

# Introduction to Old English

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## Introduction to OE

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This Introduction has been kept short, but represents an effort to include everything that is necessary (except for a vocabulary list) to read OE texts. Nevertheless, prose texts will be more accessible than poetry because

of the often highly intricate constructions the latter makes use of. For more detail, cf. the following three titles. Sweet from the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries; Quirk and Wrenn from the middle of the twentieth century; and Slocum and Lehmann from the beginning of the twenty-first century. All three are brief and informative, though not quite so concise as this website.

Quirk, R. and C.L. Wrenn (1957) *An Old English Grammar*, 2nd ed. London: Methuen.

Slocum, J. and W.P. Lehmann (2009, 2010) Old English Online, at: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/eieol/engol-0-X.html>.

Sweet, H. (1905) *Anglo-Saxon Primer with Grammar, Notes, and Glossary*; 8<sup>th</sup> rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon.

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## The alphabet of OE

was, like the ModE alphabet, basically the same as the one used for Latin. In the texts included in this *HoE* the letter <þ>, called “thorn,” is used for present-day <th>, as is <ð>, called “eth.” Although practice was not unitary <þ> is more likely to appear initially, like in *þing* “thing” and <ð> elsewhere, e.g. *fridð* “peace, refuge” or *oðerne* “other, second, next.” Both of them are pronounced either as voiceless/θ/ or voiced /ð/ depending on their position in a word and the stress pattern of the word. A second, slightly unusual letter is <æ> as in *þær* “there, then.” It is called “ash.” See also *alphabet*.

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## Word order in OE

falls into four major patterns that you need to be aware of before attempting to read an OE text. The patterns are the following, where S = subject (if present); V = verb; and O = object (if present), and anyway all sorts of linguistic material may share the O-position, e.g. prepositional phrases (PP), adverbial expressions, or object complements (aka predicate nouns or adjectives):

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### SVO

S      V      O

*We witan oþer egland her be easton* (Text 2.5)

“we know another island here by/to the east”

S                  V                  Object complement, aka predicate adjective

*Beowulf wæs breme* (Text 2.3)

“Beowulf was famous”

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### VSO

V      S      V

*Cwyst ðu gaderap man winberian of þorum, oððe fic-appla of þyrncinum?* (Matt. 7:16)

“Sayest thou gathereth one grapes (wine-berries) of/from thorns or figs (fig-apples) of/from thistles?”

V                  Object complement

*Bið stiþ ond heard* (Text 3.5)

[In this sentence the subject position is empty.]

“Is stiff and hard”

## AVSO

[Inversion of subject and verb preserves verb-second (V2) word order, which was common in the Germanic languages.]

A V S [This example does not have an object; the *that*-clause is in apposition to the subject.]

*þa gelamp hit þæt Pyhtas coman suþan of Scythian* (Text 2.5)

“Then happened it that the Picts came south from Scythia”

A V S O (Prepositional Phrase)

*þa gemette æþelwulf ealodorman hie on ængla felda* (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 871)

Then met Ethelwulf the Chief them on Englefiel d

## SOV

[The verb is complex, consisting of the modal verb *magan* and the infinitive *gegangan*.]

A S O V

*þæt ge hit magon gegangan*

“that ye it may gain/win”

Subordinate clauses frequently had SOV, and *swa swa* introduces one.]

A S O<sub>dir</sub> O<sub>indir</sub> V

*swa swa se cyng hit him geuðe* (Text 4.1)

“just as the king it to-him gave”

To identify the subject or the object you need to look for a proper name (like *Beowulf*), a common noun (like *egland* or *easton*), which may be accompanied by a determiner (as with *his hordcofan*, Text 2.4, “their treasure chest (hord coffer)”; or *þis lands*, Text 2.5, “of this land”) or an adjective (as in *mid langum scipum*, Text 2.5, “with long ships”; or *lange hwile* (Text 2.3) “a long while”), or to look for a pronoun (like *wē*, *ðū*, *man*, *hit*, *him*, *ge*, or *hie*). Note, however, that the subject may be left out, especially when the form of the verb and the context indicate what the “missing” subject is. Example: *Wrætlic hongað bi weres þeo* (Text 3.5) “Wonderously **it** hangs by a man’s thigh,” where the subject *it*, which is necessary in ModE, does not show up in the OE text.

To find the verb, you will need to know what a verb looks like, especially its characteristic endings (like the {-an} of the infinitive as in *witan*, the present tense plural {-aþ} of *gaderap*, or the past tense ending {-ðe} of *geuðe*).

The following sections will give you examples of each of these word classes. Further below, you will find more about how adjectives and adverbs look and will be given a list of some of the more common prepositions and the cases they govern.

## Parts of speech in Old English

### Nouns in OE

belonged to **declensions**, that is to patterns of **endings** (sometimes with **vowel changes**) for **singular** and **plural** and for each of the four **cases** which nouns had: **nominative**, **genitive**, **dative** (which also functioned as the **instrumental** case), and **accusative**. Singular and plural are not problematic since ModE has both of them as well. However, the **personal pronouns in OE** had not only singular and plural, but also dual (for two).

## Case in OE

is a grammatical feature of **noun phrases** (NPs) in which not only the noun head, but also the adjectives and determiners preceding it are marked for the cases nominative (for sentence subjects), genitive (for possession), dative (for indirect objects), and accusative (for direct objects). OE examples: *scip* (nom./acc. sg.), but *scipe* (dat. sg.) and *scipes* (gen. sg.).

Case is common in OE, but not fully foreign to ModE, which has two cases for nouns: common case, which is used everywhere except where the possessive case is needed. **Examples:** *book*, *horses*, *children*, *linguistics*; possessive *book's*, *horses'*, *children's*; there is no possessive case for many abstract nouns such as *linguistics*. Since ModE pronouns have three cases, further distinctions are also not hard to make. **Examples:** subject case: *I*; *her*; *we*; possessive: *my*, *mine*; *her*, *hers*; *our*, *ours*; object case: *me*; *her*; *us*.

