A GUIDE TO THE DIALECT OF THE NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND
Do you know any Doric?
**FIT’S THIS AA ABOOT EN?**

What’s this all about then?

Doric is a Scottish dialect spoken in the North East of Scotland around Aberdeen city and shire.

The term ‘Doric’ is thought to come from the Greek for ‘rural’ or ‘rustic’ perhaps due to its strong associations with the farming and fishing communities of the region.

There is an extensive body of literature, poetry, ballads and songs from the North East.

In the Disney animation ‘Brave’, a character speaks Doric and there’s a running joke that nobody can understand him. The voice actor was Kevin McKidd, a native of Elgin. Although Doric is the traditional dialect of the North East, don’t worry, we do all speak English!
THE BASICS

SO FOO DIV YE SPIK I’ DORIC?
So how do you speak Doric?

Doric words can differ from town to town. If you’re from Peterhead, you might refer to a seagull as a ‘pyool’ but in Aberdeen, the same bird would be known as a ‘scurry’. And in Buckie it’s a ‘gow’.

There are also many variations on the spellings of the words, due to differences of localised pronunciation and phonetics. The word ‘Pyool’ for instance could also be written as ‘pule’, ‘pool’ or ‘pyewel’ depending on which town you are from.
**Basic phonology**

'Wh' at the beginning of words is often realised as an 'f'.

**FAR?** Where?

**FIT?** What?

**FAN?** When?

**FOO?** How?

**FIT WYE?** Why?

**FA?** Who?
COLOURS

REID
Red

YALLA
Yellow

BLAE
Blue

FITE
White

BLAIK
Black

BROON
Brown

SILLER
Silver

SKYRIE
Gaudy/showy

NUMBERS

MONY A MICKLE MAKES A MUCKLE
Many small amounts together becomes a large amount

Een: One
I'll hae at een, cheers
I'll have that one, thanks

Twa: Two
Twa craws sat upon a wa
Two crows sat upon a wall

Fower: Four
Atween fleers een an fower
Between floors one and four

Hillock: Lots
At's a fair hillock o' chips
That's a lot of chips

Foo muckle? How much?
Foo muckle is at?
How much is that?

Bourachie: A group/huddle
A bourachie o' bairns
A bunch of kids

MONY A MICKLE MAKES A MUCKLE
Many small amounts together becomes a large amount
OPPOSITES

- MUCKLE: Big
- GYE BIG: Large
- AA: All
- AAWYE: Everywhere
- AATHIN: Everything
- AABODY: Everyone
- Small
- Little
- None
- Nowhere
- Nothing

DIRECTIONS

- SMA: GYEE BIG
- WEE: All
- NEEN: Everywhere
- NITHIN: Everything
- NAEBODY: Everyone
- UP: Big
- GING IN: Large
- OWER: All
- AROON: Everywhere
- AHEID: Everything
- AFORE: Everyone
- Down
- Go in
- Over
- Around
- Ahead
- Before
- After

DORIC DICTIONARY 11
**BAIRNS**

Children

Fit a hillock o' geets
What a lot of children

**DORIC DICTIONARY 13**

**GEETS**

Children

Fit a hillock o' geets
What a lot of children

**Bairns**

Children

Foo mony bairns are in i' playgrun?
How many kids are in the playground?

**PEOPLE**

**LOON**

Boy/son

Far's the loon i'day?
Where is your son today?

**Quine**

Girl/daughter

Fit a bonny wee quine
What a pretty little girl

**Mannie**

Man

Check at mannie's fisog!
Look at that man's face!

**Wifie**

Woman

At wifie Fraser's a richt blether
That Fraser woman talks a lot

**Toonsr**

Lives in the city

**Teuchter**

A rural dweller

**Blaa:** boast

He's ayeways blaain aboot his new car
He's always boasting about his new car

**Crabbit:** Bad tempered

He's affa crabbit i'day
He's really grumpy today

**Claik:** Gossip

Funcy a fly cup and a claik?
Fancy a sneaky cup of tea and a gossip?

