **Stockholms**, etc. usually have an initial upper-case letter in the second word:

**Kungliga Operan**, **Föreningen Rädda barnen**, **Sveriges Radio**, **Göteborgs Symfoniorkester**

In other instances, the firm or organisation itself decides how to write its name:

**Röda korset**, **Folkets hus**, **Europeiska unionen**, **Försvarets Materielverk**, **Dagens Nyheter**, **Ord & Bild**



#### 12.3.3.4 Fixed epithets without the definite article

Many fixed epithets have upper-case initial letters in all elements, unless they consist of name (+ **den**) + adjective:

**Musse Pigge**, Mickey Mouse; **Johannes Döparen**, John the Baptist;  
**Rickard Lejonhjärta**, Richard the Lionheart; **Moder Jord**, Mother Earth

but:

**den heliga Birgitta**, Saint Bridget; **Katarina den stora**, Catherine the Great; **Erike den läspe och halte**, Erik the Lisp and Lame

#### 12.3.4 *The use of upper-case letters in compound proper nouns*

A proper noun may be incorporated into a compound noun (11.3.2) in two different ways. In both instances the compound itself usually begins with an upper-case letter, as shown below.

##### 12.3.4.1 As the first element of the compound

In the examples below the upper-case letter indicates a clear awareness of the origin and significance of the proper noun for an understanding of the compound. Compare 12.3.1.2.

**en Stockholmstidning**, a Stockholm newspaper; **Volvoledningen**, the management of Volvo; **Bergmaninspirerad**, (Ingmar) Bergman-inspired; **en Zorntavla**, a Zorn painting; **en Bellmansvisa**, a Bellman song; **en Växjöbo**, a resident of Växjö  
(Compare **stockholmare**, **göteborgare**, **malmöit**, which are not compound nouns but nouns derived from place-names. See 12.3.1.2(b).)

##### 12.3.4.2 As an element within the compound

Note that the proper noun element here, almost invariably a geographical concept, loses its upper-case letter.

**Sydamerika**, South America; **Mellansverige**, Central Sweden;  
**Storstockholm**, Greater Stockholm; **Västsvrige**, West Sweden;  
**Nordengland**, Northern England; **Kommunistkina**, Communist China

### 12.3.5 *The use of upper-case letters in abbreviations*

#### 12.3.5.1 Initialisms

Initialisms (11.5.2.1) that are abbreviations of proper nouns are written in upper-case letters, regardless of their conventional unabbreviated form.

**EU = Europeiska unionen; GP = Göteborgs-Posten;  
SKL = Statens Kriminaltekniska Laboratorium**

In other instances, forms vary. The Language Council of Sweden, *Språkrådet*, advocates the use of lower-case letters for initialisms that are widely recognised and easily understood. Hence:

**bnp = bruttonationalprodukt**, gross domestic product;  
**vd = verkställande direktör**, managing director.  
Also: **cd, cv, dna, dvd, tv, wc**

However this does not take account of the fact that certain very common initialisms are almost invariably written in upper-case letters:

**AB = aktiebolag**, limited company; **CAD; FoU = forskning och utveckling**, R&D, research and development; **IT**

#### 12.3.5.2 Acronyms

Acronyms (11.5.2.3) that are abbreviations of proper nouns are written with an upper-case initial letter.

**Gais = Göteborgs Atlet- & Idrottssällskap**  
**Stim = Svenska tonsättares internationella musikbyrå**

Other acronyms are generally written in lower-case letters:

**hiv = humant immunbristvirus**  
**prao = praktisk arbetslivsorientering**

## 12.4 Miscellaneous

### 12.4.1 Hyphenation

The following basic rules for word division may prove helpful on occasions when dividing a word is unavoidable.

#### 12.4.1.1 Compound words

Compound words may be divided into their separate elements:

<b>trä-d-gård</b>	<b>Stock-holm</b>	<b>stor-spela</b>
<b>sam-arbets-vilja</b>	<b>väl-av-vägd</b>	<b>livs-medels-butik</b>

Prefixes and suffixes may be treated in the same way:

<b>an-befall-a</b>	<b>juster-bar</b>	<b>o-vän-lig</b>
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#### 12.4.1.2 Hyphenation of simple words

The basic principle for word division in Swedish is that a word is divided so that the syllable following the hyphen begins with a single consonant. For exceptions see Notes below. Two vowels can also be hyphenated in similar fashion.

<b>mu-rar</b>	<b>tra-sig</b>	<b>ma-hog-ny</b>
<b>lyd-de</b>	<b>dum-mare</b>	<b>åt-tio</b>
<b>ak-vari-um</b>	<b>ide-ell</b>	

Note 1 – Consonant clusters **ng**, **gn** accompany the syllable preceding the division: **eng-elsk**, **vagn-ar**.

Note 2 – Consonant groups denoting /sj/-sounds are usually not hyphenated: **ma-skin**, **sta-tion**.

Note 3 – The letter **x** is always kept with the first syllable: **väx-ande**.

### **12.4.2 Words or figures?**

In written Swedish cardinal numbers are given either as words or figures. If numbers are not too long they are given as words in running text.

#### **12.4.2.1 Words**

Words are, therefore, generally used to express the figures 1–12 and for round numbers from 20 to 90.

#### **12.4.2.2 Figures**

Figures are used:

- (a) For large numbers. With the exception of telephone numbers (where usage varies), large numbers are usually written as groups of three counted from the end. Round numbers over a million are sometimes written as a combination of figures and words.

