

Stamadac na Gaeilge

Gramadach na Gaeilge - Irish Grammar

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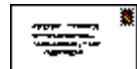
Céad mile fáilte romhaibh !

This is a short English-Irish grammar guide based on my German original.
Please excuse the probable multitude of errors, for I am only but a learner, one should in no way take for granted that everything here is correct.
Corrections are always welcomed!

Translation into English courtesy of Lynn Schneider (all pages except: satz2.htm and satz4.htm, with the kind help of Daniel Nieciecki)

Seo é graiméar a chomair na Gaeilge. Gabhaigí mo leithscéal as na meancóga is dócha a rinneas.
Ní foghlaimeoir an-mhaith mé.
Beidh fáilte roimh gach ceartchán i gcónaí!

Scríobhaigí chugam, más mian libh!



Schreibt mir doch, wenn ihr wollt

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Compiled by <https://x.com/PangurBn10>

About the Irish Language

To visitors to Ireland, Irish comes to one's attention most often via seemingly indecipherable words on signs and maps.

ander or next to the word *Dublin* stands some *Baile Átha Cliath* (spoken blah cleea or bailyah cleea). The former *Kingston* exists in the Republic of Ireland but now as *Dún Laoghaire* (spoken doon leera), *Limerick* called in Irish *Luimneach* (spoken leemrehkh). The entire country is called *Éire* (spoken eareh) or in the long form *Poblacht na hÉireann* (spoken poblekht ne hairen)

It is often, even in Dublin, substantially easier to reach the city centre when you know that the same is called *an Lár* in Irish.

It may also come to a few silly misunderstandings at the doors to public toilets: an "M" means *mná* = *ladies* (spoken mrah or menah), whereas an "F" stands for *fir* = *men*!

From these points, it already becomes clear that Irish is rather not an english dialect, but something completely different.

The Relationships Between the Languages

Irish is only distantly related to German or English.

All 3 belong to the **indo-european languages**. This is, mind you, a very large language family which spans from Iceland to Ceylon. Among those counted are the germanic, celtic, slavic, baltic, romance, northern indian, iranian, greek, armenian, albanian and many other languages.(nearly *all* european languages *except* Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, Basque and Turkish)

German and English are- not surprisingly- part of the *germanic branch* , while Irish is a *celtic language*.

The **Celtic Languages** are roughly divided into 2 main groups, the **Insular Celtic** and the **Mainland Celtic**. The latter became extinct already in the time of the Roman Empire. It was to this group that languages such as Gaulish belonged.

Insular Celtic lived on due to a lack of extensive Roman influence.

A second division is made: the **Goidelic** ("q-celtic", modern Gaelic) and the **Bretonic** ("p-celtic" or Brythonic)[[1](#)].

To the Brythonic belong: modern Welsh [**Cymraeg**] in Wales, Breton [**Brezhoneg**] in Bretagne(Brittany) and the unfortunately extinct Cornish [**Kernewek**] in Cornwall (which is being revived with astonishing sucess). Even Breton is, in a sense, an "insular celtic" language, because their people settled over from Britannia in the early Middle Ages to the Mainland.

Languages in Ireland

The majority of Irish people speak not **Irish** but **English** in everyday life. The Irish English (Hiberno-English) differs through the Irish accent and smaller further influences of Irish Gaelic. There is virtually no Irishman who isn't well versed in English, but inversely considerably many who can't speak Irish.

Aside from thses two most important languages there is also **Shelta (Traveller Cant, Sheldru)**, the language of the Irish Travellers. It bases in the vocabulary of Irish, is technically also a celtic language and is used by approx. 6000 people in Ireland (outside of Ireland by 80000 emigrants).

In Ulster (Northern Ireland and Donegal) **Scots (Lallans)**, thanks to the Scottish settlers of the 17th C, is also spoken, and the Irish variant is called **Ullans (Ulster Lallans)**.

Scottish Gaelic is, however, not spoken in Ireland. Although, some constructs of Ulster Irish come close to the Scottish Gaelic through Scottish immigrants (e.g. in Antrim). On the Isle of Rathlin, after a resettling of the island, more Scottish Gaels than any other group, so that their dialect was Scottish Gaelic, though this is no longer active since the end of the 19th Century.

Gaelic

Gaelic (Goidelic) was originally only spoken in Ireland. It spread out over to the Isle of Man and Scotland, where once the Picts lives (a partly pre-celtic, partly celtic people about whose language(s) is not much known).

From this there are today three languages: Irish Gaelic [**Gaeilge**], Scottish Gaelic [**Gàidhlig**] and Manx Gaelic [**Gaelg**]. These 3 split first in the Middle Ages and have remained quite similar, and there is generally no need for additional translation for an understanding(it is comparable to the similarity between German and Dutch).

The Gaelic languages all shared ultimately the same fate, namely the gradual displacement by English, for the larger England attained the rule over the British Isles and kept this until well into the 20th Century. Gaelic had no place therein, and was banned out of public life, the schools, the courts etc.. Since the early 17th Cent., the flight of the last of the Gaelic Princes from Ulster, there had been no Irish speaking upper class. The following aristocrats were mostly immigrants from England with land claims. In the post-1830 instituted schools, it was all but explicitly forbidden to speak Gaelic, and it was certainly frowned upon. The famine from 1845-48 in Ireland and the following waves of emigration which most greatly impacted the poor, Gaelic-speaking rural population, led finally up to a virtual extinction of the language in the 19th Century, although in the beginning of the 19th Cent. there were still large parts of Ireland that remained Irish-speaking. Those who wanted to emigrate, had to be able to speak English and those who wanted to stay even moreso, so that Irish-speaking parents adopted the slogan "Keep Irish from the children" . Also not to be ignored is the role of the Catholic Church, which was rather more interested in English-speaking (and therewith better adaptable for missionary work) members. In addition, the Irish Nation defined itself less through its ethnic roots as through its Catholic confession, so there was no need for the Gaelic language in order to separate themselves from the English. It was first later, at the end of the 19th Century, that the interest in Celtic culture and language reawakened, and by then the majority of the population was already English-speaking.

Only in remote areas, in which "the Empire" had no great interest, remained untouched. It is for this reason that language-isolated areas developed. These lie far apart from one another, and are today called "Gaeltachts".

One cannot say that the Irish are to be held accountable for "all too willingly" giving up their language; it is rather remarkable, that Irish managed to survive.

Today there are 3 main dialects (canúintí) of Irish [[2](#)], namely that of Munster [**Gaolainn/Gaeilge na Mumhan**], Connacht [**Gaeilge Connacht**] and Ulster [**Gaeilg/Gaeilge Uladh**], which are again then split into their respective sub-divisions. The differences are much smaller than, say, those between Plattdeutsch and Bavarian. Ulster-Gaelic (only spoken now in Donegal, Dún na nGall or Tír Chonaill) is, in fact, quite similar to Scottish Gaelic.

Due to a lack of native speakers, Leinster (Cúige Laighean) has no own dialect anymore. Most Irish speakers found there today are that of the **Láchanúint** ("central dialect"), an artificially created dialect, especially in Dublin (Baile Átha Cliath). The Láchanúint and its pronunciation is based heavily on the modern spellings and in the standardised grammar. In some areas of County Meath (Contae na Mí) live some immigrant native speakers from Connacht, carrying on the specialities of that particular dialect. Because of these dialectical differences, a so-called official standard grammar [**an Caighdeán Oifigiúil**] has been developed, especially for official matters. It is also being attempted to push this standard up against the dialects in order to unify the language.

There is not a great difference (e.g. in Welsh) between oral and written Irish, in view of the grammar or vocabulary.

History of Irish

The Celts came to Ireland around 500 BC and mingled with the native (pre-indoeuropean) people. Due to a lack of written history, not much is able to be said about Goidelic, the language of those early Celts. From the time period from around 500 - 700 AD there are a few inscriptions in **Ogham-Script**, these are however not very numerous and contain mainly names. The language recorded in this form is known as **Archaic Irish (an Ghaeilge Ársa)**.

First with the Christianisation, are the earliest manuscripts to be found (in latin script). This form of speech, **Old Irish (an tSean-Ghaeilge)** was used from approx. 700-900. This was the "golden age" of Ireland, the time of cloisters and high culture, while outside of Ireland a rather culturally dark epoch after the period migration reigned. Irish was one of the first european languages, in which, next to Latin and Greek, a

noteworthy amount of literature was created.

This cultural blossoming ended with the invasion of the Vikings; also the Irish language was hit hard by this downfall, what also led to a simplification in the (beforehand very complicated) rules governing inflexion. Only a few Scandinavian words were incorporated (e.g.: *fuinneog* = "wind-eye" = window). This epoch is called the **Middle Irish (an Mheán-Ghaeilge)** and took place between 900-1200.

Following the Norman invasion it came to yet another 1200-1600 blossoming of Gaelic culture, so that the immigrant Normans were actually assimilated and even took on the Irish language (as one used to say: "Hiberniores Hibernicis ipsis = Irisher as the Irish themselves"). Many words of the Norman French were taken up (e.g.: *garsún* = boy). The **Early Modern Irish or Classical Irish (an Ghaeilge Chlasaiceach)** used at this time was the unified literary norm in all of Ireland and Scotland.

We speak of Mornem Irish or **Modern Irish (an Nua-Ghaeilge)** from 1600 on, as the Classical Irish faded out of use. It split itself off from Scottish Gaelic completely and reduced its previous higher status to assume that of a strictly rural language.

With the victories of Cromwell and the following importation of Protestants, and the revoking of the power of the last of the Gaelic aristocracy in the 17th Century. also the unity of Classical Irish disappeared. The dialectical differences that had existed beforehand now greatened and dominated the language and the literary tradition crumbled completely. First again in the 19th Century awoke interest in the language anew, and with it a new literature. The defenders of the Irish vernacular triumphed against Traditionalists, who intended to revive the Classical Irish. Despite this, traditional and antiquated forms remained in both grammar and spelling. A spelling reform was first to be a success in 1945.

The Gaeltachts (na Gaeltachtaí)

These are the areas of Ireland, in which (more or less) in everyday life, Irish is spoken.

Cúige Connacht (Connacht)

Contae na Gaillimhe (County Galway)

1. Cois Fharraige in eastern Connemara (Connemara) with Bearna, Na Forbacha (Furbo), An Spidéal (Spiddal), Indreabhán (Inverin),
2. Ceantar na nOileáin (Islands District) in western Connemara with Carna, Glinsce (Glinsk), Cill Chiaráin (Kilkieran), Camas (Camus), Rós Muc (Rosmuck), Leitir Mór (Lettermore), Tír an Fhia (Teeranea), Leitir Mealláin (Lettermullin), An Cheathrú Rua (Carraroe), Rós an Mhíl (Rossaveel)
3. Dúiche Sheoigheach (Joyce Country) in northern Connemara along with Sraith Salach (Recess), An Teach Dóite (Maam Cross), An Máim (Maam), Corr na Móna (Cornamona), An Fhairche (Clonbur)
4. Oileáin Árann (Aran Islands) with the islands Inis Mór (Inishmore), Inis Meáin (Inishmaan), Inis Oírr (Inisheer)
5. Eastern Galway with Eanach Dhúin (Annaghdown), Mionlach (Menlo), Baile an Chláir (Claregalway)

Contae Mhaigh Eo (County Mayo)

1. Tuar Mhic Éadaigh (Tourmakeady) bordering on northern Connemara including An tSráth (Srah), Máim Trasna (Maamtrasna), Fionnaithe (Finny)
2. Oileán Acla (Achill Island) with Domha Éige (Dooega), Gob an Choire (Achill Sound) as well as the bordering mainland, Leithinis an Chorráin (the Corraun-Peninsula) with An Corráin, An Mhála Raithní (Mulrany)
3. West Iorras (Erris) with Leithinis an Mhuirthid (der Mullet-Peninsula) with Eachláim (Aughleam), An Fod Dubh (Black sod), Béal an Mhuirthead (Belmullet) as well as the bordering mainland with Gaith Sáile (Geesala), Dumha Thuama (Doohoma), Dún Chaocháin, Ceathrú Thaidhg (Carrowteige), Barr na Trá (Barnatra), Gleann na Muigh (Glenamoy), Béal Derrig (Beldeirg)

Cúige Uladh (Ulster)

Contae Dhún na nGall, Tír Chonaill (County Donegal)

1. Southern Donegal with Gleann Cholm Cille (Glencolumbkille), Télin (Teelin), Cill Charthaigh (Kilcar)
2. Mid Donegal with An Dúchoraidh (Doocharry), Baile na Fintown, An Clochán Liath (Dunglow), Anagaire (Annagary) and the Island Árainn Mhór (Aranmore), further north with Gaith Dobhair (Gweedore), Gort na Choirce (Gortnahork), An Fál Carrach (Falcarragh) and Toraigh (Tory Island)
3. Northern Donegal with Ros Goill (Rosguill), Fánaid (Fanad)

Cúige Mumhan (Munster)

Contae Chiarrai (County Kerry)

1. Corca Dhuibhne (Halbinsel Dingle) with An Daingean (dem Ort Dingle), Dún Chaoin (Dunquin), Ceann

Trá (Ventry), Baile an Fheirtéaraigh (Ballyferriter), Abhainn an Scáil (Annascaul), Lios Póil (Lispole), Baile na nGall (Ballydavid), An Fheothanach (Feohanagh), An Clochán (Cloghane), Cé Bréanainn (Brandon).

2. Uibh Ráthach (Iveragh) with Cillín Liath, Máistir Gaoithe, Baile an Sceilige, Gleann Mór/An Lóthair, An Dromod, An Gleann

Contae Chorcaí (County Cork)

1. Muscraí (Muskerry) with Carraig an Droichid, Béal Átha an Ghaorthaidh (Ballyingeary), Gugán Barra, Baile Bhuirne (Ballyvourney), Baile Mhic Íre (Ballymakeera), Baile Uí Bhuaigh, Cill na Martra, Cúil Aodha (Coolea), west of Maigh Chromtha (Macroom)

2. Oileán Chléire (Cape Clear Island)

Contae Phort Láirge (County Waterford)

1. An Rinn (Ring) south of Dún Garbhán (Dungarvan) with Rinn Ó gCuarach (Ring), An Sean-Phobal (Old Parish)

Cúige Laighean (Leinster)

Contae na Mí (County Meath)

1. Rath Cairn (Rathcarran)

2. Baile Ghib (Gibbstown)

Regarding the number of speakers

Irish Gaelic is today spoken by a few ten-thousands of people in the gaeltachts as their mother tongue, and we'll say a few hundred-thousand, who master it to the degree of fluency. According to the Census, 1.4 Million Irish citizens of the Republic would consider themselves (40%) as Irish-speaking, as well as 143 000 (10%) in Northern Ireland (Tuaisceart Éireann).

It is the first official language in the Republic of Ireland (Poblacht na hÉireann) and therewith also an official language of the European Union (An Comhphobal Eorpach), where one can be convinced by glimpse in a passport (Pas) and a driver's license (Ceadúnas Tiomána).

Scottish Gaelic is spoken by just under 70 000 and mainly on the westward lying islands (Hebrides) and in the Highlands. Of course there are also those in Glaschu (Glasgow) and Dùn Eideann (Edinburgh) and other cities in Scotland (Alba), who keep up the ancestral tongue of their forefathers (and mothers). Not to be confused with Gaelic is Scots (or Lallans), a germanic language related to English language of the scottish Lowlands.

Nova Scotia (Alba Nua) in Canada isn't just a name, there are also those there who speak Gaelic (on Cape Breton Island).

Manx Gaelic, since the death of the 93 year-old Ned Madrell in the year 1974, has amongst the 80 000 inhabitants of the Isle of Man (Ellan Vannin) not a single native speaker. It is, by a few hundred people, increasingly being maintained, or better, revived. According to the 1991 census there were 634 Manx speakers, and in the last census in 2001 already 1689 (2.2% der Bevölkerung).

the Script

Irish is written in the latin alphabet, or so it seems. Older documents and decorative inscriptions use also an older calligraphic style (Cló Gaelach), which has hardly changed in over 1000 years, here is the alphabet:

á b c ò e f ñ h i l m n o p ñ r t ú

Here a [sample text](#) (The Lord's Prayer)

Before the introduction of the latin script, one wrote in Ogham script (those are slanted lines engraved in stone edges).

The [orthography](#) demonstrates even in modern script some unique qualities.

So, the letters j, k, q, v, w, x, y, z are missing completely (except in foreign words). All other consonants exist practically twofold, because one differentiates between a "**broad" and "slender" consonant**". These exist as phonemes in German as well, but there is makes no difference in the meaning, as to which one is taken (if one speaks "ich" correct or with a "ch" as in "Bach" it doesn't matter, everyone knows that my humble self is intended. Furthermore, the "ch" is already the only sound, where any difference is noticed in German).

In Irish, the differences are much more important. If one book or many, it's only discernable by listening to the final consonant: a slender r means "books" (leabhair) a broad one denotes "a book" (leabhar).

Unfortunately, the latin alphabet only contains one of each "b", "c", "d", "f", etc.

To make the difference clear between "broad" and "slender" in writing, one takes the aid of vowels.

Preceding and following a *slender* one writes a *slender* vowel (e, i), next to a *broad* consonant, *broad* vowels (a, o, u). This means that a portion of the vowels aren't intended to be spoken, e.g. das "i" in "leabhair". Should a broad vowel be framed by 2 slender phonemes, one must, for better or for worse, write 3 vowels, namely: 2 slender (before and after the broad vowel), that is spoken in the end as one (which partially explains the abundance of vowels in Irish words).

Those wishing to acquaint themselves with the **difference** between a, let's say, *broad B* and a *slender B*, should start by forming their lips as if they were produce a B and try at the same time to say "bó" (Irish for "cow"), then try the same, this time with "bí" (bí = Irish "be!"), then compare the positioning of the lips used. As one can see, we automatically take a slender b before e, i and a broad before a, o, u.

In Irish it is only allowed to speak before a broad vowel a slender consonant and vice versa!

So, form your lips again to a "bi" but then say "bo", without changing your lip formation. What comes out now is the Irish word "beo" = "lively". If you do it exactly the other way around (lips pouted for "bo" and then saying "bi"), you get the word "buí" = "yellow". In the process you're making little glides, a bit like a "y" in the case of beo, and a little like "u" in the case of buí. Keep in mind that these are never strong, clear y and u, and heaven forbid you go saying "byo" or "buoy"!

The words "bo" and "beo" as well as "bí" and "buí" differ only in their "broad" consonant B, the "e" in beo and the "u" in buí are technically unvoiced, they serve only the purpose of denoting the B as "broad" or "slender".

It is principally impossible, that a consonant preceded by "i" and then directly followed by an "a". For example, "icha": this would lead to confusion (is that "ch" broad as in ach (kh) or slender as in ich (xh)) In this aspect, the Irish lexicography is quite clear: is can only be written *ichea*, or *iacha* (whatever those may mean).

Another difficult part is presented by **lenition (seimhiú)**: following some consonants appears an h, which alters the consonant quite considerably in the pronunciation. To many, this is a help: c to ch, p to ph, b to bh ("w"). Others are a bit odd: m to mh (like "v"), g to gh (broad gh: a bit like g in *berlinerisch* "sagen", slender gh: like y), d to dh (like gh), s to sh ("h"), t to th (also "h"), an fh disappears in the pronunciation completely. In older texts one finds, in place of the h, a dot above the lenited consonant (it looks then much clearer then).

Often one finds at the beginning of a word combinations like gc, bp, nd, dt, bhf, but have no fear, one only needs here to pronounce the first consonant, also g, b, n, d, bh (a lenited b). The second is left out ("eclipsed" as the latin speakers say, and from this comes the name of this phenomenon: **eclipsis (urú)**).

To simply not write the second consonant, is not something to wish for, for it helps immensely in the recognisability of the word. (otherwise one wouldn't know if "bhear" was an eclipsed "fear" or a lenited "bear". When you see bhfear it's clearer, and one can open the dictionary under "fear" and find "man", if you looked up "bear" you would only find "béal = bear" or "béal = Bar")

Just to be thorough: an eclipsed g is ng, but is still spoken like "ng".

Lenition and **eclipsis** are grammar rules that govern the mutations of words depending on the case, number, with or without article etc. and only the initial ones! Irish alters words not only at the beginning but also at the end. This is a bit frightening, for one must finally recognize a word from the spoken language by its stem. Changes to this make the task of the learner all the more difficult. He who starts swearing here, can recall learning German. Stuff like that doesn't happen there (or only orally) but for that we switch around the vowels or pull umlauts out of the middle of nowhere, which certainly causes the temporal arteries of learners of German sicher oft to swell in exasperation. (here's a good example: schwölle, schwellt, schwillt, geschwollen, der Schwall:-))

As with "béal/beál" one finds over many a vowel and accent mark, **síneadh fada** or short, **fada**. This does not apply to the accentuation, but to the length of the vowels, without such marks, the vowels are mostly spoken as short. This has a very good reason. "fear" differs from "féal" only in this little "tick", but the one is spoken [fär] and the other [fe:r], the first meaning "man" the second "grass". If one had seen a bear (béal) or a bar (beál) is also no moot point (also when the former implies that you have seen the latter, in such a bearless but bar-rich place like Ireland :-)

As one can see, the wads of letters that appear in Irish words do follow a rhyme and reason after all. Although one can't exactly say that Irish is "written as spoken"! As a consolation it should be said that before

the spelling reform in the 50s the written word was much more complicated and significantly different from the spoken. English or French orthography isn't exactly easy either.

To whomever, despite all the conflicting interests and the not exactly impressive number of possible conversational partners, wants to learn Irish, may they be getting a "Go n-éirí an bóthar leat" with them on their way.

Slán go fóill, Lars

[1]

The main difference is the change from q-sounds to p-sounds in the p-celtic languages.

In Gaelic the q remained (later c or g). (vgl. "five" Irish *cúig* with welsh *pump* or "children" Irish *clann*, Welsh *plant*).

This q is the indoeuropean qw, from which the Germans made a w (e.g. dt. was, Irish *cad*) or an f (dt. fünf, Irish *cúig*). In Latin qw remained (vgl. quod = what, quinque = five).

Interestingly it was known to the early Irish, and so they modified those foreign words from Wales to replace p with a c. This was also done with words from the latin, where the p never was q.

So it came to be e.g. that the latin *planta* (Pflanze) via the welsh *plant* (*kin*) as *clann* into Irish.

or also (hebrew-) latin *pascha* to Irish *cáisc* (= Easter)

[2]

Originally there were 2 dialects, a Northern Irish (in Ulster, Connacht and Meath, and North Leinster) and a Southern Irish (Munster and southwards, most of Leinster), which followed the ancient division of the Island in *Conn's Half* (*Leath Chuinn*) and *Mogh's Half* (*Leath Mhogha*). It is from this that the still noticeable similarities between Ulster- and Connacht-Irish, as opposed to the Munster-dialect, resulted

Caibidil a hAon

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Substantivisation of Verbs

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Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

The Cases (na Tuisil):

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In Irish there are 5 cases: the 4 like those in German as well as the vocative as the 5th case. In the official standard there are supposedly only now 3 cases, whereby nominative, accusative and dative are combined. The dative has, however, often its own forms and even if the form of the cases is the same, there are other rules for lenition and eclipse, therefore, it is not practical/possible to do without the dative. Nominative and accusative are always the same, so that even defenders of the dative don't see the accusative any more as an autonomous case, so that 4 cases remain: nominative/accusative, genitive, dative and vocative. Here, all 5 cases are described, because they are also discussed singly in Irish language grammar references in Irish. In Irish grammar books in English, the nominative/accusative/dative are combined as the "common case".

the nominative (an tuiseal ainmneach):

The nominative is used as the **subject** of a clause. Additionally it is used as the **subject** and **predicative noun** of a copular clause.

Nominative- and accusative forms are identical.

The dative form is also, with a few exceptions, identical to the the nominative form.

In the dialects, often non-standard dative forms are also used in the nominative (e.g. *Éirinn* instead of *Éire*, in Conamara e.g. *bróig* instead of *bróg*)

The nominative is used with the following prepositions: *seachas, go dtí*

(both contain a verb form, whose subject is the noun in the nominative: *seachas* = seach + is, *go dtí* = "until coming")

nominative singular (ainmneach uatha)

This is the **base form**, as one would find in the dictionary.

nominative plural (ainmneach iolra)

Forming the plural (iolra) is even in the standard quite irregular, and that it is often different in the dialects, this makes the matter even more difficult.

Basically, one can speak of two different *ways of forming the plural* :

the weak plural (an lagiolra):

This is almost exclusively present in the 1st + 2nd declension, but is quite common.

1st declension: nominative plural = genitive singular e.g.: *leabhar* - *leabhair*

or: plural suffix **-a** e.g. *cleas* - *cleasa*

2nd declension: plural suffix **-a** e.g.: *bróg* - *bróga*

It is called **weak**, because only the stem is modified in the plural, a stem-supplementary (consonant containing "real") plural suffix is not present. The plural forms are different in the genitive (= nom. sing.) and sometimes also in the vocative(suffix -a).

In some dialects, instead of the the weak plural form, strong plural suffixes are often given preference (e.g. *nasc-nascanna* instead of *naisc*)

the strong plural (an tréaniolra):

It is formed by adding different **suffixes**:

e.g.: **í, -acha, -anna, -tha** etc. (e.g.: *bás* - *básanna*)

It is called **strong**, because the stem in the plural is "supplememnted" with additional consonants (-í was formerly written -idhe).

The consonants of the plural suffix are used in all cases, although formerly modified (e.g.: nominative/accusative *-anna*, genitive *-ann*, dative *-annaibh*), though today in all cases (nominative, genitive, dative and vocative) unchanged (e.g.: *-anna*).

Originally, these suffixes were limited to certain declensions (e.g. -acha for nouns of the 5th decl. mit -ach im genitive, -anna auf jene mit -ann im genitive), they spread out in Modern Irish over the other declensions. Their "popularity" is due to the clarity of the tagging as a plural, comp. *naisc* (weak plural) with *nascanna* (strong plural).

Often, different plural suffixes are used, partially also seemingly several plural suffixes: In Connacht e.g. - *tháí* (-tha + -í), *-annaí* (-anna + -í), etc. (where this -í is probably the dative-plural suffix -ibh, spoken in Connacht as [i:])

nominative dual (ainmneach déach)

Not to remain unmentioned that in Irish there are still traces of the dual (the pair, an déach).

It occurs only following the number 2 (dhá).

The **dual form** (not only in the nominative, but in all cases, also in the genitive-dual and dative-dual) is always the same as the dative-singular:

e.g.: *cos* = *a foot* (nominative-singular), *cosa* = *feet* (nominative-plural)

ar an gcois = *on the foot* (dative-singular),

dhá chois = *two feet* (nominative/genitive/dative-dual)

In the genitive-dual, the genitive-plural form can also be used (where the genitive following a number is rather atypical)

see also footnote in Chapter 11 (Numbers)

the genitive (an tuiseal ginideach):

use of the genitive

- noun as the *attribute* of another noun
genitive attributives always *follow* the definite noun. They resemble attributive adjectives.
In German there are often compounds instead of a genitive.

The meaning of the attributive can be:

- partiality ([partitive genitive](#)): *cuid airgid* = *a share of the money*
- origin: *mac Sheáin* = *the son of Seán*
- ownership, membership: *teach an fhír* = *the man's house*
- material: *teach adhmaid* = *wooden house ("house [of] wood")*
- contents: *bosca chíste* = *cake box ("box [of] cake")*
- specific purpose: *fear an tí* = *man of the house*
- description: *lá Nollag* = *December day ("day [of] December")*
- use: *bróg cailín* = *girls' shoe*
- title, name: *Scoil Bhríde* = *Brigid School*
- monetary value, age, other measurements: *stampa scillinge* = *1 shilling stamp*, *leanbh bliana* = *one-year-old child ("child [of one] year")*
- Apposition: some genitives are called [appositions](#), often to specify gender: *baintreach fir* = *widower ("widow [of] man" > "widow+man" > "male widow")*, *dochtúir mná* = *female doctor ("doctor [of] woman" > "doctor+woman" > "female doctor")*, *macaoimh mná* = *young woman ("young person [of] woman" > "female young person")*
- object of transitive action:

After a noun that denotes a transitive action, always the *object* of the action takes the the genitive, not its subject:

grá Dé = *the love for God* (not: the love of God! In German the form "die Liebe Gottes" would more mean the latter!)

- subject of intransitive action:

Only after nouns, that describe intransitive (objectless) actions, can one use the genitive to describe the subject:

imeacht na traenach = *the departure of the train*; *seitreach capaill* = *horse's whinny ("whinny [of the] horse")*

- noun as the *object* of the [verbal noun](#)

- definite noun *after* the verbal noun:
Tá sé ag déanamh na hoibre = *He is doing the work ("He ist at doing the work")*
- indefinite noun *after* the verbal noun, when it has no further attribute:
Tá sé ag cur báistí = *It's raining ("it is at laying [a] rain")*
- noun with the preposition *a* (= "zu") that comes *before* the verbal noun, when the verbal noun itself is the attribute of another nouns (in Ger. most Partizip I); see also [verbal noun as an attributive](#):

fear na mná a phógadh = *the man that is kissing the woman ("man that woman to kiss")*

- noun following definite *prepositions*

- after the genitive prepositions (originally nouns) [trasna](#), [chun](#), [cois](#), [timpeall](#), [fearacht](#), [tar éis](#)
e.g.: *trasna an ghoirt* = *across the field ("across of the field")*
- after [derived prepositions](#) (that contain nouns) e.g. *ar aghaidh* = *in front of ("on face")*
e.g.: *ar aghaidh an tí* = *in front of the house ("on face of the house")*

- after *quantities* (see [partitive genitive](#))

- after nouns like *mórán* (much), *beagán* (little), *neart* (a bit), *roinnt* (some), *dóthain* (enough), *breis* (further), *cuid* (share) e.g. *roinnt bainne* = *some milk*
- after adverbs like *go leor* (a lot, enough), *níos mó* (more) e.g. *níos mó bainne* = *more milk*

- nouns, esp. the verbal noun, forming *participles*, mostly with the prefixes *so-*, *do-*, *in-*. With regular nouns, today this is rare, and with a verbal noun, the genitive is often equivalent to a verbal adjective, hence the details are there(see [verbal adjectives](#)).

The **form** of the genitive is **not used** when:

- when *two nouns in the genitive* directly follow one another, to avoid a double genitive
Instead the first is lenited in the nominative and only the second is in the genitive. This is the so-called "**functional genitive**", the first noun is "functional" in genitive relation, but keeps the nominative form and is lenited.

- This is always the case, if the 2nd noun is definite:
e.g.: *teach mhac Sheáin* (*the house of the son of Seán*) but *teach (an) mhic* = *the house of (the) son (genitive)*
- If the 2nd noun is indefinite, a **double genitive** is also possible:
e.g.: *seol an bháid adhmaid* = *the sail of the wooden boat* ("sail of the boat [of] wood")
- If the 1st noun is a verbal noun, it is then **always** in the genitive (see [verbal noun as the attributive](#))
e.g.: *lucht foghlamtha na Gaeilge* = *the Irish learners* ("people [of the] learning of Irish")
- If the noun describes a *quantity* (e.g. *neart*, *roinnt*, *cuid*, etc) and if a partitive genitive follows the dative. e.g.: *Tá sé ag ól roinnt bainne* = *He's drinking some milk*
- with nouns as the *object* of the [verbal noun](#)
 - if an indefinite noun follows the verbal noun and is given *a further attribute*. e.g.: *Tá sé ag léamh leabhar maith* = *He is reading a good book* (see [asldo genitive with the verbal noun](#))
 - if a noun with the preposition *a* (= "zu") precedes the verbal noun in infinitive constructions ("infintiv with to"), rather the accusative.
e.g.: *Ba mhaith liom cluiche a imirt* = *I would like to play a game* ("would be good with-me, a game to play")
 - if a verbal noun is the *object* of another verbal noun. Instead, as in German, in infinitive construction is used:
e.g.: *ag iarraidh fiafraí* = *trying to ask*
- with nouns + numbers
 - nouns following cardinal- and ordinal numbers (only after 1 or 1st is the genitive possible, but not after 11 etc.)
e.g.: *teach an dara fear* = *the house of the second man*, *stampa dhá scilling* = *2 shilling stamp*
 - nouns followed by numbers or letters as numbers (*roth bus a haon* = *the wheel of bus nr. 1*)
- with feminine proper names, if they have an *adjectival* attribute or stand next to a surname:
e.g.: *teach Bhríd Rua* = *the house of the red-haired Bríd*, *teach Bhríd Ní Cheallaigh* = *Bríd Kelly's house* (aber: *teach Bhríde* = *Bríd's house*)
- after the noun *cúpla*:
e.g.: *Tá sé ag ól cúpla deoch.* = *He is drinking a few drinks.*
- after prepositions, that actually require the genitive
 - if the noun is part of an infinitive construction.
e.g. *le linn an cluiche a bheith ar siúil* = *while the game was on* (no genitive) but *le linn an chluiche* = *during the game* (genitive)
 - if a verbal noun comes *directly after* a derived preposition.
e.g.: *le linn dul abhaile* = *on the way home* (see also [genitive + verbal noun](#))
 - if a verbal noun comes directly after *chun* in the sense of *in order to* .
- depending on the dialect sometimes the genitive is left aside [[1](#)]

the partitive genitive and the partitive dative (an ginideach rannaíoch agus an tabharthach rannaíoch)

- the genitive can specify a part of the whole. This is the **partitive genitive** (in German, one uses the nominative instead of the genitive)
e.g. *roinnt airgid* = *some money* (lit.: "a share of money"), *ceathrú úill* = *a quarter of an apple*
- Instead one can choose to form this by a *definite* noun of the **partitive dative** with the preposition de + article (in German there would be here rather the partitive genitive!). This is especially so if the first noun should remain *indefinite*:
e.g.: *cuid den airgead* = *a share of the money* ("part of the money"), *ceathrú den úill* = *quarter of the apple* ("from the apple"), *roinnt de na fir* = *some of the men* ("share of the men")
- The partitive dative ist always necessary, if *both* nouns are definite (also here one would use the genitive in German): *mo chuid den airgead* = *my share of the money* ("my part of the money")

particulars of definite genitive-attributives

- In the definite genitive-attributives, **the antecedent itself counts as definite**. So it is not allowed to become definite itself (e.g. by adding an article or a possessive pronoun)!

e.g.: *teach an dochtaíra* = **the house of the doctor** (*nicht*: a house of the doctor!)

teach m'athar = **the house of my father** (*nicht*: a house of my father!)

teach Sheáin = **John's house** (*nicht*: a house of Johns!)

(This is equivalent to the German W suffixes like "*Johns Haus*", or "*des Kaisers Bart*", where the genitive attribute is definite and through this also the antecedent becomes definite; as opposed to: "*der Bart des Kaisers*", where both nouns have to carry the article)

- Combinations of a definite genitive attribute with an indefinite remaining antecedent are also not possible (e.g. *a house of the doctor*). Here one needs instead a dative: e.g. *teach don dochtaír* = *a house of the doctor*; lit.: "a house to-the doctor"

genitive singular (ginideach uatha)

Form:

- The formation of the genitive occurs in various ways.

Through this, the [declension groups](#) differentiate themselves from one another. Te formation is (relatively) simple and regular (provided, one knows to which declension group a word belongs to)

genitive plural (ginideach iolra)

Form:

- = **nominative-singular** with the **weak plural**

In the standard, this encompasses most of the nouns of the 1st declension

e.g.: *an fear* - *na bhfear* (the man - of the men),

as well as many of the 2nd declension nouns (but often depalatalised!)

e.g. *an bhróg* - *na mbrógs* (the shoe, of the shoes); *an tsúil* - *na súil* (the eye, of the eyes)

- = **nominative-plural** with the **strong plural**

Here are mostly the nouns of the 3rd and 4th declension, most of the 5th, some of the 2nd and 1st declension.

e.g.: *an cailín* - *na cailíni* - *na gcailíni* (the girl- the girls- of the girls) [[2](#)]

- = **genitive-singular**, Here are some of the nouns of the **5th declension (with the genitive singular on -n, -d)**

e.g.: *an cara* - *an charad* - *na gcarad* (the friend- of the friend- of the friends)

in some exceptions also with the genitive singular on -ch: *na caorach* - *na gcaorach* (of the sheep, of the sheep)

- **autonomous Form** (exceptions)

e.g.: *bean* - *ban*

lenition / eclipsis in the genitive

- **indefinite nouns:**

To simplify, one could say that indefinite genitive attributives act like attributive adjectives (s.a. [lenition of adjectives](#))

unlenited after *masculine* nouns in the nominative singular

e.g. *fear céile* = *husband*

lenited after *masculine* nouns in the weak plural (on slender consonants)

e.g. *na fir chéile* = *the husbands*

lenited after *masculine* nouns, that *are in the genitive themselves* (on slender consonants)

e.g. *an fhir chéile* = *of the husband*, *teach pobail bhaile* = *the church of a town*

lenited after *feminine* nouns in the nominative singular

e.g. *bean chéile* = *wife*

especially:

- after femin. nouns of quantity: *punt phrátaí* = *1 pound of potatoes*

- genitive of the verbal nouns: *bean chaointe* = *wailing woman*

- with the appositive genitive (animals and things): *cráin mhuiice* = *the sow of the pig*

- with the genitive of material: *tine mhóna* = *turf fire*
- unlenited** after *feminine* nouns:
 - with the partitive genitive (part of, lack of, excess of...) *roinnt bainne* = *some milk*
 - with the appositive genitive (with people): *baintreach fir* = *widower ("male widow")*
 - with the genitive of category (with people): *bróg cailín* = *girls' shoe ("shoe for a girl")*
 - with genitive of action: *seitreach capaill* = *horse whinnying*
 - with body parts or parts of things: *láimh duine* = *human hand*
 - after a fem. verbal noun, if following a preposition (mostly): *ag iarraidh comhairle* = *to ask for advice*
 - after a fem. verbal noun, if used as an indefinite regular noun
 - after abstract nouns, e.g.: *saoirse cainte* = *freedom of speech*
 - after collectives, if it's the genitive plural : *buíon fear* = *a troop of men*
 - if the noun in the genitive has an attribute: *bean baile mhóir* = *big-city woman (but: bean bhaile)*
 - after **derived prepositions** e.g. *in aghaidh muíntear* = *against a teacher*
- **article**-carrying **definite nouns**
The rules are defined by the article.

lenited: after a *masculine* genitive-singular-article (*an*) (e.g. *teach an fhir* = *the man's house*)

unlenited: after a *feminine* genitive-singular-article (*na*) (e.g. *teach na mná* = *the woman's house*)

eclipsed: after a genitive-plural-article (*na*) (e.g. *teach na bhfear*, *teach na mban* = *the men's house, women's house*)

- **possessive pronoun**-carrying **definite nouns**

again the rules are defined by the possessive pronoun.

lenited after *mo, do, a* (masc.) (e.g. *rogha a chairr* = *the wheel of his car*)

unlenited after *a* (fem.) (e.g. *rogha a cairr* = *the wheel of her car*)

eclipsed after *ár, bhur, a* (plur.) (e.g. *rogha ár gcairr* = *the wheel of our car*)

- **proper names and other definite nouns in the genitive**

principally **lenited** (e.g. *fear Cháit* = *Kate's man*)

Not lenited: names with: Mo..., Do... (both former vocative forms), Maol...

Not lenited: words like: Dé = of God, San = Saint. e.g.: *glór Dé* = *the Glory of God*

Not lenited: names of saints after: Féile = festival, San = Saint, Naomh = Holy e.g.: *Lá Fhéile Pádraig* = *St. Patrick's Day*

Not lenited: foreign names, e.g.: *dán Goethe* = *Goethe's poem*

- **after genitive prepositions**

indefinite nouns after *chun, dála, timpeall, fearacht, trasna* are mostly **unlenited**

the dative (an tuiseal tabharthach):

use of the dative:

- It is used as the **indirect object** after most simple **prepositions**:
a, ag, ar, as, chuir, de, do, faoi, go, i, ionsar, le, ó, os, roimh, thar, trí, um (and in the plural after **idir**)
- as opposed to German, in Irish, a dative object **without a preposition is not possible**.
If in German the dative **without** preposition would appear, in Irish often one must use the **preposition do** (= to) : comp.:
 - *Ich gebe das Buch der Frau* = I give the woman the book = **irisch: Tugaim an leabhar don bhean** (lit.: "...to the woman")

- *Ich gebe dir das Buch; = I give you the book= irisch: Tugaim an leabhar duit* (lit.: "...to you")
- a differentiation of the static locative (dt. dative: "in der Schule"=in the school) from the dynamic locative (dt. accusative: "in die Schule"=into the school) is not common anymore in Irish [3]
This is independent of if a special dative form or the nominative form is used: *sa tigh = in the house/into the house* or *sa teach = in the house/into the house*
- the dative with le and do is used for personal relationships, similar to German "von", to express an indefinite person: e.g.: *deartháir le Seán = a brother of Seán's, uncail dóibh = an uncle of yours, caradom = a friend of mine*
(instead of the genitive for definite persona: *deartháir Sheáin = Seán's brother, bhur n-uncail = your uncle, mo chara = my friend*)
- similar with le to show ownership/copyright of an indefinite object: *dán le Goethe = a poem by Goethe* (as opposed to the genitive: *dán Goethe = Goethe's poem*)
- The **partitive dative (an tabharthach rannaíoch)** with the preposition de is often used in place of the partitive genitive (see also there), to identify a part or a quantity of things:
cuid den obair = share of the work, beirt de na mná = two of the women
- the dative **of the agent, dativeus auctoris (an tabharthach gníomhach)** acts as the *logical* subject of some clausal constructs without a grammatical (nominative-) subject, see subjectlessness. e.g.: *Is as Dóire dom = I'm from Derry, le linn gloine a ól dom = while I drink a glass*
- additionally, the dative form, if available, appears **after the number 2**. Actually, this is the nominative of the **duals (an déach)**, which has the same form as the dative-singular. e.g.: *dhá bhróig = two shoes, a dhá cois = her two feet*

autonomous dative forms:

- An autonomous *form* hardly has the dative in the standard anymore.
This is similar to German, where dative forms also sway (vgl. *dem Manne / dem Mann*)=the man's/of the man.
- This is why, today at least, the dative form = **nominative form**
- In the official standard there are also **still common dative forms** (5 words of the 2nd declension, Éire is the 5th decl.):
cos-cois (foot), lámh-láimh (hand), bróg-bróig (shoe), bos-bois (palm), cluas-cluais (ear), Éire-Éirinn (Ireland),
- some words appear in definite set W suffixes in the old dative form:
*ceann-cionn (= head e.g. in *os cionn = above*), ciall-céill (sense e.g. in *cur i gcéill = to convince, to bring sense (to s.o.)*)*

Sometimes (like in dialects and in older literature), one finds other dative forms:

dative singular (tabharthach uatha)

The dative of all nouns in the 2nd declension (not only the 5 above mentioned words) is formed via **palatalisation**: e.g. *bróg-bróig, fearg-feirg, fuinneog-fuinneoig, teach-tigh*

The dative of the 5th declension with the genitive on a broad -n or -d is formed **palatalisation of the genitive**: e.g.: *Éire (Nom.)-Éireann (Gen.)-Éirinn (Dat.), fiche (Nom.)-fichead (Gen.)-fichid (Dat.)*

Often, these dative forms of both declensions appear instead of the nominative:

e.g. *Éirinn* colloq. much more common than the official *Éire = Ireland*, today always *Albain* instead of *Alba = Scotland*, *abhainn* instead of *abha = river*

in Connemara *bróig* instead of *bróg*, *fuinneog* instead of *fuinneog* (words of the 2nd decl.) in the nominative.

In the 1st, 3rd and 4th declension, the dative form is, since a long time, always the same as the nominative form.

In the 1st declension, some dative forms in a few set W suffixes (as mentioned above: *ceann = head- os cionn = overhead*) are maintained. (the dative was once formed via "u-colouration" of the final consonant)

The dative irregular nouns: the dative of *bean* ist *mnaoi*, that of *lá* is *ló* (e.g. *sa ló = per day*)

dative plural (tabharthach iolra)

The dative plural of all declensions is formed with the addition of the suffix **-ibh**. (originally related to the latin suffix *-ibus*, comp.: *viribus = the men*) (e.g. *fear-fearaibh, bróg-brógaibh* etc.).

The form depends on the nominative-plural, independent of the other declension:

nominative plural	dative plural	example
palatalised	depalatalised + -aibh	an fear - na fír - leis na fearaibh (with the men)
-(a)igh	-(e)achaibh	an marcach - na marcraig - ag na marcachaibh (with the riders)
suffix -a	suffix -aibh	an bhróg - na bróga - sna brógaibh (in the shoes)
suffix -e	suffix -ibh	an cara - na cairde - ag na cairdibh (with the friends)
suffix -í	suffix -ibh	an cailín - na cailíní - leis na cailínibh (with the girls)
suffix -anna	suffix -annaibh	an bus - na busanna - sna busannaibh (in the busses)
suffix -acha	suffix -achaibh	an nead - na neadacha - sna neadachaibh (in the nests)

In some dialects of Munster this form often replaces the nominative-plural (*fearaibh = men*, instead of *fir*). Also the additional nominative plural suffix, common in Connacht, **-í** stems from the old dative plural (e.g.: *-annaibh > -annai*; through the local pronunciation of **-ibh** as [i:]:) As a real dative, this is hardly in use any more and has been replaced in the standard by the nominative-plural.

lenition / eclipsis in the dative

Because the dative only follows a preposition, the rules of lenition are defined by the preposition.

without article:

After **ag, as, chug, fara, le** there is neither lenition nor eclipsis.

After **ar, de, do, faoi, ionsar, ó, roimh, trí, thar, um** one **lenites** (general terms do not follow after ar and thar)

After **i** one **eclipses**. (also after the today rarer **iar = after, go = with**)

with the singular-article:

In the **standard**, for most prepositions there is a choice, either **lenition** (common in Ulster) or **eclipsis** (in Munster and Connacht) (*ar an mbád* or *ar an bhád = on the boat*)

After **den** (de + an), **don** (do + an) and **sa(n)** (i + an) the standard **lenites** (*den chathaoir = of the chair, san fharraige = in the sea*)

d, t, s are neither lenited nor eclipsed (*den doras = of the door, ar an doras = on the door, don sagart = to the priest*)

Feminine nouns beginning with s (+ vowel or l, n, r) receive a **t- prefix** (*ar an tsráid = on the street*)

In the **dialects**, lenition and eclipsis are governed by different rules (see also the overview [article and preposition](#))

with the plural article

No lenition or eclipsis.

the accusative (an tuiseal cuspóireach):

The accusative form is always the same as the nominative form.

The rules of lenition and eclipsis are, as well, same as in the nominative.

So can one tell the accusative from the nominative - only via the function/syntax.

the accusative is used with a **direct object** of a verb and of the clause:

e.g.: *Chonaic mé an fear* = *I saw the man* (direct accusative object: *an fear*)

The **direct object** of the **verbal noun** is in the accusative, if it precedes it and is connected to *a* = *to*.

e.g.: *an fear a fheiceáil* = *to see the man*

As in German, the accusative is used in adverbial **time expressions**

e.g.: *Bhí mé ann an oíche sin / an bhlian seo caite* = *I was there last night/ last year* (accusative-time expression: *an oíche sin* or. *an bhliain seo caite*)

Aside from those, the following **prepositions** require the accusative: **ach, gan, idir, mar, ná**

idir requires the dative with nouns in the plural (there, *idir* has more the meaning of "among": *idir mná* = among women)

the vocative (an tuiseal gairmeach)

use of the vocative

The vocative is the "form of address", used when **speaking to** a person or thing (if you are the sort to talk to inanimate objects)

There is no such case in German, but in other languages (comp. latin: *Marce Aurelie* = *Marcus Aurelius!*, *Domine!* = *Lord!*, *et tu, Brute?* = *you too, Brutus?*)

The vocative **form** is **not** used by nouns and adjectives (but always the vocative particle), if

- the terms of inanimate objects are used as a name for people (*a stór!* = *Darling*) and
- In the case of collectives (*a phobal* = *People!*)
- if a definite noun follows in the genitive: *a mhac Bhriain* = *Son of Brian!* (except in certain terms and proper names: *a Mhic Dé* = *Son of God!*, *a Mhic Bhriain* = *Mr. MacBrien!*)

formation of the vocative:

- nouns: always with [vocative particle](#) and **always lenited** (if possible)!

e.g.: *a Sheáin* = *Seán!*

The vocative particle doesn't have the acclamatory meaning of the German/English "O/oh!", it is rather unstressed and flown over. As a stressed appell in Irish, one can, in addition to the vocative particle, use the word **ó** (following): (*a Sheáin ó* = *oh Seán!*)

- the use of the possessive pronoun in the form of address (like in English: e.g. *my friend!*) is not common (*a chara* = *(my/dear) friend!*) except sometimes in the religious setting: *ár nAthair atá ar Neamh* = *Our Father, who art in Heaven...*
- also appositive personal pronouns in the form of address (in English e.g. *you Idiot!*) are not common (*a amadáin* = *Idiot!*)

vocative singular (gairmeach uatha)

- **1st declension:** vocative = **genitive singular** (e.g. *fear* - *a fhír* = *man!*)
- **2nd -5th declension:** vocative = **nominative singular** (e.g.: *cailín* - *a chailín* = *girl!*)
- following adjectives that are attributive are always **lenited**
- after masculine nouns (1st -5th declension!) adjective form = genitive singular, (e.g.: *a fhír mhóir* = *big man!*)
- after feminine nouns adjective form = nominative singular (*a bhean mhór* = *big woman!*)

exceptions:

- **Ó** in names in the vocative form = *Uí* (after that, lenition, h- entfällt) e.g.: *a Phól Uí Shé!* = *Paul O'Shay!*

- **Mac** in names in the vocative form = *Mhic* (after that, lenition, c after *Mhic* is not lenited) e.g.: *a Sheáin Mhic Sheamais!* = *Seán McHamish!*
- **mac** vocative form = a *mhic!* or also a *mhac!* ("Son!")
- **leanbh** vocative form = a *linbh!* or a *leana!* ("Child!")
- **Mícheál** vocative form = a *Mhícheáil!* or a *Mhíchíl!*

vocative plural (gairmeach iolra)

- **weak plural** vocative = **nominative singular + suffix a**
(e.g. *a fheara!* = *Men!*)
- **strong plural**: vocative = **nominative plural**
(e.g. *a bhuachaillí* = *Boys!*)
- following adjectives remain always **unlenited**, the form is the same as the nominative plural
(e.g.: *a fheara Gearmánacha!* = *German men!*)
- following other attributives remain as well **unlenited**
(e.g. *a fheara céile* = *Husbands!*)

Apposition (Comhaisnéis)

This is the term for 2 or more nouns following one another, that lexically belong together.

e.g. *an tAthair Ó hAnluan* = *Father Ó hAnluan*, *Seán gabha* = *Seán, the blacksmith*

Mostly, the 2nd noun is today in the nominative. But for the following cases:

- In the case of **title + surname**, the surname is always in the same case as the title.
e.g. genitive: *teach an Athar Uí Anluan* = *the house of Father Ó hAnluan*, vocative: *Dia dhuit, a Athair Uí Anluan* = *Hello, Father Ó hAnluan!*
- In the case of **title + first name (+ surname)** the name remains in the nominative, only the title is declined.
e.g.: *an Bráthair Seán Ó Cléirigh* = *Brother Seán O' Cleary*, *teach an Bhráthar Seán Ó Cléirigh* = *Brother Seán O' Cleary's house*
- In the case of **first name + noun** the noun remains in the nominative.
e.g.: *leabhar Sheáin gabha* = *Seán the blacksmith's book*, *teach Phoíil, mac an dochtúra* = *Paul the son of the doctor's house*
- In the case of **two titles** the 2nd title is in the genitive (**appositive genitive**), but the article comes before the first title:
e.g.: *an Tiarna Easpaig* = *Lord Bishop* (lit.: "the lord [of a] bishop")
- as well, the appositive genitive appears actually with **2 regular nouns**. (see under genitive, e.g. *baintreach fir* = *widower [widow + man]*, *múinteoir mná* = *female teacher [teacher + woman]*). Aside from such formations, today, mostly the 2nd noun remains in the nominative.
- Often instead of an apposition, a copular relative clause ("who is..."):
e.g. *an t-amadán is mac duit* = *your son, the fool* (lit.: "the fool, that your son is")
or also a dative with **de**:
amadán de mhac = *an idiot of a son*, *gliogar de chathaoir* = *a cripple to the chair*)
- If a personal pronoun stands with a noun in apposition, a preposition is with both: e.g. *léi leis an mbanríon* = *with her, the queen*

definite nouns (ainmfhocail chinnte)

A noun counts as **definite**, when

1. it is with the **article** e.g.: *an fear* = *the man*
2. it is with a **possessive pronoun** e.g.: *bhur bhfear* = *your man*
3. it occurs with **gach** (every) e.g.: *gach fear* = *every man*
4. it is **numerated**, e.g.: *fear a haon* = *man Nr.1*

5. it is a **proper name**, e.g. *Seán*
6. it is a unique place or person (then always without article) e.g. *neamh* = *Heaven*, *ifreann* = *Hell*, *Dia* = *God*
7. it's carrying another definite noun as the **genitive attributive** e.g. *teach an dochtúra* = *the house of the doctor*, *teach Sheáin* = *the house of Seán's*
(see [particulars of the definite genitive attributive](#))
8. it's in the **vocative** e.g.: *a fhir* = *man!*

[1]

O Siadhail in "Learning Irish" states that for the Cois-Fhairrge-dialect (Connacht) *only then* the genitive is used, if the noun is definite and after quantities, **otherwise** nominative (lenited only, if a further attribute follows)

All in all, even the genitive seems to be disappearing more and more, nominative forms are seen as a replacement not only in the singular but also in the plural.

[2]

Earlier, there were autonomous genitive plural forms for nouns with the nom. pl. ending in *-anna*: *-ann* and for nouns of the 4th declension ending in *-í* (-idhe): *-eadh* (*an cailín* - *na cailínidhe* - *na gcailineadh*)

[3]

Earlier, there was a difference between dative and accusative after prepositions (location vs. direction)

comp. the adverb, stemming from a contraction *isteach* = *inside* (lit.: "into the house") and *istigh* = *inside* (lit.: "in the house"). As well: *amach* = *outside* and *amuigh* = *outside* (eigl. *i mach* = *into a field* and *i maigh* = *in a field*)

According to *O'Nolan*, the use of *eclipsis* after a preposition and article is a sign of the accusative use in the sense of motion (e.g.: *ar an mbord* = *on to the table*, as opposed to *lenition* (*ar an bhord*) as a sign of the dative of location (= *on the table*). This differentiation has been lost, now depending on the dialect one either just lenites or just eclipses.

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

Gender (an Inscne)

Firinscneach agus baininscneach

In Irish, there are **2 grammatical genders (inscnī)**: **masculine (firinscneach)** and **feminine (baininscneach)**

Basically, those living things which are male are named with *masculine* nouns, for female creatures then *feminine* nouns.

There are definite exceptions to the rule: e.g.: stail = stallion is *feminine*, cailín = girl is *masculine* (about the suffix -ín see below)

For all inanimate objects: Belonging to one group or another is mostly random, or. dependent on the ending (see [below](#))

In this way, Irish is quite similar to German, with the difference that Irish has no "thing" gender (neutrūm) anymore.

where are the differences between the genders?

there are differences:

- in the use of the [definite article](#) in the nominative and genitive, including the following initial mutations.
(*an* or *na*, [lenition](#) or nor, [t-prefix](#) preceding s and vowels or not)
- in the lenition and declension of the following [adjectives](#)
- in the use [1] pf the [personal pronoun](#) (he = *sé* or she = *si*) and the [possessive pronoun](#) (his / her = *a* *with lenition / without lenition*) as well as the [prepositional pronouns](#) (e.g. *aige* = by him, *aici* = by her, *as* = out of him, *aisti* = our of her)

how does one recognise the gender of a word?

Masculine nouns are the following:

- all** of the [1st declension](#), **most** of the [4th declension](#)
- except *im*, *sliabh*, *teach* **none** of the [2nd declension](#), only a **few** of the [5th declension](#)
- most **professions**
- words with the following endings:
 - all those ending in **-adh**, **-amh**, **-ái**, **-án**, **-ar**, **-aire**, **-as**, **-éara**, **-aeir**, **-éir**, **-eoir**, **-óir**, **-úir**, **-éad**, **-ste**, **-ú**, **-ún** [2], **-úr** [2]
 - words ending in **-ín** (see [diminutive](#))
 - bisyllabic words ending in **-a** (e.g.: *mála* = bag, *muga* = mug)
 - monosyllabic words ending in **-cht** (e.g.: *lucht* = charge, group, *reacht* = right, *bocht* = poor person)
 - derivatives* using **-ach** (e.g.: *Éire* = Ireland > *Éireannach* = Irishman, *Gearmánach* = German, *Sasanach* = Englishman, *Caitliceach* = Catholic)

Feminine nouns are the following:

- all** of the [2nd declension](#) (except: *im*, *sliabh*, *teach*), **most** of the [5th declension](#)
- none** of the [1st declension](#), only a **few** of the [4th declension](#)

- - all those ending in **-áil, -ail, -eog, -óg, -seach, -lann, -íocht**
 - polysyllabic words ending in **-acht** (e.g. *Gaeltacht*)
 - all those ending in **-ach**, except derivatives (e.g. *báisteach* = *rain*)

All other words are difficult. ***masculine*** nouns end in the nominative often in **broad consonants**, ***feminine*** nouns on the other hand mostly in **slender** ones.

the diminutive suffix (iarmhír an dhispeagtha) -ín

diminutive = pet form

The suffix **-ín** is the same as the German **-chen** or **-lein** (fear = man > firín = little man)

Words ending in **-ín** (4th declension) are actually masculine.

Basically, ***masculine*** are those words, that in the diminutive are no longer able to be taken as the root meaning or those that take on a whole new meaning.

(e.g. "*cailín*" is not the diminutive of the archaic "*caile*", just as little as the "*Mädchen*" is still seen as the diminutive of "*Maid*". This is why "*cailín* = *girl*" is masculine!)

In the case of a real **diminutives (an díspeagadh)** it's a bit more complicated:

- if the base word is masculine then the diminutive is also ***masculine***
(e.g.: *an firín* = *the little man*, *an leabhairín* = *the booklet*)
- if the base word is feminine, then:
 - the nominative singular is seen as ***feminine***
(e.g.: *an pháirc bheag* = *the little park* > *an pháircín bheag* = *the little mini-park*)
 - the genitive singular is seen as ***masculine***
(e.g.: *cranna na páirce bige* = *the trees of the little park* > *cranna an pháircín bhig* = *the trees of the little mini-park*)
 - in the plural the gender is not recognisable
(e.g.: *na páirceanna beaga* = *of the little parks* > *na páircíni beaga* = *the little parks*)
- by female personal names, the diminutive is always ***feminine*** (*Brídín, Nóirín*)

Side note : Today only the suffix **-ín** used to produce the diminutive . Earlier one used further suffixes as well, e.g. **-óg** (**feminine**), **-án** (**masculine**), e.g. *cnocán* = *a little hill*, *eitleog* = *a little flight* , *ordóg* = *thumb* (= "little hammer ")

Fußnoten:

[1]:masculine words denoting people with a *naturally* feminine gender may still use the feminine pronoun (an *cailín* > *sí, i*) (and the other way around). But still some noun and pronoun genders do not agree (see [personal pronouns](#))

[2]: *-ún, úr*: also words stemming from Latin, there feminine, are masculine in Irish: *an náisiún* = the nation, *an nadúr* = nature

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

Declension of Nouns (*Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal*)

Introduction:

In Irish, the nouns are declined. Similarly to German, the declension is pretty rudimentary, the changes rather small, and only in a few [cases](#) are they differentiated.

One subdivides the nouns by their declension into 5 main groups (*declensionen / díochlaontai*).

In the divisions, similarities in the declension in the Celtic and the Latin declensions become apparent. [\[1 \]](#)

The divisions follow the form of the [genitive](#) singular. Also for the [dative](#) singular (if still in use) there are clear rules.

For the plural, there are certain regularities, which are very variable and were not taken into account when dividing the declensions.

A few of the nouns form irregular genitives, hence, they belong to the irregular declension.

In the dialects, sometimes a few of the nouns will spring over to other declensions (e.g.: *shoulder* = *guala* - *gualann*, 5th decl., also *gualainn* - *gualainne*, 2nd decl., *father* = *athair* - *athar*, 5th decl., also *athair* - *athara*, 3rd decl.)

Overview:

declension	gender (mostly)	genitive singular	dative singular	example
1st declension	m	palatalisation	= nominative	fear - fir - fear
2nd declension	f.	palatalisation + -e	palatalisation	long - loinge - loing
3rd declension	m./f.	(depalatalisation) + -a	= nominative	leann - leanna - leann
4th declension	m.	= nominative	= nominative	cailín - cailín - cailín
		depalatalisation	= nominative	athair - athar - athair
5th declension	f.	(depalatalisation) + -(e)ach	(depalatalisation) + -(a)igh	beoir - beorach - beoraigh
		+ -d, -n/-nn	+ -id, -in/-inn	cara - carad - caraíd
irreg. declension	m./f.	-	-	bean - mná - mnaoí

[\[1 \]](#)
comp. **lat.** longa - longae/ **ir.** long - loinge: the lat. genitive-suffix -ae of the a-declension corresponds with the Irish -e with [palatalisation](#) of the final consonant. **lat.** vir - viri / **ir.** fear - fir: the lat. genitive-suffix -i of the o-declension is in Irish only to be noticed in the palatalisation of the final consonant.

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

declension of nouns (*Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal*)

1st declension (an chéad díochlaonadh)

what belongs to it?

- exclusively *masculine* nouns
- ending in a **broad consonant**
- many common terms and also many surnames (Seán, Séamas, Pól)

Genitive Singular:

- Formed using palatalisation (**Caolú**), i.e. the final consonant is slenderized,
 - most often just the addition of an **-i-** : e.g.: Seán-Seáin
 - **-(e)ach** to **-(a)igh** (note the change of *-ch* to *-gh*)
 - **-(e)adh** to **-(a)idh**
 - some require substantial changes to the vowels:

Vowel	-ea-	-ea-	-éa-	-ia-	-ío-	-io-	-iu-
becomes	-i-	-ei-	-éi-	-éi-	-í-	-i-	-i-

Nominative Plural:

- for the most part weak plural:
 - either *palatalization* (nominative plural = genitive singular)
 - or *suffix -a*
- rarer, strong plural
 - of words ending in **-ach** or **-adh** with *suffix -ai*
(with *-ach* also weak plural in *-aigh*)
 - with *suffixes -ta, -tha*
especially those monosyllabic words with long vowel sounds, that end in *-l, -n, -r* (e.g. saol - saolta, dún - dúnta, líon - líonta)
 - (even rarer) with *suffixes -nna, -anna, -acha* a.o.
 - with *palatalisation + omission of the second syllable + -e:* (e.g.: solas-soilse, uasal-uaisle)

Genitive Plural:

- for *weak* plural: Genitive Plural is the same as the **nominative singular**
- for *strong* plural: Genitive Plural is the same as the **nominative plural**

"regular" declension (weak plural)

nom.	m/f	gen.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
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<i>broad</i> consonant	m	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>broad</i> consonant
<i>broad</i> consonant	m	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>broad</i> consonant + -a	<i>broad</i> consonant

typical suffixes

nom.	m/f	gen.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
-(e)ach	m	-(a)igh	-(a)í / -(a)igh	-(a)í / -(e)ach
-(e)adh	m	-(a)idh	-(a)í	-(a)í
-as	m	-ais	-ais	-as
-án	m	-áin	-áin	-án

examples

nom.	m/f	gen.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.	translation
Seán	m	Seáin	Seáin	Seán	"John"
an cat	m	an chait	na cait	na gcat	cat
an bord	m	an bhoird	na boird	na mbord	table
an ball	m	an bhaill	na baill	na mball	member
an blaincéad	m	an bhlaincéid	na blaincéid	na mblaincéad	blanket
an t-eolas	m	an eolais	na heolais	na n-eolas	knowledge
an leabhar	m	an leabhair	na leabhair	na leabhar	book
an fear	m	an fir	na fir	na bhfear	man
an mac	m	an mhic	na mic	na mac	son
an páipéar	m	an pháipéir	na páipéir	na bpáipéar	paper
an t-éan	m	an éin	na héin	na n-éan	bird
an cleas	m	an chlis	na cleasa	na gcleas	trick
an t-úll	m	an úill	na húlla	na n-úll	apple
an ceart	m	an chirt	na cearta	na gceart	right
an samhradh	m	an tsamraidh	na samhraí	na samhraí	Summer
an cogadh	m	an chogaidh	na cogáí	na gcogáí	war
an deireadh	m	an deiridh	na deirí	na ndeirí	end
an bealach	m	an bhealaigh	na bealaí	na mbealaí	way
an t-éadach	m	an éadaigh	na héadaí	na n-éadaí	clothing
an marcach	m	an mharcáigh	na marcáigh	na marcach	rider(horseback)
an bacach	m	an bhacaigh	na bacaigh	na mbacach	beggar
an taoiseach	m	an taoisigh	na taoisigh	na dtaoiseach	chieftain, Prime Minister
an solas	m	an tsolais	na soilse	na soilse	light
an t-uasal	m	an uasail	na huaisle	na n-uaisle	gentleman
an saol	m	an tsaoil	na saolta	na saolta	world
an gaol	m	an ghaoil	na gaolta	na ngaolta	relation
an scéal	m	an scéil	na scéalta	na scéalta	story

an glór	m	an ghlóir	na glórtha	na nglórtha	voice
an briathar	m	an bhriathair	na briathra	na mbriathra	verb
an bás	m	an bháis	na básanna	na mbásanna	death
an nós	m	an nóis	na nósanna	na nósanna	fashion, custom

Key: "Rule", "Exception"

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

declination of nouns (Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal)

2nd declension (an dara díochlaonadh)

what belongs to it?

- almost only *feminine* nouns except 3 *masculine* (im, sliabh, teach)
- end in **slender or broad consonants**.

forming the genitive:

- with a slender final consonant + **-e**:
e.g.: *coill* - *coille*, *súil* - *súile*
- with a broad final consonant, palatalisation (Caolú) + **-e**:
e.g.: *bróg* - *bróige*, *lámh* - *láimhe*, *slíabh* - *sléibhe*
- often the second syllable is omitted (syncopation):
e.g.: *obair* - *oire*, *seamair* - *seimre*
- (e)ach** (feminine, polysyllabic, also: teach) to **-(a)í***:
e.g.: *gealach* - *gealái*, *báisteach* - *báistí*, *teach* - *tí*
- but monosyllabic words ending in **-och**, **-each**, **-uach** to **-oiche**, **-eiche** (or **-í**), **-uaiche**

* -(a)í is only the orthographically new written form for -(a)ighe, and with this, also these words fit into the general rule of "palatalisation + -e"

e.g.: *teach* - *tí* (früher *tighe*), *gealach* - *gealái* (früher *gealaighe*)

forming the dative

just a side:

- those with a broad consonant form the **dative** through **palatalisation**. This dative form appears in Connemara also as the nominative form,
e.g. *fuinneog* - *fuinneoig*, *clann* - *clainn*
- this dative is only for the following 5 words also to be found in the standard:
lámh - *láimh*, *bos* - *bois*, *bróg* - *bróig*, *cluas* - *cluais*, *cos* - *cois*
- the dative singular form is identical to a nominative dual form, which only comes after the number two (*dhá*):
e.g.: *dhá bhróig* = two shoes

formation of the nominative plural:

- mostly weak plural: suffix **-a** or **-e**
e.g.: *long* - *longa*, *póg* - *póga*, *cloch* - *clocha*, *gaoth* - *gaotha*, *crioch* - *críochá*
- less common strong plural: suffixes **-anna**, **-acha**, **-ta**, **-tha** etc.
e.g.: *áit* - *áiteanna*, *fuaim* - *fuaiméanna*, *craobh* - *craobhacha*, *tonn* - *tonnta*, *tír* - *tíortha*
polysyllabic nouns ending in a slender consonant form their plural regularly with **-í**,
e.g.: *aimsir* - *aimsírí*, *oifig* - *oifigí*, *abairt* - *abairtí*

formation of the genitive plural:

- in the *weak* plural: = nominative singular, but *always* depalatalisation (Leathnú), i.e. broad final consonant
e.g.: *glúin* - *glún*, *súil* - *súl*, *binn* - *beann*, *cill* - *ceall*, *deoir* - *deor*
- in the *strong* plural = nominative plural

"regular" declination (weak plural)

nom.	m/f	gen. sg.	dative sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
<i>broad</i> consonant	f	<i>slender</i> consonant + -e	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>broad</i> consonant + -a	<i>broad</i> consonant
<i>slender</i> consonant	f	<i>slender</i> consonant + -e	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>broad</i> consonant + -a	<i>broad</i> consonant
<i>slender</i> consonant	f	<i>slender</i> consonant + -e	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>slender</i> consonant + -e	<i>broad</i> consonant
<i>slender</i> consonant (polysyllabic)	f	<i>slender</i> consonant + -e	<i>slender</i> consonant	<i>slender</i> consonant + -í	<i>slender</i> consonant + -í

typical suffixes of the 2nd declension

nom.	m/f	gen. sg.	dative sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
<i>weak</i>					
-ach	f	-aí	-aigh	-acha	-ach
-each	f	-í	-igh	-eacha	-each
-óg	f	-óige	-óig	-óga	-óg
-eog	f	-eoige	-eoig	-eoga	-eog
-lann	f	-lainne	-lann	-lanna	-lann
<i>strong</i>					
-óid	f	-óide	-óid	-óidí	-óidí
-ing	f	-inge	-ing	-ingí	-ingí

examples

nom.	m/f	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.	translation
an chlann	f	na clainne	na clanna	na gclann	children, race, descendants
an ghlúin	f	na glúine	na glúine	na nglún	knee
an fhuinneog	f	na fuinneoige	na fuinneoga	na bhfuinneog	window
an ghasóg	f	na gasóige	na gasóga	na ngasóg	scout
an bhróg	f	na bróige	na bróg	na mbróg	show
an chláirseach	f	na cláirsí	na cláirseach	na gcláirseach	harp
an bháisteach	f	na báistí	-	-	rain
an ghealach	f	na gealaí	na gealach	na ngealach	moon, moonlight
an ghallúnach	f	na gallúnai	na gallúnacha	na ngallúnach	soap
an leabharlann	f	na leabharlainne	na leabharlanna	na leabharlann	library
an tsaotharlann	f	na saotharlainne	na saotharlanna	na saotharlann	labor
an fhearg	f	na feirge	-	-	anger

an lámh	f	na láimhe	na lámhá	na lámh	arm, hand
an long	f	na loinge	na longa	na long	ship
an tsúil	f	na súile	na súile	na súl	eye
an chearc	f	na circe	na cearcá	na gcearc	hen
an chill	f	na cille	na cealla	na gceall	church(yard)
an tseamair	f	na seimre	na seamra	na seamar	clover
an leac	f	na leice	na leaca	na leac	flat stone
an tslat	f	na sloite	na slata	na slat	stick, cane
an ghlac	f	na glaice	na glaca	na nglac	hand
an speal	f	na speile	na speala	na speal	scythe
an scian	f	na scine	na sceana	na sceana	knife
an choill	f	na coille	na coillte	na gcoillte	forest
an tslinn	f	na slinne	na slinnte	na slinnte	shingle
an mhoill	f	na moille	na moilleanna	na moilleanna	obstacle
an nead	f	na neide	na neadacha	na neadacha	nest
an obair	f	na oibre	na hoibreacha	na n-oibreacha	work
an abairt	f	na habairte	na hanairtí	na n-abairtí	sentence
an oifig	f	na hoifigé	na hoifigí	na n-oifigí	office
an aisling	f	na haislinge	na haislingí	na n-aislingí	dream, vision
an scilling	f	na scillinge	na scillingí	na scillingí	shilling
an inchinn	f	na hinchinne	na hinchinní	na n-inchinní	brain
an liathróid	f	na liathróide	na liathróidí	na liathróidí	ball
an teach	m	an tí	na tithe	na dtithe	house
an sliabh	m	an tsléibhe	na sléibhthe	na sléibhthe	mountain
an t-im	m	an ime	na himeanna	na n-imeanna	butter

"regular", "exception"

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

declension of nouns (*Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal*)

3rd declension (an tríú díochlaonadh)

what belongs to it?

- masculine and feminine nouns (see table of common suffixes)
- end in a **broad or slender consonant**

forming the genitive:

- with a broad final consonant: suffix **-a** : *beannacht* - *beannachta*, *áth* - *átha*
- with a slender final consonant: depalatalisation + **-a** : *feoil* - *feola*, *cuid* - *coda*, *fuil* - *fola*, *mil* - *meala*
- with **-int** : final -t is omitted + **-a** : *canúint* - *camúna*
- with **-irt** : final -t to -th- + **-a** : *imirt* - *imeartha*

plural:

- almost exclusively strong plural
- **-aeir, éir, eoir, óir, úir**: + **-í** : *Gaeilgeoir* - *Gaeilgeoiri*
- **-acht/-iocht** (always fem.) + **-aí** : *mallacht* - *mallachtaí*
- masculine, monosyllabic: + **-anna** : *loch* - *lochanna* oder + **-aí** : *rud* - *rudaí*
- "exceptions"

"regular" declension

nom.	gender	gen.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
<i>broad</i> consonant	m/f	<i>broad</i> consonant + -a	<i>broad</i> consonant + -anna , + -aí	<i>broad</i> consonant + -anna , + -aí
<i>slender</i> consonant	m/f	<i>broad</i> consonant + -a	<i>slender</i> consonant + -(e)anna , + -í	<i>slender</i> consonant + -(e)anna , + -í

typical suffixes

nom.	gender	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
-áil	m/f	-ála	-áilí	-áilí
-(a)íl	m/f	-(a)íola	-(a)ílí	-(a)ílí
-óir	m	-óra	-óirí	-óirí
-eoir	m	-eora	-eoirí	-eoirí
-úir	m	-úra	-úirí	-úirí

-aeir	m	-ara	-aeirí	-aeirí
-éir	m	-éara	-éirí	-éirí
-irt	f	-artha	-irtí	-irtí
-áint	f	-ána	-áintí	-áintí
-úint	f	-úna	-úintí	-úintí
-acht	f	-achta	-achtaí	-achtaí
-íocht	f	-íochta	-íochtaí	-íochtaí

examples

nom.	gender	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.	translation
an rud	m	an ruda	na rudaí	na rudaí	thing
an t-am	m	an ama	na hamanna	na n-amanna	time
an loch	m	an locha	na lochanna	na lochanna	lake
an leann	m	an leanna	na leannta	na leannta	beer
an gleann	m	an ghleanna	na gleanta	na ngleanta	valley
an bhanríon	f	na banríona	na banríonacha	na mbanríonacha	queen
an bhliain	f	na bliana	na blianta	na mblianta	year
an fheoil	f	na feola	na feolta	na bhfeolta	meat
an mhóin	f	na móna	na móinte	na móinte	torf
an buachaill	m	an bhuachalla	na buachaillí	na mbuachaillí	boy
an deartháir	m	an dearthára	na deartháirí	na ndeartháiri	brother*
an dochtúir	m	an dochtúra	na dochtúirí	na ndochtúirí	doctor
an saighdiúir	m	an tsraigdiúra	na saighdiúirí	na saighdiúirí	soldier
an múinteoir	m	an mhúinteora	na múinteoirí	na múinteoirí	teacher
an táilliúir	m	an táilliúra	na táilliúirí	na dtáilliúirí	tailor
an mhaitheas	f	na maiheasa	-	-	goods
an tSamhain	f	na Samhna	na Samhnacha	na Samhnacha	All Saints', November
an Cháisc	f	na Cáscá	na Cáiscí	na gCáiscí	Easter
an troid	f	na troda	na troideanna	na dtroideanna	battle
an droim	m	an drama	na dromanna	na ndromanna	back
an greim	m	an ghreama	na greamanna	na ngréamanna	grip, hold, bite
an fhuil	f	na fola	na fola	na bhfola	blood
an mhuir	f	na mara	na mara	na mara	the sea
an sioc	m	an tséaca	-	-	frost

"rule.", "exception", *brother in the standard is the 5th declension (deartháir - dearthár)

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

declension of nouns (*Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal*)

4th declension (an ceathrú díochlaonadh)

what belongs to it ?

- mostly *masculine* nouns
- end in a vowel (most of the nouns that end in a vowel),
- a few that end in a consonant (often foreign words like *bus*, *tram*, *club*, *seans*, *tobac* etc., but also some common Irish words like *ainm*, *lucht*)
- diminutive suffix **-ín**

forming the genitive :

- no special genitive form
- genitive singular = nominative singular
- genitive plural = nominative plural

plural:

- almost exclusively strong plural
 - -ín to **-íní**: *caillín* - *caillíní*
 - -a/-e to **aí/-í**: *slabhra* - *slabhraí*, *file* - *filí*
 - -le to **-lte**: *baile* - *bailte*,
 - -ne to **-nte**: *sloinne* - *sloinnte*,
 - -í, -aí, -aoi, -é + **-the**: *croí* - *croíthe*, *garrai* - *garraíthe*, *saoi* - *saoithe*
note: some ending in -í with the plural suffix **-ithe** (short i): *ní* - *nithe*, *rúnaí* - *rúnaithe* (like classification of persons)
 - some with **-nna**: *cú* - *cúnnna*, *fia* - *fianna*, *fleá* - *fleánnna*
 - some with **-(n)acha**: *ainm* - *ainmneacha*
- a few with weak plural: e.g.: *bó* - *ba* - *na mbó*, *grásta* - *grásta* - *na ngrást*

typical suffixes

nominative	gender	genitive	plural	gen. pl.
-a	m/f	-a	-aí	-aí
-e	m/f	-e	-í	-í
-le	m/f	-le	-lte	-lte
-ne	m/f	-ne	-nte	-nte
-ín	m*	-ín	-íní	-íní
-í	m	-í	-íthe	-íthe
-aí	m	-aí	-aíthe	-aíthe
-é	m/f	-é	-éithe	-éithe
-aoi	m/f	-aoi	-aoithe	-aoithe

examples

nominative	gender	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.	translation
an dalta	m	an dalta	na daltaí	na ndaltaí	student, cadet
an bhearna	f	na bearna	na bearnaí	na mbearnaí	cleft, space, break
an slabhra	m	an tslabhra	na slabhraí	na slabhraí	chain
an t-oráiste	m	an oráiste	na horáistí	na n-oráistí	orange
an file	m	an fhile	na filí	na bhfilí	poet
an baile	m	an bhaile	na bailte	na mbailte	town
an sloinne	m	an tsloinne	na sloinnté	na sloinnté	surname
an fhéile	f	na féile	na féilte	na bhféilte	festival
an cailín	m	an chailín	na cailíní	na gcailíní	girl
an báidín	m	an bháidín	na báidíní	na mbáidíní	dinghy
an rúnaí	m	an rúnaí	na rúnaithe	na rúnaithe	secretary
an ceannáí	m	an cheannáí	na ceannaithe	na gceannaithe	buyer
an tiománaí	m	an tiománaí	na tiománaithe	na dtiománaithe	driver
an rí	m	an rí	na ríthe	na ríthe	king
an croí	m	an chroí	na croíthe	na gcroíthe	heart
an garraí	m	an gharraí	na garraithe	na ngarraithe	garden
an ní	m	an ní	na nithe	na nithe	thing
an baoi	m	an bhaoi	na baoithe	na mbaoithe	buoy
an bhé	f	na bé	na béithe	na mbéithe	lady, maid
an t-ainm	m	an ainm	na hainmneacha	na n-ainmneacha	name
an lucht	m	an lucht	-	-	group of people, charge
an tobac	m	an tobac	-	-	tobacco
an bus	m	an bhus	na busanna	na mbusanna	bus
an grásta	m	an ghrásta	na grásta	na ngrást	grace
an bhó	f	na bó	na ba	na mbó	cow
an cailín	m	an chailín	na cailíní	na gcailíní	girl
an báidín	m	an bháidín	na báidíní	na mbáidíní	dinghy
an firín	m	an fhirín	na firíní	na bhfiríní	little man
Nóirín	f	Nóirín	-	-	Noreen (a name)
Máirín	f	Máirín	-	-	Maureen (a name)

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

declension of nouns (Díochlaonadh na nAinmfhocal)

5th declension (an cuigiú díochlaonadh)

what belongs to it ?

- mostly *feminine* nouns
- ending in **slender consonants** (with i as the last vowel: **-il,-in,-inn,-ir**) or
- ending in a **vowel**
- **terms showing family relations** (athair, máthair, bráthair)

forming the genitive:

The common denominator is that the genitives end in a **broad consonant**.

- depalatalisation: *athair* - *athar* (r-stems), *Albain* - *Alban*, *abhairn* - *abhann* (n-stems), *Nollaig* - *Nollag*
- depalatalisation + **-ach**: many nouns ending in **-il,-in,-ir** or a **vowel**: *beoir* - *beorach*, *cathair* - *cathrach*
partially *without* depalatalisation + **-each** (polysyllabic nouns with slender consonants in the 2nd syllable): *litir* - *litreach*,
often syncopation (shortening) of the 2nd syllable: *litir* - *litreach*, *uimhir* - *uimhreach* (etym. ch-stems)
- nouns ending in a **vowel** + **-n, -d**: *cara* - *carad*, *pearsa* - *pearsan*, *caoga* - *caogad* (etym. n- and nt- (d-)stems)

dative:

as a side note :

Here, the common denominator is that all dative forms end in a **slender consonant**:

- many of the words ending in **-inn, -in** are originally *dative forms* that actually have replaced the nominative form which ended in a vowel: Éire (colloquially more often Éirinn), Albain (in Scottish Gaelic still Alba), abhairn (earlier: abha), Manainn (earlier: Mana). Etymologically speaking, "n-stems" (comp. lat. *natio-nationis*)
- many of the nouns with the genitive ending in **-n, -d** form the dative through palatalisation of the genitive (-in,-id)
e.g. *fiche* - *fichead* (gen.) - *fichid* (dat.), *cara* - *carad* (gen.) - *caraid* (dat.)

nom. plural:

- **genitive form + -a** : *cathair* - *cathrach* - *cathracha*, *comharsan* - *comharsana*,
- exceptions: *athair* - *athar* - *aithreacha*, *abhairn* - *abhann* - *aibhneacha*

gen. plural:

- genitive plural = nominative plural (mostly)

- genitive plural = genitive singular (some with the gen. sg. ending in -n, -d, less commonly ending in -ch, but mostly = nominative plural)

"regular" declension

nom.	m/f	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.
slender consonant	f	broad consonant	varies	varies
slender consonant (-l, n, r)	f	broad consonant + -ach	broad consonant + -acha	broad consonant + -acha
slender consonant (-l, n, r)	f	slender consonant + -each	slender consonant + -eacha	slender consonant + -eacha
vowel	f	vowel + -n	vowel + -na	vowel + -n(a)
vowel	m	vowel + -d	varies	varies

examples:

nom.	m/f	gen. sg.	nom. pl.	gen. pl.	translation
an mháthair	f	na máthar	na máithreacha	na máithreacha	mother
an t-athair	m	an athar	na haithreacha	na n-aithreacha	father
an bráthair	m	an bhráthar	na bráithre	na mbráithre	brother (monk)
an deartháir	m	an dearthár	na deartháireach	na ndeartháireach	brother (family)
an Nollaig	f	na Nollag	na Nollaigí	na Nollaigí	Christmas
an chathair	f	na cathrach	na cathracha	na gcathracha	city
an chaora	f	na caorach	na caoracha	na gcaorach	sheep
an chéir	f	na cearach	na cearacha	na gcearacha	wax
an dair	f	na darach	na daracha	na ndaracha	oak
an bheoir	f	na beorach	na beoracha	na mbeoracha	beer
an traein	f	na traenach	na traenacha	na dtreanacha	train
an litir	f	na litreach	na litreacha	na litreacha	letter
an uimhir	f	na huimhreach	na huimhreacha	na n-uimhreacha	number
Albain	f	na hAlban	-	-	Scotland
Éire, Éirinn	f	na hÉireann	-	-	Ireland
Árainn	f	na hÁrann	-	-	Aran Islands
Manainn	f	na Manann	-	-	(Isle of) Man
an abhainn	f	na habhann	na haibhneacha	na n-aibhneach	river
an teorainn	f	na teorann	na teorainneacha	na dteorainneach	border, limit
an anachain	f	na hanachan	na hanachana	na n-anachana	disaster, loss
an ionga	f	na hiongan	na hingne	na n-ingne	nail
an díle	f	na díleann	na dílí	na ndílí	flood
an chú	f	na con, na cú	na cona	na gcon	dog
an chomharsa	f	na comharsan	na comharsana	na gcomharsan(a)	neighbour

an mhonarcha	f	na monarchan n	na monarchan a	na monarchan (a)	factory
an phearsa	f	na pearsan n	na pearsan a	na bpearsan (a)	person
an lacha	f	na lachan n	na lacha in	na lachan n	duck
an cheathrú	f	na ceathrún n	na ceathrú na	na gceathrú na	quarter
an fiche	m	an fhiche ad	na fichidí	na bhfichidí	twenty
an tríocha	m	an tríochad d	na tríochaidí	na dtríochaidí	thirty
an seasca	m	an tseascad d	na seascaidí	na seascaidí	sixty
an t-ochtó	m	an ochtó d	na hochtóidí	na n-ochtóidí	eighty
an cara	m	an charad d	na cairde	na gcarad d	friend

"rule", "exceptions"; the plural of *fiche* with other numbers is *fichid*

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

the irregular declination (an Díochlaonadh Neamhrialta)

Many nouns are *irregular*- with respect to their plurals (e.g. *duine* - *daoine*, 4th declination)
 Nouns are divided into declinations rather according to the [genitive](#), for this is much more regular, and only very few, albeit common, nouns are resistant to a typification.

Of those, these are probably the most common:

Nom. Sing.	m/f	Gen. Sing.	Dat. Sing.	Nom. Plur.	Gen. Plur.	translation
an bhean ¹	f	na mná	don mhnaoi, bhean	na mná	na mban	woman
an deirfiúr	f	na deirfear	-	na deirfiúracha	na ndeirfiúracha	sister (fam.)
an tsiúr ²	f	na siúrach	-	na siúracha	na siúracha	sister (nun)
Dia, an dia	m	Dé, an dé	-	na déithe	na ndéithe	God
an lá	m	an lae	don ló, lá	na laethanta	na laethanta	day
an leaba ³	f	na leapa	-	na leapacha	na leapacha	bed
an mhí	f	na míosa	-	na míonna	na míonna	month
an olann ⁴	f	na holla	-	na holanna	na n-olann	wool
an talamh ⁵	f	na talún	-	na tailte	na dtailte	land
Ó/Ua ⁶	m	Uí	-	Uí	Ua/Ó	grandchild, descendant

¹: The dative plural is/was *mnáibh*

²: *siúr* is mostly 5th declination, except the -r is broad in the nominative

³: *leaba* is actually a verbal noun (*leabhadh*). This places it in the verbal noun class. Genitive: *leabha* > *leapa* (-bth- is pronounced[p])

⁴: *Olann* is a regular word of the 3rd declination. The genitive *olla* is produced via [syncopation](#) (the omission of a in *olann*) + suffix -a of the 3rd declination (following the old spelling, *olna*, today in the new standard *olla* both spoken and written, since ln > ll)

⁵: the genitive *talún* is actually also regular (5th declination), its earlier form was *talmhan* (dative: *talmhain*). The variant *talamh* (masc) - *talaimh* - *tailte* is regular (1st declination),

Other nouns ending in -mh also once belonged to the 5th declination, e.g. *breitheamh* = judge, old genitive *breitheamhan* (in the new standard *breithiún*), hence the English term "Brehon Laws" for the Old Irish Law System and the plural *breithiúnacha*. Today most of these nouns belong to the 1st declination: *breitheamh* - *breithimh*

⁶: This applies to the Ó in names (the word ó = grandchild is 4th declination, genitive ó). The vocative is *Uí*. The dative plural *Uibh* is sometimes to be found in town- and region names (*Uibh Ráthach* = Iveragh). *Ua* is also used as the nominative singular (and Ó also as genitive plural)

More about the *declination of verbal nouns* see [here](#)

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun(an tAinmfhocal)

the abstract noun (an t-ainmfhocal teibi)

the abstract noun

[abstract noun](#) (ainmfhocal teibi)

- [common abstract noun](#) (ainmfhocal teibí gnách)
- [graduated abstract noun](#) (ainmfhocal teibí céime)

syntax of the graduated abstract noun

- [wonderful, how big he is](#)
- [how big is he ?](#)
- [however big](#)
- [the bigger, the better](#)
- [getting bigger](#)

abstract noun (ainmfhocal teibi)

Synonym: substantivised adjective

Abstract nouns do not describe something concrete but something abstract. With this, there are a wide array of abstract nouns. In a more specific sense, we're only discussing those which are derived from adjectives.

One subdivides these abstract nouns in **common** and **graduated**.

By many of these, both will have the same form, but often they do differ from one another.

common abstract noun (ainmfhocal teibi gnách)

formation:

forms

comparative form of the adjective

m/f examples

comparative form + **-(e)acht, -(a)íocht**

f minice = frequency, bacaí = lameness

adjective + **-(a)il** (some adjectives ending in -ach)

f deirgeacht = redness, clistíocht = cleverness

adjective + **-(e)as, -(e)adas**

f bacaíl = lameness

adjective + **-achar** (some adjectives ending in -ach)

m maitheas = goodness, beos = vitality, dorchadas = darkness

adjective

m lagachar = weakness

m/f maith = (the) Good

Many adjectives have more than one appropriate abstract noun (e.g.: *maith - maith, maiithe, maitheas*)

The comparative of the adjective ending in **-mhar** or in a **-vowel** may **not** be used as the *common abstract noun* (*beo, crua, grianmhar - grianmhaire*) This refers also to the comparative ending in **-a** (*fearúil - fearúla*) as well as the irregular *dócha - dóichí*.

These comparatives are **only** used as the *graduated abstract noun*.

use:

- general expressions of a quality without respect to a bearer (like in German or English, but mostly with the article)
e.g. *Ní maith liom an dorchadas* = I don't like (the) darkness

graduated abstract noun (ainmfhocal teibi céime)

formation:

- adjectives ending in **-ach, -mhar** and ending in a **vowel** form this via the *comparative*. e.g: dá chrua[cha] é (crua), dá aistí é (aisteach), dá dhóichí é (docha), dá ghréannmhaire é (greannmhar)
as well as those adjectives, whose comparative ends in **-a**. e.g. dá dheacra é = however difficult, dá fheárula é = however masculine he may be
- many adjectives use either the comparative form or comparative + **-(e)acht/-íocht**: e.g.: *minic - minice, minicíocht, moch - moiche, moicheacht*
- the following adjectives use in this case always the form in the following table e.g. *maith - seabhas* instead of: *maiitheas, maiithe*. Some of these only serve as the grad. abstr. noun.

adjective	abstract grad. noun	examples
maith	feabhas	dá fheabhas é = however good it is
mór	méad	dá mhéad é = however big/much it is
olc	olcas	dá olcas é = however evil it is
dona	donacht	dá dhonacht é = however bad it is
fada	fad	dá fhad é = however long it is
beag	laghad	dá laghad é = however small/little it is
iomáí	liacht	dá liacht é = however much it is
furasta	fusacht	dá fhusacht é = however easy it is
gearn	giorracht	dá ghiorracht é = however short it is
luath	luas	dá luas é = however fast it is
tiubh	tiús	dá thiús é = however thick/dense it is
dócha	dóichí	dá dhóichí é = however possible it is

use:

- if an extent or a certain degree of a quality is given.
Especially:
- by the [below](#) mentioned special constructs.
- after the following words: **méad** ("size"), **méid** (masc., partitive: "amount, quantity, extent ") and **méid** (fem., "measure, size ") e.g.: *méid na donachta* = *the dimension of poorness*

syntax of the gradiated abstract noun (comhréir an ainm fhocail theibí chéime)

In German, one uses the adjective itself instead of a substantivised adjective in these uses.

In many of these uses, in German a comparison is made, often with an imaginary extent of a quality (this is why in German "how", is "wie auch immer"="however").

In Irish, the actual degree is viewed (hence the use of "a = his ", "cá = which of his " instead of "how") or it is included as part of an imaginary degree (this is the reason for the use of "dá = of his " instead of "however")

"wonderful, how big he is."**form**

a + grad. abstr. noun + direct relative clause [2]

examples

Is iontach *a fheabhas atá sé* = it is wonderful, *how good he is*
Is cuma *a mhéad atá sé* = it doesn't matter, *how big he is*

- The particle **a** ("like") is actually the masculine possessive pronoun of the 3rd person singular ("his"), therefore one could literally translate the above example as "*it is wonderful his goodness, that he is*". The masculine pronoun is always used.
- a** requires lenition.
- Because **a** is the possessive pronoun, combinations with prepositions are also possible:
e.g.: *Fuair sé ardmholadh trina fheabhas a rinne sé an obair* = *He received high praise through how well he did the work*
- after *agus*, this construct takes on the meaning of a *state of being* :
e.g.: *Tá sé go han-mhaith agus a óige atá sé* = *He is very good considering how young he is*.
- instead of this construct one can also use **chomh** + adjective (see [equative](#)).

"how big is he?"

Similar to the previous example, one can also form a question:

form

cá + grad. abstr. noun + direct relative clause [2]

examples

Cá fheabhas atá sé? = *How good is he?*
Cá mhinice a bhí sé anseo? = *How often was he hier?*

- This **cá** (= how?) is a combination of the interrogative **cé/cá** and the possessive pronoun **a** (lit.: *cá* = "which his ")
- cá** requires lenition

however big**form**

dá + grad. abstr. noun + subject

dá + grad. abstr. noun + subject + direct relative clause

examples

dá dheacracht é = *however difficult it is*
dá mhéad díuil a bhí aige ann = *however much love he had for it*

the abstract noun

dá + **grad. abstr. noun** + direct relative clause [2]

dá + **grad. abstr. noun** + dá + indirect relative clause

dá + **grad. abstr. noun** + indirect relative clause

dá fheabhas a rinne sé é = however well he did it

dá fheabhas dá ndéarna sé é = however well he did it

dá fheabhas a ndéarna sé é = however well he did it

- **dá** is a compound of preposition de + particle **a** (= how). Hence the approximate literal translation of the sentence "Dá dheacreacht é": "of which difficulty it may be". Because **a** is the possessive pronoun of the 3rd person singular: "of his difficulty it may be"

On the other hand, it does resemble the conjunction *dá* = *if* ("if it may be difficult"), which would cause eclipsis.

The second **dá** in the second-to-last construct is a combination of *de* and one of the relative pronoun, lit. translation of this sentence: "of his goodness of which he did it"

- (The first) **dá** requires lenition.
- **dá** + abstr. noun can also follow a noun as an attribute, this is then often introduced through *gach*
e.g.: *Chuir sé gach cóir dá fheabhas orm* = He let me have every treatment, no matter how good it was (lit.: "he laid every justice of-his goodness on-me") or: *Mhill sé gach aon ní dá bhreatha* = He destroyed everything, no matter how beautiful

It also often appears in negations:

e.g.: *Níl amhras dá laghad faoi* = There is not even the smallest doubt about it/ no doubt about it, however small

- regional (Connemara) also: **dhá** instead of **dá**

"the bigger, the better"

form

dá + **grad. abstr. noun** + subject + **is ea is** + comparative

dá + **grad. abstr. noun** + subject + **is amhlaidh is** + comparative

examples

dá mhéad é is ea is fearr = the bigger he is, the better

dá mhéad é is amhlaidh is fearr é = the bigger he is, the better

- This is the same **dá** as in the previous construct.
We then have the same variants in place of the named *subject* at our disposal:
e.g.: *Dá mhéad a rinne sé is ea is fearr* = the more he did, the better.
or: *Dá laghad a gcím diot is amhlaidh is fearr dom* = the less I see of you, the better it is for me
- **amhlaidh** is an adverb (= so, exactly)[1]. **is amhlaidh is** also appears outside of this construct, meaning "the" as in "the bigger, the better".

Note the small difference between these constructs:

Dá laghad é is ea is fearr é = The smaller he is, the better

Dá laghad é is fearr é = However small he is, he is the better one

In Donegal, there is another way of forming it, without an abstr. noun:

form

mas + **comparative** + ... + **mas** + **comparative** + ...

examples

mas mó atá ann mas fearr é = the more that are here, the better

- instead of **mas** also **mars**, **más**.

These stem from *mar* (= as, like) + *is* (= copula)

"it is getting bigger"

form

form of **téigh** + subject + **i** + **grad. abstr. noun**

examples

Tá sé ag dul i bhfeabhas = It will get better.

Rachaidh sé i bhfeabhas amárach = Tomorrow it'll get better.

- **téigh** = go, **i** = in.

(*Tá sé ag dul i bhfeabhas* = It is getting better. lit.: "It is at going in improvement")

[1] **amlaidh** etym. actually a prepositional pronoun of *amhail + eadh* (*old form to ea*) = "as it "

[2] Sometimes, **agus/is** is placed before the direct relative clause, possibly analogous to the expression with a similar meaning with chomh (see [equative](#): *chomh maith agus a bhí sé = as good as him*). As opposed to that, is es is actually unnecessary e.g.: *a fhéabhas [agus] a bhí sé = how good he is*

Caibidil a Trí: The verb (an Briathar)

the verbal noun (an tAinm Briathartha)

[synonyms](#)

[formation](#)

[genitive](#)

[plural](#)

[use](#)

Irish verbs have *no infinitive (infinideach)!*

There where one would use the infinitive in German or in English, stands the **verbal noun** in Irish. The Irish verbal noun has strong similarities to the infinitive, even to the point like the German infinitive it can just as well be used as a noun (e.g.: malen - das Malen etc.)

The statement "no infinitive but just a verbal noun" is then not random.

The reasons for this are the common typical (and very different) noun endings of the verbal nouns (e.g. -acht, -iocht) as opposed to the German infinitive suffix -en; and the fact that it can stand in the genitive in certain cases as well as being able to carry a genitive attribute (object). In addition, it is often used with various prepositions (ag, a, do, chun, le, etc.) (the German infinitive actually only with "zu").

On the other hand, the Irish verbal noun has also *verbal* qualities: it can carry an adverb, have direct (accusative) objects etc.

To sum up, one can say that the German infinitive has, like the Irish verbal noun, both *substantive* and *verbal* qualities. Both come somewhere between noun and verb form, the Irish verbal noun is closer to the noun, the German infinitive is rather seen as a verb form.

Synonyms:

action word, verbal noun

Abbreviation used occasionally in this text: VN

formation:

The formation of the verbal noun is very irregular. Although, the given "regular" formation is quite common. But exactly the most common verbs like to use the "irregular" verbal noun endings.

The best is if one learns the verbal noun right along with the verb.

