

# CREATIVE WRITING

Tips for writing in Shetland Dialect and writing poetry, help starting stories and word lists with both English-to-Shetland and Shetland-to-English versions





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- Tips for writing in Shetland Dialect
- Suggestions for how to spell some words
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- Shetland to English Word Lists

# Tips for Writing in Shetland Dialect

## Both poetry and prose

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### SPELLING & USING THE DICTIONARY

There isn't a right way or a wrong way to spell each word.

There isn't a standard written form of Shetland Dialect, like how there is for English. There are Shetland Dictionaries, but they do not need to be used like an English Dictionary.

You should think about each dialect word you want to write and think about the best way to spell it. Your choice does not need to match the one in the dictionary. But the Dictionary is there if you want to use it.

### CONSISTENCY

When writing in dialect you should try and be consistent. If you decide to spell "there" as "dere" you should not go on to write "dare" the next time, that would be wrong.

### APOSTROPHES

Only use an apostrophe to show either possession i.e. "Bruce's hoose", or when a letter has been removed when joining 2 words together.

Don't use an apostrophe for taking a letter off the end i.e. leave it as "greetin" for crying, or "wi" for with, or "o" for of, or "goin" for going. Don't worry that a letter is missing from the end.

You should use an apostrophe when you take letters out for joining 2 words together, like you would in English i.e. "it's" for it is.

Some examples of this in dialect are "Du'll" for you will, or "A'm" for I am, or "dey'll" for they will.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO SPELL SOME WORDS

|         |   |            |
|---------|---|------------|
| aa      | - | all        |
| aet     | - | eat        |
| afore   | - | before     |
| ain     | - | own        |
| alang   | - | along      |
| anidder | - | another    |
| byde    | - | stay       |
| cam     | - | came       |
| canna   | - | can't      |
| dan/den | - | then       |
| dat     | - | that       |
| dem     | - | them       |
| desel   | - | yourself   |
| dey     | - | they       |
| dis     | - | this       |
| dunna   | - | don't      |
| eenoo   | - | just now   |
| ey      | - | always     |
| geed    | - | gave; went |
| git     | - | get        |
| ida     | - | in the     |
| idder   | - | other      |
| ir      | - | are        |
| ithoot  | - | without    |
| kaen    | - | know       |
| laek    | - | like       |
| mesel   | - | myself     |
| mony    | - | many       |
| noo     | - | now        |
| o       | - | of         |
| ony     | - | any        |
| ower    | - | over       |
| spæk    | - | speak      |
| tae/ta  | - | to         |
| whit    | - | what       |
| wi      | - | with       |
| wye     | - | way        |
| yit     | - | yet        |
| yun     | - | that       |



In English "th" is pronounced in two different ways; voiced, as in "this" or "that", and unvoiced, as in "thick" or "think".

In Shetland dialect the voiced "th" sound changes to "d", like "dat" or "dem" for "that" or "them".

Unvoiced "th" changes to "t" in Shetland dialect, like "tick" or "tink" for "thick" or "think".

See how many of these words feature this change...



Notice how often the letters "ea" in English words like "speak" get turned around to "ae" in Shetland words, like "spæk", "laek", "kaen"

## Tips for Writing Poetry in Shetland Dialect

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Here are tips and suggestions for writing poetry at 2<sup>nd</sup> Level.

### WHAT IS THE POEM ABOUT?

Before they start writing, it's good for pupils to have an idea of what they are going to write. Many of the Activity Sheets suggest pupils could write a poem in response to the various texts - perhaps using the text as a model.

The first question you should have them ask themselves is: what is MY poem about? Brainstorm possibilities and choose the best.

Some children have an idea straight away, but some have no idea whatsoever. Here are some questions you could ask someone who is having trouble coming up with an idea, or someone who may need to think their idea through:

- Would you like to write a poem about yourself?
  - o If so, what words would you use to describe yourself?
  - o What details about yourself would you like to write about?
  - o What can you say about who you are and who you want to be?
- Would you like to write a poem about someone made-up?
  - o If so, what does this person look like?
  - o Where do they live? What do they do?
  - o Why are you writing a poem about this person?
- Would you like to write a poem about where you live, or a place you have been?
  - o If so, what does this place look like?
  - o What do you like about it? What happens in this place?
  - o Why are you writing a poem about this place?

## WHAT FEATURES IS THIS POEM GOING TO HAVE?

It will help their writing a great deal if the class think about a few features of their poem in advance:

- A good starting-point is to brainstorm related vocabulary from words/phrases the pupils know, which could be supplemented by those in Dialect Dictionaries and the Word Lists at the back of this booklet
- From these words (which could be written on the board) the pupils can see if features such as rhyme, alliteration, assonance suggest themselves...and they can make lists as an aid to their writing
  - Is the poem going to rhyme? Many children think a poem isn't a poem unless it rhymes
    - Rhyming is often difficult, but it can help to bring a poem to life - but a forced rhyme can destroy a poem. Be sure the rhyme sounds "natural". If it doesn't go for a free-form poem
      - See 'Rainy Day' by J. B. Eunson for a good rhyming poem
    - Rhyming can give a nice lightsome feel to a poem, and will let the reader know the poem is meant as a fun
      - See 'Da International Press' by Rhoda Bulter
  - Is it going to be a long poem, or a short poem?
    - Short poems can pack a lot of punch
    - Thinking carefully about the exact words is important, and where to end each line
      - See 'Norderly' by Christie Williamson
    - A long poem can have a good conversational-voice
      - See 'Andrew's Sang' by Alec Cluness
    - If you are writing a long poem, it is good to separate it into verses
      - See 'Eence Upon A Time' by Vagaland
    - If the topic is abstract e.g. weather or feelings - consider encouraging the use of personification, simile or metaphor
    - Children enjoy writing short poems like haiku, but need practice first in counting syllables
      - See 'Norderly' by Christie Williamson

# Story-Starts

Here are a selection of story starts that can be offered to a class doing creative writing.

