

“Global scale” of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR)

Proficient User	TY Level 6 CEFR LEVEL C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	TY Level 5 CEFR LEVEL C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	TY Level 4 CEFR LEVEL B2 (A Level)	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	TY Level 3 CEFR LEVEL B1 (Higher GCSE)	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	TY Level 2 CEFR LEVEL A2: (Foundation GCSE)	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	TY Level 1 CEFR LEVEL A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

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# Speak Gaelic with confidence

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## COUNTING PEOPLE

one person	aon duine
two people	dithis
three people	triùir
four people	ceathrar
five people	còignear
six people	sianar
seven people	seachdnar
eight people	ochdnar
nine people	naoinear
ten people	deichnear

## TELLING THE TIME

What time is it?	Dè 'n uair a tha e?
It's one o'clock.	Tha e uair.
It's five minutes past one.	Tha e còig mionaidean an dèidh uair.
It's ten minutes past one.	Tha e deich mionaidean an dèidh uair.
It's quarter past one.	Tha e cairteal an dèidh uair.
It's twenty minutes past one.	Tha e fichead mionaid an dèidh uair.
It's twenty-five minutes past one.	Tha e còig mionaidean fichead an dèidh uair.
It's half past one.	Tha e lethuair an dèidh uair.
It's twenty-five minutes to two.	Tha e còig mionaidean fichead gu dhà.
It's twenty minutes to two.	Tha e fichead mionaid gu dhà.
It's quarter to two.	Tha e cairteal gu dhà.
It's ten minutes to two.	Tha e deich mionaidean gu dhà.
It's five minutes to two.	Tha e còig mionaidean gu dhà.

# Speak Gaelic with confidence

Boyd Robertson and Gordon Wells

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## NUMBERS

0	neoni
1	aon
2	dà/dhà
3	tri
4	ceithir
5	còig
6	sia
7	seachd
8	ochd
9	naoi
10	deich
11	aon-deug
12	dà-dheug
13	tri-deug
20	fichead
30	trithead/deich air fhichead
40	ceathrad/dà fhichead
50	lethcheud/caogad
60	seasgad/tri fichead
70	seachdad/tri fichead sa deich
80	ochdad/ceithir fichead
90	naochad/ceithir fichead sa deich
100	ceud
1,000	mile
million	milleann

## MONTHS OF THE YEAR

January	Am Faoilleach
February	An Gearran
March	Am Màrt
April	An Giblean
May	An Cèitean/Am Màigh
June	An t-Ògmhios
July	An t-Iuchar
August	An Lùnastal
September	An t-Sultain
October	An Dàmhair
November	An t-Samhain
December	An Dùbhlachd

## SEASONS

spring	an t-Earrach
summer	an Samhradh
autumn	am Foghar
winter	an Geamhradh

## COLOURS

black	dubh
blue	gorm
brown	donn
green	uaine
grey	glas
orange	orains
purple	purpaidh
red	dearg
yellow	buidhe
white	geal

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<i>milk</i>	<b>bainne</b>
<i>potatoes</i>	<b>buntàta</b>
<i>red wine</i>	<b>fion dearg</b>
<i>sausage</i>	<b>isbean</b>
<i>vegetables</i>	<b>glasraich</b>
<i>water</i>	<b>uisge</b>
<i>white wine</i>	<b>fion geal</b>

### DIRECTIONS

<i>behind</i>	<b>air cùlaibh (+gen)</b>
<i>beside</i>	<b>ri taobh (+gen)</b>
<i>between</i>	<b>eadar</b>
<i>in front of</i>	<b>air beulaibh (+gen)</b>
<i>next door to</i>	<b>an ath dhoras do</b>
<i>opposite</i>	<b>mu choinneamh (+gen)</b>
<i>straight on</i>	<b>dìreach air aghaidh</b>
<i>to the left</i>	<b>gu clì</b>
<i>to the right</i>	<b>gu deas</b>

