GRAMMAR
OF THE
YIDDISH LANGUAGE

Dovid Katz

Duckworth
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David Katz
The *Grammar* was prepared with a dual readership in mind. The first intended users are university students enrolled in Yiddish language courses. Ideally, the qualified teacher will converse extensively in Yiddish from a very early stage of the course while supplying genuine literary texts. Lessons can be chosen as necessary from various sections to suit the requirements of the course. In place of 'fill in the blanks' exercises, it is recommended that students be asked to write original sentences and compositions on the basis of a selected section. The dictionaries recommended for use alongside the *Grammar* are Bergman's at an elementary stage; Weinreich's at a more advanced stage; and Harkavy's at a still more advanced stage at which the student is reading from works of Yiddish literature on his or her own (see 'Dictionaries', p. 277). Reading may be culled from any of a number of anthologies or readers (see 'Anthologies', pp. 278–279), or better still, from original works of modern Yiddish masters selected by the instructor.

The second intended user is the more advanced student or general reader who requires a reference grammar either to help master the language or as a work to be consulted as necessary.

Suggestions for improvements in future editions may be sent to the author at the Oxford Centre for Postgraduate Hebrew Studies, 45 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LW, England.
INTRODUCTION

Yiddish was created some thousand years ago by a Jewish minority population that had resettled from the ancient Near East to medieval Central Europe. Although it almost never enjoyed official government status, it thrived and was spoken and written by millions over a vast European territory, and gave rise to a substantial literature. Over the past century, Yiddish was carried to many parts of the world by East European Jewish immigrants and their descendants. Discovered only recently by large numbers of West European and American readers, Yiddish literature has assumed an international position, not least in consequence of its portrayals of the specifics of East European Jewish culture and the more universal implications of that culture.

Yiddish was never the language of all world Jewry. It is, rather, the traditional lingua franca of the Ashkenazim, the descendants of the makers of the medieval Jewish civilization that arose on Germanic-speaking territories. The name derives from the medieval Jewish term for those territories, Ashkenaz. With the early migrations of large numbers of Ashkenazim as far south as Italy, as far north as Holland and as far east as Russia, Yiddish spread over much of Europe, far beyond the Germanic-speaking lands.

Yiddish entails an intricate fusion between its three major components—the Semitic component deriving from the Hebrew and Aramaic of the ancient Near East that the first settlers in Ashkenaz brought with them; the Germanic component from the medieval Germanic lands where Yiddish was born; and, over the last few centuries, a Slavonic component in Eastern Europe. The two
previous Jewish languages, Hebrew and Aramaic, that the first settlers had brought with them, fused with a number of local varieties of medieval German city dialects deriving from the Upper and Central German areas. Statistically speaking, the greatest part of both the vocabulary and the morphological and syntactic machinery of the language is Germanic. Nevertheless, even the Germanic component of Yiddish is not congruous with any one German dialect, while each Yiddish dialect remains systematically relatable to any other Yiddish dialect. To the historical linguist, this is evidence of a Yiddish speech community that interacted with other far-away Yiddish-speaking communities vastly more than with the neighbouring speakers of the local or national non-Jewish languages. Yiddish linguistics focuses on the unique and creative ways in which the disparate parts of Yiddish combine to form a powerfully expressive language. Its major registers feature human sensitivities, logical precision and a sense of humour emphasizing irony and satire.

The origins of Yiddish literature are still somewhat obscure. Traces of written Yiddish go back to the eleventh century. The earliest extensive manuscript bearing an explicit date is from 1382. Appropriately enough, many of the early Yiddish literary manuscripts represent interaction of the ancient but always evolving Jewish culture of the day with selected trends from contemporary Western civilization. One of the favourite early genres is the extensive epic poem. In a number of surviving Yiddish manuscripts, medieval romances such as King Arthur are adopted from German models. In many others, however, the European epic is the form applied to such traditional Jewish motifs as the Biblical books of Samuel and Kings. In others still, both European form and content are reworked into a highly original Yiddish masterpiece. The best known example is Bovo d'Antona (Bovo of
Antona), written by the great Yiddish poet (and Hebrew and Aramaic grammarians and Yiddish etymologist) Elijah Levita (1469 – c. 1549), better known in Yiddish as ElYe Bokher. In this first application of the masterly Italian ottava rima (abababcc) in any Germanic language, ElYe Bokher took as his immediate source Buovo d’Antona, an Italian romance, which is itself closely related to the English Beve of Hampton.

All these works were written in various forms of Western Yiddish, the collective name for the Yiddish dialects of Central Europe. With the advent of printing, Yiddish literature was launched for a pan-European market of readers. Largely to this end, writers and publishers consciously evolved a standard written form of Yiddish, based upon the western dialects, that would be intelligible to all readers. This standard, clearly discernible in the 1540s, when Yiddish printing really got off the ground (although a handful of prints are extant from the 1520s and 1530s), survived right up until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

By the late eighteenth century, Western Yiddish, centred in Germany, had begun to decline, largely in consequence of the demise of Western Ashkenazi culture and the linguistic assimilation to German of the Western Ashkenazim who were becoming simply ‘German Jews’. In the Slavonic and Baltic lands, by contrast, Eastern Yiddish flourished as it never had before, and Eastern Europe remained the heartland of Yiddish until the Holocaust. Following its conscious elevation to a status of sanctity by the mystical Chassidic movement of the eighteenth century, the literary and social functions of the language expanded to suit the needs and wishes of the diversified literary, cultural and political movements of nineteenth-century Jewish Eastern Europe. The Haskóle (Haskalah), or enlightenment movement, and the Zionists, (and Hebraists), Socialist and Yiddishist movements in all their
colourful variety, made extensive literary use of Yiddish as a means of communicating their philosophies.

By the early nineteenth century, there were clear examples of the emerging new standard language, based upon the eastern dialects. Reformist writers of varying cultural persuasions did away with Western Yiddish archaisms that had long been in disuse, and evolved the modern literary standard that is based on the thriving Yiddish of Eastern Europe. Traditionally, the credit for forging a unified literary language from the dialects of East European Yiddish is assigned to the 'grandfather of Modern Yiddish literature' – Mendele Moykher Sforim (pen name of Sholem-Yankev Abramovitsh, c. 1836 – 1917). His two fellow classicists in the triumvirate of nascent modern Yiddish literature are humorist Sholem Aleichem (Sholem Rabinovitsh, 1859 – 1916) and romanticist Y. L. Peretz (1852 – 1915).

Within the European Jewish community, Yiddish was, up until the modern era, one of three Jewish languages – Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish – which complemented each other in a stable interrelating system of intracommunal languages. In addition, of course, all members of the community had knowledge of one or more non-Jewish coterриториал languages. The Yiddishist movement, a child of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Jewish Eastern Europe, has sought consciously to enhance the role of the everyday spoken language of Ashkenazic Jewry. For many years, pro-Yiddish sentiment was severely opposed by both assimilationists who sought to supplant Yiddish with the national languages of the countries in which Jews lived, and the Hebraists, who sought (and in Israel, succeeded) in reviving ancient Hebrew as an everyday spoken language. There are almost infinite combinations of love, hate, jealousy and ambiguous love-hate toward Yiddish. For many centuries, the three Jewish languages of Ashkenaz had lived in
harmony; suddenly, two of them were proclaimed sworn enemies by their adherents. The 'language controversy', as it is usually called, burned most passionately in the waning nineteenth and the early twentieth century. The third Jewish language of Ashkenaz, Aramaic, was spared from conflict because of its lack of widespread active usage. It is the most elite of the three Jewish languages of Ashkenaz, written and studied only by the most educated, the scholars of two great branches of Jewish learning and literature created in it, the Talmud (Jewish law) and Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism).

The modern literary language, known as Standard Yiddish, has drawn upon the resources of all three major East European dialects of Yiddish: Mideastern Yiddish (popularly 'Polish'), Southeastern Yiddish ('Ukrainian') and Northeastern Yiddish ('Lithuanian'). Standard languages generally come into being as a result of sociological and geocultural factors, not via mathematical equations giving everybody an equal share. Standard Yiddish pronunciation is far closer to Northeastern Yiddish, especially as cultivated in its centuries-old cultural capital, Vilna, than to any other dialect. In grammar, the historical sources of the standard are spread rather differently among the dialects, and if anything, the standard is furthest from Northeastern usage. Hence the popular conception that Standard Yiddish is a 'compromise' between Northeastern pronunciation and Southern (i.e. Mideastern and Southeastern) grammar, while a vast oversimplification, is none the less largely accurate.
ABBREVIATIONS

adv. adverb

cf. compare

e.g. for example

esp. especially

f. feminine

i.e. namely; that is

inf. infinitive

lit. literally

m. masculine

M.E. Mideastern Yiddish ('Polish')
n. noun

N.E. Northeastern Yiddish ('Lithuanian')

pej. pejorative

pl. plural

sg. singular

S. Southern Yiddish (= Mideastern Yiddish plus Southeastern Yiddish)

S.E. Southeastern Yiddish ('Ukrainian')

trans. transitive

v. verb

var. variant form
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1 THE ALPHABET

1.0 OVERVIEW
The Yiddish alphabet, written from right to left, is an evolved form of the ancient Semitic alphabet. Two systems of spelling coexist within it. The greatest part of the language is spelled according to the phonetic system, which features one-to-one correspondence between letter and sound. The minority Semitic component of Yiddish, deriving from Hebrew and Aramaic, is spelled etymologically according to the traditional system. A number of variations may be encountered in Yiddish spelling. The most widely used system is modern standard orthography. Other systems are used by certain communities.

1.1 THE YIDDISH WRITING SYSTEM
The Yiddish writing system is a variant of the Hebrew and Aramaic alphabet. Like all Semitic-derived scripts, it is written and read from right to left. Semitic alphabets are originally consonantal. Explicit letters to mark vowel sounds are absent. They are not necessary for native speakers of Semitic languages, where the three-consonant Semitic root itself signifies membership in a family of related words. Skeletal consonantal spellings are therefore perfectly comprehensible. When in the histories of these languages (not infrequently because of their demise as vernaculars and their
perpetuation as liturgical or classical languages), it did become necessary for literary or educational purposes to mark vowels, this was usually accomplished by the addition of a system of diacritic marks (or ‘points’) below or above the line. The history of the Yiddish alphabet reveals creative reworking of an Eastern cultural phenomenon – the ancient consonantal Semitic alphabet – to match a Western reality – a European language for which the representation of vowels is crucial.

1.1.1 The phonetic system
The phonetic system of Yiddish spelling generally provides a perfect one-to-one correspondence between letter and sound. It is used for the non-Semitic parts of the language, hence for the vast majority of words. It has evolved through many intermediate stages and a few regressions. Over the past thousand years, Yiddish has increasingly made use of those letters that had lost the phonetic consonantal values they once had in Hebrew and Aramaic, especially álef (→ SS1.2.2, 1.2.3) and áyin (→ SS1.2.24) and put them to work as full-fledged vowel letters, instead of introducing sublinear or supralinear points and dots). The two vowel diacritics that are retained kómfía (= [o]) and pása (=[a]) are both confined to specific letters (á = [o] → SS1.2.3; á = [a] → SS1.2.2 and á = [ay] → SS1.2.17); hence they too are in effect parts of vowel letters rather than free-floating vowel points that can be affixed at will to any consonant. In short, Yiddish has evolved a Western type alphabetic structure in which both consonants and vowels are marked by letters, while preserving the form and direction of the inherited Semitic alphabet.
1.1.2 The traditional system

The traditional system governs the orthography of the Semitic component within Yiddish, comprising several thousand words, nearly all of which are spelled historically, that is to say, as they are spelled in Hebrew or Aramaic. The correspondence between the traditional system and the vocabulary derived from Semitic would be perfect were it not for a handful of words of Semitic origin that have come to be spelled according to the phonetic system (e.g. רַע[ן]ים, ‘if; in case’) – and an even smaller handful of non-Semitic component words that have realigned themselves to the traditional system (e.g. male forename קאלמן [kalman]). For those who know Hebrew, mastering the traditional system poses no problem. For others, the spelling of each Semitism must be learned along with the word, although certain master patterns will become evident.

1.2 THE YIDDISH ALPHABET

The alphabet (or ṣlœfbez as it is also known, from its name in Yiddish – גיבוק) derives from the classic twenty-two Semitic letters. The number of symbols in Yiddish is increased by the word-final forms of the five letters that have them (ן → word-final ג, נ → מ, ג → ג, ל → מ, ד → מ), and the spirant counterparts of four plosives (cf. ג [g] vs. ג [g], כ [k] vs. כ [kh], מ [m] vs. מ [m], נ [n] vs. נ [n]). The number of function is increased first by the various combinations of letters that Yiddish makes use of to effect complete coverage of the sound system of the language, and secondly by the use of one symbol for more than one function where the true function may be deduced from position in the word. The printed and script forms of each
letter, and its phonetic transcription in Latin characters, are provided. The transcriptions, enclosed in square brackets [], represent a modified version of the transcriptional system of the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research, which was designed for English speakers. Where the transcription differs radically from accepted phonetic transcription, the international phonetic equivalent follows in parenthesis. Yiddish handwriting is frequently characterized by flamboyant strokes above and below the line for the risers and descendens (often extending higher and lower than risers and descendens in English). Where possible, the samples provided illustrate usage in initial, medial and final position.

1.2.1 Alef

Print: N  
Script: 1 (or 2)

N has no phonetic realization. It has two functions.

1.2.1.1 N to avert ambiguity

N systematically averts ambiguity by distinguishing consonantal N (tsvey vovn = [v] → §1.2.10) before and after vocalic N (vov = [u] → §1.2.9) and before diphthongal N (vov yud = [oy] → §1.2.11).

SAMPLES OF N TO AVERT AMBIGUITY

ץ [yu]  'where'

ך [pruvn]  'try'

ך [v'yynen]  'live (= dwell)'

1.2.1.2 N to mark word, syllable and stem onset

N marks the onset of words, syllables and stems that begin with the vowels
1 (\text{vov} = [u] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.9}), \text{ו} (\text{vov yud} = [oy] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.11}), \text{י} (\text{yud} = [i] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.15}), \text{ש} (\text{tsvey yudn} = [ey] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.16}), \text{ך} (\text{pasekh tsvey yudn} = [ay] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.17}).

### Samples of מ to mark word onset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>מ</th>
<th>פ</th>
<th>[un]</th>
<th>'and'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[oy]</td>
<td>'Oh!; Oh dear!'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[in]</td>
<td>'in'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[éybik]</td>
<td>'forever'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[ayz]</td>
<td>'ice'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Samples of מ to mark syllable onset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>מ</th>
<th>פ</th>
<th>[úmrui]</th>
<th>'restless'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[asotsifrt]</td>
<td>'associated'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[féik]</td>
<td>'skilful; capable'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[kontinuum]</td>
<td>'continuum'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Samples of מ to mark stem onset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>מ</th>
<th>פ</th>
<th>[faréynikn]</th>
<th>'unite (v.)'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[bagynflusn]</td>
<td>'influence (v.)'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[ríbayza]</td>
<td>'foodgrater'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Word, syllable and stem onset are not marked by מ before the vowels מ (pasekh álef = [a] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.2}), מ (komešt álef = [o] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.3}) or מ (áyin = [e] \rightarrow \text{Sl.2.24}), hence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>מ</th>
<th>פ</th>
<th>[avék]</th>
<th>'away'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[on]</td>
<td>'without'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מ</td>
<td>פ</td>
<td>[ésn]</td>
<td>'eat'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.2 \( \text{pâtekh álef} \)

Print: ב 
Script: ב 
Realization: [b] 

SAMPLES OF ב 

בֵּית \[ [b] \] \‘home’

בֶּה \[ [b] \] \‘within’

בָּשָׂם \[ [b] \] \‘room’

1.2.3 \( \text{kómet álef} \)

Print: ב 
Script: ב 
Realization: [o] \( \approx o \) 

SAMPLES OF ב 

בּוֹל \[ [o] \] \‘without’

בֵּית \[ [o] \] \‘what’

בּוֹז \[ [o] \] \‘there’

1.2.4 \( \text{deyz} \)

Print: ב 
Script: ב 
Realization: [b] 

SAMPLES OF ב 

בֵּית \[ [b] \] \‘tree’

בֶּה \[ [b] \] \‘but’

בּוֹז \[ [b] \] \‘if’

1.2.5 \( \text{veyz} \)

Print: ב (כ) 
Script: ר 
Realization: [v] 

5 occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [v] is
rendered by ח (tsvey vovn = [v] → §1.2.10).

**SAMPLES OF נ**

| הָרָא | בּוֹיִל | 'Babylonia' |
| הָבָח | קַהְיָרָה | 'group of friends; crew' |
| הָנַג | אָגֵי | 'by the way' |

1.2.6 **giml**

Print: ג Script: ג Realization: [g]

**SAMPLES OF ג**

| הָג | גֻּט | 'good' |
| הָבּוֹרִית | בָּגוֹרִית | 'spill (on top of ...)' |
| הָנַי | אוּג | 'eye' |

1.2.7 **dáled**

Print: ד Script: ד Realization: [d]

**SAMPLES OF ד**

| דָּרָות | דָּרָות | 'there' |
| דָּרָע | דָּרָע | 'or' |
| דָּלָק | בּוֹד | '(Turkish) bath' |

1.2.7.1 **dáled záyin shin**

Print: שֵׁר Script: שֵׁר Realization: [ʃ] (= j/dʒ)

שֵׁר functions as a single consonant.

**SAMPLES OF שֵׁר**

| שֵׁר | [ʃ] | 'gin' |
1.2.8 hey

Print: ה Script: נ Realization: [h]

SAMPLES OF ה

היא [heys] 'hot'
הישושויק [héysherik] 'locust'
באהלמה [baháltə] 'hide'

1.2.9 vov

Print: מ Script: מ Realization: [u]

SAMPLES OF מ

ומסער [ümser] 'under'
כומן [kúmen] 'come'
ק [ku] 'cow'

1.2.10 tsvey vovn

Print: ו Script: ו Realization: [v]

SAMPLES OF ו

וונ [ven] 'when'
ברטונדרן [bértändern] 'admire'
בריו [briy] 'letter'
1.2.11  vov yud
Print: יי  Script: יי  Realization: [oy] (≡ oy)

SAMPLES OF יי

יווט [oys] ‘finished; it’s all over!’
מורי [moyz] ‘mouse’
שמריה [shtroy] ‘straw’

1.2.12  záyin
Print: ז  Script: ז  Realization: [z]

SAMPLES OF ז

זָעַרְקָה [zavərúkHz] ‘blizzard’
בָּזָעְקָה [bazúkhn] ‘visit’
גָּלָז [glōz] ‘glass’

1.2.12.1  záyin shin
Print: שז  Script: שז  Realization: [zh] (≡ ʐ)

SAMPLES OF שז

שָׁזָב [zhābə] ‘frog’
שָׁזָה [vázhnə] ‘impressive; classy’
שָׁזָטָז [shantázh] ‘blackmail’

1.2.13  khes
Print: ח  Script: ח  Realization: [kh] (≡ x)

ח occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [kh] is rendered by 5 (khōf → §1.2.19).
### 1.2.14 tes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Realization: [t]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>תס</td>
<td>℞</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SAMPLES OF תס**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>תמל</td>
<td>[tumlä]</td>
<td>'noise'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תמנל</td>
<td>[mántl]</td>
<td>'coat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תלי</td>
<td>[royt]</td>
<td>'red'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1.2.14.1 tes shin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Script</th>
<th>Realization: [tsh] (≡ č/tš)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>שס</td>
<td>ℐ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

שס functions as a single consonant.

**SAMPLES OF שס**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ששברניק</td>
<td>[tšáynik]</td>
<td>'teakettle'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שארטסטטש</td>
<td>[fartáytshn]</td>
<td>'explain; translate'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ב伊斯</td>
<td>[baytsh]</td>
<td>'whip'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.2.15 yud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Script</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>י</td>
<td>ℨ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yud has two realizations.

#### 1.2.15.1 Consonantal י

Y is consonantal [y] (≡ j) at the beginning of a syllable.
SAMPLES OF CONSONANTAL 'v'

ג' [yo] ‘yes’
ייפלטג [yásìsës] ‘gums’
ספנאוינע [ståntsey] ‘station’

1.2.15.2 Vocalic 'v'

'v' is vocalic [i] at the middle or end of a syllable.

SAMPLES OF VOCALIC 'v'

ב [bìn] ‘bee’
חȓיס [v'khtik] ‘important’
ז [zi] ‘she’

1.2.16 tsvey yudn

Print: "v" Script: v Realization: [ey] (= ej)

SAMPLES OF "v"

אידם [éydem] ‘son in law’
ש[eyn] ‘pretty; beautiful’
כ[ley] ‘glue’

Note: Diphthong "v" is preceded by נ at the start of a word or syllable (➔ §1.2.1.2). When two 'v's occur at the beginning of a word, syllable, or stem, they represent a sequence of consonantal 'v' (= [y] ➔ §1.2.15.1) plus vocalic 'v' (= [i] ➔ §1.2.15.2), i.e. [yi], rather than diphthong [ey], hence:

ד [yid] ‘Jew’
דיש [yûdish] ‘Yiddish; Jewish’
ינגל [yíngl] ‘boy’
1.2.17 páṣakh tsvey yudn

Print: נ (/n) Script: נ Realization: [ayn] (= aj)

In many texts, נ is written מ, i.e. identically with מ = [ey] (→ §1.2.16).

Where נ is not used, the difference must be ascertained via knowledge of the word or checked with a dictionary.

SAMPLES OF נ

| נייח | [ayzn] | ‘iron’ |
| נבש | [bátn] | ‘change’ |
| ננטיס | [gatrý] | ‘faithful’ |

1.2.18 kof

Print: כ (/c) Script: כ Realization: [k]

כ occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [k] is rendered by ק (kuf → §1.28).

SAMPLES OF כ

| כזר | [kóved] | ‘honor’ |
| כלה | [kálé] | ‘bride’ |
| כבש | [békóyékh] | ‘capable’ |

1.2.19 khof

Print: ק (/q) Script: ק Realization: [kh]

SAMPLES OF ק

| קאליאסטרא | [khalyástre] | ‘gang’ |
| קאפמ | [khápm] | ‘catch’ |
| קזר | [zkhr] | ‘certain; definite(ly)’ |
1.2.19.1  lángər khof

Replaces ן in word-final position.

Print: י  Script: ד Realization: [kh]

SAMPLES OF י

ך נ  [ikh]  'I'
ך ר  [dakh]  'roof'
ך ק  [vokh]  'week'

1.2.20  láməd

Print: ל  Script: ל Realization: [l]

SAMPLES OF ל

ל נ  [lomp]  'lamp'
ל נ  [váylinke]  'little while'
ל נ  [tol]  'valley'

1.2.21  mem

Print: מ  Script: מ Realization: [m]

SAMPLES OF מ

מ נ  [mentsh]  'person'
מ נ  [tómər]  'if; in case'
מ נ  [tsímər]  'room'

1.2.21.1  shlésn mem

Replaces מ in word-final position.

Print: מ  Script: מ Realization: [m]
1.2.22 nun

Print:egie  Script:םי  Realization: [n]

SAMPLES OF ה

בֵּית [bóy dém]  'attic'
נְרֹנִים [narónim]  'fools'
שֹׁלֵם [shólem]  'peace'

1.2.22.1 ñânger nun

Replaces ה in word-final position.

Print:  ש  Realization: [n]

SAMPLES OF ש

נוּדִיק [núdnik]  'boring person; pest'
בַּשַׁר [báshar]  'bath'
שָׁנדֶה [shánde]  'disgrace'

1.2.23 sámêkh

Print: ע  Realization: [s]

SAMPLES OF ע

סָמֹווּר [samovár]  'samovar'
בָּיָש [báysn]  'bite'
שָׁפָּס [shpas]  'fun'
1.2.24 áyin

Print: ט Israel Script: ט

ט has two realizations.

1.2.24.1 Stressed ט

ט is realized as [e] (= e) in stressed position.

SAMPLES OF STRESSED ט

כע
[םסנ] 'eat'
כנ는데
[בכקנ] 'yesterday'
ט
[ז] 'I see'

1.2.24.2 Unstressed ט

ט is realized as [ə] (= i, i, ø, etc.) in unstressed position. It is sometimes called 'Reduced ט'.

SAMPLES OF UNSTRESSED ט

כענ
[ג'קץ] 'said'
כנענ
[באנן] 'trains'
כעף
[ק'אף] 'coffee'

1.2.25 pey

Print: י (י) Script: י Realization: [p]

SAMPLES OF י

כשוז
[םשזת] 'simple'
כל
[ס] 'apple'
כט
[ט] 'pot'
1.2.26 fey
Print: ג (/g) Script: ג Realization: [f]
SAMPLES OF ג
שגרתבשיט (שגרתבשיט) [fantástish] ‘fantastic’
רוшен [róshén] ‘maybe’
יוולת [hófén] ‘hope’

1.2.26.1 lángér fey
Print: ג ( ג) Script: ג Realization: [f]
Replaces ג in word final position.
SAMPLES OF ג
נעל [núl] [blóf] ‘bluff’
טול [téol] [vólf] ‘wolf’
צל [zel] [elf] ‘eleven’

1.2.27 tsādik
Print: צ Script: צ Realization: [ts] (= c)
SAMPLES OF צ
ברקא [bërka] [tsátske] ‘toy’
צירק [tsirk] ‘circus’
קיסלן [kisilen] ‘tickle’

1.2.27.1 lángér tsādik
Replaces צ in word final position.
Print: ג ( ג) Script: ג Realization: [ts] (= c)
SAMPLES OF ג

גנטס [gants]  "complete"
קלוטס [klots]  "beam; clumsy person"
קטס [kats]  "cat"

1.2.28  קף
Print: ג Script: ג Realization: [k]

SAMPLES OF ג

גלאן [kleyn]  "little"
קרן [kun]  "look"
שלג [shl]  "nation"

1.2.29  רכש
Print: ג Script: ג Realization: [r] (= r, ג)

SAMPLES OF ג

רוד [rod]  "wheel"
ארום [arum]  "around"
חור [hor]  "hair"

1.2.30  שין
Print: ו Script: ע Realization: [sh] (= ש)

SAMPLES OF ו

שא [sha]  "(Please) be quiet!"
יאסשלן [éysleshn]  "extinguish"
מאשש maneuvers [míshmash]  "hotchpotch"
1.2.31 sin
Print: פ (פ) Script: פ Reality: [s]
פ (= sin) occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [s] is rendered by ב (samekh → §1.2.23). In some texts, the Hebrew diacritic dot to the upper left of the letter (ֲפ) is employed to distinguish it from פ = [ש] (→ §1.2.30).

SAMPLES OF פ (= sin)
כותרת [סקריפט] ‘wages’
נשננה [סינא] ‘hatred; enmity’
ארץ ישראל [ארץישראלי] ‘Land of Israel’

1.2.32 tof
Print: יה (יה) Script: יג Reality: [t]
יה occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [t] is rendered by ב (תס → §1.2.14).

SAMPLES OF יה
להוהי [תויוהי] ‘passion; obsession’
umbnות [תוינות] ‘delight’
אשת [עשת] ‘Esther’

1.2.33 sof
Print: ס (ס) Script: ג Reality: [s]
ס occurs in the traditional system only. In the phonetic system, [s] is rendered by ב (samekh → §1.2.23).
SAMPLES OF ה

נהגנה [khasene] ‘wedding’

המג [emag] ‘true; truth’

הבה [shabas] ‘Saturday; Sabbath’

1.3 DELETION OF REDUNDANCIES

Note that two or even three traditional system consonants may be phonetically identical in Yiddish (although they were not, of course, in ancient Semitic). The phonetic system, adhering to its principle of one letter for one sound, selects one of the homophones characters as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Traditional system</th>
<th>Phonetic system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[k]</td>
<td>ב or ג</td>
<td>ג only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[kh]</td>
<td>נ or ג</td>
<td>ג only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>ט or נ</td>
<td>נ only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>ב, כ or ח</td>
<td>ח only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[v]</td>
<td>ב, כ, or ח</td>
<td>ח only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 COEXISTENCE OF THE TWO SYSTEMS

The (majority) phonetic system and the (minority) traditional system coexist happily in Yiddish writing. The two can be joined in a single word. This occurs frequently where a Semitic component stem is incorporated into a Germanic component morphological pattern, e.g. קוחלט [khōlem] ‘dream (v.),’ where נוחל [khōlem] ‘dream (n.)’ is verbalized via suffixation of
initizing suffix ʼ(m)- [(ʔ)m]: likewise לִכְרֵים [seykhidik] ‘logical’, from לֹגֶר [seyykhli] ‘logic; common sense’ plus adjectivizing suffix ʼ(m)-.

1.5 MODERN STANDARD ORTHOGRAPHY

Modern standard orthography is relatively uniform. The minor variations that are still encountered do not pose a serious problem for the student.

1.5.1 Origins of modern standard orthography

Modern standard orthography was, in its broad outlines, formulated by the pioneer of modern Yiddish studies, Ber Borokhov, in 1913, and modified by the great Yiddish scholar Zalmen Reyzen in 1920. In that year, Reyzen’s final version went into effect worldwide and has been followed since by culturally conscious Yiddish writers and publishers, voluntarily, and with none of the legal compulsion that usually accompanies orthographic reform. These and a number of other leading Yiddish scholars of the early twentieth century saw the need to modernize, rationalize and standardize. They believed that the phenomenal growth of Yiddish literature, press and theatre, and the overall expansion of Yiddish culture into many spheres of twentieth-century life would be hampered by inconsistencies and by the useless cumbersome machinery of silent letters that had been incorporated several decades earlier by the Germanizing press of the late nineteenth century. The introduction of modern standard orthography was not universal. Moreover, there is some acceptable variation within modern standard orthography.
1.5.2 **Press orthography**

The daily Yiddish press, in contrast to literary periodicals and books, did not on the whole accept the orthographic reforms. Many have retained the silent əs and ɪs that had been ‘imported’ from German in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (e.g. יִסְכָּר for יֶסְכָּר ‘say’, יֶזוּמ for יְזָמ ‘year’). Some features of press orthography are not Germanisms, but rather features that were not accepted by modern standard orthography. Most notable of these is the continued use of ױװ rather than ױ for [yə] still extensively encountered in newspaper usage, e.g. יִדִישװ for יִדִיש ‘Yiddish’, יִילָבָּג for יִילָבָּג ‘boy’.

1.5.3 **Orthodox orthography**

The most traditional religious Ashkenazic Jewish communities around the world, primarily (but not exclusively) Chassidic, make use of a system of spelling deriving largely from the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is remarkably similar to press orthography, differing from modern standard orthography most markedly in its retention of silent letters and other features that were, paradoxically, taken from modern literary German by proponents of the anti-traditionalist Enlightenment movement and later by the (even more anti-traditionalist) revolutionary parties. It is ironic that for today’s traditional communities, the Germanizing orthography of the late nineteenth century, which emanated from a conscious effort to destroy all that they cherish, is now their symbol of identity in Yiddish spelling, setting them apart from almost all ‘secular cultural Yiddishists’ who discarded that system in 1920 in favour of modern standard orthography. The lesson for cultural historians lies in the symbolic values which facts assume in a society,
rather than the 'physical derivation' of those facts in history. In Chassidic circles, however, a number of genuine Old Yiddish traits do survive, most notably the use of 'rather than $v$ to mark initial and medial unstressed $[e]$, e.g. נְאָרַהוּ for 'said', the $v$ for $[e]$ being one of the features of Germanizing late-nineteenth-century spelling that was retained by modern standard orthography. In pre-World-War-II Poland, the eminent Yiddish scholar Solomon A. Birnbaum perfected a standardized version of Orthodox orthography.

1.5.4 Soviet orthography

Soviet Yiddish scholars embarked on a radical program of orthographic reform shortly after the Russian Revolution in 1917. Most of its features were in widespread use by the mid-1920s.

1.5.4.1 The phonetic system in Soviet orthography

The phonetic system within Soviet spelling eliminates the $N$ that separates consonantal $n$ from vocalic $\imath$ (→ §1.2.1.1) and the $N$ marking syllable onset, (→ §1.2.1.2) while retaining it to mark word onset. The confusion resulting from the ambiguous sequences $\imath n$ (= [υu] or [υv]) and $\imath n$ (= [εy], [ιι] or [υι]) is mitigated by the introduction of two Hebrew diacritics to mark the vocalic use of $\imath$ and $\imath$ in ambiguous positions ($\imath$ for [υ] and $\imath$ for [ι]), hence Ń for יהודא 'Jewish', נַסְפִּיט for 'associated', and נַפְסִיט for 'Hebrew'.

1.5.4.2 The traditional system in Soviet orthography

Soviet spelling eliminates the traditional system altogether, and respells the
entire Semitic component in accordance with its modified phonetic system, e.g. יפיש for יהיש [éfshar] ‘perhaps’. The aim of this radical reform was to de-Hebraicize and de-Judaize Yiddish, goals it thought it could help achieve by doing away with the special historical spelling conventions of the traditional system and, indeed, by doing away with the Semitic component itself in Soviet Yiddish. In addition to explicit anti-Hebrew and anti-tradition sentiments expressed by the Soviet reformers of the 1920s, the argument in favour of a unified and phonetically based system for the whole of Yiddish was also frequently put forward, both inside and outside pro-Soviet circles, on logical and practical grounds. Most pre-World War II versions of Soviet spelling also did away with the five word-final forms of letters (e.g. ה"ל for וה"ל [shōlem] ‘peace’) although these were generally reintroduced in the early 1960s.

1.5.5 Yivo orthography

A widely taught (but less widely used) variant of modern standard orthography is that of the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research. The Yivo system arose in the 1930s as a compromise between the modern standard orthography of 1920 and the Soviet system (→ §1.5.4). Following Soviet spelling, the Yivo system eliminated the N separating consonantal ñ from vocalic Y (→ §1.2.1.1) and the N marking syllable onset (→ §1.2.1.2); unlike Soviet spelling, Yivo orthography did retain N to mark stem onset (→ §1.2.1.2). It followed the Soviet system in mitigating the resulting confusion by introducing ŋ for [u] and ŋ for [yn] in a number of positions. Both systems mark the sequence [yi] by ŋ, hence ש"יי for ש"י.
1.5.6 Innovations

The Grammar adheres to modern standard orthography. The only innovation is a graphic one. Following the practice that has developed at Oxford in recent years, the Grammar reintroduces the historical horizontal bar (known as the רושא [rösa], or more informally as the דפנותלע, 'little roof') over the spirants initializer (≡ [kh]) and initializer (≡ [s]), bringing them into line with initializer (≡ [v]) and initializer (≡ [z]). Thus all four plosive vs. spirant oppositions (_initializer [b] vs._initializer [v];_initializer [k] vs._initializer [kh];_initializer [p] vs._initializer [z]; and_initializer [t] vs._initializer [s]) are consistently marked, as was the case in Yiddish from the fourteenth century onwards. From the nineteenth century to the present, a multitude of combinations, none of them internally consistent, has arisen, sometimes using the Hebrew diacritic dot in the middle of the letter to mark the plosive for one, two, three or all of the four plosives, sometimes the horizontal bar to mark the spirant for one or more of the four spirants.
2 PHONETICS

2.0 OVERVIEW
The phonetic structure of Yiddish differs appreciably from that of English, and acquaintance with its major features at the outset is advisable. Despite the differences, the sound pattern of the language can generally be mastered with far greater ease, than, say, that of French, where the base of articulation and the accentuation pattern are vastly more distant from English. Square brackets [ ] enclose the phonetic transcriptions used in this book (→ §1.2). Where these transcriptions, intended for the English-speaking student, differ substantially from accepted phonetic transcription, the appropriate international phonetic symbol follows in parenthesis ( ). The sound system of Standard Yiddish is used in the Grammar. The major phonetic differences between the dialects lie in the realization of the stressed vowels.

2.1 VOWELS AND DIPHTHONGS

2.1.1 Stressed vowels and diphthongs
The standard language does not distinguish long from short vowels. Stressed vowels are of roughly equal length. They are closer to the peripheral locations of the cardinal vowels in the vocal tract than their counterparts in English.
2.1.1.1  ɛ [a]
ɛ [a] is more peripheral (closer to the far front of the vowel space in the mouth, hence also more tense) than London ʌ in ‘cut’ or New York ɔ in ‘pot’. Cf. ‘Continental a’ in French, Dutch and German.

2.1.1.2  ʌ [e] (= ɛ)
ʌ [e] is more peripheral than English ɛ in ‘pen’.

2.1.1.3  ɪ [i]
ɪ [i] is higher and more tense than English / in ‘tin’ but it is not lengthened or diphthongized as English əe in ‘three’.

2.1.1.4  ʌ [o] (= ɔ)
ʌ [o] is higher and more rounded than London ɔ in ‘lot’; more peripheral, rounded and tense than New York ʌ in ‘trick’. Cf. ‘Continental o’.

2.1.1.5  ɪ [u]
ɪ [u] is more tense and peripheral than English ʌ in ‘put’ but not diphthongized as English əo in ‘spoon’.

2.1.1.6  ʌ [ay] (= aj)
ʌ [ay] starts at ɛ [a] (→ 2.1.1.1) and ends at offglide [y] (=j). The nucleus of the diphthong is shorter, more front, and more tense than English / in ‘write’.

2.1.1.7  ʌ [ey] (= ej)
ʌ [ey] starts higher than ʌ [e] (= ɛ) (→ 2.1.1.2) and ends at offglide [y]
2.1.1.8 "y [oy] (−jj)
"y [oy] starts at ñ [o] (− ɔ) (→ §2.1.1.4) and ends at offglide y (− j). The nucleus of the diphthong is shorter and more tense than English ɔɪ in ‘foist’.

2.1.2 Reduced vowels
Reduced vowels occur in unstressed reduced syllables where the vowel repertoire is generally reduced. Most frequently, [ə] and [a] occur before the stress of a word, [ɛ] and [ɪ] after it.

2.1.2.1 Pronunciation
The most frequent graphic representation of reduced vowels in the phonetic system is ʊ (→ §1.2.24.2). In the traditional system, they most often correspond with ə or ɪ. Reduced vowels are generally transcribed [ə] in this book, but actual phonetic realization can vary according to a number of factors. Before the stressed syllable of a word, it usually approximates lax [i] (− i), resembling English /i/ in ‘exotic’, e.g. גיזוקט [gizokt] (− gizókt) ‘said’. After the stress it tends toward [i] before certain consonants, especially כ, e.g. בויידם [bóydım] (− bójdım) ‘attic’. It also tends toward [i] word-finally, e.g. קאוי [kávi] (− kávi) ‘coffee’, חללח [khálı] (− xáli) ‘Sabbath bread’. In the final reduced ʊ of the second diminutive (→ §4.33), it tends toward [ə], hence תישבנל [tishélé/tishale] (− tisélé/tisále) ‘very little table’.

2.1.2.2 Shift to [a] before [kh]
Reduced ʊ may be pronounced [a] before [kh] (ו, ֙ or מ), e.g. קוביל [kőyakh] or [kőyakh] ‘strength’.
2.1.2.3 Shift to [a] in the second diminutive

The first reduced ש in the suffix of the second diminutive, שולון- (→ §4.3.2) may be pronounced a, e.g. שולון [beyma] or [beyma] 'very little tree'. In the plural of the second diminutive, שולים- the second reduced ש may be rendered [a] by assimilation to the following [kh] (→ §2.1.2.2). Vowel harmony is then applied to the first reduced ש, and both may be pronounced [a], hence [beymajakh].

2.1.3 Vowels not corresponding with the phonetic system

There is a handful of words, all of them very frequently used items in everyday speech, in which vowel letters do not correspond with their expected phonetic correlates within the phonetic system. Note however that some speakers have come to use 'spelling pronunciations' based on the conventional orthography ([oyf] etc.). Most other instances of incongruence result from assimilations and rhythmic factors. Wherever the usual pronunciation of a word is not self-evident from the spelling, a transcription in square brackets is supplied in the Grammar.

- שים 'on; upon; to' (→ §15.16.5) [aɪ]
- שים 'on the; upon the; to the' (→ §5.3.3.1) [aɪn]
- שים 'up (verbal prefix)' (→ §8.2.2) [uɪ]
- שים 'him' (→ §§6.1.2.2, 6.1.3.2) [em]
- שים 'at; by' (→ §15.1) [bɑ]
- שים 'at the; by the' (→ §§5.3.3.1, 15.1) [bam]
- שים 'barely' (→ §10.1) [kam]
- שים 'to' (→ §15.16.3) [kin]
2.2 CONSONANTS

2.2.1 Voicing
The consonants [b], [d], [g], [v], [z], and [zh] (= ʐ) are fully voiced in all positions, including word-finally (except when processed by assimilation → §2.2.2. → §2.2.4), e.g.

בָּרוֹס 'I write' [ʃrəyũs]
רְעָד 'I speak' [rəd]
וֹג 'weight' [vog]
יִזְג 'ice' [ayz]
שְׁנַתָזְג 'blackmail' [ʃnantáʒə]

2.2.2 Devoicing assimilation
Voiced consonants [b], [d], [g], [v], [z], and [zh] (= ʐ) usually undergo devoicing as follows — [b] → [p]; [d] → [t]; [g] → [k]; [v] → [f]; [z] → [s]; [zh] (= ʐ) → [ʃ] (= ʃ) before any of the voiceless consonants [f], [k], [kh], [p], [s], [sh], [t] and [ts]. The devoicing by assimilation of [b] and [d] is the most consistent.

SAMPLES OF CONSONANTS PROCESSED BY DEVOICING ASSIMILATION

בָּרוֹס [ʃrəyũs] 'I write' → בָּרוֹס בָּרָאָפָס 'you (familiar) write'
רְעָד [rəd] 'I speak' → רְעָד רְדָטָס 'you (familiar) speak'
וֹג [vog] 'weight' → וֹג וֹקְשֵׁל 'scale'
בְּרִי [brɪ] 'letter' → בְּרִי בְּרִיטִינָן 'mailman'
יִזְג [ayz] 'ice' → יִזְג יִזְגָקְסָט 'ice box'
שְׁנַתָזְג [ʃnantáʒə] 'blackmail' → שְׁנַתָזְג שְׁנָטִיק 'blackmailing tactics'
Devoicing assimilation may occur across word boundaries. Cf. קָלָּב [klug] 'clever' vs. קָלָּב קִבֵּר [a klug/kluk kind] 'a clever child'.

