



The genitive case: general

In English, *of* is often used to convey the relationship between two words:
a lot of work
a glass of beer
Oh, in the case of possession, 's is used:
a day's work

In Irish, one noun is placed after the other and the second one is usually changed. This second noun is said to be in the genitive case:

obair (work) *a lán oibre (a lot of work)*
beoir (beer) *gloine beorach (a glass of beer)*
lá (day) *obair lae (a day's work)*

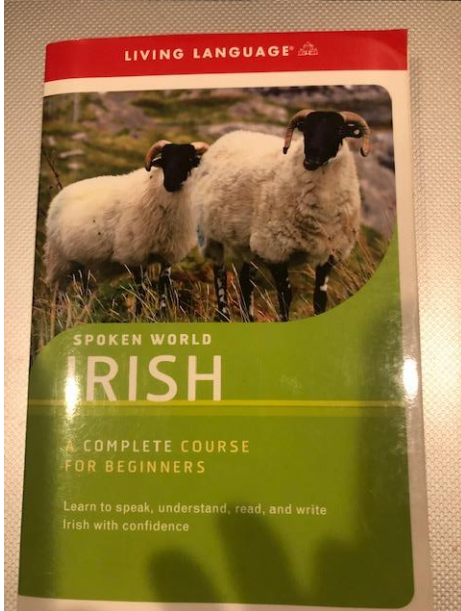
A noun is also in the genitive case when it follows:

a a compound preposition:
an teach (the house) *os comhair an tí (in front of the house)*
an samhradh (the summer) *i rith an tsamhraidh (during the summer)*

b the prepositions *chun*, *dála*, *timpeall*, and *trasa*:
an seál (the story, news) *dála an scéil (by the way)*
an baile (the town) *chun an bhaile (to the town)*
an pháirc (the field) *timpeall na páirce (around the field)*
an spéir (the sky) *trasa na spéire (across the sky)*

c verbal nouns:
an seomra (the room) *gianadh an tseomra (the cleaning of the room)*
an mhúinteoir (the teacher) *ag cineadh an mhúinteora (criticizing the teacher)*

d words used to express quantity:
airgeall (money) *a lán airgid (a lot of money)*
colas (information) *níos mó colais (more information)*
obair (work) *an iomarca oibre (too much work)*



LESSON 2

Mo mhuintir
My family

Family is of utmost importance for the Irish, so let's learn how to talk about it in Irish. In addition, in this lesson, you will also find out how to express ownership by using possessive adjectives and how to count from one to ten. Finally, you'll learn a little more about the importance of family life in Irish culture and about the dialects of Irish.

2A. VOCABULARY WARM-UP

or mhidid *how much, how many*
Sin an méid. *That's all.*
Cén aois thú? *How old are you?*

2B. DIALOGUE

Michael attends a speed-dating event where he meets Amy; they talk about their families.

Michael: An bhfuil muintir mhór agat?
 Amy: Níl ach deirfiúr anáin agam, sin an méid. Deborah is ainm di.
 Michael: An bhfuil páistea ag do dheirfiúr?
 Amy: Tá iníon anáin ag mo dheirfiúr.
 Michael: Cad is ainm di?
 Amy: Emily is ainm di.
 Michael: Ainm deas é sin. Cén aois í?
 Amy: Tá sí trí bliana d'aois. Is callta álainn é. Agus tú féin? An bhfuil muintir mhór agat?

2F. GRAMMAR

Possessive adjectives: mo (my) and do (your)

One of the ways of expressing possession in Irish is by using possessive adjectives. In the dialogue above, *mo* (my) and *do* (your) were used in *do dheirfiúr* (your sister) and *mo dheirfiúr* (my sister).

An bhfuil páistea ag do dheirfiúr?
Does your sister have a child?

Tá iníon anáin ag mo dheirfiúr.
My sister has one daughter.

When the noun begins with consonants *b, c, d, g, m, p, s,* or *t*, these possessive adjectives *mo* and *do* cause lenition: an *h* is placed after the first letter.

<i>dheartháir</i> (brother)	<i>mo dheartháir</i> (my brother)	<i>do dheartháir</i> (your brother)
<i>mháthair</i> (mother)	<i>mo mháthair</i> (my mother)	<i>do mháthair</i> (your mother)

When the noun begins with a vowel or an *f* sound, *mo* is contracted to *m'* and *do* is contracted to *d'*. The possessive adjectives are pronounced together with the noun that follows.