In the dialects, there are also partially different endings used (e.g. *feiscint/feiceáil* = see)

verbs of the 1st conjugation

regular formation:

- verbal noun suffix **-adh** or. **-eadh**
e.g. *bris* - *briseadh* (break), *mol* - *moladh* (praise)
Often the verb root is depalatalised
e.g. *buail* - *bualadh* (hit)
- verbs ending in **-áil**: verbal noun with the same ending **-áil**:
e.g.: *péinteáil* (verb = paint) - *péinteáil* (verbal noun "to paint")
- verbs ending in a short vowel/consonant + **-igh**: verbal noun ending in **-í**
(earlier *-ighe*, *-idhe*, latter, since many of these verbs ended earlier in *-idh*)
e.g.: *suigh* - *suí* (sit), *nigh* - *ní* (wash)
- verbs ending in a long vowel (á, é, í, ó, ú) + **-igh**: verbal noun ending in **-á, -é, -í, -ó, -ú**
(e.g. *-ó* earlier *-óghadh*, d.h. *-ógh* + *-adh*)

e.g.: *dóigh* - *dó* (*burn*)

further typical ("irregular") formations

- suffixless (same form as the verb stem)
e.g. *ól* - *ól* (*drink*)
- suffixless + depalatalisation of the verb stem
e.g. *coisc* - *cosc* (*prevent*)
- verbal noun ending **-amh**
e.g. *déan* - *déanamh* (*make*), *seas* - *seasamh* (*stand*), *léigh* - *léamh* (*read*)
- further verbal noun endings: **-achtáil, -úint, -an, -int, -t, -im, -e, -áil, -ach, -acht, -achán, -áil, -aidh**, etc.

verbs of the 2nd conjugation

regular formation:

- verbal noun ending: **-ú**
(earlier: **-ughadh**, also *-igh* > *-ugh* + *-adh*)
e.g. *saothraigh* - *saothrú* (*work hard*)
- verbs ending in a slender **-l, -n, -r**: verbal noun ending **-t**
e.g.: *oscaill* - *oscailt* (*open*), *imir* - *imirt* (*play*)

further typical ("irregular") formations

- verbal noun ending: **-í**
e.g.: *éirigh* - *éiri* (*rise*), *cónaigh* - *cónai* (*live*)
- suffixless (same form like the verb stem or minus *-igh*)
e.g.: *aithris* - *aithris* (*imitate*), *foghlaim* - *foghlaim* (*learn*), *damhsaigh* - *damhsa* (*dance*)
- suffixless + depalatalisation of the verb stem
e.g.: *ceangail* - *ceangal* (*connect*)
- further verbal noun endings: **-ach, -acht, -achtáil, -achan, -eáil, -áil, -int**, etc.

verbal noun without a corresponding verb

e.g. from classes of people (mostly professions)

Verbal nouns can also be formed out of types of people (mostly professions), although there is no real corresponding verb to it. These verbal nouns are most often used in the progressive

- **-acht /-eacht**

e.g.:

feirmeoir = farmer; Tá sé ag *feirmeoireacht* = He runs a farm. ("is he at farmer-being")

siopadóir = shopkeeper; Tá sé ag *siopadóireacht* = He runs a shop. ("is he at shopowner-being")

cabaire = chatterbox; Tá sé ag *cabaireacht* = He's chattering ("is he at chatterbox-being")

formation of the genitive of the verbal noun:

the verbal adjective as the genitive form

Although they are nouns, they form their genitive often using the [verbal adjective](#) [1]:

- if they appear in **"infinitive" use**
and especially then when they have a further **genitive object** or a **possessive pronoun** as an object.
bualadh (*hit*): *chun a mbuailte* = *in order to hit her*
foghlaim (*learn*): *lucht foghlamtha na Gaeilge* = *Irish learners* (*lit. "people of the learning of Irish "*)
ól (*drink*): *lucht ólta fuisce* = *whiskies drinkers* (*"people of the drinking of whiskey "*)
- to form the participle with the prefix [so-](#), [do-](#), [in-](#) (see verbal adjective):
briseadh (*break*): *sobhriste* = *fragile*

- the "regular" **verbal noun ending in -adh and -ú** (as well as: **-á, -é, -í, -ó**) **always** have a genitive in the form of the verbal adjective (in infinitive and substantivised use)
e.g: *glanadh* - *glanta* (*cleaning* - *of the cleaning*), *saothrú* - *saothraithe* (*hard work* - *of the hard work*), *suí* - *suite* (*sitting* - *of the sitting*)

substantivised genitive

genitives, depending on the noun declension, form these (except verbal noun ending in -adh and - long vowel), if they:

- appear in "**substantivised**" or "**infinitive**" **use** (if they have **no object**).
e.g.: *bréith* (*bear*): *lá bréithe* = *birthday* ("day of bearing ")
e.g.: *ól* (*drink*): *lucht óil* = *drinkers* ("people of the drinking "),
e.g.: *foghlaim* (*learn*): *lucht foghlama* = *learners* ("people of the learning ")
- the verbs ending in **-ail** with **a verbal noun ending in -ail** use **always** a substantivised genitive (**-ála**) and **never** the verbal adjective as the genitive, even not in the above mentioned cases.
Just as the many VNs ending in **-áint** (**-ána**), **-úint** (**-úna**), **-cht** (**-chta**)

substantivised genitive = verbal adjective

- verbs of the 2nd conjugation ending in **-l, -n, -r** with a verbal noun ending in **-t** the form of the genitives is **always** either:
-te (form of the verbal adjective = form of the substantivised genitive, 2nd declension)
e.g.: *oscailt* - *oscailté* (*open*) or:
-tha (form of the verbal adjective = form of the substantivised genitive, 3rd declension)
e.g.: *imirt* - *imeartha* (*play*)

In these cases (by coincidence) the verbal adjective and the substantivised genitive match.

formation of the plural of the verbal nouns:

A formation of the plural is only possible in substantivised use of the verbal noun.

Many verbal nouns form the plural according to their declension.

The "regular" verbal noun ending in **-adh** and **-ú** form the plural as such

verbal noun ending in **-adh**:

plural by affixing an **-í** on the verbal adjective:

e.g.: *glan* (*to clean*): *glanadh* - *glanta* - *glantai*

verbal noun ending in **-ú** (or long vowels)

plural ending **-uithe** or **-ithe**

e.g.: *saothraigh* (*to work hard*): *saothrú* - *saothruithe*

(not to be confused with *saothraithe*, which is the verbal adjective and genitive singular of the verbal nouns)

use of the verbal nouns:

see under [Syntax of the verbal noun](#)

[1]: Why is it that the verbal adjective is the genitive of the verbal noun?:

A normal noun in the genitive is mostly an **attribute** (e.g. "Seáin" in "teach Sheáin = Seán's house ") and is used just like an adjectival attribute (e.g. "álainn" in "teach álainn = a beautiful house ").

The substantivised genitive acts then as quasi the "*attributive form*" of the noun.

The verbal adjective acts normally as the "*attributive form*" of the verb (e.g. "tógha" in "teach tógha = built house ").

If the verbal noun now is in "infinitive" use (in stress of its *verbal* qualities) as an attribute (and must be set in the genitive), one reaches for the already existant *attributive form* of the same verb (to the verbal adjective).

Caibidil a hAon: The Noun (an tAinmfhocal)

The Names (na hAinmneacha Dilse)

[first names](#) (ainmneacha pearsanta)
[surnames](#) (sloinnte)
[forms of address](#)
[place names](#) (logainmneacha)

first names (ainmneacha pearsanta):

In Ireland there are two different groups of first names:

1. Gaelic-originating and gaelicised names:

- Gaelic e.g. *Tadhg, Niall, Eoghan, Domhnall, Brian, Conchubhar/Connór, Diarmaid, Donncha, Cathal*, etc.
- Many names were given an English "translation" due to the phonetic similarity, despite having different origins: *Áine* > *Anne*, *Aoife* > *Eva*, *Tadhg* > *Timothy*, *Eoghan* > *Eugene*, *Owen*
- Especially the Norman or Christian names were gaelicised like *Seán* = *Jean*, *Séamas* = *James*, *Searlas* = *Charles*, *Gearailt* = *Gérard*, *Annraoi* = *Henry*, *Micheál* = *Michael*, *Sinéad* = *Jeannette*, *Liam* = *Guilliaume/William*, *Peadar* = *Peter*, *Pól* = *Paul*, *Eoin* = *John*, etc.
- male names are often inflected as the [1st declension](#): *Seán* - genitive *Sheáin* - vocative *a Sheáin*, *Niall* - *Néill* - *a Néill*, *Tomas* - *a Thomais* but there are some in other declensions: [3rd declension](#): *Diarmaid* - *Dhiarmada* - *a Dhiarmaid*; *Mathúin* - *Mhathúna* - *a Mhathúin*, [4th declension](#): *Donncha* - *Dhonncha* - *a Dhonncha*
- fem. first names mostly belong to either the [2nd](#) or [4th declension](#) : *Sinéad* - *Shinéide* = *a Shinéad*, *Síle* - *Shile* - *a Shile*
Many fem. first names are formed using the diminutive suffix **-ín**: *Noirín*, *Máirín*, *Póilín*.
This can also be used for male first names: *Seánín* = *Johnny*

2. English names (also anglicised names or Norman or Gaelic origin) like *Tom, Donald, John, Gerald, William, Janet*. These names are not declined, they are also mostly neither lenited nor eclipsed.

The Irish mostly have "2" forms of their names, an English (or anglicised) and a Gaelic (or gaelicised) names, that are used depending on the preference and language being spoken.

surnames (sloinnte):

Here, there are a few different groups. Mostly, the surnames for men and women are different.

I: Gaelic and gaelicised surnames (Sloinnte Gaelacha agus Sloinnte Gaelaithe)

This is the largest group. It includes all those names with *O* and *Mac*

("*And if he lacks both O and Mac no Irishman is he*").

There are however a few typical Irish names without *O* and *Mac*, some of these end in *-ch* and some have a *de*.

1. names with Ó and Mac

- The most common group is that of the Gaelic (und gaelicised) surnames with **Ó** ("descendent, grandchild") and **Mac** ("son"). *Mac* is mostly pronounced [ək] and it is sometimes even written so: **'ac**
Although the words *ó* and *mac* mean "grandchild of", "son" this doesn't mean that someone was named after his father or grandfather. These surnames are mostly unchanged since centuries (like German names with -son, -sen) and point to a very distant ancestor. Set surnames like this exist since the 11th/12th C., some of them were added later.
- After *Ó* or *Mac* follows the first name of the ancestor in the genitive.
e.g.:
Ó Donnáill = "grandchild of *Donnall*'s", a descendent of a certain *Donnall* (angl. *O'Donald*),
Ó Caoibh = "grandchild of *Caobh*'s", a descendent of *Caobh* (angl. *O'Keefe*)
Ó Cinnéide = "grandchild of *Cinnéide*'s", a descendent of *Cinnéide*s (angl. *O'Kennedy*)
Ó Cathasaigh = "grandchild of *Cathasach*'s", a descendent of a certain *Cathasach* (angl. *O'Casey*)
Mac Aonghusa = "son of *Aonghus*'s", a son of a certain *Aonghus* (angl. *MacGuinness*)
Mac Carthaigh = "son of *Carthach*'s", a son of a certain *Carthach* (angl. *MacCarthy*)
Mac Diarmada = "son of *Diarmuid*'s", a son of a certain *Diarmuid* (angl. *MacDermot*)
- Sometimes the words **Maoil** (genitive of *Maol* = "worshipper, disciple") or **Giolla** ("servant") are seen, mostly with names of saints, e.g.:
Mac Giolla Íosa = "son of the servant of Jesus" (angl.: *McAleeese*),
Mac Giolla Phádraig = "son of the servant of Patrick" (angl. *MacGilpatrick*)
Mac Giolla Easpaig = "son of the servant of the bishop" (angl. *MacGillespie*)
Mac Giolla Phoíl = "son of the servant of Paul" (angl.: *MacGilfoyle*)
Ó Maoil Eoin = "grandchild of the disciple of John" (angl.: *O'Malone*)
Ó Maoil Aoidh = "grandchild of the disciple of Aodh" (angl. *O'Molloy*)
Ó Maoil Mhichil = "grandchild of the disciple of Michael" (angl. *O'Mulville*)
Ó Maoil Bhride = "grandchild of the disciple of Brigid" (angl.: *O'Mulready*).
the name prefix **Con** (genitive of *Cú* = hound) is part of the following names, *Con-* is not lenited.
e.g.:
Mac Conmhaoil = *MacConwill*
Mac Connara = *MacNamara*
- sometimes the name of the ancestor is added on account of their *trade, origin* etc. These are mostly with the article **an**.
e.g.:
Mac (an) Gabhann = "son of the smith" (angl.: *McGowan*),
Mac an Bháird = "son of the bard" (angl.: *MacWard, Ward*)
Mac an Bhréithiún = "son of the judge" (angl.: *MacBrown, Brown*)
Mac an tSaoir = "son of the freeman" (angl.: *MacAteer/McIntyre*),
Mac an tSaoi = "son of the wise man" (angl.: *MacKenzie*)
Mac an tSagairt = "son of the priest" (angl.: *MacTaggart*)
Mac an Lia = "son of the doctor" (angl.: *MacAlee, MacLee*)
Mac an Ghaill = "son of the foreigner" (angl.: *MacGill*)
Mac an Ultaigh = "son of the Ulsterman" (angl.: *MacNulty*)

- in the anglicised form, O' is written instead of Ó and in some cases Mc instead of Mac, by men and women alike (often O' and Mac are even omitted)

Some Norman names get Fitz in English instead of Mac (Mac Gearailt = FitzGerald) Fitz comes from fr. *fils* = son.

Some of the English forms of the name is quite a stretch of the original name:

e.g.:

Mac Oisdealbha = Costello, *Ó hEachthairn* = Ahern, *Ó Tuathail* = O'Toole, *Mac Aonghusa* = Guinness

some also have variant spellings, even literal translations are made:

Mac Gabhann = Smith/Smithson

- The spelling reform of the 40s was generally applied to surnames as well:

e.g. *Ó Seaghdha* > *Ó Sé*, *Mac Mathghamhna* > *Mac Mathúna*

■ form of the name for men:

The man's name beginning with **Ó** (or **Ua**)

or **Mac** (also **Mag** preceding a vowel).

The name that follows is then unlenited (after Ó), partially lenited (after Mac), after Ó an h-prefix precedes vowels

e.g.

Seán Ó Cathail = "John, grandchild of Cathal",

Pádraig Ó Laoghaire = "Patrick, grandchild of Laoghaire" (angl.: Patrick O'Leary)

Pádraig Ua Duinnín = "Patrick, grandchild of Duinnín" (angl.: Patrick Dinneen),

Peadar Ó hÓgáin = "Peter, grandchild of Ógán" (angl.: Peter [O']Hogan)

Seán Ó hAonghusa = "John, grandchild of Aonghú" (angl. John [O']Hennessey)

Pól Mag Uidhir = "Paul, son of Odhar" (angl.: Paul Maguire),

Séamas Mag Finn = "James, son of Finn" (angl.: James MacGinn),

Liam Mac Phaidín = "Liam, son of Paidín" (angl.: Liam MacFadden),

Brian Mac Mathúna = "Brian, son of Mathúin" (angl.: Brian McMahon)

■ form of the name for unmarried women: ("maiden name")

Here, the words

Ní = "descendent, grandchild of" (actually a contraction of Iníon Uí = "daughter of descendent/grandchild of") and

Nic = "daughter" (actually a contraction of Iníon Mhic = "daughter of son")

After **Ní** and **Nic** lenition occurs (except c and g after Nic)

e.g.

Máire Ní Cheallaigh = "Maria, grandchild of Ceallach's" (angl. als Mary O'Kelly),

Aoife Ní Mhaoil Mhichil = "Aoife, grandchild of the disciples of Michael" (angl.: Eve O'Mulville)

Áine Nic Mhathúna = "Anne, daughter of Mathúin" (angl.: Ann MacMahon),

Máire Nic Aoidh = "Maria, daughter of Aodh" (angl.: Mary McKee)

■ form of the name for married women (after taking the name of her husband. This is not required: the maiden name can continue to be used.)

The form of the name is made by a prefixing of the word **Bean** = woman, the surname (of the husband) is then completely in the genitive, Ó becomes Uí, Mac becomes **Mhic**, to add up to (**Bean**) Uí or (**Bean**) **Mhic**. (**Bean** can also be omitted.)

After **Uí** and **Mhic** one lenites (except c and g after **Mhic**)

e.g.:

Máire (Bean) Uí Cheallaigh = "Maria (Wife) of the descendant of Ceallach" (angl.: Mary O'Kelly),

Áine (Bean) Mhic Mhathúna = "Anne (Wife) of the son of Mathúin" (angl.: Ann MacMahon)

■ form of the name ending in -ch

Out of those names with Ó and Mac (provided, a personal name in the genitive follows) forms ending in -ch can be made. These are actually substantivised adjectives.

The words *Mac* and *Ó* are omitted, and all of these forms end in **-ch** (or -each, -ach, seldomly *ioch*).

This form of the name is **always** written with the article (except in the vocative) and always used without the first name.

These forms are uncommon for names with *Maoil*, *Giolla* by those names coming from trades and similar titles.

This is not to be confused with those names actually ending in -ch, to which there is no Ó or Mac form (see: [2nd substantivised adjective ending in -ch as a name](#))

Construction

- the part of the name following Ó/Mac of the ancestor is set back into the nominative (*Ó Néill* > *Niall*) and the suffix -ch is added (*an Niallach*)
- by names ending in **-igh** (= genitive form of a personal name ending in -(e)ach) one only needs to set the name back into the nominative (*Mac Cá尔thaigh* > *an Cá尔thach*, *Ó Ceallaigh* > *an Ceallach*)
- sometimes there is **synecopation**: *Ó Cadhain* > *an Cadhafter*, *Ó Siadhail* > *an Siadhlach* (statt **an Cadhanach*, **an Siadhalach*)
- This form is normally declinable (**1st declension**: genitive and vocative, also nominativ plural: **-igh**)
e.g.: *an Carthach* - *an Charthaigh* (gen.) - *ag an gCarthach* (dat.) - *a Charthaigh* (voc.) - *na Carthaigh* (nom. pl.) - *na gCarthach* (gen. pl.)

It is used

- if the male name-bearer is named or addressed without the first name or title e.g.: "(Mr.) Smith", [[1](#)].

e.g.: *an Mathúinach* = (Mr.) MacMahon (wörtl. in etwa: "the Mathúinian")

Tá an Ceallach ann = (Mr.) O'Kelly is here (wörtl. "is the Ceallach in-it")

Tháinig an Niallach isteach = (Mr.) O'Neill came in. (lit.: "came the Niallian inside")

a Ceallaigh! = Mr. O'Kelly!

- in uses for fem. name-bearers in the sense of "Mrs." together with *bean* = wife

e.g.: *Bean an Ceallaigh* = Mrs. O'Kelly

- in the plural to denote the family

e.g.: *na Ceallaigh* = the O'Kelly's

- it is also used with double names (in the case of the name in the first position):

Séamas Ceallach Ó Néill = James Kelly O'Neill

Seán Gearáltach Ó Cinnéide = John FitzGerald Kennedy

■ Forms for "Sir ..." / "Mr. ..."

Besides the aforementioned form ending in **-ch** with the article, there is also:

Mac Uí (for both those names ending in Ó or Mac)

e.g.: *Mac Uí Mhathúna* = *an Mathúinach* = Mr. MacMahon

Mac (in names with Mac, or in names with Giolla, or with the article)

e.g.: *Mac an tSaor* = Mr. MacAtter

an tUasal (lit. "the high, noble") This is only used in letters (similar to *Esquire*)

e.g.: *an tUasal Seán Ó Sé* = Seán Ó Sé, Uas. = John O'Shay, Esq. = Sir John O'Shay

■ Forms for "Madam..." / "Mrs. ..."

Bean Uí for names with Ó

Bean Mhic for names with Mac

also **Bean an** with the form of the name ending in -ch (here genitive **-igh**)

e.g.: *Bean Uí Chadhain* = *Bean an Chadhnaigh* = Mrs. O'Cain

e.g.: *Bean Mhic Mhathúna* = *Bean an Mhathúnaigh* = *Mrs. MacMahon*

it is not quite modern (but also still used in English) to use the first name of the husband (then in the genitive)
(e.g. *Bean Sheáin Úi Cheallaigh* = *Mrs. John O'Kelly*)

▪ **Forms for "Miss ..."**

Iníon Uí for names with Ó

Iníon Mhic for names with Mac

also **Iníon an** with the form of the name ending in -ch (here genitive **-igh**)

e.g.: *Iníon Uí Cheallaigh* = *Iníon an Cheallaigh* = *Miss O'Kelly*

e.g.: *Iníon Mhic Mhathúna* = *Iníon an Mhathúnaigh* = *Miss MacMahon*

▪ **Forms for "the O'Kellys"/"the O'Kelly family"**

Muintir for names with Ó (instead of Ó):

e.g.: *Muintir Cheallaigh* = *the O'Kellys / the O'Kelly family*

Clann Mhic for names with Mac

e.g.: *Clann Mhic Mhathúna* = *the MacMahons / the MacMahon family* [2]

Clann Uí for names with Ó Maoil

e.g.: *Clann Uí Mhaoil Eoin* = *the Malones / the Malone family*

Forms auf **-ch** im plural (also **-igh**):

e.g.: *na Ceallaigh* = *the O'Kelly's, na Mathúnaigh* = *the MacMahons*

2. **Substantivised adjectives ending in -ch as a name**

- very few of such names have Ó, Mac or de. They always end in **-ch** (and mostly -each/-ach).

They are substantivised adjectives (e.g. *Breathnach* = Welsh)

e.g.:

Pól Breathnach = *"Paul Welsh"* (angl.: Paul Walsh/Brannagh) auch: *Breatnach*

Seán Caomháster = *"John Mild"* (angl. John Kavanagh)

Tadhg Cinnseallach = *"Tadhg Brave"* (angl. Teige Kinsella)

Seamas Laighneach = *"James Leinsterian"* (angl. James Lynagh)

- after fem. first names they are lenited

e.g.: *Áine Breatnach* = *Ann Walsh, Máire Chaomhánach* = *Mary Kavanagh*

- they are declined as in the [1st declension](#) of nouns (e.g. *Breathnach* - gen. *Breathnaigh* - plur. *Breathnaigh*)

- for "Sir/Mister ..." there is an article or a **Mac an**:

e.g.: *an Breathnach* = *Mac an Breathnaigh* = *Mr. Walsh*

- "Madam/Mrs..." means: **Bean an** ...

e.g.: *Bean an Breathnaigh* = *Mrs. Walsh*

- "the Walshs" is done with the plural-article

e.g.: *na Breathnaigh* = *the Walshs*

3. **names with "de"**

- names mit **de** are always of an Anglo-Norman origin, where the *de* is equivalent to the French *de* = *of*. It is used instead of the French *le* = *the* and according to some sources also used in place of the Eng. article *the*.

It is not the Irish preposition [de](#), and so no lenition occurs after this *de*.

Pronunciation mostly just [@].

e.g.

de Búrca = *"de Bourge"*, angl.: *Burke*,

de Builéir = *"le bouteillier"*, angl.: *(the) Butler*,

de Róiste = *"de Roche"*, angl.: *Roche*,

de Paor = *"le Poer"*, angl.: *Power*,

de Blaca = *"le Blac"*, angl.: *Blake*

- also from these names, the form ending in **-ch** can be made (then *without "de"*)

e.g.: *an Búrcach* = *(Mr.) Burke*, *an Buitléarach* = *(Mr.) Butler*

- in form, Mr.Burke / Mrs.Burke act as the above forms, "de" is omitted:

e.g.: *Mac an Bhúrcaigh* = *an Búrcach* = *Mr. Burke*,

Bean an Bhúrcaigh = *Mrs. Burke*

- "the Burkes" is *muinntir Bhúrca* or *na Búrcaigh*

4. **other gaelicised names**

- many names of early Anglo-Norman immigrants ("na Sean-Ghall") v.a. Norman, English and Welsh origin were gaelicised in spelling and pronunciation but without the *Mac*, *Ó* or *de*.

e.g.: *Seathrún Céitinn* = *Geoffrey Keating* or also:

Standún = *Stanton*, *Puirseáil* = *Purcell*, *Daltún* = *Dalton (d'Alton)*, *Ruiséil* = *Russell*, *Dairsigh* = *Darcy*, *Seoigh* = *Joyce*, etc.

- these names are generally not lenited, e.g. *teach Sheáin Daltún* = *John Daltons Haus*

- also from these names, one can form the **-ch** form (with names ending in -éir and -éil > -éarach, -éalach; some names with -igh > -ioch), Mr. and Mrs. as above

e.g.

an Céitinnéach = *(Mr.) Keating*; *Mac an Chéitinnigh* = *Mr. Keating*,

an Ruiséalach = *(Mr.) Russell*; *Bean an Ruiséalaigh* = *Mrs. Russell*,

an Dairsioch = *(Mr.) Darcy*,

an Seoigheach = *(Mr.) Joyce*

or: *muinntir Chéitinn* = *na Céitinnigh* = *the Keatings*, *na Daltúnaigh* = *the Daltons*, *na Ruiséalaigh* = *the Russells*, *na Seoighigh* = *the Joyces*

- another form of the gaelicisation is the simple translation or taking on of similar sounding Gaelic names, and these act as Gaelic names (e.g.: *Smith* > *Mac Gabhann*, *Mary Robinson* > *Máire Mhic Róibín*)

II: English / foreign surnames

These names were not incorporated into Irish spelling. Their bearers are immigrants of the recent centuries ("na Nua-Ghall"), e.g. *Miller*, *Dickens*, *Warwick*, etc. In the Irish language, these names behave like the Gaelic and gaelicised names, but are not lenitable and are not inflected! Forms ending in -ch are not common. Also German and foreign surnames are handled this way in the Irish language.

e.g.: *Seán Miller* = *John Miller*, *Mac Uí Miller* = *Mr. Miller*, *Bean (Uí) Miller* = *Mrs. Miller*, *muinntir Miller* = *the Millers*

e.g.: *Hans Schmidt*, *Mac Uí Schmidt* = *Mr. Schmidt*, *Bean (Uí) Schmidt* = *Mrs. Schmidt*, *muinntir Schmidt* = *the Schmidts*

Table of Examples of Irish surnames

engl.	husband/son (e.g. first name Seán)	Mr.	wife (e.g. first name Úna)	Mrs.	daughter (e.g. first name Sile)	M
	nominative	vocative				

Names

O'Brian	Seán Ó Briain	a Shéain Uí Bhriain	Mac Uí Bhriain, an Briaafter	Úna Uí Bhriain	Bean Uí Bhriain Bean an Bhriamaigh	Síle Ní Bhriain	In In
(O')Hogan	Seán Ó hÓgáin	a Sheáin Uí Ógáin	Mac Uí Ógáin, an tÓgánach	Úna Uí Ógáin	Bean Uí Ógáin, Bean an Ógánaigh	Síle Ní Ógáin	In In
(O')Dinneen	Seán Ua Duinnín	a Sheáin Uí Dhuinnín	Mac Uí Dhuinnín, an Duinníneach	Úna Uí Dhuinnín	Bean Uí Dhuinnín, Bean an Dhuinnínigh	Síle Ní Dhuinnín	In In
(O')Malone	Seán Ó Maoil Eoin	a Sheáin Uí Mhaoil Eoin	Mac Uí Mhaoil Eoin, -	Úna Uí Mhaoil Eoin	Bean Uí Mhaoil Eoin, -	Síle Ní Mhaoil Eoin	In -
MacMahon	Seán Mac Mathúna	a Shéain Mhic Mhathúna	Mac Uí Mhathúna, an Mathúnafter	Úna Mhic Mhathúna	Bean Mhic Mhathúna, Bean an Mhathúnaigh	Síle Ní Mhathúna	In In
MacCarthy	Seán Mac Cá尔thaigh	a Sheáin Mhic Cá尔thaigh	Mac Uí Chárthaigh, an Cá尔thach	Úna Mhic Cá尔thaigh	Bean Mhic Cá尔thaigh, Bean an Chárthaigh	Síle Nic Cá尔thaigh	In In
MacConwill	Seán Mac Conmhaoil	a Sheáin Mhic Conmhaoil	Mac Uí Conmhaoil, an Conmhaoilach	Úna Mhic Conmhaoil	Bean Mhic Conmhaoil, Bean an Conmhaoilach	Síle Nic Conmhaoil	In C In
MacAleese	Seán Mac Giolla Íosa	a Sheáin Mhic Giolla Íosa	Mac Giolla Íosa, -	Úna Mhic Giolla Íosa	Bean Mhic Giolla Íosa, -	Síle Nic Giolla Íosa	In -
MacAteer	Seán Mac an tSaor	a Sheáin Mhic an tSaor	Mac an tSaor, -	Úna Mhic an tSaor	Bean Mhic an tSaor, -	Síle Nic an tSaor	In -
Maguire	Seán Mag Uidhir	a Sheáin Mhig Uidhir	Mac Uí Uidhir, an tUidhearch,	Úna Mhig Uidhir	Bean Mhig Uidhir, Bean an Uidhearaigh	Síle Nig Uidhir	In In
Walsh	Seán Breathnach	a Sheáin Bhreathnaigh	Mac an Bhreathnaigh, an Breathnach	Úna Bhreathnach	Bean an Bhreathnaigh, -	Síle Bhreathnach	In -
Burke	Seán de Búrca	a Sheáin de Búrca	Mac an Bhúrcaigh, an Búrcach	Úna de Búrca	Bean an Bhúrcaigh, -	Síle de Búrca	In -
Keating	Seán Céitinn	a Sheáin Céitinn	Céitinn, Mac an Chéitinnigh an Céitinneach	Úna Céitinn	Bean an Chéitinnigh, -	Síle Céitinn	In -
Miller	Seán Miller	a Sheáin Miller	Mac Uí Dickens, -	Úna Miller	Bean Miller, -	Síle Miller	In -

the form of address:

When addressing someone, in oral or written form, one uses a special case, the [vocative](#) and the vocative particle **a**. This particle causes lenition. Only in the [1st declension](#) of nouns is there a special vocative form, which looks like the genitive. In all other declensions, the nominative form is the same as the vocative form.

Although, most of the male first names belong to the 1st declension and also the in surnames common word *Mac* belongs to it. Also the irregular word *Ó* has a vocative form, which looks like the genitive.

e.g.: Seán: *a* Sheáin = John!, Séamas: *a* Shéamais = James!,

Following changes occur in **surnames**:

- **Ó to Uí:**
Seán Ó Ceallaigh: *a* Sheáin Uí Cheallaigh = John O'Kelly!
- **Mac to Mhic:**
Pól Mac Mathúna: *a* Phól Mhic Mhathúna = Paul MacMahon!
- names or forms ending in **-ch** to **-igh**:
Pól Breathnach: *a* Phól Bhreathnaigh = Paul Walsh!
an Brianach: *a* Bhrianaigh = Mr. O'Brian!
- **Bean to Bhean**
Máire Bean Uí Cheallaigh: *a* Mháire Bhean Uí Cheallaigh = Mrs. Mary O'Kelly!

The general address form (engl. Sir!, Madam!):

male: a dhuine uasail! = Sir!

female: a bhean uasal! = Madam!

group: a dhaoine uaisle! = Ladies and Gentlemen!

place names (logainmneacha):

Every Irish town that thinks anything of itself has 2 names, an Irish and an English one. Mostly the Irish form is the older one, the English name just a poor approximation of the original. Some coastal cities have English names of Scandinavian (Viking) origin (Wicklow, Wexford, etc.)

Irish place names may defy the spelling reform (e.g. often one sees *Cois Fhárrge* instead of *Cois Fharraige*).

One finds also some now uncommon grammatical forms (e.g. eclipsis after once proper words: e.g.: *Loch nEachach*, engl. Lough Neagh, *An Muileann gCear*, engl. Mullingar). Sometimes the eclipsis is not recognisable at first sight: (*Loch Garmáin* instead of the earlier *Loch gCarmáin*, engl. Wexford, a citizen of Wexford: *Carmánoch*)

River and country names appear mostly with an article (e.g. *an Life* = Liffey, *an tSionnain* = Shannon, *an Bhoinn* = Boyne, *an Ghearmáin* = Germany, *an Fhrainc* = France, *an Ioddáil* = Italy, *an Rúis* = Russia) Exceptions to this rule: *Meiriceá* = America, *Sasana* = England, *Ceanada* = Canada, *Albain* = Scotland (however they take an article in the genitive), *Éire/Éirinn* = Ireland (also taking an article in the genitive).

The names of the **3 provinces** *Ulster*, *Leinster* and *Connacht* and the word for England *Sasana* are originally plural words, naming those people who lived there. Singular forms of the names for these peoples are no longer common. Today, they are fabricated using the suffix **-e**ach.

It is through this plural character that one finds the explanation for the genitive forms (genitive plural) and older dative forms (dative plural).

- **Ulaidh** = Ulster, actually "Ulstermen", 1. decl., gen. *Uladh*, dat. *Ultaibh*
Cúige Uladh = province of Ulster, eigt. "fifth of the Ulstermen"
Ultach = native of Ulster
- **Laighin** = Leinster, eigt. "Leinstermen", 1. decl., gen. *Laighean*, dat. *Laighnibh*
Cúige Laighean = province of Leinster
Laighneach = native of Leinster
- **Connachta** = Connacht, 3rd decl., fem., gen. *Connacht*, dat. *Connachtaibh*
Cúige Chonnacht = province of Connacht

Connachtach = native of Connacht

- **Sasana** = *England*, e.g. "the Saxons", 1. decl., gen. *Sasan*, dat. *Sasanaibh*
(older forms: auch *Sacsana*, *Sacsain*, old sing. *Sacsan* = *Saxon*)
Sasanach = *an Englishman*

Today the 3 province names are almost exclusively encountered in the genitive together with the word *Cúige* = *province*, to avoid the plural character. *Sasana* on the other hand is seen as a singular word (4th decl., fem., gen./dat. *Sasana*). The development ran parallel but similar to the German, where the word "Sachsen" also once used to describe the tribe of the Saxons, is today a singular word "(das) Sachsen".

an Mhumhain = *Munster* is always a singular word: 5th decl., fem., older nominativ *Mumha*, gen. *Mumhan*, dat. *Mumhain*
but also most commonly seen with *Cúige*: *Cúige Mumhan* = *province of Munster*. A native of Munster is a *Muimhneach*

The English suffix *-ster* in the province names comes either from the Irish or Anglo-Norman *tír* = *terre* = *land*.

The word *Cúige* = *province* means "fifth", because a 5th province used to exist: altirisch *Míde* = "middle". The modern day counties of Meath (an *Mhí*, *Contae na Mí*) and Westmeath (an *Iarmhí*) carry this name, but historically, the province was much larger.

The names of the **counties** are mostly the names of the capitol cities or of a geographical region, with which they, more or less, correlate. The counties were instated through the Brit. occupation and are (at least w.r.t. their boundaries) not traditional.

Traditional Irish **geographical names** are clan or tribe oriented, describing those who once (or still) settled there. So in the East of Ulster, after a tribe that had once settled there known as the *Orghialla* in Irish. The peninsula *Corca Dhuibhne* (engl. Dingle) is named after another such tribe (Ir. *corca* = tribe). Also the names of certain chieftains appear in geographical names (e.g. *Tir Chonaill* = *Conall's Land*, engl. Tyrconnel, as the older name of Co. Donegal, *Tir Eoghain* = *Eoghan's Land*, engl. Tyrone. The area around Waterford known as *na Déisi*, engl. the Decies, names after the tribe of the Déisi.

Munster was earlier divided into subkingdoms, that were simply named for the compass points: *Deasmhumhain* = *South Munster*, engl. Desmond, *Tuadhmuhamhain* = *North Munster*, engl. Thomond, *Urmhumhain* = *East Munster*, engl. Ormond, etc.

Some geographical names, like islands, describe the form/condition of the area, so *Arainn*, the Aran Islands, after the shape of the main island, which resembles a kidney.

[1] The full surname with *Ó* *without* the first name or other additions, e.g. *Ó Néill* was earleir in old Gaelic culture as a regal title of the current king or chieftain (Taoiseach Cine). (e.g.: *Ó Néill* = "the O'Neill", was the chieftain of the O'Neills, and the King of Ulster or, later the count of Tir Eoghain/Tyrone).

Today the form "*Ó Néill*" without a further title or such is only to be used, if one is claiming to be a descendent of Niall.

In sentences like: "*Tháinig Ó Néill isteach* = *O'Neill came in*" is always meaning a famous O'Neill, and in no way some regular Paddy O'Neill off the street. If one wishes to talk about him, one must say "*Tháinig an Níallach isteach*"!

[2] Less commonly *Mhic* is omitted, preceding s a t-prefix may be used: *Clann tSuibhne* = *the MacSweeney family*

Caibidil a Dó:

the Adjective (an Aidiacht)

The Usage of Adjectives

[predicative adjectives](#)
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Caibidil a Dó: The Adjective (an Aidiacht)

Usage of adjectives

[predicative adjectives](#)
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Descriptive adjectives can be used [predicatively](#) (Tá an bhean **mór** = The woman is *big*) or [attributively](#) (an bhean *mhór* = the *big* woman). Besides that, one can turn them into [adverbs](#) (Tá an bhean ag obair go maith = The woman works *well*)

the predicative adjective (an aidiacht fhaisnéiseach)

Adjectives used predicatively are **unchanged** (as in German), e.g.:

Tá an fear **mór** - The man is big.
 Tá an bhean **mór** - The woman is big.
 Tá na fir **mór** - The men are big.
 Tá na mná **mór** - The women are big.

Adjectives used predicatively are mostly used with the verb [bí](#) (present: tá)[\[1\]](#), less commonly with the [copula](#) (present: is)

Tá an fear **mór** - The man is big.
 Is **mór** é an fear - The man is big.

Some *subjective* adjectives *of assessment* take the adverbial partiple **go** when used with the verb **bí** (they're kind of seen as "adverbs of the verb **bí**")

Tá an fear **go maith** - The man is good.
 Tá an cailín **go hálainn** - The girl is beautiful.
 Tá an lá **go deas** - The day is nice.
 Tá an aimsir **go dona** - The weather is bad.
 Tá an samhradh **go haoibhinn** - The summer is splendid.
 Tá an rós **go breá** - The rose is pretty.
 Tá sé **go holc** - It is evil.
 Tá sí **go hiontach** - She is wonderful.

Go is omitted in the presence of additional adverbs e.g.:

Bíonn beoir **maith** i **gcónaí** - Beer is *always* good.
 Bhíodh sí **riamh álainn** - She was *always* beautiful.
 Tá an lá **réasúnta deas**. - The day is *reasonably* nice.
 Bhí an aimsir **sách dona** inné - The weather was *rather* bad yesterday.

Go does not appear with the copula

Tá an lá **go deas** - The day is nice.
 Is **deas** é an lá - The day is nice.

The *attainment* of a quality (e.g. "becoming good") is expressed with the verb **éirigh** (= to rise) (use of **go** as above)

Tá sé ag **éirí mór** - He is becoming big.

Éireoidh mé go maith - I will become good.

Má **éiríonn tú sean** - If you become old.

D'éirigh sí go hálainn as sin amach = She became beautiful since then.

One may also use other verbs in conjunction with predicative adjectives, (e.g. *déan* = *do*):

Rinne sé an scian **géar** = He made the knife sharp.

Rinne sé na sceana **géar** = He made the knives sharp.

Not the difference to the *attributive* use! (adj. is then *flexible*, e.g. lenited after fem. noun: *ghéar*)

Rinne sé an scian *ghéar* = He made the sharp knife.

Rinne sé na sceana *géara* = He made the sharp knives.

For information on the predicative use of the [comparative](#) see there.

Some additional adjectives can only be used predicatively, and not attributively (e.g. *féidir* = *possible*, *fiú* = *worth*, *iomaí* = *many*). These also only appear with the copula, not with *bí* or other verbs. e.g. *Is féidir é sin* = *that is possible*; *Is fiú é* = *it is worth it*

the attributive adjective (an aidiacht aitreibhídeach)

Attributively used adjectives agree with the noun in case, number and gender.

Depending on the gender, case, number, they are [declined](#) and, if necessary, [lenited](#).

They always come **after** the noun being modified (as opposed to German or English).

e.g.:

the *big* man = an fear *mór*,
 of the *big* man = an flir *mhóir*,
 the *big* woman = an bhean *mhór*,
 of the *big* woman = na mná *móire*,
 the *big* women = na mná *móra*.

exceptions:

Adjectives are *not* declined...

- after feminine personal names:

mac Bhríd bheag = the son of small *Brid* **but** *mac na mná bige* = the son of the small woman

- after adverbs:

mac na mná réasúnta beag = the son of the reasonably small woman **but** *mac na mná bige* = the son of the small woman

Adjectives *not* agreeing in number

- after numbers 2-10 and after *beirt*: *trí bhád mhóra* = three big boats (bhád = singular, mhóra = plural!)

Preceding the noun, adjectives are only rarely possible

- in the form of [prefixes](#): e.g.: the *bad* man = an *drochfhear*
- certain [pronominal adjectives](#): e.g.: *gach fear* = every man, *gach uile bhean* = every woman (see below)

Order of attributes:

- after the noun, the closest descriptive adjectives come first: *an bhean mhaith* = the good woman.

- pronominal adjectives follow after that: *an bhean mhaith seo eile* = *this other good woman* (or: *an bhean mhaith eile seo*).
- also substantivised genitive attributes come after descriptive adjectives: *bean mhaith na scoile* = *the good woman of the school*, *scian mhór phoca* = *big pocketknife*.

adjectives als adverb (aidiachtaí mar dhobhriathar)

One can not only *be quick*, one can also *work quickly*; in the latter case *quick* is no longer an adjective, but an adverb, because it modifies a verb and not a noun. In German one does not notice the difference, in Irish it's easy: the particle **go** appears. Go requires an h-prefix preceding a vowel
Other than that, the adverbs don't change very much.

formation:

form

go + adjective

go + adjective (starting in a vowel)

examples

go maith, **go** cliste, **go** sciobtha

go hiontach, **go** hard

e.g.:

Tá mé **sciobtha** - I am fast. (predicative)

D'oibrigh mé **go sciobtha** - I work fast. (adverbial)

exceptions

- go is omitted in the case of an additional adverb e.g.: *go dona* = bad, *réasúnta dona* = reasonably bad.
- go does not appear if a copular clause is used instead of the adverb. e.g.: *Is cúramach a rinne sé é* = *Carefully, he did it* (colloquially there is a remnant h-prefix: e.g. instead of *Rinne sé go hiontach é* > *Is (h)iontach a rinne sé é* = *Amazingly, he did it*)
- instead of go one uses **níos** preceding the adverbial comparative form. e.g.: *Rinne sé níos cúramai é* = *He did it more carefully*

use:

- **adverbial** use of an adjective: Bionn Bríd ag obair go cúramach = Bríd usually works *carefully*.
- **predicative** (!) Use of some *subjective evaluatory* adjectives is done with the verb **bí**: Tá an teach go dona = the house is *bad*.

pronominal adjectives (aidiachtaí forainmneacha)

Pronominal adjectives do not modify a noun, but imply a classification, closer division or (oppositely) a generalisation.

Principally, the article is an example of a pronominal adjective. Also numbers, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and interrogatives are used as pronominal adjectives. On the other hand, many pronominal adjectives serve together with general nouns in place of a substantivised pronoun (e.g.: *duine éigin* = *some person* > *somebody*).

Some adjectives like *many*, *such* are replaced by nouns. See also indefinite pronouns

Pronominal adjectives are always used attributively. They are not declined and mostly also not lenited (though *eclipsis* occurs often). Some of these adjectives come **before** (e.g. *gach fear* = *every man*), some **after** the noun (e.g. *fear éigin* = *any man*)

- **gach** = every. e.g.: *gach fear* = *every man*; also:
gach uile = every. e.g.: *gach uile fhearr* = *every man* (**chuile** in Connacht, **ach uile** in Ulster)
gach aon = every. e.g. *gach aon fhearr* = *every man* (**chaon** in Connacht, **achan** in Ulster)

- **uile** (requires lenition)(in Ulster, Connacht **uilig**)
 = all, the whole (precedes noun in the plural, with an article or a possessive pronoun) e.g. *na huile dhaoine* = *all people, all of the people*
 = all, every (precedes the noun in the singular, with an article or a possessive pronoun) e.g. *an uile mhaitheas* = *the whole goodness, d'uile mhaitheas* = *all your goodness, all of your goodness*
 = whole (after noun in the singular) e.g. *an scéal uile* = *the whole story*
 = all (after the noun in the plural or the pronoun) e.g. *sinn uile* = *we all*
- **éigin** = someone. e.g. *fear éigin* = *some man* (in Connacht **éicint, icínt**, in Ulster **inteach, inneach**, among others, shared original form is most likely **éiginteach**)
- **aon, ar bith** = some, any (in questions), no, none (in neg. statements) e.g. *aon fhearr, fear ar bith* = *any man, no man*
- **cibé, pé (ar bith)** = whatever, whichever. e.g. *cibé duine* = *whatever person, pé áit* = *wherever*
- **eile** = other, another. e.g. *fear eile* = *another man, rud eile?* = *something else?*
- **céanna** = same, very e.g. *an fear céanna* = *the same man*
- **araile** = certain. e.g. *lá araile* = *on a certain day*
- **áirithe** = certain. e.g. *lá áirithe* = *on a certain day* (in Connacht, Ulster **áithrid**)

[1] : Once it was the rule of thumb that only adverbs could appear with the verb bí, always. ("adverbs with bí, adjectives with is") Today this only is the case for a few adjectives (see above), while the predicative use of adjectives with bí is possible and has become common.

Caibidil a Dó: the adjective (an Aidiacht)

The declension of adjectives (*Diochlaonadh na nAidiachtai*)

Declination in general

which adjectives are declined
lenition of adjectives
eclipsis der adjectives
the cases (of nouns)
formation of the genitive plural of an adjective
vocative form of an adjective
dative of an adjectives

The 3 declensions:

1st declension: all adjectives, ending in a **consonant** with the following subgroups:
1.1.: those ending in **broad** consonants enden
1.2.: those ending in **slender** consonants enden
1.3.: those ending in a broad **-ll**, **-nn** or a long vowel + **-ch**
1.4.: those ending in **-ach**
2nd declension:
2.1.: those ending in **-úil**
2.2.: those ending in **-ir**
3rd declension: all adjectives ending in a **vowel**
irregular adjectives

Rules of thumb for all declensions:

Which adjectives are declined :

Descriptive attributive adjectives, that *follow* a noun.

Preceding a noun, adjectives are not declined .

Also predicative adjectives are not declined .

Therefore, the comparative is not declinable.

lenition rules:

lenition of an adjective is used:

1. after feminine nouns in the nominative/accusative singular e.g.: *bean mhór* = big woman
2. after nouns in the dative after preposition + article + noun, if
 - the noun is lenited (always after feminine nouns, but not after masculine nouns in Connacht) e.g. *don tsráid mhór* = to the main street, *don fhearr m(h)ór* = to the big man
 - the noun is eclipsed (always after feminine nouns, but not after masculine nouns in Connacht) e.g.: *ag an mbeann mhór* = at the big woman, *ag an bhfearr m(h)ór* = at the big man
3. after masculine nouns in the genitive singular e.g.: *an fhír mhóir* = of the big man
4. after femin. and masc. nouns in the vocative singular e.g. *a fhír bhig* = little man!, *a bhean bheag* = little woman!
 - but not in the plural: e.g.: *a fheara beaga* = little men!
5. after femin. and masc. nouns in the nominative plural, that end in slender consonants (only possible in the weak plural) e.g.: *fir mhóra* = big men
6. the "dentals"-rule is not used with attributive adjectives (so d,t,s are indeed lenited also after nouns ending in d,n,t,l,s) e.g.: *an bhean dheas* = the nice woman

eclipsis of adjectives:

eclipsis of following adjectives today rather obsolete.

It did occur **earlier** in the *genitive plural*, and partially also in the *dative singular* (after eclipsed nouns)

The eclipsis of following adjectives in the dative after an article is today only encountered in Munster, esp. Muskerry.

e.g.:

na mban mbocht = the poor women (today: *na mban bocht*),

leis an bhfearr mbocht = with the poor man (today: *leis an bhfearr b(h)oche*)

adjectives as prefixes must endure eclipsis:

e.g.: *leis an gcorruimhir* = with the uneven number, *deich ndrochlá* = ten bad days

genitive plural:

The **genitive plural** is equivalent to:

1. the **nominative singular** (by a weak plural of the noun) e.g. *na bhfear móir* = *the big men/the big men's*
2. the **nominative plural** (by a strong plural of the noun) e.g. *na mbuachaillí móra* = *the big boys'*

vocative:

The **vocative singular** of an adjective is equivalent to:

1. after masculine nouns (all declensions!) the **genitive singular** e.g.: *a fhír mhóir* = *big man!*, *a chara mhóir* = *big friend!* (but not if inanimate objects are used as nicknames for people, and also not after collectives, while then not the vocative but the nominative takes hold)
2. after feminine nouns of the **nominative singular** e.g.: *a bhean mhór* = *big woman!*

The **vocative plural** is equivalent to

1. the **nominative plural** e.g.: *a fhéara móra* = *big men!*

dative:

A special **dative singular** of an adjective is hardly common anymore and is replaced with the nominative.

It is used if the adjective comes after **nouns in the dative** (an own dative form belongs only to feminine nouns of the 2nd and 5th declension).

- formed in the 1st declension via **palatalisation** (e.g. *beag* - *big*);
e.g.: *ag an bhfuinneog bhig* = *at the small window*, *don mhnaoi mhóir* = *to the big woman*
- in the 2nd and 3rd declensions, the adjective remains unchanged.
e.g.: *ag an bhfuinneog bhúi* = *at the yellow window*

The **dative plural** is always the same as the nominative plural.

e.g.: *ag na fuinneoga beaga* = *at the small windows*

Even if one uses the old dative plural suffix *-ibh* with a noun, it is never used with an adjective:

e.g.: *ag na fuinneogaibh beaga* = *at the small windows*

1st declension (An chéad díochlaonadh)

All adjectives, ending in **consonants**.

With the exception of those ending in *auf* - *úil* or -*ir* ([2nd declension](#))

Generally, these adjectives are declined like the nouns of the 1st declension (masculine) or the 2nd declension (feminine).

1st subgroup: adjectives, ending in a broad consonant

Who belongs here:

Most of the adjectives that end in a **broad** consonant.

(slender consonant: [2nd](#) subgroup)

In written Irish, this means that the last vowel is a **a, o or u**

What doesn't belong are adjectives ending in -ll,-nn ([3rd](#) subgroup) or -ch ([3rd](#) and [4th](#) subgroup)

examples: *mór* = *big*, *dearg* = *red*, *gorm* = *blue*, *olc* = *evil*

forming the genitive in the singular:

- After a **masculine** noun via **palatalisation**, the word ends then in a **slender** consonants (in written Irish, that makes the last vowel in the word either *e* or *i*).
e.g.: *mór* - *móir*
- After **feminine** nouns also leads to palatalisation and additionally a suffix of **-e**
e.g.: *mór* - *móire*

Polysyllabic adjectives tend to shorten ([syncopation](#)) when additional suffixes are added, if possible
e.g. ramhar - raimhre (instead of "*ramhaire")

nominative plural

- The plural is formed by adding the suffix **-a** to the singular form.

e.g.: mó - móra

Polysyllabic adjectives act as in the genitive w.r.t. **syncopation**

e.g.: ramhar - ramhra (instead of "*ramhara")

Paradigms

weak plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	palat.	L	palat. + e	-
nom. pl.	+ a	-/ L	+ a	-/ L
gen. pl.	-	-	-	-

strong plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	palat.	L	palat. + e	-
nom. pl.	+ a	-	+ a	-
gen. pl.	+ a	-	+ a	-

examples

mór = big, after a noun with a weak plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	mór	an bhean	mhór
gen. sg.	an fir	mhóir	na mná	móire
nom. pl.	na fir	mhóra	na mná	móra
gen. pl.	na bhfear	mór	na mban	mór

mór = big, after a noun with a strong plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an teach	mór	an mhuir	mhór
gen. sg.	an tí	mhóir	na mara	móire
nom. pl.	na tithe	móra	na mara	móra
gen. pl.	na dtithe	móra	na mara	móra

2nd subgroup: adjectives ending in slender consonants

Who belongs here:

All adjectives ending in a **slender** consonant.

In written Irish, that means the last vowel is **e** or **i**

examples: *maith* = good, *áillinn* = beautiful, etc.

forming the genitive in the singular

- palatalisation** is not necessary, because the word already ends in a **slender** consonant.
- After **masculine** nouns, the adjective then has the same form as in the **nominative singular** (but lenited).
e.g.: *maith* - *mhaith*
- After **feminine** nouns an **-e** is added to the end.
e.g.: *maith* - *maithe*

polysyllabic verbs tend to **syncopate**

e.g. saibhir - saibhre (instead of "*saibhire")
 e.g. domhain - doimhne (instead of "*domhaine")

nominative plural

- The plural is formed by adding the suffix **-e** to the singular form (making it look the same as the genitive singular feminine).
- e.g. maith - maithe
- polysyllabic verbs also here tend to **syncopate**
- e.g. saibhir - saibhre (instead of "*saibhire")
- e.g. aoibhinn - aoibhne (instead of "*aoibhinne")

Paradigms

weak plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	+ e	-
nom. pl.	+ e	-/ L	+ e	-/ L
gen. pl.	-	-	-	-

strong plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	+ e	-
nom. pl.	+ e	-	+ e	-
gen. pl.	+ e	-	+ e	-

examples

maith = good, after a noun with a weak plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	maith	an bhean	mhaith
gen. sg.	an fhir	mhaith	na mná	maithe
nom. pl.	na fir	mhaithe	na mná	maithe
gen. pl.	na bhfear	maith	na mban	maith

maith = good, after a noun with a strong plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an dalta	maith	an ainnir	mhaith
gen. sg.	an dhalta	mhaith	na hainnire	maithe
nom. pl.	na daltaí	maithe	ainnireacha	maithe
gen. pl.	na ndaltaí	maithe	ainnireacha	maithe

3rd subgroup: adjectives ending in **-ll,-nn** or long vowel + **-ch**

Who belongs here:

Some adjectives, ending in certain broad consonants, are not palatalised in the masculine genitive. This includes the adjectives ending in **-ll,-nn** or a long vowel + **-ch** (e.g. -íoch, -ách, -óch, -iuch, -eoch etc.) As well as adjectives ending in a broad **-cht, -ng, -m**, and some ending in **-r/-rr**
 examples: *fann* = weak, *fionn* = blond, *dall* = blind, *imníoch* = anxious, *gleoch* = loud, *fliuch* = wet, *bocht* = poor
 adjectives ending in a short -ach do not belong here ([4th](#) subgroup)

forming the genitive in the singular

- After **masculine** nouns, (as opposed to the 1st subgroup) the genitive is the same as **nominative singular**, that means **no palatalisation**, despite theoretical possibility (wrong: *fann* > "*fainn", *imníoch* > "*ímních").

e.g.: fann - fhann, imníoch - imníoch

- After **feminine** nouns, the adjective always **palatalised** and an **-e** is added to the end.
e.g.: fann - fainne; fionn - finne, imníoch - imníche

nominative plural

- The plural is formed by adding the suffix **-a** to the singular form.
e.g. fann - fanna, fionn - fionna, imníoch - imníocha

Paradigma

weak plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	palat. + e	-
nom. pl.	+ a	-/ L	+ a	-/ L
gen. pl.	-	-	-	-

strong plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	palat. + e	-
nom. pl.	+ a	-	+ a	-
gen. pl.	+ a	-	+ a	-

examples

fionn = blond, after a weak plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	fionn	an bhean	fhionn
gen. sg.	an fhir	fhionn	na mná	finne
nom. pl.	na fir	fhionna	na mná	fionna
gen. pl.	na bhfear	fionn	na mban	fionn

fionn = blond, after a strong plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an dalta	fionn	an ainnir	fhionn
gen. sg.	an dhalta	fhionn	na hainnire	finne
nom. pl.	na daltaí	fionna	ainnireacha	fionna
gen. pl.	na ndaltaí	fionna	ainnireacha	fionna

imníoch = anxious, after a noun with a *weak* plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem. noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	imníoch	an ghirseach	imníoch
gen. sg.	an fhir	imníoch	na girsí	imníche
nom. pl.	na fir	imníocha	na girseach	imníocha
gen. pl.	na bhfear	imníoch	na ngirseach	imníoch

imníoch = anxious, after a noun with a *strong* plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem. noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an dalta	imníoch	an ainnir	imníoch
gen. sg.	an dalta	imníoch	na hainnire	imníche
nom. pl.	na daltaí	imníocha	ainnireacha	imníocha
gen. pl.	na ndaltaí	imníocha	ainnireacha	imníocha

4th subgroup: adjectives ending in -ach**Who belongs here:**

All adjectives, that end in **-ach** (or **-each**).

But not adjectives ending in -och, -ách, -óch, -íoch ([3rd](#) subgroup)

examples: salach = dirty, Éireannach = Irish, díreach = direct etc.

forming the genitive in the singular

- this time, even the **masculine** nouns incur *palatalisation*, but the palatalised form is not -aich but **-aigh**
e.g.: salach - salaigh
- After **feminine** nouns, the adjective is palatalised as well and an -e is added, but instead of "-aighe" one writes **-aí**
e.g.: salach - salaí

nominative plural

- The plural is formed by adding the suffix **-a** to the singular form
e.g. salach - salacha

Paradigma**weak plural**

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-ach	-	-ach	L
gen. sg.	-aigh	L	-aí	-
nom. pl.	-acha	-/L	-acha	-/L
gen. pl.	-ach	-	-ach	-

strong plural

-	masc.	L/E	fem..	L/E
nom. sg.	-ach	-	-ach	L
gen. sg.	-aigh	L	-aí	-
nom. pl.	-acha	-	-acha	-
gen. pl.	-acha	-	-acha	-

examples

salach = dirty, after a noun with a *weak* plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem. noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	salach	an ghirseach	shalach
gen. sg.	an fhir	shalaigh	na girsí	saláí
nom. pl.	na fir	shalacha	na girseacha	salacha
gen. pl.	na bhfear	salach	na ngirseach	salach

salach = dirty, after a noun with a *strong* plural

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem. noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an dalta	salach	an ainnir	shalach
gen. sg.	an dalta	shalaigh	na hainnire	saláí
nom. pl.	na daltaí	salacha	ainnireacha	salacha
gen. pl.	na ndaltaí	salacha	ainnireacha	salacha

2nd declension (An dara díochlaonadh)

Who belongs here:

All adjectives ending **-úil** (1st subgroup) and some ending in **-ir** (2nd subgroup)

Basically, these adjectives are declined like the nouns of the 3rd declension.

1st subgroup: adjectives ending in -úil

The suffix **-úil** stems from the word *(s)amhail* = *same, the same* and is equivalent to the German suffix **-lich** or the English **-like, -ly**, related to the latin **simul-**. Through this samhail also the definite feminine genitive (*samhail - samhla*).

Prior to the spelling reform, this suffix was also written **-amhail** (*bródamhail* > *bródúil*)

forming the genitive in the singular

- The **masculine** form is the same as **nominative singular**
e.g. **bródúil** - **bródúil**
- As opposed to the 1st declension, following **feminine** nouns **depalatalisation** occurs and the suffix **-a** is added,
e.g. **bródúil** - **bródúla**

nominative plural

- The plural is as well formed via **depalatalisation** and the addition of the suffix **-a** to the singular form (looks the same as the feminine genitive singular)
e.g. **bródúil** - **bródúla**

Paradigma**weak plural**

-	masc	L/E	fem.	L/E
nom. sg.	-úil	-	-úil	L
gen. sg.	-úil	L	-úla	-
nom. pl.	-úla	-/ L	-úla	-
gen. pl.	-úil	-	-úil	-

strong plural

-	masc	adj.	fem	adj.
nom. sg.	-úil	-	-úil	L
gen. sg.	-úil	L	-úla	-
nom. pl.	-úla	-	-úla	-
gen. pl.	-úla	-	-úla	-

examples

bródúil = **proud** , after a noun with a **weak plural**

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	bródúil	an bhean	b hródúil
gen. sg.	an fhir	b hródúil	na mná	bródúla
nom. pl.	na fir	b hródúla	na mná	bródúla
gen. pl.	na bhfear	bródúil	na mbán	bródúil

bródúil = **proud** , after a noun with a **strong plural**

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an dalta	bródúil	an ainnir	b hródúil
gen. sg.	an dalta	b hródúil	na hainnire	bródúla
nom. pl.	na daltaí	bródúla	ainnireacha	bródúla
gen. pl.	na ndaltaí	bródúla	ainnireacha	bródúla

2nd subgroup adjectives ending in -ir

Who belongs here:

some adjectives that end in -ir (mostly -air)

examples: deacair = difficult; cóir = just, socair = quiet

forming the genitive in the singular

- The **mASCULINE** form is the same as the ***nominative singular*** .
e.g.: deacair - deacair
- FEMININE** form: **depalatalisation**, as well as ***the abbreviation of the 2nd syllable (syncopation)*** + **-a**.
e.g.: deacair - deacra

nominative plural

- The plural ist in der form is the same as ***feminine genitive singular***
e.g.: deacair - deacra

Widely similar to the [1st](#) subgroup**Paradigma****weak plural**

-	mASC	L/E	fEM.	L/E
nom. sg.	-air	-	-air	L
gen. sg.	-air	L	-ra	-
nom. pl.	-ra	-/ L	-ra	-
gen. pl.	-air	-	-air	-

strong plural

-	mASC	adj.	fEM	adj.
nom. sg.	-air	-	-air	L
gen. sg.	-air	L	-ra	-
nom. pl.	-ra	-	-ra	-
gen. pl.	-ra	-	-ra	-

examplesdeacair = difficult, after a noun with a **weak plural**

-	mASC.NOUN	adj.	fEM.NOUN	adj.
nom. sg.	an t-úll	deacair	an bhróg	dheacair
gen. sg.	an úill	dheacair	na bróige	deacra
nom. pl.	na húlla	deacra	na bróga	deacra
gen. pl.	na n-úll	deacair	na mbróg	deacair

deacair = difficult, after a noun with a **strong plural**

-	mASC.NOUN	adj.	fEM.NOUN	adj.
nom. sg.	an rud	deacair	an troid	dheacair
gen. sg.	an ruda	dheacair	na troda	deacra
nom. pl.	na rudaí	deacra	na troideanna	deacra
gen. pl.	na rudaí	deacra	na dtroideanna	deacra

3rd declension (an tríú díochlaonadh)

Who belongs here:All adjectives ending in a **vowel**.**forming the genitive in the singular**

- The form is equivalent to masculine and feminine of the ***nominative singular***
e.g. crua - crua

nominative plural

- The form is equivalent to the ***nominative singular*** as well
e.g. crua - crua

-	masc	L/E	fem.	L/E
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	-	-
nom. pl.	-	-/ L	-	-
gen. pl.	-	-	-	-

strong plural

-	masc	adj.	fem	adj.
nom. sg.	-	-	-	L
gen. sg.	-	L	-	-
nom. pl.	-	-	-	-
gen. pl.	-	-	-	-

examples

crua = hard

-	masc.noun	adj.	fem.noun	adj.
nom. sg.	an fear	crua	an bhean	chrúa
gen. sg.	na fhír	chrúa	na mná	crua
nom. pl.	na fir	chrúa	na mná	crua
gen. pl.	na bhfear	crua	na mban	crua

Irregular adjectives (aidiachtaí néamhrialta)

A few adjectives have irregular declension forms.
(irregular forms highlighted in red)

English	nom. sg.	gen. sg.		nom. pl.	explanation
		masculine	feminine		
short	gearr	gearr	giorra	gearra	instead of <i>giorra</i> regularly * <i>girre</i> would be expected.
friendly	lách	lách	láí	lácha	instead of <i>láí</i> regularly * <i>láiche</i> would be expected
exact	beacht	beacht	beaichte	beachta	instead of <i>beaichte</i> regularly * <i>bichte</i> would be expected
hot	te	te	te	teo	instead of <i>teo</i> regularly * <i>te</i> would be expected.

fine	breá	breá	breá	breátha	instead of <i>breáthe</i> regularly * <i>breá</i> would be expected.
dry	tirim	tirim	tirime	tiorma, tirime	<i>tirime</i> is regular.
fast	tapaidh	tapaidh	tapaí	tapaí	<i>tapaí</i> is regular, while -aí is just the new spelling of -aidhe.
beautiful	álainn	álainn	áille	áille	the form <i>áille</i> comes from syncopation

Caibidil a Dó: The adjective (an Aidiacht)

Comparative forms (an Chomparáid)

The comparative

- [regular form](#)
- [irregular form](#)
- [comparative with mó and lú](#)
- [the suffix -de](#)

use of the comparative

predicative and adverbial use

- [dependent comparative](#)
- [autonomous comparative](#)

attributive use

- [autonomous comparative and indef. noun](#)
- [every other case](#)
- [definite noun](#)

the equative

the comparative (an chomparáid)

In Irish there are **only two grades of comparison** (céimeanna comparáide):

- **the positive (bunchéim)**
This is the base form of the adjective
- **the comparative (breischéim)**
The comparative expresses, depending on the context, the *superlativ* (sárchéim) as well! A superlativ on it's own does not exist.

(The differentiation found in many books, and even grammar books, of the comparatives with *níos* of a "superlative" using *is* too simplified and just wrong)

The regular form of the comparative form (foirm bhreischéime)

The regular form is the *feminine genitive singular form* of the adjective (see [declension](#))

Here again as a rundown:

• 1st declension:

1. adjectives **ending in a consonant** are palatalised + **-e**:
e.g.: *ban* - *baine*, *glic* - *glice*, *ramhar* - *raimhre*, *moch* - *moiche*, *imríoch* - *imríche*
2. adjectives **ending in -ach/-each** get the suffix **-ai/-í**:
e.g.: *aisteach* - *aistí*, *salach* - *salai*
(in the old spelling: **-aighé/-ighe** > **-ai/i**, e.g. *aisteach* - *aistighe*)

• 2nd declension:

1. adjectives **ending in -úil**: get the suffix **-úla**:
e.g.: *spéisiúil* - *spéisiúla*
2. adjectives **ending in -ir**: get the suffix **-ra**:
e.g.: *deacair* - *deacra*, *cóir* - *córa*

• 3rd declension:

1. adjectives **ending in a vowel**: in the standard, the comparative form = the base form
e.g.: *dorcha* - *dorcha*, *beo* - *beo*
2. in Connacht, **monosyllabic** adjectives **ending in a vowel** a comparative form with the additional suffix **-(o)cha**
e.g.: *beo* - *beocha*, *breá* - *breácha*, *búi* - *búiocha*.
The same comparative form occurs with monosyllabic adjectives of the 1st declension **ending in -bh** (-bh mostly voiceless)
e.g.: *tiubh* [t'u:] - *tiúcha* (standard: *tibhe*), *dubh* [du:] - *dúcha* (standard: *duibhe*).

The irregular form:

There are only a few irregular comparative forms:

English	positive	comparative
good	maith	fearr
bad	dona	measa
evil	olc	measa
small	beag	lú
big	mór	mó
long	fada	faide, sia
pretty	breá	breátha
hot	te	teo
simple	furasta	fusa

much	iomaí	lia
close	fogas	foisce
nice	ionúin	ansa, ionúine
likely	dócha	dóichí
strong	tréan	tréise, tréine
dry	tirim	tirime, tiorma
rather	-	túsce
closer (to)	-	neasa (do)

mó and *lú* are also used for *more* and *less*.

forming the comparative with *mó* and *lú*

Some adjectives have the same comparative form as the base form (as in the standard of all of the 3rd declension). In order to signify the comparative, one can additionally use the word **mó** (= bigger, more) or **lú** (= smaller, less).

Theoretically, this form is possible with all adjectives.

Especially *lú* one can make a softened statement in the sense of "less": (e.g.: *is lú is sean* = *not so old, less old*). Here one often uses the abstract noun instead of the adjective (*níos lú fearúileacht* = *less masculine*)

tense	form	example
present	is mó / lú is + adjective-base form	Is mó is crua é ná riabh = it is worse than ever
preterite/conditional	ba mhó / lú ba + adjective-base form	Ba mhó ba chrua é ná riabh. = it was worse than ever
alternative	is mó / lú + noun	an fear is mó cáil = the most famous man

The latter form is very similar to the German genitive attributive "ein man *größten Ruhmes*"=a man of greatest fame

the suffix *-de* = the...the:

Sometimes **-de** is added to the comparative form

Mainly, this has the meaning "*the...-er*"

e.g. *fearrde* = *the better*, *móide* = *the bigger/more*, *lúide* = *the less*

Actually, this *-de* is the **prepositional pronoun de** (preposition **de** + é) and literally means "of him, of it"

Principally, this acts as a pronoun that refers to a preceding or following part of the sentence.

e.g.:

Is fusainde é a dhéanamh. = *the simpler it is done.* (literally: "Is simpler-of it it to do")

Is fearrde é thú. = *the better it is for you* (literally: "Is better-of it it you")

Ní miste (measa + de) liom é. = *it doesn't bother me.* (literally: "not-is worse-of it with-me it", also: "it is not any worse, I think")

Ní móide go rachfaidh mé. = *It is not likely, that I will go.* (literally: "not-is bigger-of it that I will go", also: "it is not any more, that ...")

Is móide an trua. = *the more tragic it is.* (literally: "it bigger-of it the pity")

móide and *lúide* serve also as "plus" and "minus"

lúide 10 bpunt = *minus 10 Pfund* (lit. "less-of it 10 Pfund", "the less 10 Pfund")

de can less often also stand alone with the base form of the adjective:

e.g.: *Bí cinnte de go ...* = *be sure of it, that ...*

Instead of the suffix *-de* in the comparative, **is amhlaidh** **is + comparative** is used in the sense of "*the...the*".

This is especially done in constructions with the **abstract noun**.

use of the comparative (comhréir na breischéime)

The comparative form can **not** be used like a normal adjective predicative and attributive. It is a *purely predicative* adjective form (e.g.: "he is bigger"). An attributive use ("the bigger man") can only with the help of a relative clause, in which the comparative is the predicate. (e.g.: "the man who is bigger"). Furthermore, the comparative form can only be used with the copula (also "níos" is a copular form)

When using the comparative form one must make sure that if the adjective is to be used

- **predicative/adverbial** (e.g. I am bigger/I run faster) or
- **attributive**(e.g.: I am the bigger/biggest man, I am the faster/fastest runner)

and also if it is to be

- **dependent** (with a comparative object: e.g. I am bigger *than you*) or
- **autonomous** (without a comparative object: I am bigger).

predicative and adverbial use:

the dependent comparative (comparáid spleách)

This use is marked by the use of the der conjunction **ná** = **als**.

In clauses with a real verb:

- In the **present**, **níos** is placed before the comparative form.
Níos is formed out of *ní* (= thing) and *is* (= copula). Literally translated, *níos* would mean "a thing that is...".[1]
This *ní* (= thing) is not to be confused with the negativen verbal particle *ní* (= not).
- Because instead *is* is *ba* in the **preterite/conditional**, there is the possibility of **ní ba** (literally: "a thing that was...").
Also often appearing as one word: **níba**. But *níos* is also used in the preterite/conditional.

tense	form	example
present	níos + comparative form	Tá an ghrían níos gile ná an ghealach. = The sun is brighter than the moon.
pret. and condit.	ní ba / níba + comparative form	Bhí an ghrían ní ba ghile ná an ghealach. = The sun was brighter than the moon.
pret. and cond. preceding vowel/ fh	ní b' / níb + comparative form	Bhí an ghrían ní b'áille ná an ghealach. = The sun was prettier than the moon.

In copular clauses:

- The **copula** can take the place of *bí* in the present and preterite/conditional, then *níos* / *níba* does not occur but simply **is** / **ba** (without *ní*)

tense	form	example
present	is + comparative form	Is gile an ghrían ná an ghealach. = The sun is brighter than the moon.
pret. and condit.	ba + comparative form	Ba ghile an ghrían ná an ghealach. = The sun was brighter than the moon.
pret. and cond. preceding vowel /fh	b' + comparative form	B'áille an ghrían ná an ghealach. = The sun was prettier than the moon.

Is fearr Gaeilge bhriste ná Béarla cliste! = Broken Irish is better than clever English!

If a verb follows ná

In this case, **ná (mar)**, **seachas mar**, **thar mar** appears with a direct relative clause:
Labhraíonn sé níos fearr ná (mar) a scriobhann sé. = *He speaks better than he writes.*

The autonomous comparative (comparáid néamhspleáach)

If the *than*-part is omitted (e.g. "The sun is brighter" **instead of** "The sun is brighter *than the moon*"), one speaks of the autonomous comparative. In the form of the clause, nothing changes.

e.g.: *Tá an aimsír níos teo inniu.* = *The weather is warmer today.*
Bhí an ghrían níba ghile inné. = *The sun was brighter yesterday.*

miscellaneous

To express the **increase of an attribute** (e.g. "to get better"), one uses the verb **éirigh**
e.g.: *D'éirigh an aimsír níos teo ón lá inné* = *The weather became warmer since yesterday.*
Or one uses the **gradual abstract noun** instead of the comparative form with the verb **téigh + i**:
e.g.: *Tá sé ag dul i bhfeabhas.* = *It will get better.*

To make statements with **much + comparative** (e.g.: "much better"), one uses **mórán** = "an amount", **cuid mhaith** = "a good bit" or **i bhfad** = "in length"
e.g. *cuid mhaith níos fearr* = *much better*; *mórán níos mó* = *much bigger*; *i bhfad níos measa* = *much worse*.
Similarly, one can also use numbers, especially **seacht** = "seven (times)".
e.g.: *Tá sise seacht níos áille ná tusa.* = *She is seven times prettier than you.*

Attributive use:

The term "attributive" is really only in the German translation correct.
In Irish, the comparative is not used attributively. Because of this, auxilliary constructions with relative clauses are necessary (e.g. instead of "the bigger man" follows "the man that is bigger" = *an fear is mó*)

indefinite noun and autonomous comparative

Only in this case can one use **níos / níba + comparative** attributively

e.g.: *Ba mhaith liom carr níos fearr.* = *I would like to have a better car.*
lit.: "would be good with-me car thing-that-is better"

every other case

In every other case, also:

- definite noun and/or
- dependent comparative (with a *than*-suffix)

If one uses the comparative as a **dir. relative clause with the copula**

tense	form	example
present	is + comparative form	Tá leabhar is mó agamsa ná do cheannsa. = I have a bigger book than you.
pret. and condit.	ba + comparative form	Bhí leabhar ba mhó agamsa ná do cheannsa. = I had a bigger book than you.

pret. and cond. preceding vowel/fh **ab** + comparative form Bhí leabhar **ab áille** agamsa ná do cheannsa. = I had a prettier book than you.

definite nouns

This is especially the case in which the **superlative** would occur.

How to translate such an Irish expression (comparative or superlative), is only to be seen from the context.

e.g.: *an fear is mó* = *the bigger man* or: *the biggest man* (lit.: "the man that is bigger")

Note the following:

- If **ná** (= than) follows, it is always in the comparative sense:
e.g.: *an fear is mó ná mise* = *the man, that is bigger than me*
- In the case of a comparative object, one uses, in the superlative sense, not **ná** but
 - **de** (= of) together with a group term (the biggest of...)
e.g.: *an fear is mó de na daoine* = *the biggest man of the people*, *an ceann is líu den bheirt* = *the smaller of the two*
 - **ar** (= on) together with a group term
e.g.: *an fear is mó ar an domhan* = *the biggest man in the world*, *ar a chineál* = *of his kind*
"by far" is expresses **ar fad**.
e.g.: *an fear is mó ar fad* = *the by far biggest man*
 - a further **relative clause**
e.g.: *an fear is mó atá ann* = *the biggest man that there is*
 - a further **relative clause** with **dá** (**de** + [gen. relative pronoun a](#) > **dá**)
e.g.: *an fear is mó dá bhfaca mé riabhach* = *the biggest man that I have ever seen* (literally: "... of-all-that saw I ever");
e.g.: *an fear is mó dá bhfíann ann* = *the biggest man of all that there is* (literally: "... of-all-that are in-it")
- In identifying clauses one may omit the subject (because it is equal to the predicate noun)
e.g.: *Ba i an tsúil chlé (an tsúil) ba laige aige.* = *The left eye is his weaker (eye)*
- Definite nouns with the comparative form are only possible with the article (not with other defining words).
 - This is why there can **never a possessive pronoun** occurring here!
Instead of that, a short direct relative clause with a form of **ag**: (e.g. our = atá agaínn, my = atá agam, etc.), often there is only one form of **ag**: (e.g.: agaínn, agat, etc.)
e.g.: *ár dteach móir* = *our big house* **but:** *an teach is mó (atá) agaínn* = *our biggest house*
- Often one uses, in place of a copular identification clause, a construction of **bí** with the preposition **ar**: (see [identification clauses without the copula](#))
 - e.g.: *Tá sé ar an duine is cliste sa rang.* = *He is the smartest in the class.*
- To make a statement like "his is one of the smartest" (classificatory clause) one uses again the preposition **ar** + plural of the noun:
e.g.: *Tá sí ar na cailíní is áille atá ann.* = *She is one of the prettiest girls that there is.*
- Statements like "the **second** biggest / **second** bigger" etc.: **an dara** + noun + **comparative**
e.g.: *an dara fear is mó* = *the second largest man*; *an dara seomra is dorcha* = *the second darkest room*; *an triú háit is fíarr* = *the third best place*
- To make (actually predicative) statements like: "He is **the bigger/biggest**", one uses the noun **ceann** (= "head") as a pronoun

tense	form	example
present	Is + subject + an ceann + is + comparative form	<i>Is í an bhean an ceann is mó.</i> = The woman is the bigger / biggest.
preterite / conditional	Ba + subject + an ceann + ba/ab + comparative form	<i>Ba í an bhean an ceann ba mhó.</i> = The woman was the bigger / biggest

- As one can see, the superlative thought is in its sense "attributive", it is not possible to use it adverbially, e.g.: "Seán runs *the fastest*."
Either one uses the more comparative *Ritheann Seán níos lúaithe.* = *Seán runs faster*.
or one must rearrange it to: [2]:
Is é Seán is lúaithe rith. = "Seán is the fastest running"
Is é Seán is lúaithe a ritheann. = "Seán is the fastest who runs"
- A genitive expression like: "a man of the highest fame" is translated with the nominative:
e.g.: *an fear is airde clú* = *a man of the highest fame* (lit.: "a man is highest fame")

The equative (an chéim chóthroim)

or also *degree of equity* (cóthroim = comh + trom = as strong)

The equative expresses that 2 things are the same w.r.t. an attribute (e.g. You are as big as me.)

Like in German one needs 2 words ("so...wie"="as ... as"): **chomh** (= "as") and **le** (= "as", lit."with").

The adjective in the base form comes between the two. Instead of **le** also **agus / is** (= "and") with a dir. relative clause can be used.

The predicative equative

Statements like "He is as big as you"

form

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **le** + comparative object:

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **agus (is)** + direct relative clause:

example

Tá mé chomh móir le Pól. = I am as big as Paul.

Tá mé chomh móir is atá Pól. = I am as big as Paul.

For statements like "He is just as big" one uses the words **seo/sin/siúd** or **céanna**.

form

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **seo/sin/siúd**

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **céanna**

example

Tá sé chomh móir seo. = He is just as big (as this).

Tá mé chomh sásta céanna. = I am just as happy.

It is also possible to use **comh-** as a prefix to the adjective or noun:

Tá siad **comhairde** = They are *equally big*.

Statements like "**He is so big that ...**" are made similarly to the German/English with **go** (= that), but connected via **agus** (or there is a demonstrative pronoun):

form

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **agus go/nach**

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **sin + go/nach**

example

Bhí mé *chomh* sásta *agus go* raibh tú ann.
= I was *so* happy, *that* you were there.
Bhí mé *chomh* sásta *sin go* raibh tú ann.
= I was *so* happy, *that* you were there.

Statements like "**so big, as if...**" are formed with **dá** and an irreal conditional clause:

form

tá + subject + **chomh** + adj. + **agus dá**

example

Bhí mé *chomh* dona *agus dá* mbeidh mé tinn.
= I was feeling *so* bad, *as if* I were sick.

The interrogative form "**how big is he?**" is **cé chomh** (= how?, lit. "who so?") again with **le**

Without cé it can be used as an exlamation ("**how big he is!**")

As opposed to the German, the logical subject of such clauses appears after **le** : *chomh móir leat!* = *how big you are!* (lit.: "so big with-you")

form

question: **Cé + chomh** + adj. + **le** + subject?

example

Cé chomh sásta *leat?* = How happy are you?

Cé chomh sásta *le Pól?* = How happy is Paul?

exclamation: **Chomh** + adj. + **le** + subject!

Chomh sásta *leat!* = How happy you are!

Chomh sásta *le Pól!* = How happy Paul is!

examples:

Cé chomh hard leis an tsliabh? = How high is the mountain?

Cé chomh beag leis an bpáirc? = How small is the park?

Féach, chomh domhain leis an loch! = Look, how deep the lake is!

Another form to express something similar is (without the equativr, but with the abstract noun) see "["amazing, how big he is"](#) (also as a question: "how ... is he?")

The interrogative form **cá + adj.** = *how ... is ...*, e.g. *Cá hard é?* = *How high is it?* is also possible.

The attributive equative

Statements like e.g.: "**as good a man as you**"

chomh + adjective + **le** is simply placed after the noun.

The classification is done via **bí + ar** or **bí + i**:

form

noun + **chomh** + adj. + **le** + comparative object

example

Tá sé ar fhearr chomh maith leat = *He is as good a man as you.*

Tá sé ina fhearr chomh maith leat = *He is as good a man as you.*

(lit.: "is he on / in-his man so good as-you")

Possible is also: **chomh** + adj. + **de** + noun + **le**:

form

chomh + adj. + **de** + noun + **le** + comparative object

example

Tá sé chomh maith d'fhearr leat = *He is as good a man as you.*

(lit.: "is he so good of man with-you")

A substantivisation of the adjectives with the prefix **comh-** = "same" (**có-** preceding **mh-**) is possible. Otherwise the substantivised adjective remains unchanged to the adjective form. The comparative object acts as the possessive pronoun.

form

possessive pron. + **comh-** + substantiv. adj. + **de** + noun

example

Nil do chómhaith d'fhearr anseo. = *There is no good man such as you here.*

(lit.: "not-is your same-goodness of man here")

[1] The use of a clause with **níos** deserves an explanation:

Because a clause like "*Tá an bhean níos fearr*" (= "The woman is better") is comprised of two parts: a main clause "*Tá an bhean ní*" (= "the woman is a thing") and one for the comparative customary copular relative clause "is fearr" (= "... that is better").

The main clause is problematic, because it is both logical ("the woman is a thing") and grammatically (classificatory clause with **bí** instead of the copula) difficult to explain.

It appears rather, that "*ní*" (= "a thing") is not seen as a noun here, but as an adverb, which explains the use of **bí** (*tá*) and also relates the logically false statement "woman = thing".

Earlier this "*ní*" was also no noun at all, but a topical pronoun, *a n-í* = *the one who*, comparable to the still used *an té* = *the person who*.

This "adverbial" or even "pronominal" *ní* connects to the copular relative form "is" to "*níos*".

[2] thankfully contributed by: Panu Höglund © 2002

Caibidil a Dó: The Adjective (an Aidiacht)

Miscellaneous

preceding adjectives and other prefixes (na réimíreanna)

Adjectives normally *always* come after the nouns they modify. Only a few may precede the noun. Before the noun regularly stand:

- many [pronominal adjectives](#), like *uile* = *all*, *gach* = *every* , etc. e.g.: *gach teach* = *every house*
- [possessive pronouns](#) (in Irish termed as "possessive adjectives ") e.g.: *mo theach* = *my house*
- adjectively used [numbers](#) (cardinal- and ordinal numbers) e.g.: *an triú teach* = *the third house*, *tri theach* = *three houses*

For more about those, see their corresponding sections.

All *other* (monosyllabic) adjectives may then only precede the noun in the form of a **prefix (réimír)**. A differentiation between prefixes, as is made in German, and preceding adjectives is generally not possible.

- Some adjectives occur *only* in this form as the prefix auf (e.g. *deá-* = *good* , *droch-* = *bad*)
e.g.: *deá-bhád* = *a good boat*, *drochbhád* = *a bad boat*
- By some adjectives this form is preferred (e.g.: *sean-* = *old*).
e.g.: *seanfhear* = *an old man* (rather wrong: *fear sean*)
- By most of the adjectives this is less common; if so, it is for forming set terms. They would in other cases come after the noun.
e.g.: *ardrí* = *High King* , but: *sliabh ard* = *high mountain*
- Some prefixes may also further modify normal adjectives. In English, one would use adverbs like "very", "really", "too" etc.
e.g.: *an-mhaith* = *very good*, *fiormhaith* = *really good*, *rómhaith* = *too good* .
Amazingly, many of these prefixes can be used with other parts of speech.
e.g.: *an-charr* = *a great car* (lit.: "very-car").
- The prefixes *so-*, *do-*, *in-* can today only modify [verbal adjectives](#) (more exact and more complicated: only the genitive of the verbal noun), see also in that section.

Some rules for using these prefixes:

- There is [lenition](#) following every one of these prefixes, except after *éa-* = *un-*, there [eclipsis](#), but in modern spelling with the omission of the eclipsing sound (e.g.: *éa* + *cóir* - *éagóir* = *injustice*)
- prefix and noun are always written together (*sean* + *bean* = *seanbhean* = *old woman*), except:
- an-* and *dea-* *always* with a hyphen (*an-bhean*, *dea-bhean*)
- Hyphens otherwise only by multiple prefixes (e.g.: *droch-sheanbhád* = *bad old boat*) or when the same phonemes collide (e.g.: *ró-óg* = *too young*, *sean-nós* = *old style*)

Some examples: (There are many more prefixes than those mentioned here.)

prefix	translation	example	translation
droch	bad	drochbhád	a bad boat
sean	old	seanbhean	an old woman
barr	excellent	barrthuirseach	extremely tired
dea- (deá-)	good	dea-cheol	good music
an-	very	an-charr	great car

ró (ro)	too much	róshean	too old
fíor	really	fíormhaith	really good
mí	un-	míshásta	unhappy
éa	un-	éagóir	injustice
síor	eternal	síordheifir	eternal rush
corr	odd	corruimhir corrduine	odd number odd person
il	many, poly-	ilteangach	Polyglot
leath	half	leathchéad	half hundred = 50
priomh	primary, main	priomhtheanga	primary language
ard	high, arch-	ardeaspag	archbishop
ath	re-	Athbhliain	New Year
so	easily	sobhriste	fragile
do	impossible, difficult	dodhéanta	impossible to do
in	possible	inite	edible

Some of these prefixes end (in Munster) in -a, if they precede a consonant (e.g. ana-mhaith = very good)

[1] *amlaidh* etymologically actually a prepositional pronoun made of *amhail* + *eadh* (old form of *ea*) = "like it "

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (An Briathar)

the verbal adjective (an Aidiacht Bhriathartha)

- The verbal adjective is the equivalent of the German Partizip II or the past participle (worn, washed, broken etc.)
- Together with the prefixes so-, do-, in- it takes on the meaning similar to English adjectives ending in -able (inite = edible)
- It is used as a normal adjective (but is rarely used comparatively). Since it belongs to the 3rd declension of adjectives (ending in a vowel), it remains unchanged in the genitive and the plural.

form:

verbs of the 1st conjugation:

final sound	form	example
<i>d, l, n, s, t, th</i>	verb stem + ta / te	<i>glan - glanta, bris - briste, goid - goidte**</i> , <i>ith - ite</i>
<i>b, c, f, g, m, p, r</i>	verb stem + tha / the	<i>fág - fágtha, gearr - gearrtha</i>
<i>bh, mh</i>	verb stem (without bh, mh) + fa*	<i>scríobh - scríofa, snámh - snáfa</i>
<i>igh</i>	verb stem (without -gh) + te	<i>nígh - níte, léigh - léite, dóigh - dóite</i>

b, g are devoiced by the suffix *-tha, -the*: *-btha* [-p@], *-gtha* [k@].

* *-fa* is the simplified spelling for **bhhtha / *mhtha* e.g.: *scríobh - *scríobhtha > scríofa*

** *-dta* is pronounced [-t@] (this original form was most likely *-dtha*)

verbs of the 2nd conjugation:

final sound	form	example
<i>igh</i>	verb stem (without -gh) + the	<i>salaigh - salaithe, coinnigh - coinnithe</i>
<i>il</i>	verb stem + te	<i>oscaill - oscailte</i>
<i>in</i>	verb stem* + ta	<i>consain - consanta</i>
<i>ir</i>	verb stem* + tha	<i>imir - imeartha</i>
<i>im</i>	verb stem* + tha	<i>foghlaím - foghlaimtha</i>
<i>ing</i>	verb stem + the	<i>tuirling - tuirlingthe</i>

* Depalatalisation of the verb stem (*imir* becomes *imeartha*, *foghlaím* becomes *foghlaimtha*)

il, ir, in: Here also, the form ending in *igh* is possible: e.g. *oscaill - osclaithe* instead of *oscaillte*

Use:

1. attributive adjective: *an cruiscín briste* = the broken jar
2. predicative adjective (either passiv or active)
 - e.g.: *Tá an bord briste* = The table is broken (passive).
 - e.g.: *Tá mé ólta* = I am drunk (active)
3. in the predicative use transitive verbs take on the passive, the agent is introduced with *ag*:
 - e.g.: *Tá an bord briste agam* = the table was broken by me (lit.: "is the table broken by-me")
4. in a predicative use one can also make it the perfect:
 - transitive verbs: introduction of the agent with *ag* (perfect/passive):
 - e.g.: *Tá an bord briste agam.* = I broke the table. (lit.: "is the table broken by-me")
 - intransitive verbs (only the perfect):
 - e.g.: *Tá mé imithe go hÉirinn.* = I went to Ireland. (lit.: "was I went to Ireland ")

5. predicative with other verbs
e.g.: *Chonaic mé scríofa mar sin é.* = *I saw it written.*
6. (rare) as the **participle of necessity (*rangabháil an riachtanais*)** with the copula (mostly negative):
e.g.: *Ní gearánta dom ar an aimsir* = *I have no grounds to complain about the weather* (lit.: "not-is to-complain to-me on the weather")
7. the genitive form of the verbal noun has often the same form as the verbal adjective:
e.g.: *pósadh-póstá, suí-suíte, loighe-loíte, caitheamh-caite*
8. The use in (temporal, modal) participial constructions, as in German, is not common.

prefixes so-, do-, in-

These prefixes cannot be used with other adjectives as verbal adjectives.

To be precise, it's not really the verbal adjective, but the genitive form of the verbal noun

(This is often, but not always the same as the verbal adjective: e.g.: *sábháilte* = *saved* , but: *sábhála* = *of saving!*, hence *dosábhála* = *unusable*):

They express the probability of an action.

Those words formed through this process are termed as **participles (*rangabhálacha*)** in Irish.

participle of ease (*rangabháil na fusachta*):

so- = "easily" e.g.: *sobhriste* = *fragile*, *soshábhála* = *easily rescued*

participle of difficulty (*rangabháil na deacrachta*):

do- = "difficult, impossible" e.g.: *dobhriste* = *unbreakable*, *doshábhála* = *unrescuable*

participle of suitability (*rangabháil na hoiriúnachta*):

in- = "possible" e.g.: *inbhriste* = *breakable*, *inite* = *edible*, *insábhála* = *rescuable*

These 3 participles can (less commonly) also be formed out of normal **nouns (in the genitive form)**:

so-: *so-iompair* = *carryable*, *sotheagaisc* = *teachable*

do-: *doláin* = *unfillable*, *dofhaisnéise* = *indescribable*, *doleithscéil* = *inexcusable*, *do-amhras* = *undoubtedly*

in-: *intráchta* = *passable*, *inairm* = *appropriate, to be armed*, *inrúin* = *capable, to keep a secret*

participle of comparison (*rangabháil na comparáide*)

The prefix **in-** can act as the participle of comparison with the genitive of nouns. In this case a partner of comparison is included with *le*. It is an extension of the *participle of suitability* : (**in ... le** = *as possible... as*). A degree of equation is made (equative):

e.g.: *Níl sí incheoil le Pól* = *She can't make music like Paul can*

Ní raibh aon fhear inchamáin le Pól = *There was no man who was as able with the hurley stick as Paul.*

Caibidil a Trí

The Verb (an Briathar)

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Caibidil a Trí: The verb (an Briathar)

Tense and Mood (an Aimsir agus an Modh)

Tempus (an aimsir)

present tense (an aimsir láithreach)

habitual present tense (an aimsir gnáthláithreach)

preterite (an aimsir chaite)

imperfect (an aimsir neamhfhoirfe) or habitual preterite (an aimsir gnáthchaite)

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perfect (an aimsir fhoirfe)

Modus (an modh)

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Genus verbi (an fhai)

active (an fhai ghníomhach)

passive (an fhai chéasta)

miscellaneous

progressive (an fhoirm leanúnach)

intentional (an fhoirm thimchainteach aidhme)

relative form (an fhoirm choibhneasta)

Tempus (an aimsir)

present tense (an aimsir láithreach)

Non-habitual present tense and habitual present tense have a *common* form.

(*bí* is the only verb with separate forms for *habitual* and *non-habitual*) [[1](#)]

The usage differs:

- In **written language**, the present tense form like German or English present tense (habitual and non-habitual) is used, as well as by continuing actions of the dt.perfect. In this category count also e.g. sports commentary or sermons.
- **Colloquially**, it is only understood with *verbs of thought, feeling and the five senses* as the non-habitual present tense- for punctual actions in the present. The decisive factor with these verbs is the context, if habitual or non habitual present tense is meant.
(e.g.: non-habitual: *Feiceann sé anois* = *he sees now*, habitual: *Feiceann sé go minic* = *he sees often*)
With all *other verbs*, this form colloquially only means the *habitual* present tense.
(e.g.: *Glanann sé go minic* = *he cleans often*)
Simple, non-habitual present tense is colloquially rather written with the progressive.
(e.g. *Tá sé ag glanadh anois* = *he's cleaning now*)

This use is quite similar to the English.

The use of the present tense in place of the future (in the German e.g. "wenn wir kommen"="if we come" instead of "wenn wir kommen werden"="if we will come") is not common, (mostly the future is used: e.g. *nuair a thiocfaimid* = *if we will come*), except after *má* = *if* and *cha* = *not* (see future)

In the direct relative clause: there is a special relative form with an s-suffix in the 3rd person.

e.g: *an fear a ghlana(nn)s an carr* = *the man who is cleaning the car*.

Synthetic suffixes remain unchanged. e.g.: *an carr a għlanaim* = *the car that I clean*.

Only seldom there is, in der 3rd person, a **historical present tense (an láithreach stairiúil)**, that appears in narratives (otherwise in the preterite), as a stilistic tool to make a current action "more present". Instead of -ann in Ulster the old present tense suffix **-(a)idh** is used. e.g.: *Glanaidh sé = he cleans*. One may also use the relative form **-(e)as**, even if no relative connection is present: e.g.: *Glanas Seán na soithí = Seán cleans the dishes*

habitual present tense (an aimsir gnáthláithreach)

Obviously there is a difference in Irish between the 2 aspects of action: *habitual* and *non-habitual* (somewhat comparable to the Russian perfect and imperfect aspect)

The habitual present tense exists as its own form only for the verb **bí** = to be.

Tá sé = he is (present tense)

Bíonn sé = he is (habit. present tense)

For all other verbs there is only one *common* form for non-habitual and habitual present tense. Colloquially, mostly the habitual present tense is meant (except with verbs of the thought, feeling and the senses)

It is used for actions, that **regularly** (*normally, generally, often, sometimes, seldom, never*) take place

In the direct relative clause: there is a special form with an s-suffix (e.g. *a bhíos = that is*, in Conamara *a bhíonn*)

e.g: *an carr a bhíos glan i gcónai = the car that is generally is clean.*

preterite (an aimsir chaite)

The preterite is used like the German preterite. It is, although, additionally used in the situations where the German perfect and plusquamperfect is used. It describes a one time (punctual) action in the past.

It is the normal narrative form in prose..

e.g. *Chonaic mé = I saw, I have seen, I had seen*

Just a side - (to explain the conjugation different from the other tenses):

The preterite suffixes stem from the singular (-as, -is, -) of the old Irish. s-preterite, but in the plural (-amar, -abhar, -adar) the former deponential (passive-) conjugation.

imperfect (an aimsir neamhfhoirfe) or habitual preterite (an aimsir gnáthchaite)

The imperfect is the habitual form in the past. It is used similar to the habitual present tense. But it is, as opposed to that, available for all verbs as an individual form. It describes a recurring or continuous (non-punctual) action in the past (Engl.: "I used to ...")

In form, it's the same as the subjunctive-preterite, but here, lenition and a d'-prefix occurs

e.g.: *Dhéanadh sé an obair go maith = He did (normally, regularly, ...) the work well.*

future (an aimsir fháistineach)

The future is used like the German future I, where often also a desired event in the future is played out: *Beidh deoch agam = I would (like) to have a drink*

A use of the present tense in place of the future (as in German) is not common, except sometimes by the verb *bí*.

After the conjunction *má* = if and the verbal particle *cha* = not the habitual present tense always follows instead of the future.

e.g. *Glanfaidh tú = you will clean: má għlanann tú = if you clean/will clean, cha għlanann tú = you don't clean/will not clean*

In the direct relative clause there is, as in the present tense, a special relative form with an s-suffix.

e.g: *an fear a għlanfas an carr = the man who will clean the car.*

perfect (an aimsir fhoirfe)

The perfect is, as a tense, used much more seldomly (as in German or English), instead of this mostly the preterite is used, or the present tense for continuing actions.

The Irish perfect can only be used, if the action has just recently ended (vgl. dt. term "vollendete Gegenwart"=present perfect) and it appears necessary to mention this condition; or if the condition/the result of the action is to be described (similar to the perfect in Greek). It is not a dependent tense as in English (independent from conjunctions, adverbs or other subordinating clauses).

There is also no simple formation of the perfect using a conjugation as a suffix;

Instead, compound forms (periphrastic forms) with the auxilliary verb **bí** are used, that often have a passive meaning.

Through preterite forms of **bí** a sort of perfect preterite (plusquamperfekt) is formed, through future forms, a future perfect (in German future II).

Forming the perfect with the verbal adjective

transitive form of **bí + object + verbal adjective + ag + subject***

intransitive form of **bí + subject + verbal adjective**

*.in Irish, subject and object are actually the other way around, the rendering here is more based on a German grammar. The fact that in Irish that subject and object are switched also means that this construction actually is a passive-perfect is.

With **transitive** verbs, this is basically a perfect passive form (see below).

It can, when relocated, also be translated as an active-perfect (because **bí + ag** means "have")

e.g.: *Tá an bord briste agam* = *I have broken the table/ the table was broken by me.* (lit.: "The table is broken at-me")

With **transitive** verbs that only have an **indirect objecte** (preposition + object, e.g. *beir ar rud* = *catch something*), the preposition remains the same also with the verbal adjective and introduced the logical subject (a grammatical subject is missing). This is also mainly passive

e.g.: *Tá beirthe ort* = *you are caught*, *Tá beirthe agam ort* = *I caught you*.

With **intransitive** verbs this has naturally only a perfect and no passivie meaning.

e.g.: *Tá siad imithe go hÉirinn* = *The went away to Ireland*.

The result of the action is always in the foreground. (in the examples: "the table is broken", "you are caught", "they are away").

formation of the perfect with the verbal noun

form of **bí + subject + tá éis / i ndiadhbh + verbal noun**

This form puts the emphasis on the fact that an action was completed just now.

e.g.: *Tá mé tar éis snámh* = *I just now swam* (lit.: "I am after the swimming")

form of **bí + subject + ar + verbal noun**

This form emphasises the status of an action and is passive. Technically seen, it acts as a passive participle (*ar oscailt* = "being open").

In this use **no lenition** occurs after *ar*.

e.g.: *Tá an clog ar stad.* = *The clock has stopped.* *Tá an doras ar oscailt* = *The door is opened.*

ar + verbal noun + genitive-object + do + subject

ar + possessive pronoun + verbal noun + do + subject

The form with **do + subject** is the "real" perfect: (*ar* comes from *iar* = *after*). Instead of *ar* one can also use *tar éis* etc. (see more about that under [syntax of the verbal noun](#))

But this form is only usable as a subordinating clause or adverbially, not as an independent clause. It describes the preclusion of the action (with respect to the action of the main clause)

In this use, *ar* **lenites** (earlier there was eclipsis after *iar/ar*)

e.g.: *Ar oscailt an dorais dom* = *After I had opened the door*; *ar dhéanamh na hoibre duit* = *after you have*

done the work.

In combination with the possessive pronoun a/ár one gets the forms **arna/arnár** (e.g. *arna ól dom* = after I have drunk it lit.: "after-its drinking to-me").

These occur also in verbal noun constructions as the perfect passive participle (e.g. *arna chur in fhoilsiú ag ...* = published by...) without do + subject.

Modus (an modh)

indicative (an modh táscach)

The indicative is the *form dealing with reality*, of normal statement- and narrative forms in all above mentioned tenses.

(I am, I was, I will be, etc.). It is with that the most common form.

imperative (an modh ordaitheach)

The imperative is the *command form*, used for commands and requests.

Es gibt ihn nur in einer tense (present tense)

One can divide it into:

- the "**primary imperative**" an independent form (2nd person singular/plural)
This is used as in German or English:
e.g. *glan!* = *clean!*(sg.); *glanaigí!* = *clean!*(pl.)
the 2nd person singular is also termed *verb root* and is the base form as found in dictionaries
- as the "**secondary imperative**" one actually uses verb forms of other Modi.
A secondary imperative is less common in German/English (with the forms of the subjunctive-present tense: *Gehe er!=Go he!*). Instead, in German/English one uses reworded sayings (like: "laßt uns..."="let us...", "er soll..."="he should..." etc.). In Irish:
 - the forms 1st person singular ("let me...") and the autonomous form ("one should...") are identical to the forms of the *indicative present tense*. A difference is mostly only possible to find from the context:
Glanaim = *I clean, let me clean.*
It is only clear by the irregular verbs with different stems:
Deirim = *I say, Abraím* = *let me say!*
 - the forms of the 3rd person singular and plural (**jussive**: "he should...", "they should....") as well as the 1st person plural (**hortative**: "let us...") are identical with the forms of the *indicative-imperfect (subjunctive-preterite)*, but they occur without lenition.
Glanadh sé = *he should clean!*, *Glanaimis* = *let us clean!*
In the 1st person plural there was once a form with a broad -m : *Téam* = *let us go*. (instead of *téimis*)
Often, in the 1st person plural, also the indicative-present tense suffix -imid is used: *Téimid* = *let us go*.

For the negative imperative (**prohibitive**) there is an own **negating particle (prohibitive particle) ná** (e.g.: *ná glan é!* = *don't clean it!*)

In this way, negativen clauses are always clear:

Ní għlanaimid = *we don't clean*, *Ná glanaimid* = *let us not clean!*

The **autonomous form** is especially used for prohibit signs. In German one uses rather the infinitive, in English, the progressive.

e.g.: *Ná caitear tobac!* = *No smoking!* (lit.: "one uses not tobacco!").

The **3rd person (jussive)** is especially used in idiomatic phrases, in which the grammatical and logical subject are not the same, like: *Ná bíodh eagla ort!* = *Have no fear!* (lit.: "not be fear on-you")

The use of the imperative is pretty much equivalent to the German. Besides these, it is sometimes used in constructions in the meaning "is ... or if not ...":

e.g.: *Bíodh sé sásta nó ná bíodh* = if he is happy or not (lit.: "be he happy or not be")

conditional (an modh coinníollach)

This is the *conditional form*.

That means the action is dependent on certain (named or unnamed) conditions.

In German one uses a rearranged form with "würden"=would (e.g. ich würde gehen, wenn...) =I would go, if...