**251 000 invånare.**

**1 250 000** [en miljon tvåhundrafemtiotusen] or **1,25 miljoner**

**Tel. 08-22 01 01      Tel. +46 8 288 01 99**

- (b) With units of measurement stated in abbreviated form:

**50 kg; 500 m<sup>2</sup>; 194 cm; 30 km; 24° C**

- (c) In dates and times. See 4.5.1ff.

**1918; 3 december; 15.15**

- (d) Prices:

**Biljetten kostar 50 pund.**

The ticket costs £50.

See also 4.1.1 Notes.

### 12.4.3 One word or two?

Compounds are written as one word. They are distinguished by their word accent (falling-rising tone). Compare, for example **'femton** = fifteen and **'fem 'ton** = five tonnes.

#### 12.4.3.1 Semantic differences

Occasionally there may be a difference in meaning between two or more words written separately and compounded:

**Han var herre över allt i byn. Han var känd överallt.**

He was lord *over everything* in the village. He was known *everywhere*.

Also: **grön sak**, green thing, but **grönsak**, vegetable; **kan hända**, can happen, but **kanhända**, maybe; **stor makt**, great power, but **stormakt**, superpower

#### 12.4.3.2 Stylistic differences

(a) In many instances the difference between two or more words written separately and compounded is merely a matter of style and practice. For example:

**i övrigt, i dag, i kväll** but **ihåg, ihjäl, ihop, ifall, isär, ibland**  
**för övrigt, före detta** but **förutom, framför allt, inför**  
**till godo, till sist, till synes** but **tillbaka, tillika, tillsammans**

(b) Alternatives are generally accepted in genitive expressions:

**en tremeters planka**            or            **en tremetersplanka**  
**ett 50-minuters program**    or            **ett 50-minutersprogram**

(c) For separable and inseparable verbs, see 5.6.2ff.

# Punctuation

## 13.1 Introduction

Like many other aspects of the language in the digital age, the norms for punctuation in Swedish are shifting, as unprecedented amounts of text published online or despatched directly from a computer to a printer often bypass the careful eye of the professional editor. The use of commas in particular is becoming less codified, while the dash is taking over many of the more formally correct uses of the comma, colon, full stop and brackets. Even so, in many instances English and Swedish practice remain similar as regards punctuation. This section is a résumé of the most important points of use, and also includes some of the main differences between English and Swedish punctuation.

### 13.1.1 Punctuation marks

The names of the principal punctuation marks (**skiljetecken**) in Swedish are:

.	<b>punkt</b>
,	<b>komma</b>
:	<b>kolon</b>
-	<b>bindestreck</b>
–	<b>pratminus, talstreck, anföringsstreck, tankstreck</b>
( )	<b>parentes, bågpantes</b>
;	<b>semikolon</b>
'...' ”...” »...»	<b>anföringstecken, citationstecken</b>
?	<b>frågetecken</b>
'	<b>apostrof</b>
!	<b>utropstecken</b>
@	<b>snabel-a</b> [used only in e-mail addresses]

### **13.1.2** *The comma*

The comma is used between groups of words that are relatively independent of each other. In certain cases the length of a sentence requires a comma to make it more readable. Therefore, completely hard and fast rules are not possible. The comma is used chiefly as shown in paragraphs 13.1.2.1–13.1.2.10.

#### **13.1.2.1**

Between main clauses in the same sentence linked with a conjunction.

**Landslaget vann matchen, och alla firade segern.**

The national team won the match, and everyone celebrated the victory.

**Han försökte komma in, men dörren var låst.**

He tried to get in, but the door was locked.

A comma is not required, however, when the subject is the same in both clauses and is omitted in the second clause. But see 13.1.2.7.

**Landslaget vann matchen och firade segern.**

The national team won the match and celebrated the victory.

#### **13.1.2.2**

Around a subordinate clause that is not strictly necessary in the sentence (non-restrictive clause). See 10.7.2.3.

**Hans första stora framgång, att han redan vid 14 års ålder vann 100-metersloppet, blev avgörande för hans utveckling.**

His first great achievement, that at the tender age of 14 he won the 100 metre sprint, was decisive for his development.

The comma is, however, not used to indicate necessary (restrictive) clauses. See 10.7.2.3.

**Det är klart att han ska vinna.  
den sortens bil som rostar**

It's obvious he's going to win.  
the kind of car that rusts

### 13.1.2.3

Around (lengthy) subordinate clauses to mark a pause when the passage is read. This is particularly common when the subordinate clause begins the sentence.

**Staden såg obebodd ut, eftersom ingen syntes på gatan.**

The town looked deserted, as no one could be seen in the streets.

**Om man ser närmare på resultatet, förstår man varför forskarna blev förvånade.**

If you look more closely at the result, you understand why the researchers were amazed.

### 13.1.2.4

When one of the coordinating conjunctions (8.1.3.1, 8.2) is omitted in lists or for stylistic reasons.

**Vi köpte ris, kött, sallad och ärter.**

We bought rice, meat, lettuce and peas.

**Han kom, han såg, han segrade.**

He came, he saw, he conquered.

**Han var kraftigt byggd, nästan tjock till utseendet, snarare under än över medellängd.**

He was portly, almost fat in appearance, under rather than over average height.

### 13.1.2.5

With *dels ...*, *dels; ju ...*, *desto/ju ...*, *ju; än ...*, *än* (8.2.2.3, 8.3.9.5).

