



NORSKK®

NÓREGR

HISTORY OF NORWAY



Nóregr: History of Norway

This is a chronological summary of the history of Norway, from the first human settlements, to the present day. For the sake of simplicity, dates are approximate. This historical account is also inherently selective, only reviewing historical events deemed significant.

10 500 BCE: End of Ice Age.

The Ice Age is coming to an end. Temperatures are rising and various animals, including reindeer and moose, are starting to travel northward, followed by hunter-gatherers from the east and south, and their tribes.

10 000 BCE: The Komsa People

The Komsa, from Russia, first settle in northern Norway, in Troms and Finnmark. They are hunter-gatherers and they use tools and weapons made of quartz. The Komsa then move towards the coast when they become expert ship builders and seafarers.

8 000 BCE: The Fosna People

The Fosna, from Doggerland in the North Sea (which becomes increasingly smaller following end of ice age and rising sea levels, and is submerged by 6000 BCE following the storegga slide, a massive underwater landslide and resulting tsunami), settle on the west coast of Norway, between Trondheim and Kristiansund. They are hunter-gatherers and they use flint for their tools and weapons made of quartz.

6 000 BCE: The Nøstvet People

The Nøstvet, originally nomadic and from the south, settle on the south coast of Norway, between Oslo and Trondheim. They are hunter-gatherers as well, and they use tools and weapons made of both quartz and flint.

4 000 BCE: The First Farmers

The Funnel Beaker, from the south, settle on the south coast of Norway, near the Oslofjord. They keep very basic livestock and start to grow crops with the slash and burn technique.

2 800 BCE: The Battle Axe People and the first Norwegians

The Battle Axe, from Sweden, settle in southern Norway. They are tall, mostly blonde-haired and blue-eyed, and they speak an Indo-European language that is later to be known as Germanic. The Battle Axe people introduce bronze technology to Norway and start to produce tools and weapons made of bronze and other metals. They establish permanent farming settlements as well as a social class structure. The first mead is produced.

1 000 BCE: The Sami People

The Sami, from the west Ural Mountains in Russia, settle in northern Norway, and start mixing with the descendants of the Komsa. They are hunters, trappers, and fishermen, and they use tools and weapons made of antlers, tusks, bones and stones at first, and by 700 BCE, iron (imported from Russia). They speak their own distinct Finno-Ugric language, unrelated to Germanic. They are taught agriculture upon making contact with Norwegians that have now been moving northward.

500 BCE: Longhouse

Norwegians introduce longhouses as primary dwelling.

1-500: Hersar and Hirðmenn

Norwegians move away from the coastlines and inland, in southern, central and northern Norway. They introduce the Bonde, a primitive form of land ownership, and a farming-based, self-sufficient tribal society, composed of a homestead made of two generations. A seter, or Summer pasture in the mountains, is attached to each farm unit. Slaves are introduced to Norway from the rest of Europe. The Norwegians primarily raise cattle, sheep and goats, and also grow, to a much lesser extent, some

vegetables and grains. The diet of the Norwegians consists of meat, fish (from nearby lakes and ocean), milk, cheese, butter, berries, and the occasional porridge and bread. The Norwegians drink mead and beer, and use wool and hides from their animals. Women have no status. The tribe is led by the oldest capable male, and the farm/property is inherited by the oldest male heir. Proto-Norse is developed and written in Elder Futhark, made of 24 different characters. The wealthiest males eventually take on positions of leadership across Norway, becoming chieftains and serving as military leaders. Hersar are born and start ruling Telemark, Rogaland, Hordaland, Hedmark, Jemtland, Ringerike, and Hålogaland. The þing is born. The legislative, judicial and general assembly is made up of freemen, led by a chieftain or Hersir, and makes rules, as well as settles disputes, and sentences criminals.

700: The Vikings

A militaristic society that glorifies battle and courage, and a formidable fighting force, is born: The Vikings. Boys are trained in combat at an early age, while women are taught homestead skills thereby gaining some domestic status and autonomy. Hersar and their Hirðmenn start battling against each others on a regular basis. Norse beliefs emphasize dying in combat as ultimate goal of any warrior for a chance to reach Valhöll. The art of ship building and seafaring is perfected.

Proto-Norse evolves into norrœnt mál, or Old Norse (Old West Norse and Old East Norse). Elder Futhark transitions to Younger Futhark and Rök, made of only 16 characters.

748: Skjöldrinn

Skjöldrinn (The Shield), a war band made of Úlfhéðnar, is born, to maintain warrior culture, traditions, and for mutual protection.