2.2.3 Voicing assimilation

Voiceless consonants [t], [k], [kh], [p], [s], [sh], [t] and [ts] may undergo voicing as follows – [t] → [v]; [k] → [g]; [kh] (= x) → [gh] (= γ); [p] → [b]; [s] → [z]; [sh] (= ș) → [zh] (= ʒ); [t] → [d]; [ts] (= c) → [dz] before any of the voiced consonants [b], [g], [d], [v], [z] and [zh] (= ż). Voicing assimilation is less consistent than devoicing assimilation, but it is frequently heard in natural speech. The consonant transcribed [gh] (= γ) is the voiced counterpart of [kh] (= x), which has no independent status in the language. It also serves as one of the possible realizations of ר (→ §2.2.11.1).

SAMPLES OF CONSONANTS PROCESSED BY VOICING ASSIMILATION

-קָוָא [u] 'up (v. prefix)' → קָוָא [uəvekn] 'wake up'
-בָּקָא [bak] 'cheek' → בָּקָא [bégbeyn] 'cheekbone'
-בָּקָא [bukh] 'book' → בָּקָא [béggesteft] 'bookstore'
-קָוָא [kop] 'head' → קָוָא [kőpeytek] 'headache'
-זָז [zis] 'sweet' → זָז [zisvarg] 'candy products'
-רָשָׁה [rá(e)sh] 'noise' → רָשָׁה [rá(e)zhdik] 'noisy'
-זָז [vayt] 'far' → זָז [vaytgezdik] 'farsighted'
-זָז [shvitsn] 'sweat (v.)' → זָז [shvitszdik] 'steambath'

Voicing assimilation may occur across word boundaries. Cf. קָש [kush] 'kiss' vs. קָש נָבָע [a kush gebm] 'give a kiss'.

2.2.4 Chain assimilation

In both devoicing and voicing assimilation, it is the last of a series of
consonants that affects its predecessor either to devoice or to voice. Where three or more consonants occur sequentially, the last may mutate them all. Thus, نו [ersht] ‘just’ followed by גע闪闪 [goshén] ‘happened’ yields ערמט גוט [erzhd goshén] via chain assimilation. There are a few cases when assimilation is progressive rather than regressive, and a consonant’s voicing status affects the following consonant (→ §7.3).

2.2.5 Aspiration
Plosives ב (ב), ד (ד), ג (ג), ק (ק). פ (פ), ת (ת), נ are never aspirated. To perfect pronunciation, utter each of these in word final position, holding a mirror a short distance from the mouth, until oral discharge is eliminated.

לתיב ‘praise’
קלדי ‘dress (n.)’
כל ‘clever’
חנק ‘hatchet’
זוע ‘sip’
נשע ‘night’

2.2.6 Pronunciation of [kh] (=-x)
English speakers unfamiliar with [kh] (נ and ק) may begin from its corresponding velar plosive [k] and proceed to spirantize. Cf. ch in the German ‘ach Laut’, Scottish ch in ‘loch’.

2.2.7 Pronunciation of ה
Many older speakers born in Eastern Europe still distinguish a ‘hard’ from a
'soft' (= palatalized) Ь. The distinction, common in the Slavonic environment, is rapidly losing ground in modern spoken Yiddish. 'Soft l' is heard most often before й, e.g. ציאַמאַצק [kiyámke] 'doorknob'.

2.2.8 Syllabic Ь [l] (= й)
Ь functions as a 'vowel' when it follows a consonant in an unstressed syllable. It is not preceded by a shewa vowel in speech or Ь in writing, but carries syllacticity on its own, e.g. גור [gór] (= gor) 'fork', יאל [jél] (= jél) 'spoon'.

2.2.9 Syllabic Ь [n] (= Ь)
Й (or й) [n] too, can function as a 'vowel' when it follows a consonant in a reduced syllable. It is not preceded by a shewa vowel in speech or Ь in writing, but carries syllacticity all on its own.

SAMPLES OF SYLLABIC Ь

- ווגן 'wagon' [vógn]
- תונסנדיק 'while dancing' [tántsndik]
- מוק 'make' [mákhn]
- מונסינ 'people' [méntsín]

But, unlike Ь which is always syllabic when it follows a consonant in a reduced syllable, Ь is not syllabic when the preceding consonant is Ь [m], Ь [n], any stressed vowel or diphthong, or one of the following three sequences: Ь [ng] (= ng), Ь [nk] (= nk), or consonant plus Ь [l]. In these cases, a shewa vowel is heard and Ь appears.

- קומי 'chimney' [kóymén]
- באנס 'trains (n.)' [banén]
Note however that adjectives ending in [ŋ] and [nk] do exceptionally retain syllabic [n] both in speech and writing, when inflection to an objective case (→ §5.5.2 – 5.5.4) results in one of the sequences [ŋ] + [n] or [nk] + [n]. e.g. נָלַגְנָה [nələgnə] 'long', נָלַגְנָה [nələgnə] 'agile'.

2.2.10 Bilabial assimilation
Syllabic ֶג (or ֶג) is pronounced [m] rather than [n] via assimilation following bilabials ב [b] and ג [p], e.g.BufferSize [bozisklaybm], נְנרָב [nərəb] 'choose' [b] and ג [p], e.g. גָּרָב [gərəb] 'have' [həbəm], לְלִי [ləli] 'lips' [lipəm].

2.2.11 Pronunciation of ר [r]
There are three acceptable realizations of ר.

2.2.11.1 Fricative [r]
Fricative [r] (=γ) is produced at the velum. It is the spirantized counterpart of [g], and the voiced counterpart of [kh]. Most English speakers master this realization most successfully. The target sound may be approached from [g], [k] or [kh] (→ §2.2.6).

2.2.11.2 Lingual [r]
Lingual [r] is produced at the upper gums by tongue vibration.
2.2.11.3 Uvular [r]
Uvular [r] is produced by vibrating the uvula.

2.2.12 Pronunciation of ξ [ts] (= c)
Affricate ξ [ts] resembles the English sequence t + s in 'cuts' but it functions as a single sound unit and is consequently pronounced in a shorter timespace than its English counterpart.

2.3 RHYTHM

2.3.1 Syllables
There are four syllable types.

2.3.1.1 High syllables
High syllables have primary stress (marked by ' over the vowel nucleus of the syllable), e.g. [m̩] in [pam̩lekh] פַּמְלֵה 'slowly'. High syllables are loud, long and intoned and can have as their nucleus any of the repertoire of stressed vowels and diphthongs.

2.3.1.2 Low syllables
Low syllables are never stressed, and have a very limited number of vowel nuclei (usually [ə] or [a] before the word stress and [ə] or [i], or syllabic [i] or [n], after it) e.g. [pa] and [ləkh] in לְוָנָה. Low syllables are far less loud than high ones, and they are short and unintoned.
2.3.1.3 Middle syllables

Middle syllables have secondary stress (marked by ` over its vowel nucleus), e.g. [kayt] in [pamelekhayt] ṣlownness. In a more detailed treatment, nonprimary stress would be further analyzed into secondary, tertiary etc.

2.3.1.4 Lowered syllables

Like the high syllables from which they derive (→ §2.3.1.1), lowered syllables may have any nucleus vowel. They may have secondary stress (like middle syllables → §2.3.1.3) or none at all (like low syllables → §2.3.1.2). A lowered syllable is a syllable that declines from high to middle or low, or from middle to low in normal continuous speech, in deference to the master rhythmic pattern (→ §2.3.4), e.g. [me] in אֲנִי בָּנָה מְסָמֹרְמֵי הָאָמְרָה מְסָמֹרְמֵנָן אֱלֹהַ מַקְדִּישָׁנָהוֹן [(i)kbin nekhtn pamelekhaneymmegangen] `I walked home slowly yesterday`, although [me] would of course remain high if the speaker wished to emphasize the slowness of the journey.

2.3.2 Word stress

Word stress (usually high in isolation) is bound to the root syllable, which is most frequently the first. No matter how many syllables are added in inflections or derivations, the same syllable, while it may be reduced to secondary stress in consequence of contextual reduction, retains its full vowel and, relationally speaking, retains its stress vis à vis any low syllables, e.g. לְבָנָה [lebm] `life`, לְבַדְרִים [lebrak] `alive`, לְבַדְרִיקָה [lebrakeha] `while living`. While lowered from high to middle in this last word, [le] always remains stressed vis à vis [be].
2.3.2.1 Semitic component word stress

In the Semitic component, stress is generally assigned to the penultimate syllable. The consequence is that upon suffixation, stress jumps to the new penultimate syllable, e.g. רַבִּּוּ [kháver] 'friend' vs. רַבִּּוּ [khavéyrim] 'friends'. The low [ər] of [kháver] emerges as the high [éy] of [khavéyrim].

2.3.3 Word rhythm

The most common word rhythm is a trochee pattern of ˘ (high) followed by _ (low), e.g. רַבִּּוּ [bék] 'baker', רַבִּּוּ [ér] 'perhaps', רַבִּּוּ [múd] 'boring person; pest; poor conversationalist'. If there is an unstressed syllable before the stress, the amphibrach _ ˘ results, e.g. רַבִּּוּ [gáng] 'went', רַבִּּוּ [shó] 'stubbornness', רַבִּּוּ [khal] 'gang'. Both types share penultimate stress which is the most common type in the language. Many thousands of Yiddish words were incorporated into the language in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, largely from the lexicon of internationalisms that have permeated Western languages generally. These frequently preserve full vowels in unstressed syllables (e.g. רַבִּּוּ [organizatsye] 'organization'), iambic stress pattern (e.g. רַבִּּוּ [atom] 'atom'), or both (e.g. רַבִּּוּ [kapatsitó] 'capacity; big-shot'). They have, in effect, evolved a new pattern that coexists with the old. In rapid speech, however, some reduction of unstressed syllables to [ə] does occur (e.g. רַבִּּוּ [eropían] for [eropíñ] 'airplane').
2.3.4 The master rhythmic pattern
The master rhythmic pattern entails highs at roughly equal intervals, interlaced with a far greater number of middles, lows and lowereds. The result is a starkly contrasting 'mountain range' pattern, with roughly equi-distant peaks. Each rhythmic unit (e.g. phrase, sentence) has one and only one high. Reduction (the lowering of highs to middle or low and of middles to low) is roughly in direct proportion to the rhythmic requirement that stresses be kept equally apart.

2.3.5 Sentence rhythm
Phrases and sentences in everyday speech tend to follow the same metrical structures as words, e.g. בִּיטְ' עַנְלֵנִי 'I don't know', comprising [lkh], [veys] and [nit] is realized as amphibrach [lkh veys nit] in moderate speech, and trochee [khveys nit], with only two syllables, in more rapid speech. The Yiddish rhythm pattern extends word rhythm over phrases and sentences, so that each sentence, like the word, has a single stressed syllable, which may or may not be surrounded by many reduced syllables (some of which retain some secondary stress). The actual stress pattern can vary depending on message and emphasis. The major constraint is that the high stress be selected from a syllable that can bear word stress when that word is uttered in isolation. Those syllables stressed in isolation will of course lose stress when they are not selected for sentence stress. They are relegated to reduced syllable status in lowness and shortness, but the repertoire of vowels need not be reduced as in a word uttered in isolation. The underlying principle is the presence of a single climactic stress somewhere along the line. Hence
DIALECT VARIATION

There are many differences between the spoken varieties of Yiddish in morphology, lexicon and grammar (e.g. §84.1.4, 6.1.4, 7.3.5). The best-known and most salient features distinguishing the three major modern Yiddish dialects are the systems of stressed vowels. The standard language, used throughout the Grammar, enjoys nearly perfect one-to-one correspondence between symbol and sound, at least in the phonetic system governing the largest part of the language (→ §2.1.3 for exceptions). It is very close to the stressed vowel system of Northeastern (‘Lithuanian’) Yiddish. The only major difference is that part of the series of words in the standard language with [oy] has [ej] in Lithuanian; hence יומן [voyn] ‘live; dwell’ and יינ [veyn] ‘cry’ are both [veyn] in Northeastern Yiddish. The other two dialects, Mideastern (‘Polish’) and Southeastern (‘Ukranian’) Yiddish have rather more vowels and therefore exhibit a one-to-two or one-to-three relationship between symbol and sound. The student learning the language as a beginner is best advised to master Standard Yiddish in the first instance, and to investigate dialectal variation at a later stage. The student who has a native dialect, on the other hand, is best advised to adhere to his or her native variety. All the native dialects are nonstandard insofar as none is identical with the standard. None of the dialects are substandard and
use and preservation of genuine dialect is encouraged. The following are the
major stressed vowel correspondences of the three dialects. Long vowels are
marked by a macron above the vowel letter (ä, ë, ï, ö, ù). Note that the [u]
and [ü] realizations for ʊ in Mideastern and Southeastern dialects occur only
in nineteenth- and twentieth-century borrowings. The words themselves
entered these dialects long after the sound change [u] → [i] had been
completed, and they were therefore unaffected. Assorted consonantal
differences may be noted from the examples cited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Northeastern</th>
<th>Mideastern</th>
<th>Southeastern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 נ=([a]</td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[o] or [a]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'hand'</td>
<td>hant</td>
<td>hant</td>
<td>[ont]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'weak'</td>
<td>shvakh</td>
<td>shvakh</td>
<td>shvakh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 ו=[e]</td>
<td>[e]</td>
<td>[e] or [ey]</td>
<td>[e] or [ey / i]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'bed'</td>
<td>bet</td>
<td>bet</td>
<td>bet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'ask'</td>
<td>betn</td>
<td>beytn</td>
<td>beytn / bitn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 י=[i]</td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[i] or [î]</td>
<td>[i] or [î]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'lip'</td>
<td>lip</td>
<td>lip</td>
<td>lip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'love'</td>
<td>lip</td>
<td>lip</td>
<td>lip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 נ=([o]</td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[o], [u] or [û]</td>
<td>[o] or [u]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'God'</td>
<td>got</td>
<td>got</td>
<td>got</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Hebrew | English | IPA
|---|---|---
| מְסַקֶּל | 'say' | [zogən] [zʊgn] [zʊgn]
| מְסַקֶּל | 'ride; go' | [fɔrn] [fʊrn] [fʊrn]
| 2.4.5 | (u) | (u), ([u], [l] or [r]) (u) or ([l] or [r])
| מַכֵּל | 'culture' | [kʊltʊr] [kʊltʊr] [kʊltʊr]
| מַכֵּל | 'sun' | [zʊn] [zɪn] [zɪn]
| מַכֵּל | 'son' | [zʊn] [zɪn] [zɪn]
| 2.4.6 | (æ) | (a) or ([æ])
| מַכֵּל | 'be' | [zæn] [za:n] [za:n]
| מַכֵּל | 'worthwhile' | [kædæy] [kædæ] [kædæy]
| 2.4.7 | (e) | (æ) [æ] [æ]
| מַכֵּל | 'beautiful' | [ʃeɪn] [ʃeɪn] [ʃeɪn]
| 2.4.8 | (e) | (e) [(a) or (o)y] (oy) or ([o]u) (oy) or ([o]u / u)
| מַכֵּל | 'deaf' | [tɔyb] [tɔy] [tɔy]
| מַכֵּל | 'pigeon' | [tɔyp] [tɔΥp] [tɔΥp / tɔυ]
|
3 GREETINGS

3.0 OVERVIEW
The sampling offered provides time-related and more general greetings. A number of greetings have familiar and formal variants (→ §§6.1.6.1, 7.5.1).

3.1 TIME-RELATED GREETINGS

3.1.1 Morning
גועש (גועש) [(a)gut mörgn] ‘Good morning’.
Response:
גועש נגועש [agut yór] ‘Good morning to you’ (lit. ‘A good year’).

3.1.2 Evening (upon meeting)
גועש [gut nóvnt] ‘Good evening’.
Response:
גוועש נגוועש [gut nóvnt] ‘Good evening to you’.

3.1.3 Evening / night (upon parting / going to bed)
גועש נגועש [a güte nákht] ‘Good night’.
3.1.4 On Friday (upon parting) or Saturday before sundown (upon meeting or parting)

‘Have a Good Sabbath’. When used upon parting on Friday, גון שבת ‘Have a Good Sabbath’ may have the sense of ‘Have a good weekend’. A ‘secular’ alternative, specific to the whole of the weekend, is ג nét שבט ‘Have a good weekend’.

Response:
‘Good Sabbath / weekend to you’.

3.1.5 On Saturday evening (after sundown)

‘Have a good week’.  

Response:
‘A good week to you’.

3.1.6 On the eve of a traditional holiday or on the holiday

‘Good holiday’.  

Responses:
‘Good holiday to you’.

‘Good holiday to you (familiar)’.

‘Good holiday to you (formal)’.
3.2 GENERAL GREETINGS

3.2.1 Upon meeting

?גאַַד נעַט [vos mákhste?] ‘How are you? (familiar)’.
?גאַד נעַט אַרי [vos máktir?] ‘How are you? (formal)’.
?גאַַד נעַט דעַט זַר [vos (h)êrtsakh? / vos (h)êrdzakh?] ‘What’s new?’.
?גאַַד נעַט דעַט זַר נעַט [vos (h)êrtsakh épês? / vos (h)êrdzakh épês?] ‘So what’s new?’.
?גאַַד נעַט דעַט זַר נעַט זַר נעַט זַר [vos (h)êrtsakh épês güts? / vos (h)êrdzakh épês güts?] ‘What’s the good news?’.
?דָי [vos makht a y’d?] ‘How are you doing?’ (lit. ‘How is a Jew?’).

Possible Responses:

בּוּרֵךְ חֵשֵׁם [borkhashém] ‘Fine’ (lit. ‘Blessed is God’).
[גּוֹט תָּכָּא דָּנָכֶן] ‘Fine’ (lit. ‘Thank God’).
[אָדָנָכ] ‘(Fine) thank you’.
[גָּנְדָן גּוּט] ‘Pretty good’.

[נישקֵשֵׁה] ‘Not too bad’.
[אָזוּי] ‘So so’ (with lengthening of both vowels; often accompanied by horizontal wagging of fingers of one or both hands and inclining of head).

[סקן אוּמָלזָיָן בֵּזֵאָךְ] ‘Could always be better’.

[סקן אוּמָלזָיָן אֶרְגֶּר] ‘Could always be worse’.

[ vôzl ikh mákhn?] ‘What do you expect?’ (lit. ‘How should I be?’).
3.2.2 **Upon shaking hands**

שלום עליכם [sholamaléykhem] ‘How do you do?’ (lit. ‘Peace unto you’).

Response:

עליכם שלום [aleykhemsholam] ‘How do you do?’ (lit. ‘Unto you peace’).

The handshake is usually clenched simultaneously with the stressed syllable of עליכם שלום or שלום עליכם.

3.2.3 **Upon greeting a stranger**

איפה古镇קום? [funvánat kúmsta?] ‘Where do you come from? (familiar)’.

איפה古镇קומן? [funvánat kúmtir?] ‘Where do you come from? (formal)’.

איפה古镇ביסטלאנטסמן? [funvánat bista lántsman?] ‘Where do you come from?’ (especially current in America and other immigration centres).

איפה古镇זעטיראלנטסמן? [funvánat zaytir a lántsman?] ‘Where do you come from? (formal)’ (especially current in America and other immigration centres).

איפה古镇קוממן? [funvánat kúmtman?] ‘Where do you come from?’ (lit. ‘Where does one come from?’).

איפה古镇קומתאיד? [funvánat kumta yíd?] ‘Where do you come from, my friend?’ (lit. ‘Where does a Jew come from?’).

Response:

— איפה ‘from (+ name of place)’, e.g. ניו יאורק [fun nuyörk] ‘from New
York', יירקָא [fən paríz] 'from Paris'. If the place name is the name of a
city or town, יירקָא (f. יירקָא) may be suffixed to the name of the city to form
an agentive noun, e.g. יירקָא פָּרָיס [fən paríz pərīs] 'I'm a New Yorker (f.)',
יאַרְפֶּה פָּרָיס [eəfən paríz] 'I'm a Parisian (m.)' (→ §5.12.1).

3.2.4 Asking a stranger his or her name
?בוי [vi héystə?] 'What's your name? (familiar)'.
?בוייט [vi héystir?] 'What's your name? (formal)' (lit. 'How are
you called?').
Response:
יאַרְפֶּה [i(kh)héys] — 'My name is ...'

3.2.5 Upon answering the telephone
'Hello'.
Response (when caller is known):
יאַרְפֶּה with name of caller, e.g. יארפֶּה קִנְיִים [haidə Kháyim], יארפֶּה מָשָׂה
[haidə Máshə].

3.2.6 Welcoming in person
ובּורֶק [bor(e)khabə] 'Welcome! (sg.)' (lit. 'Blessed is the comer').
ברוקים בואים [brukhimabóim] 'Welcome! (pl.)' (lit. 'Blessed are the
comers').
Responses:
ובּורֶק הנמצאת [bor(e)khán fmtṣə] 'Thank you for the welcome (sg.)' (lit.
'Blessed is the one to be found here, i.e. the resident').
3.2.7 Upon parting


[záyt gezánt] ‘Be Well!; Goodbye’ (formal).

[kól túv] ‘All the best’.

[a gút] ‘All the best’ (lit. ‘A good (...)’).
4 NOUNS

4.0 OVERVIEW

Nouns occur in three genders — masculine, feminine and neutral. They usually inflect for pluralization and diminutivization. Diminutives may have the sense of physical smallness. They frequently add subjective emotional nuances, affectionate or pejorative, to the noun. They combine to form compound nouns.

4.1 GENDER

The gender of nouns is historically fixed and must be learned with each noun. It would not, for example, be possible to determine logically that ‘table’ is masculine (דיזר, דיזר תַּבָּלוֹן), ‘notebook’ feminine (ר"א, ר"א תַּבָּלוֹן) and ‘country’ neutral (דָּרוֹשׁ, דָּרוֹשׁ לְגָּרָה). Nevertheless, there are rules and tendencies covering gender assignment for many nouns. The first principle assigns natural masculines to masculine and natural feminines to feminine. The dynamic tendency evident for nouns that exhibit no inherent sex is evident in gender assignment for new words and occasional realignments of old ones. It assigns masculinity to nouns ending in a consonant (e.g. רְאוּר [o(y)tomobil] ‘automobile’) and femininity to nouns ending in a vowel (e.g. משָּׁנוּנְלָגֵי [tekhnolodgye] ‘technology’). There is some acceptable variation in gender within literary Yiddish. A noun’s gender should be checked with a dictionary.
4.1.1 Masculinity
Masculinity may be determined semantically, morphologically or
derivationally. The masculine definite article is דָּוֺר (which inflects to דָּנַּה in both object cases → §5.3.2 – 5.3.3).

4.1.1.1 Semantic masculinity
Nouns referring to biological males, and agentives without a feminizing suffix,
are masculine. Semantic masculinity overrides morphological and derivational
factors.

SAMPLES OF SEMANTIC MASCULINITY

ox דָּוֺר קּ֣אָקָּט
thief [גָּנֶֽב] דָּוֺר נֶֽבֶּב
son דָּוֺר זֶֽאָד
grandfather דָּוֺר זיִּיֵּדֶּא
man דָּוֺר מֶֽאָלָּן
king [קְיֵנִּיֶּג] דָּוֺר מְלִֽךְ

4.1.1.2 Morphological masculinity
Nouns with the following suffixes are generally masculine. An example
follows each suffix.

דָּוֺר יִדְּישִׁיצֶֽוִֶים [yidish(izm)] ‘Yiddishism’
syllabic דָּוֺר אָֽלָּבָּל ‘sleeve’
syllabic דָּוֺר ברָפְּלִינָֽט [brómfín] ‘whiskey’
anim דָּוֺר תָּדָֽעָּר ‘thread’
anim דָּוֺר זוֹמוֹֽר ‘summer’

4.1.1.3 Masculine agentives
Semantic and morphological masculinity overlap in the case of the masculine
agentivizing suffixes -וֹסֶה- (stressed), -נֶסֶה- (stressed), -פָּרֶס- and pejorative -יָרֶס- and pejorative -טָרֶס- (both stressed). An example follows each.

- דיקְטָטֶר [diktátor] 'dictator'
- יידישיס [yidishist] 'Yiddishist'
- בורֶוֶנֶק 'bore; pest; poor conversationalist'
- מדענויט [malodyéts] 'man who can get things done'
- לְעַרְוֶר 'teacher'
- שֵנְדֶרֶכֶק [shnaydérúc] 'tailor who is not a nice person'
- פָּקָדוֹנִיסֶק [paskudnyák] 'malicious person'

### 4.1.1.4 Derivational masculinity

Nominalizations of verb stems are masculine, e.g. [שָטָנוֹ `push (n.)' from שָטָנָה `push (v.)']. Note that where past participles undergo vowel change (→ §§7.6.2.2–7.6.2.5), the nominalization frequently derives from the stem of the past participle, e.g. [שומָרָנָן `jump (n.)' (cf. שומַר `jump (v.)', past participle שומָרָנָן)].

### 4.1.2 Femininity

Femininity may be determined semantically, morphologically or derivationally. The feminine definite article is יְדֻ (which inflects to יְדָא in dative → §§5.3.3).

#### 4.1.2.1 Semantic femininity

Nouns referring to biological females, and agentives with a feminizing suffix, are feminine. Semantic femininity overrides morphological and derivational factors.
SAMPLES OF SEMANTIC FEMININITY

daughter דִּוִָּר מְעָמֵּר
grandmother דִּוִָּר בַּלַּבַּעַת
woman דִּוִָּר נְוֹר
girl דִּוִָּר מְלָהֲבָה
queen דִּוִָּר מֶלְוָה
aunt דִּוִָּר מַמְעָה
cow דִּוִָּרָן

4.1.2.2 Morphological femininity

Nouns that end in one of the following tend to be feminine. The inclusion of ב-, ה- and ג- in the list dictates that all nouns ending in an unstressed vowel are feminine, except where in conflict with semantic masculinity, e.g. נִשָּׁב ‘father’. Note that nouns ending in two of the listed endings, ג- and נ- may alternatively be neutral (→ §4.1.3). An example follows each.

ב-:
example דִּוִָּר דּוֹמֶה [dúgmə] ‘example’

ג-:
bride דִּוִָּר קָלָה [kála] ‘bride’
freedom דִּוִָּר יָרְדָה [yárda] ‘freedom’
mood דִּוִָּר מוּד [múd] ‘mood’

ל-:
literature דִּי לִיטָרַוְר [literátúr] ‘literature’

ע-:
stubbornness דִּי עָרְדֵּשָׁס נָקָשְׁנָו [akshónes] ‘stubbornness’

י-:
grammar דִּי גֵרְמָנָסְט [gramátk] ‘grammar’

ו-:
‘coffee’ דִּי קָפָא [kápa]

ז-:
confused situation דִּי רִוְדְוָס זְרַמָּיָר [tsérmashénish] ‘confused situation’

ס-:
‘conference’ דִּי קָנְרֵרָנְס [konfrénts] ‘conference’

ע-:
library דִּי בִּיבְלוֹיָטָק [bibli(y)oték] ‘library’

יו-:
bakery דִּי בֶּקֶרְאָי [bekéráy] ‘bakery’

ך-:
‘beauty’ דִּי בְּיָוף [býúf] ‘beauty’

פש-:
friendship דִּי ${	ext{fráyntshaft}}$ [fráyntshaft] ‘friendship’
4.1.2.3 Feminine agentives

Semantic and morphological femininity overlap in feminine agentive suffixes kadın- (most frequent feminizer of Semitic component agentives), and nun-. Some agentives may be feminized with either ŋ or nun-, e.g. đuvar- ( đuvarın) ‘teacher (m.)’ → đuvarın ( đuvarık) ‘teacher (f.)’. An example follows each feminine agentive suffix.

 kadın-: [gánəstə] ‘thief (f.)’
 nun-: [kęsəntstə] ‘beautiful girl / woman’
 ŋ-: [ństə] ‘baker (f.)’
 nun-: [prəzidəntstə] ‘president (f.)’

4.1.2.4 Derivational femininity

Nominalizations of adjective stems are feminine. Note that where comparative adjectives undergo vowel change (→ §5.10), the nominalization derives from the stem of the comparative, e.g. [leyŋər] ‘longer’, [kələt] ‘cold’ (cf. [kəltst] ‘cold’, [kələt] ‘cold’.)

4.1.3 Neutrality

Neutralities may be determined semantically, morphologically or derivationally. The neutral definite article is [dən] (which inflects to [dən] in dative (→ §5.3.3)). Neutrality varies in a number of words with the other two genders, most frequently femininity. Where variation does exist in the literary language, the modern trend is away from neutral.

4.1.3.1 Semantic neutrality

Diminutives in ַ- and [nəln] (→ §§4.3.1 – 4.3.2) are neutral irrespective of the gender of the base form of the noun, hence [dən] ‘the little table’
and דִּינֵי מִישְׁנָעַת 'the very little table' from דִּינֵי 'the table'; analogously, דִּינֵי גֻנְעַת 'the little street' and דִּינֵי נְתַעַת 'the very little street', from דִּינֵי 'the street'. There are two words in which semantic masculinity and femininity conflict rather sharply with the neutrality of diminutives — יָשי 'boy' and נַש֖וֹת 'girl'. Both sets of variants — דִּינֵי נַש֖וֹת and דִּינֵי יָשי and יָשי and נַש֖וֹת are equally acceptable. Historically, יָשי is the diminutive of יָושֵׁב and נַש֖וֹת is the diminutive of נַשָׁה. Native speakers do not, however, perceive יָשי and נַש֖וֹת as diminutives in the modern language. The base nouns have become emotionally charged epithets that combine with adjectives in stock phrases, usually to mark indelicacy. They may explicitly be negatively charged, e.g. דִּינֵי נַש֖וֹת 'fellow with no manners or concern for other people', יָשי 'old maid'. They often serve to denote physical strength, and are accompanied by ‘spaced out’ pronunciation, e.g. רָכַב ['กา|גא|זאמ|טא|יינג] '(He’s) a healthy (= powerful) fellow!', דִּינֵי נַש֖וֹת 'crude' [או|יא|זא|ניא|מסה] '(She’s) an iron lady!'.

4.1.3.2 Morphological neutrality

Nouns that begin or end in one of following affixes are generally neutral. Note that nouns suffixed by גֶּה- and שְׁנִי- (and occasionally, שְׁנִי-), enumerated as feminine (→ §4.1.2.2), may also be neutral. Virtually none of the neutral affixes serves to produce new nouns in the modern language, but all are encountered in stock items.

- יָשֲׂה: דִּינֵי נַש֖וֹת [גֶּשֶׁלג] 'right'
- מָשֲׂה: דִּינֵי רָכַב 'raw material'
- מָש: דִּינֵי יָשי 'Jewry'
- מָש: יָשי 'evil'
- מָש: יָשי 'evil'
- מָש: [נָשְׁדֶבַּקְס / נָשְׁדֶבַּקְס] 'bad writing'
4.1.3.3 Derivational neutrality
Nominalizations of infinitives are neutral, hence דראוף לוריב (n.) 'running (n.)' from לוריב run (v.). דראוף לאוננורים (n.) 'singing (n.)' from לאוננורים 'sing (v.). Nominalizations of adjectives ending in -ם or א are neutral, hence ראמל אירוטרנוזנידנלבמק 'the extraordinary,' from ראמל אירוטרנוזנידנלבמק 'extraordinary.'

4.1.4 Two genders in dialectal usage
Northeastern Yiddish has only two genders — masculine and feminine. Nouns appearing as neutral in the other dialects and the standard language are assigned either masculinity or femininity. Inanimate objects tend toward feminine (e.g. דראף לארונר for standard דרי לארונר 'country'). Diminutives have the gender of their base nouns (e.g. דראוף מייש for standard דורי מייש 'table,' cf. base form דורי מייש).

4.2 PLURALS
Plurals, like gender, must be learned with each noun. There are few inviolable rules, but overall patterns can account for the vast majority of nouns in the language. Most capricious are the nouns undergoing vowel change with or without the -ים- pluralizing ending. A dictionary should be consulted for a noun's plural.

4.2.1 Plural ending -(ם)
Nouns ending in a consonant or stressed vowel usually pluralize by
suffixation of \( \text{ן} \) (or \( \text{ן} \) after \( \text{נ} \), \( \text{ך} \), a stressed vowel or diphthong, \( \text{כ} \), \( \text{ך} \), \( \text{ן} \), or consonant + \( \text{ל} \) → §2.2.9).

**SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH \( \text{ן} \)-**

- arméy \( \rightarrow \) \( \text{ארמיים} \) ‘army’
- train \( \rightarrow \) \( \text{traîn} \) (איהוז) בעון ‘train’
- bed \( \rightarrow \) נמט ‘bed’
- street \( \rightarrow \) נתיק ‘street’
- hotel \( \rightarrow \) נמלט ‘hotel’
- person, good human being \( \rightarrow \) מנוון ‘person, good human being’
- professor \( \rightarrow \) מפרוור ‘professor’
- traditional synagogue, school \( \rightarrow \) סור ‘traditional synagogue, school’
- partnership \( \rightarrow \) שייחות ‘partnership’
- hour \( \rightarrow \) שעון ‘hour’

4.2.2 Plural ending \( \text{ן} \)-

The plural ending \( \text{ן} \)- is frequently pronounced somewhere between [s] and [z]. A number of categories of nouns take \( \text{ן} \)-.

4.2.2.1 Nouns ending in unstressed \( \text{ן} \)-

Nouns ending in unstressed \( \text{ן} \)- usually pluralize by suffixation of \( \text{ן} \)-. A number of nineteenth-century borrowings from German have plurals in \( \text{ן} \)-, especially in political terminology, e.g. ממס ‘mass’ → ממסים ‘(the) masses’. Some have alternate plurals in \( \text{ן} \)- and \( \text{ן} \)-. The \( \text{ן} \)- endings predominate in journalistic and parliamentary styles and usually denote a more abstract sense, e.g. שאל ‘question’ pluralizes to שאלות ‘questions (in the everyday sense)’ and שאלות ‘questions (of major importance, e.g. to society)’. Cf. §15.8.
4.2.2.2 Internationalisms ending in an unstressed nonreduced vowel

Internationalisms ending in a vowel that is not stressed but that retains its full vowel colour usually pluralize by suffixation of ב-

**SAMPLES OF INTERNATIONALISMS ENDING IN AN UNSTRESSED NONREDUCED VOWEL PLURALIZING WITH ב-**

- 'car' → 'carens'
- 'ego' → 'engen'
- 'radio' → 'radion'

4.2.2.3 Family names

Family names pluralize by suffixation of ב- (or ב- after sibilants ח, ט, ש, נ, ל, or ר).

**SAMPLES OF FAMILY NAMES PLURALIZING WITH ב(ט)-**

- 'Goldberg' → 'the Goldbergs'
- 'Hudson' → 'the Husdens'
- 'Pludermacher' → 'the Pludermachers'
- 'Rabinowitz' → 'the Rabinowitzes'
- 'Rappaport' → 'the Rappaports'

4.2.2.4 Nouns ending in ב- in an unstressed syllable

Nouns ending in ب- in an unstressed final syllable usually pluralize by
suffixed of -ן.

SAMPLES OF NOUNS ENDING IN י- IN AN UNSTRESSED
FINAL SYLLABLE PLURALIZING WITH י-
 السلامירוטים ‘aquarium’ → יسلامירוטים
לחיים [לאק'יימ] ‘alcoholic drink’ → ילחיים
שיטורנים ‘storm’ → שיטורנים

4.2.2.5 Nouns ending in י(ן)- in an unstressed final syllable
Nouns ending in י- (or ין-) in an unstressed final syllable usually pluralize by suffixation of -ן.

SAMPLES OF NOUNS ENDING IN UNSTRESSED י(ן)-
PLURALIZING WITH י-
 MLMK ‘cloud’ → יMLMLK
קרמרנוע ‘chimney’ → יקרמרנוע
קושננ ‘pillow’ → יקושננ

4.2.2.6 Nonhuman nouns ending in י- in an unstressed final syllable
Nonhuman nouns ending in י- usually pluralize by suffixation of י-.

SAMPLES OF NONHUMAN NOUNS ENDING IN UNSTRESSED י- PLURALIZING WITH י-
זומגרות ‘summer’ → יזומגרות
סיונגרות ‘tiger’ → יסיונגרות
קלוימטרים ‘church’ → יקלוימטרים

4.2.3 Plural ending י(ן)-
The plural ending י(ן)- is frequently pronounced between [es] and [ez].
4.2.3.1 Slavonic component nouns ending in a consonant

Some nouns, mostly of Slavonic derivation, pluralize by suffixation of ьъ-. There are occasional concomitant vowel changes.

SAMPLES OF SLAVONIC COMPONENT NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ьъ-

кхулигант [khuligan] ‘russian; hooligan’ → кхулиганец [khuliganets]

ъшсовок [tshvok] ‘nail’ → ъшсовокец [tshvókeč]

нудник [núdnik] ‘bore; pest; poor conversationalist’ → нудникец [núdnikets]

4.2.4 Semitic component plurals

Most Semitic component nouns are pluralized by ьъ- ([im] or [eim]) or ьъ-[eš]. Where suffixation of ьъ- or ьъ- results in a syllable being added, stress shifts to the new penultimate syllable (→ §2.3.2.1). There are frequent vowel changes in pluralization.

4.2.4.1 Semitic component plural in ьъ-

Semitic component nouns ending in a consonant are usually pluralized by suffixation of ьъ- (pronounced [im] or [eim]). A sizable minority of nouns ending in unstressed ь- or ь-, including virtually all semantically masculine agentives, also pluralize with ьъ-, dropping final ь-. A few non-Semitic component nouns regularly pluralize with ьъ-, e.g. (medical) doctor → доктор [doktor], ‘fool’ → нарцис [narcs], and ‘peasant’ → пе́йерим [peýerim]. Pluralizing ьъ- used with nouns ending in ь- or ьъ- (→ §4.1.1.3) has a sarcastic or pejorative effect, e.g. вудерми [vundérim] ‘not-so-impressive miracles’, профессора [profesór], ‘professor’ → профессорий [profesóriy], ‘not-so-impressive professors’.

The normal plurals are вудермей [vundérmej], and профессор [profesór].
SAMPLES OF SEMITIC COMPONENT NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ס-  

גנב [gáněw], ‘thief’ → גנבים [ganóvim / ganóvem]  
acağı [khávěr], ‘friend’ → חביבים [khavěyrim / khavěyrem]  
칙올 [šikér], ‘drunkard’ → שיכורים [šikúrim / šikúrem]  
🦐 [šókharn], ‘neighbour’ → שכנינו [škhéynim / škhéynem]  
רב [rov], ‘rabbi’ → רבניים [rabónim / rabónem]  
שבת [sháběs], ‘Saturday; Sabbath’ → שבטיים [shabósim / shabósem]  
חקור [shóyr̩], ‘tool’ → ש—you [shóytim / shóytém]  
נג营养价值 [sónem], ‘enemy’ → נגנונים [sónim / sónem]  
תלמיד [tálméd], ‘student’ → תלמידים [talmídim / talmídém]  

4.2.4.2 Semitic component plural in ס-  
Semitic component nouns ending in unstressed ס- or ס- usually pluralize by suffixation of ס-, dropping final ס-, and falling together phonetically with phonetic system ס-. A minority of nouns ending in a consonant also pluralize by suffixation of ס-.  

SAMPLES OF SEMITIC COMPONENT NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ס-  

נואיג [dáyge], ‘worry’ → תונ_own [dáyges]  
榜样 [dúgmės], ‘example’ → דוגמנים [dúgmées] (var. דוגנים [dúgmés])  
לוב [khólém], ‘dream’ → קולונים [khólémés]  
נשואת [khaséněs], ‘wedding’ → נושאתי [khaséněs]  
署名 [khsímēs], ‘signature’ → חתימות [khsímēs]  
טענה [táyněs], ‘complaint; point (in discussion)’ → תוענג [táyněs]  
Њavor [tóyvěs], ‘favour’ → תועוב [tóyvěs]  
לשון [lóshn], ‘language’ → לשוני [lóshněs]  
מקור [mókér], ‘source’ → מקורות [mókóyres] (var. מקוריים [mókóyrim])  
מחושש [mishpókha], ‘family’ → מחוששים [mishpókhes]  
סברה [svóre], ‘supposition; possibility’ → סברות [svóres]
4.2.5 Plural ending in \( -n \) -

The plural ending in \(-n\) - ([\(\aleph\)h / \(\alpha\)h]) is restricted to nouns ending in syllabic \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - . Where the noun is a diminutive, the composite pluralizing \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - is obligatory (\(\rightarrow\) 884.3.2, 4.3.3) but there are a number of non-diminutive nouns for which both \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - and \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - are acceptable, e.g. ‘key’ \(\rightarrow\) שוליות or שליות.

SAMPLES OF NOUNS ENDING IN \(-n\) PLURALIZING WITH \(\mathbf{\ell}\) -

- אַנְנִיֵלֶנְכֶּה ‘grandchild’ \(\rightarrow\) אנניילנה
- בֵּרִיָה-עָרוֹל ‘(little) brother (lovingly)’ \(\rightarrow\)urryărůl
- ייָדוך ‘boy’ \(\rightarrow\) ירדרוך
- בֵּרִיָה-עָרוֹל ‘girl’ \(\rightarrow\)urryărůl
- מִיְיָד ‘note’ \(\rightarrow\) מידי
- שָׁנַמְלך ‘tenth’ \(\rightarrow\) שנולך
- שָׁנַמְלך ‘(little) sister (lovingly)’ \(\rightarrow\)שנולך
- שָׁנִי ‘prank; dirty trick’ \(\rightarrow\)שני

4.2.6 Plural ending in \(\mathbf{\ell}\) -

Nouns that pluralize by suffixation of \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - do not fit into any morphological categories. They are frequently words that have been in the language since its inception. \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - may pluralize on its own, but it is frequently accompanied by vowel shifts.

4.2.6.1 \(\mathbf{\ell}\) - with no vowel change

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH \(\mathbf{\ell}\) -

- אַיָּר ‘egg’ \(\rightarrow\) אייר
- בִּילָיו ‘picture’ \(\rightarrow\)بيلיו
- חָלָב ‘towel’ \(\rightarrow\)חלב
- חָלָב ‘hundred’ \(\rightarrow\)חלב
4.2.6.2 ُ - with اُّ → ع

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ُ - AND اُّ → ع

لاُّدنِر → ُعلَّدِنِر ‘country; land’

مَنِعُوُر → ُمنِعُوُر ‘man; husband’

لاُّذهِنِر → ُمْلِمَث ‘plan’

مَلْذِنِر → ُمُلْذِنِر ‘place’

بَلْنِعُر → ُبُلْنِعُر ‘bottle’

4.2.6.3 ُ - with اُّ → ع

Although not reflected in the orthography of the traditional system, Semitic component [pōnem] ‘face’, is part of the series. It pluralizes to [pēnemēr].

