

Norway: Language

There are four official languages: *bokmål* and *nynorsk*, developed in the mid-1800s after independence from Denmark (Norwegians learn both), *sami* and *kvennish*. *Bokmål* (book language), formerly *riksmål* derived from written Danish, is the main language, used in most education, newspapers, radio and TV. *Nynorsk* (new Norwegian, in contrast to pre-1500 Old Norse of North Germanic origin), formerly *landsmål*, is a dialect form with different spelling. Used by 50% of people in 1971, it has declined to 14% (2007), mostly in rural western fjord and central mountain areas. There are many dialect variations that developed when mountainous terrain made communication difficult in the past. The Sami people have their own Finno-Ugric language in 3 versions with 9 dialects, but also speak Norwegian. North Sami is spoken by around 15,000 people, Lule Sami by around 500 and South Sami by around 300; Pite Sami is nearly extinct. Sami is the official language in six municipalities; Kvennish, also Finno-Ugric and spoken by about 8000 people in Troms and Finnmark, is the official language in one. Romani (gipsy) dialects of Indo-European origin include Tavringer Romani (spoken by 6 000), Vlax Romani (by 500), Scandoromani (indigenous to Norway and Sweden) and Rodi or Norwegian Traveller (based on Norwegian with heavy borrowings from Northern Romani and Rotwelsch).

Alphabet & Pronunciation (approximate): Letters are the same as English with three extra vowels Æ, Ø, Å. Adopted foreign words use C, Q, W, X, Z, usually retaining their original pronunciation. Words are pronounced as spelled, all letters sounded (some exceptions). Vowels are usually long in stressed syllables, as the final letter or before a single consonant.

Vowels:

a short as in 'but'
long as in 'barn'
e short as in 'bed'
long as in 'bay'
unstressed as in 'ago'
i short as in 'bit'
long as in 'beet'
o short as in 'bob'
long as in 'boom'
u short as in 'put'
long as in 'boom'
y between 'ee' and 'oo',
similar to German ü
æ short as in 'bed'
long as in 'bay'
ø as in 'fur', like German ö
å short as in 'bob'
long as in saw
au, eu between 'load' and 'loud'
eg, ei between 'bait' and 'bite'
oi, øy as in 'boy'

Consonants:

d d as in 'dog', often silent at word end and after l, n, r
g g as in 'go' before a, e, o, u, æ, ø, å
y as in 'yes' before ei, i, øy, y, final n
silent before j
silent at word end after e, i
h h as in 'her' but silent before j, v
j y as in 'yes'
k soft ch as in German 'ich' before ei, i, j, y, øy
otherwise k as in 'keg'
ng ng as in 'singer', barely audible g
nt ng as in 'singer', French-derived words ending -ant
r r as in 'rag', slightly trilled
rs sh as in 'fish'
sj sh as in 'she'
sk sh as in 'she' before ei, i, j, y, ø, øy
otherwise sk as in 'skate'
t t as in 'top', but silent in the word 'det' (it, that)
and the neuter definite article ending -et
v v as in 'vat', silent at word end after l
c as s or k in original foreign word
q as kv; w as v; x as s or ks; z as s

Telephone Spelling Alphabet:

A	aa	Anna	K	kaw	Karin	U	oo	Ulrik
B	bay	Bernhard	L	el	Ludvig	V	vay	enkelt-V
C	say	Cæsar	M	em	Martin	W	dobbelt-vay	
D	day	David	N	en	Nils			dobbelt-V
E	ay	Edith	O	oh	Olivia	X	eks	Xerxes
F	ef	Fredrik	P	pay	Petter	Y	ewe	Yngling
G	gay	Gustav	Q	kew	Quintus	Z	set	Zakarias
H	haw	Harald	R	air	Rikard	Æ	ay	Ærlig
I	ee	Ivar	S	es	Sigrid	Ø	ur	Ørn
J	yod	Johan	T	tay	Teodor	Å	aw	Åse

Basic Words & Phrases:

Do you speak English?	<i>Snakker De engelsk?</i>	zero	<i>null</i>
Where is the toilet?	<i>Hvor er toaletten?</i>	one	<i>en</i>
gentlemen, men	<i>herrer, menn</i>	two	<i>to</i>
ladies, women	<i>damer, kvinner</i>	three	<i>tre</i>
to the left	<i>til venstre</i>	four	<i>fire</i>
to the right	<i>til høyre</i>	five	<i>fem</i>
straight ahead	<i>rett fram</i>	six	<i>seks</i>
yes	<i>ja</i>	seven	<i>sju</i>
no	<i>nei</i>	eight	<i>åtte</i>
please	<i>vær så snill, vennligst</i>	nine	<i>ni</i>
thank you	<i>takk</i>	ten	<i>ti</i>
good day, hello, hi	<i>god dag, hallo, hei</i>	eleven	<i>elleve</i>
goodbye	<i>adjø, ha det</i>	twelve	<i>tolv</i>
open	<i>åpen</i>	thirteen	<i>tretten</i>
closed	<i>stengt, lukket</i>	fourteen	<i>fjorten</i>
second	<i>sekund</i>	fifteen	<i>femten</i>
minute	<i>minutt</i>	sixteen	<i>seksten</i>
hour	<i>time</i>	seventeen	<i>sytten</i>
day	<i>dag</i>	eighteen	<i>atten</i>
week	<i>uke</i>	nineteen	<i>nitten</i>
month	<i>måned</i>	twenty	<i>tjue</i>
year	<i>år</i>	twenty one	<i>tjuen</i>
spring	<i>vår</i>	twenty two	<i>tjueto</i>
summer	<i>sommer</i>	thirty	<i>tretti</i>
autumn	<i>høst</i>	forty	<i>førti</i>
winter	<i>vinter</i>	fifty	<i>femti</i>
morning	<i>morgen, formiddag</i>	sixty	<i>seksti</i>
afternoon	<i>ettermiddag</i>	seventy	<i>sytti</i>
evening	<i>aften, kveld</i>	eighty	<i>åtti</i>
night	<i>kveld, natt</i>	ninety	<i>nitti</i>
yesterday	<i>i går</i>	hundred	<i>hundre</i>
today	<i>i dag</i>	thousand	<i>tusen</i>
tomorrow	<i>i morgen</i>	what	<i>hva</i>
north	<i>nord</i>	when	<i>når</i>
east	<i>øst</i>	where	<i>hvor</i>
south	<i>sør, syd</i>	which	<i>hvilken, hvilket</i>
west	<i>vest</i>	who	<i>hvem</i>
pull	<i>trekk</i>	why	<i>hvorfor</i>
push	<i>trykk</i>	how	<i>hvordan, hvor</i>
arrival	<i>ankomst</i>	big	<i>stor</i>
departure	<i>avgang</i>	small	<i>liten</i>
entrance	<i>inngang</i>	a little	<i>litt</i>
exit	<i>utgang</i>	a lot, much	<i>mye</i>
I don't understand	<i>Jeg forstår ikke</i>	many	<i>mange</i>

Time: Transport timetables, media schedules and shop/business opening hours use the 24-hour clock. For 12-hour time, minutes are quoted up to 14 after (*over*) or before (*på*) the hour or half hour; the half hour is before, not after, the hour; quarter hours (*kvart*) are after or before the hour. Examples: *halv ti* is 9.30, *kvart på ti* is 9.45, *fjorten over halv ti* is 9.44.

