

LANGUAGE COURSE

Sindarin Grammar 1

Sindarin grammar from sounds to sentences, with every form labelled attested or reconstructed.

10 Chapters

Philip Osztromok

Generated with Claude

SINDARIN GRAMMAR 1

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Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 1 · What Sindarin Is

Tolkien's Languages gave a sketch of Sindarin. This course takes the grammar apart piece by piece. Before the first rule, though, you need to know what kind of language this is, because Sindarin is unlike Spanish or Japanese: there is no finished grammar to learn, only evidence to read. This chapter explains that evidence and the labels this course uses so you always know how sure a form is.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Sindarin is a language we *reconstruct*. Tolkien left texts, word-lists and scattered notes. A grammar is built from them, and where the evidence stops, the grammar stops or becomes a guess.

What Sindarin Is

Sindarin is the Grey-elven language of Tolkien's later work, the everyday Elvish of Middle-earth in the Third Age. Its sound and part of its grammar were built on Welsh (see *Tolkien's Languages* 3). It is one of the two Elvish languages developed far enough to learn, with Quenya. Tolkien used the name *Sindarin* from about 1951; the same language was called Noldorin in his earlier writings, as *Tolkien's Languages* 9 explained.

Where the Evidence Comes From

Everything known about Sindarin falls into a few layers. They differ in how far you can trust them.

LAYER	WHAT IT IS	HOW MUCH TO TRUST IT
Published texts	The poems, inscriptions and names in *The Lord of the Rings* and its appendices	Highest: Tolkien published them
Edited notes	Word-lists and grammar notes from Tolkien's papers, printed in the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship's journals	High, but they come from different stages of his work

LAYER	WHAT IT IS	HOW MUCH TO TRUST IT
Scholars' reconstructions	Grammars written by other people from the evidence, such as David Salo's	Useful, but scholars disagree
Fan extensions	New words and phrases invented to make the language usable	Not Tolkien's; only as good as their method

The attested texts are the short end of this table. A few poems and inscriptions are the only complete Sindarin sentences Tolkien published, and a learner's grammar has to stretch them a long way.

The Labels This Course Uses

To keep you honest about what you are learning, every Sindarin form in this course carries one of three labels:

LABEL	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Attested	Found in a text or notes by Tolkien	*pedo mellon a minno*
Reconstructed	Not found as such, but worked out by a scholar from the evidence	a mutation form given in a scholar's table
Built by rule	Made by this course from a general rule, to practise the rule	an exercise form with no source of its own

Only the first kind is safe to quote as Tolkien's Sindarin. The other two are for learning.

Two Attested Phrases, Read Closely

The two best-known Sindarin texts in the books are the inscription on the Doors of Durin at Moria and the Elvish hymn to Elbereth. Their first lines are enough to practise the method.

```
# Attested: the Doors of Durin (the inscription)
Ennyn Durin Aran Moria
  the Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria

pedo mellon a minno
```

```
  speak, friend, and enter
  pedo     speak!         (imperative of a verb of speaking)
  mellon   friend
  a        and
  minno    enter!         (imperative)

# Attested: the opening of the hymn
A Elbereth Gilthoniel
  O Elbereth Starkindler
```

Notice what a grammar can already say about these lines, without a rule yet: *pedo* and *minno* both end in *-o*, the ending of the imperative (Chapter 7). The word *a* joins two commands. And there is an open question: after *pedo* one might expect the first letter of *mellon* to mutate (Chapter 4), and scholars debate it. A variant reading of the inscription even seems to write a different form. This is what the grammar looks like at its edge.

WATCH OUT: A TRANSLATION IS NOT A SOURCE

Websites that offer to "translate English to Sindarin" usually do it by guesswork, mixing stages, inventing words and ignoring mutation. Treat any such output as built by rule at best.

WATCH OUT: ONE ATTESTED EXAMPLE PROVES LITTLE

A form that appears once may be an exception, a slip, or from an earlier stage of the language. Grammar rules rest on patterns across many forms, and Sindarin has few forms to build patterns from.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin has a standard grammar book."** It has several scholars' reconstructions, which differ in places.
- **"You can say anything in Sindarin."** The vocabulary is limited and modern concepts are missing.
- **"If it is on a Tolkien website, it is Tolkien's."** Many sites mix his words with fan inventions.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

List the four layers of evidence for Sindarin from most to least reliable, and give one thing a learner should do before trusting a form from each of the last two.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Take apart *pedo mellon a minno* word by word, giving the meaning of each word and noting which two words show the same ending. Label every item you give as attested, reconstructed or built by rule.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

A website claims to translate "I love you" into Sindarin. List three questions you would ask before trusting the result, using the labels from this chapter.

View solution

CHAPTER 1 QUICK REFERENCE

- Sindarin = Grey-elven, Welsh-based, named from about 1951 (earlier Noldorin)
- Evidence layers: published texts, edited notes, scholars' reconstructions, fan extensions
- Labels: **attested**, **reconstructed**, **built by rule**
- Attested: *Ennyn Durin Aran Moria*; *pedo mellon a minno* "speak, friend, and enter"; *A Elbereth Gilthoniel*
- Imperatives end in *-o* (Chapter 7); whether *mellon* mutates after *pedo* is debated

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 2 returns to the sounds, now with the spelling rules (*ph*, *dh*, *ng*, long vowels) and the stress of compound words, so you can read every example in the rest of the course.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 2 · Sounds and Spelling

Tolkien's Languages 3 taught you to read Elvish aloud in outline. Mutation, the subject of Chapter 4, changes the spelling of words, so before the grammar begins you need a sharper map of the sounds and the spelling. This chapter gives the full Sindarin consonant table, the few spellings that surprise, the vowels and the stress rule. The examples are taken from the attested texts.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Sindarin spelling is regular, with a handful of special cases. Learn the table once, learn the five special cases (*c*, *f/ph*, *ng*, *i* and the accents), and every word can be read aloud.