**Texten är dels på svenska, dels på engelska.**

The text is partly in Swedish, partly in English.

**Ju mer pengar staten skapar, desto större blir inflationen.**

The more money the state creates, the greater inflation becomes.

**Än var de glada, än djupt bekymrade.**

One moment they were happy, the next deeply worried.



### 13.1.2.6

Around words which are in apposition or a parenthetical addition to the sentence.

**Sjukvårdsreformen, denna laddade fråga, vill han inte diskutera.**

He won't discuss that explosive issue, the healthcare reform.

### 13.1.2.7

Often before **men** (8.2.4.1) or **utan** (8.2.4.2) when a contrast is emphasised and when **men** or **utan** is followed by more than just one or two words.

**Han har inte mycket pengar, men troligen mer än tillräckligt.**

He doesn't have much money, but presumably more than sufficient.

Compare:

**Han är rik men snål.**

He is rich but mean.

### 13.1.2.8

In order to separate interjections (9.1f.), tags, forms of address, etc. from the main body of the sentence. See also 10.6.9.

**Ja, det vill jag gärna göra!**

Yes, I'll do that by all means!

**Hej, hur står det till?**

Hi, how are things?

**Han är blind, eller hur?**

He's blind, isn't he?

**Mina damer och herrar, får jag lov att presentera ...**

Ladies and gentlemen, please allow me to introduce ...

### 13.1.2.9

Note the following occasions when the use of the comma in English is *not* reflected in Swedish.

(a) Around adverbs like 'however', 'too', 'though':

This, however, is uncertain.

**Detta är emellertid osäkert.**

(b) In letters after introductory phrases (13.1.5) and closing phrases:

Dear Mr Smith,  
Yours sincerely,

**Bäste herr Smith!**  
**Med vänlig hälsning**

(c) A colon is used to introduce direct speech in Swedish (13.1.4.1), although a comma is used when direct speech is *followed by* a reporting phrase.

### 13.1.2.10

Note the difference in Swedish and English usage of the comma in certain numerical or mathematical expressions.

(a) Decimal comma in Swedish, decimal point in English. See also 4.2.5, 13.1.4.3.

<b>3,14 [tre komma fjorton]</b>	3.14
<b>199,90</b>	199.90 [= 199 kronor 90 öre]

(b) Space (or occasionally a full stop) in Swedish, comma in English.

<b>3 000</b>	3,000
<b>4 567 890</b>	4,567,890

### 13.1.3 The full stop

The full stop is used at the end of a sentence and otherwise chiefly in the following instances:

#### 13.1.3.1

In many abbreviations. Exceptions include internationally accepted abbreviations for measurements (**cm**, **km**) and abbreviations comprising the initial capital letters of two or more words (**EU**, **HIV**).

**bl.a.** [= **bland annat**]; **e.Kr.** [= **efter Kristus**]

### 13.1.3.2

In certain numerical/mathematical expressions. See 4.6.1(c). Note, however, that the English decimal point is represented by a decimal comma in Swedish. See 13.1.2.10(a).

**kl. 13.25 [klockan tretton och tjugofem]  
Stockholm 21.04.2013 [tjugoförsta i fjärde  
tjugohundratretton]**

### 13.1.4 *The colon*

The colon is used chiefly as described in 13.1.4.1–13.1.4.4.

#### 13.1.4.1

Before quotations, dialogue in a play or thoughts in direct speech coming after a reporting phrase. The word after the colon has an initial capital letter.

**Han frågade: "Vad gör du här?"**  
He asked, 'What are you doing here?'

**Hamlet: Att vara eller inte vara, det är frågan.**  
Hamlet: To be or not to be, that is the question.

#### 13.1.4.2

Before lists, examples, explanations and summaries.

**Det fanns tre rosor: en vit, en röd och en gul.**  
There were three roses: a white one, a red one and a yellow one.

#### 13.1.4.3

In some numerical expressions and a handful of abbreviations.

<b>250:50</b>	<b>[250 kronor och 50 öre]</b>	See also 4.2.5, 13.1.2.10(a)
<b>S:t</b>	<b>[Sankt]</b>	St [Saint]

#### 13.1.4.4

Before all kinds of endings added to figures, letters, acronyms, etc. Genitive –s endings on abbreviations are, therefore, properly preceded by a colon in Swedish. See 1.8.1.3 Note 2.

<b>1:a pris</b>	first prize
<b>3:e gången</b>	the third time
<b>25:an</b>	the number 25 (bus, tram, road, etc.)
<b>FN:s generalsekreterare</b>	the UN Secretary General
<b>Gustav III:s död</b>	the death of Gustav III
<b>wc:t</b>	the WC/water closet
<b>pc:n</b>	the PC/personal computer

#### 13.1.5 *The exclamation mark*

The exclamation mark is used after exclamations, greetings, commands and imperative verb forms (5.3.4). Traditionally it has also been used after introductory phrases in letters, but this usage is becoming less common.

<b>Hoppsan!</b>	Whoops(adaisy)!
<b>Vad vackert det var!</b>	How beautiful it is!
<b>Skynda dig!</b>	Hurry up!
<b>Lycka till!</b>	Good luck!
<b>Hej Bosse!</b>	Hi, Bosse.
<b>Bäste Magnus!/Kära Eva!</b>	Dear Magnus,/Dear Eva, [in a letter]

If the exclamation, greeting, command, etc. is followed by a clause (except in the case of a clause reporting direct speech), it is customary to omit the exclamation mark at the end of the sentence. Compare the following:

**Skynda dig, annars hinner vi inte med bussen.**

Hurry up, otherwise we'll miss the bus.

