

# ICELANDIC-ENGLISH GLOSSARY OF SELECTED GEOSCIENCE TERMS

Richard S. Williams, Jr.  
U.S. Geological Survey  
Quissett Campus  
Woods Hole, MA 02543 U.S.A.

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## Icelandic-English Glossary of Selected Geoscience Terms

### Introduction

When dealing with Icelandic names of physical geographic features on maps and in journal articles it is important for students of the geology of Iceland to recognize that most place-names are compound words. For example, the volcanic island Surtsey is a compound word derived from the root ey, the Icelandic word for island, and Surts, the genitive case of Surtur, a mythological Norse giant of fire (world destroyer). Svartifoss, the beautiful cascade which flows over columnar basalts along the course of Bæjargil in Skaftafell National Park, is a compound word derived from foss, the Icelandic word for waterfall, and svarti, the definite nominative case form of svartur, the Icelandic adjective for the color black. Snæfellsjökull, an imposing stratovolcano at the tip of the Snæfellsnes peninsula on the north side of Faxaflói (named after the small ice cap (11 km<sup>2</sup>) on its summit), is a compound word derived from snæ, the root of snær, an Icelandic word for snow; and fells, the genitive case of the Icelandic word for a usually isolated mountain, plus the word jökull, the Icelandic word for glacier (etymologically the same origin as the word icicle in English).

Icelandic is rich in words which describe natural features and phenomena often in a very poetic way, such as Snæfellsjökull (described above), Skjaldbreiður ("broad shield"), and Herðubreið ("broad shoulders"). Because Icelandic and English are derivations of an older parent Germanic language, some words have retained a similar spelling and usage even after the passage of more than a thousand years or more (for example, fingur-finger, frost, mýri-mire (swamp), land, norður-north, bull (nonsense), etc.). Icelandic (Old Norse) has remained virtually unchanged, while English has evolved through several well defined stages:

"Old English" (pre-1100 A.D.), "Middle English" (1100 A.D. to 1500 A.D.), and "Modern English" (post-1500 A.D.) and has been strongly influenced by the Latin and French languages.

Icelandic and English share a generally common alphabet except for three Icelandic letters, eth (ð, Ð), thorn (þ, Þ), and æ (æ, Æ), three letters once used in English and four English letters not used in Icelandic. The letters c, q, w are not used in Icelandic except in a few foreign loanwords. The letter z was used in place of the s in some Icelandic words until a few years ago (for example, Íslenzk, now Íslensk). Icelandic also uses diacritical marks to denote independent vowel sounds. Modern Icelandic has 33 letters in its alphabet: a, á, b, d, ð, e, é, f, g, h, i, í, j, k, l, m, n, o, ó, p, r, s, t, u, ú, v, x, y, ý, z, þ, æ, and ö (note that words beginning with þ, æ, and ö are listed as the last three letters in Icelandic dictionaries). There are 14 discrete vowels (printed and spoken) used in Icelandic versus 6 printed vowels (and many more spoken) used in modern English. The transliteration of the Icelandic alphabet into the English alphabet usually results in the deletion of all diacritical notations over the vowels and the use of a d or D for ð and Ð, th or Th for þ and Þ, and ae or Ae for æ and Æ.

As noted before, in the past 1,100 years English has undergone profound changes; Icelandic is little changed; English has lost most of its inflexions (case endings); Icelandic has retained its inflexions (it employs four singular and plural case endings for the three grammatical genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter). Also, the Northern Branch (Icelandic, Færeese, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish) of the Germanic Language uses a post-positive article, in which the definite article (the) generally follows and is attached to the

noun, such as in the title of the Icelandic scientific journal Náttúrufræðingurinn (The Naturalist). The definite article can precede the noun if an intervening adjective is used, however, as in Hið íslenska náttúrufræðifélag (The Icelandic Natural History Society). Hinn hvíti jökull (the white glacier) can also be expressed as hvíti jökullinn. In addition, the definite article must agree in gender number and case with the noun. No indefinite article (a or an) is used in Icelandic; the absence of the definite article indicates the sense of an indefinite article.

The following masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns are declined in the singular and plural for each of the four cases: nominative (subject), accusative (direct object), dative (indirect object), and genitive (possessive), first without and then with the definite article.

#### jökull (glacier) - masculine noun

(a glacier)			(glaciers)		
sg.	nom.	jökull	pl.	nom.	jöklar
	acc.	jökul		acc.	jökla
	dat.	jökli		dat.	jöklum
	gen.	jökuls		gen.	jökla
(the glacier)			(the glaciers)		
sg.	nom.	jökullinn	pl.	nom.	jöklarnir
	acc.	jökulinn		acc.	jöklana
	dat.	jöklinum		dat.	jöklunum
	gen.	jökulsins		gen.	jöklanna

borg (rocky hill) - feminine noun

(a rocky hill)

sg.	nom.	borg
	acc.	borg
	dat.	borg
	gen.	borgar

(rocky hills)

pl.	nom.	borgir
	acc.	borgir
	dat.	borgum
	gen.	borga

(the rocky hill)

sg.	nom.	borgin
	acc.	borgina
	dat.	borginni
	gen.	borgarinnar

(the rocky hills)

pl.	nom.	borgirnar
	acc.	borgirnar
	dat.	borgunum
	gen.	borganna

vatn (lake) - neuter noun

(a lake)

sg.	nom.	vatn
	acc.	vatn
	dat.	vatni
	gen.	vatns

(lakes)

pl.	nom.	vötn
	acc.	vötn
	dat.	vötnum
	gen.	vatna

(the lake)

sg.	nom.	vatnið
	acc.	vatnið
	dat.	vatninu
	gen.	vatnsins

(the lakes)

pl.	nom.	vötnin
	acc.	vötnin
	dat.	vötnunum
	gen.	vatnanna

Jökull, borg, and vatn appear frequently as compounds in Icelandic geographic place-names, such as in Snæfellsjökull, Vatnajökull, Jökulsá á Fjöllum, etc.; Eldborg, Vikraborgir, Þrengslaborgir, etc.; and Vatnaöldur, Grænavatn, Veiðivötn, etc., respectively.