The Consonants

TYPE	SPELLINGS AND SOUNDS
Stops	*p, b, t, d* as in English; *c* = /k/; *g* = hard *g* as in "go"
Fricatives	*f* = /f/ (see below); *v*; *th* as in "thin"; *dh* as in "this"; *s*; *h*; *ch* as in Welsh or Scottish "loch"; *lh, ll* = a breathy *l*
Nasals	*m, n*; *ng* (see below)
Trills and approximants	*r*; *rh* = a breathy *r*; *l*; *w*; *hw* = a breathy *w*, like Scottish "which"; *i* before a vowel at the start of a word = *y*

The Five Special Cases

1. ***c* is always /k/.** Never /s/. *Celeborn* begins like *cat*.
2. ***f* and *ph*.** The letter *f* is /f/ everywhere except at the end of a word, where it is voiced to [v] and still written *f*. The sound /f/ is written *ph* when it is word-final or when it spells a mutated *p*: *i-pheriannath* "the halflings".
3. ***ng*.** It stands for /ŋ/ (as in "sing") at the end of a word, and for /ŋg/ (as in "finger") everywhere else.
4. ***ch* is not English *ch*.** It is the Welsh and Scottish sound in "loch".
5. ***i* at the start of a word before a vowel** is a consonant, /j/, like English *y*.

Old Sindarin also had a spirant written *mh*, a nasal *v*, which later merged with ordinary *v*. You will meet *mh* in the mutation tables of Chapter 4, where it matters again.

Vowels

The vowel letters are *a, e, i, o, u* and *y*. A short vowel is plain; a **long** vowel has an acute accent (*á é í ó ú*); and in a one-syllable word, length is marked with a circumflex (*â ê î ô û*), as in *Lhûn* and *dôr*. The vowel *y* is the front rounded vowel of French *u* or German *ü*. Old Sindarin also had a vowel like German *ö*, printed *oe*, which later became *e* (*Gelydh*).

Diphthongs

```
# two vowel sounds in one syllable
ai    as in "eye"                ei    as in "day"
ui    as in "Louis" (roughly)    au    as in "now"; at the end of a word it is spelled
ae    a glide from "a" to "e"    oe    a glide from "o" to "e"   (no English equivalent
```

Stress

The rule is the same as in Quenya and in Latin. It was met in *Tolkien's Languages* 3 and applies here to Sindarin words:

1. A two-syllable word is stressed on its first syllable.
2. In a longer word, stress the next-to-last syllable if it is **heavy** (it has a long vowel, a diphthong, or a final consonant).
3. Otherwise stress the one before it.

```
# applying the rule to attested words (CAPITALS = stressed syllable)
pe-do          two syllables                                  →  PE-do
mel-lon        two syllables                                  →  MEL-lon
min-no         two syllables                                  →  MIN-no
El-be-reth     penult "be" is open and short (light)          →  EL-be-reth
Mith-ran-dir   penult "ran" is closed (heavy)                 →  mith-RAN-dir
```

Stress in compound words is not covered here. The sources checked state only the general rule, so where a long name is a compound, check how it is divided before applying it.

WATCH OUT: *PH* IS A SPELLING OF A MUTATED *P*

When you see *ph* in the middle of a text, as in *i-pheriannath*, ask whether it is the result of mutation (Chapter 4). Mutation is why the same word can look different on the page.

WATCH OUT: THE SAME LETTERS MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS IN ENGLISH

c, *g*, *ch*, *ng* and *th* are all pronounced differently here from English habit. Check each against the table before reading a word aloud.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"*dh* and *th* are the same sound."** One is voiced, as in "this"; the other voiceless, as in "thin".
- **"A circumflex is stronger than an acute."** Both mark a long vowel; the circumflex is used in one-syllable words.
- **"Final *f* sounds like *f*."** It is voiced to [v].

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Say how each is pronounced: *c* in *Celeborn*, *ng* at the end of a word versus in the middle, *ch*, *dh*, *th*, *rh*, and the initial *i* before a vowel. Give an English comparison for each.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Mark the stressed syllable of *pedo*, *minno*, *Elbereth* and *Mithrandir*, saying whether each penult is heavy or light and why.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why *i-pheriannath* is spelled with *ph* rather than *f* or *p*, and what that suggests about the word before it. Then say what the circumflex in *Lhûn* tells you.

View solution

CHAPTER 2 QUICK REFERENCE

- *c* = /k/; *g* hard; *th* thin, *dh* this; *ch* loch; *lh*, *rh*, *hw* breathy
- *f* = /f/, voiced to [v] word-finally; /f/ is written *ph* when final or from a mutated *p*
- *ng* = /ŋ/ at the end of a word, /ŋg/ elsewhere; initial *i* before a vowel = *y*
- Vowels *a e i o u y*; acute = long; circumflex = long in a one-syllable word
- Diphthongs *ai ei ui au* (final *aw*), *ae oe*
- Stress: two syllables → first; longer → penult if heavy, else antepenult

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 3 turns to nouns: the article, how singular nouns are used, and how plurals are made by changing a vowel inside the word.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 3 · Nouns and Plurals

Sindarin nouns have no case endings and no gender, so the noun system is small. What it does have is one of the most distinctive features of the language: the plural is made by *changing a vowel inside the word*. This chapter teaches that change, the article that goes with it, and the exceptions. Every form below is labelled as attested unless the chapter says otherwise.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Sindarin plurals come from a lost ending. Long ago the plural was made by adding *-i*. That *-i* disappeared, but before it did, it pulled the vowel in front of it towards *i*. What is left is the changed vowel.

The Article

Sindarin has a word for "the" and none for "a". The singular article is *i*. Its plural is *in*.

```
# attested: singular i, plural in
i adan            the man             (adan alone = a man / man)
in Edhil          the Elves           (in kept before a vowel)

# before a consonant the n drops and the next word mutates (Chapter 4)
hên   →   i chîn      the children
têw   →   i thiw      the signs
```

The effect of the article on the next word, the mutation, is the subject of Chapter 4. For now, note only that *i* and *in* can change how the following word begins.

Plurals by Vowel Change

There are three patterns, depending on where the vowel sits in the word.

1. Interior vowels (not in the last syllable)

```
a  →  e      adan    →  edain      man → men
o  →  e      onod    →  enyd       Ent → Ents
u  →  y      tulus   →  tylys      poplar → poplars
```

The vowels *e*, *i*, *y* and the long vowels do not change here.

