

A List of Questions useful in developing your Norse character

A more rounded character is more realistic when interacting with the public, as you can more closely relate to your character having thought about some of these things, and answer as your character. It is also more fun amongst ourselves, as you can interact with other people's characters on a more realistic level.

It is not necessary to answer all of these questions (or any of them, really). This is merely a list of ideas to help develop your character to use in the Reik Felag Norse Culture Recreation Society. Do not feel bound or limited by these ideas.

It is best to consider your character to be continually evolving and changing, just as you are in real life. Also, try not to get too attached to an outlandish idea, particularly one that the rest of the group might have a problem with, or that doesn't fit the group's backstory (you might really want to be the Prince of Denmark, but if that doesn't jive with the local group, it's going to lead to friction).

I've personally found it easier to reflect much of my own real life in my character. For example, I grew up in a smallish coastal town but moved east to the big city (Vancouver) to make money. So my character grew up in a small farming village on the Baltic, and moved east to Kiev to make money. I've been hospitalized three times, so my character has been wounded in battle three times (and has the scars to prove it!). My character's age is exactly the same as my own, and so as the years go by for me, I consider the historical events that happened in those years.

1. Where was your Character born?

Consider broad classifications ("I'm a Dane" or "I'm a Gotlander", etc), as well as specifics ("I'm from a small farming village in Varmland"). What was the weather there like? How long has your family lived there? What is the standing of your family amongst the locals? How long did you live there before striking out on your own? What are your opinions of other people or places that you've heard about or actually visited?

2. When was your Character born?

How old are you? What were the Historical events that you witnessed or heard about? What were your opinions on those events?

3. Childhood

What did you do for fun? What duties or chores were expected of you? Who were your neighbors or childhood friends? What were the big events in childhood that shaped you?

4. Character's family

What did your Parents do? Are they still alive? If not, how did they die?

What was the family's means of support? What was family life like? Do you have any siblings? Where are they now? What do they do? Do you keep in contact with them? What are the feelings between you and your family? What support did your family give you when you set out?

5. Has your Character begun your own family?

Are you married, or planning on it? Was it arranged? What were the dowry and bride-price? Are you happy with the marriage? Do you have children? Are they legitimate? What are they like? Do you want to have children (or more children)?

6. Where or how was your Character educated?

Where did you learn your skills? From your Father/Mother/Uncle/Trusted thrall? Were you fostered? Any special skills (craftsman, merchanting, warrior, rune-knowledge)? Where did they come from? Did you have to travel or otherwise sacrifice to gain them?

7. What does your Character do for a living?

Why? Have you ever done anything else for a living? Did you enjoy it? Why did you stop doing it? Would you go back? What path led you here?

8. What are your Character's political beliefs?

Do you support the current power structure? Do you agree with the local jarl or king? Would you rebel? Have you or any member of your close family ever been exiled or punished by a jarl or Althing?

9. What are your Character's religious beliefs?

Do you follow the old ways? If so, how strongly? Are you a Christian? If not, what do you think of Christianity? What were your parent's beliefs? Have you been exposed to other belief systems (Islam, Lapp shamanism, etc)? What do you think of them?

10. What is your Character's moral code?

What do you consider to be wrong? What do you consider to be a sin? How should wrong-doers be punished? Is there anything you would rather die than do?

11. Does your Character have any goals?

Is this all you ever want to do? Do you have any ambitions beyond the here and now? Are you satisfied with the way things are? If not, why not, and how do you plan to change things?

12. What special qualities does your Character possess?

This does not necessarily refer to skills, but to what you do well. Do you get along well with people? Are you skilled at taking care of business? Planning ahead? Boasting? Making up rhymes? Juggling? Are you good at cooking or handling a work crew?

13. What does your Character hate?

14. What does your Character love?

15. What is your Character's name?

Don't include nicknames; the group will eventually evolve one for you...

Do think to go a few generations back with the Patronymics ("I am Ragnar, son of Erik, son of Bjarni, son of Ingvar who fought alongside Ivar the Boneless.")