





**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  
On, 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:

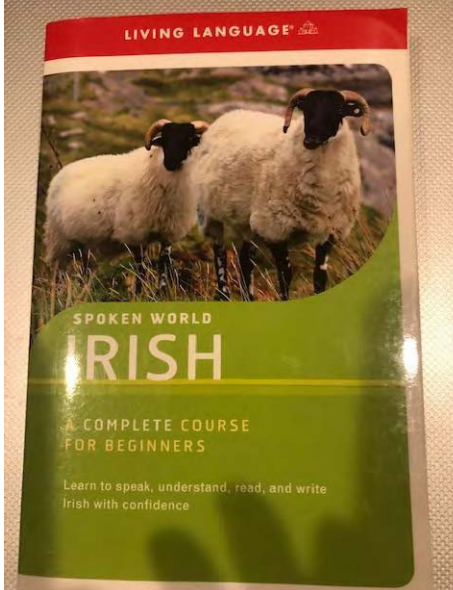
a a compound preposition:  
an teach (the house) os comhair an tí (in front of the house)  
an samhradh (the summer) i rith an tsamhraidh (during the summer)

b the prepositions *chun*, *dála*, *timpeall*, and *trasa*:  
an scéal (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) glanadh an tseomra (the cleaning of the room)  
an mhúinteoir (the teacher) ag cáineadh an mhúinteora (criticizing the teacher)

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

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**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 bhíod *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 amháin agam, sin an méid. Deborah is ainm di.  
Michael: An bhfuil páiste ag do dheirfiúr?  
Amy: Tá iníon amháin 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 cailín dláimh í. Agus tá 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 páiste ag do dheirfiúr?  
*Does your sister have a child?*

Tá iníon amháin 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.

dhearthaí (brother)	mo dhearthaí (my brother)	do dhearthaí (your brother)
máthair (mother)	mo mháthair (my mother)	do mháthair (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.

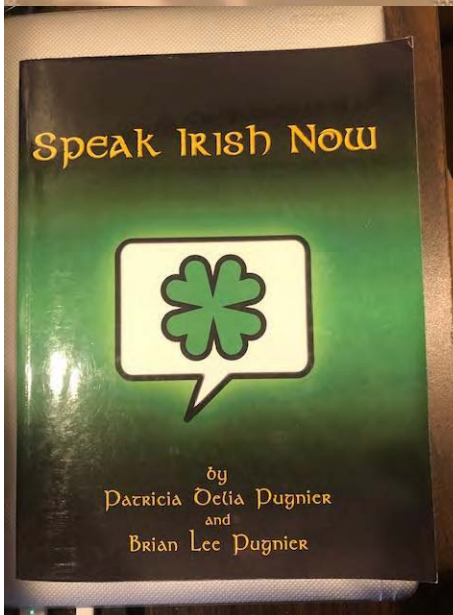
athair (father)	m'athair (my father)	d'athair (your father)
úrdóg (thumb)	m'ordóg (my thumb)	d'ordóg (your thumb)
naicéil (tooth)	m'hiacail (my tooth)	d'hiacail (your tooth)

**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 *bí ag*, 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, *tá ag* is followed by *mé*, the fused form is *agam* (at me).

Tá dearthaí 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" [vay].

**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.  
[vay may foo-uh-er]

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

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

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

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

"She was cold."  
Bhí sí fuar.  
[vay 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-ay]

"Last night"  
arís  
[ah-ay-er]