– **Skynda dig! skrek hon.**      'Hurry up!' she shouted.

### 13.1.6 Direct speech

#### 13.1.6.1

The most common Swedish convention for indicating direct speech is the use of the dash (**pratminuss**, **talstreck**) before each new speaker's comment. A new line is started before the dash. If the reporting phrase precedes the direct speech itself, a colon is used in Swedish where English has a comma.

**Mia frågar:**

– **Minns du mig, Niklas?**

– **Självklart, svarar Niklas. Vi träffades här i fjol.**

Mia asks, 'Do you remember me, Niklas?'

'Of course,' replies Niklas. 'We met here last year.'

#### 13.1.6.2

Instead of introducing direct speech with a dash, Swedish sometimes has double inverted commas or, less commonly, guillemets (called **gåsögon** in Swedish) around direct speech. Note that the form of the inverted commas ("...") differs from that in English ("...") and that both sets of guillemets usually point to the right »...».

### 13.1.7 Quotations

Double inverted commas are used to indicate direct quotations in Swedish. Single inverted commas are reserved for quotations within quotations.

**Strindberg kallade jorden en "jämmerdal".**

Strindberg called the world a 'vale of tears'.

However, when the quotation is not taken directly from speech or a written work, but is, for example, merely the name of a book, film or play, Swedish rarely uses inverted commas, unless this is necessary to avoid confusion. Compare the following:

**Hon var en av solisterna i Händels Messias.**

She was one of the soloists in Handel's 'Messiah'.

**”Messias” kommer till Stockholm till jul.**  
‘The Messiah’ is coming to Stockholm this Christmas.

### **13.1.8** *The apostrophe*

#### **13.1.8.1**

The apostrophe is used (sparingly!) to show that certain letters have been omitted in less common elisions.

**’Dag ropa’ han.** = **God dag ropade han.** ‘G’day,’ he shouted.  
**Jag såg ’na.** = **Jag såg henne.** I saw ’er.

No apostrophe is used, however, in more common elisions, such as **dan** [= *dagen*]; **stan** [= *staden*]; **sa** [= *sade*]; **la** [= *lade*].

#### **13.1.8.2**

Unlike English, Swedish does not use a genitive apostrophe. See 1.8.1.

<b>hundens ägare</b>	the dog’s owner
<b>Evas mamma</b>	Eva’s mother

### **13.1.9** *The hyphen*

In addition to indicating a wordbreak at the end of a line of text, in Swedish the hyphen is used chiefly as shown in paragraphs 13.1.9.1–13.1.9.5.

#### **13.1.9.1**

In certain compound names.

**Karl-Erik, Peterson-Berger, Dals-Eds kommun**

13.1.9.2

In compounds formed with **icke** and **anti** (although not compulsory).

<b>icke-rökare/ickerökare</b>	non-smoker
<b>anti-fascist/antifascist</b>	anti-fascist

13.1.9.3

As in English, to replace **och** in compounds.

<b>en röd-grön allians</b>	a red-green [political] alliance
<b>nord-sydkonflikten</b>	the north-south divide [ <i>lit.</i> conflict]

13.1.9.4

To avoid repetition of the second (and very occasionally the first) element of a compound in expressions.

<b>sön- och helgdagar</b>	Sundays and holidays
<b>höj- och sänkbar</b>	vertically adjustable [ <i>lit.</i> can be raised and lowered]
<b>1850- och -60-talen</b>	the 1850s and 60s

13.1.9.5

In compounds where

- (a) one of the elements is an acronym, initials, a number or a foreign word:

**LO-kongressen**, the Swedish Trades Union Confederation Congress; **pH-värde**, pH value; **t-bana**, underground railway; **frukost-tv**, breakfast TV; **2000-talet**, 21st century; **75-årsdag**, 75th birthday; **98-oktanig bensin**, 98 octane petrol; **3D-film**, 3D film; **off pist-åkning**, off piste ski-ing

Note, however, that there is no hyphen if the number is written out:

**tunnelbana**, underground railway; **tvåhundraårsdag**, bicentenary

(b) to facilitate reading:

**en tio-i-topp-lista**, a top-ten list; **en året-runt-bostad**, a year-round house

### **13.1.10** *The dash*

The short dash (double the length of the hyphen) is used chiefly as shown in paragraphs 13.1.10.1–13.1.10.3.

#### **13.1.10.1**

To indicate a pause before an unexpected conclusion to a statement.

**Han bytte sin gamla Ferrari – mot en lika gammal Skoda!**

He swapped his old Ferrari – for an equally old Skoda!

#### **13.1.10.2**

To mark a parenthetical comment, exclamation, etc.

**Jag fick inte – i varje fall inte då – be om ursäkt.**

I was not allowed – at least not then – to apologise.

#### **13.1.10.3**

To indicate period, extent, distance when used without a blank space on either side between figures, place-names, dates, etc.

**Sträckan Malmö–Lund är 15–20 kilometer.**

The distance between Malmö and Lund is 15–20 kilometres.

**Öppet 8–12. Stängt 1–31 juli.**

Open 8–12. Closed 1–31 July.



## 13.2 Addresses

Paragraphs 13.2.1–13.2.2 contain some advice from the Swedish post office on how to address letters. Note especially the straight, left-hand margin (in both typed and hand-written addresses) and the absence of end of line punctuation. In Sweden the sender usually writes his/her own address preceded by **Avs:** or **Avsändare** (‘Sender’) at the top on the back of the envelope, to ensure that the letter can be returned unopened in the event of non-delivery.