We hope they can help get people off to a good start when writing a story.

The story starts can be adapted in any way the writer wishes!

1. On da mat inside da door wis a postcaird. As I cam in, I trampit ower it wi me guttery trainers. But when I managed ta read whit it said, I couldna believe me eyes...
2. 'Did I no tell dee ta tie up da boat?'
3. Jack wisna at da hoose. Naebody wis at da hoose. Da only thing at wis at da hoose wis a muckle broon dug, sittin on da step, tied ta da door haandle, blyde an freendly an waggin his tail. I wis niver seen him afore in me life.
4. I never ever did understand why Megan laekit Jacqueline/ Bobby/ birds/ lizards/ skateboardin/ bidin in da toon/ country...



5. Da night wis as black as black could be. I couldna see a stime. But da *soond* wis gettin looder an looder...
6. On da wye ta da ferry terminal/ airport/ launch pad, I wis aaful excited.
7. 'Mercy me!' said Auntie Ellen, lookin oot ower da tap o her glesses. 'Whit kind o a gadget is yon?'
8. Robbie wis da peeriest boy in da schöl, an didna say very muckle, but he fairly surprised everybody wan Monday moarnin.
9. When I opened the parcel, I thought it must have been sent to me by mistake. 'Whit's da maitter?' said Mam. 'Dy face is as lang as da day an da moarn!'
10. It was Grandad on the phone. 'Is du döin onything interestin dis mornin?' he asked. 'I hae a veesitor aside me. Somebody interestin. Come ower an see wha it is.'
11. When A'm an aald body, I doot dat da story A'll tell maest ava will be da wan when I geed tae...

12. But he's only a puppy! He didna kaen ony better! A'm aaful sorry but he didna kaen no tae geng in yunder...
13. Weel, A'm blyde tae be oot o yunder - yun plaece wis juist teemin. A'm no seen a plaece as busy as yun fae...
14. My Granddad told me all about things like that. I remember him saying, "Da last een wis seen here fifty year ago - dey shot him! - hit's in da museum in Lerrick noo..."
15. Jamie was 10 now, and when out for a walk he/she didn't like his/her little brother having to come too. Except, one day, when he came running over to her and said, "Du'll niver giss whit A'm funn? I wis clearin oot da aald boat noost, an doon in among da peerie stons wis somtin A'm niver seen afore..."
16. Da night afore me seeventh birthday wis wan A'll niver firgit. Dat night, juist as I wis aboot tae faa asleep den...

17. Daday at school, a new boy [or lass] came intae wir class. He's [or she's] juist moved in dis weekend. Bet you canna giss whit da first thing dey said wis?
18. Wir telly brook on Saturday. I couldna believe it, right in da middle o X Factor! But it wisna dat bad. Instead o waatchin TV we aa sat an...

**WORD LISTS**  
\*  
**ENGLISH TO SHETLAND**

**CONTENTS:**

- **Descriptive words**
- **Weather words**
- **Clothes**
- **Animals**
- **Fish**
- **Sheep**
- **The Seashore**
- **Creepy Crawlies**
- **Birds**

## WORD LISTS (ENGLISH TO SHETLAND)

### DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

\* Many of these are dialect expressions rather than dialect words

|   |   |                             |
|---|---|-----------------------------|
| big   | - | muckle                      |
| cheerful  | - | lightsome                   |
| dark-haired with dark eyes and dark skin -<br>looks like they've been starved of food - | - | dark-advised<br>fanted-laek |
| poorly  | - | poor-aamos                  |
| pretty  | - | boannie                     |
| quite good-looking  | - | weel-laek, no ill-laek      |
| slim  | - | smaa                        |
| sour-faced  | - | soor-faced                  |
| small, short  | - | peerie                      |
| smart   | - | smert                       |
| stout, fat  | - | stoot                       |
| thin  | - | tin                         |
| thin, as if wasted by illness   | - | scraepit-laek               |
| thin <i>and</i> ungainly  | - | wenglit                     |
| ugly  | - | ill-laek                    |
| untidy-looking  | - | trussit-laek                |
| well dressed  | - | weel-riggit                 |
| witless   | - | glakit                      |

*You can modify your description by saying*

|        |   |              |
|--------|---|--------------|
| rather | - | kinda        |
| quite  | - | braaly       |
| very   | - | aaful, awful |

### Cold

|                          |   |                             |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| cold                     | - | caald, cowl'd               |
| stone cold               | - | ston cowl'd                 |
| becoming stiff with cold | - | stivvenin                   |
| very cold                | - | freezin, pinnishin, starvin |

## Hot

a sultry heat; stuffy atmosphere  
choking with heat; overcome  
close, or stuffy  
hot  
luke warm  
roasting  
tepid  
very hot  
working/moving so very hot

- a haet ön  
- scomfishin  
- closs  
- haet  
- loobit  
- rostin  
- loo (*of food or liquid*)  
- in a loch o swaet  
- da swaet wis runnin  
aff o me/ hailin aff o him

## Mood

angry, bad-tempered  
annoyed  
barmin  
displeased  
elated  
feeling sorry about something  
glad, happy  
rampin  
very angry  
worried

- tirn  
- taen aff  
- seething with anger  
- ill-plaesed  
- uplifted  
- vexed  
- blyde  
- boiling with anger  
- mad  
- annoyed

## Qualities

active and lively  
bad-tempered  
calm, moderate  
cheerful, of people or places  
clumsy, lacking in technique  
fit and active  
forgetful  
full of thought  
given to excessive talking  
given to extravagant behaviour  
high spirited, frisky  
inclined to vicious gossip