789: First Viking Raid

Vikings perform their first raid, landing with three ships on the south coast of England. In 795 they started using Ireland as a slave market. In 799 they pillaged France. In 844 they unsuccessfully try to raid the Iberian Peninsula. They succeed in 859 and extends their raid to the rest of the Mediterranean, including Italy and north Africa. They capture black people to use as slaves, but they don't like them and sell them on the slave market in Dublin.

800: Norwegian Settlements Across Europe and North America

Vikings settle England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France, Orkney, Shetland, Færeyjar (The Faroes), the Hebrides, the Isle of Man. In 874, Ingólfr Arnarson settles Iceland, followed by 20,000 Norwegians and Irish slaves over the course of 100 years. Eiríkr Þorvaldsson (Eiríkr hinn rauði, aka Eric the Red) is banished from Iceland and settles Greenland in 989. Baffin Island in Canada and the Eastern United State are settled by Norwegians shortly thereafter.

872: Unification of Norway

Haraldr Þöngull (tangled hair) makes the oath of not cutting or combing his hair and beard until he becomes the sole king of Norway. In 872, he wins Slaget i Hafrsfjord (the Battle of Hafrsfjord), and unifies Norway. He finally cuts his hair and combs his beard and becomes known as King Haraldr hárfagri (Harald Fairhair). He has multiple wives and at least 20 sons.

934-961: Hákon góði (Hákon Aðalsteinsfóstri)

Norway is ruled by Hákon góði (The Good), younger son of Haraldr hárfagri. He replaces Haraldr's elder son, Eiríkr blóðøx (Blood Axe), also known as Eiríkr Haraldsson, who is despised by most of the country. Hákon creates lagtings, similar to the þing but with larger jurisdictions, and introduces a naval force called the Leidang to protect the country. He also attempts to bring Christianity to Norway. Hákon dies in battle opposed by the sons of Eiríkr blóðøx who are supported by Haraldr Gormsson (Bluetooth) of Denmark.

968: Formation of Jómsvíkingar

Jómsvíkingar (Jomsvikings) are formed as a private military force with no allegiance to any government, following a previous oath between Úlfhéðnar, Berserkir and Jǫtnar. Jómsvíkingar remain Pagan throughout their history and successfully resist the forced Christianization of Norway.

970-986: Norway falls under Danish Rule

Haraldr Gormsson becomes King of Norway, with the cooperation of Hákon Sigurðarson, after betraying the sons of Eiríkr blóðøx. In 986, Haraldr Gormsson has a fall out with Hákon Sigurðarson and he is defeated by the Norwegian Leidang.

986-995: Back to Norwegian Rule

Hákon Sigurðarson becomes ruler of Norway.

995-1000: Forced Christianization Fails

Óláfr Tryggvason, who was originally sold as a slave in exchange for a goat when he was a young boy, becomes sole king of Norway after building wealth and a reputation raiding England. Óláfr Tryggvason is known for his strength, bravery and handsomeness. He builds the first Christian Church in Norway in 995. He founds Niðaróss (Trondheim) in 997. He then forces Christianization on Norwegians through violence, bans Norse religion, and destroys Heathen places and artifacts. He also attempts to limit the powers of Hersar. Óláfr Tryggvason is defeated at Svolder by the combined fleets of Sveinn Haraldsson tjúguskegg (Forkbeard), Danish King (who seized the throne from his father, Haraldr Gormsson) and Olof Skötkonung, King of Sweden (son of Eiríkr inn sigrsæli), with the help of Eiríkr Hákonarson (son of Hákon Sigurðarson).

1000: Norse Paganism Prevails and Norway is Under Danish and Swedish Rule

Following the battle of Svolder, Sveinn Haraldsson tjúguskegg, King of Denmark, becomes King of Norway and takes control of Viken. Olof Skötkonung, King of Sweden, takes control of the region of Ranrike. Norway is divided but Norwegians are allowed to practice Norse Paganism again.

1016-1028: Norway is Christianized and is back under Norwegian Rule

Óláfr Haraldson, who built his reputation and wealth through raiding, defeats Eiríkr Hákonarson at Slaget ved Nesjar (Battle of Nesjar), and is proclaimed King of Norway, interrupting Danish (and Swedish) rule again. Óláfr Haraldson tries, but fails, to establish a feudal society in Norway. He forcibly Christianizes the country by murdering those who refuse to convert and establishes the Church of Norway in 1024. Norse paganism and practices are outlawed. Óláfr Haraldson establishes standards of morality and behavior for Norwegians, leading to an era of sexual repression. Óláfr Haraldson eventually loses the support of Hersar in Norway after he murders Erling Skjalgsson who has surrendered after losing a sea battle. Norwegians enter an alliance with Knútr inn ríki (The Great), King of Denmark (and England) whose fleet invades Norway in 1028.

