

What is a rune?

A rune is a symbol “a mark or character used as a conventional representation of an object, function, or process” it is a centre point for many associations and meanings. It does not merely represent a phonetic sound, deity, and list of associations – though it is also all of those.

A rune allows us to experience and understand universal principles.

A rune is a system for retrieving and understanding ancestral wisdom, and as the tradition is ongoing, we are all adding to that repository of wisdom. I am not claiming to re-create how our ancestors worked with the runes. I am sharing how I understand & use the runes at this point (the more I work with the runes, the more I understand).

A rune allows us to connect to that wider “something” (knowing field, shamanic world, higher guidance...) and make connections of wisdom and knowledge to help us better understand ourselves, and life.

A rune is a blueprint of energy, movement. It is one small part of a formulae that expresses how the universe functions.

A rune is a doorway, an axis mundi, the potential to connect and understand.

I work with the Younger Futhark runes because they all have that central axis (axis mundi) from sky to earth.



Frey (fe)

Who:

Male God of the Vanir, son of Njord, twin of Freya.

Personifies the fertile land of the valley- gentle rain, the sun’s rays, green woodland and cattle.

Key words:

- Wealth/abundance
- Passion
- Peace
- Obsession
- Greed
- Ancestors

↳ Vidar (ur)

Who

Vidar is Odin's son, and he avenges his father at Ragnarök by killing Fenrir. There is a sense that he was "born" for this purpose, and that he sits in Odin's place after Ragnarök - the new generation of Gods.

Key words

- Strength
- Considered response.
- Patience
- Vengeance
- A challenge
- Adversity
- Doing what is needed or the “right” thing.

↳ Thor (tor)

Who

Thor is married to Sif, drives a chariot pulled by goats (which he can eat in the evening and will regenerate overnight).

He is listed as Odin's son, though feels more like a brother. The myths are full of his journeys, exploits and adventures.

Key words

- Protection
- Adventure
- Regeneration
- Strength
- A threat
- Pain
- Attack

ᚠ Odin (oss)

Who

Now let's be honest- the myths as we have them are Odin's tale, and as a self-styled All-Father he could be associated with anything....

His wife is Frigg, his main children in the myths are Balder and Vidar.

He learnt seidr from Freya, and revealed the runes by sacrificing himself on Yggdrasil.

Key words

- Wisdom
- Magic
- Power of words
- Cunning
- Beware bargains/agreements.
- Power (both good, and hubris!)
- Leadership
- Sacrifice

ᚠ Hel (rei)

Who

Hel is Loki's daughter- half dead, and half alive. She was banished to the underworld by Odin when it was foretold that Loki's brood would bring around the downfall of the Gods.

She holds the space where the dead wait to be re-born, and is known as the "All-Mother" (we have all come from her realm.

Key words

- Rest
- Journey (possibly a difficult or unwanted one)
- Honesty
- Personal strength/integrity
- Death & equally birth
- Isolation/rejection
- Thriving in a situation not of your choice.

⚡ Loki (krefth)

Who

Loki is half Jotun, half Aesir.

He is a trickster God- connected with chaos and change.

Amongst his children are his "brood" Hel, Fenrir & The World serpent, and Odin's horse Sleipnir.

Odin and Loki were blood brothers, choosing to take an oath of friendship.

Yes, he gets the Gods into trouble, but he also gets them out of a lot of trouble!

Keywords

- Chaos
- Transformation
- Change
- Creativity/inspiration
- Deception
- Illness
- Un-expected difficulties
- Problem solving

✖ Heimdall (hagl)

Who

Heimdall is the Aesir's watcher- he guards the bio-frost bridge.

He is a sky God, has enhanced hearing, and feels old to me. As if he belongs to an older time somehow.

Keywords

- Structure
- Order
- Logic

- Sudden disruption/delay
- Hostility
- Sound/listening
- Knowledge
- Storms

✂ Urd, Verdandi, Skuld (nud)

Who

The three Norns stand slightly separate to the rest of the Gods. They are connected with time, fate, and perhaps destiny.

In simple terms Urd represents the past, and all that has been. Verdandi the power of the present moment, and Skuld the as yet unformed future.

Keywords

- Need
- Compulsion
- Fate
- Opportunity
- Hardship
- Personal growth
- Obligations
- Restraints/bondage

| Skarthe (is)

Who

Skadi is an ice Jotun whose Father was killed by the Aesir.

She came to claim compensation- and married Njord as a result of this.

In time their marriage ended and some say she married Ull instead.

Keywords

- Potential
- Procrastination
- Determination/confidence
- Beauty
- Grief
- Stasis
- Coldness
- Finding ones-self again

✦ Jord (ar)

Who:

Associated with the earth and the land.

Mother of Thor, ancient Jotun, the stories suggest she may have been married to Odin.

Daughter of night.

Rather than “Mother Earth” she is raw, primal nature.

Key words:

- Land
- Harvest
- Abundance
- Roots, root chakra
- Decay/ the importance of life cycles.
- Void/dark
- Nature in all her wildness and beauty
- Personal responsibility

⚡ Balder (sol)

Who

Son of Odin & Frigg, wife to Nanna father of Forsetti. Represents the sun.

Killed by Loki who encouraged Hod to throw a Mistletoe dart at Balder.

Keywords

- Harmony
- Justice
- Beauty
- Light
- Vulnerability

- Fate
- Hubris, the danger of feeling invincible.

↑ Tyr (tyr)

Who

Tyr is a warrior god of the Aesir, and not much is really known about him.

He chooses to sacrifice a hand in the binding of Fenrir to protect Odin from breaking his oath.

Key words

- Truth
- Justice
- Fairness
- Warrior
- Deception
- Rigidity
- Opposition
- Sacrifice
- Oaths
- Strategy

↳ Frigg (Bjork)

Who

Frigg is Odin's wife, mother to Balder, and very much connected with herbal medicine and the power of plants.

Keywords

- Healer/healing
- Spouse/parent/family
- Wisdom
- Greif/loss
- "Smother" love
- Interfering in the natural laws for personal gain

Freya (mann)

Who

Freya is daughter of Njord, and twin to Frey, a member of the Vanir.

She is a beautiful Goddess, who taught Odin seidr, and deeply connected with magic and sexuality. She is also a Valkyrie, and a warrior- her Val-Freya side.

Keywords

- Magic
- Beauty
- Desire
- Death
- Warrior
- Self-worth
- Loss
- Tears

Njord (laug)

Who

Njord is the older of the Vanir Gods, the sea God. Although he is presented as male, there is a sense that he is both mother and father to the twins Freya and Frey.

He moved to live with the Aesir in the exchange of hostages, and married Skadi for a while. He is known to be a skilled negotiator, wise, and kind.

Keywords

- Water
- Wealth

- Trade
- Journey
- Negotiations
- Depths (both a good and a dangerous thing!)

Ull (yr)

Who

Not that much is known about Ull from the myths. He is a winter God associated with skiing and archery. He is the “Winter God” and seems to rule over Asgard in the Winter months, with Odin ruling in the summer months.

His mother is Sif, and often portrayed as single he may have connected with Skadi after her marriage to Njord.

Key words

- Solitude
- Patience
- Winter
- Rest
- Stored reserves
- Preparation
- Protection