And also in the usage it is very similar to the German "würde"- form:

- in actions dependent on an (irreal) condition, e.g. *Thiocfadh sé dá ...* = *He would have come, if...*
- to describe the irreal condition instead of the subjunctive-preterite (see there), e.g. ... *dá mbeadh an t-am aige* = ... *if he would have the time*.
- as a secondary future (after main clauses in the past, e.g. in indirect speech), e.g. *Dúirt sé go mbeadh sé ann* = *He said he would be there*.
- in the use as a polite request (e.g.: *An dtabharfá dom an t-im, le do thoil?* = *Would you please give me the butter?*)
- in rhetor. questions like *Cad a d'fheicfeadh sé ansin ach capall?* = *What did he see there but a horse?*

The conditional exists only in one form, this is for all tenses the same.

e.g.: *Rachainn* = *I would go/I would have gone*

subjunctive (an modh foshuiteach)

The subjunctive is the *possibility form*

The subjunctive is only possible in 2 tenses:

- **subjunctive present tense (foshuiteach láithreach)**

Except in the use for wishes, curses, etc. it has mostly been replaced by the indicative-future

- **subjunctive preterite (foshuiteach caite)**

The form of the subjunctive preterite is the same as the indicative imperfect.

It is used in irreal conditional clauses (after **dá**), but also here mostly replaced by the conditional

It is (was) used for:

- Wishes, curses etc. (*subjunctive present tense* as the **optative**) with the particle/conjunction **go** in subjunctive clauses

e.g.: *Go raibh maith agat* = *thank you* (lit."that be goodness by you");

the **negating particle** is **nár**

e.g.: *Nár éíri sin leat* = *That it will not come to pass for you!*

- Goal, purpose after **go, nó go, sula**.

If the main clause is in the present tense, future or imperative, the *subjunctive present tense* follows, if the main clause is in the preterite/conditional, the *subjunctive preterite* follows.

e.g.: *Fan go dtaga mé* = *Wait, until I come*

- Incomplete actions / indefinite time periods after the temporal conjunctions **go, nó go, sula, ach a**, if the main clause is in the present tense, future or imperative, the *subjunctive present tense* follows.

e.g.: *Beidh mé á bhualadh sula bhfeice sé féin mé* = *I will hit him before he sees me*

- after **mura** in real conditional clauses (*subjunctive-present tense*)

- after **dá / mura** in irreal conditional clauses (*subjunctive-preterite*)

- after **dá / mura** (*subjunctive-preterite*) in exclamatory clauses of wishes/regret (**irreal optative** in the sense of "had I only...", "if I could only...")

e.g.: *Dá nglanadh sé na soithi!* = *If he had only done the dishes!* (lit.: "if he the dishes cleaned had!")

Genus verbi (an fhai)

active (an fhai ghniomhach)

The active is the form that tells us that the subject of the clause is the agent (e.g. *glanann sé = he cleans*) Oppositely, the passive tells us that the logical subject of the clause experiences something (e.g. *tá sé á għlanadh = he is being cleaned*)

The active exists in all above mentioned tenses and modi (see there)

passive (an fhaí chéasta)

The passive is the *experiential form*. The subject of the clause "experiences" an action. There is no simple passive in Irish. Instead, the following (periphrastic) phrase is used:

form of **bí** + **subject** + **verbal adjective** (+ **ag** + **agent**)

e.g.: *Tá an bord briste agam.* = *The table was broken by me. / I broke the table.*

A clause of this sort with the verbal adjective of a transitive verb says that something *was done* (by me) = passive,

but also that I *have* done something (perfect, read more there).

The passive is always perfective in tense because it always stresses the status following an action.

The agent is included with **ag...** (comp. *bí...ag = have*) also: *I have broken the table*

autonomous form of the verb (**Saorbhriathar**) + **object**

e.g.: *Briseadh an bord* = *The table was broken.*

the autonomous form is not the passive, but allows a translation in the passive sense.

e.g.: *Déantar é.* = *It will be done.*

It is not possible to include the agent (*by whom* it was done).

The translation of this form into German/English is done with the impersonal pronoun *man/one*:

e.g.: *Déantar é.* = *One does it.*

form of **bí** + **subject** + **do** + **possessive pronoun** + **verbal noun**

e.g.: *Tá an teach á thóigeáil* = *The house is being built* (lit.: "The house is to-his construction")

This form is similar to the normal progressive with the pronoun as the object, but here, the possessive pronoun is always referring to the subject of the clause, and from this we get a progressive-passive construction.

miscellaneous

progressive (an fhoirm leanúnach)

As in English, there is also in Irish a special progressive.

This looks similar to the German colloquial form of: (e.g. "I bin am/beim Einkaufen") = I'm at shopping. (also sim. to the English: The children are *at play*)

form of **bí*** + **subject** + **ag** + **verbal noun** + **genitive-object**

*instead of *bí* also verbs of sense, start/finish and motion are possible.

In direct relative-clauses, *a* (lenites) instead of *ag*.

Through a conjugation of *bí* (or other verbs), the progressive is possible in all tenses.

Important is the difference between the:

- **progressive in the present tense:**

(similar in the preterite, future)

used for actions that take place now, or should continue

e.g.: *Tá mé ag feachaint ar an teilifís* = *I am watching TV (right now).*

The progressive in the present tense is colloquially the present tense form always used, while the

simple present tense colloquially only is used as the habitual present tense.
e.g.: *Feachaim ar an teilihis i gcónai = I always watch TV.*

- **progressive in the habitual present tense:**

actions of a set duration, that one repeatedly/regularly does,

e.g.: *Bím ag feachaint ar an teilihís sa tráthnóna = I watch TV (normally) the (whole) afternoon.*

For short-term actions one uses the simple (habitual) present tense.

e.g.: *Feachaim ar an nuacht gach lá = I watch the news every day.*

If the object should be a personal pronoun (e.g.: I'm building *it* right now), the verbal noun is placed preceding a in the progressive instead of the appropriate possessive pronoun, instead of ag then the standard do. (do + a = **á**)

form of **bí + subject + do + possessive pronoun + verbal noun**

e.g:

Tá sé **do mo** bhualadh = He is hitting me (right now)

Tá sé **dár** mbualadh = He is hitting us (right now)

Tá sé **do do** bhualadh = He is hitting you (right now)

Tá sé **do bhur** mbualadh = He is hitting you (pl.)(right now)

Tá se **á** bhualadh = He is hitting him (right now)

Tá sé **á** mbualadh = He is hitting them (right now)

Tá sé **á** bualadh = He is hitting her (right now)

In Munster, as in Ulster, one uses also **ag mo, ag do, ag ár, ag bhur**. In the 3rd person also here, **á**.

In Munster, instead of *ag mo*, also **am**, instead of *ag do*, **ad**. In Ulster, *ag* is often omitted completely.

In Connacht, the standard form is used, but, instead of **á**, **dhá**

all forms are here in a [table of examples](#)

for more about the progressive see: [Syntax of the verbal noun](#)

intentional (an fhoirm thimchainteach aidhme)

form of **bí + subject + ar tí + object + a + verbal noun**

e.g.: *Bhí mé ar tí an carr a dhíol = I was just about to sell the car*

Similar to *ar tí* also **ag bráth, ar thob, ag dul ag** see [syntax of the verbal noun](#)

relative form (an fhoirm choibhneasta)

These relative forms are *only* for analytic verb suffixes in the present tense, habitual present tense and future in direct relative clauses. They have the s-suffix in common (-as/-eas or -fas/-feas)

	present tense (trad.)	present tense (Connacht)	future
1st conjug.	-as/-eas	-anns/-eanns	-fas/-feas
2nd conjug.	-íos/-áíos	-íonns/-áionns	-ós/-eos

In the present tense the form -as/-eas is the traditional standard form. In Connacht, it fused with -ann/-eann zu -anns/-eanns.

In Ulster, both of the forms with -as/-eas als auch mit -anns/-eanns in the present tense are used.

They are used if the antecedent is the **subject** of the relative clause, often also if it is the direct object.

examples:

an fear a ghlana(nn)s an carr = the man that cleans the car. (present tense)

an fear a cheannaí(nn)s an carr = the man that buys the car. (present tense)

an fear a għlanfas an carr = the man who will clean the car. (future)

an fear a cheannós an carr = the man who will buy the car. (future)

It is (except in Munster) very common.

In the official standard, this form (with one exception) does not exist and is replaced with normal present tense-/future-verb forms:

an fear a għlanann an carr = the man that cleans the car. (present tense)

an fear a għlanfaidh an carr = the man who will clean the car. (future)

The exception is the verb "lean = follow" in the present tense (...a leanas = that follows).

an t-alt a leanas = the article that follows

If the s- form is used or not, the 3rd person sg. is always used (also in other tenses), if the antecedent is the **subject** of the relative clause (as in German/ and sort of English).

Is mise a scriobhann litir = I'm the one, that writes a letter. (nicht: *is mise a scriobhaim ...!)

Is mise a scriobha(nn)s litir = I'm the one, that writes a letter.

Is tusa a scriobhadh litir = You're the one, that normally wrote a letter

Is sinne a scriobhfaidh litir = We're the ones that will write a letter

Is sinne a scriobhfas litir = We're the ones that will write a letter

Other (synthetic) verb suffixes can only occur if the antecedent is the **object**

litir a scriobhaim = the letter that I write,

litir a scriobhaimid = the letter that we write,

litir a scriobhthá = the letter that you normally write,

litir a scriobhfaimid = the letter that we will write)

The relative form in the present tense of the irregular verb **bí** = be is **atá**.

Similar to the old spelling **adeir, adúirt** (today *a deir, a dúirt*) is the relative form of the verb **abair** = say.

The relative form of the copula is **is** in the present tense or **ba** (preceding a consonant), **ab** (preceding a vowel and fh) in the preterite

[1]

In older grammar books (P.W. Joyce: A Grammar of the Irish Language, 1922) all verbs are still divided into *simple* present tense (synthetic verb suffixes: -im, -ir, -imid, -tí, -id + older suffix of the 3rd person sg. -idh) and *habitual* present tense (analytic suffix -ann/eann for alle persons):

simple present tense: *buailidh sé = he is hitting,*

habitual present tense: *buaileann sé = he hits(always)*

Today, this difference is hardly ever encountered (except by irregular verbs):

The simple present tense: *deir sé = he says*, habitual present tense: *deireann sé = he says(always)*

Otherwise, the simple present tense and present tense-progressive fall into one in spoken Irish, while the suffix -ann expresses the habitual (and partially also the simple) present tense.

Caibidil a Trí: The verb (an Briathar)

The verbal particles (na Míreanna Briathartha)

[The negative particles](#)

[The interrogative particles](#)

[The past particles](#)

[The perfect particles](#)

[The relative particle](#)

[The subjunctive particle](#)

[The conjunctions go, sula, mura, ach a](#)

[The interrogatory adverb cá](#)

Verbal particles come **directly in front** of the verb. They do not occur in this form in German or English. They lead to initial mutations in the verbs ([lenition](#) or [eclipsis](#)).

In the indicative **preterite** there are modified forms with the **suffix -r** (with the exception of the direct relative particle)

The **irregular verbs** [bí](#), [abair](#), [déan](#), [faigh](#), [feic](#), [téigh](#) do **not** use the preterite forms pf the verbal particles

These verbs (except abair) use in some tenses, following the verbal particles, (except the dir. relative particle) special **dependent verb forms** (e.g. *tá sé = er is* but: *nach bhfuil sé = that he is not*)

With the copula, verbal particles create compound forms, that often look the same as the verbal particles alone.

E = eclipsis of the verbs

L = lenition of the verbs

The negative particles (an mhír dhiúltach)

The negativ particles **ní / níor, cha / char** as well as in the **imperative ná** serve to [negate](#) and are translated with "not", which is like an adverb, or as "no", which is like a pronoun.

the negative particle **ní**

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	ní	L	Ní ólfaidh tú fuisce arís. = You will not drink whiskey again.
preterite	níor	L	Níor ól tú fuisce. = You didn't drink whiskey.

In Ulster (Donegal) cha

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense preceding b,c,f,g,m,p,s	cha	L	Cha chreideann sé é = He does not believe it.
present tense u.a. preceding d,t	cha	E	Cha ndéanaim a leithéid = I don't do such things.
present tense preceding a vowel, f	chan	L	Chan ólann tú fuisce arís. = You will not drink whiskey again. Chan fhuil sin ceart = That is not right
preterite	char	L	Char ól tú fuisce. = You didn't drink whiskey.

After *cha/chan*, the (habitual) present tense is used instead of the future tense (see example *Chan ólann tú fuisce arís = You will not drink whiskey again.*)

In parts of Donegal both **ní** and **cha** are common, where *cha* is then rather the emphatic form.

The given lenition/eclipsis rules in parts of Donegal are applied very differently.

Cha/chan is the form also common in Scotch Gaelic.

In Altirisch lautete the form *ní con*, später > *nocha* > *cha*

As a [copular form](#), the use of *chan* instead of *cha* is regulated another way (*cha* preceding adjectives, *chan* preceding nouns and pronouns, independent of the initial sound)

the negative imperative particle (prohibitive particle) **ná**

tense	particle	L/E	example
imperative	ná	-	Ná hól fuisce! = Don't drink whiskey!

The interrogative particles (an mhír cheisteach)

The interrogative particles **an / ar, nach / nár**:

Because the Irish syntax is relatively strict (verb-subject-object), one must indicate a [simple question](#) with a preceding particle (*an, ar, nach, nár*). In German, one would just shift to verb to the beginning.

These interrogative particles are also not really translatable (the closes one comes is the German word "**ob**"=if, and in this meaning it is used as a conjunction in indirect queriest *Níl a fhios agam an ólann sé fuisce* = *I don't know if he drinks whiskey*)

the interrogative particle **an**

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	an	E	An ólfá fuisce? = Would you drink whiskey?
preterite	ar	L	Ar ól tú fuisce? = Have you drunk whiskey?

the negativ interrogative particle **nach**

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	nach	E	Nach n-ólann tú fuisce? = Don't you drink whiskey?
preterite	nár	L	Nár ól tú fuisce? = Didn't you drink whiskey?

In Munster: **ná**

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	ná	-	Ná hólair fuisce? = Don't you drink whiskey?
			Ná fuil sé anso? = Isn't he here?
preterite	nár	L	Nár ólais fuisce? = Didn't you drink whiskey?

The past particle (an mhír stariúil)

The past particle **do** is only still used preceding a vowel as the [d'-prefix](#), also not translatable into German.

Comparable is possiblly the ancient Greek **Augment** ("e-") in a similar meaning.

(One could compare it to the German prefix *ge-*, which actually expresses the perfective, but only in participles, e.g.: *gelaufen, getan, gemacht*)

the past-particle **do**

-	particle	L/E	example
preceding a consonant	(do)*	L	Do thuig sé an scéal. = He understood the story. (trad. Munster) Thuig sé an scéal. = He understood the story. (Standard)

preceding a vowel or f	d'	L	D'ól tú fuisce. = You drank whiskey. D'fhan tú liom. = You waited for me.
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- used with the **preterite**, **imperfect** and **conditional** and only with *autonomous* verb forms
- *: **do** preceding a consonant is only still used in *Munster* and also there in decline. Other than that, the lenition has remained, but without a particle.
- preceding a vowel or fh always **d'!**
- Do/d' comes also after conjunctions, that require the *autonomous* verb form.
e.g.: *Má d'ól tú* = if you drank, *an bainne a d'ól tú* = the milk that you drank
Do/d' is omitted by *dependent* verb forms
e.g. *Níor ól mé* = I didn't drink
- do does not lenite the autonomous verb form in the preterite (*do briseadh* = one broke), preceding a vowel an h-prefix is added: *do himriodh* = one played of the complete omission of do: *imriodh* = one played, in Connacht also, h-prefix without do: *himriodh* = one played, but never d'
- in Munster, do is often lenited: *dh'olas fuisce* = I drank whiskey, preceding a vowel also double: *do dh'olas* = I drank

The perfect particle (an mhír fhoirfe)

The **perfect-particle** **ro** is only used after other particles and conjunctions,

- that require the *dependent* verb form in the **preterite** and in the **negativen subjunctive present tense**.
- it fused with the other particles (e.g.: *ní + ro* = *níor*, *an + ro* = *ar*, *go + ro* = *gur*) and formed the **suffix -r** of the other particle in the preterite (*níor*, *gur*, *nár*, *ar*, *sular*, *murar*, etc.) and in the negative subjunctive present tense (*nár*)
- The completely independent form **ro** no longer occurs.
- some irregular verbs use no verbal particle with -r. The particle **ro** is here instead become part of the verb (e.g.: *ro + bhí* = *raibh*, *do + ro + gní* = *déarna*).

The relative particle (an mhír choibhneasta)

- the direct relative particle a / a (in direct relative clauses) would be like the English relative pronoun that
- the indirect relative particle a / ar (in indirect relative clauses) would be in English: who, whose, whom, etc.

the direct relative particle (mír choibhneasta dhíreach)

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	affirmative	a	an fear a ólanns fuisce = the man who drinks whiskey
preterite	affirmative	a	an fear a d'ól fuisce = the man that drank whiskey
present tense	negative	nach	an fear nach ólann fuisce = the man who doesn't drink whiskey
preterite	negative	nár	an fear nár ól fuisce = the man that didn't drink whiskey

- the affirmative direct relative particle requires the *autonomous* verb form, depending on the dialect, in the present tense and future also, the *relative* verb form (e.g. *a ólann/ólanns/ólás* = who drinks)
- with the verb *tá*, it fuses to form **atá** (etymologically, this explanation is acutally not right: the verb *tá* has *always* had the form *atá*, also non-relative, but only the relative form still exists)
- negative forms: **nach / nár** (in Munster **ná / nár**) require the *dependent* verb form
- in older literature, instead of *a* also **do** (an fear d'ólas = the man who drinks), so also partially still in Munster.

the indirect relative particle (mír choibhneasta indíreach)

tense	particle	L/E	example
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present tense	affirmative	a	E	an teach a n-ólann tú fuisce ann = the house in which you drink whiskey
preterite	affirmative	ar	L	an teach ar ól tú fuisce ann = the house in which you drank whiskey
present tense	negative	nach	E	an teach nach n-ólann tú fuisce ann = the house in which you don't drink whiskey
preterite	negative	nár	L	an teach nár ól tú fuisce ann = the house in which you didn't drink whiskey

- the *indir.* relative particle requires the *dependent* verb form
- with many prepositions compounds are formed, if the preposition precedes the relative particle (then - pronoun) is shifted (this is a rather uncommon): e.g. an teach *inar* ól tú fuisce = the house in which you drank whiskey.
- In Munster, instead of a / ar *go* / *gur* is used.
- negative forms: **nach** / **nár** (in Munster **ná** / **nár**)

The subjunctive particle (an mhír ghuítheach)

the subjunctive particle *go*

-	particle	L/E	example
affirmative	go	E	Go n-éirí an bóthair leat = good luck! ("may the road rise with you")
negative	nár	L	Nár fheicimid arís é. = Hopefully we won't see him again!

- through this, wishes, hopes, curses, etc. are expressed (the optative)
- basically, the subjunctive particle is identical to the conjunction *go*, and also literally translated with "that" ("that the road with you rises!", "that we never again see him!")
- Nár gets its -r from the old perfect particle *ro*, that also found use in the (neg.) subjunctive.

The conjunctions *go*, *sula*, *mura*, *ach a*

The conjunctions *go*, *sula* and *mura* act like verbal particles (pertaining to the change in the preterite: *go* / *gur*; *sula* / *sular*; *mura* / *murar*).

sula/sular and *ach a/ach ar* are actually compounds of the conjunction *sul* or *ach* and the indirect relative particle *a/ar*

the conjunction *go* = that

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	affirmative	go	go n-ólann tú fuisce = that you drink whiskey
preterite	affirmative	gur	gur ól tú fuisce = that that you drank whiskey
present tense	negative	nach	nach n-ólann tú fuisce = that you don't drink whiskey
preterite	negative	nár	nár ól tú fuisce = that you didn't drink whiskey

In Munster, **ná** is used here as well instead of "nach", and after the negative main clause **ná go** (**ná gur** in the preterite.)

the conjunction *sula* = before,

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	sula	E	Béidh sé anseo sula dtiocfaidh mé ar ais. = He will be here before I come back.

preterite	sular	L	Bhí sé anseo sular tháinig mé ar ais = He was here before I came back.
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Regional (in *Munster*) auch **sara / sarar**

the negative conjunction **mura** = if not,

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	mura	E	Mura bhfeiceann sé é = If he doesn't see him.
preterite	murar	L	Murar bhual sé leis = If he hasn't hit him

Regional instead of *mura/murar* **mara / marar** (in Connemara) **muna / munar**

the conjunction **ach a** = as soon as

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	ach a	E	Béidh sé anseo ach a dtiocfaidh mé. = He will be here as soon as I come.
preterite	ach ar	L	Bhí sé anseo ach a tháinig mé. = He was here as soon as I came.

The local interrogative adverb cá

The local interrogative **cá / cár** is an adverb ([where](#)). It is actually a compound of the interrogative cá and the indirect relative particle a/ar (cá + a = cá)

The local interrogative adverb **cá**

tense	particle	L/E	example
present tense	cá	E	Cá gcuirfidh tú é? = Where will you put it?
preterite	cár	L	Cár chuir tú é? = Where did you put it?

In other uses of *cá*, in which there is no indirect relative clause directly following, *cár* appropriately does not appear in the preterite (see [interrogative cá](#))

Caibidil a Trí / Caibidil a Trí Déag

Modals and Auxilliary verbs (na Briathra Módúla agus Cúnta)

must
should
can
may

like
want
need
have

explanations

- In Irish there are virtually **no real modal verbs**.
 One exception is *féad* = *can*
- Instead of them, one expresses these through certain *idiomatic expressions*.
 - They mostly contain the "auxilliary verb" *bí* (present tense: tá) or die *copula* (present tense: is).
 - The related conditional form (must, could, should...) comes from the use of the conditional form of the auxilliary verb (*bheadh* instead of tá, *ba* instead of is etc.)
 - Many of these expressions are formed with prepositions. The preposition introduces the actual (logical) subject, although in copular clauses, it is grammatically part of the predicate or in sentences with *bí*, an indirect object.
 - The copula with the preposition *do* + log. subject gives the objective portrayal: e.g.: *B'éigean dom* = *I would have to*
 - The copula with the preposition *le* + log. subject gives the subjective assessment: *ní foláir liom* = *I think it is necessary*
 This is especially necessary in modal expressions of *wants, likes* : *Is maith liom* = *I like, ba mhaith liom* = *I would like*
 - By omitting the preposition + subject, it takes on a passive meaning: e.g.: *B'éigean* = *man müßte, ní foláir* = *it is necessary, is féidir* = *it is possible, b'fheidir* = *it would be possible* = *maybe*.
 - Some other verbs have modal submeanings if they appear in certain tenses (e.g.: *caithfidh* = *must, glacadh* = *should*)
- Mostly, "modal verbs" of musts, shoulds and cans are supplemented by infinitive constructions (like in German: Ich muß *das Haus streichen*=I must paint the house). With objects, the preposition *to* appears (as opposed to the German): *Caithfidh mé an teach a phéinteáil* = lit.: "use-will I (= I must), the house to paint"
- Just like in German/English, go/nach-clauses that supplemented modal constructions of musts, shoulds and coulds have the meaning "it must/must be so, that", "it could be so, that", "it should be so, that..." ("epistemic modal verbs"), whereby certainly also here infinitive constructions are possible.
- an auxilliary verb **have** also doesn't exist,
 As a substitute of the verb *have* one uses the verb *bí* and the preposition *ag* or sometimes *ar*
 In Irish one "has" nothing, but it "is by or on one"
Ownership is expressed via the copula with the preposition *le*, "one owns" nothing, it "is with one"

*With "**subject**"/"**object**" , we are speaking here of the word, which in German would have the subject- or object function. In Irish, in constructions with *bí* it is mostly the other way around, ... in copular constructions, that which is termed here as the "subject" is actually part of the predicate and the following subordinating clause or infinitive construction is actually the *grammatical subject* of the sentence.

The word called "subject" is also in Irish understood as the *logical subject* of the statement. "subject" ist hier also stets derjenige, der "must", "can", "soll", "may" etc.

Abbreviations: **VN** for verbal noun or infinitive construction ("infinitive with to": object + verbal noun), **go** for a go/nach-clause ("that").

I must.../would have to

1. form of **bí + ar + subject + VN***

Tá orm imeacht = I must go (lit. "is on me to go")

Bhéadh ar Sheán a theacht = Séan would have to come (lit.: "would be on Séan to come")

2. form of **bí + ag + subject + le + VN***

This is an obvious borrowing from the English (comp. "to have to": bí ag = have, le = (in order) to).

Tá agam le dul = I must go ("I have to go")

3. **caithfidh** (= future tense of caith [use, throw etc.]) + **subject + VN/go**

Caithfidh mé imeacht = I must go (lit.: "use will I to go")

After *má* (if), a habit. present tense form of caith in the meaning "must" is allowed and necessary (because the future after *má* is always prohibited):

Má chaitheann sé imeacht = if he must go

Otherwise (except in Munster) besides the future- only conditional forms of caith are common.

Chaithfinn imeacht = I would have to go

4. form of **is + éigean + do + subject* + VN/go** (especially in the preterite **b'éigean do**, is also common as a substitute for earlier in the present tense sense *caithfidh*)

B'éigean dom é a dheanamh = I had to do it (lit. "was a force to me, it to do")

5. negative form of the copula **ní + mór + do + subject* + VN/go**

Ní mór duit bheith anseo = You must be here (lit.: "is not big to you, to be here")

6. negative form of the copula **ní + foláir + do + subject* + VN/go**

Ní foláir dom é a rá = I must say it (lit.: " is not too-much to me, to to say")

7. An impersonal "must" in the sense of conditions and obvious necessities, the following expressions are used:

- in the preterite: **b'éigean dó go** lit.: "was force to that, that"

B'éigean dó gur thit a gcodladh orthu = She must have fallen asleep

- in the present tense: **ní folair nó** lit.: "not-is too much or" (or *ní folair* at the end of the sentence.)

Ní folair nó tá sí tinn = Tá sí tinn, ní folair = She must be sick

- in the present tense/future tense: **caithfidh (sé) go** lit.: "will-use, that"

Caithfidh go bhfuil sí ann = She must be there then

I should .../should have

1. **imperative:**

Tagadh Seán = Seán should come! (lit.: "Seán, come / it should come Seán! ")

2. form of **is + ceart + do + subject* + VN/go**

Is ceart do Shéan a theacht = Seán should come (lit.: "is right to Seán to come")

Ba ceart do Sheán a theacht = Seán should have come

3. form of **is + cóir + do + subject* + VN/go**

Ba chóir duit é a dheanamh = You should do it (lit.: "would be right to you it to do")

4. **ghlacfadh + subject + VN** (only in Ulster, only conditional of the verb *glac* = accept)

Ghlaicfainn imeacht = I should better go (lit.: "I-would-accept to go")

5. form of **is + beite + do + subject* + VN**

beite is the "participle of necessity" of *bí*

Is beite do dhuine Dia a ghui = One should pray to God (lit.: "is necessary-to-be to person God to pray")

6. Instead of *beite*, it is theoretically possible to form a **participle of necessity** with any verb (form = verbal adjective) and then to make a statement closer to the "should, must" construct. But this participle is hardly useful if then in the negated form: "it is not necessary to ...":

e.g.: *Ní gearánta ar an aimsir duit = There is no reason for you to be complaining about the weather*

I can..../could

1. form of **is + féidir + le + subject*** + **VN/go**

Is féidir liom Gaeilge a scriobh = I can write Irish (lit. "is possible with me Irish to write")

Ach ní féidir liom Rúisis a scriobh = But I can not write Russian

B'fhéidir go bhfuil sé ann = It could be (= maybe) it's here

2. form of **bí + subject + in ann / in acmhainn / in inmhe / abalta + VN** (this is limited to "to have the ability to do something")

Tá mé in ann Gaeilge a scriobh = I can write Irish (in Connacht)

Tá mé abalta Gaeilge a scriobh = I can write Irish (in Ulster and Munster)

(after *ann*, *aicmhe*, *inmhe* the genitive may follow, because these are nouns: *in aicmhe a dhéanta = able to do it*

3. form of **tig + le + subject*** + **VN** (tig is actually the Ulster variant of tagann, the present tense of **tar** = to come.) Besides in the present tense (tig in Connacht, thig in Ulster) it is only common in the conditional (tiocfadh).

Tig le Pól é a dhéanamh = Paul can do it (lit.: "coming with Pól it to do")

Thiocfadh le Pól é a dhéanamh = Paul could do it (lit.: "would be-coming with Pól it to do")

4. the "real" modal verb **féad** = can (all tenses possible) is rather rare:

Nach bhféadfá fanacht? = Couldn't you stay?

5. form of **bí + sé + ar cumas + subject*** + **VN** ("subject" in the genitive or instead of it a possessive pronoun)

Tá sé ar mo chumas é a dheanamh = I can do it (lit.: "is it on my ability it to do")

6. form of **bí + subject* + i gcumas + VN**

Tá mé i gcumas é a dheanamh = I can do it (lit.: "am I in ability it to do")

7. Certain abilities are not a matter of can, but of *having* (see below: [have](#)): form of **bí + object + ag + subject***

Tá Gaeilge agam = I can speak Irish (lit.: "is Irish by me / I have Irish")

Tá léamh / snámh agam = I can read / swim

8. form of **faigh + VN**

The verb [faigh](#) means actually *to receive*. Here is in the sense of "to get the hang of something"

Fuair sé an obair a dhéanamh = He could do the work (lit.: "he got (the hang of) the work to do")

I could..../may1. form of **bí + cead + ag + subject + VN***

Tá cead ag an bhfeair fuisce a ól = the man may drink whiskey (lit.: "is allowance by the man whiskey to drink")

2. **féadfaidh** (form of **féad** in the future tense) + **subject + VN***

Féadfaidh tú imeacht anois = you can/may go now. (lit.: "can-will you go now")

3. A form of **is + miste + le** (+ recipient), actually.: "to bother someone" is often used in requests for permission (and the answers to that):

Ar mhiste leat mé a dhul ansin? = May I go there? (= would it you bother, if I went there?)

I like..../would like1. form of **is + maith + le + subject* + object/VN/go**

Ba mhaith liom fuisce a ól = I would like to drink whiskey (lit.: "would be good with-me whiskey to drink")

To emphasise, one can use **is + breá + le** instead of that.

Ba bhreá liom fuisce a ól = I would like a lot to drink whiskey (lit.: "would be nice with-me whiskey to drink")

2. Form des verbs **taitin + object + le + subject***

Taitníonn iasc liom = I like fish (lit.: "pleases fish with-me")

Thaitin an capall leis = He liked the horse

I would rather ...1. form of **is + fearr + le + subject* + object/VN/go**

Is fearr liom tae ná caife = I like/would rather tea than coffee (lit.: "is better with me tea than coffee")

I want ...

1. form of **bí** + **object** + **ó** + **subject***

Tá braon fuisce uaim = I want some whiskey (lit.: "is a drop of whiskey from me")

2. form of **bí** + **ó** + **subject*** + **VN/go**

Tá uaim fuisce a ól = I want to drink whiskey (lit.: "is from me, whiskey to drink")

3. **Teastaíonn** + **object** + **ó** + **subject***

Teastaíonn arán uaidh = He wants/needs bread (lit.: "is need of bread from him")

4. **Teastaíonn** + **ó** + **subject*** + **VN/go**

Teastaíonn uaim fuisce a ól = I want to drink whiskey (lit.: "need from me, whiskey to drink")

5. copula **is** + **mian / áil** + **le** + **subject*** + **object/VN/go**

Is mian liom é a dhéanamh = I want/wish, to do it (lit.: "is desire with-me, it to do")

"mian" can as the desired object also be carried as the genitive attribute : *mian a dhéanta = desire, to do it* (lit.: "desire of its doing")

I need ...

1. form of **bí** + **gá** + **ag** + **subject*** + **le** + **object**

Tá gá aige leis an bpeann = He needs the pen (lit.: "is necessity by-him with the pen")

2. **Teastaíonn** + **object** + **ó** + **subject***

This can both be a "want" or "need" depending on the context (where one only should want what man really needs :-))

Teastaíonn arán uaidh = He wants/needs bread (lit.: "is need of bread from him")

3. form of **bí** + **object** + **de dhíth ar** + **subject***

Tá braon fuisce de dhíth orm = I want/need some whiskey (lit.: "is a drop of whiskey of loss on me")

4. copula **is** + **gá** + **do** + **subject*** + **VN/go**

Something that is necessary to be done, *must* be done, what isn't necessary, *needs not* to be done.

Is gá dom é a dhéanamh = I must do it (lit.: "is necessity to-me, it to do")

Ní gá duit é a dhéanamh = You must/need not do it (lit.: "not-is necessity to-you, it to do")

I have

1. form of **bí** + **object** + **ag** + **subject***

Tá teach agam = I have a house (lit.: "is house by-me")

Níl carr againn = We have no car (lit.: "not-is car by-us")

Bhí cúpla leabhar ag Síle = Síle had a couple of books (lit.: "was couple of book by Síle")

I have... (phys./psych. conditions, sicknesses, parts, names)

- form of **bí** + **object** + **ar** + **subject***

Níl ocras orm = I have no hunger (lit.: "not-is hunger on-me")

Beidh tart uirthi = She will have thirst (lit.: "will-be thirst on-her")

Bhí áthas ar an bhfear = The man was happy (lit.: "was happiness on the man")

Tá slaghdán ar an gcaillín = The girl has a cold

Tá féasóg ar an seánfheár = The old man has a beard

Tá doirse móra ar an teach = The house has big doors (lit.: "are doors big on the house")

Cén t-ainm atá ort? = What is your name? (lit.: "which name, that-is on-you?")

Seán an t-ainm atá orm. = I'm Seán (lit.: Seán the name, that-is on-me)

I have (own)

- form of **is** + **le** + **subject** + **object***

Is liom an carr seo = This car is mine (lit.: "is with me the car this")

Is le Pól an teach = The house belongs to Paul (lit.: "is with Paul the house")

Caibidil a Trí: The verb (an Briathar)

Explanation of Conjugation

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infinitive verb root and verb stem

Irish verbs have **no infinitive (infinideach)!**

When in German one would use the infinitive, in Irish mostly stands the [verbal noun](#). With that, this is so to say a kind of infinitive at least to the point that it resembles the German infinitive usage as a noun (e.g.: malen - das Malen etc.) The setting of "no infinitive but just a verbal noun" though is not random.

The causes of this are the common noun suffixes of the verbal noun (e.g. -acht, -íocht) as opposed to the German infinitive suffix -en; as well as the fact that in certain cases in the genitive may appear and even carry a genitive object. The verbal noun is also rather irregular (many different suffixes or even suffixless).

This is why one can not so easily find verb stem just by crossing off a suffix.

In the dictionary, one looks up a verb then not with the verbal noun, but mostly with the **verb root (fréamh briathartha)**. This is the **2nd person singular of the imperative**(e.g.: mol = praise!, beannaigh = bless!) This is a regular, suffixless base form.

A different case is the **verb stem (stoc briathartha)** the form to which one adds the conjugations and suffixes.

In the [1st conjugation](#), stem and root are mostly identical

(sometimes [depalatalisation](#) is necessary to form the stem: e.g.: verbs ending in -áil *sabhal* - *sabhalann*, with verbs like *dóigh*, *léigh* the -igh: is omitted *dónn sé*, *léann sé*)

In the [2nd conjugation](#) it gets a bit more complicated (but almost always only due to orthographic reasons).

1st and 2nd conjugation

There are only 2 types of conjugation, the 1st and 2nd conjugation (also called type I and II)

The only **real difference** between the two conjugations are the future tense-(and conditional -) marker **-f-** (1st conj.) and **-ó-** (2nd conj.), e.g.:

1st conjugation: *molfaidh sé* = *he will praise*

2nd conjugation: *beannóidh sé* = *he will bless*

The **other differences** between the two are explainable using orthographic rules:

Important here is the "suffix" **-igh** of the verb root of the 2nd conjugation, that (also hidden) occurs in the verb stem (Basically also in the future tense/conditional see: [1]):

-igh together with (e.g.) the analytical verb suffix **-ann** (actually 1st conjugation) results in **-igheann**.

In old orthography one also wrote *-igheann*.

Today (in modern orthography):

-igh + -ann = -igheann (instead of **-ighe-** one writes **-í-**) so **-íann** (instead of **-ia-** one writes **-íó-**): so **-íonn**

The suffix **-igh** can be "found" in the **-í-** of **-íonn**.

An example:

beannaigh + ann = beannaigheann becomes beannaíann becomes beannaíonn = beann + ionn

verbs of the 2nd conjugation ending in -il, -in, -ir like *imir* have their -igh- " suffix" only in the **verb stem**. Not in the **verb root** (*imir* = play!):

imríonn could (theoretically) also be written "*imrigheann*", the verb stem of *imir* is also actually not *imr-* but *imrigh-*

verbs of the 1st conjugation ending in -igh

Also in the 1st conjugation the root suffix -igh can occur. But with these, the future tensemarker *-f-* also appears. Then they definately belong to the 1st conjugation. They are always monosyllabic.

Here one must differentiate between verbs with a long vowel and those with a short vowel.

verbs ending in a **long vowel** (dóigh, léigh) in the formation of the stem (and the conjugated forms) omit the -igh (e.g. *dónn sé* = *he burns*)

verbs ending in a **short vowel** (nigh, suigh) do not omit the -igh. They act (for orthographic reasons) almost like a verb of the 2nd conj. (*nigheann* > *níonn sé* = *he washes*)

Preceding the *-f-* there also comes an *i* (i with an accent: *nighfidh* > *nífidh sé* = *he will wash*)

Some of these verbs in the old spelling, ended in -idh, first in the reformed spelling it changed to -igh. (e.g.: *suidh* > *suigh* = *sit*, *suidheann* > *suíonn sé* = *he sits*)

Summary of examples:

conjugation type	verb root	verb stem	verb im present tense	future tense-marker	verb im future tense
1st conjugation, suffixless	mol	mol-	molann	-f-	molfaidh
1st conj. ending in -igh (-áigh, -óigh, -úigh)	dóigh	dó-	dónn	-f-	dófaidh
1st conj. ending in -igh (-éigh)	léigh	lé-	léann	-f-	léfidh
1st conj. ending in -igh (-igh, -uigh)	nigh	n(igh)-	níonn	-f-	nífidh
1st conj. ending in -áil	sabháil	sabhál-	sabhálann	-f-	sabhálfaidh
2nd conj. ending in -igh	beannaigh	beann(aigh)-	beannaíonn	-ó-	beannóidh
2nd conj. ending in -ir,-il, -in	imir	imr(igh)-	imríonn	-ó-	imreoidh

The change von **eo** instead of **ó** in imreoidh occurs for orthographic reasons.

The future tense marker **-f-** is mostly spoken as [h] (glangfaidh mé = I will clean [glangh@ me:]), voiced consonants become through this [h] unvoiced (tuigfidh mé = I will understand [tik'@ me:]). Only the suffixes **-f(e)á** and **-f(e)ar** are mostly spoken as [f] (glangfá = you would clean [glangfa:], tuigfear = one will understand[tigf@r]

synthetic and analytical forms (foirmeacha táite agus scartha)

The principal difference to be made is between the **synthetic and analytical forms** are the conjugation *suffixes*.

synthetic form (foirm tháite): "synthesis" of the verb and personal pronoun in *one* word :

Táite means *welded*.

verb and subject (pronouns) are combined into one word.

It does not need any additional, yes Virginia, **no** personal pronouns are allowed* (an extra one would be one too many)

e.g.: *tuigim* (*tuig* + *mé*) = *I understand*.

The addition of an emphatic suffix ist also possible: e.g: *tuigimse* (*tuig* + *mé* + *se*) = *I understand!*

*: after the 3rd person pl., there is an exception to the rule and a pronoun or a noun is allowed (whereby this form is also used analytically):

e.g.: *tuigid siad* = *they understand*, *tuigid na páistí* = *the children understand*

analytical form (foirm scartha): "general" form, *independent* of person

Scartha means *separated*.

verb and subject are in 2 seperate words.

In addition to this verb form, the personal pronoun **must*** also appear (or a noun).

e.g.: *tuigeann tú* = *you understand*; *tuigeann an fear* = *the man understands*

These analytical forms are the same for all persons (*tuigeann tú*, *tuigeann sé*, *tuigeann sibh*,...)

Historically they were limited to the 3rd person singular, but spread out and are today, in different degrees, used in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd person singular and plural.

In the **direct relative clause** (present tense, future tense) there are special analytical forms with an s-suffix, if the antecedent is the subject of the relative clause. e.g.: *Cé a thuigeas sin? = Who understands that? An fear a thuigfeas sin = The man who would understand that.*

*: in [short answers](#) there is no written subject (*An dtuigeann sibh? - Tuigeann = (you)Understand? - Yes.*)

The **standard-conjugation** contains both *analytical* and *synthetic* forms.

The latter is especially true of the 1st person (singular and plural : *tuigim = I understand, tuigimid = we understand*)
The forms on the pages [1st conjugation](#) and [2nd conjugation](#) are the standard forms.

In some **dialects** (def. in Munster) *synthetic forms* are much more common (see "[traditional conjugation](#)") e.g.: *tuigir = you understand, thuigis = you understood*

In other dialects (def. in Ulster) *analytical forms* are the most used (partially also for the 1st person, *tuigeann mé = I understand, tuigeann muid = we understand*)

synthetic forms are here often limited to the function of [echoforms](#).

The analytical forms (overview)

1st conjugation

	indicative							imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	present tense dir. rel.	preterite	imperfect	future tense	future tense dir. rel.	present tense			present tense	preterite
broad final sound	-ann	-as	-	-adh	-faidh	-fas	-adh	-adh	-a	-adh	
slender final sound	-eann	-eas	-	-eadh	-fidh	-feas	-eadh	-feadh	-e	-eadh	

2nd conjugation

	indicative							imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	present tense dir. rel.	preterite	imperfect	future tense	future tense dir. rel.	present tense			present tense	preterite
broad final sound	-aíonn	-aíos	-aigh	-aíodh	-óidh	-ós	-aíodh	-ódh	-aí	-aíodh	
slender final sound	-íonn	-íos	-igh	-íodh	-eoidh	-eos	-íodh	-eodh	-í	-íodh	

broad and slender stem final sound

The differences between verbs with broad and slender stem final sound are purely of *orthographic* nature, following the rule that broad consonants only are allowed to be surrounded by broad (dark) vowels and slender (light) vowels by slender consonants. The *pronunciation* of the suffix is almost the same.

lenition and eclipsis of verbs

Basically, conjugation and lenition/eclipsis have *nothing* to do with one another.

That verbs are in the **preterite, imperfect** and **conditional** are commonly **lenited** (as far as possible), is due to the following:

Preceding the verb, once stood the past verbal particle "[do](#)", which requires [lenition](#).

In the standard (and most dialects besides Munster) the particle *do* is omitted, but the lenition remains.

Also: *thuig mé < do thuig mé = I understood.*

The rest of this particle in the standard is found in the **d'** ([d'-prefix](#)) preceding verbs beginning with a vowel (incl. fh + vowel) in the above mentioned tenses (e.g.: *d'ól mé = I drank, d'fhoghlaím mé = I learned*).

After *other* verbal particles/conjunctions, also in these tenses depending on which is necessary, the verb is either **lenited** or **eclipsed**. The **d'** is then of course omitted. e.g. *ar ól tú? = you drank?*

The exception is the direct verbal particle *a*, which appears in addition to the *d'*: e.g. *a d'ól mé = which I drank*, as well as the conjunction *má* e.g.: *má d'ól mé = if I drank*.

The **autonomous form** im preterite is **never lenited**. (if *do* occurs, then as a verb with h-prefix: *do hóladh* = *one drank*)

In the **subjunctive**, verbs are often **eclipsed**, while they mostly follow eclipsing verbal particles/conjunctions.

e.g. *go mbeannaitear duit* = *may you be blessed*

After lenition-requiring verbal particles (e.g. *nár*) verbs in the subjunctive are of course also **lenited** (e.g.: *nár bheannai sé duit* = *that he may not bless you!*).

dependent and autonomous forms

dependent forms (foirmeacha spleácha)

are used after the following [verbal particles](#) or [conjunctions](#):

an, ní, nach, ná, go, a [indir. relative particle], **sula, mura, ach a, dá, cá**

All of these particles cause eclipsis, except **ní** (lenition) and **ná** (neither lenition nor eclipsis).

In the preterite, forms of this particle with -r appear (**ar, níor, nár, gur, ar, sular, murar, ach ar, cá**), which always cause lenition.

autonomous / absolute forms (foirmeacha néamhspleácha)

are used in all other cases,

also after **a** [dir. relative particle] and **má**

Only 5 of the [irregular verbs](#) differentiate between dependent forms and absolute forms in some tenses (e.g. the verb **bí**: *bhí mé* = *I was*, *ní raibh mé* = *I wasn't*)

In the regular verbs, there are no differences in the verb form, only the verbal particle **do** appears only in the absolute forms (in the preterite, imperfect and conditional ; and then mostly only preceding a vowel as **d'**)

examples:

absolute

ólaim = *I drink*

an fuisce a ólaim = *the whiskey that I drink*

d'ól mé = *I drank*

an fuisce a d'ól mé = *the whiskey that I drank*

má ólaim = *if I drink*

dependent

ní ólaim = *I do not drink*

an teach a n-ólaim ann = *the house in which I drink*

níor ól mé = *I did not drink*

an teach a ól mé ann = *the house in which I drank*

dá n-ólfaínn = *if I would drink*

tá sé ann = *he is here*

an fear atá ann = *the man who is here*

(do) bhí sé ann = *he was here*

an fear a bhí ann = *the man who was here*

má tá sé ann = *if he is here*

níl sé ann = *he is not here*

an teach a bhfuil sé ann = *the house in which he is*

ní raibh sé ann = *he was not here*

an teach a raibh sé ann = *the house in which he was*

dá mbeadh sé ann = *if he were here*

the autonomous form (an Saorbhriathar)

This form is typical for all Insular-Celtic languages.

With respect to the agent, it is completely indefinite ("autonomous" or *saor* = "free")

lenition of the autonomous form:

- The preterite forms are never lenited (*(do) cuireadh* = *one puts*)
The preterite particle *do* would, preceding those verbs beginning in a vowel, cause an h-prefix (*do hóladh* = *one drank*), this h-prefix occurs in Conamara often by an omitted *do* (*hóladh* = *one drank*)
- In other tenses (except the conditional) it was previously not lenited, but today (except in Dingle) lenition has become common (*ní chuirtear* = *one does not put*)
Before a form beginning in a vowel, after normally lenition causing particles, there is an h-prefix (except in the conditional) : (*ní hóltar* = *one does not drink*, *bainne a hóltar* = *the milk one drinks*)
- conditional forms are always lenited.

translation

In English, one can best **translate** the autonomous form with either:

-with the impersonal pronoun "**one**" (*tuigtear é* = *one understands him*) or *but*

-(less accurate) with the passive voice (*tuigtear é* = *he is understood*).

According to the origin, the autonomous form is passive (comp. to the related Latin passive ending in -tur: *amatur* = he is loved). But the impersonal translation with "one" is more sensible in modern Irish, because it is also formed with intransitive verbs and even with transitive verbs no agent can be determined!

A passive translation (e.g.: "*bristear é* = it will be broken") could incur the justified question "by whom?". A form like: "it will by him be broken" is not possible with the autonomous form.

Earlier (still in Classical Irish) it was possible to include the agent using the prepositions **le, ó, ar**:

e.g. "*Marbhadh leis é* = he was killed by him." (Keating, 17. Jh.). In Modern Irish this is incorrect!

Purely idiomatic is the modern: "*Casadh cailín orm* = I met a girl", lit.: "One twisted the girl on-me".

The passive translation is also problematic for the reason that the following pronouns are in the object form and not in the subject form: *Glanter é* = one cleaned it (NOT: **Glanter sé*)

forms of the 1st conjugation

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
broad final sound	-tar	-adh	-taí	-far	-tar	-faí	-tar	-taí
slender final sound	-tear	-eadh	-tí	-fear	-tear	-fí	-tear	-tí

forms of the 2nd conjugation

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
broad final sound	-aítéar	-aíodh	-aítí	-ófar	-aítéar	-ófaí	-aítéar	-aítí
slender final sound	-ítear	-íodh	-ítí	-eofar	-ítear	-eofaí	-ítear	-ítí

For more about the pronunciation of the suffix *-adh/-iodh* see [pronunciation and spelling](#)

The **irregular verbs** *feic, faigh, téigh, tar, clois, bí* have preterite forms ending in **-thas** (chonacthas/facthas = one saw, fuarthas = one received, chuathas/deachthas = one went, thángthas = one came, chualathas = one heard, bhíothas/rabhthas = one was).

These forms (except fuarthas) are lenited and do not differ with respect to the other preterite-verb forms.

The irregular verbs (Briathra néamhrialta)

There are only 11 irregular verbs.

They are conjugated like regular verbs, but:

- There are in the different tenses different **word stems** (all irregular verbs) [[2](#)]
- In some tenses of 5 verbs (*bí, déan, feic, téigh, faigh*) there are special **dependent forms**. These **dependent forms** differ from these verbs considerably in the autonomous or absolute forms
- no **preterite verbal particle**: In 6 of the verbs (*bí, déan, feic, abair, téigh, faigh*) there is *also* in the preterite present tense **verbal particle** that is used.
- The **autonomous form** in the preterite of 6 of the verbs (*bí, déan, feic, tar, téigh, faigh*) ends in **-thas** (instead of **-adh**)
- a side note:
The Munster dialect, some verbs (*clois, feic, tar*) use suffixless preterite forms as the synthetic form of the 1st person: e.g.: *chuala* = I heard (instead of regular-synthet. *chualas* or in the standard analytical *chuala mé*), *chonac* = I saw (instead of *chonaic mé*, *chonaiceas*), *thánag, thána* = I came (instead of *thángas, tháinig mé*)

verb	different verb stems	def. dependent forms	no preterite-verbal particle	auton. preterite ending in -thas
<i>bí</i> (be)	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>déan</i> (do)	yes	yes	yes	no
<i>feic</i> (see)	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>téigh</i> (go)	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>faigh</i> (receive)	yes	yes	yes	yes

<u>abair</u> (say)	yes	no	yes	no
<u>clois/ cluin</u> (hear)	yes	no	no	yes
<u>tar</u> (come)	yes	no	no	yes
<u>ith</u> (eat)	yes	no	no	no
<u>tabhair</u> (give)	yes	no	no	no
<u>beir</u> (carry)	yes	no	no	no

And that's all there is of irregularity!

[1] About the future tense-ó of the 2nd conjugation:

Principally: The future tense was once formed by lengthening the vowel of the last syllable zu ó.

In verbs ending in **-igh** the suffix -igh was then entpalatalised to -ach (comp. the opposite process by the declension of nouns: bealach-bealaigh) and -a- replaced with -ó-: the result was -óch, then came the personal suffix (e.g. -aidh for the 3rd person sg.), also: -óchaidh (e.g.:ceannaigh - ceannach - ceannóch - ceannóchaidh).

This form was shortened in recent times to the modern -óidh (e.g. ceannóchaidh > ceannóidh).

-óchaidh is still used today in Ulster, even if it is pronounced [o:hi].

verbs ending in -il, -in, -ir, -is used to not form the future tense with -óch- (because no -igh was present) but by lengthening the vowel of the last syllable to -ó- or -eo-, also -ir to-eor- and -in to-eon-, etc. (e.g. imír - iméor - iméoraídh). The conjugation of the tenses followed like as in verbs of the 1st conjugation (imir - imreann). Much later one took over the future tense- suffix -óchaidh (imir - imreochaidh > imreoidh). From this came the secondary "stem suffix" -igh to be used and parallel also in the other tenses (imir - imrigheann > imríonn). This is why these verbs "lack" the -igh today in their verb root (imir).

In the verb inis (tell) in Munster the future tense-/conditional form (*i*)neosaídh/(*i*)neosadh (instead of inseoidh/inseodh) is still used.

verbs of the 1st conjugation can not form the future tense not by lengthening the vowel of the last syllable (because they are mostly monosyllabic or the 2nd syllable is already long). This is why another principle was chosen (suffixes always begin with -f-: glan - glanfaidh).

[2] About the irregular verbs:

The irregularity is due to the fact that they were once combined verbs, in which there is an actual verb and affixed preposition and they were polysyllabic.

Through varied emphasis, either on the first syllable (**prototonic**: the modern dependent forms) or the second syllable (**deuterotonic**: the autonomous forms) come the "different" stems.

e.g. déan = machen: aut. form present tense : *do-ghním* (stress on ghním, still used today), dependent form *déanaim* (stress on dé as a form of the preposition *do*, ghním unstressed to-naim). The preteriteform *do rinne* comes from the deuteroton. form of **do-ro-gni* (additionally to the present tense form, the particle *ro*, stress on *ro* as the 2nd syllable), the prototonic form *déarna* through stress on the same original form on the 1st syllable *do*.

e.g. abair = say: prototonic *abair* and deuterotonic *deir* come from the Old Irish as-beir > at-beir ("to bring out"), with *deir* the unstressed first syllable almost disappeared (the t in at- is still there in the d , earlier also written *adeir*). The preterite form *dúirt*, earlier *adúirt* goes back to adrubaírt (ad + ro + beir) , and therefore contains the particle *ro*, this is why there are no r-forms necessary of the verbal particle.

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

conjugation of the regular verbs (Réimniú na mBriathra Rialta)

1st conjugation (an chéad réimniú)

- all verbs with a **monosyllabic verb stem** (e.g. *glan*, *tuig*)
- monosyllabic verbs with the suffix **-igh** (e.g.: *nigh*, *léigh*, *dóigh*) for forms of these see [monosyllabic verbs ending in -igh](#)
- polysyllabic verbs ending in -ail** (e.g.: *sabháil*) for forms of these see [verbs ending in -ail](#)
- a few other **polysyllabic verbs**, often with a depalatalisation of the final consonant (e.g. *adhlaic* = *bury*, *adhlacann sé*), some **syncopated verbs** belong to the 1st and not to the 2nd conjugation, e.g.: *deighil* = *divide* (*deighleann sé* = *he divides*), *achair* = *beseech* (*achrann sé* = *he beseeches*)
The future tense of these verbs is formed with **-f-**, without syncopation: e.g.: *deighilfidh sé* = *he will divide*, *achairfidh sí* = *she will beseech*
- polysyllabic verbs that are formed by a **compound** of monosyllabic verbs e.g.: *forghabh* = *seize*, *forghabhann sé* = *he seizes*, from *for* + *gabh*, *ruadhóigh* = *scorch*, *ruadhónn sé* = *he scorches*, from *rua* + *dóigh*

forms (standard)

broad final sound

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-aim	- mé	-ainn	-faidh mé	-aim	-fainn	-a mé	-ainn
2nd sg.	-ann tú	- tú	-tá	-faidh tú	-	-fá	-a tú	-tá
3rd sg.	-ann sé	- sé	-adh sé	-faidh sé	-adh sé	-fadh sé	-a sé	-adh sé
1st pl.	-aimid	-amar	-aimis	-faimid	-aimis	-faimis	-aimid	-aimis
2nd pl.	-ann sibh	- sibh	-adh sibh	-faidh sibh	-aigí	-fadh sibh	-a sibh	-adh sibh
3rd pl.	-ann siad	- siad	-aidís	-faidh siad	-aidís	-faidís	-a siad	-aidís
autonomous	-tar	-adh	-taí	-far	-tar	-faí	-tar	-taí

slender final sound

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-im	- mé	-inn	-fidh mé	-im	-finn	-e mé	-inn
2nd sg.	-eann tú	- tú	-teá	-fidh tú	-	-feá	-e tú	-teá
3rd sg.	-eann sé	- sé	-eadh sé	-fidh sé	-eadh sé	-feadh sé	-e sé	-eadh sé
1st pl.	-imid	-amar	-imis	-fimid	-imis	-fimis	-imid	-imis
2nd pl.	-eann sibh	- sibh	-eadh sibh	-fidh sibh	-igí	-feadh sibh	-e sibh	-eadh sibh
3rd pl.	-eann siad	- siad	-idís	-fidh siad	-idís	-fidís	-e siad	-idís
autonomous	-tear	-eadh	-tí	-fear	-tear	-fi	-tear	-tí

examples

glan = *clean*

-	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	glanaim	ghlan mé	ghlanainn	glanfaidh mé	glanaim	ghlanfainn	go nglana mé	dá nglanainn
2nd sg.	glanann tú	ghlan tú	ghlantá	glanfaidh tú	glan	ghlanfá	go nglana tú	dá nglantá
3rd sg.	glanann sé	ghlan sé	ghlanadh sé	glanfaidh sé	glanadh sé	ghlanfadh sé	go nglana sé	dá nglanadh sé

1st conjugation

1st pl.	glanaimid	ghlanamar	ghlanaimis	glanfaimid	glanaimis	ghlanfaimis	go nglanaimid	dá nglanaimis
2nd pl.	glanann sibh	ghlan sibh	ghlanadh sibh	glanfaidh sibh	glanaigí	ghlanfadh sibh	go nglana sibh	dá nglanadh sibh
3rd pl.	glanann siad	ghlan siad	ghlanaidís	glanfaidh siad	glanaidís	ghlanfaidís	go nglana siad	dá nglanaidís
autonomous	glantar	glanadh	ghlantaí	glanfar	glantar	ghlanfáí	go nglantar	dá nglantaí

tuig = understand

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	tuigim	thuig mé	thuiginn	tuigfidh mé	tuigim	thuigfinn	go dtuige mé	dá dtuiginn
2nd sg.	tuigeann tú	thuig tú	thuigteá	tuigfidh tú	tuig	thuigfeá	go dtuige tú	dá dtuigteá
3rd sg.	tuigeann sé	thuig sé	thuigeadh sé	tuigfidh sé	tuigeadh sé	thuigfeadh sé	go dtuige sé	dá dtuigeadh sé
1st pl.	tuigimid	thuigeamar	thuigimis	tuigfimid	tuigimis	thuigfimis	go dtuigimid	dá dtuigimis
2nd pl.	tuigeann sibh	thuig sibh	thuigeadh sibh	tuigfidh sibh	tuigigí	thuigfeadh sibh	go dtuige sibh	dá dtuigeadh sibh
3rd pl.	tuigeann siad	thuig siad	thuigidís	tuigfidh siad	tuigidís	thuigidís	go dtuige siad	dá dtuigidís
autonomous	tuigtear	tuigeadh	thuigtí	tuigfear	tuigtear	thuigfí	go dtuigtear	dá dtuigtí

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

conjugation of the regular verbs (Réimniú na mBriathra Rialta)

1st conjugation (an chéad réimniú)

monosyllabic verbs ending in -igh

1st [ending in a long a, o, u + -igh](#) (-áigh, -óigh, -úigh, -eoigh, -uaigh)

2nd [ending in a long e + -igh](#) (-éigh)

3rd [ending in a short vowel + -igh or a consonant + -igh](#)

forms (standard)

1st monosyllabic verbs ending in a long a, o, u + -igh (-áigh, -óigh, -úigh, -eoigh, -uaigh)

e.g.: *dóigh* = burn, *brúigh* = press, *clóigh* = tame, *láigh* = dawn

Note:

- in suffixes always a **broad f** (-faidh, -far, -faí) and a **slender t** (-itear, -iteá, -ití)
- the -igh is omitted preceding suffixes
- in suffixes ending in -ann, -adh, -amar, omit the a (e.g. *dónn* sé = he burns)

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-im	-igh mé	-inn	-faidh mé	-im	-fainn	- mé	- inn
2nd sg.	-nn tú	-igh tú	-iteá	-faidh tú	-igh	-fá	- tú	- iteá
3rd sg.	-nn sé	-igh sé	-dh sé	-faidh sé	-dh sé	-fadhb sé	- sé	- dh sé
1st pl.	-imid	-mar	-imis	-faimid	-imis	-faimis	-imid	-imis
2nd pl.	-nn sibh	-igh sibh	-dh sibh	-faidh sibh	-igí	-fadhb sibh	- sibh	- dh sibh
3rd pl.	-nn siad	-igh siad	-idís	-faidh siad	-idís	-faidís	- siad	- idís
autonomous	-itear	-dh	-ití	-far	-itear	-faí	-itear	-ití

2nd monosyllabic verbs ending in a long e + -igh (-éigh),

e.g.: *léigh* = read, *téigh* = heat

Note:

- in suffixes always a **slender f** (-ifidh, -ifear, -ifi) and a **slender t** (-itear, -iteá, -ití)
- the -igh is omitted preceding suffixes

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-im	-igh mé	-inn	-ifidh mé	-im	-ifinn	- mé	- inn
2nd sg.	-ann tú	-igh tú	-iteá	-ifidh tú	-igh	-ifeá	- tú	- iteá
3rd sg.	-ann sé	-igh sé	-adh sé	-ifidh sé	-adh sé	-ifeadh sé	- sé	- adh sé
1st pl.	-imid	-amar	-imis	-ifimid	-imis	-ifimis	-aimid	-imis

2nd pl.	-ann sibh	-igh sibh	-adh sibh	-ifidh sibh	-igí	-ifeadh sibh	- sibh	-adh sibh
3rd pl.	-ann siad	-igh siad	-idís	-ifidh siad	-idís	-ifidís	- siad	-idís
autonomous	-itear	-adh	-ití	-ifear	-itear	-ifi	-itear	-ití

3rd monosyllabic verbs ending in a short vowel + -igh/-igh oder nur consonant + -igh

e.g.: nigh = wash, snoigh = carve, snigh = flow

Note:

- in suffixes always a **slender f** (-ifidh,-ifear,-ifi) and a **slender t** (-itear,-iteá,-ití)
- the i of the suffix -igh is always retained (actually the suffix -igh remains part of the verb root) from this the following orthographically-caused anomalies result:
 - e.g.: -igh + -eann = -igheann, instead of -ighe- one writes í: -íann, instead of -ía- one writes aber -íó-: **-íonn**
 - e.g.: -igh + -im = -ighim, instead of -ighi one writes -í- also **-ím**
 - e.g.: -igh + -eamar = -igheamar, instead of -ighe one writes í: -íamar, instead of -ía- one writes -íó- : **-íomar**, (similarly with **-íodh** etc.)
- small side note:** Through this, the forms of the 2nd conjugation are attained. As opposed to these, the **-f** remains in the future/conditional (instead of **-ó-** of the 2nd conjugation)

	indicative					imperative	conditional	subjunctive			
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future				present tense			
								preterite	present tense		
1st sg.	-ím	-igh mé	-ínn	-ifidh mé	-ím	-ífinn	-í mé	-ínn	-ínn		
2nd sg.	-íonn tú	-igh tú	-iteá	-ifidh tú	-igh	-ífeá	-í tú	-iteá	-iteá		
3rd sg.	-íonn sé	-igh sé	-íodh sé	-ifidh sé	-íodh sé	-ifeadh sé	-í sé	-íodh sé	-íodh sé		
1st pl.	-ímid	-íomar	-ímis	-ífimid	-ímis	-ífimis	-ímid	-ímis	-ímis		
2nd pl.	-íonn sibh	-igh sibh	-íodh sibh	-ifidh sibh	-igí	-ifeadh sibh	-í sibh	-íodh sibh	-íodh sibh		
3rd pl.	-íonn siad	-igh siad	-idís	-ifidh siad	-idís	-ifidís	-í siad	-idís	-idís		
autonomous	-itear	-íodh*	-ití	-ifear	-itear	-ifi	-itear	-ití	-ití		

Examples

for 1st monosyllabic verbs ending in -áigh,-óigh,-úigh,-eoigh,-uaigh

dóigh = burn

	indicative					imperative	conditional	subjunctive			
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future				present tense			
								preterite	present tense		
1st sg.	dóim	dhóigh mé	dhóinn	dófaidh mé	dóim	dhófainn	go ndó mé	dá ndóinn	dá ndóinn		
2nd sg.	dónn tú	dhóigh tú	dhóiteá	dófaidh tú	dóigh	dhófá	go ndó tú	dá ndóiteá	dá ndóiteá		
3rd sg.	dónn sé	dhóigh sé	dhódh sé	dófaidh sé	dódh sé	dhófadh sé	go ndó sé	dá ndódh sé	dá ndódh sé		
1st pl.	dóimid	dhómára	dhóimis	dófaimid	dóimis	dhófaimis	go ndóimid	dá ndóimis	dá ndóimis		
2nd pl.	dónn sibh	dhóigh sibh	dhódh sibh	dófaidh sibh	dóigí	dhófadh sibh	go ndó sibh	dá ndódh sibh	dá ndódh sibh		
3rd pl.	dónn siad	dhóigh siad	dhóidís	dófaidh siad	dóidís	dhófaidís	go ndó siad	dá ndóidís	dá ndóidís		
autonomous	dóitear	dódh	dhóití	dófar	dóitear	dhófaí	go ndóitear	dá ndóítí	dá ndóítí		

for 2nd monosyllabic verbs ending in -éigh

léigh = read

	indicative					imperative	conditional	subjunctive			
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future				present tense			
								preterite	present tense		

	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	léim	léigh mé	léinn	léifidh mé	léim	léifinn	go lé mé	dá léinn
2nd sg.	léann tú	léigh tú	léteá	léifidh tú	léigh	léifeá	go lé tú	dá léteá
3rd sg.	léann sé	léigh sé	léadh sé	léifidh sé	léadh sé	léifeadh sé	go lé sé	dá léadh sé
1st pl.	léimid	léamar	léimis	léifimid	léimis	léifimis	go léimid	dá léimis
2nd pl.	léann sibh	léigh sibh	léadh sibh	léifidh sibh	léigí	léifeadh sibh	go lé sibh	dá léadh sibh
3rd pl.	léann siad	léigh siad	léidís	léifidh siad	léidís	léifidís	go lé siad	dá léidís
autonomous	léitear	léadh	létí	léifear	léitear	léifí	go léitear	dá létí

for 3rd monosyllabic verbs ending in a short vowel + -igh or only a consonant + -igh

nigh = wash

-	indicative					imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	Praeteritum	imperfect	future	present tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	ním	nigh mé	nínn	nífidh mé	ním	nífinn	go ní mé	dá nínn	
2nd sg.	níonn tú	nigh tú	níteá	nífidh tú	nigh	nífeá	go ní tú	dá níteá	
3rd sg.	níonn sé	nigh sé	níodh sé	nífidh sé	níodh sé	nífeadh sé	go ní sé	dá níodh sé	
1st pl.	nímid	níomar	nímis	nífimid	nímis	nífimis	go nímid	dá nímis	
2nd pl.	níonn sibh	nigh sibh	níodh sibh	nífidh sibh	nígí	nífeadh sibh	go ní sibh	dá níodh sibh	
3rd pl.	níonn siad	nigh siad	nídís	nífidh siad	nídís	nífidís	go ní siad	dá nídís	
autonomous	nítéar	níodh	nítí	nífeár	nítéar	nífí	go nítéar	dá nítí	

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

conjugation of the regular verbs (Réimniú na mBriathra Rialta)

1st conjugation (an chéad réimniú)

verbs ending in -ail

verbs ending in **-ail** belong to the 1st conjugation, although they are polysyllabic (as opposed to those ending in -ail). Such verbs are often formed from (English-stemming) foreign words e.g. *paint* - *peinteail*, *save* - *sábháil*

Note:

- -ail as depalatalised before a suffix to -ál (except preceding suffixes with t)
- also preceding suffixes with f there is an -ál (**broad f** follows)
- preceding suffixes with t, -ail remains (**slender t** follows)

Similar are also other, polysyllabic verbs: ending in **-óil** (e.g.: *tionóil* = *collect*, *tionólann sé* = *he collects*), **-áin** (e.g.: *taispeáin* = *show*, *taispeánann sé* = *he shows*). There is always a **long vowel** in the 2nd syllable. partially, also without depalatalisation (e.g.: *tiomáin* = *drive*, *tiomáineann sé* = *he drives*)

forms (standard)

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-álaim	-áil mé	-álainn	-álfaidh mé	-álaim	-álfainn	-ála mé	-álainn
2nd sg.	-álann tú	-áil tú	-álteá	-álfaidh tú	-áil	-álfá	-ála tú	-álteá
3rd sg.	-álann sé	-áil sé	-áladh sé	-álfaidh sé	-áladh sé	-álfadh sé	-ála sé	-áladh sé
1st pl.	-álaimid	-álamar	-álaimis	-álfaimid	-álaimis	-álfaimis	-álaímid	-álaimis
2nd pl.	-álann sibh	-áil sibh	-áladh sibh	-álfaidh sibh	-álaigí	-álfadh sibh	-ála sibh	-áladh sibh
3rd pl.	-álann siad	-áil siad	-álaidís	-álfaidh siad	-álaidís	-álfaidís	-ála siad	-álaidís
autonomous	-áiltEAR	-áladh	-áiltí	-álfar	-áiltEAR	-álfái	-áiltEAR	-áiltí

example

sábháil = save

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	sábhálaim	shábháil mé	shábhálainn	sábhálfaidh mé	sábhálaim	shábhálfainn	go sábhála mé	dá sábhálainn
2nd sg.	sábhálann tú	shábháil tú	shábhálteá	sábhálfaidh tú	sábháil	shábhálfá	go sábhála tú	dá sábhálteá
3rd sg.	sábhálann sé	shábháil sé	shábháladh sé	sábhálfaidh sé	sábháladh sé	shábhálfadh sé	go sábhála sé	dá sábháladh sé
1st pl.	sábhálaimid	shábhálamar	shábhálaimis	sábhálfaimid	sábhálaimis	shábhálfaimis	go sábhálaimid	dá sábhálaimis
2nd pl.	sábhálann sibh	shábháil sibh	shábháladh sibh	sábhálfaidh sibh	sábhálaigí	shábhálfadh sibh	go sábhála sibh	dá sábháladh sibh
3rd pl.	sábhálann siad	shábháil siad	shábhálaidís	sábhálfaidh siad	sábhálaidís	shábhálfaidís	go sábhála siad	dá sábhálaidís
autonomous	sábháiltEAR	sábháladh	shábháiltí	sábhálfar	sábháiltEAR	shábhálfái	go sábháiltEAR	dá sábháiltí

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (Briathra)

conjugation of the regular verbs (Réimniú na mbriathra rialta)

2nd conjugation (an dara réimniú)

- all polysyllabic verbs ending in -igh (e.g. *coinnigh, salaigh*)

- syncopated polysyllabic verbs ending in -il, -in, -ir, -is (e.g. *oscaill, imir, freagair, seachain, inis*)

These act like those ending in -(a)igh, but the 2nd syllable of the infinitive is abbreviated before the appropriate suffixes (syncopated: *imir* to *imr-*, *oscaill* to *oscl-*, *seachain* to *seachn-*, *inis* to *ins-*). The suffixes in the preterite and the imperative 2nd sg. is of course not -igh/-aigh but then -il, -in, -ir, -is! partially though, there is not syllable abbreviation but just the depalatalisation: *freastail* - *freastal-*, *taistil* - *taisteal-* some syncopated verbs belong also to the 1st conjugation (*achair* - *achrann sé* = he beseeches)

- other polysyllabic verbs (often ending in -im, -ing)

These are made without syllable abbreviation: e.g.: *foghlaim, tarraing,*

lorg is also polysyllabic, because it is spoken with two syllables [lor@g] (as of it were written "lorag", see [auxilliary vowel](#))

- polysyllabic verbs ending in -áil do not belong to the 2nd conjugation, but to the [1st conjugation](#)

forms (standard)

slender final sound (ending in -igh)

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-ím	-igh mé	-ínn	-eoidh mé	-ím	-eoinn	-í mé	-inn
2nd sg.	-íonn tú	-igh tú	-íteá	-eoidh tú	-igh	-eofá	-í tú	-íteá
3rd sg.	-íonn sé	-igh sé	-íodh sé	-eoidh sé	-íodh sé	-eodh sé	-í sé	-íodh sé
1st pl.	-ímid	-iomar	-ímis	-eoimid	-ímis	-eoimis	-ímid	-ímis
2nd pl.	-íonn sibh	-igh sibh	-íodh sibh	-eoidh sibh	-ígi	-eodh sibh	-í sibh	-íodh sibh
3rd pl.	-íonn siad	-igh siad	-ídís	-eoidh siad	-ídís	-eodh dís	-í siad	-ídís
autonomous	-ítear	-íodh	-íti	-eofar	-ítear	-eofai	-ítear	-íti

broad final sound (ending in -aigh)

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	-aím	-aigh mé	-áinn	-óidh mé	-aím	-óinn	-áí mé	-áinn
2nd sg.	-aíonn tú	-aigh tú	-aiteá	-óidh tú	-aigh	-ófá	-áí tú	-aiteá
3rd sg.	-aíonn sé	-aigh sé	-aíodh sé	-óidh sé	-aíodh sé	-ódh sé	-áí sé	-aíodh sé
1st pl.	-aímid	-áiomar	-ámis	-óimid	-ámis	-ómis	-aímid	-ámis
2nd pl.	-aíonn sibh	-aigh sibh	-aíodh sibh	-óidh sibh	-aígi	-ódh sibh	-áí sibh	-aíodh sibh
3rd pl.	-aíonn siad	-aigh siad	-aídís	-óidh siad	-aídís	-ódís	-áí siad	-aídís
autonomous	-aítear	-aíodh	-áti	-ófar	-aítear	-ófáí	-aítear	-áti

In the old spelling, the general future tense suffix **-óchaidh/-eochaidh** and the conditional suffix **-óchadh/-eochadh**, **-ócha-** instead of **-ó-**. These forms are still used in Ulster

examples

coinnigh = maintain

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	coinnim	choinnigh mé	choinnínn	coinneoidh mé	coinnim	choinneoinn	go gcoinní mé	dá gcoinnínn
2nd sg.	coinníonn tú	choinnigh tú	choinníteá	coinneoidh tú	coinnigh	choinneofá	go gcoinní tú	dá gcoinníteá
3rd sg.	coinníonn sé	choinnigh sé	choinníodh sé	coinneoidh sé	coinníodh sé	choinneodh sé	go gcoinní	dá gcoinníodh sé
1st pl.	coinnímid	choinníomar	choinnímis	coinneoimid	coinnímis	choinneoimis	go gcoinnímid	dá gcoinnímis
2nd pl.	coinníonn sibh	choinnigh sibh	choinníodh sibh	coinneoidh sibh	coinnígi	choinneodh sibh	go gcoinní sibh	dá gcoinníodh sibh
3rd pl.	coinníonn siad	choinnigh siad	choinnídis	coinneoidh siad	coinnídis	choinneoidis	go gcoinní siad	dá gcoinnídis
autonomous	coinnítear	choinníodh	choinníti	coinneofar	coinnítear	choinneofáí	go gcoinnítear	dá gcoinníti

salaigh = soil

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	salaím	shalaigh mé	shalaínn	salóidh mé	salaím	shalóinn	go salaí mé	dá salaínn
2nd sg.	salaíonn tú	shalaigh tú	shalaíteá	salóidh tú	salaigh	shalófá	go salaí tú	dá salaíteá
3rd sg.	salaíonn sé	shalaigh sé	shalaíodh sé	salóidh sé	salaiodh sé	shalódh sé	go salaí sé	dá salaíodh sé

2nd conjugation

1st pl.	salaímid	shalaíomar	shalaímis	salóimid	salaímis	shalóimis	go salaímid	dá salaímis
2nd pl.	salaíonn sibh	shalaigh sibh	shalaíodh sibh	salóidh sibh	salaigí	shalódh sibh	go salaí sibh	dá salaiodh sibh
3rd pl.	salaíonn siad	shalaigh siad	shalaídís	salóidh siad	salaídís	shalóidís	go salaí siad	dá salaidís
autonomous	salaítéar	salaíodh	shalaítí	salófar	salaítéar	shalófaí	go salaítéar	dá salaití

imir = play

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	imrím	d'imir mé	d'imrínn	imreoidh mé	imrím	d'imreoinn	go n-imrí mé	dá n-imrínn
2nd sg.	imríonn tú	d'imir tú	d'imrítéá	imreoidh tú	imir	d'imreofá	go n-imrí tú	dá n-imrítéá
3rd sg.	imríonn sé	d'imir sé	d'imríodh sé	imreoidh sé	imríodh sé	d'imreodh sé	go n-imrí sé	dá n-imríodh sé
1st pl.	imrímíd	d'imiríomar	d'imrímís	imreoiimid	imrímís	d'imreoimis	go n-imrímíd	dá n-imrímís
2nd pl.	imríonn sibh	d'imir sibh	d'imríodh sibh	imreoidh sibh	imrígí	d'imreodh sibh	go n-imrí sibh	dá n-imríodh sibh
3rd pl.	imríonn siad	d'imir siad	d'imrídís	imreoidh siad	imrídís	d'imreoidís	go n-imrí siad	dá n-imrídís
autonomous	imrítéar	imríodh	d'imrítí	imreofar	imrítéar	d'imreofáí	go n-imrítéar	dá n-imrítí

foghlaím = learn

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present tense	preterite	imperfect	future tense			present tense	preterite
1st sg.	foghlaímím	d'foghlaím mé	d'foghlaímínn	foghlaímeoidh mé	foghlaímím	d'foghlaímeoínn	go bhfoghlaímí mé	dá bhfoghlá
2nd sg.	foghlaímíonn tú	d'foghlaím tú	d'foghlaímíteá	foghlaímeoidh tú	foghlaím	d'foghlaímeofá	go bhfoghlaímí tú	dá bhfoghlá
3rd sg.	foghlaímíonn sé	d'foghlaím sé	d'foghlaímíodh sé	foghlaímeoidh sé	foghlaímíodh sé	d'foghlaímeodh sé	go bhfoghlaímí sé	dá bhfoghlá
1st pl.	foghlaímímid	d'foghlaímíomar	d'foghlaímímis	foghlaímeoímid	foghlaímímis	d'foghlaímeoímis	go bhfoghlaímímid	dá bhfoghlá
2nd pl.	foghlaímíonn sibh	d'foghlaím sibh	d'foghlaímíodh sibh	foghlaímeoidh sibh	foghlaímígí	d'foghlaímeodh sibh	go bhfoghlaímí sibh	dá bhfoghlá
3rd pl.	foghlaímíonn siad	d'foghlaím siad	d'foghlaímídís	foghlaímeoidh siad	foghlaímídís	d'foghlaímeoidís	go bhfoghlaímí siad	dá bhfoghlá
autonomous	foghlaímítéar	foghlaímíodh	d'foghlaímítí	foghlaímeofar	foghlaímítéar	d'foghlaímeofáí	go bhfoghlaímítéar	dá bhfoghlá

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

conjugation of the regular verbs (an Réimniú na mBriathra Rialta)

traditional conjugation and dialectical differenced

This table contains all synthetic (und analytical) verb forms, independent of if they are still used in modern Irish or if they have been replaced by analytical suffixes (see below: *explanations*).

While many of these forms predominantly appear in older texts, the older orthography is included (in the 2nd conjugation, earlier also root suffix *-uigh* instead of *-aigh*).

In the past tense forms, the particle *do* is always included, today this is mostly omitted.

In the parentheses, there are the necessary additions for either a slender or broad stem ending

e.g.: **-f(a)idh**: either **-faidh** e.g.: *dúnfaidh* or **-fidh** e.g.: *buailfidh*)

In the future tense/conditional of the 2nd conjugation, **-eo-** instead of **-ó-** occurs in the slender stem ending e.g.: **-óidh** e.g.: *salóidh sé* = *he will soil*, **-eoidh** e.g.: *éireoidh sé* = *he will rise*

1st conjugation
e.g. *buail* = *hit*

2nd conjugation
e.g.: *salaigh* = *soil*

new spelling

old spelling

present tense

I	-(a)im	buailim	-(a)ím	salaím	-(u)ighim	saluighim
you	-(a)ir	buailir	-(a)ír	salaír	-(u)ighir	saluighir
he	-(a)idh sé	buailidh sé	-(a)ídh sé	salaídh sé	-(u)ighidh sé	saluighidh sé
we	-(a)imid	buailimid	-(a)ímid	salaímid	-(u)ighímid	saluighimid
you (pl.)	-t(a)í	buailtí	-(a)ítí	salaítí	-(u)ightí	saluightí
they	-(a)id	buailid	-(a)íd	salaíd	-(u)ighíd	saluighid
one	-t(e)ar	buailtear	-(a)ítear	salaítear	-(u)ightear	saluightear

Habitueller present tense

I	-(e)ann mé	buaileann mé	-(a)íonn mé	salaíonn mé	-(u)igheann mé	saluigheann mé
you	-(e)ann tú	buaileann tú	-(a)íonn tú	salaíonn tú	-(u)igheann tú	saluigheann tú
he	-(e)ann sé	buaileann sé	-(a)íonn sé	salaíonn sé	-(u)igheann sé	saluigheann sé
we	-(e)ann sinn	buaileann sinn	-(a)íonn sinn	salaíonn sinn	-(u)igheann sinn	saluigheann sinn
you (pl.)	-(e)ann sibh	buaileann sibh	-(a)íonn sibh	salaíonn sibh	-(u)igheann sibh	saluigheann sibh
they	-(e)ann siad	buaileann siad	-(a)íonn siad	salaíonn siad	-(u)igheann siad	saluigheann siad
one	-t(e)ar	buailtear	-(a)ítear	salaítear	-(u)ightear	saluightear

preterite tense

I	-(e)as	do bhuaileas	-(a)íos	do shalaíos	-(u)igheas	do shaluigheas
you	-(a)is	do bhailis	-(a)ís	do shalaís	-(u)ighis	do shaluighis
he	- sé	do bhail sé	-(a)igh sé	do shalaigh sé	-(u)igh sé	do shaluigh sé

we	-(e)amar	do bhuaileamar	-(a)íomar	do shalaíomar	-(u)igheamar	do shaluigheamar
you (pl.)	-(e)abhar	do bhuaileabhar	-(a)íobhar	do shalaíobhar	-(u)igheabhar	do shaluigheabhar
they	-(e)adar	do bhuaileadar	-(a)íodar	do shalaíodar	-(u)igheadar	do shaluigheadh
one	-(e)adh	do buaileadh	-(a)íodh	do salaíodh	-(u)igheadh	do saluigheadh

imperfect

I	-(a)inn	do bhuaillinn	-(a)ínn	do shalaínn	-(u)ighinn	do shaluighinn
you	-t(e)á	do bhuaileá	-(a)íteá	do shalaíteá	-(u)igheá	do shaluigheá
he	-(e)adh sé	do bhuaileadh sé	-(a)íodh sé	do shalaíodh sé	-(u)igheadh sé	do shaluigheadh sé
we	-(a)imis	do bhuaileimis	-(a)ímis	do shalaímis	-(u)ighmis	do shaluighmis
you (pl.)	-t(a)í	do buailetí	-(a)ítí	do shalaítí	-(u)ightí	do shaluightí
they	-(a)idís	do buaileidís	-(a)ídís	do shalaídís	-(u)ighdís	do shaluighdís
one	-t(a)í	do buailetí	-(a)ítí	do shalaítí	-(u)ightí	do saluightí

future tense

I	-f(e)ad	buailfead	-ód	salód	-óchad	salóchad
you	-f(a)ir	buailfir	-óir	salóir	-óchair	salóchair
he	-f(a)idh sé	buailfidh sé	-óidh sé	salóidh sé	-óchaidh sé	salóchaidh sé
we	-f(a)imid	buailfimid	-óimid	salóimid	-óchaimid	salóchaimid
you (pl.)	-f(a)idh	buailfidh	-óidh	salóidh	-óchthaídh	salóchthaídh
they	-f(a)id	buailfid	-óid	salóid	-óchaid	salóchaid
one	-f(e)ar	buailfear	-ófar	salófar	-óchar	salóchar

conditional

I	-f(a)inn	do bhuaileinn	-óinn	do shalóinn	-óchainn	do shalóchainn
you	-f(e)á	do bhuaileá	-ófá	do shalófá	-óchthá	do shalóchthá
he	-f(e)adh sé	do bhuaileadh sé	-ódh sé	do shalódh sé	-óchadh sé	do shalóchadh sé
we	-f(a)imis	do bhuaileimis	-ómis	do shalóimis	-óchaimis	do shalóchaimis
you (pl.)	-f(a)idh	do buailetí	-(a)ítí	do shalóítí	-(u)ightí	do shaluightí
they	-f(a)idís	do buaileidís	-(a)ídís	do shalóidís	-(u)ighdís	do shaluighdís
one	-f(a)í	do buailetí	-(a)ítí	do shalóítí	-(u)ightí	do saluightí

imperative

I	-(a)im	buailim	-(a)ím	salaím	-(u)ighim	saluighim
you	-	buail	-(a)igh	salaigh	-(u)igh	saluigh
he	-(e)adh sé	buaileadh sé	-(a)íodh sé	saláodh sé	-(u)igheadh sé	saluigheadh sé
we	-(a)imis	buailimis	-(a)ímis	salaímis	-(u)ighmis	saluighmis
you (pl.)	-(a)igí -(a)idh	buailigí (buailidh)	-(a)ígí	salaígí	-(u)ighídh	saluighídh
they	-(a)idís	buailidís	-(a)ídís	salaídís	-(u)ighdís	saluighdís
one	-t(e)ar	buailtear	-(a)ítear	salaítear	-(u)igheá	saluigheá

subjunctive present tense

I	-(a)d	go mbuailead	-(a)íod	go salaíod	-(u)ighead	go saluighead
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more verb suffixes

you	-(a)ir	go mbuailir	-(a)ír	go salaír	-(u)ighir	go saluighir
he	-(a)idh sé	go mbuailidh sé	-(a)ídh sé	go salaídh sé	-(u)ighidh sé	go saluighidh sé
we	-(a)imid	go mbuailimid	-(a)ímid	go salaímid	-(u)ighímid	go saluighimid
you (pl.)	-(a)idh	go mbuailidh	-(a)ídh	go salaídh	-(u)ighídh	go saluighídh
they	-(a)id	go mbuailid	-(a)íd	go salaíd	-(u)ighíd	go saluighid
one	-t(e)ar	go mbuailtear	-(a)ítear	go salaítéar	-(u)ighe tear	go saluighe tear

subjunctive preterite tense

I	-(a)inn	dá mbuailinn	-(a)ínn	dá salaínn	-(u)ighinn	dá saluighinn
you	-t(e)á	dá mbuailteá	-(a)íteá	dá salaíteá	-(u)ighe teá	dá saluighe teá
he	-(e)adh sé	dá mbuaileadh sé	-(a)íodh sé	dá salaíodh sé	-(u)igheadh sé	dá saluigheadh sé
we	-(a)imis	dá mbuailimis	-(a)ímis	dá salaímis	-(u)ighmis	dá saluighmis
you (pl.)	-t(a)í	dá mbuailtí	-(a)ítí	dá salaítí	-(u)ighe tí	dá saluighe tí
they	-(a)idís	dá mbuailidís	-(a)ídís	dá salaídís	-(u)ighdís	dá saluighdís
one	-t(a)í	dá mbuailtí	-(a)ítí	dá salaítí	-(u)ighe tí	dá saluighe tí

explanations

In the table, the historical conjugation of Irish verbs is shown.

It contains thoroughly synthetic forms (except of course in the 3rd person singular and the analytical forms of the habitual present tense).

These conjugations in these forms are nowhere to be used today.

In a few dialects, some forms have remained, whereby there is a trend towards analytical forms now, in the North more than the South. Esp. in Ulster and Connacht, synthetic verb suffixes appear in [Echo forms](#).

general

The conjugation suffixes with **-t-** : *t(e)á, t(e)ar, t(a)í* - used to act like the suffix of the [verbal adjective](#). There was instead of **-t-** after *b, c, f, g, m, p, r* **-th-** .

The voiced consonants *b, g* became through this voiceless [p] and [k].

e.g.: *scuab* = *sweep*: *scuabthaí* [scuapi:] = *one swept*, *scuabhar* [scuap@r] = *one sweeps*, *scuabthá* [scuapa:] = *you swept*

In many dialects, this is still used, in der standard orthography only in the verbal adjective (e.g. *scuabtha* [scuap@J] = *swept*)

present tense and habitual present tense

The forms ending in **-(e)ann** were originally *only* habitual.

Only in the non-habitual present tense were there synthetic forms, non-habitual as an analytical form was **-(a)idh**.

Today, both are tenses fused in form ; the analytical form **-(e)ann** occurred not only as habitual but also as non-habitual and synthet. forms are today also (right now) in habitual use (*buailim* = *I hit (now/always)*)

present tense

The form of the 3rd person **-(a)idh** is seldomly still used in Ulster (as a "historical present tense" in narrative forms).

By irregular verbs it reduced itself so **-(a)idh** in Ulster so that *suffixless* forms came about: *tig sé* = *he's coming*, *tchí tú* = *you see*

The 2nd person plural **-t(a)í** is no longer in use (in written Irish also **-taoi** instead of **-tai**)

The rest of the synthet. forms still appear in Munster, outside of that mostly only as Echo forms. Only the 1st person singular **-(a)im** is still found regularly in all dialects, in the standard also the 1st person plural **-(a)imid**

In Connacht as an Echo- form of the 2nd person singular **-(a)inns** instead of **-(a)ir** (*buailinns* instead of *buailir* = *you hit*)

preterite tense

The plural forms of the 1st and 2nd person occur in spoken Munster Irish today with a slender-r: **-(e)amair**, **-(e)abhair**.

The forms of the 1st and 3rd person plural occur in Connacht and Munster, the 2nd person plural only still in Munster.

The rest of the synthetic forms occur regularly in Munster, outside of that mostly only in Echo forms.

In Munster there are also by some irregular verbs suffixless forms in the 1st person singular: *chonac* = *I saw*, *chuala* = *I heard*, *thána* = *I came*

imperfect

The imperfect forms are mostly maintained in the standard.

Only the 2nd person plural **-t(a)í** has completely vanished today (they were only by lenition able to be told apart from the autonomous form)

Instead of **-(a)imis** also **-(e)amais** or **-(e)amaois** / **-(a)imís** etc. (with a broad -m- and/or a long -í-)

In the 1st and 3rd person plural in Munster/Ulster also with -t: **-(a)imist** / **-a(i)dist** (*bhualimist* = *we hit*)

future tense

Synthetic future tense forms are only still used in Munster, outside of Munster only in Echo forms.

The 2nd person plural **-f(a)idh** is uncommon without *sibh* today.

In the 1st person plural **-(f(a)imid)** there are variations with a broad -m-: **-famuid**, **-fam**

In Ulster, the old orthography of the 2nd conjugation is still recognisable in the pronunciation, -óch- is

spoken there as [ah]. The old spelling is there then kept on: *salóchaidh* [salah@] instead of *salóidh* [salo:j]

In Connacht, the 2nd person singular acts as the Echo form **-f(a)is** instead of **-f(a)ir** (*buailfis* instead of *buailfir* = *you will hit*)

conditional

The synthetic forms are (except the obsolete 2nd person plural) still maintained in the standard.

For **-f(a)imis** similar variations apply as for the imperfect form **-(a)imis**:

For the 2nd conjugation in Ulster the to the future tense said (*shalóchadh* [halahu:]) applies instead of *shalódh* [halo:]

In older orthography there is no -f- in the 2nd conjugation (instead of **-fá** then **óchthá**. The -f- was taken over from the 1st conjugation).

imperative

The 2nd person plural is today **-igí**. This form originated out of the form of the 2nd conjugation (old orthography) **-(u)ighidh**. This is spoken [i:gi:] in Munster and was integrated in the 1st conjugation as [@gi:] (instead of the rather confusing **-(a)idh** [i:]).

The older **-(a)idh** held on longer after the stem final sound ending in -g, -c (e.g.: *tuigidh* statt *tuigigi* = *understand!*)

The 1st person plural can be said also **-(e)am** or **-(a)imid** instead of **-(a)imis**.

subjunctive present tense

The subjunctive present tense is equivalent in its forms to the future tense, just without -f-.

The suffix of the 3rd person singular (1st conjug.) **-(a)idh** is written **-a**, **-e** today.

The 2nd conjugation **-(a)ídh** is written **-(a)í** today.

In Ulster, th forms with -dh remained because in the pronunciation (except preceding pronouns) they are audible: **-aidh** [ai] (instead of [@])
(*go dtagaidh do ríocht / go dtaga do ríocht = (that) thy Kingdom come*)

subjunctive preterite tense

The subjunctive preterite tense and the indicative imperfect have identical forms. In the subjunctive the particle do is missing completely, instead, other particles/conjunctions are used(e.g. *dá* = *wenn*)

Caibidil a Trí: das Verb (an Briathar)

Echo forms

In Connacht und Ulster [synthetic verb suffixes](#) are used, mostly only in uses generally known as "echo forms" :

- short questions at the end of a sentence
e.g.: *Ghlan tú an carr, a Sheán, nár glhanais?* = *You did wash the car, Seán, no?*
- short answers (instead of the non-existent [yes/no](#))
e.g.: *Ar ghlan tú an carr, a Sheán?* - *Ghlanas.* = *Did you wash the car, Seán?* - *Yes.*
- affirmative or negative short comments
e.g.: *Mhuiuse, rinneas!* = *Oh yeah, I did that!*

they are **not** used if *longer* answers (with an object) are to follow:

e.g.: *Nár ghlan tú an carr?* - *Ach ghlan mé é!* = *Haven't you washed the car?* - *But I have washed it!*

In Munster, synthetic verb suffixes appear also aside from the echo forms.

1st conjugation, broad final stem sound

-	present	preterite	future
I	-aim	-as	-fad
you	-air/-ainns	-ais	-fair/-fais
I clean	glanaim	ghlanas	glanfad
you clean	glanair/glanainns	ghlanais	glanfair/glanfais

1st conjugation, slender final stem sound

-	present	preterite	future
I	-im	-eas	-fead
you	-ir/-inns	-is	-fir/-fis
I understand	tuigim	thuigeas	tuigfead
you understand	tuigir/tuiginns	thuigis	tuigfir/tuigfis

2nd conjugation, broad final stem sound

-	present	preterite	future
I	-aím	-áíos	-ód
you	-air/-áinns	-aís	-óir/-óis
I soil	salaím	shalaíos	salód
you soil	salaír/salaínnns	shalaís	salóir/salóis

2nd conjugation, slender final stem sound

-	present	preterite	future
I	-ím	-íos	-eod
you	-ír/-ínn	-ís	-eoír/-eoí
I maintain	coinním	choinníos	coinneod
you maintain	coinnír/coinnínn	choinnís	coinneoir/coinneoí

bí = to be

-	present	habit. present	preterite	future
I am	táim	bím	bhíos	b(eidh)ead
you are	táir/táis	bír/bínn	bhís	beir/beidhis
I am not	nílim	ní bhím	ní rabhas	ní bh(eidh)ead
you are not	nílir/nílis	ní bhír/bhínn	ní rabhais	ní bheir/bheidhis
am I?	an bhfuilim	an mbím	an rabhas	an mb(eidh)ead
are you?	an bhfuilir/bhfuilis	an mbír/mbínn	an rabhais	an mbeir/mbeidhis

déan = make, do

-	present	preterite	future
I do	déanaim	rinneas	déanfad
you do	déanair/déanainns	rinnis	déanfair/déanfais
I do not	ní dhéanaim	ní dhearnas	ní dhéanfad
you do not	ní dhéanair/dhéanainns	ní dhearnais	ní dhéanfair/dhéanfais
do I?	an ndéanaim	an ndearnas	an ndéanfad
do you?	an ndéanair/ndéanainns	an ndearnais	an ndéanfair/ndéanfais

Forms of the 2nd person present ending in **-(a)ir** are the traditional and original forms, and are especially found in Munster. Forms ending in **-(a)inns** are more used in Connacht. Forms of the 2nd pers. future ending in **-f(a)ir** are then again traditional and are used in Munster, in Connacht both **-f(a)ir** and **-f(a)is**. In Connacht, also forms ending in **-(a)ir** occur in the preterite of the 2nd person.

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

abair = say

Abair has different stems in the present, imperfect, subjunctive (**deir**), in the preterite (**dúirt**), future, conditional (**déar**) and imperative (**abair**),

There are no special dependent forms, but: *no* preterite particle is used,

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	deirim	dúirt mé	deirinn	déarfaidh mé	abraim	déarfinn	go ndeire mé	dá ndeirinn
2nd pers. sg.	deir(eann) tú	dúirt tú	deirteá	déarfaidh tú	abair	déarfá	go ndeire tú	dá ndeirteá
3rd pers. sg.	deir(eann) sé	dúirt sé	deireadh sé	déarfaidh sé	abradh sé	déarfadh sé	go ndeire sé	dá ndeireadh sé
1st pers. pl.	deirimid	dúramar	deirimis	déarfaimid	abraimis	déarfimis	go ndeirimid	dá ndeirimis
2nd pers. pl.	deir(eann) sibh	dúirt sibh	deireadh sibh	déarfaidh sibh	abraigí	déarfadh sibh	go ndeire sibh	dá ndeireadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	deir(eann) siad	dúirt siad	deiridis	déarfaidh siad	abraidís	déarfidís	go ndeire siad	dá ndeiridis
autonomous	deirtear	dúradh	deirtí	déarfar	abairtear	déarfaí	go ndeirtear	dá ndeirtí

dependent forms

indicative		
	preterite	preterite
	(ní)	(an, go, nach, a)
1st pers. sg.	ní dúirt mé	an nduirt mé
2nd pers. sg.	ní dúirt tú	an nduirt tú
3rd pers. sg.	ní dúirt sé	an nduirt sé
1st pers. pl.	ní dúramar	an nduramar
2nd pers. pl.	ní dúirt sibh	an nduirt sibh
3rd pers. pl.	ní dúirt siad	an nduirt siad
autonom	ní dúradh	an nduradh

derivatives:

verbal noun		rá
genitive of the verbal noun	substantive	rá
	infinitive	ráite
verbal adjective		ráite

*:deir is much more common than deireann (....a deir sé *instead of* ... a deireann/deireas sé).
deireann serves mostly as the habitual form (*deireann sé i gcónaí ... = he always says...*)

Forms with **d**- (deir/dúirt/déar-) are *never* lenited (since originally there used to be an a- in front: adeir, adúirt < adubhaint, etc.)
Only in the subjunctive after *nár* would one see lenition: *nár dheire sé = that he would not like to say*

Also following the dir. relative particle a , d- is not lenited: **a deir, a dúirt**. Earlier it was commonplace to write **adeir, adúirt** as the relative form instead (similarly to "atá", where the a is actually part of the verb).

Instead of *ní dúirt, an, go, nach nduirt* forms with **níor, gur, nar, ar úirt** are more common in Connacht (d used as the particle do (**dúirt**) and is omitted)

Following **direct speech** one doesn't use deir/dúirt but the **defect verb ar** (preceding seisean, sise, siadsan) or. **arsa** e.g.:
 "Is amadáin mé, nach ea?" arsa Liam = "I'm an idiot, isn't that so?" said Liam
 "Sea, tá ceart go leor agat, a chara" ar sise = "Yep, you're right, my friend" she said

older forms

Earlier, dependent forms in the **present/imperfect**: *abraim, abrann sé, abrainn, abradh sé* as well as in the **future/conditional**: *abróidh sé* were common.

In the **subjunctive**, the root *abair* was still recognizable. (*go n-abra(idh) sé = may he say*)

	dependent	absolute
present	abrann	deir(eann)
imperfect	abradh	deireadh
future	abróidh	déarfaidh
conditional	abródh	déarfadh
subjunctive	go n-abra	

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

beir = carry, hold, win, bring, take(with), bear, catch (with ar)

Irregular in the preterite (stem **rug**) und future/conditional (stem **béar**)
No special dependent forms.

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	beirim	rug mé	bheirinn	béarfaidh mé	beirim	bhéarfainn	go mbeire mé	dá mbeirinn
2nd pers. sg.	beireann tú	rug tú	bheirteá	béarfaidh tú	beir	bhéarfá	go mbeire tú	dá mbeirteá
3rd pers. sg.	beireann sé	rug sé	bheireadh sé	béarfaidh sé	beireadh sé	bhéarfadh sé	go mbeire sé	dá mbeireadh sé
1st pers. pl.	beirimid	rugamar	bheirimis	béarfaimid	beirimis	bhéarfaimis	go mbeirimid	dá mbeirimis
2nd pers. pl.	beireann sibh	rug sibh	bheireadh sibh	béarfaidh sibh	beirigí	bhéarfadh sibh	go mbeire sibh	dá mbeireadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	beireann siad	rug siad	bheiridís	béarfaidh siad	beiridís	bhéarfaidís	go mbeire siad	dá mbeiridís
autonomous	beirtar	rugadh	bheirtí	béarfar	beirtar	bhéarfaí	go mbeirtar	dá mbeirtí

Derivatives:

verbal noun	breith
genitive of the verbal noun	substantiv. infinitive
verbal adjective	breithe
	beirthe

in the meaning "bear" (by humans) mostly the autonomous form is taken (in the passive sense):

Rugadh é = he was born

Rugadh é di = she bore him ("he was born to her")

Through the prefix do came the verb **tabhair** = give (lit.: "to-carry")

(recognizable mainly on the old absolute form do-bheireann, whereby the prefix do- was often omitted, but the verb was still lenited; comp. bheireann sé = he gives, beireann sé = he brings)

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

bí = be

Irregular due to: various stems in the present (**tá**). Special habitual present (stem **bí**)
Stem **bí** also in the preterite, imperfect, imperative.

Stem **beidh/beadh** in the future, conditional and subjunctive preterite (here it is rather the same as the conditional instead of the imperfect!)