### 13.2.1 Letters within Sweden

Note that the addressee’s title, if used, is written out in full (**Herr, Fru,** etc.) unless very long, or a Latin abbreviation (**Fil mag,** etc.). However, titles are often dropped nowadays in favour of first name and surname alone. The street number always follows the street name. The street name is best written out in full. If the addressee lives in a block of flats, the floor number + **tr** (= **trappa**) should be added after a comma following the street address.

**Åke Åkerström  
Kungsgatan 24  
824 93 HUDIKSVALL**

**Robert Olsson  
Storkvägen 5, 2 tr  
403 10 GÖTEBORG**

### 13.2.2 Letters to Sweden

On letters from abroad to an address in Sweden the nationality marker **SE** should be placed before the postcode, and separated from it with a hyphen.

**IKEA AB  
Box 999  
SE-343 36 ÄLMHULT  
Sweden**

### **13.2.3 Letterheads**

In contrast to English convention, which requires the sender's full address in the letterhead, standard Swedish practice is to write only the name of the town and the date as a letterhead, for example:

**Umeå den 21 maj 2013**

### **13.2.4 E-mail addresses**

E-mail addresses follow the international pattern. Note that Swedish **å**, **ä**, **ö** are often replaced by **a** and **o** respectively. See 12.1.3.4.

**carl.nilsson@translexab.se**

## **13.3 Dates**

### **13.3.1 In running text**

In running text the most common Swedish convention is **den** + date in figures + month written out + year in figures. See also 4.5.2.1(c).

**Strindberg dog den 14 [fjortonde] maj 1912.**

Strindberg died on 14 May/the 14th of May 1912.

### **13.3.2 In figures only**

There are various conventions for giving the date in figures only. The Language Council of Sweden, *Språkrådet*, advocates day-month-year with a slash between the day and month: **21/5 2013**.

Other commonly used forms in Sweden are **21.5.2013** and **2013-05-21**. The latter form constitutes the official international standard (ISO 8601) and, although rarely encountered outside Sweden, is used widely in commercial Swedish. The Swedes' predilection for this form is perhaps linked to the fact that it adopts the same principle as the Swedish **personnummer**, a personal identity number introduced in 1947 and constructed in the form (YY)YYMMDD + four additional digits that make the number unique.

# Linguistic terms

This list comprises only those terms that may not be familiar to a student of language or those that are not already explained in the text. In some cases these are not directly transferable to English grammar.

ABSTRACT NOUNS refer to unobservable notions, e.g. **musik**, ‘music’; **påstående**, ‘assertion’; **svårighet**, ‘difficulty’.

ADJECTIVE PHRASE consists of an adjective or a participle with optional words which modify or limit its meaning, e.g. **Han är (ganska) dum**, ‘He is (rather) silly’.

ADVERB PHRASE consists of an adverb with optional words which modify or limit its meaning, e.g. **Han körde (ganska) fort**, ‘He drove (quite) fast’.

ADVERBIAL (see CLAUSAL ADVERBIAL, OTHER ADVERBIALS)

AFFIX is a prefix added to the beginning or a suffix added to the end of a word, e.g. **olycklig**, ‘unhappy’; **godhet**, ‘goodness’.

AGENT is the person or thing carrying out the action in a passive construction, e.g. **Bilen kördes av inspektören**, ‘The car was driven by the inspector’.

AGREEMENT is a way of showing that two grammatical units have a certain feature in common, e.g. plural **mina hundar**, ‘my dogs’; neuter **slottet är stort**, ‘the castle is big’.

ANAPHORIC reference means that a word in a text refers back to a previous word or words, e.g. **Olle är sjuk. Han har druckit för mycket**, ‘Olle is ill. He (i.e. Olle) has drunk too much.’ (Compare CATAPHORIC.)

APPPOSITION is where two noun phrases describe the same phenomenon, e.g. **Olle, min bror, är sjuk**, ‘Olle, my brother, is ill.’

ASSIMILATION is the process whereby a sound changes to become more like or even identical to another sound, e.g. pronunciation of **min bror** as /mimbror/. The two sounds may merge completely, as in the case of **-d** in

the stem of the verb **använda** when the verb's past tense ending **-de** is added to form **använde**.

ATTRACTION is a grammatical error often caused by the speaker's losing sight of the true agreement and becoming distracted by another word, e.g. **Typiskt för detta barn är en viss blyghet**, 'A certain shyness is typical of this child' should read **Typisk** to agree with **(en) blyghet**.

ATTRIBUTIVE is used to describe adjectives that precede the noun and modify it, e.g. **ett stort hus**, 'a big house'. Certain pronouns also have an attributive function, e.g. **min bil**, 'my car'; **varje dag**, 'every day'; **någon annan gång**, 'some other time'.

CATAPHORIC reference means that a word in a text refers to another word or words occurring later in the text, e.g. **Han är ju duktig, statsministern**, 'He's clever, the Prime Minister.' (Compare ANAPHORIC.)

CLAUSAL ADVERBIAL denotes an adverb modifying the sense of the clause as a whole, e.g. **Han är inte dum**, 'He's not stupid'; **De är aldrig lata**, 'They are never lazy'.

CLAUSE usually comprises a NOUN PHRASE and a VERB PHRASE (SUBJECT and PREDICATE), e.g. **Han läste denna bok**, 'He read this book'.

