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# for, prep. and conj.

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**Pronunciation:** /fɔ:(r) / /fə(r) /

**Forms:** Also ME *fer*, ME *south. vor*, *Orm. forr*.

**Etymology:** Old English *for* prep. = Old Frisian, Old Saxon *for*, Gothic *four* ... [\(Show More\)](#)

## A. prep.

†**I.** = before *adv.*, *prep.*, *conj.*, *adj.*, and *n.* in various uses. *Obs.* (see *fore n.*)

### 1. Of place.

#### a. In front of; = before *adv.* 2.

OE *Beowulf* 358 He for eaxlum gestod Deniga frean.  
 OE *Genesis* 2108 For þæs eagum þe ðe æsca tir æt guðe forgeaf!  
 a1300 *Cursor M.* 10497 (Cott.), Sco sagh þat angel for hir stand.  
 a1616 Shakespeare *All's Well that ends Well* (1623) iv. iv. 3 For whose throne 'tis needfull to kneele.

[\(Hide quotations\)](#)

#### b. In the presence or sight of; = before *adv.* 3, 4.

OE *Beowulf* 1649 Ða wæs on flet boren Grendles heafod legeslic for eorlum.  
 c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 113 Mori monnis erm for worlde and uniseli for gode.

[\(Hide quotations\)](#)

#### c. In asseveration; = before *adv.* 5 (Cf. Greek *πρός*.) In later use replaced by *fore n.*

c1230 *Hali Meid.* 25 For gode hit is wlateful þing for te þenke þron.  
 c1380 *Sir Ferumbras* (1879) l. 2564 My prayer ys now ido. For gode also ys myn al-so.  
 c1420 *Chron. Vilod.* 838 ʒeysse for God, quod þe knyʒt, dede he was.

[\(Hide quotations\)](#)

#### d. Into the presence of.

OE *Genesis* 871 Ne dear nu forð gan for ðe andweardne.  
 a1300 *Cursor M.* (Gött.) 23933 Leuedillede me wið þe for þi sun.

[\(Hide quotations\)](#)

### 2. Of time; = before *prep.* 7– 9. **for lang:** long ago. (Cf. ON. *fyrer*.)

a1000 *Leg. Fursæus in Rel. Ant.* I. 276 Ic wat þone man on Criste, þe wæs ge-gripen nu for feowertyne gearum.  
 ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 6996 Forrlanng.  
 ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 3076 Itt wass formaniz daʒʒ Ær cwiddedd þurh prophetess.  
 ?c1225 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Cleo. C.vi) (1972) 20 Bute hit beo hali

Second edition, 1989; online version September 2011

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## In this entry:

- be for it, to
- be for, to
- bulk for bulk
- day for day
- fight hand for hand, to
- for a great deal
- for all
- for all
- for all
- for all that
- for all that
- for all the world
- for and
- for any
- for a while
- for because
- for cause
- for certain
- for ever
- for fear of, that
- for free
- for good (and all)
- for lang
- for life
- for long, for a or the time
- for me
- for my, his, etc. part
- for my mind
- for one thing
- for real
- for rent
- for sale
- for and againsts
- for so far
- for sure
- for the first, second, etc. time
- for the general
- for the or †this present
- for the rest
- for the sake of
- for to
- for to die for it
- for wiss
- (he may do it) for me
- (I, etc.) for one
- (it is) for (a person) to do something
- (I would not) for anything
- leave for dead, to
- name a child for, to
- narrow escape for
- one's life, a

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<b>for, prep. and conj.</b>	<b>OE</b>
for-, prefix1	c1200
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nicht for feste.

a1300 *Cursor M.* 10716 (Cott.), Þe propheci Was said for lang of ysai.

(Hide quotations)

### 3. In preference to, above; = before *prep.* 11.

OE *Dream of Rood* 93 He his modor eac, Marian sylfe, ælmihtig god for ealle menn geweorðode ofer eall wifa cynn.

c1275 (1200) *Laȝamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 6946 Ah for alle ure goden deore! Woden hehde þa hæhste læȝe.

c1300 *Beket* 721 The statutz of Clarendone ech bischop holde scholde; And nameliche theo for alle other.

14.. *Sir Beues* 160 (MS. M.), Sir, blessud be ye for alle men!

1486–1504 *Let.* in W. Denton *Eng. in 15th Cent.* (1888) Note D. 318 It is mor meritory to support flyowre tenants rather then a stronge man, the pore! for a genty lman or a genty lmans man.

(Hide quotations)

## II. Of representation, substitution or exchange.

### 4.

#### a. Representing, as representative of.

'The member for — shire' now belongs rather to A. 13c.

OE *Guthlac A* 200 Swa him yrsade, se for ealle spræc feonda mengu.

a1225 *Leg. Kath.* 952 An, for ham alle, Onswerede ant seide.

1414 *Rolls of Parl.* IV. 22/2 Youre humble and trewe lieges that ben come for the Co[mmun]e of youre lond.

1582 N. Lichefield tr. F. L. de Castanheda *1st Bk. Hist. Discouerie E. Indias* v. 14 b, Their Xequel which was there for the king.

1842 T. B. Macaulay *Ess.* (1848) II. 187 The members for many counties and large towns.

1843 *Fraser's Mag.* 28 334 Walker returned thanks for his lady.

1891 *Law Times* 92 124/2 Lord Palmerston and the Earl of Mass., both Irish Peers, sat for English constituencies.

(Hide quotations)

#### b. In elliptical expressions, *once for all*, † *for all*. Cf.

German *ein für allemal*.

a1616 Shakespeare *Cymbeline* (1623) ii. iii. 103 Learne now, for all, That I [etc.].

1820 J. S. Knowles *Virginus* ii. ii, Now, once for all, farewell!

1881 *Bible* (R.V.) Heb. vii. 27 For this he did once for all [1611: once], when he offered up himself.

(Hide quotations)

### 5. In place of, instead of.

c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: Matt.* (Corpus Cambr.) ii. 22 He gehyrde þæt archelaus rixode on iudea-þeode for ðæne herodem.

a1300 *Cursor M.* 9972 (Cott.), Marial stondes vs for sceild and targe, Agains all ure wiperwyns.

c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (Roxb.) vi. 19 He died! and his broþer regned for him.

1553 T. Wilson *Arte Rhetorique* (1580) 223 Somel will saye! Blacke Vellet, for blacke Veluet.

1611 *Bible* (A.V.) Luke xi. 11 Will he for a fish giue him a serpent?

1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* i, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 49 Bacchus and! Ceres! gave us Corn for Mast, for Water Wine.

1742 E. Young *Complaint* i. 14 'Tis only change of pain! Severer for severe.

1801 M. Edgeworth *Prussian Vase* in *Moral Tales* III. 67 She could not write! the count had written all that was wanting for her.

1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* II. 208 For the old test! was substituted a

now for

oh for

once for all

play for (a certain stake), to

point for point

run, etc. for it, to

take for granted, to

(there is) nothing for it but

try a man for his life, to

turn (something) end

for end, to

what for—

what is he, etc. for (a

man, etc.)

#### In other dictionaries:

for, prep. in Middle English Dictionary [▶](#)

for in Dictionary of Old English [▶](#)

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new test.

- 1895 Lake in *Law Times* 99 468/2 They will employ somebody to do the business for them.

(Hide quotations)

6. Of payment, purchase, sale, etc. = *in exchange for* at exchange *n.* 1g.

a. Introducing the thing bought or sold, etc.: As the price of, or the penalty on account of. Also after verbs, e.g. *pay n.*, q.v.

- c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: Matt.* (Corpus Cambr.) v. 38 Eage for eage and toð for toð.  
c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 9 Nouþer gold ne seoluer ne moste gan for þe.  
?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) Ded. l. 143, I shall hafenn forr min swinnc. God læn.  
c1330 R. Mannyng *Chron.* (1725) I. 174 Men gaf fueten schillynges for a goos or a heen.  
1542 *Accts. St. John's Hosp., Canterbury* (Canterbury Cathedral Archives: CCA-U13/4), To Nycholes for the byllet for the schyr and hys costis xv s.  
1789 C. Durnford & E. H. East *Rep. Cases King's Bench* III. 467 The right of a seller to his goods, where he cannot receive payment for them.  
1895 *Bookman* Oct. 17/2 The Duc d'Aumale's great work for which some of us would gladly give all the novels ever written.

(Hide quotations)

b. In requital of.

- c1000 *Ags. Ps.* xxxiv. [xxxv]. 14 Aguldon me yfelu for godum.  
1583 C. Hollyband *Campo di Fior* 107 That she giue vs something for our paines.  
1677 R. Plot *Nat. Hist. Oxford-shire* 151 Being found to yield considerably better than most other wheat, viz. sometimes twenty for one.  
1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iv. in 14 *Virgil Wks.* 129 Describe we next the Nature of the Bees, Bestow'd by Jove for secret Services.  
a1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 209 A full punishment for all his misdeeds.  
1885 *Law Rep.: Queen's Bench Div.* 14 869 Counsell who should take nothing for their services.  
1895 A. I. Shand *Life Gen. Hamley* I. ii. 21 He was very soundly thrashed for his pains.

(Hide quotations)

III.

7.

a. In defence or support of; in favour of, on the side of. Opposed to *against*. Often *predicatively*.

- c1000 *Ælfric Exodus* xiv. 14 And Drihten fiht for eow.  
c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 7 Heo sculen bidden for heom.  
c1380 Wyclif *Sel. Wks.* III. 363 How shulde men fihte for a persone þat þei witen not [etc.].?  
1550 R. Crowley *One & Thyrtie Epigr.* sig. Aviii, Where euerye man is for him selfe and no manne for all.  
1600 Shakespeare *Much Ado about Nothing* ii. i. 348 My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights watchings.  
1676 T. Hobbes in tr. Homer *Iliads* (1686) Pref. 9 Homer indeed maketh some Gods for the Greeks and some for the Trojans.  
1690 J. Locke *Two Treat. Govt.* ii. vi, Blinded contenders for monarchy.  
1711 R. Steele *Spectator* No. 118. 13 Take my Word for it she is no Fool.  
1743 J. Bulkeley & J. Cummins *Voy. to South-seas* Ded. 8 The Right Honourable Persons who will one Day determine for or against us.  
1795 *Hist.* in *Ann. Reg.* 82 Fortune declared at last for the convention.  
1847 A. Helps *Friends in Council* I. ix. 168 You argue for it in vain.