2. The last syllable

```
a  →  e      narn    →  nern       tale → tales
e  →  i      edhel   →  edhil      elf → elves
ê  →  î      hên     →  hîn        child → children
o  →  y      orch    →  yrch       orc → orcs
```

3. A final vowel before one consonant: the "intrusion"

If the word ends in a single consonant, an *i* can also appear *inside* the last syllable, so the vowel becomes a diphthong.

```
a  →  ai     adan    →  edain       (interior a → e, and ai in the last syllable)
â  →  ai     bâr     →  bair        home → homes
ô  →  ui     thôn    →  thuin       pine → pines    (one-syllable words)
au →  oe     naug    →  noeg        dwarf → dwarves
```

So *adan* → *edain* uses two of these at once: the first *a* changes to *e*, and the last syllable gets an intruded *i*.

Exceptions and Special Cases

- **Diphthongs** (*ae, ei, ai, ui*) do not usually change, and never change in a non-final syllable.
- **Clusters:** a final *m* or *ng* resists the intrusion (*cam* → *cem* "hand" → "hands"), but *ss, ll, nn* do not (*lass* → *lais* "leaf" → "leaves"). The digraphs *ph, th, ch, dh* count as one consonant (*rath* → *raith* "street" → "streets").
- **Compounds:** usually only the last element changes (*calardan* → *celerdain*), though some change throughout.
- **One-syllable words with *ô*** are written *ui* in the plural: *dôr* → *duir* "land" → "lands". (An older proposal had *ô* → *ŷ*.)

Class Plurals

Beside the ordinary plural, Sindarin has a **class plural**, which names a whole group or kind of thing. It is made with endings such as *-ath*, *-hoth* or *-rim*: *elenath* "all the stars" and *Nogothrim* "the race of the Dwarves". English has no regular equivalent, though "kind" or "the whole host" come close.

SINGULAR	PLURAL	RULE USED	GLOSS
adan	*edain*	interior a → e; intrusion	men
edhel	*edhil*	final e → i	elves
hên	*hîn*	final ê → î	children
orch	*yrch*	final o → y	orcs
bâr	*bair*	intrusion â → ai	homes
naug	*noeg*	intrusion au → oe	dwarves

WATCH OUT: DO NOT ADD -S OR -I

A learner's first instinct is to add an ending. Sindarin does not: *edhils* and *edhili* are not forms of the language. The change is inside the word.

WATCH OUT: SOME GUIDES DISAGREE

A few learner tables give different results for some words (for example for *orod* "mountain"). Where a guide conflicts with the patterns above, check the entry in Eldamo before using it.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Every Sindarin plural changes the last vowel."** Interior vowels change too, and the last may stay the same.
- **"Sindarin has a plural ending."** It does not for ordinary nouns; the class plural is the only regular ending.
- **"The plural of 'elf' is Quenya *eldar*."** That is Quenya (*Tolkien's Languages* 5); Sindarin says *edhil*.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Give the plural of *edhel*, *hên*, *orch* and *bâr*, and say which rule applies to each. Then say how the article changes from *i adan* to the plural.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why *adan* becomes *edain* rather than *edan* or *adain*, naming the two changes. Then give the plural of *dôr* "land" and *cam* "hand" and say why each behaves as it does.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain the difference between the ordinary plural and the class plural, using *edain* and *elenath*. Say which you would use for "all the stars" and why.

View solution

CHAPTER 3 QUICK REFERENCE

- Article: singular *i*, plural *in*; no word for "a"
- Plural by vowel change: interior a → e, o → e, u → y; final a → e, e → i, ê → î, o → y
- Intrusion before one final consonant: â → ai, ô → ui, au → oe (*adan* → *edain*)
- Exceptions: diphthongs stay; final *m*/*ng* resist intrusion; compounds change at the end
- Class plural: *-ath, -hoth, -rim* (*elenath*, *Nogothrim*)

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 4 is the heart of the course: mutation, the changes to the first consonant of a word that the article, prepositions and other words trigger.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 4 · Mutation

Mutation is the feature that gives Sindarin its Welsh flavour, and the one that learners find hardest. It is also the part of the grammar where the evidence is thinnest and the experts disagree most. This chapter teaches what is solid, shows the attested examples, and says plainly where it stops.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> In Sindarin the first consonant of a word can change, depending on the word before it. The original is the *radical*; the changed form is a *mutation*. You do not choose a mutation: a trigger word demands it.

What Mutation Looks Like

The same word may begin differently on the page. Here is one word, *bâr* "home", with its first letter changing after different words, as one learner's chart shows it:

```
# one chart's forms for bâr "home"  (the labels differ between sources)
bâr             the radical form
vâr             one chart's "soft" form        b → v
mâr             one chart's "nasal" form       b → m
mbar            one chart's "mixed" form       b → mb
# attested in a text: the plural article before bâr (plural bair)
i mbair         the homes
```

The point of the chart is not to memorise it but to see the pattern: the first sound moves along a short list of related sounds.

Soft Mutation: the Most Common

The most widely occurring mutation follows the singular article *i*, and some prepositions and prefixes. This is the table given in the source used for *Tolkien's Languages* 6:

```
# radical → soft
t   →   d
p   →   b
c   →   g
d   →   dh
g   →   '     (the consonant is lost)

# attested after the article i
gwath    shadow      →    i 'wath      the shadow
```

Triggers listed by one source for the soft mutation include the singular article *i*; the prepositions *ab, am, adel, be, dad, di, na, nu*; and the prefixes *athra-, ath-, go-, gwa-, ú-, u-*. Other sources list slightly different words, so check any single trigger before relying on it.

The Article and the Plural: Nasal Mutation

The plural article *in* loses its final *n* before a consonant, and what it leaves behind is a change to the first consonant. These examples are attested:

```
# in + a word beginning in a consonant
hên       child        →   i chîn          the children
têw       sign         →   i thiw          the signs
belegorn  great tree   →   i melegyrn      the great trees
bâr       home         →   i mbair         the homes

# before a vowel the n stays
Edhil     elves        →   in Edhil        the Elves
```

Look at the first letters: *h* → *ch*, *t* → *th*, *b* → *m* or *mb*, *c* → *ch*. These do not follow one tidy table, and different scholars describe them differently.

