

***awiz** Runic: 𐀀𐀃𐀆 Pronunciation: /'a.wiz/

noun · feminine · i-stem

Meanings

1. sheep
2. ewe, especially in Northwest Germanic

Etymology

From Proto-Indo-European **h₂ówi-* ~ **h₂éwi-*, an acrostatic *i*-stem, traditionally cited as nominative singular **h₂ówis*. The initial laryngeal is disputed: **h₂-* is perhaps most likely, but **h₃ówi-* ~ **h₃éwi-* remains a viable alternative and is preferred by several major etymological dictionaries (Adams 2025; Beekes 2010: 1060–61, s.v. *ōīc*; de Vaan 2008: 437–38; Kloekhorst 2008: 337–38, s.v. *hāui-*; Kroonen 2013: 45, s.v. **awi-*). The inherited meaning was generic ‘sheep’; specialization to ‘ewe’ is secure in Northwest Germanic, though Kroonen reconstructs this sense already for Proto-Germanic (Kroonen 2013: 45; Ringe & Taylor 2014: 237). Cognate with Sanskrit *अवि-* (*ávi-*) (Mayrhofer 1992: 135), Ancient Greek *ōīc* (*óīs*) (Beekes 2010: 1060–61, s.v. *ōīc*), Latin *ovis* (de Vaan 2008: 437–38), Lithuanian *avis*, and Cuneiform Luwian 𐎶𐎵𐎠𐎺𐎠𐎶 (*ha-a-ú-i-iš*, /*hāwis*/), and Lycian 𐌶𐌵𐌶𐌰 (*χawā*) (Kloekhorst 2008: 337–38).

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	awiz	awīz
Acc.	awī	awinz
Gen.	awīz	awjô
Dat.	awī	awimaz
Inst.	awī	awimiz
Voc.	awi	awīz

Descendants

***awi** (Proto-West Germanic)

 ***ōi**, ***ouwi**, ***ouw** (Old Dutch)

ou, **ooi** (Middle Dutch)

ooi (Dutch)

ooi (Afrikaans)

***awi** (Proto-West Germanic)

eowu (Old English)

ewe, **awe**, **eu**, **ouwe**, **yeue**, **yowe** (Middle English)

ewe (English)

yowe, **yhow** (Scots)

***awi** (Proto-West Germanic)

ei, **ey** (Old Frisian)

oye, **Oue** (Saterland Frisian)

ei (West Frisian)

***awi** (Proto-West Germanic)

awi, **au**, **ou**, **ouwi** (Old High German)

ouwe (Middle High German)

Au (Alemannic German)

Aue (German)

***awi** (Proto-West Germanic)

ewi, **ewwi** (Old Saxon)

ewe (Middle Low German)

Eev, Öwwe (Low German)

ær (Old Norse)

ålam (Danish)

ær (Faroese)

ær (Icelandic)

ærsaud, ærsau (Norwegian Nynorsk)

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