**Examples**

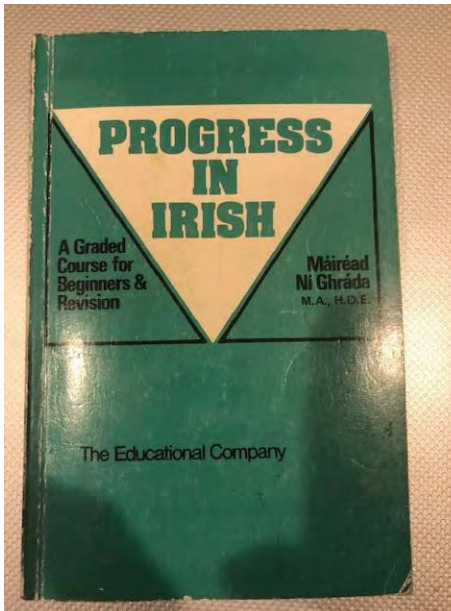
"The weather was hot yesterday."  
Bhí an aimsir te inné.  
[vay ahn aim-see-er tee in-ay]

"I went to bed last night."  
Bhí mé ag léamh inné.  
[vay may ah-ay-er in-ay]

"I was reading yesterday."  
Bhí mé ag léamh inné.  
[vay may ah-ay-er in-ay]

"The room was dirty last night."  
Bhí an tseomra salach arís.  
[vay ahn tseom-rah sah-ah-ah-ay-er]





**Foghlaim (Learn) :**

tá, is	an fear, the man
ag siúl, walking	an bhean, the woman
ag rith, running	an páiste, the child
ag ithe, eating	an cailín, the girl
ag ól, drinking	an buachaill, the boy
ag gáire, laughing	an múinteoir, the teacher
ag gol, crying	amach, out
ag caint, talking	isteach, in
ag dul, going	abhaile, home
ag teacht, coming	cé? who?

In Irish the verb comes first :

Tá Brian ag siúl, Brian is walking.

**Léigh (Read) :**

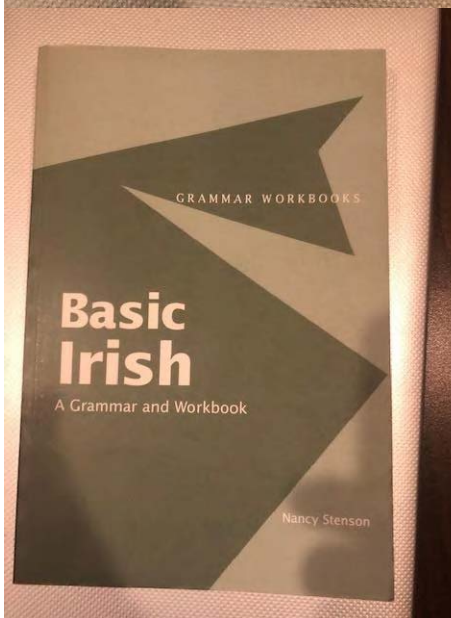
- Tá Brian ag siúl.
- Tá Scán ag rith.
- Tá Nóra ag ithe.
- Tá Máire ag ól.
- Tá an fear ag gáire.
- Tá an páiste ag gol.
- Tá an bhean ag dul amach.
- Tá an cailín ag teacht isteach.
- Tá an buachaill ag dul abhaile.
- Tá an múinteoir ag caint.

**Freagair (Answer) :**

- Cé tá ag siúl? 2. Cé tá ag rith? 3. Cé tá ag ithe?
- Cé tá ag ól? 5. Cé tá ag gáire? 6. Cé tá ag gol?
- Cé tá ag dul amach? 8. Cé tá ag teacht isteach?
- Cé tá ag dul abhaile? 10. Cé tá ag caint?

**Cuir Gaeilge air seo (Translate into Irish) :**

- Nora is running.
- Brian is talking.
- Sean is coming.
- The girl is crying.
- The teacher is laughing.
- The man is coming.
- The woman is going home.
- The child is eating.
- The boy is drinking.
- Nóra is coming in.
- Eamonn is going out.
- 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 transcription (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** 'town(land)', 'village' is one of the most common initial terms. It combines with various other words:

<i>Adjectives</i>	<b>An Baile Glas</b>	Ballyglass (lit. green village)
<i>Names</i>	<b>Baile an Fheircéaraigh</b>	Ballyferrier (lit. Ferriter's town)
<i>Other nouns</i>	<b>Baile an Tobair</b>	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':

