

***ainijaz** Runic: ᚱ | ᚠ | ᚦ | ᚦ | Pronunciation: /'aɪ.ni.jaz/

noun · masculine · ja-stem

Meanings

juniper, probably the common juniper or a closely similar coniferous shrub/tree

Etymology

Probably from a western Indo-European or pre-Indo-European plant-name **yoyni-* / **h₁oyni-* with semantic variation between ‘rush, reed’ and ‘juniper’. Compare Proto-Celtic **yoyni-*, continued by Middle Irish *áin*; Proto-Italic **joiniko-*, continued by Latin *iuncus*; and Latin *iūniperus*, which may contain the same first element (de Vaan 2008: 313; Koch 2020: 152; Matasović 2009a: 437). De Vaan explicitly notes Old Icelandic *einir* and Swedish *en* as possible Germanic comparanda, while also judging the stem **yoy-ni-* to look non-Indo-European; Matasović likewise regards the western distribution as suggestive of a substrate loan rather than inherited PIE vocabulary.

Kroonen (2013: 12) reconstructs Proto-Germanic **ainja-* from pre-Germanic **h₁oy-n-yo-*, perhaps ultimately connected with an acrostatic PIE *n*-stem **h₁óy-n- ~ *h₁éy-n-s*, especially if Hittite *𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎶𐎶* (*e-ia-an /eiyan-/*) belongs here. The Anatolian comparison would improve the case for PIE inheritance, but without it the Italic–Celtic–Germanic distribution and the irregular plant-name semantics favor a western *Wanderwort* or substrate origin (de Vaan 2008: 313; Koch 2020: 152; Matasović 2009a: 437). A direct North Germanic borrowing from Latin *iūniperus* is possible but less economical than shared inheritance or borrowing from an older western plant-name.

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	ainijaz	ainijōz, ainijōs
Acc.	ainija	ainijan̄z
Gen.	ainijas, ainīs	ainijô
Dat.	ainijai	ainijamaz
Inst.	ainijō	ainijamiz
Voc.	ainī	ainijōz, ainijōs

Descendants

einir (Old Norse)

- eini** (Faroese)
- einir** (Icelandic)
- einer** (Norwegian Bokmål)
- eine, einer** (Norwegian Nynorsk)

einir (Old Norse)

- ene, ener** (Danish)
- ener** (Norwegian Bokmål)

einir (Old Norse)

- eynholz, eynholcz, eynberen holt, eynberenboem, einbeeren struke, enekenbehren, eynikenstrucke** (Middle Low German)
- Ênbêrnstrûk, Eenberen, Ehmkenstruk, Eenkenstruk** (Low German)

einir (Old Norse)

- ēn, ēne** (Old Swedish)
- en, ene** (Swedish)

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