The Other Mutations, Briefly

NAME	TYPICAL TRIGGERS (AS LISTED BY ONE SOURCE)	STATUS
Soft	singular article *i*; prepositions such as *ab, am, be, di, na, nu*	Best attested

NAME	TYPICAL TRIGGERS (AS LISTED BY ONE SOURCE)	STATUS
Nasal	plural article *in*; prepositions such as *an, dan*	Attested after *in*
Mixed	the genitive article *en* and some prepositions with *in* (*ben, erin, nan, uin*)	The label itself is tentative
Stop	the prepositions *ed, ned, o(d)*	One source only
Liquid	none agreed	Seen in the example *galadh* → *'aladh*

The sources do not agree on the number of mutations, their names or their triggers. One source even describes the "mixed" mutation as little more than lenition. Treat this table as a map of the territory, not a rulebook.

A Puzzle: *i-Pheriannath*

Chapter 2 noted that *i-pheriannath* "the halflings" is spelled with *ph*. If the article *i* triggered only the soft mutation, *p* would become *b*, not *ph*. The attested form shows *ph*. It is a reminder that Tolkien's own text does not always match the neat tables.

WATCH OUT: DO NOT TRUST A SINGLE MUTATION CHART

Charts from different websites give different outputs for the same letter. Use the attested examples (*i 'wath*, *i chîn*, *i thiw*, *i melegyrn*, *i mbair*) as your anchor and treat the rest as scholars' proposals.

WATCH OUT: MUTATION CAN HIDE A WORD

A mutated word looks different in the dictionary. When you cannot find a word, undo the mutation: *chîn* is a mutated *hên*, and *'wath* is a mutated *gwath*.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin has one settled mutation table."** It has several proposals.
- **"Mutation is optional."** In the attested texts it is regular after the article.
- **"Mutation is the same as Welsh."** Tolkien took the idea from Welsh, but Sindarin's pattern is its own.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Using the soft table, say what *t*, *p*, *c*, *d* and *g* become, then explain how *gwath* becomes *i 'wath*. Label the mutation soft, nasal or other.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

For each attested plural, undo the mutation and name the radical: *i chîn*, *i thiw*, *i melegyrn*, *i mbair*. State the first-letter change in each.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why *i-pheriannath* is a puzzle for the soft table, and why a learner should be cautious about any single mutation chart.

View solution

CHAPTER 4 QUICK REFERENCE

- Mutation = the first consonant changes after a trigger word
- Soft (after singular *i*): t → d, p → b, c → g, d → dh, g → ' (*gwath* → *i 'wath*)
- After plural *in*: *i chîn*, *i thiw*, *i melegyrn*, *i mbair*; *in Edhil* before a vowel
- Other types: mixed, stop, liquid: triggers disputed
- Anchor on attested examples; undo the mutation to find a word

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 5 turns to adjectives: how they agree with the noun, where they stand, and how they are compared.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 5 · Adjectives

Adjectives bring together the two ideas of the last chapters: they follow the noun, they mutate, and they agree in number by the vowel change of Chapter 3. This chapter uses a small set of attested phrases and clearly labels the forms that are reconstructions.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> In Sindarin the adjective usually comes *after* its noun, and when it does, its first consonant softens. If the noun is plural, the adjective takes the plural too.

Position and Softening

An adjective that describes a noun normally follows it. English puts the adjective first ("the Elvish gate"); Sindarin puts it second.

```
# attested: the adjective follows the noun
annon edhellen          Elvish gate        (annon "gate" + edhellen "Elvish")
genediad Drannail       the Shire reckoning

# the second word is softened (lenited) after the noun, as in
loth hen   ar   'aladh hen        this flower and this tree
         (hen from sen "this"; 'aladh from galadh "tree")
```

Words that count the thing or ask about it (*indefinite*, *interrogative*, *exclamative*) go before the noun. Order can also change for emphasis: *galadhremmin ennorath* "the tree-woven Middle-earth".

Described Versus Stated

A reconstruction offers a neat distinction, and it is worth knowing though it is not firmly attested. When the adjective *describes* a noun it is softened; when it *states* something with the verb "to be" left out, it is not:

```
# reconstructed (a learner's summary), not attested
i edhel veleg        the mighty elf          (beleg → veleg: describes the elf)
i edhel beleg               the elf is mighty       (no mutation: states a fact)

Arwen bain           Arwen is beautiful
Arwen vain           beautiful Arwen
```

Agreement in Number

A plural noun takes a plural adjective. The plural is made the same way as for nouns (Chapter 3): by i-affection, a vowel change inside the word. A reconstruction gives:

```
# reconstructed
beleg   →   belig               mighty (singular → plural)
i edhel veleg            the mighty elf
in edhil velig           the mighty elves

# the determiners show number too
sen / sin      this / these
tan / tain     that / those
pen / pain     all (singular / plural)
```

If one adjective describes two nouns, it takes the plural: *I loth hen ar i 'aladh hen bain* "this flower and this tree are beautiful" (the adjective *bain* is plural here in meaning).

Comparison

A summary of the grammar gives a prefix for the comparative and a suffix for the superlative. These are reconstructions and are listed here as proposals.

DEGREE	FORM	EXAMPLE
Comparative	prefix *an-*	*celeg* "swift" → *angeleg* "swifter"
Superlative	suffix *-wain*	*celegwain* "the swiftest"; *iarwain* "the eldest"

Iarwain is a name in the books (Tom Bombadil's Elvish name), which makes the superlative the better supported of the two.

Adjectives as Adverbs

After a verb, an adjective can do the work of an adverb. Arwen's cry to her horse is attested:

```
# attested
noro lim Asfaloth        ride swiftly, Asfaloth
  noro    ride!     lim   swift(ly)
```

There is no separate word class for adverbs; the adjective stands after the verb.

WATCH OUT: MUCH OF THE NEAT RULE IS RECONSTRUCTION

The tidy contrast between *edhel veleg* and *edhel beleg* comes from a learner's summary that describes itself as partly speculative. The attested core is smaller: adjectives follow the noun, are softened there, and agree in number.