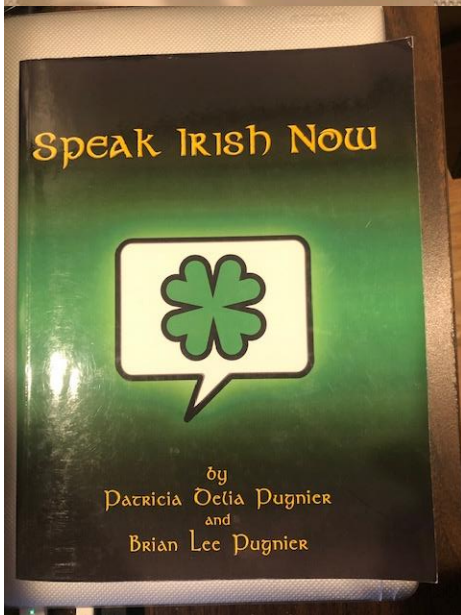
<i>athair</i> (father)	<i>m'athair</i> (my father)	<i>d'athair</i> (your father)
<i>ardóg</i> (thumb)	<i>m'ardóg</i> (my thumb)	<i>d'ardóg</i> (your thumb)
<i>fhacail</i> (tooth)	<i>m'fhacail</i> (my tooth)	<i>d'fhacail</i> (your tooth)

Expressing possession with the verb *bí* (to be) + preposition *ag* (at)

There is no single verb to express the meaning of the English verb *to have* in Irish. Instead, a construction that combines the verb *bí* (to be) with the preposition *ag* (at), that is *to be at*, is used to express the same meaning.

Note that the preposition *ag* fuses with the personal pronouns, when they follow it, to form "prepositional pronouns." For example, *ag* is followed by *mé*, the fused form is *agam* (at me).

Tá deartháir agam.
I have a brother. (lit. There is a brother at me.)



Lesson 70 – Talking About the Past

You've learned a lot of Irish! So far, we've been talking about what things are like now or what's happening now. You'll also want to talk about how something was or what someone was doing. Luckily, putting "tá" [taw] sentences into the past tense is easy.

The Past Tense of "TÁ"

As we learned back in Lesson 2, a basic Irish sentence starts with a verb. Therefore, to turn a present tense sentence into a past tense sentence, all you have to do is change the first word. The past tense of "tá" [taw], "is" is "bhí" [vee], "was."

Examples

Let's take a look at a simple sentence in the present tense, and one in the past tense to compare.

"I am cold."
Tá mé fuar.
 [taw may foo-uh-er]

"I was cold."
Bhí mé fuar.
 [vee may foo-uh-er]

Here are sample sentences using all of the pronouns in the past tense:

"I was cold."
Bhí mé fuar.
 [vee may foo-uh-er]

"You were cold."
Bhí tú fuar.
 [vee too foo-uh-er]

"He was cold."
Bhí sé fuar.
 [free shay foo-uh-er]

"She was cold."
Bhí sí fuar.
 [vee shee foo-uh-er]

Vocabulary

To make your sentences more interesting, you can add words to the end of your sentence that describe when something happened.

yesterday
inné
 [in-nay]

last night
éirí
 [uh-ray]

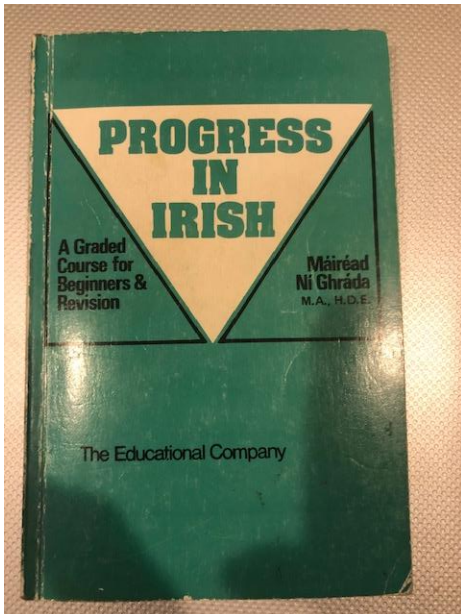
Examples

"My brother was hot yesterday."
Bhí an aimsir te inné.
 [vee an aim-sheer tchey in-nay]

"I was sick last night."
Bhí an aimsir éirí.
 [vee an aim-sheer tchey uh-ray]

"I was reading yesterday."
Bhí Pádraig ag léamh inné.
 [vee pah-drag ah-geen ehg lay-uv in-nay]

"The floor was dirty last night."
Bhí an fóir salach éirí.
 [vee an fóir salach uh-ray]



Foghlaim (Learn) :
 tá, is
 ag siúl, walking
 ag rith, running
 ag ithe, eating
 ag ól, drinking
 ag gáire, laughing
 ag gó, crying
 ag caint, talking
 ag dul, going
 ag teacht, coming