### DAYS OF THE WEEK

<i>Sunday</i>	<b>Didòmhnaich/Latha na Sàbaid</b>
<i>Monday</i>	<b>Diluain</b>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<b>Dimàirt</b>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<b>Diciadain</b>
<i>Thursday</i>	<b>Diardaoin</b>
<i>Friday</i>	<b>Dihaoine</b>
<i>Saturday</i>	<b>Disathairne</b>
<i>Sunday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Dhòmhnaich/Oidhche na Sàbaid</b>
<i>Monday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Luain</b>
<i>Tuesday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Mhàirt</b>
<i>Wednesday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Chiadain</b>
<i>Thursday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Ardaoin</b>
<i>Friday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Haoine</b>
<i>Saturday night</i>	<b>Oidhche Shathairne</b>

## Essential vocabulary

### GREETINGS AND OTHER PHRASES

<i>Cheers!/Good health!</i>	<b>Slàinte mhath!</b>
<i>Do you like...?</i>	<b>An toil leat...?/An caomh leat...?</b>
<i>good morning</i>	<b>madainn mhath</b>
<i>good afternoon/evening</i>	<b>feasgar math</b>
<i>goodnight</i>	<b>oidhche mhath</b>
<i>goodbye</i>	<b>mar sin leat/mar sin leibh</b>
<i>hello</i>	<b>hallo</b>
<i>I am Julia.</i>	<b>Is mise Sileas.</b>
<i>I like...</i>	<b>Is toil leam.../Is caomh leam...</b>
<i>no problem</i>	<b>gun dragh sam bith</b>
<i>of course</i>	<b>gu dearbh</b>
<i>we like...</i>	<b>is toil leinn.../is caomh leinn...</b>
<i>What is your name?</i>	<b>Dè an t-ainm a th' ort?/Dè an t-ainm a th' oirbh?</b>
<i>why not...?</i>	<b>Carson nach...?</b>
<i>you're welcome</i>	<b>'s e do bheatha/'s e ur beatha</b>

### FOOD AND DRINK

<i>beef</i>	<b>mairtfheòil</b>
<i>beer</i>	<b>leann</b>
<i>bread</i>	<b>aran</b>
<i>butter</i>	<b>im</b>
<i>cheese</i>	<b>càise</b>
<i>chicken</i>	<b>cearc/sitheann</b>
<i>chips</i>	<b>slisnean</b>
<i>egg</i>	<b>ugh</b>
<i>fish</i>	<b>iasg</b>
<i>fruit</i>	<b>measan</b>
<i>ham</i>	<b>hama</b>
<i>juice</i>	<b>sùgh</b>
<i>lamb</i>	<b>uanfheòil/feòil uain</b>
<i>meat</i>	<b>feòil</b>

## Track listing

### CD1

- Track 1: Introduction*  
*Conversation 1: Making acquaintances*  
Tracks 2–6: part 1 – Meeting and greeting people  
Tracks 7–10: part 2 – Introducing people  
*Conversation 2: Getting to know people*  
Tracks 11–14: part 1 – Finding out where people are from  
Tracks 15–18: part 2 – Finding out about other people's jobs and where they live  
*Conversation 3: Socializing with friends*  
Tracks 19–22: part 1 – Planning a night out  
Tracks 23–26: part 2 – Discussing the night out  
*Conversation 4: Making travel arrangements*  
Tracks 27–30: part 1 – Booking flights  
Tracks 31–34: part 2 – Discussing travel arrangements  
*Conversation 5: Discussing everyday activities*  
Tracks 35–38: part 1 – Discussing what you've been doing  
Tracks 39–41: part 2 – Discussing planned activities (beg.)