Another grammatical characteristic that Icelandic shares with English is radical changes in spelling of words in different grammatical cases and from singular to plural forms. For

example, the Icelandic word for mountain, fjall, becomes fjöll in the nominative (and accusative) plural (mountains) as in Hverfjall, Hlíðarfjall, Fögrufjöll, and Dyngjufjöll. A usually isolated mountain in Icelandic is called a fell, as in Búrfell or Snæfellsjökull. The Icelandic word for island, ey, such as in Surtsey, becomes eyjar in the genitive singular, as in Eldeyjarboði, or when used in the plural for a group of islands (Vestmannaeyjar). The genitive singular case is commonly used in the first part of compound place-names in Icelandic.

The Icelandic desire to maintain the "purity" of its spoken and written language is shown in its resistance to acceptance of foreign loanwords. Hence, there is a great lack of cognates in the modern technical and scientific literature. Rather than accept foreign words, most new technical and scientific words are coined from existing Icelandic words. In addition to the challenge of learning Icelandic, the serious student of the geoscience literature of Iceland is faced with also learning a specialized scientific vocabulary with few cognates.

The appendix on Icelandic-English Glossary of Selected Geoscience Terms will assist the reader in making a smoother transition to and a better understanding of Icelandic place-names and other geoscience terms commonly used on maps and in the geoscience literature of Iceland. For those readers interested in the origin of Icelandic geographic place-names, the publications of Örnefnastofnun Þjóðminjasafns, Suðurgötu 41, IS-101 Reykjavík, are especially useful. In 1980 and 1983, respectively, the Director of Örnefnastofnun Þjóðminjasafns, Dr. Þórhallur Vilmundarson, edited and published the first two volumes of Grímnir (Rit um nafnfræði), a periodical devoted to scholarly research into the origin of geographic place-names in Iceland (Þórhallur Vilmundarson, 1980 and 1983). The best

reference work to Icelandic geographic place-names is the two-volume set "Landið þitt", later expanded into six volumes by Þorsteinn Jósepsson and Steindór Steindórsson (1981, 1983, and 1984) and Þorsteinn Jósepsson and others (1982, 1984, and 1985).

The Icelandic-English Glossary of Selected Geoscience Terms has been compiled from a variety of published sources, including glossaries or indexes included in various scientific publications, map legends or explanations, guidebooks, textbooks, journal articles, and selected dictionaries. A list of these appears at the end of the glossary in Glossary sources.

The following Icelandic-English Glossary of Selected Geoscience Terms is organized into four columns: Icelandic word (nominative singular); class of word and gender (nm, noun-masculine; nf, noun-feminine; nn, noun-neuter; am, adjective-masculine; af, adjective-feminine; an, adjective-neuter; ad, adverb; p, preposition; and c, conjunction); Icelandic word (nominative plural); and equivalent word(s) in English. Synonyms of Icelandic words are given in parentheses in the first column. Icelandic words are given for most of the subdisciplines of geology, geophysics, and geochemistry, and related subdisciplines in the geosciences. In most cases the addition of the -ingur suffix to the Icelandic word for a scientific discipline will yield the correct word for the scientist active in that discipline. For example, jarðfræði is the Icelandic word for geology; jarðfræðingur is the Icelandic word for a geologist.

Superscripts (asterisks or numbers) and dashes are used throughout the glossary to assist the reader. A single asterisk (\*) signifies a loanword, a word borrowed intact or slightly naturalized from another language. It is either used independently or in a compound word (combined with an Icelandic word). A double asterisk (\*\*) indicates that the plural form is

not used in the same context. A triple asterisk (\*\*\*) signifies that a plural form exists but is not commonly used . In many instances, the plural form exists in a “grammatical” sense but is not necessarily used in a “geological” sense. A dash (-) indicates either that there is no plural form or the plural form is not used - or that there is no singular form or the singular form is not used. All other superscripts are defined in Glossary notes.



# Icelandic-English Glossary

## ICELANDIC

## ENGLISH

<u>Singular</u>	<u>Class/ Gender</u>	<u>Plural</u>	
afflæði	nn	-	regression
afrétt(ur)	nm	afréttir	highland pasture(s)
akur	nm	akrar	field(s)
alda	nf	öldur	rounded "smooth" ridge(s), waves(s)
almenn jarðfræði	af + nf	-	general or physical geology
andhverfa	nf	andhverfur	anticline(s)
andhverfuás	nm	andhverfuásar	anticlinal axis (es)
apalhraun	nn	apalhraun	aa lava/blocky lava
aska (gosmöl, gjóska, gosaska, & vikur)	nf	-	tephra/volcanic ash
askja	nf	öskjur	caldera(s)
aur	nm	-	mud
- (sandur)	nm	aurar (sandar)	glacial outwash area/sandur
aurkeila	nf	aurkeilur	alluvial fan(s)
austur <sup>1</sup>	nn/ad	-	east
á	nf	ár	river(s)/stream(s)
áflæði	nn	-	transgression
-	nm	áraurar	fluvial sediments
árbugða	nf	árbugður	meander(s)
árset	nn	árset	fluvial deposit(s)
ás	nm	ásar	small ridge(s)
bakki	nm	bakkar	the bank of a brook/stream/ river or the sea; the edge of a gjá, the land along the coast or a river; a hill or lowlying ridge
basalthraun*	nn	basalthraun*	basaltic lava flows
basískur* <sup>4</sup>	am	basískir* <sup>4</sup>	basic
berg (steinn)	nn	berg	rock(s)
bergásýnd	nf	bergásýndir	facies