**Footer:** Messing about

Quit footerin aboot!
Stop messing about!

**Grippy:** Miserly

He's affa grippy wi his sillar
He's very miserly with his money

**Swaak:** Agile

He's a swaak loon
He's an agile boy

**Swick:** To cheat

He' min, stop swickin in!
Hey, stop jumping the queue!

**Sook:** Sycophant

She's a richt sook
She's a right flatterer

**Clype:** To tell tales

Dinna clype te mannies Broon
Don't tell tales to Mr Brown

**Footer:** Messing about

Quit footerin aboot!
Stop messing about!

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SMALL TALK

Aye, aye fit like en Jim? Are ye nae spikin? Foo's the wife an geets?

Hello, how are you Jim? Are you not speaking? How’s the wife and kids?

Nae bad Mary – chavin awa. They’re aa fine, cheers. Fit aboot yersel?

I’m not too bad Mary – doing okay. They’re all fine, thanks. What about you?

I’m fair-tricket! Dod’s just booked us a wee holiday so we’re awa tae Tenerife!

I’m delighted! George has just booked a short holiday, so we’re off to Tenerife!

Oh fit fine! At Dod’s a fine chiel ye ken! Fan ye gaan awa?

How lovely! George is a nice fellow you know! When are you going away?

I’ morn’s morn – I’m nae packed so I’ll need tae ging hame an maak a start.

Tomorrow morning – I’m not packed so I’ll need to go home and make a start.

Aye, nae bithir. Well hae a rare time an mind an pack yer dookers!

No problem. Well have a great time and remember your swimming costume!

FIT I DINNA KEN IS NAE WURTH KENNIN.

I am very knowledgeable and a know-it-all.
**POSITIVE EMOTIONS**

**Bosie: hug**
Gie's a bosie!
Give me a hug!

**Fash: trouble**
Dinna fash yersel
Don't trouble yourself

**Tricket: Delighted**
I'm fair-tricket
I'm delighted

**Gawaaah!: Get away!**
Gawaaah! Yer kiddin!
Get away! You're kidding me!

**Bonny: beautiful**
Sheena is affa bonny
Sheena is very pretty

**Fine: good**
Affa fine butteries
Very tasty pastries

**Rare: great**
It's bin a rare nicht oot
It's been a great night out

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**NEGATIVE EMOTIONS**

**Scunnered: fed up**
I'm affa scunnered
I'm really fed up

**Greetin: crying**
Fit ye greetin fur?
Why are you crying?

**Wheesht: quiet**
Hud yer wheesht!
Be quiet!

**Spikin: speaking**
Are ye nae spikin?
Are you not speaking to me?

**Weel: well**
Am nae weel
I'm not feeling well

**Forfauchan: exhausted**
I'm affa forfauchan!
I'm really exhausted!

**Puggled: tired**
I'm fair puggled the day
I'm really tired today

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**Neep: turnip**
Yer a neep
You are an idiot