### CD2

- Track 1: part 2 – Discussing planned activities (conc.)*  
*Conversation 6: Visiting a pub*  
Tracks 2–5: part 1 – Ordering a drink  
Tracks 6–9: part 2 – Ordering food  
*Conversation 7: At a ceilidh*  
Tracks 10–13: part 1 – Talking about the music  
Tracks 14–17: part 2 – Talking about the refreshments  
*Conversation 8: Out hillwalking*  
Tracks 18–21: part 1 – On the climb  
Tracks 22–25: part 2 – At the top  
*Conversation 9: At the shops*  
Tracks 26–29: part 1 – Shopping for food  
Tracks 30–33: part 2 – Shopping for pleasure

Conversation 10: At the museum and art centre  
 Tracks 34–37: part 1 – In the art gallery  
 Tracks 38–41: part 2 – In the art centre café

### CD3

Track 1: Introduction  
 Tracks 2–7: Conversation 1 – Tutors meet  
 Tracks 8–13: Conversation 2 – Introductions in class  
 Tracks 14–20: Conversation 3 – Discussing what to do one evening  
 Tracks 24–30: Conversation 4 – Conversation in hotel bar  
 Tracks 31–36: Conversation 5 – Conversation in common room  
 Tracks 37–42: Conversation 6 – Bar meal  
 Tracks 43–48: Conversation 7 – Talking about the night out  
 Tracks 49–54: Conversation 8 – Taking a walk  
 Tracks 55–61: Conversation 9 – Shopping for presents  
 Tracks 62–67: Conversation 10 – Discussing gifts

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Cast: James Graham, Maeve MacKinnon, Stacey MacLean, Boyd Robertson, Sarah Sherborne.

tonight **a-nochd** (1)  
 too much **cus** (3/7)  
 town/city: the ~ **am baile** (4)  
 train **trèan** (4)  
 travel **siubhal** (4)  
 two o'clock in the morning **dà uair sa mhadainn** (3)

ugly **grannda** (10)  
 Uig **Ùige** (3/4)  
 Uist **Uibhist** (7)  
 University **oilthigh** (3/1)

very good **glè mhath** (1)  
 very well **glè mhath** (1)  
 view **sealladh** (8)  
 violin **fidheall** (7)  
 vodka **bhodca** (3/6)

Wait a minute **Fuirich mionaid** (4)  
 walking **coiseachd** (8)  
 want to go **airson a dhol** (3)  
 warm **blàth** (8)  
 was?, was it? **an robh?** (5)  
 washing, doing the washing  
**a' nigheadaireachd** (5)  
 wasn't, weren't, **no cha robh** (10)  
 watch TV: to ~ **a choimhead TV** (5)  
 We are from Inverness **Tha sinne à Inbhir Nis** (2)  
 we can/may **faodaidh sinn** (4)  
 we didn't see **chan fhaca sinn** (2)  
 Wednesday **Diciadain** (4)  
 Wednesday morning **madainn Diciadain** (4)  
 we have every kind **tha a h-uile seòrsa againn** (6)  
 we must **feumaidh sinn** (8)  
 were? **an robh?** (5)

weren't **cha robh** (10)  
 we were there **bha sinn ann** (2)  
 we will buy **Ceannaichidh sinn** (3/9)  
 wet **fliuch** (8)  
 whale **muc-mhara** (3/8)  
 What a view! **Abair sealladh!** (8)  
 What are you doing? **Dè tha sibh a' dèanamh?** (3)  
 What do you think? **Dè do bheachd?** (8)  
 What else do you need? **Dè eile a dh'fheumas tu?** (9)  
 What is your occupation? **Dè an obair a th' agad?** (2)  
 what kind? **dè seòrsa?** (6)  
 What kind of beer have you got? **Dè seòrsa leann a th' agaibh?** (6)  
 What were you up to? **Dè bha thu ris?** (5)  
 What will you have? **Dè ghabhas sibh?** (6)  
 when? **cuin?** (3)  
 Where are you from? **Cò às a tha sibh?** (2)  
 Where is...? **Càit a bheil...?** (3)  
 whisky **uisge-beatha** (6)  
 white wine **fion geal** (6)  
 Who is playing? **Cò tha cluich?** (3)  
 will be **bhios** (3/3)  
 will...be? **am bi...?** (3/4)  
 Will you have another cake? **An gabh thu ceic eile?** (7)  
 Will you sing a song yourself? **An gabh thu fhèin òran?** (7)  
 with **le** (6)  
 work **obair** (2)  
 writer **sgriobhadair** (3/1)

yes indeed **tha gu dearbh** (1)  
 yes, I see **seadh** (9)  
 you (emphatic) **sibhse** (3)  
 you (familiar) **thu** (1)  
 you (polite and plural) **sibh** (1)