1885 *Law Rep.: Chancery Div.* 30 13, I do not think that the cases carry out the proposition for which he has cited them.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** In exclamations, indicating the person, etc. favoured.

1664 S. Butler *Hudibras* ii. ii. 110 Did ride Crying, hey for our town through the burrough.

1835 E. Bulwer-Lytton *Rienzi* II. iii. i. 6 'Hurrah for the knight of St. John!' cried the mercenaries; 'And hurrah for fair France and bold Germany!'

(Hide quotations)

**c. to be for:** to be ready to act for, to be on the side of, or in favour of, to advocate. [Thesaurus »](#)

1590 R. Harvey *Plaine Percevall* 23 So hauing skinkde mine Vltimum Vale in a parting pot, I put you both in a draught: And drinke to the funerals of your Enimitie. Stay good neighbors, now I am for your company.

1600 Shakespeare *Much Ado about Nothing* ii. i. 348 My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights watchings.

1610 J. Healey tr. Epictetus *Manuall* (1636) 147 Like unto beasts, they are all for the belly.

1692 J. Locke *Toleration* ii, in *Wks.* (1727) II. 289 You cannot be for a free and impartial Examination.

1754 *World* No. 62. 18 When a fine gentleman chuses to signify his intention of making a short Visit I am for an abridgment of the word, and only calling it a Vis.

1799 T. Jefferson *Let.* 26 Jan. in *Writings* (1984) 1057, I am for free commerce with all nations.

1855 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* IV. xx. 511 He was for going straight into the harbour of Brest.

1878 R. B. Smith *Carthage* 219 Scipio was for delay.

1935 H. L. Ickes *Secret Diary* (1953) I. 437 I am for substantial, worthwhile, and socially desirable public works.

1996 *Advocate* 15 Oct. 56/1, I am for what is natural to almost all mammals and avians, and evidently most primates: serial monogamy with clandestine philandering.

(Hide quotations)

**d.** In honour of. Also **to name a child for** (= after) a person (now *U.S.* and *Sc.*). [Thesaurus »](#)  
[Categories »](#)

1800 H. Wells *Constantia Neville* I. 7 Louisa had been named for the mother of Mr. Hayman.

1820 J. S. Knowles *Virginus* i. i, Cheer for him, if you are Romans.

1826 W. P. Scargill *Truth* I. ii. 7 'What is the name to be? I think your mother's was Matilda.'—'Yes, she was named for a great worthy, lady Matilda.'

1863 N. Hawthorne *Our Old Home* I. 18 He had named his two children, one for Her Majesty and the other for Prince Albert.

(Hide quotations)

**e. quasi-n. fors and againsts:** 'pros and cons'. [Thesaurus »](#)

1817 J. Austen *Persuasion* (1818) IV. ix. 185, I was privy to all the fors and againsts, I was the friend to whom he confided his hopes.

1892 *Temple Bar* Nov. 424 The fors and againsts so inextricably mixed.

(Hide quotations)

**IV.** Of purpose or destination.

**8.**

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**a.** With a view to; with the object or purpose of: as preparatory to. *for company*: see [company n. 1b](#). Also, in preparation for or anticipation of (the stated time of a dinner, etc.).

- OE *Beowulf* 458 Pulfor arstafum usic sohtest.  
c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: John* (Corpus Cambr.) xi. 4 Nys þeos untrummys na for deaðe ac for godes wuldre.  
1340 R. Rolle *Pricke of Conscience* 2889 For warnyng of frendes þat lyefes.  
1490 Caxton tr. *Foure Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) xxiv. 505, I byleve that god hath the sente theym to vs for our savyng.  
1523 Ld. Berners tr. J. Froissart *Cronycles* I. cxxx. 159 The Englyshmen neuer departed fro their batayls for chasyng of any man.  
1689 R. Milward *Selden's Table-talk* 40 The individual person set apart for the service of such a Church.  
1719 D. Defoe *Life Robinson Crusoe* 99, I left the Iron Crow in the Wreck for next Day.  
1838 C. Thirlwall *Hist. Greece* III. xix. 95 [He] set sail for the relief of Epidamnus.  
1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* I. 615 A considerable number of prisoners were immediately selected for execution.  
1887 'L. Carroll' *Game of Logic* ii. §6. 50, I have been out for a walk.  
1891 *Law Times* 90 283/1 An order was made for the payment of the balance to the plaintiff.  
1900 *Athenæum* 5 May 545/1 The Annual Dinner of the Society will take place on Wednesday, May 16 at 7, for 7.30 p.m.  
1929 E. Wallace *Iron Grip* viii, You can please yourself about accepting **No. 109 Grosvenor Place, and the hour is 7.30 for 8.**  
1970 'J. Burke' *Four Stars for Danger* iii. 49 'Seven-thirty,' he was saying, 'for eight. Right?'

(Hide quotations)

**b.** For the purpose of being or becoming.

- 1490 Caxton tr. *Foure Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) ix. 210 Beryng in theyr handes flowres and roses for a token.  
1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iii, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 103 Whom to reserve for Husband of the Herd.  
1740 tr. C. de F. de Mouhy *Fortunate Country Maid* I. 11 He shall hear Reason; or, Wounds, I'll go for a Soldier.  
1853 Dickens *Bleak House* vii. 59 [He] went for a soldier, and never came back.  
1885 G. Allen *Babylon* xiv, I'm going to leave my place and go for a pupil-teacher.

(Hide quotations)

**c.** Conducive to.

- a1556 N. Udall *Ralph Roister Doister* (?1566) i. i. sig. A. iij, To keepe the Queenes peace is more for his behoofe.  
1664 J. Tillotson *Wisdom of being Religious* 31 It is for the general good of humane society.  
c1710 C. Fiennes *Diary* (1888) 128 The Bishop does not care to stay long in this place not being for his health.  
1791 J. Boswell *Life Johnson* I. Advt. p. x, Such remarks as were greatly for the advantage of the Work.  
1843 *Fraser's Mag.* 28 565 It is all for her good.

(Hide quotations)

**d.** *for sale*: see [sale n.<sup>2</sup>](#) *for rent*: see [rent n.<sup>1</sup>](#) [2e](#).

[Thesaurus »](#)  
[Categories »](#)

**a.** In order to obtain. Also after verbs like *ask*, *search*, etc., or verbs implying motion, e.g. *to go*, *send*, etc. *for*: see the verbs.

So, with mixture of 21 or 6, in (***I would not***) ***for anything, for a great deal, for all the world***, etc.

- c1230 *Hali Meid*. 9 Þat sið þat tu eauer dides te into swuch þeowdom for worldliche wunne.
- c1300 *Havelok* (Laud) (1868) 788 Havelok was war þat Grim swank sore For his mete, and he lay at hom.
- c1450 *Chester Pl.* (Shaks. Soc.) 11 Naye, Lorde, that will we not indeede For nothinge treasspass unto thee.
- 1611 *Bible* (A.V.) Prov. xxviii. 21 For a piece of bread that man will transgresse.
- 1657 W. Rand tr. P. Gassendi *Mirroure of Nobility* i. 25 He would not for any thing but be present at the Solemnity to behold the same.
- 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iv, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 141 Weary Proteus I Retir'd for Shelter to his wonted Caves.
- 1728 E. Young *Love of Fame* i. 50 What will not men attempt for sacred praise?
- 1806 J. Beresford *Miseries Human Life* I. v. 99 After having fee'd very high for places at Mrs. Siddons's benefit.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* II. 84 To bring a suit for this sum in the Court of King's Bench.
- 1864 'Holme Lee' *Silver Age* (1866) 403, I would not for the world hurt his feelings.
- 1883 *Manch. Examiner* 27 Nov. 5/5 The drawers I struck work for an advance of wages.
- 1891 *Evening Chron.* (Newcastle) 29 Jan. 3/1 For two pins I'll throw the lamp at you.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** Of an amount staked or an object risked, e.g. ***to play for (a certain stake)***: see [play v.](#) Also in a wager, in asseverations, and in ***a narrow escape for one's life, to try a man for his life***.

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- a1225 *Juliana* 16 For mi lif quoð hire feder þe schal laðin his luue for þu schalt beon ibeaten [etc.].
- a1556 N. Udall *Ralph Roister Doister* (?1566) i. i. sig. A.iiij<sup>v</sup>, I haue yond espied hym sadly comming, And in loue for twentie pounde, by hys glommyng.
- 1603 Shakespeare *Hamlet* iii. iv. 23 Dead for a Duckat.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Taming of Shrew* (1623) iii. i. 47 Now for my life the knaue doth court my loue.
- 1836 Southey in *Q. Rev.* LVII. 10 Major Beltran I had a narrow escape for his life.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* II. 223 Rosewell I had been tried for his life by Jeffreys.

(Hide quotations)

**c.** *for (one's) life* (see [life n. Phrases 2c\(a\)](#)). Also in phrases such as *I cannot do it for the life of me, for my heart, soul*, etc., where the sense is sometimes 'if it were to save my life', etc., and sometimes 'if I were to give my life', etc.

- a1250 *Owl & Nightingale* 1078 He ne mihte for his live Iseo þat man wiþ hire speke.
- 1576 A. Fleming tr. P. Lentulus in *Panoplie Epist.* 52 He had never had the audacitie and boldnesse for his hart, to set one foote forward into Syria.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Taming of Shrew* (1623) i. ii. 38, I could not get him for my heart to do it.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Measure for Measure* (1623) iv. iii. 149, I dare not for my head fill my belly.

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- 1711 J. Addison *Spectator* No. 85. ¶1, I can't, for my Heart, leave a Room before I have thoroughly studied the Walls [etc.].
- 1786 H. Mackenzie *Lounger* No. 56. 197 A great many other things **l**which I can't do for the heart of me.
- 1806 H. K. White *Remains* (1807) I. 27 You can't, for the soul of you, learn how to frown.
- 1809 B. H. Malkin tr. A. R. Le Sage *Adventures Gil Blas* IV. xi. ii. 268 Not knowing how for the life of him to part with those flattering hopes.
- 1813 Byron *Giaour* (ed. 3) 10 Away—away—for life he rides.
- 1831 L. E. Landon *Romance & Reality* (1848) 354 We must row for our lives.
- 1843 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* 54 742, I could not resist a smile for the life of me.
- 1847 Dickens *Dombey & Son* (1848) xix. 188 Walter, for his life, would have hardly called her by her name.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* I. 131 Charles fled for his life.
- 1887 *Times* 15 Apr. 9/6 Back! for your lives!

