Vowels and diphthongs

Indo-European (input to Germanic)

i	u	i:	u:			
e	o	e:	o:	ei	oi	ɑi
	ɑ		ɑ:	eu	ou	ɑu

IE /o/ → Gmc /ɑ/	L. octō, 'eight', = Go ahtau, but L. ager 'field' = Go akkrs
IE /ɑ:/ →Gmc /o:/	L. māter 'mother' = OE mōdor but Gr pōs 'foot' = OE fōt
IE /ou/ → Gmc /au/	(IE */roudh/) L. rūfus 'red', Lith. raudas, OCS rudu, Pol. rudy, Gmc *rauda, OE rēad
	but (IE */aus/) Lit. ausis, L. auris, Gmc *auson, Go ausō, Pol. usz-y, OE ēare 'ear'
IE /oi/ → Gmc /ai/	(IE */snoigʷh/) OCS snegu, Pol. śnieg, Gmc *snaiwa, Go snaiws, OE snāw
	(IE */uoida/) Pol. wiedza, Gmc *wait, OE wāt 'I know'
	but (IE */ghaid/) Gmc */gait/, Go gaits, OE gāt 'goat'
IE /ei/ → Gmc /i:/	(IE */steigh/ OE stīgan 'go, move', Pol. ścigać
	but (IE */suīno/) L. suīnus, Pol. świnia, OE swīn

Proto-Germanic

i	u	i:	u:			
e		e:	o:	eu	ɑi	ɑu
	ɑ					

Gmc /u/ →NWG /o/ (when the following syllable contains a non-high vowel) IE */muso/, L. muscus, OCS muchu, Pol. mech, OE mos 'moss', otherwise Gmc /u/ → /u/; IE */lubh/, OE lufian, Pol. lubić; IE */sunu/, Pol. syn, OE sunu, 'son'

Gmc /e:/ → NWG /ɑ:/ → OE /æ:/ Got. lētan, OIc. lāta, OHG lāzzan, OE lǣtan, unless /e:/ was followed by a nasal, then IE */e:/ show up as /o:/ in OE, Gr mēn, L. mēnsis, Go mēna, OIc māni, OHG māno, OE mōna 'moon' (soon after these changes /e:/ developed again (so-caled ē[2]) – this one shows up as /e:/ in OE, as in hēr 'here', cēn 'pine', *much speculation about its origin*, sometimes seems to have morphological motivation as in preterits of SV[7] – lēt, hēt.

/eu/ → /iu/, when followed by /i(:), j/, Gmc */newja/ (cf. Gk. neios) → /niwja/ OS niuwi, WS nīewe,non-WS nīowe, lWS nīwe, 'new'

North-West Germanic

i	u	i:	u:			
e	**o**	e:	o:			
	ɑ		**ɑ:**			
				iu	eu	ai	au

NWGmc /ɑ:/ → OE /æ:/ Got. lētan, OIc. lāta, OHG lāzzan, OE lǣtan
monophthongisation of WGmc /ɑi/ → OE /ɑ:/, Got. stains, OHG stein, OE stān, OSlav. stena, Pol. ściana

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proto Old English

i	u	i:	u:
e	o	e:	o:
	ɑ	**æ:**	ɑ:

iu   eu   au

- **Anglo-Frisian Brightening**: ɑ→ æ except before a nasal; as a result also ɑu → æu

  OE dæg, OI dɑgr, Go dɑgs, OHG tɑg
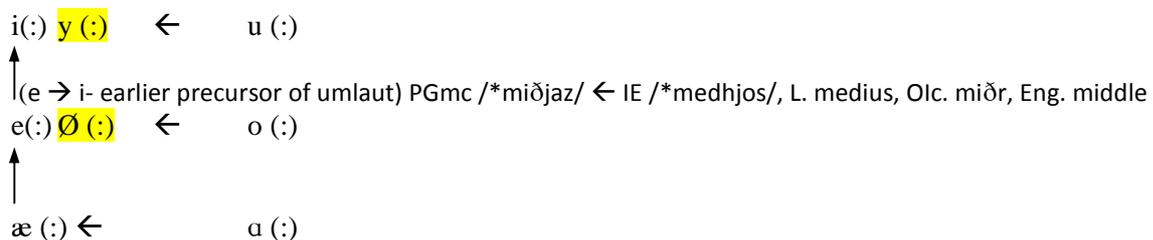
- **restoration of ɑ** (æ → ɑ before a back vowel)

	Sg.	Pl.
Nom.	dæg [dæj]	dɑgas [dɑɣɑs]
Gen.	dæges	dɑga
Dat.	dæge	dɑgum
Acc.	dæg	dɑgas

  NB. There was some controversy over the existence of AFB and restoration as the OE outcome could be derived by postulating only **one** sound change. Try to find this alternative (although historically incorrect) solution.