*occupation* **obair** (2)  
*Oh my Goodness!* **Obh! Obh!** (3)  
*on air* (4)  
*on the moor* **air a' mhonadh** (8)  
*on the plane* **air a' phlàna** (4)  
*one fear* (6)  
*onion* **uinnein** (3/6)  
*or no* (4)  
  
*perhaps's* **dòcha** (10)  
*picture* **dealbh** (10)  
*pictures* **dealbhan** (3/10)  
*pint* **pinnt** (3/6)  
*place* **àite** (4)  
*plane: on the ~* **am plèana** (4)  
*please, if you please* **mas e ur toil e** (6)  
*plenty* **gu leòr** (8)  
*plenty of animals* **beathaichean gu leòr** (8)  
*programme* **prògram** (5)

*reach, reaching* **a' ruighinn** (4)  
*red wine* **fion dearg** (6)  
*return, returning* **a' tilleadh** (4)  
*right* **ceart** (10)  
*rings* **fàinneachan** (9)

*sad, sorry* **duilich** (3/5)  
*salad* **saillead** (3/6)  
*salmon* **bradan** (3/6)  
*school: the ~* **an sgoil** (3)  
*sea* **muir** (10)  
*seeming a' coimhead* (9)  
*Shall we buy?* **An ceannaich sinn?** (3/9)  
*she i* (1)  
*sheep* **caoraich** (8)  
*shop* **bùth** (9)  
*shore* **cladach** (3/8)  
*shy* **diùid** (7)  
*singer* **seinneadair** (7)  
*singing a' seinn* (3/3)

*small beag* (10)  
*so cho* (7)  
*something rudeigin* (3/9)  
*sometimes* **uaireannan** (3/8)  
*song* **òran** (7)  
*songs* **òrain** (7)  
*soup* **brot** (5)  
*South Uist* **Uibhist a Deas** (8)  
*spectacles* **speuclairean** (3/10)  
*starting a' tòiseachadh* (3)  
*staying a' fuireach* (2)  
*steak* **staoig** (3/6)  
*stopping a' stad* (3)  
*student* **oileanach** (2)  
*sure* **cinnteach** (10)

*tea* **ti** (6)  
*teacher* **tidsear** (2)  
*ten o'clock* **deich uairean** (4)  
*thank you (familiar)* **tapadh leat** (1)  
*thank you (polite and plural)* **tapadh leibh** (1)  
*that it won't be* **nach bi i** (8)  
*that one* **am fear sin** (6)  
*That will be good* **Bidh sin math** (3)  
*The Island Band* **Còmhlan an Eilein** (7)  
*then* **ma-thà** (6), **an uair sin** (7)  
*there* **an sin** (8)  
*There are bagpipes* **Tha piob ann** (7)  
*they* **iad** (3)  
*they make them* **bidh iad gan dèanamh** (9)  
*They're deer* **'S e fèidh a th' annta** (8)  
*thing* **rud** (10)  
*thinking a' smaoinachadh* (10)  
*This is...* **Seo...** (1)  
*tidying a' sgioblachadh* (5)  
*tired* **sgìth** (3)  
*to a* (4); *ri* (3/4)  
*Tobermory* **Tobar Mhoire** (3/1)  
*today* **an-diugh** (1)  
*tomorrow* **a-màireach** (3)

## Introducing the authors

### Boyd Robertson

Professor Boyd Robertson is Principal of Scotland's Gaelic College, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, on the Isle of Skye. He has extensive experience of teaching and lecturing in Gaelic and of devising language acquisition materials. He is co-author of the Teach Yourself Complete Gaelic course and the Teach Yourself Essential Gaelic Dictionary and was Language Adviser for the Scottish Television series, Speaking our Language. He was brought up in North Uist in the Outer Hebrides and Gaelic was his first language. After graduating in Celtic Studies from Aberdeen University, he taught Gaelic at Oban High School before becoming a lecturer at Jordanhill College in Glasgow and then Reader in Gaelic at the University of Strathclyde.