WATCH OUT: DO NOT USE THE ENGLISH ORDER

Putting the adjective first (*edhellen annon*) is not the normal Sindarin order. It can occur for emphasis, but as a beginner, keep the noun first.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin adjectives never change."** They soften after the noun and take the plural.
- **"Sindarin has a word for 'is' before every adjective."** The verb "to be" is often left out (Chapter 7).
- **"Adverbs have their own ending."** An adjective after the verb does the job.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Translate *annon edhellen* and *noro lim Asfaloth*, and explain the order of words in each. Label each as attested or reconstructed.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Using the reconstructed pattern, explain why "the mighty elf" is *i edhel veleg* but "the elf is mighty" is *i edhel beleg*, and what the plural of each is. Say which parts are reconstructions.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Build the comparative and superlative of *celeg* "swift" using the proposals in this chapter, and say how sure each form is. Then explain what *iarwain* tells you.

View solution

CHAPTER 5 QUICK REFERENCE

- Adjective usually follows the noun and is softened: *annon edhellen*
- Number: plural noun, plural adjective, by vowel change; *sen/sin, tan/tain, pen/pain*
- Reconstructed contrast: *edhel veleg* (describes) vs *edhel beleg* (states)
- Comparison (proposed): *an-* comparative, *-wain* superlative (*iarwain*)
- After a verb an adjective acts as an adverb: *noro lim*

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 6 covers pronouns and prepositions: the small words and endings for "I", "you" and "they", and how they join to prepositions.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 6 · Pronouns

Pronouns are the weakest part of Sindarin. Tolkien left few examples, and the two learner summaries used for this chapter disagree on several forms. So this chapter teaches the shape of the system (free words, endings, possessives) and shows both summaries side by side where they differ.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Sindarin has two kinds of "I", "you" and "they": a free word that stands alone (for emphasis) and a short ending that attaches to a verb or noun. The ending is the everyday form.

Free Pronouns and Endings

Because a verb ending already says who is acting (Chapter 7), the free pronoun is used mainly for emphasis or to avoid confusion. Two summaries give these forms:

PERSON	SUMMARY A: FREE	SUMMARY A: ENDING	SUMMARY B: FREE	SUMMARY B: ENDING
I	*im, nin*	*-n*	*ni*	*-(o)n*
we	*mîn, men*	*-m*	*me*	*-(o)f*
you (familiar)	*chîn*	*-ch*	*ci*	*-(o)g*
you (formal)	*le*	*-l*	*le*	*-(o)l*
he / she	*e*	none	*te* (thin evidence)	none
they	*ti, sain*	*-r*	*ti*	*-r*

Summary A is the elvish.org summary of the grammar; Summary B is a Real Elvish Academy page that calls its pronoun section "rather speculative". Where they agree, the form is safer: *le* for a formal "you", and the endings *-n* "I", *-l* "you (formal)" and *-r* "they". Everything else, treat as a proposal.

```
# reconstructed from the summaries (not quoted from Tolkien)
tirin            I watch            (verb + ending -n)
i adan tîr       the man watches    (no ending for he/she)
ni glassui       I am happy         (free pronoun, verb "to be" left out)
```

Possessives

"My", "your" and "their" come in two forms: a short ending on the noun, and a separate word after it.

```
# ending on the noun (from the elvish.org summary)
lammen        my tongue        (lam "tongue" + -n)
guren         my heart         (gûr "heart" + -n; the vowel shifts)

# word after the noun, which softens (Summary B)
i higil nín   my knife         ("the knife my")
i degil dín   his pen          (tín softens to dín)

# Summary A's list of the words
nîn my   mîn our   lîn thy   tîn his/her/their
```

Both summaries put the possessive *after* the noun, as with adjectives. Summary A also gives a reflexive *ên* "his own, her own", for an owner who is also the subject.

Other Small Pronouns

KIND	WORDS
Demonstrative	*sen* this, *tan* that, *ent* that yonder
Question	*man* who, *ma* what
Relative	the article *i* does the work of "who / that"

```
# Summary A, offered as an attested name
Dor Gyrth i chuinar        Land of the Dead that Live        (i = "that")
```

Prepositions and the Mutations They Trigger

A preposition comes before its noun and changes the noun's first consonant (Chapter 4). Summary A groups them by the change:

CHANGE	PREPOSITIONS
Soft	*ab* after, *adel* behind, *am* up, *be* according to, *dad* down, *di* under, *na* to/at/with, *nu* under, *trê* through
Nasal	*an* to/towards, *dan* against, *pen* without
Stop	*o* from, *ed* out from, *ned* in
None	*bo* on, *vi* in

Some prepositions merge with the article: *na* + *in* → *nan* "to the", *nu* → *nuin* "under the", *o* → *uin* "from the". Possession can use *na(n)*: *megil nan Aragorn* "Aragorn's sword".

Prepositions with Pronouns

The "to me" forms are the nearest thing to prepositions with pronoun endings. Summary B lists a dative set built on the preposition *an* "to":

```
# Summary B (most of the set is marked as unattested)
annin     to me        ammen    to us
anno annin hîdh        give peace to me
anno hîdh nin          give me peace    (object form nin, no preposition)
tiro nin               watch me
```

WATCH OUT: THE TWO SUMMARIES CLASH

"You" is *-ch* in one and *-(o)g* in the other; "we" is *-m* in one and *-(o)f* in the other. Neither is clearly right. Check Eldamo before using any form outside the agreed ones.

WATCH OUT: NO NEAT ATTESTED SET

Do not expect a complete table of tidy forms. Sindarin pronouns are poorly understood, and many forms in fan courses are gap-fillers built from the few attested ones.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin has a full set of forms like Latin."** It has a handful of attested ones and many proposals.
- **"You always need a pronoun."** The verb ending normally carries the person.
- **"Prepositions never change the noun."** Most trigger a mutation.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Using the table, find the forms on which both summaries agree. Then give two forms on which they disagree and say which source you would check.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain how *lammen* and *i higil nín* both mean "my ...", and say which part of each is a noun ending and which is a following word.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Using the preposition list, say what mutation *an*, *na* and *vi* trigger, and explain *nan* and *uin*.

View solution

CHAPTER 6 QUICK REFERENCE

- Free pronoun for emphasis; verb/noun ending for the everyday form
- Agreed: *le* "you (formal)"; endings *-n* I, *-l* you, *-r* they
- Possessive: ending (*lammen*) or word after the noun (*i higil nín*)

- Prepositions trigger soft, nasal or stop change, or none; some merge with the article (*nan, nuin, uin*)
- The summaries disagree: check Eldamo

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 7 covers verbs: the infinitive, the present tense, the imperative and "to be".