(Hide quotations)

**d. to run, etc. for it:** see *it pron.*

## 10.

**a.** Indicating the object to which the activity of the faculties or feelings is directed: frequent after vbs., as *care, long, search*, etc., ns., as *an eye, genius, talent, taste, desire, love*, etc., or adjs., as *eager, watchful*, etc. (see those words); also in exclamations expressing expectancy or desire, **now for, oh for**.

- 1597 Shakespeare *Romeo & Juliet* ii. i. 203 O for a falkners voice, To lure this Tassell gentle backe againe.
- 1602 J. Marston *Antonios Reuenge* v. ii. sig. I3, O, for a fat leg of Ewe mutton.
- 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iv. in 44. Virgil *Wks.* 131 Such a Zeal they have for flowry Sweets.
- 1709 R. Steele *Tatler* No. 30. ¶5 Now for Colonel Constant's Epistle.
- 1834 T. Medwin *Angler in Wales* I. 37 Now for a cigar and Charters.
- 1842 Macaulay *Virginia* in *Lays Anc. Rome* 102 Oh for the tents which in old time whitened the Sacred Hill!

(Hide quotations)

**b. to be for:** to be anxious for, to desire, to want (*dial.*). [Categories »](#)

- 1673 Dryden *Assignation* iii. iii. 37, I hate to snatch a morsel of Love, and so away; I am for a set-meal, where I may enjoy my full gust.
- 1697 T. D'Urfey *Intrigues at Versailles* iii. ii. 36 Come, Madam, how shall we divert this Afternoon, are you for the Opera or Gardens.
- 1762 O. Goldsmith *Citizen of World* II. 131, I am for a Chinese dish of bear's claws and bird's nests.
- 1790 A. Shirrefs *Poems* 29 Now, o' the snish he's for a dose; Wi' pen just rising to his nose.
- 1814 J. Austen *Mansfield Park* III. vii. 47, I could not tell whether you would be for some meat, or only a dish of tea after your journey.
- 1930 N. Munro *Earchie in Art Tea-room* in B. D. Osborne & R. Armstrong *Earchie & Jimmy Swan* (1993) i. xxii. 102 'It'll likely be the Room de Good Looks,' says he, lookin' at the waitress that cam' for oor order. 'I'm for a pie and a bottle o' Broon Robin.'

(Hide quotations)

## 11.

**a.** Before an *inf.*, usually **for to**, (Sc. *till*), indicating the object of an action; = 'in order (to)'. Now *arch.* or *vulgar.* Cf. French *pour*, German *um zu*.

[Categories »](#)

For *for to* in other connections see *forto prep. and conj.*

- a1175 *Cott. Hom.* 221 Forte don him understonden.  
a1200 *Moral Ode* 180 Ne brekeþ ne ure drihte hellegate for lesen hi of bende.  
?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 1006 All þe 33re lac wass swillc. & swillc Forr oþerr þing to tacnenn.  
c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 6642 Ich æm icumen þe þus næh. for muchelere neode for suggen þe tiðende.  
1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 25 He bi gan to schake ys axe, for to smyte anon.  
c1400 *Lanfranc's Cirurg.* 53 For to clense þe wounde use þe medicyn of mel roset.  
c1485 *Digby Myst.* iv. 528 What can þou saye, Thy-self for till excuse?  
1535 *Bible (Coverdale)* Prov. xxviii. C. Helmaketh to moch haist for to be riche.  
1578–1600 in J. G. Dalyell *Scottish Poems 16th Cent.* (1801) II. 162 For till obscure thy light.  
1688 R. Holme *Acad. Armory* ii. 86/1 A Billet is a piece of Cleft Wood for to Burn.  
1748 G. Washington *Jrnl.* 8 Apr. in *Writ.* (1889) I. 6 You must ride round y<sup>e</sup> back of y<sup>e</sup> Mountain for to get below them.  
1774 A. Adams in J. Q. Adams *Familiar Lett.* (1876) 41 Having only put off its present glory for to rise finally to a more happy state.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** Hence *for to* often occurs merely *for to* before an inf.

*Obs.* in educated use.

- a1250 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Nero) (1952) 23 Þe eppel þet ich loke on is forbode me to etene & nout forto biholden.  
c1305 *St. Swithin* 14 in *Early Eng. Poems & Lives Saints* (1862) 43 Seint swythin swiþe 3ung bigan Forto serue ihesu crist.  
c1340 *Cursor M.* (Fairf.) 717 Satanas þot þat ioy for-til styg.  
1397 *Rolls of Parl.* III. 379/2 It was my menyng for to my wenyng for to haue do the best for his persone and for his estate.  
1523 *Ld. Berners tr. J. Froissart's Chronycles* I. cxxvi. 152 The kyng of Englande wst nat where for to passe the ryuer of Some, the which was large and depe.  
1659 D. Pell *Πελαγος* 328 (*note*) Blustering winds make the Seas for to rage and roar.  
1674 A. Cremer tr. J. Scheffer *Hist. Lapland* 84 Birds, Beasts, Fishes, which it was unlawfull for to bring in at the foredoor.

(Hide quotations)

**12.** Indicating destination. Cf. French *pour*.

**a.** In order to arrive at; with the purpose of going to (a place). Formerly sometimes after *go, journey, travel*, etc. Now chiefly after verbs denoting the commencement of a journey, as *to depart, start, sail, leave*, or the act of directing movement, as *to steer, make*; also after the pple. *bound*. Also predicatively.

- 1490 Caxton tr. *Four Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) i. 36 She asked whi they were departed for the kynges courte.  
1595 F. Drake *Will* in J. G. Nichols & J. Bruce *Wills Doctor's Commons* (1863) 77 Her Majesties fleete nowe in service for the west Indydes.  
a1616 Shakespeare *King John* (1623) iii. iii. 71 For England Cosen, goe.  
1646 H. Markham *Let.* in *12th Rep. Royal Comm. Hist. MSS* (1890) App. v. 2 [I am] most certainly informed that hee is at Newcastle and intends for France.  
1660–1 A. Marvell *Corr.* in *Wks.* (1875) II. 43 Mr. Mabbot is, shortly to goe for Ireland.  
1707 G. Farquhar *Beaux Stratagem* ii. 11 Are you for Church this Morning?  
1718 J. Addison *Remarks Italy* (ed. 2) 4 We sailed from hence directly

for Genoa.

- 1720 D. Defoe *Capt. Singleton* 324 We steered directly for the Gulph.  
1720 D. Defoe *Mem. Cavalier* 303 We resolved for Newark.  
1763 J. Wesley *Jrnl.* 20 Aug. (1827) III. 138 We concluded to try for Larn, though we knew not the way.  
1791 'G. Gambado' *Ann. Horsemanship* ix. 42 The curb broke, and he [sc. a horse] ran straight on for the cliffs.  
1820 Keats *Eve of St. Agnes in Lamia & Other Poems* 83 His frosted breath seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death.  
1838 C. Thirlwall *Hist. Greece* II. 296 The Persian army was in full march for Athens.  
1865 C. Kingsley *Hereward* (1884) 251 They rowed away for Crowland.  
1879 R. W. Church *Spenser* i. 9 Spenser was sixteen or seventeen when he left school for the University.  
1883 *Law Times Rep.* 49 332/2 The Clan Sinclair headed for the Margaret.  
1885 *Manch. Examiner* 12 Mar. 4/6 Lord Reay left London yesterday for India.

(Hide quotations)

**b. to be for:** to be bound for, to be making for a place. [Thesaurus »](#)

- 1606 G. Chapman *Monsieur D'Olive* iii. sig. E2, I leaue your Highnes to deale with Atropos I am for France.  
1630 J. Wadsworth *Eng. Spanish Pilgrime* ii. 6, I was for St. Sebastians, accompanied with one Mr. Pickford.  
1755 S. Derrick *Coll. Orig. Poems* 29 Sir, I've a handsome chaise and pair: Are you for London, or for Chester?  
1823 J. G. Lockhart *Reginald Dalton* xiv. 93 'Ay, ay, 'tis Oxford College, ye're for, is it? I are ye no rather auld for beginning to be a collegianer?'  
1887 *N.E.D.* at *Be, Mod.* 'Where are you for to-day?'  
1987 B. MacLavery *Great Profundo* (1989) 105 'Can I give you a lift?' 'Aye. 'Where are you for?' 'The far side.'  
1991 M. S. Power *Come the Executioner* (1992) iv. 30 Fermin stood up and stretched. 'Well, I'm for bed.'

(Hide quotations)

**c. transf. of time.**

- 1885 *Truth* 2 July 3/1 It was getting on for two before supper was served.

(Hide quotations)

**d. Introducing the intended recipient, or the thing to which something is intended to belong, or in connection with which it is to be used.**

- 1411 *Rolls of Parl.* III. 650/1 Certein Commune of Pasture whiche the said Lord claymes for hymself and his tenantz.  
1551 W. Turner *New Herball* i. sig. F v<sup>v</sup>, Byrche is good to makel twygges for baskettes.  
1585 T. Washington tr. N. de Nicolay *Nauigations Turkie* i. xxi. 27 Were set up 2 faire pavillions, the one for him the other for the Ambassador.  
a1616 Shakespeare *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1623) ii. i. 117 Val. Madam, they are for you.  
a1640 P. Massinger *Bashful Lover* v. i. 48 in 3 *New Playes* (1655), Your Bottles too, that I carry For your own tooth?  
1660 *Act 12 Chas. II* c. 4 Sched. s.v. Boxes, French boxes for Marmelade or Gelly.  
1759 *Idler* 3 Feb. 33 The Idler holds the shield for Virtue, as well as the glass for Folly.  
1835-6 *Todd's Cycl. Anat. & Physiol.* I. 518/1 For this group of animals M. D'Haan has proposed the name of Asiphonoidia.  
1839 C. Sinclair *Holiday House* xii. 281 He bought gowns for all the

maids.

- 1855 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* III. 20 He had secured for himself a place in history.
- 1861 M. Pattison in *Westm. Rev.* 19 413 A fireproof chamber for the muniments.
- 1861 M. Pattison in *Westm. Rev.* 19 413 A stone-vaulted kitchen, where dinner could be dressed for an army of guests.