**Gype: fool**
Fit a gype
What a fool

**Glaikit: senseless, stupid**
At loon's a bit glaikit
That boy is a bit stupid

**Bile: boil**
Awa an bile yer heid!
Go away!

**Mingin: not pleasant**
At baps are mingin
Those rolls are not pleasant

**Feart: scared**
Dinna be feart
Don't be scared

**Coorse: nasty**
She's a coorse besom*  
She's a nasty woman  
(*a besom is also a broomstick)
SOCIALISING

**COME AWA’ BEN THE HOOSE**
Welcome, come through

**YE WINTIN’ A FLY AN’ A PIECE?**
Would you like a cup of tea and something to eat?

**TAAK A PEW/ SIT YERSEL DOON**
Take a seat/sit down

**SO FIT HIV YE BIN UP TAE?**
So what have you been up to?

**AN FOOS YER MA ’N’ DA?**
And how are your mother and father?

**AN FAR YE BIDIN THE NOO?**
And where are you living at the moment?

**YE GAAN OOT? INTAE TOON?**
Are you heading out this evening? Into the city centre?

**AYE, FAR AND FAN WILL I SEE YE?**
Yes, where and when will we meet?

**FUNCY A DUNCE/ ARE YE DUNCIN?**
Would you like to dance?

**NO YER AARICHT I’M WABBIT!**
No thanks, I’m exhausted!

**FIT YE HAEIN?**
What are having to drink?

**I’LL HAE A PINT. CHEERS MIN!**
I’ll have a pint. Good health!
EATING & DRINKING

A FLY CUP
A cup of tea

SPOOF IT!
Drink up!

NEEPS & TATTIES
Turnips and potatoes

A CAPPIE
Ice-cream cone

SPEEN
Spoon

BUTTERY OR ROWIE
A flat breakfast pastry

HINGIN INCINS
Hanging onions

SPROOTS
Sprouts

GALSHIKS
Sweeties

A FUNCY PIECE
A cake or sweet treat

Clootie: cloth
Gee at worktop a dicht wi a clootie
Give that worktop a wipe with a cloth

Messages: shopping
I'm awa te dee my messages

Chipper: chip shop
Ye needin anything fae the chipper?

DORIC IDIOMs

Fine: tasty
Affa fine butteries
Very tasty pastries

Sappy: juicy
Is peach is affa sappy
This peach is really juicy

Aet: feed
At wiz a gweed aet
That was a nice meal

Gads: yuk
Gads min!
Yuk!

Bowfin’: disgusting
At soup’s bowfin’
That soup is disgusting

Mingin’: horrible
At pie’s mingin’
That pie is horrible

Fooshty: gone bad/rotten
At bap’s are fooshty
Those rolls are mouldy

Cowk: retch/feel sick
At milks maakin’ me cowk
That milk is making me sick

AM NAE AS GREEN AS AM CUBBIGE LOOKIN
I’m not as green as I am cabbage looking...
I’m not as stupid as I look

IT’S A SARE FECHT FIR HALF A LOAF
It’s a sore fight for a half loaf...
It’s hard to make ends meet

DORIC DICTIONARY 21
THE WEATHER

IT'S GYE WAREM I'DAY
It's very hot today

IT'S A BIT DREICH I'DAY
It's a bit dull today

IT'S AYE DINGIN DOON
It's a long spell of rain

FIT A BONNY GLOAMIN'
What a pretty sunset

IT'S CAUL I'DAY
It's cold today

HAP UP YER LUGS
Cover up your ears

I'M DROOKIT
I'm soaked

CA CANNY, OR YOU'LL GING SKITIN'
Take care, it's a bit icy

IT'S BLOWIN' A HOOLIE
It's very windy

FEELS LIKE SNA
Feels like it's going to snow

THE HAARS COMIN' IN
There's a sea fog descending

MY BEET'S ARE DUBBIE
My boots are muddy
What a nice hat

That's some outfit you have on tonight

Where did you get your fancy shoes from?

FIT A RARE BUNNET

AT'S SOME RIG-OOT YE HIV ON THE NIGHT

FAR DID YE GET YER FUNCY SHEEN FAE?
ANATOMY

THESE INGINS ARE FAIR MAAKIN MY EEN WAATER
These onions are really making my eyes water

AT POKED ME RICHT IN THE EE
That poked me right in the eye

HE’S AN AFFA KYTE ON HIM
He has a big stomach on him

KEEP YER LUGS WAARM
Keep your ears warm

STOP LUGGIN IN
Stop eavesdropping

HE KITTLER MA OXTERS
He tickled my armpits

SHE SKELPT HIS DOWP
She slapped his bum

MY QUEETS HIV SWAALT
I’ve got swollen ankles

DOON IN THE MOO
Down in the mouth / sad

FIT FIT FITS FIT FIT?
Which foot fits which foot?