COLLECTIVE NOUNS are nouns denoting a group, e.g. **familj**, 'family'; **boskap**, 'cattle'; **ärter**, 'peas'.

COMMON NOUNS are all nouns that are not PROPER NOUNS, e.g. **en hund**, 'a dog'; **två dramer**, 'two dramas'; **svagheter**, 'weaknesses'.

COMPLEMENTS express a meaning that adds to (or complements) that of the subject or object. They can be either an ADJECTIVE PHRASE or a NOUN PHRASE, e.g. **Elin och Emil är intelligenta. De är studenter**, 'Elin and Emil are intelligent. They are students.'

COMPLEX VERB is one that has two or more parts: **Jag har ätit sniglar**, 'I have eaten snails.'

COMPOUND VERB is a verb consisting of a STEM and a prefixed PARTICLE, which may be inseparable or separable from the stem, e.g. **betala**, 'pay', but **köra om/omköra**, 'overtake'.

CONGRUENCE (= AGREEMENT)

CONJUGATION denotes the way a verb is inflected, its pattern of endings, and also a group of verbs with the same endings, e.g. past tenses in: Conj. I **kalla-de**; Conj. IIb **köp-te**; Conj. III **bo-dde**.

COPULAR verbs (or copulas) link the noun or adjective COMPLEMENT to the subject, e.g. **Eva är läkare**, 'Eva is a doctor'; **Sven blev besviken**, 'Sven was disappointed'; **Soppan luktar gott**, 'The soup smells good'.

COPULATIVE means ‘linking’, (see COPULAR).

CORRELATIVE is the word or phrase that a pronoun replaces or refers to. For example, the correlative **Filmen** is replaced by the pronoun **som** in **Filmen som vi såg var urfånig**, ‘The film we saw was really silly.’

COUNT NOUNS are nouns that describes an individual countable entity and therefore usually possesses a plural form, e.g. **bok, böcker**, ‘book, books’; **mus, möss**, ‘mouse, mice’; **kille, killar**, ‘boy, boys’.

DECLENSION denotes the different ways of INFLECTING the noun in the plural, e.g. **kvinnor**, ‘women’; **killar**, ‘boys’; **parker**, ‘parks’; **äpplen**, ‘apples’; **män**, ‘men’. It is also used to describe adjective + noun constructions such as the indefinite declension of the adjective, e.g. **en sådan liten bil**, ‘a little car like that’, or the definite declension of the adjective, e.g. **den lilla bilen**, ‘the little car’.

DEFINITE (see INDEFINITE)

DERIVATIVE refers to a word derived from a STEM, usually by the addition of an AFFIX, e.g. **angå**, ‘concern’, **begå**, ‘commit’, **föregå**, ‘precede’ and **engående**, ‘a pedestrian’ are all derivatives of the verb **gå**, ‘go’.

DIRECT OBJECT refers to a person or thing directly affected by the action of a (transitive) verb, e.g. **Killen slog bollen/sin syster**, ‘The boy hit the ball/his sister.’

DUPLICATION involves the repetition of a subject, object or adverbial, usually in a pronoun or adverb form, e.g. **Anton, han är inte dum, han inte**, ‘Anton, he isn’t stupid, he isn’t’.

DURATIVE VERB (or verb of duration) denotes a continued action (e.g. **sova**, ‘sleep’), a constant change (e.g. **växa**, ‘grow’) or an intermittent action (e.g. **droppa**, ‘drip’).

ELLIPSIS involves the omission of a word or word group in the sentence, e.g. **Jag ville röka men jag fick inte (röka)**, ‘I wanted to smoke but I was not allowed to (smoke)’.

END FOCUS is the principle that new, unfamiliar information comes at the end of the sentence, e.g. **Han åkte sedan till Venedig**, ‘Then he went to Venice.’

END WEIGHT is the principle that long, heavy expressions come at the end of the sentence, e.g. **Han åkte sedan med en gammal lastbil utan strålkastare**, ‘He then travelled in an old truck without lights.’

FIGURATIVE SENSE is a sense other than the literal, e.g. **Det kostar skjortan!**, ‘It costs an arm and a leg [*lit.* the shirt].’

FINITE VERB is a verb whose form shows tense, mood or voice (active/passive) (cf. NON-FINITE VERB).

FIRST ELEMENT in a compound often modifies the SECOND (SUBSEQUENT OR FINAL) ELEMENT, e.g. *trä|hus*, ‘wooden house’ and *sten|hus*, ‘stone house’ are different types of house.

FOCUS is new information imparted in an utterance (i.e. its message), e.g. *Eva åker till Tunisien imorgon*, ‘Eva is going to Tunisia tomorrow.’

FORMAL SUBJECT (FS) is **det** in cases when the REAL SUBJECT (RS) is postponed, e.g. *Det* (FS) *sitter en gubbe* (RS) *därborta*, ‘There’s an old man sitting over there.’

FRONTING is moving an element to the beginning of the sentence. Compare *Vi älskar rödvin*, ‘We love red wine’ and *Rödvin älskar vi*, ‘Red wine we love.’

GENDER can be by sex (*karlen – han*, ‘the chap – he’; *tjejen – hon*, ‘the girl – she’) or grammatical gender (*ett hus*, ‘a house’; *ett barn*, ‘a child’; *en matta* ‘a carpet’).