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ُ - AND اُّ → ع

نَفْسِنِنِر → ُنَفْسِنِنِر ‘garden’

لَنْنِنِر → ُلَنْنِنِر ‘hole’

رَنْنِنِر → ُرَنْنِنِر ‘wheel’

4.2.6.4 ُ - with اُ → ع

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ُ - AND اُ → ع

بُنْنِنِر → ُبُنْنِنِر ‘book’

رَنْنِنِر → ُرَنْنِنِر ‘hen; chicken’

تُنْنِنِر → ُتُنْنِنِر ‘tongue’

4.2.6.5 ُ - with اُ → ع

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH ُ - AND اُ → ع

بَنْنِنِر → ُبِكْنِنِر ‘stomach’

رَنْنِنِر → ُرَبْنِنِر ‘house’

مُنْنِنِر → ُمُتْنِنِر ‘mouth’
4.2.6.6  דע- with various vowels $\rightarrow$ דע

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH דע- AND VARIOUS SHIFTS TO דע

בֶּיתָמוּר → בֵּי- בָּומִי
לָזִי → לָזִי (var.)

tooth $\rightarrow$ דע- דע (דע

4.2.7  Plural by vowel change only

Like nouns pluralizing by suffixation of דע-, those pluralizing by vowel change alone tend to be ancient items in the language.

4.2.7.1  אָ → ע

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH אָ → ע

הַנְגָּב → הנְגָּב
וֹנֶב → וֹנֶב
קֶתַּנֶּב → קֶתַּנֶּב
לָעֲנָנָה → לָעֲנָנָה (to body / ego / mood)

4.2.7.2  בָּ → ע

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH בָּ → ע

day → דַּעְנֶנ
לֹאֵנֶנ → לֹאֵנֶנ
לֹאֵנֶנ → לֹאֵנֶנ
לֹאֵנֶנ → לֹאֵנֶנ
שַּׁמְעֹנָה → שַּׁמְעֹנָה

city → דַּעְנֶנ

4.2.7.3  דּוֹ → ע

SAMPLES OF NOUNS PLURALIZING WITH דּוֹ → דּוֹ

ברָדוּר → בְּרָדוּר
בְּרָדוּר

son → דּוֹ
4.2.7.4

4.2.8

Same form for singular and plural

A number of nouns have plurals identical with the singular form of the noun.

4.2.8.1 Human nouns ending in ר-

Human nouns in ר- usually have no separate plural form. Minority usage does pluralize by ר- for agentives denoting professions, e.g. 'tailors' for שומרים, 'writers' for סופרים, 'uncle' שומע ו, hence שומעי, exceptionally pluralizes by suffixation of ר-, hence שומיים.

Samples of human nouns ending in ר- with identical plurals

- 'American' אמריקן
- 'worker' עבודה
- 'vegetarian' יוגן
- 'dancer' רקדן
- 'teacher' מנה
- 'Englishman' [æŋglændə] אנגלן
- 'Canadian' קנדי
- 'sister' אחות
- 'tailor' סה"כ
- 'writer' סופר
4.2.6.2 Various nouns with identical plurals

בייגל 'bagel' → ביגל
ברחת 'letter' → בירת
צ'ינג'ן 'finger' → צ'ינג'ן
ש' אש 'fish' → שיא
ש'ג' פרוור 'horse' → ש'ג' פרוור
ד'ר'פ' 'friend' → ד'ר'פ' ד'ר'פ' ד'ר'פ'
ש'ט'נ' 'star' → ש'ט'נ' ש'ט'נ' ש'ט'נ'

4.3 DIMINUTIVES

There is a two-tier system comprising a first diminutive and a second diminutive. In its simplest form, the first diminutive denotes 'smallness' and the second diminutive 'more smallness' or 'tininess'. Many nouns, however, usually for morphological reasons, have no more than one of the two. The diminutives may evoke emotions and attitudes instead of, or in addition to, size. Some diminutives have lost their diminutive sense and are used as base nouns which 'happen to be' morphologically diminutive. The major diminutives are of neutral gender. Many diminutives undergo the internal vowel shifts מ/מ → נ; י → ר; מ → נ, various → ב. They are the same shifts applicable in pluralization ([sects2.6.2 - 4.2.6.6]).

4.3.1 Morphology of the first diminutive

The first diminutive is formed by suffixation of syllabic ל- ([sects2.6.8]. Its plural is formed by further suffixation of י[ס] - [ס'ק/ס'ק], giving plural first diminutive suffix י[ס] - where ל, at the beginning of a syllable, is not syllabic.
SAMPLES OF DERIVATION OF THE FIRST DIMINITUVE

לוע (דוע) ‘table’ $\rightarrow$ רַעֲשָׁן (רתון) ‘little table’, pl. מִישָׁן
לע (דוע) ‘cat’ $\rightarrow$ קֶנְעָלָן (קנעהל) ‘little cat; kitten’, pl. כּוֹסָלָן

4.3.1.1 Nouns ending in י-
Nouns ending in י- attract לֶא rather than ל, and pluralize by further suffixation of י, e.g. הֵמָנ (רוה) ‘stone’ $\rightarrow$ רַעֲשָׁן (רתון) ‘little stone; pebble’, pl. שֵׁשָׁלָן (רחוב).

4.3.1.2 Nouns ending in ב-
Nouns ending in ב- attract לֶא rather than ל, and pluralize by further suffixation of י, e.g. בָּלָף (ברך) ‘mouth’ $\rightarrow$ בָּלַף (ברך) or בָּלַף (ברך) ‘little mouth’, pl. בָּלַף (ברך) or בָּלַף (ברך).

4.3.1.3 Semitic component plurals
Semitic component plurals in ב- are diminutivized by suffixation of י, occasionally with accompanying semantic nuances, e.g. הַרְועִים [khavéyrim] ‘friends’ $\rightarrow$ הַרְועֵיִים [khavéyrimlakh] ‘shady friends; cronies’ (cf. sg. רָחִיב [kháver] ‘friend’); מַגְנֵי הָעָלִים [inyonim] ‘matters’ $\rightarrow$ מַגְנֵי הָעָלִים [inyonimlakh] ‘little matters’ (cf. sg. מַגְנֵי הָעָלִים [inyonim] ‘matter’).

4.3.1.4 Nouns with no first diminutive
Nouns ending in syllabic ב- (e.g. לַעֲשָׁן (לוע) ‘spoon’), and nouns stressed two or more syllables from the last (e.g. כְּנְשִׁיקְנָש [onshikënish] ‘nuisance; pain in the neck’) cannot attract the first diminutive. Nouns ending in a vowel (e.g. לַעֲשָׁן (לוע) ‘threatening cloud’) are incapable of attracting the first diminutive, but personal names occasionally accept it (→ §4.3.7).
4.3.2 **Morphology of the second diminutive**

The second diminutive is formed by suffixation of עלול- [אֵל, āl]. Its plural is formed by further suffixation of -ל- . The resulting sequence עלול-ל is pronounced [alakh], [alēkh] or [ēlēkh] (→ §2.1.2.3).

**SAMPLES OF THE SECOND DIMINITIVE**

- דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) מִשָּׁנֵעָלֵךְ 'table' → לִשָּׁנֵעָלֵךְ 'tiny table', pl. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) מִשָּׁנֵעָלָּךְ
- כְּפָלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ (כְּפָלְּשְׁטִיָּטְךָ) 'cat' → כְּפַלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ 'little kitten', pl. כְּפָלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ (כְּפָלְּשְׁטִיָּטְךָ)
- כְּפַלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ (כְּפָלְּשִׁיָּטְךָ) 'book' → כְּפַלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ 'pamphlet', pl. כְּפַלְּשִׁיָּטְךְ (כְּפָלְּשִׁיָּטְךָ)

**4.3.2.1 Nouns ending in ל-**

Nouns ending in ל- attract the second diminutive by means of the ל of second diminutive suffix עלול-ל, with the two required ל- added on either side, e.g. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) לְדוֹלֵט (לִדוֹלֵט), pl. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) לַדְּדוֹלֵטְךְ.

**4.3.2.2 Nouns ending in an unstressed vowel**

Nouns ending in an unstressed vowel (i.e. מ-, נ, or ב), attract the second diminutive by means of the unstressed vowel assuming the added role of the first מ of second diminutive suffix עלול-ל, with the remaining sequence עלול- suffixed thereafter, e.g. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) רַחֲשָׁנֵעָלָּךְ 'question' → דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) רַחֲשָׁנֵעָלָּך 'little question', pl. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) רַחֲשָׁנֵעָלָּךְ; דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) [גֵּמֶרֶה] 'Gemora / Gemara (major part of the Talmud; select reading therefrom; cf. §§7.3.2.1, 15.17.15)' → דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) [גֵּמֶרֶאֲלָה] 'brief reading / lesson of the Talmud', pl. דְּדוֹ (דִּיו) [גֵּמֶרֶאֲלָהְךָ].

**4.3.2.3 Nouns with no second diminutive**

Nouns ending in a consonant with stress on a syllable other than the last (e.g. דְּדוֹ [פּלאֲנָה] 'nephew') cannot attract the second diminutive.
Those ending in syllabic ב- are exempted from the restriction, hence (ר尋) רייעו ‘riddle’ → ריעו (רMLElement) ‘little riddle (endearing)’. Nouns ending in syllabic י- rarely accept the second diminutive. When they do, the י- is dropped, e.g. ישוע (ר曼) [סְתֶּקָא] ‘stick’ → ישוע (רמן) [סְתֶּקָא] ‘little stick’.

4.3.3 Suffix ב- with inanimate nouns

Suffix ב- used with inanimate nouns does not usually form a diminutive noun from a base noun. It is rather used to coin nouns denoting objects that happen to be small, e.g. אגריפסה [אגריפסה] ‘safety pin’, קסמטיקס [קסמטיקס] ‘cassette tape’. Where base and derived forms do exist, the derived ב- form usually signifies an object distinct from its base noun, e.g. מַעַשְׁשֵׁה (רָד) (also מַעַשְׁשֵׁה) ‘typewriter’ from מַעַשְׁשֵׁה (רָד) ‘machine’. It occasionally invokes a humorous mood, e.g. מַקְּרָא (רָד) [מקרא] ‘contraption; gizmo’. Unlike other diminutives, those in ב- are feminine. Cf. §4.3.7.1 on ב- with proper names.

4.3.4 Diminutives as new base nouns

While many diminutives represent inflections of their base nouns denoting smallness (first diminutive) or tinyness (second diminutive), many diminutives of both categories have acquired lives of their own by assuming special connotations, e.g. נצורה (רָד) ‘brothel’ from צו (ר Estonia) ‘house’, נצורה (רָד) ‘ring’ from רינר (ר Portugal) ‘finger’, דוֹרוֹ (רָד) [קְיֵינְדִי] ‘flirtatious / coquettish gesture’ from קְיֵינ (רָד) ‘grace; beauty’. In a number of instances, the notion of size is retained as a secondary factor in tandem with the diminutive itself becoming the everyday name for a thing.
e.g. הטריקת (ברק) 'comb', ח硼טן (ברק) 'pocket comb', from הריק (ברק) 'pocket', which is now so rare that its use would imply a rather huge comb. In a number of instances, the base form of a noun and a diminutive thereof denote related but distinct objects, e.g. שעון (ברק) 'clock (in general); wall clock; pocket watch' vs. שעון (ברק) 'wristwatch'.

4.3.5 The second diminutive as sentimentality marker

The second diminutive may mark warmth, affection and sentimentality with nonhuman nouns. In many instances, the first diminutive marks physical reduction in size while the second diminutive invokes affection. For some speakers, the pronunciation of the first ו in singular and both וs in plural ending ב- increasingly approach [a] in direct proportion to increasing sentimentality, hence the frequent sentimental realizations [-a] and [alakh] (→ §§ 2.1.2.2 – 2.1.2.3).

SAMPLES OF THE SECOND DIMINUTIVE AS SENTIMENTALITY MARKER

דוד (ברק) → דוד (ברק) ו滚球
למנוע (ברק) → דוד (ברק) למנוע
לאום (ברק) → לאום (ברק) לאום
קודש (ברק) → קרד (ברק) קודש

4.3.6 The first diminutive as pejorative

The first diminutive applied to masculine agentives, especially those denoting professions, is decidedly pejorative. It generally means that the person is either incompetent at his work, not a nice person, or both.

SAMPLES OF THE FIRST DIMINUTIVE AS PEJORATIVE

דוער (ברק) → דוער (ברק) 'lawyer'
'small time lawyer'
'bad teacher'
4.3.7 Diminutives as love markers

The first, and, especially, the second diminutive can be applied to traditional Jewish proper forenames to denote warmth, affection and love. While most prolific for children’s names, diminutive forenames are often retained through life. On the whole, they follow the morphological patterns of diminutives generally (→ §4.3.2 – 4.3.3.4). Note, however, that ליל(ו) (→ §4.3.1.2) does not occur with proper names, and that names ending in a vowel may occasionally accept the first diminutive (unlike common nouns which cannot → §4.3.1.4).

**SAMPLES OF DIMINUTIVES AS LOVE MARKERS**

בוכד [avró] (m.) → בocado [avróma] → בocado [avrómale]

 najczęściej [kháye] (f.) → наиולות [kháyale]

לא [-lé] (f.) → ליאלט [léyale]

משה [móyshe] (m.) → המשה [móyshe] → המשה [móyshale]

טענדער [séndeř] (m.) →טענדערל [séndeřli]

שומעה [shmuale] (m.) →שומעה [shmuale]

שראלי [sóre] (f.) →שראלי [sórli] →שראלי [sórale]

### 4.3.7.1 Suffix ל- as love marker

As an alternative to the usual ב- and לע- diminutivizing suffixes, love may be shown by ל- suffixed to proper forenames. The ל- forms occur most extensively in Northeastern Yiddish. For increased endearment, ל- may follow upon ב-, subject to the usual morphological constraints (→ §4.3.1.4,
4.3.2.4, 4.3.7). The compounded suffix קִנֵּלֶט is usually restricted to children’s names and use as a term of endearment in intimate relationships.

SAMPLES OF SUFFIXES קִנֵּלֶט AND קִנֵּלֶט AS LOVE MARKERS

יהוֹ [yəwə] (f.) → קִנֵּלֶט [kınələt] → קִנֵּלֶט [kınələt]

לֶזֶה [ləzə] (f.) → לֶזֶה [ləzə] → לֶזֶה [ləzə]

שֶׁזֶה [šəzə] (m.) → שֶׁזֶה [šəzə] → שֶׁזֶה [šəzə]

סֶנֶר [šənər] (m.) → סֶנֶר [šənər]

סֶנֶר [šənər]

שְׁמִיק [šəmik] (m.) → שְׁמִיק [šəmik] → שְׁמִיק [šəmik]

שְׁמִיק [šəmik] (m.) → שְׁמִיק [šəmik] → שְׁמִיק [šəmik]

4.3.7.2 Suffixes קִנֵּלֶט and קִנֵּלֶט as love markers

קִנֵּלֶט is most frequent with masculine forenames ending in קִנֵּלֶט-. The masculine forename קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט has developed as a popular alternate to the more formal קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [yitskhok], which corresponds with the Biblical 'Isaac'. Its diminutive is קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט. Occasionally, קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט (or קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט) may be encountered as a feminine counterpart to קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט, e.g. קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [kántse] or קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [kántse] from קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט. A variant love marker is קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט-- קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט, which may replace the last syllable of the stem of the name, e.g. קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [eyliōnu] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [eyliōnu] (m.), with spelling according to the phonetic system for ease of reading. For increased endearment, קִנֵּלֶט-- קִנֵּלֶט may follow upon קִנֵּלֶט-- קִנֵּלֶט or קִנֵּלֶט-- קִנֵּלֶט. The compounded suffixes קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט and קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט are usually restricted to children’s names and to use as terms of endearment in intimate relationships. קִנֵּלֶט or קִנֵּלֶט do not generally trigger internal vowel shifts.

SAMPLES OF SUFFIX קִנֵּלֶט-- AND קִנֵּלֶט-- AS LOVE MARKERS

יִסְרוֹל (m.) → יִסְרוֹל קִנֵּלֶט [yišrólo] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [yišróōl] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [yišróōl]

שְׁמִיק (m.) → שְׁמִיק קִנֵּלֶט [šmúik] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [šmúik] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [šmúik]

אָברָם (m.) → אָברָם קִנֵּלֶט [avróm] → קִנֵּלֶט קִנֵּלֶט [avróm]
4.4 COMPOUND NOUNS

A compound noun comprises a noun joined together with another word (an adjective, verb stem, or another noun) to function as a single new noun. The first member of the compound (which needn’t be a noun) has primary stress. Stress in the second (which must be a noun) is lowered in deference to the compound (→§§2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.4). Gender and plural are determined by the second. There is considerable variation in the written language as to whether compound nouns are written as one word, as two, or hyphenated. Well established and familiar compounds are written as one word (except where one of the two is spelled according to the traditional system). The dynamic tendency that is developing is implicitly linked with pronunciation. Where a well established compound is pronounced as one word, with no internal phonetic pause, it is written as one word. Less well known compounds, and those created at will, are generally written as two words or hyphenated. The longer the compound, the stronger the inclination to write it as two words. There is a clear (if slow-moving) trend away from hyphenation. In the samples that follow, internal phonetic pause is marked by |.

SAMPLES OF COMPOUND NOUNS

auto mechanic [o(y)tomobil | mæk’nænikər] (דָהֲרוֹ) אוטומוביל מַכְּנָנִיקָר
university student [universitét | studént] (דָהֲרוֹ) אונִיוּרְסיטֶטְסְטּוֹנְסְטֶזְסְטָא מְסַדְּנָנְגָּנְטָמ
homework [hémərba’t] (דָהֲרוֹ) הימרבעט
traditional yeshiva student [yēshı’vənəkhər] (דָהֲרוֹ) יֶשֵׁי-בָּהוֹר
teacher training course [lērər | kûrs] (דָהֲרוֹ) לֵרֶר-כֻּרֵס
great-grandfather [ētərzye’də] (דָהֲרוֹ) עֵלֶטֶר-זֵי-דֶת
kindergarten [kïndərɡortn] (דָהֲרוֹ) קינֶרְגַּריטֶנסְט
pickpocket [kĕshənəgānəv] (דָהֲרוֹ) קְשֶנְגַּנְנָע-גָּנְבָּה
registration form [registrátsyə | bîlənk] (דָהֲרוֹ) רְגֵּֽעְנֵּה-סְרְאָפְּסְיַּֽטֵּעְנְגָּנְטָמ בְּלַינְקֶט

title page [shārbiat] (דָהֲרוֹ) שֵּֽעְרֶ-בָּלִיםְשְט
4.4.1 Compounding \( \text{b} \)

Many compounds comprising two nouns have a \( \text{b} \) (often pronounced between [s] and [z]) suffixed to the first to mark compounding and ease pronunciation. The \( \text{b} \) is not a productive compound-forming suffix anymore. It is usually retained where it exists in stock compounds, but some traditional \( \text{b} \) compounds have developed alternate forms without it. Compounding \( \text{b} \) is frequent in instances where the first member is לֶבֶן 'work'; רָבָעֵם 'life'; עָנָבֵי 'people; folk; nation' or a noun ending in suffix ג ו-. The hyphen is usually used in writing, except where the compound is pronounced as a single word, e.g. לְגֵן רָבָעֵם [lantsman] 'compatriot' (lit. 'land man'). Compounding \( \text{b} \) is encountered extensively in journalistic prose, and is especially prominent in political and scientific terminology of the twentieth century.

**SAMPLES OF COMPOUNDING \( \text{b} \)**

- development opportunities רְבָעֵמ וְלֶבֶן (lit. 'work plan')
- plan of action רְוֹעֵמ (lit. 'work plan')
- ministry of education רְוֹעֵמ וְלֶבֶן (lit. 'education')
- question of life or death רְוֹעֵמ וְלֶבֶן-רְוְעֵמ (lit. 'life question')
- folksong רְוְעֵמ וְלֶבֶן
- folklore רְוְעֵמ וְלֶבֶן
- folktales רְוְעֵמ וְלֶבֶן-רְוְעֵמ

4.4.2 Compounding \( \text{b} \)

Many compounds comprising two nouns have a \( \text{b} \) suffixed to the first as a compounding marker. It is, generally speaking, no longer productive but is retained where it exists. It is most consistently used in names of trees.

**SAMPLES OF COMPOUNDING \( \text{b} \)**

- pear tree בָּרָבָעֵם
weekly newspaper מוסף יומון
orange juice מיץ תפירה
fig tree ידנובים
magician (lit. ‘maker of tricks’) דרור (נאם לכמה)

4.4.3 The construct state in the Semitic component

Compound nouns in European languages comprise describer (attribute) plus described (head) as evident in the Yiddish compounds cited. Semitic languages, on the other hand, have the construct state with reverse order: described (head) followed by describer (attribute), corresponding with the use of ‘of’ in European languages. Yiddish preserves a large number of Hebrew and Aramaic constructs as stock phrases. Stress is usually on the second element. Most constructs occur within the Semitic component but there are a few exceptions, e.g. (רות) [סְפֵּרָבָכָה] ‘weekend’. Constructs are hyphenated or written separately.

SAMPLES OF CONSTRUCTS

waste of (valuable) time [בִּטְלָמָן] דעֶר
traditional rabbinical court [בְּצֵדָן] דעֶר
rabbinical court proceeding / trial [דִּין תוֹרָה] דעֶר
spinal cord [קְחֵט אָשֶּדֶּר] דעֶר
a taste of paradise (said esp. of good food) [טַמְגַּנְיָדָן] דעֶר
eclipse of the sun [לְקֵיפָה הָמָּהל] דוֹר
devotion, selflessness, self-sacrifice [מְסִירָס נְפֶשׁ] דוֹר
head of a traditional Talmudic academy [רֹשֶׁה אֱשֶּרְיָה] דוֹר
wild idea; temporary insanity [רְאֶקְעַג שׁנֵה] דוֹר
tuition fee [סקָר לְיַמָּד] דוֹר
4.4.3.1 Productive construct former

The morpheme בָּעַל [baal] forms a large number of Semitic component constructs within Yiddish. Its plural form is בָּעָל [bale]. A number of בָּעַל nouns are however pluralized solely by pluralization of the second element (by Semitic component pluralizing suffixes ב- [em/im] and ב- [es], and occasionally by phonetic system ב-). בָּעַל is in effect a masculine agentive former, but a few constructions have evolved feminine equivalents. Its force derives from the older sense of ‘master of’. It joins naturally only with Semitic component nouns. Constructs formed with בָּעַל may be hyphenated or written separately. Note that the phonetic system is used for בָּאֶלְבּוֹס [baelboes] ‘boss; married man; master of the household’, and its plural בָּאֶלְבּוֹסִים [baelbosim]. The plural using the traditional system (בָּעֲלֵי בָּהִיִּים) may also be encountered. Where the singular בָּעַל is encountered the reference is usually to the learned [baal habayis], as in Ashkenazic Hebrew, referring strictly to ‘master of the household’ in traditional contexts. בָּאֶלְבּוֹס [baelboes] is a traditional alternate to בָּר מִצְוָה [barmitsva] ‘Bar Mitzvah’.

SAMPLES OF CONSTRUCT AGENTIVES WITH בָּעַל

debtor [balkhov] בָּעַל בֹּה [balekhovs] (pl. בָּעַל רְבּוֹת [balekhovsets])
dreamer [balkhelbymes] בָּעַל הַלְבִּימָה [balekhelbymes]
master; artisan [balmelkhe] בָּעַל הַמְאָלָה [balmelkhes] (pl. בָּעַל הַמְאָלָה [balmelkhos])
coachman; simple man [balagole] בָּעַל נְגָלְה [bale gule] (pl. בָּעַל נְגָלְה [bale gule])
man who earns a good living [balparne] בָּעַל פַּרְנֶה [bale parneh] (pl. בָּעַל פַּרְנֶה [bale parneh])
reader of the Torah in synagogue [balkeere] בָּעַל קרְאֵי [bale kere] (pl. בָּעַל קרְאֵי [bale kere])
kindhearted, merciful person [balarakhmin] בָּעַל רָחְמִים [bale rahmis] (pl. בָּעַל רָחְמִים [bale rahmis])
passionate man [baitayven(nik)] בָּעַל תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos] (pl. בָּעַל תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos])
passionate woman [baitayvenitsa] בָּעַל תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos] (pl. בָּעַל תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos])
practical person [baitaknes] תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos] (pl. תָּאוּת (נַכּוּס) [bale tautos])
penitent; returnee to Judaism [batehns] בָּעַל תַּשׁוֹבָה [bale tshovah] (pl. בָּעַל תַּשׁוֹבָה [bale tshovah])
4.4.4 Compound names

Most traditional forenames are double-barrelled. It is important to bear in mind that the second of these is not a ‘middle name’ or ‘middle initial’. The two names are used together as one. Some traditional compound forenames, especially male names deriving from names of animals, comprise the Hebrew and Yiddish for the ‘same’ name, e.g. דרוֹב-בר [dovbér]. דֹּב is the Hebrew for Yiddish בֵּרוֹ cop ‘bear’. Analogously, ארַיָה-לִיב [aryālahv], lit. ‘lion lion’, אֱזֵיבָה-זַיוָּה [tsvinhirsh], lit. ‘deer deer’ and זְוָּה-זָּיוָּה [zə(ɣ)əv疣], lit. ‘wolf wolf’. The second of the two compounded names is stressed. The individuals so known formally would be known to their friends and relatives by the diminutives of the second (Yiddish) name alone — לֶיבֶל (or בַּער) (or בַּער) (or דַּוֶּל) (or דַּוֶּל) and לוּנָּל (or דַּוֶּל) (or דַּוֶּל) (or דַּוֶּל). Cf. 885.8.1, 5.14.2, 5.15.1.2 on traditional names.

SAMPLES OF MALE COMPOUND NAMES

Arn-Vēlvi Mayer-von-Gott
Hirshe-Dōvīdd Yose-Bēr
Moyshe-Kalmēn Shloyme-Zalmen

SAMPLES OF FEMALE COMPOUND NAMES

Blume-Dīshe Bulem-von-Dīshe
Khaye-Sōre Hazīg von-Dīshe
Mashē-Dvōyre Maskhūt-von-Dīshe
Sīme-Lēye Simhe-lamēn
5 NOUN PHRASES

5.0 OVERVIEW
A noun phrase is a noun alone or with its articles and/or adjectives. Noun phrases occur in three cases (nominative, accusative and dative) determined by the noun phrase's relation to the verb phrase. It is the articles and adjectives within the noun phrase that regularly inflect for case and for gender. With a few easily defined exceptions, Yiddish nouns themselves do not inflect.

5.1 CASE
Case is the situation of the noun phrase relative to the verb phrase. Because the singular noun itself does not usually inflect, its case is evident from its articles and adjectives, which do. While case exists abstractly across the board, its morphological effects are evident only in the singular. In the plural, the definite article is always "ו", and the adjective ending always "ו", irrespective of case or gender.

5.1.1 Nominative (subject)
Nominative is the situation of the noun phrase as subject of a sentence. The noun phrase in nominative is not dominated by any verb phrase. It simply
exists, or itself dominates a verb phrase.

SAMPLES OF NOUN PHRASES IN NOMINATIVE

The fellow is here  דוער בחוץ
The woman is reading  רבי כותרה לענשה
The house is pretty  דאש הבית איזי שיש

5.1.2 Accusative (verbal object)

Accusative is the situation of the noun phrase as the direct object of a verb.

SAMPLES OF NOUN PHRASES IN ACCUSATIVE

I see the fellow  אני צוע ודימע בחוץ
I'm photographing the woman  אני צוע אפשאןין אל פוריה
I'm repairing the house  אני צועעריקס דאש והוד

5.1.3 Dative (prepositional object)

Dative is the situation of the noun phrase as the direct object of any preposition (and hence, frequently, the indirect object of a verb).

SAMPLES OF NOUN PHRASES IN DATIVE

I'm speaking to the fellow  איש רעש מת מיט דוער בחוץ
I'm running from the girl  איש לועי גוף מיט מיט מיט
I'm looking at the house  איש קוק אוצי [af] דוער והוד

5.1.3.1 Dative with understood preposition

A number of verbs, most frequently with a human object, impose dative upon their noun phrase, although no preposition appears. These are instances of the understood preposition. There is no preposition to mediate between verb phrase and noun phrase, but the action of the verb nevertheless does not
strike’ its object directly or physically. The most frequent prepositions left out and understood are ‘to’ and ‘for’. Depending on its use in a sentence, one and the same verb may impose accusative or dative (with understood preposition). Cf. e.g. accusative ‘I’m sending her to California’ vs. dative ‘I’m sending her a letter’ (understood preposition רָאָל); accusative ‘Find me!’ vs. dative ‘Find me a room’ (understood preposition רָאָל). On accusative and dative pronouns → §§ 6.1.2 – 6.1.3.

**SAMPLES OF THE USE OF DATIVE WITH UNDERSTOOD PREPOSITION**

I’m writing (to) the fellow אֵין שְׁרֵבֶץ דַּעְתִּב בְּאוֹרָה
I’ll tell the woman what I know אֵין חַיָּלֶנָה דַעְתִּב בְּאוֹרָה חָכָם אֵין חַיָּלֶנָה

**VERBS THAT MAY IMPOSE DATIVE WITHOUT A PREPOSITION**

believing (somebody) [gléybm]
giving (something to somebody) [gébm]
telling; recount (to somebody) [rqérzatílm]
snowing (to somebody) [rítíz]
saying; telling [rítíz]
telephoning [gléybm]
hinting; alluding [me·rá·mèz]
answering; replying (to somebody) [núŋ nèvm’ír]
sending (to somebody) [šíy’k]
writing (to somebody) [šrāybm]

5.1.3.2 לְעָרֹגֵן and לְעָרֹגֵן ‘ask (a question)’ and ‘teach’ (→ §7.3.2.1) may take accusative, e.g. לְעָרֹגֵן ‘Ask her (familiar)’ and לְעָרֹגֵן ‘Teach her (formal)’. Both may be replaced by alternate forms with prepositions (that
5.2 INDEFINITE ARTICLES
The indefinite article, 'a(n)', which precedes the noun, is always singular. It is א with nouns beginning with a consonant, and ע with nouns beginning with a vowel, hence א 'a question' vs. ע 'an answer'. The indefinite article does not inflect for case or gender.

5.3 SINGULAR DEFINITE ARTICLES
The singular definite article inflects for the gender (→ §4.1) and case (→ §5.1) of its noun.

5.3.1 Singular definite articles in nominative
The singular definite article 'the' has the following forms in nominative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masculine:</td>
<td>דָָּרְעָּה</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine:</td>
<td>רֵו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral:</td>
<td>דָָּאָּה</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR DEFINITE ARTICLES IN NOMINATIVE
The student (m.) is here דָָּאָּה סטודנטֶאֶה אָּלֶה דָָּא.
5.3.2 Singular definite articles in accusative:
only masculine inflects

The masculine singular definite article inflects in accusative. Feminine and neutral are identical with their nominative forms.

masculine: רע"ו → רע
feminine: ר
neutral: דאש

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR DEFINITE ARTICLES IN ACCUSATIVE
I see the student (m.) אלך邕 דעמ סかどうמשמ
I see the student (f.) אלך邕 דעמ סimoreנמוקע
I see the house אלך邕 דאש ויהי

5.3.3 Singular definite articles in dative:
all three inflect

masculine: רע"ו → דער
feminine: דער → דער
neutral: רע"ו → דאש

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR DEFINITE ARTICLES IN DATIVE
I’m looking at the student (m.) אלך邕 אופיש דעמש סimoreנמש
I'm looking at the student (f.)

I'm looking at the house

5.3.3.1 Contraction of prepositions with דע, the masculine and neutral definite article in dative, contracts with a number of prepositions to form a single word. These contracted forms are acceptable in all styles, including the most formal.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{אֱלֹ דְעָ} & \rightarrow \text{אינֶו} \quad \text{‘on / to the’} \\
\text{אֱלֹ דְעָ} & \rightarrow \text{אוֹסְעָ} \quad \text{‘under the’} \\
\text{אֱלֹ דְעָ} & \rightarrow \text{אָדָ} \quad \text{‘over the’} \\
\text{אֱלֹ דְעָ} & \rightarrow \text{אָבָא} \quad \text{‘in the’} \\
\text{אֱלֹ דְעָ} & \rightarrow \text{אָבָא} \quad \text{‘without the’} \\
\text{בֶּדָי} & \rightarrow \text{בֶּי} \quad \text{‘at the’} \quad (\rightarrow \text{Si5.1)} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{בֶּי} \quad \text{‘until the’} \quad (\text{N.E. var. בֶּי}) \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{דָּע} \quad \text{‘through the’} \quad (\text{N.E. var. דָּע}) \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{לְמִי} \quad \text{‘according to the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{לְמִי} \quad \text{‘with the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{מִי} \quad \text{‘after the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{בָּאֶל} \quad \text{‘before / for the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{בָּאֶל} \quad \text{‘from / of the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{בָּאֶל} \quad \text{‘because of the’} \\
\text{דָּע} & \rightarrow \text{בָּאֶל} \quad \text{‘to the’}
\end{align*}
\]

5.3.3.2 Prepositions without definite articles

The masculine and neutral definite articles may be omitted with the prepositions לְנִבְּנָג ‘in; to’, לְנִבְּנָג ‘from’ and לְנִבְּנָג ‘near’, if no adjective intervenes between the preposition and the noun that is its object. The feminine definite article is usually retained, e.g. לְנִבְּנָג
near the station’ but it too may be omitted with גן (ר) ‘street’ and (ר) ‘city’.

SAMPLES OF לקים, לא, ני, נים AND LUTEל provoke WITHOUT DEFINITE ARTICLES
Let’s meet in the building (= [binyen] [binyen] בִּנְיֵן בֵּית [binyen] בֵּית
It’s not far from the house (דָּרָאָז רָז) (ר) דָּרָאָז רָז
It’s wet in the street (ר) מָצָא מֶצֶא מָצָא

5.4 PLURAL DEFINITE ARTICLES
The plural definite article is always ד.

SAMPLES OF PLURAL DEFINITE ARTICLES
אֶךֶּ֨ל וְּלֶבֶן מְלָאַלֶּהֶנֶּה
The students (f.) are here דָּרָאָז מְלָאַלֶּהֶנֶּה דָּרָאָז דָּרָאָז
I’m looking at the houses אֶךֶּ֨ל וְּלֶבֶן מְלָאַלֶּהֶנֶּה

5.5 SINGULAR ADJECTIVES
Singular adjectives inflect for the case and gender of the noun they modify.
They are unaffected by articles, except for the neutral indefinite which loses its inflection when used with an indefinite article in nominative and accusative. It optionally loses its inflection in dative.

5.5.1 Singular adjectives in nominative
Endings are ל- in masculine and נ- in feminine and neutral definite. There is no ending in neutral indefinite. Model adjective is מספר ‘good’. Definite and
indefinite articles are supplied to illustrate agreement.

masculine definite: דֶּשֶׁנֶּגֶטֶר
masculine indefinite: אֶגֶטֶר
feminine definite: דֶּשֶׁנֶּג
feminine indefinite: אֶג
eutral definite: דֶּשֶׁנ
neutral indefinite: אֶג

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR ADJECTIVES IN NOMINATIVE

masculine
The good student (m.) is here דֶּשֶׁנֶּגֶטֶר טָמֶדֶרֶנֶגֶטֶר אָא דוֹשֶׁנ
A good student (m.) is here אֶגֶטֶר טָמֶדֶרֶנֶגֶטֶר אָא דוֹשֶׁנ

feminine
The good student (f.) is here דֶּשֶׁנֶּגֶטֶר טָמֶדֶרֶנֶגֶטֶר אָא דוֹשֶׁנ
A good student (f.) is here אֶגֶטֶר טָמֶדֶרֶנֶגֶטֶר אָא דוֹשֶׁנ

neutral
The good house is pretty דֶּשֶׁנֶּגֶטֶר הוֹיִי אָא דוֹשֶׁנ
A good house is pretty אֶגֶטֶר הוֹיִי אָא דוֹשֶׁנ

5.5.2 Singular adjectives in accusative:
only masculine inflects
The masculine ending, -מ, inflects to מ. Feminine and neutral remain uninflected. Model adjective is דוֹשֶׁנ ‘good’. Definite and indefinite articles are supplied to illustrate agreement.
masculine definite: דעוּ נ滅ֶר
masculine indefinite: נ滅ֶר
feminine definite: נמע
feminine indefinite: נמע
neutral definite: נמע
neutral indefinite: נמע

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR ADJECTIVES IN ACCUSATIVE

masculine
I see the good student (m.) אני זעִי דעוּ נמעֶר ספוּרַדנמע
I see a good student (m.) אני זעִי נמעֶר ספוּרַדנמע

feminine
I see the good student (f.) אני זעי דעו נמע ספוורנדעמע
I see a good student (f.) אני זעי נמע ספוורנדעמע

neutral
I see the good house אני זעי דעו נמע נאני זעי
I see a good house אני זעי נמע נאני זעי

5.5.3 Singular adjectives in dative:
all three inflect

All three genders inflect, but inflection is optional for the neutral indefinite. Model adjective is זעִי good. Definite and indefinite articles are supplied to illustrate agreement.

masculine definite: דעו נמער
masculine indefinite: נמער

feminine definite: דְּרֵע נותֶה → רְעַ נותֶה
feminine indefinite: א נותֶה → א נותֶה
neutral definite: דְּרֵס נותֶה → רְסַ נותֶה
neutral indefinite: א נותֶה → א נותֶה

SAMPLES OF SINGULAR ADJECTIVES IN DATIVE

masculine
I'm looking at the good student (m.) [דְּרוּ נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה] נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה
I'm looking at a good student (m.) נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה

feminine
I'm looking at the good student (f.) נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה
I'm looking at a good student (f.) נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה

neutral
I'm looking at the good house נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה
I'm looking at a good house נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה נוֹתֶה מְמוּדִיתָה

5.5.4 Variants of inflected adjective ending -ן-

The masculine and neutral adjective ending -ן- has several variants, depending on how the adjective stem ends. Following a or a stressed vowel or diphthong, it is -ן- (e.g. 'warm' → בּוּר, 'blue' → בּוּלְו). Following a or a stressed vowel, it is -ן- (e.g. 'beautiful' → בּוּלוּ). The adjective בּוּן 'new' anomalously takes שְּבֵן, hence בּוּן. Note that -ן- is retained in inflected adjective endings following בּוּן and שְּבֵן. Cf. §2.2.9.

5.5.5 Inflected adjectives in letter formulas

The three alternative salutations are inflecting adjectives. They are
(lit. 'dear') and לְיוֹבָעַר (lit. 'beloved') for friendly letters, and [kｈ̪̣̬̃וֹסֵהוֹן] (lit. 'esteemed; respected') for more formal letters. The most common is לְוֹרֶד. The לְ- ending is used for masculine, the לְ- ending for feminine and plural. Preposition מֵּית 'with' usually launches the closing greeting, e.g. מֵּית אָדָמֵי 'with friendship'. Any adjectives in the closing greeting inflect as usual, e.g. מֵּית אָדָמֵי 'with kind (lit. 'friendly') regards', and its singular counterpart מֵּית אָדָמה 'with kindness'. Possessive pronouns (→ §6.2.1.1) are used for signing off – 'Your (familiar)' and 'your (formal)'. On dating letters → §13.3.4.

SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVAL SALUTATIONS

Dear Debbie מֵּית עבָּר

Dear Alex מֵּית אָלָבָה
dar Colleagues מֵּית הַכַּוְּלָה
dar Editor מֵּית הַרְעָבָה

5.6 PLURAL ADJECTIVES

The plural adjective ending is ל- in all cases and genders.

SAMPLES OF PLURAL ADJECTIVES

I'm looking at the good students (m.) אַזְּכֵּרים כְּתַבְּתִים וְיַעֲשֶׂהָ עָמַדָּנִים

The good students (f.) are here רְיַע נוּשֵׂי מְסַדִּידֲנְתֶּם יַעֲשֶׂהָ דָּא
d see the good houses שְׁיִמְשׁ עַשֶּׁה נוּשֶּׁי הַצִּיוֹרִים

5.7 PREDICATE ADJECTIVES

Predicate adjectives describe their noun from a greater distance than the
more frequently used attributive adjectives. They follow מֵאָרְיָא ‘is’ and מֵאָרְיָא ‘are’ or other verbs of being (e.g. מֵאָרְיָא ‘remain’, מֵאָרְיָא ‘stand’). They occur only in nominative.

5.7.1 Singular predicate adjectives without an article
Singular predicate adjectives without an article are uninflected. The adjective stem appears on its own. Whether the noun has a definite or indefinite article does not affect the predicate adjective. The construction may be used to make a general statement.

SAMPLIES OF THE PREDICATE ADJECTIVE WITHOUT AN ARTICLE

The table is white רְנוּר תֶּשׁ אֱלִיזָא וְזֵאָז
The story is long דְּרוּת מחָשָה לַאִיחָא
The house is new דְּרוּת הוּיָא אֱלִיזָא בֵּי
A forest is beautiful (= Forests are beautiful) אֱלִיזָא שֶׁזָּא אָזָא שֶׁזָּא

5.7.2 Singular predicate adjectives with indefinite article
Predicate adjectives with the indefinite article agree with their nouns as adjectives generally do (→ §5.5) except for the neutral indefinite which attracts suffix בֵּי. They usually modify nouns that themselves have a definite article. Repetition of that definite article with the predicate adjective would endow the construction with comparative force (→ §5.10.2). Model adjective is בֶּזָּה ‘good’. Indefinite articles are supplied.

masculine: בֶּזָּה גֶּשָּׁא
feminine: בֶּזָּה גֶּשָּׁא
neutral: בֶּזָּה גֶּשָּׁא
5.7.3 Plural predicate adjectives

Plural predicate adjectives may be uninflected. Alternatively, they may have the plural ָו-ending which has the force of English ‘ones’ used to avoid repeating a noun. Plural predicate adjectives tend to have demonstrative force and the definite article preceding their nouns is often best translated ‘these’ (→ §6.3).