<b>Cill Iseal</b>	Killcleshill (lit. low churchyard)
<b>Cill Bhríde</b>	Kilbride (lit. Bridget's churchyard)
<b>Cill an Mhuilinn</b>	Kilavullen (lit. churchyard of the mill)
<b>Áth Dara</b>	Adare (lit. oak ford)
<b>Áth na mBó</b>	Amanooce (lit. ford of the cow)

Unit 9: Prepositions | 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:

<b>tá ar</b>	must, has to
<b>tá faoi</b>	intends to, plans to

**Tá ar Shéamas oibrí anocht.** Séamas has to work tonight.  
**Tá faoi Mhairín dul go Sasana.** Máirín 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:

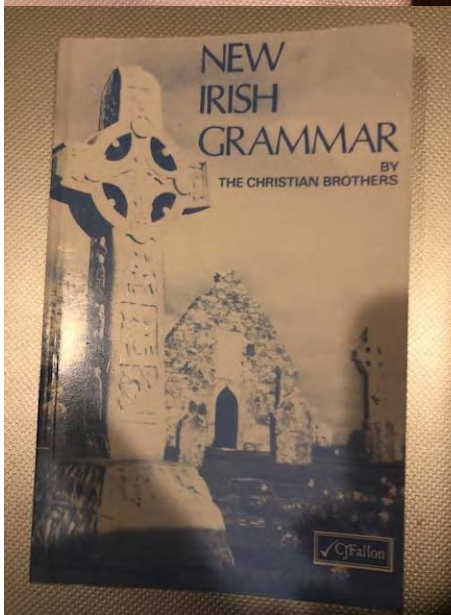
<b>Cián atá ar?</b>	What's the matter with you?
<b>Tá rud éigin air inniu.</b>	Something is bothering him today.

**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	againn	air	leis
	againn	air	leis
Plural			
4 us	againn	orainn	linn
5 you	againn	orainn	linn
6 them	acu	orthu	leis

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 **me**, **ti**, **sin**, **ibh**, only the third-person forms don't resemble independent pronouns and are less predictable in form.



**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**; **feas**—**feis**; **iasc**—**éisc**; **baeach**—**bacaih**. (See page 9, par. 2.)

3. The **Vocative Singular** has the same form, as a rule, as the genitive singular—**a bháid**; **a fheis**; **a bhacaih**.  
But,—**a phobal**, a **chann cippín**, a **rán**, 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.

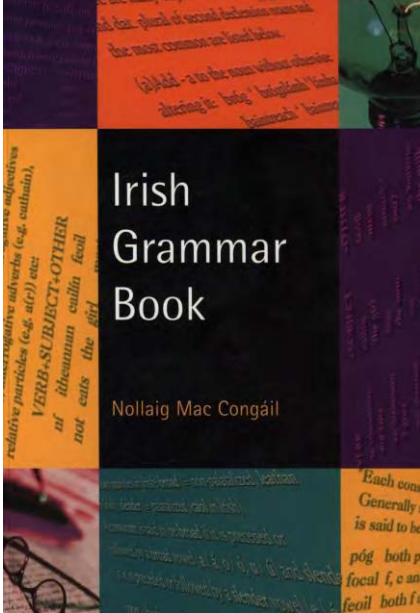
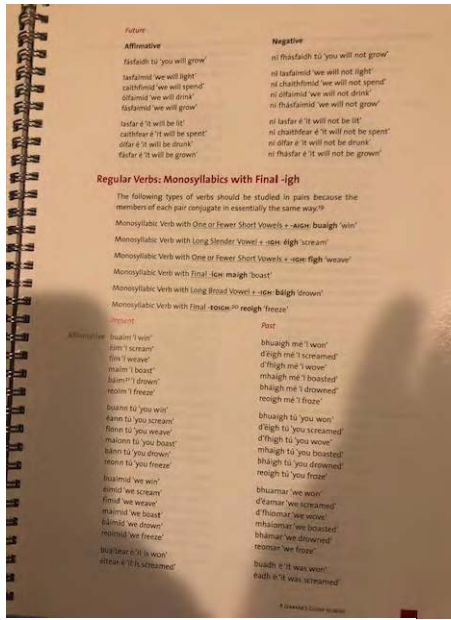
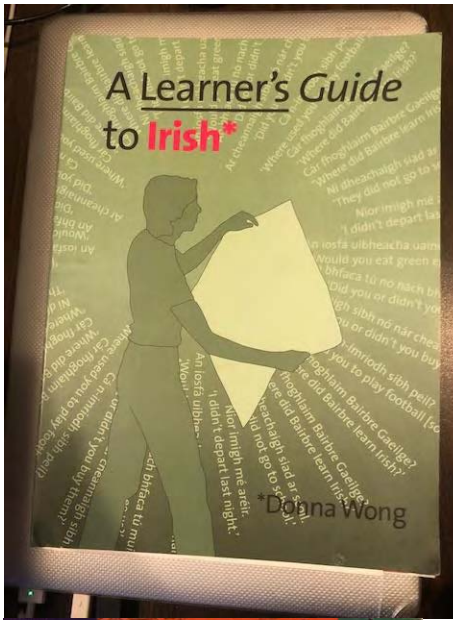
5. Nouns with **weak plurals** ending in a **slender consonant**:—  
Example:—**an cat**