1028-1035: Norway is Back to Danish Rule and Oppression

Knútr inn ríki becomes King of Norway and appoints his son, Sveinn Knútsson, as regent. Norway is oppressed with arbitrary rule and taxation. Knútr inn ríki dies in 1035 and his kingdom falls apart.

1035-1047: Norway is Back to Norwegian Rule. Denmark Falls under Norwegian Rule.

Magnús góði (The Good), also known as Magnús Ólafsson, son of Óláfr Haraldson, becomes King of Norway. He enters a peace treaty with Sveinn Knútsson and agree that the survivor of the two kings will become King of both Norway and Denmark. Magnús góði becomes King of Denmark (in addition to Norway) in 1042, after Sveinn Knútsson dies during a wild party. Magnús góði is unwilling to fight his uncle, Haraldr harðráði, who has started raiding Denmark. He therefore agrees to share the Kingdom with him. The agreement ends when Magnús góði abruptly dies in 1047.

1047-1066: Temporary Stability in Norway

Haraldr harðráði (hard ruler), also known as Haraldr Sigurðarson, younger half brother of Óláfr Haraldson, who spent 15 years as a military commander in the Væringjar (Varangian Guards), becomes King of Norway (and England). He is tall, particularly fit and intimidating, and constantly raids the Danish coast every year until 1064, in an attempt to rule Denmark. He implements a central and powerful administration, a coin economy and foreign trade. He founds Oslo, and ensures relative peace and stability in Norway until the end of his reign.

1066: End of the Viking Age

On 25 September 1066, Haraldr harðráði is defeated and killed at the Battle of Stamford Bridge. His son, Óláfr kyrri (The Peaceful, or the idiot), also known as Óláfr Haraldsson, disgracefully agrees to relinquish all the gold his father has brought with him to England, and to not attack England ever again, in exchange for being allowed to return to Norway with his father's remains. This marks the end of the Viking age.

1134-1240: Religious Civil War

Norway enters a period of constant civil war, with legitimate and illegitimate male descendants of dead kings trying to seize power, with constant interference from the Church. Magnús Erlingsson is King of Norway during 1156–1184. When he falls at Slaget ved Fimreite (Battle of Fimreite), Sverrir Sigurðarson, leader of Birkibeinar, (Birkebeinarane in Nynorsk and Birkebeinerne in Bokmål) becomes King of Norway. He is excommunicated by the Church in 1194, leading to another civil war between the

Pagan Birkibeinar and the Christian and Church-supported Baglarr (Baglar in Nynorsk and Bagler in Bokmål). He dies in 1202. His son, Hákon Sverrissonn, is King of Norway for a short time until his death in 1204. He dies before the birth of his son, Hákon Hákonarson.

1217-1263: Hákon Hákonarson

Hákon Hákonarson (Håkon Håkonsson) is the son of Hákon Sverrissonn (Håkon Sverresson), leader of the Birkibeinar faction in the ongoing civil war against the Baglarr. He is also the grandson of Sverrir Sigurðarson. Hákon Hákonarson is hunted down by the Baglarr as born in their territory and a threat to their effort to implement Church rule in Norway. A group of Birkibeinar therefore flees with the boy in the winter of 1205/1206 to save him. Upon being stranded in a blizzard, two of the best Birkibeinar skiers, Torstein Skevla and Skjervald Skrukka, carry the heir to the throne over the mountains, from Lillehammer to Østerdalen, to the safety of King Ingi Bárðarson (Inge Bårdsson). Hákon Hákonarson becomes King of Norway in 1217 and refuses to give allegiance to the Church. Hákon Hákonarson ends the civil war, builds a formidable naval fleet, and pursue and aggressive foreign policy. He brings Iceland under Norwegian rule and otherwise leads Norway through a period of relative peace and prosperity.

1263-1349: Christianization is Finalized

Upon the death of Hákon Hákonarson, the Church quickly gains ground in Norway. This is the end of tribalism. Magnús lagabœtir (The Lawmender), also known as Magnús Hákonarson, codifies all the laws of Norway and creates a new penal code, taking power away from the þing. Conflicts develop with the Sami in the north. Population of Norway increases to 500,000. Farms are divided to accommodate population growth, making farming less profitable. The arrival of the mini ice age makes the raising of crops much more difficult. A growing government requires more taxes from farmers plunging them into poverty. Slavery is ended. Under the pressure of the Church, women lose the little rights they enjoyed compared to the rest of Europe. Moral and sexual repression is spread by Christianity. Úlfhéðnar are outlawed and persecuted, and they have to go in hiding, including outside of Norway. Wolves are exterminated. Filth spreads to all cities in Norway under Church dogma and oppression.