bergfræði	nf	-	petrology
(bergtegundafræði)			
berggangur	nm	berggangar	dike(s)
berggeitill	nm	berggeitlar	laccolith(s)
berggrunnur	nm	**	bedrock
berghlaup	nn	berghlaup	rockslide(s)
(bergskriða/skriðuhlaup)			
berghleifar	nm	berghleifar	batholith(s)
bergkvika	nf	bergkvikur	magma
bergskriða	nf	bergskriður	rockslide(s) [less common, bergskrið (nn)]
(berghlaup/skriðuhlaup)			
bergsprunga	nf	bergsprungur	tectonic fracture(s), eruption fissure(s)
bergtegundafræði	nf	-	petrology
(bergfræði)			
bergæð	nf	bergæðar	vein(s)
bjarg	nn	björg	cliff(s)/rock(s)/crag(s)
blágrýti	nn	-	basalt (fine-grained) (usually Tertiary-age)
borg	nf	borgir	rocky hill(s)/city(ies)/ fortification(s)/castle(s)
borhola	nf	borholur	borehole(s)
botn	nm	botnar	bottom/head of a valley or fjord
bólstraberg	nn	-	pillow lava
brekka	nf	brekkur	slope(s)
breksía* (brotaberg)	nf	breksíur*	breccia(s)
brennisteinn	nm	-	sulphur
brennisteinnshver <sup>3</sup>	nm	brennissteinshverir <sup>3</sup>	solfatara(s)
brotaberg	nn	-	breccia
brotakerfi	nn	brotakerfi	fracture systems(s)
bruni	nm	brunar	burning; in the singular form it also means a lava field
brunnur	nm	brunnar	wells(s)/spring(s), usually manmade
brú	nf	brýr	bridge(s)
brún	nf	brúnir	edge(s)/border(s)
brúnkol (surtarbrandur)	nn	brúnkol	lignite
bunga	nf	bungur	rounded hill(s)
byggð	nf	byggðir	inhabited district(s)
bær	nm	bæir	farm(s)/town(s)/ farmhouse(s)/borough(s)

daljökull	nm	daljökla	valley glacier(s)
dalur	nm	dalir	valley(s)/dale(s)
dasít*	nn	-	dacite
díabas*	nn	-	dolerite
(dólerít*/grágrýti)			
dílótt storkuberg	an + nn	-	porphyritic igneous rock
djúp	nn	djúp	deep/part of the sea/long inlet
djúpberg	nn	-	plutonic rock
dólerít*	nn	-	dolerite
(díabas*/grágrýti)			
drag	nn	drög	shallow or indistinct water course(s)
dragá	nf	dragár	direct run-off river(s)
drangi/drangur	nm	drangar	isolated column(s) or pillars of rock
dyngja	nf	dyngjur	shield volcano(es)/lava shield(s)/dome(s)
dyngjuhvírfill	nm	dyngjuhvírfjar	top of shield volcano(es) or lava shield(s)
dyngjuröð	nf	dyngjuraðir	lava shield row(s)
eftir ísöld (nútími)	p + nf	-	Post-Pleistocene/postglacial/Holocene
eldborg	nf	eldborgir	lava ring(s)/lava cone(s)
eldborgaröð	nf	eldborgaraðir	lava cone row(s)
eldfjall (eldstöð)	nn	eldfjöll	volcano(es)
eldgjá	nf	eldgjár	lava fissure(s)
eldgos	nf	eldgos	volcanic eruption(s)
eldhryggur	nm	eldhryggir	stratified ridge(s)/composite ridge(s)
eldkeila	nf	eldkeilur	stratovolcano(es)/composite cone(s)
eldstöð (eldfjall)	nf	eldstöðvar	volcano(es)/eruption crater(s) or site(s)
eldur	nm	eldar	fire(s), volcanic eruption(s)
eldvirkni	nf	-	volcanism, volcanic activity
engi	nn	engi	meadow(s)/grassland(s)
ey	nf	eyjar	island(s)/isle(s)
eyri	nf	eyrar	sandspit(s)/gravel bank(s)/delta(s)/sand
eystri <sup>1</sup>	ad	-	farther east

falljökull	nm	falljökla	ice fall(s)
fasajafnvægi	nn	-	phase equilibria
fell	nn	fell	hill(s)/mountain(s), generally, but not in all cases, isolated
felling	nf	fellingar	fold(s)
fjall	nn	fjöll	mountain(s)
fjallgarður	nm	fjallgarðar	mountain range(s)
fjalljökull	nm	fjalljökla	mountian glacier(s)
fjara (strönd)	nf	fjörur	beach(es)/ebb/ebb-tide/low water
fjarkönnun	nf	-	remote sensing
fjörður	nm	firðir	fjord(s)
flikruber	nn	flikruber	ignimbrite(s)/welded ash-flow tuff(s)
flöguber	nn	flöguber	shale(s)
flóð	nn	flóð	flood(s)
fljót	nn	fljót	large river(s)
flói	nm	flóar	large bay(s)/marsh(es)/fens
fokjarðvegur	nm	-	loess
foksandur	nm	forksandar	eolian sand
fornlífsöld	nf	-	Paleozoic Era
fornsegulmagn	nn	-	paleomagnetism
forsögulegur <sup>4</sup>	am	forsögulegir <sup>4</sup>	prehistoric
forsöguleg <sup>4</sup>	af	forsöguleg <sup>4</sup>	prehistoric
forsögulegt <sup>4</sup>	an	forsögulegt <sup>4</sup>	prehistoric
foss	nm	fossar	waterfall(s)
framskrið	nn	framskrið	glacier advance
frumlífsöld	nf	-	Proterozoic Era
gabbró*	nn	gabbró*	gabbro
gangur	nm	gangar	dike(s)
garður	nm	garðar	garden(s)/yard(s)/dike or low wall of earth or stone
geislasamsæta	nf	geislasamsætur	radioisotopes
geislasteinn	nm	geislasteinar	zeolite(s)
gervigígur	nm	gervigígur	pseudocrater(s)/rootless cone(s)
gil	nn	gil	ravine(s)/gorge(s)/gully(ies)
gígur	nm	gígur	crater(s)
gjall	nn	gjall	scoria/cinder
gjallgígur	nm	gjallgígur	scoria cone(s)
gjallgígaraðir	nf	gjallgígaraðir	scoria cone row(s)
gjallkenndur <sup>4</sup>	am	gjallkenndir	scoriaceous