### The functions of the cases

are difficult to define in a satisfactory way. The **nominative** is the normal case of the subject while the **dative** is either for an indirect object or the direct object of a “dative” verb, e.g. *helpan* with a dative object such as *him* (not accusative *hinen*) in *ond he him helpe ne mæg*, literally “and he could not help **to him**” (*Beowulf*, l. 2448). Among the dative verbs we find the following:

<i>andswarian</i> “answer”	<i>derian</i> “harm”	<i>lician</i> “like, please”	<i>þeow(i)an</i> “serve”
<i>ārian</i> “honor”	<i>fulgān</i> “accomplish”	<i>gelyfan</i> “believe”	<i>þiwian</i> “serve”
<i>bēodan</i> “offer”	<i>fylgan</i> “follow”	<i>ōleccan</i> “flatter”	<i>þyncan</i> “seem”
<i>dēman</i> “judge”	<i>helpan</i> “help”	<i>sālan</i> “happen”	<i>wiþstandan</i> “withstand”

There are, in addition, a number of adjectives that are used with the dative, e.g. *gelic* “like” and *lād* “loath, be disagreeable to.” There once was an **instrumental** case, which was used to mark the means used to do something. With the exception of the masculine and neuter personal pronouns, the instrumental was no longer distinct from the dative in the OE texts we have. The **genitive** indicates possession or analogous attribution. Examples: *Godes feoh*, Text 2.1, “God’s property”; *meotodes meahste*, Text 2.6, “the Creator’s power.” As in ModE the genitive may indicate the subject or the object of the verb to which the associated noun is related, as with OE *godes lufu* or ModE *the love of God*, where the OE case-marked genitive like the ModE periphrastic genitive *of God* may be the subject (“God loves someone”) or the object (“someone loves God”). The genitive is also used for partitive relations *sum hund scipa* “a hundred of ships.” A further use is adverbial as in *dages ond nihtes* (“by day and by night”) or for the object of a small number of verbs, e.g. *þurtan* “be in need of” or *blissian* “rejoice at.” The **accusative** is most frequently the direct object (here: *gofol*) of a verb (here: *syllon*). Examples: *ær we gofol syllo*, Text 3.3, “before we pay tribute.” *Verbs take objects chiefly in the accusative, but also in the dative and even, sometimes, in the genitive, as pointed out above. This is also true of prepositions, which take objects in the accusative and/or dative (see list under prepositions).*

## Gender in OE

is a more difficult notion. In OE nouns were assigned to one of three classes that were labeled masculine, feminine, and neuter. These classes are only indirectly related to the sex of the thing the nouns refer to.

That little bit of connection comes out most clearly in the fact that most words that designate male beings are also grammatically masculine. Examples: *se cyng* “the king,” *mann/monn* “man, person,” *dryhten* “lord, ruler.” This is less convincing in the case of nouns referring to female beings. Examples: *frōwe* “woman,” *hlāfðige* “lady,” or *cwēn* “woman, wife, queen.” But: *mægð-man* (masc.) “maiden, virgin” or *wīf* (neuter) “woman.” Another neuter that seems strange to speakers of ModE is *cild* “child.” Inanimate beings – considered neuter in ModE – could be masculine. Examples: *þorn* “thorn,” or *drinc* “drink.” They could also be feminine. Examples: *winberian* “grapes,” *duguð* “retainer, people, nobles,” *dūce* “duck,” or *duru* “door.” They could, of course, also be neuter. Examples: *igland* “island,” *drincfæt* “drinking vessel,” or *dūst* “dust.” Gender was generally fixed, but there was also a fair amount of variation as with masculine or neuter *gēar* “year” or feminine or masculine *stīg* “path.”

The realignment of gender according to sex was beginning to appear in OE, where there are instances in which a grammatically non-feminine antecedent with reference to a female person was followed by a feminine pronoun. As Strang remarks, “By 1170 it was broadly true that if reference to a person was involved, natural gender took priority; ....”

Strang, B.M.H. (1970) *A History of English*. London: Methuen.

## Declensions in OE

are the sets of **case**, **number**, and **gender** forms which a noun, a **determiner**, an **adjective**, or a **pronoun** may have. A number of different declensions are recognized for OE. They include the *a*-, the *i*-, the *o*-, the *u*-, the weak noun declensions, as well as nouns with vowel mutation. The designation “*a*-declension” is due to the vowel which came between the root and the ending of these nouns in an earlier Proto-Germanic stage of the language; the same applies to the *i*-, *o*-, and the *u*-declensions. Further declensions are also distinguished, but they add more detail than is desirable in this short overview. See the following for more detail:

Quirk, R. and C.L. Wrenn (1957) *An Old English Grammar*. 2nd ed. London: Methuen.

Slocum, J. and W. ð Lehmann (2009, 2010) Old English Online, at: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/eieol/engol-0-X.html>.

### The *a*-stem declension

consists of masculine and neuter nouns only. Examples of masculine *a*-stem nouns: *stōl* “chair,” *heofan* “heaven,” *here* “army,” *æfen* “evening,” *ðēaw* “custom.” Examples of neuter *a*-stem nouns: *scip* “ship,” *wæter* “water,” *cynn* “kin,” *wēsten* “waste,” *hlēow* “protection.”

Table The *a*-stem noun declension

	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>stōl</i> (masculine)	<i>stōlas</i>	<i>scip</i> (neuter)	<i>scipu</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>Stōles</i>	<i>stōla</i>	<i>scipes</i>	<i>scipa</i>
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>stōle</i>	<i>stōlum</i>	<i>scipe</i>	<i>scipum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>stōl</i>	<i>stōlas</i>	<i>scip</i>	<i>scipu</i>

### The o-stem declension

consists exclusively of feminine nouns. Examples: *giefu* “gift,” *ār* “honor,” *frōfar* “solace,” *costing* “temptation,” *lēs* “pasture,” *mēd* “meadow,” *stōw* “place.”

Table The o-stem noun declension

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Alternate plural</i>
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>giefu</i> (feminine)	<i>giefa</i>	<i>giefe</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>giefe</i>	<i>giefa</i>	
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>giefe</i>	<i>giefum</i>	
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>giefe</i>	<i>giefa</i>	<i>giefe</i>

### The i-stem declension

contains mostly masculine and feminine nouns, but also a very few neuter ones such as *sife* “sieve.” Examples of *i*-stem nouns: masculine *mere* “lake, sea” and feminine *dēd* “deed”:

Table The i-stem noun declension

	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>	<i>singular</i>	<i>plural</i>
<b>nominative</b>	<i>mere</i>	<i>mere</i>	<i>dēd</i>	<i>dēde</i>
<b>genitive</b>	<i>meres</i>	<i>mera</i>	<i>dēde</i>	<i>dēda</i>
<b>dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>mere</i>	<i>merum</i>	<i>dēde</i>	<i>dēdum</i>
<b>accusative</b>	<i>mere</i>	<i>mere</i>	<i>dēd</i>	<i>dēde</i>

### The u-stem declension

had few members in the OE texts we have. Examples, masculine *medo* “mead,” *sunu* “son”; feminine *duru* “door,” *hond* “hand.”