1349-1624: The Dark Ages

Svartedauen (The Black Death), or the plague, reaches Norway from England in 1349. Unsanitary conditions together with exterminated rat predators (such as wolves, foxes

and cats) at the hands of the Church, leads to the annihilation of two thirds of the Norwegian population in only a year. The worst death toll in all of Europe. Farms become deserted (called ødegårder) and farming collapses. The Pope calls the plague divine punishment for the sins (including sexual) of the Norwegians. In 1397, Norway enters an union with Denmark that will lead to over 400 years of oppression under Danish rule. Danish language starts to take hold in Norway. A series of famines and epidemics also further weaken Norway. Opportunistic German merchants, the Hanseatic, take control of trade in Norway. The Kingdom of Norway collapses. Oslo burns to the ground in 1624, is rebuilt, and renamed Christiania.

1563-1720: The Swedish Wars

The Danish Kings are embroiled with various wars with Norway in the attempt to extend their territory, while Sweden attempts to invade Norway on a regular basis. Norwegians, once again, have to face Swedish aggression on their own, with no support or assistance from the Danish Kings who comfortably hide in Denmark away from the conflicts they are causing. In 1623 the Kings of Denmark start using Norway's natural resources to finance their wars and effectively enslave the Norwegian population.

1720-1814: The Danish Oppression

The population of Norway has grown back to 500,000, or the pre-plague numbers. A middle class of merchants, traders and craftsmen is developed, together with a lower class of servants and laborers. Norway exports fish, timber, furs and minerals. The merchant marine and shipbuilding industry grows significantly. Norwegian nobility has overall disappeared and is only survived by Danish nobility. Members of the government are primarily Danes. The "Norwegian" military is controlled by German officers appointed by Danish King. Danish becomes the language of the elite, the church, literature, and the law. The Danes exploit Norway's natural resources and Norwegians for their own benefit. Norwegians are left to fend off on their own frequent attacks from Sweden provoked by the Danes. Norwegians are kept in poverty by heavy taxes, unreasonable fines, and arbitrary oppressive laws. Rebellion, protests and dissent are quashed by the Kingdom of Denmark with torture, imprisonment, and death.

1814-1905: The Swedish Rule

On 17 May 1814, following years of international intrigue involving Nordic countries, but also France and England, Norway adopts its own Constitution, based to that of France and the United States. Norway somewhat gains its independence from

Denmark. Only to fall to Swedish rule as an agreement is somehow entered transferring the responsibility of Norway's foreign affairs and policies to Sweden. Norwegians still do not have freedom of religion with the state Lutheran Church being the only authorized faith until 1845. Norway does not have his own written language and speaks primarily Danish which remains the language of business, government, and the Church, from several centuries of Danish oppression and occupation. In 1845, however, the first stories in written Norwegian are published by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe. This paves the way for Ivar Aasen, a Norwegian teacher with a knowledge of norrønt mál (Old Norse) to create a new written Norwegian language, landsmål, based on listening to the various Norwegian dialects during extensive travels throughout the country. By 1825, Norway's population has nearly tripled to 1.8 millions. With limited farming land and resources, and ongoing religious oppression, the country slides further into desperation and poverty, leading to further settlements in the north, and prompting mass immigration of Norwegians to the United States and Canada. To this day, the world's highest concentration of Úlfhéðnar is found in the State of Montana and province of British Columbia. In the late 1900's Norwegians such as Fridrjof Nansen and Roald Amundsen start exploring polar areas. In 1872, Oscar 2, grandson of Karl Johan (a Frenchman who changed his name to a Nordic name and eventually ruled Sweden), became King of Norway and started various reforms meant to give more rights to Norway as goodwill gestures. These were however largely ignored by Norwegians who were, by that time, at breaking point from a combined several hundred years of Danish and Swedish occupation.