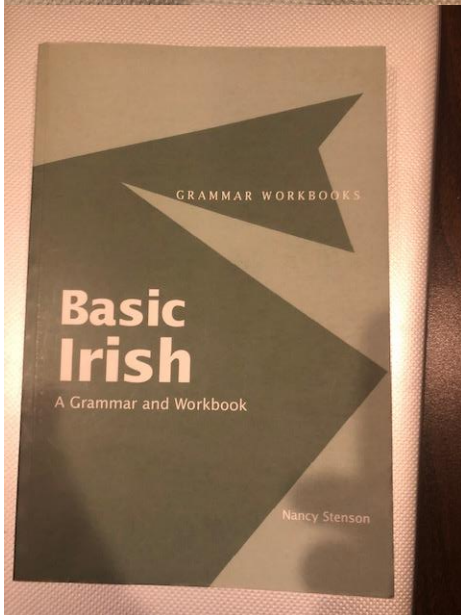
an fear, the man
 an bhean, the woman
 an páiste, the child
 an cailín, the girl
 an buachaill, the boy
 an múinteoir, the teacher
 amach, out
 isteach, in
 abhaile, home
 cé? who?

In Irish the verb comes first :
 Tá Brian ag siúl, Brian is walking.

Léigh (Read) :
 1. Tá Brian ag siúl. 2. Tá Seán ag rith.
 3. Tá Nóra ag ithe. 4. Tá Máire ag ól.
 5. Tá an fear ag gáire. 6. Tá an páiste ag gó.
 7. Tá an bhean ag dul amach.
 8. Tá an cailín ag teacht isteach.
 9. Tá an buachaill ag dul abhaile.
 10. Tá an múinteoir ag caint.

Freagair (Answer) :
 1. Cé tá ag siúl? 2. Cé tá ag rith? 3. Cé tá ag ithe?
 4. Cé tá ag ól? 5. Cé tá ag gáire? 6. Cé tá ag gó?
 7. Cé tá ag dul amach? 8. Cé tá ag teacht isteach?
 9. Cé tá ag dul abhaile? 10. Cé tá ag caint?

Cuir Gaelige air seo (Translate into Irish) :
 1. Nora is running. 2. Brian is talking.
 3. Sean is coming. 4. The girl is crying.
 5. The woman is laughing. 6. The man is coming.
 7. The woman is going home. 8. The child is eating.
 9. The boy is drinking. 10. Nora is coming in.
 11. Eamann is going out. 12. Niall is coming home.



UNIT EIGHT
 place-names

Like personal names, Irish place-names typically come in both Irish and English versions. Most English versions of place-names rely on transliteration (Anglicizing the pronunciation and respelling it, ignoring the meaning of the name).

Traditional Irish place-names are typically composed of phrases that include a term referring to some geographical feature (a hill, valley, lake, etc.) or architectural structure of note in the region (church, castle, fort), followed by a descriptive term or name. The repeated use of certain geographical terms gives Irish place-names their characteristic flavour.

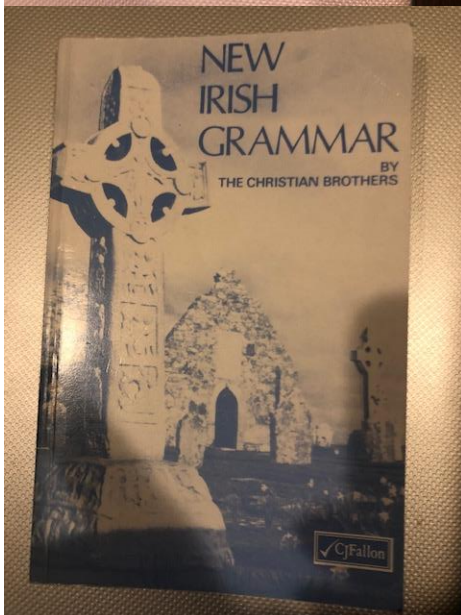
Baile 'townland', 'village' is one of the most common initial terms. It combines with various other words:

Adjectives **An Baile Glas** Ballyglass (lit. green village)
Names **Baile an Fheirtéaraigh** Ballyferrier (lit. Ferriter's town)
Other nouns **Baile an Toibair** Ballintober (lit. town of the well)

A second noun in such cases is in the genitive case (see Unit 6). It may be further modified, leading to still longer names, including most famously the Irish name of Dublin: **Baile Átha Cliath** 'the town of the ford of the hurdles'.