Table The u-stem noun declension

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>sunu</i> (masc.)	<i>sunu</i>	<i>hond</i> (fem.)	<i>honda</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>sunu</i>	<i>sunu</i>	<i>honda</i>	<i>honda</i>
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>sunu</i>	<i>sunum</i>	<i>honda</i>	<i>hondum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>sunu</i>	<i>sunu</i>	<i>hond</i>	<i>honda</i>

### The weak (or an-) declension

contains mostly feminine and masculine nouns, but also two neuter nouns (*ēage* “eye” and *ēare* “ear”). Examples: masculine: *nama* “name,” *gama* “man,” *boda* “messenger,” *bana* “killer”; feminine: *sunna* “sun,” *byrne* “coat of mail,” *cyrice* “church,” *earde* “earth,” *heorte* “heart,” *tunge* “tongue,” *hlāfdige* “lady.” The neuter

weak nouns have endings like the masculine and feminine except in the accusative singular, which is like the nominative (*ēage*).

Table The weak noun declensions

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>sunne</i> (fem.)	<i>sunnan</i>	<i>nama</i> (masc.)	<i>naman</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>sunnan</i>	<i>sunnena</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>namena</i>
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>sunnan</i>	<i>sunnum</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>namum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>sunnan</i>	<i>sunnan</i>	<i>naman</i>	<i>naman</i>

## Number: The nouns with verb mutation (aka the root nouns)

have a back vowel in the singular (except for the dative) and the plural (except for the nominative and accusative). In the other cases the back vowel has undergone front mutation (aka umlaut) from /o/ > /e/ and /u/ > /y/. This happened when stressed /o/ or /u/ was followed by an unstressed syllable with /i/ or a /j/. The original phonemes /i - j/ were no longer present in OE times. These nouns are sometimes called root nouns because the inflection followed directly on the root without an intervening stem vowel as described above. Examples, masculine: *monn* “man,” *fōt* “foot,” *tōð* “tooth”; feminine: *bōc* “book,” *gōs* “goose,” *āc* “oak,” *burg* “fortress, borough” *lūs* “louse,” *mūs* “mouse,” *brōc* “breeches.” Several of these continue to have vowel change in ModE, but now regularized to a singular-plural alternative. Examples: *man-men*, *foot-feet*, *tooth-teeth*, *goose-geese*, *mouse-mice*, *louse-lice*.

Table The declension with vowel mutation

	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>	<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>monn</i> (masc.)	<i>menn</i>	<i>bōc</i> (fem.)	<i>bēc</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>monnes</i>	<i>monna</i>	<i>bōce</i>	<i>bōca</i>
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>menn</i>	<i>monnum</i>	<i>bēc</i>	<i>bōcum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>monn</i>	<i>menn</i>	<i>bōc</i>	<i>bēc</i>

## Adjectives in OE

are marked for gender and case in a more consistently visible way in their inflections than is the case with nouns. The following paradigms illustrate this.

### The weak adjective declension

In the first table the weak declension of the adjective “good” is given. Weak endings were used when the adjective was preceded by a specifier such as the *demonstrative in OE* (see there and under *article in OE* for paradigms).

Table The weak adjective declension in OE

	Singular			Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	Neuter	All genders
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>gōda</i>	<i>gōde</i>	<i>gōde</i>	<i>gōdan</i>
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdena</i> (later: <i>gōdra</i> )
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōdan</i>	<i>gōde</i>	<i>gōdan</i>

There are relatively few distinct endings in the weak declension. Consequently, marking for gender and case depends chiefly on the determiner.

### The strong adjective declension

The second table shows the strong adjective paradigm using the same adjective. This paradigm was used when there was no determiner or one which did not specify, such the indefinite *article*.

Table The strong adjective declension (OE)

	Singular			Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	Neuter	All genders
<b>Nominative</b>	<i>gōd</i>	<i>gōd(u)</i>	<i>gōd</i>	<i>gōde</i> (also fem.: <i>gōda</i> ; neuter: <i>gōdu</i> )
<b>Genitive</b>	<i>gōdes</i>	<i>gōdre</i>	<i>gōdes</i>	<i>gōdra</i>
<b>Dative (+ instrumental)</b>	<i>gōdum</i>	<i>gōdre</i>	<i>gōdum</i>	<i>gōdum</i>
<b>Accusative</b>	<i>gōdne</i>	<i>gōde</i>	<i>gōd</i>	<i>gōde</i> (also fem.: <i>gōd</i> ; neuter: <i>gōdu</i> )

### Comparison of adjectives (and adverbs) in OE

is a further distinction made by inflection. This is still usually the case in ModE if the word compared is monosyllabic (exceptions: the adjectives *like*, *real*, *right*, *wrong*) or disyllabic ending in {-le, -er, -ure, -ow, -y} as with *noble*, *clever*, *mature*, *yellow*, *funny*. Otherwise, analytic (periphrastic) comparatives and superlative using *more* and *most* are employed. Examples: *more complicated*, *most beautiful*.

The comparative in OE was formed by adding {-ra} to the positive form while the superlative added {-ost(a)}. Examples (positive-comparative-superlative): *lēof-lēofra-lēofost* “dear-dearer-dearest”; *heard-heardra-heardost* “hard-harder-hardest.” A number of adjectives have superlatives in {-mest}. Examples: directions with {-mest}: *hindemest* “hindmost,” *innemest* “innermost,” *niðmest* “lowest,” *ȳtemest* “outermost.” A small number of adjectives undergo vowel mutation (see *nouns with vowel mutation*), where /ea/ and /eo/ became /y/ and /a/ became /e/. Examples: *eald-yodra-yldest* “old-older/elder-oldest/eldest”; *geong-gingra-gingest* “young-younger-youngest”; *lang-lengra-lengest* “long-longer-longest.” Other such adjectives are *feorr* “far,” *grēat* “large,” *hēah* “high,” *sceort* “short,” and *strang* “strong.” In several cases the comparison is suppletive,



that is, the root of the positive differs from that of the comparative and superlative. Example: *gōd-betra-betest* “good-better-best,” *micel-māra-māest* “much-more-most,” *yfel-wyrsa-wyrst* “bad-worse-worst.”

## Adverbs in OE

consisted of a number of independent forms such as *swā* “so, thus,” *þa* “then, when,” *þær* “there, where,” *foran* “in front,” *ūt* “out,” *uppe* “up, above,” *ær* “before,” *faste* “fast, securely,” *forð* “forth.” Most adverbs were, however, derived from adjectives using the endings {-lice} or {-ē}. Examples: *baldlice* “boldly”; *blindlice* “blindly”; *unwāclīce* “bravely, unwaveringly”; *swiðe* “very” < *swið* “strong”; *longe* “for a long time”; *sweotule* “clearly” < *sweotol* “clear.” The comparative and superlative are formed as with the adjective. Example: *luflice-luflicor-luflicost* “in (more/most) lovely way.”