1905: Norwegian Independence

Christian Michelsen, a ship owner from Bergen, devises a strategy to dissolve the union with Sweden. He mobilizes Norwegian forces to defend the country against any possible Swedish invasion, and then demands that Norway be afforded full control of its foreign affairs. King Gustav of Sweden refuses, leading to the resignation of most of the Norwegian government and a constitutional crisis. When King Gustav is unable to form a new government on 7 June 1905, the Storting (supreme legislative assembly in Norway formed in 1814 following independence from Denmark) passes an unanimous resolution that dissolves the union with Sweden. Britain, Germany and Russia side with Sweden. Sweden considers war with Norway but the king ultimately decides against it. The King eventually agree to the dissolution of the union if confirmed by referendum in Norway and subjected to negotiations to finalize Norway's independence as applicable. On 13 August 1905, 367,149 voted in favor of dissolving the union, and only 184 against, showing Norwegians' unfathomable resentment against Sweden and centuries of occupation by both Sweden and Denmark. On 23 September 1905, the Karlstad Convention between Norway and Sweden is signed, providing a demilitarized

zone on both sides of the border. On 16 October 1905, Sweden repeals the Act of Union. On 26 October 1905, Oscar of Sweden renounces the throne of Norway effectively making Norway independent for the first time in over 500 years. In a typical Nordic twist, however, Norwegians select a Prince from Denmark, who is married to the daughter of King Edward VII of England, as the new King of Norway. The Danish Prince Carl changes his name to Haakon and becomes Haakon 7, with no connection whatsoever with any previous, and glorious kings of Norway, such as Hákon Hákonarson. In 1907, Riksmål, a version of written Norwegian language, which is essentially a variation of Danish, is introduced.

1914: First World War

Norway tries to maintain neutrality during WWI. However, the country ends up supporting Britain and the United States, at great cost to the nation. When the question of compensation and reparation is brought up for Norway's losses at the Paris Peace Conference, Norway is largely ignored by the victorious nations and only ends up with sovereignty over Spitzbergen.

1925: Oslo Becomes Oslo Again

Kristiana (formerly Christiania) is renamed Oslo again.

1927: Norway Goes Red. For 3 Weeks.

In 1914, the Norwegian Labor Party joins Comintern (Communist International) and takes a radical turn to the left. The party is successful in the 1927 election in forming a minority communist government. Over the course of 3 weeks, the Norwegian Krone loses most of its value, several Norwegian banks go bankrupt, and capital flees the country, leading to the quick collapse of the Communist minority government.

1929: Bokmål is Born

Bokmål, an allegedly Norwegian language derived from Danish after centuries of occupation, is officially adopted. So is Nynorsk, another written version, closer to Old Norse. Both Bokmål and Nynorsk are state-sanctioned fusions of Ivar Aasen's standard Norwegian language (Landsmål) with the Dano-Norwegian written language (Riksmål).

1939-1945: Second World War

Nazi Germany invades Norway, and tries to nazify the country with the support of Norwegian collaborators. Norwegian government goes into exile. The Norwegian Resistance movement develops and undertakes various heroic and glorious exploits against the Nazis. Norway is eventually liberated.

1949: NATO

Norway joins NATO, despite Russian objections, after rejecting a neutral alliance with Sweden and Finland.

1949-1972: Post War

Norway starts rebuilding the country. Further sacrifices are demanded of Norwegians, including rationing sugar, coffee and vehicle until the late 1950's. Welfare is expanded to all Norwegians and the Labor government introduces universal healthcare, free education and paid vacation. Norway's political leaders seek to join the European Union, but a majority of Norwegians vote to reject EU membership in 1972.

1972 to 2018: Wealth

Phillips Petroleum discover oil in a section of the North Sea under Norwegian jurisdiction in 1969. In 1972, a national company, Statoil (now Equinor), is created to develop and retain control over oil resources in the best interest of Norway. The Norwegian Armed Forces are further developed. In 1982, Forsvarets Spesialkommando (FSK) is established to protect Norwegian interests and oil resources. In 1990, Norway creates the State Petroleum Fund, for the benefits of all Norwegian. Oljefondet, as it is known today, is worth over US \$1 trillion in assets, or about US\$ 195,000 for each Norwegian citizen. In 1994, Norway enters the European Economic Agreement, after Norwegians rejects membership in the EU once again in 1990, eliminating most border controls with the rest of Europe. Norway's wealth prompts the migration of several hundred thousands people primarily from other Nordic nations, as well the United States, Canada, and the rest of Europe. Norway government moves shortly thereafter to implement immigration restrictions to reduce the flow of people seeking "asylum" in Norway.

2018: The Future of Norse Culture

Norway is faced with the responsibility of protecting Norse culture and Norwegian way of life, under constant pressure from globalization, regressive liberalism, and the overall feminization of western society.