### Gordon Wells

Gordon Wells is an experienced language teacher and learner, having spent time in Japan and India before settling in Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides. In addition to Gaelic he has taught English and various Asian languages and he was co-writer for the BBC Hindi Urdu Bol Chaal series in the early nineties. He is now Projects Officer for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, for whom he leads the development of a major video archive presenting aspects of Hebridean life and work for language learners. In his spare time he blogs on language and other issues at [www.gordonwells.co.uk](http://www.gordonwells.co.uk) and plays in a Gaelic rock and reggae band.

*I hope there will be good food there* **Tha mi 'n dòchas gum bi biadh math ann (3/5)**

*I like bread and butter* **'S toil leam aran is im (6)**

*I must* **feumaidh mi (9)**

*I myself don't eat meat* **Cha bhi mi fhèin ag ithe feòil (9)**

**I prefer 's fheàrr leam (7)**

*I see them* **Tha mi gam faicinn (9)**

*I see* **tha mi a' faicinn (8)**

*I will not, no* **cha ghabh (7)**

*I will see* **chi mi (4)**

*I will take* **gabhaidh mi (6)**

*I will, yes* **gabhaidh (7)**

*indeed* **dha-rìribh (5)**

*in Glasgow* **ann an Glaschu (2)**

*in Inverness* **ann an Inbhir Nis (2)**

*in the Isle of Skye* **san Eilean Sgitheanach (2)**

*in the morning* **sa mhadainn (3)**

*in town, in the town* **anns a' bhaile (5)**

*ironing* **ag iarnaigeadh (5)**

*isn't it* **nach eil (1)**

*it e (3), i (1)*

*It is a good day* **'S e latha math a th' ann (8)**

*It is nice* **Tha i snog (1)**

*joking, fun* **fealla-dhà (10)**

*journey, trip* **turas (3/4)**

*just as usual* **dìreach san àbhaist (1)**

*just now* **an-dràsta (2)**

*kitchen* **cidsin (3/5)**

*lager* **lagar (3/7)**

*lake* **loch (8)**

*lamb (meat)* **feòil uan (3/6)**

*land* **tìr (10)**

*large* **mòr (10)**

*last night* **a-raoir (3/7)**

*learning Gaelic* **ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig (2)**

*leave, leaving a'* **fàgail (4)**

*Lewis* **Leòdhas (3/4)**

*little* **beag (10)**

*living a'* **fuireach (2)**

*loch* **loch (8)**

*Loch Eport* **Loch Euphort (8)**

*Loch Ness* **Loch Nis (2)**

*lochs* **lochan (8)**

*Look!* **Seall! (9)**

*looking a'* **coimhead (9)**

*making a'* **dèanamh (3)**

*mainland* **Tìr Mòr (3/8)**

*man* **duine (3/10)**

*marvellous* **miorbhaileach (8)**

*match* **gèam (5)**

*maybe 's* **dòcha (10)**

*me* **mi (2)**

*me (emphatic)* **mise (1)**

*meat* **feòil (9)**

*menu* **clàr-bìdh (3/6)**

*milk* **bainne (9)**

*money* **airgead (9)**

*monster: the ~* **an uilebheist (2)**

*morning* **madainn (1)**

*mountains* **beanntan (8)**

*music* **ceòl (7)**

*my* **mo (2)**

*my brother* **mo bhràthair (2)**

*my female friend* **mo bhanacharaid (1)**

*my friend* **mo charaid (1)**

*near* **faisg air (2)**

*nine o' clock* **naoi uairean (4)**

*not bad* **chan eil dona (1)**

*now* **a-nis (6)**

*nurse* **nurs (2)**

*Oban* **An t-Òban (3/4)**

*ocean* **muir (10)**

do you want...? **a bheil sibh ag iarraidh...**? (6)  
 doctor **dotair** (3/2)  
 doing **a' dèanamh**? (3)  
 Don't you know? **Nach eil fios agad**? (3/7)  
 drink: to ~ **ri òl** (6)  
 dry **tioram** (8)  
 dusting **a' dustadh** (5)