- veeve  
- crabbit  
- mooderate  
- lichtsome  
- vyndless  
- kniff, nyiff  
- mindless  
- towtfoot  
- sheeksit  
- overly  
- filsket  
- ill-spaekin

|                                  |   |                   |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| keen, eager                      | - | aaber             |
| kindly                           | - | blydely           |
| lacking manners and care         | - | graceless         |
| lively, energetic                | - | yasp              |
| mischeivous                      | - | ill-trickit       |
| nice                             | - | fine              |
| no use at skilled/physical tasks | - | haandless         |
| obedient                         | - | biddable          |
| over boisterous                  | - | owre-steer        |
| prim and priggish                | - | perskeet, pernyim |
| purposefully nasty               | - | ill-döin          |
| slovenly                         | - | slushit           |
| sly                              | - | sleekit           |
| sulky                            | - | dorty             |
| sympathetic and sensitive        | - | feelin-herted     |
| thoughtful                       | - | towtful/tochtful  |
| trouble making                   | - | ill-makkin        |
| tough                            | - | tyoch             |
| untidy                           | - | trusset           |

## Taste

|  |   |           |
|--|---|-----------|
| burnt  | - | brunt     |
| scorched   | - | scoodered |
| sour as opposed to sweet e.g. when describing rhubarb or lemon - |   | shilpit   |
| sour; gone off or gone bad                                       | - | soor      |

## Touch

|                           |   |                 |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------|
| a hard but uneven surface | - | ruckly          |
| easily broken, feeble     | - | bruckly, brucky |
| hairy                     | - | birsie          |
| rough                     | - | coorse          |
| smooth                    | - | slight          |
| soaking wet               | - | sabbin, sabbitt |
| soft                      | - | saft            |
| sticky and mushy          | - | clatchy         |
| wet                       | - | weet            |
| woolly                    | - | ooie            |

## Sound

|   |   |         |  |
|---|---|---------|--|
| a bellow  | - | bröl    |  |
| a creak   | - | snyirk  |  |
| a creak or squeak                                       | - | neester |  |
| a deep sigh, the sighing of the wind                    | - | soch    |  |
| a low whirring sound, as of a spinning wheel            | - | birr    |  |
| a loud knock  | - | bong    |  |
| a loud noise, like thunder                              | - | dunder  |  |
| a tinkling noise  | - | rinkle  |  |
| bleat, like a sheep                                     | - | nyaarm  |  |
| cackle, as a hen  | - | claag   |  |
| croak, as a crow  | - | kirrup  |  |
| sound of someone clearing their throat                  | - | crex    |  |
| sound made by a light engine                            | - | snirr   |  |
| the low persistent sound of a rolling sea               | - | hush    |  |
| the sound of liquid gently splashing within a container | - | swinkle |  |
| to bang on a surface looking for an echo                | - | rong    |  |
| to moan or wail   | - | oob     |  |
| to splash gently in water                               | - | swittle |  |
| to wheeze   | - | whassel |  |
| whinny or neigh, like a horse                           | - | nyicker |  |
| yelp or bark, like a dog                                | - | yalk    |  |

## Movement

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| blow, thud, strike, dart   | - | doose   |  |
| bumble   | - | boofel  |  |
| to crawl   | - | oag   |  |
| to duck, as from a blow; dip in water  | - | dook  |  |
| to go quickly  | - | stend alang, stend on/<br>stoor alang, stoor on |  |
| to grasp   | - | mitten (a hadd o)                               |  |
| to grasp firmly, to grab   | - | yock (a hadd o)                                 |  |
| to jump  | - | jimp, jamp, jimpit                              |  |
| to move in a great hurry, vibrate or shake   | - | dirl  |  |
| to row gently against the tide in order to maintain a boat's position. Also used metaphorically to describe slow walking | - | aandoo  |  |
| to snatch  | - | cleek, click (a hadd o something)               |  |



|  |   |                              |
|--|---|------------------------------|
| to snatch quickly away                       | - | wheech ('ch' as in<br>'loch) |
| to stagger                                   | - | swaander                     |
| to strike; to slam, as a door                | - | dadd                         |
| to walk jauntily                             | - | link alang                   |
| to whirl round rapidly, as in a square dance | - | birl                         |
| to walk slowly and aimlessly                 | - | drittlet                     |
| to walk with a limp                          | - | hirple                       |
| to walk with long, purposeful strides        | - | stend                        |
| wander                                       |   |                              |

## WEATHER WORDS

### Mist

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| a thick mist                           | - | stumba  |
| dense fog                              | - | steekit mist, steekit stimna,<br>steekit stumba |
| haze, mist                             | - | ask   |
| mist which gathers in valleys at night | - | daalamist                                       |
| thick mist or light drizzle            | - | dag   |
| wet mist, almost a drizzle             | - | raag  |

### Cold

|                                   |   |            |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------|
| a very severe frost               | - | bonfrost   |
| an extremely cold bout of weather | - | pinnishin  |
| cold, stormy weather              | - | bitterness |
| cold, stormy weather              | - | bittersie  |
| very cold and chilly              | - | caald-rife |

### Wind

|   |   |           |
|---|---|-----------|
| a biting cold wind  | - | snitter   |
| a light breeze of wind                                    | - | laar      |
| a strong gale   | - | gowster   |
| a sudden squall of wind                                   | - | flann     |
| a very light breeze                                       | - | pirr      |
| a violent gale, very stormy weather                       | - | vaelensi  |
| extremely calm with the surface of sea as smooth as cream | - | raem calm |

|                              |   |                    |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| having a good drying quality | - | sooky              |
| squally                      | - | flanny             |
| the sighing of the wind      | - | soch               |
| to die down, as in wind      | - | dill               |
| to dry by exposure to wind   | - | sook               |
| to increase in the wind      | - | ta tak up ida wind |
| to lull, as in bad weather   | - | daachen            |
| windy, drying weather        | - | drocht             |

## Lightning

|   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| a flash, as of lightning                      | - | flaacht       |
| lightning                                     | - | lichtnin      |
| sudden flashes of lightning common at hairst- | - | blashy blinks |
| summer/autumn lightning                       | - | hairst blinks |

