

***-ō** Runic:  Pronunciation: /ɔ:/

suffix · forms nouns · feminine · ō-stem

Function

1. forms feminine ō-stem nouns from roots and stems, including concrete nouns, person nouns, and abstract/action/result nouns
2. serves as the regular feminine counterpart to masculine/neuter a-stems in Proto-Germanic

Etymology

From Proto-Indo-European **-éh₂*, especially in formations analyzable as thematic **-e/o-* + **-h₂*. This was a feminine-forming suffix, creating feminine counterparts to *o*-stem adjectives and nouns, and also forming inherited feminine abstract, action, and concrete nouns. Its relationship to collective forming suffix **-h₂* is real but is not the sole source of the feminine suffix ([Melchert 2014](#); [Ringe 2017: 91–92, 221, 299–303](#)). Cognate with Latin *-a*, Ancient Greek *-ā/-η* (*-ā/-ē*), Sanskrit *-आ* (*-ā*), Proto-Slavic **-a*, Proto-Celtic **-ā*, and Latvian and Lithuanian *-a*, all with similar roles deriving feminine nouns from masculine ones and deriving abstract nouns.

Paradigm

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	-ō	-ôz
Acc.	-ō	-ôz
Gen.	-ōz	-ô
Dat.	-ōi	-ōmaz
Inst.	-ō	-ōmiz
Voc.	-ō	-ôz

Descendants

*-u (Proto-West Germanic)

-a (Old Dutch)

-e (Middle Dutch)

*-u (Proto-West Germanic)

-u (Old English)

-e (Middle English)

*-u (Proto-West Germanic)

-e (Old Frisian)

-e (Saterland Frisian)

-e (West Frisian)

*-u (Proto-West Germanic)

-a (Old High German)

-e (Middle High German)

-e (German)

*-u (Proto-West Germanic)

-a (Old Saxon)

-e (Middle Low German)

-e (Low German)

-a (Old Norse)

-e (Danish)

-a (Faroese)

-a (Icelandic)

-e (Norwegian Bokmål)

-e (Norwegian Nynorsk)

-𐌶 (-a) (Gothic)

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