

To express an infinitive (e.g. “to eat”) or a gerund (e.g. “eating”) in Irish, a special form of the verb called the “verbal noun” (*an t-ainm briathartha*) is used. The *ainm briathartha* form has to be learned for each verb, though there are some patterns that you will come to recognize. Often, the gerund form is preceded by the preposition “ag” in Irish and is used with a form of “tá”.

1.	Cad a rinne tú aréir?	What did you do last night?
2.	D’ith mé mo dhinnéar.	I ate my dinner.
3.	Cad a bhí tú ag déanamh aréir?	What were you doing last night?
4.	Bhí mé ag ithe .	I was eating .
5.	Cad a dhéanann tú ag a sé a chlog?	What do you do at six o’clock?
6.	Ithim mo dhinnéar.	I eat my dinner.
7.	Cad atá tú ag déanamh ?	What are you doing ?
8.	Táim ag ithe .	I’m eating .

Below are a list of several useful verbs together with the *ainm briathartha* form. There are several verbs in Irish that are only used in the *ainm briathartha* form.

9.	ól	drink	ag ól	drinking
10.	rith	run	ag rith	running
11.	scríobh	write	ag scríobh	writing
12.	foghlaim	learn	ag foghlaim	learning
13.	snámh	swim	ag snámh	swimming
14.	siúil	walk	ag siúl	walking
15.	ith	eat	ag ithe	eating
16.	léigh	read	ag léamh	reading
17.	tar	come	ag teacht	coming
18.	téigh	go	ag dul	going
19.	imigh	leave	ag imeacht	leaving
20.	imir	play (a game)	ag imirt	playing (a game)
21.	[gáir]	call out, laugh	ag gáire	laughing
22.	[can]	sing	ag canadh	singing
23.	[seinn]	play (music)	ag seinm	playing (music)
24.	[troid]	fight	ag troid	fighting
25.	[damhsaigh]	dance	ag damhsa	dancing
26.	[rinc]	dance	ag rince	dancing
27.			ag cócaireacht	cooking
28.			ag caint	talking
29.			ag obair	working
30.			ag siopadóireacht	shopping

When the *ainm briathartha* has an object, the object must be in the genitive case. The genitive of each noun must be learned, though again, there are many patterns that can help you guess the correct form.

31.	An ólann sé líomanáid?	Does he drink lemonade?
32.	An bhfuil sé ag ól líomanáide?	Is he drinking lemonade?
33.	Scríobh an buachaill litir.	The boy wrote a letter.
34.	Bhí an buachaill ag scríobh litreach.	The boy was writing a letter.
35.	Chaith sí an liathróid.	She threw the ball.
36.	Bhí sí ag caitheamh na liathróide.	She was throwing the ball.

If the object of the verb is used with a preposition, then it is not changed to the genitive when the *ainm briathartha* is used.

37.	Tá an fear ag breathnú ar an teilifís.	The man is watching the television.
38.	Tá sí ag breith ar an liathróid.	She's catching the ball.
39.	Tá Peadar ag feitheamh liom.	Peter's waiting for me.
40.	Tá mé ag éisteacht leis an raidió.	I'm listening to the radio.
41.	Tá sé ag labhairt leis an gcailín.	He's talking with the girl.
42.	Tá na páistí ag gáire faoin madra.	The children are laughing at the dog.

To express the infinitive (e.g. "to eat") in Irish, you typically precede the *ainm briathartha* with the word "a" (lenites the following word). The object of the verb is usually placed before the "a" and is not put into the genitive.

43.	Is maith liom beoir a ól .	I like to drink beer.
44.	Is breá liom cáis a ithe .	I love to eat cheese.
45.	Is fearr liom peil a imirt .	I prefer to play [Gaelic] football.
46.	Ar mhaith leat dinnéar a ithe ?	Would you like to eat dinner?
47.	Ba mhaith liom é a ithe anois díreach.	I'd like to eat it right now.
48.	Níor mhaith liom é a ithe go fóill.	I wouldn't like to eat it yet.
49.	B'fhéarr liom ceol a sheinm .	I'd rather play music.