eagle **iolaire** (3/8)  
 eagles **iolaircan** (3/8)  
 early **tràth** (3/1)  
 easy **furasta** (3/4)  
 eat **ithe** (6)  
 eating **ag ithe** (6)  
 eggs **uighean** (9)  
 eleven o'clock **aon uair deug** (3)  
 English (language) **Beurla** (6)  
 evening **feasgar** (4)  
 ever **riamh** (3/4)  
 every kind **a h-uile seòrsa** (6)  
 expensive **daor** (9)

female friend **banacharaid** (2)  
 ferry **bàt-aiseig** (3/4)  
 fiddle **fidheall** (7)  
 fine **tha gu math** (1)  
 fish **iasg** (10)  
 food **biadh** (6)  
 football **ball-coise** (5)  
 football match **gèam ball-coise** (5)  
 for **airson** (3)  
 four o'clock **ceithir uairean** (4)  
 French (language) **Fraingis** (6)  
 Friday afternoon/evening **feasgar Dihaoine** (4)  
 Friday night **Oidhche Haoine** (4)  
 friend **caraid** (2)  
 from Cape Breton **à Ceap Breatainn** (2)  
 from Edinburgh **à Dùn Èideann** (2)  
 fun **fealla-dhà** (10)

Gaelic songs **òrain Ghàidhlig** (7)  
 game **gèam** (5)  
 Glasgow: to ~ **a Ghlaschu** (4)  
 Glasgow University **Oilthigh Ghlaschu** (3/1)  
 going **a' dol** (3)  
 good **math** (1)  
 good afternoon/evening **feasgar math** (1)  
 good morning **madainn mhath** (1)  
 green **uaine** (10)

haddock **adag** (3/6)  
 hall: the ~ **an talla** (3)  
 he **e** (3)  
 here **an seo** (4)  
 high school **àrd-sgoil** (3/1)  
 hills **beanntan** (8)  
 hills of Harris: the ~ **beanntan na Hearadh** (8)  
 home, homewards **dhachaigh** (8)  
 hotel **taigh-òsta** (3)  
 house **taigh** (10)  
 How are you? (familiar) **Ciamar a tha thu?** (1)  
 How are you? (polite and plural) **Ciamar a tha sibh?** (1)  
 How are you yourself? **Ciamar a tha thu/sibh fhèin?** (1)

I **mi** (2)  
 I (emphatic) **mise** (1)  
 I'm sorry **Tha mi duilich** (3/5)  
 I'm sure there will **Tha mi cinnteach gum bi** (3/5)  
 I am... **Is mise...** (1)  
 I am a nurse **'S e nurs a th' annam** (2)  
 I am from Edinburgh **Tha mise à Dun Èideann** (2)  
 I am full up **Tha mi cho làn ri ugh** (6)  
 I don't know **Chan eil fios agam** (9)  
 I don't like cheese **Cha toil leam càise** (6)  
 I hope **tha mi 'n dòchas** (8)  
 I hope it won't **Tha mi 'n dòchas nach bi** (3/5)

## Only got a minute?

Gaelic is Scotland's longest established language and is an integral part of the country's heritage, life and culture. It is a Celtic language closely related to Irish and more indirectly to Welsh and Breton. Gaelic is now found mainly in the Highlands and Islands and in urban areas such as Glasgow and Edinburgh but was once spoken in most parts of Scotland. The footprint of the language can be seen clearly in Scottish place names and personal names. Many of the badges of Scottish identity including tartan, bagpipes and whisky are derived from Gaelic culture, and the Gaelic tradition has contributed significantly to the riches of Scottish literature and music.

**Speak Gaelic with confidence** provides an introduction to the language and enables learners to communicate in basic Gaelic without being sidetracked by complex grammar explanations. It covers the common situations and the everyday language a learner is likely to encounter.

Only got a minute?

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## Only got five minutes?