gjallkennd <sup>4</sup>	af	gjallkenndar <sup>4</sup>	scoriaceous
gjallkennt <sup>4</sup>	an	gjallkennt <sup>4</sup>	scoriaceous
gjá	nf	gjár	tectonic fissure(s)/chasm(s)/ cleft(s)
gjóska (gosmöl/gosaska/ aska/vikur)	nf	gjóskur	tephra/pyroclastics [infrequently used]
gjóskuberg	nn	gjóskuberg	tuff (indurated)
gljúfur	nn	gljúfur	rocky ravine(s)/canyon(s)/gorge(s)
gnípa	nf	gnípur	pinnacle(s)/peak(s)/mountain summit(s)
gnúpur (núpur/hnjúkur)	nm	gnúpar	peak(s)/steep mountain(s)
gos <sup>2</sup>	nn	gos <sup>2</sup>	eruption(s) of volcanoes and geysers
gosaska (aska/gosmöl/ gjóska/vikur)	nf	gosöskar	tephra/volcanic ash [infrequently used]
gosbelti	nn	gosbelti	volcanic zone(s)
gosberg	nn	-	extrusive (volcanic) rock(s)
goshver <sup>3</sup>	nm	goshverir <sup>3</sup>	geyser
gosketill (askja)	nm	goskatlar	caldera(s)
gosmöl (gjóska/vikur/ gosaska/aska)	nf	-	tephra
gossprunga	nf	gossprungur	eruptive fissure(s)
grágrýti (dólerít*/díabas*)	nn	grágrýti	dolerite(s)
granít*	nn	-	granite
granófýr*	nn	-	granophyre
grettistak (grjót)	nn	grettistök	glacial erratic(s)
grjót (grettistak/stórgrýti)	nn	**	stones/glacial erratic(s)
**	nn	grjót	rocky area
grop	nn	-	porosity
grunn	nn	grunn	shoal(s)/shallows
grunnvatn	nn	grunnvötn	ground water
grunnvatnsborð	nn	grunnvatnsborð	groundwater table(s)
grunnvatnsskil	nn	grunnvatnsskil	groundwater divide(s)
grænn <sup>4</sup>	am	grænir <sup>4</sup>	green
græn <sup>4</sup>	af	grænar <sup>4</sup>	green
grænt <sup>4</sup>	an	græn <sup>4</sup>	green

gufa	nf	gufur	steam/vapor(s)
gufuhver <sup>3</sup>	nm	gufuhverir <sup>3</sup>	fumerole(s), solfatara(s) steam vent (s)
haf (sjór)	nn	höf	sea(s)/ocean(s)
hafís	nm	***	sea ice
hagi	nm	hagar	pasture(s)
háhitasvæði <sup>3</sup>	nn	-	high-temperature geothermal area (+200° C. at 1 km depth)
hálendi	nn	-	highlands
halli (jarðlagahalli)	nm	hallar	geologic dip(s)
háls	nm	hálsar	ridge(s)
hamar	nm	hamrar	crag(s)/cliff(s)/precipice(s)/rock(s)
haugur	nm	haugar	hummock(s)
heiði	nf	heiðar	heath(s)
hellir	nm	hellar	cave(s)/cavern(s)
helluhraun	nn	helluhraun	pahoehoe lava(s)/smooth lava(s)
hérað	nn	héruð	region(s)/district(s)/locality(ies)
hitaveita	nf	hitaveitur	district-heat distribution systems(s) (geothermal)
hjalli	nm	hjallar	terrace(s)
hjarn	nn	***	firn
hlíð	nf	hlíðar	slope(s)/mountainside(s)
hljóðbrot	nn	hljóðbrot	seismic refraction(s)
hljóðhraðamæling	nf	hljóðhraðamælingar	exploration seismology/seismic survey(s)
hljóðspeglun	nf	hljóðspeglanir	seismic reflection(s)
hlýskeið	nn	hlýskeið	interglacial
hnjúkur (núpur/gnúpur)	nm	hnjúkar	peak(s)
hnullungur	nm	hnullungar	cobble(s)/boulder(s)
hnyðlingur	nm	hnyðlingar	xenolith(s)
hnyklaberg	nn	hnyklaberg	pillow lava(s) [infrequently used]
holt	nn	holt	hill(s)/wood(s)-(archaic meaning)
hop	nn	hop	glacier retreat(s) or recession(s)
hóll	nm	hólar	rounded hill(s)/hillock(s)/knoll(s)
hólmur	nm	hólmar	islet(s)
hóp (lónavötn)	nn	hóp	land-locked inlet(s) still influenced by tides
hrafntinna	nf	-	obsidian
hraun	nn	hraun	lava/lava flow(s), rock avalanche used; e.g., hrun)
hraundrýli	nn	hraundrýli	hornito(es)

