

***alaz** Runic: ᚦᚦᚦᚦ Pronunciation: /'a.laz/

noun · masculine · a-stem

Meanings

awl; a pointed implement used for piercing holes

Etymology

From an uncertain pre-Germanic formation, perhaps Proto-Indo-European **h₁oh₁-ló-*. It is generally connected with **ēlō*, but the vowel alternation **a ~ *ē* is not straightforward: Kroonen (2013: 19, 117) alternatively derives **ēlō* and **alaz* from different stem grades of an inherited ablauting paradigm, with **ēlō* generalized from the nominative **h₁éh₁l-eh₂* and **alaz* from the oblique stem **h₁h₂l-h₂-*, or treats **alaz* as an independent formation **h₁oh₁-ló-*, with pretonic shortening of earlier **ō*. Mallory and Adams (1997: 37) give the more general reconstruction **h_xóleh_a-* ('awl', in standard laryngeal notation: **Hóleh₂-*). However, I believe an analysis of **alaz* as an inherited instrument noun **h₁oh₁-tló* is formally and semantically attractive in light of Kroonen's account of Proto-Germanic **-l-* from PIE **-tl-/*-d^{hl}-* (Kroonen 2017). It competes with the conventional reconstruction with the root itself ending in **-l-*, but that analysis is not based on an independently established root; rather, it reflects the traditional segmentation of Sanskrit आरा (*ārā*) and the PGmc forms. The relation of **ēlō* could then involve a parallel feminine instrument formation, perhaps **h₁éh₁-tléh₂-*, though the precise vocalism and PGmc consonant development would still require explanation, and this could sever the relationship with the Sanskrit noun as a direct cognate. Liberman (2020) contends that the length of the root vowel in PGmc is essentially unknown and considers the word a likely *Wanderwort*.

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	alaz	alōz, alōs
Acc.	alą	alanz
Gen.	alas, alis	alô
Dat.	alai	alamaz
Inst.	alō	alamiz
Voc.	al	alōz, alōs

Descendants

- æ1, eal (Old English)
 - al, alle, aul, nal, hal, el, eal (Middle English)
 - awl, nall (English)
 - awl (Scots)

- alr (Old Norse)
 - alur (Icelandic)
 - ale (Norwegian)

[View on Wiktionary](#).

Related Words

Words mentioned in this entry

*ēlō *noun*

Entries that mention this word

*alasnō *noun* *ēlō *noun*