Scottish Gaelic is a Celtic language closely related to Irish and Manx Gaelic, and less directly to Welsh and Breton. It is the longest established living language in Scotland and was, for a period in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the language of the Crown and Government. The number of Gaelic speakers has been falling, with just under 100,000 being able to speak or understand it according to the 2001 Census, but vigorous attempts are now being made to reverse this decline, not least among adult learners. The strongest Gaelic-speaking communities are in the Outer Hebrides, but concentrations of keen speakers and activists are found in urban centres like Glasgow and Edinburgh. There are also emigrant communities around the world, some perhaps dating from the Highland Clearances, in which Gaelic may still be heard, for example in Nova Scotia, Canada. The arrival of modern communication systems has seen the borders between all these communities blur, with the Internet enabling contact with Gaelic speakers and learners anywhere in the world.

Any visitor to Scotland who is alert to Gaelic will be struck by the footprint the language has left on the country. Look in any telephone directory and note the number of surnames beginning with 'Mac' or 'Mc'. Don't even try counting them! All these names derive from the Gaelic word **mac** meaning *son*. For instance, **Macdonald** is literally *son of Donald*. Place names also reveal how widely Gaelic has been spoken. The prefixes **Ach/Auch** (*field*), **Bal** (*town*), **Dun/Dum** (*fort*), **Inver** (*river mouth*), **Kil** (*church*), **Kin/Ken** (*head or end*), and **Strath** (*valley*) all come from Gaelic, and are found in places like Auchinleck, Balmoral, Dundee, Inverness, Kilmarnock, Kingussie, and Strathclyde, dotted all round the country.

The Gaelic language has had a strong influence over many aspects of Scottish culture, perhaps particularly in relation to music. The bagpipes were traditionally taught orally, using Gaelic terminology and vocables.

## English–Gaelic glossary

NB: Numbers indicate the conversation in which the vocabulary item first appears.

*Aberdeen* **Obar Dheathain** (5)  
*accordion* **bogsa** (7)  
*accordion music* **ceòl a' bhogsa** (7)  
*after that* **an uair sin** (7); **as dèidh sin** (3/6)  
*afternoon* **feasgar** (4)  
*airport* **port-adhar** (4)  
*already* **mar-thà** (3/10)  
*also* **cuideachd** (6)  
*and* **agus** (2)  
*animals* **beathaichean** (8)  
*another* **eile** (7)  
*anyway* **co-dhiù** (8)  
*apples* **ùbhlán** (9)  
*are you?* **a bheil sibh?** (2)  
*arrive, arriving* **a' ruighinn** (4)  
*as cho* (7)  
*as...as* (3/4) **cho...ri**  
*at all* **idir** (7)  
*at eight o'clock* **aig ochd uairean** (3)

*bagpipes* **piob** (7)  
*baking* **a' fuine** (5)  
*Barra Barraigh* (3/4)  
*beautiful* **brèagha** (1)  
*beer* **leann** (6)  
*beginning* **a' tòiseachadh** (3)  
*Benbecula* **Beinn na Fadhla** (3/4)  
*between* **eadar** (3)  
*big* **mòr** (10)  
*bird* **eun** (3/8)  
*biscuit* **briosgaid** (6)  
*black* **dubh** (10)  
*boat* **bàta** (10)

*bonnet* **bonaid** (3/9)  
*bonnets* **bonaidean** (3/9)  
*bread* **aran** (5)  
*brooches* **bràistean** (9)  
*bus* **bus** (4)  
*busy* **trang** (5)  
*but* **ach** (2)  
*butter* **im** (6)

*cake* **cèic** (6)  
*ceilidh: to a ~* **gu cèilidh** (3)  
*ceilidhs* **cèilidhean** (7)  
*certain* **cinnteach** (10)  
*cheese* **càise** (6)  
*clouds* **sgòthan** (8)  
*coffee* **cofaidh** (6)  
*coke* **còc** (3/6)  
*cold* **fuair** (8)  
*Colin's Band* **Còmhlan Chailein** (3)  
*cooking* **a' còcaireachd** (5)  
*course* **cùrsa** (3/1)