There are a few verbs in Irish, mostly having to do with states that you can be in, for which you say that you are "in" the verb to express that you are doing it.

50.	Tá Tomás ina chodladh .	Tom's sleeping .
51.	Níl Máire ina codladh go fóill.	Mary's not sleeping yet.
52.	An bhfuil tú i do chodladh , a Mháire?	Are you asleep , Mary?
53.	Níl. Níl mé i mo chodladh go fóill.	No. I'm not sleeping yet.
54.	Tá mé i mo luí .	I'm lying down .
55.	Tá mé i mo shuí .	I'm sitting (or awake).
56.	Tá mé i mo sheasamh .	I'm standing .
57.	Tá mé i bhfolach .	I'm hiding .

Comhrá 1

A: Cá bhfuil na páistí anois?
B: Bhí siad **ag imirt** peile sa pháirc.
A: An bhfuil siad **ag imirt** go fóill?
B: Níl. Tá siad **ag troid** anois.
A: Féach! Tá Seánín bocht **ag caoineadh**.
B: Agus tá na buachaillí eile **ag rith** abhaile.

Comhrá 2

A: An maith leat **a bheith ag imirt** peile?
B: Ní maith. Is fearr liom leadóg **a imirt**.
A: Ar mhaith leat cluiche leadóige **a imirt** liomsa?
B: Ba mhaith. Go raibh maith agat.
A: Beidh mé **ag feitheamh** leat anseo.
B: Ní bheidh tú **ag feitheamh** i bhfad.

Comhrá 3

T: Cad a bhí tú **ag déanamh** aréir?
S: Bhí mé **ag léamh** leabhair.
T: Cén leabhar a bhí tú **ag léamh**?
S: Bhí mé **ag léamh** “An Béal Bocht”.
T: Bhí mé féin **ag scríobh** litreach aréir,
ach léigh mé an leabhar sin anuraidh.

Comhrá 4

A: An raibh tú **i do shuí** go luath?
B: Ní raibh.
D’fhan mé **i mo chodladh** go déanach.
A: An raibh tú **ag rince** aréir?
B: Ní raibh. Bhí mé **ag scríobh** litreach.
A: Bhí mé féin **ag breathnú** ar an teilifís.
B: B’fhéarr liomsa litir **a scríobh**.

Conversation 1

Where are the children now?
They were **playing** football in the park.
Are they still **playing**?
No. They’re **fighting** now.
Look! Poor Johnny’s **crying**.
And the other boys are **running** home.

Conversation 2

Do you like **to play** football?
No. I prefer **to play** tennis.
Would you like **to play**
a game of tennis with me?
Yes. Thanks.
I’ll be **waiting** for you here.
You won’t be **waiting** long.

Conversation 3

What were you **doing** last night?
I was **reading** a book.
Which book were you **reading**?
I was **reading** “The Poor Mouth”.
I myself was **writing** a letter last night,
but I read that book last year.

Conversation 4

Were you **awake** early?
No.
I stayed **asleep** until late.
Were you **dancing** last night?
No. I was **writing** a letter.
I myself was **watching** television.
I’d rather **write** a letter.

Dán

Poem

(le Síle Ní Rabhartá)

An Oíche	The Night
Chonaic mé an oíche ag teacht anuas	I saw the night coming down
Mar chóta mór dubh ar an tuath	Like a large black coat on the countryside
Chuala mé na páistí ag dul a luí,	I heard the children going to sleep,
Le torann agus brón sa seomra istigh	With noise and sorrow in the room inside
D’fhág mé an madra ag tafann amuigh	I left the dog barking outside
Go brónach san oíche ag caoineadh sa ghaoth.	Sadly in the night, crying in the wind.