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 7 · Verbs 1: Present and Imperative

The verb is where the pronoun endings of Chapter 6 do their work. This chapter covers the present tense, the infinitive, the command form and "to be". As before, the two learner summaries disagree in places, and the chapter says where. The past and future wait for Chapter 8.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> A Sindarin verb is a stem plus endings. The stem decides the pattern: *basic* verbs end in a consonant (*nor-* "run"), *derived* verbs end in *-a* (*padra-* "walk").

Two Kinds of Verb

KIND	STEM LOOKS LIKE	EXAMPLES
Basic	ends in a consonant	*nor-* run, *car-* make/do, *ped-* speak, *tir-* watch
Derived	ends in *-a*	*padra-* walk, *linna-* sing

Vocabulary lists show the bare stem. One summary warns that other verb classes probably exist but too little is known to describe them.

The Infinitive

Both summaries use the verbal noun (gerund) as the infinitive, and they disagree on its form:

```
# elvish.org summary: -ed basic, -ad derived
peded     to speak        linnad    to sing

# Real Elvish Academy summary: -ed basic, -d derived
cared     making          padrad    walking
e aníra tírad     he wants to see      (one of "a couple of" examples)
```

Neither is a quotation of a full Tolkien paradigm, so treat the infinitive as reconstructed.

The Present Tense

The pattern in the second summary is the simplest. The third singular is the bare stem (a one-syllable vowel is lengthened). With a pronoun ending, basic verbs add *-i-* and change the vowel (i-affection, as for plurals in Chapter 3), and a plural subject adds *-r*:

```
# basic verbs (reconstructed)
i adan nôr          the man runs           (nor-, vowel lengthened)
nerin               I run                  (nor- + -i- + -n; o → e)
in edain nerir      the men run            (plural: + -r)
i adan câr          the man makes
cerin               I make

# derived verbs: the final -a becomes -o before a pronoun ending
i adan padra        the man walks
padron              I walk
in edain padrar     the men walk           (-r added; vowel unchanged)
```

The other summary proposes two present tenses: a simple one (*aorist*, *pedin* "I speak") and a continuous one (*pidon* "I am speaking"). That fuller system is shown in the table below, and the forms are not the same as in the first set.

MEANING	REAL ELVISH ACADEMY	ELVISH.ORG
I run / make	*nerin, cerin*	aorist: *pedin* "I speak"
he speaks	bare stem, *pêd*	aorist: *pêd* "he speaks"
they speak	stem + *-ir*	aorist: *pedir*
I am speaking	not distinguished	continuative: *pidon*

The two agree on a core: the third singular is the bare (lengthened) stem, *-r* marks "they", and *-n* marks "I".

The Imperative

The command form is the most secure part of the verb system, because it has attested examples in the books:

```
# attested
pedo mellon a minno      speak, friend, and enter      (pedo = ped- + -o; minno = minna
noro lim Asfaloth        ride swiftly, Asfaloth

# the rule as the summaries give it
basic:     stem + -o                      noro!   run!
derived:   final -a becomes -o            padro!  walk!   linno!  sing!
```

"To Be"

Sindarin often leaves "to be" out. The subject and the word describing it simply stand side by side:

```
# reconstructed
Arwen edhel          Arwen is an elf
Arwen bain           Arwen is beautiful
i edhel beleg        the elf is mighty
ni glassui           I am happy          (the free pronoun carries the person)

# the verb itself appears as an imperative (na- "to be")
no lim               be quick!
no aer i eneth lín   hallowed be thy name
```

The other summary lists a present *nê* "(it) is", a past *nant* and a future *natha*. Treat these as proposals.

WATCH OUT: THE TWO PRESENT-TENSE SYSTEMS DIFFER

Do not mix *pidon* with *nerin*-type forms in one sentence. Pick one summary, say which, and keep to it.

WATCH OUT: I-AFFECTION HIDES THE STEM

nerin looks unlike *nor-*. When you cannot find a verb, undo the vowel change first, just as you undo mutation for nouns.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin verbs have one fixed paradigm."** Even the experts' summaries differ.
- **"You must always write 'is'."** The verb "to be" is usually omitted.
- **"The imperative is the hard part."** It is the best attested: add *-o*.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Make the present tense of *nor-* "run" and *padra-* "walk" for "the man runs/walks", "I run/walk" and "the men run/walk", using the Real Elvish Academy pattern. Label them attested or reconstructed.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Form the imperative of *ped-*, *minna-* and *nor-*, then explain *pedo mellon a minno* word by word.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Say "Arwen is an elf" and "I am happy" in Sindarin. Why is no verb written? Then name two points where the two summaries disagree about the present tense.

View solution

CHAPTER 7 QUICK REFERENCE

- Basic verbs end in a consonant, derived verbs in *-a*
- He/she: bare stem. I: *-i-* + *-n* with vowel change (*nerin*); derived *-o-* (*padron*). They: *-r*
- Imperative: *-o* (*pedo, noro, padro*), the best attested form
- "To be" is usually omitted; imperative *no*

- Infinitive = verbal noun, form disputed

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 8 covers the past and the future tenses, the perfect and participles.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 8 · Verbs 2: Past and Future

The past tense is the most poorly attested part of Sindarin verbs. Tolkien gave a few forms and a few patterns, and the rest is the work of scholars. This chapter shows the two summaries' patterns for the past and the future, and is plain about which is which. Pronoun endings are those of Chapter 6; the present tense is in Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 7.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> The future is the easy one: add *-tha* to the stem. The past is the hard one: derived verbs add *-nt*, but basic verbs change their stem in ways that vary from verb to verb.

The Future: *-tha*

Both summaries agree that the future is made with *-tha* (the second adds that a basic verb may take *-atha*). Pronoun endings and the plural *-r* then follow as in the present.

```
# Real Elvish Academy pattern (reconstructed)
i adan noratha          the man will run
norathon                I will run
in edain norathar       the men will run
i adan padratha         the man will walk
padrathon               I will walk
in edain padrathar      the men will walk

# elvish.org pattern, a different stem vowel
peditha                 he will speak
pedithan                I will speak
peditham                we will speak
pedithar                they will speak
```

The elvish.org summary also has a "future continuative" in *-tho-* (*pedithon* "I will be speaking"). That form is a proposal with no firm support.

