

Dyskans Peswardhek (14) An Peswardhegves Dyskans

Grammar Summary Lessons 1 – 13

This grammar summary contains all the grammar met so far.

1 Articles

Indefinite: does not exist kador = a chair or chair

Definite: the = an used with masculine, feminine, singular and plural

2 Nouns

(a) Gender

Nouns are either masculine or feminine

Nouns ending –va are feminine,

nouns for female persons are feminine e.g. benyn, mowes, modrep etc

Feminine singular nouns mutate (2nd) after an and unn: benyn, an venyn; kador, unn gador

nouns for male persons are masculine e.g. den, maw, mab etc

masculine plural nouns of persons mutate (2nd) after an: mab, mebyon, an vebyon

(b) Plurals

(i) *The most common way to form the plural is to add –ow or –yow, but there are many exceptions*

(ii) collectives

The word for a star in Cornish is steren. There are two forms of the plural Sterennow = lots of individual stars

Ster = stars in general

This happens with several words, especially of living ‘things’.

Steren is known as the singulative, sterennow is the plural and ster is the collective

<i>singulative</i>	<i>plural</i>	<i>collective</i>	<i>English</i>
steren	sterennow	ster	star
gwedhen	gwedhenow	gwydh	tree
pluven	pluvennow	pluv	feather*
avanen	avanennow	avan	raspberry
briallen	briallenow	brialli	primrose
gwenenen	gwenenenow	gwenen	bee
komolen	komolennow	kommol	cloud

And many other examples.

All of the words above are feminine

**pluven has a modern, extended meaning of ‘a pen’*

3 Adjectives

(a) Adjectives generally follow the noun, exceptions will be pointed out as they occur

Benyn hir a tall woman

Adjectives following a feminine singular noun or a masculine plural noun of persons mutate (2nd): kador + bras = kador vras, mebyon + da = mebyon dha

dyskador byghan = a small (male) teacher

dyskadores vyghan = a small (female) teacher

dyskatoryon vyghan = small (male) teachers

dyskadoresow byghan = small (female) teachers

Two adjectives following the noun are separated by a comma or by the word 'ha', if mutation is necessary only the first is mutated.

ottomma benyn goth, teg ha byghan

or ottomma benyn deg, byghan ha koth

or ottomma benyn vyghan, koth ha teg h.e. (hag erel = etc.)

(b) (i) The possessive adjectives are

ow³ (my)

dha² (your)

y² (his)

hy³ (her)

agan (our)

agas (your)

aga³ (their)

ow, hy and aga all cause a third mutation of the following word (whether masculine or feminine, singular or plural)

dha and y cause a second mutation of the following word (whether masculine or feminine, singular or plural)

penn (head): ow fenn, dha benn, y benn, hy fenn, agan penn, agas penn, aga fenn

kath (cat): ow hath, dha gath, y gath, hy hath, agan kath, agas kath, aga hath

tas (father): ow thas, dha das, y das, hy thas, agan tas, agas tas, aga thas

(ii) contractions: ha + ow is not liked so there is a contraction used and

ha + ow becomes ha'm

ha + dha becomes ha'th

dhe + ow becomes dhe'm

dhe + dha becomes dhe'th

'm does not cause a mutation; 'th is followed by a form of the 5th mutation, more on this later

4 Particles

(a) a used (i) as an interrogative particle A vyn' ta mos? Do you want to go?

(ii) as a verbal particle, my a vynn I want

(b) na(g)is a negative particle nag is used before parts of the verb bos beginning with a vowel nag yw – no; na vynnaw no

(c) ny(ns) is a negative particle, nyns is used before parts of the verb bos beginning with a vowel: nyns ov trist I'm not sad; ny vynnaw mos I don't want to go

(d) y(th)is is used to begin a statement if you want to start with the verb, yth occurs before parts of the verbs beginning with a vowel: yth ov vy trist I am sad

5 Prepositions

(a) a² (of) is used in several expressions

meur a

Eus meur a dhamach? = is there a lot of damage?

Eus meur a gathes? = Are there a lot of cats?

