

Séimhiú (Lenition/Aspiration/Softening)

Litir Letter	Seancló Old Script	Sampla Example	Fuaimniú Pronunciation	Béarla English
bh	b̃	an bhean bhuel	[f]un van well	the woman well!
ch	c̃	a chat	a khot	his cat
dh	d̃	dhuit dhíol	Gitch yiel[d]	for you sold
fh	f̃	ar fhill sí?	or ill she	did she return?
gh	ġ	ghoid ghéill	Gidge Yale	stole surrendered
mh	m̃	gan mhoill a mhéar	gone will a ver[y]	w/o delay his finger
ph	p̃	a Phóil	a foil	Paul!
sh	ś, ř	shíl mé	heel may	I thought
th	t̃	a thoil	a hill	his will

Séimhiú “softens” the sound of a letter in Irish. This is shown in the old script by putting a dot over the letter, and in the new script by writing an “h” after it. Note that “d”, “s”, and “t” sometimes do not get séimhiú when they come after an “n”. Also, some of the sounds depend on whether they are broad (next to “a”, “o” or “u”) or slender (next to “e” or “i”).

Urú (Eclipsis)

Litir Letter	Seancló Old Script	Sampla Example	Fuaimniú Pronunciation	Béarla English
n-a	n-Δ	ár n-athair	are no[t] her	our father
mb	mb	a mbó	a mow	their cow
gc	ġc	a gcill	a gill	their church
nd	nṑ	i ndán	in on	in store
n-e	n-e	a n-eilifint	a n-elephant	their elephant
bhf	bḟ	an bhfuil tú?	un will too	are you?
ng	nġ	i ngrá	[s]ing raw	in love
n-i	n-ı	le n-ithe	le ni[t] hu[t]	to eat
n-o	n-o	le n-ól	le knoll	to drink
bp	bp	a bpáirc	a bark	their park
dt	ṑṑ	an dtig leat?	[f]un dig [f]lat	can you?
n-u	n-u	a n-úll	[f]un [p]ool	their apple

Urú changes the sound of a letter to that of a different letter. The new sound is written in front of the one that it replaces or “eclipses”. Note that “d”, “s”, and “t” sometimes do not get urú when they come after an “n”. Also, the “n” prefix on a vowel only happens in certain cases; the dash is needed when confusion can occur (e.g. *ár n-athair* = our father, *ár nathair* = our snake).

Other Changes at the Start of a Word

Litir Letter	Seancló Old Script	Sampla Example	Fuaimniú Pronunciation	Béarla English
h-a	h-Δ	a h-aghaidh	a high	her face
h-e	h-e	a h-eilifint	a h-elephant	her elephant
h-i	h-ı	le h-im	le him	with butter
h-o	h-o	le h-ocras	le[t] hoe crus[t]	with hunger
h-u	h-u	a h-úll	a hool[igan]	her apple
t-a	ṑ-Δ	an t-aer	un tare	the air
t-e	ṑ-e	an t-éileamh	un [s]tay love	the request
t-i	ṑ-ı	an t-iasc	un tea [h]usk	the fish
t-o	ṑ-o	an t-ocras	un toe crus[t]	the hunger
t-u	ṑ-u	an t-úll	un tool	the apple
ts	ṑs, ṑř	sa tSeapáin	saw chap on	in Japan

The “h” prefixes can be written with or without a dash. The “t” prefixes must be written with a dash when confusion can occur (e.g. *an t-éad* = the jealousy, *an téad* = the rope). The “t” prefix on “s” can be written with or without a dash.

Irish Tune Names:

An Ghaoth Aneas	Southwind (The Wind from the South)
An Spailpín Fánach	The Migratory Laborer
Báidín Fheilimí	Feilim's Little Boat
Buachaill ón Éirne	The Boy from the Erne River / Come by the Hills
Casadh an tSúgáin	The Twisting of the Rope
Cúil Raithin (Coleraine)	"Fern Corner"
Inis Oírr	Inisheer
Sí Bheag Sí Mhór	Little Fairy [Mound], Big Fairy [Mound]
Sliabh na mBan (Slievenamon)	The Mountain of the Women
Tabhair dom do Lámh	Give Me Your Hand

Irish Song Titles:

Amhrán Dóchais	Song of Hope
Amhrán na bhFiann	Soldier's Song (Irish National Anthem)
Cáit Ní Dhuibhir	Kate O'Dwyer
Cad é Sin don Té Sin	"What is it to That One?"
Carraig Fhearghais	Carrickfergus (The Rock of Fergus)
Crúiscín Lán	Full Pitcher
Eibhlín a Rúin	Eileen, [my] Darling
Fear a' Bhàta (Scottish Gaelic)	Man of the Boat
Loch Laomainn (Scottish Gaelic)	Loch Lomond
Na Gairdíní Saileacha	Sally Gardens (the Willow Gardens)
Óró 'Sé do Bheatha Abhaile	"Oh, Welcome Home"
'Sí do Mhamó í / Cailleach an Airgid	She's Your Granny / The Hag with the Money
Siúil a Ghrá	Go, [my] Love
Siúil a Rúin (Shool aroon)	Go, [my] Darling
Thugamar Féin an Samhradh Linn	We Brought the Summer with Us