Basic Grammar: Of all European languages, Norwegian and English have the simplest forms of grammar. Word order and grammar are alike as English had its origins in the similar West Germanic Angle and Saxon languages with later Viking additions. Nouns are masculine/common, feminine or neuter. The indefinite article as in a car, an apple (*en bil*,

et eple) is added to the end of a noun to form the definite article: the car, the apple (*bilen, eplet*). Plurals are formed by adding *-r* or *-er* for indefinite nouns: cars, apples (*biler, epler*), except for one-syllable neuter nouns which do not change; and *-ne* or *-ene* for definite nouns: the cars, the apples (*bilene, eplene*). Adjectives add *-t* with neuter singular nouns (some exceptions) and *-e* for plurals. Possessives add *-s*, comparatives add *-re* or *-ere*, superlatives add *-st* or *-est* but some adjectives use *mer* and *mest* without changing the ending, like English. Present tense verbs add *-r* or *-er*; other tenses and other rules of grammar are a little more complex. There are some irregular nouns, verbs and adjectives, many the same ones as English, eg *mann, menn; springe, sprang, sprunget; god, bedre, best ...* which you can guess! Some words are identical in spelling and meaning, eg arm, egg, finger, flat, land; some have slight spelling differences, eg blood (*blod*), book (*bok*), knife (*kniv*), come (*komme*), self (*selv*), shall (*skal*); other spellings are not so obvious, eg neighbour (*nabo*), own (*egen*), sea (*sjø*), while some words have changed meaning, eg *bein* means leg as well as bone, *kinn* means cheek, not chin and *stol* means chair, not stool.

Most of the modern Norwegian vocabulary comes from Old Norse with loanwords from Middle Low German, which influenced Norwegian vocabulary and grammatical structures from the late Middle Ages. Currently, the main source of new loanwords is English, eg rapper, e-mail, catering, juice, bag (originally a loan word to English from Old Norse). Norwegian is not influenced by English as much as Swedish and Danish are. Both English and Norwegian have French and Latin loanwords. Some loanwords have their spelling changed to reflect Norwegian pronunciation rules, but in general Norwegianised spellings take a long time to establish, eg *sjåfør* (from French chauffeur) and *revansj* (from French revanche) are now the common Norwegian spellings, but juice is more often used than the Norwegianised form *jus*, catering more than *keitering*, service more than *sørvis*.

There is an official advisory body *Språkrådet* (Norwegian Language Council) that determines, subject to approval from the Ministry of Culture, official spelling, grammar and vocabulary for both *bokmål* and *nynorsk*. Major spelling reforms occurred in 1907, 1917, 1938 and 1959. There was a move to bring both versions of Norwegian together as one language *samnorsk* but this was officially abandoned in 2002. The board's work has always been subject to bitter controversy from purists. The last major revision in 2005, allowed all *Bokmål* feminine nouns to be written as masculine (common). All official publications are in both *bokmål* and *nynorsk*.

Most Norwegians speak good English (it's a compulsory school subject) but some older people in rural areas don't. Norwegians, Danes and Swedes can understand each other's languages, all descended from Old Norse. Danish has the same alphabet as *bokmål*, but is pronounced with dropped consonants and slurred syllables. Swedish pronunciation and spelling is similar but uses *ä* and *ö* instead of *æ* and *ø*. Icelandic and Færøese, close to Old Norse, are more difficult to understand.

Language Courses: Academic courses are available at the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, East Anglia, Hull, Surrey, Westminster and Goldsmiths, Morley and University Colleges in London, Specialist language colleges have short courses at various levels, eg the Brasshouse Centre in Birmingham. Some Norwegian universities offer intensive summer courses that include Norwegian culture and social life; they are intended mainly for foreign students starting studies in Norway.

Books: Norwegian Phrase Book (Berlitz 2004 ISBN 978-981-246-986-3) £4.99, essential in emergencies and for translating signs and menus.

Norwegian Pocket Dictionary (Berlitz 2008 ISBN 978-981-246-989-5) £6.99

For other language books and dictionaries, see <<http://www.norsk.org.uk>>.

Norway: Social Life & Customs

There is no class structure and no aristocracy apart from the royal family; the king can knight people for services to the state but they have no title. Norwegians tend to be easy-going and hospitable, but have great national pride. Elaborate national folk costumes (*bunader*) with about 200 regional variations are worn at weddings and other festive occasions. The long dark winters can be depressing, especially in the North, but summer is celebrated — work finishes mid-afternoon to make the most of the light evenings. Many enjoy the outdoor life in their spare time, spending weekends hiking, fishing or boating (14% of households own a boat; there are 400 000 leisure craft) in summer and skiing in winter. 20% of households own one of 418 000 holiday cabins in the countryside, which is unpolluted and litter-free. 35% of adults belong to a sports club.; 55% attend sports as spectators but less often than 10 years ago. Leisure time has increased for both men and women as time spent on housework, preparing and eating meals has reduced. Lifestyles are greatly influenced by the state welfare programme with paid holidays and guaranteed pensions. However, as in many western countries, lifestyles are changing, particularly with the young who are less active outdoors and more interested in the urban social and music scenes.

Etiquette: It is normal to shake hands when meeting someone for the first time. People are introduced by their job title rather than Mr/Mrs/Miss. eg *vaktmester* (caretaker) *Per Olsen*. In the south, it's considered polite to telephone before visiting but unannounced visits are completely acceptable in the north. Older people and strangers are addressed by the formal '*De*' (you); children and friends by the informal '*du*'. In homes, outdoor coats and shoes are removed in the entrance hall. Norwegians do not eat at restaurants as often as the British but they do invite friends to their homes much more often for a meal or a drink. Wait for your host to invite you to start eating and wait until the host makes the toast '*Skål*' before you touch your drink and return the toast. After a meal, thank the hostess with '*Takk for maten*' (thanks for the food). Norwegians don't drop litter; always dispose of your rubbish responsibly. Visitors are not expected to be formal and smart casual dress is the norm, even in business.

Religion: Norway is the least religious country in Western Europe in terms of practising faith. There is religious freedom with several hundred registered religious organisations receiving financial support from the state. About 86% of Norwegians are nominally members of the official state Church of Norway (Evangelical Lutheran), but this is declining amongst the young. Over 70% of babies are baptised and over 60% of 14-year olds are confirmed; about 15% choose a civic confirmation after a citizenship course. Over one-third of marriages take place in civic registries rather than churches and over half of these are second or third marriages; 19% of marriages take place abroad. Civic registries also perform over 250 same sex partnership ceremonies annually. Over 95% have a church burial service. Only 13% take part in church activities with 3% attending services regularly. The King nominates church bishops who are appointed by the government. The first woman priest was appointed in 1961 and the first woman bishop in 1993.

Jews and Jesuits were banned from entering Norway since the Danish-Norwegian Lutheran reformation. In 1845, other Christian denominations and atheism were permitted but the law prohibiting Jews was not abolished until 1851. Jews were persecuted during WW2 and in 1946 only 559 Jews were living in Norway. There is some anti-semitism today among nationalistic neo-nazi and extremist Islamic movements, but it isn't common. In 1964 a constitutional amendment allowed freedom of religion, except that the royal family and at least half of the Government must belong to the state church. There is continuing debate about separating church and state.

There are about 51 000 Catholics in Oslo and other cities along with churches (*kirker*) of other denominations (about 153 000 other Protestants, including 40 000 Pentecostals). There are 80 000 humanists, 79 000 Muslims, 10 000 Buddhists and 1000 Baha'is. Eastern

Orthodox, Sikhs and Hindus are also present. Modern Sami are mostly Christian but some still follow traditional shamanistic beliefs. The local Tourist Information Office can tell you if there is a church or group of your faith in the area.

Family life and homes: Demographics are changing as the traditional rural society becomes urbanised (77% in 2009). As in all northern Europe countries, there is a decline in the marriage rate and a third of couples with children are unmarried, accounting for over 53% of children, mostly in Oslo and northern counties. The divorce/separation rate has increased from 10% in 1960 to about 45% with over 60% of these having children. Two-parent, two-children families are still the norm but 22% of children are in single parent families. Since 1970, the average child-bearing age for mothers has increased by 4 years to 30 but the legalisation of abortion in 1978 has led to nearly 3% of the 18-24 year age group having an abortion annually. The birth-rate for teenage mothers has dropped by 75%, and the abortion rate has doubled, a net reduction in pregnancies. In 1970, 90% of adopted children were Norwegian, this dropped to 16% in 2001 but has since risen to 40%; most adopted children are now Chinese, South Korean or Colombian.

