

# Sievers Types



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## Overview: Basic Patterns

Table 1: The basic Sievers types

Type	Pattern	Examples
A	/ x / x	eorlic ellen; glædne Hrōðgār; wīde sīðas (cf. 2 trochees)
B	x / x /	ond Halga til (cf. 2 iambs)
C	x / / x	gebūn hæfdon (cf. 1 iamb + 1 trochee)
D1	// \ x	frēan Scyldinga; hār hilderinc
D2	// x \	wēold wīdeferhō
E	/ \ x /	healærna mæst

- ▶ Classical terminology unsuitable given
  - ▶ The variable number of syllables to a dip;
  - ▶ The principle that foot boundaries must coincide with word boundaries.

## Overview: Extended Patterns

Table 2: Sievers types with optional anacrusis and extended dips

Type	Pattern	Examples
A	[x x] / x (x x x x) / x	hǣþene æt hilde
B	(x x x x) x / x (x) /	and tō þære hilde stōp
C	(x x x x x) x / / x	þonne hit æniġ mǣð wære
D1	[x x] / (x x x) / \ x	Offa þone sǣlidan
D2	[x x] / (x x x) / x (x) \	eald enta ġeweorc
E	/ \ x (x) /	wǣlræste ġecēas

## Type A1: /x/x

► Two lifts, no half-lifts

(1) wuldres wealdend

*Beowulf* 17a; basic pattern

(2) Scyldes eafera

*Beowulf* 19a; resolved second lift

(3) fyrdsearu fūslicu

*Beowulf* 232a; both lifts resolved

(4) Ġewāt him þā tō waroðe

*Beowulf* 234a; anacrusis, longer first dip, resolution

## Type A2: $\wedge\wedge$

- A half-lift in either or both dips

- (5)  $\begin{array}{c} / \quad \backslash \quad / \quad \times \\ \text{Écgbēow hāten} \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 263b
- (6)  $\begin{array}{c} / \quad \times \quad / \quad \backslash \\ \text{wītena wēlhwylic} \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 266a; resolved first lift
- (7)  $\begin{array}{c} / \quad \backslash \quad / \quad \backslash \\ \text{sīgerōf kyning} \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 619b; resolved first lift
- (8)  $\begin{array}{c} / \quad \backslash \quad / \quad \backslash \\ \text{glædman Hrōðgār} \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 367b

## Type A3 (Light Verse): xx/x

- ▶ No “first” lift
- ▶ At least two unstressed syllables before the remaining lift
- ▶ Limited to on-verse
- ▶ Single alliteration

(9)     ×   ×   ×   ×   /   ×  
Næs þæt þonne mǣtost

*Beowulf* 1455a

(10)   × ×   ×   ×   ×   /   ×  
ðāra þe hē ġeworhte

*Beowulf* 1578a

## Type B: x/x/

- ▶ Rarely more than one resolved lift
- ▶ Variable number of unstressed syllables in the first dip; rarely more than two in the second

- (11)     $\overset{\times}{\text{ond}} \overset{/}{\text{Grendles}} \overset{\times}{\text{hond}}$  *Beowulf* 927b; basic pattern
- (12)     $\overset{\times}{\text{tō}} \overset{/}{\text{sele}} \overset{\times}{\text{þām}} \overset{/}{\text{hēan}}$  *Beowulf* 919b; first lift resolved, contraction maintained
- (13)     $\overset{\times}{\text{on}} \overset{/}{\text{nicera}} \overset{\times}{\text{mere}}$  *Beowulf* 845b; both lifts resolved
- (14)     $\overset{\times}{\text{swylce}} \overset{\times}{\text{hīe}} \overset{\times}{\text{æt}} \overset{\times}{\text{Finnes}} \overset{/}{\text{hām}}$  *Beowulf* 1156a; longer first dip
- (15)     $\overset{\times}{\text{Scolde}} \overset{\times}{\text{his}} \overset{\times}{\text{aldor}} \overset{/}{\text{gedāl}}$  *Beowulf* 805b; longer first dip, parasiting vowel suppressed
- (16)     $\overset{\times}{\text{þāra}} \overset{\times}{\text{þe}} \overset{\times}{\text{hit}} \overset{\times}{\text{mid}} \overset{\times}{\text{mundum}} \overset{/}{\text{bewand}}$  *Beowulf* 1461b; longer dipo

## Type C: x//x

- ▶ Variable number of unstressed syllables in the first dip; just one in the second
- ▶ Rarely a resolved second lift
- ▶ Second lift is often carried by a short syllable (the second element in a compound)

