

Fönster mot svenskan och Skandinavien

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Introduction

The material in this book consists of modules accompanied by online *Media Workbook* materials and web exercises. It is not intended as a "stand-alone" book but rather for use within a North American university course context with an instructor of Swedish. Your instructor will bring supplementary, additive materials into the classroom (web-TV, games, etc.) The textbook is released under the *Gnu Public License*. It is suggested that you print/view the module-PDFs in color, to take advantage of layout and images. (If you are an instructor and would like to use one or several modules in your course, please just contact the author.)

When creating this material, a number of criteria served as guidance, such as:

- ✧ an assumption that culture is intrinsically connected to language. Here, for Swedish, this involves Swedish-speaking areas and the larger Scandinavian and Nordic regions, as well as the Scandinavian exodus to North America. The material is organized thematically in seven modules (2-4 weeks each):
 - *Scandinavians (past)*
 - *Swedes (present)*
 - *Space, time and traditions (includes weather, seasons, etc.)*
 - *Entrepreneurship and business life*
 - *Nature, environment, and free time*
 - *Politics and a bit of history*
 - *Art in Scandinavia*

As culture is by nature to some degree subjective, a critical point-of-view is encouraged.

- ✧ an assumption that it is important to face authentic language immediately, even though it is sometimes challenging. Conversational or interview clips in the *Media Workbook* exercises are thus real and not scripted (and background noise, incomplete sentences, informal language etc. occur just like in real conversations). As for other visuals, most photos were photographed as part of the project in Scandinavia; some images are from Wikimedia Commons. For the drawings, I am grateful to Christina Alm-Arvius and to UVic Humanities Computing and Media Centre and Half-Baked Software's Clipart Library.
- ✧ an assumption that we learn language and culture in individual ways and that our individual motivations for learning Swedish often differ. You are encouraged to explore Swedish and Scandinavian culture as tailored to your own academic and professional goals. For example, portfolio and podcast assignments allow freedom to individualize your language learning experience.

- ✧ an assumption that language and culture forms part of an educational academic experience that prepares you for a variety of future responsibilities. As an example, in addition to language structures, vocabulary, and communicative functions for how to *do* things (such as thanking, asking, complementing, agreeing, disagreeing, expressing emotions, etc.), metalinguistic concepts and analysis of spoken and written texts are assumed important.
- ✧ an assumption that the users of this book enjoy to be challenged. Concepts are presented at a level, pace, and in a mode appropriate for a university with discovery, observation, analysis and discussion playing important roles. Your instructor will also provide a great deal of support and explanations!
- ✧ this material is also intended to optimize language structures (rather than "brute-force" coverage) and it draws on recent academic literature on Swedish. Thus, presentations of language structures etc. will at times differ from traditional textbooks. If you are also using a grammar book, it may sometimes present "the other side".

Lastly, any feedback you wish to provide during or after your use of the textbook is appreciated. If you make me aware of something that you believe is an inconsistency and I agree that it is a true error, I will acknowledge your name in the next version (if you allow me).

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