**SAMPLES OF PLURAL PREDICATE ADJECTIVES**

**masculine**

The tables are white

 inversión לָאָבָנָה

The tables are white ones

 inversión לָאָבָנָה

**feminine**

The stories are long

 inversión לָנָאָבָנָה

The stories are long ones

 inversión לָנָאָבָנָה

**neutral**

The houses are new

はある增资 לָאָבָנָה

The houses are new ones

はある增资 לָאָבָנָה

5.8 ADJECTIVES FOLLOWING THE NOUN

Adjectives may follow the noun with an article intervening (resulting in repetition of the article). They inflect as do normal attributive adjectives (→ §5.5). The construction is particularly prominent in poetry, folktales and
certain narrative styles.

SAMPLES OF USE OF ADJECTIVES FOLLOWING THE NOUN
An old tree stood over here
I saw the old tree

5.8.1 Adjectives following the noun as proper names
In East European villages, an adjective with definite article describing a person, with definite article, following the name, was on occasion used as a name by which an individual was known, e.g. Yosli the redhead, Shmuel-Yankl the school teacher (from teacher in a traditional [khéyder] or primary school'). A number of figures from ancient Jewish history, mostly biblical, are known in Yiddish by their traditional Hebrew names following the same pattern, i.e. name plus descriptive title. Cf. §§4.4.4, 5.14.2, 5.15.12 on traditional names.

SAMPLES OF TRADITIONAL NAMES FROM ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY

Adam (lit. ‘Adam the First’) [ nods horishn]
Abraham (lit. ‘Abraham our Father’) [ avróm ovín]
Moses (lit. ‘Moses our Teacher’) [ mòyshe rabéynu]
Deborah (lit. ‘Deborah the Prophetess’) [ dvôrye hanévië]
Samson (lit. ‘Samson the Strong Man’) [ shimshn hagîbër]
David (lit. ‘David the King’) [ dòvid haméylokh]
Solomon (lit. ‘Solomon the King’) [ shlòy maméylokh]
Elijah (lit. ‘Elijah the Prophet’) [ eyliôhu hanôvi]
Isaiah (lit. ‘Isaiah the Prophet’) [ yəshàyë hanôvi]
Jeremiah (lit. ‘Jeremiah the Prophet’) [ yirmiyôhu hanôvi]
Esther (lit. ‘Esther the Queen’) [ èstër hamálkë]
5.9 ADJECTIVE QUANTIFIERS

The major adjective quantifiers are ביטל ‘a little; slightly’, נאנס ‘quite; rather; pretty’ and ישוע ‘very’.

5.9.1 ביטל

‘a little; slightly’ immediately precedes uninflected predicate adjectives. Before predicate adjectives with the indefinite article, it precedes the indefinite article. Cf §6.4.6 on partitive pronoun ביטל.

SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVE QUANTIFIER ביטל

The film is slightly boring
The film is a slightly boring one
His films are slightly boring

5.9.2 נאנס

‘quite; rather; pretty’ immediately precedes attributive and predicate adjectives. It follows the indefinite article.

SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVE QUANTIFIER נאנס

They’re showing quite a boring film
The film is quite boring
The film is quite a boring one
His films are quite boring
5.9.3

[צ'יר / צ'יר / צ'יר] 'very' immediately precedes attributive and predicate adjectives. When quantify an attributive adjective with the indefinite article, it may precede or follow the indefinite article (א = צ'יר - צ'יר). When it quantifies a predicate adjective with the indefinite article, צ'יר is generally used.

**SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVE QUANTIFIER צ'יר**

ארק הкажет ננועי רטמ צ'יר נודנעמ פילמ
The film is very boring

דער פילם צ'יר נודנעמ

His films are very boring

צ'יר שיטות צ'יר נודנעמ פילמ

They’re showing a very boring film

דרער פילם צ'יר צ'יר נודנעמ

The film is a very boring one

5.10  COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES

The comparative is formed by suffixing ייר to the adjective stem. Normal adjective endings are then suffixed to the ייר. Many comparatives have concomitant vowel changes, frequently נ/ני/ני → יין and נ → י, which must be learned with the relevant adjective. Note the special comparatives 'good' → 'better', 'שליילמש' 'bad' → 'worse'. There are four comparative link words corresponding with 'than' – conjunctions וי and אניז and link which leave the compared noun phrase that follows them in nominative, and prepositions פאר and פאר which place it in dative (→ 85.5.3).

**SAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES**

ניינעקרפ איז נודנעמ צ'יר סק

New York is larger than many other cities

(cf. סק 'large')
The younger sister is cleverer than the older one
(cf. *young*, *clever*, *old*)

The expensive photographs are prettier than the cheap ones
(cf. *pretty*)

You can have more faith in a newer car
(cf. *new*)

5.10.1 Comparative predicate adjectives

Comparative predicate adjectives are formed by using the definite article after וְזַי 'is' or זְבַע 'are' (or another verb of being). They inflect as subject adjectives generally (→§ 5.1). Comparative affix -וּר- appears between the comparative stem and the appropriate inflectional ending.

**SAMPLES OF COMPARATIVE PREDICATE ADJECTIVES**

The old table is the nicer one

The big city is the more beautiful one

The new house is the smaller one

5.10.2 Predicate base adjectives with comparative force

Repetition of the definite article with any predicate adjective tends to give
the adjective comparative force (in contrast to the indefinite article → §5.7.2). The pattern of inflection follows attributive adjectives (→ §5.5.1).

**SAMPLES OF PREDICATE BASE ADJECTIVES WITH COMPARATIVE FORCE**

The old table is the nice one

The big city is the beautiful one

The new house is the small one

**5.11 SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES**

The superlative is formed by suffixing סַכְלָה to the adjective stem. The usual adjective endings are then suffixed to the סַכְלָה sequence. Superlatives are generally processed by the same ס / ס / ריו → ע and 3 → ס vowel changes as their corresponding comparatives. These vowel changes must be learned along with each of the adjectives affected. Note the special superlatives 'good' → *בֵּן הָלָבֶב* - 'best', *בֵּן הָלָבֶב* - 'bad' → [erkst] 'worst'.

**SAMPLES OF SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES**

_new York times_ איז דווער והופטסניר בֵּן קי דווער חועלמ

New Yorkers still say that the Empire State Building is the tallest building in

the world

(cf. הרו"ח, 'tall; high')

ואז דווער ריו לָעָבָבָאָבָא

This is the longest story in the book

(cf. long’
He is the most foolish of them all
(c.f. נאורי, "foolish")

She went to her most beloved aunt
(c.f. לְּבָלוֹד, "beloved")

5.11.1 Superlative predicate adjectives
Superlative predicate adjectives are formed by using the definite article after 'is' or 'are'. They inflect as nominative adjectives generally (→ §5.5.1). The superlative affix -טס- appears between the comparative (/superlative) stem and the appropriate inflectional ending. They offer an alternative to attributive superlatives.

SAMPLES OF SUPERLATIVE PREDICATE ADJECTIVES
The old table is the nicest one
The big city is the most beautiful one
The new house is the smallest one

5.11.2 Superlative intensifier סאמה
The superlative intensifier סאמה [sáma] 'very (-st)', immediately precedes the superlative. סאמה does not inflect.

SAMPLES OF SUPERLATIVE INTENSIFIER סאמה
This is your (familiar) very best idea
You have the most beautiful pictures
They are the very greatest fools
5.12 SPECIAL TYPES OF ADJECTIVES

5.12.1 Invariant adjectives
Adjectives formed by suffixation of ר- to the names of cities and towns (and occasionally countries) do not inflect. They retain the ר- ending in all cases, numbers and genders. Internal modifications of the stem are encountered in the names of some culturally central cities. In addition to their adjectival use, they all double as agentives denoting a person from the named place. As agentives they attract the feminizing suffix מ- (§ 3.2.3, 4.1.2.3).

SAMPLES OF INVARIANT ADJECTIVES

American אָמֶּרִיטִיִּי
of / from Oxford אָקְסְפָּטִיִּי
of / from Warsaw וָסַרְשִׁליִּי
cf. Warsaw וָסַרְשִׁליִּי
of / from Vilna וְיֵילְנִי
of / from Jerusalem [yərəsholáymer] יְרוֹשְׁלוֹמִיִּי
(cf. Jerusalem [yərəsholáyim] יְרוֹשְׁלוֹמִי)
of / from Montreal מַנְטְנֵבִיִּי
of / from Melbourne מֶלוֹבִּיִּי
of / from New York נֵיו-יַּקְוִּי
Parisian פֶּרֶזִי
of / from Cracow קרָצַקְוִּי (cf. Cracow קרָצַקְוִּי)
of / from Tel Aviv טֶל-אָבִיוֹבִיִּי

5.12.2 Adjectives from names of substances
Adjectives derived from names of traditionally known substances frequently attract suffix ר- to which the appropriate adjective endings are further
suffixed. Note that גְּדֶל הָעִנֵּשׁ ‘gold’ attracts a נ- alone, hencephalt (§5.12.3).

**SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVES FROM NAMES OF SUBSTANCES WITH SUFFIX -רָבַּר**

(of) iron - אַלְמָן (cf. מַטִּיר ‘iron’)  
(of) glass - ולֶאַגַּר (cf. מַטֵּיר ‘glass’)  
wooden - הָאָגֵל (cf. מַטֵּיר ‘wood’)  
(of) copper - קֹפֵר (cf. מַטֵּיר ‘copper’)

**SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ADJECTIVES DERIVED FROM NAMES OF SUBSTANCES**

I have two wooden boxes.

Don’t break the glass table.

**5.12.3 ADJECTIVES WITH FINAL SYLLABIC -ן**

Adjectives with a base form ending in syllabic -ן (§2.2.9) replace the syllabic -ן with נ- in inflected forms (other than predicate indefinite with ending נ- → §5.7.2), e.g. base form נָבֶן [n̩b̪n] ‘open’ vs. masculine singular accusative/dative נָבֶן [n̩b̪n], plural נָבֶנִים [n̩b̪nim]; base form הָגֵדֶל -ן [g̩dl̩n] ‘golden’ vs. masculine singular accusative/dative הָגֵדֶלִים [g̩dl̩lim], plural הָגֵדֶלִים [g̩dl̩lim].

**5.13 DIMINUTIVES OF ADJECTIVES**

There are two suffixes by which adjectives are diminutivized. One of these, לְנַלְכָּל-, reduces the force of the adjective, and has a number of nuances. The second, קֶנִי-, applies affection and sentimentality. Unlike diminutives of nouns (§4.3), diminutives of adjectives do not undergo internal vowel shifts.
5.13.1 Adjunctive diminutive in לְנַעַר

The adjective diminutive in לְנַעַר- mitigates the force of the base adjective, and is often used to soften a stark statement or mitigate an insult. It derives from the adverb diminutive in לְנַעַר- (→ §10.5). לְנַעַר- usually occurs with monosyllabic adjective stems. The diminutized adjective is pronounced slowly in falsetto. It is often accompanied by a gentle forward and downward thrust of the head and the opened palm of one hand, with optional horizontal vibration of the same hand and its fingers, and a slight smile. Cf. §10.5 on diminutives of adverbs.

SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVE DIMINUTIVE לְנַעַר-

rather difficult; delicate שָׁוֶה לְנַעַר (from שָׁוֶה, ‘difficult’) somewhat chilly; not very cold כָּפָל לְנַעַר (from כָּפָל, ‘cold’) somewhat not יָוֶה לְנַעַר (from יָוֶה, ‘not’)
somewhat ugly [mēsēkh] מֵיאוֹס לְנַעַר (from מֵיאוֹס, ‘ugly’)

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ADJECTIVE DIMINUTIVE לְנַעַר-

It’s a rather delicate matter סֵאֵד יָנֵלָנָנוּר גָהֵךְ It’s a somewhat chilly day סֵאֵד יָנֵלָנָנוּר מָפָנִים It’s a somewhat not day סֵאֵד יָוֶה יָנֵלָנָנוּר מָפָנִים Her boyfriend is not exactly handsome אֵיד חַבְר גָהֵךְ מֵיאוֹס לְנַעַר

5.13.2 Adjunctive diminutive in נָה

The adjunctive diminutive נָה- to which normal adjective endings are suffixed, marks warmth, affection and sentimentality. Its usage parallels the second diminutive of nouns in לְנַעַר- (→ §4.3.5). The adjective נָה ‘old’, which is often personified to refer informally and affectionately to an elderly person, takes נָה-, e.g. רַעֲר נָהָסָנוּר קֹומָה ‘The old chap is coming’.
SAMPLES OF ADJECTIVE DIMINUTIVES IN -ק
whiteividטקן (from יִבְשָׂם ‘white’)
little קִנָּה (from קִנַּה ‘little’)
beautiful שִׁיאר (from שֵׁי ‘beautiful’)

5.14 NOUNS THAT INFLECT FOR CASE

A minority of nouns, nearly all of them referring to people, may inflect for one or both of the objective cases. They attract inflectional ending י- (ן- following נ, ג, a stressed vowel or diphthong, or the sequences ל, ק or consonant plus י). They fall into two categories: intimate nouns and proper names. Personal pronouns inflect internally rather than by suffixation (→ §§6.1.2 – 6.1.3).

5.14.1 Intimate nouns

The intimate nouns are from family and traditional life.

5.14.1.1 Masculine intimate nouns

Masculine intimate nouns are inflected in both accusative and dative. Note that inflection for רומ and נוּנָם is optional.

שָׁאֵב ‘father’ → רומ
זִיוֹד ‘grandfather’ → רומ
יִד ‘Jew; fellow; guy’ (→ רומ)
נוֹנָם ‘person; fellow; human’ (→ רומ)

כרכוּ תּוּנָם ‘(traditional) school teacher; Chassidic rebbe’ → רומ [רֶבֶּם]
SAMPLES OF INFLECTED MASCULINE INTIMATE NOUNS

Lloyd George knows my father ליזד ג'ורג' ק飔 נואס דאטרמע דאצ'ק
I'm speaking with grandfather איך רואד מיטן דיצ'ק
Did you see that fellow? הָפָּצָה נְצוֹעֵן דַּוָּצָה מַנְצָצָה?
Have you been to see the rebbe? בִּיסְסָה נְצוֹעֵן בִּיסְסָה רְבּוּכְוָה?

5.14.1.2 Feminine intimate nouns

Feminine intimate nouns are inflected in dative. They optionally inflect in accusative. Inflection of בּוֹרָה is optional even in dative.

‘mother’ → בּוֹרָה ‘grandmother’ → בּוֹרָה בּוֹרָה [bɔm]
‘aunt’ → בּוֹרָה

SAMPLES OF INFLECTED FEMININE INTIMATE NOUNS

Are you going to (see) mother? נִיְסָת או דיֵר מְדוֹר מְדָדוּ?
Have you heard from grandmother? חָפָּה נְצוֹעֵן פוֹח דַּוָּצָה בּוֹרָה?
I’m writing to my aunt אלָק שְּרִיְבָב דַּוָּצָה מְדוֹר מְדָדוּ

5.14.1.3 Neutral intimate הַדָּדוּ

The one surviving neutral inflecting noun is הַדָּדוּ ‘heart’ which inflects to הוּרֵס in dative. Inflection signals that הַדָּדוּ is being used in its metaphorical sense, e.g. הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס ‘at heart’, הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס ‘to take to heart’ [afn] הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס ‘depressed’ (lit. ‘heavy on the heart’), הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס ‘devastating shock; blow to the ego’ (lit. ‘stab in the heart’). The absence of inflection in dative signals that ‘heart’ is being used in a more strictly physical sense, e.g. הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס הוּרֵס ‘The patient is suffering heart pain’.
5.14.2 Proper names
A single proper name, whether forename or surname, may inflect for either subjective case. Where both names are used, only the surname inflects. מֶשֶׁשֶׁקֶחַ [mēshēkēkh] ‘Messiah’ is a proper name in Yiddish and therefore inflects to מֶשֶׁשֶׁקֶח [mēshēkēkh]. Analogously, biblical names comprising name plus descriptive title (→ §5.8.1) are treated as single names and it is therefore the descriptive title that inflects, e.g. אלִיָּיו הָנָוָיו [eyliōhu hanōvi] ‘Elijah the Prophet’ → אלִיָּיו הָנָוָיו [eyliōhu hanōvi]. Cf. §§4.4.4, 5.15.1.2 on traditional Yiddish names.

SAMPLES OF INFLECTIONS OF PROPER NAMES

בֵּרוּלִי (m.) → בְּרֵי [bērlēn]
מֵיסֶבֲעַלְעַנְלַמ [tāybalēn] → לֶיְנַ (f.) → לֶיְנַ [lēyen]
לה לֶיְנַ (f.) → לֶיְנַ [lēyen]
כָּלְקַמְנַ (m.) → כָּלְקַמְנַ [kālēmēn]
מַסְקַפַּקַפַּפַּפַּפַּפַּפַּפ [mōskovitshn] → נְשָׁלַה הָרוּבִּין [shōyme rūbīn]
rooted in the language is encountered in formal styles as a ‘supergrammatical’ feature, and in the opinion of some, a pedantic one. In informal styles, inflection of non-traditional names may be used for humorous effect.

**SAMPLES OF INFLECTIONS OF NON-TRADITIONAL PROPER NAMES**

шаךק בורית ‘Chuck Berry’ → שאריך בורית
לודז ידנשברזישט ‘Lloyd George’ → לודז ידנשברזישט
קדנין ‘Nadine’ → קדנין
ניקסן ‘Nixon’ → ניקסן

**5.15 POSSESSIVES**

Possession by humans is marked by suffixation of the possessive ending -ן. Possession by nonhumans (institutions, abstract notions, etc.) is generally expressed by the preposition יָדַע.

**5.15.1 Human possessors**

Possession by humans is marked by suffixation of -ן (usually pronounced between [s] and [z]), to the possessor’s name (or an agentive noun) e.g. מנדלסטון ‘Mendele’s style’. If the possessor has a definite article, the article is inflected for dative (→ 85.1.3), e.g. דִּיקְרֶעַל סָפָר ‘the fireman’s daughter’, דִּיקְרֶעַל לַנוּרָ🎰 ‘the teacher’s (f.) room’, דִּיקְרֶעַל קָרְבָּן ‘the child’s toy’. The understood preposition is יָדַע, denoting relation to the possessor. If the name or agentive ends in one of the sibilants ,  צ,  ש, the suffix is סָטָ-, e.g. מַהֲרָוְלֶיצָה ‘Horowitz’s hat’, דִּיקְרֶעַל הָאָבִי ‘the boss’s address’. The older usage of an
apostrophe before possessive ב is still encountered.

5.15.1.1 **Intimate nouns as human possessors**

Possessives of the masculine intimate nouns מְנַעַם, מַעְעַם, מַעְעַע, מְנַעַע, and רְבֵּי (\(\rightarrow\) §5.14.1.1) are formed by adding possessive ב to the inflected │- form of each (רְבֵּי מְנַעַם, מְנַעַע מַעְעַע, מַעְעַע מַעְעַע, מְנַעַע מְנַעַע) (רְבֵּי מְנַעַם). The resulting possessives are רְבֵּי מְנַעַם מַעְעַע, מְנַעַע מַעְעַע, מְנַעַע מַעְעַע, מְנַעַע מְנַעַע [רְבֵּן צַעְנַע] (רְבֵּן צַעְנַע).

5.15.1.2 **Possessives as proper names**

In traditional Yiddish-speaking communities, people are often known by their forenames followed by the possessive of one of their parents' forenames. Alternatively, the possessive of the agentive of a parent's profession may be used. The construction, which has the force of 'son of' and 'daughter of', is well represented in Yiddish literature, both as pen names of authors and in names of major works. Cf. §§4.4.4, 5.8.1, 5.14.2 on traditional names.

**SAMPLES OF POSSESSIVES FORMING PROPER NAMES**

(from יִזְקִיק בְּרֵשִׁית גֶּבְעָן)

Yitskhok Bashévis 'Isaac son of Bath-Sheba'
(Isaac Bashevis Singer)

egaletsy pesi dym hodesh

Motl Péysë-dem-kházns ('Motl son of the Cantor Peyse')
(name of book by Sholem Aleichem)

שלום ר', זיימט

Shloyme Reb Kháim ('Solomon son of Chaim')
(name of book by Méndele Móykhâr Sfórim)
5.15.2 Nonhuman possessors

Possession by nonhumans is generally marked by explicit use of the preposition 'of', e.g. 'of the founder of the organization', 'of the city's character'.

(continued on next page)
6 Pronouns

6.0 Overview
There are four types of pronouns — personal, possessive, demonstrative and partitive.

6.1 Personal Pronouns
Personal pronouns replace a specifically named or understood person or thing. There are seven singular and three plural personal pronouns. Most pronouns inflect for accusative and for dative. For samples of the use of personal pronouns → §§ 7.5.1–7.5.2, 7.6.1.1–7.6.1.2, 7.7.1–7.7.2, 7.9.1–7.9.2.

6.1.1 Pronouns in nominative

6.1.1.1 Singular

1

אַל
you (familiar) דָּר

אָדָם
you (formal)

עֲרָ
he

שֶׁ
she

פָּרָ
people; one; we

תָּ
it

שָׁנַ
6.1.2 Pronouns in accusative

6.1.2.1 Singular

me מני
you (familiar) דני
you (formal) נני
him [em] מני
her יי
it י

6.1.2.2 Plural

us נני
you נני
them יי

6.1.3 Pronouns in dative

'it' do not occur in dative.

6.1.3.1 Singular

me מני
you (familiar) רני
you (formal) ניि

him [em] ני

her ני

6.1.3.2 Plural

us נוגב

you (familiar) ני

you (formal) ני

them ני

6.1.4 Single objective case in dialectal usage

Minority usage, based upon Northeastern Yiddish, uses the dative forms for both accusative and dative of the singular personal pronouns. Bearing in mind that the plural paradigms are universally identical for both accusative and dative, this usage results in a single objective case for all personal pronouns. Use of the unified objective case, as follows, may be encountered in the literary language.

me ני

you (familiar) ני

you (formal) ני

him [em] ני

her ני

6.1.5 Morphology of the third person indefinite pronoun

The third person human indefinite may occur in any of three forms before the verb — 'n (most frequent in Yiddish literature and in contemporary written Yiddish) ןלן [mën] (most frequent in journalistic style) or ןמ [mê]
(the favourite of speakers and writers hailing from Southeastern Yiddish speech territory). After the verb, only יִהְיֶה occurs. The same pattern is also followed by the third person nonhuman indefinite. It may occur in any of three forms before the verb — יִהְיֶה, יִהְיֶה [yes] or יִהְיֶה [yes], with usage distribution paralleling that of יִהְיֶה, יִהְיֶה and יִהְיֶה, respectively. After the verb, only יִהְיֶה occurs.

6.1.6 Semantic features of personal pronouns

6.1.6.1 נָאִי (דִּיוֹר / דָּיוֹר) וָּלִי
The second person singular וָּלִי forms are traditionally used with intimate friends and small children. The technically ‘plural’ נָאִי (cf. French vous, German Sie) is used as a singular with persons with whom one has a more formal relationship. In Eastern Europe, a child would often address his or her own grandparent with נָאִי; a girl and boy in love would be taking a daring step by switching to וָּלִי before marriage. The division between וָּלִי and נָאִי continues to depend on a number of social variables. Nevertheless, it is clear that except in the most traditional communities, וָּלִי has steadily encroached upon the semantic territory of נָאִי in the course of the last century. This is most marked in the English-speaking world and in Israel, where the coterritorial English and Hebrew lack the distinction, but the trend is evident among younger speakers even in Paris and Montreal, where the distinction is supported by the coterritorial French. The major factor in the degree to which וָּלִי and נָאִי are distinguished by younger people today seems to be the level of ‘traditionalness’ of a speech community or circle. Among younger Yiddish speakers born and raised in the West, it has become customary in recent years to ask permission upon first acquaintance to dispense with נָאִי.
and to proceed straight onward to ו. It is, however, important to use נ with adult members of traditional communities as well as with older generation East-European-born speakers of all cultural persuasions.

6.1.6.2 Use of ‘נ

‘נ (/ מ / מ) is widely used in Yiddish where English uses ‘we’, ‘people (in general)’, ‘one’, ‘you’. It frequently occurs where English uses a passive.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ‘נ

We've already been there מ'אני שווים נוהגון ר'ים
People say so מ'אני נוהג ר'ים
What do people say about it? [vozzókt] מ'אני נוהג ר'ים
One can’t say for certain [avzikher] מ'אני נוהג ר'ים
The truth is not known [émes] מ'אני נוהג ר'ים
You're not allowed in there מ'אני נוהג ר'ים

6.1.6.3 Use of ‘ס

‘ס (/ ט / ס) may serve to provide a grammatically necessary subject in a sentence with no ‘real’ subject. It may also occur where Yiddish requires a subject at the beginning of a phrase to meet the inflected-verb-second rule (→ §14.1). It prefixes the predicatives ‘which there is’ and ‘there are’ (→ §14.6).

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ‘ס

It could be / Maybe ס'קינע זיך
Maybe not ס'קינע זיך איז נוש
It’s raining in London ס'נימ' [zgeyt] א רען איז ל'גאָד
Father is coming ס'קינע דער מיטע
An apple tree is growing in the garden ס'שאָטַקס איז נוֹלַבָּה איז נַעַר
It’s fine / Things are good [sigút] ס'אָיז נומ
6.2 POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Possessive pronouns occur both before and after the noun. Where possession is clear from context, the definite article is generally used instead of a possessive pronoun (→ §15.13).

6.2.1 Preceding the possessed noun

Possessive pronouns preceding the possessed noun inflect for the number of the possessor and the number of the possession. The gender of the possessor is evident only in the third person singular where there are separate pronouns — רֵעִי 'his' vs. רֵרֵי 'her'. Possessive pronouns preceding the possessed noun also inflect for gender when the indefinite article is used in a special construction (→ §6.2.1.5).

6.2.1.1 Singular possessor with singular possession

my מתי
your (familial) רון
your (formal) נשות
his ذو
her נר

6.2.1.2 Singular possessor with plural possessions

my ליין
your (familial) דולין
your (formal) נשות
his ذو
her נר
6.2.1.3 Plural possessors with singular possession

Our  נוֹרְדְעַר
Your  אֲמִינוֹר
Their  דִּיוֹר

6.2.1.4 Plural possessors with plural possessions

Our  נוֹרְדְעָרִים
Your  אֲמִינוֹרִים
Their  דִּיוֹרִים

6.2.1.5 The possessive-indefinite construction

Possessive pronouns preceding the possessed noun inflect for gender and case when the indefinite article occurs with the noun. The construction has the force of 'a — of mine/yours etc.' It is most frequent with nouns designating humans.

SAMPLES OF USE OF THE POSSESSIVE-INDEFINITE CONSTRUCTION

אָנִי מַעֲנִי אֲלָמַס
My uncle of mine is coming today

אָנִי מַעֲנִי אֲלָמַס אֲלָמָס
My aunt of mine is coming this evening

אני  גָּאוֹן אֲגָאוֹנִי אֲגָאוֹנ
I see an acquaintance (m.) of ours

6.2.2 Following the possessed noun

Possessive pronouns following the possessed noun may be synonymous with
the simpler forms preceding the noun. Used with the definite article, the
construction may have demonstrative force (→ §6.3). Possessive pronouns
following the noun inflect for everything — number of the possessor and the
possession, gender of the possessor and the possession, and case. The arrow
(→) marks the regular changes for both accusative and dative (AD) or, where
applicable, for dative (D) only. Sample nouns are 'umbrella',
'thing' and 'house'.

6.2.2.1 First person possessor with single possession

דשע ShirutimMitnun (AD) דשע Shirutim Mitnun
דשע Šeəl Mitnun (D) ביכ Šeəl Mitnun
דשע ShirutimMitnun (D) נש Shirutim Mitnun

6.2.2.2 Familiar second person possessor with single
possession

דשע ShirutimDitnun (AD) דשע ShirutimDitnun
דשע Šeəl Ditnun (D) ביכ Šeəl Ditnun
דשע ShirutimDitnun (D) נש Shirutim Ditnun

6.2.2.3 Formal second person possessor with single
possession

דשע ShirutimAtmune (AD) דשע ShirutimAtmune
דשע Šeəl Atmune (D) ביכ Šeəl Atmune
דשע ShirutimAtmune (D) נש Shirutim Atmune

6.2.2.4 Third person masculine possessor with single
possession

דשע ShirutimDitnun (AD) דשע ShirutimDitnun
6.2.2.5 Third person feminine possessor with single possession

לעט שירטום אונדרוטר (AD) לער שירטום אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר

6.2.2.6 Singular possessor with plural possessions

לעט שירטום זכר (AD) לער שירטום זכר
לעט שירטום זכר (AD) לער שירטום זכר
לעט שירטום זכר (AD) לער שירטום זכר
לעט שירטום זכר (AD) לער שירטום זכר

6.2.2.7 First person possessors with single possession

לעט שירטום אונדרוטר (AD) לער שירטום אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר

6.2.2.8 Second person possessors with single possession

לעט שירטום אונדרוטר (AD) לער שירטום אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר
לעט זכר אונדרוטר (D) לער זכר אונדרוטר

6.2.2.9 Third person possessors with singular possession

לעט שירטום זכר (AD) לער שירטום זכר
6.2.2.10 Possessors with plural possessions

6.3 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

6.3.1 'this'
Demonstrative 'this' may be expressed by phonetic stress alone, in which case it is implicit in written texts, or explicitly by a demonstrative pronoun.

6.3.1.1 Implicit 'this': stressed definite article
The definite articles (in any of the cases) can double as demonstratives by being stressed. In written texts, demonstrative use of an article is inferred from the context or evident from bold typeface (or spacing out of letters to denote emphasis). Noun phrases used as demonstratives are frequently jumped to the front of a sentence, further strengthening the sense of 'this'/‘these’ rather than 'the' (→ §§14.4.7, 14.10).

SAMPLES OF IMPLICIT 'THIS'
敦煌 河里 站 在 [ dém bókхar kénəkh] I know this fellow

cf. [ dém bókхar kénəkh] I know the fellow
6.3.1.2 **Explicit ‘this’**

There are several demonstrative formulas: ני and ננ preceding the definite article; נ alone following it; adjectively inflected דאבוי following it. Two or more may be used redundantly in combination for proportionately increasing emphasis. A series of demonstratives for a single noun serves to emphasize identity and is occasionally used for humorous or hostile effect. In the samples provided, demonstrative force may be said to increase with each line.

**SAMPLES OF EXPLICIT ‘THIS’**

(→ 6.3.1.1 FOR TRANSLATIONS)

emoth dawem baror kunen acher
emoth dawem baror kunen akhe
am dawem baror kunen acher
am dawem rakhim baror kunen akhe
am dawem rakhim baror kunen acher
am dawem rakhim baror kunen akhe
am dawem rakhim baror kunen akhe
am dawem rakhim baror kunen akhe
6.3.2 'that'

Stressed definite articles are used in many instances where English has 'that', e.g. וואס איז דאש [vose dós?] 'What's that?'. Where 'thatness' is however explicitly required, ינונע or דער לאחיטע, דער מארדערעדער are used.

6.3.2.1 דער לאחיטע / דער מארדערעדער

As an attributive adjective before a noun, דער לאחיטע, 'the other / next one' may signify 'thatness' for any noun, but on its own, it substitutes for a
person – 'that one; the other person; the second one; the next one'. As an adjective, נבדע is anomalous insofar as it declines only with the definite article (e.g. דו נבדע, the other man; דו נבדעה, the other woman); with the indefinite article it is usually left as invariant נבדע, e.g. נבדע, an other man; נבדעה, an other woman. Plural is always דוקר נבדע and דוקר נבדעה. In singular only, דוקר נבדעה (lit. 'the second one') may be used interchangeably with דוקר נבדע.

SAMPLERS OF THE USE OF דוקר נבדע AND דוקר נבדעה

We should ask the other man (/that man)

It's the other one who's the expert

The other lady is coming tomorrow

I don't know the others yet

6.3.2.2 יגנער

As an attributive adjective before a noun, יגנער may signify 'thatness' for any noun, but on its own it substitutes for a person – 'that one; the other person'. The old neutral nominative form in נ- (יונע, also spelled יונע) is very rare nowadays. When used with a neutral it is increasingly lining up with feminine in nominative and with masculine in accusative and dative (cf. interrogative נבע = סל 3.1.1 and relative נבעלא = סל 4.7). יגנער is
frequently (but not necessarily) aggressive or derogatory. When used with the definite article, דוער יונגוּר, usually aggressive and occasionally humorous, may be substituted for יונגוּר. דוער demonstrates the speaker or writer’s wish to project distance between him or herself and the person spoken of by labelling him or her with ‘otherness’.

**SAMPLES OF THE USE OF יונגוּר**

ירוגוּר וויס ניט וויס ערא וויס

That man (lit. ‘that one’) doesn’t know what he’s talking about

יונגוּר וויס ניט וויס ערא וויס

That woman (lit. ‘that one’) doesn’t know what she’s talking about

ירוגוּר קינע מות ניט קינעראין

That man can’t be trusted

ירוגוּר יונגוּר איצ שוויק יונגוּר דשק

There he is again!

6.3.2.3 דוער יונגוּר / דוער יונגוּר

As an attributive adjective before a noun, דוער (יקנ) may signify ‘sameness’ for any noun, but on its own it substitutes for a person – ‘the same one; the same person’.

**SAMPLE OF THE USE OF דוער יונגוּר**

דוער יונגוּר הוקס איסלאמ נוגמדאעש אוגמדאעש

The same man once held a rather different view
6.4 PARTITIVE PRONOUNS

Partitive pronouns provide for a limitation to a single person or a conceptual proportional relation to a perceived group of people, or people in general.

6.4.1 אניותר and אניותר

אניותר 'a/person'; a man’ and אניותר 'a woman' inflect for case and gender as adjectives. Cf. §§12.1.1–12.1.1.1 on numerals.

SAMPLS OF THE USE OF אניותר AND אניותר

One (m.) of them was here today

One (f.) of them was here today

You should invite one of them

One says one thing, one says another

6.4.2 אניותר

אניותר 'somebody; anybody (positive)' is usually pronounced [éymëtsər]. It inflects for case as an adjective. אניותר is exclusively a pronoun.

SAMPLS OF THE USE OF אניותר

Is anybody here? [éymëtsər]

I saw somebody [éymëtsn]

6.4.3 אניותר

אניותר ‘nobody; anybody (negative)’ inflects for case as an adjective. Where the negative phrase does not already contain the negative particle, אניותר is used, e.g. 'וù is not already contained in, אניותר. 'Who’s there?' is answered negatively byAMI, אניותר, 'nobody'. אניותר is exclusively a pronoun.
6.4.4  

טִּילְיָה (people); part', which takes a plural verb, does not inflect. is also a common noun and an invariant adjective that may refer to inanimate objects.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF טִּילְיָה

Some say ‘yes’, some say ‘no’

טִּילְיָה וּטִּילְיָהוֹת יְתֵמוֹל דַּאָנָג

Some will agree [máskím] טִּילְיָה וּטִּילְיָהוֹת יְתֵמוֹל

6.4.5  

שְׁמוֹר / טַמְלֶנָונָם

or ‘a few’, which take a plural verb, do not inflect. and are also common nouns and invariant adjectives that may refer to inanimate objects.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF TEAMLONAM AND שְׁמוֹר

I know only a few of them

שְׁמוֹר וּשְׁמוֹר וּשְׁמוֹר וּשְׁמוֹר

A few people will come

6.4.6  

בִּילֵל

‘a small number; a few’, which takes a plural verb, does not inflect. When used as a common noun or invariant adjective,  has the sense of ‘a little’. Cf. §5.9.1 on adjective quantifier  בִּילֵל.
SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ביסל

A few people remained ביסל דימעט נובלבינך
A few people will be unhappy ביסל תונעל דימעט אומצףיריעך

6.4.7

ס פ

ס פ [asákh] ‘many’, which takes a plural verb, does not inflect. It is also a common noun and invariant adjective that may occur with inanimate objects.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ס פ

Many people are still here ס פ זיינעט בקך דקך
Many have already left ס פ זיינעט שיווי שאעניק

6.4.8

דימעט

דימעט ‘most’, which takes a plural verb, does not inflect. It is also a common noun and invariant adjective that may refer to inanimate objects.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF דימעט

Most people are still here דימעט זיינעט בקך דקך
Most have already left דימעט זיינעט שיווי שאעניק

6.4.9

איסטלוונגר / יتدערער / יתדרער איבנער

Everyone; everybody’, which take a singular verb, inflect for case and gender as adjectives. Now occurs mostly in literary styles. They are exclusively pronouns.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF איסטלוונגר / יتدערער / יתדרער איבנער

Everyone knows he’s crazy יתדרער איבנער זיינעט אן ארז ויר מניינען
I saw every one of them. Everyone knows that.

Everyone is happy.

Everyone has his foibles.

\[\text{Yudnera zeir e'nezerkevre} \text{ [mashugasan]}\]

6.4.10  ידוערא זייר איזניציקירא

Each and every one; every single one, which takes a singular verb, inflects for case and gender as an adjective. It is exclusively a pronoun.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF ידוערא איזניציקירא

I know every single one.

Every single person will come today.

We will invite every single one of them.

6.4.11  איילנוג

Everyone which takes a plural verb, optionally inflects to איילנוג in either objective case when serving as a pronoun referring to humans. When substituting for inanimate objects, איילנוג is retained uninflected in all cases. Hence, Do you have all the books? may be answered by איילנוג זייר איילנוג?

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF איילנוג AND איילנוג

Does everyone know the story? [mayse]

You told everyone the story? [miyose]
7 Verbs

7.0 Overview

The Yiddish verb system combines synthetic and analytic constructions. Synthetic verbs synthesize grammatical information into a single word by inflecting the verb as required. Only the present tense is fully synthetic in Yiddish. Person and number are marked by appropriate endings. The past and future are formed by combining a synthetic helping verb with an uninflected (unchanging) main verb. In the past, the unchanging main verb is the past participle. In the future it is the infinitive. The essential morphology therefore comprises the suffixes of the stem in the present tense and the conjugations of the helping verbs used to form the past and future. Analytic verbs are discussed in §9.

7.1 The Infinitive

The infinitive is the traditional point of reference for any verbal paradigm. The synthetic infinitive is formed by suffixing ָה (or ְת after ה; ח; ר; כ; a stressed vowel or diphthong; ב following a consonant) to the stem. Preposition של ‘to’, unlike its English counterpart, appears only rarely with the infinitive.

Samples of infinitives

develop מבית
say ציון
dance שָׁנָגֵר
7.2 THE PRESENT PARTICIPLE

The present participle is formed by suffixation of paradigm - (or after h, g, d, n, l following a consonant, or a stressed vowel) to the stem of the verb. It denotes the ongoingness of the verbal action – ‘while doing / being something; in the course of; during’. Its use frequently corresponds with English -ing when so used. Syntactically, paradigm functions as an adverb (→ §14.4.1).

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF PRESENT PARTICIPLES

I entered the room, holding the books in my hand.

Sitting in the pub, we had quite a few drinks.

She left thinking about it.

Talking a whole night, the answer was found.

You won’t accomplish anything by yelling.
7.3  THE VERBAL ADDITIVE: י"ז

The verbal additive is י"ז. It is only pronounced [zikh] when stressed for contrast. It is normally reduced to [zækh] or [zakh] and although written separately, it is nearly always pronounced as a suffix of the preceding verb. When the part of the verb preceding י"ז ends in one of the voiceless consonants [ʁ], [k], [kh], [p], [s], [sh], [t], [s] — most frequently [t] of the third person singular ending — that voiceless consonant may undergo the usual regressive voiceless assimilation and become voiced in deference to the [z] of י"ז (→§2.2.3), e.g. י"ז הוהי ז"ע [vos hérdsakh?] 'What's new?; How are you?'. י"ז following a verb ending in a voiceless consonant is, however, one of the instances where assimilation may be progressive, leading to the devoicing of the second consonant — the ʁ of י"ז — hence the equally widespread [vos hértsakh?]. י"ז follows the present tense verb but usually precedes the past participle in the past tense and the infinitive in the future tense (→ §§7.5, 7.6, 7.9, 14.3.1, 14.3.3.1, 14.5.1, 14.5.3.1).

7.3.1  י"ז as an inherent part of the verb

Some verbs are historically accompanied by י"ז (literally ‘oneself; itself’). In these instances, י"ז always occurs with the verb, and is listed with it in dictionaries. Many inherent י"ז verbs have different meanings when used on their own, e.g. י"ז בולע 'ask' vs. 'beg'.

SAMPLES OF VERBS WITH INHERENT י"ז
extricate oneself; get out of [arōydzreyen]
interfere; mix in [rozydren]
try [roymoon]
complain [rokleyon]
be friends (with) (mit) [khàvern]
make noise

try

become tied up / entangled

hesitate; be indecisive

7.3.2 יְלֻבָּנָן as intransitivity and reflexivity marker

יְלֻבָּנָן may designate intransitivity or a reflexive mood in a verb that is transitive when it appears alone (not to be confused with the grammatical reflexive → §14.8). יְלֻבָּנָן adds the notion that it is the subject him or herself that is undergoing the action.

SAMPLES OF יְלֻבָּנָן AS AN INTRANSITIVITY AND REFLEXIVITY MARKER

dress up elegantly (cf. הָדַשׁ ‘polish’ trans. v.)
hide (oneself) (cf. בָּאוֹרָל ‘hide’ trans. v.)
get washed (cf. מָחֵשׁ ‘wash’ trans. v.)
wish for oneself (cf. חָרִים ‘wish’ trans. v.)
comfort / console oneself (cf. מָרִיתס ‘console’ trans. v.)
forgive oneself (cf. קַסְרִים ‘forgive’ trans. v.)

7.3.2.1 יְלֻבָּנָן and יְלֻבָּנָן יְלֻבָּנָן (➞ §5.1.3.2) may mean both ‘teach’ and ‘study’. Where the meaning is unclear from context, יְלֻבָּנָן יְלֻבָּנָן may be used for ‘study’ to avoid ambiguity. יְלֻבָּנָן occurs much more frequently in discussions of modern education. In discussion of traditional studies, יְלֻבָּנָן appears on its own, e.g. יְלֻבָּנָן [khûmêsh] ‘study Khûmêsh [the Five Books of Moses]’, יְלֻבָּנָן [gêmôre] ‘master a section of the Talmud (lit. learn a leaf (= two sided page) of Talmud)’. Cf. §§ 4.3.2.2, 5.1.3.2, 15.17.15.
7.3.3  ḥeṭ as a solitude marker

ḥeṭ may be attached at will to a number of verbs to denote solitude, the state of being on one’s own, or wishing to be alone, e.g. ḥeṭ לְַנִּמְלָא ‘I am going walking’ vs. ḥeṭ לְַנִּמְלָא ‘I am walking along by myself...’. It may have the force of ‘minding one’s own business’ and is commonly used to anticipate an interruption or harassment from another party.