## Sun

|                         |   |              |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|
| short gleam of sunshine | - | simmer blink |
| sultry heat             | - | ön           |

## Rain

|                               |   |                           |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| a deluge of rain              | - | uplowsin                  |
| a downpour of rain            | - | doontöm, tömald, vaanloop |
| a heavy shower                | - | plump                     |
| a heavy shower of rain        | - | speet                     |
| an interval between showers   | - | slud                      |
| fine rain                     | - | drush                     |
| light drizzle                 | - | röd                       |
| heavy, as of showers          | - | slashy                    |
| heavy rain along with thunder | - | thunder speet             |
| misty drizzle                 | - | skub                      |
| rainy                         | - | weety                     |
| small, driving rain           | - | slurd                     |
| to pour                       | - | töm                       |
| wet and windy                 | - | blashy                    |

## Snow

|                          |   |       |
|--------------------------|---|-------|
| a heavy fall, as of snow | - | onlay |
|--------------------------|---|-------|

|                                     |   |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| a light fall of snow                | - | feevil                    |
| a thaw                              | - | upslaag                   |
| a thaw with heavy rain              | - | uplowsin                  |
| drift                               | - | fann                      |
| drifting                            | - | bearin                    |
| hailstone                           | - | haily-puckle, hail-puckle |
| snow falling gently in large flakes | - | flukra                    |
| snow falling in large wet flakes    | - | skalva                    |
| to drift                            | - | bear, moor                |
| to drive, as snow                   | - | caav                      |
| to snow heavily with drifting       | - | moor                      |
| to snow quietly                     | - | sneeb                     |
| to thaw; a thaw                     | - | towe                      |

## Blizzards

|  |   |               |
|--|---|---------------|
| a blizzard   | - | moorie        |
| a blizzard   | - | caavie        |
| a violent blizzar                                      | - | moorie-caavie |
| a snowstorm with violent flurries of fine powdery snow | - | mell-moorie   |
| blinding snowstorm/blizzard                            | - | blinnd-moorie |

## CLOTHES

|                              |   |             |
|------------------------------|---|-------------|
| apron                        | - | peenie      |
| braces                       | - | strops      |
| cap                          | - | kep         |
| coat                         | - | cot         |
| corsets                      | - | stays       |
| fisherman's waterproof smock | - | smookie     |
| garter                       | - | gerteen     |
| gloves                       | - | glives      |
| hanky                        | - | sneet-cloot |
| headsquare, hanky            | - | nyepkin     |
| jumper                       | - | gansey      |
| shawl (knitted)              | - | hap         |
| mask                         | - | faase face  |
| nappy                        | - | hippen      |
| night dress, nightie         | - | goonie      |
| ragged garments              | - | plags       |
| scarf (thick)                | - | graavit     |

|                             |   |                |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------|
| shirt                       | - | sark           |
| shoes                       | - | shön           |
| slippers                    | - | smucks         |
| underpants                  | - | draaers        |
| underwear                   | - | inside claes   |
| socks (very thick and long) | - | sea-buit socks |
| vest                        | - | slip, simmit   |
| woollen hat                 | - | toorie         |

## ANIMAL NAMES

|         |   |         |
|---------|---|---------|
| cattle  | - | kye     |
| cow     | - | coo     |
| duck    | - | deuk    |
| gander  | - | genner  |
| goose   | - | gös     |
| gosling | - | gaeslin |
| kitten  | - | kettlin |
| otter   | - | dratsi  |
| pig     | - | grice   |
| puppy   | - | whalp   |
| rabbit  | - | kyunnen |
| stoat   | - | whitrit |

## FISH NAMES

|                          |   |                         |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| coalfish (adult), saithe | - | saed                    |
| coalfish (baby)          | - | sillock                 |
| coalfish (teenager)      | - | piltock                 |
| halibut                  | - | turbot                  |
| ling                     | - | olick                   |
| pilot whale              | - | caain whale             |
| piked dogfish            | - | hoe                     |
| porpoise                 | - | neesick                 |
| sea scorpion             | - | plucker                 |
| seal                     | - | selkie, sel             |
| stickleback              | - | banstickle, benistickle |
| turbot                   | - | roond turbot            |

## SHEEP

### Names for sheep

|   |   |        |
|---|---|--------|
| a sheep that jumps over or breaks through fences                | - | almark |
| a weaned lamb that has been added to the flock of breeding ewes | - | setnin |
| barren female animal that does not bear young                   | - | yield  |
| ewe   | - | yowe   |
| male sheep (castrated)  | - | hug    |
| male lamb (castrated)   | - | wadder |
|   |   | lamb   |
| young female sheep that has not yet had a lamb                  | - | gimmer |

### Sheep Descriptions/Phrases

|  |   |                        |
|--|---|------------------------|
| a drive of sheep, to drive sheep   | - | caa                    |
| a sheep mark in which the back part of the ear is cut off  | - | half oot<br>ahint      |
| a sheep mark in which the upper half of the foreside of the ear is cut off                                     | - | half oot afore         |
| an earmark consisting of a vertical slit in the ear  | - | rit                    |
| coloured thread through sheep's ear or round neck for identification purposes, to put a coloured thread on     | - | caddel                 |
| having a white ring round the neck   | - | byelsit                |
| having a white streak down the forehead  | - | blissit                |
| having both ears off (as a mark of ownership)  | - | minister's<br>mark     |
| having dark spots on a white fleece  | - | blaegit                |
| having drooping ears   | - | lavilugget             |
| having light-coloured body with dark-coloured belly  | - | catmoagit              |
| having the head, or face, a different colour from the body-  | - | kranset                |
| sheep-fold   | - | crö                    |
| short-haired   | - | snug-ooed              |
| sheep tick   | - | ked                    |
| tags of matted wool hanging, usually from rear end of sheep  | - | dill-bells             |
| three strips of wood placed round the neck of a sheep in triangular fashion to prevent it going through fences | - | branks, byoag,<br>hems |
| time of year when sheep are gathered in from the hill  | - | caain-time             |

|   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| to bleat  | - | nyaarm, yaarm |
| to pluck the wool off a sheep                                   | - | roo           |
| to reject from flock  | - | cast          |
| tufts of wool lost from sheep's backs and gathered from pasture | - | hentilagets   |
| two lambs tied together with a cringle round the neck,          |   |               |
| to tie two lambs together                                       | - | cring         |

