

VIKING

for kids

What Are the Northern Lights, Anyway?



All About Reindeer



Find out Your
Viking Name!



ALL ABOUT REINDEER

Reindeer live in Norway and many other areas in the northern parts of Europe, Asia and North America. In Canada and the United States, they are often referred to as caribou. Some reindeer live in the wild, while others are domesticated—meaning they are used by humans for things like farming and transportation, much like cows and horses. In particular, the Samí culture has lived closely with reindeer for many generations.

Reindeer are herbivores, which means they eat only plants, not other animals. A single reindeer can eat anywhere from 9 to 18 pounds of grass, leaves, moss, mushrooms, ferns and other vegetation every day!

FUN FACT:

The word “reindeer” comes from Old Norse, which was a language spoken in Norway and other parts of Scandinavia many centuries ago. The Old Norse word for “horned animal” was *hreinen*.





Did Santa's reindeer come from Norway?

If all this talk about reindeer makes you think of Christmas, you're not alone! Especially in North America, reindeer often appear in Christmas stories—usually pulling Santa's sleigh as he delivers presents on Christmas Eve.

The first example of this was in a poem called "A Visit from Saint Nicholas," which was written almost 200 years ago in 1823. The poem describes Santa's reindeer as "tiny," which means they may have been Svalbard reindeer—a subspecies found in northern Norway that is only about half the size of other reindeer!



Keeping warm in chilly climates

Many reindeer live in very cold, snowy climates, and they are well adapted to survive in these harsh environments. For example, their noses have an unusual feature that warms the air as they breathe! Reindeer also have specialized feet that help them walk in different kinds of weather. In the summer, when the ground is wet and soft, their footpads are soft and wide. This helps keep them from sinking into the mud. In the winter, their footpads tighten so that more of their tough hooves are exposed. This gives them a better grip when the ground is covered in snow and ice.

Even reindeer's fur is specialized to help them survive in the cold! They have hollow hairs filled with air, which not only provide extra insulation against the cold but also help them float while swimming across icy rivers and streams. Reindeer also see differently than other animals—they are the only mammal that can see ultraviolet light. (Humans can't see ultraviolet light, but if you've ever seen how certain colors glow under a black-light, it is a little bit like that.) This unique ability helps reindeer spot things like food or danger, even against the glaring white of the snow.



**Celebrate
Leif Erikson Day**
October 9th



Leif Erikson, a Viking with Norse parents, sailed from Iceland to North America around 1000 A.D. This feat is celebrated in the United States, Canada and Iceland on October 9.

Leif and his crew were the first Europeans to successfully cross the Atlantic. Nicknamed Leif the Lucky, he was the son of Erik the Red. How did they get such colorful names? Vikings were often named after Norse gods, and after animals or character traits like strength and wisdom. Sometimes Vikings also earned nicknames based on their looks, their personality, or something they had done.

Find out Your Viking Name!

Check off the box next to the first letter of your first name, and then the first letter of your last name. Tell your family and friends what their names are!

First letter of your first name:	Girl	Boy	First letter of your last name:	What you're like
A	Siv	Ivar	A	the Adventurous
B	Randi	Harald	B	the Trusted
C	Hervor	Thorkell	C	the Brave
D	Ingrid	Gorm	D	Bluetooth
E	Thjodhildr	Frode	E	the Boneless
F	Hilda	Svend	F	the Strong
G	Jorunn	Trygve	G	the Noble
H	Thorgunna	Ragnar	H	the Famed Warrior
I	Astrid	Sten	I	the Divine
J	Gro	Knud	J	the Crafty
K	Åse	Aasgot	K	the Merciless
L	Thyra	Rune	L	the Wise
M	Sigrid	Sigfrid	M	the Proud
N	Frigg	Olav	N	the Violent
O	Ulfhild	Njål	O	the Cunning
P	Solveig	Magnus	P	the Skald (Poet)
Q	Gunnhildr	Thorgils	Q	Fair Hair
R	Helga	Gunnar	R	the Terrible
S	Freya	Birger	S	the Red Shield
T	Revna	Ulf	T	the Famous Spear
U	Liv	Hróarr	U	Shaggy Britches
V	Saga	Bjørn	V	the Victorious
W	Frida	Erik	W	Ironside
X	Tove	Odin	X	the Peaceful
Y	Bodil	Leif	Y	the Bold Ruler

DID YOU KNOW?



In Norway, the people call the country Norge

Norway has a volcano



The Capital city of Norway is Oslo

Norway is one of the best places to see the northern lights

Skiing was invented in Norway



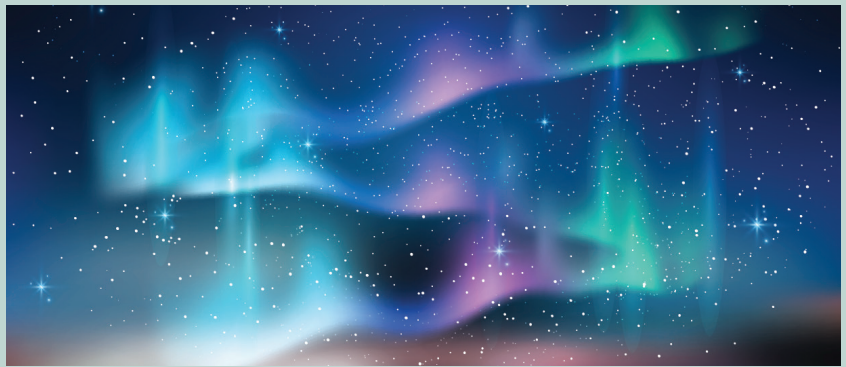
Vikings originated in Norway



Norway is ruled by a King and Queen

What Are the Northern Lights, Anyway?