I CANNA FEEL MY TAES
I can’t feel my toes

HE SPIKS WI A BOOL IN HIS MOO
He talks with a posh accent

DORIC DICTIONARY 27
YER LOOKIN AFFA PEELIE-WALLY. FIT'S A DEE?

You look a bit off colour. What's wrong with you?

**DIV: To do**
Fit div yi dee for a bite o met?
What do you do for a living?

**GING: To go**
Ging up i' stairs
Go up the stairs

**GANG: To go**
Ye may gang far and fare waur
You may go a lot further and do a lot worse

**HING: To hang**
Fit wye are ye hingin aboot?
Why are you hanging about?

**HUD: To hold**
Shut yer een and hud on
Shut your eyes and hold on

**TAAK: To take**
Taak it hame wi ye
Take it home with you

**TEEN: Taken**
She's been teen te A&E
She's been taken to Accident and Emergency

**RUG: To pull**
I'm ruggin it as hard as I can
I'm pulling it as hard as I can

**GAAR: To cause, to make**
The reek o his taes gaared me bowk
The stink of his toes made me be sick

**HOWK: To scratch, swipe**
He howked his ba ower the wa
He swiped his ball over the wall

**DIRL: To spin**
He dirled her aboot the dunce fleer
He spun her about the dance floor

**LOWP: To jump**
Awa an taak a lowp!
Away and take a jump!
ANIMALS (CRAITERS)

SHILT/SHILTIE
Horse

DUG
Dog

KITTLEN
Kitten

MOOSE
Mouse

TOD
Fox

RUBBIT
Rabbit

COOSHIE DOO
Pigeon

CRAW
Crow

JITTEN
Turkey

OOLET
Owl

CORMORANT
Duck

SCURRY/PYOOL/GOW
Seagull

TARIK
Arctic Tern

DEUK/JOOK
Duck

SANDY’S AN AFFA PEER CRAITER
I feel sorry for Sandy

INSECTS

FOGGY BUMMER
Bumble bee

WURREM
Worm

GOLLACH
Beetle

FLECH
Flea

SHILT/SHILTIE
Cow

COO/BEAST
Cow

SHARN: Cow dung
Yer beets are clarted in sharn
Your boots are covered in cow dung

Knapdarlochs: matted dung on the hind-quarters of cattle or sheep
Yer gimmer has knapdarlochs
Your ewe with one lamb has matted dung on her wool

WURREM
Worm

GOLLACH
Beetle

SCURRY/PYOOL/GOW
Seagull

TARIK
Arctic Tern

DEUK/JOOK
Duck

SANDY’S AN AFFA PEER CRAITER
I feel sorry for Sandy

SHARN: Cow dung
Yer beets are clarted in sharn
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Knapdarlochs: matted dung on the hind-quarters of cattle or sheep
Yer gimmer has knapdarlochs
Your ewe with one lamb has matted dung on her wool
WANT TE KEN MAIR?
Want to know more?

The best way to learn Doric is to visit Aberdeen and the North East of Scotland and listen to the locals speaking it, especially in the more rural areas.

Why not visit our riverside campus at Garthdee in Aberdeen and say ‘Fit like!’

If you’re keen to learn more, there are a wide range of websites and resources available online, including www.doricdictionary.com and facebook.com/wespikdoric.

You can also visit the RGU website:
www.rgu.ac.uk/local-lingo

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure this dictionary is accurate, we cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies in this document. Thanks to all our Facebook fans for their suggestions and contributions.
DINNA FASH YERSEL QUINE

AAL AGE DISNA COME ITSEL

CONTACT US
+44 (0)1224 262048
marketing@rgu.ac.uk
www.rgu.ac.uk

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www.twitter.com/robertgordonuni

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