

**A Basic Guide to the Younger Futhark**  
First Edition

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# Runic Corner

## The Basic Guide to the Younger Futhark



The second rune row developed in chronological order as the second best known rune row covered here in Runic Corner is the Younger Futhark. Common in what is now Sweden and Norway. While many sources say that they were also common in Iceland, other sources contradict this, showing that the Elder Futhark was in wider use in Iceland at least up until late, at least till the middle ages. So while there is some evidence of it's use in Iceland, the it seems that until late a version of the Elder Futhark, known as the Elder Fupark, was in wider use. Consisting of sixteen runes, the Younger Futhark is on the surface a simplified and rune row. While the runes are simplified, however, this made the way they interacted with the sounds of the spoken language more complex as the sixteen runes had to accommodate more sounds per rune than the twenty four of the Elder Futhark, making it more complex to read at the same time it became symbolically simpler.

As an alphabet, it was used to write Old Norse in rune rows and inscriptions, as well as graffiti all around the world during the Viking era. Better associated with the Viking age than the Elder Futhark, which is better associated with the Germanic world and an older rune row (Though there is evidence of the Elder Futhark still in use during the Viking age), the Younger Futhark is not as common as the Elder Futhark among rune users today. However, it is still worth learning as it has a different energy, a different way of looking at things. This is something that may suit other rune users as a primary set if you resonate with this, even if it is not for me. It may also be a good tool to keep around, as I am now with my own set (pictured) for individual uses. They are, in a way, a more direct energy than the Younger Futhark in so many ways, far more direct and explicit in their meaning and form when you work with them. This different energy is something that while I

may not use all the time, but in carving them and getting to know them to write this guide I found uses for them as well that I didn't find in the Elder Futhark, my primary set. This is something you may also have if you do not use them as a primary set.

Overall, in carving the Younger Futhark, creating this guide and the companion Younger Futhark rune poem I learnt a lot about this rune set and the uses. This is a good set for those who are more attracted to this rune row sets energy, and for uses and meanings that resonate for those that primarily use other rune sets. It is also the rune row to write Old Norse in, if you are writing out spells in runes. For these reasons and more it is a good rune set to learn about.

## The Younger Futhark Complete Rune Row



**Fe** – This rune both represents material wealth and a caution not to be careless or hoard such wealth, or it causes strife. In the Viking era this would be represented by cattle in the field, wealth you could go out and count. Which makes it harder to associate with the more ephemeral, almost ethereal forms of wealth we see today – Digital money, stocks and bonds, but through translation of the term portable wealth this still stands in some ways. In other ways what this. In some ways when manifesting this will still stand better for the solid material abundance that money buys. This is because our more ephemeral digital money, which to the ancients would be seen as almost spiritual and almost energetic rather than real. This is especially true as we get further and further away from even physical notes and coins, the only form of solid money wealth that we have today recognisable to the ancients. Look at this which this means in a reading and trust your intuition as to whether this means money or materially physical abundance or goods such as real estate, cars, livestock or collectables. The second part of this rune is the warning not to distribute what you have unevenly in the family, especially if this rune appears merkstave, or reversed. Especially if reversed, it is a warning not to be unfair to those you care about around you, or be careless with it, as this inequality creates strife. As a rune of manifestation and spell work use this rune to attract material abundance and money – But this will not be in the form of lotto wins or overnight gains. This, like Fehu, will be in the form of slow gain through work or effort.



**Ur** – Differing from the Elder Futhark rune of the same form, this rune indicates the formless slurry of creation that met the primal fire to create the nine realms in Norse mythology. It is also associated with the rich volcanic soil that allows crops to grow, the primal power of creation and

this powerful underpinning energy that helped form reality. A rune of primal power still, it differs in the way it represents the primal forces behind creation. Unlike Uruz, which is associated with the Primal ox, the Aurochs, this is more associated with the primal, untameable, underpinnings of life that nonetheless we need to live. When in a reading it brings in this power into your life, same as if used in manifestation work as the underpinning energy that allows us to grow our aims and goals. Reversed, or merkstave look for where this energy is unbalanced, or needed in your life Take a look at your life and see where you can make changes to work better to bring this energy in. As a rune in spell work and manifestation, use this rune to bring in the energy of the primal forces into your life. But do so when you need to consciously, unselfishly, with direction, and at their will, or this will have unintended consequences.