Special dependent forms in the present (**fuil**) and preterite (**raibh**).

Stem **raibh** also in the subjunctive present

Preterite particles are not used.

[see here](#) for the (non-standard) forms used in Munster

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
	1st person sg.	tá mé, táim	bhí mé	bhínn	beidh mé	bí	bheinn	go raibh mé
2nd person sg.	tá tú	bhí tú	bhíteá	beidh tú	bí	bheifeá	go raibh tú	dá mbeifeá
3rd person sg.	tá sé	bhí sé	bhíodh sé	beidh sé	biodh sé	bheadh sé	go raibh sé	dá mbeadh sé
1st person pl.	táimid	bhíomar	bhímis	beimid	bímis	bheimis	go rabhaimid	dá mbeimis
2nd person pl.	tá sibh	bhí sibh	bhíodh sibh	beidh sibh	bígí	bheadh dibh	go raibh sibh	dá mbeadh sibh
3rd person pl.	tá siad	bhí siad	bhídís	beidh siad	bídís	bheidís	go raibh siad	dá mbeidís
autonom	táthar	bhíothas	bhítí	beifear	bítar	bheifí	go rabhthar	dá mbeifí

Habitual present and dependent forms

	indicative				
	habituell	dependent			
		present	present (an, go, nach, a)	present (ní)	present (cha)
1st person sg.	bím	an bhfuil mé	níl mé, nílim	chan fhuil mé	an raibh mé
2nd person sg.	bíonn tú	an bhfuil tú	níl tú	chan fhuil tú	an raibh tú
3rd person sg.	bíonn sé	an bhfuil sé	níl sé	chan fhuil sé	an raibh sé
1st person pl.	bímid	an bhfuilimid	nílimid	chan fhuilimid	an rabhamar
2nd person pl.	bíonn sibh	an bhfuil sibh	níl sibh	chan fhuil sibh	an raibh sibh
3rd person pl.	bíonn siad	an bhfuil siad	níl siad	chan fhuil siad	an raibh siad
autonomous	bítar	an bhfultear	níltar	chan fhuiltear	an rabhthas

Relative form

	present
1st person sg.	atáim, atá mé
2nd person sg.	atá tú
3rd person sg.	atá sé
1st person pl.	atáimid
2nd person pl.	atá sibh
3rd person pl.	atá siad
autonom	atáthar

derivatives

verbal noun	bheith
genitive of the verbal noun	noun
	-
	infinitive
participle of necessity*	beite

As the relative form, **atá** (= ... that is) is used. It counts as a **compound of a** (the direct relative particle) **and tá**. The verb tá was once always atá, but today the prefix a- only remains in the relative form.

níl (= is not) is a **compound ofní and ful**, so: *ní fhuil* > *níl* (*ful* is the actual stem of all dependent forms in the present). In **Ulster** it is spoken bisyllabic, so that there the spelling *ní fhuil* is more fitting.

In **Ulster**, the negative particle **cha(n)** is used instead of *ní*. Then one writes rather **chan fhuil** (instead of *níl*). (comp. *chan eil* in Scotland)

Although cha mostly lenites, forms of the verb bí, beginning in b-, are readily eclipsed: *cha mbionn*, etc.

In the subjunctive present, also **go mbí, go mbé** is used.

**beite* is not used as the *verbal adjective* ("was"), only as the participle of necessity (lit.: "it is necessary to be "): *is beite a + verbal noun* = one should, *is beite do...a + verbal noun* = someone should

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

clois = hear

Irregular only in the preterite (stem **chuala**, note: also the autonomous form is lenited!)
No special dependent forms

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	cloisim	chuala mé	chloisinn	cloisfidh mé	cloisim	chloisfinn	go gcloise mé	dá gcloisinn
2nd pers. sg.	cloiseann tú	chuala tú	chloisteá	cloisfidh tú	clois	chloisfea	go gcloise tú	dá gcloisteá
3rd pers. sg.	cloiseann sé	chuala sé	chloiseadh sé	cloisfidh sé	cloiseadh sé	chloisfeadh sé	go gcloise sé	dá gcloiseadh sé
1st pers. pl.	cloisimid	chualamar	chloisimis	cloisfimid	cloisimis	chloisfimis	go gcloisimid	dá gcloisimis
2nd pers. pl.	cloiseann sibh	chuala sibh	chloiseadh sibh	cloisfidh sibh	cloisigí	chloisfeadh sibh	go gcloise sibh	dá gcloiseadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	cloiseann siad	chuala siad	chloisidís	cloisfidh siad	cloisidís	chloisfidis	go gcloise siad	dá gcloisidís
autonomous	cloistear	chualathas	chloistí	cloisfear	cloistear	chloisfí	go gcloistear	dá gcloistí

Derivatives:

verbal noun	cloisteáil	
genitive of the	substantiv.	cloisteála
verbal noun	infinitive	cloisteála
verbal adjective		cloiste

instead of clois in Ulster also (with *same* preterite form chuala): [cluin](#) = hear
As a verbal noun, also *cloisint*.

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

cluin = hear

Irregular only in the preterite (stem **chuala**, not: also the autonomous form lenites!)
No special dependent forms

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	cluinim	chuala mé	chluiinn	cluinfidh mé	cluinim	chluiinn	go gcluine mé	dá gcluininn
2nd pers. sg.	cluineann tú	chuala tú	chluinteá	cluinfidh tú	cluin	chluiñeá	go gcluine tú	dá gcluineá
3rd pers. sg.	cluineann sé	chuala sé	chluieadh sé	cluinfidh sé	cluineadh sé	chluiñeadh sé	go gcluine sé	dá gcluineadh sé
1st pers. pl.	cluinimid	chualamar	chluinimis	cluinimid	cluinimis	chluiñimis	go gcluinimid	dá gcluinimis
2nd pers. pl.	cluineann sibh	chuala sibh	chluieadh sibh	cluinfidh sibh	cluinigí	chluiñeadh sibh	go gcluine sibh	dá gcluineadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	cluineann siad	chuala siad	chluinidís	cluinfidh siad	cluinidís	chluiñidís	go gcluine siad	dá gcluinidís
autonomous	cluintear	chualathas	chluiñtí	cluinfeár	cluintear	chluiñfí	go gcluintear	dá gcluñtí

Derivatives:

verbal noun	cluinstin
genitive of the	substantiv.
verbal noun	chluiñstine
verbal adjective	infinitive
	chluiñstine

cluin is the variant used most commonly in *Ulster* of [clois](#) = hear (with *its own* preterite form chuala).

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

déan = *make, do*

irregular in the preterite (stem **rinne**) sowie

Déan has special dependent forms in the preterite (stem **dearna**) without a preterite particle!

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	déanaim	rinne mé	dhéanainn	déanfaidh mé	déanaim	dhéanfainn	go ndéana mé	dá ndéanainn
2nd pers. sg.	déanann tú	rinne tú	dhéantá	déanfaidh tú	déan	dhéanfá	go ndéana tú	dá ndéantá
3rd pers. sg.	déanann sé	rinne sé	dhéanadh sé	déanfaidh sé	déanadh sé	dhéanfadh sé	go ndéana sé	dá ndéanadh sé
1st pers. pl.	déanaimid	rinneamar	dhéanaimis	déanfaimid	déanaimis	dhéanfaimis	go ndéanaimid	dá ndéanaimis
2nd pers. pl.	déanann sibh	rinne sibh	dhéanadh sibh	déanfaidh sibh	déanaigí	dhéanfadh sibh	go ndéana sibh	dá ndéanadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	déanann siad	rinne siad	dhéanaidís	déanfaidh siad	déanaidís	dhéanfaidís	go ndéana siad	dá ndéanaidís
autonomous	déantar	rinneadh	dhéantaí	déanfar	déantar	dhéanfaí	go ndéantar	dá ndéantaí

Dependent forms

	indicative	
	dependent	
	preterite (ní)	preterite (an, go, nach, a)
1st pers. sg.	ní dhearna mé	an ndearna mé
2nd pers. sg.	ní dhearna tú	an ndearna tú
3rd pers. sg.	ní dhearna sé	an ndearna sé
1st pers. pl.	ní dhearnamar	an ndearnamar
2nd pers. pl.	ní dhearna sibh	an ndearna sibh
3rd pers. pl.	ní dhearna siad	an ndearna siad
autonomous	ní dhearnadh	an ndearnadh

Derivatives

verbal noun	déanamh
genitive of the verbal noun	subst. déanaimh
	infinitive déanta
verbal adjective	déanta

In Munster, in place of déan, the regular verb **déin** or **dein** is used (in the future/conditional, still *déan*).
In Ulster, there are absolute forms in the present **ním**, **níonn sé** (from **do-ghníonn**, see below)

Older forms

Once there was an absolute form in the **present**: *(do-)ghním*, *(do-)ghníonn sé* and the **imperfect**: *(do-)ghnínn*, *(do-)ghníodh sé*.
Déanann sé, etc. was then only the dependent form.

In the **future/conditional**, *(do-)ghéanaidh sé* became absolute and *déanfaidh sé* dependent.:

	dependent	absolute
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present	déanann	(do-)ghníonn
imperfect	déanadh	(do-)ghníodh
future	déanfaidh	(do-)ghéanaidh
conditional	déanfadh	(do-)ghéanadh

From the root ghní- one derived the words such as *gníomh* = *deed, action* .

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

faigh = receive, find

Irregular in the preterite (stem **fuair**), in the future (stem **gheobh-**)

fuair is not lenited.

as well as special **dependent forms** in the preterite and future (note here *eclipsis after ní*), no preterite-verbal particle

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	faighim	fuair mé	d'fhaighinn	gheobhaidh mé	faighim	gheobhainn	go bhfaighe mé	dá bhfaighinn
2nd pers. sg.	faigheann tú	fuair tú	d'fhaigheá	gheobhaidh tú	faigh	gheofá	go bhfaighe tú	dá bhfaigheá
3rd pers. sg.	faigheann sé	fuair sé	d'fhaigheadh sé	gheobhaidh sé	faigheadh sé	gheobhadh sé	go bhfaighe sé	dá bhfaigheadh sé
1st pers. pl.	faighimid	fuaireamar	d'fhaighimis	gheobhaimid	faighimis	gheobhaimis	go bhaighimid	dá bhfaighimis
2nd pers. pl.	faigheann sibh	fuair sibh	d'fhaigheadh sibh	gheobhaidh sibh	faighigí	gheobhadh sibh	go bhfaighe sibh	dá bhfaigheadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	faigheann siad	fuair siad	d'fhaighidís	gheobhaidh siad	faighidís	gheobhaidís	go bhfaighe siad	dá bhfaighidís
autonomous	faigheann	fuarthas	d'fhaigheá	gheofar	faigheann	gheofá	go bhaigheann	dá bhfaigheá

dependent forms

	indicative			
	preterite (ní)	preterite (an, go, nach, a)	future (ní)	future (an, go, nach, a)
1st pers. sg.	ní bhfuair mé	an bhfuair mé	ní bhfaighidh mé	an bhfaighidh mé
2nd pers. sg.	ní bhfuair tú	an bhfuair tú	ní bhfaighidh tú	an bhfaighidh tú
3rd pers. sg.	ní bhfuair sé	an bhfuair sé	ní bhfaighidh sé	an bhfaighidh sé
1st pers. pl.	ní bhfuaireamar	an bhfuaireamar	ní bhfaighimid	an bhfaighimid
2nd pers. pl.	ní bhfuair sibh	an bhfuair sibh	ní bhfaighidh sibh	an bhfaighidh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	ní bhfuair siad	an bhfuair siad	ní bhfaighidh siad	an bhfaighidh siad
autonomous	ní bhfuarthas	an bhfuarthas	ní bhfaighean	an bhfaighean

Derivatives

verbal noun		fáil
genitive of the verbal noun	substantiv. infinitive	fála faigheann
verbal adjective		faigheann

fuair is never lenited, e.g. with the direct relative particle a: *a fuair* ! e.g: An leabhar a fuair mé inné = The book that I received yesterday.

Older Forms

Earlier, there was an absolute form in the **present**: (do-)gheibhim, (do-)gheibheann sé and in the **imperfect**: (do-)gheibhinn, (do-) gheibheadh sé.

The lenition in the future/conditional comes from the former prefix do- (do-gheobhaidh):

	dependent	absolute
present	faigheann	(do-)gheibheann
imperfect	faigheadh	(do-)gheibheadh

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

feic = see

Irregular in the preterite (stem **chonaic**), special dependent forms in the preterite (stem **faca**),
no preterite particle

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	feicim	chonaic mé	d'fheicinn	feicfidh mé	feicim	d'fheicfinn	go bhfeice mé	dá bhfeicinn
2nd pers. sg.	feiceann tú	chonaic tú	d'fheicteá	feicfidh tú	feic	d'fheicfeá	go bhfeice tú	dá bfeicteá
3rd pers. sg.	feiceann sé	chonaic sé	d'fheiceadh sé	feicfidh sé	feiceadh sé	d'fheicfeadh sé	go bhfeice sé	dá bhfeiceadh sé
1st pers. pl.	feicimid	chonaiceamar	d'fheicimis	feicfimid	feicimis	d'fheicfimis	go bhfeicimid	dá bhfeicimis
2nd pers. pl.	feiceann sibh	chonaic sibh	d'fheiceadh sibh	feicfidh sibh	feicigí	d'fheicfeadh sibh	go bhfeice sibh	dá bhfeiceadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	feiceann siad	chonaic siad	d'fheicidís	feicfidh siad	feicidís	d'fheicfidís	go bhfeice siad	dá bhfeicidís
autonomous	feictear	chonacthas	d'fheictí	feicfear	feictear	d'fheicfí	go bhfeictear	dá bhfeictí

Dependent forms

	indicative	
	preterite (ní)	preterite (an, go, a)
1st pers. sg.	ní fhaca mé	an bhfaca mé
2nd pers. sg.	ní fhaca tú	an bhfaca tú
3nd pers. sg.	ní fhaca sé	an bhfaca sé
1st pers. pl.	ní fhacamar	an bhfacamar
2nd pers. pl.	ní fhaca sibh	an bhfaca sibh
3rd pers. pl.	ní fhaca siad	an bhfaca siad
autonomous	ní fhacthas	an bhfacthas

Derivatives

verbal noun	feiceáil
genitive of the verbal noun	feiceála
substantiv.	feiceála
infinitive	feiceála
verbal adjective	feicthe

Older forms

Earlier there was once an absolute form in the **present, imperfect** and the **future/conditional**: *(do-)chím, (do-)chí(onn) sé, (do-)chíodh sé, (do-)chífidh sé, etc.*

This is also still in use as **tchím, tchí(onn) sé** or **tí(onn) sé** in *Ulster* or *in Munster* as **chím, chíonn sé**.

	dependent	absolute
present	feiceann	(do-)chíonn
imperfect	feiceadh	(do-)chíodh
future	feicfidh	(do-)chífidh
conditional	feicfeadh	(do-)chífeadh

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

ith = eat

Irregular in the future and conditional (stem **íos**)

No special dependent forms

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	ithim	d'ith mé	d'ithinn	íosfaidh mé	ithim	d'íosfainn	go n-ithe mé	dá n-ithinn
2nd pers. sg.	itheann tú	d'ith tú	d'iteá	íosfaidh tú	ith	d'íosfá	go n-ithe tú	dá n-iteá
3rd pers. sg.	itheann sé	d'ith sé	d'itheadh sé	íosfaidh sé	itheadh sé	d'íosfadh sé	go n-ithe sé	dá n-itheadh sé
1st pers.pl.	ithimid	d'itheamar	d'ithimis	íosfaimid	ithimis	d'íosfaimis	go n-ithimid	dá n-ithimis
2nd pers. pl.	itheann sibh	d'ith sibh	d'itheadh sibh	íosfaidh sibh	ithigí	d'íosfadh sibh	go n-ithe sibh	dá n-itheadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	itheann siad	d'ith siad	d'ithidís	íosfaidh siad	ithidís	d'íosfaidís	go n-ithe siad	dá n-ithidís
autonom	itear	itheadh	d'ítí	íosfar	itear	d'íosfaí	go n-itear	dá n-ítí

Derivatives

verbal noun	ithe
genitive of the verbal noun	substantiv.
	infinitive
verbal adjective	ite

A rare preterite form: *duaidh sé* = *he ate*, *duamar (duadhamar)* = *we ate* (contraction of *d'ith* and *d'itheamar*)

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verben (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

tar = come

Various stems in the present and subjunctive (stem **tag-**), in the preterite (stem **tháinig**), future and conditional (stem **tioc-**) as well as the 2nd pers. singular imperative (the verb root **tar**)
No special dependent forms

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	tagaim	tháinig mé	thagainn	tiocfaidh mé	tagaim	thiocfainn	go dtaga mé	dá dtagainn
2nd pers. sg.	tagann tú	tháinig tú	thagtá	tiocfaidh tú	tar	thiocfá	go dtaga tú	dá dtagtá
3rd pers. sg.	tagann sé	tháinig sé	thagadh sé	tiocfaidh sé	tagadh sé	thiocfad sé	go dtaga sé	dá dtagadh sé
1st pers. pl.	tagaimid	thángamar	thagaimis	tiocfaimid	tagaimis	thiocfaimis	go dtagaimid	dá dtagaimis
2nd pers. pl.	tagann sibh	tháinig sibh	thagadh sibh	tiocfaidh sibh	tagaigí	thiocfad sibh	go dtaga sibh	dá dtagadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	tagann siad	tháinig siad	thagaidís	tiocfaidh siad	tagaidís	thiocfaidís	go dtaga siad	dá dtagaidís
autonomous	tagtar	thángthas	thagtaí	tiocfar	tagtar	thiocfáí	go dtagtar	dá dtagtaí

Derivatives

verbal noun	teach	
genitive of the verbal noun	substantiv.	teachta
	infinitive	teachta
verbal adjective	tagtha	

in Conamara instead of tar, **teara**, instead of tag-, **teag-**, also **ní tháinig**, **an dtáinig** instead of *níor tháinig*, *ar tháinig*.
In Ulster, instead of tag-, **tig**, in the 3rd pers. suffixless: *tig sé*.

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

tabhair = give

Various stems in the present, preterite, imperfect (stem **tug**) in future, conditional and 2nd person singular imperative (stem **tabhar**), no special dependent forms

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	tugaim	thug mé	thugainn	tabharfaidh mé	tugaim	thabharfainn	go dtuga mé	dá dtugainn
2nd pers. sg.	tugann tú	thug tú	thugtá	tabharfaidh tú	tabhair	thabharfá	go dtuga tú	dá dtugtá
3rd pers. sg.	tugann sé	thug sé	thugadh sé	tabharfaidh sé	tugadh sé	thabharfad sé	go dtuga sé	dá dtugadh sé
1st pers. pl.	tugaimid	thugamar	thugaimis	tabharfaimid	tugaimis	thabharfaimis	go dtugimid	dá dtugaimis
2nd pers. pl.	tugann sibh	thug sibh	thugadh sibh	tabharfaidh sibh	tugaigí	thabharfad sibh	go dtuga sibh	dá dtugadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	tugann siad	thug siad	thugaidís	tabharfaidh siad	tugaidís	thabharfaidís	go dtuga siad	dá dtugaidís
autonomous	tugtar	tugadh	thugtaí	tabharfar	tugtar	thabharfaí	go dtugtar	dá dtugtaí

Derivatives

verbal noun	tabhairt	
genitive of the verbal noun	substantiv.	tabhartha
	infinitive	tabhartha
verbal adjective	tugtha	

Older forms

Earlier, dependent forms were more common in the **present**: *tabhraim*, *tabhrann sé*, *etc.* as opposed to absolute forms (*do-*)*bheirim*, (*do-*)*bheireann sé* (auch *bheir sé*, ohne -eann) This is true as well in the **future** und **conditional** about the dependent: *tiubhraidh*/*tiobhraidh sé* and absolute: (*do-*)*bheurfaidh*/*(do-)bhéarfaidh sé* and in the **imperfect**: dependent: *tabhrainn*, *tabhradh sé*, absolute: (*do-*)*bheirinn*, (*do-*)*bheireadh sé* in Munster and Ulster these are, in part, still in use.

	dependent	absolute
present	tabhrann	(<i>do-</i>) <i>bheir(eann)</i>
imperfect	tabhradh	(<i>do-</i>) <i>bheireadh</i>
future	tiobhraidh	(<i>do-</i>) <i>bhéarfaidh</i>
conditional	tiobhradh	(<i>do-</i>) <i>bhéarfadh</i>

tabhair stems from the verb *beir* through an affixing of the preposition *do* = *to*. This is recognizable on its aforementioned older absolute forms. In the dependent form, *tabhair* took the mutation on of *do-* to *ta-*, because it is a prototonic form (stress on the 1st syllable), as opposed to a deuterotonic *do-bheir* (stress on the 2nd syllable: *bheir*).

The forms ending in *tabhar*/*tabhair* are most [to:r]/[to:r'], also spoken [tor] (e.g. *tabhair dhom é* = *give it to me!* [tor'@m e:]).

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Irregular Verbs (na Briathra Neamhrialta)

téigh = go

various stems in the present, imperative and imperfect (stem té-) in the preterite (stem chuaigh), future and conditional (stem rach-), special dependent form in the preterite (stem deach-)
no preterite particle is used

	indicative				imperative	conditional	subjunctive	
	present	preterite	imperfect	future			present	preterite
1st pers. sg.	téim	chuaigh mé	théinn	rachaidh mé	téim	rachainn	go dté mé	dá dtéinn
2nd pers. sg.	téann tú	chuaigh tú	théiteá	rachaidh tú	téigh	rachfá	go dté tú	dá dtéiteá
3rd pers. sg.	téann sé	chuaigh sé	théadh sé	rachaidh sé	téadh sé	rachadh sé	go dté sé	dá dtéadh sé
1st pers. pl.	téimid	chuamar	théimis	rachaimid	téimis	rachaimis	go dtéimid	dá dtéimis
2nd pers. pl.	téann sibh	chuaigh sibh	théadh sibh	rachaidh sibh	téigí	rachadh sibh	go dté sibh	dá dtéadh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	téann siad	chuaigh siad	théidís	rachaidh siad	téidís	rachaidís	go dté siad	dá dtéidís
autonomous	téitear	chuathas	théití	rachfar	téitear	rachfaí	go dtéitear	dá dtéití

Dependent formen

	indicative	
	preterite (ní)	preterite (an, go, nach, a)
1st pers. sg.	ní dheachaigh mé	an ndeachaigh mé
2nd pers. sg.	ní dheachaigh tú	an ndeachaigh tú
3rd pers. sg.	ní dheachaigh sé	an ndeachaigh sé
1st pers. pl.	ní dheachamar	an ndeachamar
2nd pers. pl.	ní dheachaigh sibh	an ndeachaigh sibh
3rd pers. pl.	ní dheachaigh siad	an ndeachaigh siad
autonomous	ní dheachthas	an ndeachthas

Derivatives

verbal noun	dul
genitive of the verbal noun	substativ.
	infinitive
verbal adjective	dulta

In place of téigh in the imperative 2nd person, téir or téirigh is mostly in use.

In Connemara, future-/conditional forms with **gabh-** are common, as well as the imperative forms: **gabh!**, **gabhigí!** (possibly through the engl. "go", gabh actually means "take")
here then the verbal noun **goil**, verbal adjective: **goite**

Caibidil a Trí: The Verb (an Briathar)

Defect Verbs (*na Briathra Uireasacha*)

feadair = know

ar / arsa = say

dar = appear

dóibh = almost happen

the copula is = is

Defect verbs are those verbs that cannot be fully conjugated, and therefore are only present in a few forms. Partially, some of them will only appear in one form.

feadair = know

feadair is conjugated as before in the passive (in the plural, similar to the modern preterite), but it has an active meaning. It is the only remaining verba deponentia in Irish. It is temporally independent (*feadramar* = *we know, we knew*)

Feadair is today only used in interrogative constructs (*an bhfeadair tú?* = *do you know?*) or in negative statements (*ní fheadar* = *I don't know, I wonder*).

It fuses often with *ní* to become *n'fheadar*.

N'fheadar an bhfuil sé ann fós = *I wonder if it's still there*

Paired with *do* it takes on the meaning "to be able to tell someone" ("to let someone know "):

An bhfeadrais seo dom? = *Could you let me know it?*

1st pers. sg.	feadar (feadair mé)
2nd pers. sg.	feadraís (feadair tú)
3rd pers. sg.	feadair sé
1st pers. pl.	fead(r)amar (feadair muid)
2nd pers. pl.	fead(r)abhar (feadair sibh)
3rd pers. pl.	fead(r)adar (feadair siad)

The forms without -r- (feadamar, etc.) demonstrate the forms of classical Irish, the later -r- shows the taking on of the -r- of the singular forms, which is no longer considered a part of the suffix, but is counted as part of the stem.

Today, *feadair* is rather seldomly used mostly still in Munster. The noun and old verbal noun *fios* = *knowledge* is much more common (*Níl a fhios agam* = *I don't know* , lit. "not-is its knowledge at-me"). In Connemara, there is a verb *ní* in the meaning of "to ask oneself" (*Ní mé* = *I wonder*).

ar, arsa = say

Ar, arsa is only used **after direct speech**. It is also temporally independent (*arsa mise* = *I said, I say*).

Ar only precedes pronouns of the third person (*seisean, sise, siadsan*).

Arsa is used in all other cases (preceding an article, but very seldom and archaic also *ars*)

With *Ar, arsa* one may only use the emphatic forms of the pronouns (*mise, tusa, seisean, sise, sinne, sibhse, siadsan*)

"*Tuigim anois*", *arsa Seán* = "Now I understand", said Seán.

"*Ní thuigeann tú ar chor ar bith*", *ar sise* = "You don't understand a thing", she said

In [indirect speech](#), another verb must be used (e.g. *abair* = *say*):

Dúirt sé léi gur thuig sé = he told her that he understood.

Dúirt sí leis nár thuig sé ar chor ar bith = she told him that he didn't understand a thing.

dar = appear

This verb exists only in one form: *dar* = *(it) appears* . It is also temporally independent.

It is always used in combination with the preposition *le* = *with* : *dar liom* = *it appears to me* (*I think, thought, etc. lit.*: "*(it) appears with-me*").

Dar leis an bhfear go bhfuil sé ann = *it appears/appeared to the man, that he was there / the man thought that he was there*

dóbair = almost happen

Variations: *d'fhóbair, hóbair*.

This verb appears also only on one form (3rd person singular preterite).

Although its origin is a verb, it now has taken on the meaning of an adverb ("almost", "nearly").

Dóbair dom titim = *dóbair go dtitfinn* = *I almost fell*

the copula is = is

With good cause, the [copula](#) is seen as a defect verb.

Because its description would be too involved to be included here, it has its own chapter in the above link.

Caibidil a Ceathair:

The Copula (an Chopail)

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Caibidil a Ceathair: The Copula (an Chopail)

What is a copula

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what is a copula?

A copula is a word that connects the subject and predicate ("copulates").

If a "normal" verb is the predicate, one does not need an additional copula. [[1](#)]

It occurs only if a noun, pronoun or adjective is the predicate.

In German the verb "sein" serves as the copula.

The correllating Irish verb [bí](#) (present tense [tá](#)) does *not* act as the copula (except with adjectives)!!

It is therefore *impossible*, to say "*Tá mé an dochtúir = I am the doctor" !

(Unless one changes the predicate into a prepositional object: "tá mé i mo dhochtúir" = "I am in my doctorhood = I am a doctor." see [classificatory and identificatory clauses without the copula](#) or [bí and is](#) further below.

Instead of that there is an separate **copula** (in the simple form [is](#)), that does **not count as a real verb**, although it is related to the German "ist" or English "is" and is also so translated. It is seen more as a **particle**, in the best case as a [defect verb](#).

uses of the copula

The use of the copula is limited in Irish to the following, specific, yet frequently occurring uses:

- coupling of the predicate noun and the subject in [classificatory](#) and [identificatory clauses](#)
e.g.: *Is dochtúir é.* = *He is a doctor.* *Is é an dochtúir é.* = *He is the doctor.*
- certain [adjective uses](#), especially
 - modal verb-like uses with prepositions le, do, etc.
e.g.: *Ba mhaith le Pól an carr.* = *Paul would like the car.*
 - adjectives of subjective assessment and of equivalence.
e.g.: *Is ionann iad* = *They are the same.* *Is maith sin!* = *That is good!*
 - [comparative](#) (always with on of the copula forms is/ba or níos/ní ba)
e.g.: *an fear is mó* = *the biggest man* (the man that is the biggest)
- [origin-](#) and [ownership](#) (with the prepositions as, de, le)
e.g.: *Is as Corcaigh sé* = *He is from Cork.* *Is le Pól an carr.* = *The car belongs to Paul.*
- to [emphasize](#) single parts of speech and to loosen up the sentence structure (*cleft- and pseaudio-cleft clauses*)
e.g.: *Is é an fear a dhéanann na bróga* = *He's the man makes the shoes.* (That's the man who makes the shoes.)
- [full queries](#) (questions with [interrogatives](#)). These always contain a copular construction, even if it's mostly not to be seen.
e.g.: *Cé a rinne sin?* = *Who did that?* (Who is it, that did that?)

properties of the copula

- the copula exists only in 3 base forms:
 - present tense** (in part, at the same time the *future*) **is**
 - preterite** (same time *imperfect, conditional*) **ba**
 - subjunctive** (rare) **gura**
- the copula does **not** exist in the *imperative*. The copula also has no "*verbal noun*". Instead, transcriptions with **bí** and the preposition **i** must be used. e.g. *Bí i d'shear!* = *Be a man!*, *bheith in a shear* = *to be a man* (see [identificatory and classificatory clauses without the copula](#))
- copular forms are **inflexible**, and not conjugable (all forms are actually the 3rd person singular).
- after the copula, **personal pronouns** if the 3rd person in their "**object form**" follow (é, i, iad instead of sé, sí, siad)
- instead of "verbal particles" (*ní, nach, go*, etc.) **compounds of the particle and copula** [2] are used, that are often the same as the verbal particles in form.
- in the form of (rarer) **combinations with other words** like **conjunctions, prepositions etc.**
- in the present tense, all copular forms and compounds thereof cause neither lenition nor eclipsis. in the preterite / conditional, the copula always causes lenition.
- certain **different syntax rules** apply.

These follow also the basic syntax P-S-O:

In an Irish sentence, the predicate comes *first, then* the subject, then the object (P-S-O)

In copular clauses, the predicate is introduced by the copula. So: **copula - predicate - subject**. An object is not used.

[1]

The subject forms of the personal pronouns *sé, sí, siad* count as a combination of the copula *is* and the pronouns *é, i, iad*. This is how in every sentence with these pronouns the copula couples the predicate and subject. Also the relative form of the verb ending in -as in the combination with the copula is explained.

[2]

The claim that these are "compunds" or copula-"forms" is simplified:

In reality, they are often normal verbal particles by which the copula is simply omitted (e.g. *ní* instead of *"*ní is*").

The "missing" copular form is also the reason why that after the particles one doesn't lenite or eclipse: (*ní maith liom* not *"*ní mhaith liom*").

Although the copula mostly as the form (ba) is omitted after particles also in the preterite, the lenition caused by the absent *ba* remains: (e.g.: *níor mhaith liom*), so the instigator of the lenition is here actually not *níor* but the "missing in action" *ba*!

Real fusions are e.g. *más* (má + is) and those ending in *-b, -bh* (as a contraction of *ba*, or. lenited *bha*), mostly only preceding a vowel: *níorbh é an fear* instead of *"*níor bha é an fear*"

Caibidil a Ceathair: The Copula(an Chopail)

Copular forms

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copular forms-overview

clause form	present tense		preterite / conditional	
	preceding a consonant	preceding a vowel	preceding a consonant	preceding a vowel
affirmative clause	is	is	ba	b' (dob')
negative clause	ní (chan, cha)	ní h (chan)	níor (ní ba, char)	níorbh (ní b', charbh)
affirmative question	an (ar)	an (ar, ab)	ar (an mba)	arbh (an mb')
negative question	nach	nach	nár (nach mba)	nárhbh (nach mb')
conditional clauses				
real conditional clause	más	más	má ba	má b'
irreal conditional clause	-	-	dá mba	dá mb'
negative conditional clause	mura (maran, -r)	murab (marab)	murar (mara mba)	murarbh (mara mb')
subjunctive clauses				
affirmative subjunctive clause	gura	gurab	dá mba	dá mb'
negative subjunctive clause	nára	nárab	-	-
relative clauses				
direct relative clause	is	is	ba	ab
indirect relative clause	ar	arb	ar (a mba)	arbh (a mb')
negative relative clause	nach	nach	nár (nach mba)	nárhbh (nach mb')
relative clauses with interrogatives				
Who (direct rel.)	cé is	cé is	cé ba	cé ab
Whom (indirect rel.)	cér	(cérb)	cér	(cérbh)
Where, What	cár	cár	cár	cárhbh
in combination with interrogatives				
Who	cé	cé h	cér	cérhbh
combinations with conjunctions				
go (that)	gur (go)	gurb (gob)	gur (go mba)	gurbh (go mb')
nach (that not)	nach	nach	nár (nach mba)	nárhbh (nach mb')
ó (since)	ós	ós	ó ba	ó b'
sula (before)	sular	sularb	sular	sularbh
combinations with prepositions				
de (of)	dar	darb	dar	darbh
do (to)	dar	darb	dar	darbh
faoi (under)	faoinar	faoinarb	faoinar	faoinarbh
i (in)	inar	inarb	inar	inarbh
le (with)	lenar	lenarb	lenar	lenarbh
ó (from)	ónar	ónarb	ónar	ónarbh
trí (through)	trínar	trínarb	trínar	trínarbh
combinations with ní (+ comparative)				
ní (thing)	níos	níos	níba (ní ba)	níb (ní b')

lenition after the copula

- no lenition after present tense- and subjunctive-forms
- lenition after all forms in the preterite/conditional (esp. in Ulster t,d,s after ba is not lenited)

omission of the copular form is:

- The copular form **is**, preceding a pronoun or a noun, can be omitted :
Is eisean an fear > Eisean an fear = He is the man
 In that case, an eventual subpredicate is omitted:
Is é an fear atá ann > An fear atá ann = The man is here.
- in normal copular clauses, **is** cannot be omitted preceding adjectives:
*Is maith liom í = I don't like her *Maith liom é*
 but in the usage for emphasis, one may omit it preceding an adjective:
Is tuirseach atá sé > Tuirseach atá sé = Tired is he.
- other copular forms than **is** are never omitted.

miscellaneous and variants

- **is** is mostly pronounced [@s], with a broad [s], a slender [s'] only when preceding é/i/iad etc.
- with the pronouns é/i/iad as well as ea and éard (= é an rud) **is** contracts in in spoken Irish to [s'e:, s'i:, s'iad, s'a, s'e:rd]. Often this is also written as such: **se, sí, siad, sea, séard** (also with an apostrophe: 'sé, 'sí, 'siad, etc.): *Is é an fear é > 'Sé an fear é = He's the man*
- **b'** mostly does not precede pronouns é, i, iad, ea : e.g.: *ba é = he was*. Instead, a glide occurs in spoken Irish ([j] or [w]): *ba é [baje:] or [bawe:]*
- an older form is the spelling **badh** instead of *ba*, esp. in the conditional. (which explains the aforementioned glide: *badh é*)
- **dob'/dob** partially still in use in Munster (particle **do** + b') also preceding pronouns: e.g. *dob'é / dob é = he was*
- **ar** Connemara for *an*, **ab** Connemara for *an* preceding é, i, iad e.g. *ab é*
- forms like **ní ba, an mba, nach mba, go mba, a mba, mara mba** are common in Connemara

For the conditional, these forms reflect the original form. They are however replaced by those forms with -r in the standard, which originally are only the preterite forms.

- Instead of the subjunctive forms *gura(b) / nára(b)* in Connemara **go mba / nár ba** is used.
- forms of **cha (chan, char, charbh)** come up instead of *ní* in Ulster (and Scotland), whereby *cha* precedes adjectives, and *chan* precedes pronouns and nouns.
- Similarly, *chan* occurs in other forms ending in -n preceding nouns and pronouns, e.g. **maran**
- in Ulster also *general* forms like **is é, ab é, gob é, nab é** are in use (i.e. generally subpredicate é instead of é/i/iad, this é is independent of gender and number, partially also generalising in many uses, where it's lacking in other dialects, e.g.: *Is é tinn a bhí sí = It's sick she was* instead of *Is tinn a bhí sí*)
- combinations with prepositions demonstrate the indirect relative clause (e.g.: *an fear lenar maith é = the man, who likes it*, as the variant of the form: *an fear ar maith leis é* When negating, only "an fear nach maith leis é" is possible.
- historical future forms of the copula (**budh**; also relative: **bhus** are now obsolete, but were at least used in written forms in days of yore.
- in Munster, one uses more often *ná* as the verbal particle and conjunction instead of *nach*. Though this is never used as the copular form, rather in that case always *nach*.

Seo, sin, siúd as the copular forms

Seo, sin, siúd count as the copular forms in these examples.

They are forms of the [demonstrative pronoun](#) with the meaning "this is", "that is", "that one is"

All of these forms without s- are Connacht- (Cois Fháirge-) Irish. I don't know if they exist in other dialects. This is why only the dialect specific forms (*ab* instead of *an*, *marab* instead of *murab*) are given.

As the standard, there are longer forms, in which the demonstrative pronoun is not seen as the copular form. Only the short form in the statement with "seo/sin/siúd" is also to be found in the standard.

-	seo	sin	siúd	example	long form (standard)	translation
affirmative.:	seo	sin	siúd	Seo é an rud a dhéanamh	Is é seo an rud a dhéanamh	This is the thing that is to be done.
affirm. pret.:	b'eo	b'in	b'iúd	B'eo é an rud a dhéanamh	Ba é seo an rud a dhéanamh	This was the thing that was to be done.
neg.:	ní heo	ní hin	ní hiúd	Ní heo é an rud a dhéanamh.	Ní hé seo an rud a dhéanamh.	This is not the thing that is to be done.
question:	ab 'eo	ab 'in	ab 'iúd	Ab'eo é an rud a dhéanamh?	An é seo an rud a dhéanamh?	Is this the thing which is to be done?
question neg.	nach 'eo	nach 'in	nach 'iúd	Nach'eo é an rud a dhéanamh?	Nach é seo an rud a dhéanamh?	Is this not the thing which is to be done?
cond. pos.	más 'eo	más 'in	más 'iúd	Más'eo é an rud a dhéanamh,	Más é seo an rud a dhéanamh,	If it is the thing to be done,
cond. neg.	marab 'eo	marab 'in	marab 'iúd	Marab'eo é an rud a dhéanamh,	Murab é seo an rud a dhéanamh,	If it is not the thing to be done,
that	gurb 'eo	gurb 'in	gurb 'iúd	Deir sé gurb'eo é an rud a dhéanamh.	Deir sé gurb é seo an rud a dhéanamh.	He said , that this was the thing to be d
that not	nach 'eo	nach 'in	nach 'iúd	Deir sé nach'eo é an rud a dhéanamh.	Deir sé nach é seo an rud a dhéanamh.	He said , that this was not the thing to l

- **The subpredicate**

- A personal pronoun as the subpredicate appears in the short forms preceding definite nouns after the demonstrative pronoun, because this counts as the copular form. *Seo é an fear*. In Ulster it's omitted: *Seo an fear = This is the man*.
- In the long form there is always a personal pronoun preceding the demonstrative pronoun. e.g.: *Is é seo an fear = Seo é an fear = This is the man*.
Ab i sin an bhean = Ab'in i an bhean = She is the woman.
Gurb é seo an fear = Gurb'eo é an fear = That this is the man.

- **Why is the s in seo/sin/siúd omitted?** Why does an apostrophe take its place?

- An explanation is the consideration that, seo/sin/siúd are actually combinations of the copular form "is" and the little words "eo/in/iúd", so that it must be "ab é is eo", instead of "ab é seo" or even ab 'eo
- This view is, while etymologically wrong, (the s- in seo has nothing to do with the copula), is very practical (and stands in analogies to others, forms that are really constructed that way like *is éard = séard, gurb éard, ab éard*, etc.)
- Another explanation is a lenition of the s: sheo, shin, shiúd. This h-sound is not spoken.
Occasionally it is actually written that way: **b'shin** (b'in) = that was, **b'sheo** (b'eo) = this was, etc...

Caibidil a Ceathair: The Copula(an Chopail)

bí and is

In Irish there are 2 words, which can be translated into English with "**to be**".

While the copula "is" only serves to conjoin subject and predicate, the verb **bí** is *predicative itself*:

Bí expresses an action of **existance** is a (named or unnamed) *state of being*: Táim = I am (I exist, there is a "me"). It is then a verb of the *state of being*, of *existance*.

This is why it is mostly used with prepositions of location, in simplest form with **i (= in)** or its 3rd person masculine conjugation **ann** (= in him/in it/therein, extended "there/here"). (comp. a state of being *in which one is*) e.g.: *Tá daoine ann = People exist / There are people here*.

Existance alone may be freely expressed without an *i/ ann* , e.g. *Níl aon Dia ach tú = There is no God aside from you*.

Also other states/conditions can be described (e.g. the state of being of standing, sitting, living (see [state of being verbs](#)), the state of being in a profession/practicing a trade, etc.). Furthermore, it is used with predicative adjectives.

Examples:

Tá sé ann	He is here/ he exists	"is he in-it"
Tá sé sa teach	He is in the house	"is he [in his being] in-the house "
Tá sé ar an mbord	He is on the table	"is he [in his being] on the table "
Tá sé ina sheasamh	He is standing	"is he in-his [state of being of] standing"
Tá sé ina chónai	He lives	"is he in-his [state of being of] living[somewhere]"
Tá sé ina dhochtúir	He is/works as a doctor	"is he in-his [state of being of] [being]a doctor"
Tá sé ina lá	It is daytime	"is he in-his [state of being of] [being]day"
Tá sé mór	He is big	"is he [in a state of being of] [being]large"

This existance/state of being/location description is the base meaning of *bí*.

The extent of existance or the **magnitude** is expressed without a preposition. i.e. statistics such as height, weight, age, time and the like is done by usgin **bí + magnitude**:

e.g.: *Tá sí seacht mbliana d'aois = She is 7 years old; Tá sí naoi gcloch meáchain = She is 9 stones (=57 kg) heavy; Tá sé ceathrú chun a trí = It is quarter to three*.

The modern uses as the **auxilliary verb** (e.g. in the [progressive](#)) are secondary, but more or less contain the sense of a temporally limited *state of being*. In the progressive, the temporal limitation (to that moment) is especially emphasized.

Tá sé ag ól = He is drinking (right now at this moment)

Predicative adjectives are mostly used with **bí** today, and the temporal limitation moves into the background, because a state of being is being described.

Because **bí** itself is predicative, its use as a predicative adjective is grammatically problematic, and earlier it was only considered possible to make the adjectives into adverbs (with **go**). This has remained so only by a few subjective adjectives of assessment (*Tá sé go dona = It is bad*). Otherwise, predicative adjectives are used today (or it's the case that they are indeed adverbs, whereby go is omitted): *Tá sé mór = He is big* The **copula** can also (less common today, earlier always) be used with adjectives. Today, this is limited to a certain few expressions. In this case, all signs of a temporal limitation are lacking, and it is moreso the permanent intrinsic quality being described. All in all, the difference in meaning between **bí** and **is** with

adjectives is rather small. The copular clause emphasizes more the adjective, and is therefore often interjectory ("He is *big*!")

with the copula	<i>Is mó r é</i>	He is big!	"is big he "
with bí	<i>Tá sé mó r</i>	He is big	"is he [in a state of being of] [being]big"

With the construction ***i + possessive pronoun + noun***, *bí* can form a clause with a similar meaning as that with the copula. (see [classifications- and identification clauses without the copula](#))

So, instead of an actual classification/identification (with the copula), there follows a description of a state of being (with *bí*). e.g.:

with the copula	<i>Is dochtúir é</i>	he is a doctor	"is doctor he "
with bí	<i>Tá sé ina dhochtúir</i>	he is a doctor	"is he in his [state of being of] a [being]doctor"

The copular clause gives a rather (*mostly permanent*) *assigment* "he = doctor", while the clause with *bí* shows that a (*mostly temporary*) *relationship* exists, which was just achieved or could be reversed, and therefore is more a state of being (he is now a doctor, he works as a doctor, but will not always do so) e.g. *Tá sé ina fhear anois* = *Now he is a man* (lit.: "is he in-his [state of being of] [being]a man now"). Because before that he was a child)

With the use of finite temporal adverbs, e.g. *anois* = *now*, the construction with the copula also becomes possible, e.g. *Is fear é anois* = *Now, he is a man*), as well as the use of *bí* with infinite temporal adverbs, e.g.: *Bhí sé ina amadáin riamh* = *He has always been an idiot*. Through this, the above statement receives a permanent vs. temporal relativity. The main difference of the sentences is the very classification through the copula, where *bí* states that it's a case of state of being being described.

e.g.: *Is fear é* = *He is a man* : He is classified as a man.

e.g.: *Tá sé ina fhear* = *He is a man* : He is in a state of being, in which he possesses the qualities of a man.

Different words for "being", and special copulae exist in other languages as well: e.g. in Spanish "estar" and "es"

(notice the non-coincidental similarity between "tá" and "estar" as well as between "is" and "es"!)

The form *tá* derives from the indoeurop. root *staro* = to stand to (underlining the verbal base meaning as the German "Zu-standes")

Caibidil a Ceathair: The Copula (an Chopail)

Syntax of the Copula

predicate and subject in the copular clause
deviations from the PSO-rule in the copular clause

predicate and subject in the copular clause

The **predicate (faisnéis)** of a sentence is the "sentence statement".
 In a "normal" sentence this would be formed by the verb (**predicative verb**).

There are also sentences in which the verb is *not* the sole predicate of the sentence, but simply the introduction (so-called. **non-predicative verbs**).

Even the German verb "sein" is in this sense a non-predicative verb.

The actual statement occurs then in an *identification* ("He is Paul") or *classification* ("He is a donkey"). The predicate is then formed by a noun (**predicate noun**: "Paul", "donkey").

Also an adjective (**predicative adjective**) may form the predicate ("He is big")

In the sentence "He is a student", "*a student*" is the predicate, "is" only couples it with the subject ("he") The "sentence statement" is here that he is *a student*.

The sentence: "he is big" says something about the quality of size. (hence *big* = predicate)

In the sentence: "he reads" is the action of reading the sentence statement (so *reads* = predicate).

If a noun is the predicate ("predicate noun") this is often falsely termed as "object". As opposed to an object, it is always in the nominative and not in the accusative.

In Irish, the copula comes in place of the verb "to be" in sentences such as "he is a student", in part also in sentences like "he is big".

In identificatory clauses ("the man is the student") it is often difficult to discern subject from predicate, as both could be switched without a change in meaning (man = student)

In German and in English, one has the syntax "SPO" (subject - predicate - object)

This is why the subject comes first ("the man"), the predicate ("the student") follows.

If a pronoun occurs, this is always the subject ("he is the student", "Are you Paul?").

If one wishes to shift the emphasis to the pronoun, one only can do so with the aid of vocal or italic stress (Are you Paul?), it remains the subject (Are you *Paul*? / Are *you* Paul?)

So, in German or English, neither the word order nor the grammatical predicate definitive, only the stress says something about the desired logical sentence statement (*the man* is the student / the man is *the student*)!

In Irish, the **emphatic** part is *always* the grammatical and logical predicate and is then shifted in the necessary position!

In other words, if one wants to emphasize something in such sentences, one moves it into the predicate position!

In Irish, the order "PSO" is the rule (predicate - subject - object)

For copular clauses, then: **copula - predicate - subject**.

So:

Is é an dalta an fear = the man is *the student*. (predicate: an dalta = the student)

Is é an fear an dalta = *the man* is the student / the student is *the man* (predicate: an fear = the man)

deviations from the PSO-rule in the copular clause

In **identificatory clauses**, in some cases, (personal pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person) the syntax is switched and PSO no longer applies.

i.e. the pronoun of the 1st and 2nd person (*mé*, *tú*, *sinn*, *muid*, *sibh*) occurs **always directly** after the copula, no matter if it's the predicate or the subject.

The cause of this could be the substitution of older conjugated forms of the copula (e.g. "am" = I am) through the modern copular form + pronoun ("is mé" = I am), which simply takes the place of "am" in the sentence: "Is mé an fear" = I am the man (Altirisch approx: "Am in fer")

The (always unstressed) "mé" is here the subject, despite its position.

A sentence like: "*Is é an fear mé" (as would be expected according to the PSO-rule) would be wrong.

In order to avoid such confusion, the personal pronoun is then made to be the predicate of the sentence. Then, the PSO-rule applies again.

Since the predicate is always the emphasized part of the sentence (see above), one uses other ("emphatic") forms of the pronouns:

"Is mise an fear = I am the man (actual translation: the man is *me*)

The fact that the pronoun is the predicate here can only be seen due to the emphatic form, while unstressed (normal) forms of the pronoun show that it is the subject.

(One could also simplify this to say that a pronoun of the 1st and 2nd person is always the predicate.

Although, the lack of stress of "mé" and "tú" would be disturbing.)

For personal names a similar rule applies: they too stand as the subject before the actual predicate. But they are still separated from the copula by a subpredicate (é/i/iad), so that, at least formally, the PSO-rule applies. e.g.: *Is é Pól an múinteoir* = *Paul (subject) is the teacher (predicate)*.

For those who find these complicated rules to be too much, should orient themselves by using examples:

Is mise an múinteoir = *I am the teacher*

Is tusa an múinteoir = *You are the teacher*

Is eisean an múinteoir = *He is the teacher*

Is é an múinteoir é = *He is the teacher*

Is é an múinteoir an fear = *The man is the teacher*

Is é an fear an múinteoir = *The man is the teacher*

Is é Pól an múinteoir = *Paul is the teacher*

Caibidil a Ceathair: Die Copula (an Chopail)

Syntax of the Copula (Comhréir na Copaire)

The copula in the [identification clause](#)
 The copula in the [classificational clause](#)
 The copula and [adjectives](#)
 The copula in [real conditional clauses](#)
 The copula in [irreal conditional clauses](#)
 The copula in [direct relative clauses](#)
 The copula in [indirect relative clauses](#)

The copula in [subjunctive clauses](#)
 The copula in [matters of ownership](#)
 The copula in [matters of origin](#)
 The copula in [stating names](#)
 The copula in [interrogative clauses](#)
[answers](#) to interrogative clauses
[emphasis](#) in the copular clause

Comments:

Here, the abbreviations used are: subject (**S**) und predicate (**P**)
 in the case of a pronoun, the colour stands for if it's the subject (**é/i/iad**) or the predicate (**é/i/iad**). Copular forms appear in red (e.g.: **is**)

The identification clause (an abairt ionannais)

An identification clause is a **copular clause with a definite predicate noun** "X is *das* Y".
 The subject of the clause is equated to another term, subject and predicate are *identical*. (X = Y)
 (In less common cases, one can find an indefinite predicate noun, see below)

with a definite noun as the subject *after* the predicate

"the X is the Y"

Preceding definite predicative nouns (e.g. with an article) one must always **additionally** include the appropriate pronoun **é/i/iad** as a so-called **subpredicate (fófhaisnéis)**, because a definite noun is not allowed directly following the copula.
 e.g.: **í an bhean** = the woman, **é mo theach** = my house

tenses		general	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + é/i/iad + P + S	Is é an sagart an fear	The man is the priest
	negative	Ní + hé/hí/hiad + P + S	Ní hé an dochtúir an fear	The man is not the doctor
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + é/i/iad + P + S	Ba é an dochtúir an bhean	The woman was/would be the doctor
	negative	Níorbh + é/i/iad + P + S	Níorbh é an dochtúir an bhean	The woman was/wouldn't be the doctor

with a definite noun as the subject *before* the predicate

"the X is the Y"

In identification clauses, the subject comes sometimes *before* the actual (main-) predicate.
 The principal syntax is maintained, while a **subpredicate (é/i/iad)** appears **before the subject**.
 It **doesn't** depend on the following subject, but on the predicate.
 (e.g. **Is é mo bharúil go...** **not** ***Is i mo bharúil go...**) sim.: **"It is my opinion, that..."**

tenses		general	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + é/i/iad + S + P	Is é mo bharúil go...	It is my opinion, that...
	negative	Ní + hé/hí/hiad + S + P	Ní hé mo bharúil go ...	It is not my opinion, that...
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + é/i/iad + S + P	Ba é mo bharúil go ...	It was my opinion, that ...
	negative	Níorbh + é/i/iad + S + P	Níorbh é mo bharúil go ...	It was not my opinion, that...

é/i/iad (subpredicates) are mostly **é**, especially, if the predicate is a *go-subordinating clause* or *infinitive with to*.
 Equivalent to the "it" in: **"It is my opinion, that..."**

This clause form is then chosen, when:

- the predicate is comprised of a **subordinate clause**
 (e.g. **Is é mo bharúil go bhfuil ceart agat** = *It is my opinion, that you are right*)
- the predicate is comprised of an **infinitive-construction** ("infinitive with to")
 (e.g. **Is é mo aidhm Gaeilge a thuiscint** = *It is my goal to understand Irish*)
- the predicate is comprised of an **indefinite noun**
 (**Is é an rud a chonaic mé ná capall** = *The thing that I saw, was a horse*)

Note here the common little word **ná** (= as) preceding the main predicate. Most commonly, this is in clauses for emphasis (see also [pseudo-cleft clause](#))

Not to be confused with a [classificational clause](#) (e.g. "It is a horse" = **Is capall é**)

- the subject is a proper name

(e.g.: *Is é Seán an dochtúir.* = *Seán is the doctor.* not: **Is é an dochtúir Seán*)

Also in clauses with go-subordinating clauses or verbal noun constructions **ná** can come before the main predicate:
Is é an rud (ná) go bhfuil ceart agat = *It is so, that you are right.* *Is é mo aidhm (ná) Gaeilge a thuiscint* = *It is my goal to understand Irish.*

with a personal pronoun in the 1st / 2nd person (mé, tú, muid, sinn*, sibh) as the subject

Here, a syntax change occurs, that contradicts the P-S-O-rule:

If these personal pronouns are the subject of the clause, they come mostly *before* the predicate.

As to why this is so see [hier](#)

"I am the Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + pers.pron. + P	Is mé an dochtúir
	negative:	Ní + pers.pron. + P	Ní mé an dochtúir
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + pers.pron. + P	Ba mé an dochtúir
	negative:	Níor + pers.pron. + P	Níor mé an dochtúir

These clauses stress the noun (compare. Are you Seán? - An tú Seán?) and not the pronoun.

*: *muid* is actually used with the copula, although it is as a derivative of compounds and doesn't really seem to fit in here.

with the personal pronoun in the 1st / 2nd person (mé, tú, muid, sinn, sibh) as the predicate

"I am the Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + pers.pron. + S	Is mise an dochtúir
	negative:	Ní + pers.pron. + S	Ní mise an dochtúir
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + pers.pron. + S	Ba mise an dochtúir
	negative:	Níor + pers.pron. + S	Níor mise an dochtúir

As the predicate, [emphatic forms](#) of the personal pronoun are used (e.g. *mise, tusa* statt *mé, tú*)

These clauses stress the pronoun (comp. Are you Seán? - An tusa Seán?).

Usually, this form is more common: (comp. I am the doctor vs. I am the doctor)

Gramatically, in German/English the pronoun remains the subject, no matter which clause term is stressed (comp. *Bist du Paul?* / *Are you Paul?* / *Bist du Paul?* / *Are you Paul?*). clauses like *Ist Paul du?* / *Is Paul you?* are not possible. In Irish, it is indeed viable as a predicate.

with the personal pronoun of the 3rd Person (é, í, iad) as the subject

"he is the Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + é/í/iad + P + é/í/iad	Is é an dochtúir é
	negative:	Ní + hé/hí/iad + P + é/í/iad	Ní hé an dochtúir é
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + é/í/iad + P + é/í/iad	Ba é an dochtúir é
	negative:	Níorbh + é/í/iad + P + é/í/iad	Níorbh é an dochtúir é

In unstressed, neutral clauses (so mostly) one encounters this clause form.

Then, is it natural that the noun is stressed.

It looks so as if the pronoun is *repeated* at the end, but the first **é/í/iad** is the obligatory **subpredicate** (while a definite noun is not allowed to directly follow the copula), the latter **é/í/iad** is the real subject.

Níorbh is listed here instead of níor, while é/í/iad begins with a vowel.

In Ulster, the pronoun at the end is omitted. That means that whatever é/í/iad is closest to the copula, goes as the subject:

Ulster: *Is é an fear.* = *He is the man.* instead of

Standard: *Is é an fear é.* = *He is the man.*

In Ulster, the pronouns of the 3rd person act the same as those of the 1st and 2nd person.

with a personal pronoun of the 3rd person (é, í, iad) as the predicate

"he is the Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	affirmative	Is + pers.pron. + S	He is the doctor
	negative:	Ní + pers.pron. + S	He is not the doctor

preterite/conditional:	affirmative	Ba + pers.pron. + S	Ba eisean an dochtúir	He was/would be the doctor
	negative:	Níor + pers.pron. + S	Níor eisean an dochtúir	He was/would not be the doctor.

As the predicate, however, [emphatic forms](#) of the personal pronoun are used

(e.g. *eisean*, *é sin* oder *é féin* statt *é*, *i*, *iad*)

In form, this is equivalent to the clauses with *mise/tusa/sinne/sibhse* as the predicate.

This is also used to to stress the pronoun.

The classifactorial clause (an abairt aicme)

A classifactorial clause is a **copular clause with an indefinite predicate noun "X is a Y"**.

Here a classification to a group/class is made ("It is a horse", d.h. "it" belongs to a class of living things, that one calls "horse")
(An indefinite predicate noun can, less commonly, but also appear in identification clauses, see below)

with a definite subject:

"the X is a Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	Is + P + é/i/iad + S	Is dochtúir é an fear	The man is (a) doctor
preterite/conditional:	Ba + P + é/i/iad + S	Ba dhochtúir é an fear	The man was/would be a doctor
present:	P + is + ea + S	Dochtúir is ea an fear	The man is (a) doctor
preterite/conditional:	P + ba + ea + S	Dochtúir ba ea an fear	The man was/would be a doctor

The pronoun **é/i/iad** (*subsubject, fo-ainmní*) can be omitted (in Ulster): e.g.: *Is dochtúir (é) an fear*.

The 2nd variation of the is actually a form of [emphasis](#) with a trailing copular clause (like a left shift):

Dochtúir is ea an fear = lit.: "A doctor; is it the man"

Although in Munster, this is the general common form of the classifactorial clause

But, it will only occur in the affirmative clauses.

A common form of emphasis in Connacht and Donegal would be a relative clause with *bí* and the preposition *i* (as an inversion of the clause *Tá sí ina dochtúir*, see [classifactorial clauses without the copula](#)):

Dochtúir atá inti = *She is a doctor*.

Rud a bhí ann nár bhí fhorasta a dhéanamh = *That is something, that is not easy to do*.

with a personal pronoun as the subject:

"I am a Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	Is + P + pers.pron.	Is dochtúir mé	I am (a) doctor
preterite/conditional:	Ba + P + pers.pron.	Ba dhochtúir mé	I was/would be a doctor
present	P + is + ea + pers.pron.	Dochtúir is ea mé	I am (a) doctor
preterite/conditional:	P + ba + ea + pers.pron.	Dochtúir ba ea mé	I was/would be a doctor

The 2nd variation is also here actually a form of [emphasis](#) (left shift):

Dochtúir is ea é = "A doctor; is es er" (only in affirmative clauses)

with an indefinite subject:

"an X is a Y"

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	Is + P + S	Is dochtúir fear	a man is a doctor
preterite/conditional:	Ba + P + S	Ba dhochtúir fear	a man was/would be a doctor

A *indefinite* subject is only theoretically possible. A definite subject is mostly given precedence:

e.g.: *Is iasc é an bradán* = *The salmon is a fish* instead of *Is iasc bradán* = *A salmon is a fish*

The copula and adjectives

with an attributive adjective

To be mentioned is only the classifactorial clause, in which the *indefinite* predicate noun also carries an adjective attribute.

The subject (as well as the predicate in the identification clause) can of course also have an adjective, without that this causes any special cases.

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	Is + P + adj. + S	Is duine deas é.	He is a nice person.
preterite/conditional:	Ba + P + adj. + S	Ba dhuine deas é.	He was/would be a nice person
present	Is + adj. + an + P + S	Is deas an duine é	He is a nice person.
preterite/conditional:	Ba + adj. + an + P + S	Ba dheas an duine é.	He was/would be a nice person

The first form in the table demonstrates a regular classifactorial clause (X is a Y), only that the predicate noun here also possesses an adjective - attribute.

Especially so is the form below: Note the article **an**, *despite* an indefinite predicate! (although: X is a Y)

The difference between the two constructs lies in the emphasis (in the first case the noun, in the second, the adjective is stressed):

comp.: Is duine deas é. = He is a nice person.

and: Is deas an duine é. = He is a nice person.

with the predicative adjective

tense	gen.	example	translation
present:	Is + adj. + S	Is deas é an duine!	The person is nice!
preterite/conditional:	Ba + adj. + S	Ba dheas é an duine!	The person was nice!

predicative adjectives with the copula are limited to certain uses today, with all other uses they are rather uncommon. More commonly, a predicative adjective will appear with the verb **bí** : *Tá an duine go deas* = *The person is nice*.

In older textbooks this (bí and adjective), despite its common use, is stylistically frowned upon. However, it was not the copula with predicative adjective, but the use of *attributive* adjectives was recommended instead.

Also: *Is duine mór é sin* = *That is a big person* (instead of *Tá an duine sin mór* or *Is mór é an duine sin* = *That person is big*).

The copula with a predicative adjective is also common in the following cases:

- with **adjectives with a subjective judgement** in exclamatory clauses:
e.g.: *Is deas é sin!* = *That is nice!* *Ní furasta i an teanga seo!* = *This language is not easy!* *Nach dall é?* = *Isn't that stupid?*
- with certain **adjectives of equation** and a few others (adjectives about an indefinite amount like *iomáí* = *much* :
e.g.: *Is ionann iad*, *is mar a chéile iad* = *they are the same*, *Is iomáí fear a bhí ann* = *many men were there*
- in "**copular-modal constructs**" incl. **expressions with an adjective and a preposition**:
e.g.: *Is maith liom é* = *I like it*. (lit.: "Is good with-me it")
Thorough the omission of the preposition the impersonal statement takes on a modal sense
e.g.: *Is maith é* = *it will be liked* (lit.: "is good it")
- with all **comparatives**: to use the **comparative** a copular form is **always** necessary (see there)
e.g.: *Is fearr mo charr ná do cheanna* = *My car is better than yours*.
(also *níos* is a copular form: *ní* + *is* = "a thing, that is":
e.g.: *Tá an carr níos fearr* = *the car is better*)
- to cause **emphasis**, one can also shift the adjectival adverb of a clause clause with the copula to the beginning (then it is again a predicative adjective)
e.g.: *Is cúramach a rinne sé an obair* = *Carefully, he did the work* (lit.: "Is (it) carefully, that did he the work"), *Is minic a bhí sé ann* = *Often, he was here*.

adjectives with the copula and prepositions

tense	gen.	example	translation	lit.
present	Is + adj. + prep. + P + S	Is maith liom fuisce a ól	I like to drink Whiskey	"Is good with me, Whiskey to drink"
preterite/conditional	Ba + adj. + prep. + P + S	Ba mhaith liom fuisce a ól	I would like to drink Whiskey	"Would be good with me, Whiskey to drink"

adjective , preposition and the following predicate noun or prepositional pronoun form together the predicate, a following noun, pronoun, subordinating clause or infinitive construction form the (grammatical) subject.

e.g. *Is maith liom fuisce a ól*: *maith liom* is the predicate, *fuisce a ól* the subject.

Some **nouns** are used here like adjectives.

(e.g. *fiú* = worth, *dóigh* = expectation/opinion, *eol* = knowledge, *cuimhin* = rememberance, *oth* = regret, *fuath* = hate, *mithid* = (high) time, etc.)

e.g.: *Is fiú duit é* = *it's worth it to you*, *is dóigh liom* = *I think it's possible/I think*, *mar is eol duit* = *as you know*, *is cuimhin liom* = *I remember*, *is oth liom é* = *I'm sorry*, *is fuath liom é* = *I hate it*, *is mithid dom imeacht* = *it's time for me to leave*

The non-existant **modal verbs must, should, can, could, would like, want** are often substituted with such phrases in Irish (I like = *is maith liom*, lit.: "is good with me", *ba cheart duit* = you should, lit. "would be right to you")

The **logical subject** of the statement (the one that would like, should, can, etc.) is here part of the predicate (*ba mhaith liom é* = I would like it).

Because the preposition is used to lead in the logical subject in modal clauses, the omission of it makes it an impersonal modal statement (e.g.: *Ba mhaith é* = *one* would like it.)

Actually, the modal usage only secondary.

Primarily, there are **base meanings of the copula and preposition**:

- The construction with the preposition **le** (*le* = with) means a **subjective judgement** (*liom* = with-me, "I find")
(e.g.: *Ba mhaith liom é* = I would like it, *eigil*: "I would find it good". *Is fada liom an tsráid* = *I find*, the street is long)
- Without **le**, it becomes rather an **objective statement**:
(e.g.: *Ba mhaith é* = it was/would be good. *Is fada an tsráid* = *the street is long*)
(in the modal sense, this has rather an impersonal meaning, see above)

- with the addition of *dar liom* (= I find) one could again give a subjective opinion:
(e.g.: Ba mhaith é, dar liom = It would be good, I find)
- with the preposition **do** (*do* = for) the statement becomes **objective** like "good for...", "bad for..."
(e.g. Is maith bainne *duit* = Milch is good *for you*. Ba cheart *dom* = I should, actually: "it would be right *for me*.)
- similarly to *do* also the preposition **ar** (*ar* = on)
(e.g. an garáiste is giorra orainn = the garage, which is closest *for us*.)

le and do may also appear together:

Ní maith *leis* é ach is maith *dó* é = He doesn't like it but it is good *for him*.

The copula in real conditional clauses

(clásal coinníollach oscailte)

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	affirmative	Más	Más é an dochtúir é
	negative	Mura	Murab é an dochtúir é
preterite	affirmative	Má ba	Má ba é an dochtúir é
	negative	Murar	Murarbh é an dochtúir é

Differences between classifactorial- und identification clauses are as above.
preceding a vowel, def. forms (see examples)

The copula in irreal conditional clauses

(clásal coinníollach iata)

tense	gen.	example	translation
conditional:	affirmative	Dá mba	Dá mba é an dochtúir é
	negative	Murar	Murarbh é an dochtúir é

clauses with **murar** do not differ, as one can see, between real or irreal conditions.

The copula in direct relative clauses

(clásal coibhneasta díreach)

tense	general	example	translation
present	affirmative	antecedent + is	an rud is féidir a dhéanamh
	negative	antecedent + nach	an rud nach féidir a dhéanamh
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	antecedent + ba	an rud ab fhéidir a dhéanamh
	negative	antecedent + nár	an rud nár bh fhéidir a dhéanamh

Instead of **ba**, **ab** precedes a word beginning with a **vowel** or **with f** (see example: ab fhéidir = that was possible, ab álainn = that was beautiful).
Instead of **nár** in a similar case, then **nár bh**

The copula in indirect relative clauses

(clásal coibhneasta néamhdhíreach)

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	affirmative	antecedent + ar	an fear ar maith leis an bord
	negative	antecedent + nach	an fear nach maith leis an bord
preterite/conditional:	affirmative	antecedent + ar	an fear ar mhaith leis an bord
	negative	antecedent + nár	an fear nár mhaith leis an bord

Prepositions may appear *at the end of the clause* (then use the copular form as in the above table) or as the *beginning* of an indir. relative clause (then combined forms with i, ó, de, do, trí, le, faoi; see table of all [copular forms](#))

e.g.: An fear **ar** maith **leis** an bord. = The man, who likes the table. (lit. "The man that-is good with-him the table", note no eclipsis of bord!)
or: An fear **lenar** maith an bord. = The man, who likes the table. (lit. "The man with-that-is good the table")

Often this is in the following expression about stating a name. Here, the form with a preposition at the end of the clause is unlikely:
e.g.: An fear **darb** ainm Seán. = The man named Seán. (lit.: "The man to-whom-is name Seán.")

The combination of [generalising relative pronoun](#) and the copula is equal to the indirect relative form:

e.g.: Sin **arbh** eol dom = That is all that I know.

The copula in the subjunctive clause

tense	gen.	example	translation	lit.
subjunctive present	affirmative	Gura	Gurab amhlaidh duit!	The same to you! "That-may be so-like-it to-you!"
	negative	Nára	Nára fada uainn an lá!	"Not-that-may be long from-us the day!"

The subjunctive wird zumeist for wishes, curses and the like use the (**Optative**).

In copular clauses, it is uncommon and exclusively limited to set expressions.

forms ending with -b (*gurab, nárab*) precede a vowel (see above *Narab ea!* = *Hopefully not!*).

subjunctive preterite falls in with the conditional, here after *dá* = *if*: **dá mba** (see [irreal conditional clause](#))

The copula to show ownership (úinéireacht)

tense	gen.	example	translation
present	is + le + P + S	Is le Pól an carr	The car belongs to Paul (lit.: "Is with Paul the car")
preterite/conditional:	ba + le + P + S	Ba le Pól an carr	The car belonged to Paul (lit.: "Was with Paul the car")

Ownership is expressed in the construction **is le** "is with...".

The copula in statements of origin

general	example	translation
is + as + P + S	Is as an Ghearmáin mé	I am from Germany (lit.: "am from Germany I")

Origin is expressed **is as** "is out of ...".

Instead of **as** also **ó** (in Munster) is possible: *Is ón nDaingean mé* = *I am from Dingle*

The subject can be introduced with *do* : *Is as Doire dom* = *I am from Derry*

The copula to state a name

Stating the first name(or name- and surname)

general	example	translation	lit.
Name + is + ainm do + Person	Seán (Mac Mathúna) is ainm dom.	I'm (called) Seán (MacMahon).	"Seán (MacMahon) is name to-me"

This clause form is known for its [emphasis](#) on the name at the beginning of the clause (instead of the non-traditional normal clause form "*Is ainm dom Seán")

It is possible also as an indirect relative clause.

e.g.: *an fear darb ainm Seán.* = *The man named Seán.* (lit.: "The man to-him-is name Seán")

Stating the surname

general	example	translation	lit.
is + de + Name + S	Is de Bhriainach mé	I am an Ó Briain	"am from the Brianian I "
is + de mhuintir + Name + S	Is de mhuintir Bhriain mé.	I am an Ó Briain.	"am from Brian's people I."

"belonging to a family" is meaning here more to which "Clan" one belongs (which [surname](#) one has)

This is the common was of stating your last name

Instead of **de mhuintir** (for names with Ó) also **de chlann Mhic** (for names with Mac) or **de chlann Uí** (for names with Ó Maoil)

e.g.: *Is de chlann Mhic Mhathúna mé* = *I am a MacMahon*; *Is de chlann Uí Mhaoil Eoin mé* = *I am an O'Malone*

The copula in interrogative clauses

The copula in simple queries

The object of the question is the predicate, and PSO structure follows the copula. Only in the case of pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person can the (grammat.) subject of the copula directly follow it (*An tú an dochtaír* = *Are you the doctor?*)

A differentiation by classifactorial- und identifications clauses is made using the above models.

In placeve of *is* or *ba* there are also special copular forms (in the form similar to the verbal particle)

Although then there is no eclipsis after an/nach!

tense	interr. form	preceding a vowel	L/E	example
present	affirmative	an	-	An eisean an dochtaír? = Is he the doctor?

	negative	nach		-	Nach eisean an dochtúir? = Is he not the doctor?
preterite/conditional	affirmative	ar	arbh	L!	Ar dhochtúir é? = Was he a doctor?
	negative	nár	nár bh	L!	Nár dhochtúir é? = Wasn't he a doctor?

In Connemara instead of **an** also **ar** (before mé, thú, muid, sibh) or **ab** (vor é/i/iad)

e.g.: Ar mise an dochtúir? = Am I the doctor?

Ab é an dochtúir é? = Is he the doctor?

as well as in place of **ar** also **an mba**, in place of **nár** also **nach mba**

e.g.: An mba é an dochtúir é = Was he the doctor?

"Ar mise an dochtúir?" can also mean "Am I the doctor?"(Connemara) as well as "Was he the doctor?" (standard).

supplementary queries with Cé, Cad, Céard

The **interrogatives cé, cad, céard** make mostly a *copular construction* (interrogative = copula + predicate): "**who/what is**", so that a supplementary answer of the question is made:

1. as a simple subject/predicate of a regular copular clause without a relative clause
 - Cé thusa? = Who are you?, Cé hiad? = Who are they? Cé hí an bhean sin? = Who is this woman?, Cé leis iad? = To whom do they belong?, etc.
2. as a direct relative clause with a verb or copula
 - with -verb e.g. Cé a bhí ann? = Who was here? (lit. "who is (it), that here was") or
 - with -copula e.g.: Cad is fearr leat? = What do you prefer? (lit. "What is (it), (that)-is better with-you")?
3. with forms with a preposition (like e.g. **cé aige, cé air**) as an indirect relative clause with verbs or (rarely) with the copula
 - with -verb e.g. Cé aige a bhfuil an leabhar? = Who has the book?
 - with -copula e.g. Cé leis ar chóir dom gearán a dhéanamh? = To whom should I complain?

1. Query as a regular simple copular clause:

To simplify, one can call these clauses "simple copular clauses".

Because basically, only the copular form "is / ba = is/was" is replaced with the word "**cé / cér(bh)** = who is/was".

1.1. Cé = Who is (in identification clauses)

tense	general	example	translation
present :	cé + hé/hí/hiad + subject cé + hé + subject cé + pronoun	cé hí an bhean sin? cé hé an bhean sin? cé tusa?	Who is the woman? Who is the woman? Who are you?
preterite/conditional:	cérbh + é/i/iad + subject cérbh + é + subject cér + pronoun	cérbh i an bhean sin? cérbh é an bhean sin? cér tusa?	Who was the woman? Who was the woman Who were you?

é/i/iad = subsubject, **é** = predicate (cé in this case copula + subpredicate)

(the combination of cé with a masculine pronoun, also cé hé, is preferred: cé hé an bhean sin) with **cé h-prefix** preceding a vowel in the present.

Besides that, and less commonly, the form **cérbh** is used preceding a vowel in the present: Cé hiad = Cérbh iad? = Who are they? **cérbh** can only be used preceding é/i/iad (or eisean/ise/iadsan).

The questions of ownership and origin (**cé leis and cé as**) are formed as well without a relative clause, but as permanent combinations with the copula (cé leis = lit. "with whom is") and the clause supplementation is carried out *as part* of this copular construction:

Cé leis an leabhar? = To whom does the book belong?

Cé as thú? = Where are you from?

1.2. Cé + article + noun = which, what sort of (in identification clauses)

number	general	example	translation
Singular	cén + predicate + subject	cén leabhar é sin?	Which book is that?
Plural	cé na + predicate + subject	cé na leabhair iad sin?	Which books are those?

cén / cé na (which/what) acts here like an adjective.

Only in this form can the article directly follow the copula (or fuse with it: cé + an = cén)

1.3. Cad / cad é / céard = What is (in classifactorial clauses)

	general	example	translation
Short form	cad + é/i/iad (+ seo/sin/siúd) cad + seo/sin/siúd	cad é seo? cad sin?	What is this? What is that?
Long form	cad é rud + subject cad é rud + pronoun cad é an rud é + subject cad é an rud é + pronoun	cad é rud leabhar? cad é rud sin? cad é an rud é leabhar? cad é an rud é seo?	What is a book? What is that? What is a book? What is this?
others	cad is + subject + ann	cad is leabhar ann?	What is a book?

cad / cad é rud may be replaced by *céard* (= *cén rud*) (*céard* is common in Connemara) e.g. *Céard é?* = What is it?

rud or an rud is equivalent in to the English "sort of a thing" (e.g.: what sort of a thing is that?)

It is something like a subpredicate.

Although *rud = thing* is used, just such a question may refer to people (*Cad é an rud é?* - *Is múinteoir é.* = What is he? - He is a teacher.)

cad is due to the prepositional pronoun *ann* ("in-it") as the end. Also similar are constructions with other prepositions (*Cad is ainm duit?* = What is your name? *Cad is cús leis?* = What is the cause of it?)

The *long forms* are more often used when a definition is requested (as well as the form with *cad is ... ann?*) or then things are asked that can be seen, the *short forms* for things that can be heard.

2. Question with a clause supplement as the direct relative clause

2.1. direct relative clause with verbs

- There follows a relative clause, introduced via the relative particle, affirmative **a** or negative **nach / nár**
e.g. *Cé a bhí ann* = Who is da (lit. "Who is (es), der da is").
- After *cén / cé na* + predicate a relative clause may follow:
e.g.: *Cén leabhar a bhí ann* = Who's book is here?

2.2. direct relative clause with the copula

combinations of *cé/cad* and the following direct relative form of the copula :

tense	vor	general	example	translation
present	consonant	cé is cad is	Cé is fearr leat? Cad is fearr leat	Who do you prefer? What do you prefer?
	vowel	cé is cad is	Cé is ansa leat? Cad is ainm duit?	Who do you love the most? What is your name?
preterite/cond.	consonant	cé ba cad ba	Cé ba mhaith leat? Cad ba mhaith leat?	Who would you like? What would you like?
	vowel / fh	cé ab cad ab	Cé ab fhéarr leat? Cad ab fhéarr leat	Who would you prefer? Was would you prefer?

Such relative clauses occur regularly with adjectives, esp. comparatives (see the examples in the table).

More commonly, they are also with copular-modal constructs (e.g.: *Cad ba chóir dom a dhéanamh?* = What should I do?).

The may also appear with nouns, always with a preposition(-alpronoun) at the end: (*Cé ba chaptæn ort?* = Who was your captain?, *Cad is ainm duit?* = What is your name? and the aforementioned "cad in classifactorial clauses" *Cad is leictreachas ann?* = What is electricity?).

Although not with the pronoun (*cérbh* é not: **cé ba é*).

Instead of **cad** of course also **cad é, céard**

cé may be supplemented by **acu** (= of them): *Cé acu is fearr leat, tae nó caife?* = Which do you prefer, tea or coffee?

3. Question with clause supplements as the indirect relative clause

3.1. *Cé/cad with a prepositional pronoun and following indirect relative clause*

Interrogatives like e.g. **cé aige / cad aige** (by whom, at what), **cé dó / cad dó** (to whom, to what end), **cé air / cad air** (on whom, whereupon), etc. are set combinations, that do not change. After this, an indirect relative clause always follows:

- indirect relative clause with a verb:
e.g. *Cé aige a bhfuil an leabhar?* = Who has the book? (lit. "who by-him, that is the book?")
(comp. accompanying statement clause: *Tá an leabhar aige.* = He has the book.)
- indirect relative clause with the *copula* is rather rare (e.g. with copular -modal constructs):
e.g.: *Cé dó ar cheart é a dhéanamh* = Who should do it? (lit.: "who to-him, that-would right it to do")
(comp. accompanying statement clause: *Ba cheart dó é a dhéanamh* = he should do it)

Exceptions: **Cé leis** (if as a question about ownership), **Cé as** (if as a question about origin) is formed without the relative clause. A relative clause with the copula like those under 3.1. is, in this usage, not very common (e.g. wrong **Cé leis arbh é?*)

The right thing here is a regular simple copular clause: *Cé leis é?* = Whose is it?, *cé as thú* = Where are you from?

Further (less common) exceptions can be seen under section 3.2.

3.2. Special form: *Cé* with the indirect copular relative clause

The forms listed here in the table are only here for purposes of thoroughness. They are rather rare.

In the opposite clause to 3.1., here the interrogative and prepositional pronoun are not permanent, but the prepositional pronoun is already part of the relative clause.

tense	preceding	general	example	translation	literal
present :	consonant	cér*	Cér dióbh thú?	What is your surname?	Who(-COP indir.) from-them you
	vowel	(cérbh)**	Cérbh as duit?	Where are you from?	What(-COP indir.) from-that to-you
preterite/conditional:	consonant	cér*	Cér dióbh é?	What was his surname?	Who(-COP indir.) from-them him
	vowel / fh	(cérbh)**	Cérbh as duit?	Where were you from?	What(-COP indir.) from-that to-you

* *cér* stands actually only before *dióbh* in questions of family origin.

** *cérbh* / *cérbh* except in this expression (from Ulster) is rather unusual (hence the parentheses)

Due to the "duit" = lit. "to you", a possible form of the subject in the statement of origin (Is as ... dom = I am from ...), an indirect relative clause is

necessary, not due to "as"!

supplementary queries with Cá = "where is"

This is also a copular construction, so the continuation of the question is only possible as:

- an *indir. relative clause*.
 - with *-verbs* (cá fuses with a / ar to become the [verbal particle](#) cá / cár e.g.: Cá bhfuil tú = *Where are you?* Cár chuir tú é = *Where have you put it?*) or
 - with *-copula* (see below)

when as the relative clause with the copula :

Combinations of cá and following the *indir. relative form of the copula* : **cár** (= cá + ar, **cár** preceding a vowel)

tense	cá + ar	preceding a vowel	L/E	example
present	cár	cár b	-	cár eisean an dochtaír? = <i>Where is he the doctor?</i>
preterite/cond.	cár	cár bh	L!	cár mhaith leat dul inniu? = <i>Where do you want to go today?</i>

supplementary queries with Cá = "wie is"

Cá is a copular construction as well, so the continuation of the question is only possible as:

- adjective within *des cá-copular clauses* , whereby the h-prefix precedes a vowel: Cá hard é? = *how high is it?*
- or with a [gradual abstract noun](#)
- **cá + a (his) + substantive adjective + direct relative clause**
here the *combination* of cá + a to become cá, so this cá requires lenition (like a alone):
Cá mhinice a dúirt mé leat é? = *How often have I told you?* (lit. "how is its frequency, that I it said to you")

supplementary queries with Cá = "what is", "which is "

Cá is used in Ulster sometimes in place of *cad/céard* and *cén*.

This is also a copular construction, so the continuation of the question is only possible as:

- Part of the copular clause: cá haois é = *"which age is he"* = *how old is he?* or as a
- *indir. relative clause!* with a verb or the copula

answers to copular questions

to supplementary queries

Necessarily, a normal clause follows (with or without a copula) which explains the matter, or an appropriate short answer.

e.g.:

Cén fear é? - (Is é) Séamas (é). = *Which man is it?* - (It is) Séamas.
Cén fear atá ann? - Pól agus Micheál (atá ann). = *Which man is here?* - Paul and Michael (are here).

to simple queries

In German and English, one answers these questions with **yes** or **no**. In Irish, there is no simple yes or no!
Hence, the following answer possibilities:

- On principle, the predicate together with an appropriate form of the copula is repeated.
The copula alone is not acceptable as an answer.
- If the predicate is a *definite noun*, an appropriate personal pronoun is used instead ([é/í/iad](#)).
If the predicate is an *indefinite noun*, one uses **ea = es**.
- The answers given are just short answers (equivalents to "yes"/"no"). Of course, the answer may be explained or supplemented (e.g. with *agus*) or in the case of negation, an alternative offered (most simply with *ach*)
e.g.: An múinteoir é Pól? - Ní hea, ach dochtaír. = *Is Paul a teacher?* - No, he's a doctor.
An scéalaí í Máire? - Sea, agus mise. = *Is Mary a storyteller?* - Yes, and me too.
- In the table are only the present-copular forms. Of course, also the appropriate preterite/conditional-forms are possible
e.g.: Ar mhúinteoir í Máire? - Ba ea. = *Was Máire a teacher?* - Yes, she was.

type of question	yes / no	answer	example
<i>identification (is X the Y?)</i>	yes	Is + pers.pron.	An é Pól an dochtaír? - Is é. = <i>Is Paul the doctor?</i> - yes
	no	Ní + pers.pron.	An é Pól an múinteoir? - Ní hé. = <i>Is Paul the teacher?</i> - no
<i>classification (is X a Y?)</i>	yes	Is ea	An dochtaír é Pól? - Sea. = <i>Is Paul a doctor?</i> - yes
	no	Ní hea	An múinteoir é Pól? - Ní hea = <i>Is Paul a teacher?</i> - no
<i>with adjective as the predicate</i>	yes	Is + adj.	An deas é an duine? - Is deas. = <i>Is the person nice?</i> ! - yes
	no	Ní + adj.	Nach deas é an duine? - Ní deas = <i>Is the person not nice?</i> - no
<i>with adjective as the attribute</i>	yes	Is ea	An duine deas é? - Sea. = <i>Is he a nice person?</i> - yes
	no	Ní hea	Nach duine deas é? - Ní hea. = <i>Is he not a nice person?</i> - no
<i>with le (questions of ownership)</i>	yes	Is + le + pron.	An leatsa an leabhar? - Is liom. = <i>Does this book belong to you?</i> - yes

	no	Ní + le + pron.	An le Pól an teach seo? - Ní leis. = Does this house belong to Paul? - no
in copular -modal constructs	yes	Is + adj. etc*	An féidir leat é a scriobh? - Is féidir. = Could you write that down? - yes
	no	Ní + adj. etc*	An maith leat caife? - Ní maith. = Do you like coffee? - no

is ea is contracted to: sea

*: In adjective clauses with le and do, this is readily repeated in the answer (is actually part of the predicate):
e.g.: An maith leat caife? - Is maith liom. = Do you like coffee? - Yes.

emphasis in the copular clause

An important use of the copula is the emphasis of single clause terms, that shift to the beginning of the clause. With that, in non-copular clauses the [PSO-syntax](#) can be skirted (cleft- und pseudo-cleft clause, see: [change in the word order in a clause - with help of the copula](#)). These and other forms of the clause rearrangement can also be applied to the copular clause itself.

emphasis in various copular clauses (cleft- und pseudo-cleft clause)

The **cleft clause** can also be used even in the copular clause itself:

Then the form is: is + word to be emphasized preceding the clause (also in the preterite/conditional one rather uses is)

examples:

normal copular clause

Is maith liom í. = I like her.

Ba mhaith liom é. = I would like it.

Ba cheart iad a bheith aige = He should have it

emphasis

Is ise is maith liom. = Her I like .

Is liomsa ba mhaith é. = I would like it.

Is aige ba cheart iad a bheith = He should have it.

Sometimes, this syntax is constantly used, e.g. in clauses about names:

e.g.: Seán is ainm dó. = His name is Seán. (instead of: *Is ainm dó Seán.)

Clauses with interrogatives and the copular relative clause use also this syntax of a split clauses.

e.g.: Cad ba mhaith leat? = What would you like?

pseudo-cleft clauses occur less commonly in copular clauses. The construction is rather simple.

e.g. Séard i fén dochtaír. = That, what she is, is a doctor.

(normal syntax: Is dochtaír í. = She's a doctor.)

emphasis in classificatorial clauses (left shift)

Here is a syntax that, due to its frequency, has already been mentioned by the [classificatorial clauses](#). It demonstrates a rearrangement ([left shift](#)) of the predicate with the following unaltered copular clause, in which the predicate is represented by the antecedent pronoun ea (= "it").

clauseform	gen.	example	translation
normal:	Is + P + é/i/iad + S	Is dochtaír é an fear	The man is (a) doctor
hervorg. predicate:	P + is + ea + S	Dochtaír is ea an fear	The man is (a) doctor

A literal translation for this would be:

Dochtaír is ea an fear = "A doctor, is it the man"

This sort of emphasis only occurs in affirmative clauses.

It is primarily used in the dialect of Munster and suppressed there the "normal" clause form completely; there it is no longer seen as emphatic.

A subsubject (**é/i/iad**) as in "normal" classificatorial clauses is in the left shift unnecessary (because yes ea stands between copula and subject), and is omitted.

Cleft clauses demonstrate indeed a copular clause. Similar to classificatorial clauses, also here a left shift is possible. With adverbs and adverbial provisions, ea appears as the antecedent pronoun.

"normal" cleft clause: Is abhaile a théann an fear = It is homeward that the man goes.

left shift: Abhaile is ea a théann an fear = Homeward it is that the man goes.

Caibidil a Cúig

The prepositions (na Réamhfhocail)

Many prepositions in Irish form combinations with personal pronouns (so-called "*prepositional pronouns*") or with other words, they are then in that sense *conjugated*. Some prepositions require [lenition](#) or [eclipsis](#) or even the [genitive](#). The usage of the prepositions sometimes differs greatly from the German or English counterparts. Some form certain important expressions and an alternative for non-present verbs like "to have", "to own", "to want" etc, so that they are handled here. The given translations and uses are only to be seen as a guide and are by no means complete.

conjugated prepositions (réamhfhocail réimníthe)

[ag](#), [ar](#), [as](#), [chun/chuig](#), [de](#), [do](#),

[fara](#), [faoi](#), [i](#), [idir](#), [ionsar](#), [le](#),

[ó](#), [roimh](#), [tri](#), [thar](#), [um](#)

[combinations of the prepositional pronouns](#)

unconjugated prepositions (réamhfhocail neamhréimnithe)

[a](#), [dar](#), [is](#), [gan](#), [go](#) [dtí](#), [mar](#), [os](#), [seachas](#)

genitive prepositions (réamhfhocail ghinideacha)

[chun](#), [trasna](#), [tar éis](#), [cois](#), [tigh](#), [timpeall](#), [fearacht](#)

[derived prepositions](#) (réamhfhocail chomhshuite)

miscellaneous

[alternative for the preposition "for"](#)

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

ag = at, by

Although written as **ag**, the preposition is mostly spoken as [eg'] (as if it were written **aig** or **eig**) (In use in the progressive of verbs it is them pronounced [@], or [@g] or [@g'] preceding a vowel. After a vowel, it is mostly muted.)

Except in the progressive, **aige** is used in Munster instead of *ag* (there also combinations with the article: **aigen** = *ag an*, **aigesna** = *ag na*)

Case

ag requires the dative.

Initial Mutations:

- without article: **keine lenition / eclipsis** e.g.: *ag Seán*
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** (except d,t) e.g.: *ag an bhfeair = by the man*
 - only in Munster d,t also eclipses
 - in Connacht, t-prefix precedes feminine nouns with s-: *ag an tsúil*
 - in Ulster, always **lenition**: *ag an fhearr*

Interrogative:

- Cé / cad aige** + indirect relative clause = by whom, at what?
- Cé acu** + direct relative clause = which, which of...?
- Cé agaibh/acu** + direct relative clause = who of us/you/them? (also: **cé acu agaibh/acu**)

Combined with the personal pronoun (so-called. prepositional pronoun):

-	general	contrast form	translation
I	agam	agamsa	at me
you	agat	agatsa	at you
he	aige	aigesean	at him
she	aici	aicise	at her
we	againn	againne	at us
you(pl)	agaibh	agaibhse	at you
they	acu	acusan	at them

Occasionally (Connemara) one finds short forms ('am /'amsa, 'ad / 'adsa, 'ainn / 'ainne instead of agam/agamsa, agat/agatsa, againn/againne.

Because Munster the form *aige* (ending in a vowel) is used, there also combinations with the possessive pronoun occur (**aigena, aigenár** = at his, at our, etc.)

Uses:

1. **spatial location:** *by, at* close proximity: ag an fear = at the man's
2. **temporal:** *at:* ag a trí a chlog = at 3 O'clock
3. with the verbal noun: progressive: tá mé ag ithe = *I'm eating right now* (lit.: "am I at eating ")
(whereby here *ag* is more seen as the particle, which has little or nothing to do with the base meaning of the preposition)
4. have: tá + noun + ag...
 - e.g.: tá teach aige = he has a house
but also extended:
 - languages, qualities can ("have"): tá Gaeilge agam = *I speak Irish*, tá snámh aige = *he can swim*
 - allowed to ("have permission "): tá cead ag
 - **love** ("to have love "): tá grá ag **subject ar object**, e.g. tá grá agam uirthi = *I love her*
 - **desire** ("to have desire in"): tá dúil ag **subject i object**
 - to be **interested** ("to have interest"): tá súim ag... ("have interest ")
 - **have** in the sense of a perfect construct with **verbal adjectives**: tá an bord briste agam = *I have broken the table* (actually passive: *the table has been broken by me*, see: agent notation)
5. with adjectives: nice **of**: go deas ag...; easy **for**, good for, pointless for...; difficult for...: éasca ag..., maith ag..., trom ag, etc.
6. **part of** (in the **partitive dative** instead of the more common preposition de): many, some, an amount **of** them: go leor acu, roinnt acu, neart acu, neart ag tithe = *a bunch of houses* (but mostly only the 3 plural pronouns agaibh, acu, with nouns more often *de* instead of *ag*)
7. as a **substitute for a possessive pronoun**, if a demonstrative pronoun (seo, sin) appears: *an teach sin 'amsa* = *this my house*
or if with the superlative: *mac is sine atá agam* = *my oldest son*
8. **denoting the agent:** **adjective + ag**: tinn ag an ngrian = *sick from the sun*, tá tinneas cinn orm aige = *I have a headache because of him*
 - also noting the agent in perfect-/passive clauses **verbal adjective + ag**: briste ag Máirtín = *broken by Martin*
9. **ag seo, ag sin** = here is, there is....
10. **tá sé ina acu** = they see him as ("he is a to them ")
11. **níl agat ach...** = you just have to...
12. with **verbs**: *clois ag* = *hear from*, *faigh ag* = *receive from*, *fág ag* = *leave with*,
13. in Connacht, Ulster also as a substitute for the preposition chuig (fusion due to pronunciation: *chuig* > *ag*)

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

ar = on

Even though written as **ar**, the preposition is mostly spoken as [er'] (as if it were written as **air**)

Case

ar requires the dative.

Initial Mutations

- without article: **lenition** (with **non-general** terms) *ar chios mór* = *for a high rent*
- without article: **no lenition** (with abstract, gen. terms and with descriptions of a state, if without a further attribute) *ar cíos* = *rented*, *ar muir* = *at sea*
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** (except d, t) *ar an mbord* = *on the table*
 - only in Munster also d,t are eclipsed
 - in Connacht t-prefix preceding femin. nouns with s-: *ar an tsúil* = *on the eye*
 - in Ulster always **lenition**: *ar an bhord*

Interrogative

- cé/cad air** (+ indirect relative clause)? = for what... ?

combined with personal pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pronoun	translation
I	orm	ormsa	on me	ar mo	on my
you	ort	ortsá	on you	ar do	on your
he	air	airsean	on him	ar a / arna	on his
she	uirthi	uirthise	on her	ar a / arna	on her
we	orainn	orainne	on us	ar ár / arnár	on our
you (pl.)	oraibh	oraibhse	on you	ar bhur	on your
they	orthu	orthusan	on them	ar a / arna	on their

The forms **arna**, **arnár** are only used in combination with the verbal noun ("[afterwards](#)"), otherwise **ar a**, **ar ár** is used

(*arna* appears also in the expression *an lá arna mhárach* = *tomorrow*)

use:

- spatially on** something (on top of: *ar an mbord* = *on the table*), **in** something (cities: *ar an mbaile*)
- wearing **clothing** etc.: **Tá...ar...**, to put on clothing: **cuir....ar...**, take off clothing : see [de](#)
- have tá...ar**
 - appearance** (complexion, looks, features etc.)

- also **parts of things** : *tá doirse ar an teach* = *the house has doors*
- **phys./psych. conditions and emotions** (sicknesses, problems, joy, thirst, fear, pity, etc.) : : *tá áthas orm* = *I am happy ("is happiness upon me ")*
- to **have a name (be named)**: *Máirtín atá air* = *his name is Martin*

4. **attainment** of such conditions, symptoms: **cuir...ar** = to get: *Chuir sé fearg orm* = *he made me angry*
5. **to affix , hold onto**: *ar teaghrán* = *on a noose, chain, ar srian* = *bridled*
6. **price: for** (an amount of money): *ar phunt* = *for a pound, tá punt ar an t-ull* = *the apple costs a pound*
7. **dimensions in**: *ar airde* = *in height, ar fad* = *in length*
8. **participation /membership in**: *ar scoil* = *(to go) to school*
9. **classificatory clause without the copula** (part of a whole): *tá sé ar na fir is mó* = *he is one of the biggest men*

10. **identificatory clause without the copula**

- (with the superlative): *tá sé ar an bhfear is mó acu* = *he is the bigger/biggest man of them*
- (with ordinal numbers): **to be the 1st, 2nd, 3rd ...** : *bhí sé ar an dara fear a tháinig* = *he was the 2nd man that came*

11. **must**: **tá ar...** *Tá orm bainne a ól* = *I have to drink milk*
12. **responsibility for**: *tá a báis ort* = *you're responsible for her death*
13. **disadvantage**: e.g. *spóirt ag Cáit ar Seán* = *Cáit's fun at Seán's cost or: bhí sé ag briseadh fuinneogai ort* = *he's broken your window*
14. **indir. object after tá...ag** (= "have") **tá....ag... ar...**: e.g.: *Tá buiochas agam ar Cháit.* : *I'm thankful to Cait, tá airgead agam ort* = *you owe me money ("I have money on you ")*, *tá grá agam ort* = *I love you ("I have love on you ")*
15. with **verbs** : **iarr ar...** = *to ask someone, féach ar...* = *to look at something, tosaigh ar...* = *to begin, glaoigh ar...* = *to ring someone*
16. with definite nouns: **feabhas ar...** = *an improvement in...*
17. **similarity**, to be **like**: *ar dháth an róis* = *rose-coloured, ar dhéanamh báid* = *boat-shaped*
18. **equality**: *fear ar d'ainm* = *a man of your name / who has the same name as you*
19. **probability**: **tá baisteach air** = *it looks like rain, it will probably rain, tá cogadh air* = *there'll likely be a war*
20. **within** (as far as) *ar amharc* = *in sight, ar éisteacht* = *within earshot*
21. **ar meisce** = *drunk, ar buile* = *crazy, ar fheabhas* = *fabulous etc.*
22. **activity by** (with the verbal noun): *ar an obair* = *at work, working (comp. dt. Partizip I)*
23. **dependence on**: *ar arán* = *(to live) on bread , ar thoil (Dé)* = *depending on the will of (God)*
24. **because , for** : *ar ghrá Dé* = *for the love of God, ar a thuarastal* = *for his pay*
25. **result: on** *ar a iarratas* = *on his application*
26. by **numbers**: **and**: *duine ar fhichid* = *21 people* (lit.: "one on twenty ")
by **arithmetic**: **divided by** : *a sé ar a trí sin a dó* = $6 : 3 = 2$
27. **up to/away from** : *thuas air* = *south of, ar aghaidh* = *forwards, amach ar an doras* = *out the door*
28. **temporal around/at**: *ar maidin* = *in the morning, ar a dó a chlog* = *at 2 O'clock*
29. with verbal nouns: **after**: *arna criochnú dom* = *after I had ended it* (as a replacement of the old preposition iar)
30. **about** something: *scéal ar* = *a story about, ainm ar* = *a name for, cúis dlí ar* = *charges against*
31. **authority over**: *rí ar Sasana* = *King of England*
32. **advantage over**: *tá bliain agam air* = *I am one year older than him* ("I have one year in advantage over him "). *bhí deich nóiméad aige orm* = *he had a 10 minute head start on me*
33. with an **adjective**: *santach ar* = *greedy for, maith ar* = *good for, etc.*
34. strengthening of the **imperative**: *scríobh ort!* = *write! (write already!, well, write!)*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

as = out

Case

as requires the dative.

Initial Mutations

- without an article: no lenition/eclipsis e.g. *as baile* = out of a city
- with the article: **eclipsis** (except d, t) e.g.: *as an mbaile* = out of the city
 - only in Munster, d,t also eclipses
 - in Connacht, a t-prefix precedes a femin. noun with s-: *as an tsúil*
 - in Ulster, always **lenition**: *as an bhaile*

Interrogative:

- cé/cad as** ? = from where, out of where?

Combined with personal pronouns:

	general	contrast form	translation
I	asam	asamsa	out of me
you	asat	asatsa	out of you
he	as	as-san	out of him, from that
she	aisti	aistise	out of her
we	asainn	asainne	out of us
you (pl)	asaibh	asaibhse	out of you
they	astu	astusan	out of them

Use:

- spatial/applied: out**, out of
- origin from**: from Dublin, etc. (with the copula!) Is as Béal Feirste é = He is from Belfast
- starting point of a motion from**: *as sin go Éirinn* = from there to Ireland, *i bhfad as seo* = far from here
- constitution out of**: out of fabric / material *as an éadach*
- origin: out of/from** :
 - origin of something **sensory**: e.g. *Tá baladh as an madadh* = the dog smells, *Tá cor as an cáca* = the cake is moving
 - origin of a **name**: *baisteadh as a athair é* = one named him **after** his father
 - origin of **knowledge**: *aithním as a shúil é* = I recognized him **by** his stride
 - origin of a **deduction**: *tuigim as* = that's how I understand it
 - psych. origin **of an action** : as *fearg* = out of anger, etc.