GRAMMATICAL SUBJECT (= FORMAL SUBJECT)

HEAD WORD is the word that determines the syntactical type of the phrase: e.g. in *en stor svart katt*, ‘a large black cat’, the word **katt** is head denoting that this is a noun phrase.

HOMONYM is a word that is identical in spelling to another word, e.g. **komma** = either ‘to come’ or ‘comma’.

IDIOM(ATIC) indicates a usage that is not readily explicable from grammar.

IMPERATIVE is the MOOD of the verb expressing command or warning or direction, e.g. **Kom!**, ‘Come on!’, **Se upp!**, ‘Look out!’, **Rör om!**, ‘Stir!’

IMPERSONAL constructions do not involve a person but are usually formed with the impersonal pronoun **det**, e.g. *Det snöar*, ‘It’s snowing.’

IMPLIED SUBJECT is actually an object which functions as subject in a non-finite clause, e.g. *Vi bad honom skriva en rad*, ‘We asked him to drop us a line.’

INDECLINABLE describes a word that does not inflect, e.g. the adjectives **bra**, good; **utrikes**, foreign; **öde**, deserted. Unlike other adjectives these take no endings for gender or plural.

INDEFINITE refers to a new entity, e.g. *En tjuv anhölls idag*, ‘A thief was arrested today.’ In contrast, DEFINITE refers to a previously mentioned entity, e.g. *Tjuven hade stulit en bil*, ‘The thief had stolen a car.’

INDIRECT OBJECT is usually a person or animal benefiting from an action, e.g. *Vi gav honom pengarna*, ‘We gave him the money.’

INFINITIVE PHRASE is a phrase consisting of an infinitive accompanied by optional words which modify it, e.g. **att skriva brev**, ‘to write a letter.’

INFLECT means to change form by modifying an ending, e.g. the verb **skriva** ‘write’, inflects **skriv, skriva, skriver, skrev, skrivit, skriven**, etc.

INFLEXIBLE (= INDECLINABLE)

INFLEXION (see INFLECT)

INTERROGATIVE means question, e.g. an interrogative pronoun asks a question, e.g. **Vem var det?**, ‘Who was that?’, **Varför kom du hit?**, ‘Why did you come here?’

INVERTED word order denotes verb – subject order, e.g. **Idag åker vi**, ‘Today we leave.’

MATRIX is that part of a main clause sentence remaining when the subordinate clause is removed, e.g. **Eva lovade att hon skulle skriva till oss**, ‘Eva promised that she would write to us.’

MODAL VERBS express possibility, intention or obligation, e.g. **jag kan**, ‘I can’; **han vill**, ‘he wants to’; **du måste**, ‘you must’.

MOOD is the quality of a verb that conveys the speaker’s attitude. The indicative mood conveys factual statements or poses questions, the imperative mood makes a request or command, and the subjunctive mood expresses a wish, doubt, or something contrary to fact.

MORPHEME is the smallest part of a word expressing some meaning: in the word **bilarna**, ‘the cars’, there are three morphemes: **bil** ‘car’, **ar** (plural morpheme) and **na** (definite morpheme).

MUTATED VOWEL is one that changes in different forms of the word, e.g. **o** → **ö** in **son – söner**, ‘son – sons’; **stor – större**, ‘big – bigger’.

NOMINAL means noun or acting as a noun, e.g. **Simning är roligt**, ‘Swimming is fun’; **Att simma är roligt**, ‘To swim is fun’.

NON-COUNT NOUNS are nouns, often denoting an abstract or substance, that do not usually take a plural, e.g. **mjöl**, ‘flour’; **bensin**, ‘petrol’; **luft**, ‘air’; **vatten**, ‘water’; **glädje**, ‘joy’.

NON-FINITE VERB forms are those forms not showing tense or mood, namely the infinitive, supine and participles.

NOUN PHRASE is a noun (see HEAD WORD) often accompanied by one or more words before or after the noun which modify it, e.g. **en vacker dikt som jag lärde mig**, ‘a beautiful poem that I learned’.

NUMBER is a collective term for singular and plural usually marked by an ending, e.g. **två pennor**, ‘two pens’.

OBJECT (see DIRECT OBJECT, INDIRECT OBJECT)

OBJECTIVE GENITIVES do not signify possession as conventional genitives do (**hoppets röst**, ‘the voice of hope’; **kungens beslut**, ‘the king’s decision’), but indicate that the prepositional complement is the recipient (object or ‘patient’) of a verbal action, e.g. **hoppet om fred**, ‘the hope of peace’; **mordet på kungen**, ‘the king’s murder’.

OTHER ADVERBIALS (or content adverbials or sentence adverbials) are usually an adverb, noun phrase or subordinate clause denoting manner, place, time or condition, e.g. **Han åker med tåg** (manner) **till Stockholm** (place) **i morgon** (time) **om han har tid** (condition), ‘He will travel by train to Stockholm tomorrow if he has time.’

PARENTHETICAL means bracketing, e.g. the parenthetical prepositional expression **för ... sedan** brackets the prepositional complement in the phrase **för 10 dagar sedan**, ‘ten days ago’.

PART OF SPEECH means word class, e.g. noun, adjective, verb, conjunction, etc.

PARTICLE is a stressed adverb or preposition appearing together with a verb to form a single unit of meaning, a particle verb, e.g. **om** in **köra om**, ‘overtake’; **ned** in **skriva ned**, ‘write down’.