Two other extremely common components of place-names are **cill** 'churchyard' and **áth** 'ford':

Cill Iseal Killeeshill (lit. low churchyard)
Cill Bhríde Kílríde (lit. Bridget's churchyard)
Cill an Mhuilinn Kíllavullen (lit. churchyard of the mill)
Áth Dara Adare (lit. oak ford)
Áth na mBó Ammaoe (lit. ford of the cow)



8
THE FIRST DECLENSION

1. All nouns of the first declension are masculine and end in a broad consonant.

2. The **Genitive Singular** is formed by **attenuation**:—
 báid—báid; fear—fir; iasc—éisc; bacach—bacaigh. (See page 9, par. 2.)

3. The **Vocative Singular** has the same form, as a rule, as the genitive singular—a **bháid**; a **fhír**; a **bhacaigh**.
 But,—a phobal, a cheann cripín, a rún, a stór, a leanbh. (i.e., collective nouns, terms of endearment, metaphorical terms.)

4. If the noun has a **strong plural**, all cases in the plural have the same form. For weak plurals see Ch. 7, §§. 5, 7, 8.

5. Nouns with **weak plurals** ending in a **slender consonant**:—
 Example: **an cat**

	Singular	Plural
Common	an cat	na cait
Genitive	don chat, ag an chat (gcat)	do na cait, ag na cait
Vocative	bia an chat	bia na geat
	a chat	a chata

Nouns declined like cat:

SINGULAR		PLURAL	
Common	Genitive	Common	Genitive
báid, a dhéir, cianóg, a huan, éisc, a holl, macraoch, a cailín, páipéir, a papair, piansa, a pas	táin an bháid, barr an chinn, barr an chaoil, túip an mharaigh, bun an pháipéir, barr an phinn	na háid, na cian, na éisc, na macraigh, na páipéir, na pinn	scolta na bháid, méid na geann, ar bharr na geann, síol na macraoch, ag lámh na h-éisc, costas na h-éisc

Unit 9: Prepositions I 71

Two of the above prepositions, **ar** and **faoi**, combine with the verb 'to be' to form useful idioms with verbal noun expressions following (see Unit 20). Again, the English subject is the object of the Irish preposition:

Irish	English
tá ar	must, has to
tá faoi	intends to, plans to

Tá ar Sheamas obair anocht. Séamas has to work tonight.
 Tá faoi Mhairín dul go Sasana. Mairín intends to go to England.

Tá ar is also used to indicate something is the matter with the person named as object of ar. This usage usually takes the form of a question, but not always:

Irish	English
Céard atá ort?	What's the matter with you?
Tá rud éigin air inniu.	Something is bothering him today.