(b) many prepositions in Cornish combine with pronouns

dhe Jowan to John gans an ki with the dog but ganso with him

Dhe ² to	Gans with	Yn in	War ² on	Orth at	
dhymm	gene v	ynn o v	warn av	orthi v	me
dhis	genes	ynn o s	warn as	orthi s	you
dhodh o	gans o	ynn o	warnodh o	orto o	him
dhedh i	gens i	ynn i	warnedh i	orti i	her
dhyn n	genen n	ynn o n	warnan n	orthyn n	us
dhy wgh	genow gh	ynn o wgh	warnow gh	orthow gh	you
dhedh a	gans a	ynn a	warnedh a	orta a	them

6 Verbs

(a) Present tense

(i) Simple present - conjugation

Bos short	Bos long	gul	gallos	mynnes	
..ov	..esov	a wrav	a allav	a vynn av	vy
..os	..esos	a wredh	a yllydh	a vynn yd h	ta
..yw	y ^{ma} /usi/eus	a wra	a yll	a vynn	ev
..yw	y ^{ma} /usi/eus	a wra	a yll	a vynn	hi
..on	..eson	a wren	a yllyn	a vynn yn	ni
..owgh	..esowgh	a wrewgh	a yllowgh	a vynn ow gh	hwi
..yns	..ymons/esons	a wrons	a yllons	a vynn o ns	i

Remember: a wredh ta is usually a wre' ta; a yllydh ta is usually a yll' ta; a vynn**yd**h ta is usually a vyn' ta

Ta is written separately - Os ta lowen? Benyn os ta?

Most verbs form the third person singular of the present tense by using the stem of the verb but there are a few irregular verbs. This is the form used, especially in conversation, in a statement.

Most verbs ending in -a, -ya, -es drop the ending to form the stem

Redya: my a red, ty a red, ev a red, hi a red, ni a red, hwi a red, i a red

Skrifa: my a skrif, ty a skrif, ev a skrif, hi a skrif, ni a skrif, hwi a skrif, i a skrif

Kerdhes: my a gerdh, ty a gerdh, etc.

Mynnes: my a vynn, ty a vynn etc.

But

Gallos: my a yll, ty a yll etc.

Gul: my a wra, ty a wra etc.

Bos: my yw, ty yw etc.

Dos: my a dheu, ty a dheu, etc

Irregular: dybri, eva, kavos. For the moment use these with gul

My a wra dybri, ty a wra eva, ev a wra kavos etc.

(ii) Present continuous

In English we make the present participle by adding -ing to the infinitive (go, going; read, reading), in Cornish we put ow in front of the infinitive.

owth oberi working

these present participles are used with the long form of bos, owth is used when the following verb begins with a vowel.

ow causes a 4th mutation

terlenti	to sparkle	ow terlenti	sparkling
splanna	to shine	ow splanna	shining
gwaya	to sway	ow kwaya	swaying
dos	to come	ow tos	coming
mos	to go	ow mos	going
gul	to do	ow kul	doing
oberi	to work	owth oberi	working

(b) Imperfect tense

Just as bos has a long and a short form in the present tense so it does in the imperfect tense

<i>present</i>		<i>imperfect</i>	
<i>short</i>	<i>long</i>	<i>short</i>	<i>long</i>
...ov vy	...esov vy	...en vy	...esen vy
...os ta	...esos ta	...esta	...eses ta
...yw ev	...yma ev	...o ev	...esa ev
...yw hi	...yma hi	...o hi	...esa hi
...on ni	...eson ni	...en ni	...esen ni
...owgh hwi	...esowgh hwi	...ewgh hwi	...esewgh hwi
...yns i	...ymons i	...ens i	...esens i

- *The rules for using the long and short forms in the imperfect are the same as for the present tense*
 - *There is no equivalent to eus/usi or esons*
 - *No other tenses of bos have both a long and a short form*
 - *No other verb has long and short forms*

(c) Past (preterite) tense

gul	<i>to do</i>	gallos	<i>to be able to</i>	mynnes	<i>to want to</i>
gwrug	<i>I did</i>	gyllis	<i>I could</i>	mynnis	<i>I wanted</i>
gwrussys	<i>you did</i>	gyllsys	<i>you could</i>	mynsys	<i>you wanted</i>
gwrug	<i>he did</i>	gallas	<i>he could</i>	mynnas	<i>he wanted</i>
gwrug	<i>she did</i>	gallas	<i>she could</i>	mynnas	<i>she wanted</i>
gwrussyn	<i>we did</i>	gyllsyn	<i>we could</i>	mynsyn	<i>we wanted</i>
gwrussowgh	<i>you did</i>	gyllsowgh	<i>you could</i>	mynsowgh	<i>you wanted</i>
gwrussons	<i>they did</i>	gallsons	<i>they could</i>	mynsons	<i>they wanted</i>

*gwrussys is usually a wruss' ta and ny wruss' ta

The verbs given are the forms which mean yes, to say no you need to put na in front and mutate: na wrug vy, na allas, na vynsons

To make a statement you need the particle a: my a vynnas I wanted, ty a allas you could, hwi a wrug you did.