7.3.4  Prepositional constructions with ḥeṭ

ḥeṭ combines with a number of prepositions to form widely used prepositional phrases. Occasionally, the construction is used creatively. The best known example comes from the literary movement associated with the introspectivist Yiddish literary journal ḥeṭ לְַנִּמְלָא, launched in New York in 1920. Its name derives from ḥeṭ לְַנִּמְלָא ‘in oneself’, hence – introspectivist. The group’s adherents are known as the ḥeṭ inzikhists / introspectivists.

SAMPLES OF PREPOSITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS WITH ḥeṭ

around oneself; in one’s circle / environment ḥeṭ [arûm] ההובられない
at home; in one’s own possession; ḥeṭ [ba] 보내
with oneself מִם וְַהִי
independently; alone [tárzech] נפא שלד
recover; get well קום וְַצַּלך

7.3.5  Inflection of ḥeṭ for person in dialectal usage

In Southern Eastern Yiddish (comprising Mideastern and Southeastern Yiddish), verbal additive ḥeṭ is generally reserved for the third person only and for the general sense of ‘oneself’. The first person singular is ḥeṭ and the
7.4. **NEGATION**

The negator is נִכָּל (N.E.) or נִכָּל שֶׁשַׁשָּׁש (S.). It is נִכָּל [nit kin / nit ka] with an indefinite noun as object. נִכָּל is only stressed when emphasis is required. On its position in the sentence → §§14.3.3, 14.5.3.

7.5 **PRESENT TENSE**

The present tense is formed by suffixation of the appropriate ending to the stem. There is no ending in the first person singular. Note that the formal second person singular form is taken from the plural. נִכָּל follows the present tense verb. The first person singular is identical with the stem of the verb. The first person plural is usually identical with the infinitive (but cf. §§7.5.3, 14.9).

7.5.1 **Present singular endings**

- **first person**: no ending
- **second person familiar**: נִכָּל
- **second person formal**: נִכָּל
- **third person**: נִכָּל
imperative familiar: no ending

imperative formal: "-n

SAMPLE OF PRESENT SINGULAR: בָּאוֹז 'say'

I say בָּאוֹז
you (familiar) say בָּאוֹז
you (formal) say בָּאוֹז
he says בָּאוֹז
she says בָּאוֹז

it is said / people say / one says הָאוֹז

say! tell me! (familiar) הבָּאוֹז
say! tell me! (formal) הבָּאוֹז

7.5.2 Present plural endings

first person: בָּאוֹז
second person: בָּאוֹז
third person: בָּאוֹז
imperative: בָּאוֹז

SAMPLE OF PRESENT PLURAL: בָּאוֹז 'say'

we say בָּאוֹז
you say בָּאוֹז
they say בָּאוֹז

say! tell me! הבָּאוֹז

SAMPLE VERBS WITH REGULAR PRESENT

visit בָּאוֹז
bless (esp. ‘say the traditional grace after meals’) 

yearn for; miss 

remember 

dream [kholemen] 

dance 

think 

run 

read [leyen] 

think (= be of the opinion) 

eat 

go (by vehicle) 

come 

sleep 

converse 


7.5.3 Reduced ב in verb endings

There are a few verbs with first and third person plural ending ב- that have infinitives in ב-. The ב- forms are expected with stems ending in a stressed vowel or diphthong (→ §2.2.9). Cf. בִּני [gleyen] ‘we / they are going’, בִּי [zayan] ‘we / they see’, בִּי [shteyen] ‘we / they are standing’ vs. infinitives בִּי ‘go’, בְּ ‘see’. בְּ ‘stand’. Note that the ב that appears in verb endings in the expected phonetic contexts should not be confused with the organic ב of stems that happen to end in ב. Where a stem ends in ב, the ב is retained throughout the conjugation, e.g. stem בָּרוּפָּ ‘snore’, infinitive בָּרוּפָּ, third person בָּרוּפָּ ‘he/she is snoring’.
7.5.4 Variants in the regular present tense

7.5.4.1 Stem ending in ב in third person singular
Stems ending in ב, conjugated for third person singular (where the present tense ending is also ב), would result in two consecutive ה's. Double consonants do not generally occur (although they appear in writing in compounded words to preserve the integrity of both stems, e.g. רָצוֹן 'call together' from prefix -רָצוֹן and infinitive רָצוֹן → §8.1.5). The potential sequence that would result in the third person singular of stems ending in ב is averted by obligatory collapse in both speech and writing to a single ב, e.g. עֲרָבָנָה 'she works' (infinitive עֲרָבָנָה), עֵבֶר הָאָרֶץ 'he holds / is holding' (infinitive עֵבֶר הָאָרֶץ), עָלֵילוֹת 'people are waiting; everybody is waiting' (infinitive עָלֵילוֹת).

7.5.4.2 Stem ending in ר in third person singular
Stems ending in ר in third person singular (where the present tense ending is ר), would result in ר followed by ב. The ו sequence is retained in writing, but never pronounced, hence רָדָה [ʁaːdə] 'she talks / is talking'.

7.5.5 Anomalies

7.5.5.1 No ending in third person singular
The third person singular forms of a number of helping verbs that serve to form analytic verbs (→ §9.1) do not have the usual ב-ending.

- רָצָה 'has to; must' (→ §9.1.2)
- רָצָה 'wants' (→ §9.1.6)
- רָצָה 'should' (→ §9.1.8)
7.5.5.2 Optional ב ending in third person singular

The irregular בוי 'know (something that is not generally studied)' (§15.4) may or may not have the usual ב- ending in third person singular, hence בוי + ב = בוי 'she knows'.

7.5.6 Imperative additives יִהְיֶה and בּוֹשׁ

יִהְיֶה [ta; to] immediately precedes the imperative and בּוֹשׁ [zhe] immediately follows it. They can be used independently of each other or they may surround the imperative for increased effect. Both יִהְיֶה and בּוֹשׁ invoke affection, love or familiarity to support a suggestion, request or command, often having the force of 'please', 'do please' or 'come on'. יִהְיֶה occasionally translates 'then; in that case' in support of the imperative, and usually occurs after the other party has made some remark about the request. Both יִהְיֶה and בּוֹשׁ frequently serve to impose guilt upon the listener or reader in support of the request made (§11.4 on interrogative additives יִהְיֶה and בּוֹשׁ). In less intimate contexts, the non-emotional ויש צוֹה יִרְאִי נוֹפֵל (familiar) or ויש צוֹה יִרְאִי (lit. 'Be so good'), may be used for 'please'.

SAMPLES OF IMPERATIVE ADDITIVES יִהְיֶה and בּוֹשׁ

Then tell me יִהְיֶה גָּלֶגֶג מִי

Come on, please tell me בּוֹשׁ גָּלֶגֶג מִי

Then come on, please tell me (You owe it to me!)}

יִהְיֶה גָּלֶגֶג מִי
7.6 PAST TENSE

7.6.1 Regular past

The regular past is formed by combining the appropriate present tense form of helping verb הָבָּם [hōbēm] ‘have’ with the past participle of the main verb. The regular past participle is formed by prefixing -ע- and suffixing י- to the stem, giving the template י+STEM+ע-ל. The -ע- prefix disappears in the past participles of verbs with unstressed prefixes (→ §8.1), e.g. יָשָׁרֵשֵׁת יָשָׁרֵשֵׁת ‘understand’ → past participle יָשָׁרֵשֵׁת יָשָׁרֵשֵׁת ‘understood’. It also disappears in verbs with stressed suffix י, e.g. יָאוֹרָנְגֵייווֹרָנְגֵייווֹ [organizirn] ‘organize’ → past participle יָאוֹרָנְגֵייווֹ ‘organized’.

7.6.1.1 Singular present of יָשָׁרֵשֵׁת

I have יָשָׁרֵש
you (familiar) have יָשָׁרֵש
you (formal) have יָשָׁרֵש
he has יָשָׁר
she has יָשָׁר
people have / we have / one has יָשָׁר

SAMPLE SINGULAR PAST USING יָשָׁרֵש ‘say’

I (have) said יָשָׁרֵש יָשָׁרֵש
you (familiar) (have) said יָשָׁרֵש יָשָׁרֵש
you (formal) (have) said יָשָׁרֵש יָשָׁר
he says יָשָׁר יָשָׁר
she says יָשָׁר יָשָׁר
it was said / people said / one said יָשָׁר יָשָׁר
7.6.1.2 Plural present of בוחר
we have [nomb] ניר בוחר
you have ציר בוחר
they have [nomb] הלא בוחרים

SAMPLE PLURAL PAST USING בוחרים ‘say’
we (have) said ניר בוחרים נועדו
you (have) said ציר בוחרים נועדו
they (have) said הלא בוחרים נועדו

SAMPLE VERBS WITH REGULAR PAST AND THEIR PAST PARTICIPLES

בערבות burn → בחרבretain
נשליבים believe → ישליבים believe
נשננומן cry → בנייונן
נזורבים look for; search → בצרובים
נוצרות make noise → לצלוצליםcreate
לועפת laugh → ליצרמל어 laugh
נעריאניק clean (up) → יעריאניקירטיקט → שמטうま

7.6.2 Past participle in נ-
Some participles are historically of the shape נ+STEM+לי (or נ+STEM+לי if the stem ends in נ, ג, דנ, נ, ל following a consonant, or a stressed vowel). Participles in נ- are frequently accompanied by internal vowel shift.

7.6.2.1 Participle in נ with no vowel shifts
נעריאניק ‘ask for; request’ → יעריאניק
7.6.2.2 Participle in "ןככ" with י → י

נהוגות
'avoid' → י (ד) רוחונמיתן
'change' → י
'bite' → י
'cry' → י

[trâybm] 'drive; propel; chase' → [getribm]

'fuss' → י (ד) רוחונמיתן
'lend' → י (var.
'kill' → י
[klâybm] 'collect' → י [getribm]

[klâybm] 'prepare to; ready oneself' → [getribm]

[raybm] 'rub' → י
'tear' → י
'trumpet' → י

'whip' → י
'cut' → י (ד) רוחונמיתן

[shrâybm] 'write' → י [getribm]

'yell; scream' → י (S. var.

7.6.2.3 Participle in "ןככ" with ב → ב

נהוגות
'measure' → ב
'slaughter' → ב
7.6.2.4 Participles in 'ל' (in) with 1

- 'give (as a gift)' → לunanaknu
- 'tie (up)' → לְעַבָּדָה
- 'infer' → לרְבְדָה
- 'limp' → לְיחֵקָן
- 'wish (somebody something)' → לְמַטְסַח
- 'sing' → לְזָהָג
- 'sink' → לְזִכְנָן
- 'drink' → לְדָרְסַנָן
- 'force' → לְפָחַבָן
- 'swallow' → לְשִילָבָן
- 'win' → לְנוֹחֲבָן

7.6.2.5 Various vowel and consonant changes

- 'bend down' → לְנֶבֶד לְטָהֵן
- 'bring' → לְבֵּרָגֵס (S. var. לְבֵּרָגֵס [gækreynkt])
- 'lift' → לְשֵׂהְיְבַם (S. var. לְשֵׂהְיְבַם [lukhoybm])
- 'take' → לְנֶבֶד לְטָהֵן
- 'lose' → לְלֵזְצַי (N.E. var. לְלֵזְצַי [lukhoybm])
- 'understand' → לְנֶבֶד לְטָהֵן
- 'swear' → לְנֶבֶד לְטָהֵן (N.E. var. לְנֶבֶד לְטָהֵן)

7.7 MINORITY PAST TENSE: THE ימי VERBS

A minority of verbs form their past by combining the appropriate present of ימי 'be', rather than יְבַלְּבַל 'have' with the past participle (cf. French être,
German *sein*). All זן verbs have past participles in י(מ), usually with vowel shift. All are intransitive.

7.7.1 Singular present of זן

I am עז
you (familiar) are דר ביטש
you (formal) are מני זים (S. var. דרג)
he is נור אסי
she is ר אסי
we are / people are / one is מאי

SAMPLE SINGULAR PAST USINGSoon 'sleep'
I (have) slept א"ק ביטש נונשלפלק
you (familiar) (have) slept דו ביטש נונשלפלק
you (formal) (have) slept ארי זים נונשלפלק
he (has) slept נור אסי נונשלפלק
she (has) slept ⓐאסי נונשלפלק
we/people (have) slept; one slept נונשלפלק

7.7.2 Plural present of זן

we are מני זים (S. var. דרג)
you are דו ביטש
they are מני ודיבגון (S. var. דרג)

SAMPLE PLURAL PAST USINGSoon 'sleep'
we (have) slept מני ודיבגון נונשלפלק
7.7.3 Basic נָכוֹר verbs

The basic נָכוֹר verbs generally have to do with motion, motionlessness, states of existence, and the life cycle. Where a נָכוֹר verb acquires a transitive meaning, it automatically joins the more usual נָכוֹר verbs (→ §7.6), e.g. transitive עָלֵם 'hang (something / somebody)' vs. intransitive עָלֵם 'hang; be hanging' with נָכוֹר.

BASIC VERBS WITH PAST WITH נָכוֹר AND THEIR PAST PARTICIPLES

[bi'eybm] 'remain' → [gə'el'ebm] 'stay
גָּעַבָּבֵנָנָה 'go; walk' → גָּעַבָּבֵנָנָה 'be successful (in doing something)'
נָעָבָבְּבָנָה 'turn out as planned' → נָעָבְּבָנָה 'happen; occur'
נָעָבְּבָנָה 'hang' → נָעָבְּבָנָה (S. var. נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה) 'grow' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'become'
נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'be' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'sit'
נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'run' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'lie'
נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'fall' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'go (by vehicle)'
נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'fly' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה 'come' → נָעָבְּבֶנָנָה
7.7.4 Derivative יִזְּיוּר verbs

Derivative יִזְּיוּר verbs are prefixed forms of basic יִזְּיוּר verbs. As is often the case with prefixed verbs (→ §8), they may in the course of centuries wander far from the meanings of the base verbs from which they derive. Derivative יִזְּיוּר verbs preserve the major grammatical features of the base verbs from which they derive — past with יִזְּיוּר, past participle in יִזְּיוּר (לע), and intransitivity. One of the יִזְּיוּר verbs, 'become' can itself be used to form analytic verbs, all of which automatically form their past tense with יִזְּיוּר (→ §9.1.7).

SAMPLES OF DERIVATIVE יִזְּיוּר VERBS

אָוֶזֶגְאֵーン [אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן] ‘die; run out’ → אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר
אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר ‘put up with’ → אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר
אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר ‘commit a blunder; fall in; be deceived’ → אָוֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר
בָּיֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר ‘be present’ → בָּיֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר
בָּיֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר ‘happen; occur’ → בָּיֶזֶגְאֵאן יִזְּיוּר

7.8 Pluperfect Past Tense

The pluperfect past is formed by inserting לְעַתָּא (past participle of לְעַתָּא) before the past participle of the main verb. The pluperfect is rarely encountered with יִזְּיוּר verbs.
SAMPLES OF THE PLUPERFECT PAST

"I had warned you (formal) not to go"

"That is what they had told us beforehand"

"We had seen that film"

### 7.9 FUTURE TENSE

The future tense is formed by combining the appropriate part of הוליגו, 'will / shall' with the infinitive. The conjugation of הוליגו is irregular. In normal speech, the appropriate part of הוליגו used to form the future tense is phonetically reduced as transcribed (→ §§7.9.1 – 7.9.2). Future helping verb הוליגו should not be confused with הוליגו 'want' (→ §9.1.6). The infinitives are identical but the present tense conjugations differ markedly.

#### 7.9.1 Singular future with הוליגו

- I will [ikh vel / khvel / ikhl]
- you (familiar) will [du vest / duæst / dust]
- you (formal) will [ir vet / iræt / irt]
- he will [er vet / eræt / ert]
- she will [zi vet / ziæt / zit]
- we will / people will / one will [mævet / maæt]
SAMPLE SINGULAR FUTURE: שֶׁבֶטֶנֵךְ ‘say’
I will say שֶׁבֶטֶנֵךְ
you (familiar) will say רְדָּה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
you (formal) will say אַיְרָה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
he will say רְדָּה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
she will say רְדָּה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
people will say / we will say / one will say מַחֲטֵט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ

7.9.2 Plural future with וּכְלַק
we will מִיר וּכְלַק [mir vel / miln (N.E.) / mirn (S.])
you will [ir vet / iret / irt] וָאִי תוֹמֶט וּכְלַק
they will [zev vel / zeyln / zein / zein]

SAMPLE PLURAL FUTURE: שֶׁבֶטֶנֵךְ ‘say’
we will say מִיר וּכְלַק צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
you (plural/formal singular) will say אַיְרָה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ
they will say רְדָּה תוֹמֶט צֹּלֶטֶנֵךְ

7.10 IMMEDIATE FUTURE TENSE
The immediate future is formed by the appropriately conjugated present tense of וָאִי ‘go’. It denotes the intention to carry out the action in the nearer rather than in the more distant future.

SAMPLES OF THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE
I’m going to buy a book אָכֵי נְיָכְתִּי אוֹבָר
I’m going to tell him off [em] נְיָכְתִּי אוֹבָר הָאֵרִים
They’re going to think about it נְיָכְתִּי אוֹבָר דָּעְן רֵעָמָה
7.11 PLUPERFECT FUTURE TENSE

The pluperfect future is formed by the appropriate part of וָעַל (→ §§7.9.1 – 7.9.2) plus infinitive והזינו plus the past participle of the main verb.

SAMPLES OF THE PLUPERFECT FUTURE

אִיק וָעַל אַסְכִּי הָיוּךְ וְגָנוֹם וְנֶצְּרָנִים אָדָר זַלֶּלֶת נֶט לֵין הָיוּךְ
I will have warned you (formal) not to go

דַּרְשָׁנֵו וָעַל וְאַסְכִּי הָיוּךְ וְגָנוֹם נֶצְּרָנִים וּפְרוֹנֵר
That is what they will have told us beforehand

דוֹם דַּרְשָׁנֵי וָעַל וָעַל מִרְי הָיוּךְ וְגָנוֹם
We will have seen that film
8 PREFIXED VERBS

3.0 OVERVIEW
A prefix can provide a verb with a special nuance or a completely new meaning. The modern meanings of many prefixed verbs may be distantly related, or not obviously related at all, to those of their unprefixed base forms. Many prefixes have become so attached to certain verbs that the verb on its own provides an imperfective mood suggesting that the action is somehow incomplete. There are two types of verbal prefixes: unstressed prefixes and stressed prefixes. Stressed prefixes emerge as separate words in the present tense.

3.1 UNSTRESSED PREFIXES
Unstressed prefixes are retained in all tenses. In the past tense, the past participle prefix -מא disappears; its function is assumed by the unstressed prefix itself. Some of the six unstressed prefixes do have some general primitive meaning. Use over the centuries has, however, obscured it in many instances. For many, a historical connection may be inferred (e.g. ניבתנ -'discover' from סאת + 'cover'; cf. English 'dis' + 'cover').

3.1.1 ניבתנ
General meaning: negation; distancing from; undoing of.
SAMPLES OF -גמ
[andék] ‘discover’ (→ past participle)
[andzágn] ‘refuse’ (→ past participle)
‘run away from’ (→ past participle)
‘discourage’ (→ past participle)
‘fall asleep’ (→ past participle)

8.1.2. -נ
General meaning: transitivity of intransitive verbs; application of one thing to another; thoroughness of action; bringing a state of existence into being.

SAMPLES OF -נ

בָּנָה-ליס ‘hide’ (→ past participle)
בָּזָה ‘visit’ (→ past participle)
בָּשָׁל ‘insult’ (→ past participle)
בָּשָׁמ ‘notice’ (→ past participle)
בָּשָׁם ‘calm (someone) down’ (→ past participle)
בָּשָׁמ ‘calm (oneself) down’ (→ past participle)

8.1.3. -ע
-ע is a relic prefix. Most of the stems of the -ע verbs do not survive as unprefixed verbs.

SAMPLES OF -ע

עָבָדִי ‘be born’ (→ past participle)
8.1.4  בער - (frequently [da])

General meaning: completeness of action; carrying through of the action to its conclusion.

SAMPLES OF - בער

דונ代孕גנהנ (dahárgen) ‘kill’ (→ past participle דונ代孕גנהנ [dahárgět])

זיטל דניראיס (zitl dinaryis) ‘rejoice (esp. with the company or presence of another person)’ (→ past participle דניראיספ [dinaryis])

דנייראיס (dinaryis) ‘tell (a story); recount’ (→ past participle דנייראיספ [dinaryis])

דנייראיס (dinaryis) ‘recognize’ (→ past participle דנייראיספ [dinaryis])

8.1.5  בער -

General meaning: completeness of action; initiation of a change in circumstances; debasement of the value or success of the action.
8.1.6 - עָנָן
General meaning: coming apart; spreading out; in all directions; spacing out of the verbal action; total undoing of something.

**SAMPLES OF - עָנָן**

- עָנַבְּדָה ‘break’ (→ past participle עָנַבְּדָה)
- עָנַגַּי ‘spill all over the place’ (→ past participle עָנַגַּי)
- עָנַמַּל ‘confound’ (→ past participle עָנַמַּל)
- עָנַמַּל עֵבָדָם ‘squander completely’ (→ past participle עָנַמַּל עֵבָדָם)
- עָנַגַּי ‘grab up; buy out’ (→ past participle עָנַגַּי)
- עָנַגַּי עָנַגַּי ‘ruin; cripple’ (→ past participle עָנַגַּי עָנַגַּי)

8.2 **STRESSED PREFIXES**

Like their unstressed counterparts, stressed prefixes are deeply rooted in the history of the language, and the primitive senses of the prefixes have often been lost. The heavy stress of stressed prefixes relegates the stem to
secondary stress status (→ §2.3.1.3 — 2.3.1.4). In the present tense, the stressed prefix separates off and appears after the verb. In the past tense, -ן is infixed between the stressed prefix and the stem to form a one-word past participle. The status of the stressed prefix as a distinct entity is so strong that it often blocks consonant assimilation of voice or voicelessness (→ §2.2.1 — 2.2.4), especially when sentence rhythm provides for heavy wordstress; cf. e.g. heavily stressed [óys ge mátart] ‘completely exhausted’ vs. less heavily stressed [óyzgémátart] ‘exhausted’ for (past participle of יָזָמָה). Model verb is [tsúzn] [tsúzn] ‘promise’.

SAMPLE OF CONJUGATION OF STRESSED PREFIX: צָזַה

present singular

I promise [zog tsú]

you (familiar) promise [zokst tsú]

you (formal) promise [zokt tsú]

he promises [zokt tsú]

dshe promises [zokt tsú]

it is promised / people promise / one promises [mezokt tsú]

Promise! (familiar) [zog tsú]

Promise! (formal) [zokt tsú]

present plural

we promise [zogn tsú]

you promise [zokt tsú]

they promise [zogn tsú]

Promise! [zokt tsú]

present participle

(while) promising [tsúznıdik] צָזַהנִדיק
past singular
I (have) promised [tsūgazōkt]
you (have) promised (familiar)
you (have) promised (formal)
he (has) promised
she (has) promised
it was promised / people promised / one promised

past plural
we (have) promised
you (have) promised
they (have) promised

future singular
I will promise
you (familiar) will promise
you (formal) will promise
he will promise
she will promise
they will promise / we will promise / one will promise

future plural
we will promise
you will promise
they will promise
6.2.1  אירט

General meaning: completeness of action; lengthiness of the action; undoing of a prior situation; suddenness; outward action.

SAMPLES OF -גנונן

[דָּרָּשׁ הָרֶגֶן] 'annihilate; wipe out completely' (→ past participle [דָּרָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית] / [דָּרָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘wash (thoroughly)' (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘cry one's eyes out' (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘reveal' (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘extinguish' (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘avoid' (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

רָמִיתָּשׁ ‘yell suddenly’ (→ past participle [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית]; S. var. [רָמִיתָּשׁ הָרֶגִּית])

6.2.2  אירט [וּרַת]

General meaning: completeness of action; Cf. English *up*. Note that the pronunciation [וּרַת] does not reflect the spelling.

SAMPLES OF -וּרַת

וּרַת [וּרַת] ‘pick up; lift' (→ past participle [וּרַת הָרֶגִּית])

וּרַת [וּרַת] ‘demonstrate; document’ (→ past participle [וּרַת הָרֶגִּית])

וּרַת [וּרַת] ‘open up’ (→ past participle [וּרַת הָרֶגִּית])

וּרַת [וּרַת] ‘get up' (→ past participle [וּרַת הָרֶגִּית])
6.2.3  
General meaning: return to former state.

**SAMPLES OF -יון**
1. הרמוניות  ‘(systematically / officially) kill’ (→ past participle הרמוניות; S. var. הרמוניות Hongenachts)
2. הרמוניות  ‘(systematically/officially) be killed’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)
3. הרמוניות  ‘give back; return’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)
4. הרמוניות  ‘come back; return’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)

6.2.4  
General meaning: under; at the bottom of; secretly; moderately; not quite fully.

**SAMPLES OF -ון**
1. הרמוניות  ‘limp; be less than proficient’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)
2. הרמוניות  ‘be lazy temporarily / for a specific task’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)
3. הרמוניות  ‘secretly hand over (to)’ (→ past participle הרמוניות)

6.2.5  
General meaning: completeness of the action; repetition of the action; action through time or space; excessiveness.
SAMPLES OF - איבר

איברניריס

‘translate’ (→ past participle איברניריס)

איברניריס

[‘bærətrəɪb] ‘exaggerate’ (→ past participle איברניריס)

איברניריס

‘have a snack’ (→ past participle איברניריס)

איברניריס

‘make over; renew’ (→ past participle איברניריס)

איברניריס

‘look over’ (→ past participle איברניריס)

8.2.6 איבר

General meaning: enter a new state; change of situation.

SAMPLES OF - איבר

דָּרָך איצנגוניו

‘get used to’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

איצנגוניו

‘wrap up’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

איצנגוניו

‘get used to living (in a place)’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

איצנגוניו

‘talk into’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

איצנגוניו

‘agree’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

איצנגוניו

[‘aɪnəkʃənən] ‘be stubborn about something’ (→ past participle איצנגוניו)

8.2.7 איבר

General meaning: specification of the action.

SAMPLES OF - איבר

איברניריס

‘incite (someone’s anger against a third party)’ (→ past participle איברניריס)
8.2.8 -מג

General meaning: completion of the action. Note that in the past tense, the prefix may be pronounced [ıp] or [6].

**SAMPLES OF -מג**

ָ GLfloat 'complete a period of work' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [ıp(ג)אָרְבֶּט])

ָ GLfloat 'play a trick' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [ıp(ג)אָטְנַ])

ָ GLfloat 'postpone; procrastinate' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [ıp(ג)אָליָכִט])

ָ GLfloat 'finish completely' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [ıp(ג)אָנָדִיקְט])

ָ GLfloat 'finish eating' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [ıp(ג)אָגֶסְנַ])

8.2.9 -ב

General meaning: by; at.

**SAMPLES OF -ב**

ָ GLfloat 'attend' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [בָּיְגָּבֶּן])

ָ GLfloat 'enclose' (→ past participle ָ GLfloat [בָּיְגָּלְיָאְכֶּט])
General meaning: anticipate; come before.

**SAMPLES OF -רנוי**

- propose’ (→ past participle רנוי [forgøleykt])
- propose (in more formal/parliamentary style)’ (→ past participle רנוי [forgøshogn])
- introduce’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- imagine; suppose’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- occur’ (→ past participle רנוי)

**SAMPLES OF -רנוי**

- listen to; pay (careful) attention to; obey’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- promise’ (→ past participle רנוי [tsúgøzek])
- add on; affix; attach’ (→ past participle רנוי [tsúgøshép])
- become attached; become a nuisance/pest (to)’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- run over (to)’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- take away’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- fit in; conform’ (→ past participle רנוי)
- watch; observe’ (→ past participle רנוי)
8.2.12 Free stressed prefixes

The free stressed prefixes retain much of the historic force of their meanings, and can usually be prefixed at will to verbs. They often mark the direction of movement or action, or some prepositional aspect (e.g. with what or whom). Most can double as adverbs or prepositions on their own. A number of them, however, have entered into fixed combinations with specific verbs, yielding new meanings that cannot always be inferred from the base verb, e.g. [dû(r)khkumǝn] ‘work it out; compromise’ (from dur, ‘through’ plus kum, ‘come’), [dû(r)khkumǝn] ‘mimic’ (from dur, ‘after’ plus kum, ‘come’), [forôyszogn] ‘predict’ (from ôys, ‘before’ plus zogn, ‘say’).

FREE STRESSED PREFIXES

through [(a)dû(r)kh] -רורב(ם)
(over) there; to there; thither -לאורב
(over) here; to here; hither -לאורב
away -שנטא
with -מ
opposite; vis-à-vis; in reply to -ל(ב)קמערג

down -ליגויורב
upward [arû] -וירזא
around -לירב
in -לירב
down -לירוברג
over -לירוברג
after -ברנה
past; by -ברורב
before - סמוך
apart; in all directions - {[saféyforn]}'travel past; pass through'

Samales of free stressed prefixes

-בר: 'pass through (by vehicle)'
-בר: 'go there'; לַזָּה נִשָּׁה 'swim there'
-בר: 'come here'
-בר: [avéggeyn] 'go away; leave'; צֶלֶךְ 'throw away'
-בר: 'oppose'
-בר: 'sit down'
-בר: 'bring down'; סָנָא 'jump down'
-בר: 'throw out'; לַזָּה נִשָּׁה 'let out; release'
-בר: [arúsfritzh] 'climb up'; סָנָא 'carry up'
-בר: 'look around for; search'; סָנָא 'travel around'
-בר: 'let down; lower'
-בר: 'tell off; scold' (lit. 'tell in'); לַזָּה נִשָּׁה 'let in'
-בר: 'jump over'
-בר: 'suffer together with'; מִזְרַח 'take with';
-בר: 'run after'
-בר: [saféyforn] 'travel past; pass through'
-בר: 'run in all directions; scatter'
8.2.12.1 Free stressed prefixes without main verbs

The free stressed prefixes -ד (but not its parallel form -ד) can be used on their own without a main verb. Their past tense is formed with helping verb זָכַנְנֵנָו (→ §7.7). Use of free stressed prefixes without a main verb often provides a sentence with increased dynamic force. Some have become established in idiomatic expressions, e.g. 'He’s off his rocker' (lit. 'gone down from sense'; cf. English ‘out of his mind').

SAMPLES OF STRESSED PREFIXES WITHOUT MAIN VERBS

ו אַיְזָר נַעַבְּשָׁנִים נַעַבְּשָׁנִים
He went up the stairs ר נַעַבְּשָׁנִים [רלע] נַעַבְּשָׁנִים
They entered the house ו אַיְזָר נַעַבְּשָׁנִים אַיְזָר נַעַבְּשָׁנִים

8.3 PERFECTIVE VS. NAKED VERBS

Many unstressed and stressed prefixes have become so attached to certain verbs as to render the verb on its own rare and somewhat strange sounding to native speakers. In these cases, the prefixed versions have in effect become the present day base forms of the verb, and the unprefixed ‘naked’ forms are reserved for situations where the action is incomplete or vague. Thus, לִשְּׁרוֹן [לִשְּׁרוֹנָה] is the usual verb for ‘write’. The use of לִשְּׁרוֹן on its own may be reserved for general situations e.g. לִשְּׁרוֹן לִשְּׁרוֹנָה [לִשְּׁרוֹנָה] ‘What are you writing?’ Use of the unprefixed form may also
signify incompleteness of the action, e.g. 'I was writing a letter', which may imply that the letter was somehow not completed. The equivalent of 'I wrote a letter' is האן הנשוריון א ברוח. Analogously is the basic form for 'come (somewhere)', and 'go (somewhere)'; קומתי and נמי on their own are more general concepts.
9 Analytic Verbs

9.0 Overview
Unlike synthetic verbs which synthesize the main verb and its person, tense and number into a single word by prefixing or suffixing the stem (→ §7), analytic verbs ‘analyze these out’ by factoring down to the individual grammatical components, which are maintained by a helping verb. In all analytic verbs, by definition, the main verb is uninflected – neither prefixed nor suffixed nor internally changed in any way, irrespective of person, tense or number. Person, tense and number are rather indicated by the inflection of the appropriate helping verb which accompanies it. Many everyday synthetic verbs are used analytically when the speaker wishes to modify or specify the meaning along the lines of one of the available helping verbs that serve as formers of specialized analytic verbs. Some verbs, on the other hand, are historically analytic. They are the inherently analytic verbs, which do not exist as synthetic verbs. Analytic verbs require no detailed analysis or conjugation because they don’t change. It is the helping verbs that inflect, and they tend to be irregular.

9.1 Specialized Analytic Verbs

9.1.1 Analytic verb former קבע
קבע [gēbûm] ‘give a’ designates the action, in conceptual terms, as a single (and usually brief) event, rather than an ongoing affair. Its present is formed
with the present tense of irregular נָלַבֵּן as helping verb plus indefinite article נָ and the stem of the main verb. In the past tense, the participle [וֹאֵבָּה] usually follows the stem. In the future, the inflected part of futurizing וְהָלַבֵּן must precede the נָ plus stem sequence. The infinitive usually follows. Many analytic נָלַבֵּן verbs have alternative forms with בָּנָה (→ 89.1.9).

9.1.1.1 singular of helping verb נָלַבֵּן 'give'

I give שֶלֶחֶב
you (familiar) give רֵבִינָשְׁנָה
you (formal) give אֶרֶבִינָשְׁנָה
he gives שֶלֶחֶב
she gives רֵבִינָשְׁנָה
people give / we give / one gives מִלְּנָשְׁנָה
give! (familiar) נְבִינָה
give! (formal) נְלָנָה

9.1.1.2 plural of helping verb נָלַבֵּן 'give'

we give שֶלֶחֶב
you give רֵבִינָשְׁנָה
they give רֵבִינָשְׁנָה
give! נְלָנָה

SAMPLE ANALYTIC VERB WITH נָלַבֵּן 'give a kiss'

present singular

I am giving a kiss שֶלֶחֶב אֶלֶךָ
You (familiar) are giving a kiss רֵבִינָשְׁנָה אֶלֶךָ
You (formal) are giving a kiss אֶרֶבִינָשְׁנָה אֶלֶךָ
He is giving a kiss  ד"כ נימא א קוש
She is giving a kiss  ד רי נימא א קוש
One gives a kiss;  You should give a kiss  מ"עמא א קוש
Give a kiss!  (familiar)  ניב א קוש
Give a kiss!  (formal)  ניב א קוש

**present plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td>Everybody kissed; People gave a kiss; We gave a kiss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**past singular**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (familiar)</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (formal)</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**past plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They</td>
<td>gave a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**future singular**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Conjugation</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>will give a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (familiar)</td>
<td>will give a kiss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You (formal) will give a kiss [i-ret akúzh gebm] אִירֵּט אַקּועז גֶּבֶּמֶּ
He will give a kiss [e-ret akúzh gebm] עֶרֶט אַקּועז גֶּבֶּמֶּ
She will give a kiss [zit akúzh gebm] דִּי אַקּועז גֶּבֶּמֶּ
We will/People will kiss [m-et akúzh gebm] מְהַעֲטַ אַקּועז גֶּבֶּמֶּ

future plural

We will give a kiss [mi-l / mi-n kúzh gebm] מִיר קֻזָּח גֶּבֶּמֶּ
You will give a kiss [i-ret a kúzh gebm] אִירֵּט אַקּועז גֶּבֶּמֶּ
They will give a kiss [ze-ln kúzh gebm] דִּי קֻזָּח גֶּבֶּמֶּ

SAMPLE ANALYTIC VERBS WITH Gebm

promise (lit. ‘give a word’) אַשְּפָרִים גֶּבֶּמֶּן [š-ff-re-n ḡ-em-en]
advise; give (a piece of) advice [é-ytsè][ ḡ-em-en]
cope; manage [š-mês ḡ-em-en]
slap / give a smack [š-mięj-ré ḡ-em-en]
smile / give a smile [š-mięj-ré ḡ-em-en]

9.1.2 Analytic verb former יד בְּלָבָּה (usually pronounced [dá-fn]) ‘must; have to; should; ought to’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. The third person singular has no - ה, hence נוּרַדֵא, וּנְדָפַי.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF יד בְּלָבָּה

I have to go פָּלַק יד בְּלָבָּה פָּשֵּׁב פָּנֵי
Why do you have to go? לְפָשֵׁב אוֹרַדֵא דִּי בְּלָבָּה נָפַלְתֶּ
What do you need it for? [avôs dá-fstè?] לְפָשֵׁב אוֹרַדֵא דִּי בְּלָבָּה נָפַלְתֶּ
I must tell you the truth [é-mè스] לְפָשֵׁב אוֹרַדֵא דִּי בְּלָבָּה נָפַלְתֶּ
We really have to go פָּלַק יד בְּלָבָּה פָּשֵׁב פָּנֵי
9.1.3 Analytic verb former

The form ‘in the process of; in the middle of; in the midst of’ is formed by the appropriate part of אִלָּלֶמְךָּו plus preposition אַלְּכֻּ for plus infinitive. It can be applied to any verb that expresses an ongoing action, and often corresponds with English -ing.

SAMPLES OF USE OF אִלָּלֶמְךָּו

She’s in the middle of writing a letter

We’re eating now

9.1.4 Analytic verb former

The form ‘keep (on); all the time; constantly’ is formed by the appropriate part of אִלָּלֶמְךָּו plus אַלְּכֻּ for plus infinitive. It can be applied to any verb that expresses an ongoing action.

SAMPLES OF USE OF אִלָּלֶמְךָּו

Why do you keep jumping?

They keep laughing

9.1.5 Analytic verb former

The form ‘would’ is formed with either the infinitive or the past participle of the main verb. It is used to express a conditional or contingent mood. The past participle is used most frequently. The infinitive tends to be reserved for a rather more parliamentary style.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF אִלָּלֶמְךָּו

What would you (familiar) say?

And you (familiar) would go?

I would deal with it differently.
9.1.5.1 Alternative conditional with ועון

A conditional mood may also be formed by conjunction ועון, lit. ‘when; if’ that also has the sense of ‘if it were the case that’. It occurs in this sense in the present tense only, but the present with ועון is frequently used to cover situations in the past. ועון often serves as the if-clause in a sentence in which ועון occurs in the then-clause (→ SS14.4.5 – 14.4.5.1).

SAMPLES OF THE ALTERNATIVE CONDITIONAL WITH ועון

If I were Rothschild...

If I had known then, things would be different today

9.1.6 Analytic verb former וְעָלַל

וְעָלַל ‘want to’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. Although the infinitive is identical with וְעָלַל ‘will (future tense helping verb)’ (→ 87.9), the rest of its conjugation differs markedly. The stem vowel of וְעָלַל ‘want to’ is [ע] in the present, [ע] in the past and [ע] in the infinitive, hence in the future. While the conjugated parts of וְעָלַל ‘will’ are phonetically reduced in everyday speech, those of וְעָלַל ‘want to’ are not. Note the contrasting transcriptions of each in the future tense of the sample provided.

SAMPLE OF USE OF וְעָלַל ‘WANT TO': MODEL MAIN VERB גָּוָי ‘GO’

present singular

I want to go וְעָלַל גָּוָי
You (familiar) want to go וְעָלַל גָּוָי
You (formal) want to go  ייר ולט ג'ינ
He wants to go  ו靜 ולט ג'ינ
She wants to go  י靜 ולט ג'ינ
People want to go / Everyone wants to go  מטייל ג'ינ

present plural
We want to go  מיטי וידל ג'ינ
You want to go  אייר וידל ג'ינ
They want to go  זי וידל ג'ינ

past singular
I wanted to go  [ikhob gевוית ג'ינ] (N.E. var. וינק
You (familiar) wanted to go  [dust gевוית ג'ינ]
You (formal) wanted to go  [irת gевוית ג'ינ]
He wanted to go  [erת gевוית ג'ינ]
She wanted to go  [ziת gевוית ג'ינ]
People/We wanted to go  [mэто gевוית ג'ינ]

past plural
We wanted to go  [mir hobм gевוית ג'ינ]
You wanted to go  [irת gевוית ג'ינ]
They wanted to go  [zэй hobм gевוית ג'ינ]

future singular
I will want to go  [ikhл веин ג'ינ]
You (familiar) will want to go  [dust веин ג'ינ]
You (formal) will want to go  [irת веин ג'ינ]
He will want to go  [erת веин ג'ינ]
She will want to go [zi'at véin géyn]
People will want to go [mat véin géyn]

future plural
We will want to go [mi'ln / mirn véin géyn]
You will want to go [i'aret véin géyn]
They will want to go [zein véin géyn]

9.1.7 Analytic verb former

וּנְוַלָּין ‘become; be; get’ is used with the past participle of the main verb to form a passive. In the present tense, the appropriately inflected part of וּנְוַלָּין ‘become’ precedes the verb. In the past and future it usually follows it. וּנְוַלָּין forms its past with צְלִיל (→ §7.7). Note that a few deeply rooted constructions coexist in the modern language with corresponding synthetic verbs, e.g. נָגָלָה = נָגָלָה ‘run away; escape’. Passives may also be formed using pronoun מ ‘מ’ (→ §6.1.6.2). Model verb is נָרַגְגַגְגַגְגַגְגַגְגַגְגַג ‘become entangled / tied up in something; become involved’.