(hraun) flæði	nn	-	effusive lava flows [term only used during an eruption]
hraunhellir	nm	hraunhellar	lava tube(s)
hreppur	nm	hreppar	rural community(ies)/districts(s)
hringrás vatnsins	nf + nn	-	hydrologic cycle
hrunskriða (skriður)	nf	hrunskriður	talus
hryggur	nm	hryggir	ridge(s)
hús	nn	hús	house(s)/building(s)
hvalbak	nn	havalbök	roche(s) moutonnée(s)
hvammur	nm	hvammar	grassy hollow(s)/dell(s)
hvarfleir	nm	-	glacial varve(s)
hver <sup>3</sup>	nm	hverir <sup>3</sup>	hot spring(s) - (boiling or almost boiling water)
hverahrúður	nn	hverahrúður	hot-spring deposit(s)
hverfjall (öskugígur)	nn	hverfjöll	tephra ring(s)
hvítur <sup>4</sup>	am	hvítir <sup>4</sup>	white
hyrna	nf	hyrnur	mountain peak(s) (derived from horn)
hæð	nf	hæðir	height(s)/hill(s)
höfði	nm	höfðar	promontory(ies)/cape(s)/point(s)/headland(s)
höfn	nf	hafnir	harbor(s)/port(s)
innri <sup>5</sup>	a	-	inner
innskotsberg	nn	innskotsberg	intrusion(s)
innskotslag	nn	innskotslög	sill(s)
ís <sup>6</sup>	nm	ísar <sup>6</sup>	ice (singular); sea, lake, river ice (plural)
ísöld	nf	**	Pleistocene Epoch
ísrák (jökulrák)	nf	ísrákir	glacial stria(ae)
ísúr <sup>4</sup>	am	ísúrir <sup>4</sup>	intermediate silica composition (52-65 percent)
jafnskjálftalína	nf	jafnskjálftalínur	isoseism(s)
jarðeðlisfræði	nf	-	geophysics
jarðefnafræði	nf	-	geochemistry
jarðeldasvæði	nn	jarðeldasvæði	volcanic zone(s)
jarðfræði	nf	**	geology
**	nf	jarðfræði	geosciences
jarðfræðikort	nn	jarðfræðikort	geologic map(s)
jarðgas	nn	jarðgös	natural gas(es)

jarðgrunnskort	nn	jarðgrunnskort	surficial geologic map(s)
jarðgrunnur	nm	-	surficial deposits
jarðhitaleit	nf	-	geothermal exploration
jarðhiti	nm	-	geothermal heat, activity
jarðlag	nn	jarðlög	geologic stratum(a) or rock(s)
jarðlagافرæði	nf	-	stratigraphy
jarðlagahalli (halli)	nm	jarðlagahallar	geologic dip(s)
jarðlagastrik (strik)	nn	jarðlagastrik	geologic strikes(s)
jarðmyndun (myndun)	nf	jarðmyndanir	geologic formations
jarðolía	nf	jarðolíur	petroleum (plural: several types of oil)
jarðsaga	nf	-	historical geology
jarðskjálftafræði	nf	-	seismology
jarðskjálftamælin	nf	jarðskjálftamælar	seismograph(s)
jarðskjálfti	nf	jarðskjálftar	earthquake(s)
(landskjálfti)			
jarðskorpuhreyfing	nf	jarðskorpuhreyfingar	tectonics
jarðskorpa	nf	-	lithosphere, crust
jarðskrið	nn	jarðskrið	solifluction(s)
jarðtrog	nn	jarðtrog	geosyncline(s)
jarðvatn	nn	-	subsurface water
jarðvegur	nm	-	soil(s)
-	nf	jöklabreytingar	glacier variation
		(jöklabreytingar)	
jökulá (jökulsá)	nf	jökulár	glacier river(s)
jökulalda	nf	jökulöldur	terminal
(jökulgarður/jökulurð)			moraine(s)/drumlin(s)
jökulárset	nn	jökulárset	fluvioglacial deposit(s)
jökulberg	nn	-	tillite
jökulbreiða	nf	jökulbreiður	ice sheet(s)
-	nf	jökulbreytingar	glacier variation
		(jöklabreytingar)	
jökuleyðing	nf	-	deglaciation
jökulgap	nn	-	bergschund
jökulgarður	nm	jökulgarðar	terminal moraine(s)
(jökulalda/jökulurð)			(moraines)
jökulhetta	nf	jökulhettur	ice cap(s)
jökulhlaup	nn	jökulhlaup	glacier outburst flood(s)
jökulkast	nn	jökulköst	calving(s) of glacier terminus
jökulkemba	nf	jökulkembur	fluted moraine(s)
jökulker	nn	jökulker	ice kettle(s)/ice cauldron(s)
jökull	nm	jöklar	glacier(s)
jökulrák (ísrák)	nf	jökulrákir	glacial stria(ae)



jökulruðningur	nm	jökulruðningar	glacial till(s)/ground moraine/glacial drift
jökulrönd	nf	jökulrendur/ jökulrandir	margin(s) of a glacier
jökulröst	nf	jökulrastir	ice stream(s)
jökulá (jökulsá)	nf	jökulár	glacier river(s)
jökulskál	nf	jökulskálar/ jökulskálir	cirque(s)
jökulskeið	nn	jökulskeið	glacial epoch(s)
jökulsker	nn	jökulsker	nunatak(s)
jökulsprunga	nf	jökulsprungur	glacier crevasse(s)
jökulsvarf	nn	-	glacial abrasion (e.g., fine particles)
jökulsvörfun	nf	-	glacial erosion (the process)
jökultunga	nf	jökultungur	glacier tongue(s)
jökulurð	nf	jökulurðir	moraine(s)
(jökulalda/jökulgarður)			
jörð	nf	jarðir	earth/soil/Earth/farm(s)
kalkhrúður	nn	kalkrúður	calcium carbonate deposit(s) from a hot spring
kambur	nm	kambar	crest of hill
kaupstaður	nm	kaupstaðir	Icelandic town(s) with a special legal and administrative status: Reykjavík and 22 others
kauptún	nn	kauptún	village(s)
keilugangur	nf	keilugangar	inclined sheet(s) (intrusions), cone sheets
kelda	nf	keldur	pool(s), bottomless pit(s)
ker (sprengigígur)	nn	ker	maar(s)
kirkja	nf	kirkjur	church(es)
kísilgúr	nm	-	diatomite
kísilhrúður	nn	-	silica deposit(s) from a hot spring
kleif	nf	kleifar	very steep slope(s)/narrow (steep) passage(s)/narrow glen(s) on a mountainside/rock(s), slanted top
on			
klepragígur	nm	klepragígar	spatter cone(s)/scoria cones
klepragígaröð	nf	klepragígaraðir	spatter cone row(s)/crater row(s)/mixed cone row(s)
klettur	nm	klettar	cliff(s)/crag(s)/rock(s)