(Hide quotations)

### 13. Of appointment, appropriation, or fitness.

a. Following a vb., adj., or noun of quality, denoting appointment, appropriation, fitness, etc.

- c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (1839) Prol. 2 Dethe withouten ende, the whiche was ordeyned for us.
- c1400 *Mandeville's Trav.* (1839) v. 56 A manere of Wode the whiche is goode for manye dyverse Medicynes.
- c1450 *Cov. Myst.* 318 We xal asay Yf the cros for the be mete.
- 1548 *Hall's Vnion: Henry IV* Introd. f. ix, Henry duke of Lancastrela prince apt for a kyngdom.
- 1548-9 *Bk. Common Prayer* Communion (*rubric*) The vesture appoynced for that ministracion.
- 1582 N. Lichefield tr. F. L. de Castanheda *1st Bk. Hist. Discoverie E. Indias* ii. 5 To put himselfe in a readinesse for that voiage.
- 1677 N. Cox *Gentleman's Recreation* (ed. 2) iii. 60 Fitter for a large Inne than a Lady's Chamber.
- 1722 D. Defoe *Jrnl. Plague Year* 9 Loaded with Baggage and fitted out for travelling.
- 1764 S. Foote *Patron* ii. 53 Robinson Crusoe is advertis'd for this evening.
- 1789 W. Blake *Echoing Green* in *Songs Innoc.* iii, Many sisters and brothers, Like birds in their nest, Are ready for rest.
- 1816 J. Austen *Emma* I. v. 74 Very fit for a wife, but not at all for a governess.
- 1838 C. Thirlwall *Hist. Greece* III. xxii. 247 Quite sufficient for his purpose.
- 1840 C. Thirlwall *Hist. Greece* VI. 283 Seleucus, reflecting on Python's fate, augured that which was designed for himself.
- 1840 *Peter Parley's Ann.* 154 What is a clock good for?

(Hide quotations)

b. After adjs. or advs. qualified by *too*, *enough*, etc., the prep. is often equivalent to the infinitive combinations, 'to admit of', 'to require, call for', or the like.

- 1807 Wordsworth *Ode* in *Poems* II. 158 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.
- 1832 *Westm. Rev.* XVII. 82 The passages are too frequent for quotation.
- 1897 *N.E.D.* at *For, Mod.* The subject is quite important enough for separate treatment.

(Hide quotations)

c. Following a n., or predicatively: = Appointed or adapted for, proper or suitable for. **(there is) nothing for it but:** (there is) no way of meeting the case, no course open, but.

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- a1375 *William of Palerne* (1867) l. 294 Clothed in comly cloþing for any kinges sone.
- 1486 *Bk. St. Albans* Diiij b, That hauke is for a Baron.
- 1583 C. Hollyband *Campo di Fior* 55, I will rather have him. He is for me.
- 1663 S. Pepys *Diary* 27 Apr. (1971) IV. 113 He is not for my family, he is grown so out of order and not to be ruled.
- 1669 S. Sturmy *Mariners Mag.* v. 64 Sea-Carriages are made less, as the Block-maker that makes them hath Rules for.

- 1711 J. Addison *Spectator* No. 297. ¶6 By no means a Match for his Enemies.
- 1748 S. Richardson *Clarissa* III. xxxv. 183, I have nothing for it! but matrimony.
- a1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 250 The sheets, a term for various ropes.
- 1840 *Peter Parley's Ann.* 155 Do you know it is time for school?
- 1845 M. Pattison in *Christian Remembrancer* Jan. 68 The momentous questions which have interest only for noble souls.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* I. 223 Lauderdale! still continued to be minister for Scotch affairs.
- 1850 T. Carlyle *Latter-day Pamphlets* i. 37, I fear she is not long for this world!
- 1874 G. W. Dasent *Half a Life* I. 196 There was nothing for it but to grin and bear it.
- 1885 *Manch. Examiner* 22 Sept. 5/3 The old law making hanging the inevitable penalty for murder.
- 1886 *Manch. Examiner* 3 Nov. 3/1 The Quarterly for October.

(Hide quotations)

**d. (it is) for (a person) to do something:** becoming or permissible to, the duty or concern of.

- 1611 *Bible* (A.V.) Prov. xxxi. 4 It is not for kings to drinke wine.
- 1819 Corbett *Eng. Gram.* xvii. §193 It is for the guilty to live in fear.
- 1885 *Law Rep.: Queen's Bench Div.* 14 872 It will be for the Rule Committee to alter the rule if [etc.].

(Hide quotations)

†**e. to be for:** to be ready, prepared, or a match for a person (*obs.*).

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- a1627 T. Middleton & W. Rowley *Old Law* (1656) iii. sig. 19, My yong boyes I shall be for you.
- a1640 P. Massinger *Beleeue as you list* (1976) iii. iii. 62 His angrie forehead noe matter I am for hym.

(Hide quotations)

**f. to be for it** (*orig. Mil. slang*): to have one's name on the crime sheet, i.e. to be marked down for punishment or trouble; hence, to be in for trouble.

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- 1909 *Captain* Apr. 14/2 'He'll give the whole show away?' 'Then, I suppose, we'll all be for it.'
- 1915 'I. Hay' *First Hundred Thousand* xvi. 214 No more trial trips; no more chaperoning! This time, we decided, we were 'for it'.
- 1915 *War Illustr.* 21 Aug. 22/1 Then it is that he realises so acutely that if anything happens to his pilot he is 'for it', as the current flying phrase has it.
- 1917 P. MacGill *Brown Brethren* iv. 68 If Captain Thorley finds 'im missin' he'll be for it.
- 1919 *Athenæum* 25 July 664/1 'You're for it', i.e., for the 'orderly room'.
- 1919 *Athenæum* 1 Aug. 695/1 'On the peg', to be charged with a 'crime'. 'You'll be for it', the sergeant's threat of 'the peg'.
- 1926 *Punch* 28 Apr. 466/1 Major Atle declared that if the discipline of a unit broke down it was the officer in charge who should be 'for it'.
- 1928 J. Galsworthy *Swan Song* ii. vi. 152 You're 'for it', as they say in this Bonzoid age.
- 1940 *War Illustr.* 5 Jan. 567/1 If a bomb comes, one is 'for it'.

(Hide quotations)

**14.** Of result or effect; used after words like *cause*, *ground*, *motive*, *reason*, etc. (See the ns.)

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**15.** Designating an amount to be received or paid; cf. A.

6. Also in Cricket scoring: With the result of (so many runs), at the cost of (so many wickets).

- 1776 *Trial Maha Rajah Nundocomar for Forgery* 23/2 Bollakey Doss drew a draught on Benares for a lack of rupees.
- 1857 T. Hughes *Tom Brown's School Days* ii. viii. 389 The Lords' men were out by half-past twelve o'clock for ninety-eight runs.
- 1885 *Liverpool Daily Post* 1 June 5/4 The University men were all out for 44.
- 1886 R. L. Stevenson *Strange Case Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* i. 8 The signature was good for more than that.
- 1887 A. Birrell *Obiter Dicta* 2nd Ser. 159 [He] sent the author a bank-bill for £100.
- 1897 *N.E.D.* at *For, Mod.* Put my name down for two guineas. (Comm.) We have this day drawn on you for £100. (Cricket) The score stood at 150 for 6 wickets.

(Hide quotations)

**V.** Of advantage or disadvantage.

**16.**

**a.** With the purpose or result of benefiting or gratifying; as a service to. [Thesaurus »](#)

- OE *Crist III* 1423 Hwæt, ic þæt for worulde gebolade!  
?c1225 (1200) *Ancrene Riwe* (Cleo. C.vi) (1972) 22 Þe eareste fiue [Psalmes]. for ouseolf & for alle þet ou god doð.
- c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 33 Þat he þeos soðfeste word seggef for his fader saule.
- 1340 *Ayenbite* (1866) 1 Þin holy blod þet þou ssedest ane þe rod uor me and uor mankende.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Macbeth* (1623) iii. i. 66 If't be so For Banquo's Issue haue I fil'd my Minde.
- 1631 W. Gouge *Gods Three Arrows* v. Ded. 406 Leave me not to shift for my selfe.
- 1645 Milton *Passion* ii, in *Poems* 17 Dangers Which he for us did freely undergo.
- 1674 A. Cremer tr. J. Scheffer *Hist. Lapland* 118 If he sees convenient he may set up for himself.
- 1816 Byron *Parisina* iii, They only for each other breathe.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** *ironically*. [Categories »](#)

- 1740 *Xmas Entertainm.* (1883-4) ii. 12, I will swinge his Jacket for him.
- 1855 F. E. Smedley *Harry Coverdale* liii, It would have been a mercy if I hadn't broken some of his bones for him.

(Hide quotations)

**17.** As affecting the interests or condition of (a person or thing), whether for good or evil. Chiefly after adjs., ns. of quality, or advbs.

In early English the dative was used in this sense without prep.  
Cf. Greek and Latin uses.

- 1537 *Bible (Matthew's)* Psalms cxviii. [cxix]. 71 It is good for me that I haue bene in trouble.
- 1632 J. Story tr. *Short Surv. Sweden* 7 Grain, butter, cheese, and such other commodities usefull for the life of man.
- 1883 *Daily News* 22 Sept. 4/6 This bodes ill for the peace of Europe.
- 1891 Sir. A. Wills in *Law Times* 91 233/2 Things had begun to look badly for all concerned.

## 18.

a. Governing a n. or pers. pron. followed by an infinitive, forming a construction equivalent to 'that he, etc. may, might, should', etc.

Originally, the prep. had the sense A. 13 or A. 16a, the inf. being either the subject of the sentence or expressive of purpose; but the use was early extended to include cases to which this analysis is inapplicable. In the 15-16th c. the Latin use of the accus. and inf. was often imitated in English: e.g. 'Behold how good it is, brethren to dwell together in unity' (*Ps.* cxxxiii. 1, Prayer-bk. version).