- origin of **pride, gratitude** : tá bród orm asat = I am proud **of** you ("is pride on me out of you "), go raibh maith agat as an obair seo = thank you **for** this work ("that be goodness by you out of the work this ")

6. **in / with a medium**: *nigh as uisce* é = wash it in (with) water
7. **in a language** : *as Gaeilge* = in Irish, *as Gearmáinis* = in German
8. **locational information about a quality (on/at)**: *géar as an mbarr* = sharp **at** the tip
9. **gen. out of** : *as amharc* = out of sight, *as cuimse* = off the scale (opposite in = ar: ar amharc = in sight)
10. **outside of a normal function** : *as ordú* = out of order, *as úsaid* = out of use, *as bealach* = off-track (=being wrong/following a misconception)
11. **lack of**: *as obair* = **out of work** , *tá ... as ...* = **not have** (as opposed to *tá ... ag* = have)
12. **out of** : *as guais* = out of danger, *as an imirt* = out of the game
13. **selection of**: *bain rogha as* = choose out of, *duine as béirt* = one of the two
14. **engagement in** : *tá as rud* = to be into something ("to get something *out of* something")
15. **adverbial to be off**: *Tá as*, *Tá an raidió as* = the radio is off, **turn off**: *cas ... as*, *Chas mé an tine as* = I put out the fire
16. **adverbial to not belong, be out** : *tá mé as* = I'm out .
17. **adverbial alone**: *as féin*: *tá mé ag súil as féin* = I walk alone
18. **adverbial be alone** : *tá as ... féin*, e.g. *Tá asainn féin anois* = we're alone now

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

chun, chuig = to, towards

chun stems from **dochum** < *tochim*, an Old Irish verbal noun ("to step towards"), this is why it required the genitive. Prior to the spelling reform: **chum**

The form *chuig* is a reversion of the personal form of the 3rd person *chuige*.

The personal forms once belonged to the preposition with the same meaning **go** = to (Old Irish. *co*), the forms came about in relevance to the forms of *ag*.

In Munster, *chun* is actually pronounced [xun], in Connacht and Ulster only [un] or [@n].

Case

chun (moreso in Munster and in the standard) requires the **genitive**,
chuig (in Connacht and Ulster) requires the **dative** (in the dialect of Clare, *chuig* also takes the genitive)

Initial Mutations after *chuig*

- without an article: no lenition or eclipsis e.g. *chuig cailín* = to a girl
- with the singular-article: **eclipsis** (except d,t) e.g. *chuig an gcailín* = to the girl
 - in Munster, d,t also eclipses
 - in Connacht, **t-prefix** precedes femin. nouns with s-: *chuig an tsúil*
 - in Ulster, always **lenition** e.g.: *chuig an chailín*

Initial Mutations after *chun*

- without the article: **genitive**, without lenition e.g.: *chun buachalla* = to a boy
- with the article: **genitive** e.g.: *chun an bhuauchalla* = to the boy
 (*chun an/chun na* both in Ulster > **'na**, e.g.: *dul chun an chnoic > goil 'na chnoic* = go to the hill)

Interrogative

- Cé / cad chuige** = to whom, why?

Combination of *chuig/chun* with personal pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation
I	chugam	chugamsa	to me
you	chugat	chugatsa	to you
he	chuige	chuigesean	to him
she	chuici	chuicise	to her
we	chugainn	chugainne	to us
you(pl)	chugaibh	chugaibhse	to you
they	chucu	chucusan	to them

In Connacht/Ulster: chuir > [huig] > **ag**. In place of **chuig** also **ag** is used.

By pronominal forms, often those with h (*hagam, agam* statt *chugam* etc.) are found in Munster, the g is mostly(except in the 3rd pers. sg.) lenited: **chugham, chughat, chuige, chuichi, chughainn, chughaibh, chuchu**

Use

1. **directional to:** e.g.: *scríobh chugam* = write to me, *dul chuig an dochúir* = go to the doctor
also applied: *cuir chun báis* = **to** bring s.o. to their death, *dul chun olcais* = to turn bad, *dul chun dearmaid* = to be forgotten, *chun bealaigh* = **on** the way
2. also with town names with an article **to:** *chun na Fraince* = to France (instead of *chun* also do, go dtí is possible)
3. **cause for, because :** *rinne muid chuig glóire Dé é* = we did it for the Glory of God
4. **chuige** = especially (Adverb)
5. **proximity on, by** *chun na gaoithe* = **close to** the wind, *chun mo laimhe* = **near to** my hand
6. *chugat leat* = away with you!
7. **temporal until, as soon as :** *chun gur ghlaigh an coileach* = no sooner did the cock crow
8. **temporal by time of day before** a ceathrú chun a dó = quarter to two (here also: a ceathrú don dó) or **almost, nearly** tá sé chun a dó = it is almost 2 O'clock.
9. **with the verbal noun: "in order to" (intention,purpose):** *chuig/chun an fhírinne a rá* = (in order) to tell the truth, *chun teanga a fhoghlaim* = (in order) to learn a language, after *chun here*, mostly **no genitive** (instead of *chun*, also le)
10. **with the verbal noun: "ready to" (prepared / suitable for):** *tá an féar chun bainte* = the grass is high enough to be cut; *réidh chun ...* = ready to,fear chun cainte = a man to talk, *lá chun taistil* = a day to travel, *an aimsir chuige* = fitting weather

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

de = of

In Munster, de and do are used one and the same

Case

de requires the dative

Initial Mutations after de

- without an article: **lenition**: e.g. *de thír* = *of a country*
- with the singular article: **lenition**: e.g. *den Ghearmáin* = *of Germany* (in Dingle partially eclipsis)
- with the singular article preceding s: **t-prefix**: e.g.: *den tsagart* = *of a priest*

de preceding a vowel and fh

- de** becomes: **d'** e.g. *d'Úna* = *of Úna* (form is the same as the preposition do!)

Frage

- Cé / cad de** = of whom, of what?

combined with the article

- de + an: **den**
- de + na: **de na** (also: **des na, desna**)

combined with personal pronouns and possessive pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pron .	translation
I	díom	díomsa	of me	de mo (dem)	of my
you	díot	díotsa	of you	de do (ded)	of your
he	de	desean	of him	dá	of his
she	di	dise	of her	dá	of her
we	dínn	dínne	of us	dár	of our
you(pl)	díbh	díbhse	of you	de bhur	of your
they	díobh	díobhsan	of them	dá	of their

The pronominal forms often occur **lenited**, especially after vowels and slender consonants (**dhíom** instead of *díom*, **dhá** instead of *dá*, etc.)

In Connemara there are often also so-called short forms: **'íot, 'íom, 'e, 'í, 'inn, 'íbh, 'íobh**

but the forms of do are also in use (**dom/dhom** instead of **díom/dhíom**)

Partially, in Munster **dem** and **ded** (dom, dod) are used instead of *de mo* and *de do*, in Ulster **dena** instead of *dá*.

combined with the indirect relative particle, *and with the indirect relative form of the copula*

tense	relative particle (de + a/ar)	copular form (de + ar)	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	dá	dar	darb	of him/of her
preterite	dar	dar	darbh	of him/of her

combined with the general relative pronoun

tense	rel. pron. (de + a/ar)	translation
present	dá	of all that
preterite	dar	of all that

Use

1. **spatial, extended distance from** (similar to [ó](#): there however the point of origin is in the foreground): *titim den chathaoir = to fall off the chair; bhriseadh den chrann = to break off of a tree, stad den ól = to stay away from drinking*
to take **off** clothing: *bain dhíot an cóta = take your coat off*
2. **partitive dative (part of a whole)** instead of the [partitive genitive](#)): *cuid de na daoine = some of the people, triúr de na mná = three of the women*, (sometimes also [ag](#) but mostly only with pers.pron plur.: *go leor acu = many of you, but: go leor dhe = lots of it!*)
3. **content** (following the verb líon de = fill with):
4. **appositional umbrella term** : mostly in metaphor. use: e.g.: *gliogar de chathaoir = a cripple of a chair, amadán de mhac = an idiot of a son*
5. **material, cause, instrument** : *tuirseach den chaint = tired of talking, buille de mhaide = whack of a stick, iorna de shnáth = ball of yarn, rinneadh d'adhmad é = one made it out of wood*
6. **sudden movement with**: *de léim (with a leap), de phlump (with a bang), d'arraidh amhain (in one blow) = suddenly*
7. **origin of**: *duine den seanreacht = someone of the old regime, fear de Bhrianach = a man of the O'Briens*
8. **thankfulness for** someone.: *buioch de*
9. often **in names of anglo-norman origin** (from French: de, Engl: the): *de Búrca = Burke ("de Bourg"), de Buitléir = Butler ("Bouteillier, the Butler")*
10. with **verbs** : *ceangail de = connect to, greamaigh de = tie to, líon de = fill with, lean de = continue with*
11. with **directional adverbs**: *laistigh de = outside of, taobh thuaidh de = north(side) of*
12. with the [general relative pronoun](#) **on, of** : *Feiceann tú a bhfuil d'fhir ann = you see what for men there are or: Feiceann tú fear dá bhfuil ann = you see a man of all there are*
13. with the [abstract noun](#) (in combination with a: **dá**):
 - **however**: *dá dheacreacht é = however difficult it may be*
 - **the ... the** : *dá dheacreacht é is ea is fearr = the more difficult, the better*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

do = to, for

In Connacht, *do* is pronounced [g@], as if it were written **go**, but it differs from the homophonous preposition **go** in that lenition follows (go doesn't lenite).

In Munster, **de** and *do* are interchangeable.

Case

do requires the dative

Initial Mutations after do

- without the article: **lenition** e.g. *do Sheán* = to Séan
- with the singular article: **lenition** e.g. *dón mháthair* = to mother (in Dingle sometimes **eclipsis**)
- with the singular article after s: **t-prefix** e.g.: *dón tsagart* = to the priest

do preceding a vowel and fh

- do* becomes: **d'** e.g. *d'Una* = to Una, *d'fhear* = for a man (form is the same as the preposition **de**!)

Interrogative

- Cé/cad dó** = to whom, where to, why, whom?

Combined with the article

- do* + an: **don**
- do* + na: **do na** (also **dos na, dosna**)

Combined with personal pronouns and possessivir pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pron	translation
I	dom	domhsa	to me	do mo (dom)	to my
you	duit	duitse	to dir	do do (dod)	to your
he	dó	dósan	to him	dá	to his
she	di	dise	to her	dá	to her
we	dúinn	dúinne	to us	dár	to our
you(pl)	daoibh	daoibhse	to you	do bhur	to your
they	dóibh	dóibhsean	to them	dá	to their

The forms often occur lenited, esp. after vowels and slender consonants (**dhom** instead of *dom*, **dhá** instead of *dá* etc.).

in *Conamara* also the short forms ('om, 'uit, 'ó, 'i, 'úinne, 'aoibh, 'óibh)

in *Ulster* **domh** or **damh** instead of *dom*, **dona** instead of *dá*.

in *Munster* **dom** and **dod** (instead of *do mo* and *do do*)

As the object of a verbal noun, **á** instead of **dá**

Combined with the indir. relative particle and with the indir. relative form of the copula

tense	relative part. (do + a/ar)	copular form (do + ar)	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	dá	dar	darb	to it
preterite	dar	dar	darbh	to it

Use

1. **indirect dative-object**: like the German dative without a preposition (for general "benefit" of a person/thing of an action): *scriobh mé leitir dhuit* = *I wrote you a letter*, but if the spatial goal is in the foreground: *scriobh leitir chugat* (see [chuig](#))
2. in certain [verbal noun constructions](#) preceding the subject ("dative subject"), e.g.: **thar éis + verbal noun+ do + subject = afterwards.**
3. in copular clauses with adjectives: *is breá do* = *it is nice for...*, *ar leor do* = *it is enough for...*, *ní gá dhuit* = *it is not necessary for you*, *is fiú (do...)* = *it's worth it (for...)*, *is fíor do* = *to be right*, also as a substitute for modals:
must: **b'éigean do...** (lit.: *it would be necessary for*)
should: **is ceart do...** (lit.: *it would be right for*)
4. **do + possessive pronoun** in the progressive **as a substitute of the personal pronoun**: as the object. e.g.: *Tá mé do do bhualadh* = *I'm hitting you*
5. in Munster, partially still in place of the short form **a** in [infinitive constructions](#) with the verbal noun ("infinitive with to") e.g.: *chun Gaeilge d'fhoghlaím* = *in order to learn Irish*
6. **time of day** : with an indep. number (with the article): *a ceathrú don trí* = *quarter to three* (also [chun](#))
7. with certain verbs: *inis do...* = *tell someone*, *tabhair do...* = *give someone*, *lig do* = *leave someone*, *taspeáin do...* = *show someone*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

fara = *together with, beside*

fara is actually a sub form of *ar* (Old Irish *for*), also **fré, fre, farae**

Today, *fara* is rare and probably most commonly in use in Munster (Alternative: *in éineacht le*)

Case

fara requires the dative

Initial Mutations

- without article: **no lenition or eclipsis**
- with article: **no lenition or eclipsis**

Combinations with the article:

- fara* + *an*: **fairis an**
- fara* + *na*: **fairis na**

Combinations with personal pronouns:

-	general	contrast form	translation
I	faram	faramsa	beside me
you	farat	faratsa	beside you
he	fairis	fairis-san	beside him
she	farae	faraese	beside her
we	farainn	farainne	beside us
you(pl.)	faraibh	faraibhse	beside you
they	faru	farusan	beside them

fre has similar forms to *le*: *freis* instead of *leis*

Instead of *faram*, *farat*, etc. also *fara liom*, *fara leat*, etc. is used, or completely without *fara*: Forms of *in éineacht le*

With possessive pronouns, also combined forms may occur in Munster (**farana** = beside his, etc.)

Use:

- together with**, in the company of e.g: *Bhí Mícheál faru* = Michael was with them
- as much as, beside**: *fara cabhair Dé* = with the help of God; *punt fara do cheart* = a pound **more than** is coming to you ("aside of that what your right")
- beside, compared to** : *is beag é fara a bhfuair tusa* = it is little compared to that which you got , **fara a bheith...** = instead of being ,
- fairis sin > freis sin > freisin** = also,too (lit.: "beside that ")

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

faoi = under, about

Case

faoi requires the dative

Variations

faoi is the Connacht- and standard form

fé (in Munster), **fá** (old standard form), less common also **fó**, **fí**

in Ulster both **faoi** (in the sense of "under") and **fá** (in the sense of "over", "above") are in use

Initial Mutations

- without the article: **lenition**
- with the article: **eclipsis** (except d, t) e.g.: *faoin mbord* = under the table
 - only in Munster, also d, t eclipses
 - in Connacht t-prefix precedes femin. nouns with s-: *faoin tsúil* = under the eye
 - in Ulster, always **lenition**: *faoin bhord*

Interrogative:

- cé/cad faoi** + indirect relative clause = under what?

Combined with the article

- faoi + an = **faoin**
- faoi + na = **faoi na**

Combined with personal pronouns and possessive pronouns:

-	personal pron.	contrast form	translation	possessive pron.	translation
I	fúm	fúmsa	under me	faoi mo	under my
you	fút	fútsa	under you	faoi do	under your
he	faoi	faoisean	under him	faoina	under his
she	fúithi	fúithise	under her	faoina	under her
we	fúinn	fúinne	under us	faoinár	under our
you(pl)	fúibh	fúibhse	under euch	faoi bhur	under your
they	fúthu	fúthusan	under them	faoina	under their

Combined with the indirect relative particle **a** and with the indirect relative form of the copula

tense	relative part. faoi + a/ar	copular form faoi + ar	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	faoina	faoinar	faoinarb	under him/her/it
preterite	faoinar	faoinar	faoinarbh	under him/her/it

e.g.: *cathaoir faoina bhfuil mo leabhar* = the chair under which my book is (instead of more common: *cathaoir a bhfuil mo leabhar faoi*) ; *an creann faoina raibh fás* = the tree that grew ("the tree, under which growth was ")

Use:

1. **spatial: under:** *faoin gcatthaoir* = under the chair
2. **contact: against:** *faoin mballa* = against the wall
3. **motion:** walking , hurry, growth, etc.: *tá siúl fím* = I walk fast, *tá fuadar fút* = you're in a hurry, *tá fás faoin gcrann* = the tree grows
4. **intent:** *Tá fúm...* = I intend... e.g.: *tá fút teacht* = you intend to come
5. **topic, occasion: about:** *caint faoi ...* = speak about, *imni faoi...* = worry about, *áthas faoi...* = joy over..., *brón faoi ...* = sorrow over
6. **approximate timepoint :** *around* *faoi Nollaig* = around Christmastide
7. **with numbers: times:** *faoi dhó* = two times, *faoi sé* = six times ,
also in **arithmetic:** *a trí faoina ceathair sin a dó dhéag* = three times four is twelve
8. Expressions: *faoi bhrón* = sad

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

i = in

The pronunciation of *i* is not [i] but a short [@], as if it were written **a** (and so it is in older literature)

Case

i requires the dative or the accusative, but without the differentiation in location and movement as in German

Initial Mutations after i

- without an article: **eclipsis** e.g. *i gCeanada* = *in Canada*
- with the singular article: **lenition** e.g. *sa Ghearmáin* = *in Germany*
 - in Munster **f eclipses**: *sa bhfarraige* = *in the sea*
 - in Connacht **eclipsis** (except d, t): *sa nGearmáin*
 - in Connacht **t-prefix** preceding femin. nouns with s-: *sa tsúil*

Interrogative

- Cé ann** = in what?

i becomes in

- preceding vowels e.g. *in Éirinn* = *in Ireland*, *in Albain* = *in Scotland*
- preceding the number 2 [*in dhá*]
- preceding bhur [*in bhur*]
- preceding titles of books and the like [e.g.: *in "Céard a dhéanamh?"* = *in "What To Do?"*, *in "Cré na Cille"* = *in "Cemetery Earth"*]
- after **in** there is never eclipsis or lenition!

Combined with the article

- i + an (preceding a consonant): **sa**
- i + an (preceding a vowel): **san**
- i + na: **sna**

"sa/san/sna" stem from the older form **ins an** / **ins na** (these forms are most prevalent in Ulster, comp. Scottish *anns an*)

Combined with personal pronouns *and* possessive pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pron.	translation
I	ionam	ionamsa	in me	i mo (im)	in my
you	ionat	ionatsa	in you	i do (id)	in your
he	ann	annsan	in him	ina	in his
she	inti	intise	in her	ina	in her

we	ionainn	ionainne	in us	inár	in our
you(pl)	ionaibh	ionaibhse	in you	in bhur	in your
they	iontu	iontusan	in them	ina	in their

Forms like **ina**, **inár** are spoken like 'na, 'nár (this is always so after a vowel, but often generally so). This is why one often sees it written that way as well.

Combined with the indirect relative particle *and* with the indir. relative form of the copula

tense	relative part. (i + a/ar)	copular form (i + ar)	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	ina	inar	inarb	in his/in her/in its
preterite	inar	inar	inarbh	in his/in her/in its

Use

1. **spatial**: location **in** a room (as dt. in): *sa bpota = the the pot*
2. **spatial-relative**: **in /am**: *in iochtar na tire = in the lower part of the land, i mbun = on the ground, in imeall = on the sidelines*
3. **temporal**: **in**: *san oíche = in the night*
4. **regarding**: **in**: *briste sa lár = broken through the middle, bán sa ghruaig = blonde("white in the hair ")*
5. **quality**: **in**: an "intrinsic" quality: *maith i leabhar = good in a book, sláinte sa ngrian = healing power of the sun* (with subst. adjectives)
6. **condition**: **in**: *i bpian = in pain, i imní = in fear*
7. **condition**: **(in a state of...)**: **(tá + subj.) + i + possessive pron. + object** : *tá sé ina phraiseach = it is in disarray ("it is in its disorder ")*
similarly also:
 - **progressive form** with **state of being verbs**: *tá mé i mo chodladh = (I'm) asleep , tá mé i mo chónai = I live ("I am in my living ")*
as well as sitting, standing, lying, etc.)
 - **classification clauses without the copula**: often by temporary or recently attained **functions / professions** *tá mé i mo dhochtuir = I am a doctor ("in my being a doctor"), tá tú i do fhearr anois = Now, you are a man ("in your manhood")*
Additional adjectives are here then always lenited (...mhaith), different than by a definition of a function at the beginning of a sentence: *dhochtuir maith atá ionam = I am a good doctor*, by non-pronomial forms always **in** (without eclipse) *dhochtuir atá in Bríd = Bríd is a doctor*
 - **In a state of being: to exist**: *ann = here. Tá teach ann = There is a house, A house is here .*
 - **attainment of such states** : **éirigh + i + possessive pron. + object** , e.g: *Éireoidh mé i mo dhochtuir = I will become a doctor. Ba mhaith liom éirí i mo dhochtuir = I would like to become a doctor.*
8. **membership**: **in**: *sna Gardaí = with the police(force), i mbanna = in the band*
9. **in ann + VN = capable of** (also: *i gcumas, in acmhainn*)
10. **pro** (with an article): *deich bpunt sa lá = 10 pounds a day*
11. **for**: *fear san fhearr = man for man*
12. **with verbs** : *glaoi in ainm = to call by name*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

idir = between

Case

idir requires the accusative (but the dative by nouns in the plural).

variations

eadar (in Ulster)

Initial Mutations after idir

- without article: **lenition** e.g.: *idir mhrá* = *amongst women*
but no lenition if distance, time, difference or opposition is being expressed.
- with an article: no lenition or eclipsis

Interrogative

- Cé eatarthu** = between what, between whom?

Combinations with personal pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation
we	eadrainn	eadrainne	between us/among us
you	eadraibh	eadraibhse	between you/among you
they	eatarthu	eadarthusan	between them/among them

Today there are conjugated forms just for the plural, in the singular not: *idir mise is tusa* = *between me and you*

(Forms like *eadram* = *between me*, *eadrat* = *between you*, *eidirthi* = *between her* are archaic)

The plural forms are not used in lists with *agus* = *and*: *idir iad agus na daoine eile* = *between them and the other people*

use

- spatially: between** : *idir Baile Átha Cliath agus Gaillimh* = *between Dublin and Galway*
- temporally: between** *idir an dó agus an trí* = *between two and three (O'clock)*
- pairings: both... and** (with *agus*), (use of the singular): *idir fhear agus bhean* = *men and women*, *idir balla agus ceann* = *walls and roof*, *idir sean agus óg* = *young and old*,
- partially, partially** (with *agus*): *idir mhagadh is dháiríre* = *half joking, half serious* , *idir gháire is ghol* = *between laughing and crying*
- idiomatic expressions** : *idir an dá linn* = *in the meantime*, *idir amanna* = *now and again*, *idir eatarthu* = *half and half*

6. **exclusively among:** *eadrainn féin an chaint seo* = *this should remain between us*, *rún idir mhná* = *a secret amongst women*
7. **among the :** *an bhean is áille idir Éireannaigh* = *the most beautiful woman among the Irish*
8. in the sense of **while:** **under, in:** *idir lámha* = *in progress*, *idir chamáin* = *in conversation*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

ionsar = to, in the direction of

ionsar < **d'ionnsaí ar / d'ionnsaighe ar** = lit. "to approach on", is a combination of the verbal noun ionnsaí and the preposition ar. This is why it is sometimes also written **ionns'ar**.

Case

ionsar requires the dative.

Initial Mutations

- without article: **lenition** e.g.: *ionsar theach Bhriain* = to Brian's house
- with the singular article:
 - in Ulster, **lenition** e.g.: *ionsar an ghairdín* = to the garden
 - otherwise (if used) **eclipsis** (except d, t) e.g.: *ionsar an ngairdín* = to the garden

Interrogative form

- cé ionsair, cá hionsar?** = to whom, to what?

Combinations with personal pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation
me	ionsorm	ionsormsa	towards me/to my place
you	ionsort	ionsortsa	towards you/to your place
he	ionsair	ionsairsean	towards him/to his place
she	ionsuirthi	ionsuirthise	towards her/to her place
we	ionsorainn	ionsorainne	towards us/to our place
you(pl.)	ionsoraibh	ionsoraibhse	towards you/to your place
they	ionsorthu	ionsorthusan	towards them/to their place

Use:

- probably only common in Ulster
- "<http://www.braesicke.de/> druid ionsar = turn to, *tar ionsar an teach* = to get to the house

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

le = with

In *le* the old prepositions **le** and **re** have fallen together. (in Scottish Gaelic they are still separate)
In Munster mostly **lé** (with a long e)

Case

le requires the dative.

Initial Mutations:

- without article: **no lenition/eclipsis**, but the h-prefix precedes a vowel: e.g.: *le hAoife* = with Aoife
- with article: **eclipsis**: *leis an mbord* = with the table
 - only in Munster also d,t is eclipsed
 - in Connacht t-prefix preceding femin. nouns with s-: *leis an tsúil* = with the eye
 - in Ulster always **lenition**: *leis an bhord*

interrogative:

- cé / cad leis** = with whom, to whom belongs the..., with what?

combination with article:

- le + an: **leis an**
- le + na: **leis na**

combination with personal pronoun and possessive pronoun:

-	personal pron.	contrast form	translation	possessive pron.	translation
I	liom	liomsa	with me	le mo (lem)	with my
you	leat	leatsa	with you	le do (led)	with your
he	leis	leis-sean	with him	lena	with his
she	léi	léise	with her	lena	with her
we	linn	linne	with us	lenár	with our
you(pl.)	libh	libhse	with you	le bhur	with your
they	leo	leosan	with them	lena	with their

The 3 "lena" differ according to if lenition ("with his "), eclipsis ("with her " plural), or nothing follows ("with her " singular).

lem, led appear in Munster.

combination with the indirect relative pronoun a and the indirect relative form of the copula:

tense	rel. part. le + a/ar	copular form le + ar	copular form pre vowel	translation
present	lena	lenar	lenarb	with him/her
preterite	lenar	lenar	lenarbh	with him/her

After a combination with the relative pronoun lena eclipsis follows, after lenar, lenition

These forms are only used if the indirect relative clause begins with a preposition (as in German : die Frau, mit der ich gehe = an bhean lena dtéim) More often, the preposition is at the end (an bhean a dtéim léi)

Uses:

- accompaniment: with** le Máirtín = with Martin
- aid: with, via** : le spáid = with the spade , fuair sé bás leis an ocras = he died from the hunger
- purpose/requirement:** (with the verbal noun): **(in order) to** : le balla a phéinteáil = in order to paint the wall, neart le n-ól = to drink a lot, scéal le hinsint = to tell a story here, the n-prefix precedes a vowel (otherwise no eclipsis)
- adj + le + verbal noun** : maith le hithe = good to eat, blasta le hól = tasty to drink, crua le cogaint = hard to chew
- force of motion : with**: le gaoth = with the wind, le sruth = with the flow
- point in time : at the start of the ...**: leis an lá = by daybreak, leis an mí = at the start of the month
- cause phys./psych. state**: leis an tuirse = from exhaustion; le hól = **through** drinking; le greann = out of fun; le gleo = **due to** the noise
- behaviour to others** : e.g. deas le... = nice to..., fearg (ar...) le... = angry at...
- location: close to** : leis an mballa = against the wall, le tine = close to the fire, **cuir le** = lay upon
- motion: close to....along**: éirigh le balla = to climb a wall, tit le haill = to fall off a cliff
- in the direction to, towards** : líl le grian = lie in the sun, tabhair do chúl leo = turn your back to/on them, tá síul agam le... = I hope...(to hope for something...)
- for/against**: paidir le = pray for, cúis le = cause of, fianaise le = proof of, cuir gadhar le = to sick a dog on someone
- duration: since**: le seachtain = since/for a week, le fada = since a while
- subjective assessment: "finden"**: **copula + adjective + le + subject**: is maith le = **like** , ba mhaith le = **want, would like** , is hionadh le = to wonder , is breá le = love ("to find wonderful "), is fuath le = hate, is fearr le = prefer, is cuma le...(faoi...) = to not care about (something).
e.g.: is fada liom é = I find it to be long, is dóigh liom go ...= I think that...
- practice**: is minic liom = I do it often
- property own / have** : **copula + le + subject**: Is le Cáit an teach = the house belongs to Cait ; an teach leis = his house similarly also:
 - ownership of body parts: cois leis = a foot of his
 - relationship with** : cara liom = a friend of mine , iníon leis = a daughter of his
- author**: e.g. of books : (by...) e.g.: "Faust" le Goethe but also: triúr clainne leis = 3 children by him (conceived)
- with directional adverbs : with**: anuas leat! = down you go , but also with adverbs of motion: d'imigh sí léi = she left
- can**: is féidir le....,or : tig le... + VN
- tá subj. le...(ar...) agree with (on)** but **tá le subj.: succeed in/with**
- comparison: as ... as** : **chomh + Adj. + le**: chomh mór leat = as big as you
similar also (with chomh):
 - comparison with**: i gcomparáid le = in comparison with, inchurtha le = comparable to, obair le triúr fear= the work of(compared with) three men, fás leat = grow **like** you
 - as well as** : tá sé chomh maith ag + S + ... + le + ... tá sé chomh maith agam suí le seasamh = I can sit as well as stand

- **as much as** : tá sé chomh cóir agat é a dhéanamh liomsa = you have just as much right to do it as I do
- 22. with verbs (reflexive on the subject) **to go on** : abair leat = keep talking, d'oibrigh mé liom = I kept working
- 23. with certain **verbs**: fan le = wait for, (eas) aontigh le = (not) agree with, buail le = meet someone, ag cuiidu le = help someone, déir le = to say about
- 24. **communication: with**: labhair le = speak with but also gáir le = smile at someone, feedáil le = whistle at, éist le = listen to
- 25. **is leat + VN = it's your turn to ...**
- 26. **take/bring**: tá ... le: tá sé liom = I'll take/bring it with me
- 27. **type of motion** : bhí síul géar leis = he had a fast pace
- 28. **tendency, trend**: tá fána leis = it's falling, tá casadh chun an chladaigh leis = it curves to the coast
- 29. **profession/activity (working with)**: dochtaur le leigheas = M.D., doctor of medicine, obair le miotal = metal work, to work with metal
- 30. **to bring with it** : tá costas leis = that would bring costs with it, tá trioblóid leis = that brings trouble
- 31. **to begin /end with**
- 32. **maidir le** = regarding, with respect to, like
- 33. **in aice le** = next to (spatial)
- 34. **in éineacht le** = beside (together with)
- 35. **leis** adverbial use: **also** (instead of *freisin, fostar*) predom. in Munster): Bhí mé ann, leis = I was there too.

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

ó = *from, since*

Case

ó requires the dative.

Initial Mutations after ó

- without the article: **lenition** e.g. ó *Chiarráí* = *from Kerrry*
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** e.g. ón *nGearmáin* = *from Germany*
 - only in Munster, d, t is also eclipsed
 - in Connacht t-prefix preceding a femin. noun with s-: ón *tsúil* = *from an eye*
 - in Ulster, **lenition**: ón *Ghearmáin* = *from Germany*

Interrogative

- Cé / cad uaidh** = from whom, from what?

Combined with the article

- ó + an (preceding a consonant): **ón**
- ó + na: **ó na**

Combined with personal pronounes *and* possessive pronounes

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pron.	translation
I	uaim	uaimse	from me	ó mo	from my
you	uait	uaitse	from you	ó do	from your
he	uaidh	uaidhsean	from him	óna	from hus
she	uaithi	uaithise	from her	óna	from her
we	uainn	uainne	from us	ónár	from our
you(pl)	uaibh	uaibhse	from you	ó bhur	from your
they	uathu	uathusan	from them	óna	from their

Combined with the indir. relative pronoun *and* with the indir. relative form of the copula

tense	relative part. (ó + a/ar)	copular form (ó + ar)	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	óna	ónar	ónarb	from him/her/it
preterite	ónar	ónar	ónarbh	from him/her/it

Combined with the numeral particle a

ó + a	óna
-------	-----

e.g. óna trí go dtí a hocht a chlóg = from 3-8 O'clock

Use

1. **spatial point of origin: from:** tar ón bposta = come from the mail
2. **temporal starting point: from / since :** ón Nollaig = since Christmas, ó mhaidin = since this morning, ó Lá Fhéile Eoin amach = from St. John's Eve on ,
also as a conjunction **since:** ó bhí sí tinn = since she was sick
3. **applied point of origin: from:** litir uait = a letter from you, cabhair ó chairde = help from friends
4. **origin of, from** fear ó Thrá Lí = a man **from** Tralee
5. **distance from:** mile uaidh = a mile away (from)
6. **distance / loss / absence :** Is cuma liom agam nó uaim é = I don't care if I have it or not, is fearr d'shearr bean chéile uaidh = a man **without** a wife is better off ;-)
7. **out of :** bí ó bhaol = out of danger
8. **limit: from ...on:** ó 10 mile suas = from 10 miles upwards, ó cúig phunt go deich bpunt = from 5 to 10 pounds
9. **reason:** bodhar ó thorann = deaf **from** the noise, tuirseach ó shiúil = tired from walking
10. with adjectives: deas uait = nice **of** you, maith uainn = good **of** us
11. with adjective: is breá uait = do (sth.) well
12. needs need, want : tá + object + ó + subject, or teastíonn + object + ó + subject, or tá + object + ag teastáil + ó + subject: tá spóirt uaim (also teastaíonn spóirt uaim) = I want to have fun, tá bainne uait (teastíonn bainne uait) = you need milk, teastíonn uaim labhairt leat = I want to speak to you
13. **fromto(ó...go):** ó thús go deireadh = from beginning to end, ó lá go lá = from day to day, óna hocht go dtí a naoi = from 8-9, ó am go ham =from time to time
14. with **numbers:** **less, minus** (note the reverse order as in English or German!): a dó óna trí sin a haon = 3 - 2 = 1 (lit: "2 from the 3 that-is 1")

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

roimh = before

Case

roimh requires the dative.

Variations

in Ulster also **roimhe**, in Munster **roim**, preceding the article, also **roimis**.

Initial Mutations

- without article: **lenition** e.g.: *roimh mhaidin* = before morning
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** (except d, t) e.g.: *roimh an mbus* = before the bus
 - only in Munster, also d,t are eclipsed
 - in Connacht t-prefix precedes feminine nouns with s-: *roimh an tsúil* = before the eye
 - in Ulster always **lenition**: *roimh an bhus* = before the bus

Interrogative

- cé roimhe** = before what?

Combinations with personal pronouns

-	general	contrast form	translation
I	romham	romhamsa	before me
you	romhat	romhatsa	before you
he	roimhe	roimhesean	before him
she	roimpi	roimpise	before her
we	romhainn	romhainne	before us
you(pl.)	romhaibh	romhaibhse	before you
they	rompu	rompusan	before them

instead of roimhe also **roimis** (Munster)

Use:

- temporal before**: (früher als), *roimh mhaidin* = before morning, *tá mé roimhe ann* = I am here before him
- spatial before**: (rare, more common: os comhair)
- with verbs: *tar, téigh roimh* = to catch, stop , prevent, interrupt
- idiomatic expressions : *tá fáitios agam roimh...* = I am afraid of..., *tá fáilte agam romhat* = I welcome you

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

trí = *through*

Case

trí requires the dative or accusative

Varianten

thrí, tré, thré, fríd (in Ulster)

Initial Mutations

- without an article: **lenition** e.g.: *trí fhuinneog* = *through a window*
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** e.g.: *tríd an bhfuinneog* = *through the window*
 - only in Munster, d,t are also eclipsed
 - in Connacht, a t-prefix precedes a femin. noun with s-: *tríd an tsúil* = *through the eye*
 - in Ulster, always **lenition**: *fríd an fhuinneog* = *through the window*

trí with the article

- trí + an = **tríd an**
- trí + na = **trí na**

Interrogative

- cé / cad tríd** = through what, through whom?

Kombination mit Personalpronomen und Possessivpronomen

-	general	contrast form	translation	possessive pron.	translation
I	tríom	tríomsa	through me	trí mó	through my
you	tríot	tríotsa	through you	trí do	through your
he	tríd	trísean	through him	trína	through his
she	tríthi	tríthise	through her	trína	through her
we	trínn	trínne	through us	trínár	through our
you(pl)	tríbh	tríbhse	through you	trí bhur	through your
they	tríothu	tríothusan	through them	trína	through their

trí and all forms are often lenited (**thrí** instead of **trí**, etc.)

Combined with the indirect relative pronoun and the copula

tense	relative part. trí + a/ar	copular form trí + ar	copular form preceding a vowel	translation
present	trína	trínar	trínarb	through that
preterite	trínar	trínar	trínarbh	through that

Use:

- **entering through** a room, an opening (**through** also applied), in open spaces, rather: [trasna](#): *trí fhuinneog* = *through a window* , but: *trasna garrai* = *through a field*
- penetration of solid objects: *chuaigh an piléar trína gualainn* = *the bullet went through her shoulder*
- temporal **through / during** : *tríd an oíche* = *through the night*, *tríd an scéal* = *during the story*
- (in the midst, mixed) **under/ among** : *tá bó amháin trí na caorigh* = *there is a cow among the sheep*
- mix **with**: *cuir ola tríd* = *mix it with oil*, *beoir trí fhíon* = *beer and wine*
- **through / due to / via**: *trí bháisteach a bhí an fearr fliuch* = *due to the rain, the grass was wet*, *tríomsa* = *because of me*
- miscellaneous: *trí thine* = *on fire*, *trí gach scéal* = *in summary*, *trína chéile* = *chaos*, *tríd síos* = *throughout*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

thar* = *past, over

Case

thar requires the dative or accusative.

Initial Mutations nach *thar*

- without article: **lenition** e.g.: *thar bhosca* = *over a box*
no lenition (in general terms) e.g.: *thar muir* = *overseas*
- with the singular article: **eclipsis** (except d, t) e.g. *thar an mbosca* = *over the box*
 - only in Munster also d,t are eclipsed
 - in Connacht t-prefix preceding feminine nouns with s-: *thar an tsúil* = *beyond the eye*
 - in Ulster always **lenition**: *thar an bhosca* = *over the box*

Interrogative

- Cé / cad thart** = past whom, past what?

Combinations with personal pronouns

	general	contrast form	translation
I	tharam	tharamsa	past me
you	tharat	tharatса	past you
he	thairis	thairis-sean	past him
she	thairti	thairtise	past her
we	tharainn	tharainne	past us
you(pl.)	tharaibh	tharaibhse	past you
they	thartu	thartusan	past them

special form : **thart** = past it (adverbial), also applied: past

use

- spatial movement** of something to and beyond, horizontal (**past**) and vertical (**over**): *thar an mbosca* = *over the box*, *thar an dteach* = *past the house or over the house*
- also **temporal over ... past** : *bhí sé thar am agat* = *it was overdue for you* (lit.: "it is over the time at you")
- also **applied over ... past** : *thar chomhairle a athair* = *despite her father's advice* (lit.: "above the advice of her father")
- Amount: (**more than...., over....**): *thar bhliain* = *over a year, more than a year*
- certain comparative: (**more than**): *thar a bheith go maith* = *more than good*

Caibidil a Cúig: Präpositionen (Reamhfhocail)

um = *about/around*

um is mostly still in use in Munster, but also in the standard. In northern dialects, in part, other prepositions are taken in its place.

Through the development from *um* > *má* > *fá* and the equation with *faoi*, one will mostly use *faoi* (Ulster *fá*) in the sense of "about" (*labhairt fím* = *speaking about me*)

Case

um requires the dative or accusative

Initial Mutations

- without an article: **lenition** (*only c, d, f, g, s, t, not b, m, p*) e.g. *um banríon* = *about a queen*
- with the article: **eclipsis** e.g.: *um an mbaile* = *around a town*
 - only in Munster, d,t also eclipses
 - in Connacht, the t-prefix precedes femin. nouns with s-: *um an tsúil* = *around the eye*
 - in Ulster, always **lenition**: *um an fhear* = *about the man*
(whereby *um* is mostly used in Munster)

Interrogative:

- cé / cad uime** + indirect relative clause.? = *about what, about whom?*

Combined with the personal pronoun:

-	general	contrast form	translation
I	umam	umamsa	about me
you	umat	umatsa	about you
he	uime	uimesean	about him, because
she	uimpi	uimpise	about her
we	umainn	umainne	about us
you(pl)	umaibh	umaibhse	about you
they	umpu	umpusan	about them

Use:

- around**: *díagh siad um an rí* = *they gathered together around the king*
- be around one another, **accompany**: *a bhéirt mhac uime* = *his two sons, who accompany him (who are around him)*
- along**: *um Shionainn* = *along the Shannon*
- temporal **around, on** : *um Nollaig* = *on Christmas*, *um thránona* = *in the afternoon*, *um an am sin* = *around this time*

5. *cuir um* = put **on**, get dressed("to wrap oneself in"): *Chuir sí an cóta uimpi* = *She put her coat on*
6. **against**: *um an gcoirthé* = *against the stone*
7. *is uime* = **because of**, because ; *fáth um* + indir. relative clause= the cause **why** (mostly though without *um*)
Cén fáth (um) a bhfuil tú anseo? = *Why are you here?*
8. **fight over**, *ag fonóid um* = *laugh about*, *grá um* = *love for*
9. **for, over**, etc. in official titles for civil offices, laws .: *An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas* = *Higher Education Authority (HEA)*, *An Institiúid Éireannach um Chosaint Raideolaioch* = *Radiological Protection Institute of Ireland (RPII)*, *An tAcht um Chosaint Sonrai* = *Data Protection Law*
(Dinneen classifies this use as *wrong* in his dictionary, but it is common and "official")
10. **not** to be used in the meaning *in order to* with the verbal noun, instead use *le, chun*

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

other prepositions

go (dtí) = to

go = with

gan = without

mar = as

os = over

seachas = except

is = until

a = to

dar = by

go (dtí) = to

go dtí *lit:* "until coming" (tí is an old subjunctive of tar = to come)

Initial Mutations :

- **without article:** (mostly only **go**): no lenition: *go hÉirinn* = to Ireland
- **with article (always go dtí):** no lenition or eclipse: *go dtí an teach* = to the house (in Dingle though it's eclipse)

Pronominal forms:

- *no* definite pronominal forms, **go dtí** is used e.g.: *go dtí é* = to him, *go dtí mé* = to me (etymol. the pronominal forms of chun/chuig belong to go)

Use:

1. The goal **of a spatial movement (to):** *go dtí an teach* = to the house , go only for place names without an article: *go Meiriceá* = to America (for place names with article: see do/chun)
2. **temporal length (until):** *go dtí an lá sin* = up until this day , go only in idiomatic expressions: *go maidin* = until morning
3. **up to, except :** *Ní fheabhas go dtí é* = There's nothing better than it

go = with

Initial Mutations:

- without article : **eclipse**

Pronominal forms:

- There are only special pronominal forms for **possessive pronouns**

-	with poss.pron.
with my	go mo
with your	go do
with his	gona

with her	gona
with our	gonár
with your(pl.)	go bhur
with their	gona

Use:

1. **with** (rare): *go n-onóir* = *with honour*
2. Measurements: ...**and** a half: *go leith* (lit.: "with half"). e.g: *trí chéad go leith punt* = 350 pounds
3. in expressions.: *go bhfios dom* = **as far as** *I know* (lit.: "with knowledge to me "), *go gcuimhin liom* = *as far as I remember*; *go gclos dom* = *so I hear*
4. **without** eclipsis: see [*go \(dti\)*](#)

There is a good case for the fact that the conjunction *go* = *that* comes from this preposition.
Etymologisch related with Latin "cum".

gan = without

Initial Mutations :

- without article: **lenition** (mostly only preceding abstract/general terms) e.g: *gan phósadh* = unmarried but always no lenition
 - of **d, s, t, f**: e.g.: *gan fear* = *without a man*
 - in infinitive constructions
 - if the noun carries a further attribute
 - proper names : e.g.: *gan Pól* = *without Paul*
- with article: no lenition/eclipsis

Pronominal forms:

- *no* pronominal forms : *gan mise* = *without me*, *gan é* = *without him*

Use:

1. **without**: *gan obair* = *without work*
2. double (or with *ná*): **neither nor** : *gan obair gan arán* = *gan obair ná arán* = *neither work nor bread*
3. to negate the verbal noun: **not** : *Tá mé sásta gan siúil* = *I'm fine to not walk*.

mar = like, as

Initial Mutations :

- without article: **lenition** e.g.: *mar fhear* = *like a man*
- with article: **eclipsis** e.g.: *mar an ngréin* = *like the sun*

Pronominal forms:

- *no* pronominal forms : *mar mise* = *like me*

Use:

1. **like, as**: *mar bhean* = *as a woman, like a woman*
2. **fitting, as** (type of): *gach éinne mar a dhúchas* = *everyone according to his nature*

3. mar atá = as there is, especially, namely
4. mar gheall ar = **because of**: *mar gheall ar an mbád* = *due to the boat*
5. mar le = **for**: (seeing as, in light of): *Is breá an aimsir í, mar le geimhreadh* = for winter it is nice weather.

os = over

os is an old preposition, which today only finds use in set combinations, no lenition/eclipsis, also **ós, uas**, earlier also prepositional pronouns *uasam, uasat, uaiste, uasainn, uasaibh, uasta, related with *thuas, anuas, suas, lastuas* (see [directional adverbs](#))*

Use:

1. *os cionn* = over, above: *os mo chionn* = above me
2. *os comhair, os coinne* = across:
3. *os ard* = loud, open, public (adverbial)
4. *os íseal* = with a soft voice, in secret
5. *os meán* = off the scale

seachas = except

seachas is a compound of *seach* and the copula *is*, this is why it is rarely seen as *seach is* or only *seach* (also rare with prepositional pronouns: *seacham, seachat, etc.*)

Use:

1. others **except**: *seachas thú féin* = *besides yourself, daoine seachas ise* = *people other than her*
2. **other/rather than** : *an teach seachas an ceann seo* = *another house than this one*
3. **seachas mar a** + direct relative clause: **compared to, like**
4. **better than** : *seachas a chéile* = *rather than the other*

is = until

only used with article *an* (= **is an**) (actually: *is an < i san* = *in the*)

Use:

- **temporal until**: *mí is an lá inniu* = *today one month ago* (lit. "one month until the day today"), *bláin is an t-am seo* = *this time last year* (lit. "year until this time")

a = to

a is (almost) **only** used preceding verbal nouns, It is actually a short form of the preposition [do](#) = to. Sometimes, in older literature, and in Munster, *do* still is used instead of *a*: e.g.: *"chun na Gaeilge d'fhoghluim"* = *chun na Gaeilge a fhoghlaim* = *to learn Irish.*

Initial Mutations:

- without article : **lenition**

Use:

1. in clauses like the "[extended infinitive with to](#)": e.g.: *Bhí mé sásta mile a shiúl = I was happy to walk a mile.*
2. not in the "[simple infinitive with to](#)" or only rarely used
3. instead of ag in the [progressive](#) in the relative clause: e.g.: *an fear atá litir a scríobh = the man that is writing a letter.* The object comes before the VN and is in the nominative/accusative (not the genitive)
4. Except preceding verbal nouns, a appears rarely: e.g. in *a chlog = O'clock* : *a trí a chlog = 3 O'clock*

dar = by

A rather rare preposition, used in interjections and similar expressions.

e.g.: *dar Dia! = by God!*, *dar m'anam! = my soul!*, *dar m'fhocal! = my word!*

Caibidil a Cúig / Caibidil a Seacht

Prepositional Pronouns (*Forainmneacha Réamhfhoclacha*)

These are **compounds of preposition and personal pronouns**.

They are formed from many different prepositions. (*conjugated prepositions* = *réamhfhocail réimnithe*).

summary of all prepositional pronouns

-	<u>ag</u> at/by	<u>ar</u> on	<u>as</u> out of	<u>chuig</u> to	<u>de</u> of	<u>do</u> to/for	<u>faoi</u> under	<u>fara</u> next to	<u>i</u> in
I	agam	orm	asam	chugam	díom	dom	fúm	faram	ionam
you	agat	ort	asat	chugat	diot	duit	fút	farat	ionat
he	aige	air	as	chuige	de	dó	faoi	fairis	ann
she	aici	uirthi	aisti	chuici	di	dí	fúithi	farae	inti
we	againn	orainn	asainn	chugainn	dínn	dúinn	fúinn	farainn	ionainn
you(pl.)	agaibh	oraibh	asaibh	chugaibh	díbh	daoibh	fúibh	faraibh	ionaibh
they	acu	orthu	astu	chucu	díobh	dóibh	fúthu	faru	iontu

-	<u>idir</u> between	<u>ionsar</u> toward	<u>le</u> with	<u>ó</u> from	<u>roimh</u> before	seach	<u>thar</u> past	<u>trí</u> through	<u>um</u> around
I	(eadram)	ionsorm	liom	uaim	romham	seacham	tharam	tríom	umam
you	(eadrat)	ionsort	leat	uait	romhat	seachat	tharat	tríot	umat
he	idir é	ionsair	leis	uaidh	roimhe	seacha	thairis	tríd	uime
she	(eidirthi)	ionsuirthi	léi	uaithi	roimpi	seichi	thairti	tríthi	uimpi
we	eadrainn	ionsorainn	linn	uainn	romhainn	seachainn	tharainn	trínn	umainn
you(pl.)	eadraibh	ionsoraibh	libh	uaibh	romhaibh	seachaibh	tharaibh	tríbh	umaibh
they	eatarthu	ionsorthu	leo	uathu	rompu	seachu	thartu	tríothu	umpu

The forms *eadram*, *eadrat*, *eidirthi* are today obsolete and have been replaced by *idir mé*, *idir tú*, *idir í*.

The preposition *seach* is rather archaic, it was included to be thorough (and symmetrical :-).
(in older literature one could find further pronouns, like **uas** (os = over): **uasam**, **uasat**, etc.)

As one may note, there are certain rules governing the formation, so all of the 1st person singular ends in -m, all of the 2nd person singular in -t, all of the 1st person plural in -inn, the 2nd person plural in -ibh. In the 3rd person singular and plural there are various forms, while here once also different accusative and dative forms occurred.

The spelling of the 3rd person plural with -a instead of -u was once common (*aca*, *ortha*, etc.)

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

genitive prepositions (réamhfhocail ghinideacha)

These prepositions all require the [genitive](#).

They are for the most part originally nouns (e.g. timpeall = round).

Additionally, we have the [derived prepositions](#) (or compound prepositions, réamhfhocail chomhshuite), which are comprised of a simple preposition and a noun.

chun = to, towards

see [chuig](#)

Also chun was once a noun (Old Irish VN dochum < tochim = to step towards)

trasna = through, over, across

1. see [trí](#): *trasna an garrai* = through the field, across the field
2. across: *trasna na habhann* = across the river, *trasna an bhothair* = across the road
3. adverbial: *cúig troithe trasna* = 5 miles across / wide / deep (depending)
4. adverbial: *teacht trasna ar duine* = to contradict someone
5. adjectival: *barra trasna* = crossbeam

timpeall = around, about

1. spatially: *timpeall an tí* = around the house, *inár dtimpeall* = around us, in our area
2. temporally: *timpeall na nollaig* = around Christmas, *timpeall fiche bliain* = about 20 years

fearacht = like

1. like, in the way that: *fearacht an fhír seo* = like this man, *a fhéaracht sin* = just like that

tar éis = after (temp.)

also **thar éis, théis, d'éis** among others

A combination of the preposition *tar* (*thar*) or *de* and the noun *éis* ("path")

1. **Time: past**: *a ceathrú tar éis a dó* = quarter past two, *a leathuair tar éis a dó* = a half hour past two (= half past two)
2. *tar éis* + do + subject + verbal noun: afterwards... (see [Syntax of the verbal noun](#))
3. with VN: (*tá* + subj. + *tar éis* + VN) Expression of a recently ended action (like the *perfect*) *Tá mé tar éis imeacht* = I just left (see [Syntax of the verbal noun](#))

cois = beside, at the foot of

cois is actually the *dative* of the noun *cos* = foot

1. **beside, at the foot of** : *cois cnoic* = at the foot of the mountain, *cois abhann* = on/by the river

tigh = at

Derived from the noun *teach* = house,

tigh is the old *dative* of *teach*

used in names (e.g. bar names) comp. to the french *chez* ("chez Jean"), also used preceding personal and company names

1. **at** *tigh Sheáin* = "at Seán's", *tigh Mhic Dhonaill* = at McDonald's,
Cheannigh mé tigh Whoolworth é = I bought it at Woolworth's

derived prepositions (réamhfhocail chomhshuite)

- These are comprised of simple prepositions and nouns. They are formed just as in German:
e.g. *ar nós* = in a way/ like
- Instead of personal pronouns the possessive pronoun is used *preceding* the noun part
e.g.: *ar nós na daoine* = *in the way of the people* but *ar ár nos* = *our way* (formation also as in German)
in some dialects, with some derived prepositions, personal pronouns are used, e.g.: *ar nós mé féin* = *in my own way*
- Many of these are also usable (without the genitive object) as [conjunctions](#) (often with *go* = that)
e.g. *d'ainneoin go* = *despite, (that)*

The table shows a selection of the most common ones:

preposition	translation	lit.	example
with ar	on	-	-
ar aghaidh	across from /opposite	"on face "	<i>ar aghaidh an dhorais</i> = opposite the door
ar ceann	an the tip/end of, in front of	"on head "	<i>na daoine ar ár gceann</i> = the people in front of us
ar chúl	behind	"on back side "	<i>ar chúl an tí</i> = behind the house
ar feadh	for (the extent of), the length	"on stretch"	<i>ar feadh seachtaine</i> = for a week
ar fud	through way , straight through	"on area "	<i>ar fud na tíre</i> = around the country
ar nós	like, as the way of	"on way "	<i>ar mo nós</i> = like me
ar s(h)on	because of , for the sake of, in order to	"on comfort "	<i>ar son Dé</i> = for God's sake
with as	out	-	-
as ucht	because of , for, to	"out of breast "	<i>as ucht na tíre</i> = for the good of the country
with de	of	-	-
d'ainneoin	despite	"of unwillingness "	<i>de m'ainneoin</i> = in spite of me
de bharr	as a result of, due to	"of point "	<i>de bharr báis</i> = as a result of death
de chois	in the area / close to	"of foot "	<i>de chois an tí</i> = close to the house
de réir	due to, according to	"of will "	<i>de réir an leabhair</i> = due to the book
with faoi	under	-	-
faoi cheann	in (within), temp.	"under head "	<i>faoi cheann seachtaine</i> = within a week
faoi choinne	(meant) for	"under meeting "	<i>faoi a coinne</i> = for her
with go	until	-	-
go ceann	until, for (temp.)	"until head "	<i>go ceann bliana</i> = for a year
with i	in	-	-
in aghaidh	against	"in face "	<i>inár n-aghaidh</i> = against us
in aice	in the vicinity of	"in area "	<i>in aice na Gaillimhe</i> = near Galway
in áit	instead of	"in place "	<i>i m'áit</i> = in my place
in éadan	against	"in forehead "	<i>in bhur n-éadan</i> = against you
i gcaitheamh	during	"in progress"	<i>i gcaitheamh oíche</i> = during a night
i gceann	at the end of	"in head "	<i>i gceann an bheallaigh</i> = at the end of the way
i gcoinne	against	"in meeting "	<i>i gcoinne an tsrutha</i> = against the flow
i gcuideachta	in the company of	"in accompaniment "	<i>i do chuideachta</i> = in your company
i ndiaidh	after	"in afterwards "	<i>i ndiaidh an scéil</i> = after the story
i bhfianaise	in view of	"in witness "	<i>i bhfianaise na farraige</i> = in view of the sea
i bhfochair	(together) with	"in area "	<i>in bhur bhfochair</i> = together with you
i lár	central , in the middle of	"in middle "	<i>i lár an bheallaigh</i> = in the middle of the way

i láthair	in the presence of	"in presence "	i láthair Dé = in the presence of God
i leith	for	"in side "	i leith na saoirse = for freedom
i measc	between, in the midst of	"in mix "	i measc na nduine = among the people
i rith	during, in the course of	"in run "	i rith na seachtaine = during the week
i dtaobh	regarding, about	"in side "	i dtaobh an ruda = regarding the thing
i dteannta	(together) with	"in support of "	i do theannta = with you
with le	with	-	-
le haghaidh	for	"with face "	lena aghaidh = for him
le hais	compared to, next to	"with axis "	lena hais = next to, compared to her
le cois	beside, at the foot of	"with foot "	le cois na habhann = on the river
le linn	during	"with duration "	le linn na seachtaine = during the week
le teann	from, out of	"with power "	le teann feirge = out of anger
with os	over	-	-
os cionn	above	"over head "	os cionn an tí = above the house
os coinne	in front of, across from	"beyond meeting "	os mo choinne = in front of me
os comhair	across from, in front of, in the presence	"over location "	os comhair na fuinneoge = across from the window
os mhair	in front of	"over last"	os mhair an dhorais = at the door
with thar	over (... beyond, pasti)	-	-
thar ceann	beyond the	"over head "	thar ceann an ghoirt = beyond the field
thar cheann	for, in place of	"over head "	thar mo cheann = instead of my
tar éis	after (s. above)	"over trail "	-

In some dialects there is a trend towards simplification of derived prepositions notable through an omission of the simple preposition and further changes.

(e.g. Munster: *ar feadh > feadh > fean/fan: fan na seachtaine = for the week; de réir > dréir/déir* (in Connacht *réir, léir*): *déir/léir na haimsire = appropriate for the season*)

A further form of derived prepositions is comprised of 3 parts: preposition-noun-preposition

(e.g. *in aice le = next to, in éineacht le = together with, i ndáil le = with respect to*).

These do not require the genitive but take the case appropriate for the last preposition (in the examples: *le*)

Caibidil a Cúig: Prepositions (Réamhfhocail)

Substitutes for the Preposition "for"

A simple preposition "for" as in English does not exist in Irish. *For* is used quite widely in partially very different uses in English ("for a week", "for 10 dollars", "only for you", "good for him" etc.). In Irish one must use different prepositions:

for in a temporal sense

- **ar feadh** ("on duration") or **go ceann** ("until head"): is used, if the action introduced by the duration has already ended (with other words: other verbs than bí)
Tháinig sé ann ar feadh seachtaine = He came here for a week
- **le** ("with"): is used, if the time at the moment of speaking the action, or a third party action, has just been ended, or is still going on, mostly with the verb *bí*, in German more often *seit* instead of *für*, in English more *perfect* or *past perfect*
Bhí mé ann le seachtain = I was there for a week, I was there since a week

for a purpose

- **le haghaidh** ("with face"):
Cheannaigh mé sin le m'aghaidh = I bought it for myself

for a favor

- **do** ("to"):
Rinne mé sin dó = I did that for him

for a goal

- **ar son** ("on well-being"):
Rinne mé ar son an airgid é = I did it for the money
Glacaigí agus ithigí uile é seo: óir is é seo mo chorp a thabharfar ar bhur son = Take and eat all of this, for this is my body, given for you.
- **de/mar gheall ar** ("of/as promise on"), in Ulster

for an amount of money

- **ar** ("on"):
Cheannaigh mé ar phúnt amháin é = I bought it for a pound

gratitude **for**

- **as ucht** ("out of chest"), **as** ("out"):
Go raibh maith agat as an gcabhair = Thank you for the help
- **ar son** ("on well-being"), more common in Ulster

good **for**

- **do** ("to"):
maith dó = good for him, olc duit = bad for you

for = in place of

- **thar cheann** ("over head "):
Bhí sé ann thar mo cheann = he was there for me

for something (i.e. pro-)

- **i leith** ("in side") or **i bhfabhar** ("in favor"), **ar thaobh** ("on side ")
Tá mé i leith fanacht anseo = I'm for staying here , Tá sé ar thaobh Shasana = He's for England

for = of its kind

- **mar le** ("as with ")
is breá an aimsir í, mar le geimhreadh = For Winter, it's delightful weather!
- **de** ("of")
Is fear maith é d'fhearr Sasanach = He is a good man for an Englishman.
- **maidir le** ("considering")
Maidir le Sasanach nil sé ag déanamh go holc = For an Englishman he doesn't do that badly.

Caibidil a Sé

the Conjunctions (na Cónaisc)

Coordinating Conjunctions

Inclusive

and
not only but also
neither nor

Exclusive

or
either or
or else

Restrictive

but
only
except

Subordinating Conjunctions

Complementary

that
Causal
because, for,
because of, due to

Circumstantial

seeing, that

Concessive

despite, even though, even if

Final

with that, so that

Temporal

until
since, since then
as soon as
before
during, while
as long as
after
when, as, every time, when

Conditional

if, when
if-then
if it were not so, that
provided, that
if
if so or if not

Modal

as if
like, as

Local

where

Comparative

as...as, than, the..the

Relative

see Relative particle

Conjunctions are words, that connect partial clauses or just single words with one another in a relationship.

In Irish (as in German) it is common that certain expressions are often used as "complex conjunctions".

Those expressions here portray just a selection of the rich array of such constructions.

Divided by their compositions, there are many types of conjunctions:

- **simple conjunctions** (consisting of one word), e.g. *ach, agus, nó, ó, sula*, including also:
 - *má, dá, mura* that pull to a (real/irreal) conditional clause
 - Interrogatives as conjunctions *cé, céard, cá, conas* etc.
 - Interrogative verbal particles as conjunctions: *an, ar, nach*, etc.
- constructions, that contain **agus** (or abbrev.: **is**), less commonly **ach, nó**.
- constructions, that contain **go/nach**
 - the use of "agus go/nach" contains a description of condition
 - instead of a go- subordinating clause, often an infinitive construction is possible (e.g. *le hé an fear a bhualadh* instead of *le go mbualann sé an fear* = *so that he hits the man*, equivalent to the German "um zu": *le fear a bhualadh = in order to hit the man*
- constructions, that contain **a/nach** (relative particle) and with that introduce a (direct/indirect) relative clause.
 - the use of "agus a/nach" contains a comparison

Some of the words mentioned here are in either German or Irish actually *adverbs*, that are used as conjunctions (adverbial conjunctions, for it is through them that subordinating clauses are introduced, also termed as adverbial clauses), some are *prepositions*.

Many of the compound conjunctions contain a noun; some of these nouns are more useful within the conjunction/preposition (e.g. *diaidh, ainneoin*)

The division chosen here in *coordinating* and *subordinating* conjunctions has little meaning for the Irish, for except select conjunctions, the main and subordinating clauses do not differ in syntax. Especially, the word order does not change in the subordinating clause, as is common in German. Confusingly, one must add, that coordinating conjunctions in altered meaning alone or in compounds may introduce subordinating clauses.

Coordinating Conjunctions (cónaisc chomhordaitheacha)

Inclusive conjunctions (cónaisc charnacha)

These contain a list, in which all connected parts are included.

and

and	agus, is
-----	----------

and has two forms: *agus* (rather long for a so often used word) and *is* (short form, easily confused with the copula *is!*) In old gaelic script there appears often as shorthand the tyronic notation **7** in its place (similar to a seven, that is here as a substitute).

examples:

Tá mé sásta inniu **agus** bhí mé sásta inné. = I am today and was yesterday satisfied.

In lists, one uses *agus* between *each of the terms* ("polysyndetic coordination")

In German and English *and* is mostly only between the last two terms ("(mono)syndetic coordination"):

e.g.: *Pól agus Seán agus Séamas agus Dóirín a bhí ann.* = *Paul, John James and Doreen waren da.*

Between adjectives, however, there is normally no *agus* ("asyndetic")

e.g.: *an cailín óg álainn* = *the young and pretty girl*

e.g.: *Tá an aimsir te tirim* = *the weather is hot and dry*.

(between the same comparitives use **sa**:

e.g.: *measa sa mheasa* = *worse and worse*)

other uses of agus

in affirmative answers:

Agus is in affirmative answers preceding supplementary information: e.g.:

An bhfuil cead agam tobac a chaitheamh? - Tá **agus** fáilte = May I smoke? - Yes, please do.

Ólfaidh mé fuisce. - Ólfaidh **agus** mise. = I will drink whiskey. - Yes, me too.

As part of other conjunctions

Agus, is is part of many other conjunctions, mostly together with the direct relative particle *a* or with *go* = *that* (e.g.: *chomh luath is a* = as long as; *is go* = until)

Enumeration in the conditional clause

Agus is used for [enumeration in conditional clauses](#) (these then as an infinitive construction), see there

in comparative clauses

In comparative clauses, that contain an equivalence, *agus* means "so, as".

Agus appears then together with the direct relative clause (*agus a*)

This is especially the case **chomh** + *adjective* and following other expressions of equivalence like **ionann, mar a chéile** = "same", **amhlaidh** = "so" or **oiread** = "as much as":

e.g.:

Ní hionann sin **agus** a bhí sé = That is not the way it was.

chomh maith **agus** a rinne sé é = As good as he did it.

Fuair mé an **oiread** **agus** ba mhaith liom = I received as much as I wanted.

With **is amhlaidh**, *agus* means "and matter of fact"

Is amhlaidh a tháinig sé abhaile **agus** a shrón briste = So he came home, and matter of fact with a broken nose.

Also in a comparison of similar clauses, in which a consequence of the one is described in the other (e.g.: "so good, that ...") one uses *agus*, and then with a *go/nach*-subordinating clause (*agus go/nach*). (not to be confused with *agus go/nach* in non-comparative clauses, in which it takes on the meaning of a description of condition.)

agus appears as well in clauses of an unreal comparison (e.g.: "as good as if..."), then with an unreal conditional clause (*agus dá*)

e.g.:

Tá sé **chomh** maith **agus** go bhfuil sé ann. = It is so good that he is here.

Tá sé **chomh** maith **agus** dá mbeadh sé ann. = It is as good as if he were here.

with infinitive constructions

Agus can, as in German, connect main clauses and has then a normal coordinative function ("and")

The 2nd partial clause may appear as a verbal noun- or. [infinitive construction](#).

Then, *agus* has a rather subordinating meaning.

For negation, one uses (common in verbal noun constructions) **gan**.

and +	clause form	example
-------	-------------	---------

main clause	Verb + subject + object + agus + Verb + subject + object	Bhí sé ann <i>agus</i> bhí fearg air (He was there and he was angry)
VN- construction	Verb + subject + object + agus + subject + object + VN	Bhí sé ann <i>agus</i> fearg (a bheith) air (He was there in anger)
main clause	Verb + subject + object + agus + ní + Verb + subject + object	Chonaic tú an fear <i>agus</i> ní raibh tú ag gáire (You saw the man and you didn't laugh)
VN- construction	Verb + subject + object + agus + gan + subject + object + VN	Chonaic tú an fear <i>agus</i> gan tú (a bheith) ag gáire. (You saw the man while you weren't laughing)

In such infinitive constructions, *a bheith* = *to be* is normally omitted (in the examples, it is for clarification purposes in parentheses).

e.g.:

Chonaic tú an fear agus gan tú (a bheith) sásta. = You saw the man and were not satisfied

Agus é (a bheith) ag gáire, thit sé go talamh. = As he was laughing, he fell down.

Other verbal nouns can just as well be used, but are then of course not omitted.

Due to the fact that an infinitive construction is used, this construction does not have the function of a main clause but rather of a subordinating clause. *Agus* has here different, more subordinating functions through the description of a certain *condition*, which stands in relation to the main clause.

Should the events of both clauses occur at the same time (recognisable through the usage of the progressive), one translates *agus* here to "while, as" :

e.g.: *Agus é (a bheith) ag gáire, thit sé go talamh* = As he was laughing, he fell down. (lit.: "and he [to be] at laughing, fell he to the ground.")

The rather neutral description of condition may, depending on the context, ranging from "seeing as", "despite" to "even though" in translation. It can also take on the function of a modal attributive:

e.g.: *D'imigh tú agus fearg (a bheith) ort* = You left in anger (lit.: "Left you and anger (to be) on-you")

Instead of the infinitive construction, following *agus* a go-subordinating clause may follow, which makes the description of condition even clearer. (see also [conditional conjunctions](#)).

Similar constructions are also possible with **ach** = **but**, but then with a more restrictive (if it were not so, that; provided, that; ,etc.) or a conditional meaning (if)

not only but also

not only... but also ...	lit.
... chomh maith le...	".. so good with ... "
idir ... agus...	"between ... and ... "
ní hamháin ... ach ... freisin	"not alone ... but ... also"

examples:

Bhí Pól **chomh maith le** Seán sásta = Paul, as well as Seán, were satisfied.

Idir mhná **agus** flir a bhí sásta = Both men and women were satisfied.

Ní hamháin Pól a bhí sásta **ach** Seán **freisin** = Not only Paul but also Seán was satisfied.

neither nor

neither ... nor ...	lit.
ní ... ná ...	"not ... noch"
ní ... agus ní ...	"not ... and not ..."

examples:

Ní raibh Pól **ná** Seán sásta = Neither Paul nor Seán were satisfied.

Ní íosfaidh mé **agus** **ní** ólfaidh mé = I would neither eat nor drink

In negative responses, **ná** helps in supplementary information:

e.g.: An raibh Pól ann? - Ní raibh **ná** Seán = Was Paul there? - No, and neither was Seán.

and not either, and even less so

With 2 negated statements, one can emphasize the negation of the second clause with **agus ní mó** = "and no more" or **agus is lú** = "and the least", followed by a dir. relative clause.

examples:

Ní raibh sé anseo **agus ní mó** a bhí sé ansin = He was not here and he was not there either.

Ní raibh sé sásta **agus is lú** a bhí mé sásta = He was not satisfied and I was even less so satisfied.

Exclusive conjunctions (cónaisc scaracha)

These contain a selection or a negative clause, that means a part of the statement will be excluded

or

or	nó
----	----

example

An raibh Pól **nó** Seán sásta inniu = Were Paul or Seán satisfied today?

either or

either... or...	lit.
... (é) sin nó ...	"that or"

examples:

Bhí Pól sásta é **sin nó** bhí Seán sásta = Either Paul or Seán were satisfied.

or else

or else	nó (neachtar acu)
---------	--------------------------

examples:

Ith é **nó neachtar acu** íosfaidh mé é = Eat it, or else I will eat it.

Restrictive conjunctions (cónaisc chodarsnacha)

but, although

but	ach
-----	-----

example

Tá mé sásta inniu **ach** ní raibh mé sásta inné. = I am satisfied today, but not yesterday.

other uses of ach

in negative responses

Ach is in negative responses preceding an eventual clause response or correction: e.g.:

An dochtaír é? - Ní hea, **ach** múinteoir. = Is he a doctor? - No, a teacher.

if

If the conditional is in the main clause, and the clause following *ach* is negated, then *ach* means mostly "if"

Thógfadh sibh an balla, ach nil clocha agaibh. = You would build a wall, if you had stones. (lit.: "... but you have no stones")

with infinitive constructions

Similar to **agus**, *ach* can introduce infinitive constructions (see for further info [agus](#))

Then, *ach* has a subordinating function and a rather conditional meaning for "providing, that", "wenn" or a temporal meaning for "as soon as", "if", "as". e.g.:

Gheobhaidh tú é ach ioc as = You will get it when you pay for it

Tá sé maith go leor ach gan fearg a chur air = He is all right, provided the anger doesn't rise in him

Bhí sé sásta ach an leithscéal sin a ghabháil leis = He was satisfied, as soon as he got the apology.

instead of an infinitive construction also used together with the indirect relative particle a (*ach a* see [as soon as](#))

only

In negative clauses, *ach* can take the function of *only* (see [semi-negative clause](#))

only	ní ... ach ...
------	----------------

example

Ní raibh mé sásta **ach** inné. = I was only satisfied yesterday. (lit.: "not was I satisfied but yesterday")

except

except	lit.
ach amháin (go)	"but alone(that)"
cé is moite de/go	"who is exception of/that"
díomaite de	"apart from"
seachas	"besides"

Subordinating Conjunctions (cónaisc fho-ordaitheacha)**Complementary conjunctions (cónaisc ráiteasacha)**

Complementary = completes something.

These conjunctions introduce subordinating clauses, that, as either an object or a subject, complement the main clause. The subordinating clause replaces then a noun as a member of the clause (compare: "He ordered, that they march" and "He ordered the march").

that /that not

go / nach is a conjunction, that is equivalent to the English *that / that not* .

With the help of go/nach one can make many other conjunctions.

It plays an important role in [indirect speech](#)

Similar to the english *that*, **go** has a final meaning (so that; see 2. example clause).

-	-	present	L/E	preterite	L/E	translation
positive		go	E	gur	L	that
negative	Standard	nach	E	nár	L	that not
	Munster	ná	-	nár	L	that not
		ná go	E	ná gur	L	that not

examples:

Deir sé **go** bhfuil deifir air. = He said, that he's in a hurry.

Tá sé chomh fuar **go** bhfuil orainn ár gcótaí a chaitheamh. It is so cold, that we must wear our coats.

Deir sí **nach** bhfuil ceart agat. She said, that you aren't right.

Dúirt sí **nár** fhoghlaim sí a cuidse. = She said, that she hasn't learned her part.

In *Munster*, **ná** is used instead of *nach* (and **ná go** following a *negative* main clause):

Deir sé **ná** fuil sí ann = Deir sé **nach** bhfuil sí ann = He said, that she is not there.

Ní deirim **ná go** bhfuil sí ann = Ní deirim **nach** bhfuil sí ann = I don't say, that she isn't there.

Causal conjunctions (cónaisc chuíse)**because / while**

There is a vast amount of "because" and similar causal conjunctions.

positive	negative	lit.	dialect
mar (go)	mar nach	"as, that"	all
faoi go	faoi nach	"thereunder, that"	Connacht
de bharr go	de bharr nach	"of the point, that"	Connacht

de bhrí go	de bhrí nach	"of strength, that"	
ó tharla(igh) go	ó tharla(igh) nach	"there happened, that"	Connacht, Munster
ós rud é go	ós rud é nach	"there it is a thing, that"	Munster
toisc go	toisc nach	"purpose, that"	Munster
mar gheall ar go	mar gheall ar nach	"as bet, that"	Connacht
i ngeall ar go	i ngeall ar nach	"in bet, that"	Connacht
(as) siocair go	(as) siocair nach	"(out of) cause, that"	Ulster
a rá go	a rá nach	"to say, that"	
ar an ábhair go	ar an ábhair nach	"on the material, that"	
as ucht go	as ucht nach	"from the breast, that"	Connacht
cionn is go	cionn is nach	"head and that"	Ulster
faoi rá is go	faoi rá is nach	"about saying and that"	
lá go	lá nach	"day that"	Connacht, Munster
ón uair go	ón uair nach	"from hour, that"	Munster
le linn + VN	-	"while"	Ulster
ag + VN	-	"at"	Connacht
ar son go	ar son nach	"on happiness, that"	Connacht

others: óir, dóigh, ó (ós with the copula), arae, nó

These are in affirmative clauses mostly without go, in negative clauses however always with nach (like mar)

Some of these "because" allow a verbal noun construction (instead of go/nach-partial clauses)

examples:

Bhí fáitíos roimpi mar go raibh sí an-ard. = One was afraid of her because she was very tall.

Rinne siad é mar nach raibh siad leisciúil. = They did it because they weren't lazy.

Bhí fearg air faoi go raibh siad ag déanamh gleo. = He was angry because they were making noise.

Ní dheachaidh mé go hÉirinn de bharr go raibh mé tinn. = I did not go to Ireland, because I was sick.

Óir is leatsa an ríocht agus an chumhacht agus an ghlór. = For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. (from the Lord's Prayer)

Dóigh is liomsa é. = Because is is mine.

Ós í an Ghaeilge an teanga náisiúnta is í an phríomhtheanga oifigiúil í. = Because Irish is the national language, it is the first official language. (from: Art. 8 of the Irish Constitution)

Note that mar, that carries various meanings:

examples:

mar tá sé = because he is (mar + verb)

mar go bhfuil sé = because he is (mar + go-subordinating clause)

Compare with the other uses of mar:

mar a bhfuil sé = where he is (mar + indir. relative clause)

mar atá sé = how he is (mar + dir. relative clause)

The negative form mar nach is the same for all 3 uses, only the context gives the difference in meaning:

mar nach bhfuil sé = because/where/how he isn't.

that's why/ for / therefore / due to

-	lit.
(agus) mar sin (go)	(and so) how that, (that)
(agus) dá bhrí sin (go)	(and) from his strength, (that)
fath um + indir. relative clause	"reason about"
is uime sin + dir. relative clause	"is about that"

examples

Níor tháinig sé agus sileadh mar sin gur mharbh a bhí sé = He didn't arrive and that's why one thought that he was dead.

Déanaim smaoineamh dá bhrí sin táim ann = I think therefore I am.

Is uime sin a dúirt mé leat é = That's why I'm telling you.

Circumstantial conjunctions (cónaisc imthoisceacha)

seeing, that (considering, that / depending on)

Circumstantial describe conditions under which other events occur. They remain relatively neutral with respect to if the event *due to* or *despite* the condition (causal or concessive) takes place.

The describe only, that there is a *connection* between condition and event, that makes it necessary to view, consider and to describe an event.

positive	negative	lit.
agus go	agus nach	"and that"
agus a rá go	agus a rá nach	"and to say, that"
ráite go	ráite nach	"said, that"
tráth is go	tráth is nach	"time and that"
tar éis go	tar éis nach	"afterwards, that"
i ndiaidh go	i ndiaidh nach	"afterwards, that"
nuair a	nuair nach	"if"

others:

agus + verbal noun (the VN bheith is omitted)

agus + a + abstract noun + a + dir. relative clause (see also [abstract noun](#))

agus chomh + adjective + agus a + dir. relative clause

examples:

Ní haon ionadh sin **agus gurb** eisean do mhac = That is not surprising, seeing that he is your son.

Agus nach tusa a rinne ar chor ar bith é! = Considering, that you haven't even done it!

Ní dhéanfaidh tú é **tráth agus nár** thosaigh tú fós = You will not do it, since you have not even started with it.

Ní hionadh é **agus a** fheabhas a bhí tú = It is no surprise, as good as you were (seeing, how good you were)

Ní hionadh é **agus chomh** maith **agus a** bhí tú = It is no surprise, so good as you were.

Ba cheart duit a bheith amuigh **agus** an lá (a bheith) chomh breá sin = You should be outdoors, considering that the weather is so nice.

Concessive conjunctions (cónaisc fhaomhacha)

although/ despite / even if

positive	negative	lit.
cé go	cé nach	"who, that"
cé is moite go	cé is moite nach	"who is exception, that"
(d')ainneoin go	(d')ainneoin nach	"(of) resistance, that"
i ndiaidh (is) go	i ndiaidh (is) nach	"after, that"
tar éis go	tar éis nach	"after, that"
siúd is go	siúd is nach	"there and that"
i dtaobh is go	i dtaobh is nach	"in side and that"
ach go	ach nach	"but, that"
ar a shon go	ar a shon nach	"on the reason, that"
má ... féin	mura ... féin	"if... even"
dá ... féin	mura ... féin	"if... even"
fiú amháin	ní fiú amháin	"worth only"
más ea (féin)		"(even) when it is"

instead of cé also **gidh (gí)**

examples:

Ní chreidim é **cé go** bhfeicim é. = I don't believe it, even though I see it.

Ní dhearna sé é, **(d')ainneoin go** dúirt mé leis é. = He didn't do it, although I told him to.

Níor tháinig fearg orm léi **i ndiaidh nach** n-éistfeadh sí liom. = I didn't become angry with her, even though she didn't want to listen to me.

Chuala mé iad **siúd is nach** bhfaca mé iad. = I heard her, although I didn't see her.

Má tá sé bocht **féin** tá sé fial. = Although ("even if") he is poor, he is generous

Fiú amháin tá sé bocht tá sé fial = Even though he is poor, he is generous

Fear leannta é, **más ea féin**, níl aon Bhéarla aige = He's a learned man, but he still can't speak English.

conditional clauses (**má, dá**) can possess a concessive character (also without *féin*), dá- clauses are then often with the indicative or imperative in the main clause (in the conditional meaning, the conditional is always in the main clause)

Final conjunctions (cónaisc aidhme)

with that/ so that/ so

positive	negative	lit.
le go	le nach	"with that"
chun go	chun nach	"to that"
ar nós go	ar nós nach	"on the way, that"
i riocht is go	i riocht is nach	"in the form and that"
i geruth is go	i geruth is nach	"in the form and that"
i gcaoi go	i gcaoi nach	"in the way, that"
i dtreo go	i dtreo nach	"in the direction, that"
sa tsí go	sa tsí nach	"in the way, that"
súil is go	súil is nach	"eye and that"
faoi choinne + VN	-	"under meeting"
sa dóigh go	sa dóigh nach	"in the way that"
ar shlí go	ar shlí nach	"on the way that"
d'fhoínn is go	d'fhoínn is nach	"from the wish and that"*
ionas go	ionas nach	"way, that"
go	-	"that"
nó go	-	"or that"
-	sula	"before"
-	ar eagla (go)	"on fear; that"

d'fhoínn is go is more accurately translated as "in the hope, that...".

ar eagla go means also more lit. "out of fear that"

Following sula (in Munster sara) the subjunctive is also allowed.

examples

Déan deifir le go mbeidh tú réidh in am. = Hurry so that you are ready in time.

Scríobh sí síos é ar nós nach ndéanfadh sí dearmad air. = She wrote it down, so that she would not forget it.

Chodail mé rófhada i riocht is go raibh mé déanach. = I overslept so, that I was late.

Dúirt sé é sin d'fhoínn is go gcuirfeadh sé fearg orm. = He said that in the hope that it would anger me.

Tháinig sé anseo go bhfeicfeadh sé í. = He came here to see her.

Chuaigh sé abhaile sula bhfeicteí é - He went home, in order not to be seen. (lit.: ... before he will be seen)

Temporal conjunctions (cónaisc ama)

until

positive	negative	lit.
go dtí go	go dtí nach	"until coming, that"
nó go	-	"or that"
(is) go	-	"(and) that"

Following these conjunctions, the subjunctive can be used, if it's concering indefinite time periods.

examples

Bhí siad ina dtost go dtí go bhfaca mé iad. = They were silent, until I saw them.

Fan nó go dtiocfaidh / dtaga sé. = Wait until he comes.

Ní thiocfaidh sé go bhfaighidh sé cuireadh uait. = He will not come, until you invite him.

since / since then

	Form	+	lit.
positive	ó	indep. verb form	"since"
negative	ó nach	dir. relative	"since, that not"

		clause	
--	--	--------	--

ó may also mean *da* (in the causal sense, similar to the engl. *since*) see [because, for](#) with the copula, ó conjoins to ós
ó is also used as a preposition: ó = [from, since](#).

example

Ní fhaca mé iad ó chuala mé an scéal. = I have not seen her, since I heard the news.

as soon as

present	L/E	preterite	L/E
ach a	E	ach ar	L

as soon as	+
chomh luath is a	direct relative clause
(ar) feadh	VN

Following **ach a**, the subjunctive tense is allowed, when it's about an indefinite time period.
Instead of the indir. relative particle **a**, an infinitive construction may follow **ach** (see [ach](#))

examples

Glaofaigh sí **chomh luath is a** thiofaidh sí abhaile. = She will call, as soon as she comes home.
Inseoidh mé sin dó **ach a** bhfeicfidh / bhfeice mé é.= I will tell him that, as soon as I see him.

before

present	L/E	preterite	L/E
sula	E	sular	L

until, before	+	lit.
an t-am a	indirect relative clause	"the time, that"
roimh	object + a + verbal noun + do + subject	"before to"

sula / sular is a combination of **sul** (= before) and the indirect relative particle **a / ar**, hence **sul a/ar** is also possible.
Regional: instead of **sula** also **sara / sarar** (Munster), **sol** (with dir. relative clause), **sola, sul má** (Connemara), **roimh** (Mayo)
Following **sula**, the *subjunctive* may be used (by indefinite time points/time periods)
Sula has also the final meaning "in order to not / to not".

examples

Béidh sé anseo **sula** dtaga mé ar ais. = He will be here, before I return.

Béidh sé anseo **sara** dtiocfaidh mé ar ais. = He will be here, before I return.

Bhí siad ina suí **sara** ndéaradh sé focal - They stood up, before he could say a word.

Phéinteáil sé an doras **sular** tháinig Pádraig.= He had painted the door, before Pádraig arrived.

An t-am ar tháinig sé, bhíodar diolta ar fad.= Until (before) he arrived, they were all sold out.'

Roimhimeacht **dom**, béidh sé anseo = before I go, he will be here.

while, as (synchronicity)

während	+	lit.
chomh fada is a	direct relative clause	"so far and that"
an t-achar a	direct relative clause	"the distance, that"
fad a	direct relative clause	"far; that"
le linn	object + a + verbal noun + do + subject	"with period ... to"
ag	object + a + verbal noun + do + subject	"at ... to"
ag	verbal noun + genitive object + do + subject	"at ... to"
agus	subject + ag + verbal noun	"and ... at"

chomh fada is a > **chúns a** (in Connacht)

More about *le linn* and *ag* + do + subject see here [usage of the verbal noun: synchronicity](#)

examples:Bhí sé ag caoineadh **an t-achar a / fad a / chúns a** bhí sé ag caint liom. = He was crying as he spoke with me.Le **linn** a bheith anseo **dó** rinne sé a chuid den obair = As he was here, he did his work

Agus é ag gáire, thit sé go talamh = While laughing, he fell over.

Ag léamh litreach **dó** fuair sé bás. = As he was reading the letter, he died.**as long as**

as long as	+ relative clause	lit.
fad (agus) a	direct	"long (and) that"

example:Tig leat é a choinneáil **fad is a** thugann tú aire dó. = You may hold it, as long as you take care of it.'**after**

after	+	lit.
tar éis	object + a + verbal noun + do + subject	"after ... to"
ar	verbal noun + genitive object + do + subject	"on ... to"

ar with the possessive pronomen *a* comprises the combined form **arna****example:**Tiocfaidh an bhean **tar éis** imeacht **don** fhear. = The woman will come, after the man is goneAr chloisteáil na nuactha **dí** bhí sí tinn. = After she heard the news, she was sick.Arna cloisteáil sin **dí** bhí sí tinn. = After she had heard it, she was sick.**when (temp.) / as**

	+ relative clause	lit.
nuair a	direct	"(the) time, when"*

* *nuair* < *an uair* = the time**examples:**

Nuair a bhí mé óg, bhí mé i mo chónaí i nDún na nGall. = As I was young, I lived in Donegal.

Leag thart é **nuair a** bheidh tú réidh leis. = Put it away, when you are done with it.**every time, when**

	+	lit.
gach uair dá	eclipsis	"every time from all, that"

dá is here the combination of the preposition [de](#) and the [generalising relative pronoun](#) *a*. *Dá* appears often after *gach* + noun.**examples:**Gach uair **dá** bhfaca mé é, ní raibh sé ag obair. = Every time that I saw him, he was not working.**Conditional conjunctions (cónaisc choinníollacha)****if (condit.) / falls**In Irish, there are two types of conditions (conditional -)clauses, depending on if the realisation of the condition is possible ([real](#) conditional clauses) or just assumed ([irreal](#) conditional clauses).

-	positive	L/E	negative	L/E	negative preterite	L/E
Real:	má	L	mura	E	murar	L
Irreal:	dá	E	mura	E	-	-

Regional instead of *mura* / *murar* also **muna** / **munar**, **mara** / **marar**

Following **má**, any tense is allowed (instead of the future, the habitual present)

Following **dá**, normally comes the conditional or subjunctive-preterite (same form as the imperfect)

Following a realistic **mura**, any tense is allowed, also the subjunctive-present (in the future sense)

Following an unrealistic **mura**, comes either the conditional or subjunctive-preterite.

examples:

Má bhíonn sé sásta, tiocfaidh na fir. = If he is satisfied, the men will come.

Tiocfaidh fearg uirthi, **mura** ndéanfar di é = She will be angry, if one doesn't do it for her,

Murar chaill sí é, ghoid sé é. = If she hasn't lost it, he stole it.

Dá mbeadh lá maith ann dhéanfainn é. = If it were a nice day, I would do it.

Mura rachainn leis ní fheicfinn an mhaighdean mhara. = If I hadn't gone with him, I wouldn't have seen the mermaid.

for, if

mar dá:

Mar dá mbeadh sé ann bheadh sé sásta = For if he were there, he would be satisfied.

if it weren't so, (that)

	lit.
murach (go/nach)	see below
mura mbeadh (go/nach)	"if-not were (that)"
murab é (go/nach)	"if-not-were it (that)"
ach (go/nach)	"but (that)"
ach ab é (go/nach)	"but were it (that)"

murach is actually just the contraction of **mura mbeadh** = *if it were not*

This is used to describe results, if already realised conditions would not exist.

The main clause is in the **conditional**.

The subordinate clause following murach / ach is in the **indicative**.

Instead of a subordinate clause, an infinitive construction or a noun may also be written, in the latter case, murach becomes a preposition in the sense of "without".

example:

Ní chréidfinn é **murach go** bhfaca mé féin é = I wouldn't have believed it, had I not seen it myself.

Murach an balla = If it weren't for the wall, without the wall

Ach go bhfuil balla ann = If the wall weren't there.

Ach nach bhfuil balla ann = If it weren't so, that there was no wall (= if there were a wall)

provided, that

positive	negative	lit.
i gcleithiúnas go	i gcleithiúnas nach	"in dependence, that"
ar chuntar go	ar chuntar nach	"on condition, that"

example:

Éireoidh leis an bhfiontar **i gcleithiúnas go** mbeidh cách páirteach ann. = The project will be a success, provided that we all participate.

Tig leat é a bhriseadh **ar chuntar go** n-íocfaidh tú as. = You may break it, if you pay for it.

also **ach** can be used in this sense (with verbal noun or with go; see also [but](#))

if

if	positive	negative
present	an	nach
preterite	ar	nár

In Connacht also **má** in the sense of "if" is used.

an / nach is a [verb particle](#) (here used in the sense of an "indirect query")

example:

Níl mé cinnte **an** bhfuil mé sásta. = I am not sure, if I am satisfied.

Ní mé **ar** chuala sé é. = I wonder, if he heard it.

Níl a fhios agam **má** tá Gaeilge aige. = I don't know, if he can speak Irish.

if ... or if (not)

if ... or not	+ (after 1st part)	+ (after 2nd part)	lit.
an ... nó nach ...	eclipsis	eclipsis	"if ... or if not"
cé acu a ... nó nach ...	dir.relative clause	dir. relative clause	"who at-them that ... or that not"
cé acu an ... nó nach ...	eclipsis	eclipsis	"who at-them if ... or if not"
pé acu a ... nó nach ...	dir.relative clause	dir. relative clause	"whoever at-them that ... or that not"
cibé acu a ... nó nach ...	dir.relative clause	dir. relative clause	"whoever at-them that ... or that not"
... nó ná ...	imperative	imperative	"...or not ..."
má ... má	real conditional clause	real conditional clause	"if... then ..."

e.g.:

Níl a fhios agam **an** bhfuil mé sásta **nó nach** bhfuil = I don't know, if I am satisfied, or not.

Níl a fhios agam **cé acu** atá mé sásta **nó nach** bhfuil = I don't know, if I am satisfied, or not.

Níl a fhios agam **cé acu an** bhfuil mé sásta **nó nach** bhfuil = I don't know, if I am satisfied, or not.

Biodh sé sásta **nó ná** bíodh = if he is satisfied or not.

Instead of the negative **nó nach** (or not) another (positive) alternative with **nó an**, **nó a** (or if) may also follow.

e.g.:

Níl a fhios agam **an** bhfuil mé sásta **nó an** bhfuil mé míshásta = I don't know, if I am satisfied or if I am unsatisfied.

Níl a fhios agam **cé acu a** bhí mé sásta **nó a** bhí mé míshásta = I don't know, if I was satisfied or if I was unsatisfied.

Of course there can be two alternatives in one clause (connected via **nó** = or).

e.g.:

An bhfuil mise **nó** tua sásta = if I or you are satisfied

Cé acu mise **nó** tua atá sásta = if I or you are satisfied

Pé, cé acu, cibé acu, an also with **2 adjectives** directly following one another (without **nó**), also similar **más** with 2 adjectives:

e.g.:

Pé maith olc é = if it is good or bad

Más maith olc é = if it is good or bad

Más fior bréag é = if it is true or false

The forms **an, cé acu** appear in *indirect queries*.

But **pé, pé acu, cibé acu** appear in the sense of a *condition* (to describe the ambivalence of the condition). In this sense the imperative form is used (sim. in German: "Sei es oder sei es nicht"=May it be so or not)

examples:

In the sense of an indirect query:

Níl mé cinnte **an** bhfuil mé sásta inniu **nó nach** bhfuil. = I am not sure if I am satisfied today or not.

Abair liom **cé acu a** bheidh tú ann **nó nach** mbeidh = Tell me if you will be there or not.

Níl a fhios agam **an** fior bréag é = I don't know if it is true or false.

In the sense of an ambivalent condition :

Cibé acu a bheidh sé ann **nó nach** mbeidh, beimid sásta. = if he will be there or not, we will be satisfied.

Pé maith olc é = if it is good or bad, either good or bad, be it good or bad.

Pé maith olc leat é = either you like it or not, if you like it or not.

Beimid ann, tagadh sé **nó ná** tagadh. = We will be there, if he comes or not.

Ambivalence (neamhchúis) can also be expressed with **dá** + abstract noun in the sense of "how ... ever": **dá olcas é** = however bad, or with **cibé** in the sense of "who/which/what ever": **cibé áit ar bith** = whichever place/wherever

Modal conjunctions (cónaisc mhódúla)

as if

positive	negative	+	lit.
ar nós dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"on way if"
ach oiread agus dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"but amount as if"
ach chomh beag agus dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"but so small as if"

chomh (+ adj.) (agus) dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"so ... as if"
amhail (agus) dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"like as if"
fearacht agus dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"like as if"
ionann agus dá	-	irreal conditional clause	"same as if"
mar a	mar nach	direct relative clause	"like"
ar nós mar a	ar nós mar nach	direct relative clause	"on way, like"
faoi mar a	faoi mar nach	direct relative clause	"according, like"
amhail mar a	amhail mar nach	direct relative clause	"so, like"
cosúil le mar a	cosúil le mar nach	direct relative clause	"same, like"
mar dhea go	mar dhea nach	eclipsis	"as if it were, that"
i leith is go	i leith is nach	eclipsis	"in side, that"

After **mar a**, etc. follows mostly a verb in the conditional.

mar dhea go has the meaning of an intentional faking (similar also the verb **lig (ar ... go)** (engl. to let on = to pretend): "to do so, as if"

(*mar dhea* originally *mar bh'ea*, lit. "as were it")

examples:

Chorraigh sí **ar nós dá** mbeadh sí ag iaraid í féin a bhaint as poll. = She moved around, as if she were trying to free herself out of a hole.

Níor chuala mé aon rud **ach oiread agus dá** mbeadh gan duine a bheith beo sa bhaile seo. = I heard nothing, as if no one in this village were alive.

Bhog sé a cheann (**ar nós**) **mar a** bheadh sé ag seinm. = He moved his head (so), as if he were playing music.'

Bhí an múinteoir go maith dom **fearacht dá** mba mé a mhac féin = The teacher was so good to me, as if I were his own son.

Bhí an múinteoir go maith dom **i leith is gur** mé a mhac féin. = The teacher was so good to me, as if I were his own son.

Bhí an múinteoir **chomh** maith dom **is dá** mba mé a mhac féin. = idem.

D'fhan sé ansin ag **ligeann air** féin **gur** ag breathnú ar an teilifís a bhí sé = He stayed there and did so, as if he were watching television.

like, as

like, as	+ relative clause	lit.
sa chaoi a	indirect	"in the way, that"
mar a	direct	"like"
amhail a	direct	"like"
amhail mar a	direct	"like"

sa chaoi a in Connemara also **sa gcaoi a**; also without article: **i gcaoi a**

examples:

D'fhág sí é **sa gcaoi a** raibh sé. = She left it as it was.

Seinneadh port ansin, **mar a** rinneadh go minic. = Then a melody was played, like one had often done it.

Amhail a dúirt sé = Exactly, as he said.

see also about the comparitive under [comparitive conjunctions](#) (so ... like, (more) than)

as much(...) as

oiread (...) agus a	+ dir. relative clause	"amount ... and her"
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example:

Níl oiread airgid agam **agus a** cheapfá. = I haven't as much money, as you think.

as far as

ar feadh a	+ indir. relative clause	"for the duration as"
sa mhéid go/nach	+ eclipsis	"in the extent, that"

example:

Níl sé anseo **ar feadh a** bhfuil a fhios agam = He is not here, as far as I know.

Local conjunctions (cónaisc áite)

where

where	+	lit.
mar a	indirect relative clause	"where"*
san áit a	indirect relative clause	"in the place, where"
cá	eclipsis	"where"

* *mar a* can also mean "where" (with an indirect relative clause) or "how" (with direct relative clause):

Biodh sé mar atá sé agus Trá Lí mar a bhfuil sí = May it be, as it be and may Tralee be, where it may be (saying)

example:

Lorg iad **mar ar** chuir tú iad.= Look for them (there), where you left them.

Fan **san áit a** bhfuil tú.= Stay where you are!

Níl a fhios agam **cá** bhfuil tú = I don't know, where you are.

Caibidil a Seacht:

The personal pronouns (na Forainmneacha Pearsanta)

[forms](#)

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[muid + sinn, tú + thú](#)

[the order of the pronouns](#)

[agreement in gender and number](#)

[emphatic suffixes](#)

Forms

		subject form		object form		copular form	
		normal	emphatic	normal	emphatic	normal	emphatic
1st	I	mé	mise	mé	mise	mé	mise
2nd	you	tú	tusa	thú	thusa	tú	tusa
3rd	he	sé	seisean	é	eisean	é	eisean
	she	sí	sise	í	ise	í	ise
	it	-	-	-	-	ea	eadhon
1st	we	muid sinn	muidne sinne	muid sinn	muidne sinne	muid sinn	muidne sinne
2nd	you	sibh	sibhse	sibh	sibhse	sibh	sibhse
3rd	they	siad	siadsan	iad	iadsan	iad	iadsan

mé and tú appear occasionally (fitting to the rather short pronunciation) as *me* or *mi* and *tu* without an accent (as by *mise* and *tusa*)

The genitive form of the personal pronoun is the [possessive pronoun](#).

The terms "subject form" and "object form" are contradictory. Better terms would be *subjunct form* (for subject form) and *disjunct form* (for object form), but these terms are used seldomly. The term "copular form" is used here, since this form is not always identical to the object form.

The subject form (foirm ainmneach)

- is used if the pronoun *directly* follows the verb and is the subject of the sentence.
e.g.: Ólann sé bainne = he drinks milk
- is **not** used, if **synthetic** verb forms are used, because here, the subject is already signified (e.g.: ólaim bainne = *I drink milk*, tuigimid = *we understand*),
except exceptionally- and selectively in the 3rd pers. plural: (e.g.: tuigid siad / tuigeann siad = *they understand*)

The object form (foirm chuspóireach)

- There are differences in the subject form of the 2nd person sing. (thú instead of tú) and the 3rd person (é/í/iad instead of sé/sí/siad).
For sinn and sibh there were once forms without s (*inn, ibh*), today no longer.
- It is used if the pronoun does *not directly* follow the verb (no matter if it is the subject or the object)

e.g.: *Ólann Seán é* = *Seán drinks it.* (object)

e.g.: *Ólann sise agus eisean bainne* = *She and he drink milk.* (actual subject!). Here though after *agus tú, not* thú

- as the object, is denotes also reflexivity, if necessary for clarity, together with the [reflexive pronoun féin = self](#): e.g.: *Nímse mé (féin)* = *Ich wash myself*. *Ghortaigh sé é féin* = *He hurt himself*
- It is also used with the [autonomous form](#) of the verb (dir object): *Glantar é* = *one cleans it*
- It is used after non-conjugable [prepositions](#). e.g. *gan é* = *without him* (also here tú instead of thú: *gan tú* = *without you*)
- **not** used after conjugable prepositions (instead of their compound forms with a preposition, i.e. prepositional pronouns s.b.) also *not *ag é* but *aige* = *by him*
- **not** used after zusammengesetzten prepositions (instead of dessen [possessive pronouns](#))
- **not** used, if it should be the direct object of a verbal noun (e.g. in the progressive form) (here instead of its use of [possessive pronouns](#), in the progressive form with the preposition do: e.g.: *Bhí mé do bhur mbualadh* = *I have beaten you* ("I was to your beating") see also [tenses](#)

The copula form (foirm chopaileach)

- identical to the object form, except the *tú* mostly appears unlenited and there is here a neuter pronoun *ea*.
- The forms *é, i, iad* are always bound to the copular form *is* in spoken Irish [ʃe:], [ʃi:], [ʃi@d]). This is also partially written so: 'sé, 'sí, 'siad (with and without an apostrophe). Then, they are the same as the subject forms.
- They are used if the pronoun is the subject/predicate (or subsubject/subpredicate) of a [copular clause](#). *Is tusa a rinne é* = *It was you who did it*; *Is eisean a rinne é* = *He did it*; *Is é mo mhuinteoir é* = *He is my teacher*.

The polite form (foirm an ómóis)

- A polite form really doesn't exist, i.e. one speaks to strangers and people of higher authority with **tú = you**.
e.g.: *Conas atá tú, a dhuine uasail?* = *How do you do, Sir?*; *Conas atá tú, a Uachtaráin?* = *How do you do, Mr. President?*
- An exception lies in the address of **clergy**, here one can use **sibh = you(pl.)** ("iolra an ómóis = the plural of honour):
e.g.: *Conas atá sibh, a Athair?* = *How are we, Father?*
Appropriately one must also use the 2nd person plural in possessive- and prepositional pronouns or verbs
e.g.: *Ólaigí, a Athair, más é bhur dtoil é* = *Drink, if you please, Father!*

Emphatic forms (foirmeacha tréise)

- besides the above forms, (*mise, tusa, etc.*) there are also forms with **féin** (*mé féin, tú féin, etc.*) or with [demonstrative pronouns](#) (in the 3rd pers.: *é sin, i siúd, iad seo, etc.*)
- they serve to emphasise a pronouns, also called "contrast forms".
- thes must be related in some way, like a series of personal pronouns (e.g.: *mise agus tusa* = *you and I*)
- also common in identification copular clauses as the predicate (e.g.: *Is mise Pól* = *I am Paul* instead of *Is mé Pól*)
- The forms *mise, tusa, eisean, ise, etc.* are only used for persons, *not* for inanimate nouns, the forms with *féin* or *sin* may also be used for inanimate nouns

The neuter pronoun (an forainm pearsanta neodrach)

ea (old script form **eadh**), pronunciation: [a:] (Standard and Munster), [æ:] (in Connacht).