## THE SEASHORE

|   |   |                   |
|---|---|-------------------|
| horse mussel                            | - | yoag              |
| limpet                                  | - | lempit            |
| lower part of seashore                  | - | da ebb            |
| razor shell                             | - | spoot             |
| sand gaper                              | - | smisslin          |
| scallop                                 | - | harpie-shall      |
| seaweed (bladderwrack)                  | - | tang              |
| seaweed (growing in the water)          | - | lukki lines       |
| seaweed (large, broad-leaved like kelp) | - | waar, waary bleds |
| seaweed (long thin strands)             | - | drooie lines      |
| water's edge                            | - | shoormal          |
| whelk                                   | - | bucky             |
| winkle                                  | - | wylk              |

## CREEPIE CRAWLIES

|                     |   |                          |
|---------------------|---|--------------------------|
| ant                 | - | mooratoog or mooritoog   |
| beetle              | - | black klock              |
| bumble bee          | - | stingy bee               |
| centipede           | - | thoosan taes             |
| daddy-long-legs     | - | willy-lang-legs          |
| earwig              | - | forkietail or spurrytail |
| fly                 | - | fishy flee               |
| great winged beetle | - | hundiclock               |
| moth                | - | moch                     |
| spider              | - | speeder                  |
| woodlouse           | - | slater                   |

## BIRD NAMES

\* A longer list, including the less common birds, is also available

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| artic skua               | - | aalin or skooty aalin                                  |
| black guillemot          | - | tystie   |
| black-headed gull        | - | hoodie maa   |
| common gull              | - | tina maa or tanyick, peerie maa                        |
| cormorant                | - | lorin, big skarf or brungawheedie                      |
| corn bunting             | - | dokken sparrow   |
| curlew                   | - | whaap  |
| dunlin                   | - | plover's page  |
| eider duck               | - | dunter   |
| fulmar                   | - | maalie   |
| gannet                   | - | solan  |
| great black-backed gull  | - | swaabie  |
| great northern diver     | - | emmer-gös  |
| great skua               | - | bonxie   |
| gull                     | - | maa (except in Lerwick where all<br>gulls are scories) |
| guillemot                | - | loom or longwie  |
| heron                    | - | hegri  |
| hooded crow              | - | hoodie craa  |
| kittiwake                | - | rippack maa, weeg                                      |
| lapwing                  | - | tieves nacket, plivver                                 |
| lesser black-backed gull | - | peerie swaabie or herring gull                         |
| mallard                  | - | stock deuk   |
| manx shearwater          | - | leerie or baakie craa                                  |
| meadow pipit             | - | hill sparrow or teetick                                |
| merlin                   | - | peerie hawk  |
| owl                      | - | cotogle  |
| oystercatcher            | - | shalder  |
| peregrine                | - | stock hawk   |
| puffin                   | - | tammie norie   |
| raven                    | - | corbie   |
| razorbill                | - | sea craa or wilkie                                     |
| redshank                 | - | ebb-cock   |
| red-breasted merganser   | - | herald deuk  |
| red-throated diver       | - | rain-gös   |
| ringed plover            | - | saandiloo  |
| rock dove                | - | doo or blue doo  |

|              |   |                            |
|--------------|---|----------------------------|
| rock pipit   | - | banks sparrow              |
| rook         | - | scotch craa                |
| shag         | - | skarf                      |
| skylark      | - | laverek or ladyin          |
| snipe        | - | snippeck or horse-gok      |
| storm petrel | - | alamootie or oilymootie    |
| tern         | - | tirrick                    |
| twite        | - | lintie                     |
| wheatear     | - | stenshakker                |
| whimbrel     | - | peerie whaap or tang whaap |
| wren         | - | stenkie or robbie cuddie   |
| young gull   | - | scorie                     |



**WORD LISTS**  
\*  
**SHETLAND TAE ENGLISH**

**CONTENTS:**

- **Descriptive words**
- **Weather words**
- **Clothes**
- **Animals**
- **Fish**
- **Sheep**
- **The Seashore**
- **Creepy Crawlies**
- **Birds**

## WORD LISTS (SHETLAND TO ENGLISH)

### DESCRIPTIVE WIRDS

\* Many of these are dialect expressions rather than dialect words

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| boannie   | - | pretty  |
| peerie  | - | small, short                                      |
| muckle  | - | big, much   |
| stoot   | - | stout, fat  |
| tin   | - | thin  |
| smaa  | - | slim  |
| scraepit-laek   | - | thin, as if wasted by illness                     |
| wenglit   | - | thin <i>and</i> ungainly: "all elbows and knees". |
| Also used for shakily-made chairs, etc! (think 'Basil Fawlt') |   |   |
| weel-laek   | - | good-looking                                      |
| ill-laek  | - | ugly  |
| no ill-laek   | - | quiet good-looking really!                        |
| soor-faced  | - | sour-faced  |
| dark-advised  | - | dark-haired with dark eyes and dark skin          |
| weel-riggitt  | - | well dressed                                      |
| smert   | - | smart   |
| fanted-laek   | - | looks like they've been starved of food           |
| lightsome-laek  | - | looks like they'd be a cheery sort                |
| glakit-laek   | - | looks witless                                     |
| trussit-laek  | - | untidy-looking                                    |
| poor-aamos-laek   | - | looks downright poorly                            |