- 1508 J. Fisher *Treat. Penyt. Psalmes* sig. dd.iii. It is better for a synner to suffre trybulacyon in this lyfel than to be eternally turmented in hell.
- 1548 *Hall's Vnion: Henry V* f. lxxv. A tent of purple velvet for the counsailers to mete in.
- 1582 N. Lichefield tr. F. L. de Castanheda *1st Bk. Hist. Discoverie E. Indias* vi. 16 It was verye needefull and necessarye for him to take a Pilot.
- 1621 R. Brathwait *Natures Embassie* (1641) Ded. sig. Aij. It is high time for the Satyryst to pen something which may [etc.].
- 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iv, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 128, I must forsake This Task; for others afterwards to take.
- 1777 R. Watson *Hist. Reign Philip II I.* vi. 128 The [island] lay at so great a distance from Europe, as had made it almost impossible for the christians to send assistance to the besieged.
- a1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 220 For a man who had such good blood to part with it so wantonly was a shame.
- 1843 *Frasers Mag.* XXVIII. 7 13 What a condition for me to come to!
- 1883 *Law Times* 20 Oct. 408/1 The new rules render it more difficult for a defence to be kept up.
- 1896 'M. Field' *Attila* i. 19 When a girl becomes A woman, it is usual for her mother To speak to her of life.

(Hide quotations)

b. in exclamatory use.

- 1757 S. Foote *Author* ii. 40 For this low, lousy Son of a Shoe-maker, to talk of Families.

(Hide quotations)

VI. Of attributed or assumed character; = as.

## 19.

a. In the character of, in the light of, as equivalent to; esp. to introduce the complement after verbs of incomplete predication, e.g. *to have, hold*, etc. (see those verbs), where *as* or *as being* may generally be substituted. *to beg (a person) for a fool*: see *beg v.* 5a.

- OE *Beowulf* 1175 Ðæt þu ðe for sunu wolde hereri[n]c habban.
- c1000 Ælfric *Deut.* xxxi. 20 And tellaþ min wedd for naht.
- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 387 Ðatt mann hemm hallt forr gode menn.
- 1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 142 Þis word was for dom yholde.
- 1377 Langland *Piers Plowman* B xv. 578 3it knewe þei cryst! For a parfit prophete.
- c1400 *Lanfranc's Cirurg.* 110 Per ben but .vj. boonys whanne þat þou rekenest os coronale for oon boon.
- a1533 Ld. Berners tr. *Bk. Duke Huon of Burdeux* (1882-7) lxxxiv. 265 Know for trouth that! god loueth fayth.
- a1556 N. Udall *Ralph Roister Doister* (?1566) iii. iii. sig. D.iiij. He vaunteth him selfe for a man of prowesse greate.
- 1569 R. Grafton *Chron.* II. 446 The Englishe Ambassadors receyuing this for aunswere, tooke their leaue.
- 1644 J. Evelyn *Mem.* (1857) I. 78 Celebrated in France for the best in the kingdom.

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- 1711 J. Addison *Spectator* No. 169. ¶11 Ill-nature among ordinary Observers passes for Wit.
- 1719 D. Defoe *Farther Adventures Robinson Crusoe* 256 You'll be hanged for a Pirate.
- 1725 I. Watts *Logick* ii. iii. §1 We mistake his Blunders for Beauties.
- 1760 S. Foote *Minor* i. 28, I wou'd engage to elude your penetration, when I am beau'd out for the baron.
- 1813 Byron *Giaour* (ed. 3) 3 A grotto **That holds the pirate for a guest.**
- a1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 40 That distance went for nothing.
- 1843 *Fraser's Mag.* 28 702, I know for a fact that a courier was waiting.
- 1845 M. Pattison in *Christian Remembrancer* Jan. 68 Mere chronology **is** often mistaken for history.
- 1883 R. L. Stevenson *Silverado Squatters* ii. ii. 71 The pines look down upon the rest for underwood.

(Hide quotations)

**b. So with an adjective, as in *to take for granted, to leave for dead*, etc. *for certain, for sure, †for wiss*, see those adjs.**

Also, with mixture of sense A. 8, as in the formula of the Marriage Service (quot. 1549) where the sense is 'whether she prove better or worse', etc.

- c1460 J. Fortescue *Governance of Eng.* (1885) xi. 136, I holde it for vndouted, þat [etc.].
- 1549 *Bk. Common Prayer* Matrimony, **I take thee to my wedded wif** for better for worse.
- 1651 R. Baxter *Plain Script. Proof* 49 In the mean time I take it for granted.
- 1681 C. Cotton *Wonders of Peake* 69 At the bottom he was left for dead.
- 1700 Dryden *Chaucer's Palamon & Arcite* iii, in *Fables* 74 He quiver'd with his Feet, and lay for Dead.
- 1732 G. Berkeley *Alciphron* II. vi. xxx. 111 Admitted for morally certain.
- 1801 M. Edgeworth *Prussian Vase* in *Moral Tales* III. 16 Pamiska's friends **gave the young man up for lost.**
- 1858 C. Patmore *Betrothal* ix, in *Angel in House* (ed. 2) I. 112, **I blamed** the print for old.

(Hide quotations)

**c. *what is he, etc. for (a man, etc.)*: what is (he) considered as (a man), i.e. what sort of a (man, etc.) is he? (Cf. German *Was für ein?*) *Obs.* or *dial.***

Categories »

- 1579 Spenser *Shepherd's Cal.* Apr. f. 12, What is he for a Ladde you so lament?
- 1623 J. Bingham tr. Xenophon *Hist.* 136 When the Lacedemonians enquired, what Xenophon was for a man, he answered, that [etc.].
- 1657 W. Rand tr. P. Gassendi *Mirroure of Nobility* ii. 265 Consider **how** many, and what for Epistles he sent to this very City.
- 1707 C. Cibber *Comical Lovers* i. 10 What is she for a Woman?
- 1708 *Brit. Apollo* No. 63. 3/2 What are you for a Lover.
- 1827 Scott *Surgeon's Daughter* in *Chron. Canongate* 1st Ser. II. xi. 273 'What is that for a Zenobia?' said Hartley.

(Hide quotations)

**d. (*I, etc.*) for one**: as one, as a unit in an aggregate. **for one thing**: used parenthetically when one out of several reasons, instances, etc., is mentioned.

- 1719 D. Defoe *Farther Adventures Robinson Crusoe* 227 Will you go? **I'll** go for one.
- 18.. J. Keble *Lett. Spirit. Counsel* (1870) 176, I could say, for one thing, make your account beforehand with this trouble coming upon you.
- 1880 *Scribner's Monthly* 20 356/1, I for one shall never do so.

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**e. for the first, second, etc. time:** as a first, second, etc., instance. Cf. French *pour la première fois*.

- 1730 A. Gordon tr. F. S. Maffei *Compl. Hist. Anc. Amphitheatres* 68 The Romans were for the first time forbid such Games.
- 1788 Gibbon *Decline & Fall* VI. lxvi. 431 (*note*), He [Aldus] printed above sixty considerable works of Greek literature, almost all for the first time.
- a1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 177 There was a shower of rain for the first time since my arrival.
- 1863 C. E. L. Riddell *World in Church* III. 253 Is he a man likely to fall in love for a second time?
- 1875 B. Jowett tr. Plato *Dialogues* (ed. 2) I. 399 That they may converse with Socrates for the last time.

(Hide quotations)

**f. for good (and all):** see *good adj., adv., and n.*

**g.** With an adjective, in pleonastic use, as *for free*, for no charge, without payment; *for real*, real. Also in such phrases used *attrib.* Chiefly *U.S.*

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- 1887 in *Amer. Speech* (1950) 25 39/2 When a for-true doctor come to see him.
- 1900 'J. Flynt' & 'F. Walton' *Powers that Prey* 180 They're goin' to railroad him for fair. The *World* says the police found the weapon on him.
- 1942 in H. Wentworth *Amer. Dial. Dict.* (1944) 228/1 Railroads don't haul trash for free.
- 1943 *Amer. Speech* 18 47 It might be reasonable to assume that 'for free' results from the confusion of 'free' and 'for nothing'.
- 1954 W. M. Miller *Conditionally Human* (1963) 72 Don't worry, Richard. This time it's for real.
- 1957 *New Yorker* 21 Sept. 33/2 He said psychiatrists had been enthusiastic, patents have been applied for, and it's for real.
- 1957 G. Smith *Friends* 147 Back home we pay if we're ill. **I You don't** expect to be ill for free.
- 1958 K. Amis *I like it Here* xi. 133 Bowen tried to buy some drinks, conscious of having been fed and made drunk for free.
- 1960 J. Kirkwood *There must be a Pony!* (1961) xii. 95 A good guy; a movie cop!; a for-real cop.

(Hide quotations)

**VII.** Of the cause or reason.

**20.**

**a.** By reason of, under the influence of (a feeling or subjective condition).

- OE *Beowulf* 338 Wen ic þæt ge for wlenco, nalles for wræcsiðum, ac for higeþrymmum Hroðgar sohton.
- a1123 *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* anno 1101, For heoran agenan mycelan ungetrywþan.
- c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 17 Helþef us seodðan ane muchele þef for his muchele eadmodnesse.
- 1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 58 He by gan hym by þenche, And hys wrapþe toward þe kyng, for drede of þe erl, quenche.
- c1380 *Antecrist* in Todd *3 Treat. Wyclif* 152 How may þei seie for shame þat þei folowen Crist truly?
- c1450 *Jacob's Well* (1900) 72 Boldere to synne for trust of þe mercy of god.
- a1586 Sir P. Sidney *Arcadia* (1590) ii. xvi. sig. Z4<sup>v</sup>, Like the poore childe,

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whose father while he beates him, will make him beleuee it is for loue.

- 1725 D. Defoe *New Voy. round World* ii. 143 Our Men raised a Shout for Joy.  
1802 *Noble Wanderers* II. 32 Arsaces, panting for rage, had already grasped his poniard.  
1827 R. Southey *Hist. Peninsular War* II. 776 They had, for pure wantonness, set fire to some of the houses.

(Hide quotations)

**b. for fear of, that**, etc.: see *fear* *n.*<sup>1</sup> 3b.

- 1847 F. Marryat *Children of New Forest* I. v. 86 Take your guns too, for fear of accident.