PERSONAL NUMBERS

1 person	<i>duine amháin</i> ¹	/d̪uːn̪ə ˈaː wʲaːn̪ˠ/
2 persons	<i>beirt</i> ²	/b̪ˠeːrt̪ˠ/
3 persons	<i>trí</i> ³	/t̪ˠr̪ˠiː/
4 persons	<i>ceathair</i>	/k̪ˠeːt̪ˠh̪ˠaːr̪ˠ/
5 persons	<i>cúigear</i>	/k̪ˠuːg̪ˠeːr̪ˠ/
6 persons	<i>seisear</i> ⁴	/s̪ˠeːs̪ˠeːr̪ˠ/
7 persons	<i>seacht</i>	/s̪ˠeːt̪ˠh̪ˠ/
8 persons	<i>ochtar</i>	/oːx̪ˠt̪ˠaːr̪ˠ/
9 persons	<i>nóimear</i>	/n̪ˠoːiːm̪ˠeːr̪ˠ/
10 persons	<i>deichniúr</i>	/d̪ˠeːt̪ˠs̪ˠn̪ˠuːr̪ˠ/

¹ These nouns, which are all masculine except *beirt*, e.g. an *beirt* 'the two people', stand when counting people. Above ten, *duine* is used with ordinary numbers.³

² With nouns denoting people, e.g. *bean*, *agairt*, *maistreoir*, ordinary numbers can stand. *duine*, *trí*, *seacht*, *ceathair* and *seisear*. Alternatively, personal numbers can be used followed by a plural form, e.g. *beirt mháthair*, *tríúr na gceannairde*, *ceathair mháistir*, or less frequently by the singular in such phrases as e.g. *beirt fhear*.

TEXT

1

1 Tá Máire pósta ag Pádraig. Is duine deas liom é Pádraig agus bhí mé sinse nuair a bhí mé ina pháiste. Tá síad pósta anois. **2** Ceannairde na ceannairde agus bhí síad pósta anois. Ach d'fheall sí go raibí sí ag goll a dhéanamh. **3** Tá sí pósta anois. **4** Tá sí pósta anois. **5** Tá sí pósta anois. **6** Tá sí pósta anois. **7** Tá sí pósta anois. **8** Tá sí pósta anois. **9** Tá sí pósta anois. **10** Tá sí pósta anois.

Learning Irish
Mícheál Ó Siadhail

Learning Irish consists of a book and accompanying tapes or CDs that cover the Cois Fhairge dialect of Irish from Co. Galway. There are 36 lessons, each consisting of vocabulary (including phonetic pronunciation of all words and plural forms of nouns), grammar, a reading text, exercises and translations. Translations of all the texts and answers to all the exercises as well as English-Irish and Irish-English vocabulary sections are included at the back of the book. This is a good book to use if you want to become familiar with Connemara Irish, but be aware that the forms of words given will be different from the standard forms you're most likely to encounter in books and media.

ISBN: 0-300-04224-8 (book), 0-300-08416-1 (w/ cassettes), 0-300-12177-6 (w/ CDs)
Publisher: Yale University Press

Ceisteanna

Líon na bearnaí leis an mbriathar agus an gcuspóir ceart. Roghnaigh na focail ó na liostaí thíos.
Fill in the blanks with the correct verb and object. Choose the words from the lists below.

Briathra (Verbs): dul, foghlaim, gáire, ithe, léamh, ól, ól, scríobh, teacht
Cuspóirí (Objects): ceapaire, Gaeilge, líomanáid, líomanáide, litreach, nuachtáin

- Táim ag _____ chuig mo chara in Éirinn.
I'm writing a letter to my friend in Ireland.
- Bhí sé ag _____ sa chistin.
He was drinking the two lemonade in the kitchen.
- An mbeidh tú ag _____ go luath amárach?
Will you be coming early tomorrow?
- An bhfuil tú ag _____ abhaile anois?
Are you going home now?
- Ar mhaith leat _____ a _____?
Would you like to eat a sandwich?
- Nár mhaith leat _____ a _____?
Wouldn't you like to drink some lemonade?
- An bhfuil sí fós ag _____ an _____?
Is she still reading the newspaper?
- Tá Liam ag _____ fúm arís.
William is laughing at me again.
- Táimid ag _____ .
We are learning Irish.

1. scríobh, litreach; 2. ól, líomanáide; 3. teacht; 4. dul; 5. ceapaire, ithe; 6. líomanáid, ól; 7. léamh, nuachtáin; 8. gáire; 9. foghlaim, Gaeilge