Since 1970, the number of one-person households has doubled to 39% of all households, common in inner cities and sparsely populated areas and in the youngest and oldest adult age groups. Some students at secondary level have to leave home to study in a large town or city (and many who don't, still choose to), so they become independent much earlier than in other countries. There has been a shift in the care of elderly relatives from the family to the state. The average life expectancy of 78.7 years (2007), an increase of 10 years since 1950, has implications for future social welfare provision.

Average household income is kr 527 700 (2006), 74% earned, 5% property and unearned income, 21% pensions and benefits. As in most western countries, the rich are becoming richer but 5.6% of households are below the official poverty level. Average household debt has soared since 2000 to kr 772 000 in 2006; 80% of households have debt; for 27%, debt is more than twice annual income, for 13% more than three times. Household expenditure has more than trebled in real terms since 1958. The average household spends 29% of its budget on housing, transport 18%, food 11%, clothing 5%, communications 2%, alcohol 2%. In the last 50 years, consumption of meat has remained constant; potatoes, fish, milk (with a shift to skimmed and semi-skimmed), fats, oils and sugar have fallen; alcohol, soft drinks, juices, fruit and vegetables have increased.

About 53% of households live in detached houses (with 64% of the population), 21% in semi-detached or terrace houses and 22% in flats or other accommodation. 70% of households have a garden. 76% are owner-occupiers (one of the highest levels in Europe), 17% are tenants but this proportion is higher in cities. 20% of households also own a holiday home, 145 own a boat. Average dwelling size is 114m², the highest in Europe, and 33% have two or more bath/shower rooms. The price of dwellings has risen more than 270% since 1992 (almost 500% in Greater Oslo).

Since 1946, the average daily travel distance has increased from 4km to 40km, mainly in the use of private cars and flying; rail and sea travel have remained constant. 80% of households own a car (total 2.2 million), more in rural areas; nearly 25% have two or more. 80% go on holiday each year for an average of 21 days, the second highest number in Europe after Germany. Women take holidays more often than men and for longer. The most popular destinations are Spain, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, UK, Germany.

Sickness and deaths: The sickness absence rate from work is 8.5% for women and 5.5% for men. Since 1970, daily smokers have decreased from 52% to 21% for men and 30% to 22% for women; an additional 10% are occasional smokers. However there has been an increase to 10% of men taking snuff daily. Since the war, the number of deaths due to TB and other infectious diseases has declined while cancer and heart diseases remain significantly high. Diabetes and respiratory diseases have increased. Violent deaths have decreased for men due to fewer fishing and other marine accidents; an increase in deaths due to falls and traffic accidents is now declining.

Family occasions: Children's birthdays are celebrated annually, but later ones are usually celebrated only by immediate family. However, certain years, eg 18th, 21st, 50th, 60th, 65th, 70th, 80th, are marked by larger celebrations with friends as well as family, often a large dinner party. Other occasions, eg christenings, confirmations, weddings and funerals, may be rather formal with many speeches.

Public Holidays (*heiligdager*):

If a public holiday falls on a Sunday, the next day becomes a holiday. Public transport usually runs a Sunday service, except for Christmas and New Year where there is a very limited service or none.

1 Jan	New Year's Day	40th day after Easter	Ascension Day
March/April	Maundy Thursday- Easter Monday	8th Monday after Easter	Whit Monday
1 May	Labour Day	25 Dec	Christmas Day
17 May	Constitution Day	26 Dec	St Stephen's Day

Easter (*påske*) is popular as a skiing holiday. The Sami hold reindeer races, traditional chanting (*joik*) concerts and colourful festivities at Easter in Karasjok and Kautokeino.

Constitution Day (*Grunnlovsdagen*) has the biggest turnout with events everywhere; people wear traditional costume. It is a civic celebration without any government or military participation; in Oslo, schoolchildren and marching bands parade along Karl Johans gate to the Royal Palace (*Slottet*) to be greeted by the King. Bjørnson wrote a poem <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ja,_vi_elsker_dette_landet> for the 50th anniversary of the constitution in 1864, subsequently adopted as the national anthem. Music at: <[http://www.navyband.navy.mil/anthems/ANTHEMS/Norway%20\(National%20Anthem\).mp3](http://www.navyband.navy.mil/anthems/ANTHEMS/Norway%20(National%20Anthem).mp3)>. The day is also celebrated in Shetland and in immigrant communities in the USA and other countries.

On Midsummer's Eve (*Sankthanskvelden*), 23 June, shops and offices close early, small boats go out to islands for picnics and bonfires are lit on the beach with barbecues, parties, singing, dancing and fireworks until the early hours.

The industrial summer holiday is the last three weeks in July. School holidays are eight weeks from mid-June to mid-August, one week at end of September/beginning of October, two weeks at Christmas/New Year, one week at end of February and one week at Easter.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee awards the Nobel Peace Prize each year on 10 December.

St Lucia's Day, 13 December, is celebrated with a children's candlelit procession to church and a carol service. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Lucia_Day>

Christmas (*jul*) is celebrated with a tree in most homes; the family's main celebratory meal takes place on the evening of Christmas Eve (*juleaften*) after which gifts are exchanged. As in other countries, pre-Christian traditions have been incorporated. A bowl of porridge is left out for the gnome (*Jule-nissen*) who brings good fortune to farmers and is the equivalent of Santa Claus; in the country, an oat sheaf (*julenek*) is mounted on a pole and left out for birds. Traditional foods include sour cream porridge (*rømmegrøt*) or rice porridge (eaten for lunch), ptarmigan or grouse (*rupa*) in the north, glutinous cod soaked in lye (*lutefisk*) in the west, pork roast or ribs (*svineribber*) in the southeast, *rakfisk*, dried salted pork (*pinnekjøtt*) or mutton ribs (*pinneribbe*) steamed over birch or juniper twigs, minced pork sausages (*medisterpølser*), mashed rutabaga, sauerkraut and boiled potatoes, rice cream (*riskrem*) with raspberry sauce, raisin buns and biscuits (*strull* and *goro*), a small gingerbread house, seven traditional types of *julekaker*: ginger snaps (*pepperkaker*), doughnuts (*smultringer*), treacle snaps (*sirupssnipper*), sandcakes (*sandkaker*), griddle cake filled with butter, sugar and cinnamon icing (*lefsekling*), curl cakes (*krumkaker*) and brown sticks (*brune pinner*), grog (*gløgg*) made with cinnamon, raisins, almonds, ginger, cloves, cardamom, other spices and juice, raspberry or orange *julebrus*, strong dark holiday beer (*julaøl*), aquavit (*akvavit*). Between *juleaften* and New Year's Eve, children pay visits to neighbours to sing a carol or perform and are given candy, nuts and clementines (*julebukk*

or *nyttårsbukk*). In some areas, adults visit neighbours and are given drinks (*drammebukk*). Workplaces also serve a similar *julebord* for their staff around late November/early December.

New Year's Eve is celebrated with fireworks at midnight. A meal with turkey is common.

Books: Christmas Fireside Stories: Norwegian Folk & Fairy Tales, by P. C. Asbjornsen (2008, ISBN 978 140 979 486 8) £16.95

Dollar Road, by Kjartan Flagstad & N. Christensen (Louisiana State University Press 1989 ISBN 978 080 711 525 1) £17.49, portrays the transformation of rural Norway to an industrial society.

Norway: Arts & Culture

Norse Mythology: The Viking pagan faith had twelve gods, the *Æsir*, who lived at *Asgard*. *Odin* god of war, wisdom, poetry and magic was conflictually untrustworthy, violent and wise. He was Lord of the *Valkyrie* women warriors at *Valhalla*, the hall of dead heroes. *Odin* created heaven and earth from the body of the giant *Ymir*, man from an ash tree and woman from an alder. His wife *Frigga* was goddess of home and family. *Yggdrasil*, the tree of life, supported the universe and Vikings believed that it would eventually die and both gods and mortals would perish in the *Ragnarok*, the twilight of the gods. Woden is the Anglo-Saxon equivalent of *Odin*.