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

Nouns declined like cat:

SINGULAR		PLURAL	
Common	Genitive	Common	Genitive
Mé, a dhé	táin an bháid	na báid	scolta na mbáid
ceann, a ceann	barr an chinn	na cinn	meid na gcinn
ceann, a ceann	barr an chnoic	na cnoic	ar bharr na gcnoic
ceann, a ceann	barr an mharaicigh	na maraich	siúl na maraich
ceann, a ceann	bun an pháipéir	na páipéir	ag léamh na páipéir
ceann, a ceann	barr an phinn	na pinn	costas na bpinn





Eclipsis affects the following consonants only:

b	→	mb
c	→	gc
d	→	nd
f	→	bhf
g	→	ng
p	→	bp
t	→	dt

The remaining consonants cannot be eclipsed.

Eclipsis affects all vowels in the same way:

a	→	n-a
e	→	n-e
i	→	n-i
o	→	n-o
u	→	n-u

t before VOWELS and s

t (with hyphen except when following vowel is a capital letter) can be prefixed to initial vowels or s (without hyphen):

t-a	tA
t-e	tE
t-i	tI
t-o	tO
t-u	tU
ts	

h before VOWELS

h can be prefixed to initial vowels only:

ha
he
ho
hu

During the course of this work frequent reference will be made to these initial mutations and what causes them.

The Past Tense

FIRST CONJUGATION - CATEGORY 1 (A)

	<b>Broad</b>	<b>Slender</b>
1 sg.	mhol mé	chuir mé
2 sg.	mhol tú	chuir tú
3 sg.	mhol sé, sí	chuir sé, sí
1 pl.	mholamar	chuireamar
2 pl.	mhol sibh	chuir sibh
3 pl.	mhol siad	chuir siad
Passive	moladh	cuireadh