The Past

Derived verbs: *-nt*

For verbs in *-a*, both summaries add *-nt* in the third singular, and the *nt* becomes *nn* before a pronoun ending:

```
# derived verbs (reconstructed)
i adan padrant          the man walked
padrannen               I walked                (Real Elvish Academy)
in edain padranner      the men walked
linnant                 he sang                 (elvish.org)
linnen                  I sang                  (elvish.org: a different ending again)
```

Basic verbs: a changed stem

Basic verbs form the past by adding a vowel in front and changing the stem, in several ways. The Real Elvish Academy page lists:

```
# reconstructed: present → past (third singular, then "I")
tîr     watches     →   idir        idíren      watched, I watched
cên     sees        →   egin        egínen      saw
câr     makes       →   agor        agóren      made
nôr     runs        →   onur        onúren      ran

# stems ending in b, d, g use a nasal
pêd     says        →   ebent       ebennen     said
dâg     slays       →   adhanc      adhangen    slew
câb     leaps       →   agamp       agammen     leapt
```

The elvish.org summary gives a different, simpler picture (*pent* "he spoke", *pennin* "I spoke") and a short list of irregular verbs: *onen* "I gave", *aun* "he gave", *agor* "he did". Where the two meet is *agor* "he made/did", a good sign that the form is genuine.

Participles and the Perfect

Neither summary gives a true perfect tense. The nearest thing is the participle. These forms come from the elvish.org summary and are reconstructed:

FORM	ENDING	EXAMPLE
Present participle	basic *-el*; derived *-ol*	*pedel* speaking; *linnol* singing
Perfective participle	*-iel*	*linniel* having sung
Passive participle	*-en*, plural *-in*	*pennen / pennin* spoken; *linnen / linnin* sung

The same summary forms a "may it be" mood from *aen* plus the future: *peditha aen* "may it be that he speaks".

WATCH OUT: PAST FORMS DISAGREE

"I sang" is *linnen* in one summary and *padrannen*-type (*-nnen*) in the other. Do not combine endings from the two. Pick one summary, state it, and treat the forms as reconstructions.

WATCH OUT: THE PAST LOOKS NOTHING LIKE THE PRESENT

idir does not look like *tîr*. When you meet a verb you cannot find, strip any front vowel and undo the vowel changes before looking it up.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Sindarin has a complete past tense."** It has a few attested forms and several proposals.
- **"There is a perfect tense."** Only a perfective participle is proposed.
- **"The future is just as shaky."** It is the best agreed: *-tha*.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Make the future of *nor-* and *padra-* for "the man", "I" and "the men". Name the part both summaries agree on.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Make the past of *padra-* for "the man" and "I", then explain why the *-nt* becomes *-nn-* in the second.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Give the past "the man saw" and "the man made", and say what *agor* tells you about how far to trust the pattern. Then state why a perfect tense is not a safe thing to teach.

View solution

CHAPTER 8 QUICK REFERENCE

- Future: stem + *-tha*, endings as in the present (*norathon, padrathar*)
- Past, derived verbs: *-nt*, becoming *-nn-* before an ending (*padrant, padrannen*)
- Past, basic verbs: front vowel and a changed stem (*idir, egin, agor*)
- Participles: *-el/-ol* present, *-iel* perfective, *-en/-in* passive
- The two summaries disagree on the past: pick one

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 9 puts the pieces together: word order, questions, negation and joining clauses.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 9 · Sentences

This chapter joins the pieces: nouns (Chapter 3), mutation (Chapter 4), adjectives (Chapter 5), pronouns (Chapter 6) and verbs (Chapters 7 and 8). The elvish.org summary covers questions, negation and joining words; the Real Elvish Academy page does not, and says so. Where only one source speaks, the chapter says which.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Ordinary Sindarin order is subject, verb, object, with adjectives and possessors after the noun. A word that changes a following word (an object, an adverb) usually softens it.

Word Order

```
# reconstructed (Real Elvish Academy): subject, verb, object
i adan nôr            the man runs
cenin 'aladh          I see a tree        (object softened: galadh → 'aladh)
gohenam di            we forgive them     (pronoun object may come after)

# attested names show noun + noun for "of"
Ennyn Durin           Doors of Durin
Condir i Drann        Mayor of the Shire
Ónen i-Estel Edain    I gave Hope to the Men     (verb, object, then the person given to
```

The person receiving can follow the object, or be introduced by *an* "to": *Gurth an Glamhoth!* "Death to the Orc-host!". That *an* brings a nasal change (Chapter 6).

Adverbs and Mutation

```
# reconstructed
mae garnen            well done           (mae "well" softens carnen)
nerin vregol          I run suddenly      (an adverb after the verb is itself softened)
noro lim Asfaloth     ride swiftly, Asfaloth   (attested)
```

Questions

A question is made with a question word, and the word order does not change (elvish.org summary):

WORD	MEANING
man	who, what
ias	where
ir	when
manen	how

```
# the summary's examples
Man agorech?          What did you do?
Mas barech?           Where is your house?
```

Negation

The negative word *la* (or *law*) goes before the verb, and the verb softens. The prefix *ú-* also gives a negative sense ("cannot"):

```
# elvish.org summary, cited there to Vinyar Tengwar 42
La chebin estel anim       I do not keep hope for myself      (cebin → chebin)
Ú-chebin estel anim        I cannot keep hope for myself
```

Joining Words and Relative Clauses

WORD	MEANING
ar	and (*a* is also seen before a consonant, as in *pedo mellon a minno*)
dan	but
egor	or

WORD	MEANING
sa	that

The article *i* does the work of "who" or "that" in a relative clause: *Dor Gyrth i chuinar* "Land of the Dead that Live". The Real Elvish Academy page offers another way, with a participle: *i adan norel* "the running man" (reconstructed).

Numbers, Briefly

Numbers follow the noun: *corvath nêl* "three rings". The first ten cardinals in the elvish.org summary are *môn, tôd, nêl, canad, leben, eneg, odog, tolodh, neder, pae*, and the summary gives twelve-based and ten-based forms for the rest; since the sources are thin, they are left out of this chapter.