Thor, *Odin's* son, was the giant short-tempered god of thunder, fire and lightning, frequently fighting the evil frost giants of the *Jotunheimen* with his hammer *Mjolnir*, made by the trolls. His chariot was drawn by two goats that could be killed and eaten at night but were fully recovered the next morning. *Loki* was cunning and treacherous and the other gods chained him beneath a serpent that dripped venom on his face. His wife *Sigyn* held a bowl over his head to catch the venom but whenever she had to empty the full bowl, his squirming caused earthquakes. *Frey*, god of fertility, had a large ship *Skidbladnir* that could carry all the gods but could be folded up into his bag. He lived with elves at *Elfheim*. *Freya* was goddess of love, healing and fertility. *Hel*, goddess of the dead, lived on brains and bone marrow and presided over *Hel*, under the roots of *Yggdrasil*, where those who died of sickness or old age went. The *Norns* were the three goddesses of fate, Past, Present and Future, who cast lots over the cradle of every new baby.

Folk Culture: Legends and folk tales are still popular in the dark winter nights with trolls, giants, elves, witches, beautiful wood nymphs (*hulder*) who steal milk and lure young men inside a mountain so they can never leave, *vetter* spirits who guard the coastline, a headless fisherman and serpents including the Loch Ness-like Selma of Seljordvatn in Telemark. Traditional costumes are proudly preserved in Norwegian life. Folk music, both traditional and modern fusions, and folk dance have a large following. Native instruments include the lur, selje flute, bukke horn, langeleik zither and hardingfele or Hardanger fiddle. Music was not written down but passed on from one player to the next. Sami music is also enjoying a revival. There are many folk festivals throughout the country; the main ones are at Bergen, Bø and Førde.

UNESCO World Heritage sites in Norway:

Bryggen medieval timber buildings, Bergen.

Oldest stave church, dating from 1135, Urnes, Sogn og Fjordane.

Røros copper mining town, dating from 1644, Sør-Trondelag.

Prehistoric rock drawings, Alta, Finnmark.

Vegaøyan archipelago, Nordland.

Struve geodetic arc, triangulation survey stations on the line of longitude from Hammerfest to the Black Sea, 1816 - 1855.

Geirangerfjord, Møre og Romsdal, and Nærøyfjord. Sogn og Fjordane.

Architecture: Wooden stave churches (*stavkirker*) derive from Viking architecture and date from the 11th century early Christian era. They are named after their vertical support posts, built without nails and have ornately carved dragon head gables reminiscent of Viking longboat prows, intricate carvings of intertwined plants and animals, paintings on wood and a unique pagoda-like shape. About 2000 were built but few remain and several burned down in recent years. Less than 30 survive with the largest at Heddal, Telemark, about 250 other pre-1350 timber buildings are preserved in open-air folk museums. Except for large churches, stone and masonry for buildings wasn't common until after 1350.

The Romanesque style with slightly pointed arches, barrel vaults, cruciform piers supporting vaults and groin vaults, was initially influenced by England, typified by Stavanger's 12th century cathedral. Trondheim's Nidaros Cathedral (*domkirke*) is Scandinavia's largest medieval building, the oldest Romanesque part dating from about 1150 with later Gothic

extensions; it is used for Norway's coronations. Most later churches are Gothic style. Bergen's wooden Bryggen was built by the German Hanseatic merchants in the 16th century. Danish rulers built no significant buildings apart from stone fortresses (later modernised in baroque style) until King Christian IV started a number of Renaissance architecture projects including the rebuilding of Oslo as Christiania in 1624 and Kristiansand. Oslo, Stavanger, Bergen and Trondheim still have old town areas with wooden houses and cobbled streets.

At the start of the 19th century, there were only a few architects, mostly military officers trained in civil engineering. Wealthy merchants and landowners commissioned buildings and gardens in neo-classical style. After self-government in 1814, Christiania began an ambitious building program with the Royal Palace, Karl Johans gate, the monumental square surrounded by the University and the Storting, the Stock Exchange, the Bank of Norway and Christiania Theater, all influenced by German architecture which often used red-brick buildings in a revival of medieval styles. Most urban apartment buildings and villas continued in the classical tradition with plastered brick walls. From around 1840, architects started to design wooden buildings in Swiss chalet style which evolved into a variation known as dragon style, combining motifs from Viking and medieval art with elements from the recent past. Building traditions varied by region and type of structure and continue today in vacation cabins in the mountains and along the coast.

After independence in 1905, architects educated in Sweden developed a distinctly national architecture, breaking with German tradition. However, German modernism and town planning continued in early 20th century architecture. The *Jugendstil* variant of Art Nouveau influenced much new construction and Ålesund, after a fire in 1904, was rebuilt almost entirely in this style, along with buildings in Trondheim, Oslo's Historical Museum and Government office building, Bergen's theatre Den Nationale Scene. Cost-effective, sanitary, comfortable housing projects grew in importance, especially with co-operative organisations that built large-scale residential complexes and satellite cities (*drabantbyer*) in the outskirts of Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim and other cities. In 1973, the parliament recommended a shift toward small residential houses rather than large apartment buildings. Norwegians often undertake home improvement projects on their own and many have built most of their own homes.

After World War II, much of the reconstruction was functional, typified by Oslo's red brick Rådhus. National and local government sponsored building of hospitals, schools, sports and cultural centre and transport infrastructure such as bridges and tunnels. Tromsø has the strikingly modern Arctic Cathedral opened in 1963 and new religious buildings have been mainly Catholic churches and mosques. Modern architecture is influenced by aesthetics and environment together with access to daylight and fresh air. The Snøhetta Norwegian architectural firm has achieved international acclaim for its low-key, cool, Scandinavian style, including the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Egypt, the new Opera House in Oslo, and the Visitor's Center at the World Trade Center memorial site in New York. Over 2600 buildings throughout Norway have cultural heritage protected status.

Art Galleries (*kunstgallerier*) & Museums (*museer*): Religious art was prominent in the 13th century but stagnated until a revival in the mid-17th century of pictorial artists and peasant art with carved church decoration and in the 18th century, Rococo-influenced *rosemaling* (rose painting) decoration was popular on walls and furniture in the home. Landscape painting developed in the early 19th century, particularly Johan Christian Dahl (1788-1857), and an annual State Exhibition of Art was initiated in 1884. In the 20th century there was a large output of expressionist mural paintings. The best known artists are neo-romantic Nikolai Astrup (1880-1928), impressionists Frits Thaulow (1847-1906) and Edvard Munch (1863-1944) with *The Scream* and sculptor Gustav Vigeland (1869-1943) who was given a lifetime pension by Oslo City Council and created nearly 200 sculptures in Frognerparken in Oslo. Contemporary artists include Rolf Groven, Per Inge Bjørlo, Marianne Aulie and Anne Katrine Dolven.

There are museums and art galleries in most cities and towns, some only of local interest;

many have short opening hours, eg 11.00 to 15.00. There is usually an admission fee, but some are free; for students and those over 67 there may be a discount – always ask. Oslo and Bergen offer a pass for free public transport, admission to museums and other local attractions and discounts at carparks and restaurants. Kristiansund has an annual photography exhibition. 40% of the population go to exhibitions and 42% to museum each year.

<<http://www.kulturnett.no/?&lang=en>> for information on over 850 museums and other cultural sites.