**Thurs** – With similar meanings to the Elder Futhark Thuriaz, it is still distinct at the same time. In the Younger Futhark the emphasis is on the power of giants, with their ability to throw massive, devastating boulders and the use as a carrier rune of power in magick workings. It is also associated with the god Thor, and his hammer. Here might and power are emphasised over the ideas of endurance and defence, giving the Younger Futhark Thurs rune a different, more direct focus. In divination, when this comes up, it shows that either you, or someone around you, has this power. Look for the power used well if the rune appears upright. Merkstave this is a warning against misused power, or power used against you. Look to other other runes in the reading as well as the question to see the exact message on which way this power is being wielded, and by whom. In terms of magick, manifestation and spell work, use as a carrier in magick workings when using the Younger Futhark.



**Oss** – Using the same form as the Elder Futhark Anzus, this rune has a completely different set of correspondences compared to the Elder Futhark rune. Rather than representing the world tree and the deities that we connect to by it, it represents the mouth of Odin himself through the symbolism of the river mouth. It represents voice, and more directly the sound the runes made as they were taken, screaming their songs, by Odin from the roots of the world tree. In divination the meaning follows the above symbolism, a double meaning of divine connection and the voice. Merkstave, or reversed, look for where you may have lost your voice, or need to regain it to find your true power again. Look at the rest of the runes in the reading and use your intuition to connect to the message this rune is giving you. Symbolising both the voice and the connection with the divine at the same time, this shows a strong connection to verbal rune magick known as Galdr. Use in magick work and manifestation to symbolise the voice as well as to facilitate finding or speaking your truth.



**Raiedh** – This rune has a very similar meaning to the corresponding Elder Futhark rune, meaning travel and process. This could mean a spiritual or physical journey, any process with a metaphorical road, or defined process you must walk, involved. The diverse meanings of this rune could go to shamanic journey work to a drive, long or short distance on the road. Like it's Elder Futhark counterpart this could equally mean a bureaucratic journey, or a journey of initiation. When this comes up in divination, look to your question and the runes that came with it to refine this meaning and fully understand exactly what this journey means for you at this time. Reversed, or merkstave look at where you need to follow processes to get better results than you are now, the context depending on the question and the surrounding runes. In manifestation work use this rune to facilitate success in any of the above journeys.



**Kaun** – Differing quite a lot from the similarly named rune Kenaz, this rune signifies gaining wisdom through suffering. Nigel Pennick describes this as the sore, or ulcer that gives us wisdom in healing as well as Odin's self inflicted wound while hanging on the world tree during his ordeal. However, this can describe the concept of shamanic illness, a common concept among many shamanic cultures as a part of the shamanic calling just as well. Indeed, it describes any knowledge or spiritual insight and growth gained through suffering equally well as a single sore or ulcer. In divination it is showing that your current state of suffering is not in vain, and you are gaining wisdom, or ignoring the gifts if this rune appears merkstave, or reversed. In magick work use to understand the wisdom and gifts coming through your suffering, or tho bring them into your life.



**Hagall** – This rune, like Haglaz in the Elder Futhark, comes through to me as three state change. The rune of Frau Hollie, this rune show the way that as a hailstorm brings chaotic and potentially destructive change. Just as the change you witness in a physical hailstorm, it runs it's course and there is nothing you can do to stop it, just endure it and count the damage afterwards. The three states in order are the state before, the chaotic and destructive state during and the completed state after, this can also happen in our lives. Often as destructive and chaotic as the hailstorm that symbolises it this state of change can be horrible to bear, but if you get through it to the end then the rewards will come. Look to the runes with Hagal for which part of the change you are in, or what this is likely to be when this comes up in divination. In magick work use to understand the change as best you can and bring in the strength to bear it.



**Naudhr** – This rune of restriction, similar to the Elder Futhark Naudhiz, has a reinforced meaning of the bondage that need brings into our life. Literally meaning the bondage of our material needs, this rune reminds us that we are restricted by fate and our lives. For this reason I found it very strongly associated with the chains of addiction, with the chains of poverty and want among other strong fetters put on us by strong needs. In a way this Younger Futhark rune resonating especially with the ideas of the fetters of want and need, of poverty I have experienced in my own life. When this appears in a reading, look for what you really need in your lives and what is really holding you back. Other runes, or your question itself might hold clues to this. You may only just be able to acknowledge the chains at the moment, but that is the first step. Use in magick work to identify what holds you back as the first step of changing your circumstances.



**Is** – Like Isa in the Elder Futhark, this rune stands for ice. It does, however also have stronger associations with the crystallised wisdom of the crystal, and the time of winter as a time of reflection and gaining wisdom. This comes from the restrictions of the frozen northern winter, where life goes indoors because of the weather, progress stops and you have to wait for the thaw to start for the year again. Just like ice is water frozen in form and time, so is the ice like quartz crystal a reflection of energy and wisdom frozen in time. If this appears in a divination, take this as a time of reflection and stillness. Look for what wisdom you can bring from this pause with you into the next phase. This is a pause where you won't be able to move forward, but you can take stock. Use in magick work to find and distil wisdom in your life.