To make the question you need the a particle and the conjugated form of the verb: A yllis mos? Could I go? A vynsons gweles an fylm na? Did they want to see that film? A wrussys ta gweles an fylm? (this is usually A wruss' ta gweles an fylm?)

To make the negative statement or question you need a or a ny plus the conjugated form of the verb: Ny wrussys ta gorthebi an govyn. (Usually Ny wruss' ta gorthebi an govyn) You didn't answer the question A ny vynsys mos dhe'n cinema? Didn't you want to go to the cinema?

(d) To have

(i)

I have a dog (with me) Yma ki genev I had* a dog (with me) Yth esa ki genev
I have (own) a dog Yma ki dhymm I had* (owned) a dog Yth esa ki dhymm
(this English 'had' has the sense 'used to have')

(ii) to have a cold

yma anwos warnav I have a cold (there is a cold on me)
yth esa anwos warnav I had a cold

(e) To have to

I must go Res yw dhymm mos I had* to go Res o dhymm mos

7 Mutations there are five (or even six) mutations, the most common of which is the second, also known as the soft mutation or lenition

(a) 2nd mutation

	b	ch	d	ga	ge	gi	gl	gr	gw	gy	go	gu	gro	gru	k	m	p	t
2 nd	v	j	dh	a	e	i	l	r	w	y	wo	wu	wro	wru	g	v	b	d

benyn an venyn davas an dhavas mamm an vamm etc

Causes of the second mutation met so far

(i) Feminine singular nouns after an and unn

(ii) Masculine plural nouns of persons after an

- (iii) Verbs after the particles a, ny and na
- (iv) Adjectives after feminine singular nouns and masculine plurals of persons (but words beginning with k, p or t do not mutate after words ending in s or th)
- (v) Nouns following the numbers dew and diw (and dew and diw themselves after an)
- (vi) Words after dhe
- (vii) Words after the possessive adjectives dha and y

(b) 3rd mutation also known as the breathed mutation or spirate

	b	ch	d	ga	ge	gi	gl	gr	gw	gy	go	gu	gro	gru	k	m	p	t
3 rd															h		f	th

Causes of the third mutation met so far

- (i) After the masculine number tri
- (ii) After the feminine number teyr
- (iii) Words after the possessive adjectives ow, hy and aga

(c) 4th mutation also known as the hard mutation or provection

	b	ch	d	ga	ge	gi	gl	gr	gw	gy	go	gu	gro	gru	k	m	p	t
4 th	p		t	ka	ke	ki	ki	kr	kw	ky	ko	ku	kro	kru				

Causes of the fourth mutation met so far
Ow to form the present participle

8 Numbers Cornish counts in twenties,

0	mann	20	ugens	40	dew ugens
1	onan	21	onan warn ugens	41	onan ha dew ugens
2	dew/diw	22	dew warn ugens	42	dew ha dew ugens
3	tri/teyr	23	tri warn ugens	43	tri ha dew ugens
4	peswar/peder	24	peswar warn ugens	44	peswar ha dew ugens
5	pymp	25	pymp warn ugens	45	pymp ha dew ugens
6	hwegh	26	hwegh warn ugens	46	hwegh ha dew ugens
7	seyth	27	seyth warn ugens	47	seyth ha dew ugens
8	eth	28	eth warn ugens	48	eth ha dew ugens
9	naw	29	naw warn ugens	49	naw ha dew ugens
10	deg	30	deg warn ugens	50	deg ha dew ugens
11	unnek	31	unnek warn ugens	51	unnek ha dew ugens
12	dewdhek	32	dewdhek warn ugens	52	dewdhek ha dew ugens
13	tredhek	33	tredhek warn ugens	53	tredhek ha dew ugens
14	peswardhek	34	peswardhek warn ugens	54	peswardhek ha dew ugens
15	pymthek	35	pymthek warn ugens	55	pymthek ha dew ugens
16	hwetek	36	hwetek warn ugens	56	hwetek ha dew ugens
17	seytek	37	seytek warn ugens	57	seytek ha dew ugens
18	etek	38	etek warn ugens	58	etek ha dew ugens
19	nownsek	39	nownsek warn ugens	59	nownsek ha dew ugens