Literature: The sagas are skaldic poetry from the court poets of the 9th and 10th century and eddic poetry of Icelandic origin, originally an oral tradition, eventually written down using a Latin alphabet in the 13th century, comprising legends, heroes' sagas and poetry. Religious poetry emerged in the 13th century. There was a dark age from the 14th to early 19th centuries with the strong Danish influence but Ludvig Holberg and others helped preserve a Norwegian flavour until a nationalist revival by Henrik Arnold Wergeland (1808 - 1845) and others. The end of the 19th to mid 20th century saw a golden age of poetry, novels and drama and international prominence was gained by authors Alexander Kjeiland, Jonas Lie and Nobel prize winners Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832 - 1910), Knut Hamsun (1859 - 1952) and Sigrid Undset (1882 - 1949). Bjørnson wrote on rural life and social problems, Undset is best known for her trilogy *Kristin Lavransdatter* on the life of a 14th century family (filmed by actress Liv Ullman), Hamsun for his 1917 novel *The Growth of the Soil* and other works. There is also a considerable volume of literature by Norwegian emigrants to other countries. Many poets wrote patriotic poems distributed clandestinely during World War II and post-war literature was mainly based on war experiences. Hamsun was imprisoned after the war for his Nazi sympathies.

From 1965, the state purchased 1000 copies of each new Norwegian book for distribution to libraries, creating a flourishing expansion of fiction writing. There is a vast amount of contemporary literature including best-seller *Sophie's World* by Jostein Gaarder, Lars Saabye Christensen's novels including *Halvbroren* (*The Half Brother*) and internationally acclaimed crime writers Karin Fossum and Jo Nesbo. but little has been translated into English. The number of fiction titles published annually has increased to 2200. 27% of women and 18% of men read books every day. Bergen, Kristiansund, Lillehammer and Molde have literature festivals.

Drama: The major cities have drama companies and theatres (expensive) but many close for the summer. The best known dramatist is Henrik Ibsen (1828 - 1906) writing about real social, religious and moral problems. Skien, Ibsen's home town, has a museum and theatre that performs all his plays. Jon Fosse is currently Norway's most popular living dramatist both nationally and internationally with his minimalist plays; he also writes novels, poetry and children's books. Bergen, Harstad, Lofoten and Ålesund have theatre festivals. Half the population visit the theatre at least once per year.

<<http://www.ibsen.net>> for performance details in Norway and worldwide.

Film: Norway's film output is small but internationally acclaimed; Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* (1951) and Torill Kove's *The Danish Poet* (2006) have won Oscars. Tancred Ibsen, Arne Skouen, Ivo Caprino, Oddvar Bull Tuhus, Nils Gaup, Hans Petter Moland, Jens Lien and Bent Hamer are the best known directors. There are film festivals at Bergen, Grimstad, Haugesund (Amanda award), Kautokeino, Oslo, Trondheim and Tromsø. Cinemas (*kino*) are expensive (two to three times the UK price); non-Norwegian films are shown in the original language with Norwegian subtitles. 67% of people visit the cinema at least once per year.

Music: Prior to the 1700s, there is scant written record of music, but there is a large aural tradition of religious and folk music, particularly in rural areas. Traditional Sami music is a chanting style called *joik*. There is a Nordic dance music tradition using the Hardanger fiddle (*hardingfele*) with its additional sympathetic strings and regional dances include *halling*, *pols*, *springleik*, *rull*, *gangar* and *springar*. The most popular modern Hardanger

fiddle artist is Annbjørg Lien. Other traditional instruments include *bukkehorn* (goat horn), *harpeleik* (chorded zither), *langeleik* (box dulcimer), *lur* (trumpet-like instrument), *seljefløyte* (willow flute), *tungehorn* and *meråker* (clarinets) and Norwegian harp. There is a strong choral tradition with choirs in most towns.

International violinist Ole Bull (1810 - 1880) encouraged both Ibsen and composer Edvard Grieg (1843 - 1907) and revived the interest in folk music. Other well-known composers were Johan Svendsen, Christian Sinding and Johan Halvorsen. Contemporary post-1950 composers include Johan Kvandal, Knut Nystedt, Edvard Hagerup Bull and Egil Hovland, Finn Mortensen, Arne Nordheim, Kåre Kolberg, Alfred Janson and Ragnar Söderlind. Pianist Leif Ove Andsnes and cellist Truls Mørk are current internationally recognised musicians. There are orchestras and concert halls (expensive) in Oslo, Bergen (dating from 1765), Trondheim, Kristiansand, Tromsø and Stavanger and an opera house in Oslo. Music festivals take place in Bergen (including opera and ballet), Bodø, Elverum, Harstad, Haugesund (chamber music), Kristiansand, Kristiansund (opera), Lofoten (chamber music), Nesbyen, Oslo, Risør, Stavanger (chamber music) and Tromsø. 35% of people go to classical music concerts each year, 5% to opera performances and 12% to ballet and dance.

There is a very strong jazz scene including many world class musicians: saxophonist Jan Garbarek, drummer Jon Christensen, guitarist Terje Rypdal, pianist Bugge Wesseltoft, percussionist Paal Nilssen-Love, bassist Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Mari Boine, Arild Andersen, Nils-Petter Molvær, Håvard Wiik, Kjetil Møster, Håkon Kornstad, Supersilent, Jaga Jazzist, Wibutee, Christian Wallumrod Ensemble, Nils Petter Molvaer. Blues guitarists include Knut Reiersrud and Bjørn Berge; R&B stars are Noora Elweya Qadry, Winta and Mira Craig. Country musicians include Heidi Hauge, Bjørn Håland and Aksi the Hillbillies who write and sing songs in traditional Hallingdal dialect. Black Metal bands are Darkthrone, Mayhem, Burzum, Immortal, Emperor, Enslaved, Gorgoroth, Satyricon, Dimmu Borgir, Ulver, Arcturus; some have achieved notoriety, ending up in jail for church arson and murder. The hip hop scene includes Warlocks, Tommy Tee, Darkside of the Force, Punktum, Klovner i Kamp, Diaz, Gatas Parlament, Tungtvann, Karpe Diem, Paperboys and Madcon. Prominent pop and rock musicians include a-ha, Lene Marlin, Madrugada, Turbonegro and Sissel Kyrkjebø, Røyksopp, Kings of Convenience, Sondre Lerche, Magnet, Erlend Øye, Thomas Dypdahl, Xploding Plastix, Kaizers Orchestra, Ane Brun, Bertine Zetlitz, M2M, Gåte, Bel Canto, Ralph Myerz, Gluecifer, Bigbang, Rebekka Karijord, kaada, Furia Norway, Marit Larsen, Marion Raven, Minor Majority, Briskeby, D'Sound, Maria Haukaas Storeng, Serena Maneesh, Hanne Hukkelberg, Kurt Nilsen, Maria Mena, TNT, Flunk Venke Knutson, Savoy and the Jack Herren Band and Annie. There are jazz festivals in Bergen, Bodø, Haugesund, Kongsberg, Lillehammer, Lofoten, Molde (Europe's oldest), Oslo, Stavanger, Svalbard, Tromsø, Trondheim, Voss, Ålesund; blues festivals in Hamar, Hammerfest, Notodden, Tromsø, Trondheim and Voss and rock festivals in Bodø, Haugesund, Helgeland, Kristiansand, Oslo, Trondheim and Åndalsnes. 47% of the population go to non-classical concerts each year.

Nightclubs, discos, dance and music clubs can be found in cities and large towns but admission is expensive.

The Arts Council Norway provides state funding for many artists and institutions. *Riksteatret* theatre, the *Rikskonsertene* concert series and *Riksgalleriet* exhibition are national touring organisations. For details of the major festivals: *Norske Festivaler* <<http://www.norwayfestivals.com/index.cfm?setlanguage=3>>.

Books: Edvard Munch, by JP Hodin (Thames & Hudson 1972 ISBN 978 050 020 122 0) £7.95
Kristin Lavransdatter, by Sigrid Undset (Penguin 2005 ISBN 978 014 303 916 7) £25, fictional trilogy of Viking times.