**Ar** – A novel rune in the Younger Futhark, in form it is effectively a reversed Naudhiz, or Nadhur, and represents a good year, or good harvest. The literal meaning of the rune is of a good physical harvest, similar to Jera. But in terms of our modern day to day life this can mean any form of cyclical process similar to a harvest. In order to bring this in all the right actions have to be taken at the right time, at the right place – A reversed understanding of necessity in effect. In divination, depending on your question, where it comes up and what runes are with it it is showing you need to take the right steps for a good results, or are on track for good results. Merkstave it can be seen as a warning to take a look at your path and revise what you are doing to get the right results. Use in magick work to manifest the path of right actions at the right time to get the best results.



**Sol** – The rune of the sun goddess and the bounty of light that allows growth and illumination, this is the rune of victory and achievement. If you draw this rune in a divination it is a good sign that you will prevail, even if delayed, and that you are on the right track. In form it cannot be reversed, or go merkstave, so there is no reversed meaning. In magick work, use to manifest the necessary energy to achieve an outcome, reflecting the secondary meaning of consciously directed spiritual action. Also use when you are in the dark and looking for a solution to find the light, or the way out, or the light at the end of the tunnel during a dark time.



**Tyr** – With the same form as the Elder Futhark rune Teiwaz, this focuses more on the sky god Tyr's role as the regulator of order and form among the nine realms of creation. In this it focuses

almost directly on the regulation of the cosmic order, the natural, non-man made rules and regulations that exist both in our world and in greater reality. This rune in divination shows us the need for more order and regulation in our lives, perhaps because of ensuing chaos around us, or the need to follow it. Reversed, or merkstave, look at where you are going against the grain of cosmic order and need to adjust for better results. In magick work, use this to ensure your workings are empowered and work within the regulations of the cosmic order.



**Bjarkan** - This rune of the earth goddess, this rune is similar to the Elder Futhark rune Berkana. With different names according to place, is one of birth, rebirth, regeneration and the joys of spring. As a woman's rune, it signifies gestation and childbirth. But as I have worked with it in carving this rune as well as writing the companion rune poem to this guide, and I also see associated healing through regeneration and the bounty of spring associated with it, the regeneration of recovering after a hard time. In this way I also associate it with healing through the association with regeneration. In divination it can be associated with any of the above meanings – Birth, rebirth, spring, healing and regeneration. However, if it appears reversed this might mean that they are not there or this is delayed. Use in magick work to bring in any of the meanings associated in the quick description above.



**Madhr** – If Bjarkan is the rune of the mother, then Madhr is the rune of man, and equally of fatherhood by association. Associated with humanities achievements and the continuity of clan and family bloodlines, this is a rune of continuity between ancestors, the current generation and their descendants. Standing for continuity in family, clan and community this is a rune of family and inheritance. In divination it could stand for fatherhood, or any of the above meanings in continuity of family ties, Merkstave a warning of them being broken. In magick work, use this to represent

anything associated with humanity or it's realms of achievement, or to help heal families and family issues.



**Logr** – This rune, standing for fluids and water, within and without, is a rune of all the life giving fluids in creation, as well as the energetic flow that underpins them. Be they our blood, the waters of the rivers or oceans and their currents, or the rain, they all give us life. In a way it is this life force, this lifeblood that is the water in all it's forms and fluids that it forms that is the real message of this rune. In divination, depending on your question and the runes around it, it could symbolise any fluid, or the tides and currents of the prime ether that underpin it. Look for the meaning in the surrounding runes as well as your question and interpret intuitively, upright or merkstave. Generally, merkstave will be a warning. In magick work, use for any of the above meanings, but focus in on your meaning specifically in your intentions when doing so.



**Yr** – The last rune in the Younger Futhark row, it is also called Elgir when used as a magickal connector and enabler, this rune is also called the death rune. Symbolising the roots of the world tree and the entryway to the underworld, it is also a rune of our own shadow and unconscious. Like the tarot card Death, this rune is one to be careful interpreting as it may not literally mean death. It could mean the end of a job or cycle, or of your connection to place, for example, a move to a new house. In divination, look for other 'Deaths', or endings and transitions in the reading before predicting death straight out. Also look for what it could mean in the unconscious, or the shadow in other runes in the reading, or your question before predicting death. For something new to begin, the old needs to die. This is what is being symbolised so much more commonly than physical death when drawing this rune. In magick work, use this to enhance shadow, or unconscious work and bring about necessary endings. You can also use it more traditionally as a facilitator with other Younger Futhark runes in the Elgir form.