WATCH OUT: ONE SOURCE FOR MOST OF THIS

Questions, negation and the conjunctions come from a single summary. The Real Elvish Academy page covers none of them. Treat the forms as reported, not as established, and check Eldamo before building a sentence.

WATCH OUT: MUTATIONS ARE EASY TO MISS

After you build a sentence, go back through it asking, for every word: "did the word before me demand a change?" Objects, adverbs and words after *la* are the usual ones.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"Questions invert the order."** They do not; a question word does the work.
- **"Sindarin has a word for 'not' that never changes anything."** *La* softens the verb.
- **"There is a word for 'who' that is separate from the article."** Both exist: *man* asks, *i* joins.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Say "the man runs", "I see a tree" and "I run suddenly", marking which mutation each one needs.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain *Man agorech?* and *La chebin estel anim* word by word, and say what *la* does to the next word.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Analyse *Dor Gyrth i chuinar* and *Ónen i-Estel Edain*: which word is the relative marker in the first, and what is the order of the second?

View solution

CHAPTER 9 QUICK REFERENCE

- Order: subject, verb, object; adjective, possessor and number after the noun
- Object and adverb soften (*cenin 'aladh*, *mae garnen*)
- Questions: *man, ias, ir, manen*, no change of order
- Negation: *la* before a softened verb; *ú-* "cannot"
- Joining: *ar, dan, egor, sa*; relative: the article *i*

COMING NEXT

Sindarin Grammar 1, Chapter 10 reads the surviving texts and closes the course.

Sindarin Grammar 1

Course 1 · Chapter 10 · Reading the Texts

The last chapter uses everything so far on the real thing: the few surviving Sindarin texts. You will find that the grammar explains much of them, and that a few words stay out of reach. That is the honest state of Sindarin, and knowing it is part of knowing the language.

> **THE IDEA IN A BOX**
>
> Reading Sindarin means working backwards: undo the mutation, undo the vowel change, split off the ending, and look the stem up. Then check your answer against the sources that say what Tolkien wrote.

A Method for Reading

1. **Find the verb and the noun phrases.** The verb often carries its subject as an ending (Chapter 6).
2. **Undo the mutation** on each first consonant (Chapter 4): *chîn* → *hên*.
3. **Undo vowel changes** for plurals and verb endings (Chapters 3 and 7): *nerin* → *nor-*.
4. **Look up the stem**, then re-apply the tense and person.
5. **Label the result** attested or reconstructed, as this course has done on every form.

Text 1: The Doors of Moria

```
# attested
Ennyn Durin Aran Moria       the Doors of Durin, Lord of Moria
pedo mellon a minno          speak, friend, and enter
```

Ennyn is "doors" (an old plural), *Durin* follows it for "of Durin" (Chapter 9), *Aran Moria* is "Lord of Moria". *Pedo* and *minno* are imperatives in *-o* (Chapter 7) joined by *a* "and".

Text 2: The Hymn to Elbereth

The hymn begins *A Elbereth Gilthoniel* "O Elbereth Starkindler". Two phrases from it use this course's grammar:

```
# attested; the glosses are my reading, so check them
galadhremmin ennorath        tree-woven Middle-earth      (adjective before the noun, f
le linnathon                 to you I will sing           (le "you" + linna- "sing" + -
```

Le linnathon is a good test: the pronoun (Chapter 6), the verb stem *linna-* (Chapter 7) and the *-tha* future (Chapter 8) are all visible. The ending *-on* is a form that appears in one summary, not the other, so even a famous line shows the disagreement.

What We Do Not Know

- The **past tense**, **dual number** and many **pronouns** are inferred, not documented.
- The **mutation rules** have several rival versions (Chapter 4).
- The **vocabulary** is limited to what Tolkien recorded; new words are fan-made, and are usually called Neo-Sindarin.
- Tolkien changed his mind over the decades, so sources from different periods may conflict.

Where to Go Next

RESOURCE	WHAT IT IS GOOD FOR
Eldamo	Word-by-word dictionary with the source for each form (eldamo.org)
elvish.org (Derdzinski)	The summary of the grammar used in Chapters 6 to 9
Real Elvish Academy	A learner's course, partly Neo-Sindarin (used in Chapters 5 to 9)
Tolkien's journals	Vinyar Tengwar and Parma Eldalamberon, which publish the notes
This site	*Tolkien's Languages* 6 for the Sindarin sounds; Quenya has its own course

Recap of the Course

CHAPTER	KEY POINT
1	Evidence comes in layers: published, edited, reconstructed, fan-made
2	Sounds and spelling: *c* = /k/, *dh* = /ð/, *y* a vowel
3	Nouns: article *i / in*; plurals by vowel change (*adan / edain*)
4	Mutation: the first consonant changes after trigger words
5	Adjectives follow the noun and soften
6	Pronouns: free words and endings; the sources disagree
7	Present tense and imperative (*-o*); "to be" is left out
8	Future *-tha*; past *-nt* and changed stems
9	Order, questions, negation, joining words

WATCH OUT: DO NOT WRITE LONG SINDARIN YOU CANNOT CHECK

A sentence built from reconstructed forms looks convincing but may not be what Tolkien would have written. Use attested phrases for anything permanent, such as a tattoo or an inscription.

COMMON MYTHS

- **"You can write anything in Sindarin."** Only simple sentences, and with caveats.
- **"Sindarin is fully described."** It is a partial language with many gaps.
- **"One course can teach all of it."** Cross-check every form against Eldamo.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Use the five-step method on *i chîn* and *nerin*: undo the mutation or vowel change, name the stem, and label the result.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Take *le linnathon* apart piece by piece and name the chapter that explains each piece.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Write a short plan for how you would check a new Sindarin sentence before using it: which three sources would you consult, and what would make you reject it?

View solution

CHAPTER 10 QUICK REFERENCE

- Reading method: find the verb, undo mutation, undo vowel changes, look up the stem, label the result
- Attested texts: the Moria inscription, the hymn to Elbereth
- Gaps: past, dual, pronouns, mutation rules, vocabulary
- Check everything against Eldamo; prefer attested phrases

COURSE COMPLETE

You have finished *Sindarin Grammar 1*. For the sister language, see the planned Quenya Grammar 1 course.