The Growth of the Soil, by Knut Hamsun (Souvenir Press 1989 ISBN 978 028 564 878 4) £9.99
Hunger, by Knut Hamsun (Canongate Books 2006 ISBN 978 184 195 819 4) £7.99

Norway: Sports & Activities

Be aware that some activities may not be covered by standard travel insurance policies.

Sports Centres (*idrettshaller*): These are found in cities and large towns and provide many of the following facilities: gym with weightlifting and exercise machines, dance studio, swimming pool, sauna, jacuzzi, squash, tennis, volleyball, basketball, climbing wall, football pitches.

Sports Clubs: These are usually based on municipalities (*kommuner*) with subsidy from the local authority and sponsorship from local businesses. They have sections for many different sports. Some independent single-sport clubs exist. Many clubs own buildings in the countryside with showers, training and cooking facilities; some have simple accommodation.

Amusement Parks: The five largest are Tusenfryd near Oslo, Hunderfossen near Lillehammer, Kojbeparken near Stavanger, Telemark Sommerland near Bø and Kristiansand Dyrepark. All the usual rides and many other attractions to keep children occupied all day.

Aero sports: There are facilities for flying light aircraft, gliding, parachuting, tandem parachuting with experienced instructor, hang-gliding and paragliding, ballooning or flying model aircraft.

Norges Luftsportforbund, Rådhusgaten 5 B, inngang Dronningens gt, Postboks 383 Sentrum, N-0102 Oslo (0830-1500 Mon - Fri) (T: 23 01 04 50) <<http://www.nlf.no>> <post@nlf.no>

Athletics (*friidrett*): Bislet stadium in Oslo stages international competitions. Marathons take place annually in Oslo, Honningsvåg (North Cape Marathon) and Tromsø (Midnight Sun Marathon). Many places have marked jogging trails with information boards suggesting exercises; some are lit at night.

Cycling: There are well-developed cycle routes, especially in Rogaland and Vestfold, but cycle touring in mountainous areas can be strenuous. When roads are improved by re-routing or tunnels, the old road is often designated for cycles only. Cyclists are prohibited in longer tunnels because of exhaust fumes; good lights are required in others. *Sykkel Norge* detailing some long-distance cycle routes is available free from tourist offices. Many areas have mountain bike trails. Bikes can be rented at some tourist offices, hostels, campsites and sports shops by the hour, day or week. Most towns have a repair shop. Cycles are carried on non-express trains (reservation required) and Hurtigruten at 10% of the adult fare, on Bussekspress at 50% of adult fare, on most rural buses at the child fare and express ferries and some planes.

Stiftelsen Sykkelturisme, Fylkeshuset, N-3724 Skien <info@bike-norway.com> <<http://www.bike-norway.com/default.asp?lang=eng>> for maps of cycle routes, details of road conditions, tunnels, repair shops, accommodation with safe cycle storage and tools.

Syklisternes Landsforening, Storgata 23C, Oslo (T: 22 47 30 30)

Statens Vegvesen (T: +47 815 48 991) for brochure 'Tunnel Guide for Cyclists'.

Books: 5 definitive regional cycling guides with route maps, descriptions and information on localities, in Norwegian only (Tun Forlag <<http://www.boktunet.no>> 2009, ISBN prefix 978 825 2932, then 584, 669, 577, 591, 560 for Nord-, Midt-, Vest-, Sør-, Øst-Norge respectively) kr 339,- each

Diving: Crystal clear waters on both the west and south coasts attract many diving enthusiasts. There are diving centres along these coasts. Equipment can be rented and local clubs provide information on wrecks, particularly in More og Romsdal. Enquire at tourist offices.

NDF – Norwegian Diving Association, Servicebox 1, Ullevål Stadion, N-0840 Oslo (T: 21 02 97 42) <dykking@nif.idrett.no> <<http://www.ndf.no>>

Fishing (*fiske*): There are 69 freshwater and marine fish species. A sea fishing licence is

needed if using nets, but not for angling by rod or hand line; fishing is prohibited in conservation areas. Cod, saithe and whiting are found in fjords; also out at sea along with catfish, haddock, hake, halibut, ling, plaice and conger eel; there are minimum size limits. For fresh water lakes and rivers, an annual national licence is compulsory for all over 16 (kr 220 or kr 355 per family, 2010), available at post offices or online, and in most places an additional local licence for day, week or season, available at tourist offices, hotels, sports shops, news kiosks and campsites which provide details of the local rivers and lakes it applies to. The fishing season is from 15 May to 1 October, but varies by location, some opening later or closing earlier. Fishing tackle can be hired in some places. Owing to fish disease in several rivers, disinfecting tackle is compulsory when moving between different water systems; major fishing areas have disinfection stations. Carp, arctic char, eel, grayling, perch, pike, pollan, tench, sea trout, brown trout and whitefish are found in most rivers and lakes. There are over 600 registered salmon rivers available; the best ones are in Finnmark. Seek local advice on food safety before eating the fish you catch.

Directorate for Nature Management for fishing regulations <direktoratet@dirnat.no>.
<<http://www.dirnat.no/fritidsfiske>>

Fishing licence information <<http://www.dirnat.no/fiskeravgift>>, online payment
<<http://www.inatur.no/fiskeravgift>>

Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers (*Norges Jeger- og Fiskerforbund*)
<<http://www.njff.no>>

Book: Angling in Norway, by John Berge (Nortrabooks 1996 ISBN 978 829 010 369 4) £19.98

Football (*football*): Very popular for both men and women; sports clubs and sports centres have pitches.

Geology: There are historic mining areas at Røros and near Kongsberg and Evye with visitor centres.

Glaciers (*breer*): There are information centres and exhibitions near major glaciers. Nigardsbreen at Sogndal, Hardangerjøkulen at Hemsedal and many others have glacier walks under expert guidance. Never venture on glaciers on your own – fissures can open without warning. Ice climbing is also available.

Book: Ice Fall in Norway, by Ranulph Fiennes (Mandarin 1995 ISBN 978 074 931 908 3) £5.99

National Park Centre <<http://www.nasjonalparksenter.no/english>> for general information
Jostedalbreen Nasjonalparksenter, N-6799 Oppstryn (T: 57 87 72 00, fax: 57 87 72 01)

<post@jostedalsbre.no> <<http://www.jostedalsbre.no/engelsk/senter.htm>>

Norsk Bremuseum on Rv. 5, N-6848 Fjærland (T: 57 69 32 88, fax: 57 69 32 87)

<post@bre.museum.no> <<http://www.climatechannel.no/>>

Breheimsenteret, on Rv. 55/604 Jostedalen, N-6871 Jostedalen (T: 57 68 32 50, fax: 57 68 32 40)

<jostedal@jostedal.com> <<http://www.jostedal.com>>

Følgefonni Breforlag/Jostein Bakke, N-5627 Jondal (T: 55 29 89 21 or 95 11 77 92)

<post@folgefonni-breforlag.no>

<<http://www.folgefonni-breforlag.no/UK/home.htm>>

Olden Aktiv Briksdalsbreen, N-6792 Briksdalsbre (T: 57 87 38 88)

<infi@oldenaktiv.no> <<http://www.oldenaktiv.no/index.php?action=&lang=English>>

Golf: There are over 170 courses near cities and a few large towns that welcome visitors. Most are 9- or 6-holes only. Some have clubs for hire and instruction.

Norges Golfforbund, N-0840 Oslo (T: 21 02 91 50, fax: 21 02 91 51) <post@golfforbundet.no>
<<http://www.golfforbundet.no>> <<http://www.golfguiden.no>>

Horse Riding (*hest ridning*) & Pony Trekking: There are stables near cities and in major tourist areas; charges are per hour with instruction available. Some arrange day tours or trekking on the Hardangervidda and elsewhere using sturdy *fjording* or *dølahest* ponies with overnight camping or other accommodation. Trotting/horse and trap racing is popular; there are circuits in many areas.