klif	nn	klif	very narrow path(s) or passage(s)/ mountain pass(es)/steep rock(s)
kol motor)	nn	kol	coal (singular: coil in electric
kornastærð	nf	kornastæðir	grain size(s)
kort (landabréf/ landkort/ uppdráttur)	nn	kort	map(s)
krókur	nm	krókar	crook/sharp bend/nook/corner or enclosed area hidden from view in the landscape
kubbaberg	nn	-	cube-jointed basalt
kvarter*	nn	-	Quaternary Period
kviksyndi	nn	kviksyndir	quagmire(s)
kvikuþró	nf	kvikuþrær	magma chamber(s)
kvísl	nf	kvíslir	river(s)/tributary(ies)
lag	nn	lög	layer(s)/stratum(a)
lagskipting	nf	***	stratification
lág hitasvæði <sup>3</sup>	nn	lág hitasvæði <sup>3</sup>	low-temperature geothermal area(s) (+150° C. at 1 km depth)
land	nn	lönd	land(s)/area(s)
landabréf (kort/ landkort/uppdráttur)	nn	landabréf	map(s)
landabréfabók	nf	landabréfabækur	atlas(es)
landafræði	nf	-	geography
landkort(kort/ landabréf/uppdráttur)	nn	landkort	map(s)
landmæling	nf	landmælingar	geodetic surveying
landmótunarfræði	nf	-	geomorphology
landrek	nn	-	continental drift/plate tectonics
landskjálfti (jarðskjálfti)	nm	landskjálftar	earthquake(s)
laug <sup>3</sup>	nf	laugar	warm spring(s)
leir	nm	**	clay
leira	nf	leirur	a muddy area, periodically flooded, in rivers or along shores of lakes
leirhver <sup>3</sup>	nm	leirhverir <sup>3</sup>	mudpot, boiling mudpot
leirsteinn	nm	-	mudstone, siltstone
lekt	nf	-	permeability

leysing	nf	leysingar	ablation
leysingarvatn	nn	-	meltwater
lind	nf	lindir	spring(s)
lindá	nf	lindár	spring-fed river(s)
lindakalk	nn	-	travertine
líparít* (ljósgrýti)	nn	líparít*	rhyolite
ljósgrýti (líparít*)	nn	ljósgrýti	rhyolite
ljósgrýtistúff*	nn	ljósgrýtistúff*	rhyolitic tuff(s)
loftslag	nn	-	climate
loftsteinn	nm	loftsteinar	meteorite(s)
lón	nn	lón	lagoon(s)/inlet(s)
lónavatn (hóp)	nn	lónavötn	land-locked inlet(s) still influenced by tides
lækur	nm	lækir	brook(s)
malarás	nm	malarásar	esker(s)
málmgrýti	nn	-	ore
megineldstöð	nf	megineldstöðvar	central volcano(es)
melur	nm	melar	gravel(s)
miðlífsöld	nf	-	Mesozoic Era
misgengi	nn	misgengi	fault(s)
misgengisstallar	nm	misgengisstallar	fault scarp(s)
mislægi	nn	mislægi	unconformity(ies)
móberg	nn	-	tuff(s)/hyaloclastite(s)/ palagonite(s)
-	nf	móbergsbreksíur	hyaloclastite breccia
móbergshryggur	nm	móbergshryggir	hyaloclastite/palagonite ridges(s)
móbergsmýndun	nf	móbergsmýndanir	palagonite formation(s)
móbergssæt	nn	móbergssæt	tuffaceous sediment(s)
móbergsstapi (stapi)	nm	móbergsstapar	table mountain(s)
móbergspursi	nm	-	palagonitic breccia
múli	nm	múlar	low, rounded mountain(s)/ headland(s)
myndbreyting	nf	myndbreytingar	metamorphism
myndbreytt berg	an + nn	myndnbreytt berg	metamorphic rock(s)
myndun (jarðmyndun)	nf	myndanir	geologic formation(s)
mynni	nn	mynni	mouth(s)/outlet(s)
mýri	nf	mýrar	bog(s)/mire(s)
mælikvarði	nm	mælikvarðar	scale(s)
möl	nf	-	gravel(s)/pebble(s)

náma	nf	námur	quarry(ies)/pit(s)/mine(s)
náttúrlegt umhverfi	an + nn	natturleg umhverfi	natural environment(s)
nes (skagi)	nn	nes	peninsula(s)/headland(s)/ point(s)/cape(s)
norður <sup>1</sup>	nn/ad	-	north
núpur (hnjúkur/gnúpur)	nm	núpar	peak(s)
nútími (eftir ísöld)	nm	-	Holocene or Recent Epoch
nyrðri <sup>1</sup>	a	-	northern
nýlífsöld	nf	-	Cenozoic Era
oddi	nm	oddar	promontory(ies)/point(s)/ tongue(s) of land
ós	nm	ósar	mouth(s) of a river/estuary(ies)
óseyri	nf	óseyrar	delta(s)
perlusteinn	nm	-	perlite
rafsegulmæling	nf	rafsegulmælingar	electromagnetic survey(s)
rauður <sup>4</sup>	am	rauðir <sup>4</sup>	red
rekbelti	nn	rekbelti	rift zone(s)
rétt segulmögnun	an + nn	-	normal polarity
reykur	nm	reykir	smoke/steam
rif	nn	rif	reef(s)/bank(s)
rishryggur	nm	rishryggir	horst(s)
rof	nn	rof denudation	
rofabarð	nn	rofabörð	soil patch(es)
rúst	nf	rústir	palsa(en)/ruin(s)
rönd á skriðjökli	nf + p + nm	randir/rendur á skriðjökli	medial moraine(s)
röst	nf	rastir	strong ocean (tidal) current(s)
samhverfa	nf	samhverfur	syncline(s)
samhverfuás	nm	samhverfuásar	synclinal axis(es)
samsætu hlutfall	nn	samsætu hlutföll	isotopic ratio(s)
sandalda	nf	sandöldur	dune(s)
sandsteinn	nm	-	sandstone