1 onan *When counting but unn in front of a noun, causes a 2nd mutation of following feminine singular nouns: unn lyver, unn gath*

2 dew *But diw with feminine nouns, both dew and diw cause a second mutation dew dhen, diw venyn*

3 tri *But teyr with feminine nouns. Both tri and teyr cause a different mutation (3rd) tri thas, teyr fluven*

4 peswar *But peder before feminine nouns. Neither peswar nor peder cause a mutation. peswar den, peder benyn*

No other number has a feminine form. No other number causes a mutation

60 = tri ugens,

70 = deg ha tri ugens,

80 = peswar ugens,

90 = deg ha peswar ugens

only the numbers from 21 – 39 use warn all numbers thereafter use ha

50 you may use either deg ha dew ugens or hanterkans for fifty

100 = kans, 1 000 = mil, 1 000 000 = milvil (both of these cause a 2nd mutation of a following noun)

compound numbers with a noun put the noun after the first element:

31 books = unnek lyver warn ugens 43 cows = teyr bugh ha dew ugens

Remember: numbers are always followed by a singular noun and lies = many is treated in the same way as a number, so is followed by a singular noun. Unn ki, dew gi, tri hi, peswar ki, lies ki

years of age is bloodh, so we say:

Pymp bloodh yw ev He is 5 years old

Peswar bloodh warn ugens yw hi She is 24 years old.

9 Time

What time is it? Py eur yw (hi)?

Remember eur is feminine so the feminine numbers are used.

The word for half is hanter and after is wosa so

hanter wosa diw yw it's half past two

quarter past kwarter wosa

quarter past three kwarter wosa teyr

the word for 'to' is dhe, which causes a 2nd mutation

quarter to six kwarter dhe hwegh

quarter to three kwarter dhe deyr

Some useful words are: poran = exactly teyr eur poran exactly three o'clock

a-dro dhe = about a-dro dhe deyr eur about three o'clock

10 Direct and indirect speech

yn-medh

This means 'says' or 'say' or 'said' (the past tense has the same form as the present). It is only used with reported speech

Yn-medh Alyn "Eus eglos y'n dre?" Alan says "Is there a church in the town?"

“Da yw genen gwari war an treth,” yn-medh an fleghes. “*We like to play on the beach*” say the children.

11 Clauses

Adjectival clauses. Cornish has an idiomatic way of saying

I have a son, his name is Peter: Yma mab dhymm, Peder y hanow

There is the pub, its name is The Red Lion. Ottena an diwotti, An Lew Rudh y hanow

That is Morwenna, her hair is black. Honn yw Morwenna, du hy gols.

12 Questions and Answers

Ev a red lyver He reads a book

To turn this into a question it is better to use gul

A wra ev redya lyver? <i>Does he read a book?</i>	Gwra, ev a wra redya lyver	<i>Yes, he does read a book</i>
	Gwra, ev a red lyver	<i>Yes, he reads a book</i>
	Na wra, ny wra ev redya lyver.	<i>No, he doesn't read a book.</i>
A wre' ta skrifa lyther? <i>Do you write a letter?</i>	Gwra, my a wra skrifa lyther	<i>Yes, I do write a letter</i>
	Gwra, my a skrif lyther	<i>Yes, I write a letter</i>
	Na wrav, ny wrav vy skrifa lyther	<i>No, I don't write a letter</i>

For the 3rd person singular forms (ev and hi) you can make the question without gul

A red ev lyver? Red, ev a red lyver. Na red, ny red ev lyver

A gerdh hi? Kerdh, hi a gerdh....Na gerdh, ny gerdh hi

But this is not as common, especially in speech

In English most interrogatives start with w: what, when, where, why, but how.

In Cornish most start with p: pyth, pandra, ple, p'eur, prag, but fatel.