Hest i Turistnæring, v/Anders Johnsen, N-4990 Sønderled (T: 37 15 45 05, fax: 37 15 46 10)
<andejohn@online.no> <<http://www.hest.org>>

Mountain & Rock Climbing (*klattring*): Romsdalen with Europe's highest vertical rock face Trollveggen (1812m), the Jotunheimen with Norway's 29 highest peaks including Galdhøpiggen (2469m) and Glittertind (2464m), the Lyngen peninsula in Troms, Vesterålen and the Lofoten Islands are the main centres. Gausta (1883m) in Telemark is also a popular tourist walk. Mountain weather can change rapidly with Arctic conditions even in summer – seek local advice. Some sports centres have climbing walls.

Norsk Tindeklub (T: 22 50 54 66) <<http://www.ntk.no>>

Books: Climbing in the Magic Islands, by Ed Webster. Climbing in the Lofotens.

Scandinavian Mountains, by Peter Lennon (West Col 1987 ISBN 978 090 622 732 9) £14.95

Orienteering: see separate information document.

Racket Sports: Squash and indoor tennis are available at many sports centres; some sports centres and large hotels have outdoor tennis courts.

Shooting: There is clay pigeon shooting in some areas. The minimum age for hunting large game and trapping lynx is 18; for hunting small game and other trapping, it is 16. Hunters must pass an annual shooting proficiency test but foreigners with experience and documentary evidence of licences and permits can apply in advance for exemption. A national hunting licence fee must be paid to the Wildlife Fund, but does not confer rights on any land. Private landowners own two-thirds of the land and have sole hunting rights; they may issue permits to others. Anyone can apply for a permit to hunt elk, red deer and roe deer on common land; on other state-owned land, anyone can apply to hunt small game; permits are issued on a quota basis with preference given to residents. Local hunting (*jakt*) associations arrange shoots for willow grouse, ptarmigan, black grouse, capercaillie, hazel grouse and small game. The hunting season varies by location but is at most from 10 August to 23 December for birds and large game animals and shorter for some species; at most 15 July to 15 May for small game animals and shorter for some species. Apply well in advance for a police permit to bring your own gun into the country; air and sea carriers also require advance notice.

Directorate for Nature Management <<http://www.dirnat.no>> <direktoratet@dirnat.no> for hunting regulations.

<<http://www.brreg.no/english/registers/hunter>>

Norwegian Police <<http://www.politi.no>> for gun regulations.

Norwegian Association of Hunters and Anglers (*Norges Jeger- og Fiskerforbund*)

<<http://www.njff.no>>

Skiing & Winter Sports: Norway claims to have invented the sport – ski is a Norwegian word – and Norwegians have dominated the Winter Olympics. There are downhill centres at Holmenkollen in Oslo, Geilo, Voss, Lillehammer and the surrounding Gudbrandsdalen and many other places. The season runs from November to April; Easter is very busy. Many places have ski jumps (*hoppbakker*). Summer skiing takes place on glaciers near Finse, Stryn and the Jotunheimen. Nordic (cross country) skiing (*langrenn*) is found everywhere with 20 000km of maintained trails (*skiløyper*); some are lit at night (*lysløyper*); the annual *Birkebeiner* long distance race takes place at Lillehammer with thousands of entrants. DNT (see Walking below) has information on skiing throughout Norway. Both downhill and cross country skis can be hired at most centres; instruction is available. Some areas have dog sled tours. Cities have ice skating rinks (*ishaller*) with skates for hire.

Be aware of symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite and how to treat them and also avalanche risk when off-piste/trail.

Norwegian Ski Association <<http://www.skiforeningen.no/english>>

<<http://www.skiinfo.no>>

Stryn Sommerskisenter, N-6783 Stryn (T: 57 87 54 74, Info: 92 25 83 33)

<info@strynefjellet.com> <<http://www.strynefjellet.com>>

Galdhøpiggen Sommerskisenter, N-2687 Bøverdal (June–October) (T: 61 21 17 50, fax: 61 21 21 72) <gpss@online.no> <<http://www.gpss.no/english/>>

Folgefonna Sommerskisenter, N-5627 Jondal (June–Sept) (T: 46 80 59 66, fax: 53 66 88 95) <post@folgefonn.no> <<http://www.folgefonn.no>>

Swimming (*svømming*): Cities, large towns and large hotels have swimming pools (*bad* or *svømmehaller*), often with saunas and jacuzzis; other places may have one attached to a local school, available to the public at weekends and in school holidays (early July to mid-August). South coast beaches (*badestrand*) are among the best in the world. There are some open air lidos and bathing sites can also be found at some lakes and rivers. Unless signed at the roadside, always enquire locally about safe places – coastal currents and rivers can be dangerous.

Indoor swimming centres <<http://www.badelandene.no>>

Bathing beaches <<http://www.bade.info>> [site under development]

Walking: There are over 20 000 km of marked trails, some in forests surrounding cities and towns with information boards on flora and fauna, but most in upland areas like the Hardangervidda, Jotunheimen, Dovrefjell and Rondane mountains with trails marked with red Ts connecting huts a day's walk apart. The 470 huts are owned by local hiking associations affiliated to the Norwegian Mountain Touring Association (*Den Norske Turistforening*). To use the huts, DNT membership is required. There are 43 large staffed lodges with meals and beds, 169 unstaffed huts with cooking facilities and bunks and 258 where you take your own cooking equipment. A members' universal key opens 400 huts; for others, the key is collected from staffed huts or DNT offices in nearby towns. Linen can be hired at staffed huts or take your own sleeping bag. At staffed lodges, you can just turn up but it may mean sleeping on the floor if you haven't booked; you can also camp outside and use the facilities for a fee. Most huts are open at Easter and from mid-June to end-September; some are open all year. DNT publishes maps for popular upland areas showing paths and walking times, eg 4t = 4 *timer* (hours), between its huts. There are organised walking tours in summer and skiing tours in winter. Some areas have privately owned huts with discounts for DNT members.

Right of access is permitted everywhere except on cultivated land, the immediate vicinity of houses and some conservation areas.

Mountain weather can change rapidly with Arctic conditions even in summer – seek local advice, wear appropriate clothing and footwear and take the relevant Ugland (formerly Statens Kartverk) 1:50 000 map, compass and emergency food and equipment. Large areas have no mobile phone coverage. There may be no-one else in wilderness areas; in case of accident, leave details of your route and expected return time at the place you are staying. During the hunting season, ask locally about safe areas.

DNT, Youngest 1, N-0181 Oslo (T: 40 00 18 68) <info@turistforeningen.no> <<http://www.turistforeningen.no/english/>>

Oslo counter, Storgata 3 (T: 22 82 28 00, fax: 22 82 28 01) <post@dntoslo.no>

Bergen office (T: 55 33 58 10) <post@bergen-turlag.no>

Books: Mountain Hiking in Norway, by Erling Welle-Strand (Nortrabooks 1993 ISBN 978 829 010 364 9) £12.95, details of trails, huts and sketch maps.

Norwegian Mountains on Foot (DNT)

Walking in Norway, by Constance Roos (Cicerone Press 2003 ISBN 978 185 284 230 7) £12, 20 2-8 day treks.

Water Sports, Boating & Canoeing (*båter og kanoer*): Ask at local tourist offices about available facilities. Many coastal towns offer cruises round offshore islands. There are century old steamers on the 105-km 18-lock Telemark canal between Skien and Dalen and large lakes also have cruises. There is white water rafting (minimum age applies) and canoeing on the Sjoelva, Strandaelva, Trysilelva, Dagali, Jølstra and Driva rivers. Canoeing is also good in the Femund area, Østfold, Aust- and Vest Agder, Telemark and suburban Oslo. Rowing boats, canoes and kayaks can be hired on many lakes; some have

organised canoe tours. Wind-surfing and water skiing are available in some places. Sailing is very popular (both King Olav and King Harald won Olympic gold medals); yachts are not available for hire without a skipper but members of UK yacht clubs should contact the local club and may be invited to help crew. The tidal variation ranges from 0.17m on the south coast to 2.17m in the north. Up-to-date sea charts are available from local book shops. Coastal weather can change rapidly – seek local advice.