*You can modify your description by saying*

|              |   |        |
|--------------|---|--------|
| kinda        | - | rather |
| braaly       | - | quite  |
| aaful, awful | - | very   |

### Caald

|              |   |                          |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|
| caald, cowld | - | cold                     |
| freezin      | - | very cold                |
| pinnishin    | - | very cold                |
| starvin      | - | very cold                |
| stivvenin    | - | becoming stiff with cold |

ston cowld - stone cold

## Hot

a haet ön - a sultry heat; stuffy atmosphere  
closs - close, or stuffy  
da swaet wis runnin aff o me/ hailin aff o him - working/moving  
so very hot  
haet - hot  
in a loch o swaet - very hot  
loobit - loo (*of food or liquid*)  
rostin - roasting  
scomfishin - choking with heat; overcome

## Mood

annoyed - worried  
blyde - glad  
ill-plaesed - not-pleased  
mad - very angry  
taen aff - annoyed  
tirn - angry, bad-tempered  
uplifted - happy  
vexed - feeling sorry about something

## Qualities

aaber - keen, eager  
biddable - obedient  
blydely - kindly  
craabit - bad, tempered  
dorty - sulky  
feelin-herted - sympathetic and sensitive  
filsket - high spirited, frisky  
fine - nice  
graceless - lacking manners and care  
haandless - no use at skilled/physical tasks  
ill-döin - purposefully nasty  
ill-makkin - trouble making  
ill-spaekin - inclined to vicious gossip  
ill-trickit - mischevious

|                   |   |                                |
|-------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| kniff, nyiff      | - | fit and active                 |
| lichtsome         | - | cheerful, of people or places  |
| mindles           | - | forgetful                      |
| moaderate         | - | calm, moderate                 |
| overly            | - | given to extravagant behaviour |
| owre-steer        | - | over boisterous                |
| perskeet, pernyim | - | prim and priggish              |
| sheeksit          | - | given to deep thinking         |
| sleekit           | - | sly                            |
| slushit           | - | slovenly                       |
| towtful           | - | thoughtful                     |
| trusset           | - | untidy                         |
| tyoch             | - | tough                          |
| veeve             | - | active and lively              |
| vyndless          | - | clumsy, lacking in technique   |
| yasp              | - | lively, energetic              |

### Taste

|           |   |   |
|-----------|---|---|
| brunt     | - | burnt   |
| scoodered | - | scorched  |
| shilpit   | - | sour as opposed to sweet e.g. when<br>describing rhubarb or lemon |
| soor      | - | sour; gone off or gone bad  |

### Touch

|                 |   |                           |
|-----------------|---|---------------------------|
| birsie          | - | hairy                     |
| bruckly, brucky | - | easily broken, feeble     |
| clatchy         | - | sticky and mushy          |
| coorse          | - | rough                     |
| ooie            | - | woolly                    |
| ruckly          | - | a hard but uneven surface |
| sabbin          | - | soaking wet               |
| saft            | - | soft                      |
| slight          | - | smooth                    |
| weet            | - | wet                       |

## Soond

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| bröl    | - | a bellow  |
| claag   | - | cackle, as a hen                                |
| kirrup  | - | croak, as a crow                                |
| nyaarm  | - | bleat, like a sheep                             |
| nyicker | - | whinny or neigh, like a horse                   |
| yalk    | - | yelp or bark, like a dog                        |
| <br>    |   |   |
| birr    | - | a low whirring sound, as of a spinning<br>wheel |
| <br>    |   |   |
| bong    | - | a loud knock                                    |
| dunder  | - | a loud noise, like thunder                      |
| hush    | - | the low persistent sound of a rolling sea       |
| neester | - | a creak or squeak                               |
| oob     | - | to moan or wail                                 |
| rinkle  | - | a tinkling noise                                |
| rong    | - | to bang on a surface looking for an echo        |
| <br>    |   |   |
| crex    | - | sound of someone clearing their throat          |
| snirr   | - | sound made by a light engine                    |
| snyirk  | - | a creak   |
| soch    | - | a deep sigh, the sighing of the wind            |
| swinkle | - | the sound of liquid gently splashing            |
| swittle | - | to splash gently in water                       |
| whassel | - | to wheeze                                       |

## Movement

|                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| aandoo                            | - | to row gently against the<br>tide in order to maintain a boat's position. Also used metaphorically to<br>describe slow walking |
| birl                              | - | to whirl round rapidly, as in a<br>square dance  |
| <br>                              |   |  |
| boofel                            | - | bumble   |
| cleek, click (a hadd o something) | - | to snatch  |
| dadd                              | - | to strike, to slam, as a door  |
| dirl                              | - | moving in a great hurry  |
| dook                              | - | to duck, as from a blow; dip<br>in water   |
| <br>                              |   |  |
| doose                             | - | strike, dart   |

|                            |   |  |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| drittle                    | - | to walk slowly and aimlessly             |
| hirple                     | - | to walk with a limp                      |
| jimp, jump, jimpit         | - | to jump                                  |
| link alang                 | - | to walk jauntily                         |
| mitten (a hadd o)          | - | to grasp                                 |
| oag                        | - | to crawl                                 |
| stend                      | - | to walk with long, purposeful<br>strides |
| stend alang, stend on      | - | to go quickly                            |
| stoor alang, stoor on      | - | to go quickly                            |
| swaander                   | - | to stagger                               |
| waander                    | - | wander                                   |
| wheech ('ch' as in 'loch') | - | to snatch quickly away                   |
| yock (a hadd o)            | - | to grasp firmly, to grab                 |

## WADDER WORDS

### Mist

|                |   |  |
|----------------|---|--|
| ask            | - | haze, mist                             |
| daalamist      | - | mist which gathers in valleys at night |
| dag            | - | thick mist or light drizzle            |
| raag           | - | wet mist, almost a drizzle             |
| steekit mist   | - | dense fog                              |
| steekit stimna | - | dense fog                              |
| steekit stumba | - | dense fog                              |
| stumba         | - | a thick mist                           |