(Hide quotations)

**21. Because of, on account of:**

**a. a person or persons.**

- c1000 Ælfric *Genesis* xx. 3 Þu scealt sweltan nu Abimeleh for þam wife þe þu name.  
c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 7216 Þin hired þe hateð for me & ich æm iuæid for þe.  
13.. *K. Alis*. 2318 Al Pierce for him sorwith, y-wis.  
1382 Wyclif *Psalms* xxvi. 11 Dresse me in a riȝt path for myn enemys.  
1549 in J. G. Nichols *Chron. Grey Friars* (1852) 62 The cause was for them that rose in Essex.  
a1616 Shakespeare *King Lear* (1623) ii. ii. 229 Thou shalt have as many dolours for thy daughters.  
1818 W. Cobbett *Gram. Eng. Lang.* xvii. §196 When I see many *its* in a page, I always tremble for the writer.

(Hide quotations)

**b. a thing.** Also in **for cause** (see *cause* *n.* 6) and after such ns. as *charge*, *reputation*, etc. and adjs. as *sorry* (see those words). Some adjs. formerly construed with this prep. now take others; e.g. *glad of*.

In Old English *for* with the instrumental case of the neuter demonstrative pron. formed advb. phrases = 'therefore', which, with the addition or ellipsis of the relative *ðe* became conjunctive phrases = 'because'. (For these phrases and their later representatives see *for-thon conj.*, *for-thy conj.*; cf. also *forwhy conj.*). Similarly, *for that conj.* appears from 13th c. as a conjunction; and in the 16th c. there are a few examples of *for this* in the senses 'therefore' and 'because'.

- a1553 J. Philpot *Exam. & Writings* (1842) 352 If that he demand the reason why we do so, I will gladly satisfy his mind|For this [orig. *quia*] we know surely those things, as they have written, to have come unto us uncorrupt.  
a1553 J. Philpot *Exam. & Writings* (1842) 396 For this [orig. *igitur*], Florebell, thou hast a high bishop and ruler of the church such a one peradventure as thou soughtest not after.  
a1553 J. Philpot *Exam. & Writings* (1842) 352 If that he demand the reason why we do so, I will gladly satisfy his mind|For this [orig. *quia*] we know surely those things, as they have written, to have come unto us uncorrupt.  
a1553 J. Philpot *Exam. & Writings* (1842) 396 For this [orig. *igitur*], Florebell, thou hast a high bishop and ruler of the church such a one peradventure as thou soughtest not after.  
c1000 Ælfric *Exodus* xviii. 9 Þa wæs Iethro bliþe for eallum þam godum þe Drihten dyde Israhela folce.  
c1175 *Lamb. Hom.* 17 Þine frond þu luuest for þam goddede þe he þe deð .  
1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 113 Ac for þoure coming ich am glad.  
c1380 *Eng. Wycliffite Serm.* in *Sel. Wks.* I. 25 Þei shulden not be aferd for perillis.  
1484 Caxton tr. G. de la Tour-Landry *Bk. Knight of Tower* (1971) xxxvii.

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- 60 The one is proud for his science.
- 1631 W. Gouge *Gods Three Arrows* iv. xii. 390 Faith herein will make us thankful for all manner of prosperity.
- 1718 J. Addison *Remarks Italy* (ed. 2) 4 The Gulf is remarkable for Tempests.
- 1801 M. Edgeworth *Prussian Vase* in *Moral Tales* III. 38 A mother respected for her feminine virtues.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* I. 308 Notorious both for covetousness and for parsimony.

(Hide quotations)

**c.** On account of one's regard for. So in **for the sake of** [Thesaurus »](#) (see [sake n.<sup>1</sup>](#)), used synonymously with *for* in this sense and in senses [A. 7](#), [A. 8](#).

- OE *Dream of Rood* 113 Se ðe for dryhtnes naman deaðes wolde biteres onbyrgan, swa he ær on ðam beame dyde.
- OE *Genesis* 2474 Ða ic for gode wille gemundbyrdan.
- a1200 *Moral Ode* 23 Ðe him solue forȝet for wiue ne for childe.
- c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 6600 Ich bad hine for Gode [c1300 *Otho* for lofue of God] don þat child of hade.
- 1393 Langland *Piers Plowman* C. iii. 170 To be married for monye mede hath a-sented.
- ?c1450 *Life St. Cuthbert* (1891) l. 981, I leeu þe prolong for shortnes.
- 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Pastorals* x, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 46 Lycoris for thy Rival tempts the raging Sea.
- 1697 T. Ken *Evening Hymn* ii, Forgive me, Lord, for Thy dear Son.

(Hide quotations)

**d.** In adjurations = *for the sake of* at sense [A. 21c](#). Also in exclamations, chiefly of pain or sorrow.

- a1000 *Boeth. Metr.* i. 128 Hel hi for Drihtne bæd þæt hi [etc.]
- c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 30. Nu biððeð Lazamon alcne æðele mon for þene almihten godd þæt he [etc.].
- c1325 *Coer de L.* 1782 Mercy, Richard, for Mary maid!
- 1393 Langland *Piers Plowman* C. ii. 54 Ich fraynede hure faire þo, for hym þæt hure made.
- a1500 (1460) *Towneley Plays* (1994) I. xxii. 280 Alas for my master ¶ That yester-euen ¶ Before Caiphas was broght!
- 1597 Shakespeare *Richard II* v. ii. 75 God for his mercy! what treachery is here?
- 1610 *Bible* (Douay) II. Joel i. 15 Crie ye to our Lord: A a a, for the day.
- 1740 S. Richardson *Pamela* I. 81 But I have not found it so, Alas for me.
- 1820 Byron *Blues* ii. 64 *Lady Blueb.* Oh fie! *Miss Lil.* And for shame!
- 1820 Keats *Lamia* i, in *Lamia & Other Poems* 18 For pity do not melt!
- 1843 Dickens *Christmas Carol* iii. 90 Alas for Tiny Tim, he bore a little crutch.

(Hide quotations)

† **e. for because:** see [because adv. 1](#), [because conj. 1](#)  
*Obs.*

**22.** Of an efficient or operative cause: In consequence of, by reason of, as the effect of. (Now chiefly after comparatives; otherwise usu. replaced by *from*, *of*, *through*.) Also in *for want of*: see [want n.<sup>2</sup> 2c](#).

- c1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1978) l. 13885 Ða eorðe gon beouien. for þan vnimete blase.
- ?c1370 *Robt. K. Cicyle* 55 Bettur he werel So to do then for hunger dye.
- c1380 Wyclif *Sel. Wks.* III. 349 Scarioth was þe worse for beyng in þis

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holi cumpanye.

- c1400 *Lanfranc's Cirurg.* 101 & þou fyndest a man havyng þe crampe for a wounde.
- a1492 Caxton tr. *Vitae Patrum* (1495) i. xl. f. lx/1, For the grete hete of the sonne, She hadde the febres or axes.
- 1512 *Act 4 Hen. VIII* c. 11 For defaute of such issue to remaine to oure Sovereigne Lorde.
- 1548 *Hall's Vnion: Edward IV* f. xiiii, To die for thirst standyng in the riuer.
- 1578 T. Cooper *Thesaurus* (new ed.) at *Vetustas*, He lacketh teeth for age.
- 1641 J. Jackson *True Evang. Temper* ii. 121 For the abundance of milk she [the cow] did give, the owner might eate butter.
- 1718 F. Hutchinson *Witchcraft* Ded. (1720) 11 Her chin and her knees meeting for Age.
- 1766 O. Goldsmith *Vicar of Wakefield* II. ix. 128 In this very room a debtor of his died for want.
- 1850 T. T. Lynch *Mem. Theophilus Trinal* v. 84 Shall we be the brighter spirits for being the duller men?
- 1887 A. Birrell *Obiter Dicta* 2nd Ser. 103 They breathed the easier for the news.
- 1897 *N.E.D.* at *For, Mod.* He is worse for liquor. This coat is worse for wear.

(Hide quotations)

### 23. Of a preventive cause or obstacle.

**a.** In spite of, notwithstanding. Rare exc. in **for all, for any**, with a n.; also absol. **for all that**, etc. [Thesaurus »](#)

- OE *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* anno 1006, Ac for eallum þissum se here ferde swa he sylf wolde.
- c1320 *Seuyn Sag.* (W.) 1135 For al that heuer he mighte do, His menesoun might nowt staunche tho.
- c1386 Chaucer *Doctor's Tale* 129 This mayde shal be myn, for any man.
- c1430 *Syr Gener.* 8058 Loue him she wold for ony drede.
- 1548 *Hall's Vnion: Henry V* f. liij, But for all that he could do, he lost almoste. ccc. of his fotemere.
- 1681 H. More *Plain Expos. Daniel* iii. 68 This Alexander the Great for all his greatness died.
- 1795 R. Burns *Poems & Songs* (1968) II. 762 The rank is but the guinea's [1800 reads guinea stamp] stamp, The Man's the gowd for a' that.
- 1820 Keats *Eve of St. Agnes* in *Lamia & Other Poems* 83 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold.
- 1871 D. G. Rossetti *Last Confession* in *Poems*, I was a moody comrade to her then, For all the love I bore her.
- 1873 F. Hall *Mod. Eng.* p. xv, For all that, I have contrived to give some thought to my mother-tongue.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** in conjunctival phrases: **for all that, for all = notwithstanding (that), although.** Now rare in literary use. [Thesaurus »](#)  
[Categories »](#)

- 1523 Ld. Berners tr. J. Froissart *Cronycles* I. clvi. 189 For all that the frenche kynge sende to hym to delyuer the same castels, yet he refused so to do.
- 1588 *Marprel. Epist.* (Arb.) 21, I tell you D. Stannop (for all you are so proude).
- 1682 J. Bunyan *Holy War* 24 [Conscience] (for all he was now so debauched) did terrifie them sore.
- 1786 H. Mackenzie *Lounger* No. 90. 17 For all her feelings are so fine.
- 1841 L. Hunt *Seer* (1864) 40, I am not a very bad play-fellow for all I am so much bigger.
- a1866 J. Keble *Lett. Spirit. Counsel* (1870) 185 For all she seemed so calm, she had often to bear up against the same kind of feelings.

(Hide quotations)

**c.** Indicating the presence or operation of an obstacle or hindrance. (Cf. ON. *fyrrer*, German *für*, *vor*.) In negative sentences; also after *if it were not, were it not*; occas. = for fear of. †**for to die for it** = if I die for it. *but for*: see [but conj.](#) 29.