It is mostly bound to *is* to make **sea**, spoken: [ʃa:] or [ʃæ:].

It is known as the "neuter" pronoun ("it"), a leftover of the (today otherwise obsolete) neuter.

It can only be used with the [copula](#) and also only:

- in classification clauses (with an indefinite predicate noun) e.g. *múinteoir is ea an bhean* = *the woman is a teacher*; *Múinteoir is ea i* = *She's a teacher* (literal translation: "Teacher it is, that she is").
- in reference to an indefinite predicate noun: e.g.: *Is múinteoir íse ach ní hea mise* = *She is a teacher, but I am not*.
- in short questions, answers: *Seán a rinne é, an ea?* = *Seán did it, isn't that so?* *Is ea* = *Yes*
- **ní hea** as the corrective: *Is dócha, ní hea, is deimhin gur rinne sé é* = *It is possible, no, it is sure, that he did it*.
- **is ea a** to connect an adverbial indicators with the main clause : e.g. *Thall ansiúd is ea atá sí ina cóiné* = *It's over there, where she lives*.
- **an ea go** in the meaning "is it so that..." *An ea nach bhfuil tú sásta?* = *Is it so that you are not satisfied?*
- **más ea (féin)** = even if it is so: *Ach más ea, déanfaidh mé é* = *But even if so, I will do it*. (in altered pronunciation as the filling word> *muise, mhaise* = *indeed*)
- to preclude an action: *Is ea a chuamar ar fud na tíre* = *What we had done, was to go through the entire country*.
- **is ea is + comparative** in constructions with the [abstract noun](#) in the meaning *desto*: *dá mhéad é is ea is fearr é* = *the bigger, the better*

In other uses only *sé/é* or *si/í* is used, depending on the antecedent, for what the *it* stands. If the gender of the antecedent is unknown or a subordinating clause, then one uses *sé* or *é*, and never *ea*.

The same applies for the usage of a "impersonal it": *Tá sé ag cur baistí* = *It's raining*.

eadhon (eadh + ón, -ón is the old emphatic suffix in the neuter)

It is used in written language still as the replacement for the abbreviations like "which is called", "namely" or "that is" (Latin "id est", i.e., in Irish often .i. abbreviated, also in English "viz.").

In Irish, the pronoun stands alone, the copula (is) is omitted.

amhlaidh is a remaining prepositional pronoun out of *amhail* = *like* and *eadh* = *it* (lit.: "like it").

Today mostly used as an adverb in the meaning "so": *Tá sin amhlaidh* = *So it is*

is amhlaidh is + comparative appear in the usage "so", "the...", esp. in combination with the [abstract noun](#) (see there)

Often, **is amhlaidh** is also similarly used like **is ea**.

prepositional pronouns (forainmneacha réamhfhoclacha)

With many prepositions there are **compound forms** with the personal pronouns, i.e. the prepositions are, so to say, conjugated.

e.g. *ag* : *agam, agat, aige, aici, agaínn, agaibh, acu.*

see [overview](#)

muid / sinn:

- *Sinn* is the older form and is probably predominantly used in Munster, (but known worldwide as in the party name *Sinn Féin* = *Ourselves*)
- *Muid* is made up of the present tense verb suffix -imid (e.g. *tuigimid* = *we understand*);
- *Muid* is today more often as *sinn* and stems as a pronoun originally from Ulster.
In older grammar books[1] the use of muid was very much frowned upon, but without success.
- Occasionally, *muid* is recommended as a subject form after analytical verb forms (e.g.: *tuigeann muid thú* = *we understand you*), *sinn* on the other hand to be used as the object form (e.g.: *tuigeann tú sinn* = *you understand us*). *Muid* appears still also the object form.

tú / thú:

Generally, tú is the subject- and copular form and thú is the object form, but in both cases there are too many exceptions, so that this had to be appended:

An unlenited **tú/tusa** is used:

- as the subject of a verb (*glanann tú = you clean*)
- directly after the copula (*is tusa mo ghrá = you are my love*)
- with the verbal noun (*tú a bheith ann = that you are there, tú a chloisint = to hear you*)
- after agus (*glanann mise agus tusa = you and I clean*)
- after non-conjugated prepositions (*idir tusa agus eisean = between you and him, gan tusa = without you*)

A lenited **thú/thusa** is used:

- as the object of a verb (*glanaimh thú = I clean you, glantar thú = one cleans you*)
- with der copula, if es not directly danach steht: *cér díobh thú? = what's your name?, cé as thú = where are your from?, mo cheol thú = bravo, is dochtaír thú = you're a doctor*

the order of the pronouns:

In German/English the 1st person ("I") always comes last, at least it should. In Irish it is the other way around.

If there should follow more than one pronoun after another, the following applies:

1. **1st person** (mé, muid/sinn)
2. **2nd person** (tú, sibh)
3. **3rd person** (é í, iad and nouns)
in a list, a pronoun of the 3rd person comes after a noun

e.g.:

Bhí mise is tusa is eisean ann = He, you and I were there.

*Bhí mise agus mo chairde in Éirinn anuraidh = My friends and I were in Ireland last year
an múinteoir agus eisean = he and the teacher*

agreement in gender and number:

Usually, pronouns of the 3rd person (*sé = he, sí = she*) agree in number and gender with the appropriate noun.

Pertaining to the **gender**, there are exceptions only in the cases of

- **persons**: nouns, no matter which grammatical gender, are represented by *pronouns of the natural genders*:
e.g.: *an cailín = the girl* (masculine noun!), but the pronoun - *sí, í = she*
This applies also for occupational terms.
e.g. *an múinteoir = the teacher* (masculine noun!), but the pronouns *sé, é* by male teachers, *sí, í* by female teachers
- **nautical terms**: Irish terms for ships can either be feminine (*long = ship*) or masculine (*bád = boat*).
In any case one uses *feminine pronouns*.
e.g.: *Is bád deas í = It is a pretty boat*
- **áit, uair** are feminine nouns, but use **masculine pronouns**.
e.g.: *Is é an áit is fearr é = It is the best place.*
- for some nouns (**vehicles, machines, animals**) like *carr = car, capall = horse, leabhar = book* are partially using masculine or feminine pronouns.
- Subpredicates and other pronouns together with **interrogatives** are mostly masculine: *Cé hé an bhean sin? = Who is that woman?* Always masculine are prepositional pronouns with interrogatives: *Cé aige a raibh an ginmhilleadh? = Who had the abortion?*

In **number** there are exceptions made in the case of

- **collective nouns (*cnuasainmneacha*):** collective nouns are nouns in the singular, that signify a group of persons, things (e.g. *slua* = *crowd*, *aintir* = *people*, *beirt* = *a twosome*, *buion* = *troop*, *clann* = *children*, etc.).

One refers back to them with plural pronouns:

e.g.: *Is iad an bheirt is fearr iad* = *They are the two best ones* (an bheirt: singular, iad: plural),
An mhuintir a raibh mé leo = *The people, by whom I was.* (an mhuintir: singular, leo: plural)

Emphatic suffixes (*iarmhíreacha tréise*)

	suffix
I	-sa/-se
you	-sa/-se
he	-san/-sean
sie	-sa/-se
we	-na/-ne/-e*
ih̄r	-sa/-se
sie	-san/-sean

The forms **-se, -sean, -ne** come after a slender final sound, the forms **-sa, -san, -na** after a broad final sound.
 *: -e is used after a double-n: *sinn-ne* > *sinne*, *againn-ne* > *againne*

These suffixes are mentioned here, because they are closely related to the personal pronouns.

They serve as contrast and emphasis

They are used *only in reference to persons, not in reference to inanimate things or animals.*

If a person is repeatedly mentioned in a sentence, the suffix can only be used the first time (e.g. *Nimse mé féin* = *I wash myself*)

They can be added to the following parts of speech:

- **nouns** (if with possessive pronouns) e.g.: *a theachsan* = *his house*
- **adjectives** (if with possessive pronouns and noun) e.g.: *a theach mórsan* = *his big house*
- **personal pronouns** e.g.: *seisean* = *he*, *sinne* = *we*, *muidne* = *we*
- **prepositional pronouns** e.g.: *aigesean* = *by him*, *linne* = *with us*
- **synthetic verb forms** e.g.: *tuigimse* = *I understand*, *tuigfinnse* = *I would understand*, *tuigeamarna* = *we understood*

According to the origin, they are weakened forms of the [demonstrative pronouns](#): *seo* (> sa/se), *sin* (> san/sean). -ne is a shorthand form of the personal pronoun *sinn* (or the older form *sni*). "Sinne" is also actually a double "sinn".

Alternatively to that, the [pronouns féin](#) (e.g.: *mé féin*, *tú féin*, *é féin*) or, in the 3rd person, the [demonstrative pronouns seo, sin, siúd](#) may be used (e.g.: *é sin*, *i sin*, *iad sin*). These alternatives are also to be found in usage.

[1] Gráiméar na Gaedhilge leis na Bráithreachaibh Críostamhla, 1906:
in reference to *muid*: "On no account should this corruption be imitated by the student"

Caibidil a Naoi

Other Words(Focail eile)

interrogatives

[cé, cá, cad, conas, cathain, an](#)
[interrogatives with prepositions](#)

Demonstrative pronouns

[relative particle and -pronouns](#)
[direct relative particles](#)
[indirect relative particles](#)
[reflexive relative pronouns](#)
[generalising relative pronouns](#)

determinant pronouns

[indefinite pronouns](#)
[the pronoun féin](#)
[reciprocal pronouns](#)
[verbal particle](#)
[vocative particle](#)
[number particle](#)

Interrogatives (míreanna ceisteacha)

One can subdivide interrogatives in:

- **Interrogative pronouns (forainmneacha ceisteacha):** (who, what)
- **Interrogative adverbs (dabhriathra ceisteacha):** (when, where, how, with what, etc.)
- **Interrogative adjectives (aidiachtaí ceisteacha):** (which, how many)

This subdivision makes generally (and especially in Irish) little sense, because the adverbs are often used with the help of a pronoun (adverbial pronouns are) do not behave any differently than an interrogative pronoun. Some (e.g. *cá*) can act as a pronoun, an adverb or an adjective.

While in German the interrogatives all start with "w", in Latin with "qu", in Irish they begin with "c" (comp. lat. *quod*, dt. *was*, Ir. *cad*). The root of this is the indo-european "kw-"

Cé, cá, cad are autonomous interrogatives.

All other interrogatives are **combinations** with nouns, pronouns, prepositions or other words, also when the individual parts aren't easily recognizable (e.g. *conas* < *cá ionas*)

Syntax of interrogatives:

Interrogatives contain for the most part some (invisible) form of the [copula](#) or, better said, the copula is included in the formation of the interrogative. Interrogative particle and intentional copula comprise the **copular clause**.

The interrogative is considered then the ***predicate of the copular clause***.

This "copular clause" most often consists only of one word e.g. *cé* = who, lit. "who *is*(it)", but here the subject is nowhere to be seen (e.g. "it").

The **subject** is now the rest of the question, e.g.: *cé hé sin* = *who is that?*

If a verb should be incorporated (e.g. "who says that?"), there is still the need of a real subject, which is then replaced by a **relative clause** with the verb: e.g. *cé a deir sin?* = *who says that?*, lit.: "who *is*(it), *that* says *that*?". *cé a rinne sin?* = *who did that?*

More about this under [Syntax: supplementary queries](#) or under [the copula in interrogative clauses](#)

interrogatives can also be used in indirect questions as a [conjunction](#):

(e.g. *Nil a fhios agam cé hé an fear seo* = *I don't know, who this man is*)

the interrogatives differ in their use strongly from dialect to dialect.

Cé

older form - also **cia** instead of cé

Cé in copular clauses

present	present preceding vowel	preterite	preterite preceding vowel
cé	cé h	cér	cérbh

Cé in copular relative clauses

relative clause	present	present preceding vowel	preterite	preterite preceding vowel
direct	cé	(cérb)	cér	cérbh
indirect	(cér)	(cérbh)	cér	(cérbh)

Cé with the article an (= which?)

	+ an	+ na
cé	cén	cé na

Usage

1. who : (base meaning)

- with personal pronoun or demonstrative pronoun (secondary subject or subject as a part of the copular clause) *Cé hé an cailín beag* = *who is the little girl?*, *Cé (hé) sin?* = *who is that?*, *Cérbh i an bhean sin?* = *who was this woman?*, *Cérb iad* = *who are they?*
- with direct relative clause (in the presence of another verb) *Cé atá ann?* = *who ist there?*, *Cé a rinne é* = *who did it?*
- with prepositional pronoun (as a part of the copular clause), especially le: **cé leis** = **whose** and as: **cé as** = **where**: *Cé leis é?* = *Whose is it?/To whom does it belong*, *cér leis é an carr?* = *To whom did the car belong?/Whose car was it*, *Cé as thú* = *Where are you from?*
- with prepositional pronoun (mostly 3rd person sg. or pl.) and with the indirect relative clause: *Cé aige a bhfuil an arán* = *who has the bread?*

2. what (as such especially in Connacht)

- with prepositional pronoun (3rd person sg. or pl., see table) and with the indirect relative clause: *Cé leis ar scriobh tú?* = *with what did you write?*
- cé + rud** > **céard** = what: *Céard atá ann?* = *What's there?*, older form also **créad** *céard* is the Connacht form for *cad* = *what*.
there also **céardós** = what a
- cé + an ní** > **cén ní** = what: *Cén ní baisteadh?* = *What is baptism?*

3. what kind/which:

- cé + article an**: *Cén fear é?* = *What sort of man is he?*, *Cén t-am é?* = *What time?*, *Cé na fir iad* = *What sort of men are they?*
- cé + noun**: *cé rud?* = *Which thing?*, *What?*

- cé + comparative form of the adjective: *Cé is mó, seo nó sin?* = *who/what is bigger, this or that?*
(also **cé acu**: *cé acu is mó, seo nó sin?* = *which one is bigger, this one or that one?*)

4. who of / which of:

- with pronoun: cé + agaibh/agaibh/acu (= who of us, of you, of them) + dir. relative clause: *cé agaibh atá ann?* = *who of you is there?*
common also: **cé acu** + agaibh/agaibh/acu (= who of us, of you, of them) + dir. relative clause: *cé acu agaibh a bhí ann?* = *who of you were there?*
less common also with de: *cé acu diobh seo* = *which of these*, *cé acu diobh seo a bhfuil uait?* = *which of these do you want?*
- with nouns in the singular: **cé acu** + noun + dir. relative clause: *Cé acu fear atá ann?* = *Which man is there?*
- with nouns in the plural: **cé acu** + de + noun + dir. relative clause: *Cé acu de na fir atá ann?* = *Who of the men is there?*
- **cé acu** often also (following the pronunciation) > **céca, ciaca, ciacu**
- **cé acu** + dir. relative clause + **nó** also in indirect queries with an alternative in the meaning "if ... or" e.g.: *abair léi cé acu atá tú ann nó nach bhfuil* = *Tell her, if you are there or not*

5. where, where to:

- in Connemara, cé often instead of cá (standard) is used and then with the indirect relative clause (cé + a = cé), e.g.: *Cé raibh tú?* = *Where were you?*, *Cé ndeachaigh tú?* = *Where did you go to?*

6. other combinations:

- **how**: **cé chomh** (+ adjective + le/agus a), e.g.: *Cé chomh mór leis an iasc?* = *How big is the fish?*
- **how**: **cé mar** (+ dir. relative clause), **cén chaoi** (+ indir. relative clause), **cén dóigh** (+ indir. relative clause, u.a. in Ulster)
- **how old**: **cén aois** (lit.: "which age"; + dir. relative clause)
- **why**: **cén fáth** (lit.: "which reason"; + indir. relative clause) u.a. in Connacht
- **when**: **cén uair** (lit.: "which time"; + dir. relative clause), **cén t-am** (lit.: "what time"; + indir./dir. relative clause)
- **where**: **cén áit** (lit.: "which place"; + indir./dir. relative clause)
- **how much**: **cé mhéad** (instead of cá mhéad, see also cá; + dir. relative clause)
- **who/whatever**: **cé ar bith** > **cibé** > **pé**, **cé beag sin** = *however small it was*

7. despite:

- **despite**: **cé go/nach**
- **except**: **cé is moite (de)**

Cá

Cá in copular clauses

present	present preceding vowel	preterite	preterite preceding vowel
cá	cár	cár	cár

Cá with indir. relative particle (in the meaning of: where)

present	preterite
cá	cár

Usage

1. what (no lenition/eclipsis) (especially so in Ulster)

- with prepositional pronoun (3rd pers. singular, see table) *Cá leis?* = *with what?*

2. which/what (no lenition/eclipsis)

- cá + noun in the copular clause: *Cá haois é?* = *what age does he have?*, *Cárth aois é* = *what age did he have?*, also with dir. relative clause, preceding vowel also shortened to **c'** (e.g.: *c'ainm atá ort* = *what is your name?*)

3. how

- cá + graduated abstract noun (lenition!): *Cá mhinice* = *how often*, *Cá fhad* (> **cád, cáid**) = *how long?*, *Cá mhéad* = *how much?*
- cá + adjective (no lenition/eclipsis!): *Cá hard é?* = *how high is it?*, *cárth ard é?* = *how high was it?*

4. where / where to

- this is a combination with the indir. relative particle: *cá a/ar* > *cá/cár*
- with dependent verb form (**cá** + eclipsis, **cár** + lenition : *Cá bhfuil tú?* = *Where are you?* *Cár chuir tú é?* = *Where did you put it?*)

5. from where

- with preposition as: *Cár as é?* = *Where is he from?*

6. other combinations:

- where: **cá háit** (lit.: "what place", also > **c'áit**) + indir. relative clause
- where: **canad** (< cá ionad)
- when: **cá huair, cá ham** (> **c'am**) + dir./indir. relative clause
- since when: **cá fhad é ó** (**cád é ó** > **cáideó**)
- whatever: **cár bith**

Cad

Usage

1. what (base meaning, **cad** most common in Munster, in Ulster always **cad é** > **goidé**, in Ring (East-Munster) and Scotland **cad é** > **dé**)

- in copular clauses: *Cad é seo?* = *What is this?*, *Cad é an rud é nuachtáin?* = *What is a newspaper?*
- in copular relative clauses (generally with prepositions): *Cad is ainm duit?* = *What is your name* ("What, [that] is name to-you")?, *Cad is nuachtán ann* = *What is a newspaper?* ("What, [that] is newspaper in-it")
- with the direct relative clause: *Cad a dhéinir / Cad a dhéanann tú?* = *What are you doing?* preceding tá the relative particle is sometimes omitted: *Cad (a)tá ...* = *What is ...*
- with é (**cad é** with the dir. copular relative clause): *Cad é is fearr leat?* = *What do you prefer?*
- with é (**cad é** and with the direct relative clause): *Cad é a dhéineann sé* = *What is he doing?*
- with prepositional pronoun (3rd person sing. masc.; see table) and the indirect relative clause, e.g.: *cad air* = *what is it*, *cad leis* = *with what etc.* e.g.: *Cad air ar chuir tú é* = *Upon what did you place it?*

2. which

- with é (**cad é** + noun with article): *Cad é an t-am é?* = *What time is it?*

3. from where

- with preposition as **Cad as**: *Cad as é?* = *Where is he from?*

4. other combinations

- how: **cad é mar** (in Ulster: **goidé mar**) *Goidé mar atá tú?* = *How are you?*
- why, on what account: **cad ina thaobh** (lit.: "what in-his side", used in Munster)
- why, to what end: **cad chuige** (lit.: "what to-him", used in Ulster, oft > **tuige**)
- why: **cad é chúis** (> **d'é chúis**), used in Ring .
- what: **cad éard** (> **d'éard**), used in Ring (East-Munster).

Conas

cá/cé + *ionas* > *conas* = *what way*,
 conas is most commonly used in Munster

Usage

- **how:**

+ direct relative clause: *Conas atá tú* = *How are you?* (here often tá instead of atá: *Conas tá tú*) or
 + go- clause: *Conas go ndéarfadh sé a léithead?* = *How could he say something like that?* or
 + Infinitive construction (engl. "how to"): *Conas tosú?* = *How to start?*, *Conas gearán a dhéanamh* = *How to make a complaint.*

Cathain

cá/cé + *tan* > *cathain* = *what time*

Usage

- **when:** with the direct relative clause: *Cathain a tharla sé?* = *When did it happen?*

An

forms

tense	affirmative	L/E	negative	L/E
present	an	E	nach	E
preterite	ar	L	nár	L

Usage

1. **An** is used as a marker ([Verbal particle](#)) in simple queries: *An bhfuil tú ann?* = *Are you there?* *Nach bhfaca tú é?* = *Haven't you seen it?* *Nár bhualamarna le chéile fós?* = *Haven't we met?*
2. **combinations:**
how much: an mó e.g.: *An mó atá ann?* = *How much is there?*

interrogatives with prepositions

these words are called **interrogative adverbial pronouns (forainmneacha dobhriathartha ceisteacha)**

One uses the 3rd person singular masculine (less often also in the plural: cé acu = who of them, cé eatarthy = amongst whom).

These combinations mostly require an *indirect* relative clause (colloquially sometimes a *direct* relative clause; cé leis meaning "whose"/"to whom belongs" and cé as/cad as/cá has "where is ... from" and form a non-relative copular clause; cé acu, "who of them" requires a direct relative clause)

the usage and translation can be derived from the corresponding translation of the preposition (here, only the base meaning is given)

prep.	cé +	cá +	cad +	translation *

<u>ag</u>	cé aige	cá (h)aige	cad aige	at whose place, in which, at what, who has
<u>ar</u>	cé air	cá (h)air	cad air	upon whom, whereupon, on what
<u>as</u>	cé as	cá (h)as	cad as	from whom, where from, resulting from what, how
<u>chuig</u>	cé chuige	cá chuige	cad chuige	to whom, where to, to what end, why
<u>de</u>	cé de	cá de	cad de	from whom, from what (origin)
<u>do</u>	cé dó	cá dó	cad dó	to whom, who, where to
<u>faoi</u>	cé faoi	cá faoi	cad faoi	under whom, under what
<u>i</u>	cé ann	cá (h)ann	cad ann	in whom, in what, where
<u>idir</u>	cé eatarthu	cá (h)eatarthu	cad eatarthu	amongst whom, between whom, where between
<u>le</u>	cé leis	cá leis	cad leis	with whom, with what, to whom does ... belong
<u>ó</u>	cé uaidh	cá (h)uaidh	cad uaidh	from whom, where from, from what
<u>roimh</u>	cé roimhe	cá roimhe	cad roimhe	before whom, before what
<u>trí</u>	cé tríd	cá tríd	cad tríd	through whom, through what
<u>thar</u>	cé thart	cá thart	cad thart	via whom, via what, along which way
<u>um</u>	cé uime	cá (h)uime	cad uime	about whom, about what, at what

*only **cé** can be used when referring to *persons* and *things*, also **cé air** = upon whom/ whereupon, **cad** and **cá** only in reference to *things*: **cad air/cá air** = on what
Instead of **cad céard** is also used.

Forms with **cá** are typical für *Ulster*, with **cad** more in *Munster* (cad chuige as '**tuige**' also in other dialects), **cé** is used in dialects if in reference to persons ("who"), in reference to objects ("what") is often common in Connacht.

Under **cá** in Ó Dónaills dictionary, forms like "cá air" are given for prepositions with a vowel. Given its initial vowel, forms with h (cá hair or cá h-air) seem more logical and are also found in literature. Under as, mostly "cá has" is written.

In spoken Ulster-Irish one hears **cá** and preposition often contracted. e.g.: **c'air, c'as, c'aige**.
the other prepositions with vowel (ann, uaidh, uime) I have not yet encountered with **cá**.

Derived prepositions

The genitive-requiring [derived prepositions](#) (preposition and noun) use the appropriate interrogative beside **cad, céard, cé, cá** always the [possessive pronoun](#) of the 3rd person masculine singular **a = his**

Examples:

preposition	lit.	interrogative	lit.
ar nós = like	"in way"	Cad ar a nós = how, in what way?	"what on his way"
de chois = close to	"of foot"	Cad dá chois = Close to what?	"what of-his foot"
i dtaobh = regarding	"in side"	Cad ina thaobh = Regarding what, why?	"what in-his side"
i gcoinne = against	"in meeting"	Cad ina choinne = against what?	"what in-his meeting"
le haghaidh = for	"with face"	Cad lena aghaidh = for what?	"what with-his face"

Derived prepositions without the genitive with simple prepositions (e.g. *mar gheall ar* = because of, in aice le = in the area of use here the 3rd person masculine of the prepositional pronoun (e.g. *air, leis*)

Examples:

preposition	lit.	interrogative	lit.
mar gheall ar = because of	"like bet on"	Cad mar gheall air = why?	"what like bet on-him"

in aice le = in the area of	"in area with "	Cad in aice leis = close to what?	"what in area with-him"
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Demonstrative pronouns (forainmneacha taispeántacha)

Seo, sin, siúd are the standard forms (adjectival **úd** instead of *siúd*)

In Munster following *broad* consonants the forms **so, san, súd** are common (e.g. *an capall so* but *na capaill seo*, *an fear san* but *an buachaill sin*)

There are, in copular clauses (e.g. in the preterite) sometimes forms without "s" (**eo, in, iúd**) see also: ["seo, sin, siúd as copular forms"](#)

meaning of **seo, sin, siúd**:

with **seo** = **this** something spatially / temporally close to the speaker is meant. Also something emotionally close to him (e.g.: *a chara seo* = *dear friend!*)

with **sin** = **that** something either spatially / temporally close to the addressed party or spatially / temporally a bit away from the speaker is meant. Emotionally, as well, a rather cooler, more neutral relationship.

with **siúd** = **that there** something either spatially / temporally further away is meant. Emotionally, it indicates a greater distance, not only as politeness and admiration but also dislike.

standalone demonstrative pronomina

seo = **this** e.g. *Seo é mo theach* = *this is my house*. *Tabhair dom seo!* = *Give me this here!*

sin = **that** e.g.: *Sin a raibh anseo* = *That is all that there was*.

siúd = **that there** e.g. *Siúd is feidir liom a thabhairt* = *That there I can spare*

adjectival demonstrative pronomina (this ..., that... etc,)

these pronouns for the indication of nouns are formed with the articles and the 3 words **seo, sin, úd** (in Ulster instead **adaí**)

an ... seo = **this** ... e.g.: *an teach seo* = *this house*

an ... sin = **the ..., there** ... e.g.: *an cailín sin* = *that girl*

an ... úd = **that ... there** e.g.: *an crann úd* = *the tree over there*

Just as in German, one generally does not place a **possessive pronoun** next to a demonstrative pronoun ("this, my house"). If it is indeed needed to indicate the owner, one uses a form of [ag](#) in place of the possessive pronoun:

e.g.: *an teach seo (atá) agamsa* = *this house, that I have*. *Sa tír seo aginne* = *In this, our country*

Often, this construction of demonstrative pronoun and [ag](#) is used as the **alternative to the possessive pronoun**; in Ulster the demonstrative pronoun is then abbreviated to **s'** (**s'agam, s'agat**, etc.): *an teach s'agamsa* = *my house*, alternatively, in Connemara an abbreviated form of the prepositional pronoun ('amsa, 'atsa, etc.) is used : *an teach seo 'amsa* = *my house*)

Such forms as : **mo theach seo*, **inár dtír seo* etc. are not possible!

the form "*a theach seo*" has another meaning. It does not mean "*this, his house*" but instead "*this one's house*" (see below)

Demonstrative pronomina with the personal pronoun (this, that etc,)

Only possible with the 3rd person (sé, sí, siad, é, í, iad or synthetic verb forms of the 3rd person pl. e.g. bhíodar = sie waren)

not with emphatic pronouns (seisean, sise, siadsan)!

sé/sí/siad seo = **this** e.g.: *Is é seo a rinne é* = *This did it*.

sé/sí/siad sin = **der, die, das, die** e.g.: *Tá sí sin go maith* = *That is good*.

sé/sí/siad siúd = **jene(r,-s)**, **jene** e.g. *Bhiodar siúd ina gcónai i mBéal Feirste* = *Those ones lived in Belfast.*

Demonstrative pronomina with the possessive pronoun (his, hers, theirs, etc.)

also only possible with the 3rd person (a = his, her, their). *Seo, sin, siúd* refers to the possessive pronoun, not to the noun.

a seo = **his, her, their** e.g. *a theach seo* = *his house*

a ... sin = **his, her, their** e.g.: *a theach sin* = *this one's(m.) house*, *a teach sin* = *this one's(f.) house*

a ... siúd = **his, her, their** e.g. *a dteach siúd* = *those ones' house*

with the verbal noun **á ... seo/sin/siúd** takes the place of the object (á = do + a).

e.g. *Tá mé á dhéanamh seo* = *I'm doing this* ("I am to his doing" or lit. "I am to-his doing it")

In German and English, all 3 forms translate to approximately the same thing, the only differences being the indication of distance to the person (his, her, their).

These distances are only possible in English or German only beyond the realm of fine grammar: "this his/that his" etc.

In German the word "dessen", "deren" also serves as the genitive-relative pronoun ("Der Mann, dessen Frau hübsch ist"=The man whose wife is beautiful.). In Irish, the indirect relative particle is used! ("An fear a bhfuil a bhean go hálainn")!

Demonstrative adverbs

these are formed simply using the "prefix" **an-** :

(**an-** is actually the prepositional pronoun **ann** = *in him*, used as an adverbial pronoun ("in that"), **anseo** then actually *ann seo* = *lit. "in this"* > "herein"), earlier also written with double-n. *Ann* alone as an adverb means also *there*, although this hasn't the demonstrative character it might carry in German.

anseo = **here** e.g.: *Táim anseo* = *I am here*

ansin = **there** e.g.: *Bhíomar inár gconáí ansin* = *We lived there.*

ansiúd = **over there** e.g.: *Bhí siad ina gcónai thall ansiúd i Sasana* = *They lived over there in England.*

ansin can also be used as a temporal adverb ("then") : *Ansin a bhí mé i mo chonáí i Londain* = *Then, I lived in London*

In Munster, forms with broad s are also common (**anso, ansan, ansúd**)

also with the preposition mar one forms adverbial phrases:

mar seo = **this way, at this time, in this way**: *Téir mar seo* = *go this way!* *Déan é mar seo* = *do it this way!*

mar sin = **so, that way, so then** (also conditional): *ní rachaidh tú mar sin* = *so then you won't go?*, *cúig phunt nó mar sin* = *5 pounds or so*

also in the formation of additional adverbial pronouns the demonstrative pronoun is used:

e.g.: **aige sin** = *therewith*, **aige seo** = *herewith*, **air seo** = *hereupon*, **leis sin** = *thereupon*, etc.

relative particle and -pronoun (míreanna agus forainmneacha coibhneasta)

relative pronoun are **words, that** refer to a word ("antecedent") in the previous partial clause (like e.g. the word "that" in this clause, which refers to "words").

In the new partial clause, the pronoun forms the subject (direct relative clauses), a direct object (also direct relative clauses) or an indirect object (indirect relative clause)

direct relative particle (mír choibhneasta dhíreach)

In German, these are "equivalents" to the pronoun (*der, die, das*) "that" or also (*welcher, welche, welches*) "which". In Irish it's only a particle.

Why particle and not pronoun?

The Irish perspective sees it not as taking the place of a noun ("pro nomen") as the subject or object of the relative clause, but as the antecedent *directly* subject/object without the need of a pronoun! The relative particle only connects antecedent and relative clause. In addition to that, it is very short and flown over in speech. An extensive explanation is given in the footnotes[[1](#)]

A division between *masculine* and *feminine* is not made.

tense	affirmative	L/E	negative	L/E
present a.o.	a	L	nach	E
preterite	a	L	nár	L

An teach **a** bhí go maith = the house, *that* was good.

An scéal **nach** raibh go maith = the story, *that* wasn't good

The direct relative particle **a** requires the [autonomous verb form](#). In the preterite with d' preceding vowel:
e.g.: *a d'ól tú* = *that you drank*

The negative form **nach/nár** requires the [dependent verb form](#). In the preterite without d' preceding vowel:
e.g.: *nár ól tú* = *that you didn't drink*

More about the usage see: [clause forms: direct relative clause](#)

indirect relative particle (mír choibhneasta indíreach)

In German the (genitive) relative pronoun **dessen, deren, (whose)** (dative-/accusative-) relative pronoun with a preposition e.g. **to whom, in which, on which** etc.

This is a **particle** and not a **pronoun**, while an additional, real **reflexive pronoun (forainm iarthearachtach)** appears (mostly a prepositional pronoun [dt. e.g. "on him"] or a possessive pronoun [dt. e.g. "whose"])

The indirect relative particle connects only relative clause and antecedent. The antecedent is represented by a reflexive pronoun in the relative clause, and is therefore only the *indirect* object of the relative clause.

tense	affirmative	L/E	negativ	L/E
present	a	E	nach	E
preterite	ar	L	nár	L

The indirect relative particle **a/ar** and **nach/nár** requires the [dependent verb form](#). e.g.: *ar ól tú inti* = *in which you drank*

Examples:

an teach **a** bhfuil mé **ann** = the house, *in which* I am. (a = relative particle, ann = reflexive pronoun)

an bord **nach** bhfuil sé **air** = the table, *on which* it is not. (a = relative particle, air = reflexive pronoun)

an teach **a** bhfuil **a** dhíon go dona = the house, *whose* roof is poor. (1. a = relative particle, 2. a = his = reflexive pronoun)

By inserting reflexive pronouns, one can convert a direct relative clause in an indirect one (if the antecedent is the object of the relative clause).

e.g.:

an teach **a** bhfeiceann tú **é** = the house, *which* you see. (a = relative particle, é = reflexive pronoun)

instead of a direct relative clause:

an teach **a** fheiceann tú = the house that you see.

In Munster, **go/gur** takes the place of the indirect relative particle (instead of a/ar)

e.g. an teach **go** bhfuil mé **ann** = the house, in which I am (go = relative particle, ann = antec. pronoun)

More on the usage see: [clause forms: indirect relative clause](#)

reflexive relative pronoun a (forainm coibhneasta iartheachtach)

In the above indirect relative clauses there is, besides the relative particle, a reflexive pronoun (e.g. a prepositional pronoun: *an bord a bhfuil an leabhar air* = *the table that the book is on*). In this case, the relative *a* is only a particle.

A preposition can also be placed directly before the relative.

In this case, the relative takes the form of a reflexive pronoun (then exactly like in German: the table *on which* ...). It is then a real pronoun and not just a particle:

an bord ar a bhfuil an leabhar = *the table upon which the book is*.

an teach ina bhfuil mé = *the house in which I am*.

Negative forms (*nach/nár*) do not allow the pronoun. Here one uses a normal indirect relative particle with a prepositional pronoun at the *end of the clause* (e.g.: *an teach nach bhfuil mé ann* = *the house in which I am not*)

More about the usage see: [clause forms: indirect relative clause](#)

Forms

The forms are identical with the indirect relative particle.

tense	affirmative	L/E
present	a	E
preterite	ar	L

There are **combinations** made with those prepositions ending in a vowel:

prep.	with a	with ar	translation
le	lena	lenar	with that
de	dá	dar	of that
do	dá	dar	to that
i	ina	inar	in that
ó	óna	ónar	from that
faoi	faoina	faoinar	under/ about that
trí	trína	trínar	through that

The reflexive relative pronoun requires the [dependent verb form](#). e.g.: *inar ól tú* = *in that you drank*

General relative pronoun a (forainm coibhneasta réamhtheachtach)

In English, "that, which"; "all, that"; in Irish, just "a"

In the form (including the resulting *eclipsis*) it is identical with the indirect relative particle.

Although, there completely lacks a inflection of the antecedent. The relative pronoun takes the place of even

the antecedent (réamhtheachtaí), hence the term *réamhtheachtach*

tense	affirmative	L/E
present	a	E
preterite	ar	L

The generalising relative pronoun requires the [dependent verb form](#). e.g.: *ar ól tú = all that you drank*

Examples:

Chonaic mé a raibh anseo = I saw all that was there

Tabhair leat a bhfuil uait = Take what you need

also together with **gach**:

e.g.: *Gach a bhfuil ann = Everything that there is.*

Together with those prepositions ending with a vowel, the same **combinations** are formed as with the reflexive relative pronoun:

prep.	with a	with ar	translation
le	lena	lenar	with all that
de	dá	dar	of all that
do	dá	dar	to all that
i	ina	inar	in all that
ó	óna	ónar	from all that
faoi	faoina	faoinar	under all that
trí	trína	trínar	through all that

Most common of these is especially **dá** = "of all, that":

e.g. *an fear is cliste dá bhfuil ann = the cleverest man of all that there are.*

see also appropriate excerpt [clause forms: general. relative pronoun](#)

Determinative pronouns (forainmneacha cinntitheacha)

whom, which

- **an té** "he, who", "she, who"
an té + direct relative clause [[2](#)]
e.g.: *Chonaic mé an té a dúirt é. = I saw him, who had said it*
- **na daoine, an mhuintir** = "they, who" (Plural)
na daoine, an mhuintir + direct relative clause
e.g.: *Chonaic mé na daoine a dúirt é. = I saw those, who had said it*

that, what

- **(is é)an rud, is éard, séard, siod**: "that, which"
(is é)an rud, séard, is éard + direct relative clause
e.g.: *Séard / (Is é) an rud a dhéanfaidh tú = That, which you will do.*
séard is typical for Connemara, in Munster rather *is é an rud*, in Ulster instead of that, *siod*
séard is especially used introductory in *exclusive clauses* to [change the word order](#) in the clause:
e.g.: *Séard a chonaic mé ná capall = That, which I saw, was a horse.*

- **a:** "that, which" (in the general sense of "all that")
see [generalising relative pronoun](#)

(something/that) what

- **rud:** (something/that,) what
rud + direct relative clause
rud a (lit. "thing, that") equates to the German relative *was*, that refers to the entire main clause.
e.g.: *Dúirt sé liom é a dhiol, rud a rinneas = he told me I should sell it, which I did.*

whoever/whatever

- **pé / cibé** "whatever (things/people)"
pé / cibé (+ noun) + direct relative clause
e.g.: *Cibé mná a bhí ann = Whatever women were there.*
- **pé / cibé ar bith** "whoever" **cibé rud ar bith** "whatever"
cibé ar bith + direct relative clause
e.g.: *Cibé ar bith a chonaic mé = Whoever I saw.*

"whoever/whatever" is in German rather an indefinite pronoun, due to the Irish structure with the relative clause is stands there.

Indefinite pronoun (forainmneacha éiginnte)

There are very few real indefinite pronouns. Instead of them, mostly nouns like *duine* (person), *rud*, *ní* (thing) or *ceann* (head) are used.

Used here are various [pronominal adjectives](#) like *uile* (all), *eile* (other), *éigin* (some), *gach* (every), *ar bith* (at all) or cardinal numbers like *aon* (one, no), that only seldomly appear as the substantive pronoun alone. Some nouns are used in the sense of pronominal adjectives.

(some)one, one, something

- **duine** = (some)body (lit.: "person"), used for people e.g. *duine de na paistí = one of the children* (for masc. also **fear**: e.g. *fear de na fir = one of the men* and fem. also **bean** *bean de na mná = one of the women*)
- **ceann** = (some)one (lit.: "head") for things z.B. *An bhfuil ceann agatsa? = Have you got one?*
- **duine éigin** = someone, somebody
- **rud éigin** = (some)thing
- **ceachtar** = something, one (of 2) e.g.: *ceachtar den bheirt = one of the two*; **neachtar** is the same as *ceachtar*, but is used most commonly in the expression *nó neachtar acu = "otherwise"*.
- **roinnt, cuid** = some (in the partial sense: "a part of", followed by the partitive genitive), e.g. *roinnt bainne = some milk, cuid oibre (den obair) = some (of the) work*

only in interrogative clauses (the same forms in neg. clauses mean "no, nothing"):

- **aon duine** (> **éinne**), **duine ar bith** = somebody, (some)one e.g. *An bhfuil a fhios ag éinne...? = Does someone know...? (ar bith lit.: "on the world")*
- **aon rud, rud ar bith** = (some)thing e.g.: *An bhfuil aon rud agat? = Do you have something?*
- **aon cheann, ceann ar bith** = (some)one

certain

- **araile** e.g.: *araile lá = on a certain day*; also as a clause for *a chéile = another* (e.g.: *i ndiaidh araile = after another*); but mostly used in the phrase *agus araile = and so on*

every, everyone, everything

- **cách** = everyone, e.g.: *Mar is eol do chách* = as everyone knows
- **gach (aon) duine / rud** (lit.: every person/every thing) (*gach aon* > **achan** in Ulster, > **chaon** in Connemara, if it's about 2 things/people)
- **gach uile dhuine / rud** (lit.: every person/every thing) (*gach uile* > **chuile** in Connacht, if it's about more things/people)

every, every second

- **gach ré**, e.g.: *gach ré lá* = every second day

other, another

- **eile** = other, the other e.g.: *duine agus eile* = the one and the other
- **duine eile** = another person, another one e.g. *duine nó duine eile* = the one or another
- **rud eile** = something other, something else
- **a mhalaire sin de** = another (than)
 - e.g.: *a mhalaire (athrach) sin de bhó* = another cow than this one
- **malairt (athrach) + gen.** = another (than)
 - e.g. *Ní phógfainn do mhalaire* = I would kiss no other but you, *malairt bóthair* = another street, *níor thuig mé a athrach* = I understood nothing else.

malairt (athrach) means lit. "change", here as opposed to leithéid:

compare: *a mhalaire sin de bhó* = another cow (than this one) and *a leithéid sin de bhó* = such a cow (like this one)

same, the like

- **céanna** = same (adjectival) e.g.: *an lá céanna* = der same day
- **an céanna** = the same e.g.: *mar an céanna* = like that/like this

all

- **(an t-)iomlán** = all, every e.g. *an t-iomlán againn* = all of us
- **an uile** = all, everything
- **gach aon rud/ní, gach uile rud/ní** = everything (lit.: every thing)
- **sinn uile** = we all, **siad uile** = they all
- **sin uile** = that all e.g.: *Sin uile é* = that is all
- **a** = all, that: see [general relative pronoun](#), also together with gach: **gach a**

both

- **siad araon** (object form: **iad araon**) = (they) both e.g.: *Tá siad araon ann* = both are there.
- **sinn araon, muid araon** = we both, **sibh araon** = you both
- **an bheirt** (lit.: the two): *an bheirt acu* = both of them

no one, no , none

- **aon duine** = no one, nobody (in negative clauses) e.g.: *Níl aon duine ann* = No one is there.
- **duine ar bith** = nobody, no one (in negative clauses)
- **aon rud/cheann** = none (in negative clauses)
- **rud/ceann ar bith** = none (in negative clauses)

nothing

- **néamhni** (lit.: "no thing")

- **dada / tada / faic** (in negative clauses)
- words that normally have another meaning **ceo** ("fog"), **blas** ("taste") in negative clauses
- **diabhal** ("Devil") for the negation of the general relative pronoun **a**: *diabhal a bhfuil ann = nothing is there*

such, such a

leithéid is a noun and means "likeness", a "resemblance", it is mostly used in the sense of "such", "like that". Then mostly with the possessive pronoun a = his (also with other possessive pronouns in the sense of "likes of me", etc.)

- **a leithéid (sin)** = such, like him, like them e.g.: *Ní chuala mé riamh a leithéid = I have never heard such a thing*
- **a leithéidí sin** = such things, as such
- **dá leithéid sin** = such a (adjectival) e.g.: *fear dá leithéid sin = such a man*
- **a leithéid (sin) de** = such a (adjectival)* e.g.: *a leithéid sin d'fhearr = such a man*
- **leithéid (+ genitive)** = such a e.g.: *leithéid an lae = (on) such a day*
- **a leithéid eile** = another of the like, another like that
- **mo leithéid** = one such as myself, the likes of me, **ár leithéidí** = such as us, the likes of us, **bhur leithéidí** = such as you, the likes of you, etc.

instead of *leithéid* one can sometimes use other phrases like *den shórt sin* = "of this sort", *an cineál sin* = "this kind", *a samhail* = "his likeness".

*: with *sin* more in the demonstrative light (*a leithéid sin de cheol = such music*), without *sin* more for intensification (*a leithéid de cheol ar a fheabhas = such good music*)

so much/as much/that much

Similar to *a mhalaírt* (*something else*), *a leithéid* (*something*) appears also *a oiread* (*so much*) .
oiread = amount, number.

- **a oiread** = as much(de = of, le/agus a = as), e.g. *Tá a oiread agat liom féin = You have as much as I do, beidh a oiread agat agus is mian leat = you will have as much as you like*
- **an oiread (seo, sin)** = so much (mostly with the genitive), e.g.: *Níor chonaic mé riamh an oiread seo = I have never seen so much, an oiread airgid = so much money, a(n) oiread eile = again so much*
- **an méid seo** = that much, e.g.: *Tá an méid seo cinnte = That much is certain.*

a lot, more

- **a lán** = many, much (lit.: "his fullness "), e.g. *a lán airgid = much money, a lán againn = many of us*
- **mórán** = much (u.a. in negative clauses or questions), e.g. *Níl mórán Gaeilge agam = I can't speak much Irish*
- **neart, go leor** = a lot (before or after a noun), e.g. *Tá go leor airgid aige = he has a lot of money*
- **cuid mhór** = plenty, e.g.: *Tá cuid mhór ann fós = There is still plenty there; cuid mhór daoine = plenty of people*
- **iomáí** = many. *Iomáí* is only used as a predicative adjective with the copula: e.g. *Is iomáí lá a bhí mé ann = I was there for many days* (lit.: "is many a day, that I was there"), *Is iomáí a leithéid a rinne é = many like him did it* (lit.: "is many his likeness that did it")
- **tuilleadh, a thuilleadh** = more (lit.: "his addition"), e.g.: *a thuilleadh eolais = more knowledge; Ní raibh mé ann a thuilleadh = I wasn't there anymore.*
- **níos mó** = more, e.g.: *níos mó airgid = more money*
- **breis agus, corrach le** = more than, e.g. *breis is deich mbád = more than 10 boats*
- **an iomarca, an iomad, barraíocht** = too much, e.g.: *an iomarca airgid = too much money*
- **puinn** = not much (in neg. clauses), e.g.: *Níl puinn airgid aige = He hasn't much money*

"one"

There is no "impersonal" pronoun like the German *man*.

- Instead one uses the [autonomous form](#) (saorbhriathar) of the verb:
e.g.: *Déantar é* = *One does it*; *Rinneadh é* = *One did it*; *Táthar* = *One is*; *Beifear* = *One will be*
- Sometimes one uses *siad* = *they* or *duine* = *someone* in the general sense of "one", especially after prepositions:
e.g.: *deirtear* = *deir siad/duine* = *one says*
Is fearr do dhuine é a dhéanamh = *One should better do it*
- In copular clauses with [adjective and preposition](#) (esp. in [modal verb](#) constructions) the prepositional phrase is omitted:
e.g.: "is ceart do" = shouls: *Ba cheart (do dhuine) é a dhéanamh* = *one should do it* (but: *is ceart dom ...* = *I should ...*)
The "do dhuine" may also be omitted: *Is fearr é a dhénamh* = *One should better do it*

the pronoun **féin**

féin (= *self*) is used as:

Retrospective pronoun (forainm aisbhreatheannaitheach)

- mé féin* = *myself*, *sé féin* = *himself*
- in the sense of **personal** (e.g.: *Rinne sé féin é* = *He did it by himself*)
- also to **emphasise the personal pronoun** (e.g. *Tá mé féin sástaanois* = *I myself, anyway, am now satisfied*)
- In clauses with the pronoun in complex subjects/objects** (e.g.: *Tá mé féin agus Pól ann* = *Paul and I are there*)
- and **with the possessive pronoun** in the sense of "own": (e.g.: *mó theach féin* = *my own house*)

Reflexive pronoun (forainm athfhillteach)

- mé féin* = *myself*, *é féin* = *himself*
- reflexive on the subject (e.g. *Chneáigh sé é féin* = *He hurt himself*)

féin appears (retrospective and reflexive):

- with a personal pronoun (subject- or object form) e.g.: *mé féin* = *me myself/my self*; *tú féin* = *you yourself/your self*, *é féin* = *he himself/his self etc.*
- with an emphatic personal pronoun (then *additionally* a simple pronoun!) *tusa tú féin*, *mise mé féin*, *etc.*
- with a prepositional pronoun e.g. *Déan duit féin é* = *do it for yourself*
- with synthetic verb forms e.g.: *Chonaiceamar féin é* = *we saw it ourselves*, *déan féin é!* = *do it yourself!*
- with nouns (them mostly with the inserted é/i/iad) *: e.g.: *na daoine (iad) féin a rinne é* = *the people did it themselves*; *Bhí Pól (é) féin ann* = *Paul (himself) was there*
- with possessive pronoun + verbal noun e.g.: *Bhí sé á dhíol féin* = *he sold himself*
- with possessive pronoun + noun in the sense of *own* e.g.: *mo theach féin* = *my own house*

féin is often pronounced [he:n'] instead of [f'e:n'] .

(part. dialect dependent, part. dependent on the preceding sound)

In Connemara e.g. only the pronunciation [he:n'] is common.

The pronunciation [p'e:n'] also appears e.g. in Munster and on the Aran Islands, if it follows an -m: *dhom féin* [y@m pe:n'] = *to myself*. Then also part. written as **péin** (*dhom péin*).

Writing *fhéin* is wrong!

The adjective *same* is **céanna**: e.g. *an fear céanna* = *the same man* (see [pronominal adjectives](#))

the adverb féin

féin = *self* can not only be used as a pronoun but also as an **adverb**(like in German)

It takes on the meaning of "even":

e.g.: Bhí Pól féin ann = *Even* Paul was there.

It can appear alone or as a complement to other adverbs.

e.g.: *mar sin féin* = *even then, despite that, anyway*; *anois féin* = *even now*; *fós féin* = *even still*; *chéana féin* = *already*

*: é/i/iad is mostly inserted to differentiate between **pronoun** and **adverb**.

ex...: Bhí Pól **é féin** ann = Paul himself was (personally) there (pronoun)

Bhí Pól **féin** ann = Even (himself) Paul was there (adverb)

Reciprocal pronouns (forainm cómhalartach)

one another **a chéile**

céile ist actually a noun (partner, comrade, spouse),

a is actually the possessive pronoun 3rd person sg. (= his)

together, **a chéile** also lit: "his partner"

In place of **a chéile** (seldom) **araile** is used also.

As in German, here are **combinations with prepositions** being used.

The possessive pronoun **a** is often left out, but lenition is still necessary (e.g.: *le chéile* instead of *lena chéile*)

le(na) chéile = *with one another, together*,

ó(na) chéile = *from one another*,

trí(na) chéile = *in disarray, confusion* (lit: *through one another?*)

as a chéile = *in a row* (lit: *next to one another?*)

ina chéile = *in one another*,

faoi(na) chéile = *amongst/between (a pair/exclusive group)*,

dá chéile = *to one another*,

i ndiaidh a chéile = *after one another*;

mar a chéile = *same* (lit.: *like another*),

oiread le chéile = *everyone as much as the other* (lit.: *amount with one another*),

de réir a chéile = *nach another, gradually*, etc.

Together with a noun and a few opposing prepositions (e.g. from/to, out/in) it means (from)one ... (until) another.

e.g.: *ón lá go chéile* = *from one day to the next*, *as gach fásach ina chéile* = *from one wasteland into the other*

the Vocative particle (an mhír ghairmeach)

form: **a**

this particle is always used when addressing someone (in spoken language it is often swallowed and is always unstressed)

The following noun is in the **vocative**.

a lenites the following word (even when it's "swallowed"), non-Irish personal names are not lenited

In today's usage it does not correlate to the German/English particle "o" (*a thiarna!* = *[o] Lord!*), because the Irish "a" is always a necessity, the "o" is more seldomly used and has then a strong appellative character.

One often leaves the vocative particle off in translation, e.g.: *a Sheáin* = *Seán!* (not: *o Seán!*)

One can bring in the appellative tone into Irish with a following ó: *a chailín ó* = *o girl!*

the number particle (an mhír uimhreach)

form: **a**

The number particle appears before (cardinal-) [numbers](#), if no noun is to follow.
Especially:

- when counting (*a haon, a dó, a trí, a ceathair; ... = 1, 2, 3, 4, ...*),
- enumeration (*bus a haon = Bus Nr. I*),
- in titles: (*Eoin Pól a dó = Johannes Paul II, Seamas a dó = James II*),
- in arithmetic (*a haon agus a dó sin a trí = 1 + 2 = 3*),
- when telling time (*a haon a chlog = 1 o'clock*).

The number particle enables the adjectival numbers to stand alone without a following noun (*trí úll = three apples, a trí = three*).

After **a** there is neither lenition nor eclipsis, but an h- prefix on numbers starting with a vowel (a **haon**, a **hocht**, a **haon déag**, etc.).

with prepositions, the particle **a** conjoins; the forms resemble those combinations of preposition and possessive / relative pronoun. They appear most often in calculations:

*a sé **faoina** dó sin a dó dhéag = 6 times 2 equals 12* (faoi + a)

*a dó **óna** trí sin a haon = 3 minus 2 equals 1* (ó + a)

(The form resembles the particle in the feminine possessive pronoun *a = her*)

[[1](#)] the direct relative particle is actually unnecessary. It is a relatively new development, earlier there was *only* the lenition of the verb as an indicator of the relative *without* a particle or pronoun. (*an fear chuireas = the man who lies*)

a came to be from the earlier very common preterite particle *do*, that was used also in other tenses by irregular verbs. Eventually they were able to be heard even in relative clauses, became accepted as the relativium and were applied also to other verbs: (*an fear do chuireas = the man who lies*), which would serve nicely as a possible "cause" of the lenition of the verbs. It then shrank to the contemporary *a* (*an fear a chuireas = the man who lies*).

As one can see, *a* is a particle without own meaning, and cannot be a "pronoun". That in German the relative pronoun must be used, is a whole other story ...

[[2](#)] the form "+ direct relative clause" is used, if *an té* is a pronomial subject or dir. object of the relative clause. In the proper cases it is also possible as an indirect relative clause . e.g.: *an té ar thug mé é dó = he to whom I gave it*

Caibidil a hOcht:

The possessive pronouns (na hAidiachtaí Sealbhacha)

[adjectival possessive pronouns](#)

[subst. possessive pronouns](#)

[prepositions und possessive pronouns](#)

[usage](#)

The possessive pronouns are counted as adjectives, because they can only operate adjectivally (with a further noun) and not as a noun (autonomously, without a further noun). (One needs auxilliary words to express the latter). This is where the term "aidiachtaí sealbhacha" instead of "forainmneacha sealbhacha".

adjectival possessive pronouns (with a noun)

English	general	L/E	contrast form	preceding a vowel	with a noun in the plural	with a noun in the plural (contrast form)
my	mo	L	mosa/se	m'	mo chuid	mo chuidsa/se
your	do	L	dosa/se	d'	do chuid	do chuidsa/se
his	a	L	asan/sean	a	a chuid	a chuidsan/sean
ihr	a	-	asa/se	a h....	a cuid	a cuidsa/se
our	ár	E	árna/ne	ár n....	ár gcuid	ár gcuidna/ne
your (pl.)	bhur	E	bhur sa/se	bhur n....	bhur gcuid	bhur gcuidsa/se
ihr	a	E	a san/sean	a n....	a gcuid	a gcuidsan/sean

in *Connemara* instead of ár also **ar**, instead of bhur also **'ur**, instead of d' also **t'** (e.g.: *t'uncail* = *your uncle*)
Sometimes instead of m' also **mh'** comes up (*mh'athair* = *my father*)

In *Ulster* instead of bhur also **mur** at least in the pronunciation ([mur]).

In *Connemara* there are also (except after mo and do) the following pronouns **seisean, sise, muide, sibhse, siadsan** as the contrast form (e.g.: *ar leabhar muide* = *our book*, *'ur gcarr sibhse* = *your car*). This stronger contrast is often necessary, because there all possessive pronouns (except mo, do) sound the same: a, a, a, ar, 'ur, a (all.: [@])

The usage of cuid (= part)

- used by **nouns in the plural** e.g.: *mo chuid leabhar* = *my books*
- also used by **nouns without a plural form or inquantifiable things**: e.g.: *do chuid Gaeilge* = *your Irish*, *ár gcuid airgid* = *your money*, *mo chuid bainne* = *my milk*
- the noun that follows noun is in the genitive (partitive genitive)
- cuid is not used for solid, inherent property (e.g. body parts). (*mo chosa* = *my feet*)
- also by a **share of** with prep. **de** (partitive dative) *mo chuid den obair* = *my work (my share of the work)*
- a contrast suffix is mostly added to the *following* noun, *not* to cuid (*Seo mo chuid bainnese!* = *That's my milk!*)

examples

preceding a consonant

English	Irish	Irish emphatic
my car	mo charr	mo charrsa
your car	do charr	do charrsa
his car	a charr	a charrsan
her car	a carr	a carrsa
our car	ár gcarr	ár gcarrna
your car	bhur gcarr	bhur gearrsa
their car	a gcarr	a gcarrsan

preceding a vowel

English	Irish
my uncle	m'uncail
your uncle	d'uncail
his uncle	a uncail
her uncle	a huncail
our uncle	ár n-uncail
your uncle	bhur n-uncail
their uncle	a n-uncail

plural

English	Irish
my cars	mo chuid
your cars	do chuid
his cars	a chuid
her cars	a cuid
our cars	ár gcuid
your cars	bhur gcuid
their cars	a gcuid

further examples:

mo leabhar = my book

mo leabhsa = my book

mo chuid leabhar = my books

mo chuid leabhsa = my books

mo chuid Gaeilge = my Irish

mo chuid Gaeilgese = my Irish

substantive possessive pronouns

English	general	plural*
mine	mo cheannsa	mo chuidse
yours	do cheannsa	do chuidse
his	a cheannsan	a chuidsean
hers	a ceannsa	a cuidse
ours	ár gceann-na	ár gcuidne
yours	bhur gceannsa	bhur gcuidse
theirs	a gceannsan	a gcuidsean

* Plural form *also* for non-countable things in the singular. For persons **mintir** instead of *cuid* (*mo mhuintirse* = my (people))

Words like "mine", "yours" etc., also subst. possessive pronouns, that do not require an additional noun are not present in Irish.

In order to make statements like "mine", "yours", one uses the nouns *ceann* ("head") or *cuid* ("share") or *mintir* ("people").

By juxtaposition, ("my thing and yours") one simply repeats the noun ("mo rudsa agus do rudsa").

examples:

Sin é *mo cheannsa* = That is *mine*.Sin é *mo chuidse* = Those are *mine*.mo leabhsa agus *do leabhsa* = my book and *yours*mo chuid leabhsa agus *do chuidse* = my books and *yours*mo chuid Gaeilge agus *do chuidse* = my Irish and *yours*

Statements like "**the book ist mine**" are not made with the possessive pronouns, but with the preposition **le** as an expression of ownership:

Is *liomsa* an leabhar = the book is *mine*.Is *leatsa* an leabhar = the book is *yours*.Is *linne* na bróga = the shoes are *ours*.

prepositions und possessive pronouns

Possessive pronominal forms of the prepositions:

Some prepositions fuse with following possessive pronouns. These would be those ending in a vowel as well as, in certain usages, also *ar* (in the sense of *after that*).

-	<u>de</u> (of)	<u>do</u> (to)	<u>faoi</u> (under)	<u>i</u> (in)	<u>le</u> (with)	<u>ó</u> (from)	<u>trí</u> (through)	<u>go</u> (with)	<u>ar</u> (on)
mo (my)	de mo	do mo	faoi mo	i mo	le mo	ó mo	trí mo	go mo	ar mo
do (your)	de do	do do	faoi do	i do	le do	ó do	trí do	go do	ar do
a (his)	dá	dá, á	faoina	ina	lena	óna	trína	gona	arna, ar a
a (her)	dá	dá, á	faoina	ina	lena	óna	trína	gona	arna, ar a
ár (our)	dár	dár	faoinár	inár	lenár	ónár	trínár	gonár	arnár, ar ár
bhur (your) (pl.)	de bhur	do bhur	faoi bhur	in bhur	le bhur	ó bhur	trí bhur	go bhur	ar bhur
a (their)	dá	dá, á	faoina	ina	lena	óna	trína	gona	arna, ar a

In *Munster*, also in the 1st and 2nd persons one uses combinations:

lem, led, óm, ód, dom, dod, im, id, fém, féd, etc. instead of
le mo, le do, ó mo, ó do, do mo, do do, i mo, i do, faoi mo, faoi do.

e.g.: *im leabhar* < *i mo leabhar* = *in my book*

In *Munster* and *Connacht* there are in part also further combinations in the 2nd person plural due to the mostly vowel-centered pronunciation of *bhur* as [u:r] or [@]: **le nbhur, ó nbhur, trí nbhur**, etc. These do not apply as standard forms, because in the standard, the consonantal pronunciation [vu:r] is favoured. Only **in bhur** has remained in the standard, whereby here, "in" is to be seen as an alternative for the eclipsis in *bhur*.

Do (to): By usage as the object of the verbal nouns in the progressive and passive tenses: **á** instead of **dá**
e.g.: *Tá mé á mholadh* = *I praise him*. (lit.: "am I to his praising")

If it does not occur with a verbal noun, then **dá** instead of **á**

e.g.: *Thug mé dá chara é* = *I gave it to his friend* (lit.: "gave I to his friend it")

In *Connacht*, one uses **dhá** in both cases.

In *Munster*, there are also special forms in the progressive of the 1st and 2nd person: **am, ad**, that most likely actually belong to *ag* (otherwise **dom, dod**)

e.g.: *Tá mé ad mholadh* < *Tá mé do do mholadh* = *I praise you*. (lit.: "am I to your praising")

Go (with): **gona** is like *go*, archaic and is only here for the sake of completeness.

The common preposition **go (to)** does not use this form, instead *go dtí a* = *to his*, but colloquially sometimes also combinations like **go dtína** = *to his*).

Ar (on): **arna** precedes only the verbal noun in the meaning "after", "after that". Otherwise always **ar a**.
arna chur in eager ag ... = *published by...* ("after-his laying in order by...")

It is the rest of the archaic, eclipsis triggering preposition *iar* = *after*, that falls together with *a* in modern Irish (*iar n-a* > *iarna* > *arna*).

The **connecting consonant -n-** in *ina, óna, faoina*, etc. was originally only common after *i, go* and *iar* (> *ar*), while these prepositions triggered eclipsis (and also *n*-prefix) (**i n-a** > *ina*, **go n-a** > *gona*, **iar n-a** > *arna*). With the other prepositions it was just added to the end (*óna, faoina, lena, trína*)

usage of the possessive pronouns

1. general belongings: **as in German/English**,

e.g.: *mo charr* = *my car*

2. **Ownership:** poss.pron.+ object + *féin*,

e.g.: *mo theach féin* = *my own house* (lit.: "my house myself")

3. with demonstrative pronouns (only 3rd Person in the sense of "his")

e.g.: *Tá sí ina theach sin* = *She is there in his house* (lit.: "is she in-his house there")

4. with *ceann*, *cuid*: s.o. (plural forms, subst. possessive pronouns)

5. als **genitive of the personal pronoun**, e.g.:

- as a pronominal object in clauses of the progressive with the preposition do:

e.g.: *Tá tú do mo bhualadh.* = *You're hitting me.*

- this has also a **passive meaning** by apposition and possessive pronouns as well:

e.g.: *Tá an teach á thóigeáil.* = *The house is being built.* (lit.: "is the house to-his construction")
or (with *féin*) a **reflexive meaning**:

e.g.: *Tá tú do do bhualadh féin.* = *You're hitting yourself.*

- less commonly as a pronominal object in infinitive constructions:

e.g.: *chun a mbuailte* = *in order to hit her* ("lit.: to her hitting")

- with derived prepositions:

e.g.: *os mo chionn* = *above me* (lit.: "over my head")

6. with **state of being verbs** (like standing, living, lying, sitting, sleeping) with the **preposition i**,

e.g.: *tá sé ina chónai i....* = *he lives in....* (lit. "he is in-his living in...")

7. **classification with i**: e.g.: *tá mé i mo dhochtuir* = *I'm a doctor* (see also classification clauses without the copula)

8. In expressions like "as a threesome", "as a foursome" with the preposition **i** and the appropriate personal number

e.g.: *i m'aonar* = *(I) alone* ("by lonesome"), *inár triúr* = *(we) as a threesome*, *in bhur seachtar* = *(you) as a sevensome*

9. The possessive pronouns of the 3rd person masculine **a** (= "his") with the grad. abstract noun in the meaning "**how**",

e.g.: *a fheabhas í* = *a fheabhas atá sí* = *how good she is* (lit.: "his goodness, that-is she")

also in combination with **cá** (**cá + a > cá** = "how?") and **de** (**de + a > dá** = "however")

e.g.: *cá fheabhas í* = *how good is she?*, *dá fheabhas í* = *however good she is.*

10. The possessive pronouns are **not used** in certain cases.

Instead of that, the article and a form of the preposition **ag** is used (often shorthand and contrast forms, often in a relative clause):

- by nouns with demonstrative pronouns (seo, sin, úd), except in the aforementioned (3rd) sense.

e.g.: *an teach seo 'amsa* = *an teach seo (atá) agamsa* = *this, my house*

This construction is often preferred as an alternative to possessive pronouns (mostly: *an teach seo agamsa* = *my house* instead of the uncommon: *mo theach*)

- by nouns with the comparative form in the sense of the superlative:

e.g.: *an mac is sine (atá) agam* = *my eldest son*

- in the usage of ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.)

e.g.: *an chéad mhac (atá) aige* = *his first son*

11. It is also **not used** in the address form.

Instead of that, one uses only the vocative particle.

e.g.: *a chara* = *my friend!*

Caibidil a Deich:

The Article (an tAlt)

[definite and indefinite articles](#)

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definite and indefinite articles

There is only one **definite** article (alt cinnte) *an fear = the man*

There are no **indefinite** articles (alt éiginnte) So: *fear = man or = a man*

declension of the article

There are only 2 forms:

either **an** (nominative singular masc./fem., genitive singular masc., dative singular masc./fem.)

or **na** (genitive singular fem., nominative/genitive/dativ plural masc./ fem.)

The dual form (used before the number 2) is also **an** (*an dá bhliain = the 2 years*)

Declension means then more than if **lenition**, **eclipsis** or **t-, n- h-** follows (see table)

The usage is dependent on the [gender](#) of the [noun](#).

These initial mutations result from the old celtic article-declension forms, and are thus discussed here under "declension".

Given here is only the **nominative** (=accusative) and **genitive**.

In the **dative**, the mutations are dependent on the preposition and the dialect used (see under [articles with prepositions](#))

masculine

	singular		plural	
	nom.	gen.	nom.	gen.
preceding a consonant	an	an L	na	na E
preceding d, t	an	an	na	na E
preceding s	an	an t	na	na
preceding a vowel	an t-	an	na h	na n-

feminine

	singular		plural	
	nom.	gen.	nom.	gen.
preceding a consonant	an L	na	na	na E
preceding d, t	an	na	na	na E
preceding s	an t	na	na	na
preceding a vowel	an	na h	na h	na n-

- that **d, t** are not lenited after articles, is due to the "**d, n, t, l, s**"-rule: should these consonants somehow follow one another, there is no lenition (as here after the *n* in *an*)
- t before s only if s + vowel or s + l,n,r

examples

masculine:

	nominative singular	genitive singular	nominative plural	genitive plural
preceding a consonant	an fear = <i>the man</i>	an fhir = <i>of the man</i>	na fir = <i>the men</i>	na bhfear = <i>of the men</i>
preceding d, t	an teach = <i>the house</i>	an tí = <i>of the house</i>	na tithe = <i>the houses</i>	na dtithe = <i>of the houses</i>

preceding s	an sagart = <i>the priest</i>	an tsagairt = <i>of the priest</i>	na sagairt = <i>the priests</i>	na sagart = <i>of the priests</i>
preceding a vowel	an t-éan = <i>the bird</i>	an éin = <i>of the bird</i>	na héin = <i>the birds</i>	na n-éan = <i>of the birds</i>

feminine:

	nominative singular	genitive singular	nominative plural	genitive plural
preceding a consonant	an ghloine = <i>the glass</i>	na gloine = <i>of the glass</i>	na gloiní = <i>the glasses</i>	na ngloiní = <i>of the glasses</i>
preceding d, t	an teist = <i>the test</i>	na teiste = <i>of the test</i>	na teisteacha = <i>the tests</i>	na dteisteacha = <i>of the tests</i>
preceding s	an tsúil = <i>the eye</i>	na súile = <i>of the eye</i>	na súile = <i>the eyes</i>	na súl = <i>of the eyes</i>
preceding a vowel	an áit = <i>the place</i>	na háite = <i>of the place</i>	na háiteacha = <i>the places</i>	na n-áiteacha = <i>of the places</i>

articles with prepositions

If a preposition comes before the article, a **special form** of the preposition occurs (often form ending in -s [1]; this is often sounding the same as the 3rd pers. sg. masc., e.g. *leis an*) or there are **fusions** with the article (e.g. *den, don, faoin, sa*). Here denoted in red.

In the parentheses are the **non-standard forms** (those forms with -s- mostly in Munster, *ins an* in Ulster)

Besides these, there are other rules regulating lenition and eclipsis. Here mostly follows the **dative**.

Depending on the dialect, the following rules:

prep.	prep. + article.sing	lenition / eclipsis						prep. + article.plural	lenition/ eclipsis		
		standard	Ulster	Connacht	Munster						
						Dingle					
ag	ag an (aigen)	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	ag na (aigesna)	-			
ar	ar an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	ar na	-			
as	as an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	as na	-			
chuig	chuig an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	chuig na	-			
faoi	faoi (fén, fán)	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	faoi na (fésna, fá na)	-			
le	leis an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	leis na	-			
mar	mar an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	mar na	-			
ó	ón	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	ó na (ósna)	-			
roimh	roimh an, (roimis an)	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	roimh na (roimis na)	-			
trí	tríd an (trís an)	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	trí na (trísna)	-			
thar	thar an (tharaí an)	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	thar na (tharaí na)	-			
um	um an	E/L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	E	E	um na	-			
de	den	L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E	de na (desna)	-			
do	don	L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E	do na (dosna)	-			
i	sa, san* (ins an)	L, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, - (d, t)	E, ts (fem.), - (d, t)	L, ts, bhf, - (d, t)	L, ts, bhf, - (d, t)	sna (ins na)	-			
fara	fairis an										
go	go dtí an					E	go dtí(s) na	-			
idir	idir an						idir na	-			
gan	gan an						gan na	-			

*san instead of sa preceding a vowel as well as preceding fh- (in Connacht and Munster sa bhf-)

The given lenitions- and eclipsis rules in the dialects are modeled after: *M. Ó Siadhail: "Modern Irish"*.

The rules for **Connacht** are used in the Gaeltachts of County Galway. In **Mayo**, similar rules apply in Erris and Tourmakeady (with a lean to eclipsis), in Achill the Ulster rules apply (lenition).

In **Ring** (Munster) other rules still apply, that due to their extensive nature, are not discussed here.

Legend and explanations for the above table:

- **E/L**: In the standard, there is generally a choice between lenition or eclipsis after most prepositions + article .
e.g.: *ar an mbord/ar an bhord = on the table*

- **E:** In Munster and Connacht, one eclipses after most prepositions + article.
e.g.: *ar an mbord* = *on the table*
- **L:** In Ulster, one lenites after most prepositions + article.
e.g.: *ar an bhord* = *on the table*
- **ts:** In Ulster and Munster, a t-prefix is used with all nouns, beginning with s, if the preposition + article normally incurs lenition, and not eclipsis.
e.g.: *ar an tsúil* = *on the eye*, *ar an tsagart* = *on the priest*
- **ts (fem.):** In the standard and Connacht, a t-prefix only precedes feminine nouns, independent of a customary lenition or eclipsis following the preposition + article.
e.g.: *ar an tsúil* = *on the eye* but: *ar an sagart* = *on the priest*
- **- (d, t):** d,t is not lenited in all dialects according to the "dentals"-rule following "an". In the standard and Connacht, d,t are additionally not eclipsed.
e.g.: *ar an doras* = *on the door*
- In Munster, on the other hand, eclipsis occurs. e.g.: *ar an ndoras* = *on the door*
- **bhf:** In Munster, an f after sa is eclipsed, even though sa normally lenites (in Connacht, f, like every other consonant, is eclipsed after sa). e.g.: *sa bhfarraige* = *in the sea*
- In the empty portions of the table, the lenition rules for the article in the nominative/accusative apply (lenition for femin. nouns, no lenition for mascul. nouns, no lenition of the t,d, t-prefix instead of lenition of the s)

Preceding a **vowel**, the nominative caused t-prefix is omitted for masculinen nouns:

e.g.: *an t-úll* = *the apple aber*; *ar an úll* = *on the apple*.

An n-prefix, as is expected with eclipsis, does not occur because the article already ends in -n.

In the so-called "**standard**", by most prepositions, lenition or eclipsis are "a choice". After *don*, *den*, *sa(n)*, lenition always follows. For words with s- there is the t-prefix only preceding feminine nouns, even if the speaker would otherwise prefer eclipsis. d,t are not lenited, but also not eclipsed (words with s-,d-,t- are also treated as in Connacht).

examples:

Munster and Connacht: *ag an bhfear*, Ulster: *ag an shear* = *at the man*

Ulster and Connacht: *as an teach*, Munster: *as an dteach* = *out of the house*

Ulster and Connacht: *ar an tsúil*, Munster: *ar an síul* = *on the eye*

Ulster: *ar an tsagart*, Connacht and Munster: *ar an sagart* = *on the priest*

Ulster and Munster: *sa bhád*, Connacht: *sa mbád* = *in the boat*

Ulster: *san fharraige*, Connacht and Munster: *sa bhfarraige* = *in the sea*

Munster (Dingle): *don bhfear*, Ulster, Connacht, rest of Munster: *don shear* = *to the man*

Munster (Dingle) and Connacht: *den sagart*, Ulster, rest of Munster: *den tsagart* = *of the priest*

article with cé

The article fuses also with cé meaning "which": cé + an = **cén**, but cé + na = **cé na**

e.g.: *Cén fáth?* = which reason (or short: why), *cén fear* = which man, *cé na fir* = which men

pronunciation of the article

The vowel of the article is always unstressed, and hence neutral [@].

Preceding those words beginning with a **consonant** the **-n** of the article **an** is not spoken, so, as if one would write **a'**.

e.g.: *the woman* = *an bhean* [@ væn], *the man* = *an fear* [@ fær]

Preceding a **vowel and fh** the **-n** is also spoken, it is slender or broad, depending on the following sound.

e.g.: *the work* = *an obair* [@nob@r'], *of the man* = *an fhir* [@n'ir'], *of the fish* = *an éisc* [@n'e:shk']

Preceding a **t-prefix** the **-n** remains unvoiced:

e.g.: *the fish* = *an t-iasc* [@ t'i@sk]

The **article na** is spoken [n@].

e.g.: *the fish* = *na héisc* [n@ he:shk']

usage of the article

differences to German:

1. The article appears also with previously unmentioned definite nouns (in German mostly indefinite articles are used here)
 - *Tháinig an fear isteach* = "A" man came in.
2. Always accompanying the demonstrative pronoun **seo, sin, úd**
 - *an teach seo, an teach sin, an teach úd* = this/that house
3. if a definite noun is further described by a definite genitive attribute, there is an article *only* preceding the attribute (if necessary), but never in front of the antecedent), e.g.
 - *teach Sheáin* = *Seán's house* (no way - *an teach Sheáin!*)
 - *teach an dochta* = *the doctor's house* (no way - *an teach an dochta!*)
 - *fear na mná móire* = *the big woman's husband* (no way - *an fear na mná móire*)
4. A statement like "*a* house of the doctor" must be formed with prepositions: *teach don dochta*
4. the first noun keeps the article by a demonstrative pronoun:

- *an teach seo an dhochtúra* = *this house of the doctor*

5. preceding titles and similar ways of addressing people

- *an Dochtúir Ó Murchú* = *Dr. Murphy*, *an tAthair Ua Duinnín* = *Father O'Dinneen*, *an tUasal Seán de Burca* = *Mr. John Burke*)
- not if the indicator behind the name is in appositive: *Seán gabha* = *Seán the smith*

6. preceding surnames in general use without a first name:

- *an Breatnach* = *(Mr.) Walsh*, *an Dónallach* = *(Mr.) Ó Dónaill/O'Donnell*
- *na Breatnaigh* = *the Walshs*, *na Dónallaigh* = *the O'Donnells*

7. in many place-, river- and especially most country names

- *an Fhrainc* = *France*, *an Astráil* = *Australia*, *an Ghearmáin* = *Germany*, *an Life* = *Liffey*, *an tSionainn* = *Shannon*
- preceding Éire (Ireland), Albain (Scotland) and Gaillimh (Galway) the article is only genitive: e.g. *Poblacht na hÉireann*, *Gaeilge na hAlban*, *Contae na Gaillimhe*
- in the case of Éire for official terms, often no article: *Dáil Éireann*, *Tuaisceart Éireann* (= *Northern Ireland*) but: *Tuaisceart na hÉireann* (= *the North of Ireland*)

8. for set feasts

- *an Nollaig* = *Christmas*, *an Cháisc* = *Easter*, *an Chincis* = *Pentacose*, *an Inid* = *Shrovetide*, *an Carghas* = *Lent*

9. with seasons, day- and month names

 - *an tEarrach* = *Spring*, *an Luan* = *Monday*, *an Feabhra* = *February*
 - not in the adjectival genitive: (*lá Mártá* = *a March day*, *oíche geimhridh* = *a winter night*)

10. meaning "per"

 - *deich bpunt an ceann* = *10 pounds per head*

11. in copular classification clauses with an attributive adjective (despite the indefinite pronoun!)

 - *is deas an duine é* = *he is a(!) nice person*.

12. with cé (**cén**, **cé na**, **cé hiad na**) meaning "which"

13. with the antecedents of a relative clause, the article is often omitted: *teach a chonaic mé* = *the house that I saw*.

14. abstract and generalising nouns are (except in idiomat. expressions) mostly with the article: *an t-ocras* = *hunger* (but: *tá ocras orm* = *I'm hungry*), *an maith agus an t-olc* = *good and evil*, *an duine* = *man* (as such)

15. to indicate a class in the sg. (*an saidhbhir* = *the rich*)

16. to indicate a large amount/quantity: *na mílte* = *thousands*, *an iomarca* = *too many*

17. **an ... ag ...** serves often as a substitute for possessive pronouns, then always with a demonstrative pronoun, comparative and ordinal numbers:

 - *an teach seo agamsa* = *this, my house*; *an iníon is óige aici* = *her youngest daughter*; *an chéad mhac aige* = *his first son*

[1]

The forms of the prepositions ending in -s preceding articles acquire the -s from an otherwise lost initial sound s- the historical article form **sindos**.

Leis an is etymologically from le + sindu/-a. (sindu is die masculine dative form, feminine is sinda)

The forms **sa**, **san** (originally from **ins an** < in + sindu/-a) remain only due to parts of the article.

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

The Numbers (na hUimhreacha)

Numbers and Ordinal Numbers

[Explanations](#)

[Numbers from 1-19](#)

[Numbers from 20-99](#)

[Numbers from 100-1 Million](#)

Decimals and miscellaneous

[Decimals and Fractions](#)

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

the numbers (na hUimhreacha): explanations

[cardinal numbers without a noun](#)

[cardinal numbers with a noun](#)

[numbers of person](#)

[ordinal numbers](#)

cardinal numbers without nouns (maoluimhreacha):

- are used as nouns.
- they (1-19) are always used with the [numeral particle](#) **a** (*a haon, a dó, a trí, etc.*)
- the even tens (except *deich* = 10) are mostly seen without a particle (*fiche* = 20, *tríocha* = 30, *caoga* = 50). This is because the even tens (except *deich* = 10) count as real nouns
- The numeral particle does then appear when a ten is combined with the numbers 1-19 (*fiche a hocht* = 28, *caoga a naoi* = 59, *fiche a trí déag* = 33).
- they are used when counting (*a haon, a dó, a trí, a ceathair, ... = 1, 2, 3, 4, ...*) and numbering (*bus a haon = Bus Nr. 1*)
and in arithmetic (*a haon agus a dó sin a trí = 1 + 2 is 3*)
- This form is the same as the adjectival cardinal numbers with a noun, except in the case of 2, 4 (and also 12, 14 etc.):
comp. a dó - dhá, a ceathair - ceithre
- The numbers 11-19 are formed using an affixed **déag** (-ten): *a haon déag = 11*
- *déag* is lenited after *dó*, but not after the other numbers (*a dó dhéag = 12* but: *a trí déag = 13*)
a haon déag is pulled together when spoken (nd > nn), as if *a haonnéag* was written there [@ hi:Ne:g, @ he:ne:g]
- Instead of *fiche a haon* also **a haon is fiche** etc.
- The numeral particle is not used in *selections* : *bád nó dhó = one boat or two; trí nó ceathair de bháid = three or four boats*
- for the numbers from 20-99 there are 2 ways of counting: the decimal system (in base ten) and the vigesimal system (in base twenty), see overview [numbers from 20-99](#)
decimal: *seachtó a dó = 72*
vigesimal: *trí fichid a dó dhéag = 72* (lit.: "3x20 + 12")
- Null is **náid**, often without a numeral particle.
- A use with other nouns may only follow with the aid of the preposition *de*: e.g.: *a trí déag de chapaill = 13 of the horses*. Otherwise one uses the adjectival forms given below

cardinal numbers with nouns (uimhreacha néamhphearsanta):

- they are used like adjectives but come *before* the noun, as opposed to other adjectives.
- they are used in specifying a quantity of things (*trí bhád = 3 boats*)
- **The number 1:** There are 3 possibilities for "one boat":
bád = bád amháin = aon bhád amháin = one boat
but not : *aon bhád*: this takes the meaning of "any boat," in questions, or in negative sentences, "no boat":
An bhfuil aon bhád agat? = Do you have a boat?, Nil aon charr agam = I don't have a car
- The numbers 2-10 und 12 are sometimes used with quantities of people (except *duine*), but mostly in their place on uses the special [numbers of person](#): *trí fhear = triúr fear = 3 men*

- The noun following **1** is always in the **singular** and is (after *aon*) **lenited**
e.g. *aon bhád amháin* = *1 boat*
- The noun following **2** (*dhá*) is always in the **singular** and is **lenited**, if possible (2nd declension) in the **dual-form*** (the **dual** is equivalent to the dative form)
e.g.: *dhá bhád* = *2 boats* (singular), *dhá mhuic* = *2 pigs* (muic is the dial of muc), *dhá láimh* = *2 hands* (láimh is the dual of lámh)
- The noun following **3-10** is today mostly in the **singular**, but it is
 - **lenited** after **3-6** (e.g.: *trí bhád* = *three boats*)
 - **eclipsed** after **7-10** (e.g.: *seacht mbád* = *seven boats*)
- less commonly, the noun following **3-10** is in the **plural**, but it is
 - **not lenited** after **3-6** (e.g.: *trí bliana* = *three years*)
(an **h-prefix** preceding a vowel: e.g.: *trí huibhe* = *3 eggs*)
 - **eclipsed** after **7-10** (e.g.: *seacht mbliana* = *seven years*)

The plural after 3-10 is always used when:

- counting of **years** (special plural form for *bliain*: *bliana*):
aon bliain, dó bliain, trí bliana, sé bliana, seacht mbliana, etc.
- The **gen. noun ceann** (= "piece" lit. "head"), plural: *cinn*
ceann = *1 piece*, *dhá cheann* = *2 pieces*, *trí cinn* = *3 pieces*, *seacht gcinn* = *7 pieces*
(instead of *ceann* there are also similar words in this vein)
- **units of measurement** and the like: e.g.: *trí cinn* = *3 pieces*, *trí huairé* = *3 hours, three times*, *trí huibhe* = *3 eggs*, *trí fichid/trí scóir* = *3 x 20*, *trí scilinge* = *3 shillings*, *trí pingine* = *3 pence*
- With the numbers from 11-19 **déag** comes after the noun: *trí bhád déag* = *13 boats*
otherwise they act as the numbers from 1-10
déag (-ten) is lenited after a noun with a final vowel sound (in the singular), e.g.: *aon chóta dhéag* = *11 coats*. This isn't the case if the noun is in the plural: *trí bliana déag* = *13 years*
- after even **steps of tens or twenties** (except *deich*) nouns are unlenited and always in the **singular** (originally, this is the genitive plural), e.g.: *tríocha bád* = *30 boats*, *caoga ceann* = *50 pieces*, *fiche bliain* = *20 years*

with a following adjective:

- an **adj.** after *aon* + feminine noun is **lenited** and is in the **singular** e.g: *aon bhean mhór amháin*
- an **adj.** after *aon* + masculine noun remains **unlenited** in the **singular** e.g: *aon shear móir amháin*
- an **adj.** after *dhá* till *deich* + noun is **lenited** and is in the **plural** e.g: *dhá bhád mhóra*, *seacht mbád mhóra*
(if one uses a noun in the plural after 3-10, lenition of the adjective follows *only then* if the noun ends in a slender consonant: e.g. *trí capaill mhóra* = *3 big horses* , otherwise not: *trí bróga móra* = *3 big shoes*)

with an article

- the singular article **an** precedes 1, 2, 11, 12 (*dhá* after an article de-lenited to *dá*).
e.g.: *an t-aon bhád déag* = *the 11 boats*, *an dá bhád* = *the 2 boats*, *an dá bhád déag* = *the 12 boats*.
In the genitive, the *t*-prefix is omitted on *aon* with a masc. noun : **an aon**, preceding femin. nouns, though still **na haon**; *an dá* remains unchanged. (after *aon* one also commonly places the noun in the genitive)
e.g.: *seolta an aon bháid déag* = *the sails of the eleven boats*, *leabhar na haon mhná amháin* = *the book of the one woman*, *seolta an dá bhád* = *the sails of the two boats*.
- plural-article **na** precedes 3-10 and 13-19:
e.g.: *na trí bhád* = *the 3 boats*, *na ceithre bhád* = *the 4 boats*, *na hocht mbád* = *the 8 boats*.
In the genitive there is **eclipsis** on the number:
e.g.: *seolta na dtrí bhád* = *the sails of the 3 boats*, *stábla na gceithre bho* = *the stall of the 4 cows*
- singular article **an** preceding even tens (except *deich*):
e.g.: *an fiche bliain* = *the 20 years*, *an caoga bád* = *the 50 boats*.
- **céad/míle** also in the plural (with the plural article: *na*) *na céadtha / na mílte* = hundreds/thousands of...
After this, follows the noun, mostly in the plural: *na céadtha mná* = hundreds of women

miscellaneous and variants

- **ceithre, cúig** appear often in lenited form (**cheithre, chúig**)
- preceding **dhá** always **in** instead of *i* (e.g.: *in dhá bhaile* = *in two towns*)
- **fiche** is a noun, which can be declined ([5th declension](#)):
genitive **fichead**, dative **fichid**, plural **fichid** (with other numbers, otherwise: **fichidí**)
similarly, the other powers of 10 are declined
- instead of **fiche/fichid** also **scór/scóir** (after that also nouns in the *plural* are possible.)
- instead of **is fiche, is tríocha** etc. of course also **agus fiche, agus tríocha**
- instead of **is fiche** ("and 20") then also **fichead** ("of 20") or **ar fhichid** ("on 20") are possible and vice versa
 - **trí bhád is fiche / agus fiche** = *23 boats* ("3 boats and 20")
 - **trí bhád fichead** = *23 boats* ("3 boats of 20")
 - **trí bhád ar fhichid** = *23 boats* ("3 boats on 20")
- Instead of e.g. **is caoga, is seachtó** ("and 50", "and 70") equivalent to **caogad, seachtód** ("of 50", "of 70") or **ar caogaid, ar seachtóid** ("on 50", "on 70") etc. are possible (but not as common as with **fiche**)
 - **trí bhád is seachtó** = *73 boats* ("3 boats and 70")
 - **trí bhád seachtód** = *73 boats* ("3 boats of 70")
 - **trí bhád ar seachtóid** = *73 boats* ("3 boats on 70")
- instead of **céad** **is dhá bhád** then **dhá bhád is céad/ar chéad** (102 boats); despite the rule of thumb that numbers over one hundred have **céad** leading.
- The twenties or [vigesimal system](#) can also be used above 100 : e.g.: *sé fichid bád* = *120 boats* (lit.: "6x20 boats") instead of: *céad is fiche bád* = *120 boats*;
seacht bhfichid = *140* ("7x20"), *cúig fichid* = *100*, *ocht bhfichid* = *160*, *naoi bhfichid* = *180*, etc.
- instead of **dhá cheann** then **péire** = both
- instead of 12 then **doisínne** or **dosaen** (= dozen):
e.g.: *doisínne uibheacha* = *a dozen eggs* , in multiples: *dhá dhoisean uibheacha* = *two dozen eggs*, *deich ndosaen uibheacha* = *120 eggs* .
- **daichead** (40) is the compact form of **dá fhichead** ("2x20"),
instead of that one, also **dhá scór** (+ noun in the plural) or **ceathracha** (analog to *tríocha* = 30)
- instead of **caoga** or **dhá fhichead a deich** (50) also **leathchéad** ("half a hundred")
e.g.: *caoga bád* = *deich mbád is dá fhichead* = *leathchéad bád* = *50 boats*
equivalent to **céad go leith** = *150* (lit.: "100 with half")
- punt (pound) vor déag (also 11-19) always punta
e.g.: *dhá phunta dhéag* = *12 pounds*

numbers of person (uimhreacha pearsanta):

- numbers of person are used to count **people**.
- they are nouns (as opposed to the **adjectival cardinal numbers**).
- there are only ones for from **2-10**, as well as a special form for **12**
- **3-10** are masculine and originally contractions of normal cardinal number and **fear** = man: *trí fhear* > *tríúr*. They are used for women as well (*tríúr ban* = *3 women*), **2** (**beirt**) is a feminine noun
- for the numbers 1, 11 and above 13 there are no special numbers of person, i.e. one uses the normal cardinal numbers
- they may occur on their own *or* in connection with nouns that describe persons:
e.g.: *tríúr* = *3 people*, *tríúr fear* = *3 men*, *tríúr ban* = *3 women*, *tríúr múinteoir* = *3 teachers*
Nouns denoting people can also be used with **adjectival cardinal numbers**, but this is less common (*tríúr ban* = *3 women*, less common would be *trí bhean*)
the noun *duine* = *person* is already included in the noun of person: *3 people* = *tríúr* not **tríúr duine*
- a following noun is unlenited after 3-10, but is lenited after **beirt**,
 - in the **genitive plural** (older standard variant) e.g. *beirt fhear, tríúr ban, ochtar banaltraí*
 - in the **nominative-singular** (but *bean* is always in the gen. plural: *ban*) e.g. *ochtar banaltra*
a following adjective would then be in the nominative singular, after **beirt**, in the plural e.g. *beirt fhear mhóra, tríúr fear móir*
 - in the **dative plural**, with the preposition **de**: *tríúr d'fhir, ochtar de mhná*
- expressions like "**as a threesome**", "**as a foursome**", etc. are formed with the preposition **i** and the possessive pronoun: *Bhí siad ina n-ochtar ann* = *they were there as a group of eight*. (lit.: "were they

in-their eight[-man] there "); *Rinne muid inár gcúigear é = we did it as a group of five.*

- without a following noun, numbers of person can also be used as a substitute for number + ceann when counting *inanimate* objects: *trí cinn = triúr = 3 pieces*
e.g. "Cé mhéad leabhar?" - "Triúr" (eng.: "How many books ?" - "3 (pieces)")
- with the article: dháréag is delenited to **dáréag** after the article: *an dáréag aspal = the 12 Apostles*
ochtár with article always takes the t-prefix: *an t-ochtár*, but not in the genitive and dative: *ar an ochtar = on the 8 people*
- instead of *beirt = two* also **dís** is possible, instead of *seachtar = seven* also **mórsheisear** (lit. "big six ")
- The word **aonar** is due to its origin a number of person ("one person "), but is hardly used in that sense (instead of that is means "alone" *Tá mé i m'aonar = I am alone* (lit.: "I am in my one person "). It is used as the other expressions like "threesome" , so it quasi literally means "onesome"

ordinal numbers (orduimhreacha):

- ordinal numbers appear mostly with the article.
- after chéad (= 1st) **lenition** occurs: *an chéad fhear = the first man*
- after dara (= 2nd) upwards, no lenition: *an triú fear = the third man*, but **h-prefix precedes a vowel:** *an triú hulla = the 3rd apple, an dara háit = the 2nd place*
- The suffix -ú in older orthography was written -mhadh: *seachtmhadh = seachtú = 7.*
- after the ordinal number, the noun is **always in the nominative**, *almost never* in the genitive: *clann an dara bean = the children of the 2nd wife*
- after the ordinal number and the noun there is usually no genitive attribute: *an dara bean chéile le Seán = Seán's 2nd wife*
- with the ordinal number and the noun there is mostly no possessive pronoun needed: *an dara bean chéile aige = his 2nd wife*
- Instead of *dara* then **darna** (= 2nd), instead of *triú* then **treas** (= 3rd)
- Instead of *dóúdéag* then **dara....déag** (= 12th)
- The abbreviated form with numerals (like: 1st , 2nd , 3rd) is done in Irish with a ú (*1ú, 2ú, 3ú*), with 1st and 2nd one can also find *1d, 2a*.

Is é Lá Fheile Pádraig an 17ú lá den Mártá = Saint Patrick's Day is the 17th of March.

When the date is stated, this is mostly done so with further simplification: *an 17ú lá den Mártá 2003 = 17 Mártá 2003*

Footnote:

*: The **dual** stood earlier in Indo-European languages next to the singular and the plural

The remnants in Irish (as a composite of singular/plural) are:

1. the singular article (*an*) preceding two e.g.: *an dá bhád = the two boats* (instead of the otherwise necessary plural article *na* preceding 3-10: *na trí bhád = the three boats*)
2. if it exists, a noun after two is in the dual form (= dative singular form) e.g. *dhá bhróig =two shoes*
3. otherwise, the nominative singular form of the noun always comes after two e.g.: *dhá bhád = two boats* (after 3-10 also the plural is possible)
4. following adjectives are then still in the plural e.g. *an dá bhád mhóra = the two big boats* (like with 3-10)

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

the Numbers (na hUimhreacha)

Numbers from 1-19 (na huimhreacha óna 1 go dtí a 19)

-	counting out loud, numbering <i>maoluimhrecha</i>	counting (things) <i>uimhreacha néamhphearsanta</i> (e.g.: bád = boat)	counting (persons) <i>uimhreacha pearsanta</i> (e.g. fear = man)	ordinal numbers <i>orduimhreacha</i> (e.g. bád = boat)	short
1	a haon	bád bád amháin aon bhád amháin	fear fear amháin aon fhear amháin	an chéad bhád	1d
2	a dó	dhá bhád	beirt fhear	an dara bád	2a
3	a trí	trí bhád	tríúr fear	an tríú bád	3ú
4	a ceathair	ceithre bhád	ceathrar fear	an ceathrú bád	4ú
5	a cúig	cúig bhád	cúigear fear	an cúigiú bád	5ú
6	a sé	sé bhád	seisear fear	an séú bád	6ú
7	a seacht	seacht mbád	seachtar fear	an seachtú bád	7ú
8	a ocht	ocht mbád	ochtar fear	an t-ochtú bád	8ú
9	a naoi	naoi mbád	naonúr fear	an naoú bád	9ú
10	a deich	deich mbád	deichniúr fear	an deichiú bád	10ú
11	a haon déag	aon bhád déag	aon fhear déag	an t-aonú bád déag	11ú
12	a dó dhéag	dhá bhád déag	dháréag fear	an dóú bád déag	12ú
13	a trí déag	trí bhád déag	trí fhear déag	an tríú bád déag	13ú
14	a ceathair déag	ceithre bhád déag	ceithre fhear déag	an ceathrú bád déag	14ú
15	a cúig déag	cúig bhád déag	cúig fhear déag	an cúigiú bád déag	15ú
16	a sé déag	sé bhád déag	sé fhear déag	an séú bád déag	16ú
17	a seacht déag	seacht mbád déag	seacht bhfear déag	an seachtú bád déag	17ú
18	a ocht déag	ocht mbád déag	ocht bhfear déag	an t-ochtú bád déag	18ú
19	a naoi déag	naoi mbád déag	naoi bhfear déag	an naoú bád déag	19ú

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

Numbers (na hUimhreacha)

Numbers from 20-99 (na huimhreacha ó fiche go dtí nócha a naoi)

There are 2 different counting systems:

by tens (decimal system, *an córas deachúlach*)
by twenties (vigesimal system, *an córas fichiúlach*)

Numbers from 20-99 (decimal system)

This is the way of counting taught today in school and used in most standard Irish

-	enumeration, <i>maoluimhreacha</i>	counting (things and people) (e.g.: bád = boat)	ordinal numbers <i>orduimhreacha</i> (e.g. bád = boat)	short
20	fiche	fiche bád	an fichiú bád	20ú
21	fiche a haon	bád is fiche	an t-aonú bád is fiche	21ú
22	fiche a dó	dhá bhád is fiche	an dóú bád is fiche	22ú
23	fiche a trí	trí bhád is fiche	an tríú bád is fiche	23ú
24	fiche a ceathair	ceithre bhád is fiche	an ceathrú bád is fiche	24ú
25	fiche a cúig	cúig bhád is fiche	an cúigiú bád is fiche	25ú
26	fiche a sé	sé bhád is fiche	an séú bád is fiche	26ú
27	fiche a seacht	seacht mbád is fiche	an seachtú bád is fiche	27ú
28	fiche a ocht	ocht mbád is fiche	an t-ochtú bád is fiche	27ú
29	fiche a naoi	naoi mbád is fiche	an naoú bád is fiche	29ú
30	tríocha	tríocha bád	an tríochadú bád	30ú
31	tríocha a haon	bád is tríocha	an t-aonú bád is tríocha	31ú
32	tríocha a dó	dhá bhád is tríocha	an dóú bád is tríocha	32ú
33	tríocha a trí	trí bhád is tríocha	an tríú bád is tríocha	33ú
34	tríocha a ceathair	ceithre bhád is tríocha	an ceathrú bád is tríocha	34ú
35	tríocha a cúig	cúig bhád is tríocha	an cúigiú bád is tríocha	35ú
36	tríocha a sé	sé bhád is tríocha	an séú bád is tríocha	36ú
37	tríocha a seacht	seacht mbád is tríocha	an seachtú bád is tríocha	37ú
38	tríocha a ocht	ocht mbád is tríocha	an t-ochtú bád is tríocha	38ú
39	tríocha a naoi	naoi mbád is tríocha	an naoú bád is tríocha	39ú
40	daichead	daichead bád	an daicheadú bád	40ú
41	daichead a haon	bád is daichead	an t-aonú bád is daichead	41ú
42	daichead a dó	dhá bhád is daichead	an dóú bád is daichead	42ú
43	daichead a trí	trí bhád is daichead	an tríú bád is daichead	43ú
44	daichead a ceathair	ceithre bhád is daichead	an ceathrú bád is daichead	44ú
45	daichead a cúig	cúig bhád is daichead	an cúigiú bád is daichead	45ú
46	daichead a sé	sé bhád is daichead	an séú bád is daichead	46ú
47	daichead a seacht	seacht mbád is daichead	an seachtú bád is daichead	47ú
48	daichead a ocht	ocht mbád is daichead	an t-ochtú bád is daichead	48ú

49	daichead a naoi	naoi mbád is daichead	an naoú bád is daichead	49ú
50	caoga	caoga bád	an caogadú bád	50ú
51	caoga a haon	bád is caoga	an t-aonú bád is caoga	51ú
52	caoga a dó	dhá bhád is caoga	an dóú bád is caoga	52ú
53	caoga a trí	trí bhád is caoga	an tríú bád is caoga	53ú
54	caoga a ceathair	ceithre bhád is caoga	an ceathrú bád is caoga	54ú
55	caoga a cúig	cúig bhád is caoga	an cúigiú bád is caoga	55ú
56	caoga a sé	sé bhád is caoga	an séú bád is caoga	56ú
57	caoga a seacht	seacht mbád is caoga	an seachtú bád is caoga	57ú
58	caoga a hocht	ocht mbád is caoga	an t-ochtú bád is caoga	58ú
59	caoga a naoi	naoi mbád is caoga	an naoú bád is caoga	59ú
60	seasca	seasca bád	an seascadú bád	60ú
61	seasca a haon	bád is seasca	an t-aonú bád is seasca	61ú
62	seasca a dó	dhá bhád is seasca	an dóú bád is seasca	62ú
63	seasca a trí	trí bhád is seasca	an tríú bád is seasca	63ú
64	seasca a ceathair	ceithre bhád is seasca	an ceathrú bád is seasca	64ú
65	seasca a cúig	cúig bhád is seasca	an cúigiú bád is seasca	65ú
66	seasca a sé	sé bhád is seasca	an séú bád is seasca	66ú
67	seasca a seacht	seacht mbád is seasca	an seachtú bád is seasca	67ú
68	seasca a hocht	ocht mbád is seasca	an t-ochtú bád is seasca	68ú
69	seasca a naoi	naoi mbád is seasca	an naoú bád is seasca	69ú
70	seachtó	seachtó bád	an seachtódú bád	70ú
71	seachtó a haon	bád is seachtó	an t-aonú bád is seachtó	71ú
72	seachtó a dó	dhá bhád is seachtó	an dóú bád is seachtó	72ú
73	seachtó a trí	trí bhád is seachtó	an tríú bád is seachtó	73ú
74	seachtó a ceathair	ceithre bhád is seachtó	an ceathrú bád is seachtó	74ú
75	seachtó a cúig	cúig bhád is seachtó	an cúigiú bád is seachtó	75ú
76	seachtó a sé	sé bhád is seachtó	an séú bád is seachtó	76ú
77	seachtó a seacht	seacht mbád is seachtó	an seachtú bád is seachtó	77ú
78	seachtó a hocht	ocht mbád is seachtó	an t-ochtú bád is seachtó	78ú
79	seachtó a naoi	naoi mbád is seachtó	an naoú bád is seachtó	79ú
80	ochtó	ochtó bád	an t-ochtódú bád	80ú
81	ochtó a haon	bád is ochtó	an t-aonú bád is ochtó	81ú
82	ochtó a dó	dhá bhád is ochtó	an dóú bád is ochtó	82ú
83	ochtó a trí	trí bhád is ochtó	an tríú bád is ochtó	83ú
84	ochtó a ceathair	ceithre bhád is ochtó	an ceathrú bád is ochtó	84ú
85	ochtó a cúig	cúig bhád is ochtó	an cúigiú bád is ochtó	85ú
86	ochtó a sé	sé bhád is ochtó	an séú bád is ochtó	86ú
87	ochtó a seacht	seacht mbád is ochtó	an seachtú bád is ochtó	87ú
88	ochtó a hocht	ocht mbád is ochtó	an t-ochtú bád is ochtó	88ú
89	ochtó a naoi	naoi mbád is ochtó	an naoú bád is ochtó	89ú
90	nócha	nócha bád	an nóchadú bád	90ú
91	nócha a haon	bád is nócha	an t-aonú bád is nócha	91ú
92	nócha a dó	dhá bhád is nócha	an dóú bád is nócha	92ú
93	nócha a trí	trí bhád is nócha	an tríú bád is nócha	93ú
94	nócha a ceathair	ceithre bhád is nócha	an ceathrú bád is nócha	94ú
95	nócha a cúig	cúig bhád is nócha	an cúigiú bád is nócha	95ú

96	nócha a sé	sé bhád is nócha	an séú bád is nócha	96ú
97	nócha a seacht	seacht mbád is nócha	an seachtú bád is nócha	97ú
98	nócha a hocht	ocht mbád is nócha	an t-ochtú bád is nócha	98ú
99	nócha a naoi	naoi mbád is nócha	an naoú bád is nócha	99ú

Numbers from 20-99 (vigesimal system)

A rather archaic way of counting, but still in use.