## Pronouns in OE

are rich in inflections. This is especially the case with the personal pronouns, but applies to the demonstrative, relative, interrogative, indefinite pronouns as well.

### The personal pronouns of OE

have more forms than the ModE ones do. As the following table shows, there are distinct second person singular and plural pronouns and, since there are three distinct numbers, dual pronouns to boot. Case distinctions include more cases than ModE has: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, and, marginally, instrumental.

### Number in the personal pronoun system of OE

consists of the usual singular and plural, but also has dual number for two. Examples: OE had the dual **personal pronouns**, *wit* “we two” and *git* “you two.” Example: William the Conqueror’s first edict after the Conquest was issued in Latin and English (and not in French). In it he addressed Bishop William and Gosfredð as follows, *And ic cȳðe eow, þæt ic wylle, þæt ge beon eallra þera laga weoðde, þe gyt weran on Eadwerdes dæge kynges* (Liebermann 1903–1916: 224) “And I made known to you that I demand that you both be worthy of all these laws, which you both were in the days of King Edward.” By the end of the OE period the plural was replacing the dual.

### Case in the personal pronouns of OE

was, as with the nouns, losing its distinctions and changing from a seven-case system that was no longer practiced in any of the texts we are dealing with toward what was to become the two- or three-case system of ModE (nouns, two; pronouns, three). The vocative case had already merged into the nominative long before; the instrumental case was merging with the dative and had distinctive forms only in the 3rd person singular, masculine and neuter. While the dative and the accusative were still largely different from each other, they were less and less often so in the first and second persons and were soon to become a single object or objective case, where sometimes the original accusative and sometimes the original dative form prevailed.

Table the personal pronouns of OE (without all the alternatives which actually occurred)

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Nominative</i>	<i>Genitive</i>	<i>Dative</i>	<i>Accusative</i>	<i>Instrumental</i>
<b>First</b>	<i>ic</i>	<i>mīn</i>	<i>mē</i>	<i>mē(c)</i>	
<b>Second</b>	<i>ðū</i>	<i>ðīn</i>	<i>ðē</i>	<i>ðē(c)</i>	
<b>Third masc.</b>	<i>hē</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hine</i>	<i>hȳ/beō</i>
<b>Fem.</b>	<i>hēo</i>	<i>hiere</i>	<i>hiere</i>	<i>hie</i>	
<b>Neuter</b>	<i>hit</i>	<i>his</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hit</i>	<i>hȳ/beō</i>
<b>Dual</b>					
<b>First</b>	<i>wit</i>	<i>uncer</i>	<i>unc</i>	<i>unc</i>	
<b>Second</b>	<i>git</i>	<i>incer</i>	<i>inc</i>	<i>inc</i>	
<b>Plural</b>					
<b>First</b>	<i>wē</i>	<i>ūser (ūre)</i>	<i>ūs</i>	<i>ūs(ic)</i>	
<b>Second</b>	<i>gē</i>	<i>ēower</i>	<i>ēow</i>	<i>ēow(ic)</i>	
<b>Third</b>	<i>hī(e)</i>	<i>hī(e)ra</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>hī(e)</i>	

### Reflective pronouns in OE

were only sometimes distinguished by using the emphatic suffix {-self}. However, the use of possessive *sīn* indicates that genitive, dative, accusative *sīn*, *se*, *sec* had once been used for *him-* or *herself* and for *themselves*.

### Relative pronouns in OE

were expressed in three ways, (1) by the demonstratives *se-seō-þæt*; (2) by *se-seō-þæt* followed by *þe*, or (3) by *þe* alone, which was indeclinable. Examples:

- (1) **demonstrative alone:** Example: *alle būtan ānum, sē wæs þæs aldormonnes godsunu; ond hē his feorh generede, ond þēah hē was oft gewundad* (from the ninth century translation into OE of Bede's *Historia*, here about Caedmon, In: C.T. Onions (ed.) (1959), *Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, 14th ed, Oxford: Clarendon) "all but one, **who** was his nobleman's godson; and he saved his life, though he was much wounded."
- (2) **demonstrative + þe:** Example: *‘Eft hē cwæð sē þe mid him sprecende wæs: Hwæðere þū meaht mē singan* ("Again he said, **he who** was speaking with him: 'But you can sing to me.'") (*ibid.*)
- (3) **þe alone:** Example: *Wæs hē se mon in weoruldhāde geseted oð ðā tīde þe hē wæs gelyfedre ylde, and hē nāfre ænig lēoð geleornade* (*ibid.*) "He was a man appointed to secular life, up to the time **that** he was of advanced age, and he never learned any poetry."

### Interrogative pronouns in OE

included those still familiar from ModE despite the changes in spelling and pronunciation which have meanwhile occurred. Examples (OE-ModE): *hwæt-what*, *hwā-who*, *hwær-where*, *hwȳ-why*, *hwelc-which*. The interrogatives *hwā* and *hwæt* are declined as in columns one and two; the interrogatives *hwæðer* and *hwylc* follow the strong declension:

Table Interrogatives *who*, *what*, *whether*, and *which*

<i>who and what</i>		<i>whether and which</i>					
	<i>mascul/fem</i>	<i>neuter</i>	<i>masc.</i>	<i>fem.</i>	<i>neuter</i>	<i>plur: masc/fem</i>	<i>neuter</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>hwā</i>	<i>hwæt</i>	<i>hwæðer</i>	<i>hwæðer(u)</i>	<i>hwæðer</i>	<i>hwæðere</i>	<i>hwæðeru</i>
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>hwæs</i>	<i>hwæs</i>	<i>hwæðeres</i>	<i>hwæðerre</i>	<i>hwæðeres</i>	<i>hwæðerra</i>	<i>hwæðerra</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>hwam</i>	<i>hwam</i>	<i>hwæðerum</i>	<i>hwæðerre</i>	<i>hwæðerum</i>	<i>hwæðerum</i>	<i>hwæðerum</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>hwone</i>	<i>hwæt</i>	<i>hwæðern</i>	<i>hwæðere</i>	<i>hwæðer</i>	<i>hwæðere</i>	<i>hwæðeru</i>
<b>Instr.</b>	<i>hwȳ</i>						

## Indefinite pronouns in OE

like the interrogatives have remained essentially the same since OE. Examples (OE-ModE): *æfre*-every, *ælc*-each, *anig*-any, *manig*-many, *nænig*-not any, *oðer*-(*an*)other, *sum*-some.