### Caald

|            |   |                                   |
|------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| bitterness | - | cold, stormy weather              |
| bittersie  | - | cold, stormy weather              |
| bonfrost   | - | a very severe frost               |
| caald-rife | - | very cold and chilly              |
| pinnishin  | - | an extremely cold bout of weather |

### Wind

|         |   |                            |
|---------|---|----------------------------|
| daachen | - | to lull, as in bad weather |
| dill    | - | to die down, as in wind    |
| drocht  | - | windy, drying weather      |

|                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
| flan               | - | a sudden squall of wind                                      |
| flanny             | - | squally  |
| gowster            | - | a strong gale  |
| laar               | - | a light breeze of wind                                       |
| pirr               | - | a very light breeze  |
| raem calm          | - | extremely calm with the surface of sea<br>as smooth as cream |
| snitter            | - | a biting cold wind   |
| soch               | - | the sighing of the wind                                      |
| sooky, sook        | - | having a good drying quality                                 |
| ta tak up ida wind | - | to increase in the wind                                      |
| vaelensi           | - | a violent gale, very stormy weather                          |

## Lichtnin

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| blashy blinks | - | sudden flashes of lightning common at<br>hairst |
| flaacht       | - | a flash, as of lightning                        |
| hairst blinks | - | summer/autumn lightning                         |

## Sun

|              |   |                         |
|--------------|---|-------------------------|
| ön           | - | sultry heat             |
| simmer blink | - | short gleam of sunshine |

## Rain

|               |   |                               |
|---------------|---|-------------------------------|
| blashy        | - | wet and windy                 |
| doontöm       | - | downpour of rain              |
| drush         | - | fine rain                     |
| plump         | - | a heavy shower                |
| röd           | - | light drizzle                 |
| skub          | - | misty drizzle                 |
| slashy        | - | heavy, as of showers          |
| slud          | - | an interval between showers   |
| slurd         | - | small, driving rain           |
| speet         | - | a heavy shower of rain        |
| thunder speet | - | heavy rain along with thunder |
| töm           | - | to pour                       |
| tömald        | - | a downpour of rain            |
| uplowsin      | - | a deluge of rain              |

|          |   |                    |
|----------|---|--------------------|
| vaanloop | - | a downpour of rain |
| weety    | - | rainy              |

## Snaa

|               |   |                                     |
|---------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| bear          | - | to drift                            |
| bearin        | - | drifting                            |
| blinnd-moorie | - | blinding snowstorm/blizzard         |
| caav          | - | to drive, as snow                   |
| fan           | - | drift                               |
| feevil        | - | a light fall of snow                |
| flukra        | - | snow falling gently in large flakes |
| haily-puckle  | - | hailstone                           |
| moor          | - | to snow heavily with drifting       |
| onlay         | - | a heavy fall, as of snow            |
| skalva        | - | snow falling in large wet flakes    |
| sneeb         | - | to snow quietly                     |
| towe          | - | to thaw; a thaw                     |
| uplowsin      | - | a thaw                              |
| upslaag       | - | a thaw                              |

## Blizzards

|                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| blinnd-moorie  | - | blinding snowstorm/blizzard                               |
| mell-moorie    | - | a snowstorm with violent flurries of fine<br>powdery snow |
| moorie, caavie | - | a blizzard  |
| moorie-caavie  | - | a violent blizzar   |

## CLAES

|            |   |                          |
|------------|---|--------------------------|
| buits      | - | boots                    |
| cot        | - | coat                     |
| cöttikins  | - | short socks/ ankle socks |
| cotts      | - | skirts                   |
| draaers    | - | underpants               |
| faase face | - | mask                     |
| gansey     | - | jumper                   |
| gerteen    | - | garter                   |



|                |   |                              |
|----------------|---|------------------------------|
| glives         | - | gloves                       |
| goonie         | - | night dress                  |
| graavit        | - | scarf                        |
| hap            | - | knitted shawl                |
| hippen         | - | nappy                        |
| inside claes   | - | underwear                    |
| kep            | - | hat                          |
| loren shön     | - | shoes not boots              |
| nyepkin        | - | headsquare, hanky            |
| peenie         | - | apron                        |
| plags          | - | ragged garments              |
| sark           | - | shirt                        |
| sea-buit socks | - | very thick socks             |
| shön           | - | shoes                        |
| simmit         | - | vest                         |
| slip           | - | vest                         |
| smookie        | - | fisherman's waterproof smock |
| smucks         | - | slippers                     |
| sneet-cloot    | - | hanky                        |
| stays          | - | corsets                      |
| strops         | - | braces                       |
| toorie         | - | woollen hat                  |

## ANIMAL NAMES

|         |   |         |
|---------|---|---------|
| coo     | - | cow     |
| deuk    | - | duck    |
| dratsi  | - | otter   |
| gaeslin | - | gosling |
| genner  | - | gander  |
| grice   | - | pig     |
| gös     | - | goose   |
| kettlin | - | kitten  |
| kye     | - | cattle  |
| kyunnen | - | rabbit  |
| whalp   | - | puppy   |
| whitrit | - | stoat   |

## FISH NAMES

|                          |   |                         |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| banistickle, benistickle | - | stickleback, banstickle |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------|

|              |   |                          |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|
| caain whale  | - | pilot whale              |
| hoe          | - | piked dogfish            |
| neesick      | - | porpoise                 |
| olick        | - | ling                     |
| plucker      | - | sea scorpion             |
| piltock      | - | coalfish (teenager)      |
| roond turbot | - | turbot                   |
| saed         | - | coalfish (adult), saithe |
| selkie, sel  | - | seal                     |
| sillock      | - | coalfish (baby)          |
| turbot       | - | halibut                  |