sandur	nm	sandar (aurar)	sand/area(s) of sand/glacial outwash plain(s)
segulmagn	nn	-	magnetic polarity
segulmæling	nf	segulmælingar	geomagnetic survey(s)
set	nn	set	sediment(s)
setberg	nn	-	sedimentary rocks
setlag	nn	setlög	sedimentary deposit(s)/clastic sediment(s)
setmyndun	nf	setmyndanir	sedimentation
sífreri	nm	-	permafrost
sigdalur/sigdæld	nf	sigdalir/sigdældir	graben(s)
siggengi	nn	siggengi	normal fault(s)
sigketill	nm	sigkatlar	collapse cauldron(s) on a glacier or a volcano
sjávarrof	nn	-	wave abrasion or erosion
sjór (haf)	nm	sjóir	sea(s)/ocean(s)/seawater/waves or breakers; [sjóir (large waves)]
skagi (nes)	nm	skagar	peninsula(s)/headland(s)/cape(s)
skarð	nn	skörð	mountain pass(es)
skálarjökull	nm	skálarjökklar	cirque glacier(s)
sker	nn	sker	skerry(ies)
-	nn	skil	geologic contact(s)
skjálftamiðja	nf	skjálftamiðjur	epicenter(s)
**	nf	skjálftaupptök	hypocenter
skjálftavirkni	nf	-	seismicity
skógur	nm	skógar	wood(s)/forest(s)
skriðjökull	nm	skriðjökklar	outlet glacier(s)/valley glacier(s)
skriðuhlaup	nn	skriðuhlaup	rock avalanche(s)
(bergskrið/berghlaup)			
skriða (hrunskriða)	nm	skriður	talus
skriðukeila	nf	skriðukeilur	alluvial cone(s)
slétta	nf	sléttur	plain(s)/field(s)/an area of level ground
snefilefni	nn +	snefilefni	trace element distribution(s)
útbreiðsla	nf	útbreiðslur	
sniðgengi	nn	sniðgengi	strike-slip fault(s)
snjóflód (skjós-kriða)	nn	snjóflóð	snow avalanche(s)
snjór <sup>8</sup>	nm	snjóar <sup>8</sup>	snow/lots of snow/layers of snow/ snowfall(s)
snjós-kriða (snjoflód)	nf	snjós-kriður	snow avalanche(s)
snælna	nf	snælnur	snow line(s)
snær <sup>8</sup>	nm	-	snow

sprengigígaröð (öskugíraröð)	nm	sprengígaraðir	tephra ring row(s)
sprengigígur (ker)	nm	sprengigígar	maar(s)
sprengigjá	nf	sprengigjár	explosion fissure(s)/maar row(s) explosion chasm(s)sprunga
	nf	sprungur	fissure(s)/crack(s)/fracture(s)
staður	nm	staðir	place(s)/spot(s)
stapi (móbergsstapi)	nm	stapar	rocky hill(s)/bluff(s)/table mountain(s)
steinafræði	nf	-	mineralogy
steingervingafræði	nf	-	paleontology
steingervingur	nm	steingervingar	fossil(s)
steinn (berg)	nm	steinar	stone(s)/rock(s)
steind	nf	steindir	mineral(s)
steintegund	nf	steintegundir	rock type(s)
stórgrýti	nn	stórgrýti	large rock(s)/boulder(s)
storkuberg	nn	storkuberg	igneous rock(s)
strandlína	nf	strandlínur	raised beach(es)/coastline(s)/ terrace(s)
strik (jarðlagastrik)	nn	strik	geologic strike
strönd (fjara)	nf	strendur/strandir	coast(s)/shore(s)/beache(es)/ strand(s)
stöð	nf	stöðvar	station(s)
stöðug samsæta	af+	stöðugar	stable isotopes
	nf	samsætur	
suða	nf	suður	boiling(s); suður is infrequently used
suður <sup>1</sup>	nn/ad	-	south
súr <sup>4</sup>	am	súrir <sup>4</sup>	acidic (more than 65 percent SiO <sub>2</sub> ) rocks (also applies to pH of liquids)
surtarbrandur (brúnkol)	nm	-	lignite
svartur <sup>4</sup>	am	svartir <sup>4</sup>	black
sveit	nf	sveitir	countryside/rural district(s)
svæði	nn	svæði	area(s)/place(s)/region(s)/ tract(s) of land
svörfun	nf	-	erosion
syðri <sup>1</sup>	a	-	southern
sýsla	nf	sýslur	county(ies)
sæluhús	nn	sæluhús	hut(s), emergency hut(s)