- OE *Beowulf* 2549 Ne meahte horde neah unbyrnende ænige hwile deop gedygan for dracan lege.  
 c1000 Ælfric *Genesis* xvi. 10 Þæt man hit geriman ne mæg for þære meniu.  
 1297 *R. Gloucester's Chron.* (1724) 177 Hii mowe noȝt wel fle Vor feblesse of her brode.  
 1377 Langland *Piers Plowman* B. xv. 282 Þat no man miȝte hym se for mosse and for leues.  
 a1430 *Octouian* 682 That wyf therst not say nay, For wordes ylle.  
 1490 Caxton tr. *Foure Sonnes of Aymon* (1885) xii. 296, I shold never doo that, for to deye for it.  
 a1592 R. Greene *Comicall Hist. Alphonsus* (1599) ii. sig. C4, That you dare Not vse your sword for staining of your hands.  
 1691 J. Ray *Wisdom of God* 213 Unhabitable for heat.  
 1744 G. Berkeley *Let.* 19 June in *Wks.* (1871) IV. 298 Last night being unable to sleep for the heat.  
 1751 *Affect. Narr. Wager* 92 This was like, not seeing the Wood for Trees.  
 1810 Scott *Lady of Lake* v. 237 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed.  
 1876 'G. Eliot' *Daniel Deronda* III. vi. xliii. 261 At times she could not stand for the beating of her heart.

(Hide quotations)

†**d.** As a precaution against, or simply, against: (to beware) of; (to hinder, keep, prevent) from.

- 1377 Langland *Piers Plowman* B. ii. 230 Freres for knowynge of comeres coped hym as a frere.  
 a1400–50 *Alexander* 285 Þat wald for hurtte or for harme any hathill kepe.  
 ?a1400 (1338) R. Mannyng *Chron.* (Petyt 511) (1996) ii. l. 2987 Sone after mydnyght in þe snowe for syght, scho ȝede out in hir smok.  
 ?1523 J. Fitzherbert *Bk. Husbandrie* §51 Se that they holde his heed hie ynoughe for drownyng.  
 1561 J. Hollybush tr. H. von Braunschweig *Most Excellent Homish Apothecarye* f. 40<sup>v</sup>, He must also beware for taking cold.  
 1590 R. Greene *Neuer too Late* sig. B<sup>v</sup>, A hat of straw like a swaine Shealter for the sunne and raine.  
 1611 L. Barrey *Ram Alley* i. ii, Ah, how light he treads, For dirting his silk stockings!  
 1680 J. Moxon *Mech. Exercises* I. xii. 213 That may hinder the Corner of the Edge of the Chissel for coming at the Work.  
 1728 in J. A. Picton *City of Liverpool: Select. Munic. Rec.* (1886) II. 88 To prevent the constitution of it for being entirely subverted.

(Hide quotations)

## VIII. Of correspondence or correlation.

**24.** Prefixed to the designation of a number or quantity to which another is stated to correspond in some different relation. (Cf. similar use of *to*.)

- 1399 Langland *Richard Redeles* ii. 42 For on þat ȝe merkyd ȝe missed ten schore Of homeliche hertis.  
 1583 T. Watson *Passionate Cent. of Loue* xcviij, in *Poems* (1870) 133 For eu'ry pleasure that in Loue is found, A thousand woes and more therein abound.  
 1686 N. Cox *Gentleman's Recreation* (ed. 3) v. i. 6, I will undertake to shew any man Twenty other Horses lamell for One Hunter.  
 1720 D. Defoe *Mem. Cavalier* 270 They were twice our Number in the

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Whole, and their Foot three for one.

- 1806 J. Beresford *Miseries Human Life* I. vi. 124 It contains for one inch of lean, four or five of stringy fat.
- 1887 'L. Carroll' *Game of Logic* i. §3. 32 For one workable Pair of Premises you will probably find five that lead to no Conclusion at all.

(Hide quotations)

**25.** Preceded and followed by the same n. (without article or defining word), in idiomatic expressions indicating equality in number or quantity between objects compared or contrasted, as **point for point**, etc. **bulk for bulk**: taking an equal bulk of each. † **day for day**: on one day as on every other, hence = 'day by day'. † **to fight hand for hand**: = 'hand to hand'. **to turn (something) end for end**: to reverse.

Thesaurus »

- c1386 Chaucer *Clerk's Tale* 521 Of Grisildis wordes He tolde him point for point.
- c1400 (1300) *Kyng Alisaunder* (Laud 622) l. 2918 Word for woord þus hij spake.
- c1450 *Chester Pl.* (E.E.T.S.) 256 Such marvayels he ne dyd day for day.
- 1535 W. Stewart tr. H. Boethius *Bk. Cron. Scotl.* II. 118 Dongard courage had for to fecht hand for hand With Constantyne.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Antony & Cleopatra* (1623) iv. ix. 22 A Braine that can Get gole for gole of youth.
- 1692 R. Bentley *Boyle Lect.* iv. 11 Bulk for bulk heavier than a Fluid.
- 1759 Johnson *Idler* 11 Aug. 249 May, Sandys, and Holiday confined themselves to the toil of rendering line for line.
- a1769 *Regul. Sea-Serv.* in Falconer *Dict. Marine* (1789) Kk iv b, If a foreign admiral salutes them, he shall receive gun for gun.
- 1877 *Daily News* 10 Oct. 6/2 We turned the rope end for end.
- 1881 B. Jowett tr. Thucydides *Peloponnesian Wars* I. 168 The prisoners were exchanged man for man.
- 1885 *Manch. Examiner* 15 May 5/3 They will not be slow to return him like for like.

(Hide quotations)

## IX. Of reference.

### 26.

**a.** As regards, with regard or respect to, concerning. Also in idiomatic expressions: † **for the general**, in general; † **for so far**, in so far; † **for my mind**, to my thinking; **for my, his, etc. part** (see [part n.<sup>1</sup> Phrases 1d](#)); **for the rest** (= French *du reste*: see [rest n.<sup>3</sup>](#)). † **what for—**; = 'what with—' (see [what pron., adj.<sup>1</sup>, adv., int., conj., and n.](#)). *as for*: see [as adv. and conj. Phrases 3a](#).

The parenthetic use, as in **for me** = as for me, for my part (= French *pour moi*), is now obsolete.

- 1479 J. Paston in *Paston Lett. & Papers* (2004) I. 619, I haue myche to pay her in London, what for the funerall costys, dettys, and legattys that [etc.].
- 1551 T. Wilson *Rule of Reason* sig. Sij, He is deliuered from the lawe, for somuch as pertaineth to his condemnation, but he is not fre for so muche as belongeth to the due obedience, which he oweth vnto God.
- 1590 Marlowe *Tamburlaine: 2nd Pt.* sig. I3, For person like to prouoe a second Mars.
- 1628 T. Hobbes tr. Thucydides *Peloponnesian War* (1822) 99 This year was of all other for other diseases most free.
- 1634 W. Wood *New Englands Prospect* i. iv. 10 The Soyle is for the generall a warme kinde of earth.
- a1657 W. Burton *Comm. Antoninus his Itin.* (1658) 176 For old Marinus, I know not how to excuse him.
- 1665 S. Pepys *Diary* 7 Apr. (1972) VI. 75 Sir Philip did show me nakedly

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the King's condition for money.

- 1710 G. Berkeley *Treat. Princ. Human Knowl.* §111 For the rest, this celebrated author holds there is an absolute Space.
- 1740 *Xmas Entertainm.* (1883–4) iii. 21 All the Witches for my Mind are young Women.
- 1765 W. Blackstone *Comm. Laws Eng.* I. 466 Thus much for the privileges and disabilities of infants.
- 1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 250 How he managed for water I could not learn.
- 1843 *Fraser's Mag.* 28 570 So much for our housemaid.
- 1893 R. S. Surtees *Soapey Sponge's Sporting Tour* (rev. ed.) lxix. 361 Get married and trust to Providence for the rest.

(Hide quotations)

**b.** So far as concerns (a person or thing). Used with a limiting or restrictive force (cf. [A. 23](#)). (**he may do it for me**, i.e. with no opposition from me.

- 1300 *Cursor M.* 3206 (Cott.), 'Fader', he said, 'be þou ful bald, For me sal it neuer be tald'.
- 1578 T. Timme tr. J. Calvin *Comm. Gen.* x. i. 238 Let them for all me, inioy the fruit of their labours.
- 1655 S. Hartlib *Legacy* (ed. 3) 160 This Art for what I can perceive, is no way demonstrable à priori.
- 1767 'Coriat Junior' *Another Traveller!* I. 321 They shall have it untouched for me.
- 1809 J. Moser *Don Quixote in Barcelona* ii. v, [He] shall carry all the limbs he has got to heaven for me.
- 1837 W. S. Landor *Pentameron* in *Wks.* (1846) II. 314/2 The banks of the Hebrus may be level or rocky, for what I know about them.
- 1890 W. Besant *Demoniac* vi, After the first month you ought to have come home again, for all the good it has done.

(Hide quotations)

**c.** with words signifying privation or want

- 1653 tr. F. Carmeni *Nissena* 75 He wanted for no care nor possible assistance.
- 1791 W. Cowper *Retirem.* 73 With hunger pinched, and pinched for room.
- 1801 M. Edgeworth *Forester* in *Moral Tales* I. 87 In distress for money.
- 1804 J. Marshall *Life of Washington* II. i. 38 The people were in great distress for provisions, arms, and ammunition.
- 1855 Thackeray *Rose & Ring* i, He need want for nothing.

(Hide quotations)

**d.** for all the world: see [world n. Phrases 6c\(a\)](#).

**27.** In proportion to, considering; considering the nature or capacity of; considering what he, she, or it is, or that he, etc. is so and so.

- [1594 Marlowe & T. Nashe *Dido* iv. iv, Aeneas, for his parentage, deserves As large a kingdom as is Lybia.]
- 1631 J. Weever *Anc. Funerall Monuments* 536 This Lawier was a very honest man for those times.
- 1697 Dryden tr. Virgil *Georgics* iii, in tr. Virgil *Wks.* 119 His Bulk too weighty for his Thighs is grown.
- 1754 S. Richardson *Hist. Sir Charles Grandison* I. ii. 6 A man of an excellent character for a Lawyer.
- 1787 'G. Gambado' *Acad. Horsemen* 13 Should your horse prove, what is properly termed too many for you.
- 1861 C. M. Yonge *Stokesley Secret* iii. 42 As poor a man for an esquire, as

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her father was for a surgeon.