What: Pyth yw hemma? What is this? This requires answers of the form

Hemm yw ... or ... yw hemma

Pandr'a wruss' ta skrifa? What did you write? This requires answers of the form My a wrug skrifa ...

Conventionally Pyth is used with the verb bos and Pandra with other verbs

Grammatically here pandra should be used with dhe: Pandr'a wruss' ta dhe skrifa?; as should the other auxiliary verbs: Pandr'a vyn' ta dhe eva? But in speech you will often hear this 'dhe' omitted.

**When: P'eur hwre' ta mos? When did you go? This requires answers of the form My a wrug mos*

(What time: Py eur yw? Do not confuse with P'eur)

Where: Ple'ma'n gorsav? Where is the station? This requires answers of the form Yma an gorsav ...(You will often hear Yma'n gorsav)

**Why: Prag y hwre' ta mos ena? Why did you go there? Answers later!*

* *These have not been met yet, more on this later; they both involve a 5th mutation.*

13 Adverbs

Cornish has some special adverbs for the time at which something happens

nyhewer = *last night* haneth = *tonight*

dygynsete *the day before yesterday* de *yesterday* hedhyw *today*
a-vorow *tomorrow* trenja *the day after tomorrow*

warlena *last year* hevlena *this year* an vledhen a dheu *next year*

14 Expressions

Dell

These expressions are really conversation fillers

Dell hevel *it seems*

Dell dybav *I think* dell brederav *I think* dell grysav *I believe*

saw

Nyns yw saw hager-awel = *not is but a gale*

This is an idiomatic way of saying 'it is only a gale'.

Nyns yw saw ki byghan! *It's only a small dog!*

There follows a list of suitable books (these are a suggestion and are not compulsory)

1 Bora Brav *suitable for 1st grade students, with good vocabulary list published by Kesva an Taves Kernewek, available in the Standard Written Form*

2 *A Learners' Cornish Dictionary ed. Steve Harris, published by Ors Sempel, in the Standard Written form, available from the Kowethas web-site*

3 Keskowsow Istorek ha Keskowsow *by John Parker published by Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek, available in the Standard Written form*

4 *Cornish Grammar for Beginners by John Page published by Kesva an Taves Kernewek, available in the Standard Written Form*

Skeul an Yeth 1 *is available on the Kesva web-site* www.kesva.org

Information on these books and others may be obtained from the web-sites www.kesva.org *and* www.cornish-language.com

Revision exercises

These questions are taken from 2005 First Grade examination set by Kesva an Taves Kernewek

Question 1 (24 marks)



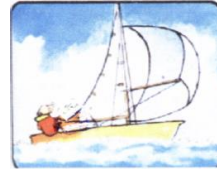
a) Pyth yw hemma?



b) Yw hemma sort?



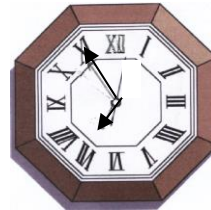
c) Yw an gewer sygh?



d) Pyth usi hi ow kul?



e) Py liw yw hemma?



f) Py eur yw hi?

g) Esons i ow koska?

h) Eus skubell omma?



Question 2 (5 marks)

Find the word which does not fit with the others in the row.

- a) plos garow hwerow tanow yar
- b) karr kanstel tren tro askel kert
- c) losten krys troos lavrek gwlanek
- d) leth te koffi backen dowr
- e) omladh hwerthin amanyyn kewsel donsya.

Question 3 (12 marks)

Answer the following questions in **Cornish**.

- a) Ple'th os ta trigys?
- b) Eus kenderow dhis?
- c) A wre' ta diwrosa?
- d) A wruss' ta mos dhe Alban?

Question 4 (9 marks)

Translate the following into **English**

- a) Yma mamm y'n worvarghas ow prena avalow, fav ha karetys.
- b) Yma dhe skath an marner golow rudh ha golow gwyrddh nosweyth.
- c) "Yth esov vy ow klanhe ow harr wosa an glaw," yn-medh Peder.

Question 5 (5 marks)

Match the Cornish places with the English meaning

- a) Halwyn (Halwynn) =
- b) Trewint (Trewyns) =
- c) Mellanoweth (Melinnowydh) =
- d) Penrose (Pennros) =
- e) Porthscatho (Porthskathow) =

(i) end of the upland

(ii) harbour of boats

(iii) white moor

(iv) new mill

(v) windy farmstead