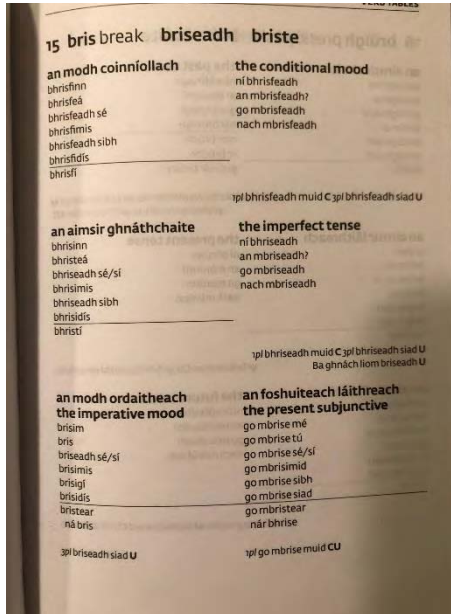
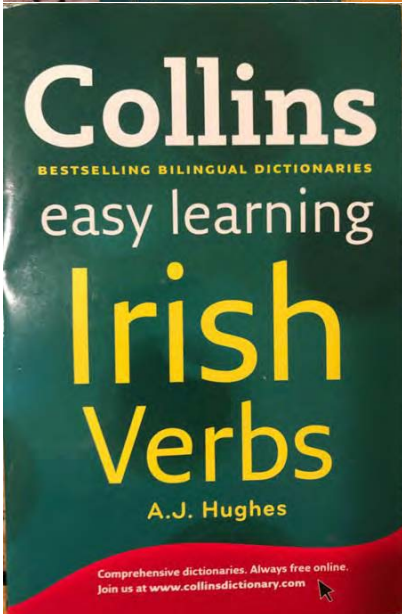
FIRST CONJUGATION - CATEGORY 1 (B)

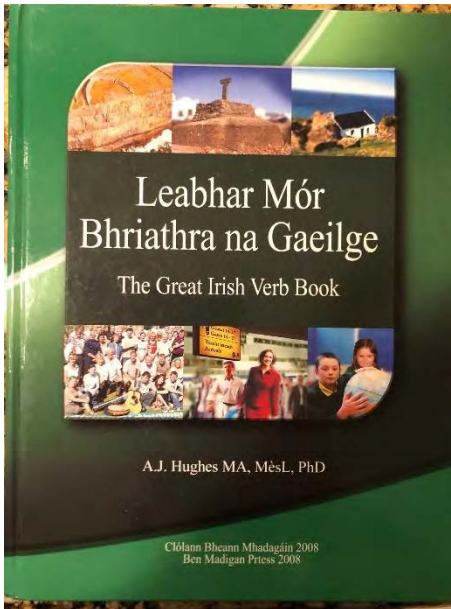
	<b>Broad</b>	<b>Slender</b>
1 sg.	reachtáil mé	thiomáin mé
2 sg.	reachtáil tú	thiomáin tú
3 sg.	reachtáil sé, sí	thiomáin sé, sí
1 pl.	reachtálamar	thiomáineamar
2 pl.	reachtáil sibh	thiomáin sibh
3 pl.	reachtáil siad	thiomáin siad
Passive	reachtáladh	thiomáineadh

To form the past tense, lenite the initial consonant of the verb and prefix 'd' if the initial letter is f or a vowel, e.g. d'fhág, d'ól.

The only synthetic form of the verb in the past tense is 1 pl. - (e)amar and - (e)adh is the passive ending.

In the passive forms, the initial consonant of the regular verb is *never* lenited and initial f and vowels remain unaffected, e.g. óladh, fágadh.





14 bris 'break' v.n. briseadh v.adj. briste

Standard Irish: An Caighdeán Oifigiúil

THE PAST TENSE	An Amhar Chaithe	THE PRESENT TENSE	An Amhar Láithreach
bhris mé	níor bhris	brisim	ní bhriseann
bhris tú	ar bhris?	brisceann tú	ní bhriseann?
bhris sé	gar bhris	brisceann sé	an bhriseann?
bhris sí	nár bhris	brisceann sí	go bhriseann
bhriseamar	níor bhriseadh?	brisimid	sach mbhriseann
bhris sibh	ar bhriseadh?	brisceann sibh	bhriseann sibh
bhris siad	gar bhriseadh	brisceann siad	a bhriseann
bhriseadh	nár bhriseadh	bhrisear	