Counting is not done in tens- (20, 30, 40, 50 ...) but in steps of twenty (20, 2x20, 3x20, 4x20, ...)

That means that the tens 30, 50, 70, 90 appear as 20+10, 2x20+10, 3x20+10, etc.

This is not unusual and was (or is) still common elsewhere:

comp. French: *quatre-vingt = 80 ("4x20")*, *quatre-vingt dix-neuf = 99 ("4x20+19")*

-	lit. translation	enumeration <i>maoluimhreacha</i>	counting (things and people) (e.g.: bád = boat)	ordinal numbers <i>orduimhreacha</i>
20	20	fiche	fiche bád	an fichiú bád
21	20+1	fiche a haon	bád is fiche	an t-aonú bád is fiche
22	20+2	fiche a dó	dhá bhád déag is fiche	an dóú bád is fiche
23	20+3	fiche a trí	trí bhád déag is fiche	an tríú bád is fiche
24	20+4	fiche a ceathair	ceithre bhád déag is fiche	an ceathrú bád is fiche
25	20+5	fiche a cúig	cúig bhád déag is fiche	an cúigiú bád is fiche
26	20+6	fiche a sé	sé bhád déag is fiche	an séú bád is fiche
27	20+7	fiche a seacht	seacht mbád is fiche	an seachtú bád is fiche
28	20+8	fiche a hocht	ocht mbád is fiche	an t-ochtú bád is fiche
29	20+9	fiche a naoi	naoi mbád is fiche	an naoú bád is fiche
30	20+10	fiche a deich	deich mbád is fiche	an deichiú bád is fiche
31	20+11	fiche a haon déag	aon bhád déag is fiche	an t-aonú bád déag is fiche
32	20+12	fiche a dó dhéag	dhá bhád déag is fiche	an dóú bád déag is fiche
33	20+13	fiche a trí déag	trí bhád déag is fiche	an tríú bád déag is fiche
34	20+14	fiche a ceathair déag	ceithre bhád déag is fiche	an ceathrú bád déag is fiche
35	20+15	fiche a cúig déag	cúig bhád déag is fiche	an cúigiú bád déag is fiche
36	20+16	fiche a sé déag	sé bhád déag is fiche	an séú bád déag is fiche
37	20+17	fiche a seacht déag	seacht mbád déag is fiche	an seachtú bád déag is fiche
38	20+18	fiche a hocht déag	ocht mbád déag is fiche	an t-ochtú bád déag is fiche
39	20+19	fiche a naoi déag	naoi mbád déag is fiche	an naoú bád déag is fiche
40	2x20	dhá fhichead	dhá fhichead bád	an dá fhicheadú bád
41	2x20+1	dhá fhichead a haon	bád is dá fhichead	an t-aonú bád is dá fhichead
42	2x20+2	dhá fhichead a dó	dhá bhád is dá fhichead	an dóú bád is dá fhichead
43	2x20+3	dhá fhichead a trí	trí bhád is dá fhichead	an tríú bád is dá fhichead
44	2x20+4	dhá fhichead a ceathair	ceithre bhád is dá fhichead	an ceathrú bád is dá fhichead
45	2x20+5	dhá fhichead a cúig	cúig bhád is dá fhichead	an cúigiú bád is dá fhichead
46	2x20+6	dhá fhichead a sé	sé bhád is dá fhichead	an séú bád is dá fhichead
47	2x20+7	dhá fhichead a seacht	seacht mbád is dá fhichead	an seachtú bád is dá fhichead
48	2x20+8	dhá fhichead a hocht	ocht mbád is dá fhichead	an t-ochtú bád is dá fhichead
49	2x20+9	dhá fhichead a naoi	naoi mbád is dá fhichead	an naoú bád is dá fhichead
50	2x20+10	dhá fhichead a deich	deich mbád is dá fhichead	an deichiú bád is dá fhichead
51	2x20+11	dhá fhichead a haon déag	aon bhád déag is dá fhichead	an t-aonú bád déag is dá fhichead
52	2x20+12	dhá fhichead a dó dhéag	dhá bhád déag is dá fhichead	an dóú bád déag is dá fhichead
53	2x20+13	dhá fhichead a trí déag	trí bhád déag is dá fhichead	an tríú bád déag is dá fhichead

54	2x20+14	dhá fhichead a ceathair déag	ceithre bhád déag is dá fhichead	an ceathrú bád déag is dá fhichead
55	2x20+15	dhá fhichead a cúig déag	cúig bhád déag is dá fhichead	an cúigiú bád déag is dá fhichead
56	2x20+16	dhá fhichead a sé déag	sé bhád déag is dá fhichead	an séú bád déag is dá fhichead
57	2x20+17	dhá fhichead a seacht déag	seacht mbád déag is dá fhichead	an seachtú bád déag is dá fhichead
58	2x20+18	dhá fhichead a hocht déag	ocht mbád déag is dá fhichead	an t-ochtú bád déag is dá fhichead
59	2x20+19	dhá fhichead a naoi déag	naoi mbád déag is dá fhichead	an naoú bád déag is dá fhichead
60	3x20	trí fichid	trí fichid bád	an trí ficheadú bád
61	3x20+1	trí fichid a haon	bád is trí fichid	an t-aonú bád is trí fichid
62	3x20+2	trí fichid a dó	dhá bhád is trí fichid	an dóú bád is trí fichid
63	3x20+3	trí fichid a trí	trí bhád is trí fichid	an tríú bád is trí fichid
64	3x20+4	trí fichid a ceathair	ceithre bhád is trí fichid	an ceathrú bád is trí fichid
65	3x20+5	trí fichid a cúig	cúig bhád is trí fichid	an cúigiú bád is trí fichid
66	3x20+6	trí fichid a sé	sé bhád is trí fichid	an séú bád is trí fichid
67	3x20+7	trí fichid a seacht	seacht mbád is trí fichid	an seachtú bád is trí fichid
68	3x20+8	trí fichid a hocht	ocht mbád is trí fichid	an t-ochtú bád is trí fichid
69	3x20+9	trí fichid a naoi	naoi mbád is trí fichid	an naoú bád is trí fichid
70	3x20+10	trí fichid a deich	deich mbád is trí fichid	an deichiú bád is trí fichid
71	3x20+11	trí fichid a haon déag	aon bhád déag is trí fichid	an t-aonú bád déag is trí fichid
72	3x20+12	trí fichid a dó dhéag	dhá bhád déag is trí fichid	an dóú bád déag is trí fichid
73	3x20+13	trí fichid a trí déag	trí bhád déag is trí fichid	an tríú bád déag is trí fichid
74	3x20+14	trí fichid a ceathair déag	ceithre bhád déag is trí fichid	an ceathrú bád déag is trí fichid
75	3x20+15	trí fichid a cúig déag	cúig bhád déag is trí fichid	an cúigiú bád déag is trí fichid
76	3x20+16	trí fichid a sé déag	sé bhád déag is trí fichid	an séú bád déag is trí fichid
77	3x20+17	trí fichid a seacht déag	seacht mbád déag is trí fichid	an seachtú bád déag is trí fichid
78	3x20+18	trí fichid a hocht déag	ocht mbád déag is trí fichid	an t-ochtú bád déag is trí fichid
79	3x20+19	trí fichid a naoi déag	naoi mbád déag is trí fichid	an naoú bád déag is trí fichid
80	4x20	ceithre fichid	ceithre fichid bád	an ceithre ficheadú bád
81	4x20+1	ceithre fichid a haon	bád is ceithre fichid	an t-aonú bád is ceithre fichid
82	4x20+2	ceithre fichid a dó	dhá bhád is ceithre fichid	an dóú bád is ceithre fichid
83	4x20+3	ceithre fichid a trí	trí bhád is ceithre fichid	an tríú bád is ceithre fichid
84	4x20+4	ceithre fichid a ceathair	ceithre bhád is ceithre fichid	an ceathrú bád is ceithre fichid
85	4x20+5	ceithre fichid a cúig	cúig bhád is ceithre fichid	an cúigiú bád is ceithre fichid
86	4x20+6	ceithre fichid a sé	sé bhád is ceithre fichid	an séú bád is ceithre fichid
87	4x20+7	ceithre fichid a seacht	seacht mbád is ceithre fichid	an seachtú bád is ceithre fichid
88	4x20+8	ceithre fichid a hocht	ocht mbád is ceithre fichid	an t-ochtú bád is ceithre fichid
89	4x20+9	ceithre fichid a naoi	naoi mbád is ceithre fichid	an naoú bád is ceithre fichid
90	4x20+10	ceithre fichid a deich	deich mbád is ceithre fichid	an deichiú bád is ceithre fichid
91	4x20+11	ceithre fichid a haon déag	aon bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an t-aonú bád déag is ceithre fichid
92	4x20+12	ceithre fichid a dó dhéag	dhá bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an dóú bád déag is ceithre fichid
93	4x20+13	ceithre fichid a trí déag	trí bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an tríú bád déag is ceithre fichid
94	4x20+14	ceithre fichid a ceathair déag	ceithre bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an ceathrú bád déag is ceithre fichid
95	4x20+15	ceithre fichid a cúig déag	cúig bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an cúigiú bád déag is ceithre fichid
96	4x20+16	ceithre fichid a sé déag	sé bhád déag is ceithre fichid	an séú bád déag is ceithre fichid
97	4x20+17	ceithre fichid a seacht déag	seacht mbád déag is ceithre fichid	an seachtú bád déag is ceithre fichid
98	4x20+18	ceithre fichid a hocht déag	ocht mbád déag is ceithre fichid	an t-ochtú bád déag is ceithre fichid
99	4x20+19	ceithre fichid a naoi déag	naoi mbád déag is ceithre fichid	an naoú bád déag is ceithre fichid

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

the Numbers (na hUimhreacha)

Numbers from 100 - 1 Mio

-	counting out loud, numbering <i>maoluimhreacha</i>	counting (things and people) (e.g.: bád = boat)	ordinal numbers <i>orduimhreacha</i> (e.g. bád = boat)	short
100	céad	céad bád	an céadú bád	100ú
101	céad a haon	céad is bád	an céad is aonú bád	101ú
102	céad a dó	céad is dhá bhád	an céad is dóú bád	102ú
107	céad a seacht	céad is seacht mbád	an céad is seachtú bád	107ú
110	céad a deich	céad is deich mbád	an céad is deichiú bád	110ú
112	céad a dó dhéag	céad is dhá bhád déag	an céad is dóú bád déag	112ú
120	céad is fiche	céad is fiche bád	an céad is fichiú bád	112ú
123	céad fiche a trí	céad fiche is trí bhád	an céad fiche is tríú bád	123ú
200	dhá chéad	dhá chéad bád	an dá chéadú bád	200ú
202	dhá chéad a dó	dhá chéad is dhá bhád	an dá chéad is dóú bád	202ú
212	dhá chéad a dó dhéag	dhá chéad is dhá bhád déag	an dá chéad is dóú bád déag	212ú
220	dhá chéad is fiche	dhá chéad is fiche bád	an dá chéad is fichiú bád	220ú
222	dhá chéad fiche a dó	dhá chéad fiche is dhá bhád	an dá chéad fiche is dóú bád	222ú
300	trí chéad	trí chéad bád	an trí chéadú bád	300ú
400	ceithre chéad	ceithre chéad bád	an ceithre chéadú bád	400ú
500	cúig chéad	cúig chéad bád	an cúig chéadú bád	500ú
600	sé chéad	sé chéad bád	an sé chéadú bád	600ú
700	seacht gcéad	seacht gcéad bád	an seacht gcéadú bád	700ú
800	ocht gcéad	ocht gcéad bád	an t-ocht gcéadú bád	800ú
900	naoi gcéad	naoi gcéad bád	an naoi gcéadú bád	900ú
1000	míle	míle bád	an miliú bád	1000ú
1968	míle naoi gcéad seasca a hocht	míle naoi gcéad seasca is ocht mbád	an míle naoi gcéad seasca is ochtú bád	1968ú
1 million	milliún	milliún bád	an milliúnú bád	10^6 ú
1 (USA) billion	míle milliún	míle milliún bád	an míle milliúnú bád	10^9 ú
1 (EUR) billion	billiún	billiún bád	an billiúnú bád	10^{12} ú

Caibidil a hAon Déag:

the Numbers (na hUimhreacha)

[fractions](#)

[mixed numbers](#)

fractions (uimhreacha codánacha)

-	English term	Irish word	alternatively	with objects (e.g.: úll = apple)
1/2	one half	leath		leathúll ("half-apple") leath an úll ("half of the apple ") leath na n-úll ("half of the apples ")
1/3	one third	trian		trian den úll ("a third of the apple ") trian na n-úll ("a third of the apples ")
2/3	two thirds	dhá thrian		dhá thrian den úll ("2/3 of the apple ")
1/4	one fourth	ceathrú		an ceathrú (cuid) den úll
3/4	three fourths	trí cheathrú		an trí cheathrú (cuid) den úll
1/5	one fifth	cúigiú		an cúigiú (cuid) den úll
4/5	four fifths	ceithre chúigiú		an ceithre chúigiú (cuid) den úll
1/6	one sixth	séú		an séú (cuid) den úll
1/7	one seventh	seachtú		an seachtú (cuid) den úll
1/8	one eighth	ochtú		an ochtú (cuid) den úll
1/9	one ninth	naoú		an naoú (cuid) den úll
1/10	one tenth	deichiú		an deichiú (cuid) den úll
1/11	one eleventh	a haon ar a haon déag	aondéagú	an t-aonú cuid déag den úll
1/12	one twelfth	a haon ar a dó dhéag	dódhéagú	an dóú cuid déag den úll
1/13	one thirteenth	a haon ar a trí déag	trídéagú	an triú cuid déag den úll
2/13	two thirteenths	a dó ar a trí déag	dhá thrídéagú	a dó ar a trí déag den úll
1/14	one fourteenth	a haon ar a ceathair déag	ceathairdéagú	an ceathrú cuid déag den úll
1/15	one fifteenth	a haon ar a cúig déag	cúigdéagú	an cúigiú cuid déag den úll
1/16	one sixteenth	a haon ar a sé déag	sédéagú	an séú cuid déag den úll
1/17	one seventeenth	a haon ar a seacht déag	seachtdéagú	an seachtú cuid déag den úll
1/18	one eighteenth	a haon ar a ocht déag	ochtdéagú	an ochtú cuid déag den úll
1/19	one nineteenth	a haon ar naoi déag	naoidéagú	an naoú cuid déag den úll
1/20	one twentieth	fichiú		fichiú (cuid) den úll

12/22	twelve twenty-seconds	a dó dhéag ar fiche a dó		let's not get carried away here!
1/100	one hundredth	céadú		an céadú (cuid) den úll
1/1000	one thousandth	miliú		an miliú (cuid) den úll

Fractions are mostly identical to the ordinal numbers

an ceathrú den úll = 1/4 of the apple (lit. "the fourth of the apple ")

an ceathrú cuid den úll = 1/4 apple (lit. "the fourth piece of the apple ")

mixed numbers

-	English term	Irish term	with objects (e.g.: úll = apple)
1 + 1/2	one and a half	a haon go leith	úll go leith
2 + 1/2	two and a half	a dó go leith	dhá úll go leith
2 + 1/3	two and one third	a dó go dtrian	dhá úll go dtrian
2 + 1/4	two and one fourth	a dó is ceathrú	dhá úll is ceathrú
3 + 1/5	three and one fifth	a trí is cúigiú	trí úll is cúigiú
3 + 1/6	three and one sixth	a trí is séú	trí úll is séú
3 + 1/7	three and one seventh	a trí is seachtú	trí úll is seachtú
3 + 1/8	three and one eighth	a trí is ochtú	trí úll is ochtú
3 + 1/9	three and one ninth	a trí is naoú	trí úll is naoú
3 + 1/10	three and one tenth	a trí is deichiú	trí úll is deichiú

go in go leith is an otherwise rare preposition meaning with (go leith lit.: "with half", leith is the dative of leath)

Caibidil a Dó Dhéag

the adverbs (na dobhriathra)

word order

[locational and directional adverbs](#)

[temporal adverbs](#)

[adverbs out of adjectives](#)

[adverbial pronouns](#)

[adverbs out of nouns](#)

[adverbs out of weekdays](#)

[adverbs out of numeral words](#)

Interrogative adverbs (when, where, how) see [interrogatives](#)

Adverbs in Irish are unchangeable (no declension or conjugation).

Those adverbs derived from adjectives can however be incremented (the form is the same as the adjective)

word order

The adverb comes mostly:

- **before** simple personal- or prepositional pronouns as the object
e.g.: Bhí mo mhac inné agam = My son was yesterday by me.
- **after** emphatic pronouns (-sa, féin, seo)
e.g. Bhí mo mhac agamsa inné = My son was by me yesterday.
- it can, like every other part of speech, move to the **beginning** (as a copular construction), the rest as a dir. relative clause
(Is) inné a bhí mo mhac agamsa. = Yesterday, my son was by me.
Inné (is ea) a bhí mo mhac agamsa. = Yesterday, my son was by me.

locational and directional adverbs (dobhriathra treo agus suímh)

Notice the common quartering, depending on a state of being (adverbs begin often with **th-**), a movement towards the speaker (**s-**) or a movement away from the speaker (**an-**) is occurring.

By expressing a *relative location* to another thing/person, adverbs can also begin with **las-/lais-** (laistigh, lastoir, etc). The point of reference is then inserted with *de* (*lastuas den staighre* = *above the stairs*, *lastuaidh den tir* = *north of the country*)

Instead, the forms with *las-* are also common as forms with the noun **taobh**: *taobh thiar de* = *west of*, *taobh istigh de* = *within*.

The difference between **an-** and **s-** is about the same as the German **her-** and **hin-**, but in other composition (*anuas* = *down from above*, *sios* = *down below*)

A *following noun* may be included (e.g. *anuas an staighre* = *downstairs*).

In this case, the adverbs are used as **prepositions**.

Additionally, one can use these adverbs as **adjectives** (*an teach thuaidh* = *the northern house*, *an Pol Thuaidh* = *the North Pole*).

A possibility of substantiation is prefixing **an taobh**: e.g. *an taobh istigh* = *the inside*, *an taobh thusas* = *the upper*, *an taobh theas* = *the southern part*

The compass (an compás)

northwest (of) laistiar lastuaidh				north (of) lastuaidh				northeast (of) lastoir lastuaidh
	in the Northwest thiar thuaidh			in the North thuaidh			in the Northeast thoir thuaidh	
		northwesterly aniar aduaidh		northerly aduaidh		northeasterly anoir aduaidh		
			to the Northwest siar ó thuaidh	to the North ó thuaidh	to the Northeast soir ó thuaidh			
west (of) laistiar	in the West thiar	westerly aniar	to the West siar	+	to the East soir	easterly anoir	in the East thoir	east (of) lastoir
			to the Southwest siar ó dheas	to the South ó dheas	to the Southeast soir ó dheas			
		southwesterly aniar aneas		southerly aneas		southeasterly anoir aneas		
	in the Southwest thiar theas			in the South theas			in the Southeast thoir theas	
southwest (of) laistiar laisteas				south (of) laisteas				southeast (of) lastoir laisteas

The terms for West and East are much more often used in Irish than in English or German.

One doesn't just go "down" a street, no - one says the actual direction:

Tá mé ag dul siar an bóthar = *I'm going down the road (to the West)*

North and South in such sentences is often replaced by "up" (South) and "down" (North).

Tá mé ag dul sios an bóthar = I'm going down the road(to the North)

In Connacht (Cois Fháirge) ó dheas and ó thuaidh apply independent of the direction (= from/to/in the South / North).

aduaidh and aneas are used in compound directions, independent of the direction:

e.g.: siar aduaidh = to the Northwest, thoir aneas = in the Southeast

Wind directions are generally termed as aneas, aduaidh : an gaoth aduaidh = northerly wind

Directions like "south-southwest" are formed similarly to those above, but as "southwest-south": theas thiar theas = in the south-southwest, aneas aniar aneas = from the south-southwest.

The noun forms of the directions differ greatly:

tuaisceart = North, deisceart = South,

oirtheas = East, iarthar = West

ordheisceart = Southeast, iardheisceart = Southwest

irthuaiseart = Northeast, iarthuaiseart = Northwest

up and down

up (pos.) thuas	from above anuas	up (dir.) suas [1]	above lastuas
down (pos.) thios	from below anios	down (dir.) sios	below laistios

up (thuas) is often said in place of in the South and down (thios) in place of in the North.

Aside from noun phrases like an taobh thuas = the upside there are a few others: an t-iochtar = the lower, an t-Uachtar = the upper.

front and back

back thiar	from the back aniar	to the back siar	behind lastiar
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"back" and "in the West" are the same (thiar)

(In Ireland one has to say the West always at your back, so one is always looking east, "ex oriente lux"). Following this logic, "East"(thoir) = "front". Which is correct, but is hardly used this way.

Instead, one uses mostly ar aghaidh, ar tosach and other expressions.

left and right

If one follows the aforementioned behind me is the West and in front of me the East, then right of me is South:

and it is so!: rechts = **deas** (comp. ó dheas = in the South).

Links = **clé** doesn't quite fit in this picture, but (links = tuathal is at least in the dictionary, comp. ó thuaidh = in the North)

Deas and clé are **adjectives**, adverbially only as ar taobh deas/clé, ar taobh na láimhe deise/clé or ar dheis/clé (deis and clé as nouns in the sense of right/left hand, instead of ar, also other prepositions are used to indicate direction)

Clé kann auch einfach so adverbial verwendet werden.

Note the threefold meaning of deas (right, southern, nice)

here and there

over there thall	from over there anall	out there (dir.) sell	beyond lastall
over here abhus	-	-	this side(of) lasbhus

in and out

in	isteach	inside	istigh	within	laistigh
out	amach [1]	outside	amuigh	outside of	lasmuigh

temporal adverbs (dobhriathra ama)

A small selection:

anois now	ansin then
inniu today	anocht tonight
inné yesterday	aréir last evening
arú inné day before yesterday	arú aréir the evening before last

amáireach tomorrow	anuraidh last year
arú amáireach day after tomorrow	arú anuraidh year before last

adverbs out of adjectives (dobhriathra aidiachtacha)

forming with the adverbial particle go:

form	examples
go + adjective	go maith, go cliste, go sciobtha
go + h+adjective (init. vowel)	go hiontach, go hard

go is omitted mostly:

- if there is an additional adverb, e.g.:

D'oibrgh sé reasúnta dona = *He worked pretty poorly.* (comp.: *D'oibright sé go sciobtha* = *He worked poorly.*)
Deirim sin minic go leor = *I say it often enough* (comp.: *Deirim sin go minic* = *I say it often*)
- if the adverb modifies an adjective, e.g.:

go measartha = *especially*
an teach measartha mór = *the especially large house*
- in copular clauses, e.g.:

Ní dona a d'oibrgh sé = *He didn't work poorly*
- In the comparative (instead níos), e.g.:

D'oibrigh sé níos measa = *He worked poorer*
- before the prefix ró- e.g.:

D'oibrigh sé ródhona = *He worked too poorly*

The adverbial particle go is identical to the preposition go.

If it is identical to go = to/until or with the today seldomly used go = with, there are conflicting sources; more likely is go = to/until, because no eclipsis follows. Also go mór = lit. approx.: "up to [a] large [degree]"

adverbial pronouns (forainmneacha dobhriathartha)

Adverbial pronouns are formed with the help of prepositions. In German e.g. *darin, darauf, hierin, deswegen*, etc.

with conjugable prepositions

Many prepositions are conjugated and form [prepositional pronouns](#). The **3rd person singular masc.** of these are used as adverbs.

(exception is *idir* = *between*. There one uses the 3rd person plural.)

e.g.: **aige** = with it(lit.: "by-him"), **air** = on it(lit.: "on-him"), **ann** = therein (lit.: "in-him"), **eatarthu** = between (lit.: "between-them")

Often a [demonstrativ pronoun](#) follows, especially if a stronger meaning is desired:

sin (= that, equiv. to the dt. prefix *da-/dar-*): **air sin** = *on that*, **dó sin** = *to that*, **de sin** = *of that*, **ann sin** = *in that*

seo (= this, equiv. to the dt. prefix *hier-*): **air seo** = *on this*, **dó seo** = *to this*, **de seo** = *of this*, **ann seo** = *in this*

siúd (= that there, equiv. to the dt. prefix *there(dar)-*): **air siúd** = *on that there*, **dó siúd** = *thereto*, **de siúd** = *from there*, **ann siúd** = *in there*

preposition	adverb	English	preposition	adverb	English
ag	aige (sin)	at (that)	i	ann (sin)	in (that)
ar	air (sin)	upon (that)	idir	eatarthu (sin)	amongst
as	as (sin)	out of (that)	le	leis (sin)	with (that)
chuig	chuige (sin)	towards (that)	ó	uaidh (sin)	from (that)
de	de (sin)	of (that)	roimh	roimhe (sin)	before (that)
do	dó (sin)	to (that)	trí	tríd (sin)	by means of (that)
fara	fairis (sin)	beside (that)	thar	thart (sin)	beneath (that)
faoi	faoi (sin)	under (that)	um	uime (sin)	around (that)

Fairis sin > **freisin** (lit. "besides that") has an extended meaning of also (in Connacht).

In the meaning "also" there is also (in Munster) the word **leis** (lit.: "with that") and (in Ulster) **fosta**

A simple **ann** means "therein" also (more often) "there". It is used with the verb **bi** in the meaning "there is, there exists":

Tá teach ann = *there is a house* (lit.: "is a house in-it")

An bhfuil Dia ann? = *Is there a God?* (lit.: "is God in-it?")

Ann sin, ann seo, ann siúd are mostly written **ansin, anseo, ansiúd** and have the further meanings:

anseo = here < ann seo = "in-it this"

ansin = there < ann sin = "in-it that" (temporal also: *then*)

ansiúd = over there < ann siúd = "in-ti there"

The appropriate [interrogatives](#) are formed using *cé, cad* or *cá* ([overview](#) see there):

dó sin = *to that*, *cé dó* = *why?*

faoi sin = *under that*, *cé faoi* = *under what?*, etc.

with derived prepositions

Combined or [derived prepositions](#) connect with nouns in the genitiv or with possessive pronouns.

The acquire an adverbial meaning through the connection with the **possessive pronouns of the 3rd person masc.** (often + sin/seo/siúd)

examples:

preposition	deutsch	adverb	English	lit.
ar son	because	ar a shon	because of that	"on its welfare"
de bharr	result	dá bharr sin	as a result	"from-its top of that"
i lár	central	ina lár sin	centrally	"in-its middle that"
i ndiaidh	after	ina dhiadidh sin	afterwards	"in-its after that"
le haghaidh	for	lena aghaidh sin	supporting	"with-its face that"

adverbs out of nouns

Remarkable many adverbs are derived from nouns. Often this took place with the help of the [preposition *i*](#) in the form of the modern prefixes *a-*, *i-*, *an-*, *in-*, *is-*, that due to their origin as prepositions, are always unstressed (*is-* = archaic for *sa = in the*)

The substantial origin is today hardly recognisable, aside from the constant emphasis on the 2nd syllable (the 1st syllable of the noun part).

Similar constructions are also to be found in German and English (often with the preposition *zu, to*) (comp. e.g.: engl. *today, tomorrow, dt. zutage, zuhause*).

Through a change in the (historical) dative to accusative forms (comp. *istigh, isteach*) word pairs with a shifted meaning occur (*drinnen, herein*).

examples

inné = *yesterday* < *i ndé* = "in a day"

inniu = *today* < *i ndiu* = "in a day"

amuigh = *outside* < *i muigh (i maigh)* = "in a field"

amach = *out* < *i mach* = "in a field"

istigh = *inside* < *i tigh (sa tigh)* = "in the house"

isteach = *inside* < *i teach (sa teach)* = "into the house"

amárach = *tomorrow* < *i mbáraich* = "in a morning"

anuraidh = *last year* < *i n-uraidh* = "in last year"

anocht = *tonight* < *i nocth* = "in a night"

In adverbs, with the help of other prepositions, one can mostly still recognize the nouns: *ar uaireanta* = *sometimes*, etc.

adverbs out of weekdays

These adverbs are in German and English more used as normal nouns of time periods ("On Monday, I go to school"). The adverbs (Mondays = every Monday = gach Luan etc.) are nouns in Irish.

The adverbs are formed with **Dé** (archaic for *day*). They are always written capitalized. (Déardaoin always keeps its D)

day	English	adverb	English	origin
Luan	Monday	Dé Luain	(on) Monday	lat. "dies lunae = day of the moon"
Máirt	Tuesday	Dé Máirt	(on) Tuesday	lat. "dies martis = day of Mars"
Céadaoin	Wednesday	Dé Céadaoin	(on) Wednesday	alt-ir. "first fasting"
Déardaoin	Thursday	Déardaoin	(on) Thursday	alt-ir. "day between the fastings"
Aoine	Friday	Dé hAoine	(on) Friday	alt-ir. "fasting" (lat. "dies jejunii")
Satharn	Saturday	Dé Sathairn	(on) Saturday	lat. "dies saturni = day of Saturn"
Domhnach	Sunday	Dé Domhnaigh	(on) Sunday	lat. "dies dominica = day of the Lord"

Usage, comp.:

an Luan = *the Monday*

Dé Luain = *on Monday, this Monday*

Dé Luain seo caite = *last Monday*

Dé Luain seo chugainn = *next Monday*

gach Luan = *every Monday, Mondays*

ó Luan go Satharn = *von Monday bis Saturday*

adjectives/adverbs out of numeral words

*	-time(s)	-times (math.)	-fold
1	(aon) uair (amháin)		singil
2	dhá uair	faoi dhó	dúbailte
3	trí huaire	faoi thrí	tréaga
4	ceithre huaire	faoi cheathair	ceathairfhillte
5	cúig uaire	faoi chúig	cúigfhillte
6	sé huaire	faoi shé	séaga

7	seacht n-uaire	faoi sheacht	seachta
8	ocht n-uaire	faoi ocht	ochtfhillte
9	naoi n-uaire	faoi naoi	naoifhillte
10	deich n-uaire	faoi dheich	deichfhillte

The last column of the table is only to be used as an adjective. Instead of *tréaga*, *séaga*, *seachta* also *tréfhillte*, *séfhillte*, *seachtfhillte*. Further formations of similar adjectives with-*chodach* (*ochtchodach* = *eightfold*).

[1]

suas and amach mean extended also: *completely, fully*

e.g.: *Tá mé caite amach* = *I am completely out. Amach is amach* = *through and through*

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Change in the word order in a sentence

with the help of the copula

cleft construction: [subject](#), [object](#), [other clause](#)

members

cleft construction: [verb](#) [through](#) [a](#) [verbal](#) [noun](#) [and](#) [déan](#)

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Special syntax

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The Sentence (an abairt)

Word Order (ord na bhfocal)

predicate - subject - object (PSO)

Irish is part of the “PSO” language group, and is thus differentiated from most of the other Indo-European languages such as German or English (where the prevailing word order is subject – predicate – object: SPO). Among all Insular Celtic languages, however, the PSO word order is usual.

This principle word order is rigid and can only be altered by means of special constructions (see: [alterations in the word order in a sentence](#)).

An alteration in the word order does not usually occur for syntactic reasons, and thus even in interrogative and negative sentences the same word order persists and the sentence is merely introduced by a verbal particle or conjunction (verbal particle – predicate – subject – object)

the predicate (an fhaisnéis)

The predicate is the "statement" of the sentence, mostly an "action". An action is expressed by a verb ("**predicate verb**").

The statement of a sentence can also be a classification ("Paul is a teacher") or an identification ("Paul is the teacher"). In these cases, a noun is the predicate (**predicate noun**). Subject and predicate noun are then connected via the [copula](#). It is, in this sense, a "**non-predicate verb**", itself being *not* the predicate but the introductory particle.

Through this, there is a slightly altered word order in the copular clause, which basically follows "PSO": (copula-predicate-subject)

The statement of the sentence can also consist of attributing a quality ("Paul is young"). In this case, an adjective is the predicate (**predicate adjective**). The coupling of subject and [predicative adjectives](#) follows mostly with the verb [bí](#). Bí is in itself actually a predicate verb and forms, with the adjective, a **predicate framework** with the subject in the middle. (e.g. *Tá Pól óg* = *Paul is young*.).

Occasionally, the copula may link a subject and predicate adjective (e.g. *Is deas é Pól* = *Paul is nice*.)

the subject (an t-ainmni)

The subject is the "agent" of the sentence. The subject of a sentence is for the most part a noun or a pronoun in the nominative.

In the case of synthetic verb forms, the subject is already contained in it. (e.g. *bhíomar* = *we were*, *táim* = *I am*).

It can (e.g. in copular clauses) also be an infinitive construct or a subordinating clause.

In passive sentences, then it is the one "suffering" the action and not the agent as the subject. [“passive” from Latin patior, pati, passus sum = to suffer, to undergo]

grammatical and logical subject

In Irish there are a number of idiomatic expressions, in which subject of the corresponding English sentence is not the **grammatical subject**, but a **logical subject** in the form of a prepositional phrase (here **bold**). e.g.:

- *Is maith liom é* = *I like it* (lit.: "is good with-me it")
- *Tá teach agam* = *I have a house*. (lit.: "is house at-me")
- *Bhí ocras orm* = *I was hungry* (lit.: "was hunger on-me")

grammatical subjectlessness

Caution: This bit becomes more complicated, advanced learners only! :-)

By some, very few verbs, there is always grammatical complete **subjectlessness**. In Irish, this doesn't appear as disturbing as it seems.

In most cases, a *logical subject* appears with a preposition.

Because the prepositions used mostly are in the dative, the term **dative of the agent (an tabharthach gníomhach)** seems appropriate. (Latin. "dativus auctoris"). The "dative of the agent" is in bold. e.g.:

- *Is as Dóire dom = I am from Derry.* (lit.: "Is out of Derry to-me")
- *Chuaigh air aici = She defeated him* (lit. "went on-him at-her")
- *Theip / chinn orm é a dhéanamh = I failed to do it.* (lit.: "failed on-me it to do")
- *D'éisigh liom é a dhéanamh = I managed to do it.* (lit.: "rose with-me it to do")
- *Bhris ar an bhfoighne agam = My patience ran out.* (lit.: "broke on the patience at-me")
- *Mhéadaigh ar mo mhisneach = My courage increased.* (lit.: "increased on my courage")

These constructions are also possible in the perfect (with the verbal adjective of the verb) e.g.

- *Tá teipthe orm = I have failed*

Aside from such rather idiomatic phrases, the dative of agent appears above all regularly in [Expressions of precedence/consequence/concurrence](#) with the verbal noun, which is always used with the preposition [do](#). e.g.:

- *le linn gloine a ól dom = while I drink a glass* (lit.: "with the span a glass to drinking to-me")
- *tar éis sin a chloisteáil dó = after he heard that* (lit.: "beyond the trail that to hearing to-him")

In perfect or passive sentences with the [verbal adjective](#) a grammatical subject can likewise be missing, if a transitive verb introduces its object with a preposition even in the active voice (e.g. "*beir ar rud*" = *catch something*). Preposition + object then forms the logical subject in the passive voice (see the first example.)

Additionally, the agent can here be expressed with ag, in the perfect the logical subject is thus ag + agent (see the second example):

- *Tá beirthe ort = You've been caught* (lit.: "is borne on-you") instead of present active: *Beirim ort = I catch you.* (lit.: "bear-I on-you")
- *Tá beirthe agam ort = I have caught you, you have been caught by me* (lit.: "is borne at-me on-you")

A subject also basically does not appear in sentences with the [autonomous verb form](#) (*Saorbhriathar*). Whereas the English translation may use "one" or "they" in a general, impersonal sense, there is no subject word in Irish separate from the saorbhriathar, e.g.: *Déantar é = (Some)one does it.*

[Short answers](#) (expressed in English with "yes/no") are also mostly subjectless, e.g.: *An ólann sé? - Ólann.* = *Does he drink? - Yes.*

the object (an cuspóir)

- The **direct** (accusative-) object is the object of the action. It is for the most part a noun or pronoun, it can also be an infinitive construction or a subordinate clause.
- The **indirect** (dative-) object appears in Irish only with prepositions.
- **genitive** objects can only be taken by the verbal noun; it is in that case the direct object. The genitive also appears as the indirect object of compound prepositions.

In English and Irish the subject and the object do not always correspond.

e.g.: *Tá teach agam = I have a house* etc.

(teach is the grammatical subject in Irish but house is the object in English)

The Simple Affirmative Sentence (an abairt dhearfach shimplí)

In Irish, in non-copula sentences, **the (predicative) Verb come first, then the subject, then the object (VSO)**

verb + subject + object

Irish:	Feiceann tú an fear
English:	You see the man

Further sentence additions follow:

verb + subject + dir. object + indir. object + local modifier + modal modifier + temporal modifier

Irish:	Scríobh sé litir don chailín anseo go cúramach aréir.
English:	He wrote a letter to the girl carefully here last night .

Direct pronominal objects (in the form of simple [personal pronouns](#)) principally fall at the *end* of the sentence:

An ndéanann tú bróga nó **an** ndéanann tú **ach** a ndeisiú? = Are you making shoes are you only mending them?
(lit.: "IP make you shoes or IP make you but their mending?")

The Simple Query (an cheist chinntitheach)

Yes-no questions require a [verbal-participle](#), which again is simply placed at the front of the sentence. No change in word order (as in English) takes place.

present tense	affirmative: An + verb + subject + object	An ólann tú fuisce? = Do you drink whiskey?
	negative Nach + verb + subject + object	Nach n-ólann tú fuisce? = Don't you drink whiskey?
simple past	affirmative: Ar + verb + subject + object	Ar ól tú fuisce? = Did you drink whiskey?
	negative Nár + verb + subject + object	Nár ól tú fuisce? = Didn't you drink whiskey?

An / **nach** require eclipsis, **ar** / **nár** require lenition

In Munster, **ná** is used instead of *nach*. There is no lenition *ná* or eclipsis, but *h* prefixes a vowel.
e.g.: *Ná hólir fuisce?* = *Don't you drink whiskey?* (see [verbal particles](#))

In casual colloquial speech the interrogative particle is occasionally omitted, but the eclipsis however remains: (e.g.: *Bhfuil tú cinnte?* = *Are you sure?*)

The Full Query (an cheist líonta)

Full questions contain an [interrogative](#) (*who, what, how, where, why, with what, wherefore* , etc.).

A question word, however, cannot simply be placed in front of a verb, because the P-S-O word order must be preserved. In accordance with the PSO rule, it would have to stand after the verb when the interrogative pronoun is the subject or the object of the sentence. This does not occur, however (incorrect: **Rinne cé é?* = Who did it?).

The question word in Irish stands **always at the beginning of the sentence**.

In order to get around the PSO rule, then, the interrogative sentence is divided *into two subsets*:

1. First, the **question word** stands in the form of a small **copula clause**. This copula clause consists only of the question word, the copula remain invisible and/or is understood as part of the question word (*cé = who (is it)*)
2. The rest of the question follows as a (direct/indirect) **relative clause**. This relative clause is the formal subject of the preceding copula clause.

interrogative + relative clause (*Cé a rinne é? = Who did it?*) lit.: "Who is it that did it?"

The interrogatives *cé = who, cad = what, céard = what, conas = how* require a [direct relative clause](#).

The interrogatives *cá = where, cén fath = why, cén chaoi = how* , as well as the combinations with prepositional pronouns *cé/cad leis = with what, cé/cad air = on what* , etc. require an [indirect relative clause](#)

examples:

statement	question	literally
Rinne sé é sin. = He did that.	<i>Cé a rinne é sin?</i> = Who did that?	"Who(-is-it), that did it that?"
Rinne sé é sin. = He did that.	<i>Cad a rinne sé?</i> = What did he do?	"What(-is-it), that did he?"
Scriobh sé le peann é = He wrote it with a pen.	<i>Cad leis ar scriobh sé é?</i> = What did he write it with?	"What with-it(-is-it), that wrote he it?"

This construction follows exactly those [changes in the word order](#) in a statement (and acts as a [cleft construct](#), see there). comp.:

Cad a rinne sé? = What did he do? (lit.: "(is it) what, that did he?")

(Is é) sin a rinne sé. = He did that. (lit.: "(is it) that, that did he.")

Questions with 2 interrogatives like "Who did what?" are not possible in Irish.

The Double Question (an cheist deighilteach)

Also called a "disjunctive" question. These questions already contain a choice of answers:

- **cé acu ... nó** = what ... or: (with a direct relative clause):
Cé acu is fearr leat, tae nó caife? = What do you prefer, tea or coffee?
- **an ... nó**
An fearr leat tae nó caife? = Do you prefer tea or coffee?
An ólann tú tae nó caife? = Do you drink tea or coffee?
An tae nó caife a ólann(s) tú? = Do you drink tea or coffee?

The Answer (an freagra)

One answers a complete question with a complete sentence or with just one word, as in English:
Cé a rinne sin? - Pól (a rinne sin). = Who did it? - Paul (did it)).

yes and no (sea agus ní hea)

A simple question would be answered in English with either **yes** or **no**.
 In Irish there is simply **no yes or no**!

Instead, the repetition of the **predicate** takes the place of the answer.
 Thus the **verb form** without a subject or an object. In negation, the negative particle is also used.

An ólann sé bainne? - Ólann. = Does he drink milk? - Yes. (lit.: "drinks")
An ólann sé fuisce? - Ní ólann. = Does he drink whiskey? - No. (lit.: "does not drink")
An bhfaca sí mé? - Chonaic. = Did she see me? - Yes. (lit.: "Saw")
An bhfaca tú an cailín? - Ní fhaca. = Did you see the girl? - No. (lit.: "Did not see")

A subject appears as part of a synthetic verb form: e.g.: *ní ólaim = no* (lit.: "not drink-I").

Nach n-ólann tú fuisce? - Ní ólaim. = Don't you drink whiskey? - No. (lit.: "not drink-I")
Nach n-ólann sibh bainne? - Ólaimid. = Don't you drink milk? - Yes. (lit.: "drink-we")

In Ulster and Connacht, otherwise uncommon synthetic forms appear in short answers (so-called Echo forms)
 e.g.: *ólfad* = yes (lit.: "drink-will-I") instead of *ólfaidh* = yes (lit. "drink-will"):

Nár ól tú fuisce? - Níor ólas. = Didn't you drink whiskey? - No. (lit.: "not drank-I")
An déanfaidh tú sin? - Déanfad. = Will you do that? - Yes. (lit.: "do-will-I")

In the case of analytic verb forms, the subject is always missing. A subject is used only for emphatic affirmation/denial in the answer, see:

An ólann sé fuisce? - Ní ólann = Does he drink whiskey? - No.
An ólann sé fuisce? - Ní ólann sé ar chor ar bith! = Does he drink whiskey? - No, he doesn't drink whiskey at all!

The absence of *yes* and *no* has a substantial **advantage**:

A question such as "Don't you drink whiskey" answered with "Yes" is ambiguous. (Yes, I don't drink whiskey or Yes, I do not drink whiskey)

In Irish it is clear: *Ólaim* – I drink, *Ní ólaim* – I do not drink.

note:

The words **sea** (< **is ea** = "is-it") and **ní hea** (= "not-is it") can understandably help as a yes/no replacement, but their correct usage is very limited. They are grammatically correct and permitted only as the answer to a copula-question with an indefinite predicate!

An dochtúir é Pól? - Sea. = Is Paul a doctor? - Yes.
Ólann tú fuisce, an ea? - Ní hea. = You drink whiskey, isn't that so? - No.

Sea and *ní hea* also serve as replacements for the words "yes" and "no" in general expressions where they do not have the function of the answer to a question:

e.g.: *Sea nó ní hea a rá* = to say yes or no (such as "sea agus ní hea" in title of this article)

As a general short answer, a form of the verb déan = do can be used, independent of the verb of the interrogative clause. With *déan*, however, the pronoun is repeated in the answer:

An ólann tú fuisce? - Déanaim = Do you drink whiskey - Yes. (lit.: "do-I")
An ólann sé bainne? - Ní dhéanann sé = Does he drink milk? - No. (lit.: "not does he")

supplementing answers

Often one does not want to say only *yes* and *no*, but to supplement the answer by corrections, additions, etc. A complete sentence can be used here. In short answers an addition is enough, introduced by:

- **agus**: with *agus* = "and" stands with an addition in a positive answer, often corresponding to English "and also ..." "and ... too":
 e.g.: *An ólann sé fuisce? - Ólann, agus mise = Does he drink whiskey? - Yes, and me too.* (lit.: "drinks, and I")
An bhfuil cead agam tobac a chaitheamh? - Tá, agus fáilte = May I smoke? - Yes, gladly. (lit.: "is, and welcome") *Tá mé fuar. - Tá, agus mise. = I'm cold. - Yes, me too.*
- **ná**: *ná* = "neither/nor" stands in negative answers before an addition, corresponding to English "neither ... nor"
 e.g.: *An raibh Pól ann? - Ní raibh, ná Seán = Was Paul there? - No, and neither was John.* (lit.: "not was, nor John")
- **ach**: *ach* = "but" stands in negative answers before a correction:
An dochtúir é? - Ní hea, ach múinteoir. = Is he a doctor? - No, a teacher. (lit.: "not-is it, but teacher")

The go/nach-joined clause (an clásal ráiteasach)

This is equivalent to the subordinating clauses with "**that...**", "**that not...**"

Joined clause means, that such a subordinating clause is a part of the main clause (subject clause, object clause).

present tense:

affirmative clause **go + verb + subject + object**
 negative clause **nach + verb + subject + object**

Sílim go bhfuil tú sásta = I think that you are happy
 Sílim nach bhfuil tú sásta = I think that you are not happy

past:

affirmative clause **gur + verb + subject + object**
 negative clause **nár + verb + subject + object**

Bhí mé sásta gur shíl tú é = I was happy that you thought it.
 Bhí mé sásta nár shíl tú é = I was happy that you didn't think it.

go / nach requires eclipsis of the verbs, **gur / nár** requires lenition

In Munster **ná** is used instead of *nach* (without lenition or eclipsis).

The “go” joined clause is used similarly to the English “that” subordinate clause. However, it appears with a multitude of other [conjunctions](#), since this display “go/nach” as a component.

On the other hand, an [infinitive construct](#) (infinitive with “to”) can frequently appear in Irish, similar to English (in expressions of emotion, will, preference, etc. this is the default use in English, and the Irish form sounds awkward in literal translation). go-subordinate clause: *Ba mhaith liom go bhfuil tú sásta = I would like it that you are happy = I would like you to be happy*
 infinitive with zu: *Ba mhaith liom tú a bheith sásta = I would like you to be happy*.

Caibidil a Trí Déag: Sentences and Syntax (Abairt agus Comhréir)

the Conditional Clause (an clásal coinníollach)

real conditional clauses
irreal conditional clauses
complex conditional clauses

Complex clauses serve to describe conditions and their consequences ("if ..., then ...").
A conditional construct is generally comprised of:

- the subordinating clause (the actual conditional clause), which contains the condition (**Protasis, céadbheart**) and
- the main clause, which describes the consequence of the condition (**Apodosis, iarbheart**)

The order of main- and subordinating clause is random in Irish (as in German).

In Irish one differentiates between two forms of conditional clauses, real and unreal:

the real conditional clause (an clásal coinníollach oscailte)

use:

The real conditional clause is used, when:

- the condition is / would be/ will be fulfilled
- the condition is attainable
- the condition is probable, to be fulfilled.

The main clause (Apodosis) is either in the:

- indicative, imperative or subjunctive present tense, less commonly also in the conditional

The subordinating clause (Protasis) is in:

- the indicative and is introduced with **má, mura(r)**.
after **má** the future tense never follows, instead the (habit.) present tense

Positive clause: (If...)

present tense :	Má + verb + subject + object	Má fheiceann tú an fear = If you see the man
preterite:	Má + verb + subject + object	Má d'ól tú fuisce = If you drank whiskey

Má requires lenition. The independent verb form is used (i.e. in the preterite one needs the d'-prefix).

Negative clause: (If not...)

present tense:	Mura + verb + subject + object	Mura bhfeiceann tú an fear = If you don't see the man
preterite:	Murar + verb + subject + object	Murar ól tú fuisce = If you didn't drink whiskey

mura requires eclipsis and the dependent verb form.

murar requires lenition

After **mura** one can also use the subjunctive present tense (in the future sense).

regional also: **mara, marar** or **muna, munar**

The unreal conditional clauses use the *same* conjunction (*mura*), but then either the subjunctive preterite or conditional and not the indicative. *Murar* appears only in real conditional clauses.

the unreal conditional clause (an clásal coinníollach iata)

use:

The unreal conditional clause is used, when:

- the condition is not attainable
- it is sure, that the condition will not/could not be fulfilled
- there is a reasonable doubt about the attainability of the condition.
- in indirect speech, the real conditional clause (if in the future tense) is converted into an unreal conditional clause.

The main clause (Apodosis) is **always** in the:

- conditional

The subordinating clause (Protasis) is:

- either in the conditional or in the subjunctive preterite and is introduced by **dá, mura**.

Positive clause: ("if/then... ")

conditional	Dá + verb + subject + object	Dá bhfeicfeá an fear = If you would see the man
subjunctive-preterite	Dá + verb + subject + object	Dá bhfeicteá an fear = If you would have seen the man

- **Dá** requires eclipsis and the dependent verb form.
- The *subjunctive preterite* has the identical form as the *imperfect*.
- Dá-clauses with the subjunctive preterite (rather old fashioned) and the conditional are *lexically equivalent*
- Irreal conditional clauses are indifferent in tense ("If you would see the man / had seen the man ")

regional (Connacht) instead of dá also: **dhá**

Negative clause: ("if/then not ... ")

conditional	Mura + verb + subject + object	Mura bhfeicfeá an fear = If you wouldn't see the man
subjunctive preterite	Mura + verb + subject + object	Mura bheicteá an fear = If you hadn't seen the man,

- **mura** requires eclipsis.
- mura with the *subjunctive* is generally seen as archaic, but was probably the *original* form
- in place of the *subjunctive preterite* one can take the *conditional* (the most common form today)

regional instead of mura also: **mara, muna**

The real conditional clauses use the same conjunction (*mura*), but after that, then not the subjunctive/conditional but the indicative (present tense etc.) or *murar* with the indicative preterite.

complex conditional clauses (clásail choinníollacha iolracha)

If more than one condition is to be fulfilled (real or irreal), then:

- only the first condition contains **má, dá, mura** with a finite verb form (see above)
- further conditions are conjoined with **agus** and stand as infinitive constructions with the verbal noun

e.g.: *Ní chreidfinn an scéal sin mura bhfeicfinn an fear agus é a chloisteáil*
 = I wouldn't have believed the story, if I didn't see the man and had heard him

Caibidil a Trí Déag: Sentences and Syntax (Abairt agus Comhréir)

The Relative Clause (an clásal coibhneasta)

[Direct](#) relative clauses

[Indirect](#) relative clauses

[Generalizing relative pronoun](#)

Relative clauses are subordinate clauses, which refer back to a word (antecedent) in the primary clause. In Irish, they are introduced by a [relative particle](#), more rarely by a relative pronoun. The relative particle is usually *not* a pronoun. It links only an antecedent and a relative clause (thus it is a conjunction.)

In Irish, there is a distinction between *direct* and *indirect* relative clauses. In direct relative clauses, the antecedent is a *direct* subject or object. In indirect relative clauses, there usually appears a further pronoun which has the function of an object, and which itself refers back to the antecedent.

For syntactic reasons, relative clauses are used by far more frequently than in English.

The direct relative clause (an clásal coibhneasta díreach)

antecedent + **a** + **verb** + **subject** and/or **object**

form: One uses the [direct relative particle](#) (*mír chobhneasta dhíreach*)

- affirmative clause: *present et al.*: **a** ([Lenition](#)), *past*: **a** ([Lenition](#))
- negative clause: *present et al.*: **nach** ([eclipsis](#)), *Past*: **nár** ([>Lenition](#)) (in Munster **ná** instead of *nach*)

Characteristics:

- In both the present and future special [relative forms](#) of the verb are used (with s-endings: Present: -(e)a(nn)s, Future: -f(e)as or. -ós)
e.g.: bionn > a bhíos (also a bhíonn), beidh > a bheas, feiceann > a fheiceas (also a fheiceanns), feicfidh > a fheicfeas, éireoidh > a éireos
These relative forms are widely common, but not part of the standard.
- An exception is **tá**, which is always “merged” with a to form **atá**. Likewise **adeir**, **adúirt**, which are mostly written today as *a deir*, *a dúirt* = (says, said).

Uses:

- as an **attributive subordinate clause** referring to an antecedent. The antecedent is the **subject** or **direct object** of the relative clause.
e.g.: *an fear a rinne sin* = *the man who did that*; *an rud a rinne sé* = *the thing that he did*
position of the relative clause:
 - attributive relative clauses mostly stand directly after their antecedents, in the sentence structure the antecedent and the relative clause often move to a place that allows for this, usually at the end of the sentence:
e.g.: *Tháinig isteach i dteach tábhairne an fear a bhí ina chónai sa Spidéal* = *Into the pub came the man who lived in Spiddal*.
 - or at the beginning of the sentence, if it is the subject (with a pronoun in its place after the verb)
e.g.: *An fear a bhí ina chónai i Spidéal, tháinig sé isteach i dteach tábhairne* = *The man who lived in Spiddal came into the pub*
 - also, the relative clause can be separated from the antecedent:
e.g.: *Tháinig an fear isteach i dteach tábhairne a bhí ina chónai i Spidéal* = *The man came into the pub, the one who lived in Spiddal*
- relative clauses that refer to an entire sentence or sentence subset begin with **rud a** (in English “which”):
e.g.: *Dúirt sé liom an leabhar a cheannach, rud a rinne mé* = *He told me to buy the book, which I did*.
- to **get around the PSO word order**, sentence elements can be fronted, and the rest of the sentence follows as a direct relative construction (as a **gap clause**, see [emphatic sentence position](#)). In this case there is no proper relative clause: the relative clause serves here only syntactic functions (the so-called independent relative clause, clásal coibhneasta leithleach)
e.g. *Is ag léamh a bhí mé* = *I was reading*. lit.: “It-is at reading that was I”. [The emphasis would largely be conveyed in English by a stronger intonation on “reading.”]
- after **question words** (**cé**, **cad**, **ceard**, **conas**, etc.) a direct relative clause always follows. e.g.: *Cé a bhí ann?* = *Wer war da?*
(if **cé**, **cad** are linked with prepositions (**cé air**, **cad chuige**, etc), an *indirect* relative clause follows! Likewise after **cén fáth**, **cén chaoi** and a few others.)
- after **an té** (the one), **cibé**, **pé** (whoever)
e.g.: *an té a chonaic sin* = *the one who saw that*; *cibé ar bith a chonaic sin* = *whoever saw that*
- after the **conjunctions** **nuair**, **mar**
e.g.: *nuair a bhí mé anseo* = *when I was here*; *mar a bhí sí* = *as she was*
- together with **chomh** (+ adjective) et al. with **agus** (in the sense of “As....as”):
e.g.: *chomh luath agus a bhí sé ann* = *as soon as he was therer*; *an oiread agus a fuair sé* = *as much as he got*
- after the **abstract noun of degree** (see there) e.g. *dá fheabhas a rinne sé é* = *as well as he did it*.

Characteristics of the syntax:

If a sentence with a **go/nach subordinate clause** is converted into a direct relative clause, the go/nach subordinate clause is **also** converted into a direct relative clause. The previous primary clause is converted into a **module clause** (*clásal idiraisnéiseach*) as in our example “whom I think.” It

usually involves a verb of saying or thinking.

normal: Sílim **go bhfuil** an fear sásta I think (**that**) the man **is** happy

direct relative: Feicim an fear **a** shílim **atá** sásta. I see the man **whom** I think **is** happy.

The indirect relative clause (an clásal coibhneasta indíreach)

form: The indirect relative particle (*mír choibhneasta indíreach*) is used

- positive: *Present et al.*: **a** (**Eclipsis**), *Past:ar* (**Lenition**) (in Munster **go/gur** in stread of *a/ar*)
- negative: *Present et al.*: **nach** (**Eclipsis**), *Past: nár* (**Lenition**) (in Munster **ná** instead of *nach*)

Use: The indirect relative clause is either

- prepositional (e.g. Eng. *on which*),
- genitive (e.g. Eng *whose*)
- adverbial (Eng. *when, where, how*),
- used with a back-referencing prepositional pronoun as an accusative object.

A **back-referencing pronoun (forainm iartheachtach)** appears both in prepositional use (mostly as a prepositional pronoun) and in genitive use (as a possessive pronoun). It can also appear as a prepositional pronoun in the form of an accusative object (without this pronoun a direct relative clause is necessary)

This back-referencing pronoun represents the antecedent (réamhtheachtaí) as an object. The antecedent is only more *indirectly* the object of the sentence (represented by the pronoun). In the *direct* relative clause however, the antecedent is always the *direct* object or the subject of the sentence.

I. prepositional use (on which.... / in which... / etc.)

1. Preposition with personal pronoun at the end of the clause

Present.et al. antecedent + **a** + **verb** + **subject** + **preposition** + **pronoun** an bord a bhfuil an forc air = the table that the fork is on.

Past: antecedent + **ar** + **verb** + **subject** + **preposition** + **pronoun** an bord ar luigh an forc air = the table that the fork lay on.

The personal pronoun is here the back-referencing pronoun.

Combinations of prepositions and personal pronouns are the most common occurrences. ([Prepositional Pronouns](#)).

2. Preposition before the relative pronoun

Present.et al. antecedent + **preposition** + **a** + **verb** + **subject** an bord ar a bhfuil an forc = the table on which the fork is.

Past: antecedent + **preposition** + **ar** + **verb** + **subject** an bord ar ar luigh an forc = the table on which the fork lay

A preposition can introduce the relative clause. [Learners of English who remember being scolded not end sentences with prepositions will recognize this as the “proper” or “formal” form in English. In Irish, like in English, the previous form, with the preposition at the end, is more common and more natural in living speech – *DN*]

This variant is only encountered with a few prepositions (*ar, as, do, i, le*) and it is only possible in *affirmative* sentences, not in *negative* ones: e.g.:

An bord ar a bhfuil an forc = the table on which the fork is (affirmative) *but*:
An bord nach bhfuil an forc air. = the table that the fork is not on (negative)

In this case the relative particle is a genuine relative pronoun, the so-called **back-referencing relative pronoun (forainm coibhneasta iartheachtach)**.

The back-referencing relative pronoun requires certain *combinations* of the prepositions and the relative pronoun *a / ar*. Of these, the most frequently appearing forms are *lena(r), dá(r), ina(r)*

II. genitive use (whose...)

Present et al. antecedent + **a** + **verb** + **poss. pron.** + **subject** + **object** an fear a bhfuil a mhac sásta = the man whose son is happy

Past antecedent + **ar** + **verb** + **poss. pron.** + **subject** + **object** an fear a raibh a mhac sásta = the man whose son was happy

Here the possessive pronoun is the back-referencing pronoun. It must refer back to the antecedent of the relative clause. [1]

III. adverbial use

Present. et al. antecedent + **a** + **verb** + **subject** + **object**

Past: antecedent + **ar** + **verb** + **subject** + **object**

Place	an áit a bhfuil mé sásta = the place where I was happy
Time	an t-am a dtiocfaidh mé anseo = the time that I will come here
Reason	an fáth a mbeidh mé anseo = the reason that I will be here
Place	an áit ar ól mé fuisce = the place where I drank whiskey
Time	an t-am ar tháinig mé anseo = the time that I came here
Reason	an fáth ar ól mé fuisce = the reason that I drank whiskey

The **antecedent** must be a general term of **time** / **place** / **reason** / **and way**. A direct relative clause is equally possible here.
e.g.: *áit* = place, *slí* = way, *caoi* = manner, *dóigh*, *fáth* = reason, *am* = time, *lá* = day, *oíche* = night, etc. (*uair* however is not usual)
The antecedent can also occur in questions, e.g.: *cén chaoi*, *cén fáth* (*Cén chaoi a bhfuil tú?* = How are you?)

These uses are called **adverbial**, since the relative particle here replaces the relative adverbs *when*, *where*, *who*, *how*, etc.
In **English** this is very common:

e.g.: *an áit a bhfuil mé sásta* = the place where I'm satisfied
an fáth a bhfuil mé sásta = the reason why I'm satisfied
an t-am a bhfuil mé sásta = the time when I'm satisfied
an tslí ar fhoghlaim mé Gaeilge = the way how I learned Irish

In principle, this adverbial relationship can be converted into a prepositional relationship (the place in which, the time at which, etc.). This means that a back-referencing pronoun would be conceivable.

(e.g. *an áit a bhfuil mé ann* / *an áit ina bhfuil mé* = the place that I am in).

Actually, the indirect relative pronoun with the preposition “*i*” **ina** = *in which* was reduced in the course of time to the modern **a**.
In earlier times, **i** (in the sense of “in which,” as an abbreviation of *ina*) was written here.
(*an áit ina bhfuil mé* > *an áit i bhfuil mé*. today: *an áit a bhfuil mé*).

IV. use with a back-referencing personal pronoun as accusative object.

Principally, when the antecedent is an accusative object, a direct relative clause is used.

However, direct relative clauses like “*An fear a bhualil mé*” are **ambiguous**.

There is no way to distinguish whether the antecedent is the subject (“*the man who hit me*”) or the object (“*the man whom I hit*”).

In the latter case, an **unambiguous** sentence structure with the *indirect* relative particle is possible.

Present et al.: antecedent + **a** + **verb** + **subject** + **é/i/iad** *an fear a mbuailfidh mé é* = the man whom I hit
Past: antecedent + **ar** + **verb** + **subject** + **é/i/iad** *an fear ar bhualil mé é* = the man whom I hit

The back-referencing pronoun (usually **é**, **i**, **iad**) is important.
Without it, a direct relative clause would be necessary.

Special properties of the indirect relative clause

A **go/nach-subordinating clause** may be converted into an indirect relative clause if one turns the main clause into a relative clause, similarly to direct relative clauses. A prerequisite for this is a potential back-referencing pronoun, or the creation of such (in the example below: *air* = upon it). The main clause becomes an **inserted clause** (*clásal idíraisnéiseach*), in the example: “of which I thought”.

According to the *Bráithre Críostaí*, the inserted clause is a direct relative clause: “*a shil mé*”

According to *Ó Siadhail* it is an indirect relative clause: “*ar shil mé*”

normal: Shil mé **go raibh** an forc ar an mbord.
(in)dir. relative: An bhfuil an forc ar an mbord **a(r)** shil mé **a raibh** sé
air?

I thought **that** the fork **was** on the table.

Is the fork on the table **of which** I thought, **that** it upon it **was**?

The conversion of the go/nach-subordinating clause is not required. Also sentences like this are possible:

*An bhfuil an forc ar an mbord **ar** shil mé **go** raibh sé air? = Is the fork in the table, of which I thought, that it was on?*

The indirect relative clause (*ar shil mé ...*) is comprised here as well of the prepositional pronoun *air*, referring back to *bord*, so it is a back-referencing pronoun.

Hence, three possibilities come about of this sentence:

*An bhfuil an forc ar an mbord **a** shil mé **a** raibh sé air? (dir. + indir. relative clause)*

*An bhfuil an forc ar an mbord **ar** shil mé **a** raibh sé air? (indir. + indir. relative clause)*

*An bhfuil an forc ar an mbord **ar** shil mé **go** raibh sé air? (indir. relative clause + go-subordinating clause)*

The **indirect neg. relative clause** identical in form to the *direct neg. relative clause (as well nach/nár)*, with the exception of a naturally occurring back-referencing pronouns (in the examples in **bold**)

A preposition is not possible as the introducer of the relative clause.

an bord **nach** luíonn forc ar bith **air** = the table upon which no fork lies

Present, et al. antecedent + **nach** + **verb** + etc. an fear **nach** bhfuil **a** mhac sásta = the man whose son is not happy

an t-am **nach** mbeidh mé ansin = the time which I will not be there

an fear **nach** mbuaileann mé é = the man whom I do not hit

an bord **nár** luigh forc ar bith **air** = the table upon which no fork lay

Past: antecedent + **nár** + **verb** + etc. an bhean **nár** tháinig **a** mac = the woman whose son didn't come

an t-am **nár** tháinig mé ansin = the time in which I did not come there

an fear **nár** bhuaile mé é = the man whom I didn't hit

Clauses with the generalising relative pronoun **a**

Present, et al. **a** + **verb** + **subject / object** Sin **a** bhfuil anseo = That is all there is

Past **ar** + **verb** + **subject / object** Sin **ar** tháinig anseo = That's all that came

In this instance, **a / ar** means: "everything which" or "all that"

even this **a** requires **eclipsis**, **ar** lenites! This **generalising relative pronoun** (*forainm coibhneasta réamhtheachtach*) looks the same as the indirect relative particle, but the antecedent is missing!

The missing antecedent (*réamhtheachtai*) is expressed by the relative pronoun itself.

Hence the term "réamhtheachtach"

It can be the object (*sin a bhfaca mé = that's all that I saw*), as well as the subject (*sin a bhfuil anseo = that's all that's here*) of the relative clause. *Sin a bhfuil* is short and sweet for: *That's all*.

possible further modification using de (= everything which is..)

Present, et al. **a** + **verb** + **de** + **noun** Féiceann tú **a** bhfuil **d'fhir** ann = You see all of the men which are there.

Past **ar** + **verb** + **de** + **noun** Chonaic tú **a** raibh **de** mhná ann = You saw all of the women which were there.

With the help of the preposition **de** (= **of**) one can closer modify what is meant by "all".

emphasis of a selection with dá (= of all that which)

Present (u.a.) **noun** + **dá** + **verb** + **object** Féiceann tú fear **dá** bhfuil ann = You see one man of all which are there

Past **noun** + **dár** + **verb** + **object** An leabhar is fearr **dár** scríobh sé = The best book of all which he wrote

This **dá** is a combination of **de** (= **of**) and the general relative pronoun **a** (all that).

use of the form dá:

- often with **superlatives**

e.g.: *An fear is airde dá bhfaca mé riamh = the biggest man that I have ever seen.* (lit.: "...of-all, that saw I ever")

after **gach** + **noun** and similar expressions:

e.g.: *gach ní dá mb'fheídír = everything within possibility* (lit.: "every thing of-all, that are possible")

after timepoints-/locations, also in a rather adverbial sense:

e.g.: *gach uair dá raibh mé ann = everytime I was there* (lit.: "every time of-all, that was I in-it")

gach áit dá mbím = everywhere I am (lit.: "[at] every place of-all, [at] which I am")

after **iomlán** = **everything** and other expressions:

e.g.: *Iomlán dá bhfaca mé riamh = All I ever saw* (lit.: "all of all, that saw I ever")

- after **dá** + **abstract noun**:

e.g.: *dá óige dá bhfuil sé = however young he is* (lit.: "of-his youth, of-all that is he")

negation of a = all with an méid

an méid nach + verb **an méid nach** bhfuil ann = Everything that isn't there (lit.: "the amount, that isn't there")

nach is here a normal relative particle and not a pronoun, which is replaced by *an méid*. The whole clause is a normal direct relative clause.

negation of a = everything with diabhal (= devil)

diabhal a + verb **diabhal a** bhfuil ann = Nothing is there (lit.: "devil all that there is ")

a is again the generalising relative pronoun, which is negated by **diabhal**.

diabhal a means then *nothing*.

With *ach* an *only*-clause is created: *Diabhal a bhfuil ann ach leabhartha* = *Only books are there*.



[1] The genitive use comes from the prepositional use (selectively, the prepositions ag, i, do)
 an fear **ag a** bhfuil a mhac ann = the man whose son is there
 an fear **ina** bhfuil a mhac ann = the man whose son is there
 an fear **dá** bhfuil a mhac ann = the man whose son is there
 (ag a > 'ga > gha > a, ina > 'na > a, dá > dhá > a)
 ag a > 'ga > go - also the reason why in Munster, one uses go instead of a

Caibidil a Trí Déag: Sentences and Syntax (Abairt agus Comhréir)

Emphasis (tréisiú)

with the help of the copula

cleft construction: subject, object, other sentence members

cleft construction: verb via verbal noun and déan

cleft construction: with comparatives

pseudo-cleft construction: verb, go/nach-subordinating clause, object, as an interrog. clause

cleft- and pseudo-cleft construction in the copular clause itself

without the help of the copula

complex subject, object, predicate in the classificatory clause

change in the sentence word order through stress (tréisiú)

The syntax in Irish is quite rigid (PSO or. VSO, see [word order](#)). Althought, this is often skirted with the following changes inf the word order. This actually does not only happen for a special emphasis (tréisiú) or reinforcement (néartú), but also to bring variety in speech/writing and is therefore common.

with the help of the copula (cleft- and pseudo-cleft construction)

The emphasis using a copular construction is the most common variety of changing the word order in Irish.

There are two basic variations, which actually - although rare - also exist in German:

the cleft construction (an abairt scoilte)

The part of the sentence to be emphasised is split off the sentence "cleft" and appears as the predicate of the copula in a copular clause. The rest of the sentence follows then as a relative clause. In German and Irish, both have a similar form.

e.g.: Is teach a thógann sé = It is a house, that he builds (instead of: Tógann sé teach = He builds a house)

the pseudo-cleft construction (an abairt bhréagscoilte)

This acts as the construction similar to e.g. "What he's building, is a house".

In this case, the part being emphasised appears at the end of the sentence, but is represented at the beginning of the sentence with a pronoun (above e.g. "what", Irish "séard").

After the pronoun, follows a relative clause in Irish (different to the German).

e.g.: Séard a thógann sé ná teach = What he builds, is a house

In German, as opposed to Irish, cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions are a rather rare occurrence of rearranged clause elements. Much more common are freestyle rearrangements of the word order. This is not possible in Irish and therefore cleft- and pseudo-cleft constructs must take the place of that.

the cleft construction to emphasise the subject, object, verbal noun and other construction elements

- This is the most common form of emphasis. It can be used for all clause elements (except for verbs and subordinating clauses)
- The element to be emphasised moves to the beginning of the sentence in the form of a *copular construction* (most simply as *is* + word/phrase), which means it becomes the predicate of a copular clause.
The rest of the sentence follows as a direct relative clause. Wherby here, it's not always an apparent logical and understandable direct relative relationship between the antecedent and the relative clause (for example by adverbs as the antecedent).
Moreover, the relative clause is independent and functions quasi as the subject of the new copular clause. This is why it is also called *independent relative clause (an clasál coibhneasta leithleach)*.
- In place of *is* any other copula form (interrogative, negative, relative etc) is possible, depending on the situation (*ní*, *an*, *nach*, etc.)
- preterite forms (*ba*, *níor*, *ar*, *nar*, etc.) are to be avoided. In their place, present tense forms are used.
- The copular form *is* can often be omitted, but other forms of the copula cannot. Preceding indefinite nouns, it is mostly omitted.
- Preceding *definite* nouns, as always by the copula, comes the corresponding pronoun *é/i/iad* as a subpredicate.
If *is* is omitted, then one no longer needs this pronoun (e.g. Is é an fear a ... or An fear a ...)

example:

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal syntax:	verb + subject + object	Féiceann tu an fear	You see the man	see you the man
emphasised subject	(Is +) subject + a + verb + object	(Is) <u>tusa</u> a fhéiceann an fear	You see the man	Are <u>you</u> [it], that sees the man
emphasised dir. object	(Is +) object + a + verb + subject	(Is é) <u>an fear</u> a fhéiceann tú	The man you see.	[It] is <u>the man</u> , that you see
emphasised indir. object	(Is +) prep. + object + a + verb + subject	(Is) <u>don</u> <u>fhearr</u> a thugann tú é	The man you give it to.	[It] is <u>to-the man</u> , whom you give it
emphasised Adverb	(Is +) Adverb + a + verb + subject	(Is) <u>abhaile</u> a théann an fear	Home goes the man	[It] is <u>home</u> , [where] the man goes

- with adverbs and indirect objects (with a preposition), but also an indefinite direct objecten, instead of *is* also *is ea* (comes afterwards) is used:
(i.e.: In the copular clause, there is another shift in the form of a left shift of the predicate instead)
e.g.: Abhaile **is ea** a théann an fear = Home is where the man goes.
- By subjects and definite direct objects, *é/i/iad* may also follow *is*, which is much less commonplace.
e.g. An fear **is é a** fhéiceann tú = The man it is, that you see
- supplementary queries (with interrogative particle) always demonstrate a cleft construction, whereby copula and interrogative mostly fuse into one word.
(e.g.: *cé* = who-is[-it]):
e.g.: Cé a rinne é? = Who did it? (lit.: "Who-is[-it], that did it?")

In sentences of the progressive:

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal syntax	verb + subject + ag + VN + object	Tá mé ag scríobh an leabhair	I am writing the book	am I at writing of the bo
emphasised subject	(Is +) subject + a + verb + ag + VN + object	(Is) <u>mise</u> atá ag scriobh an leabhair	I am writing the book	am I [it], that-is at writi

Emphasis and Shifting

emphasised verbal noun	(Is +) ag + VN + a + verb + subject + object	(Is) ag scriobh atá mé an leabhar	Writing the book I am	is [it] at writing, that-am
emphasised object	(Is +) object + a + verb + subject + a + VN	(Is é) an leabhar atá mé a scriobh	The book it is, that I am writing	is it the book, that-am I

If the verbal noun and object are split through the shift of the clause element, then the object is in the nominative/accusative and no longer in the genitive (2nd and 3rd example of the table)

If the **object** is pulled in front of the verbal noun in sentences in the progressive, then **a** (lenition!) takes the place instead of **ag** preceding the verbal noun (3rd example in the table)!

A theoretically plausible *indirect relative clause* like *Is scriobh a bhfuil mé an leabhar aige is not possible, **ag** and verbal noun are not split.

the cleft construction to emphasise the verb using the verbal noun and déan

A verb cannot be emphasised in a cleft construction like those above, because it already stands at the beginning of a normal sentence. One can however place the verbal noun of the verb at the beginning, and following that, a relative clause with a form of the verb **déan** (= do) (similar as the poor German: *Laufen tust du*)

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal syntax	verb + subject + object	Chonaic tu an fear	You saw the man	Saw you the man
emphasised verb:	verbal noun + a + déan + subject + object	Féiceáil a rinne tú an fear	Seen the man you have	Seeing did you the man

This cleft construction is basically a sentence form with **déan** = *do* as an auxiliary verb like:

Rinne tú an fear a fheiceáil = *You did see the man*. (lit.: "did you the man to see").

In this form, it is used most often with rare verbs, to avoid their inflexion.

the cleft construction with comparative adjectives

comparatives (graduated adjectives) are often avoided within a relative clause, because they themselves act as relative clauses (with *níos* or *is*).

Instead, the comparative appears as a copular construction (i.e. with *is*, *ba*) preceding the relative clause.

This form is used with attributive, predicative and adverbial uses of the comparative (also in the superlative meaning).

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal sentence	verb + subject (etc.) + níos / is + comparative	Bíonn na laethanta níos fuaire sa gheimhreadh	The days are cooler in the Winter	are the days thin
w/ relative clause	is + comparative + a + verb + subject (etc.)	Sa gheimhreadh is fuaire a bhíonn na laethanta	In the Winter, the days are cooler	In the Winter is

This applies not only to sentences with a special emphasis of one part of the sentence, but also in other occasions where a relative clause is needed.

This form also doesn't really serve to specially emphasise the comparative.

On the practical side, the resulting construction always forms a cleft construction (*is* + comparative + relative clause).

This form is, of course, not to be used if the relative clause should only serve to highlight the comparative:

e.g.: *an fear a bhí níos sine ná mise* = *the man who was older than me*

the pseudo-cleft construction to emphasise the verb

An emphasis of the verb as in the above patterns (i.e. as the cleft construction) is only possible in the form of the verbal noun.

The verb, or the action clause, can also be emphasised, by placing certain expressions in front of it that point to the fact that the action is in the spotlight of interest.

Such expressions as: "*Is é an chaoi*" = "*the way it is*" or "*is é an rud*" = "*the thing is*", "*is amhlaidh*" = "*so it is*" or "*is ea*" = "*it is*"

This is grammatically a "pseudo-cleft construct".

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal syntax	verb + subject + object	Bhualt tu an fear	You hit the man	hit you the man
emphasised verb:	Is é an chaoi + a/ar + verb + subject + object	Is é an chaoi ar bhualt tú an fear	What you did was hit the man	is it the way, that hit you the man
	Is é an rud + a + verb + subject + object	Is é an rud a bhualt tú an fear		is it the thing, that hit you the man
	Is amhlaidh + a + verb + subject + object	Is amhlaidh a bhualt tú an fear		is [it] so, REL hit you the man
	Is ea + a + verb + subject + object	Is ea a bhualt tú an fear		is it, REL hit you the man

"*Is a an chaoi*" requires an indirect relative clause (comp. *adverbial* *indir. relative clause*), hence the *eclipsis* after *a* or *lenition* after *ar* in the preterite (hence *ar bhualt* in the above example instead of *a bhualt* in the other examples)

"*Is é an rud*" can be contracted to one word: **Séard** (*Séard a bhualt tú an fear*). "*Is ea*" becomes then "*Sea*"

the pseudo-cleft construction to emphasise a go/nach-subordinating clause

Such a subordinating clause can only be emphasised through the formation of a "pseudo-cleft construction", similar to the emphasis of verbs.

	structure	example	deutsch	lit.
normal syntax	verb + subject + go/nach ...	Dúirt sé go bhfaca sé an fear.	He said that he saw the man.	said he that
emphasised clause	Is é an rud + a + verb + subject + (ná) + go/nach ...	Séard a dúirt sé (ná) go bhfaca sé an fear.	What he said is that he saw the man.	is-it-the-thin

"*Is é an rud*" can be contracted to one word: **Séard**

Instead of "*séard*" one can use other expressions, e.g. *rud eile* = *something else / what's more*, etc.

e.g.: *Rud eile atá speisiúil faoin teach seo ná go raibh cónai air ann* = *Something else interesting about this house is that he had lived there*.

Similar to the go/nach-subordinating clause, an **infinitive construction** may be also be emphasised by a pseudo-cleft construction:

e.g.: **Séard** a dúirt sé leis ná **an fíar a bhaint** = *What he told him was is that he was to cut the grass*.

the pseudo-cleft construction to emphasise the object

An object can be emphasised using a cleft construction (see above), but also with a pseudo-cleft construction. The emphasis comes about when one moves the object to the *end* of the sentence.

This way of shifting emphasis is also possible for subjects, but less common and most likely restricted to interrogative clauses.

	structure	example	translation	lit.
normal syntax	verb + subject + object	Chonaic mé capall	I saw a horse	saw I a horse
emphasised object:	Is é an rud + a + verb + subject + ná + object	Séard a chonaic mé ná capall	What I saw, was a horse	is-it-the-thing, that saw I but a horse

"Is é an rud" can be contracted to one word: séard

Note the use of the conjunction **ná** (lit.: *but*): It's possibly comparable to: *You've seen nothing but a horse.*

the pseudo-cleft construction as an interrogative construction

Similar pseudo-cleft construction syntaxes may also be attained in (mostly rhetorical) questions.

Instead of "is é an rud (séard)" comes then words like **céard, cad, cé**.

Here, instead of **ná** often **ach**:

e.g.:

Céard eile a chonaic sí ansin ach capall? = What else did she see there but a horse?

Cad a dhéanfainn, mar sin, ach é a bhualadh? = What else should I have done but to hit him?

cleft- and pseudo-cleft construction in the copular construction itself

Cleft- and pseudo cleft constructs are formed using the copula, but also appear in various copular clauses themselves, see here: [emphasis in the copular clause](#).

without the help of the copula (so-called "left shift")

emphasis of the subject

If a subject is modified by an **expansion** (e.g. a relative clause or other adverbial construct) it becomes rather long and therefore clumsy in the normal PSO-sentence structure.

Therefore, it can move to the beginning of the sentence (i.e. shifted to the left. Hence the term **left shift**)

The actual main clause follows unchanged, the subject is represented there in its normal position by a reflexive pronoun, to ensure continuity of meaning.

In the German or English comparative clause such a pronoun is lacking, so below, the extra "he" is rather atypical.

e.g. (subject bold, expansion italicised):

normal:	Bhí an fear a chonaic mé ar an tsráid ag dul abhaile.	The man that I had seen on the street, went home.
shifted:	An fear a chonaic mé ar an tsráid, bhí sé ag dul abhaile.	The man, that I had seen on the street, (he) went home.

emphasis of the object

In *negative* clauses, one can often shift the object to the front. It shows a particularly strong emphasis (of the negation, not the object). It is one of the rare forms, in which one actually goes against the PSO syntax rule.

normal:	Ní bhfuair mé litir.	I didn't receive a letter.
shifted:	Litir ní bhfuair mé.	Not one letter did I receive.

In clauses in the **progressive**:

Here, the object can also be positioned at the beginning of *negative* clauses, it then is in the nominative/accusative. There is then **a** instead of **ag** preceding the verbal noun.

normal:	Ní raibh mé ag saothrú pingine.	I didn't earn a penny.
shifted:	Pingin ní raibh mé a saothrú.	Not one penny did I earn

emphasis of the predicate in the classificatory clause

The sentence form *Dochtúir is ea é* = *He is a doctor* is meant here

For more information, see: [emphasis in the copular clause](#)

Caibidil a Trí Déag

Syntax of the Verbal Noun (*Comhréir an Ainm Bhriathartha*)

Used as the Infinitive:

[the progressive](#)

without [object](#)

[with following object \(noun\)](#)

with [object \(pronoun\)](#)

with [object \(further verbal noun\)](#)

with [leading object](#)

[progressive tense in the relative clause](#)

[progressive tense with go/nach-subordinating clause](#)

[progressive tense in only-clauses](#)

[passivee-progressive tense](#)

[perfect tense-progressive tense](#)

[progressive tense of stative verbs](#)

[infinitive constructions](#)

with [/without object](#)

with [go/nach-subordinating clause](#)

with [subject](#)

[infinitive construction of a goal](#)

[intentional form](#)

[Expressions of synchronicity- / plusquam perfect, etc.](#)

[while](#)

[after](#)

[before](#)

[other uses of the dative of the agent](#)

[verbal noun as an attribute](#)

[further clauses with the verbal noun](#)

with [le](#), with [chun](#)

with [gan](#)

with [ar](#), with [tar éis](#)

with [agus, ach](#)

[with/after other prepositions](#)

[genitive in verbal noun constructions](#)

[genitive following genitive prepositions](#)

[genitive of a noun after the verbal noun](#)

[genitive of a noun preceding the verbal noun](#)

[genitive form of the verbal noun](#)

[Used as a Noun:](#)

[Usage als regular noun](#)

When using the Irish verbal noun, one must differentiate between the "infinitive" usage (like the German/English infinitive) and the "substantive" usage (the gerund).

Used as the Infinitive:

The Progressive (*an fhoirm leanúnach*)

The progressive tense describes actions that are currently taking place, just like the English "continuous"-forms. Colloquially, the present progressive tense is also used in place of the acutal *present* (the actual present appears colloquially only as *habitual present*, similar to English)

The Irish progressive tense is made with the auxilliary verb **bí** (= to be) and a preposition. The preposition is mostly **ag** (= at, on, but in certain cases also **do** = for or **a** = to).

With this respect, it is quite similar to colloquial German ("Ich bin beim Lesen, Ich bin am Lesen") =I am reading. The preposition **ag** differs in its pronunciation in the usage in the progressive tense ([@] preceding a consonant, [@g] preceding a vowel) from its other uses (otherwise [eg]).

Prepositions like **ag** and **do** require the *dative*. The verbal noun is also formally in the dative. Special dative forms are generally and especially with verbal nouns rather uncommon.

Other verbs in place of **bí**:

Instead of the verb **bí** (= to be), the verb in the progressive as a verb of *sense*, of *movement* or of *beginning/ending/continuation* is possible.(e.g. "I hear you coming" = Cloisim tú ag teacht, "The came a-running" = Tagann siad ag siúil, "I started drinking" = thosaigh mé ag ól)

In Ulster, often **adh/a dh'** preceding a vowel or **a'** preceding a consonant (with lenition) with other verbs than **bí** instead of **ag** is to be heard: **thosnaigh mé a dh'ól** =I began to drink

Tempus:

The verb **bí** may take on any tense. It is so that one can form a progressive tense present, preterite, future etc. To read more about the specifics of the meaning of the simple and habitual present of **bí** see [tenses: progressive tense](#).

progressive tense present: **Tá mé ag léamh** = I am reading (now),

progressive tense habit. present: **Bíonn mé ag léamh** = I read (normally),

progressive tense preterite: **Bhí mé ag léamh** = I read (just now),

progressive tense future: **Beidh mé ag léamh** = I will (soon) read, etc.

progressive tense without object

form of bí + subject + ag + VN

Tá mé ag léamh = I am reading ("am I at reading")

progressive tense with a *following* noun-object

A *following* direct object is mostly (see below) in the genitive.

form of bí + subject + ag + VN + genitive-object

Tá mé ag léamh an nuachtáin = I am reading the paper ("am I at reading the paper")

e.g.:

Tá tú ag feiceáil an fhir = You see the man (lit.: "you are at seeing the man")

Feicim an fear ag teacht = I see the man coming ("I see the man at coming")

Tagaim ag foghlaim Gearmáinise = I am coming to learn German ("I come at learning [of] German")

progressive tense with a *pronominal* object

This form doesn't resemble any German form.

- Here, the possessive pronoun is used (as always, when a pronoun takes the place of a genitive-object, possessive pronouns are the genitive forms of the personal pronoun)
- Instead of ag , do

form of bí + subject + do + possessive pronoun + VN

Tá tú do mo bhualadh = You are hitting me ("are you to my hitting")

But: instead of (do + a) one uses **á not dá** (the regular combination of do + a)

e.g.:

Tá tú **do** **mo** bhualadh = You are hitting **me**.

Tá mé **do** **do** bhualadh = I am hitting **you**.

Tá tú **á** bhualadh = You are hitting **him**.

Tá tú **á** bualadh = You are hitting **her**.

Tá tú **dár** mbualadh = You are hitting **us**.

Tá mé **do** **bhur** mbualadh = I am hitting **you**(pl).

Tá tú **á** mbualadh = You are hitting **them** (pl).

Orally, other forms are possible (not with *do* but also here with *ag* or without a preposition)

If the possessive pronoun refers to the subject, one speaks of the passive-progressive tense.

e.g. Tá an teach **á** thóigeáil = The house is being built. (lit.: "is the house at-his building")

These clauses are often double entendres and only discernable in context:

Tá sé á dhíol = He sells it (active, sé not the same as á) *or*

Tá sé á dhíol = It is being sold(passive, sé = á)

If the possessive pronoun refers to the subject but the **reflexive pronoun féin** is present, one speaks of the reflexive progressive tense

Tá sí **á** bualadh **féin** = She's hitting herself. (lit.: "is she at-her hitting self")

This form is also used with the **demonstrative pronoun (seo, sin, siúd)**, which then appears in addition to the possessive pronoun.

Depending on what the demonstrativum refers to, á lenites or doesn't, or requires eclipsis.

e.g.: Tá tú **á** ndéanamh **seo** = You are doing these (= these things: plural, so eclipsis follows á). (lit.: "are you to-their doing these")

Tá tú **á** dhéanamh **seo** = You are doing this (this one thing: singular masc., so lenition follows á)

reflexive progressive tense (foirm leanúnach athfhillteach)

To make a statement like "He's hitting himself" , one needs besides the antecedent possessive pronoun also the reflexive pronoun (forainm athfhillteach) **féin** = self.

Tá sé á bhualadh **féin** = He's hitting **himself**.

Tá mé **do mo** bhualadh **féin** = I'm hitting **myself**.

Tá siad á mbualadh **féin** = They're hitting **themselves**.

progressive tense with a further verbal noun as the object

The second verbal noun is **not**, as perhaps feared, in the genitive, (wrong would be e.g.: *Tá mé ag iarradh fhiabraithe = *"I am at the attempt to ask") **Instead** (as in German) an "infinitive with to " (see below) is added.

form of bí + subject + ag + VN + a + VN

Tá mé ag iarraidh a fhiabraí. = I am trying to ask

progressive tense, if an object is preceding

To stress the object, the direct object can precede the clause. Then, it precedes the verbal noun, is separated from it and is no longer in the genitive but in the nominative/accusative

Instead of the preposition **ag** then always **a** (with lenition!).

For this, the following *possibilités*:

1. The rest of the clause follows unchanged (so **not** in the form of a relative clause). This is possible with negativeen clauses.

object + form of bí + subject + a + VN

Pingin ní raibh mé a shaorú = Not a penny I've earned

2. in a relative clause.(copula + object preceding as the antecedent)

Is + object (antecedent) + a + relative form of bí + subject + a + VN

(Is é) an obair atá Pól a dhéanamh = The work is done by Paul.

progressive tense in the relative clause

1. direct object as the antecedent

Instead of **ag** , **a** is used with lenition des VN.

This entspricht the aforementioned form for emphasis of the object, relative clauses can become necessary without a special choice of emphasis, this is always the case in interrogative clauses.

object (antecedent) + a + relative form of bí + subject + a + VN

Is maith liom an obair atá an fear a dhéanamh. = I like the work, that the man does.

Cad atá tú a dhéanamh? = What are you doing (right now)?

2. subject or other terms as the antecedent

In this case the construction does not change, it remains **ag** standing.

subject (antecedent) + a + relative form of bí + ag + VN + genitive-object

Nach maith an fear atá ag déanamh na hoibre? = Is the man not good, that does the work?

Cé atá ag damhsa ansin? = Who is dancing there?

progressive tense with a go/nach-subordinating clause

Within such a subordinating clause, there are no specifics to the usage of the progressive tense (*go bhfuil sé ag déanamh na hoibre* = *that he is doing the work*).

By using a go/nach-subordinating clause as the *object* of the progressive tense *in the main clause* one must note the following:

In Munster, there comes a combination into play of do/ag with the possessive pronoun a (= his), also **á** (ag/do + a) instead of *ag*, similar to the progressive tense with a pronominal object . (á is a proleptic pronoun, that shifts the subordinating clause)

Outside of Munster one just uses *ag* without such a pronoun.

Munster: **form of bí + subject + á + VN + go...**

Tá mé á rá go bhfuil tú sásta = I say, that you are satisfied. (lit.: "Am I *at seinem* saying, that ...")

Connacht/Ulster: **form of bí + subject + ag + VN + go...**

Tá mé ag rá go bhfuil tú sásta = I say, that you are satisfied. (lit.: "Am I *at* saying, that ...")

progressive tense, in "only"-clauses (foirm leanúnach leathdhiúltach)

In Irish, there is no one word **only** like in German or English.

Instead, the clause is negated and ach (= but) is added to the part of the clause, that is meant ("only me", "only in the paper" etc.). This is why one calls such a clause a "seminegated clause" (irish "leathdhiúltach")

When then the *object* comes after ach (disjoined from the verbal noun) one uses **a** instead of **ag**. The object is then not in the genitive but in the nominative/accusative.

neg. form of bí + subject + a + VN + ach + object

Nil mé a léamh ach an nuachtán = I'm only reading the paper (right now) ("not-I am at reading but the paper")

progressive tense passive (foirm leanúnach chéasta)

This form looks the same as the progressive tense with a pronominal object, **but** here the possessive pronoun is **always referring to the subject**.

form of bí + subject + do + possessive pronoun + VN

Tá an teach á thóigeáil = The house wird gerade gebaut ("is the house *at his* building")

These clauses are often double entendres:

Tá sé á dhíol = He's selling it (active) *or* It's for sale (passive)

An agent may be added with **ag** (making the passive clear)

Tá an teach á thóigeáil agam = The house is being built *by me*.

Here, the subject can even lead (similar to *leading object* see above)

Pingin ní raibh á shaorú agam = Not a penny was earned *by me*.

Nach deas an teach atá á thóigeáil agam? = Isn't the house nice, that is being built *by me*?

progressive perfect tense (foirm leanúnach fhoirfe)

Instead of **tar éis** also **d'éis** or **i ndiaidh**

form of bí + subject + tar éis + bheith + ag + VN + genitive-object

Tá mé tar éis bheith ag léamh an nuachtáin = I just read the paper ("am I after being at reading the paper")

Also similar is the construction of a perfect tense without the progressive tense (then without *bheith ag*, the verbal noun forms then an infinitive construction, see there)

progressive tense of state-of-being verbs

Some verbs do not use the form with **ag** but instead the preposition **i** (= in) with the possessive pronoun. The possessive pronoun refers to the subject.

form of bí + subject + i + possessive pronoun + VN

Tá mé i mo chónaí i mBéal Feirste = I live in Belfast. ("am I in my living in Belfast")

These verbs do not describe active actions but a *state of being*, in which one finds oneself.

These are the following verbal nouns:

- **seasamh** = standing

Tá mé i mo sheasamh = I am standing.

- **suí** = sitting

Tá tú i do shuí = You are sitting.

- **luí** = lying (down)

Tá sé ina luí = He is lying.

- **rith** = running
Tá sí ina rith = *She's running*. (also "running" is considered a state of being)
- **cónaí** = living (somewhere)
Táimid inár gcónaí i mBaile Átha Cliath = *We live in Dublin*.
- **codladh** = sleeping
Tá sibh in bhur gcodladh = *You're sleeping*.
- **dúiseacht** = is awake
Tá siad ina ndúiseacht = *They are awake*. ("being awake" is a state)
- **tost** = is quiet
Tá sé ina thost = *He's being quiet*.

This form is the common usage of these verbs.
forms like *cónaíonn sé* = *he lives* are quite uncommon.
Tá sé ag seasamh means: *He's going to stand (somewhere)*.

For *cónaí*, the following form is (in Munster) also possible: *Tá cónaí orm* = *I am living* ("is living on me") instead of *Tá mé i mo chónaí*

infinitive constructions (frásáí ainm briathartha)

Besides the progressive tense, there are still many possibilities to use the verbal noun.
In German this is often an "infinitive with to", and that is why we want to use the term "infinitive construction".
(In Irish, there is **no infinitive**. Instead, the verbal noun is used, hence the Irish term "verbal nominal phrase")
sometimes in German, one would prefer other forms in place of an infinitive construction (subordinating clause)

infinitive construction with and without an object

without an object :

This form is equivalent to the German "simple infinitive with to"
Only that here in Irish, the preposition "to" isn't used. It is negated with gan ("without"). Gan doesn't lenite here.

affirmative	VN	Tá mé sásta siúl. = I am ready to walk
negative	gan + VN	Tá mé sásta gan siúl. = I agree, <i>not</i> to walk

verbal noun of transit (coming, going, etc.) use mostly the preposition **a** (= to; requires lenition)
e.g.: *Tá mé sásta a theacht* = I agree to come.

with a direct object

This form is equivalent to the German "extended infinitive with to"
The object is always in the nominative preceding the verbal noun (no genitive like the objects in the progressive tense)
Between object and verbal noun, the preposition **a** (= to) is used.
a requires lenition of the verbal noun!

affirmative	object + a + VN	Tá mé sásta míle a shiúil = I am happy to walk a mile
negative	gan + object + a + VN	Tá mé sásta gan míle a shiúil = I am happy, <i>not</i> to walk a mile

If a pronoun (personal pronoun or demonstrative pronoun) is the object, nothing changes in the clause form, the pronoun simply comes before the preposition a.

Tá mé sásta iad a dhíol = *I agree to sell them*.
Tá mé sásta gan iad a dhíol = *I agree not to sell them*.

It is possible (today rarer) also to use the possessive pronoun (then without the preposition a)

Tá mé sásta a ndíol = *I agree to sell them*.
Tá mé sásta gan a ndíol = *I agree not to sell them*.

with an indirect object

Just the opposite as in German, the indirect object in Irish is always *following* the verbal noun. The preposition *a = to* is not used. Indirect objects are dative objects, in Irish always introduced with a preposition (in German also dative without preposition)

affirmative	VN + prep. + indir. object	Tá áthas orm siúil le Máire = I am happy to walk with Máire
negative	gan + VN + prep. + indir. object	Tá áthas orm gan siúil le Pól = I am happy <i>not</i> to walk with Pól

Of course, both direct and indirect objects may be incorporated:

Tá áthas orm an leabhar seo a thabhairt do Mháire. = *I am happy to give this book to Máire.*

Usage of the infinitive construction with or without an object

The possibility of usage is only partially equivalent to the German "infinitive with to"

It appears in clauses with

- **with a verb** (infinitive construction as the object)

Bhain mé triall as é a dhíol = *I tried, to sell it.* (lit.: "pulled I attempt out, it to sell")

- **as the subject of a copular clause**

Is fiú é a dhéanamh = *It is worth it, to do it.*

- **following modal constructions**

In Irish there are no real modal verbs (*must, should, can, would like, etc.*), and instead, idiomatic expressions, mostly with the copula. (exactly as previously mentioned)

Im German the infinitive without "to" follows a modal verb, in Irish they take a particle "a", if an object is present.

e.g.: *Ba mhaith liom an carr seo a cheannach* = *I would like to buy this car.* ("would be good with-me the car this to buy")

- **with the verb déan**

in this form déan (= to make, do) serves as an auxilliary verb. It can be used to alter any tense.

This construction is often used instead of less common verbs

Rinne sé an capall a dhíol = *He sold the horse* ("He did, to sell the horse")

- **with the verb abair**

With abair (= to say) the verbal noun serves to enable indirect speech as an alternative to the imperative.

indir. speech: *Dúirt sé liom an capall a dhíol* = *He said to me, I should sell the horse* ("he said with me, das horse zu verkaufen")

(instead of **dir. speech:** *Ar seisean liom: "Díol an capall!"* = *He said to me: "Sell the horse!"*)

Instead of *abair* also similar verbs like *ordaigh* = *to order*, *lig* = *to leave*, *beartaigh* = *to decide* etc.

- **as a short clause** (or "free form")

An infinitive construction can be used as a fragment (without subject and verb) in questions, answers, exclamations, titles.

Cá bhfuair tú an teach seo? - Sin a cheannach = *Where did you get the house? - Bought it, It (was) for sale.*

An capall sin a dhíol, an ea? = *The horse I should sell, yes?*

also negation with *diabhal* (=devil) e.g.

Ar léigh tú an leabhar seo? - Diabhal léamh. = *Have you read this book? - Haven't read!* (lit.: "devil read")

(Earlier this was also common in German, e.g. as a title of recipes: "Eels to fry".)