- **Diphthong Height Harmony** (DHH) - during the OE period the second element of a diphthong adjusted its height to the height of the first element: iu → iu; eu → eo; æu → æɑ
- iu and eo merged together as eo
  Hence Gmc *biun, *deur, *dauþ, *stain → OE bēon 'be', dēor 'animal' dēaþ (=æ:ɑ) 'death', stān 'stone'.
- **Breaking** – as a result of this change a **radical change occurred in the OE vowel system**. Very early in the prehistoric OE period the front vowels æ, e, and i (**both short and long !!**) were diphthongised when immediately followed by a velar or velarised consonant or consonant group. The contexts are:

  1) before the voiceless velar fricative /x/ (spelled <h>)
  2) before the velarised liquid [ɫ] when found with a following consonant including itself
  3) before the liquid /r/ when it was followed by another consonant (which was probably velarised)

      /æ/ Breaking → /æu/ DHH → æɑ spelling<ea>   *sæh → seah 'he saw'
      /e/ Breaking → /eu/ DHH → eo   spelling <eo>   *fehtan → feohtan 'fight'
      /i/ Breaking → /iu/ (spelled io)→ /eo/ (iu, eo merger)   *tihhian → tiohhian → teohhian 'consider'

- **i-umlaut** - Old English vowels harmonised to an /i/ or /j/ following them in the same word. This caused all back vowels to front and all short front vowels (except /i/) and **diphthongs** to raise when an /i/ or /j/ followed in the next syllable. This can be represented as follows:

  i(:) y (:)   ←   u (:)

  (e → i- earlier precursor of umlaut) PGmc /*miðjaz/ ← IE /*medhjos/, L. medius, OIc. miðr, Eng. middle
  e(:) Ø (:)   ←   o (:)

  æ (:) ←   ɑ (:)

Typical examples of the sound change are : *brūdi > br*y*d 'bride', *tr*u*mmjan > trymman 'strengthen', *fōtiz > f*ē̄*t
'feet', *oli > *e*le 'oil'; *hāljan > h*ǣ*lan 'heal', *ladin > l*æ*den 'Latin', *sandjan > s*e*ndan 'send' (special development
before a nasal!!); *b*æ*ddj > b*e*dd 'bed'.

- diphthongs (both short and long) were i-mutated to a sound represented in spelling by <ie>. The precise phonetic
value of <ie> is uncertain, most probably it was [i(:)y].
  *c*ī̄*osi∂ > cīest 'he chooses', *wiorsira > wiersa 'worse', *hēarjan > hīeran 'hear', *ealdira > ieldra 'older'.
- i-mutation had profound morphological effects. For example,
  - (i)   athematic nouns (*mann*, *menn* dat.sg. nom.acc.pl.);
  - (ii)   some adjectives show umlaut in comparative and superlative (*lang, lengra, lengest*);
  - (iii)   2,3sg. pres. of strong verbs *cēose* 'I choose' – *cīest* 'you choose', *helpan* – *hilpst* (!), etc.

OE vowels and diphthongs

i	y	u		i:	y:	u:			
e		o		e:		o:		ēo	eo (!)
æ		ɑ		æ:		ɑ:		ǣɑ	æɑ (!)

Consonants

- **WGG- West Germanic Gemination**

  V (short) C j V → V C C j V C ≠ r (j is ultimately lost in PreOE)

WGG functions as a partial isogloss separating West Germanic from the other major dialect groups.

Go. *satjan*, OE *settan*; OE *biddan*, OS *biddian* , Go *bidjan*, ON *bi*đ*ja* 'ask'.

OE weak verbs Class 1

class 1 is characterized by the historical formative */jɑn/ in the infinitive, still unchanged in Gothic *fram-jan*, unlike in
OS *fremmian*, OE *fremman.* WGG is responsible for some alternations in Class 1 of weak verbs.

fremman 'to do'	**nerian** 'to save'	**dēman** 'to judge'
Present		
Sg.		
1. fremme	nerie	dēme
2. fremest	nerest	dēmst
3. fremeþ	nereþ	dēmþ
Pl.		
fremmaþ	neriaþ	dēmaþ
Subjunctive		
Sg. fremme	nerie	dēme
Pl. fremmen	nerien	dēmen
Imperative		
Sg. freme	nere	dēm
Pl. fremmaþ	neriaþ	dēmaþ
Participle		
fremmende	neriende	dēmende
Preterite		
Sg.		
1. fremede	nerede	dēmde
2. fremedest	neredest	dēmdest
3. fremede	nerede	dēmde
Pl.		
fremedon	neredon	dēmdon
Subj.		
Sg. fremede	nerede	dēmde
Pl. fremeden	nereden	dēmden
Participle		
gefremed	genered	gedēmed

- **palatalisation**
  Pre-OE Germanic had three contrastive places of articulation for obstruents: labial, dental/alveolar, and velar. There was nothing (phonemically) in the palato-alveolar or palatal area (except /j/). In a transition to OE a new series was created: 'palatal' /tʃ, dʒ, ʃ/.
 OE EXAMPLES:
  velar [k, g] before back vowels: *camb, cuman, gōd*
  velar [k, g] before a consonant: *cradol, glæs*
  palatal [tʃ, j] before i(:) eo(:) ea(:):   *cinn, cēosan, geard*
  palatal [dʒ]:   *sengean*(< */sangjan/) 'singe'

Phonetically palatalisation involves fronting of velars in front contexts

*PrGmc	OE	OE EXAMPLES
kambr (OIc.)	k	camb
kinnus (Go.) *k c → tʃ		cinn
juk (Go.) *j → j		geoc
geldan (OS)		gieldan
muggia (OS) *ɣ dʒ		mycg
gōd (OS)	g	gōd

- A different sort of palatalisation /sk/ → /ʃ/
  The mechanics are not clear. Probably /sk/ → /sx/ → /ʃ/. The reason for this palatalisation is obscure. It appears in both front and back environments, and before consonants so it is not assimilatory, e.g. *scīnan* 'shine', *sċofl* 'shovel', *sċanca* 'shank', *sċrinkan* 'shrink'.
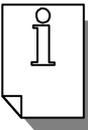
Palatalisation was restricted in the Northumbrian dialect of OE (and still is in Scots kirk vs. church); consequently, many words in MnE could not possibly derive from southern OE. WS *ġiefan* -give, skirt (OE *sċyrte* gives the doublet shirt), guest OE *ġiest*, gift OE *ġift*, etc.