Prepositional pronouns

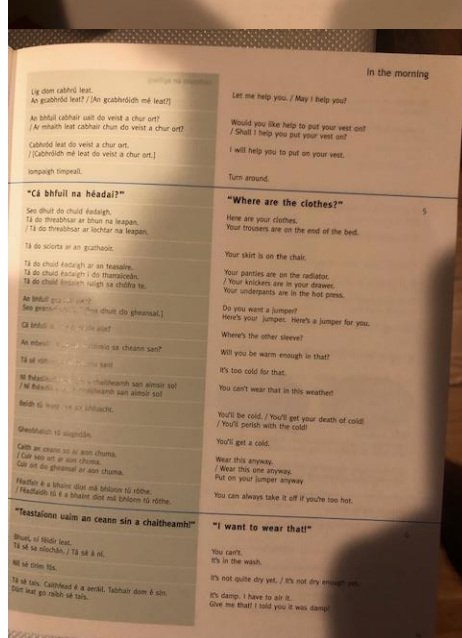
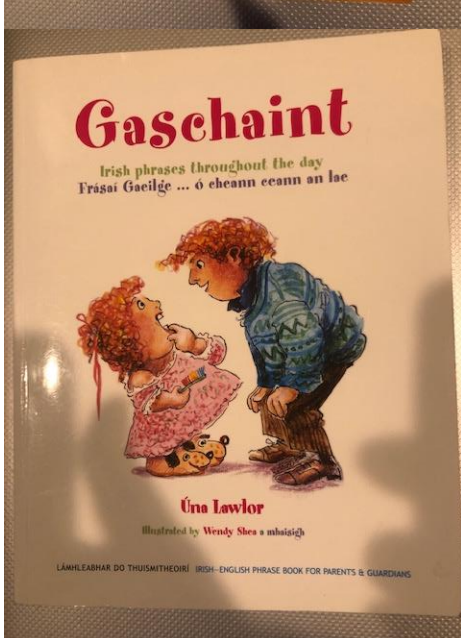
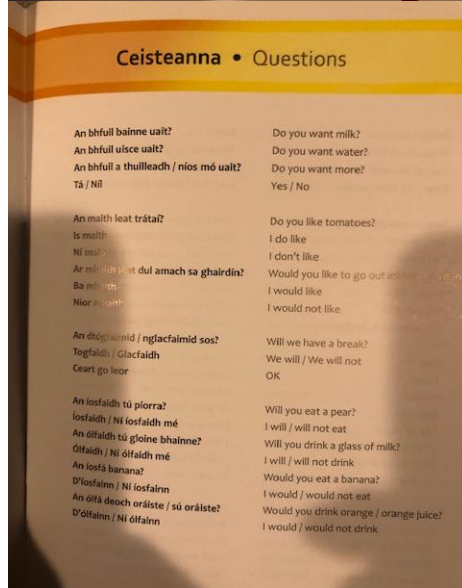
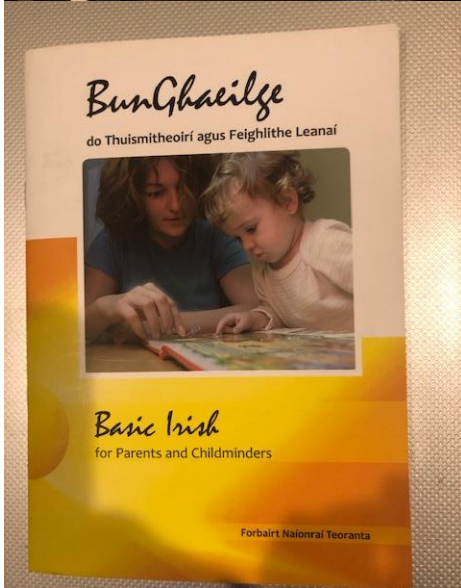
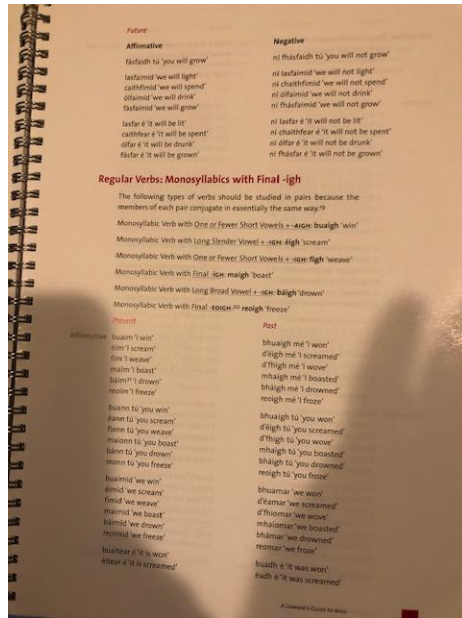
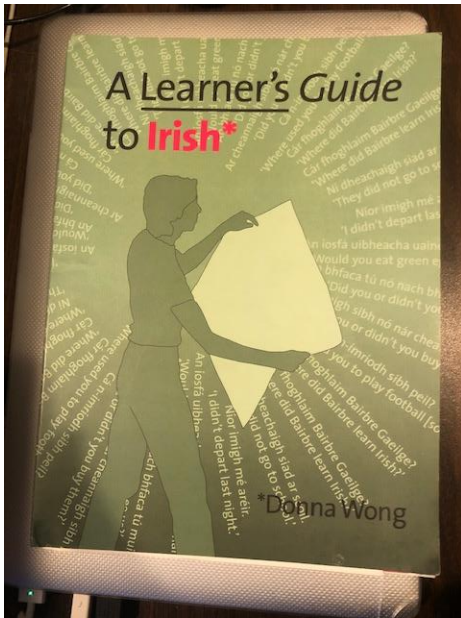
Many prepositions, including those presented in this unit, have special combination forms that incorporate a pronoun object. These may change the form of the preposition itself when a pronoun ending is added, and the endings are also only partly predictable. In this unit, we provide the pronoun forms for three of the prepositions introduced above, **ag**, **ar**, and **le**.

Singular	ag	ar	le
1 me	agam	orm	liom
2 you	agat	ort	leat
3 him/it	aige	air	leis
her/it	aici	airde	léi

Plural

	ag	ar	le
4 us	againn	orainn	linn
5 you	againn	orainn	linn
6 them	acu	orthu	leo

Some patterning in these forms can help in learning and remembering them. First- and second-person forms ('me', 'you', 'us') all consistently have the same endings for each preposition, endings which conveniently recall the pronouns mé, tú, sin, sibh; only the third-person forms don't resemble independent pronouns and are less predictable in form.



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