## Determiners in OE (articles, demonstratives, possessives, and numerals)

were marked for case, gender, and number. The demonstratives eventually split functionally and formally into the definite article and what were to be the ModE demonstratives. In OE they served in a function similar to the definite article, but were used less often than in ModE and had a more emphatic function. In addition, the demonstratives *se-seō-þæt* were used as relative pronouns. The indefinite article eventually emerged as an unstressed variant of the numeral *one*; however, the use of the indefinite article *ān* was rare as compared with ModE; and the indefinite pronoun *sum* was used in the same function. The paradigms for the demonstratives and the articles in OE are given in the following tables.

Table Demonstratives (used as definite articles)

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>se</i>	<i>seō</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þā</i>
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þære</i>	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þāra</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>þam</i>	<i>þære</i>	<i>þam</i>	<i>þām</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>þone</i>	<i>þā</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þā</i>
<b>Instr.</b>	<i>þȳ</i>		<i>þȳ</i>	<i>þam</i>

The second of the two deictic determiners was generalized from *þis*, the nominative and accusative singular of the emphatic OE demonstrative to which the plural adjectival ending *-e* was added giving us the pair *this/these* (Lass 1992: 2.9.1.2). The full paradigm of forms appears in the following table.

Table Demonstrative *this* in OE

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>þes</i>	<i>þeōs</i>	<i>þis</i>	<i>þās</i>
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>þises</i>	<i>þisse</i>	<i>þises</i>	<i>þissa</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>þisum</i>	<i>þisse</i>	<i>þisum</i>	<i>þisum</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>þisne</i>	<i>þas</i>	<i>þis</i>	<i>þās</i>
<b>Instr.</b>	<i>þys</i>		<i>þys/þeōs</i>	<i>þisum</i>

The two demonstratives differed inasmuch as *se-sēo-ðæt* had more a specifying function while *þes-þeōs-þis* was more deictic in function.

Table Numeral one (used as the indefinite article)

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>ān</i>	<i>ān</i>	<i>ān</i>	<i>āne</i>
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>ānes</i>	<i>ānre</i>	<i>ānes</i>	<i>ānra</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>ānum</i>	<i>ānre</i>	<i>ānum</i>	<i>ānum</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>ānne</i>	<i>āne</i>	<i>ān</i>	<i>āne</i>
<b>Instr.</b>	<i>āne</i>	<i>ānre</i>	<i>āne</i>	<i>ānum</i>

The cardinal numbers *twegen* “two” and *þrȳ* “three” were also declined (see following table), as was *begen* “both.” The further numbers up to *nigontyne* “nineteen” rarely are, and all the higher ones are indeclinable.

Table Declensional paradigm of the numbers two and three

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>twegen</i>	<i>twā</i>	<i>twā</i>	<i>þry</i>	<i>þreō</i>	<i>þreō</i>
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>twegra</i>	<i>twegra</i>	<i>twegra</i>	<i>þreōra</i>	<i>þreōra</i>	<i>þreōra</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>ānum</i>	<i>ānre</i>	<i>ānum</i>	<i>þium</i>	<i>þium</i>	<i>þium</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>twegen</i>	<i>twā</i>	<i>twā</i>	<i>þry</i>	<i>þreō</i>	<i>þreō</i>

A final set of determiners in OE are the possessives, which were derived from the genitive of the personal pronouns. The possessives *mīn*, *þīn*, *sīn*, *ūser* (*ure*), *eower*, *uncer*, and *incer* are declined as follows:

Table Possession *my* (used as the indefinite article)

	<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>	<i>Neuter</i>	<i>Plural: masc + fem</i>	<i>Neuter</i>
<b>Nom.</b>	<i>mīn</i>	<i>mīn</i>	<i>mīn</i>	<i>mīne</i>	<i>minu</i> ( <i>mīne</i> )
<b>Gen.</b>	<i>mīnes</i>	<i>mīnre</i>	<i>mīnes</i>	<i>mīnra</i>	<i>mīnra</i>
<b>Dat.</b>	<i>mīnum</i>	<i>mīnre</i>	<i>mīnum</i>	<i>mīnum</i>	<i>mīnum</i>
<b>Acc.</b>	<i>mīnne</i>	<i>mīne</i>	<i>mīn</i>	<i>mīne</i>	<i>minu</i> ( <i>mīne</i> )
<b>Instr.</b>	<i>mīne</i>		<i>mīne</i>		

The possessive determiners *his* “his, its,” *hiere* “her,” and *hiera* “their” were indeclinable.

## Verbs in OE

are grouped into two major subdivision. The first are the **strong verbs** (today called “irregular”) which underwent vowel changes (or **ablaut**). They were inherited from **Indo-European**. The second group is that of the **weak verbs** (today called “regular”), which form the past tense and past participle by adding the ending {-od(e)/-ed(e)} or {-de/-te} to the present tense stem. This is a feature inherited from **Proto-Germanic**. In addition, there is a small, but important set of OE irregular verbs: *beon*, *wesan*, and *habban*. Each of these will be introduced in the following.

In OE the verbs underwent **inflection** for person (first, second, and third), **number** (singular and plural), **tense** (present and past), and **mood** (indicative, subjunctive, imperative).

### Mood in OE

may need a brief explanation since its use in ModE is not especially prominent. The verbs were inflected for mood in two relatively distinct paradigms as indicative or subjunctive. The former is used for assertions that can be evaluated as true or not. This is the default case and can be found everywhere throughout OE texts. Example: *pis syndon þā dōmas, þe Æðelbirht cyning āsette on Augustinus dæge* “These **are** the laws which King Æðelbirht **set up** in St. Augustine’s days” (Text 2.1 “Æðelbirht’s Laws” [title], 602 or 603). Although no hard and fast rule may be applied, the subjunctive, in contrast, calls the truth value of a statement into doubt. The subjunctive was used, among other things, to express conjecture, wish or volition, commands, the possible, but not certain truth of a situation, or hypothetical contexts. Because the subjunctive is used widely to express desired, but not yet achieved actions or states, its domain is frequently the unreal. Example: *Gif man mægð-man nēde genimeð, þān āgende L scillingas and æft at þān āgende sinne willan at gebiege* (Text 2.1 “Æðelbirht’s Laws” [Law 82], 602 or 603) “If someone abducts a virgin/maiden by force, 50 shillings for the person she belongs to, and then he **may buy** her back as desired.” Example of volition: *sī þīn nama gehālgod* from the Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6:9) “May your name be honored,” where *sī* is the present subjunctive of *be*.