SAMPLE OF USE OF נָרַגְגַגְגַגַג ‘BECOME INVOLVED’

present singular
I’m becoming involved נָרַגְגַג ‘becoming involved’
You (familiar) are becoming involved נָרַגְגַג ‘are becoming involved’
You (formal) are becoming involved נָרַגְגַג ‘are becoming involved’
He is becoming involved נָרַגְגַג ‘is becoming involved’
She is becoming involved נָרַגְגַג ‘is becoming involved’

One becomes involved; It’s easy to get entangled נָרַגְגַג ‘gets entangled’
Go ahead and become involved! (familiar) *(sarcastic)*

Go ahead and become involved! (formal) *(sarcastic)*

**present plural**

We’re becoming involved

You’re becoming involved

They’re becoming involved

Go ahead and become involved! *(sarcastic)*

**past singular**

I became involved

You (familiar) became involved

You (formal) became involved

He became involved

She became involved

People became involved; We became involved

**past plural**

We became involved

You became involved

They became involved

**future singular**

I will become involved

You (familiar) will become involved

You (formal) will become involved

He will become involved

She will become involved
future plural

We will become involved
You will become involved
They will become involved

SAMPLE VERBS WITH וונֵר
fall asleep וֹנֵרָה
be rescued; be saved וֹנֵרָהְיָה
be fed up with (plus reflexive → §14.6) וֹנֵרָה וֹנֵרָה
be impressed; admire וֹנֵרָה יִנְסְפּזֵר
be / become confused יָנְמוּשְׁנָה וונֵר

9.1.8 Analytic verb former וּנְלִי

וּנְלִי ‘should; would; ought; let (…); may (…)’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. It occurs far more frequently than English ‘should’ (which itself frequently corresponds with מָרָשֶׁר → §9.1.2). In numerous contexts וּנְלִי corresponds with English use of the infinitive alone. Frequently, מָרָשֶׁר provides a subjunctive mood. The third person singular has no וּנְלִי, hence מָרָשֶׁר מָרָשֶׁר, וֹנֵר:

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF מָרָשֶׁר

How should I know? מָרָשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹרֹנִי מָרָשֶׁר אתָּם מָרָשֶׁר
What should we do? מָרָשֶׁר נִתַּנְתִּי מָרָשֶׁר מָרָשֶׁר
I told him to wait מָרָשֶׁר נַעֲבֹרֶנִי מָרָשֶׁר מָרָשֶׁר
Let’s have it your way (lit. ‘Let it be like this’) מָרָשֶׁר נַעֲבֹרֶנִי מָרָשֶׁר מָרָשֶׁר
Let them yell! מָרָשֶׁר נַעֲבֹרֶנִי מָרָשֶׁר מָרָשֶׁר
COMMON EXPRESSIONS WITH יָשָׁלָל

יָשָׁלָל זָעִי אָדוּר

Let's have it your way (lit. 'Let it be like this')

[mazl]

יָשָׁלָל כְּפַר מֶת מְדִיל

Best of luck to you! (lit. 'It should be with luck!')

[tsorēs] תּוֹרָה

I have no idea (lit. 'So I should know of troubles')

[as simkhes] תּוֹרָה

Let us meet only on happy occasions (said on sad occasions)

9.1.8.1 יָשָׁלָל as an alternative imperative

Second person use of יָשָׁלָל (lit. 'you should') is frequently used as an alternative to the grammatical imperative (→ §7.5). Imperative use of יָשָׁלָל frequently has a softer tone than the grammatical imperative, implying friendly advice rather than a command. Familiar second person pronoun דָּו is usually omitted and יָשָׁלָל is used on its own. When דָּו is retained the resulting mood is one of scolding or warning (as harsh or harsher than the grammatical imperative).

SAMPLES OF יָשָׁלָל AS AN ALTERNATIVE IMPERATIVE

Iُאֱלָלָמִים קְמַעְנֵי דַּי (familiar)

(בָּאְלָשָׁנָם קְמַעְנֵי דַּי (I'm telling you,) come early! (familiar)

Don't go! (familiar)

Iُאֱלָלָמִים נִיַּהוּ (I warn you,) don't go!

Tell the truth! (formal) [émes] תְּהֹמֶש

Iُאֱלָלָמִים אִצְנֵנָה דָּו אָמָה
9.1.9 Analytic verb former נָשָׁף

'Verbs 'do a' is often interchangeable with נֵנהב (→ §9.1). It too designates the action as a single event, rather than an ongoing affair. Its present is formed with the present tense of irregular נָשָׁף as helping verb plus indefinite article נ plus stem. In the past, the participle נָשָׁף [גֵּט] usually follows the stem. In the future, the inflected part of futurizing נָשָׁף must precede the נ plus stem sequence, while the infinitive נָשָׁף usually follows. Where both נָשָׁף and נֵנהב are used with the same verb, נָשָׁף tends to have a loftier tone, נֵנהב a more everyday tone. Thus, נָשָׁף שֵׁם נָשָׁף alone would be used in נָשָׁף שֵׁם נָשָׁף יִשְׁחַר נָשָׁף 'kiss the מְצֹּר (traditional doorpost amulet) when entering or leaving a room'. נָשָׁף שֵׁם נָשָׁף with reference to humans may denote a higher level of love than נֵנהב which denotes only the act of kissing. There is also a grammatical difference. נֵנהב takes dative without a preposition (i.e. the understood preposition → §5.1.3.1); נָשָׁף does not. Cf. e.g. נֵנהב שֵׁם נָשָׁף יִשְׁחַר שְׁחַטְסָר 'give one's sister a kiss'. There is no difference for masculine nouns, where both accusative and dative have דִּינָם (→ §§ 5.3.2–5.3.3).

9.1.9.1 present singular of helping verb נָשָׁף

I do / am doing נָשָׁף

you (familiar) do / are doing נָשָׁף

you (formal) do / are doing נָשָׁף

he does / is doing נָשָׁף

she does / is doing נָשָׁף

people do / we do / one does נָשָׁף

Do! (familiar) נָשָׁף

Do! (formal) נָשָׁף
9.1.9.2 present plural of helping verb מרא
we do / are doing מרא מ אנחנו
you do / are doing אר מ אנחנו
they do / are doing הם מ אנחנו
Do! מוש

SAMPLE OF א שמא: MODEL VERB א שמא קפוף מ שמא
present singular
I'm having a look אני מмотр א קפוף
You (familiar) are having a look יד מוס מ צ קפוף
You (formal) are having a look אר מוס מ צ קפוף
He is having a look נר מוס מ צ קפוף
She is having a look יד מוס מ צ קפוף
One has a look; You should have a look מוס מ צ קפוף
Have a look (familiar)! מוס מ צ קפוף
Have a look (formal)! מוס מ צ קפוף

present plural
We are having a look wir מוס מ צ קפוף
You are having a look אר מוס מ צ קפוף
They are having a look הם מוס מ צ קפוף
Have a look! מוס מ צ קפוף

past singular
I had a look אני מראה הצ צ קפוף
You (familiar) had a look יד מראה הצ צ קפוף
You (formal) had a look אר מראה הצ צ קפוף
He had a look נר מראה הצ צ קפוף
She had a look  דַּעְתָּהּ אֶל קָקֶם נֶפֶשׁ
People had a look; We had a look  מְדַעְתָּהּ אֶל קָקֶם נֶפֶשׁ
past plural
We had a look  מִיר הֵבָב אֶל קָקֶם נֶפֶשׁ
You had a look  מְיָר הֵבָב אֶל קָקֶם נֶפֶשׁ
They had a look  מְיָר הָבֹב אֶל קָקֶם נֶפֶשׁ

future singular
I will have a look  [ikhl/khvel akútkon] יִשְׂאַל וְעָל אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
you (familiar) will have a look  [du(ə)st akútkon] רֹד וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
you (formal) will have a look  [ir(ə)t akútkon] רֹזְחָי וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
he will have a look  [er(ə)t akútkon] רֶעָי וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
she will have a look  [zi(ə)t akútkon] רוֹזְחָי וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
we will / people will have a look  [me(ve)t akútkon] מְזָהַטָּהּ אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
future plural
We will have a look  [miin/mirn a kútkon] מְזָהַטָּהּ אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
you will have a look  [ir(ə)t a kútkon] רֶעָי וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל
they will have a look  [ze(y)ln a kútkon] רוֹזְחָי וְטָמְס אֶל קָקֶם מַשְׁפַּל

SAMPLE ANALYTIC VERBS WITH קָקֶם
say (quickly)  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
think over; have a think  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
give a laugh  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
ask  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
give a scratch  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
give a jump  קָקָטַקְשׁ אָן
9.1.10 Analytic verb former לִפְגָּר

‘allow; let’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. In inverted word order (→ §11.2, 14.4), the ָו of suffix (וָ) is frequently omitted, giving לִפְגָּר. Imperative לִפְגָּר followed by objective pronoun לָאֵיךְ or לַאֵיךְ, e.g. לִפְגָּר לָאֵיךְ, e.g. ‘Leave me alone’.

SAMPLES OF USE OF לִפְגָּר

Let me know (familiar) לָאֵיךְ

Let me know (formal) לָאֵיךְ

Why don’t you (familiar) let them come? לָאֵיךְ

Leave me alone / Stop harassing me (familiar) לִפְגָּר

Leave me alone / Stop harassing me (formal) לִפְגָּר

9.1.11 Analytic verb former לַאֵימָר

‘let’s; let us’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. It is exclusively a first person plural. Note, however, that growing usage has לַאֵימָר instead of לַאֵימָרוּ (→ §9.1.10), e.g. לַאֵימָר צָוָא, ‘Leave me alone’.

SAMPLES OF USE OF לַאֵימָר

Come on, let’s go (lit. ‘Let’s go already’) לַאֵימָר שִׁוֵּא נִנַּל

Let’s answer לַאֵימָר עֵנֵס עַדְעַד

Let’s not answer לַאֵימָר גֶּשֶּׁנְיָא עַדְעַד

9.1.12 Analytic verb former מִזְז

‘must; be compelled to’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. It is often interchangeable with לִדָּרְשָׁר (→ §9.1.2) but can denote a stronger sense of necessity. The third person singular has no ָו, hence מִזְזיוּ. לִדָּרְשָׁר מִזְז,

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF מִזְז

I really have to go מִזְז אֲלֵי
9.1.13 Analytic verb former

מָעַן ‘may’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. It denotes that permission or moral authority is invoked for the action, rather than mere physical ability (cf. קִנּוּץ → 9.1.16). Anomalously, the negative of מָעַן is the inflected part of מַכְּר, always used with הבא, giving ‘may not’. The third person singular of both has no מ, hence וְדִי מ’, וְדִי מ’, מַכְּר מ’. טָפוּר נֵיט

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF מָעַן AND מַכְּר

Are we allowed to use the garden?

It’s not allowed on weekends

Is touching allowed?

9.1.14 Analytic verb former

נַעַמְתַן ‘take to’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. It has the sense of ‘about to start; just starting; get down to doing something’. The past participle of נַעַמְתִּן is נַעַמְתִּן. Where the infinitive functions as a noun (→ §4.1.3.3), or a true noun is the thing that is about to be started, the parallel construction נַעַמְתִּן זֶרֶז is used. It is followed by the definite article (appropriately in dative following זֶרֶז) plus the noun.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF נַעַמְתִּן AND נַעַמְתִּן

I’m about to begin studying music

We prepared to escape

I’m getting down to work

Let’s get down to the homework
9.1.15  **Analytic verb former**

The infinitive of the main verb to express the habitual past.

**SAMPLES OF THE USE OF**

I used to live over there  
We used to see each other often  
It used to be different

9.1.16  **Analytic verb former**

(Var. *כִּנְעָן*) ‘can’ is used with the infinitive of the main verb. The third person singular has no ס-, hence קָנָן. The conjugation of analytic verb former קָנָן is identical to that of **know** (→ §15.4).

**SAMPLES OF THE USE OF**

Can you do me a favour?  
You never can tell  
I can’t make it today

9.2  **INHERENTLY ANALYTIC VERBS**

9.2.1  **The inherently analytic verb with**

In the present, the appropriate part of **הָיוָה** [höbm] ‘have’ (→ §§7.6.1.1 – 7.6.1.2) must precede the main verb. In the past, the inflected part of **לָנוּּב** also precedes the main verb but the past participle **לְנוֹבָא** may precede or follow the main verb; it usually follows. Analogously, in the future, the
inflected futurizing (→ §87.91 - 7.9.2) must precede the main verb but infinitive יָבוּב may precede or follow the main verb; it usually follows. Note that one of the inherently analytic verbs with יָבוּב, יָבוּב [farı̀b hobl] ‘be offended; take something the wrong way’ is the source of וְרֵחַ יָבוּב, וְרֵחַ יָבוּב [kharòtə hobl] ‘change one’s mind’ (lit. ‘have regret / remorse’).

SAMPLE ANALYTIC VERB WITH וְרֵחַ יָבוּב ‘CHANGE ONE’S MIND’

**present singular**

I’m changing (/I’ve changed) my mind דָּוַה יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
You’re changing (/You’ve changed) your mind יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
You’re changing (/You’ve changed) your mind (formal) יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
He’s changing (/He has changed) his mind נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
She’s changing (/She has changed) her mind נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
People are changing (have changed) their minds מִנְּרֵב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
Change your mind! (familiar) נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
Change your mind! (plural) נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב

**present plural**

We’re changing (/We have changed) our minds מִנְּרֵב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
You’re changing (/You’ve changed) your minds נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
They’re changing (/They have changed) their minds נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
Change your mind! נֵרֶב יָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב

**past singular**

I changed my mind ויָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
You (informal) changed your mind ויָבוּב וְרֵחַ יָבוּב
You (formal) changed your mind
He changed his mind
She changed her mind
People changed their minds

past plural
We changed our minds
You've changed your minds
They've changed their minds

future singular
I'll change my mind
You (informal) will change your mind
You (formal) will change your mind
He will change his mind
She will change her mind
People will change their minds

future plural
We will change our minds
You will change your minds
They will change their minds

SAMPLES OF INHERENTLY ANALYTIC VERBS WITH הָנַשְׁמִין
have pleasure [hanōs hobm]
be eager; be in the mood [khēyshēk hobm]
get married [khāsēnē hobm]
love, like strongly [līb ḥasideb] (var. ḥalif ḥasideb)
9.2.2 The inherently analytic verb with יִזְכּר

The analytic verb with יִזְכּר, 'be', produces hundreds of verbs. Many are restricted to a traditional learned style, but quite a few have widespread use. In the present tense, the appropriate part of יִזְכּר (→ §§ 7.1 - 7.7.2) must precede the main verb. In the future, יִזְכּר precedes the main verb and infinitive follows. In the past, the analytic verb with יִזְכּר, alone in the standard language, uses a mixed conjugation comprising the inflected part of יִזְכּר plus the past participle of יִזְכּר (גֵּזִין), giving the characteristic conjugation of analytic verbs with יִזְכּר. Model verb is יִזְכּר [מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ / מַסְקִים זָיִנ] 'agree'.

SAMPLE ANALYTIC VERB WITH יִזְכּר 'AGREE'

**present singular**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Tag</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (familiar)</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You (formal)</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody / We</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר</td>
<td>בְּיִזְכּר מַסְכֶּם זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**present plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Tag</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>מְיִזְכּר</td>
<td>מְיִזְכּר מַסְקִים זָיִנ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agree! (familiar) דִּי מַסְכֶּם! | Agree! (formal) דִּי מַסְקִים!
past singular

I agreed
You (familiar) agreed
You (formal) agreed
He agreed
She agreed
Everybody agreed / It was agreed

past plural

We agreed
You agreed
They agreed

future singular

I will agree
You (familiar) will agree
You (formal) will agree
He will agree
She will agree
Everybody will agree / We will agree

future plural

We will agree
You will agree
They will agree [mikham zayn]

SAMPLES OF ANALYTIC VERBS WITH [zayn]

suspect [khóyshed zayn]
do not agree [mákîm zayn]
distinguish; differentiate [máfkhn zayn]
concede (a point); confess [móyda zayn]
trouble somebody for a favour [mátriék zayn]
take the trouble to do somebody a favour [mashér zayn]
ofer hospitality [= food/drinks]; treat [to] [mékhaót zayn]
continue [mámshék zayn]
agree [máskim zayn]
succeed [mástliék zayn]
receive / welcome [guest] [mékabí pónim zayn]
assume [méstéar zayn]
sacrifice; give up [mákrib zayn]

9.2.2.1 Passives of the analytic verb with [zayn]

A few analytic verbs with [zayn] have passives using [zayn] (→ §9.1.7).

SAMPLES OF ANALYTIC VERBS WITH [zayn] WITH PASSIVES

mátsli ‘rescue’ → [mítstl vern] ‘be rescued’
[hiyém ‘fulfill’ → [mékúyém vern] ‘be fulfilled’
10 Adverbs

10.0 Overview

Adverbs modify, specify or elaborate on verbs or the state and time in which the verb action occurs. Where they occur in the middle of a phrase, adverbs follow the inflected verb. Thus, adverb רִשָּׁהֲנָה ['eššer] 'perhaps' follows the part of come' inflected for third person singular in רֵע קָוָם 'He may come'. Adverbs usually precede uninflected verbs (i.e., infinitive and past participle), hence נַע וּנֵע אֶשֶׁר קָוָם. There are however occasions where the adverb may follow the uninflected verb for emphasis (→ §14.10), e.g. נַע וּנֵע קָוָם אֶשֶׁר. Adverbs may generally be used to begin a sentence. There are four major types of adverbs: true adverbs (§10.1); adverbs from adjectives and nouns (§10.2); relic adverbs (§10.3); adverbs from prepositional phrases (§10.4). Some adverbs have diminutives (§10.5). Psychoadverbial inserts are phrases inserted into a sentence that serve to betray the speaker's true emotional disposition toward the object of speech or writing (§10.6).

10.1 True Adverbs

True adverbs are not derived from any other part of speech. They have no comparative or superlative.

Samples of True Adverbs

יְעוֹלָם (var. אָצְטָרַת, אָצְטָר רֶבּ; nonliterary var. אָצְטָרַת) now
once; someday [amṓ] maybē [éfšēr] šō̂n
soon; soon after bēšlō̂r
(deliberately) illogically; necessarily; exclusively [dārēk] ṛō̂̂ḥōk
then (var. ।)
really; in point of fact šēmek
really; in full; no kidding [māmēsh] šō̂m
suddenly (var. ।)
early ṛē̂
earlier ṛē̂rē
barely; just [kam] ḵēm
already šēn
late šō̂nem
later šō̂nemrō

10.2 ADVERBS FROM ADJECTIVES AND NOUNS

New adverbs arise continually from adjectives and nouns by way of the following productive mechanisms.

10.2.1 Adverbs from adjective stems

Most adjective stems can double as adverbs. Unlike true adverbs, they may attract comparative suffix .isUser-defined- just as adjectives do (→ §5.10).

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS FROM ADJECTIVE STEMS
preferably bēšūlōr
well nō̂̂ (better: bēšūlōr, bēšūlōr; better still: bēšūlōr)
quickly (more quickly: נְקָדָעַת)
slowly (more slowly: שַׁמָּשָׁמָהֲבוּר) calmly [רָעִיק] (more calmly: רוּאִיֵּךְ) quietly (more quietly: סְתָלוּכְּר) badly (worse: שֶׁלָנָבֵת)

10.2.2 Adverbs from adjective stem plus -הֶהֶיֶּית
Adjectives may be adverbialized by suffixed of -הֶהֶיֶּית, [ərˈhɛyt], to the adjective stem. Most frequently, the -הֶהֶיֶּית adverbs denote a general state of being rather than modifying a verb as directly as true adverbs (§10.1) and adverbs from adjective stems (§10.2.1). [גַּזְעְנְטַהֶהֶיֶּית] ‘in good health’ is used with imperatives in the idiomatic sense of ‘Enjoy (…)!’ e.g. ‘Eat in good health’ (‘Bon appétit’ or ‘No need to feel bashful’). The -הֶהֶיֶּית is also used ironically in the sense of ‘Go ahead and (…) (but don’t blame me)!’, e.g. ‘Well if you want to go, then go, but don’t blame me!’.

The -הֶהֶיֶּית may also be suffixed to present participles of verbs (§7.2), e.g. [גָּדְאָנְדִיקַהֶהֶיֶּית], ‘while going’ [שָׁטְאָנְדִיקַהֶהֶיֶּית], ‘while standing’ [שְׁטָאָנְדִיקַהֶהֶיֶּית]. The -הֶהֶיֶּית forms are more forceful.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH SUFFIX -הֶהֶיֶּית
angrily; while in an angry mood [øŋˈɡərbroyɡəstərˈhɛyt]
carefully; cautiously [øpˈɡəhɪtərˈhɛyt]
while / when young [yʊŋərˈhɛyt]
while / when wet [nəsərˈhɛyt]
without having been invited [nɪtˈfɑrbatnərˈhɛyt]
while / when ill [kræŋkərˈhɛyt]
quietly [shtɪlərˈhɛyt]
10.2.3 Adverbs from nouns by suffixation of אָּלִי-  
Nouns may be adverbialized by suffixation of אָּלִי-. It is often the plural of  
the noun that serves as the base of the adverb. Frequently, the אָּלִי- adverbs  
are partitive, denoting a delimitation of period of time, or a conceptual  
division into subparts.

**SAMPLIES OF ADVERBS FROM NOUNS WITH SUFFIX אָּלִי-**

- one by one; one at a time [éyntsigvayz]
- before marriage (m.) [bókhervayz]
- slowly [básiaghvayz]
- youthfully (m.); as a boy [njelóvayz]
- in great numbers; in droves; massively [mésnachná]
- before marriage (f.); youthfully (f.); as a girl [málióvayz]
- in pairs; by the couple; two by two [shóólvayz]
- at times [észvayz]

10.3 RELIC ADVERBS

Relic adverbs are not ‘relic’ because of numerical scarcity. On the contrary,  
they are amply represented. The classification denotes rather that the  
relevant prefixes and suffixes are, generally speaking, no longer productive in  
the modern language. They cannot be used at will to create new adverbs.

10.3.1 Prefix -נ

In addition to its function as a relic adverbiaal prefix used with a number of  
common adverbs, prefix -נ- is used systematically for telling time, e.g.  
ךָּלָּא  ‘one o’clock’,  ‘two o’clock’ etc. (→ §13.2.2).
SAMPLES OF RELIC ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -ן

certainly; of course [aváde] (cf. מִזְמָה, 'rule; generalization')
like this; so [שָׁעָה]
in short [aškíl] (cf. לְבָלָל, 'face')
apparently [apónim] (cf. רֱפִּים, 'face')
all the more obvious [apshite] (cf. פְּשִׁיטוּה, 'face')
beforehand [afr'ter] (cf. פְּשִׁיטוּה, 'face')
in short; to sum up; to get right to the point [akitsér] (cf. מֵאְפָּר, 'manner; kind of')
for example [akitsér] (cf. מֵאְפָּר, 'manner; kind of')

10.3.2 Prefix -ן

Prefix -ן plus superlative adjective plus suffix -ְ forms an adverbial superlative. Alternatively, these may be formed via preposition ל (→ §10.4.1).

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -ן

most preferably; at (his/her/its) best [םְבָנֶסֶט]
most undesirably; at (his/her/its) worst [םְבָנֶסֶט]
most beautifully; at (his/her/its) most beautiful [םְבָנֶסֶט]

10.3.3 Prefix -לֶו

-ֶו (often pronounced [da]) combines with a number of prepositions to form an adverb. Prefix -לֶו is unstressed. The preposition is stressed. A number of the -לֶו plus preposition adverbs have parallel forms comprising the preposition plus the dative article וּ, which is stressed, e.g. [דַּנְוָק /דַּרְנְוָק] 'afterwards' = [נֹגוֹדְדַמְד]. There are, however, instances where the meanings of the two constructions do not
converge, e.g. דע ומעון [darár/derfrár] therefore vs. דע לה [far dém] 'before that'.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -ד

present; nearby: [dabpréy/derpréy]

in the vicinity [délebm/derlém]

afterwards [danókh/dernkókh] therefore [darár/derfrár]

of it; from this; therefrom; hereof [darun/derfrun]
in addition; moreover; on top of everything else [datsú/dertsú]
on the other hand; against it [dakég/n/derkég]

10.3.4 Prefix -ב

-ב [bə] occurs naturally only within the Semitic component.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -ב

somewhat drunk [bégilímś] retrospectively; after the fact; it now being too late [bédievəd]

(if you) forgive me for saying so [bem(e)xhíle]

anyway; in any case [beméyiə]

explicitly; specially [bēfēyrəsh]

publicly; openly [bēfrēseya]

10.3.5 Prefix -כ

Like -ב, -כ [kə] occurs naturally only within the Semitic component. Most words with prefix -כ are used in a learned style.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -כ

as agreed [ksīhamdúber]
extremely difficult [kəkˈrɪəs ˈjām suʃ] נקריעה ים מים
(lit. 'like the parting of the Red Sea')
understood literally [kəpʃuˈtɔj] בשושות
according to plan; in good order [kəʃuˈrə] בשושה

10.3.6 Prefix -ל
Like ב, and ב, -ל [lə] occurs naturally only within the Semitic component.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH PREFIX -ל
after the fact; too late [ləkˈnéeraməˈjəsə] לפני שנים שנה
at first; in the first instance; initially [ləkˈnætˌkhiˈliə] לפני תחילת
for example [ləmˈoʃi] לפני שלש
at the present time [ləˈsátə] לפני סוף

10.3.7 Suffix -ו-
The only systematic use of adverbal suffix -ו- is in the numeric adverbs ונしかもת 'firstly', וmalıdır 'secondly' etc. (→ §12.2.2). The remaining surviving items generally have to do with time, space or direction. In some, suffix -ו- is optional.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH SUFFIX -ו-
Friday evening (eve of Sabbath) [fráyˈtik tə nákʰt(ə)] בשלישית צאת שבת
Saturday night [ʃəbəs tsə nákʰt(ə)] שבת-
Saturday night (var.) [ʃ(a)ˈbeyəsə nákʰt(ə)] שבת-
the next day; on the morrow (→ §13.3.2.1) זומצומצם
on the way [ahˈniˈveks] בדרך
on the way; en route [ˈuntərˈveɡzn] בדרך הוה
at least [ʃəˈniˈkʰesnə]藜יתסמנת
mostly from far; looking at a distance [fundərváyt múz]
on the way back; while returning [tsurıkveg múz]
(to the) left לינקט
(to the) right רונקט

10.3.8 Suffix †-

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS WITH SUFFIX †-
in the near future ראונט (also spelled ראונטי)
during the week (days) ראונערתומצק
last week ראונתנוגצנ (cf. ראונערתומצק, ‘next week’)
last year ראונאתנוגצנ (cf. ראונערתומצק, ‘next year’)
totally; altogether ראונתרנוגצנ (also spelled ראונתרנגצנ)
truthfully [inderëmëns] ראונתקזנ = [afanëmëns] ראונתקזנ
nevertheless [fundëstvegn] ראונדרטססטעגנ

10.4 ADVERBS FROM PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

A prepositional phrase is a preposition plus the noun phrase that is its object.
At a higher level than the sum of its parts, a prepositional phrase can function as an adverb in the syntax of the language (→ §14.4.1). Some modern adverbs derive historically from prepositional phrases (e.g. from the classical Hebrew prefixed prepositions -ב, -כ and -ל → §§10.3.4 – 10.3.6; from prepositional phrases with relic suffix † → §10.3.8). Many others derive from modern prepositions that double as adverb formers. Prepositional phrases tend to become fully adverbialized when they acquire
‘stock phrase’ status by regular use.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS FROM PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

to be spiteful; as a provocation [afsetolōkhes]
to a certain extent ṣayn ḍere nistgar mōṣe
at home ḍere nistgar
after that [nogh dém] (also spelled ṣayn ḍere nistgar)
before that ḍere nistgar
on one hand ḍere nistgar
on the other hand ḍere nistgar
from nearby ḍere nistgar
after all ḍere nistgar

10.4.1 Superlative adverbs from preposition ḍere
Preposition ḍere plus definite article ḍere (conflating obligatorily to ḍere) plus adjective with superlative ending ṣa- plus suffix -et forms an adverbial superlative. Some adverbial superlatives with ḍere have alternate forms with the far less frequent -et (→ §10.3.2).

SAMPLES OF ADVERBIAL SUPERLATIVES WITH ḍere

- first of all ḍere ḍere nistgar ẓaletam nevēṣom
- most easily ḍere ḍere nistgar ẓaletam nevēṣom
- at least ḍere ḍere nistgar ḍere nistgar ẓaletam nevēṣom
- most difficult of all ḍere ḍere nistgar ḍere nistgar ẓaletam nevēṣom
- at the very latest ḍere ḍere nistgar ẓaletam nevēṣom

10.4.2 ‘For the sake of’ constructions from preposition ḍere
Preposition ḍere plus possessive pronoun or proper name plus
corresponds with ‘for the sake / benefit of; as far as — is concerned’. Where a possessive pronoun is used, it is suffixed by - (optionally - for some). Proper names and other human nouns have possessive -.

**singular**

for my sake

for your (familiar) sake

for your (formal) sake

for his sake

for her sake

**plural**

for our sake

for your sake

for their sake

**Samples of the use of**

do it for my sake

As far as I’m concerned, you can even go today

Let’s stay for Léyzer’s sake

10.5 **DIMINUTIVES OF ADVERBS**

Monosyllabic adverbs may be diminutivized by suffixing - ([læk]) or ([lak]) to the adverb stem. There are no internal vowel shifts. The
diminutivized adverb is pronounced slowly in falsetto. It is often accompanied by side-to-side movement of the head, horizontal movement of the hands and fingers up to 180°, and a slight smile. Cf. §5.13.1 on diminutives of adjectives.

SAMPLES OF DIMINUTIVES OF ADVERBS

נשיתעך, 'quite fast (but not at top speed!)' (from נית 'fast')
EFRיאלטעהך, 'sort of early (but not too early!)' (from עראיה 'early')
Kalוגלעתך, 'quite cleverly (but not exactly brilliantly!)' (from קלוג 'clever')
שינוגלתך, 'quite prettily (but not exactly beautifully!)' (from שיש 'beautiful')
שונמקתך, 'sort of late (but not too late!)' (from שנון 'late')

10.6 PSYCHOADVERBIAL INSERTS

Psychoadverbial inserts are parenthetic interpolations in a sentence. They are uttered rapidly with clipped intonation (i.e. surrounded by split-second pauses, marked here by ). They serve to betray to the listener the speaker's attitude toward whatever it is he or she is speaking about. Virtually all can be used as self-contained sentences (i.e. interjections) in reply to a situation described by the interlocutor. Many psychoadverbial inserts may be used ironically. The following list represents a modest sampling.

10.6.1 A שונא [inamázídikərsəhō]
gloss: with my best wishes; all being well (lit. 'in a lucky hour')
attitude: friendly hope for a positive outcome
sample: מיר חונאל דרוי דונם חונא וד חנאם אינא
We’ll talk about it when you (all being well!) arrive. or: We’ll talk about it when you return. Have a good journey back!

10.6.1.1 Use of אין א נ חכמי פוע ה шут as reply
use as reply: — אני פוער! I’m leaving on Tuesday.
— אני נ חכמי פוע ה шут! Every success; Bon voyage!

10.6.1.2 Ironic use of אין א נ חכמי פוע ה шут
ironic use: hope for positive outcome of a perceived stupidity
sample: Why do you want to jump off the roof? Arapkhorengunوفן
— אני נ חכמי פוע ה шут? Du viist inamázidikərshó| arópshpringen fun dákh?
transcription: [du viilst inamázidikərshó| arópshpringen fun dákh?]
translation: Do you want to jump off the roof? Well, have fun!

10.6.1.3 Ironic use of אין א נ חכמי פוע ה шут as reply
use as reply: — אני שמייגオススメ פוך ואר孔ך I’m jumping off the roof.
— Why do you want to jump off the roof? Well, go ahead! Don’t come crying to me!

10.6.2 א נ רצות המש [mirtsešhem / mirtsešhem]
gloss: hopefully (lit. ‘if God wills it; God willing’)
10.6.2.1 Use of ירצה sesso as reply

use as reply: קומס דינגונישתי? You’re coming on Thursday?
               אני ירצה Sesso I certainly hope so; Yes, of course!

10.6.3 [bim(e)khif(e)]
gloss: asking you to forgive me (for saying something potentially offensive, embarrassing, vulgar or unkind).
attitude: aggressive state of mind toward interlocutor
sample: דיסנט קליאידאר זאנס באיט במחילה א ביסל לנקורייטן
transcription: [dayne kléyder zeen òys |bëmekhifè| a bisl lekherlekh]
translation: Your clothes, if you forgive me for saying so, do look a bit ridiculous.

10.6.3.1 Ironic use of במחילה

ironic use: mitigating an insult by apologizing for it in the same sentence
sample: די ביסל במחילה אן אייזיסט
transcription: [du bist |bëmekhifè| anidyòt]
translation: Do forgive me for saying so, but you are an idiot.

10.6.4 [gotsédánkèn]
gloss: thank God
attitude: happiness at the way something has turned out

sample: רָאָי בֵּין שְׂיוֹדָן גִּנּוֹת נָתַנְוָאָךְ אַרְוַהָךְ דְּרַע הַקְּדָשָׁתָן
transcription: [khbin shoyn |gotsëdàñken| adûrkn dem ekzáñen]
translation: Thank God, I've passed the examination or I'm thrilled that I passed the examination

10.6.4.1 Use of הנך כך as reply
use as reply: — סִפְּרֵי גִּנּוֹת אֶת דַּרְוַהָךְ It was a success.
נַקְּשׁ תְּר חַזְקְקֶנְו [gót tse dàñken] Thank God!

10.6.5 النלע [khoñie]
gloss: Heaven forfend; God forbid.
attitude: fear of worst scenario
sample: קַעָנְסֵט הַנֵּלע אָרוֹפְסוֹן לָקֶל
transcription: [kénst [khoñie] arópsain]
translation: You may (God forbid) fall down.

10.6.5.1 Use of הַנֵּלע as reply
use as reply: [ka(o)s] מַרְאֵי אֵין קְנַט? Are you angry with me?
הַנֵּלע Of course not! God forbid!

10.6.5.2 Ironic use 1 of הַנֵּלע
ironic use 1: ‘fear’ that something will turn out well
sample: קַוָּמ נִיטָ, קַעָנְסֵט הַנֵּלעָךְ נָטַנְוָאָךְ גַע פַּרְבְּרֲיֶנְגֶנֶן
transcription: [kúm nit, kénst [khoñie] gut farbréyngeñ]
translation: Don't come, you might (God forbid) have a good time.
10.6.5.3 Ironic use 1 of הלוילא as reply
use as reply: נר חות איב אמא וה跨越式? He doesn’t want to go on vacation?
הלוא? No way; God forbid. How stupid of him!

10.6.5.4 Ironic use 2 of הלוילא
ironic use 2: satiric denial of something obviously correct
sample: איך ו骠כט גזוק איז קחו? A liar.
transcription: [ikho gezokt az er iz kholit a sigar?]
translation: I said that he is (God forbid) a liar.

10.6.5.5 Ironic use 2 of הלוילא as reply
use as reply: מי גוסעל דיר גיט, אטש? You don’t like them, right?
הלוא? God forbid. When did I say that?

10.6.6 לוהבידל [lehevdil]
gloss: though one shouldn’t mention them in the same breath
(lit. ‘to differentiate [between sacred and profane]’, i.e.
‘not to say I don’t differentiate although I mention them
[together’])
attitude: contempt for one of the two things or persons
discussed
sample: דיין פרימם אן לולבידל דיין ברודער וה쓸 ציק ר׳דארטן
transcription: [dayn fraynt un lehevdil zayn bruder vein zayn dortn]
translation: Your friend and his brother (whom I can’t stand) will be there.
10.6.6.1 Use of מְבָשֵׁל as reply
use as reply: דִּאָּפִישִׁי תָּאָרְךָ דִּאָף בּוֹרֵדְתָּ עִלָּלְךָ תָּאָרְךָ? Will your friend and his brother be there?
לְהָתיֶיִיָּא Please don’t mention them in the same breath.

10.6.7 נֶבֶךְ [nébakh]
gloss: sadly; pitifully; alas.
attitude: genuine sorrow for an unfortunate person
sample: דִּיַּדְרָא צֶיוּדָה אָאָ נַעְבְּךָ נַעְבְּךָ Grandfather is sadly ill.
transcription: [der zéyde iz |nébakh| kránk]
translation: Grandfather is sadly ill.

10.6.7.1 Use of נֶבֶךְ as reply
use as reply: — דִּיַּדְרָא צֶיוּדָה אָאָ נַעְבְּךָ Grandfather has become ill.
לְהָתיֶיָּא How very sad.

10.6.7.2 Ironic use of נֶבֶךְ
ironic use: feigned sympathy for somebody who is in fact very well off; pointing out caustically that too much is being made of a trifle
sample: נֶבֶךְ נַעְבְּךָ קֶסֶף נַעְלָמָה ניִם
transcription: [érót |nébakh| kin géit nit]
translation: (e.g. of a millionaire): He has no money! How very sad!

10.6.7.3 Ironic use of נֶבֶךְ as reply
use as reply: — איָלָ נֵבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ נֶבֶךְ I’ve lost my pen.
10.6.8  נֶּבֶאַקָּה [nēbēakēkh (with extra lengthening)]  Big
tragedy! How awful!

10.6.8.1 Use of נֶּבֶאַקָּה as reply
use as reply:      — They are very ill
                      How dreadful! Oh my God!

10.6.9  קִין-הוֹרוֹא [kinaynhōre / kināhōre]
gloss:             no evil eye; not to provoke the attention of ‘the evil
                   eye’ by praising the good news too much (cf. ‘knock on
                   wood!’)
attitude:          gratification or pride concerning good news or an
                   achievement
sample:            יִדְיוֹ וְתַנְצִיר קִין-הוֹרוֹא וְהוֹרָה הַהָוָה
transcription:    [di tōkhet hot [kinaynhōre] khasēne gahat]
translation:      My daughter got married. I’m thrilled.

10.6.9.1 Use of קִין-הוֹרוֹא as reply
use as reply:      — Fantastic!
11 Questions

11.0 Overview

Questions can be formed from declarative sentences by change in intonation alone (§11.1). Explicitly structured questions are formed by inversion of subject and predicate (§11.2) or by combining inversion with an interrogative word (§11.3). Interrogative additives serve to add emotional force to questions (§11.4).

11.1 Intonation

Declarative sentences may be turned into questions by the characteristic rising intonation at the end, marked in written usage by a question mark (?).

Samples of questions via intonation alone

You’re coming tomorrow

Are you coming tomorrow?

They really know

Do they really know?

It’s true

Is it true?

11.1.1 Sarcastic intonation questions

When a declarative sentence righteously purporting to state a mere fact is ‘overquestionized’ by invoking a rise-fall intonation pattern, it becomes a
haarsly satiric attack.

SAMPLeS OF SARCASTIC INTONATION QUESTIONS

He’s a doctor  ער אוז א רקסטער
You call him a doctor?  ער אוז א רקסטער?

It’s summer in Oxford  ס’איז דומע אַל קסטאָאָר
You call this summer in Oxford?  ס’איז דומע אַל קסטאָאָר?

We’re experts  מיר זײבען עקסטאָר
You think we’re experts?  מיר זײבען עקסטאָר?

11.1.1.1 Use of דוע in sarcastic intonation questions
The use of ‘doubtful דוע explicitly marks doubt or satire in sarcastic intonation questions. It is inserted immediately after the inflected verb, e.g. ‘You call him a doctor!’

11.2 INVERSION
Questions may be formed by inversion of subject and predicate. The predicate consists of the inflected verb. Thus, ‘You are coming tomorrow?’  קומטס רעגראָן ‘Are you coming tomorrow?’ When inversion results in the sequence of second person familiar verb ending שע-+ pronoun דו, the two are obligatorily conflated to ending שע- (or, less formally, to שע-) which is suffixed to the verb. The ending שע- is usually pronounced [sta] or [st], unless stressed for contrast.

SAMPLES OF QUESTIONS BY INVERSION

Are you (formal) telling the truth?  קומטס רעגראָן אָמכא אַמעח? [émes]?
11.3 INTERROGATIVE PLUS INVERSION

Interrogatives are explicit ‘question words’. They automatically trigger inversion of subject and predicate (→ SS14.4 – 14.5).

11.3.1 Interrogatives

The interrogatives, most of which double as relative pronouns, are on the whole uninflecting.

INTERROGATIVES

where נָא (→ locative נָאָה, ‘where to; whither’)
what שְׁאָלַת
what kind of / what type of מַמה (→ pl. מַמָּאִים) what kind of a(n) (often aggressive) מַמה אָנָל
how ḥוֹצָה (→ בָּשֶׁר) how much / how many הֲדוֹחֵי (→ מַדוֹחי)
who מַמָּא (→ object [vębên] מַמָּאָה, ‘whom’)
whose [vębêns] מַמָּאָה
do when מַמָּא
for what reason (lit. ‘because of what’) [makhmâvôs] מַמָּא וָנָה why שְׁאָל (also spelled שְׁאָלַה)
for whom מַמָּא מַמָּא וָנָה
for what reason (lit. ‘because of what’) [tsəlīvōs]  צויכים
is / are; does / do (in a yes or no question)  זה

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF INTERROGATIVES

Where are you?  [vu bīstə?]  ויהי ביסטר
Where are we going? / Where shall we go?  ויהי ביכורה? / ויהי ביכורה?
What are you thinking?  ויהי ביכורה?
What kind of machine is this?  ויהי ביכורה?
What kind of friend is that?  ויהי ביכורה?
How do you (familiar) do it?  ויהי ביכורה?
How many books do you (formal) have?  ויהי ביכורה?
Who’s coming?  ויהי ביכורה?
Whom can you (formal) recommend?  ויהי ביכורה?
Whose house is this?  ויהי ביכורה?
When do we see each other?  ויהי ביכורה?
Why don’t you say yes?  ויהי ביכורה?
For whom do you work?  ויהי ביכורה?
Why don’t they answer?  ויהי ביכורה?
Are you (familiar) coming tomorrow?  ויהי ביכורה?