- **after agus in conditional clauses**

A succession of conditional clauses is done with *agus*, whereby then the following conditional clauses appear as an infinitive construction

Ní chreidfinn an scéal sin mura bhfeicfinn an fear agus é a chloisteáil = *I wouldn't believe the story, if I hadn't seen the man and hadn't heard him*

- **after certain conjunctions**

Following certain conjunctions, mostly in the special sense of (**agus** = and > in the case of, seeing, that, **ach** = but > providing that, **murach** = if it weren't so, **tar éis** = despite) an infinitive construction can appear instead of a go-subordinating clause (see details also under conjunctions, esp. agus)

e.g.:

Murach tú a bheith anseo ní bheadh sí sásta = *If you weren't here, she would not be happy.*

(statt: *Murach go bhfuil tú anseo ...*)

*Is dócha go raibh sé sásta **ach** é a bhualadh leat* = *Of course he would be happy, provided, he met you* (lit.: "is certain that was he happy, but he to meeting with-you")

(instead of: ... *ach gur bhualail sé leat*)

*Is dócha go bhfuil sé ar meisce **agus** a bhean a bhualadh* = *Certainly he is drunk, when he beats his wife* (lit.: "is certain that was er on drunkenness and his wife his beating")

(instead of: ... *agus go mbualann a bhean é*)

infinitive construction with go-subordinating clause

a + VN + go/nach-subordinating clause	Ba mhaith liom a fheiceáil go bhfuil tú sásta = I would like to see, that you are happy
--	---

This **a** is *not* the preposition **a** (= "to") as above!

This **a** is moreso a possessive pronoun (3rd pers. sg. masc. "his"). It shifts the following go-subordinating clause.
(*Ba mhaith liom a fheiceáil go bhfuil tú sásta* = lit. "would be good with me his seeing, that are you happy")
In English it is equivalent to the pronoun "it" in: "I would like to see it, that you are happy"

infinitive construction with subject

The German "infinitive with to" can only have an object.

The Irish form can also either in place of that or additionally contain a subject

A lit. translation is therefore hardly possible, as it would necessitate a that-subordinating clause in the translation.

A negation is done with **gan**

forms:

subject + (a)* + VN	tú a fhanacht = that you wait ("you to wait")
subject + a + VN + genitive-object	a mhac a fháil báis = that his son is dying ("his son to receive death")
subject + do + possessive pronoun + VN	Dia dár sábháil = that God save us ("God to our saving")
subject + object + a + VN	a mhac bás a fháil = that his son is dying ("his son death to receive")

*): In Ulster, in the case of an intransitive usage, (only subject and verbal noun, without object) no preposition **a** is used: *Ba mhaith liom tú fanacht* = *I would like, that you wait*
genitive-objects are (except in set phrases like *fáil báis* = to die) most common in Munster.

Special form: Logical subject with prepositions

- In many Irish clauses, (esp. in idiomatic expressions with prepositions) a **logical subject** of the statement differs from the **grammatical subject** of the clause.

e.g.:

Tá airgead agat = *You have money* (lit. "Is money at-you")
grammatical subject: airgead (= money),
logical subject "you" in: agat (= at-you)

Tá áthas uirthi = *She is happy* (lit. "is joy on-her")
grammatical subject: áthas (= joy),
logical subject "she" in: uirthi (= on-her)

- Should a such logical subject appear in infinitive constructions, it is additionally shifted without a preposition

e.g.:

Ba mhaith liom tú airgead a bheith agat = *I would like, that you have money*
(lit.: "would be good with-me you money to be at-you")

Ba mhaith liom i áthas a bheith uirthi = *I would like, that she is happy*
(lit.: "would be good with-me she joy to be on-her")

Usage:

- as the topic of the clause (instead of a go/nach-subordinating clause) or as the subject of a copular clause
e.g.: *Niorbh aon ionadh Niamh a theacht* = *It was no surprise, that Niamh came.*
- as an alternative to the imperative in indirect speech (3rd person)
e.g.: *Dúirt sé Seán a dhíol an capaill* = *He said, Seán should sell the horse* ("He said Seán to sell the horse")
- as a free form
in questions, answers, in exclamations, titles, shorthand etc.
e.g. *1939 - an dara cogadh domhanda a thosú* = *1939 - the 2nd WW began*

Omission of *bheith*

The verbal noun of **bí** (*bheith* = to be) is often omitted completely:

Is mór an trua gan é (a bheith) anseo = *It's a pity, that he is not here.* (lit.: "is great the pity without him (to be) here")
Tóg uaim é agus gan (bheith) uaim ach é = *Take it from me, that's only what I want.*

infinitive construction of a goal

This form is equivalent to the infinitive with "in order to".

le + object + a + VN

le gloine a ól = in order to drink a glass

chun + object + a + VN

chun gloine a ól = in order to drink a glass

ag / a + VN + genitive-object

ag ól gloine = in order to drink a glass

do + possessive pronoun + VN

á ól = in order to drink it

In Connacht, **le** prefixes an **n-** to a word beginning with a vowel (e.g.: *le n-ól* = *in order to drink*, *le n-uisce a ól* = *in order to drink water*), although no eclipsis occurs after **le**! (Standard: *le hól* = *in order to drink*)

An object after **chun** is mostly *not* in the genitive ([see below](#))

A pronoun as the object connects **not** with **le** and **chun** to form prepositional pronouns like *leis* or *chuige*. It remains separate after **le** and **chun**:

le hé (le n-é) a dhéanamh / chun é a dhéanamh = *in order to do it*.

(This is not only for **le** and **chun**, but for all infinitive constructions following a preposition).

Alternatively, following **le**, the possessive pronoun appears with the VN, following **chun** the possessive pronoun with the genitive of the VN:

lena dhéanamh, chun a dhéanta = *in order to do it*

le usually appears with the verb **bí**, **chun** with other verbs.

Táim anseo le n-ól. = *I am here in order to drink.*

Tháinig mé anseo chun ól. = *I came here to drink.*

Chun and **le** occur mainly this way in Munster, as **le** is more common in Connacht and Donegal.

The forms with **ag** / **a** / **do** are used mainly following *verbs/transitive expressions*

They are actually progressive tenses, according to the structure

e.g.: *Tagaim ag foghlaim Gaeilge* = *I come, in order to learn Irish.* *D'imigh mé do do bhualadh* = *I left, in order to hit you.* *Tháinig mé anseo ag ól.* = *I came here to drink.*

In Ulster, at least orally, rather an altered form and not **ag** is used ("**a**" preceding a consonant, "**adh**" preceding a vowel, "**a dh**" in written form), that causes lenition (historically a form of **do** instead of **ag**):

e.g.: *tigeann tú a dh'foghlaim Gaeilge* = *You come to learn Irish.* *tig sé a'cheannach báid* = *He comes to buy a boat.* (Standard: *Tagann tú ag foghlaim Gailge, tagann sé ag ceannach báid*)

do (shortened to **a**) is also used outside of Ulster in all of Ireland in the expression *dul a chodladh* = *to go to sleep* ("to go in order to sleep").

Note: The forms with the verb **bí** ([bí + subj. + le + VN](#) or [bí + subj. + chun + VN](#)) have various meanings (see below)

The intentional (an fhoirm thimchainteach aidhme)

The form "**bí ag dul ag**" resembles the English "*be going to*"

form of bí + subject + ar tí + object + a + VN

form of bí + subject + ag dul ag + VN + genitive-object

instead of **ar tí** also **chun, ag brath or ar hob**

If within a definite time span, then only **chun, ag brath, le**

Tá sé **chun** carr nua a cheannach amárach = He's going to to buy a car tomorrow.

Tá sé **ag brath** an teach a cheannach = He's going to buy a house.

Tá mé **ag dul ag** foghlaim Gaeilge = I'm going to learn Irish.

Expressions of synchronicity / the plusquam perfect

The important thing to note in these expressions is a *logical* subject in the form of the combination of **do + agent**. It is almost a sort of "dative subject", which is a bit unusual.

This is also common in other languages, e.g. in Latin: **dative of the agent, dativus auctoris (an tabharthach gníomhach).**

A real, *grammatical* (nominative-)subject is missing. (for more details see also [subjectlessness](#)) Different to other subjectless forms these expressions are only possible as a subordinating clause or. adverbiale.

In such constructions, the verbal noun functions in place of the participle, they are in this sense comparable to the participle constructions on other languages (comp. dt. "Ein glass trinkend, ...",= "Drinking a glass,..." "Gerade ausgetrunken habend, ..." = "Just having finished drinking,...")

synchronicity of the verbal noun ("while")

le linn + object + a + VN + do + agent	le linn gloine a ól dom = as I drink a glass
le linn + VN + genitive-object + do + agent	le linn ól na gloine duit = as you drink the glass
ag + VN + genitive-object + do + agent	ag ól na gloine duit = as you the drink glass
do + possessive pronoun + VN + do + agent	á ól dom = as I drink it

plusquam perfect of the verbal noun ("after")

tar éis + object + a + VN + do + agent	tar éis gloine a ól dom = after I had drunk a glass
tar éis + VN + genitive-object + do + agent	tar éis ól gloine dom = after I had drunk a glass
ar + VN + genitive-object + do + agent	ar ól gloine dom = after I had drunk a glass
ar + possessive pronoun + VN + do + agent	arna ól dom = after I had drunk it

Instead of **tar éis** also **d'éis, i ndiaidh**

ar forms **arna** the with possessive pronoun of the 3rd person **a**

Originally, not ar but **iar** (= nach) was used, iar would eclipse (iar dteacht dom = after I came) iar was shortened to ar, and after ar then lenition (ar theacht dom)

Ar is, in this usage rather archaic and colloquially completely replaced with *tar éis/i ndiaidh*.

arna appears with the verbal noun also without *do + subject* as the perfect tense-passive construction (see below under [ar](#))

succession of the verbal noun ("before")

roimh + object + a + VN + do + agent	roimh gloine a ól dom = before I had drunk a glass
---	--

Other Uses of the dative of the agent

The combination of **do + agent** is aside from the above uses also encountered in other clauses and has even its own clause-forming possibility. It was often used, at least in Old Irish.

e.g.:

Dóbair dom titim = *I had almost fallen ("almost-happened to-me falling")*

Sa chomhrá díuinn = *In the course of our conversation, ("in the conversation to-us")*

verbal noun as an attribute

This is one of those forms, in which the [genitive of a verbal noun](#) can occur.

The verbal noun as the attribute often comes close to our present-participle, if it is used attributively. (e.g.: *the story-telling man*)

Often it is the case that also a translation makes more sense as one word (e.g.: *storyteller*) or with a subordinating clause (*the man, who tells a story*).

One such a verbal noun-attribute must also be translated as an "infinitive with to" :

(e.g.: *Tháinig mian a mbuailte ormsa* = *a desire to hit her overcame me.* lit.: "came desire her hitting on-me")

forms:

noun + genitive-object + a + VN	fear scéil a insint = the story-telling man
noun + genitive-VN + genitive-object	fear inste scéil = the story-telling man

noun + **possessive pronoun + genitive-VN** fear a inste = the man telling it

The first two forms are lexically equivalent.

With a pronomial object, only the 3rd form is possible.

further examples:

lucht foghlamtha na Gaeilge = die Irisch-Lernenden ("Irish learning people" lit.: "people [of the] learning of Irish")

bzw. *lucht na Gaeilge a fhoghlaím* (lit.: "people of the Irish to learn")

fear diolta na leabhair = the bookseller ("man [of the] selling of books")

cailín deas crúite na mbó = the nice cow-milking girl ("girl nice [of the] milking of the cows")

Depending on the genitive-form of the verbal noun used, there are some differences (either noun-based genitive or verbal adjective as the genitive form). More on this [here](#)

further clauses with the verbal noun

With various prepositions certain expressions can be made.

In form, they resemble the progressive tense (bí + preposition + verbal noun)

Besides the here mentioned expressions, there are also others.

with the preposition le

form of bí + subject + le + VN Tá an balla seo le péinteáil = This wall is to be painted.

This clauseform wird verwendet, to express purpose, intention, duty, necessity, possibility, guarantee.

Often, this clause form has a passive character, an agent can then be added with **ag**

Then this clause form correlates to the German/English "es soll ..." = "it should be..." or. "es ist zu ..." = "it is to be..."

further examples:

Cad a bheidh agat le n-ól? = What do you want to drink? ("what will you have to drink?") (intention)

Tá sí lena theacht = She is going to come / She is planning to come (intention)

Tá obair le déanamh agam = I have work to do (duty)

Tá an balla seo le péinteáil = This wall is to be painted. (necessity)

Níl le feiceáil ach an fharraige = Nothing is to be seen but the sea (possibility)

Is dócha atá sé le theacht = Surely he is coming (guarantee)

with the preposition chun

form of bí + subject + chun + VN Tá an balla seo chun péinteáil = This wall is ready to be painted.

This form expresses that someone / something is *finished, ready, prepared* for an action.

It conveys more as the [intentional form](#) (see above)

It may also be passive.

further examples:

Tá an fómhar chun tarlú = The harvest can be brought in.

Tá Pól chun iascaigh = Paul is ready to go fishing

with the preposition gan

form of bí + subject + gan + VN Tá an balla seo gan phéinteáil = This wall is not painted.

This form expresses that something is not done, or, that someone hasn't done something.

further examples:

Is fada a bhí sí gan teacht = She hasn't come in a long time.

with the preposition ar

1. the real preposition ar

form of bí + subject + ar + VN Tá an balla seo ar péinteáil = This wall is painted.

This form expresses the status following an action (perfect, passive) or of a continuous state(present, passive). ar does not lenite here.

further examples:

Tá sé ar oscailt = It's open.

Tá an teanga seo ar labhairtanois = This language is spoken now.

Tá an leabhar ar fáil anseo = The book is available here.

2. The preposition iar > ar

with do + subject see above: [plusquamperfect of the verbal noun](#)

Often, ar (shortened from iar) occurs, but also with the possessive pronoun a (ar + a: **arna**) without do+subject to express a **perfect tense passive participle**:

arna chur i n-eagar ag = distributed by

arna fhoilisiú ag = published by

arna chur i mbuidéil ag = bottled by

with the prepositions tar éis, i ndiaidh, d'éis

form of bí + subject + tar éis + object + a + VN Tá mé tar éis an balla seo a phéinteáil. = I have just painted this wall.

Instead of **tar éis** also **d'éis, i ndiaidh**

This form demonstrates a perfect tense-construction.

The direct completion of the action is stressed.

The clause term *tar éis + object + a + VN* acts as an infinitive construction.

(lit. translation: "I am after painting the wall")

Comp. also [perfect tense-progressive](#)

with the conjunctions agus, ach

Verbal noun constructions often follow agus (= and) and ach (= but). See under [conjunctions: agus](#).

This was also mentioned earlier. Similarly, the infinitive construction can follow murach (= 'if it were not so') and the preposition used as a conjunction tar éis (= 'after').

As opposed to these, agus and ach have here special meanings as conditional conjunctions (= "in case of", "seein that", "provided, that").

An infinitive construction may only be replaced by one go-subordinating clause.

with other prepositions

thar: "more than" .: Tá sé thar a bheith maith = It is more than good

ó: "from": Tá mé tuirseach ó bheith ag siúil = I am tired from walking

trí: "in which": tríd an rud seo a dhéanamh = In which this thing is done.

ar feadh: "as soon as": ar feadh mé a bheith ann = sobaldI da bin

With many verbs, prepositions are inseparable in certain meanings : e.g. *tabhair faoi* = to attempt.

An infinitive construction may directly follow the preposition, without that the preposition belongs to the infinitive construction: *Thug mé faoi é a dhéanamh* = I tried to do it (lit.: Gave I under, it to do)

genitive in verbal noun-constructions

genitive of the verbal noun following genitive-prepositions

chun, ar tí, i ndiaidh, le linn and other prepositions actually require the genitive.

Although, in verbal noun-constructions the following is true:

- If the verbal noun occurs without an object or with a noun-object, then **no genitive**:
chun pósadh = in order to marry

le linn an bhean a phósadh dom = as I married the woman

le linn pósadh na mná dom = as I the married the woman

- although, if a possessive pronoun acts as as the object, then the **genitive** of the verbal noun is needed:

le linn a pósta dom = as I married her

chun a pósta = in order to marry her

genitive of a noun after the verbal noun

- always **genitive**, if with article
Bhí mé ag pósadh na mná áille =I married the beautiful woman
- always **genitive**, if without article and without further attribute
Bhí mé ag pósadh mná =I married a woman
- but **no genitive**, if without article, but with further attribute
Bhí mé ag pósadh *bean álainn* =I married a beautiful woman

genitive of a noun before the verbal noun

- in infinitive constructions, the object is in the nominative, accusative or dative and not **in the genitive**
e.g.: Ba mhaith liom an bhean a phósadh = I would like to marry the woman (lit.: "would be good with-me the woman to marry")
This is also the case, if an additional subject is present:
e.g.: Ba mhaith liom an fear an bhean a phósadh = I would like, that the man marry the woman.
This is also the case following genitive-prepositions:
e.g.: chun an bhean a phósadh = in order to marry the woman
- if the verbal noun as an attributive of a noun is present, its object may precede it as in infinitive constructions, connected with a = to, but then it is in the **genitive**!
e.g.: fear na mná a phósadh = the man marrying the woman (lit.: "man the woman to marry")

genitive form of the verbal noun

- see [verbal noun-genitive](#)

Used as a Noun

Usage as a regular noun

The above uses of the verbal nouns replace (approximately) infinitive ("infinitive usage")

There, an action is always (gníomh) somehow delegated to an agent (gníomháí) and /or it occurs in relation to an object (cuspóir).

The verbal noun can also be used as a regular noun, ("substantive usage").

Then it mostly occurs without reference to an agent and without an object of the action (but a genitive-attribute is possible)

e.g.:

Tá (an) *léamh* go suimiúil = (The) Reading is interesting.

Fuair mé *orduithe* uaidh = I received orders from him.

The verbal noun may also have the meaning of a comparable German noun of -ung, e.g.: *neartú* = *verstärkung*
= *support*

Often it not only has an abstract meaning, describing an action, but also a concrete meaning, like the result of an action,
e.g.: *crochadh* = *hanging/suspension*, *ordú* = *order/command*

One can recognise if it is a case of usage as a regular noun by the following:

- verbal noun with an article: e.g.: *an léamh* = *reading*
- verbal noun with an adjective (predicative or attributive): e.g.: *léamh maith* = *a good read*
- verbal noun with numbers: e.g.: *dhá ordú* = *two commands*
- verbal noun in the plural: e.g.: *orduithe* = *commands*

Caibidil a Trí Déag: Sentences and Syntax (Abairt agus Comhréir)

Miscellaneous

[directional adverbs with le](#)
[subjunctive clauses](#)

Clauses with directional adverbs and le

The use of [directional adverbs](#) as the imperative resembles the German or English: "Runter mit dir!" = *Down you go*, see the first example) It may also be used as a normal sentence (in German this is less common, see 2nd and 3rd example)

directional adverb + le + subject

Anuas leat!	= Down with you!/Down you go!
Suas an crann leis agus	= Up the tree with him and....
Síos an bóthar liom....	= I go down the street here...

Often, [le](#) is also used with verbs to emphasize the motion:
D'imigh sí léi = *She went away* . lit.: "left she with her ". *Imigh leat* = *Go away!/Get lost!*

The use of directional adverbs as the imperative also allows the use of the imperative plural suffix -igí:
síosaigí libh = *down with ye!* (also: sit down!)

The subjunctive clause (an clásal foshuiteach)

affirmative: [Go](#) + subjunctive of the **verb** + **subject** + **object**
negative: [Nár](#) + subjunctive of the **verb** + **subject** + **object**

go requires eclipsis, **nár** lenition
 subjunctive clauses, that begin with go/nár, are used for wishes, curses, hopes etc.
 They act as the optative.

e.g.: *Go raibh maith agat* = *Thank you!* (lit.: "That may good be by you")
Go n-éirí an bóthair leat = *Good luck!* (lit.: "That rise the way with you!")
Go dtaga do ríocht = *Thy Kingdom come!* (lit.: "That may come your kingdom!")
Nár laga Dia do lámh = *May God not weaken your hand!* (lit.: "That-not weaken God your hand!")
Nár lige Dia = *God forbid!* (lit.: "That-not allow God ")

Other uses of the subjunctive: see [tenses](#)

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Classificatory- and Identificatory Clauses Without the Copula

[classificatory clauses with bí and i \(= in\)](#)

[classificatory clause with bí and ar \(= auf\)](#)

[identificatory clauses with bí and ar \(= auf\)](#)

Classificatory clauses (e.g. "The man is a doctor") are usually formed with the [copula](#): (Is dochtúir é an fear).

Often, one needs clause forms with the verb [bí](#) instead, partially to express the time relevance ("I was a student at that time"), the attainment ("then I became a teacher") or also just to vary things a bit. In some dialects, these clause forms are generally preferred over copular clauses.

classificatory clauses with **bí** and der preposition **i** (= in)

The use of the preposition [i = in](#) is easily explained. Because it is a condition that is being described, **in** which one finds oneself or a function that one has with "in" (= in oneself).

Here, there are 3 clause forms:

1. i + possessive pronoun + predicate:

Tá mé i mo dhochtúir. = I am a doctor. ("I am in my (status as) a doctor")

Tá Bríd ina dochtóir. = Bríd is a doctor. ("Bríd is in-her (function as) a doctor")

2. within a relative clause (i + subject):

Dochtúir **atá ionam**. = I am a doctor. ("a doctor, that is in-me", meaning: "...whose function is in me")

Dochtúir **atá ann**. = He is a doctor. ("a doctor, that is in-him", "...whose function is in him")

Dochtúir **atá in Bríd**. = Bríd is a doctor ("a doctor, that is in Bríd", "... whose function is in Bríd")

Note the use of **in** (instead of **i**) here preceding names and the missing eclipsis. (**in Bríd** instead of **i mBríd**).

In some grammar explanations, the use of the prepositional pronoun (e.g. **ionam**) is seen as allowed.

Furthermore, one should note the double meaning of "Dochtúir **atá ann**": "He is a doctor" and "There is a doctor" (due to the common adverbial use of **ann** = da: **tá .. ann** = "there is")

3. in an "only"-clause (i + subject):

Níl **ionam ach** amadán = I am only an idiot (lit.: not-is in-me but an idiot)

Only an "only"-clause is considerable as a non-relative clause form.

A normal non-relative clause with **i + subject**, like e.g.: ***Tá amadán ionam** is not possible!

Here, one could only do so as the form **Tá mé i m'amadán** = I am an idiot (see 1.)

use:

These forms are used,

- if a **recently attained or temporary function, profession or similar** is meant.

e.g.: **Bhí mé fós i mo chailín beag ag an am sin** = I was still a little girl at that time

If the connection of subject and predicate is already inborn, and this (permanent) connection cannot be reversed, one *cannot* use these expressions, then it is only possible as a copular clause:

(incorrect e.g. ***Tá an bradán ina iasc** instead of correct: **Is iasc é an bradán** = The salmon is a fish, because the salmon was always a fish and will always remain one, it's not just temporarily taking on the job of a fish)

- in **tenses where there is no copular form**, so, in the future, imperative, as well as in clauses requiring a verbal noun. Most of the time these sentences are logically equivalent to the first point. e.g.:

Bí i d'fhearr! = Be a man! (lit.: "be in your man"),

Ní maith léi bheith ina cailín beag. = She doesn't like being a little girl. (lit.: "not-is good with-her being in-her girl small")

classificatory clause with **bí** and the preposition **ar** (= on)

This expression is used especially in those cases when "one of...", and the like should be expressed with the superlative. It is also used for statements like "one so ... as ..." (i.e. as the attributive equative). e.g.:

Tá sé ar na daoine is mó sa rang = He is **one of the biggest** in the class. (lit.: "is he on the people are biggest in the class")

Tá sí ar na cailíní is áille ar an domhan = She is **one of the most beautiful** girls in the world. (lit.: "is she on the girls are most beautiful on the world")

Tá sé ar fhearr chomh maith leat = He is **a man as good as you**.

Tá sin ar ceann de na rudaí a dúirt mé = That is **one of the things** of which I spoke. (lit.: "is that on head of the things that spoke I")

identificatory clauses with *bí* and the preposition *ar* (= on)

These are mostly used to demonstrate the superlative ("the smartest" etc.) and with ordinal numbers ("the first", "the second", etc.).

Tá sé **ar an bhfear is cliste** sa bhaile = He is **the *smartest man*** in the town. (lit.: "is he on the man is smartest in-the town")

Tá sí **ar an gcaillín is áille** in Éirinn = She is **the *most beautiful girl*** in Ireland (lit.: "is she on the girl is most beautiful in Ireland")

Bhí sé **ar an dara fear** a tháinig = He was **the *second man*** that came (lit.: "was he on the second man that came")

Caibidil a Trí Déag: Sentences and Syntax (abair agus comhréir)

indirect speech (an chlaoninsint)

One can either present something thought or said word for word with quotes (= direct speech), or one converts that which was said into a subordinating clause (= indirect speech)

for example:

direct speech

"Tá sé ag cur an cóta air" arsa mé
 "He's putting on the coat " I said.
 "Cuir ort an cóta!" ar sise.
 "Put on the coat !" she said.
 "Cuireadh Pól an chota air!", I said
 I said: "Paul should put on the coat!"

indirect speech:

Dúirt mé gur chuir sé an cóta air
 I said that he put on the coat.
 Dúirt sé leis an cóta a chur air.
 She told him that he should put on the coat.
 Dúirt mise Pól an cóta a chur air.
 I said that Paul should put on the coatl.

As one can see, indirect speech causes a few changes in the sentence structure.

Here are a few rules:

the verb "to say"

In direct speech, it's mostly the [defect verb](#) ar (with a pronoun of the 3rd person) or. arsa (with other pronouns and nouns).

ar/arsa is indefinite in tense (said)

In indirect speech, ar/arsa cannot be used. (Instead one must always take a form of the verb [abair](#).)

As well, ar/arsa can only come *after* the quoted speech, *before* that one would also have to use a form of abair in direct speech.

Instead of *to say* one can also use other verbs like *order, ask, bid, wish, think, mean etc.*

tense

If the main clause is in the [preterite](#), the tense for the indirect speech changes to:

direct speech	indirect speech
present	preterite
habitual present	conditional
future	conditional
subjunctive present	subjunctive preterite or conditional or verbal noun
imperative	verbal noun
neg. imperative	gan + verbal noun

The imperative is **always** given as the verbal noun (no matter if the main clause is in the preterite)
 By an imperative of the 3rd person ("He should ..") the form subject + verbal noun.(see 2nd example above)
 The subjunctive present is given as the verbal noun only in the case of wishes (optative).

conjunction/particle

Usually, indirect speech is introduced via **go / nach** (that / that not)

Dúirt sé go mbeadh sé ann = He said he would be there

Dúirt sí nach raibh sé ann = She said that he wasn't there.

If the verb stands as the **verbal noun**, then use an infinitive construction ("infinitive with/without to ")

Dúirt sé le Pól imeacht = He told Paul he should (be) go(ing).

Dúirt sé le Pól tae a ól = He told Paul he should (be) drink(ing) tea.

In **copular clauses**, the copular form **gur / nach** is most common

Dúirt sé gur mhaith leis tae = He said that he would like tea.

Deir sí nach maith léi tae = She said that she doesn't like tea.

Indirect questions are introduced with the appropriate interrogatives (**an, cé, cad, cá, conas**, etc.) , instead of **an** also **má**.

D'fhiografiah sí de ar mhaith leis tae = She asked him if he would like tea.

D'fhiografiah sí de cá raibh an cailín óg = She asked him where the young girl was.

Ní sé cé a rinne é = He asked himself who had done it.

Indirect double questions (if or if not) are denoted by **cé acu** or **an** in the first part and **nó nach** in the second:

D'fhiografiah sí de cé acu a bhí sé sásta nó nach raibh = She asked him if he was satisfied or not

Real **conditional clauses** in the future tense come after main clauses in the preterite in the conditional and are introduced with **dá** instead of **má**.

temporal adverbs

If the main clause is in the **preterite**, the temporal adverb also must be changed.

translation	direct speech	indirect speech	literally
today	inniu	an lá sin	"that day "
yesterday	inné	an lá roimhe sin	"that day before"
day before last	arú inné	dhá lá roimhe sin	"2 days before that "
tomorrow	amárach	an lá arna mháraoch	"the day after-its morning "
day after next	arú amárach	i gceann dhá lá	"ahead 2 days "
tonight	anocht	an oíche sin	"that night "
last night	aréir	an oíche roimhe sin	"night before that"
this year	i mbliana	an bhliain sin	"that year "
last year	anuraidh	an bhliain roimhe sin	"year before that "
next year	an bhliain seo chugainn	an bhliain a bhí chugainn	"the year, that to-us was"

direct

"Ach beidh mé ann anocht" arsa mé

"But tonight I will be there," I said

indirect

Dúirt mé go mbeinn ann an oíche sin

I said that tonight I would be there.

demonstrative pronouns and adverbs

If the main clause and the indirect speech are in the 3rd person, the demonstrative part changes, d.h. *this* becomes *that*, *here* becomes *there*.

translation	direct	indirect
here	anseo	ansin, ansiúd, ann
this	seo	<i>pron.</i> : sin, siúd <i>adject.</i> : sin, úd

"Bhí sé anseo" arsa Seán - Dúirt Seán go raibh sé ansin (Seán said that he was here)

Caibidil a Ceathair Déag:

Initial Mutations(na hAthruithe Tosaigh)

Initial mutations are changes in the beginnings of words which serve a grammatical purpose. Such alterations to the beginnings of words appear at first unusual and do not occur in the German or English languages. They are although typical for all modern living celtic languages.

Lenition (séimhiú)

[Lenition](#)

[Appearance](#)

[Features](#)

[Usage](#)

Eclipsis (urú)

[Eclipsis](#)

[Appearance](#)

[Features](#)

[Usage](#)

Prefixes (na réamhlitreacha)

[Prefixes](#)

[t-prefix](#)

[h-prefix](#)

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[d'-prefix](#)

Causes of the Initial Mutations

[Causes](#)

Caibidil a Ceathair Déag:

Initial Mutations (na hAthruithe Tosaigh)

Lenition (an Séimhiú)

Lenition (lat. lenere = weaken) means that a consonant is spoken without a stop of the flow of air i.e. with breath or aspirated. It is because of this that lenition is sometimes referred to as **aspiration**.

Aspiration in its own right is actually a much more subtle alteration of a phoneme (a p is still a p, even when aspirated). A classical Greek ph was aspirated, but remained a p was no f (it was first much later that in Greek and Latin that ph was spoken as an f). In Irish lenition a ph would always be spoken as an f. So, aspiration is really not the best term to use.

Basically, the **plosive** (stop- or explosive) is replaced by its corresponding **fricative**.

Here is a bit about the [causes](#) of lenition.

Transcription and Pronunciation:

The lenited consonant is denoted by a following h.

(In the [old script](#) with a dot above the consonant)

		pronunciation				pronunciation				pronunciation	
lenited		broad	slender	lenited		broad	slender	lenited		broad	slender
b	bh	[w] engl. w	[v'] ger. w	f	fh	voiceless !	voiceless !	p	ph	{f} ger. f	[f] ger. f
c	ch	[x] like in ach	[x'] like in ich	g	gh	[γ] see below	[γ'] ger. j	s	sh	[h] ger. h	[h] ger. h
d	dh	[γ] see below	[γ'] ger. j	m	mh	[w] engl. w	[v'] ger. w	t	th	[h] ger. h	[h] ger. h

I, n, r, as well as **h, j, v, w, z** never lenited*

pronunciation of lenited consonants at the start of a word:

- A broad **gh/dh** is a [γ], a "stimmhaftes ch", almost like a (throaty, unrolled) r (e.g. in "Bratpfanne"), slender **gh/dh** like a German j.
In my home dialect, Berlin-Brandenburg, a g is often also "lenited", e.g. in "ick sare dir" for "ich sage dir" ("broad gh"), or "Jurke" for "Gurke" ("slender gh"), also similar to the Rhine dialect.
- **dh** was originally the same as the engl. voiced th [ð] (like in *that*). Now dh is pronounced more like *gh*.
- **th** was originally like the engl. unvoiced th [θ] (as in *thing*), now spoken more like *h*. (i.e. there are no "lisp sounds" in Irish anymore)
- **sh** and **th** are spoken like *h*, but, preceding a long a,o,u, a slender **sh, th** becomes [x'] (like *ch* in ger. *ich*): *a Sheáin* [@ x'a:n'], *a thiocfaidh tú* [@ x'u:k@ tu:]
- **mh** partially leads to a nasalisation of the neighbouring vowels, as opposed to **bh**, other than that, they are the same.
- f and s are indeed fricatives, so **fh** is ignored completely in speech, **sh** is spoken as *h*.

special cases :

d, t, s:

- **d, t, s (meist) nicht lenited after d, n, t, l, s!** ("dentals"-rule! [1])
But attributive adjectives are lenited despite d, t, s
- **sc, sp, st, sm, sf** are always unlenited (because then they would be impossible to say)!
- **s:** in some cases (after an article with words ending in n) instead of lenition: **s becomes ts** (wenn followed by a vowel or l, n, r)(see [t-prefix](#))

f:

- **fh** is always mute, this is why a word beginning in fh + vowel (or l, n, r) is **treated like a word that starts with a vowel:**
e.g.: *m'fhear céile* = *my husband* (not: **mo fhear céile*), *d'fhoghlaim mé Gaeilge* = *I learned Irish* (not: **fhoghlaim mé Gaeilge*), *d'fhliuch sé an t-úrlar* = *he wet the floor*
- should a word with f change to drastically change through lenition, sometimes the lenition is rejected.

b, p:

- **b, m and p** are, in part, not lenited after **m**: e.g. *um bosca* = *around a box*
or in Munster im' instead of i mo: *im' poca* = *in my pocket* (instead of: *i mo phoca*)

l, n, r:

- in written Irish, these are *not* recognizably lenited, but in spoken Irish is there is an audible difference in some dialects: a change from a tensed l, n ([L], [N]) to a relaxed l, n ([l], [n]) e.g.: unlenited: *an leabhar* [L'aʊr] > lenited: *don leabhar* [l'aʊr]
By r, this difference ([r]/[R]) is today uncommon.

use:

Lenition is the grammatical rule of the beginning of a word that:

nouns:

1. after the vocative particle **a**: *a Cháit!*
2. feminine nouns in the nominative after the article **an** (except d, t) in the case of s: **s becomes ts** (if s precedes a vowel or l,n,r)
3. masculine nouns in the genitive after the article **an** (except d, t) in the case of s: **s becomes ts** (if s precedes a vowel or l,n,r)
4. in indefinite **genitive attributes** after *a feminine* noun and after the weak plural (but there are many exceptions, more under the section about the [genitive](#))
5. those **definite nouns and proper names as a genitive attribute** without an article (no matter if the antecedent is masc. or fem.): *muintir Cháit* = *Kate's parents*, *stáisiún bhus a trí* = *the Bus #3 stop*
6. because it is never possible that **2 genitives come after one another**, the first is only lenited and remains in the nominative ([functional genitive](#))(gender irrespective): e.g. *obair bhean an tí* = *housewife's work*, *Lá Fheile Pádraig* = *St.Patrick's Day* (lit. "Day of the Feast of Patrick")
7. a noun attribute in compound words (if the 2nd part is not in the genitive): *scian phóca* = *pocket knife*
8. a noun in the after numbers **1-6** (but not after 3-6, if the noun that follows is in the plural) after **aon** also **s becomes ts**
9. after **beirt, dís** (2 people), but not after *triúr* etc.!
10. after **an chéad** (the first), but not after *an dara*, *an tríú*, etc.!
11. after possessive pronouns **mo, do, a** (a only if it is the 3rd person sg. masc)
12. after a preposition if it lacks an article **ar, ó, do, de, faoi, idir, mar, roimh, thrí, thar, gan** (after ar, idir, gan, see there)
13. after **don, den** in the case of s : **s becomes ts** (in the standard and in Connacht only the fem. nouns)
14. after **sa(n)** in the standard, Ulster and Munster (always in Connacht, in Munster in the case of f , eclipsis instead)
15. in Ulster always after **preposition + article**
16. after **uile** (= everyone)
17. in surnames after **Ní, Uí, Mhic, Nic** but not after **Ó, Mac**

verbs:

1. after **ní** and the preterite verb particle and conjunctions ending in -r: **ar, gur, nár, níor, murar, sular, ach ar**
2. a verb after a direct relative particle **a** (except tá, deir): *an teach a thíogaídh sé = the house that he wants to build*
3. a verb after **má** (except tá, déir)
4. verbs in the **preterite** (except auton. form), **imperfect, conditional** (actually after the particle **do**, the particle itself can only still be seen today preceding the vowel and fh): *(do) bhí sé = he was, d'fhoghlaím sé = he learned*
5. verbal nouns after the preposition **a** ("to") *tú a phósadh = to marry you*

adjectives:

1. after a feminine noun in the nominative: *an bhean mhór = the big woman*
2. after a masculine noun in the genitive *an fhír mhóir = of the big man*
3. after a noun in the weak plural that ends in a slender consonant: *na fir mhóra = the big men*
4. after the prepositions **den/don/sa** + noun (not after a masculine noun if the noun remains unlenited)
5. directly after **2-6**: e.g. *is trí mheasa é = it is three times as bad*
6. after **2-19**, if with a noun in the singular: e.g.: *seacht mbád mhóra = 7 large boats*
7. after **beirt**, if with a noun: e.g.: *beirt mhac bheaga = 2 little sons*

general:

1. after **prefixes**: *an-mhaith, fiormhór, seancharr* etc.
2. the second part of a **compound word**
3. words after forms of the copula in the preterite/conditional (base form **ba**) e.g.: *ba mhaith liom = I would like*
4. déag after words in the singular ending in a vowel e.g.: *seacht hata dhéag = 17 hats*
5. déag after weak plural ending in a slender consonant (except *cinn*): e.g.: *trí fir dhéag*
6. déag is lenited after dó (but not after trí, sé, náoi) *a dó dhéag = twelve*
7. within a word and at the end of a word, due to historical phonetic evolution (pronunciation is then often quite different)
8. some words are mostly lenited (e.g.: *dhá = two, cheana = already, chomh = like, chun = to* , similarly, also dialectical with *dhuit = to you, dhá = to his, if, cheithre = four*)

[1]

The deeper meaning of the "dentals"-rule:

The name of the rule derives from the sounds in question (d,n,t,l,s).

They are not all dentals in the linguistic sense, but they are all coronals, that are produced in the same (homologous) location in the mouth: the tip of the tongue touches the "corona" of the upper front teeth when one speaks d,n,t,l,s.

Because these consonants are produced at the same location, they are easily spoken one after another. On the other hand, the sounds th, sh, dh are produced at different locations. This means that to speak a lenited d,t,s after d,n,t,l,s, would mean extra work for the speaker.

The reason for lenition was originally to simplify speech instead of making it more difficult. This is why after d,n,t,l,s one abstains from lenition of d,t,s.

The same goes for other homologously formed consonants. Also there one could build up "rules" about the groupings (e.g. a "b,m,p rule"), but these hardly play the role that the coronals do.

To generalise, one could formulate the rule so, that it states that homologous consonants cancel out lenition if they occur right after one another.

Caibidil a Ceathair Déag:

Initial Mutations (na hAthruithe Tosaigh)

Eclipsis (an tUrú)

Eclipsis (griech.: omission, disappearance) is the substitution of the **unvoiced** consonants with the corresponding **voiced** ones (*c* becomes *g*, *f* becomes *bh*, *t* becomes *d*, *p* becomes *b*).

Voiced consonants are then replaced with **nasals** (*b* becomes *m*, *d* becomes *n*, *g* becomes *ng*). This is why eclipsis is sometimes called **nasalisation**.

Here is some background about the [causes](#) of eclipsis.

about the written notation of eclipsis:

- In written Irish, the consonant replacement appears *in addition* to the consonant being replaced, the latter disappears in speech ("ng" is only the velar nasal without the *g*, as in the German: "lang")
- in titles and similar capitalisations, the eclipsing letter appears in lowercase, the eclipsed one in uppercase: *mB*, *gC*, *nD*, *bhF*, *nG*, etc. e.g.: *i gConnachta* = *in Connacht*, *i nGaeilge* = *in Irish*, *i mBéarla* = *in English*
- preceding a vowel one inserts an *n*- (see [n-prefix](#))

consonant	eclipsed	spoken	consonant	eclipsed	spoken
b	mb	[m]	g	ng	[ng]
c	gc	[g]	p	bp	[b]
d	nd	[n]	t	dt	[d]
f	bhf	[v] / [w]			

l, m, n, r, s (and h, j, v, w, z)	no eclipsis
---	--------------------

Besonderheiten:

d, t are (except in Munster) **not** eclipsed after a preposition + article! e.g.: *ar an teach* = *on the house*
s can in some dialects in Munster "be eclipsed". There, the unvoiced [s] is replaced with the voiced s [z], a sound which is otherwise foreign to Irish. This remains unnoted in written Irish. (e.g.: *an sagart* [@ sag@rt], *ar an sagart* [er' @ zag@rt])

Use:

1. after the prepositions **ag, ar, as, le, mar, ó, faoi, roimh, thrí, thar, um** if **with the article an**: (in Munster always, in Connacht by *d, t* no eclipsis as well as a *t*-prefix preceding *s* by femin. nouns) e.g.: *ar an mbord* = *on the table*

2. after a preposition with an article **sa** (in Connacht always, in Munster only by f, in the standard/Ulster, lenition):
e.g.: *sa bhfarraige = in the sea*
3. after the preposition **i** if **without article** e.g. *i dteach = in a house*
(similarly also after the archaic prepositions *go = with, iar = to*)
4. after the genitive plural article **na** e.g. *na dtithe = of the houses*
5. after the plural possessive pronouns **ár, bhur, a** e.g. *ár dteach = our house, a gcarr = their car*
6. after the numbers **7-10**, (17-19, 27-29 etc.) e.g.: *deich dteach = ten houses*
7. verb after verbal particles / conjunctions **an, go, nach, mura, dá, sula, ach a**
8. verb after the interrogative **cá** (in the meaning "where")
9. verb after the indirect relative particle **a**
10. verb after the generalising relative pronoun **a** ("all, that ")
as well as after the expression **diabhal a** (= ní, "not", lit.: "devil all, that ")
11. after the prefix **éa-** (= "un-") Here, one leaves out the sound being eclipsed (*éa- + cóir = éagóir = injustice, éa + trom = éadrom = not heavy, light*)
12. in a few place names after those nouns which are normally things, e.g. *Loch nEachach (Lough Neagh)*, as well as after other nouns in the genitive plural, e.g. *Mainistir Ó dTorna (Abbeydorney)*, lit.: "Abbey of the O'Dorneys"

Caibidil a Ceathair Déag:

Initial Mutations (na hAthruithe Tosaigh)

t-, n-, h-, d'-prefixes (na Réamhlitreacha)

Not only lenition (séimhiú) and eclipsis (urú), but also (in part also in cooperation) the prefixing of the letters **t, h, n, d'** change the beginnings of words.

Here is a bit about the cause of these prefixes (except th d'-prefix which is explained below)

[t-prefix](#)
[h-prefix](#)
[n-prefix](#)
[d'-prefix](#)

t-prefix (an réamhlitir t)

spelling:

preceding **s: ts** capitalised: **tS**

preceding a vowel: **t-a, t-e, etc.** capitalised: **tA, tE, etc.** e.g. *an tÉireannach = the Irishman*

pronunciation:

The s after t-prefix is not spoken: *an tsráid* [tra:d']

use:

1. preceding nouns with a **vowel** after the article **an**

- in the **nominative/accusative** with masculine nouns, e.g.: *an t-úll = the apple*
(not in the genitive and dative, e.g.: *craiceann an úll = the skin of the apple, ar an úll = on the apple)*

2. preceding nouns with **s-** after the article **an** (instead of lenition of the s; occurs only if it's followed by a vowel or l, n, r)

- in the **nominative/accusative** by feminine nouns: *an tsráid = the street*
- in the **genitive** by masculine nouns: *an tsagairt = of the priest*
- in the **dative**, i.e. after many prepositions + article
 - in *Connacht* and in the *standard* only by **feminine** nouns, even if eclipsis would be required: *ar an tsráid = on the street*, **but not** by masculine nouns: *ag an sagart = by the priest*
 - in *Ulster* by **feminine** and **masculine** nouns: *ag an tsagart = by the priest*
 - in *Munster* by **feminine** and **masculine** nouns only after the leniting forms den (de + an), don (do + an), sa (i + an): *don tsagart = to the priest*

3. preceding numbers with a **vowel** after the article **an** in the **nominative/accusative** no matter if it's followed by a feminine or masculine noun: *an t-aon bhád amháin = the one boat, an t-aonúdeag, an t-ochtú, an t-ochtódú, an t-ochtar, an t-ocht.* (not in the dative: *ar an ochtar*)

4. preceding **s-** after **-n**, if -n occurs in another word than the article (e.g. colloq. in Árainn *an-tsean* = *very old* instead of the standard *an-sean*), often after *aon* (colloq. *aon tsúil* = *an eye* ; probably etymolog. wrong, in analogy to the t-prefix after the article, standard: *aon síul*)
Sometimes this occurs in names, e.g. after *Clann* = *Family* : *Clann tSuibhne* = *MacSweeney Family*

h-prefix (an réamhlitir h)

spelling:

preceding a vowel: **ha**, **he**, etc. capitalised: **hA**, **hE**, etc. e.g.: *Poblacht na hÉireann* = *Republic of Ireland*

use:

h-prefix is only used preceding words beginning in a **vowel**. It generally serves to simplify pronunciation, if 2 vowels clash and **neither** lenition nor eclipsis are necessary.

1. preceding nouns

- **after the article na**
 - in the nominative/accusative/dative plural: *na héin* = *the birds*
 - in the genitive singular by feminine nouns: *na hoifige* = *of the office*
- **after a = her** (possessive pronoun of the 3rd person sg. fem.): *a huncail* = *her uncle*
 - also after **a dhá = her two/both her** : *a dhá húll* = *her two apples*
- in the plural after **trí, ceithre, cúig, sé** (esp. uaire): *trí huaire* = *3 hours* ,
(not in the sing.: *trí úll* = *3 apples*)
- **after ordinal numbers** (except *an chéad*) *an triú húlla* = *the 3rd apple*
- after non-leniting **prepositions**
 - **after le = with** : *le hÚna* = *with Úna*
 - **after go = to** *go hÉirinn* = *to Ireland*
- **after cá = which** : *cá háit* = *where ("which place")*, *cá haois* = *how old ("which age")*;
(but not if *cá* occurs in the meaning *where* or *how*.)
- in names with **Ó**: *Ó hEidhin*, *Ó hAnluain*,
h disappears after *Uí* or *Ní* (*Uí Anluain*)

2. preceding pronouns (é, í, iad, ea, eo, in, iúd)

- **after ní** (neg. copular form) *ní hí* = *she is not*
- optional **after cé**: *cé hé* = *who is it*
- **after cá** (prepositional pronoun): *cá hair?* = *on what?*

3. preceding adjectives / adverbs

- **after go** (adverbial particle) *go holc* = *bad*
- **after chomh** (= so) *chomh holc* = *so bad*

4. preceding verbs

- after the imperative verbal particle **ná**: e.g.: *ná habair é* = *don't mention it!*
- after the neg. interrogatory verbal particle and conjunction **ná** (common in Munster): e.g.: *ná hólair é?* = *Don't you drink it?*
- preceding the **autonomous verb form (Saorbhriathar)** (not so in the standard)
 - in the preterite, if it's the preterite particle **do**: e.g.: *do hóladh* = *one drank* , in Connacht also without *do*: e.g.: *hóladh* = *one drank*
 - in all tenses (except conditional) after the otherwise leniting words ending in a vowel. e.g.: *nuair a hóltar* = *when one drinks*, *an cluiche a himrítear* = *the game that one plays*

5. preceding numeral words 1 and 8 after the numeral particle **a: *a haon* , *a hocht***

6. in adverbial days of the week with **Dé (= day) *Dé hAoine* = *Friday***

n-prefix (an réamhlitir n)

spelling:

preceding a vowel: **n-a**, **n-e**, etc. by capitalisation: **nA**, **nE**: e.g.: *Tir na nÓg* = *Land of Youth*

use

1. preceding a vowel by expressions/particles actually requiring **eclipsis** : *ár n-uncail* = our uncle; (unless it already ends in -n, also **not after an**: *ar an úll* = *on the apple!*), **not after the preposition i**: but instead **in**: *in Éirinn* = *in Ireland* (this is purely a written convention, the pronunciation is the same as *i nÉireann*, which also occasionally occurs).
2. after **le** in the meaning "(in order) to" (in Connacht): *cad a bheidh agat le n-ól* = what will you drink? ("what will you have to drink?"), although after le normally *no* eclipsis occurs.

d'-prefix (an réamhlitir d')

This is actually not a "prefix" in the sense of the other prefixes, because d' is only a short form of the independent particle **do**. In this way it's quite different from the other prefixes.

Do is a past verbal particle to denote the preterite, imperfect and conditional tenses. It's only still in use anymore in Munster preceding consonants: (*do dhéineas* = *ich machte*). Preceding a vowel in the form **d'** in all dialects and in the standard.

The abbreviation of *do* explains also the apostrophe by *d'*.

spelling:

preceding a vowel and preceding **fh**: **d'a, d'e, d'fh**, capitalised: **D'a, D'e, D'fh** etc.

use:

1. **preceding a vowel and fh by verbs** in the preterite, imperfect, conditional. *d'ól mé* = *I drank* , *d'ólinn* = *I used to drink*, *d'ólfinn* = *I would drink*, *d'fhoghlaín the sé* = *he learned*

- d' is only used preceding non-dependent verb forms (i.e. without another particle - but also after *má* = *if* and the direct relative particle *a*, e.g.: *má d'ól mé* = *if I drank*, *a d'ól mé* = *that I drank*)
- d' is **not** used preceding dependent verb forms (i.e. if other verbal particle (*níor, nár, ar, gur* etc.) are needed, e.g.: *níor ól mé* = *I didn't drink*, *gur ól mé* = *which I drank*)
- d' is **not** used preceding the autonomous verb form (Saorbhriathar) in the preterite.

It is possible (in Munster) to use the long form *do*. *Do* would incur an h-prefix, which sometimes also occurs without *do*: *do hóladh / (h)óladh* = *onr drank*

On the other hand, in the conditional/imperfect, d' is used: *d'óltaí* = *one used to drink*, *d'ólfaí* = *one would drink*

- d' preceding other words than verbs is an abbreviation of the possessive pronoun *do* = *your* or the prepositions de = *of* and do = *to* preceding vowels

Caibidil a Ceathair Déag:

Initial Mutations (na hAthruithe Tosaigh)

Causes of Initial Mutations in Irish

The main cause is the Irish way of speaking: the words of a sentence are pulled together and spoken **without a pause**. Pauses are almost always avoided, and some sentences seem so as if spoken as a single word. (there seems to be a quasi "*horror vacui*" = a fear of nothingness.)

The individual words affect each other in pronunciation (what is generally known as "**Sandhi**"), similar as it occurs in French (called there "*liaison*", comp.: *les amis* [lezami]), in order to enable this unhindered flow of speech.

On the other hand, in German there is a short pause made after almost every word so that the beginnings and ends of the words remain separate and unchanged. It's important to note that those words in German beginning in a vowel actually don't begin with a vowel sound but a glottal stop, which is not the case in Irish. Another thing: Similar to the French, certain unspoken phonemes "reappear" under certain circumstances (e.g. the most often mute *s* in *les*). But as opposed to French, in Irish, these letters are mostly no longer included in the spelling. They make themselves known via the "*t-, h-, n-prefix*", "eclipsis" or similar phenomena.

Also different than French are these changes to the beginnings of words to their own right, and being used to express grammatical relationships to other words.

lenition

These mutations eased the flow of speech because through it, the obstacles presented by the stop sounds disappeared. Stops cause a stop in the flow of air, and in turn hinder the flow of speech.

The cause of **lenition** was generally in Early Irish the **position of the consonant between two vowels**, as well as within the word as over the word "limits."

If the word ended in a vowel and the next began in a consonant + vowel (which was mostly the case), this consonant was now between 2 vowels and was lenited.

Today the once final vowels have been mostly discarded, but lenition became in time a tool of grammar, being then used where once a vowel suffix once stood.

For **example**: the feminine article was originally longer and ended in the vowel *-a* (***sinda**). In time, it was shortened to *an*, but the following lenition was retained. This explains lenition of feminine nouns after the article.

The masculine article (***sindos**) was ***sindi** in the genitive singular and thus incurred lenition.

The masculine possessive pronoun **a** is an old genitive singular of the personal pronoun. Just like the genitive singular of the masc. articles, lenition is also required afterwards.

Feminine nouns once ended in the nominative preferably in the vowel *-a* (as is the case in Latin), this is why the following adjectives and nouns in the genitive are still lenited today (while the lenition today is generalised and also occurs following those feminine nouns, which didn't once end in *-a*).

eclipsis and n-prefix

eclipsis and the **n-prefix** occur where today or once the **preceding word ended in a nasal** (m, n, ng, mostly n).

So were the endings of e.g. **numbers** *seacht* = *seven*, *naoi* = *nine* and *deich* = *ten* earlier surely in a nasal (comp. Latin *septem*, *novem*, *decem*). This *-m* is long since erased from Irish; but it lives on in the modern eclipsis. (e.g. *seacht mbád* = *seven boats*). After *ocht* = *eight* is also, in analogy to 7,9,10 eclipsed, although

the number 8 never ended in a nasal.

Because the preposition "i" once, as in German, was written "in", thus ending in a nasal, explains its following eclipsis. On the other hand, the eclipsis also made the -n in "in" superfluous, so that the preposition is today whittled down to "i".

It is easy to understand that the conjunction *go* (also today a rare preposition in the sense of "with") causes eclipsis when one views the originally related Latin counterpart *cum*. Also *go* (Old Irish *co*) ended once in a nasal.

Eclipsis was produced by these final nasals as a way of simplifying speech. A voiceless consonant is difficult to speak after -m or -n, and so it was simply re-voiced (e.g. p to b, t to d), because -mb- and -nd- are easier to speak than -mp- and -nt-. In time, many of the end nasals disappeared but the initial mutation remained and was then generalised as a grammatical tool (e.g. also stretched on other words, e.g. *ocht* = *eight*).

After **preposition + article**, either eclipsis or lenition can occur, depending on the dialect. Why?: The original accusative singular form of the articles were ***sindon** (masc.) and ***sindan** (fem.). It ended then with an -n as a nasal, and this is why today eclipsis follows: *ar an mbord* = on the table.

Just as in German, there was the possibility of the accusative or the dative after certain prepositions (depending on the desired meaning: motion or position, in German e.g.: *auf dem Tisch* and *auf den Tisch*). The dative form of the article was now ***sindu** (masc.) or ***sinda** (fem.), which of course caused lenition (this is why in Ulster today still following preposition and article lenition is always used).

Today this lexical differentiation between dative and accusative following a preposition no longer is used. After most prepositions now follows always the dative or what remains of it. If lenition or eclipsis is used, ist now more a question of dialect (Connacht/Munster: *ar an mbord* = *on(to) the table*, Ulster: *ar an bhord* = *on(to) the table*)

In the **genitive plural**, the article once was also ***sindan**, from which eclipsis resulted.

The plural possessive pronouns **ár**, **bhur**, **a** are old genitive plural forms of the personal pronoun, probably ended in a nasal as well and therefore still cause eclipsis today.

t-prefix

The **t-prefix** is the **remains of the -d- of the article**, which is otherwise unseen.

As was mentioned by lenition, the article in earlier times was quite a bit longer.

The masculine article used to be ***sindos**. [1] This was shortened over time to the modern *an*.

The suffix -os was lost before consonants, also the -d- fell out as "superfluous" (better said: -nd melted into -n) Preceding a vowel, the suffix -os was lenited, spoken as [oh] and lengthened the lifespan of the (post the omission of the -o-) leading d, in which it hardened the -d- to -t (*sindos* > *sindoh* > *sindh* > *sint*)

The -d in ***sindos** thus remained longer preceding vowels (***sind**) and became unvoiced ("t"), so approximately ***sint**, it lost additionally its s (***int**). Today this is written a bit differently (**an t-**, e.g.: *an t-ull* = *the apple*).

The feminine article ended in a (***sinda**). A following word with s was lenited to sh, spoken [h] (e.g. ***sinda shulis**). Later on, the a was also dropped. The d of the article was devoiced through the [h] to t, the [h] itself became mute (***sint'** *shulis* > ***int'** *shulis*) Today, one says and writes this as *an tsúil* = *the eye*.

h-prefix

Today one can explain the **h-prefix** as a "pronunciation help between two vowels" and it is also used in this way.

Actually it is quite often the **lenited final -s** of the preceding word, which is no longer to be seen. (lenited s becomes a spoken [h]).

As in the other Indo-European languages, endings in -s were once very prevalent (comp. the Latin suffix -us, Greek -os, Lithuanian -as, Old Celtic -os)

e.g. the possessive pronoun of the 3rd person sg. fem. *a* = *her*: It was once ***esjas**, whose s between vowels became lenited to [h]. This is why there is today an h-prefix preceding a vowel after *a* = *her*.

Similarly, the feminine article in the genitive singular ended in -s (***sindas**), so that also here an h-prefix follows.

The (feminine) nominative plural article *na* was once also ***sindas**.

The masculine nominative article was then ***sindos**, but this suffix -os was probably weaker in its vowel and had another effect: the

leniting final -s made the -d , after the devoicing of -o- , voiceless to -t, so that the *t-prefix* preceding a vowel remained (sindos > sindoh > sind-h > sint > an t-)

(Note: with * the old or antiquated forms also consciously denoted orthographically as incorrect forms)

[1] The similarity of *sindos* to the modern demonstrative pronoun *sin* is not coincidental.

Also in German, article and demonstrative pronoun stem from one source.

(comp. by: *das Haus* the word "das" could be the article or a demonstrative pronoun [= that house]. In the sentence: *Das ist ein Haus* , the "das" is always the demonstrative pronoun)

Caibidil a Cúig Déag:

Root Inflexion (Infhilleadh na fréimhe)

Caolú Palatalisation

Leathnú Depalatalisation

Coimriú Syncopation

Díghlórú change from voiced to an unvoiced consonant

There are many changes of the final sound or **inflexions (infhillteacha)** some with various flexion suffixes, e.g. plural suffixes like *-tha*, *-a*, *-í*, *-anna*, *-acha* or verb suffixes like *-im*, *-ann*, *-tar* etc. This is known as **outward flexion**.

This is the case in all inflected languages.

The more importantly described flexions are those in the *word stem* or *word root*, which many languages demonstrate. In German these are the phonetic mutation progressions (Ab- and Umlaute) like "*lauf, lief, ging, gegangen*", etc. One terms this as **inner flexion**

Those root changes typical in Irish are similar to the German mutations through old, yet often lost suffixes, which once affected the word root (comp. dt. Fuß - Füße, ir. fear - fir [originally: fer - firi])

As opposed to German, in Irish the changes in *slenderness* of the final consonants are in the foreground and not the vowels (comp. *bord - boird* [*bord - bord'*])

Syncopation ist also to be found in German (e.g. wechseln, ich wechsle)

Palatalisation (an Caolú)

Caolú (ir.) = slenderisation (of a consonant)

Palatum (lat.) = palate; slender consonants are formed more in the hard (bony) part of the palate.

This is no more than that a **broad** consonant is replaced with its **slender** component.

Because slender and broad consonants are denoted orthographically by appropriate vowels in their proximity, it follows that:

In *written Irish* this is mostly noted by **an inserted i.**

e.g. *bád* (a boat) *becomes* *báid* (of a boat or boats)

So, the *broad d* in *bád* becomes *slender d* in *báid*.

Partially there are also certain mutations necessary for the preceding vowels, that then again almost remind one on the German Ablaute and Umlaute:

vowel	-ea-	-ea-	-éa-	-ia-	-ío-	-io-	-iu-
becomes	-i-	-ei-	-éi-	-éi-	-í-	-i-	-i-
example	man	horse	bird	fish	chirp	fair	wet
nom.	fear	each	éan	iasc	bíog	fíonn	fliuch
palat.	fir	eich	éin	éisc	bíge	finn	fliche

e.g.: *fear* (a man) *becomes* *fir* (of a man or men)

So, the *broad r* in *fear* becomes *slender r* in *fir*

Additional vowel mutations (real Ablaute e.g. *mac - mic*) are more the exception than the rule.

Caolú aids in the formation of

- the genitive and vocative in the 1st declension of nouns (e.g. an fear - an fhir - a fhir)
- the weak plural of the 1st declension of nouns (e.g. an fear - na fir)
- the genitive of the 2nd declension of nouns + suffix -e (e.g. an lámh - na láimhe)
- the (old) dative and the dual of the 2nd declension of nouns (e.g. an lámh - ar an láimh - dhá láimh)
- the genitive of the 1st declension of adjectives, in the feminine form + suffix -e (e.g. fliuch - fliche)

Depalatalisation (an Leathnú)

Leathnú (ir.) = broadening (of a consonant)

Synonyms: *velarisation, attenuation.*

This means a "slender" consonant is replaced with a "broad" consonant.

(opposite principle of palatalisation)

In *written Irish* **mostly only an i is omitted** :

e.g. abhainn (a river) *becomes* abhann (of a river)

So, the *slender -nn* in abhainn becomes *broad -nn* in abhann

Sometimes more complex mutations need to be taken in the vowels (**i zu ea**, etc., partially the reverse of palatalisation, s.o.)

vowel	-ei-	-éi-	-i-	-í-	-ui-
becomes	-ea-	-éa-	-ea-	-ío-	-o-
example	bite	tinker	honey	whistle	blood
nom.	greim	tincéir	mil	feadaíl	fuil
depalat.	grema	tincéara	meala	feadaíola	fola

e.g.: Éirinn (Ireland) *becomes* Éireann (of Ireland)

so, the *slender -nn* in Éirinn becomes a *broad -nn* in Éireann

Leathnú aids in the formation of:

- the genitive of the nouns of the 3rd declension (e.g. mil - meala)
- the genitive of many nouns of the 5th declension (e.g. Éirinn - Éireann)
- the genitive of the adjectives of the 2nd declension (e.g. bródúil - bródúla)
- the form of some verbal nouns (e.g. cuir - cur)

Syncopation (an Coimriú)

Coimriú (ir.) = (syllable-)shortening, also *Meánchoimriú* = middle(syllable-)shortening
 syncopation (griech.) = shrinking, shortening

Syncopation occurs in bi- and polysyllabic words.

Syncopation means that **the vowel of the last syllable of the stem is omitted** . (e.g. *iníš zu insíonn*)
 So, the originally bisyllabic word stem is shortened and monosyllabic (*iníš zu ins-*)

This always occurs when the following **3 characteristics** come together:

1. the vowel of the last syllable is unstressed and without accent
 (e.g. the second *i* in *iníš* = *tell*)
2. this vowel is between a liquid (**l, m, n, r**) and another consonant
 (e.g. *n* in *iníš*)

3. to such a polysyllabic word an **additional** conjugation, declension, plural or other *suffix* is added (e.g. *inis* + suffix *-íonn*: *insíonn*)

There are a few **rules**:

- Syncopation also leads to a mutation of vowels/consonants in the first syllable, if the rule "[Caol le caol](#)" (slender with slender) requires:
e.g.: *ramhar* - *raimhre*, *domhain* - *doimhne*
- nn, ll, rr** are shortened to **l, n, r**. e.g. *aoibhinn* - *aoibhne* (not: *aibhnne*)
- If combinations occur through syncopation like **ln / nl / dl**, then **ll** is written instead. Instead of **dn / nd** then **nn**.
e.g.: *álainn* - *áille* (instead of: *áilne*) or *ólann* - *ólla* (instead of: *ólna*)
(The exception in written Irish of a retained -dl-: *codail* - *codladh*. The pronunciation of *codladh* is however [kol@], as if one had written **colladh*).

a few important **examples**:

- preceding conjugation suffixes of syncopating verbs, mostly of the [2nd conjugation ending in -il, -ir, -in](#), partially also -is (if a l, m, n, r comes in front of it, see above)
e.g.: *cosain* - *cosnaíonn*, *imir* - *imríonn*, *inis* - *insíonn*, etc.
- in the [declination of adjectives](#): e.g. the feminine genitive suffix -e, plural suffix-a, -e:
e.g.: *an bhean ramhar* = *the fat woman* - *na mná raimhre* = *of the fat woman* - *na mná ramhra* = *the fat women*

Some words resist syncopation: e.g. *freastail*: *freastalaíonn* instead of incorrectly **freastlaíonn* (possibly because -stal- sounds better than -stl-). The only thing that helps here is a feel for the language.

change from voiced to unvoiced (an Díghlórú)

This only occurs before an ending that begins with [h] beginnen. It is especially the future suffixes with *f* and verb- and verbal adjective endings with *th*-.

The voiced consonants *b*, *d*, *g*, *bh*, *mh* are devoiced by the [h], which [h] mutes, *-bth-* is then spoken [p]. Often, even the spelling is simplified since the spelling reform: *dth* > *dt*, *mhth* > *f*, *bhth* > *f*

	b	d	g	bh	mh
ending with f-	-bf-	-df-	-gf-	-bhf-	-mhf-
ending with th-	-bth-	-dt- (-dth-)	-gth-	-f-(-bhth-)	-f-(-mhth)-
pronunciation	[p]	[t]	[k]	[f]	[f]
examples	<i>scuabfaidh sé</i> <i>scuabtha</i>	<i>goidfidh sé</i> <i>goidte</i>	<i>pógfaidh sé</i> <i>pógha</i>	<i>scriobhfaidh sé</i> <i>scriofa</i>	<i>snámhfaidh sé</i> <i>snáfa</i>
translation	<i>he will sweep</i> <i>swept</i>	<i>he will steal</i> <i>stolen</i>	<i>he will kiss</i> <i>kissed</i>	<i>he will write</i> <i>written</i>	<i>he will swim</i> <i>swum</i>

One should not confuse the consonant cluster *-bf-* within a word with the *bhf-* as an eclipse of *f-*. The latter is spoken [v/w].

Caibidil a Sé Déag:

the Phonology (an Fhóneolaíocht)

the sounds of Irish

[vowels](#)

[diphthongs](#)

[consonants](#)

[glides](#)

[stress](#)

[stress within a word](#)

[cadencing](#)

In **phonology** the *sounds* of a language are described, the written result of these sounds does not belong to that and is secondary.

The Irish *written language* is for this reason discussed separately in the chapter [orthography](#), with (further) guidelines about the pronunciation.

Note about the depiction:

The depiction of the sounds should actually be done using the IPA symbols (IPA = international phonetic alphabet).

But this is dependent on the font, and is still not feasible in HTML in a way in which all, regardless of what platform they use, can see.

It is for this reason that there are partially "substitutes" used here.

Some of these symbols are common as modified IPA symbols for Irish, so the apostrophe ['] for slender (palatal) consonants and with that the forms [x'] for [ç], [s'] for [ʃ] and [z'] instead of [ʒ]; as well as [L], [N], [R] for "tensed l, n, r" (in the IPA these are normally used for depicting other phonemes).

The fricatives [f] and [v] are partially spoken bilabial, partially also labiodental, for both the Irish transcriptions are normally without a difference [f] and [v] are used (actually according to the IPA they are only for the labiodental variants, [ɸ] and [β] would be the bilabial symbols).

As actually also in the modified IPA not-conform replacement symbols, there remains here only [ng] for the velar nasal (in IPA ein [ŋ]), [@] for the neutral vowel (in IPA a [ə]), [å] for a back a (in IPA a [ɑ]) as well as [?] for the glottal stop (in IPA a [?] glottaler Verschlusslaut]).

I don't have here any listenable examples (in form of soundfiles) of the sounds of Irish but there are some to be heard on the website [Fios Feasa: The Sounds of Irish](#) (there one finds the sounds of the Munster dialect)

the vowels (na gutaí)

There is a difference made between long and short vowels.

In the artificial *Lárchamúint* (central dialect) there are:

- long vowels: [a:], [e:], [i:], [o:], [u:]
- short vowels: [a], [e], [i], [o], [u], [@]

The vowels [a], [o], [u] count as *broad*

The vowels [e] and [i] count as *slender*

Not only those vowels marked with an accent in writing (á, é, í, ó, ú) are long. Also preceding certain consonants the vowels are lengthened (e.g. preceding -rd, -nn, -rr, -ll, -m), if the word is monosyllabic, also further combinations lead to vowel lengthening (see [orthography](#))

In Ulster, *all* vowels in an unstressed syllable are short, otherwise long vowels remain clear (and are not reduced to [@], as it happens with short vowels).

The [a:] is often spoken in Munster/Connacht as a "back a", similar to the scandinavian "å" (technically: an open back unrounded vowel). In Ulster it is an [æ:], only the Láirchanúint uses a normal long [a:]. Furthermore, in Connacht/Munster there is the [æ] instead of an [a] in some combinations.

In Ulster, there is partially the [ɯ], which is an unrounded ü-sound (technically: a closed back unrounded vowel), in Irish orthography "ao", which is otherwise appearing as [i:] (Standard, Connacht) or [e:] (Munster), e.g. *saor* [si:r], [se:r], [sɯr]

the neutral vowel (schwa) [ə]

- It is an "unarticulated" short sound, neither a nor e nor i. In German one calls it the "Murmel-e".
- In phonetic transcriptions it is a (according to the IPA-Umschrift) [ə], but here a [@] is substituted (Blume = [Blu:m@])
e.g.: *broad* = *leathan* [l'æh@n], *eile* = *other* [el'@]
(in some transcriptions an i-coloured "slender" schwa-sound is separated from the standard schwa.
e.g.: *other* = *eile* [el'i]. But, this is actually not audible. *eile* sounds almost like the German word *Elle*. With that, the transcription [el'@] is preferable.)
- In an unstressed syllable, in many Irish dialects, *every* short vowel is spoken as a schwa ([@])
- The **aux. vowel**: Sometimes, the schwa sound is not written, but spoken as an auxiliary vowel between certain consonants (see there):
e.g.: *blue* = *gorm* [gor@m], *name* = *ainm* [an@m']
- **Elision**: If in spoken Irish, a [@] comes up against another vowel, the [@] is omitted. Should two [@] follow after another, only one [@] is spoken.
e.g.: *Tá sé ag ól* = *he drinks* [ta: s'e:go:l] not [ta: s'e: @g o:l]
baile áillainn = *pretty town* [bal'a:l'inn] not [bal'@ a:l'inn]
na gaotha aduaidh = *the north wind* [n@ gi:h@du@j] not [n@ gi:h@ @du@j]
The a in ag [@g] or in gaotha [gi:h@] or the e in baile [bal@] is not spoken in such cases.

the diphthongs (na défhogair)

There are the following diphthongs:

- [au] e.g.: *amh* in *amhras* [aur@s] (= doubt)
- [ai] e.g.: *adha* in *radharc* [rairk] (= view)
- [ei] e.g.: *eidh* in *beidh* [b'ei] (= will be)
- [u@] e.g.: *ua* in *fuar* [fu@r] (= cold)
- [i@] e.g.: *ia* in *ciall* [k'i@l] (= sanity)

in some dialects there are also the sounds [oi], [@i], [ui], [ou].

the consonants (na consain)

The consonants are classified depending their point of origin (bilabial, dental, alveolar, velar, glottal) and by their nature of production (plosives = stops, fricatives, nasals, liquids). Many consonants have an unvoiced and a voiced version (e.g.: [p]/[b], [t]/[d], [k]/[g], etc.)

Although, there are no truly aspirated consonants (*k, p, t*, are always aspirated in German)

- **Bilabials:**

- plosives: [p], [b]
- fricatives: [f], [v], [w]
- nasals: [m]

Also [f] and [v] are often spoken bilabially, i.e. they are formed with both the upper and lower lip. (in German these sounds are labiodental, i.e. with the lower lip and the upper row of teeth or vice versa). [w] (a semivowel) is often at the beginning of a word (in Connacht/Donegal) used as the velar form of the (palatal) [v] ; within a word always [v], if spoken as a consonant.

- **Dentals:**

- plosives: [t], [d]
- liquids: [l]
- nasals: [n]

The dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] (equiv to the engl. *th* in *thing* and *that*) no longer exists in Irish (replaced with [h] and [γ])

- **Alveolars:**

- fricatives: [s], [z]
- liquids: [r]

The broad [r] ist a rolled tip-of-the-tongue-r, the slender [r'] is rather complicated.

The broad Irish s is always an unvoiced s [s]

The voiced s-sound ([z]) only appears in foreign words: *zoo* = *zú* [zu:]

(in a few dialects also as an eclipse of the s: e.g.: *ag an tsagart* [eg'@ zagh@rt])

- **Palatoalveolars:**

- fricatives: [ʃ], [ʒ]

The slender s ist always the same as an unvoiced german "sch" ([ʃ]). In transcriptions simply [s'] is used.

The voiced variation [ʒ] only appears in a few foreign words of English origin. In transcriptions, one uses [z'] e.g. *jab* = *job* [d'z'ab] for simplicity.

- **Velars:**

- plosives: [k], [g]
- fricatives: [χ], [γ]
- nasals: [ŋ]

Also those consonants formed on the soft palate (Velum) are divided into broad (velar) and slender (palatal) (see below)

[γ] is equivalent to the modern Greek letter γ (Gamma). A broad [γ] is a "voiced ch", like g in a Berlinerisch "Wagen" or Spanish "Tarragona", a slender [γ'] is the same as a [j] like the German j in "ja".

A broad [χ] like ch in the German "ach", the slender [χ'] is equivalent to [ç] like ch in the German "ich".

- **Glottals:**

- stops: [?]
- fricatives: [h]

The glottal stop, [?], e.g. in the German "Aorta" [a?orta] is virtually unknown to modern spoken Irish.

An abrupt collision of vowels (Hiatus) is avoided. The glottal stop is, however, often still used in traditional Irish vocals (sean-nós), also in Scottish Gaelic it is still quite commonly used (written mostly as *th*)

The disappearance of the glottal stop in Irish leads to a mingling and lengthening of vowels, if consonants then devoiced (e.g. *athair* Standard [ah@r'] but Cois Fháirrge with a voiceless [h]: [æ:r']) [h] appears only as a produkt of lenition of t and s (*th, sh*), as well as the h-prefix. Occasionally, also f is spoken as [h]

[h] connects to voiced [b], [g], [d], [v] and makes these voiceless ([p], [k], [t], [f]), e.g. *sciobhá* [s'kip@] instead of [s'kibh@]

between vowels, [h] always disappears in Cois Fháirrge, and the vowels mingle: e.g. *beatha* [b'ah@] > [b'æ:]

broad and slender (leathan agus caol)

All consonants exist in two forms (with the exception of the [h]):

- broad (velar) consonants: [p], [b], [v]/[w], [f], [m], [t], [d], [n], [l], [r], [s], [z], [k], [g], [x], [γ], [ŋ]
- slender (palatal) consonants: [p'], [b'], [v'], [f'], [m'], [t'], [d'], [n'], [l'], [r'], [s'], [z'], [k'], [g'], [x'], [γ'], [ŋ']

In phonetic transcriptions, a small apostrophe ['] is used to denote the slender variant.

The difference between the two forms is important. The differences are also greater then the equivalent pairs in German or English.

In German, only "ch" in "ach" [ax] (velar) and in "ich" [iç] are woth mentioning, in Irish transcription: [ix']

(palatal))

In Irish, the differences are also to be heard in [d] and [d'] or [t] and [t'] and others (partially, and especially in Ulster, the slender consonants d,t are spoken like affricates: [dj], [tç] or [tʃ]) It becomes especially obvious in the difference between [s] and [s']. A slender [s'] is always spoken like the German "sch" [ʃ].

Specifics:

In combinations like sp-, sf-, sm- at the beginning of a word, the s is always broad. e.g.: *spléach* [sp'l'e:x]

In the following combinations, the 1st consonant is always broad : -cht, -rd, -rl, -rn, -rs, -rt. e.g.: *boichte* [boxt'@] not: [boxt'@]

At the beginning of a word the [r] is always broad: *rí* [ri:]

It is important to note that broad consonants may also stand next to slender vowels and also the other way around: slender consonants next to broad vowels.

In German, this is not possible. There, it is always only similar toned consonants and vowels beside one another (e.g. ach [ax], ich [ix']).

In Irish, the glide comes into use, in order to make this shift from slender to broad, and vice versa, possible.

The difference of broad and slender is made clear in the *orthography* through the neighbouring vowel signs. e.g. seo [s'o], sin [s'in'], airgead [ar'@g'@d], airgid [ar'@g'@d']

The difference between "broad" and "slender" consonants in Irish is equivalent to the difference between "hard" and "soft" consonants in slavic languages.

This is made clear e.g. in Russian, where necessary, through a soft character ь and a hard character ъ : e.g. работать [rabitat'] = to work (soft т [t'] durch ъ); or through "soft" vowels like я, ё and ю and the "hard" vowel ѫ (which is approximately the Irish ao).

tensed l,n,r

The consonants l,n,r are differentiated in some dialects in a tensed form [L], [N], [R] and the non-tensed form [l], [n], [r]. ([m] counts always as tensed, so therefore there's no need of a special notation)

The difference comes roughly in the precision of the pronunciation, [L], [N], [R] are somewhat lengthened, [l], [n], [r] are spoken a bit more lax. [L], [N] are formed by a pressing of the tongue on the front teeth, [l], [n] are produced on the alveolae.

In written Irish, the tensed variant (except at the beginning of a word) often expressed as a double (nn, ll, rr).

Tensed consonants also have an effect on neighbouring vowels:

The "tension" reaches over to the neighbouring vowels. This is why they are either lengthened or diphthongised, if the tensed consonants are in a stressed syllable at the end of a word (or preceding further consonants):

In Munster, the difference tensed/non-tensed was lost, only the vowels show diphthongisation or lengthening: e.g. *donn* [daun] instead of [doN], *ceann* [k'aun] instead of [k'aN], *fillte* [fi:l't'@] instead of [fiL't'@].

Only in Ring and Clare is [i] also diphthongised: e.g. *cill* [k'ail]

In some dialects, (bes. Connemara) there is a lengthening and diphthongisation also in a sustaining of the tensed consonants, but the diphthongisation is only with middle vowels

e.g. *donn* [dauN], *ceann* [k'å:N], *fillte* [fi:L't'@]

In Ulster there is only lengthening, no diphthongs,

e.g. *donn* [du:N], *ceann* [k'æ:N], *fillte* [fi:L't'@]

In the Lárchanúint, the tensed consonants are completely ignored and handled like the non-tensed ones, and the vowels remain mostly short,

e.g. *donn* [don], *ceann* [k'an], *fillte* [fil't'@]

at the beginning of a word:

Where the differences between tensed and non-tensed consonants remain, then it also applies that if [L], [N] at the beginning of a word as the unlenited form, then [l], [n] as the lenited form,

e.g.: *the book* = *an leabhar* [@ L'aur], *my book* = *mo leabhar* [m@ l'aur]

tensed n [N] is also used in the eclipsed form (except ng): e.g. *ten doors* = *deich ndoras* [d'e: Nor@S], *ten*

fish = *deich n-iasc* [d'e: N'i@sk]

Only the word *le* appears resistant to start with a non-tensed l [l@]

the glides (na sleamhnóga)

In Irish, slender (palatal) consonants can appear neighbouring broad vowels ([a], [o], [u]) as well as broad (velar) consonants next to slender vowels ([e], [i]).

When spoken, there then occur deliberate short glides, that don't really correlate to real phonemes: There is a palatal glide [j] and a velar glide [u]. In transcriptions, it is normally not included extra, just the palatal consonant is marked with an apostrophe ['] instead.

e.g.: *beo* [b'o] actually [b'j'o] (slender consonant b + broad vowel o)

e.g.: *buí* [bi:] actually [bui:] (broad consonant b + slender vowel i)

In the case of a palatal s [s' bzw. ʃ] there is no glide: *seo* [s'o] or [ʃo]

There also lacks a notation in *written Irish* of these glides. Only the *broadness* or *slenderness* of the consonants is denoted by the voiceless vowel signs: (e.g. the u in *buí* [bi:] or the e in *beo* [b'o:]).

These vowel signs could therefore be taken as a hint of such a glide and are sometimes also known as "sleamhnóg".

In some dialects, an [u] appears between some broad consonants (esp. [b, m]) and [a], e.g. *baile* [bual'@], *maith* [mua].

stress (an bhéim)

stress within a word (an bhéim ghutha)

Depending on the stress, one can differentiate into 2 dialect groups:

1. Connacht and Ulster:

In these dialects, the stress lies always **on the 1st syllable**.

In polysyllabic words, the syllables with long vowels get a secondary stress.

Only a few words are stressed on the 2nd syllable (in combinations, e.g. with unstressed prefixes like a-, is-, mostly adverbs): *aréir, anocht, istigh, atá*, some foreign words e.g. *tobac*)

Other prefixes get the main stress, intensifying prefixes (e.g. an- = very) are stressed right after the following syllable.

2. Munster:

Here, the rules governing stress are more complicated.

Mostly, it's also a case of **stress on the 1st syllable**, but then

- **stress on the 2nd syllable if**
 - the 2nd syllable contains a long vowel or a diphthong.
e.g.: *cailín, fuinneog*
 - the 2nd syllable is *-ach(t)* and no long vowel is in the 1st and 3rd syllable.
e.g. *salach, donacht*
- **stress on the 3rd syllable if**
 - the 3rd syllable contains a long vowel or diphthong and the other syllables are short
e.g. *tuismitheoir*

cadencing

constantly unstressed words

The following parts of speech are always unstressed (because they are proclitic or enclitic):

- *personal and possessive pronouns* (as opposed to English or German!)

If the attention of the listener should be drawn to these words, it is not the stress but (also unstressed) emphatic suffixes are used:

e.g.: *mise* = *me(!)*, *mo leabhsa* = *my(!) book*, *eisean* = *him(!)*.

An additional possibility is the shift in the word order in the clause:

e.g.: *is mise a rinne é* = *I(!) did it*

- *prepositions*
- *verbal particles and conjunctions*
- *the article*
- *the adverbial particle go*
- *the copula*

graduation of the stress within a sentence

- subjects (except the pronoun) are emphasized stronger than the verb.

e.g.: *Itheann an fear* = The man eats.

- in copular clauses, the predicate is emphasized stronger than the subject.

e.g.: *Is é an múinteoir an fear sin.* = That man is the teacher.

- objects are emphasized stronger than the subject

e.g.: *Itheann an fear an leite* = The man eats the porridge.

This is not the case, if the subject is a noun, but the object is only a pronoun.

e.g.: *Itheann an fear é* = The man eats it.

- Genitive attributes, attributive and predicate adjectives and appositions are emphasized stronger than the word they modify.

e.g.: *an cailín deas Éirennach* = the nice Irish girl

- Numbers are stressed the same as the word they modify (e.g. *dhá chapall* = 2 horses), in the case of two part numbers at least the 2nd part is stronger (e.g. *dhá chapall déag* = 12 horses)

- adverbs and adverbial phrases are emphasized stronger than the verb.

e.g.: *Tá mé i mo chónaí i nGaillimh* = I live in Galway.

interrogative sentences

In English, interrogative clauses are denoted by an alteration in the intonation (comp. e.g.: "He's here." and "He's here?"). In Irish this is not commonplace.

Caibidil a Seacht Déag

Irish Orthography (Litriú na Gaeilge)

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The orthography of Irish is at first a bit confusing.

In addition, the pronunciation and written Irish are not identical, especially the pronunciation varies from dialect to dialect.

Although, the order in which letters appear is not random, but follows specific rules.

One can just as well develop a feeling for how a written word is to be pronounced, spelling and pronunciation are certainly closer knit as in English or French.

the alphabet (an Aibítir)

á b c ò e f g h i l m n o p ñ r t ú

The names of the letters resemble those from the German:

á, bé, cé, dé, é, eif, gé, héis, í, já, cá (k), eil, eim, ein, ó, pé, cú (q), ear, eas, té, ú, vé, wae, ex, yé, zae

Old tree names were once the alphabet, as taken over from the Ogham Alphabet:

a (ailm = white fir), b (beith = birch), c (coll = hazel), d (dair = oak), e (edad/eabhadh = poplar), f (fern/fearn = alder), g (gath/gort = ivy), h (uath = hawthorn), i (idad/iodhadh = yew), l (luis = rowan), m (muin = vine), n (nin/nion = ash), o (onn = gorse), p (peith = dwarf alder), r (ruis = holander), s (sail = willow), t (tinne/teithne = holly), u (úr = heather)

The Irish Alphabet consists of:

- **vowels (gutai)** a, e, i, o, u
with an **acute accent (sineadh fada)** shows the length of the vowel: á, é, í, ó, ú
Although some vowels without accent be pronounced as long.
- **consonants (consain)** b, c, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, s, t
The **consonant h** serves as a notation lenition (bh, ch, dh, fh, gh, mh, ph, sh, th) and as the h-prefix (ha, he, hi, ho, hu), otherwise only to be found in foreign words.
The **consonants j, q, v, w, x, y, z** appear only in a few foreign words: . There isn't a **k** (even the name of k is written with c : cá)

In old script there are also certain abbreviations in use, taken from tironic notes, a medieval short hand.
Especially common is the symbol for agus (and):

ঁ = æs ur
 Seán ঁ Síle = Seán agus Síle

In modern writings, this is replaced by a 7 (e.g. 7rl. = agus araile = and so on).

Still common is .i. the sign for id est, in English i.e.. Written out it would be in Irish: *eadhon* = *es (is)* (an emphatic form of *ea*)

Caol le caol agus leathan le leathan

In English "**slender with slender and broad with broad**"

This is the most important rule in Irish spelling.

It is also to be found in Scottish Gaelic.

e, é, i, í are termed in Irish as **slender vowels (gutáí caola)**

a, á, o, ó, u, ú and also the ligature **ae** are termed as **broad vowels (gutáí leathana)**

Those "slender" vowels are accompanied by consonants which are **slender (consain chaola)**

And "broad" vowels are accompanied by consonants which are **broad (consain leathana)**

In German a slender consonant can be preceded by a slender vowel then follows by a broad one, differences in the pronunciation of the consonants are hardly noticed and are unimportant for the meaning.

Still, such differences are there: (i.e. im *ch* in *ich* and *ach*). In Irish, these differences are much more evident.

In Irish, it goes like this:

preceding and directly following broad consonants only a broad vowel is allowed.

preceding and directly following slender consonants only a slender vowel is allowed.

With that, it becomes very clear if the consonant is to be pronounced slender or broad.

i.e. combinations like *abe* or *abi* are next to impossible in Irish.

Possible is only e.g. *aba*, *abo*, *abu*, *abae* (broad b) or *ebi*, *ebe*, *ibi*, *ibe* (slender b)

What's the point?

While in German, one has consonants that automatically fit to the accompanying vowels (think "ich" and "ach"), in Irish a broad consonant can directly follow a slender vowel and vice versa; the consonants are independent of the vowels.

This is only true of the *spoken* language.

In the written language, there would be no clarity as to if a consonant is broad or slender, if it were not for this rule.

This clarity is very much needed and is made possible in writing through the use of vowels. It is for this reason that broad consonants may only be framed by broad vowels, and slender consonants only by slender vowels.

Many written vowels serve only as a marker of the "broadness" or "slenderness" of the neighbouring consonants. I.e. vowels are inserted, which are *not to be spoken!*

examples

- between a broad vowel and slender consonant an **i** is inserted.
e.g.: *báid* = *boats*
- between **í** and broad consonant an **o** is inserted.
e.g.: *bíodh* = *it shall be*
- between **é** and broad consonant an **a** is inserted.
e.g.: *féar* = *grass*

- between a slender consonant and a an e is inserted.
e.g.: *fear* = *man*, *fearr* = *better*
- between a slender consonant and o an e is inserted.
e.g.: *teo* = *warmer*
- instead of ó after slender consonants you write eo.
e.g.: *éireoidh mé* = *I will rise*
- between a slender consonant and u an i is inserted.
e.g.: *fliuch* = *wet*

Depending if a broad or slender consonant is used, *words differ* often in their **meaning, number or case**:

examples:

e.g. *bád* = *a boat*, *báid* = *boats, of a boat*(gen.)
the i in *báid* only serves to mark d as slender, it is not spoken [ba:d']
e.g. *biodh* = *it shall be*
the o in *biodh* denotes the dh as broad, and is not spoken [b'i:x]

It is through this that many vowels appear in written Irish.

This rule is practised consequently.

In compound words this rule is not put in use (e.g. *neamhbheo* = *neamh + beo*). Also with adverbs like *arís*, *ansin*, *anseo*, *ansiúd*, *aneas*, *aniar* a.o. as well as prepositinoal pronouns like *ina*, *lena* are originally also contractions, so that the rule does not take effect. There are hardly any other exceptions, and if so, then well substantiated. e.g.: *ospidéal* (s in sp- always is broad, therefore a broad vowel preceding sp, a slender vowel following)

Pronunciation and Spelling (*Fuaimniú agus Litriú*)

About the usage of vowels as a marker of the broadness or slenderness of consonants see above.

For information on Irish phonetics see [Phonology](#)

The following are only suggestions of the whole, without wanting to or being able to explain the pronunciation in full (due to the great variation in the dialects)

ao: ao is spoken like a long e [e:] (in Munster) or like a long i [i:] (in Connacht, Ulster, Standard). Despite the pronunciation it counts as broad, and is also framed by broad consonants. Should a slender consonant follow, one writes **aoi**. This is always pronounced [i:].

ao used to be, and partially still is pronounced in Donegal as an unrounded [ü].

ae: this is a long e [e:] (most *not* [æ:]). While and despite the appearance of an e, it is considered broad! It is treated almost as one single letter. (prior to the spelling reform it was written "aedhea" e.g. in *Gaedheal > Gael*).

So, an i must follow if the next consonant is slender: **aei**. (e.g.: *Gaeilge* earlier *Gaedhilge*)

ei, éi: Even though e is a slender vowel, it's followed by a (voiceless) i preceding slender consonants: (*éire* = *Ireland* [e:r'@])

ea: the e actually serves only to the slenderness of a possible preceding consonant, so in the standard [a] following slender consonants (*fear* [far]) Although in Connacht it's spoken like the German "ä" [æ (*fear* [fæ])]

Etymologically, it was often the case that e was the spoken part, the later a served the broadness of the following consonant (old ir.: *fer* = *Mann*, new ir.: *fear*)

ai: also often as "ä" [æ]

eo: almost always a long o [o:]. In a few words as a short o [o]: *deoch*, *seo*.

"eo" takes the place of "ó" after slender consonants.

abh, odh, ogh: at the beginning or within a word often like German "au"(ow!) [au] (e.g. *umlabht* = Umlaut)

amh: at the beginning or within a word in Cois Fhairrge also "au" [au], in remaining Connemara more like [av].

adh, agh, eidh: at the beginning or within a word often like the German "ai"(aye) [ai]

aigh, aigh: at the beginning or within a word like the German "ai" [ai]

omh(a): long o [o:]

umh(a): long u [u:]

-th-: actually [h], but in Cois Fháirge the initial h is mostly omitted, neighbouring vowels fuse and become long: *athair* [ah@r'] or [æ:r']

-ch-: slender ch [x'] as an initial often pronounced [h] and treated like th: *fiche* [fih@] or [fi:]

pronunciation of the suffix **-(a)idh, -(a)igh**

-(a)igh appears as a verb root and imperative (e.g. *éirigh* = *climb!*) and as the preterite of the 2nd conjugation (e.g. *d'éirigh sé* = *he climbed*) but also as the genitive of the noun -(e)ach: (e.g. *an mharcáigh* = *of the rider*).

-(a)idh takes its place next to genitive forms of the noun -adh (*an tsamhraidh* = *of summer*) and in prepositional pronouns of the 3rd person masc (*uaidh* = *from him*) as well as in verbal suffixes (e.g. *ólfaidh sé* = *he will drink*)

p.o.s. Munster Connemara Donegal Láchanúint example

all	[ig']	[@]	[i]/[@]	[i:]	shalaigh sé na bróga = he soiled the shoes
-----	-------	-----	---------	------	--

In Ulster, this suffix is spoken [@] in the case of verbs preceding pronouns (mé, tú, sé, etc.) otherwise [i].

The future verb suffix **-óidh** is pronounced in Munster [o:ig], in Connemara only [o:] and in the Láchanúint [o:i:].

In Ulster the old suffix *-ochaidh* is used instead (pronunciation [ahi]/[ah@] or [ohi]/[oh@])

pronunciation of the suffix **-(e)adh**

This suffix performs many functions, not only as verbal noun suffix, but also as a suffix of the analyt. verb form in the imperfect tense (as well as the conditional and imperative) and last but not least as the autonomous form in the preterite.

This is why it is pronounced differently in the dialects, also depending on the function.

The original pronunciation according to the written [að, later [ay]. It is no longer pronounced like this in any of the Gaeltachts (da [γ] only at the beginning of a word).

p.o.s. Munster Connemara Donegal example

Imperfect preceding noun	[@x]	[@x]	[u]	ghlanadh an fear = the man cleaned (habit.)
Imperfect preceding sé/sí/sinn/sibh/siad	[@x]	[@t']	[@t']	ghlanadh sé = he cleaned (habit.)
autonomous form preterite	[@g]*	[u:]	[u]	glanadh an bord = one cleaned the table
verbal noun	[@]	[@]	[u]	Tá sé ag glanadh = he is cleaning (now)

*same in Muskerry and Ring, but in Kerry (Dingle) [@x], in Southwest-Cork (Cléire) [@v]

The Láchanúint form is comparable to that of Connemara.

The Donegal forms apply also to Mayo (autonomous form in Mayo also [@f])

The verb suffix **-ódh** is similar, but with a preceding [i:] (in Munster [i:x], in Connemara [i:@x])

pronunciation of the suffix **-(e)abh, -(e)amh**

This is purely a noun suffix, that appears often in many verbal nouns.

p.o.s. Munster Connemara Donegal Láchanúint example

noun	[@v]	[@]	[u]	[@v]	talamh = ground, ollamh = professor, seasamh = sitting
------	------	-----	-----	------	--

pronunciation of the suffix **-(a)ibh, -(a)imh**

The suffix *-(a)ibh* is the old dative plural suffix of nouns, *-(a)imh* is a noun suffix.

p.o.s. Munster Connacht Donegal Láchanúint example

noun [iv'] [@], [i:] [iv'] [iv'] *do na fearaibh* = for the men, *Gaillimh* = Galway

The pronunciation [i:] in Nord-Connacht (Mayo) and Ulster is (outside of Donegal, now extinct, there also[u:]) commonplace.

In Connemara rather [@] (*Gaillimh* = Galway [gaL'@])

The genitive form **-(a)imhe** is universally pronounced [iv'@] (*Contae na Gaillimhe* = County Galway [koNde: n@ gaL'iv'@])

Double consonants (*consain dhúbailte*)

Only **l, n, r** may be written double: **ll, nn, rr** (only between vowels, next to other consonants only l, n, r)

This affects the pronunciation. So werden e.g. in many dialects vowels in monosyllabic words preceding ll, nn, rr are spoken mostly long or diphthongised. (as opposed to German, where only short vowels precede double consonants)

e.g. *donn* [daun] = brown; *barr* [ba:r] = tip, *fearr* [faur] = better

On the other hand, ll, nn, rr in are in some dialects rather elongated ("stretched") (e.g. *donn* [doN]), but also both (e.g. *donn* [dauN]).

In Munster there is no stretching phenomenon for double consonants, nn is however pronounced (e.g. Waterford) [ng] (e.g. the name of the Gaeltacht found there: *An Rinn* [@ Ri:ng'], engl. ring)

Other consonants appear only once.

Should by compound words or after presyllables it come to pass that other identical consonants follow, this must be prevented with a hyphen.(e.g. *mo chos-sa* = my feet). The hyphen has no effect on the pronunciation: e.g. [m@ xos@]

Also **-rd, -rl, -rn, -m, -ng**, at the end of a word will have a similar effect on preceding vowels as do **-ll, -nn, -rr**. Also in this case, the vowels are lengthened or diphthongised: *cam* [kaum], *ard* [a:rd], etc.

the Neutral- or Schwa-vowel

This vowel is in many languages the most common, and certainly is in Irish.

In only a few languages have made the effort to transcribe this vowel, and so it is lacking in Irish as well.

In German the "e" does the most of the dirty work (like e in Blume [blu:m@], the so-called "mumbly e").

In Welsh it's a non-terminal syllabic "y", that's why there are so many Y's in Welsh.

In Irish is can be an a, e, i, o, or u, and in many dialects close to every short vowel in an unstressed syllable. e.g. *consain leathana* = [cons@n' l'æ@n@]

the Auxilliary Vowel (*an guta cúnta*)

l, n, r are not just any old consonants, but *liquids* and have noch so manche Besonderheit. Here, an important one:

Between l, n, r, following vowels and preceding b, bh, ch, g, m, mh,

(so in combinations like: *lb, nb, rb, lbh, nbh, rbh, lch, nch, rch, lg, ng**, *rg, lm, nm, rm, lmh, nmh, rmh, rn*) one speaks an [@] (spoken wie e in Blume) , but it is never written.

This is the **auxilliary vowel** (*cúnamh* = help) It is also called the **epenthetic vowel** (*epenthetic* = inserted).

*: The consonant cluster *ng* are mostly to denote the velar nasal (like English "ng"), then no aux. vowel is needed.

only in a few cases would one pronounce *n* and *g* separately and only then is an aux. vowel inserted. (e.g. *tháinig* > *thangamair* = we came [han@g@m@r'])

examples: *gorm* [gor@m] = blue; *dearg* [d'ar@g] = red; *leanbh* [l'an@bh] = child; *ainm* [an'@m'] = name; *Colm* [Col@m]; *dorcha* [dor@cha] = dark

If this aux. vowel was to be written, then most likely as "a" or "i": e.g.: *goram, *dearag, *leanabh, *ainim, *Colam, *doracha. But it is not done.

Today the writing of the aux. vowel is only following a double-l,n,r, e.g. *farraige* = sea (earlier *fairrge*)

The aux. vowel allows for easier pronunciation. It is necessary due to the shortness of Irish vowels. (very different from German: e.g. dt."Holm" is easy to pronounce without help, but the dt. o in Holm is much longer as the Irish o in Colm)

In Munster, by cases of e.g. *cn*, *mn*, *gn*, also those at the beginning of a word (mná, gnó, cnámh)[[1](#)] and other connections with l,n,r, an aux. vowel is inserted.

Tongue Twisters like mb, gc, nd, bhf, bp, dt....

such combinations come up due to eclipsis (*urú*). only the 1st consonant is spoken (so m, g, n, bh, b, d in the example)

All those Hs...

The h serves as a notation of lenition (*séimhiú*): **bh, ch, dh, fh, gh, mh, ph, sh, th**

It took the place of the earlier system of [[2](#)] the old script; a dot (*ponc séimhithe*) above the consonants (much clearer)

ḃ	ċ	ḋ	Ḋ	Ṅ	ṁ	ṗ	Ḋ	ċ
bh	ch	dh	fh	gh	mh	ph	sh	th

Here, a [sample text](#) (the Lord's Prayer)

Other usage as the h-prefix: hA, ha, hE, he, hI, hi, hO, ho, hU, hu

Within a word, or the lone h is only common in foreign-/borrowed words (e.g. hata = hat)

small letters in front of uppercase...

e.g.: nA, nE, tS, tA, tE, nD, nG, mB, bhF, bP, hA etc.

In cases of eclipsis and t-h-,n-prefixes of capital letters (e.g. in titles) the added consonant is written small directly followed by the capital letter.

e.g. Poblacht na hÉireann = Republic of Ireland; Tir na nÓg = Land of Youth, Dún na nGall = Donegal
Sometimes in compound words the 2nd part is written large: e.g.: an tSeánGhaeilge = Old Irish

Foreign words

Foreign words are tailored to meet the rules of Irish pronunciation and spelling. In this way they become almost impossible to recognise.

The flood of foreign words comes mostly via English, and their pronunciation of Latin words e.g. is often taken on and then set in writing.

When possible, Irish suffixes or. word stems are used

e.g. teilifísean = television, síceolaíocht = Psychology (*síc* from the Greek *psych* + Irish. *eoláí* = sage+ Irish - *cht* as noun suffix)

the spelling reform

In the 40s, a spelling reform took place, in which relatively thoroughly the written word was matched up with the pronunciation. The problems arising in the dialectical differences, making the necessity of a central "middle of the road" dialect.

With this, the written Irish became more similar to the pronunciation, but a complete congruence is not the case. The artificial *Láircháint* (*central dialect*) came into being as a result of this reform; in which the written Irish mirrors the pronunciation the most.

In the spelling reform, one omitted many of the letters that were voiceless in the majority of dialects, e.g. -ócháidh > -óidh, -uchadh > -ú, -aedhea- > -ae-, -amhail > -uil, -ighe > í, -idhe > í, etc. In addition to this,

there were conventions of spelling, whose roots are in the pronunciation: , *-ighea* > *io*, *ln/nl/dl* > *ll*, *dn/nd* > *nn*, etc.

Parallel to the spelling reform one switched from the Gaelic script ([sample text](#)) to the modern script.

[1] in the North (Connacht, Ulster) this is spoken *[kr; mr; gr]*

[2] In **Old Irish** only the lenited letters **f** and **s** were noted with a dot (the dot was generally used as a sign of deletion, *punctum delens*). Since a lenited f loses its voice, and a lenited s is spoken as h, they were, quasi, "deleted").

lenited **c, p, t** were denoted with an h (**ch, ph, th**), as "ch", "ph", "th" were known from the Latin (or from the Greek).

lenited **b, d, g, m** were completely without notation, because letter combinations like "bh", "dh", "gh" and "mh" were unknown to Latin speaking scholars.

First later, in Classical Irish became the dot over all lenited consonants the rule. Now, in the age of modern script, the h in its place (supposedly because typewriters had no key for dotted letters)

The letters **l, n** are lenitable in spoken Irish, but in the written form they remain unlenited.