tangi	nm	tangar	narrow peninsula(s)/ promontory(ies)/ point(s) of land
tertiér*	nn	-	Tertiary Period
tímabil	nn	tímabil	period(s)
tindur	nm	tindar	pinnacle(s)/summit(s)
tjörn	nf	tjarnir	small lake(s)/pond(s)/ pool(s)/ tarn(s)
tunga	nf	tungur	tongue(s) of land usually between several rivers
tún	nn	tún	fertilized farm field(s)
undir jökli	p + nm	undir jöklum	subglacial, beneath glaciers
uppblástur (vindrof)	nm	-	denudation/wind erosion
uppdráttur (kort/ landkort/landabréf)	nm	uppdrættir	map(s)
upphafsöld	nf	-	Archeozoic Era
útkulnaður <sup>4</sup>	am	útkulnaðir <sup>4</sup>	inactive/extinct
vað	nn	vöð	ford(s)
varða	nf	vörður	cairn(s)
vatn	nn	vötn	lake(s)/water
vatnafræði	nf	-	hydrology
vatnaset	nn	vatnaset	alluvium
vatnaskil	nn	vatnaskil	water divide(s)
vatnasvið	nn	vatnasvið	drainage basin(s)
vatnsgildi	nn +	-	water equivalent of snow
snævar <sup>8</sup>	nm		
vatnshver <sup>3</sup>	nm	vatnshverir <sup>3</sup>	hot spring(s)
veðrun	nf	-	weathering
veður	nn	-	weather
vegur	nm	vegir	road(s)/path(s)/way(s)/route(s)
ver	nn	ver	wet area(s)/highland bog(s)/ nesting area(s)/ fishing station(s) or place(s)
vestur <sup>1</sup>	nn/ad		western
viðnámsmæling	nf	viðsnámsmælingar	electrical resistance measurement(s)/ survey(s)

vikur (aska/gosmöl/ gjóska/gosaska)	nn	vikrar	pumice/lapilli/pumice flats or pumice-covered area(s)
vík	nf	víkur	bay(s)/cove(s)/creek(s)
vindrof (uppblástur)	nn	vindrof	deflation
virkur <sup>4</sup>	am	virkir <sup>4</sup>	active
víti	nm	vitir	lighthouse(s)
víti	nn	víti	hell/also used for explosive volcanic craters or maars
vogur	nm	vogar	inlet(s)/cove(s)/creek(s)
volgra <sup>3</sup>	nf	volgrur <sup>3</sup>	lukewarm spring(s)
völlur	nm	vellir	field(s)/plain(s)
völuberg	nn	-	conglomerate
yfirborðslag	nn	yfirborðslög	surficial layer(s)
yfirborðsvatn	nn	-	surface water
ytri <sup>5</sup>	am	ytri <sup>5</sup>	outer
ytri <sup>5</sup>	af	ytri <sup>5</sup>	outer
ytra <sup>5</sup>	an	ytru <sup>5</sup>	outer
þelaurð	nf	þelaurðir	rock glacier(s)
þing	nn	þing	meeting(s)/parliament(s)
þorp	nn	þorp	village(s)
þúfa	nf	þúfur	frost mound(s)/small hillock(s)/ mound(s)/knoll(s)
þursaberg	nn	þursaberg	breccia
þyngdarafl jarðar	nn + nf	-	gravity
þyngdarmæling	nf	þyngdarmælingar	gravity survey(s)
öfugt segulmagn	an + nn	-	reverse polarity
ölkelda	nf	ölkeldur	cold, carbon dioxide spring(s)
-	nm	öræfi	wasteland/desert/wilderness
öskufall	nn	-	tephra fall
öskugígaröð (sprengigígaröð)	nf	öskugígaraðir	tephra ring row(s)
öskulagatímatöl	nn	öskulagatímatöl	tephrochronology(ies)
öskugígur (hverfjall)	nm	öskugígar	tephra ring(s)
öxi <sup>9</sup>	nf	axir <sup>9</sup>	axe(s)



## Glossary notes

1. Austur (east), vestur (west), norður (north), and suður (south) can be nouns (neuter) as well as adverbs; it all depends on the context in which they are used. As in English, the above adverbial form is the positive one; they also exist as adjectives in the comparative and superlative forms:

<u>Positive (Adv.)</u>	<u>Comparative (Adj.)</u>	<u>Superlative (Adj.)</u>
austur	eystri or austari	austastur
vestur	vestri or vestari	vestastur
norður	nyrðri or norðari	nyrstur
suður	syðri	syðstur

2. Gos is also used in the vernacular as an abbreviation for gosdrykkur, the Icelandic word for soda pop or a soft drink.
3. Geothermal activity in Iceland is divided into two types of areas on the basis of water temperature at a depth of 1 kilometer: (1) háhitasvæði (high-temperature areas (+200°C)) which have leirhverir or brennissteinshverir (solfataras), gufuhverir (fumeroles), goshverir (geysers), etc.; and lághitasvæði (low-temperature areas (+150°C)) which have a variety of types of vatnshverir (springs), such as hverir (hot springs; > 70°C), laugar (warm springs; 30°C-70°C), and volgrur (lukewarm springs; < 30°C). The distinction between hver and laug is not based solely on the water temperature; it varies throughout Iceland, depending on what is considered to be “warm” or “hot” in each district.
4. Adjectives usually have different forms in the singular and plural of masculine, feminine, and neuter grammatical genders; for example, the word green:

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
masculine	grænn	grænir
feminine	græn	grænar
neuter	grænt	græn

5. Inner in Icelandic only exists as comparative (innri) and superlative (innstur) adjectives; the same holds true for outer, with ytri the comparative and ystur the superlative form of the adjective.
6. Ís is also used in the vernacular as the Icelandic word for ice cream; in the plural (ísar) it means ice cream cones, but it can also mean ice from a meteorological standpoint.
7. Deglaciation can also be expressed as eyðing jökla.
8. Snjór (snow) is a masculine noun which has very irregular declensions, including multiple spelling variations within the singular cases:

singular:	nominative	snjór, snær, snjár
	accusative	snjó, snæ, snjá
	dative	snjó, snæ (vi), snjá (vi)
	genitive	snjós/snjóar, snævar, snjávar, snjóvar
plural:	nominative	snjóar
	accusative	snjóa
	dative	snjóum
	genitive	snjóa

9. Axar (ax) is the form of the genitive case or declension; for example, Axarfjörður.

## Glossary sources

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