Gradually, the subjunctive was displaced by periphrastic forms using the **modal auxiliaries**. Most of these verbs were historical **preterite-present verbs** and include *cunnan* “know, be able to”; *māgan* “be able to”; *sculan* “have to”; and *purfan* “need.” A further prominent modal is *willan*, which is an irregular verb with patterning similar to some of the modals. Example: *Eal þæt his man āþer oððe ettan oððe erian mæg, þæt lið wið ðā sē* (inserted in: *Compendious History of the World* by Orosius, translated under King Alfred) “All that a man **can** either graze or plough extends alongside the sea.”

Table The modal verb *magan* (> ModE *may*)

	present tense indicative	past tense indicative
First person singular	<i>ic mæg</i>	<i>ic meahte</i>
Second person singular	<i>þū meahst</i>	<i>þū meahtest</i>
Third person singular	<i>hē/hēol/hit mæg</i>	<i>hē, hēo (hit) meahte</i>
All persons plural	<i>wē/gē/hī magon</i>	<i>wēlgē /hī meahton</i>

Furthermore, there is a third mood with distinctive forms: the **imperative**. Examples, singular: *hīere* “hear; plural: *hīerað* “hear ye; y’all hear.” Examples in sentences, singular: **Sing** *mē frumsceaft* (from the ninth century translation into OE of Bede’s *Historia* about Caedmon, In: C.T. Onions (ed.) (1959), *Sweet’s Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*, 14th ed, Oxford: Clarendon) “Sing to me about the Creation”;

plural: *lēofan men*, **gecnāwað** þæt sōð (“*Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*”, 1010–1016, by Wulfstan II, Archbishop of York) “Dear people, know what is true.”

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### Voice in OE

is periphrastic and is formed by *beon*, *wesan*, and *weorðan* as auxiliaries followed by the past participle. Example: *ðam eafera was æfter cenned* (Text 2.3) “To him an heir was afterward born.” See also **voice**. In contrast to ModE the passive was formed in OE with either the auxiliary *bēon* “be,” which had a more state-like aspect, or *weorþan* “become,” which emphasized the result of a dynamic action. Examples: *ƿær wearð se cyning begsecg ofslægen* “And then the king Bagsac **got** killed” (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Abbotton II) for the year 871). The auxiliary *be* gradually displaced *weorþan* completely, possibly reinforced by the influence of French *être* “be” + past participle. Furthermore, expressions with *man* “(some)one” were used with the active verb to express a passive-like relation. Example: *7 his broðor Horsan man ofslōh*. “And **(some)one** slew his brother Horsa = Horsa’s brother was slain” (*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the year 455).

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### Tense in OE

consisted, as it does in ModE, of two tenses: the present tense, which then as now could also express future time, and the past tense (aka preterite), which also extended to the time reference of the past perfect. Examples, present for present: *Brittene igland is ehta hund mila lang. 7 twa hund brad. 7 her sind on þis iglande fif geþeode* (Text 2.5) “The island Britain **is** 800 miles long, and 200 miles broad. And there **are** on the island five languages”; present for future: *Swā bēoþ þa fyrmestan y#temeste, and þā ytemestan fyrmeste* (Matt. 20:16, In: H. Sweet (1905) *Anglo-Saxon Primer with Grammar, Notes, and Glossary*; 8th rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon, p. 65) “So the last **shall be** first, and the first last”; past for past *Erest weron bugend þises landes Brittes þa coman of Armenia* (ibid.) “The first inhabitants of this land **were** the Britons, who **came** [or indeed: **had come**] from Armenia”; past for past perfect: *Witodlice Dryhten āstāg niþer, tō þæm þæt hē gesāwe þā burg and þone stīepel, þe Adāmes bearn getimbrodon* (Gen. 11:5) “Verily the Lord came down to them that he might see the city and the tower which the children of Adam **had built**.”

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### Perfective aspect in OE

referred to the same period or point of time as the past tense, but emphasized the completed nature of the act or event reported. The perfective in OE was formed with *habban* / *hauen*, which in OE was already a perfect auxiliary. However, it was not the only auxiliary of the perfect; *bēon* was also used, but the former was ousting the latter. In *Havelok* we find both, e.g. *Quanne he havede this pleinte maked* “when he had made this complaint” (l. 134); *Quanne he weren alle set* “when they were [= had] all sat” (l. 162; note that although this is a northern text, where *they* might be expected, *he* is used for both “he” and “they”). The original distinction between change-of-state and (some) intransitives with *ben* and stative with *hauen* was not maintained strictly. Eventually *ben* is replaced by *hauen* (Fischer 1992: 260f). There is no real evidence of the progressive in OE.

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### Number in the OE verb

consisted of singular and plural only. Examples: OE third person singular, present tense *Gif cyning his leðde tō him gebāteð* “If the king orders his people to him” (Text 2.1: *Æðelbirht’s Laws*, 602 or 603, Law no. 3) vs. first person plural, present tense *we eow fultumiad* “we (will) help you” (Text 2.5 *ASChronicle*,

ninth century). Where dual pronouns show up as the subject, the verb takes the same endings as with the plural. Example: *And ic cyðe eow, þæt ic wylle, þæt **get beon** eallra þæra laga weoðde, þe gyt wæran on Eadwerdes dæge kynges* (Liebermann 1903–1916: 224) “And I made known to you-all that I demand that **you-both** be worthy of all these laws, which **you-both** were in the days of King Edward.” See the *verb classes of OE*.

### Person in OE

was no different from ModE: First person for the speaker(s); second for those addressed; and third for the one(s) or thing(s) spoken about. What was different was the use of considerably more inflectional endings according to person. Typically there were distinct endings for the first person present singular, viz. {-e}, for the second person singular {-(-e)st}, and the third person singular {-(-e) ð}. See the *verb classes of OE*.

### Concord in the verb

involves both *number* and *person*. The basic paradigms for the past tense are given under *principal parts*. While the past uses the same inflections for the first and the third persons singular, the present distinguishes them. Furthermore, in the present tense the second person singular always has the {-st} ending (with or without a preceding vowel) in contrast to the second person singular past tense of the strong verbs, which ends in {-e}. In both the past and the present tenses the plural uses the same endings for all persons, cf.