- 1886 *Manch. Examiner* 15 Mar. 5/4 The weather **phenomenally** severe for the season.

(Hide quotations)

## X. Of duration and extension.

### 28.

a. Marking actual duration. During, throughout. Phr. [Thesaurus »](#)  
**for long, for a or the time.**

- c1450 *Cov. Myst.* 129 Who seyth oure ladyes sawtere dayly for a ȝer thus.
- 1511 *Pylgrymage Richarde Guylforde* (Pynson) f. xxviiij<sup>v</sup>, **Welrestyd** vs for that nyght.
- 1564 W. Bullein *Dial. against Fever Pestilence* f. 5, His Steward **applied** the poore menne with the purse, with mucche deuotion for the tyme.
- 1604 Shakespeare *Hamlet* iii. i. 93 How does your honour for this many a day?
- 1626 T. Aylesbury *Passion Sermon*. 15 The Jewes for long were **the** favourites of heaven.
- 1711 J. Addison *Spectator* No. 86. ¶2, I have seen an Eye curse for half an Hour together.
- a1792 Bp. Horne *Serm.* (1799) III. 68 Reflect for a moment, on these two pictures of virtue and vice.
- 1843 *Fraser's Mag.* 28 334 The *Brigand's Bride* ran for many nights.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* I. 166 The two great parties **had** for a moment concurred.
- 1872 H. P. Liddon *Some Elem. Relig.* i. 34 Would he even be interested for long in a philosophy which he believed to be only relatively true?
- 1885 *Law Rep.: Queen's Bench Div.* 15 316 The catch **was** worn away, and probably had been so for **months**.

(Hide quotations)

b. Marking intended duration, e.g. **for life**; also in the phrases, **for the or this present, for a while, for ay, for ever**: see *ay adv.* 3, *ever adv.* 5b. [Thesaurus »](#)

- 1548 *Hall's Vnion: Henry V* f. lv, A peace was concluded **for a certain** space.
- 1559 W. Cuningham *Cosmogr. Glasse* 8 Have you then for this present, your whole desire?
- 1632 J. Story tr. *Short Surv. Sweden* 53 For the present I let passe.
- 1636 *N. Riding Rec.* IV. 52 He shall enter bond for his good abearing for a year.
- 1642 *Protests Lords* I. 11 Whether we shall adjourn for six months.
- 1692 E. Walker tr. Epictetus *Enchiridion* (1737) xv, What bounteous God did for awhile afford.
- 1706 *Acc. Soc. Propag. Gosp.* 33 The Society **ordered fifty** Pounds per annum to be ascertained to him for Three Years.
- 1719 D. Defoe *Life Robinson Crusoe* 129, I resolv'd to sit down for all Night.
- 1750 Johnson *Rambler* No. 59. ¶6 He is always provided with a curacy for life.
- 1764 Sterne in Traill *Life* 87 About Christmas **I fix my** head-quarters at London for the winter.
- 1847 A. Helps *Friends in Council* I. vi. 97 If there were Peers for life **it** would **meet most** of your objections.
- 1849 T. B. Macaulay *Hist. Eng.* II. 156 Four thousand pounds a year for two lives.
- 1870 M. Bridgman *Robert Lynne* II. v. 117, I sha'n't get up for another hour.
- 1885 *Law Rep.: Queen's Bench Div.* 14 892 The driver **was** practically placed at the disposal of the defendants for the day.

(Hide quotations)

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29. for once, see *once adv.* 9; for the nonce, see *nonce n.*<sup>1</sup> 1.

30. Marking an amount of extension, esp. in space, lineal or superficial: Over, over the space of, to the extent of, through.

- 1569 R. Grafton *Chron.* II. 36 The River of Trent in the moneth of June flowed not for the space of a mile.
- 1608 Shakespeare *King Lear* vii. 458 For many miles about ther's not a bush.
- 1818 M. G. Lewis *Jrnl. W. India Proprietor* (1834) 159 After travelling for five and twenty miles.
- 1863 C. Kingsley *Water-babies* i. 8 Not only did he own all the land about for miles.
- 1885 *Manch. Examiner* 28 Sept. 5/3 When alman has walked briskly even for a mile.

(Hide quotations)

†XI.

31. Misused for *fro*, *from prep.*, *adv.*, and *conj.*

- 1400 (1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Trin. Cambr.) l. 13554 Anoon he had his sijt For þenne was he no more led.
- 1440 *Partonope* 2260 Sorno~goure swerde for the arson reft.
- 1440 *York Myst.* xxx. 222 He bese hurled for þe highnes he haunted.
- 1540 *Act 32 Hen. VIII* c. 42 §1 All personnes of the said company lshalbe exempt for bearing of armure.

(Hide quotations)

B. *conj.*

†1. Introducing the cause of a fact, the statement of which precedes or follows: Because of. A. 21b. *Obs. exc. arch.*

Categories »

- 1200 tr. *Alcuin's Virt. & V.* 115 in *Anglia* XI. 376 We sculen fleon þa unðeawes, na þa mænn sylfelf for heo synd godes gesceafte.
- 1275 (1200) *Lazamon Brut* (Calig.) (1963) l. 76 Eneam helbiheyte lal his drihliche lond. for he nefde nenne sune.
- 1340 R. Rolle *Pricke of Conscience* 6807 Þus for þai did ay ogayns Goddes lawe, Vermyn and wode bestes sal þam ay gnawe.
- 1450–1530 *Myrr. our Ladye* 11 And for god made all thinges in syx dayes ltherefore, etc.
- 1500 (1400) *Sir Torrent of Portyngale* (1887) l. 1331 For sir Torent the fend did fall, Gret lordys honoured hym all.
- 1600 E. Fairfax tr. Tasso *Godfrey of Bulloigne* ii. xix. 23 Nor for he sweld with ire was she affraid.
- 1616 Shakespeare *Othello* (1622) iii. iv. 158 They are ielalous for they are ielalous.
- 1691 Dryden *King Arthur* i. i. 6 Why comes not he? lFor, he's a puleing Sprite.
- 1799 A. Seward *Som.* xlix, In balance true Weigh it, but smile at the objections vain Of sickly Spirits, hating for they do.
- 1872 Tennyson *Gareth & Lynette* 26 And, for himself was of the greater state, lhe trusted his liege-lord Would yield him this large honour all the more.

(Hide quotations)

2.

a. Introducing the ground or reason for something previously said: Seeing that, since. Cf. Greek *γάρ*, Latin *nam* or *enim*, French *car*, German *denn*.

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- c1150 *Serm.* in Kluge *Ags. Lesebuch* 71 Hwu sceal þiss gewurðen, for ic necann naht of weres gemane.
- 1154 *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* anno 1135, On þis kinges time wes al unfriðfor agenes him risen sone þa rice men.
- ?c1200 *Ormulum* (Burchfield transcript) l. 119 & te33 wærennRihhtwise mennlFor e33þerr here 3edelRihht affterr goddess lare.
- ?a1400 *Morte Arth.* 219 Ffore he was demyde þe doughtyeste þat duellyde in erthe.
- 1480 Caxton *Chron. Eng.* (1482) ccxlv. 298 Nowe is good tyme For al Englonð praith for vs.
- 1559 W. Cuningham *Cosmogr. Glasse* 25 For xij. tymes 30. maketh 360.
- a1613 T. Overbury *Wife* (1638) 202 A churchman she dare not venture upon; for she hath heard widowes complain of dilapidations.
- 1664 J. Tillotson *Wisdom of being Religious* 59 Just such is he who for fear of any thing in this world ventures to grieve God; for in so doing he runs away from men and falls into the hands of the living God.
- 1766 O. Goldsmith *Vicar of Wakefield* I. iii. 17 Near a fortnight passed awayfor premature consolation is but the remembrancer of sorrow.
- 1838 T. Thomson *Chem. Org. Bodies* 806 This oil or resinous-like body contains phosphorus; forlwe find phosphoric acid in the residue.
- 1883 *Manch. Guard.* 22 Oct. 5/3 This is no party question, for it touches us not as Liberals or Conservatives, but as citizens.

(Hide quotations)

## b. Introducing a detailed proof.

- 1570 H. Billingsley tr. Euclid *Elements Geom.* i. f. 20<sup>v</sup>, For forasmuch as DC is equal to CE, & [etc.] therfore [etc.].
- 1815 J. Smith *Panorama Sci. & Art* I. 588 For, let there be three bodies at H, O, and D; if [etc.].
- 1840 D. Lardner *Geom.* 106 For from the point B draw BD perpendicular to [etc.].

(Hide quotations)

## 3. = whether pron., adj., and conj. in an obj. sentence. Categories »

*Obs. rare.*

- a1325 (1250) *Gen. & Exod.* (1968) l. 2651 We sulen nu witen for it dede Ðis witterlike or in child-hede.
- c1394 *P. Pl. Crede* 350 Woldest þou me tellen For þei benlsyker on to trosten, y wolde quyten þe þi mede.

(Hide quotations)

## †4. In order that. Cf. A. 8. *Obs.*

- c1305 *St. Katherine* 171 in *Early Eng. Poems & Lives Saints* (1862) 94 Noman ne 3af hire mete ne drinke: for heo scholde for hunger deye.
- c1380 *Sir Ferumbras* (1879) l. 907 Þaylbyndeþ þer-wiþ is e3ene about for he ne schold no3t sene.
- ?c1450 *Life St. Cuthbert* (1891) l. 4753 For þair trauail sulde no3t be waste.
- a1616 Shakespeare *Henry VI, Pt. 3* (1623) iii. i. 9 And for the time shall not seeme tedious Ile tell thee what [etc.].

(Hide quotations)

## †5. *for and*: = 'and moreover'. *Obs.*

- a1529 J. Skelton *Against Garnesche* ii. 22 in *Poet Wks.* (1843) I. 119 Syr Gawen, Syr Cayus, for and Syr Olyuere.
- 1603 Shakespeare *Hamlet* v. i. 92 A pick-axe and a spade, A spade for and a windingsheete.
- 1617 T. Middleton & W. Rowley *Faire Quarrell* v. sig. I4<sup>v</sup>, *Chau.* [sings] A Hipocrene, a Tweke, for and a Fucus.

for, prep. and conj.

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