Norges Padleforbund, Service Box 1, Ullevål Stadion, N-0840 Oslo {T: 21 02 98 35, fax: 21 02 98 36) <webmaster@padling.no> <<http://www.padling.no>>

Norway: Orienteering

Organisation: *Norges Orienteringsforbund* (NOF) is organised by county associations (*kretser*) which provide a means of interclub co-operation and hold their own championships in much the same way as the UK. Apart from local training, events are fixed during the winter for the whole summer season and the complete fixture list (*terminliste*) is published online early in the year.

Norges Orienteringsforbund, Sognsvn 75L, N-0840 Oslo (T: 21 02 90 00, fax: 21 02 95 11) <<http://www.orientering.no>> <nof@orientering.no> for county association websites and club websites.

Clubs (*klubber, lag*): These are usually based on municipalities (*kommuner*) with subsidy from the local authority and sponsorship from local businesses. They cater for other sports besides orienteering. Some independent orienteering-only clubs exist. Many clubs own buildings in the countryside with showers, training and cooking facilities; some have simple accommodation. Entries to events are made by the club on behalf of its members.

The orienteering section of sports site <<http://www.speaker.no>> has links to events.

Events: The season runs from April to September. Major events include the 4-day *Midnattsolgaloppen* in Arctic Norway at end June/beginning July in odd years <<http://www.mg-norway.no>>, *Drammen 3-dagers* in early July, the long running *Sørlandsgaloppen* on the south coast in early July <<http://www.sorlandsgaloppen.no>> (its format is the basis of the Scottish 6-day event, but it is now a 3- or 4-day event preceded by coaching days and other activities for under 21s), 4-day *Nordvest-galoppen* in the fjord area in late July, Modum 2-dagers in late August. There are several 2-day weekend events. Large events are sponsored by local businesses. Besides events with courses based on age class, smaller events offer a limited number of courses of different lengths. *Tur-O* or *O-trim* is similar to our permanent courses; at the beginning of each summer, a large number of controls is set out and overprinted maps can be bought at sports shops, petrol stations, tourist offices etc. In the autumn, certificates are presented to those who find all controls.

Age Classes (*klasser*) & Courses (*løyper*): These differ slightly from the UK; competitors do not run out of age class. H=Men (*Herrer*), D=Women (*Damer*), L=Long (*Lang*), K=Short (*Kort*); there are A, B, C and Novice classes. There may be a *småtroll* course for young children. Large events typically offer:

A		B		C		N	
						D/H -12N	
						H10N	D10N
						H11-12N	D11-12N
H10-12A	D10-12A						
H13A	D13A						
H14A	D14A	H13-14B	D13-14B				
H15A	D15A						
H16A	D16A	H15-16B	D15-16B			H13-16N	D13-16N
H17-20AK	D17-20AK			H17C	D17C	H17N	D17N
H17-18AL	D17-18AL						
H19-20AL	D19-20AL						
H21AL and K	D21AL and K						
H35AL and K	D35AL and K						
H40AL and K	D40AL			H40C	D40C		
H45AL and K	D45						
H50	D50						
H55	D55						
H60	D60						
H65	D65						
H70							
H75							

Course length (*lengde*) is from 2.0 to 12.5km and varies little for any one class between events; climb is not given as terrain is nearly always similar with small rocky hills. The A courses for adults are technically difficult (UK's TD5), junior A courses are roughly TD4, B, C and N courses are TD3 or less.

Event details usually quote distance from a major road junction and the route is signed from there to the event; map references are not given. There is usually a car parking fee (*avgift*); for large events; bus transport from a town car park to the forest may be compulsory. Event facilities include first aid (*førstehjelp*), drink at the finish or on return to the assembly area (*møtested*); at large events, there may be a crèche (*barneparkering*), refreshments (drinks and waffles — not like Wilf's), and a stall with orienteering clothing and equipment (*O-utstyr*) which are much more expensive than the UK. If the event is based at a school or sports centre, toilets (*toaletter*) and showers (*dusj*) will be available; in the forest, there may be temporary toilets and showers.

Entry form (*påmeldingsblankett*): The norm is for clubs to enter their members by postal form or online; if entering from the UK, you are making a club entry. Entry closing date is normally 6 days before the event; for major events it may be up to 6 weeks before with a later closing date (50% surcharge). Non-competitive courses may be available for entry on the day (*direkte påmelding*). The adult entry fee (*startavgift*) applies to those 17 years and older; junior entry fees are for those 16 years or younger. For major events, you can pay for camping or other accommodation at the same time. You can get an international draft in NOK from your bank to post with the entry form. Alternatively, your bank can transfer funds directly to the organising club's bank account, but this may be difficult if you have only the club's bank giro number (sufficient in Norway) because UK banks usually require the name and address of both the payee and the bank in Norway to prevent money laundering. Contact the event organiser (*arrangør*) for these details. Bank charges can be expensive – check with your bank for the cheapest method.

Online entries: There are links from club websites for major event online entry pages but the entry is not valid until the entry fee is received; online credit card payment is generally not offered, except for some large events.

Terrain (*terregn*) & Vegetation (*vegetasjon*): Terrain is usually rough but runnable (*løpbar*) with small hills and rocky outcrops; contours are usually complex. Vegetation described as broken woodland (*skog*) is discontinuous with indistinct vegetation boundaries; tree cover is usually naturally seeded conifers and birch, rarely plantation (*plantefelt*), with dense (*tett*) patches of birch scrub; there are many marshes, usually runnable, which have distinct vegetation. Ground vegetation is bilberry, small ferns and heather; in the south, some nettles and bracken may occur. Upland areas have fewer trees and more heather. There may be a path network in areas near towns; elsewhere there are few paths but marshes often provide distinct navigational handrails. Spurs usually have less ground vegetation and are faster than re-entrants that tend to be wet with more luxuriant growth. Much of the terrain looks the same; it is essential to maintain contact with the map, counting paces and continually checking compass direction. When lost, relocating may be very difficult.

Map (*kart*) & Control Descriptions (*beskrivelser*): Maps are IOF standard, scale (*målestokk*) 1:10000 (more usual) and 1:15000 with 5m contour interval (*ekvidistans*); there is rarely a legend on the map. Significant large boulders and crags will be on the map, but the many small ones and other relatively insignificant features won't be. The brown dot knoll symbol is used to mark the location of the highest point (*høydepunkt*) on a small hill or spur rather than the distinct small knoll we expect in the UK; in Norway, such small knolls are insignificant. Maps in unsealed polybags, pre-printed with courses, are picked up at the start line. Control descriptions with IOF pictorial symbols are usually printed on the map, but available separately before starting. At small events, descriptions may be Norwegian

text; ask for a translation before you start.

Controls (*poster*): These are marked by the same banners as in the UK. Small events may use control cards (*klippekort*) and pin or ticket punches; larger events use electronic punching with Emit cards which you can hire (pay with your entry fee).

Results: These are displayed at the event and posted online. For larger events, a printed copy may be available if ordered at the time of entry; at major events, the local newspaper usually publishes results in full the next day.

Safety: Full arm and leg cover is compulsory. Ticks are present, particularly in thicker vegetation, so take precautions by using a repellent. Inspect clothing and skin thoroughly for ticks after running – that's what close friends are for! Remove any attached ticks by lifting the head with tweezers, do not squeeze the body. Seek medical attention promptly if bitten.

The terrain is usually rough and rocky underfoot. It's advisable to tape your ankles as a precaution against sprains. Instructions at <<http://www.sportsinjuryclinic.net/strapping-and-taping.php>>

In hot sunny weather, there are risks of sunburn and dehydration. Use UV blockers. Most large events provide drink stations.

If electronic punching is not used, team managers (*laglederer*) are responsible for checking that all their club members have returned from the forest.