Have you ever heard of the northern lights? Or maybe even seen them for yourself? The northern lights are a kind of streaky, moving glow that happens in the night sky. They occur in many different colors, most often green or pale pink. Norway is famous for the northern lights, but they appear in other parts of the world too.



When and where to see them

The northern lights occur in areas that are very far north, like Norway or Canada. They can happen at any time of year, but they are most active during the winter. Norway is a great place to see the northern lights because the nights in winter are very long there, and the skies are often clear.

Why it happens

The earth is surrounded by a layer of oxygen and other gases, which is called the atmosphere. There is no air in outer space, so the atmosphere is what allows us to live and breath here on Earth!

The gases in the atmosphere are made up of very tiny particles. The sun also gives off other tiny particles that carry an electric charge. When the electric particles from the sun bump into certain gas particles in the earth's atmosphere, it makes them glow! This is similar to how a neon light works when it is plugged into an electrical outlet.

The scientific name for the northern lights is aurora borealis. On the other side of the earth, very far to the south, a similar phenomenon happens in the night sky. In the south, it is referred to as the southern lights, or aurora australis.



The legends of the northern lights

Throughout history, many cultures have created their own myths and legends about the northern lights. For example, some cultures believed the northern lights were created from water sprayed by whales, or that they were tracks left in the sky by mythological creatures. Others saw them as omens—signs of good or bad fortune ahead.

According to the traditional beliefs of the Samí people of northern Scandinavia, the northern lights are considered powerful and even dangerous, so they must be treated with caution and respect. It is traditional in Samí culture to stay indoors when the northern lights are visible in the night sky.

The Vikings also had a variety of beliefs about the northern lights. For instance, some legends told that the northern lights were the spirits of Vikings who had died in battle. Others regarded them as a bridge to Valhalla, the afterlife for fallen warriors in Viking mythology.

LAUGH OUT LOUD

What is full of holes but still holds water?

A sponge.

What question can you never answer yes to?

Are you asleep yet?

How many letters are in the English alphabet?

18: Three in "the," seven in "English" and eight in "alphabet."

What becomes wetter the more it dries?

A towel.

When things go wrong, what can you always count on?

Your fingers.

Where can you find cities, towns, shops and streets, but no people?

A map.

What has four eyes but can't see?

Mississippi.

David's parents have three kids: Snap, Crackle and...?

David.

What begins with T, ends with T, and has T in it?

A teapot.

What can you catch but not throw?

A cold.

What goes up but never comes back down?

Your age.

What has to be broken before you can use it?

An egg.

Reindeer Chow

Share this crispy-choco-nutty treat with friends and family, and then leave some out on Christmas Eve to attract a few reindeer. Be sure to get help from a grownup with the microwaving!

What you'll need:

Equipment:

1 large mixing bowl
1 microwave-safe bowl
measuring spoons
measuring cups
1 rubber spatula
1-gallon or 2-gallon Ziploc Bags for shaking and storing snacks

Ingredients:

9 cups Rice Chex or Corn Chex cereal
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter (or other nut butter/substitute)
1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
4 Tablespoons unsalted butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar

Optional addition:

1 bag (12 oz.) red and green Christmas M&Ms (regular or peanut)
2 cups of mini pretzels

Making the Reindeer Chow:

**Get a grownup to help with steps 3 and 5*

1. Measure the cereal into a large mixing bowl and set it aside.
2. In a large microwave-safe bowl, add the peanut butter, chocolate chips and butter.
- *3.* Microwave the peanut butter, chocolate chips and butter in 15 second intervals, stirring after each time, until everything is melted and you have a smooth mixture.
4. Add the vanilla and salt and stir them in.
- *5.* Slowly pour this warm mixture over the cereal in the other bowl.
6. Stir lightly until all of the pieces are evenly coated in chocolate.
7. Scoop the cereal into a 1-or 2-gallon resealable plastic bag. Add the powdered sugar, then give it a thorough shake. All of the pieces should turn white like Christmas snow!
8. Optional: add a bag of red and green M&Ms (with or without peanuts) and 2 cups of mini pretzels.
9. Your reindeer chow is ready to enjoy!

Storing reindeer chow

If you are giving away reindeer chow as a gift, package your treats in baggies with a festive label that says "Reindeer Chow."

Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to two months so that your treats stay crunchy and fresh.



FREE HERITAGE MEMBERSHIP

*Sponsor a new Heritage
member today!*



Building Heritage Membership

We are excited to introduce these colorful recognition patches for Heritage members who have been with Sons of Norway for 5, 10 or 15 years. These charming designs featuring Norwegian wildlife can be ordered for \$2 each.

We have also updated our Heritage member certificates! They are available at no cost for 5-, 10- and 15-year Heritage members. Ask your Lodge Leader how to organize and place an order for these items.



If you have been a Sons of Norway member for a few years, check with your parents or your lodge!
You may be eligible for one of these fun patches that you can wear on your jacket or backpack!

Note to parents:

We welcome children ages 15 and under to the Heritage member program. Heritage members must be sponsored by a relative who is already a Sons of Norway member (most often a parent or grandparent) but they are not required to be part of the same household as the sponsoring member. At age 16, Heritage members have the option of joining Sons of Norway as an adult Individual member or as part of a Family membership, if one exists at their home address.