Table The present indicative paradigm (see also *principal parts* and *subjunctive*)

<i>person + number</i>	<i>present (strong verbs)</i>	<i>present (weak verbs)</i>
<b>First person singular</b>	<i>ic drīfe</i>	<i>ic lufie</i>
<b>Second person singular</b>	<i>þū drīfst</i>	<i>þū lufast</i>
<b>Third person singular</b>	<i>hē/hēo/hit drīfð</i>	<i>hē, hēo (hit) lufað</i>
<b>All persons plural</b>	<i>wē/gē/hī drifað</i>	<i>wē/gē/hī lufiað</i>

## The verb classes and principal parts of OE

determine the forms of the verb base (or root) to which conjugational inflections (see also *concord*) may be added. There are four such forms for the strong verbs of OE and three for the weak verbs (as in ModE): the infinitive, the past (for OE strong verbs two forms), and the past participle.

### The weak (aka consonantal) verbs

are what today are called the regular verbs, that is, the ones that have a regular past tense and past participle, namely ModE {-ed}. In OE the vast majority of verbs were weak, though not regular in the sense we are familiar with since they also included cases of vowel and consonant change. The past and past participle endings were most often the almost familiar inflections {-ode} and {-od} respectively; some, however, took

the endings {-te} or {-t}. Examples: *wunian* “help” and *lufian* “love,” in the first case, and *mētan* “meet” and *bringan* “bring,” in the other:

infinitive	past	past participle
(ge) <i>wunian</i>	(ge) <i>wunode</i>	(ge-) <i>wunod</i>
<i>lufian</i>	<i>lufode</i>	(ge-) <i>lufod</i>
<i>mētan</i>	<i>mētte</i>	(ge-) <i>mēt</i>
<i>bringan</i>	<i>brōhte</i>	(ge-) <i>broth</i>

Table The weak verb inflections in the past tense indicative

<b>First and third persons singular</b>	<i>ic, hē, hēo (hit) lufode</i>
<b>Second person singular</b>	<i>þū lufodest</i>
<b>All persons plural</b>	<i>wē   gē   hī lufoden</i>

### The strong (aka vocalic) type of verb

depended on a variety of patterns of vowel change and had one further distinctive form due to the fact that the 1st and 3rd person past singular had a different vowel than elsewhere. Examples: OE *drincan-dranc-druncon*-(ge-)*druncen*; ModE: *drink-drank-drunk*. As for the two distinct past tense forms: the first (*dranc* above) was for the 1st and 3rd persons singular, and the second past form (*druncon*) was for the 2nd person singular and the plural in all persons, cf.

Table The strong verb inflections in the past tense indicative

<b>First and third persons singular</b>	<i>ic, hēl hēol/hit dranc</i>
<b>Second person singular</b>	<i>þū drunce</i>
<b>All persons plural</b>	<i>wē/gē/hī druncon</i>

The strong verbs undergo vowel gradation or *ablaut*. Seven classes are commonly recognized. Examples:

- I. “bid” *bīdan* - *bād* - *bidon* - *biden*;
- II. “offer” *bēodan* - *bead* - *budon* - *boden*;
- III. “bind” *bindan* - *band*-*bundon*-*bunden*;
- IV. “bear” *beran* - *bær* - *bāeron* - *boren*;
- V. “give” *giefan* - *geaf* - *gēafon* - *giefen*;
- VI. “stand” *standan* - *stōd* - *stōdon* - *standen*;
- VII. “fall” *feallan* - *fēoll* - *fēolloon* - *feallen*.

### The irregular (aka anomalous) verbs

are a third set of verbs recognized for OE. The most central of them is the verb *bēon/wesan* “be,” which remains the most irregular in ModE as well. Next to the present indicative *eom, eart, is, sind(on)* “am, art, is, are” there is an alternative paradigm *bēo, bist, bið, bēoð*. The past has first and third person singular *wæs*, second person singular *wāere* and plural *wāeron*. The subjunctive has its own paradigms: present singular *sȳ* and plural *sȳn* or *bēo* and *bēon* and past singular *wāere* and plural *wāeren* (see *HoE* §2.1.2 for mention of a possible double paradigm for the present tense of the verb *be*).



Table The irregular verb *bēon*

	<i>indicative</i>			<i>subjunctive</i>		
	<i>present</i>	<i>present</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>pres.</i>	<i>pres.</i>	<i>past</i>
<b>1st p. sg.</b>	<i>ic eam</i>	<i>bēo</i>	<i>wæs</i>	<i>ȝy</i>	<i>bēo</i>	<i>wære</i>
<b>2nd p. sg.</b>	<i>þū eart</i>	<i>bist</i>	<i>wære</i>			
<b>3rd p. sg.</b>	<i>hē/hēol/hit is</i>	<i>bið</i>	<i>wæs</i>			
<b>all p. plur.</b>	<i>wē/gē/hī sind(on)</i>	<i>bēoð</i>	<i>wæron</i>	<i>ȝyn</i>	<i>bēon</i>	<i>wæren</i>

**Other irregular verbs** include *habben* “have,” *dōn* “do,” *gān* “go,” and perhaps *willan* “will, wish” as well as the *preterite-present verbs* (see paradigm in *mood in OE*; cf. the ModE *modal auxiliaries*).

Quite a few verbs have differing vowels (and consonants) in the first as opposed to the second and third person present singular. Examples: *cēosan* “choose” with *ic cēose*, but *þū cȳst* and *hē/hēo cȳst*; *sēan* “see” with *ic sēo*, but *þū syhst* and *hē/hēo syhð*. Such alternatives may be explained by *i*-mutation in the pre-OE period. This process led to the raising of *e* to *i* due to the assimilatory influence of an *i* or *j* in the following syllable. The verb *beran* “bear” had a third person singular present-tense Proto-Germanic ending \*{-īpi} thus leading to the raising of the second person singular to *bir(e)ð*. The phonetic value of the vowel spelled as <y> was unstable, but can be regarded for our purposes as *i*.

## Adverbs in OE

could be derived from adjectives by adding the suffix {-lic}, cf. *wrætlic hongað* “wonderously it hangs” (Text 3.5) or {-ē} as in *sweotule asecgan* “openly speak” (Text 2.4).

## Prepositions in OE

were not as common as they are in ModE. The increase in the frequency of their appearance is due in part to the typological shift from a synthetic (OE) to an analytic (ModE) language. Analytic languages depend on particles such as prepositions to carry grammatical meaning. Example: OE *wordum mælde* (Text 3.3, “The Battle of Maldon,” late eleventh century) consists of the dative plural of *word*; a ModE translation requires a preposition: *spoke within words*.

Prepositions share with verbs the feature of taking objects. Their source lies in **adverbs** (*before*, *after*, *near*, etc.), participles (*concerning*, *including*, *pertaining to*, etc.), compound prepositions (*out of*, *down from*, *within*, etc.) and complex expressions (*in front of*, *in regard to*, *by means of*, etc.) i.e. ones where one preposition combines with another one.