11.3.1.1 Inflecting interrogative

‘which’ inflects for case, gender and number. The older separate neutral form can occasionally be encountered in the written language but it is rare in modern usage. Neutral usually aligns with feminine in nominative and with masculine in both objective cases.

in nominative

which (masculine)  וחלו
which (feminine)  וחלו
which (neutral) which (neutral) which (neutral)
which (masculine) which (masculine) which (masculine)
which (feminine) which (feminine) which (feminine)
which (neutral) which (neutral) which (neutral)

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF חִנְלִיתֵהוּ in NOMINATIVE
Which coat (דַּרְוֶר מַמְגֵּל) is this? דַּרְוֶר מַמְגֵּל
Which ship (דַּרְוֶר שִּׁיק) is this? דַּרְוֶר שִּׁיק
Which house (דַּרְוֶר רוֹז) is this? דַּרְוֶר רוֹז

חִנְלִיתֵהוּ in accusative
which (masculine) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ
which (feminine) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ
which (neutral) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF חִנְלִיתֵהוּ in ACCUSATIVE
Which coat do you see? דַּרְוֶר מַמְגֵּל תֵּסֶּמֶר
Which ship do you see? דַּרְוֶר שִּׁיק תֵּסֶּמֶר
Which house do you see? דַּרְוֶר רוֹז תֵּסֶּמֶר

חִנְלִיתֵהוּ in dative
which (masculine) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ
which (feminine) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ
which (neutral) חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ חִנְלִיתֵהוּ

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF חִנְלִיתֵהוּ in DATIVE
Of which coat are you speaking? דַּרְוֶר מַמְגֵּל תֵּסֶּמֶר
On which boat are you coming? דַּרְוֶר שִּׁיק קַמְסֶמֶר
Near which house will you stand? דַּרְוֶר רוֹז תֵּסֶּמֶר
11.4 INTERROGATIVE ADDITIVES

The interrogative additives are דָּשַׁנ and עַשֶּׁה. Their use parallels that of imperative additives דָּשַׁנ and עַשֶּׁה (→ §7.5.6). דָּשַׁנ [tə / to] immediately precedes the interrogative and עַשֶּׁה [zə] immediately follows it. They can be used independently of each other or they may surround the interrogative for increased effect. Like their imperative counterparts, the interrogative additives דָּשַׁנ and עַשֶּׁה may serve to invoke affection, love or familiarity in support of a request or demand for an answer to the question being asked. They may also have the force of ‘then; so; in that case’. Interrogative דָּשַׁנ and עַשֶּׁה also add forcefulness, seriousness, and occasionally annoyance, to the question. Their use is most frequent with בָּאַשׁ ‘what’, אַשְׁאַשְׁאִיר ‘why’ and (וַה) ‘how’. Like their imperative counterparts, they may invoke feelings of guilt in support of the question or request laced with the additive.

SAMPLES OF INTERROGATIVE ADDITIVES דָּשַׁנ and עַשֶּׁה

So why don’t you tell me? דָּשַׁנ הֲבָאַשׁ דָּשַׁנ מְמַגָּסְט מִיר נִמְטָא?

Come on, why don’t you tell me? דָּשַׁנ בָּאַשׁ דָּשַׁנ מְמַגָּסְט מִיר נִמְטָא?

Come on then, why don’t you tell me? (You owe it to me!)

দুলন। যেন হলো আমার অন্য দিনের?
দুলন। যেন হলো আমার রুদ্ধসংসার?

Which ones do you have in mind?
Which ones are you talking about?

দুলন। যেন হলো আমার অন্য দিনের?
দুলন। যেন হলো আমার রুদ্ধসংসার?
12 Numbers

12.0 Overview
Alongside the international number system, used in everyday life, Yiddish retains the traditional Jewish alphabetic numbering system for culture-specific purposes.

12.1 Cardinal Numbers

12.1.1 Basic cardinal numbers

1
2 לועט
3 דרי
4 פיר
5 פר
6 ענק
7 [zibm]
8 שבט
9 ניין
10 צות
11 עמק
12 חطبع
13 רדיין
12.1.1.1 אֶחָד

אֶחָד is used for the number ‘one’ in isolation when counting and in clock time (§13.2.2). When used as an attributive adjective, and in double digit combinations (§12.1.2.1), אֶחָד occurs, e.g. אֶחָד אֵד אֶחָד ‘one man’, אֶחָד אֵד אֶחָד ‘one woman’. אֶחָד does not inflect as an attributive adjective. As a predicative adjective (§5.7), אֶחָד inflects for gender, e.g. אֶחָד אֵד אֶחָד אֵד ‘God is one’ (name of the Yiddish variant of a Passover song). In usage parallel to the posseseive-indefinite construction (§6.2.1.5), אֶחָד combines with indefinite article (§6.1.1), e.g. אֶחָד אֵד אֶחָד אֵד ‘some fellow’, אֶחָד אֵד אֶחָד אֵד ‘some woman’. אֶחָד with the indefinite article inflects for case and gender, e.g.
12.1.2 Combined cardinal numbers

12.1.2.1 Double digit combinations

Double digit combinations are ordered upward with conjunction נון 'and' (often rendered [n] or [en] in speech) in between. נון (rather than נון) is used in combination.

SAMPLES OF DOUBLE DIGIT COMBINATIONS

21 [eyn en tsvantsik]
34 [firn draysik]
48 [akhtn feritsik]
56 [zeksn fuftsik]
67 [zibmen zekhtsik]
71 [eyn en zibetsik]
89 [nayn en akhtsik]

12.1.2.2 Multiple digit combinations

Multiple digit combinations are ordered downward, as in English, but upwardly ordered double digit combinations within them are retained, e.g. 432 (lit. 'four hundred two-and-thirty').

SAMPLES OF MULTIPLE DIGIT COMBINATIONS

121 [hundert eynen tsvantsik]
234 [tsvey hundert firn draysik]
348 [dray hundert akhtn feritsik]
1,056 [toyzent zeksn fuftsik]
12.2 ORDINAL NUMBERS

There are special ordinal forms for '1st' to '19th', all ending in בֵּizacion, to which usual adjective endings are suffixed. For '20th' to '100th' and in '1000th', a בֵּizacion appears between the number (which has the same stem as both cardinal and ordinal) and the adjective ending. In higher numbers, it is the very last number in the sequence that determines the suffix — if it is between 20 and 100, or ends in the word 'thousand', בֵּיזיזיון appears. Note the anomalous בֵּישׁ for 'first'.

12.2.1 Basic ordinal numbers

first בֵּישׁ
second בֵּישׁה
third בֵּישׁוֹ
fourth בֵּישׁהוֹ
fifth בֵּישׁוֹהוֹ
sixth בֵּישׁוֹהוֹוֹ
sventh בֵּישׁוֹוֹוֹ
eighth
ninth
 tenth
eleventh
twelfth
thirteenth (var. דרייננט)
fourteenth (var. דtraîטנט)
fifteenth (var. דסנט)
sixteenth (var. דשענט)
seventeenth (var. דבענטש)
eighteenth (var. דאנזנט)
nineteenth (var. דאטנט)
twentieth
thirtieth
fortieth
fiftieth
sixtieth
seventieth
eightieth
ninetieth
hundredth
thousandth
ten thousandth
hundred thousandth
millionth

SAMPLES OF ORDINAL NUMBERS

Second Avenue 1 שער ( LoginForm) חתנו
12.2.2 Ordinal numbers as adverbs

Points made in discussion may be numbered by adverbializing ordinals by suffixing ב-ו, usually [n]. Where only two points are being made, Semitic component וראשות [réyshes] ‘firstly’ and ובט_coverage [shéynes] ‘secondly’ may be substituted for וראשותנו and ובט_coverageנו. If extra emphasis is required, וראשותנו כל [réyshesköl] ‘first of all’ and ובט_coverageנו ו [vēshéynes] ‘and secondly’ may be used.

firstly [ershtn] ונושננ
secondly [tsveytn] ושטיים
thirdly [dritn] רדייט
fourthly [sftn] ארבעה
fifthly [sintn] חמישים
sixthly [sekstn] שישים

12.3 FRACTIONS

Fractions are formed by suffixing ב-ו or ב-וסנה, generally along the lines of the ordinals (→ §12.2), to the unsuffixed form of the ordinal number. They are neutral in gender. Simple major-digit fractions with a numerator of one
may alternatively be expressed with suffix [khéylik / khéylokk] 'part'. The هلל forms may be used in everyday situations but the هلל forms alone are used in arithmetic. Note the special form هلל 'half (n.)' and its adjective counterpart هلل which inflects for case and gender as an attributive adjective. Single digit number plus a half may alternatively be expressed by suffixing هلל- to the ordinal stem of the following full number, e.g. هلل = two and a half, هلل = three and a half. Note, however, هلل for 'one and a half'.

12.3.1 Major fractions

twelfth [tsvéft khéylik]

third [drít khéylik]
fourt [fört khéylik]
fifth [fínt khéylik]
sixth [zékst khéylik]
seventh [zbént khéylik]
eighth [ákht khéylik]
ninth [náynt khéylik]
ten [tsént khéylik]
eleventh [élft khéylik]
thirteenth (var. דרימינטל)
fourteenth (var. הפוריטנטל)
fifteenth (var. הפוריטנטל)
sixteenth (var. הפוריטנטל)
seventeenth (var. הפוריטנטל)
eighteenth (var. הפוריטנטל)
SAMPLES OF FRACTIONS

an eighth ניעם
one eighth יניעם
four fifths ארבעים
three and a half דריים מטר
six nine-tenths שישה שיטים
nine twenty-fifths תשעים ואחתים

12.4 THE ALPHABETIC NUMBERING SYSTEM

The traditional Jewish numbering system uses the letters of the alphabet. Combined numbers are ordered downward. From 1,000 and upward, the system recycles itself, separating the thousands from the small numbers by an apostrophe and/or by use of larger or bold letters for the thousands.

12.4.1 The basic alphabetic numbers

1 נ
2 ב
3 ג
4 ד
5 ה
12.4.1.1 Anomalies

The anomalies in the system result from traditional cultural considerations. The combinations 10 (ו) + 5 (ה) for 15 and 10 (ו) + 6 (ל) would result, when written out, in variants of the sacred name of God. They are therefore subject to the traditional ban on using God’s name in vain in an everyday context, even where reference to God is not intended. The combinations 9 (ט) + 6 (ל) and 9 (ט) + 7 (ט) are substituted, giving ט = 15 and טט = 16. Traditional sacred Hebrew and Aramaic books with extensive Jewish letter numbering also avoid combinations with negative overtones, e.g. 304 = טט, (4+300) rather than the expected טט (300+4,) because it spells the word טט [shed] ‘evil spirit’. 
12.4.2 Supplementary uses of the Jewish alphabet

12.4.2.1 Calendar

The Jewish calendar is outlined in §13.5.

12.4.2.2 Numerology

Traditional Jewish numerology, called גָּמָרִית [gēmārīyā] 'gematria', adds up the numeric values of the letters of Hebrew words and names as a starting point for exegetical or mystical extrapolation. It is a practice prevalent in rabbinic lore and kabbalistic inquiry. Thus, for example, it has been noted in support of the rabbinic adage נַכְנַס יָין | יָטָסוּ סֹד [nīkhnēs yāin | yōtsō sōd] 'When wine goes in, a secret comes out', that the words for 'wine' and 'secret' both add up to 70 in gematria (wine = יָיִן = 10+10+50 = 70; secret = רֹאשׁ = 60+6+4 = 70). In a lighter vein, traditional wedding speeches often entertain guests by demonstrating the compatibility and good fortune of the bride and bridegroom via interlocking series of gematrias.

12.4.2.3 Acronyms

Traditional Jewish acronyms are called רֶשֶׁת אָבְדָה | רֶשֶׁת אָבְדָה [roshētēyvēs] '[abbreviations from the] heads [=first letters] of words'. Traditionally, words thus created are marked by the double apostrophe " before their final letter to mark their acronymity, but the apostrophe is frequently omitted for well established acronyms. A number of semantic classes are particularly inclined to acronyms. Great rabbinic figures are often known to Yiddish speakers by their acronyms. Most frequently, the vowel a is supplied to create syllables from the initials, except in final syllables ending in a vowel where o is supplied. Maimonides is traditionally known as רְאוּפֵן נְבֵי | רְאוּפֵן נְבֵי [der rāmēn] 'the Rambam', the acronym from his full traditional name
Rabéynu Móyshe ben Móymén. The great sixteenth-century Ashkenazic codifier Rabbi Móyshe Isséres is known as der ramó ‘the Ramó’ from his initials. The tradition is on occasion continued in modern Yiddish cultural circles. Among the best known examples are leading Yiddish cultural institutions founded in pre-World War II Eastern Europe — ייוו [yivo / yivø] (from יידישער ויסנסאף אוניברסיטאט אינטסיט牵引 ‘Yiddish Scientific Institute’, now the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research in New York), צэнטרלייידיש ‘Central Yiddish’ [tsisho] (from צэнטרלייידיש שוק ‘Central Yiddish School Organization’) and ציקו [tsiko / tsiko] (from ציקו ‘Central Yiddish Culture Organization’). A number of Jewish names are themselves תְּרוּפָה, e.g. קאָס ‘Katz’ from קוהן צדיק kohen tsedek ‘righteous kohen (descendant of the Biblical priestly caste)."
13.0 OVERVIEW

Alongside international units of time and the general calendar, Yiddish retains active use of the Jewish calendar and concepts of time associated with it.

13.1 LIFE

13.1.1 Age

how old...? ?

years old

birthday (var. ג'נומאבאָסֶט) (ריז) ג'נומאבאָסֶט

SAMPLES OF AGE

How old are you (familiar)? ווי אַלט ביםשאָר קאַ焕发ען אַלט ביםшאָר

I'm twenty-two years old איך בײַן אַלט צוויט שאַװצאנען 싱אַר

13.1.2 Youthfulness

just-born נײַ-גנובוייר

young (comparative: נײַ-גנובאָר; superlative: —)
middle aged
quite young; youngish
quite old; oldish
old (comparative: -לת; superlative: -לטש)

13.1.3 The age cycle

baby [יְבָנָי(ק)] (יְנוֹן)
child (יְנוֹן)
little boy (יְנוֹן)
little girl (יְנוֹן)
boy (יְנוֹן)
bar-mitzvah boy (i.e. 13 year old) [בּוֹקֵה(יִמְשַׁ)א]
girl (יְנוֹן)
young man (also: fellow; bachelor) [בּוֹקֵה(יִמְשַׁ)א]
young woman [בּוֹקֵה(א)ט(ס)]
(rare: מַיִלְיָה is the usual female correspondent of בוחר)
young fellow [יונָגַרְמָן]
young woman (יונָגָרְמָן)
man (רָעָר)
woman (רָעָר)
old man [זֹּון; סָקָנַים]
old woman [סָקָנַי(ס)]

13.1.4 Death

7 days of mourning upon a death [שִׁבְעָה]
(end of) thirty-day mourning period [שְׁלֹשִׁים] (pl.)
date of anniversary of a death (יָמִים עַל תְּמוּנָת),

13.2 TIME

13.2.1 Units of time

second [sɛkˈʌnd(ə)] (רְדוֹ)
minute [mɪnɪt] (רְדוֹ)
hour [ˈʃoʊ(ə)] (רְדוֹ)
day (סֻכָּה) (רְדוֹ)
period of twenty-four hours [mæsɪlɪs] (רְדוֹ)
week (טַוְיוֹן) (רְדוֹ)
month [khəˈdɪʃ] (רְדוֹ) (pl. ḫəˈdɪʃim)
year(s) (יָמִים) (רְדוֹ)
decade [yɔːrtʃɛnˈdɪk] (רְדוֹ)
century [yɔːrˈhʌntər] (רְדוֹ)
millennium [yɔrtˈʃɛnt] (רְדוֹ)

13.2.1.1 Plurals of שעה, שֵׁעָה and יָמִים

When used with a specific number, שעה ‘minute’, יומִים ‘hour’ and יָמִים ‘year’ themselves serve as plural forms, e.g. זָהָה שֵׁעָה, יָמִים ‘ten minutes’, יָמִים ‘twenty years’. When used as conceptual time units with no specific number, the plural in -ָּה is used, e.g. יומִים, שֵׁעָה ‘minutes, not hours’; יומִים ‘for many years’.

13.2.2 Clock time

Clock time is given without a preposition, e.g. מִיְּרָאָה (זָהָה אֶלֶּה).
'We're coming at 2 o'clock'. Hours and minutes may be given consecutively - 9:21 is read 'nine twenty-one'. Note the alternative forms for expressing half hours: 'thirty' or 'half past' after the preceding whole hour, and 'half (to)' before the following hour, e.g. 8:30:

- o'clock
- a quarter to
- a quarter past
- thirty
- half past
- half to

SAMPLES OF CLOCK TIME

12:30
1:15
2:15
3:25
3:50
5:00
7:45
8:26

13.2.3 Parts of the day

- before dawn: וְשֵׁשֶׁת (sheshet)
- in the morning: אֵלֶּחֶם (aelchem)
- in the afternoon: בָּשָׁה (bashah)
- at dusk: בֵּלֶד (belad)
- in the evening: שְׁמָרוֹת (shamroyot)

(→ §13.3.2.1)
in the evening בְּנַשֵׁעַת
at night [banakh] בְּנַשֵׁעַת

SAMPLES OF CLOCK TIME AND DAY TIME
4 a.m. פָּרָה פַּרְעֹה
10 a.m. צַנֵּחַ אֱלֹהֶיךָ
3 p.m. רוֹדִי נַאֲמָרִים
8 p.m. עָשֶׁר אֵין שָׁעָה - נַאֲמָר אֵין דוֹרֵעַ נַאֲמָר
11 p.m. עֽלֵה בְּנַשֵׁעַת

13.2.4 Conceptual time sequences
just a second!; in a jiffy! בְּמִיוֹנִי [מינוקה]
just one moment מַעֲטִיםָם [מעטים]
a little while נַחֲלוֹן [נחלון]
a while נַחֲלוֹן [נחלון]
quite a while נַחֲלוֹן [נחלון]

13.2.5 Idiomatic time sequences
a long long time ago נִצְנַכֶּר [נכן]
('of Chmielnitski’s times’, after Bogdan Chmielnitski, who led massacres of Jews in the Ukraine in 1648 and 1649)
seldom [shmīt] שְׁמִית [מית]
('once in a sabbatical’ after the Biblical sabbatical at seven-year intervals)
very seldom [yōyvi] יָוְיִי [יוי]
('once in a jubilee’ after the Biblical jubilee at fifty-year intervals)
very long [gōtes] תַּקְוָה long as the diaspora (→ §16.1)
(‘long as the diaspora’ after the two-thousand-year Jewish diaspora)

very short [púrim] בֶּדֵי פּוּרִים
(‘from the Fast of Esther to Purim’, i.e. a timespan of one day)

in / until a ripe old age [mēṣushēlakhōn yōrōn]
(‘Methuselah’s years’, after Methuselah who lived 969 years; cf. Genesis 5:27)

13.2.6 Relative time concepts

now (var. אֵלֶּה, אַלְּהֵן, אָלְמָן; nonliterary var. אֵלֶּה)
then; (= ‘at that time’) (var. בִּתְמַעַלָּת, בִּתְמַעַלָּת, בְּתָמַעַלָּת)
before (preposition requiring object) בְּרֵאשִׁית
after (preposition requiring object) בְּקֶר
before, previously (adv.) בּוֹדְקֵה
later (adv.) בּוֹדְקֵה

during [mēshēkh] בְּשַׁעֲרֵהוֹנִי / [bēshās/pshās] בְּשַׁעֲרֵהוֹנִי
concurrent with לִקְדַּסְתָּקִים מִצְאָה
at the same time בְּאֶדָד (אֶדְדָד) דֶּרֶךְ צְרוּבָּהוֹר אַבֶּסְפָּה

13.3 THE CALENDAR

13.3.1 Seasons

spring רְנוֹרִים (חרייליגוּן)
summer רְנוֹרִים (חרייליגוּן)
13.3.2 Days

Sunday וֹנֵמְכִי
Monday מַקְנֵמְכִי
Tuesday רִיָּנְסָטִיק
Wednesday מַיְסָתָלִק
Thursday דְּגָנְנֵרְסָטִיק
Friday רֵיָּנְסָטִיק
Saturday [שָׁבָּטָה] הַבְּשֵׁש

13.3.2.1 Friday and Saturday evening

Because the Jewish Sabbath, like all Jewish holidays, begins on the evening preceding the date of the holiday (→ §13.5.3), the preceding day has special cultural and linguistic status. In addition to רֵיָּנְסָטִיק, Friday is also called הַבְּשֵׁש [èrev shábês] ‘eve of Sabbath’. The part of Friday afternoon immediately preceding the onset of the Sabbath celebration is known as הַבְּשָׁנָה [farshábês]. Friday evening, upon and following the start of the Sabbath, is רֵיָּנְסָטִיק [motse shábês]. Saturday night, from the end of the Sabbath at sundown and onwards, is known as הַבְּשָׁנָה [shábês tsu nákht(s)] or [sh(a)seyse nakht(s)] ‘Saturday night’ (→ §10.3.7). The stock-phrase use of preposition אָוֶּדֶן [avdernákht] is used, e.g. אָוֶּדֶן נָאַשְׂרוּ הָוֶּדֶן נָאַשּׁוּב, 'Wednesday evening' (→ §13.2.3).
13.3.3 Months

January

February

March (var. מאי)

April (אפריל)

May (var. spelling: ממאי)

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

13.3.4 Dates

Dates are formed with ordinal numbers (§12.2). They are masculine and traditionally given in dative with masculine definite article)

SAMPLES OF DATES

October 3 (דצמברˈ) שְׁשִּׁים-גָּלֶפֶתָה
december 36th

April 12 (אָפִּילֵי) עֲשָׂר-בֶּן-טַו
april 12th

January 28 (יַנוֹועַר) עֲשָׂר-טַו
january 28th

13.4 USE OF PREPOSITIONS WITH EXPRESSIONS OF TIME

In many cases where English uses 'at' 'on' or 'for' in expressions of time, there is no preposition at all. Preposition מִ (at) is used in the sense of
intention with respect to a period of time, but no preposition appears in the factual recounting of the period of time. המila – קרויה corresponds with ‘ago’; והחיה – אלחרז corresponds with ‘in – time’.

**SAMPLES OF THE USE AND NON-USE OF PREPOSITIONS WITH EXPRESSIONS OF TIME**

**We’ll meet at 4** אירפת גור湖泊 לượcג
**I’m coming on the 24th** רק שומ לה Posté
**I came intending to stay three weeks** ארבע ביה נאכר הגדול דריצי זושן
**I stayed three weeks** ארבע ביה נאכר הגדול דריצי זושן
**I saw them ten years ago** ארבע כיוון דר יצוון מש צأخو יצאו זאוריק
**I’ll see them again in ten years** ארבע הולו דו חירא 서ועי און צאוו יצאו זאוריק

### 13.5 THE JEWISH CALENDAR

#### 13.5.1 The calendric system

The Jewish lunar calendar makes use of the alphabetic numbering system (→ §12.4). The calendar is calibrated to Biblical history as chronologized in Jewish tradition, and counts from the Biblical creation of the world. That event is placed in Jewish year 1, which corresponds with 3761/3760 BC. Thus, for example, 586 BC coincides with the Jewish years קספ בענה (3,175) and הקרוב (3,176); 1492 AD coincides with הרברוב (5,252) and הרברוב (5,253). To simplify the system for everyday use, the ‘ה representing 5,000 is deleted where discussion is limited to years after ‘ה (i.e. AD 1239/1240). The abbreviated forms of years are usually written out using the traditional double apostrophe (‘”) before the final letter. Thus, 1900 is תמ”ו (5,661
To convert any Jewish year after 1240, add 1,240 to the abbreviated Jewish date (i.e. without the 5,000). If the exact date is known and it falls between the Jewish new year in autumn and 1 January, add 1239 instead. If the exact date is not known, it is customary to add 1240 with the understood caution that the first few months of the Jewish year coincide with the preceding year. Jewish dates generally become 'words' via the insertion of an [a] vowel for years that end in a consonant, and an [o] vowel for years that end in a vowel, e.g. הָנַשְׁנִית [tashmákh] = 1987/1988, הָנַשְׁנְה [tashnó] = 1990/1991. Many names of years are historical concepts, e.g. זָעַשְׁנִית הָיוּכְה [gëyres tákh vëštá] the persecutions of [5.]408 and [5.]409', refers to the massacres of Ukranian Jewry in those years. Adding 1240 converts the years to AD 1648 and 1649.

13.5.2 Months

The Jewish lunar year has twelve months. Leap years, which occur seven times within a nineteen-year cycle, have thirteen months. The month added is אָדוֹר [véyodeř], also called אָדוֹר בֵּ' [öder béyj].

אָדוֹר [tishre] (September / October)
אַכְהָט [khéshvèn] (October / November)
כְּלָל [kislev] (November / December)
טֵיֶב [tévës] (December / January)
שְׁבַט [shvat] (January / February)
אָדוֹר [öder] (February / March; called 'אָדוֹר אָלָף [öder álfe] in leap years)
אָדוֹר [véyodeř] / אָדוֹר בֵּ' [öder béyj] (in leap years only)
נְסִי [nìsn] (March / April)
נְיָר [nyár] (April / May)
סִיבַּנ [sìvn] (May / June)
13.5.3. Dates of the month and of major holidays

Dates of the month are given using the Jewish alphabetic numbering system (→ 112.4). The Jewish day extends from dusk to dusk and the date therefore begins on the previous day in the general calendar. Jewish holidays therefore begin on the evening of the date before their counterparts in the general calendar.

**MAJOR JEWISH HOLIDAYS AND THE DATES ON WHICH THEY BEGIN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holiday</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
<th>Popular English name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ראש השנה</td>
<td>[rosheshone]</td>
<td>‘Jewish New Year’</td>
<td>ג' תשרי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>יום כיפור</td>
<td>[yomkipar]</td>
<td>‘Day of Atonement’</td>
<td>כ’ תשרי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>סוכות</td>
<td>[sukee]</td>
<td>‘Feast of Tabernacles’</td>
<td>מח’ תשרי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שמחת תורה</td>
<td>[simkhes toyre]</td>
<td>‘Simhath Torah’</td>
<td>כ’ת תשרי</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>חנוכה</td>
<td>[khanake]</td>
<td>‘Hanukkah’</td>
<td>ב’ כסלו</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בטиш✈</td>
<td>[tu bishvat]</td>
<td>‘Tu biShevat’</td>
<td>בס’ בשבט</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ספירה</td>
<td>[purim]</td>
<td>‘Purim’</td>
<td>ז’ אדר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>פסח</td>
<td>[peysakh]</td>
<td>‘Passover’</td>
<td>ס’ ניסן</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>לג בומה</td>
<td>[lag boymer]</td>
<td>‘Lag baOmer’</td>
<td>ז’ אייר</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>שבועות</td>
<td>[shvuaa]</td>
<td>‘Shavuoth’</td>
<td>ו’ סיוון</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בטאמצ</td>
<td>[shivoer betamuz]</td>
<td>‘Fast of Tamuz’</td>
<td>ט’ תמוז</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>בטאוב</td>
<td>[tishovov]</td>
<td>‘Fast of Av’</td>
<td>ט’ אב</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14 Syntax

14.0 Overview

Yiddish syntax is highly flexible. Because the three cases (→ §5.1) themselves maintain clarity of subject and object, there is scope for extensive variation in word order. Changes in word order empower the speaker and writer to determine nuance and emphasis by transposing many of the parts of a sentence at will with no loss of clarity. The major constraints are the placement of the inflected verb in second position within a sentence, the application in certain conditions of obligatory inversion of subject and predicate, and the position of verbal additive זַא and negator זָא.

14.1 The Inflected-Verb-Second Rule

The inflected-verb-second rule stipulates that the inflected verb be placed in second position within a sentence. Inflecting verbs are those that inflect for person and number. In the present tense, the main verb itself inflects (→ §7.5) and is therefore subject to the rule. In the past and future tenses, it is the helping verbs that inflect (דִּיבְּרֵי or זִיס in the past → §§7.6 - 7.7; וַעֲלֵי in the future → §7.9). The helping verbs in the past and future tenses must adhere to the inflected-verb-second rule. The main verbs — the past participle in the past and the infinitive in the future — do not inflect and are therefore exempt from the rule.
14.2 BASIC SENTENCE ORDER: NOUN PLUS INFLECTED VERB

The primitive sentence type comprises a noun phrase followed by a verb phrase. Note from the samples provided that the inflected verb adheres to the inflected-verb-second rule in all three tenses. In the present, where the main verb itself inflects, it is simply placed after the subject. In the past, the appropriate part of the past tense helping verb — בָּלָט or הָלַכְּנָנָה — is second. In the future, the appropriate part ofְָּנֶלְּּּּּ must be placed second.

SAMPLE SENTENCES IN BASIC SENTENCE ORDER

present

וד ביטס נוענעס

You are right

past

דוער טפים וּכָּכְּבָּנָה גָּרְנֶרֶם מתכ ובנגולת

Father spoke to his little boy

future

וּכּכָּכְּבָּנָה בָּנַּה וּגָרְנֶרֶם מָכְּבָּנָה

The new teacher (f.) will arrive on Monday

14.3 WORD PLACEMENT IN BASIC SENTENCE ORDER

14.3.1 כּכָּכְּבָּנָה in basic sentence order

If a verb is accompanied by additive כּכָּכְּבָּנָה (→ §7.3), כּכָּכְּבָּנָה immediately follows
the inflected verb in basic sentence order. The result is that in the past and future of synthetic verbs, and in the present of verbs with stressed prefixes, יִלְבָּשׁ is sandwiched between the inflected and uninflected verb.

SAMPLES OF יִלְבָּשׁ IN BASIC SENTENCE ORDER

present
I’m delighted to hear the good news.
People are pushy in that company.

(Inf. [shtupm] יִלְבָּשׁ ‘push oneself; be ambitious; sell oneself’)

present of verbs with stressed prefixes
I fit in here.
Stop bothering me!

(Inf. [shtupm] יִלְבָּשׁ ‘stop bothering someone’)

past
We said goodbye to each other last year.
They greeted each other on the street.

future
We’ll see each other again next year.
I will miss you (lit. ‘The heart will yearn’).

14.3.2 Object pronouns in basic sentence order

Accusative pronouns (→ §6.1.2) immediately follow the inflected verb. Dative pronouns (→ §6.1.3) follow the preposition of which they are the object.
SAMPLES OF OBJECT PRONOUNS IN BASIC SENTENCE ORDER

**present**

Our friends can see us [khaveyrim] kunneyn Lonzhayn
He looks at you (familiar) all day

**present of verbs with stressed prefix**

They are throwing us out (inf. למשתתפים)
They're taking everything away from us

**past**

We were fooled (/cheated)
They spoke to us

**future**

We'll see them tomorrow
They won't yell at us

14.3.3 לי in basic sentence order

Negator לי (→ §7.4) occurs somewhere after the inflected verb. In sentences with helping (inflected) and main (uninflected) verbs,.limit occurs somewhere between the two. This is applicable for all helping+main verb combinations (past → §§7.6–7.7; future → §7.9; present of verbs with stressed prefixes → §8.2; analytic verbs → §9). The scope for manoeuvre within these constraints allows for considerable variation of sentence emphasis (→ §14.10).
SAMPLES OFIGIN IN BASIC SENTENCE ORDER

**present**

I'm not going

They don't know what they're talking about (lit. 'They don't know of their hands and feet')

**present of verbs with stressed prefix**

We're not getting up early

I'm not throwing away the coat

**past**

I didn't go to Jerusalem

He didn't find himself

**future**

We won't go to Montreal

We won't see each other on Friday

14.3.3.1 WITH

Where verbs have additive *with* (➔ §7.3), *with* always precedes *origin*. Adverbs may intervene.

**SAMPLES OF WITH**

I don't try

I don't try anymore
14.3.3.2 نيֶנֶז with object pronouns

Niez follows an object personal pronoun (→ §6.1.2 – 6.1.3). An adverb may appear between them. In analogous sentences with common or proper nouns, ניז may precede the noun.

**SAMPLES OF NiEZ WITH OBJECT PRONOUNS**

I don't see him upstairs נִיְזָה לְעַיְבָּהּ
I don't see him upstairs anymore נִיְזָה לְעַיְבָּהּ וְלֶנְדָהּ
I don’t see the people upstairs נִיְזָה לְעַיְבָּהּ וְלָנְדָהּ
I don't see Zálmen upstairs נִיְזָה לְעַיְבָּהּ וְלֶנְדָהּ זָלָמֶן

14.3.3.3 ניִזְקִן

Where a transitive verb with an indefinite object is negated and נִיְזִקְן (→ §7.4) is used, נִיְזִקְן [kin / ka] occurs immediately before the noun phrase that is its object. ניִזְקִן are often separated by the requirements of placement.

**SAMPLES OF THE POSITION OF ניִזְקִן**

We don’t have any time ניִזְקִן לְעַיְבָּהּ
They didn’t have any money ניִזְקִן לְעַיְבָּהּ וְלְנְדָהּ
You won’t have any worries here ניִזְקִן דָּגְגָּעַת נְדָהּ וְלְנְדָהּ
Don’t tell me any stories ניִזְקִן מָיִסָּעַת נְדָהּ וְלְנְדָהּ

14.4 INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER: INFLECTED VERB PLUS NOUN

In inverted sentence order, the inflected verb is jumped forward so that it precedes the subject. The most frequent cause of inversion is the inflected-verb-second rule. Jumping the inflected verb forward places it in second position, in conformity with the rule. In past and future, this generally results
in separation of the helping verb (לִבְּנָה or זָרִיף in the past; וְעָלָל in the future) from the main verb (past participle or infinitive). Main verbs, which are not subject to the inflected-verb-second rule, are unaffected by the jump.

14.4.1 Adverbial triggered compulsory inversion

Adverbials comprise adverbs, adverb phrases (phrases launched by an adverb) and prepositional phrases (functioning in effect as adverbs → §10.4). Adverbials at the beginning of a sentence would result in the inflected verb being in third position. This is averted by inversion, which jumps the inflected verb forward to second position. The samples provided illustrate the same sentence in basic sentence order and in inverted order triggered by placement of an adverbial at the beginning of the sentence. Subject and object are underlined; adverbials triggering inversion are outlined. The adverbs and prepositional phrases provided have similar meanings.

SAMPLES OF ADVERBS AND ADVERB PHRASES TRIGGERING INVERSION

**present**

Mālkē is coming soon מַלְךָ בָּא מִשָּׁלָה → מַלְךָ בָּא מִשָּׁלָה

**past**

We danced late at night מִרְבִּי הַבָּטָאְס שָׁפֶם אֵין דּוּר נָאֵיבָא → מִרְבִּי הַבָּטָאְס שָׁפֶם אֵין דּוּר נָאֵיבָא

**future**

I will certainly go וְיִדֶרֶמ אֵין אַחַד מְדִינֵי נֶזֶק → וְיִדֶרֶמ אֵין אַחַד מְדִינֵי נֶזֶק
SAMPLES OF PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES TRIGGERING INVERSION

present
Mälke is coming in a little while מָלְקֶהּ שָׁנָה שׁוֹנֵבּ קָאָה ַּשׁוֹנֵבּ → מָלְקֶהּ שָׁנָה שׁוֹנֵבּ קָאָה

past
We danced until late at night וְהָדָנְשָהּ עָלְהּ עַל עָלְהּ נָאָרְו עָלְהּ נָאָרְו → וְהָדָנְשָהּ עָלְהּ עָלְהּ נָאָרְו עָלְהּ נָאָרְו

future
I will certainly go 진행 עַלְּדוֹת קָאָה נָיִּי ↩ 진행 עַלְּדוֹת קָאָה נָיִּי

14.4.2 Midsentence adverb-triggered inversion
A sentence need only have a noun phrase and a verb phrase. A written sentence may comprise any number of true sentences tied by link words. Whether or not inversion is triggered in the middle of a sentence depends on the nature of the link word. If the link word is an adverbial, inversion is triggered. If it is a conjunction, there is no inversion. In the samples provided, subject and object are underlined; inversion triggers (adverbs, adverb phrases and prepositional phrases) are outlined. Conjunctions, which do not trigger inversion, are in bold type.

SAMPLES OF MIDSENTENCE ADVERBIALS TRIGGERING INVERSION

present
I’m coming on Thursday קָאָה יַנְבּוֹרְפְּשָהּ → קָאָה יַנְבּוֹרְפְּשָהּ
I might be coming on Thursday קָאָה יַנְבּוֹרְפְּשָהּ → קָאָה יַנְבּוֹרְפְּשָהּ
past
We went to Europe

future
She won’t go

SAMPLES OF MIDSENTENCE CONJUNCTIONS NOT TRIGGERING INVERSION
present
I’m coming on Thursday

past
We went to Europe

future
She won’t go

14.4.3 Distinguishing conjunctions from adverbs
By definition, adverbs trigger inversion while conjunctions do not. It is
therefore important to know which link words are adverbs and which are conjunctions. There are hundreds of adverbs in the language used to describe states of time, place, feeling and situation. Adverbs (including adverbial and prepositional phrases) often represent the more complex logical relations (e.g. nevertheless', 'on the other hand'). Many conjunctions are the link words that express the basic linking concepts 'and', 'but', 'if', 'or' 'because' and 'that'. Some, however, do express time relations, and some have developed more sophisticated logical connotations. In stock phrases combining an adverb with a conjunction, it is the final word that determines status with respect to triggering inversion. 'ע"ע 'as' concludes the stock phrase 'בְּשָׁלֵיָהוּ 'as soon as'. The entire phrase therefore functions as a conjunction and inversion is blocked (→ §5.10 on conjunctions vs. prepositions with comparative adjectives).

14.4.3.1 Major conjunctions

but בְּשָׁלֵיָהוּ

if אַצְרַי

or אוּדוּר

and וְ

that; when; if בְּשָׁלֵיָהוּ (preceding subject; cf. adverb בְּשָׁלֵיָהוּ)

as soon as בְּשָׁלֵיָהוּ "זַ"ז

although [hagám] מְנוּבָה

which / that שֹּׁם

when / if שָׁם

as / like שָׁם

if / in case / in the event שָׁם עָבָד

although שָׁם וּלָא
after [nogh dém vi] וְיָנֵמ [preceding subject; cf. preposition נְגֶקֶל) notwithstanding that [nit gekùkt av dém vos] but / only נְגֶקֶל rather; it is rather the case that [nor vodén] נְגֶקֶל וְיָנֵמ (כְּעַיִיתָהוּן)

14.4.4 Present participle triggered compulsory inversion
Present participles (→ §7.2) trigger inversion. Inversion triggering present participles are **outlined**.

**SAMPLES OF PRESENT PARTICIPLES TRIGGERING INVERSION**

inýem [kha've] בֵּשְׁם רְוקָם וּלְוָא הַחָבָרָה
While walking, Kháve thought about the matter

While running, the athlete injured his foot

14.4.5 If-then clause triggered compulsory inversion
If-then clauses trigger inversion in the then-clause. Inversion is triggered regardless of the type of word beginning the if-clause. Inversion here has the force of English ‘then’. Noun phrases and inflected verb are **underlined**, inversion-triggering if-clauses are **outlined**.

**SAMPLES OF IF-THEN CLAUSE TRIGGERED INVERSION**

We will come to visit you מִיר מְלָל קָוָם זָא רָי זָא נְעַשְּׁמַ תָּא →
If you invite us, we'll come to visit you
emphasis (→ §14.10) triggers inversion. In the samples provided, inversion-triggering fronted words are outlined.

**SAMPLES OF OBJECT-FRONTING INVERSION**

I really needed this! [dóz dafíkñ ndókh]  
I have enough apples  
We didn’t need him yesterday [em]  
I have too many problems already  

**14.4.8 Stylistic inversion**

Unless it is subject to obligatory inversion, the first sentence in a spoken or written text exhibits basic sentence order (noun phrase followed by verb phrase). Follow-on sentences may, however, be inverted to avert monotony. Such inversion often has the additional force of ‘so’, ‘then’ or ‘and’ in a continuous text, serving to provide continuity the way an adverb, prepositional phrase or conjunction might do. In many traditional styles of discourse and narrative, only the first sentence in any paragraph is in basic word order. The rest may be processed by stylistic inversion.

**SAMPLES OF STYLISTIC INVERSION**

I entered the room. It was dark.

I didn’t understand. So I continued reading.

I wanted to speak with you (formal). So I came.
14.5 WORD PLACEMENT IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

14.5.1 ז''ל in inverted sentence order
ז''ל follows the nominative in inverted sentence order if the nominative is a personal pronoun. ז''ל follows the inflected verb where the nominative is a common or proper noun.

SAMPLES OF ז''ל IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

present
That is why he is delighted זל''יב רע''ב בר''יא על ז''ל
That is why the boss is delighted זל''יב רע''ב בר''יא על בר''יא בבר''יא בבר''יא

present of verbs with stressed prefixes
Why do you (familiar) refuse? ?מונאש כוקזזנ ז''ל
Why does Esther refuse? ?מונאש [éster]

past
They became friends in Peru ז''ל שותי קוקזזנ ז''ל בבר''יאבדרז
Those two became friends in Peru ז''ל שותי קוקזזנ ז''ל בבר''יאבדרז

future
We will meet next year ז''ל ותרגנ ז''ל מגרז ז''ל
The sons will meet next year ז''ל וברגנ ז''ל מגרז ז''ל

14.5.2 Object pronouns in inverted sentence order
Accusative pronouns (→§6.1.2) immediately follow the subject. Dative
pronouns (→ §6.1.3) follow the preposition of which they are the object, as they do in basic sentence order (→ §14.3.2).

**SAMPLES OF OBJECT PRONOUNS IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER**

**present**

While listening, he paints you (formal) אדועונר דיק שלטת טר אמייך

He looks at you (familiar) all day אני נצנצן ספג קוקס טר ארוחי ריני

**present of verbs with stressed prefix**

Why are they throwing us out? ליפורנרשיסק הוּקֶס טַנְנֶה יאַוֵּד זָּפַּנֵנָאָרְס

Why are they taking everything away from us? אֶזֶּה הָקוֹסַר קַוַּקְוַד יאַוֵּד זָּפַּנֵנָאָרְס

**past**

We were cheated on Thursdayされて יאַוֵּד זָּפַּנֵנָאָרְס

They spoke to us later שומנער ה napraw מיט יאַוֵּד גבעונדער

**future**

Will we see them tomorrow? וייעל מיט די מיטוזון שוקע

Of course they won't yell at us וייעל מיט די אַרִיך זָּפַּוֵּד גבע שריינע

**14.5.3 נִי in inverted sentence order**

As in basic sentence order (→ §14.3.3), נִי occurs somewhere after the inflected verb, and, in verbs comprising helping plus main verb, somewhere between the two.

**SAMPLES OF נִי IN INVERTED WORD ORDER**

**present**

Nevertheless, I'm not going יהלא ני אלק ני
Why don’t they know what they’re doing? (lit. ‘Why don’t they know of their hands and feet?’)

present of verbs with stressed prefix
We’re not getting up early on Monday
In the meantime, I’m not throwing away the coat

past

[yərushalāyim] בֵּית יְרוּשָׁלָיִם
Last year I didn’t go to Jerusalem

future

If they come, we won’t go to Montreal

Why won’t we see each other on Friday?