- (17)     x   /   /   x  
on weg þanon *Beowulf* 844b; basic pattern
- (18)     x   /   /   x  
æt Wealhþeôn *Beowulf* 629b; contraction suppressed
- (19)     x x x x x   /   /   x  
þonne hē on þæt sinc starað *Beowulf* 1485b; longer first dip
- (20)     x x   /   /   x  
ac hē sigewæpnum *Beowulf* 804a; first lift resolved
- (21)     x x x x   /   /   x  
Nō ic mē an herewæsmun *Beowulf* 677a; first lift resolved

## Type D: /Λx

- ▶ Second foot often a compound or derived form
- ▶ Second dip of D1 has just one unstressed syllable, first dip of D2 up to two
- ▶ Either lift may be resolved; rarely both
- ▶ Halflift usually not resolved; in D1 may be just a short syllable
- ▶ Second lift in D1 may be a short syllable
- ▶ May be “expanded” with (usually) one unstressed syllable after the first lift, requiring double alliteration (D\*1, D\*2)

## Type D1: /Λx

(22)  $\begin{array}{cccc} / & / & \backslash & \times \\ g\ddot{u}\check{\delta}fremmendra \end{array}$

*Beowulf* 246a; basic pattern

(23)  $\begin{array}{cccc} / & / & \backslash & \times \\ \acute{c}easter\grave{b}\ddot{u}endum \end{array}$

*Beowulf* 768a; parasiting vowel suppressed

## Type D2 //x\

(24) wēold wīdeferhǫ

*Beowulf* 702a; basic pattern

(25) bād bolgenmōd

*Beowulf* 709a; basic pattern

(26) maga māne fāh

*Beowulf* 978a; resolved first lift

(27) Duru sōna onarn

*Beowulf* 721b; resolved first lift, longer dip

## Type D\*1: /xΛx

(28)  $\begin{array}{cccc} / & \times & / & \backslash & \times \\ \bar{e} & o & d & e & y & r & r & e & m & \bar{o} & d \end{array}$

*Beowulf* 726a

(29)  $\begin{array}{cccc} / & \times & / & \backslash & \times \\ e & o & r & l & u & m & e & a & l & u & s & c & e & r & w & e & n \end{array}$

*Beowulf* 769a; resolved second lift

(30)  $\begin{array}{cccc} \times & / & \times & / & \backslash & \times \\ o & n & b & r & a & e & d & \beta & a & b & e & a & l & o & h & y & d & i & g \end{array}$

*Beowulf* 723a; anacrusis, resolved second lift

## Type D\*2: /x/x\

(31)    /    ×   /    ×   \  
lēoda landgeweorc

*Beowulf* 938a

(32)    ×   /    ×   /    ×   \  
gehnægde helle gāst

*Beowulf* 1274a; anacrusis

## Type E: $\wedge x /$

- ▶ Either lift may be resolved; rarely both
- ▶ Dip usually a single unstressed syllable, sometimes two
- ▶ Some verses ambiguous between D2 and E; alliteration, syntax, content may help

(33) Nægling forbærst *Beowulf* 2680b; basic pattern

(34) wælfagne winter *Beowulf* 1128a; parasitic vowel suppressed

(35) Dēaðfāge dēog *Beowulf* 850a; contraction maintained

(36) sundnytte drēah *Beowulf* 2360b; contraction maintained

## Anacrusis

Verses of types A (/x/x) and D (/^/x) may start with one or two unstressed syllables, which are considered extrametrical:

(37)  $\begin{array}{cccc} \times & / & \times & / & \times \\ \text{swā} & \text{sā} & \text{bebūgeð} & & \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 1223b (type A1)

(38)  $\begin{array}{cccc} \times & / & \times & / & \backslash & \times \\ \text{befongen} & \text{frēawrāsnum} & & & & \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 1451a (type D1)

(39)  $\begin{array}{cccc} \times & \times & / & \times & \times & / & \times \\ \text{gē} & \text{æt} & \text{hām} & \text{gē} & \text{æt} & \text{herge} & \end{array}$  *Beowulf* 1248a (type A1)

## Foot Boundaries

Table 3: Foot boundaries according to Sievers

A	/ x   / x	eorlic ellen; glǣdne Hrōðgār; wīde sīðas
B	x /   x /	ond Halga til; swā giōmormōd
C	x /   / x	gebūn hæfdon; be yðlāfe
D1	/   / \ x	frēan Scyldinga; hār hilderinc
D2	/   / x \	wēold wīdeferhð
E	/ \ x   /	healærna mǣst

- ▶ Verses like *ond Halga til* and *be yðlāfe* favour a feet division based on word boundaries (see esp. Russom).
- ▶ Some scholars abandon Sievers's types altogether (see again Russom).

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