## SHEEP

### Names for sheep

|             |   |   |
|-------------|---|---|
| almark      | - | a sheep that jumps over or breaks<br>through fences                             |
| gimmer      | - | a female sheep, between the first and<br>second shearing and not yet had a lamb |
| hug         | - | male sheep (castrated)  |
| setnin      | - | a weaned lamb that has been added to<br>the flock of breeding ewes              |
| wadder lamb | - | a wether or castrated male sheep  |
| yield       | - | barren female animal that does not bear<br>young                                |
| yowe        | - | ewe   |

### Sheep Descriptions/Phrases

|                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|
| blaegit             | - | having dark spots on a white fleece   |
| blissit             | - | having a white streak down the forehead   |
| branks, byoag, hems | - | three strips of wood placed round the<br>next of a sheep in triangular fashion to prevent it going through fences |
| byelsit             | - | having a white ring round the neck  |
| caa                 | - | a drive of sheep, to drive sheep  |
| caain-time          | - | time of year when sheep are gathered in<br>from the hill  |
| caddel              | - | coloured thread through sheep's ear or<br>round neck for identification purposes, to put a coloured thread on     |
| cast                | - | to reject from flock  |

|                |   |   |
|----------------|---|---|
| catmoagit      | - | having light coloured body with dark-<br>coloured belly                             |
| cring          | - | two lambs tied together with a cringle<br>round the neck, to tie two lambs together |
| crö            | - | sheep-fold  |
| dill-bells     | - | tags of matted wool hanging, usually from<br>rear end of sheep                      |
| half oot afore | - | a sheep mark in which the upper half of<br>the foreside of the ear is cut off       |
| half oot ahint | - | a sheep mark in which the back part of<br>the ear is cut off                        |
| hentilagets    | - | tufts of wool lost from sheep's backs and<br>gathered from pasture                  |
| ked            | - | sheep tick  |
| kranset        | - | having the head, or face, a different<br>colour from the body, see 'cring'          |
| lavilugget     | - | having drooping ears  |
| moorit         | - | brown   |
| nyaarm         | - | to bleat  |
| rit            | - | an earmark consisting of a vertical slit in<br>the ear                              |
| roo            | - | to pluck the wool off a sheep   |
| snug-ooed      | - | short-haired  |
| yaarm          | - | to bleat  |

## DA SEASHORE

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| bucky             | - | whelk  |
| da ebb            | - | lower part of seashore                                   |
| dilse             | - | seaweed, the common dulse                                |
| drooie lines      | - | seaweed (long thin strands)                              |
| harpie-shall      | - | scallop  |
| lempit            | - | limpet   |
| lukki lines       | - | seaweed (growing in the water)                           |
| shoormal          | - | water's edge   |
| smisslin          | - | sand gaper   |
| spoot             | - | razor shell  |
| tang              | - | seaweed (found above the low water)                      |
| waar, waary bleds | - | seaweed (large, broad-leaved weed<br>growing in the sea) |
| wylk              | - | winkle   |

yoag - horse mussel

## CREEPIE CRAALIES

|                          |   |                     |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------|
| black klock              | - | beetle              |
| fishy flee               | - | fly                 |
| forkietail or spurrytail | - | earwig              |
| hundiclock               | - | great winged beetle |
| moch                     | - | moth                |
| mooratoog or mooritoog   | - | ant                 |
| slater                   | - | woodlouse           |
| stingy bee               | - | bumble bee          |
| speeder                  | - | spider              |
| thoosan taes             | - | centipede           |
| willy-lang-legs          | - | daddy-long-legs     |

## BIRD NAMES

\* A longer list, including the less common birds, is also available

|                         |   |                        |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------|
| aalin or skooty aalin   | - | artic skua             |
| alamootie or oilymootie | - | storm petrel           |
| banks sparrow           | - | rock pipit             |
| bonxie                  | - | great skua             |
| corbie                  | - | raven                  |
| cotogle                 | - | owl                    |
| dokken sparrow          | - | corn bunting           |
| doo or blue doo         | - | rock dove              |
| dunter                  | - | eider duck             |
| ebb-cock                | - | redshank               |
| emmer-gös               | - | great northern diver   |
| herald deuk             | - | red-breasted merganser |
| hegri                   | - | heron                  |
| hill sparrow or teetick | - | meadow pipit           |
| hoodie craa             | - | hooded crow            |
| hoodie maa              | - | black-headed gull      |
| laverek or ladyin       | - | skylark                |
| leerie or baakie craa   | - | manx shearwater        |
| lintie                  | - | twite                  |
| loom or longwie         | - | guillemot              |

|                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| lorin, big skarf or brungawheedie | - | cormorant  |
| maa                               | - | gull (except in Lerwick where all gulls are scories) |
| maalie                            | - | fulmar   |
| peerie hawk                       | - | merlin   |
| peerie swaabie or herring gull    | - | lesser black-backed gull                             |
| peerie whaap or tang whaap        | - | whimbrel   |
| plover's page                     | - | dunlin   |
| rain-gös                          | - | red-throated diver                                   |
| rippack maa, weeg                 | - | kittiwake  |
| saandiloo                         | - | ringed plover  |
| scorie                            | - | young gull   |
| scotch craa                       | - | rook   |
| sea craa or wilkie                | - | razorbill  |
| shalder                           | - | oystercatcher  |
| skarf                             | - | shag   |
| snippeck or horse-gok             | - | snipe  |
| solan                             | - | gannet   |
| stenkie or robbie cuddie          | - | wren   |
| stenshakker                       | - | wheatear   |
| stock deuk                        | - | mallard  |
| stock hawk                        | - | peregrine  |
| swaabie                           | - | great black-backed gull                              |
| tammie norie                      | - | puffin   |
| tieves nacket, plivver            | - | lapwing  |
| tina maa or tanyick, peerie maa   | - | common gull  |
| tirrick                           | - | tern   |
| tystie                            | - | black guillemot                                      |
| whaap                             | - | curlew   |