Ulster Irish: Gaeilge Chaithe Uaidh

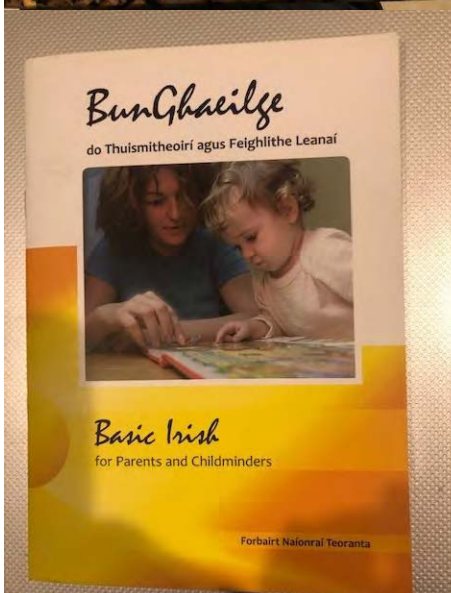
THE PAST TENSE	An Amhar Chaithe	THE PRESENT TENSE	An Amhar Láithreach
bhris mé	níor bhris	briom	ní bhriseann
bhris tú	níor bhris (char bhris)	bhriseann tú	ní bhriseann (cha bhriseann)
bhris sé	ar bhris?	bhriseann sé	an bhriseann?
bhris sí	gar bhris	bhriseann sí	go mbhriseann
bhriseamud'	nár bhris	bhriseann mud'	sach mbhriseann
bhris sibh	níor bhriseadh?	bhriseann sibh	bhriseann sibh
bhris siad	gar nár bhriseadh	bhriseann siad	a bhriseann
bhriseadh	gan nár bhriseadh	bhrisear	

Connacht Irish: Gaeilge Chonnacht

THE PAST TENSE	An Amhar Chaithe	THE PRESENT TENSE	An Amhar Láithreach
bhris mé	níor bhris	brisim	ní bhriseann
bhris tú	ar bhris?	bhriseann tú	ní bhriseann?
bhris sé	gar bhris	bhriseann sé	an bhriseann?
bhris sí	nár bhris	bhriseann sí	go mbhriseann
bhriseamud'	níor bhriseadh?	bhriseann mud'	sach mbhriseann
bhris sibh	ar bhriseadh?	bhriseann sibh	bhriseann sibh
bhriseamud'	gar bhriseadh	bhriseann siad	a bhriseann
bhriseadh	nár bhriseadh	bhrisear	

Munster Irish: Gaeilge na Mumhan

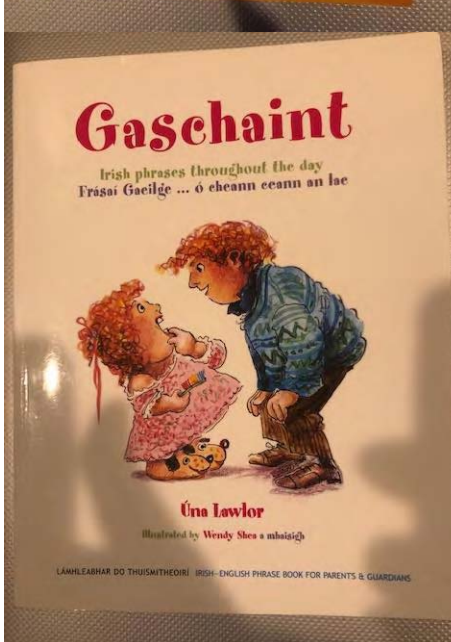
THE PAST TENSE	An Amhar Chaithe	THE PRESENT TENSE	An Amhar Láithreach
(do) bhriseamud'	mí(oir) bhris	bhrisim	ní bhriseann
(do) bhriseamud'	ar bhris?	bhriseann tú	ní bhriseann?
(do) bhris sé	gar bhris	bhriseann sé	an bhriseann?
(do) bhris sí	nár bhris	bhriseann sí	go mbhriseann
(do) bhriseamud'	*níor bhriseadh	bhriseann mud'	ní bhriseann
(do) bhriseamud'	*ar bhriseadh?	bhriseann sibh	a bhriseann
(do) bhriseamud'	*gar bhriseadh	bhriseann siad	
(do) bhriseamud'	*nár bhriseadh	bhrisear	
(do) bhriseamud'	*ar bhriseadh		