14.5.3.1 מִי הַנָּעַר in inverted sentence order
As in basic sentence order (→ §14.3.3.1), מִי always precedes הַנָּעַר. Adverbs and the subject may appear between them.

SAMPLES OF מִי הַנָּעַר IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

I don’t try now
Now I don’t try anymore
Now Shīmān doesn’t try anymore
14.5.3.2 נִזָּה with personal pronoun as subject in inverted sentence order

Where the subject that has been transposed by inversion is a personal pronoun, נִזָּה must appear after the pronoun. An adverb may appear between them. Where the subject is a proper or common noun, נִזָּה may precede the object noun.

SAMPLES OF נִזָּה WITH SUBJECT NOUNS IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

If you come, he won't come
נִזָּה יִתָּה עַל הָעַד אֶזֶכֶם שָׁתיִית נִזָּה
נִזָּה יִתָּה עַל הָעַד אֶזֶכֶם שָׁתיִית נִזָּה יִתָּה
If you come, the people won't come
נִזָּה יִתָּה עַל הָעַד אֶזֶכֶם בְּרִימְנְדָּל יִתָּה בְרִימְנְדָּל יִתָּה
If you come, Bráyndi won't come
נִזָּה יִתָּה עַל הָעַד אֶזֶכֶם בְּרִימְנְדָּל יִתָּה בְרִימְנְדָּל יִתָּה

14.5.3.3 נִזָּה with object pronoun

As in basic sentence order (→ §14.3.3.2), נִזָּה follows an object personal pronoun. An adverb may appear between them. In analogous sentences with common or proper nouns, נִזָּה may (and usually does) precede the object noun.

SAMPLES OF נִזָּה WITH OBJECT NOUNS IN INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

Today, I don't see him upstairs
הַיֵּבֵּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה
תְּמַבֶּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה
Today, I don't see the people upstairs
הַיֵּבֵּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה הַיֵּבֵּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה
תְּמַבֶּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה
Today, I don't see Záimen upstairs
הַיֵּבֵּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה הַיֵּבֵּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה
תְּמַבֶּז עַל אֶזְכֶּה אִדֶּשֶד נִזָּה אֵזְכֶּה

14.5.3.4 נִזָּה in inverted sentence order

As in basic sentence order (→ §14.3.3.3), נִזָּה [kin / ka] occurs immediately before the noun phrase that is its object. נִזָּה are often separated by the requirements of נִזָּה placement.
SAMPLES OF THE POSITION OF נטנץ Киев in INVERTED SENTENCE ORDER

We don’t have any time on Sunday. نوفمبر شهر من شهر Květ.

You didn’t tell me a tall story?

14.5.3.5 נטנץ jumped to end during fronting

When a negative sentence undergoes object fronting for emphasis (→ §14.4.7, 14.10), נטנץ is jumped to the end of the sentence for emphasis.

SAMPLES OF NEft Yiņ IN OBJECT FRONTING INVERSION

I’m not Rothschild רוטשילד בַּיְּנַא נטנץ

She did not kill him רוטשילד בַּיְּנַא נטנץ

You don’t have any sense שלֶב נטנץ

She is no fool קְנַי נטנץ

14.6 PREDICATIVES

14.6.1 Positive predicatives

The positive predicatives are singular סטייוון דוしたい ‘there is’, plural סטייוון דוしたい ‘there are’. In the past and future, סטייוון דוしたい disappears. It is replaced by past participle וントונ in the past and the appropriate part of וnton in the future. When applied in the present tense to humans, the predicative can have the sense of ‘just arrived’. Where סטייוון דוしたい (over) here’ occurs alongside סטייוון דוしたい or סטייוון דוしたい, the resulting sequences סטייוון דוしたい (over) here’ and סטייוון דוしたい (over) here’, are retained.
I don't know [khvéysnit] →
[tómærnt | véysikhnt] תומך ויסיקהית

If not, then I don’t know

It’s no good [stóygnt] של טוב גнят
[unazyó | togyes béméyiel nit] עזיו ב tüm הג📡
And if so (/if yes), it's no good anyway

14.4.5.1 Inversion in the if-clause

Where there is no word (adverb, prepositional phrase or conjunction) to signify the concept ‘if’ in the if-clause, inversion is invoked in the if-clause. Inversion in the if-clause itself serves to supply the concept ‘if’.

SAMPLES OF INVERSION IN THE IF-CLAUSE

[kumdzl | kum lkh óykhnt] קומדזל, קומ את הקנה

If she comes, then I'll come too

[vílmén géyn | télómír géyn] וילמן גיינ, טולמייר גיינ

If we want to go, then let's go

[ínkás] בימר ינקס, גיינ הליגר גיינ

If I go, you're angry; If I don’t go, you’re also angry

14.4.6 Interrogative inversion

Interrogatives trigger inversion (→ §11.2 – 11.3).

14.4.7 Fronting inversion

Any word that is fronted (brought forward) to the beginning of a sentence for
present singular
there is  [sidō / sīzdō]  סְיָדוֹ / סִיזְדוֹ

SAMPLES OF THE PRESENT SINGULAR PREDICATIVE
There’s a theatre in town  סְיָדוֹ קל משמעו של שהים
Shlóyme is here / Shlóyme has just arrived  [#Sidó dō] שלמה

present plural
there are  [(s)zányen dō]  סְיָזְנוֹן דֹּו

SAMPLES OF THE PRESENT PLURAL PREDICATIVE
There are many students here  סְיָזְנוֹן דֹּו קל משמעו של סְיָזְנוֹן
Are the guys here yet?  [khévre]  שֶׁדוֹו דֹּו הָזַרְדְּהַה?

past singular
(there / it) was  [sigévén / sělz gévén]  סְיָגְבֶּנֶּו / סְלְצֵגֶבֶּנֶּו

SAMPLES OF THE PAST SINGULAR PREDICATIVE
It was a nice day  סְיָגְבֶּנֶּו קל משמעו של סְיָגְבֶּנֶּו
Was Síme here?  סְיָגְבֶּנֶּו דֹּו קְלַרְדַּה?

past plural
there were  [(s)zányen gévén]  סְיָזְנוֹן גַּבֵּנֶּו

SAMPLES OF THE PAST PLURAL PREDICATIVE
There were many robbers  סְיָזְנוֹן גַּבֵּנֶּו קל משמעו של סְיָזְנוֹן
Were Síme and Zálman there?  סְיָזְנוֹן גַּבֵּנֶּו קְלַרְדַּה קץ בלומֶּו?
future singular
there will be  [sitzáyn / sëvet záyn]

SAMPLES OF THE FUTURE SINGULAR PREDICATIVE
It will turn out well  סוחט זין גוז
Kháne will be there  סוחט זין דשומוק חוה

future plural
there will be  [sëin záyn / sëin záyn]

SAMPLES OF THE FUTURE PLURAL PREDICATIVE
There will be students there  סוחלן זין דשומוק ספויידונג[vertex]
Kháne and Shmuél will be there  סוחלן זין דשומוק חוה אוק שפואל[vertex]

14.6.2 Negative predicatives
In the present tense, the negative predicatives are סאני זין גיומק (or) סאני זין גיומק ‘there isn’t’ and סאני זין גיומק ‘there aren’t’. In the past – סאני זין גיומק סזגנוק זין גיומק ‘there wasn’t’ and סאני זין גיומק סזגנוק זין גיומק ‘there weren’t’. Future forms are סוחלן זין זין ‘there won’t be’, plural סוחלנ זין זין ‘there won’t be’. In colloquial speech it is common to use the singular forms for both singular and plural. If the negative predicative has an indefinite object, the indefinite article disappears and is replaced by כי. When the object is a personal name, כי is omitted unless the proper name is being treated as a common noun, for identification of a stranger or humorously for a familiar individual (cf. ‘Isn’t there a Joe around?’). When the object has a definite article, the definite article is retained in the negative and no כי appears, unless the sense of
‘any’ or ‘none at all’ is required, in which case מ"א replaces the definite article.

**present singular**

there is no [sînîţô / sîz nîţô / sëz nîţô]

**SAMPLES OF THE PRESENT SINGULAR NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE**

There isn’t a theatre in town סָאָיגַנְו נִיטָא מַטָּאָרֶה גְּהִיָּאָה נְּשָׁקָא

The theatre doesn’t exist any more סָאָיגַנְו מַטָּאָרֶה מַדַּיָּא לִטָּאָרֶה נְּשָׁקָא

Shlôyme is not here / Shlôyme hasn’t arrived סָאָיגַנְו שַלְוָיָא נְּשָׁקָא שַלְוָיָא

There is no Shlôyme here סָאָיגַנְו שַלְוָיָא נְּשָׁקָא שַלְוָיָא

**present plural**

there are no [sînîţûn nîţô / sèzûn nîţô]

**SAMPLES OF THE PRESENT PLURAL NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE**

There aren’t many students here סָאָיגַנְו נִיטָא מַטָּאָרֶה גְּהִיָּאָה נְּשָׁקָא

Our friends aren’t here yet? [kha'bîrim] סָאָיגַנְו נִיטָא מַטָּאָרֶה גְּהִיָּאָה נְּשָׁקָא

**past singular**

there wasn’t any [sinigevén / sôiz nît gévén]

**SAMPLES OF THE PAST SINGULAR NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE**

It wasn’t a nice day סָאָיגַנְו נִיטָא מַטָּאָרֶה גְּהִיָּאָה נְּשָׁקָא

Wasn’t Sîmô here? סָאָיגַנְו נִיטָא מַטָּאָרֶה גְּהִיָּאָה נְּשָׁקָא

**past plural**

there were no [sèzûn nîgâvén / nît gévén]
SAMPLES OF THE PAST PLURAL NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE
There weren’t many robbers [kinsakh] וריבעה
Were Sime and Zaimen not there? שמיים וзамין לאلاح או?

future singular
There won’t be [satinzayn / sest nit zayn]

SAMPLES OF THE FUTURE SINGULAR NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE
It won’t turn out well [satzun get zi‘m nom] גוני
Khane won’t be there [zun get zi‘m raper] רפאי

future plural
there won’t be [satin ni(t)zayn / sven nit zayn]

SAMPLES OF THE FUTURE PLURAL NEGATIVE PREDICATIVE
There won’t be any students there [satzun get zi‘m rapem kip saperunom] רפאיי
Khane and Shmuel won’t be there קהנ ושמואל לאleftrightarrow אפוקנאי

14.7 RELATIVES
Relatives ‘who’ and ‘that/which’ replace the subject they refer to. The inflected verb usually follows the relative and is thus maintained in second position within the relative phrase (the subsentence launched by the relative), in conformity with the inflected-verb-second rule. The relatives are uninflecting ווענבער and inflecting ווענבער. Its inflection follows the same anomalous pattern of interrogative ווענבער (→ §11.3.1.1). ווענבער and ווענבער are frequently but not always interchangeable. While ווענבער occurs in all
three cases, בְּרִית is limited to nominative and accusative. When referring to people, both בְּרִית and בְּרִית may be replaced in either object case by בְּרִית, which does not inflect for number or gender.

SAMPLES OF RELATIVES IN NOMINATIVE

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The table that stands here is a pretty one

[prose:4.5.8] דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The woman sitting over there is my professor (f.)

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The poem, which is very beautiful, is too long for now

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The people who are coming are my good friends

SAMPLES OF RELATIVES IN ACCUSATIVE

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The table I bought is a pretty one

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The woman I see over there is my professor (f.)

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The poem, which the poetess wrote is very beautiful

דַּרְוָא מָשׁ בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית בְּרִית

The people whom I see are my good friends
SAMPLES OF RELATIVES IN DATIVE

The table of which I was speaking is standing over here

The woman with whom I am speaking is my professor (f.)

The poem of which you read is very beautiful

The people to whom I am going are my good friends

14.7.1 הָאָמֶרֶת as subordinate phrase launcher

Unlike its English counterpart, relative הָאָמֶרֶת can launch a subordinate sentence.

SAMPLES OF הָאָמֶרֶת AS A SUBORDINATE PHRASE LAUNCHER

The people with whom one cannot communicate (lit. ‘the people that with them one cannot talk’) are here again

The doctor whom I know (lit. ‘that I know him’) arrived today

14.8 REFLEXIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

Reflexive verbs are formed by putting the subject, usually human, with all its
articles and adjectives into dative (→ 885.1.3, 5.3.3, 5.5.3). As it happens, the minority of Yiddish nouns that do inflect (→ 85.14) are human designators – intimate nouns (→ 85.14.1), proper names (→ 85.14.2) and personal pronouns (→ 86.1.3). The noun phrase, appropriately inflected for dative, is linked to the verb via the third person singular of ביי (→ 87.7.1): אניי in the present, ויינגען (plural ויינגען) in the past, and גוזן (plural גוזן) in the future. The literal sense of reflexivity is therefore ‘it is / was / will be something to somebody’. Many verbs just happen historically to take the reflexive. They denote states of being or feeling rather than actions per se. A number of reflexives are formed with ‘become’ (→ 89.1.7) rather than ביי. Note that the passively constructed גונען (‘like’) (→ 815.5.6) takes the reflexive.

**SAMPLES OF USE OF THE REFLEXIVE**

I’m o.k.; all is well with me; I’ve got it good

She’s feeling cold

Martin is feeling hot

Father is feeling cool outside

Grandmother is feeling warm today

She likes him [er gefeit] [er gefeit] [er gefeit]

She once liked him more

Bliumke likes Nosen [nosen]

He likes her [zi gefeitem]

He once liked her more

Sender likes Khayke

You don’t know how good you had it

It will be difficult for us next year

Are you getting fed up? [nimes] [nimes] [nimes]

Here you’ll find it better
14.9 THE DOUBLE VERB CONSTRUCTION

The use of the infinitive followed by the same verb in its appropriately inflected form, with inversion, is a popular device for denoting contrast or habitual activity. For the small minority of verbs where the first person plural differs from the infinitive, the double verb construction follows the first person plural (e.g. גִּבּוֹן, חִיפָּסָל rather than קְנַן יוֹסֵף rather than קְנַן).

SAMPLES OF THE DOUBLE VERB CONSTRUCTION

מרַפְּסָפָן סְרֵפֶּסֶן וּם אָבְנָאָר אֲרוּבעָנָאָר וּרְגְּאָנָא

He does think, but he certainly doesn’t do any work (lit. ‘but work he doesn’t’)

לָאֵשׁ לְאֵשׁ מִיר לְבִעֲנַר קַעְפַּמיֶשׁ אִיִּזְּ בַּעֲנִים

We do laugh but it’s not funny (lit. ‘but funny it’s not’)

קֵוָּמַה קֵוָּמַה וּיְבִיַּגְּעַמֶּסׁ אָרְבִּיוֹנָאָר עַלְּמַה

She comes every night at eleven o’clock

14.9.1 The discontinued double verb construction

A double verb construction with no follow-on tends to imply dissatisfaction, or to provide implicit criticism or irony, the nature of which is evident from context.

SAMPLES OF THE DISCONTINUED DOUBLE VERB CONSTRUCTION

[kûmən | kûmt er] ...ךֵוָּמַה קֵוָּמַה וּרְעַה

He will most certainly come (but...)

[liákhn | liákhtzl] ...לִיאָקִהְנַהְנַה לִיאָקִהְנַהְנַה וּרְעַה

She certainly is laughing (but...)
14.9.2 The double infinitive construction

An infinitive fronted to the beginning of the sentence for emphasis (→ §14.4.7, 14.10) may be repeated in an inverted phrase following upon it. The construction has implicit but powerful comparative force.

SAMPLES OF THE REPEATED INFINITIVE

לשמור את المهרה (but.....)
They will certainly try (but....)

14.10 VARIABILITY OF WORD ORDER

Subject to the constraints outlined in this chapter, word order can vary dramatically depending both on rhythmic factors and the speaker’s wish to lay greater stress on one of the several parts. Most frequently, the part of the sentence brought up to the front marks its semantic prominence. Apart from inflected verbs which are assigned to second position, nearly anything can be brought up to the front. And even inflected verbs may be brought up front to create a dramatic exclamation. The item at the end may also carry greater or greatest stress, depending on intonation (or, in written texts, context). Items in the middle generally have less emphasis.

SAMPLES OF VARIABILITY OF WORD ORDER

I have enough apples
I have enough apples
I have enough apples
I have enough apples
Do I have enough apples!

We can’t come now
We can’t come now

mir Kunegun Yis Komun Ayatuma
Azantsa Kunegun Mid Biv Komunu
We can't actually come now. We can't actually come now. We can't come now. We can't come now. We just can't come now! We just can't come now!
15 SEMANTICS

15.0 OVERVIEW
The notes in this chapter provide acquaintance with a number of semantic distinctions that have no direct correlates in English.

15.1 ‘AT’
The most frequent equivalent of ‘at’ is בֵּי [ba]. בֵּי also translates ‘from’ that ascribes learning something from somebody or studying with or under somebody. בֵּי has a number of additional uses which must be mastered case by case. בֵּי regularly conflates with the dative definite article, giving בֵּי [bam] (→ 85.3.3.1).

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF בֵּי

דֵּרֶק הוֹלֵךְ עַד גְּנֵה לא [bam] וְיִוְיָד
He learned this from his grandfather

שָׁנָה מִלְּשָׁנָה שָׁסָדוֹד בֵּי אַרְגְּרְנֵרָה
We studied under a great professor

בֵּי נִזְּרַי אֱצְרְנֵר
Things are different with them

אֶלֶךָ הוֹלֵךְ בֵּי אַמָּה [ba em] וְיִוְיָד
I lived at his place for two years
It's warm in their house

Have you been to see the doctor?

15.2 'FROM'

ترجمة نموذجية للفهم القريب من 'part of it'; معظم الاقتباسات 'from', hence 'I escaped from Alcatraz'; 'by' يشير إلى الأثر الشخصي، hence 'a new book by the same author'.

15.3 'GO'

To walk or to go a conceptually short distance is 'נהל'; to go by vehicle is 'ל행'.

Cf. 'I'm going home' (on the assumption that home is nearby) vs. 'I'm going to Australia'.

15.4 'KNOW'

is used for knowledge acquired by study, knowledge of languages, and acquaintanceship with humans or objects. 'אני, on the other hand, is used with reference to more general empirical knowledge of the world and in cases where there is no object (§ 9.1.16 on כִּלּוּנָן as an analytic verb
15.5 ‘LOVE’

15.5.1 ‘Friend’

The neutral terms are רַבִּי (usually pronounced and occasionally spelled רַבִּי) ‘friend (m.)’ and רַבִּי (יוֹדַע) ‘friend (f.)’. Both refer to platonic friendship. In addition, they may be used disingenuously about a romantic relationship which one is reluctant to divulge. Thus, when a woman says רַבִּי she implicitly claims not to be involved romantically with the male friend referred to. Analogously, when a man says רַבִּי of a woman, he does so to stress the nonromantic nature of the friendship. To convey the general notion ‘friend’ of a person of the opposite sex, with no romantic undertones or implicit denials, the predicative possessive pronoun with indefinite article may be used, e.g. ‘He is a friend of mine’, ‘She is a friend of mine’ (→...
15.5.2 'Boyfriend' and 'Girlfriend'

' Boyfriend' ['khāver'] and 'girlfriend' ['khāvērta'] (occasionally 'khāvērtorn'] are synonymous with "friend (m.)" and "friend (f.)" when referring to persons of the same sex. Thus for a woman speaking of her woman friend, 'mizq ḥarēshu and 'mizq ḥarēshu are synonymous, as are 'mizq ḥarēshu and 'mizq ḥarēshu to a man. For opposite sexes, however, 'mizq ḥarēshu and 'mizq ḥarēshu have the sense of 'boyfriend' and 'girlfriend' respectively, most unequivocally so when used with possessive pronouns, e.g. 'her boyfriend', 'your girlfriend'.

15.5.3 'Going out'

A traditional expression is 'leymvēt [lit. 'go around with']', e.g. 'leym vēt [lit. 'go around'] 'She's been seeing him for four years'. In English-speaking countries, the anglicism 'aredeygeyn' ['arodeygeyn] (lit. 'go out with') is very popular. Its near-homophony with 'aredeygeyn' 'die' is often exploited in jokes. The most universal phrase in use is simply 'leym vēt [lit. 'go with']'.

15.5.4 'Lover'

'Beloved' or 'lover' is an inflecting nominalized adjective — 'lovers'. They are often used in Yiddish where English would
have ‘boyfriend’ or ‘girlfriend’ although the semantic content of the Yiddish denotes a level of intimacy higher than בורוכו and לישטניש. There are a number of other terms which may be used for special effects, e.g. ליבטשע (f. ליבטשעער) in lighthearted jest (referring also to lovers of or dabblers in the arts); ליבטשע (f. ליבטשעער), technically a superlative meaning ‘most beloved’, in folkloristic and poetic usage; ליבטשע (f. ליבטשעער) and ליבטשע, now archaic and used only to make fun of somebody else’s relationship.

15.5.5 ‘Love affair’

This or roman may be used for ‘have a romantic relationship / love affair’.

15.5.6 ‘Like’ and ‘love’

‘Like’ is expressed via a reflexive construction (→ §14.6). Subject ‘likee’ + דאטיב ‘liker’ combine, e.g. ‘She likes him’, ‘He likes her’. ‘Love’ is an analytic verb with ליב (פּופּוּב; → §9.2.1), which imposes accusative, e.g. שְׁלוֹמְתָּא. ‘She loves him’, ‘He loves her’. An alternative to is ליב סְפּוּב.

15.6 ‘PAPER’

A piece of paper is שֵׁטְּקִי (a štikl papir), pl. שֵׁטְּקִי mamzer. דו is ‘newspaper’ (pl. דוֹפֶּנֶג).
learned or academic paper delivered before a conference or symposium (pl. דיבורים). A leaf of a book is דף or דפיות when not prefixing a specific number, e.g. רוני = רוני והעלバレ רוניrazy דפיות. 'On which page is it?'. When a page number is included, only عدد appears, e.g. עניין عدد 92 ‘on page 92’. Its abbreviated form is ‘פ.’ but older ‘ד.’ is still encountered.

15.7 'PARTY'

Traditional Jewish celebrations, most notably weddings, bar-mitzvahs, and circumcisions, are called חתונות [simkhas]. Some speakers expand the range of חתונות to cover a party of any type. Others Yiddishize the Israeli Hebrew חותנה [meseiba] to [meseibe], but neither option has gained much ground outside limited circles. A party characterized by the presence of single people and alcohol is a חוגי اللبنקע [hulyanke] (pl. חוגי اللبنקעש [hulyanye], lit. 'orgy' but usually used humorously of any 'wildish party'. A traditional and universally acceptable way of expressing the modern notion of 'party' is a prepositional phrase rather than a noun - ק ComVisible לחהמש [lekhayems] 'come for (alcoholic) drinks'.

15.8 'QUESTION'

A simple question of fact that is swiftly answerable, e.g. 'Which way is Delancey Street?' is most frequently rendered by the analytic רגור סיכום [regor simkem] (→ §9.1.9) lit. 'give an ask'. The most universal and middle-of-the-road
question is 'question' (→ §4.2.2.1 on the semantic nuances of variant plural endings of שאל). An intellectually contentious question, implicitly or explicitly challenging a premise or argument, is a קושה [kāshe]. Finally, a traditional Jewish legal question asked of an appropriate (usually rabbinic) authority, most often on a matter requiring a yes or no answer, is a שאלה [sháyle]. Note the popular proverb שאלתא זא מחרט איצי מרייתא [amē frekt a sháyle iz treyf] lit. 'When one asks a question (of the rabbi as to whether certain food is kosher), the answer is that it is not kosher'. The proverb has the sense of 'If you ask permission the answer will be no (so go ahead and do what you please without asking).

15.9 'RIGHT'
For a human to 'be right' is יודע וודתך [n-news] or ודוע וודתך [n-news] 'you are right'. For a thing (e.g. a statement, idea, book) to 'be right' is adjective איז וודתך [n-news] 'that's right'. The noun 'right' is דעה [n-news] (nouns), which has no plural. It is often used as a collective abstract concept, e.g. שלוש השמות דעה [n-news] 'human rights'.

15.10 'SHUSH'
'Sense' meaning 'logic' is קושה [séykh], e.g. קושה [séykh] [indém initó kin séykh] 'There's no sense in it'. 'Sense' meaning 'one of the possible meanings of a word or thing' is קושה [séykh] 'In what sense do you mean it?'. Sense as a specific human faculty, or one of the five senses, is קושה [séykh] (pl. קושי [khûshim]), e.g. קושי [séykh] 'sight'...
15.11 ‘SOLUTION’
Solution to an intellectual question (e.g. מִטְרָא ← § 15.8) is a נַיָּה [tērēš], but note that in everyday use נַיָּה may mean ‘excuse’. אֲחַיָּה [gězveq] may be used for a solution that is a ‘way out’ of a problem. בַּשְׂאֵּר [bashéyḏ] usually refers to the solution of a riddle or mystery in the world of ideas, and קְשֶׁת [šāqēṭ] (also ‘remedy’) to the solving of a more practical problem. The most generally applicable term is קָנָה. In popular usage, פֶּתֶר [pēṭer], lit. ‘patent’ is used approvingly of a promising or successful solution to a problem.

15.12 ‘TELL’
This is the most frequent correlate of ‘tell’, e.g. בָּאֵל מִי [ba‘al me’i] ‘Tell me!’ To ‘tell (a story)’ is דָּרַשׁ מִי [dāraḥš mī] ‘Tell me a story’. To ‘tell’ in the sense of ‘convey information’ is קָנָה מִדָּר [kāna mīdar] ‘Can you tell me what was said?’

15.13 ‘THE’
The definite article substitutes for possessive pronouns (→ § 6.2) where possession is known, understood, or can be inferred from context. Thus, in a conversation with someone about his or her father, one would say דָּרַשׁ מִדָּר [dāraḥš mīdar] , She has a good sense of humour.'.
rather than י tócש (which is reserved for cases where there might be ambiguity). Analogously, the article is used with inanimate objects, e.g. דו רוע ארטשע בויטל לאיז קלאָטנע כע那人 'My car has broken down' where possession is clear.

15.14 ‘THINK’

רַמאָ is the most general verb for ‘think’. It may be modified by unstressed prefixes -ב-, giving רמאָ ‘think (about something specific); consider’, and -ר, giving רמאָ ‘think until a solution is found’. It also attracts stressed prefix -ו, giving רמאָ ‘devise; come with (a solution)’. מָה is to think in the sense of ‘be of the opinion’ and corresponds with its noun מָה ‘opinion’. מָה and מָה may overlap with both מָה and מָה. מָה has a more ponderous, considered mood about it. מָה generally has the sense of ‘contemplate’. מָה is rarely encountered in literary Yiddish. In journalistic prose and colloquial use, however, it is frequently used for מָה.

SAMPLES OF THE USE OF VERBS FOR ‘THINK’

I think a lot about the problem

Man thinks and God laughs (proverb)

Well, what are you thinking about? [nu | vos trakhste?]

I have to think about it

I’ve come up with an answer

Have you come up with anything?

Well, what do you think?

I have a different opinion

I thought about it a lot
15.15  "TIME"

(ד') covers time in the general sense only. The sense of 'occasion; event; occurrence' is לועצמא (לועצמא), hence לועצמא (לועצמא) 'the last time'.

The equivalent of 'a good time' is the verbal phrase [färbréyngan] lit. 'spend the time well'.

15.16  "TO"

The usages covered by English 'to' correspond with a number of prepositions, depending on the nature of the prepositional object.

15.16.1  "To (a person)" = צא

Hence, צא (דותער) צא שבולוט (דותער) 'to Dvoyre', צא שבולוט (דותער) 'to Shloyme', צא שבולוט (דותער) 'to the teacher', צא שבולוט (דותער) 'to mother'. צא is frequently omitted where it is the understood preposition in dative. Verbs concerned with human communication usually do not take צא, e.g., צא שבולוט (דותער) I told her', צא שבולוט (דותער) I told the teacher (f.).

15.16.2  "To (a physical object)" = צא

Hence, צא (منتجاتק) צא ביב (UGC) 'to the table', צא (منتجاتק) 'to the tree', צא ( PRODUCTS ) 'to the building'.

15.16.3  "To (a geopolitical concept)" = קין [kin] or קין

Hence קין ( PRODUCTS ) קין "to Oxford", קין ( PRODUCTS ) קין "to London", קין ( PRODUCTS ) קין "to London", קין ( PRODUCTS ) קין "to London".
If the place name happens to be a plural, or happens to include the feminine definite article יְהִי, only יְהִי is used, hence יָאָרֶי יְדֵהַנָּה שָׁמֶשׁ to the United States, יָאָרֶי דַרְעֶר לִיוֹם to Lithuania. יָאָרֶי דַרְעֶר שָׁוָיִים to Switzerland.

15.16.4 ‘To (a place that is not a geopolitical concept)’

Hence יָאָרֶי בְּבֶהְרִי to the bank, יָאָרֶי פַּרְקִי to the factory. יָאָרֶי הָעָר to the city. Cf. §5.3.3.2

15.16.5 ‘To (an event)’

Hence יָאָרֶי וּדוֹר לְחֵי to the wedding, יָאָרֶי וּדוֹר לְנַשָּׁה to the funeral, יָאָרֶי וּדוֹר לִירֵעְבּוֹג to the meeting, יָאָרֶי וּדוֹר לְקַבִּילֵי to the congress / conference.

15.17 JEWISH VS. GENERAL

Yiddish evolved as the language of Ashkenazic Jewish civilization over a millennium, coterminously with the cultures of Christian Europe. The language has a huge lexicon for traditional Jewish concepts, institutions and realia. All of these survive in full in traditional communities. There are, however, large numbers of items that survive both in literal and in metaphorical senses, in all varieties of Yiddish. There is also vocabulary to cover the civilization of Christian Europe specifically. Since the Westernizing movements of the nineteenth century, the language has been enriched by
large numbers of borrowings from German, Russian and the international 'Western repertoire' of secular internationalisms. The result is a two or three tier semantics. The following is a modest sampling.

15.17.1 'Bible'

`:תנָּקָה [tanákh] 'Jewish Bible (i.e. the Old Testament)'

vs.

:בִּבְלֶל [bibl] 'Bible (in general)'

15.17.2 'Book'

:סְנֵר [sneyfr] (pl. שְּנֵרִים [sneyrim]) 'traditional sacred book'

vs.

:בּוֹך [bukh] (pl. בּוֹוכֵי [bokhe]) 'book (in general)'

15.17.3 'Conference'

:אסְפּוֹת [aspo] (pl. אספאות [aspoa]) 'traditional assembly / conference'

vs.

:אסְפָּה [asfa] (pl. אספים [asfa]) 'assembly / conference (in general)'

15.17.4 'Expert'

:בָּקִי [baki] 'be expert / proficient (in Talmudic studies)'

vs.

:מַמקְח [mamkhe] 'expert / specialist (in anything)''
15.17.5 'Fool'

שומת [shóyté] (pl. שומרים [shóytim]) 'jewish fool'

שומתミש [tipēsh] (pl. שומריםミし [tipēyim]) 'esp. jewish fool'

ןור [nar] (pl. נורנים [narónim]) 'any fool'

15.17.6 'Genius'

גאון [gōʻen] (pl. גאונים [gōyonim]) 'genius (esp. in talmudic studies)'

נער [neʾ] (pl. נערים [neʾyim]) 'young genius (esp. in talmudic studies)'

נערינע [gennyō] (pl. נערינעים [gennyōnym]) 'genius (in general)'

15.17.7 'God'

דאברלעיג [der rēbōne shelōyim] 'god (viewed traditionally)'

דער ריבוגדעיג [der rēbōne deālme] 'god (viewed traditionally)'

(used in learned style)

דער ייביבערשעט [der eybysters] 'god (viewed intimately)'

לעטעדט ייחער (lit. 'sweet father' \(\rightarrow\) 85.6.1) 'god (viewed very intimately)'
15.17.8 'Justice'

יוושר (yôyshe'rub) 'traditional sense of) justice (in a specific case)

vs.

גנרב וסיקס (gënre'usikx) '(modern / universal sense of) justice'

15.17.9 'Pray'

דָּבָה (dâvênên) 'say the traditional Jewish prayers'

vs.

פּוֹטִיל (po'tîle ton) 'pray (in general)'

15.17.10 'Prayer'

פּוֹטִיל (po'tîle) '(traditional Jewish) prayer'

vs.

גְּבֶט (g'ebêt) 'prayer (in general)'

15.17.11 'Rabbi'

רָב (rov) (pl. רַבּוֹנִים [râbônim]) 'traditional rabbi'

vs.

רֶבֶּה (rébê) (pl. רְבֵי [rébeiym]) 'Chassidic rebbe'

vs.

רַבְּיִינוע (pl. רַבְּיִינוער, pl. רַבְּיִינוע נוּ) 'modern rabbi'

vs.
15.17.12 ‘Religious’

תורתי ‘observant of traditional Judaism’

vs.

נאו-ортודוקס ‘neo-Orthodox; observant of (quasi-)traditional Judaism’ (used especially of ‘modern’ Orthodox groups)

vs.

religious ‘religious (in any faith)’

15.17.13 ‘School’

חúde [khéyder] (pl. חוררים [khadórím]) ‘traditional primary school’

vs.

(’universum school)’

‘primary school (in general)’

15.17.14 ‘Synagogue’

שכלה (pl. שכלות) ‘traditional synagogue’

vs.

‘modern synagogue’

(pl. כנסיות or כנסיות, ‘specific) church’
15.17.15 'Talmud'

בתרן [gəmōrɛ] 'Talmud (looked at from the traditional point of view)'

(technically בתרן refers only to the later Aramaic portions comprising the
bulk of the Talmud but in traditional Yiddish usage, the term may refer to the
whole of the Talmud — §§4.3.2.2, 7.3.2.1)

בתרון [tálμʊd] 'Talmud (looked at from a modern scientific or secular
point of view)'

15.17.16 'Teacher'

מלמד [mælˈmæd] (pl. מורים [mærəm]) 'traditional
primary school teacher'

vs.

רב [rēbə] (pl. רביים [rēbəs]) 'traditional school / yeshiva teacher'

vs.

לומדים (pl. — or ב-; f. לומנית, pl. ב-) 'teacher in general'
16 Phraseology

16.0 Overview

The chapter provides introductory acquaintance with common idiomatic devices and a modest sampling of each. The categories are chosen to exemplify more general underlying strategies of Yiddish phraseology and idiomatic structure.

16.1 Similes

Stock similes with "like; as", are frequently used in both speech and writing. They are drawn from everyday life or from Jewish history.

Samples of Similes

[gezunt vi an ayzn] נגעון יי או איזן
'healthy (/strong) as (a piece of) iron' (= 'very healthy / strong')

[vi got in pariz] ויי גוט אין פריז
'as God finds it in Paris' (= 'has it really good')
(Var. ויי גוט אין אודסא
'as God finds it in Odessa')

[toby vi di vant] טובי ויי דיי ונט
'deaf as the wall' (= 'very deaf')
[mies vi der tóyt] 'ugly as death' (= 'very ugly')

[nás vi a káts] 'wet as a cat' (= 'very wet; drenched')

[svet helín vi a tóyt nánsé] 'it will help as much as cupping glasses (once used to draw blood to the skin as an alleged cure for numerous maladies) will help a dead person' (= 'hopelessly useless')

[sáynt hóbem vi a shpín] 'hate like a spider' (= 'hate intensely')

[shéyn vi di véit] 'beautiful as the world' (= 'very beautiful')

SAMPLES OF SIMILES FROM JEWISH HISTORY

[gróys vi óyg méylekh habóshn] 'tall as Og King of Bashan' (= 'very tall'; cf. Deuteronomy 3:11)

[gezánt vi shimshén nag[ber] 'healthy (/strong) as Samson' (= 'very strong'; → §5.8.1)

[láng vi der góíes] 'long as the Jewish diaspora' (= 'very long'; → §13.2.5)
16.2 REJOINERS

Stock rejoinders are drawn from a variety of sources.

SAMPLES OF REJOINERS

[áderaba] אדרבא

‘Of course!’ (lit. ‘to the contrary (I agree!)’, i.e. ‘Why shouldn’t I agree?’, hence ‘Of course!’)

[adi bóbe volt gëhàt a bòrd | voidzi gëvën a zëyde]

‘Stop saying // all the time!’ (lit. ‘If grandmother had a beard she would have been a grandfather’)

[shlékt vi yèróvem ben nèvot] שלנרקטוי וי רзвоным בן נבטים

‘evil as Jeroboam’ (= ‘very evil’; cf. Kings I 11:26-14:20)

[ráykh vi kóyrakh] רעך וי קרוח

‘wealthy as Korah’ (cf. Pesaḥim 119a; Numbers 16; the Yiddish simile refers to the postbiblical legends of Korah’s wealth rather than to the biblical account of his rebellion)

[klíng vi shìdhỳmaméyìakh] קלינק וי שילדה המלך

‘wise as King Solomon’ (= ‘very wise’; often satiric; → §5.8.1)
16.3 SATIRIC CHARACTERIZATIONS

Anything in the language is capable of being turned around via the satiric rise-fall intonation (→ §11.1.1). Still, a number of characterizations have become part of a stock repertoire of ready-to-use epithets. They are often accompanied by raising of the head and eyebrows, and/or shaking of the head and upper part of the body.

SAMPLES OF SATIRIC CHARACTERIZATIONS

[an áyníał] אָנָא אָיִינִיָא
‘What a stupid idea!’ (lit. ‘an idea/notion/novel proposal’; has the meaning of ‘what a brilliant idea’ when uttered loudly with falling intonation)

[ándékt améríkə] אמריקְנָא קְנָא
‘Discovered America!’ (used to mock a purported ‘discovery’ or ‘innovation’
or the purported ‘importance’ of the information offered)

[a gróyser knáker] גרייטער קעַנאָקער
‘Big talker!’ (lit. ‘big knocker’; used to debunk a show-off, big-shot or person who has failed to pull something off)

[zeyger a güter knáver] זײַגער אַ גוטער קעַנאָבר
‘Some friend you are (/he is, etc.)!’ (lit. ‘a very good friend’)

[a khókhem] קעַהָם
‘What a fool (m.)!’ (lit. ‘a wise man’)

[a khakhéyméste] קעַהָעװײַמײַסטה
‘What a fool (f.)!’ (lit. ‘a wise woman’)

[a khókhme] קעַהָהװ
‘What a stupid thing to say!’ (lit. ‘(a piece of) wisdom’)

[a näye maysé] נײַה מאָיזהה
‘We’ve heard that one before!’ (lit. ‘a new story’; used to debunk the alleged novelty of a statement or discovery)

[a ráynem mánt] מאַנדער מאַנט
‘What a nasty fellow!’ (lit. ‘a nice guy’)

[klíyn bísale trógedik] קלײַן ביסאַלע טרוֹגאַדיק
‘Very slightly pregnant!’ (used to reply to an attempted mitigation of a situation that is in fact a yes or no issue)
That’s one little thing!” (used to debunk the allegedly minor importance of something and to argue that the point in question is in fact the heart of the matter)

‘Not a very good looking man/boy!’ (lit. ‘a handsome man’)

‘Not a very good looking woman/girl!’ (lit. ‘a beautiful woman’)

16.4 PROVERBS

Proverbs are frequently used in both speech and writing.

SAMPLES OF PROVERBS

When the thief is needed, he is taken off the gallows’ (i.e. it is permissible to associate with an undesirable person if necessity dictates)

People who can’t write say the pen is no good’

‘The shoemaker goes barefoot himself’
Sometimes the cure is worse than the malady

Where you are liked, go seldom; where you are not liked do not go at all’ (i.e. don’t rush to accept invitations)

Wealth is power’ (lit. ‘whoever has the hundred has the authority’)

The angels don’t walk about on earth’ (used to allay disappointment in other people)

‘A fool remains a fool‘

Don’t ask the doctor, ask the patient‘

‘A curse isn’t a telegram’ (used to allay the anxiety of a victim of verbal abuse)
16.5 REDUNDANT INTENSIFIERS

In addition to adding emphasis, redundant intensifiers convey a rather humorous and happy mood, even in situations where the subject is one of gravity.

SAMPLES OF REDUNDANT INTENSIFIERS

[avéggeyn ingántsn] אมหาングן אין נגנטן
‘leave entirely’

[dahàrgéen af tóyt] דהרגוונ אופ תוי
‘kill completely’ (lit. ‘kill to death’; by overuse the phrase has also come to mean ‘beat up badly’ and can be used to tease lovingly as a facetious threat)

[mæshúge | af nántsn | kóp] מסגוג נאַהים גנטסן קープ
‘completely crazy’ (lit. ‘crazy in the entire head’)

[sarplóntert ingántsn] סארפלונטלטנערט אַי נגנֿטסן
‘completely confused; inextricably entangled’

[zikh tsühern mit béyde óyern] צירפ טאַהערמ מיט בירדע אַיערן
‘listen with both ears’ (= ‘listen attentively’)

16.6 HISTORICAL METAPHORS

Historical metaphors are used both as complete sentences on their own, in reaction to a situation described, and as metaphors within a sentence.
SAMPLES OF HISTORICAL METAPHORS

[םוֹיָשׁ תֹּרֶשֶׁת] תְוָירָבָּה ‘Job’s troubles’ (= ‘grave personal difficulties’)

[חותשקה מיטרָיִים] וֹשָׁךְ מַטְרָיִים ‘the darkness of Egypt (during the Plague of Darkness)’ (= ‘very dark’)

[תָּמְגָּנְיָדְנָ] נִבְּעָד ‘the taste of the Garden of Eden’ (= ‘delicious’)

[יִסְרָיֶל נֵמֶן] יִשְׂרָיֵל נֵמֶן ‘Jethro’s names’ (said of a person or place with many names; cf. Rashi’s commentary at Exodus 18:1)

[מַשְׁרְיָּט שֵׁרְיָּעָה קִנָּא מֵאֲרוֹיָּמ] מַשְׁרְיָּט שֵׁרְיָּעָה קִנָּא מֵאֲרוֹיָּמ ‘They’re carrying straw to Egypt’ (after the Israelites escaped their former slave labour which included carrying straw) (= ‘wasted energy’; cf. ‘carrying coals to Newcastle’)

[מָּוֶּשֶׂה רַבְּעֶנְעָז סִתְּקָנ] מֶשֶׂה רַבְּעֶנְעָז סִתְּקָנ ‘the rod of Moses’ (said of something apparently miraculous; also to mock something allegedly impressive or to question the authenticity of a feat)
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