PARTITIVE indicates that a part is implied, e.g. **en del av pengarna**, ‘some of the money’; **en flaska vin**, ‘a bottle of wine’; **ett kilo potatis**, ‘a kilo of potatoes’.

PEJORATIVE means deprecating as in e.g. **din dumma åsna**, ‘you stupid ass’.

PERIPHRASTIC means paraphrasing.

POSTPOSED (or POST-POSITIONED) means coming after something.

PREDICATE forms the only compulsory part of the clause other than the SUBJECT. The predicate is the verb plus any object, complement or adverbial: **Han spelar (piano dagligen)**, ‘He plays (the piano every day).’

PREDICATIVE(LY) indicates that an element is found after the verb.

PREDICATIVE COMPLEMENT is a word or word group (often a NOUN PHRASE or ADJECTIVE PHRASE) which complements, i.e. fills out, the subject, e.g. **Hon är hans lärare och hon säger att han är lat**, ‘She is his teacher and she says that he is lazy.’

PREPOSED (or PRE-POSITIONED) means coming in front of something.

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE consists of a preposition plus a prepositional complement (usually a NOUN PHRASE or INFINITIVE PHRASE), e.g. **tjejen med det långa håret**, ‘the girl with the long hair’; **De gick utan att säga adjö**, ‘They left without saying goodbye.’



PRODUCTIVE implies that a word class or method of word formation is still being used to produce new words, e.g. the suffix **–vänlig** in **sittvänlig**, ‘comfortable to sit in’.

PROPER NOUNS are names of specific people, places, books, etc. e.g. **Ingmar Bergman; Stockholm; Gamla testamentet**, ‘the Old Testament’.

RAISING is the practice of moving an element from a subordinate clause to the front of the main clause (see FRONTING), e.g. **Det sa Pelle att vi inte skulle göra**, ‘Pelle said that we should not do that.’ (← **Pelle sa att vi inte skulle göra det.**)

REAL SUBJECT is the postponed subject, e.g. **Det är roligt att spela datorspel**, ‘It’s fun to play computer games’ (see FORMAL SUBJECT).

RECIPROCAL or RECIPROCATING indicates a mutual activity in either the pronoun – **De älskar varandra**, ‘They love one another’ – or in the verb – **De kysstes länge**, ‘They kissed for a long time.’

REFLEXIVE applies to both pronouns and verbs. Reflexive pronouns refer to the subject in the same clause. They have a distinctive form in the 3rd person, e.g. **Han har rakat sig**, ‘He has shaved (himself).’ Reflexive verbs incorporate a reflexive pronoun: **De har lärt sig svenska**, ‘They have learned Swedish.’

SECOND (SUBSEQUENT or FINAL) ELEMENT in a compound determines the word class of the compound, cf. **fri**, ‘free’ (adjective: FIRST ELEMENT) with **fri|het**, ‘freedom’ (noun) and **fri|ge**, ‘liberate’ (verb). Some compounds have three or more elements, e.g. **röd|vin|s|flaska**, ‘red wine bottle’.

SEMANTIC denotes the meaning of words.

SIMPLE VERB is one that only consists of one word, e.g. **Hjälp!**, ‘Help!’; (**jag sjunger**, ‘(I) sing’; (**han gick**, ‘(he) went’).

STATEMENT is a declarative sentence or clause ending with a full stop.

STEM is the part of the verb common to all of its forms and onto which the inflexional endings are added, e.g. **dansal**, **dansal/r**, **dansal/de**, **dansal/t**.

SUBJECT is a NOMINAL sentence element which together with the PREDICATE forms a clause.

SYLLABLE consists of a vowel plus one or more consonants, e.g. **ö, dö, rör, röst, in-dus-tri-ar-be-ta-re**.

TAG QUESTION in English consists of verb + subject (+ negative) at the end of a statement to invite a response from the listener, e.g. ‘He likes salmon, doesn’t he?’ In Swedish **va?** or **eller hur?** usually suffice, e.g. **Han gillar lax, eller hur?**, ‘He likes salmon, doesn’t he?’

TERMINATIVE VERBS denote an action or process implying a state of change or leading to a change or cessation, e.g. **somna**, 'fall asleep'; **låsa**, 'lock'.

TOPIC is the position at the beginning of all main clause STATEMENTS and V-QUESTIONS. It is usually occupied by the subject, e.g. **Vi/Studenterna tycker om hennes föreläsningar**, 'We/The students like her lectures.' In Swedish, however, words other than the subject, especially ADVERBIAL expressions of time or place, may often occupy the topic position, e.g. **I morgon spelar jag fotboll**, 'Tomorrow I'm playing football.'

V-QUESTION is a question introduced by an INTERROGATIVE pronoun or adverb (so named because many of these words begin with the letter **v** in Swedish), e.g. **vad, vem, var, varför** as well as **när, hur**, etc.

VERB PHRASE consists of a FINITE VERB alone or several finite and non-finite verbs in a chain, e.g., **Han reser**, 'He is travelling'; **Han sitter och laser**, 'He is (sitting) reading', **Han måste kunna springa**, 'He must be able to run.'

VOICE indicates whether the subject of a verb acts (active voice, e.g. **Klara älskar Oskar**, 'Klara loves Oskar') or is acted upon (passive voice, e.g. **Oskar älskas av Klara**, 'Oskar is loved by Klara').

VOICED describes a consonant produced with vibration of the larynx, e.g. **b, d, g, v, m, n, r, l**.

VOICELESS describes a consonant produced without vibrating the larynx, e.g. **p, t, k, f, s, z**.

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