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Ceisteanna • Questions

An bhfuil bainne uait?	Do you want milk?
An bhfuil uisce uait?	Do you want water?
An bhfuil a thuilleadh / níos mó uait?	Do you want more?
Tá / Níl	Yes / No
An maith leat tráta?	Do you like tomatoes?
Is maith	I do like
Ní maith	I don't like
Ar mháth éat dul amach sa ghairdín?	Would you like to go out in the garden?
Ba maith	I would like
Níor maith	I would not like
An dtógaimid / ngiactaimid sos?	Will we have a break?
Togfaidh / Giactfaidh	We will / We will not
Ceart go leor	OK
An íosfaidh tú píorra?	Will you eat a pear?
Íosfaidh / Ní íosfaidh mé	I will / will not eat
An óifaidh tú gloine bhalainne?	Will you drink a glass of milk?
Óifaidh / Ní óifaidh mé	I will / will not drink
An íosfaidh banána?	Would you eat a banana?
D'íosfaim / Ní íosfaim	I would / would not eat
An óifaidh deoch oráiste / sú oráiste?	Would you drink orange / orange juice?
D'óifaim / Ní óifaim	I would / would not drink



In the morning

Lig dom cabhrú leat. An gabhróid leat? (An gabhróidh mé leat?)	Let me help you. / May I help you?
An bhfuil cabhair uait do veist a chur ort? (An cabhair leat cabhair chur do veist a chur ort?)	Would you like help to put your vest on? / Shall I help you put your vest on?
Cabhair leat do veist a chur ort. (Cabhróidh mé leat do veist a chur ort.)	I will help you to put on your vest.
Imaghaigh timpeall.	Turn around.
"Cá bhfuil na h-éadaí?"	"Where are the clothes?"
Sao dhúid do chuid éadaigh, / Is do bhróstar ar bharr na seipín. / Is do bhróstar ar lochtar na seipín.	Here are your clothes. Your trousers are on the end of the bed.
Is do seipín ar an gcuaisne.	Your skin is on the chair.
Is do chuid éadaigh ar an teallainn. / Is do chuid éadaigh / do bhróstar ar an teallainn. / Is do chuid éadaigh / do bhróstar ar an teallainn.	Your pants are on the radiator. / Your knickers are in your drawer. / Your underpants are in the hot press.
An bhfuil tú siúcraí?	Do you want a jumper?
See pres. (siúcraí) / (Ní siúcraí tú siúcraí?)	Here's your jumper. Here's a jumper for you.
Cá bhfuil an siúcraí?	Where's the other sleeve?
An bhfuil tú siúcraí? / An bhfuil tú siúcraí?	Will you be warm enough in that?
Is siúcraí / Is siúcraí / Is siúcraí?	It's too cold for that.
Ní siúcraí / Ní siúcraí / Ní siúcraí?	You can't wear that in this weather.
Is siúcraí / Is siúcraí / Is siúcraí?	You'll be cold. / You'll get your death of cold. / You'll perish with the cold.
Siúcraí / Siúcraí / Siúcraí?	You'll get a cold.
Cabh ar ais ar an chuma. / Cab ar ais ar an chuma. / Cab ar ais ar an chuma.	Wear this anyway. / Wear this one anyway. Put on your jumper anyway.
Siúcraí / Siúcraí / Siúcraí?	You can always take it off if you're too hot.
"Teastaíonn uaim an ceann sin a chaitheamh?"	"I want to wear that?"
Bhíod, ní shíod leat. / Tá sí sa stóráil / Tá sí a sí.	You can't. It's in the wash.
Ní sí síod leat.	It's not quite dry yet. / It's not dry enough yet.
Tá sí saib, cabhróidh é a péint. Teachar dom é sin. / Tá sí saib, cabhróidh é a péint. Teachar dom é sin.	It's damp. I have to air it. Give me that! I told you it was damp.



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