Ælfric the Grammarian (c. 955–1010), who helped to establish the West Saxon standard, introduced a more consistent use of the grammatical cases, for example using accusative case objects after prepositions such as *þurh* “through, because of” (otherwise also dative and genitive) and *oð* “to, up to, until,” *wið* “against, by, near,” and *ymbe* “at, around, near” (all three otherwise also dative).

In general, prepositions began to be employed more widely as the older functions of case retreated into the background. Consequently, their number, which was relatively small in OE, grew in the early ME

period. The following examples are taken from the running text in H. Sweet (1905) *Anglo-Saxon Primer with Grammar, Notes, and Glossary*; 8th rev. ed. Oxford: Clarendon (page numbers in parentheses):

- ān** (variant of *on*; see there) *an onginn* (55) “**in** the beginning”  
**æfter** (dative) “after” *æfter þæm* (68) “**after** that”  
**æf** (dative) “before” *þrim gēarum æf þæm þe hē forþ-fērde* (82) “three years **before that** (= before) he went forth”  
**æt** (dative) “at, toward” *hēo gīernde æt him* (71) “she yearned **for** him”  
**be** (dative) “by” *be his āgnum willa* (56) “**by** his own will”  
**binnan** (dative) “within” *binnan þæm fierste* (56) “**within** the period”  
**būtan** (dative) “without, except” *būtan gōdum weorcum* (56) “**without** good works,” *ealle būtan fifum* (58) “all **except** five”  
**for** (dative) “for” *for his scēapum* (55) “**for** his sheep”  
**fram** (dative) “from” *fram his āgnum folce* (56) “**from** his own people”  
**geond** (accusative) “throughout” *hē fērde geond manigu land* (55) “he traveled **throughout** many lands”  
**intō** (accusative) “into” *ēodon intō Godes temple* (58) “went **into** the temple of God”  
**mid** (dative) “with” *mid him* (66) “**with** him”  
**of** (dative) “from” *steorran of heofone* (55) “stars **from** heaven”  
**ofer** (dative or accusative) “over” *ofer eall Englaland* (55) (dative) “**over** all England”; *Hē bebēad þæt hīe scēten ofer þære eorþan* (60) (accusative) “He commanded that they should settle **over** the earth”  
**on** (dative or accusative) “on, in” *on siex dagum* (55) “**in** six days”  
**ongēan** (dative or accusative) “toward; against” *Se cyning hēt hīe feohtan ongēan Peohtas* (80) “The king had them fight **against** the Picts”  
**tō** (dative) “to” *tō hiera scīpum* (57) “**to** their ships”  
**þurh** (accusative) “through” *þurh gelēafan þære mōdor* (57) “**through / by means of** the faith/belief of her mother”  
**under** (dative or accusative) “under” *ic hæbbe þeġnas under mē* (60) “I have servants **under** me”  
**wif** (usually accusative, here dative) “in return for” also “against, toward, along” *ne cōme þū tō mē tō wyrċenne wif ānum pēninge?* (65) “Didn’t you come to me to work **for** one penny?”  
**ymbe** (accusative) “about” *þā hē ūt ēode ymbe undern-tīd* (64) “that he went out **about** the third hour.”

## Conjunctions in OE

have to a great extent remained unchanged since the OE period, e.g. *ond* “and,” *nāðor* “neither,” and *for* “for.” On the other hand, such once widely used conjunctions as *ac* “but” and *æf* (*þæm þe*) “before” have dropped out of use. The distinction between coordinate conjunctions (*and, or, for, either, neither, and yet*) and subordinate conjunctions (e.g. *although, after, before, because, if, since*) was more likely to affect **word order** in OE, where subordinate clauses frequently (but not always) have verb-final word order. Example with coordinate conjunction: *Brittene igland is ehta hund mila lang. 7 twa hund brad* (Text 2.5) “Britain is 800 miles long, and it is 200 miles broad.” Example with a subordinate conjunction: *Gif cyning æt manes hām drincæð ...* (Text 2.1) “If the king at a man’s home drinketh....” See *word order in OE*.

Conjunctions and conjunctive words or connectors often appeared in pairs, as what are usually called correlative coordinate conjunctions. Where there are ModE parallels this is less problematic:

<i>oððe ... oððe</i>	<i>either ... or</i>	<i>oþþe hē ānne hataþ and oþerne lufaþ, oþþe hē biþ ānum ġe-hiersum and oþrum unġehiersum</i> (Matt.6:24) “ <b>either</b> he hates the one and loves the other <b>or</b> he is obedient to the one and disobedient to the other”
<i>nāhwæðer</i>	<i>neither ... nor</i>	<i>nēron nāwðer ne on Frēsisc gescāpene ne on Denisc</i> (ASChon. for 897) “they were <b>neither</b> shaped like Frisian <b>nor</b> Danish ships”
<i>æġðer ge ... ge</i>	<i>both ... and</i>	<i>þā wēron æġðer ge swiftran ge unwealtran ge ēac hierran þonne þā oðru</i> (ibid.) “they were <b>both</b> swifter <b>and</b> steadier <b>and</b> also higher than the others”

Or correlative pairs including subordination:

<i>swa (...) þæt</i>	<i>so (...) that</i>	<i>hē wearþ þā mihtig on micelre strengþo, swā þæt hē gelcēhte āne lēon be wege</i> (76) “he then became powerful with much strength <b>so that</b> he once killed a lion at the roadside”
<i>swa ... swa</i>	<i>as ... so</i>	<i>swā swā wæter ādwæscþ fȳr, swā ādwæscþ sēo almesse synna</i> (Sweet 1905: 55) “ <b>just as</b> water extinguishes fire, <b>so</b> alms extinguish all sins”
<i>ġif ... þān</i>	<i>if ... then</i>	<i>ġif se biscop dēþ be his āġnum willan, and wile bindan þone unscyldigscyldigan ālīsan, þonne forliēst hē þā miht þe him God forgeaf.</i> “ <b>if</b> the bishop does something of his own will and wishes to take someone not guilty and release someone guilty, <b>then</b> he violates the power God gave him”
<i>þā ... þā</i>	<i>when ... then</i>	<i>þā þā mēnn slēpon, þā cōm his fēonda sum</i> “when the men slept, then came one of his enemies”
<i>þonne ... þonne</i>	<i>when ... then</i>	<i>þonne hēo cymþ tō þære heofonlican Hierusalēm, þonne gesihþ hēo micle māran mærpō and wuldor þonne hie re ær on life ...</i> (72) “ <b>When</b> she came to her heavenly Jerusalem, <b>then</b> saw she much more fame and glory than here before in life ...”