*dance* **dannsa** (3)  
*dance: to the ~* **chun an dannsa** (3)  
*day* **latha** (3/4)  
*dear* **daor** (9)  
*deer* **fèidh** (8)  
*depart(s), departing* **a' fàgail** (4)  
*digital* **didseatach** (3/9)  
*Dingwall* **Inbhir Pheotharain** (3/2)  
*Do you see them?* **A bheil thu gam faicinn?** (9)  
*Do you speak Gaelic?* **A bheil Gàidhlig agaibh?** (6)

There is now a traditional music resurgence, with many excellent Gaelic singers and players, while groups, such as Runrig, have taken the language into contemporary rock genres. And now that there is a Gaelic television service the language is probably getting a wider public exposure at a national level than it has had for a very long time indeed.

**Speak Gaelic with confidence** takes you on a trip into Scotland's island and mainland Gaelic communities. It gives you a phased introduction to the spoken language, concentrating on what you're most likely to need – and what's easiest to learn in the early stages of acquiring a new language! The focus is on listening and then speaking, with lots of opportunity for practice and repetition. Any grammar is kept very simple, to provide a basic explanation of how the language works. The topics and situations covered are among the most common the learner is likely to encounter on first acquaintance with Scotland's Gaelic language.

Only got five minutes?

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## Conversation 1: Making acquaintances

### PART 1: MEETING AND GREETING PEOPLE

#### CD1, TR2

<b>Seumas</b>	Hallo. Is mise Seumas.
<b>Catriona</b>	Madainn mhath, a Sheumais. Is mise Catriona.
<b>Seumas</b>	Ciamar a tha sibh, a Catriona?
<b>Catriona</b>	Tha gu math, tapadh leibh. Ciamar a tha sibh fhèin?
<b>Seumas</b>	Glè mhath, tapadh leibh. Tha i snog an-diugh, nach eil?
<b>Catriona</b>	Tha gu dearbh! Tha i brèagha.

### Insight

#### Word order

Word order in Gaelic differs from that in English. Words for things (nouns) come before any words that describe them (adjectives) so *Good morning* is **Madainn mhath** literally *Morning good*. In sentences, the doing word (verb) comes before the subject as in **Tha i snog an-diugh**, *It is nice today*, where **tha** is the doing word *is* and *i* is the subject *it*.

### PART 2: INTRODUCING PEOPLE

#### CD1, TR7

<b>Catriona</b>	Hallo, a Mhìcheil. Ciamar a tha thu a-nochd?
<b>Mìcheal</b>	Chan eil dona, tapadh leat. Ciamar a tha thu fhèin?
<b>Catriona</b>	Dìreach san àbhaist, tapadh leat. Seo Seumas.
<b>Mìcheal</b>	Feasgar math, a Sheumais.
<b>Catriona</b>	Seo mo charaid, Mìcheal.
<b>Seumas</b>	Feasgar math, a Mhìcheil. Seo mo bhanacharaid, Anna.

's dòcha (10) *maybe, perhaps*  
seadh (9) *yes, I see*  
Seall! (9) *Look!*  
sealladh (8) *view*  
'S e fèidh a th' annta (8) *They're deer*  
seinneadair (7) *singer*  
'S e latha math a th'ann. (8) *It's a good day.*  
'S e nurs a th'annam. (2) *I'm a nurse.*  
Seo... (1) *This is...*  
'S fheàrr leam (7) *I prefer*  
sgòthan (8) *clouds*  
sgriobhadair (3/1) *writer*  
sibh (1) *you (polite and plural)*  
sibhse (3) *you (emphatic)*  
sgith (3) *tired*  
siubhal (4) *travel*  
speuclairean (3/10) *spectacles*  
staoig (3/6) *steak*  
'S toil leam aran is im. (6) *I like bread and butter.*

tha a h-uile seòrsa againn (6) *we have every kind*  
tha còmhlan eile ann (7) *there is another band*  
tha gu dearbh (1) *yes indeed*  
tha gu math (1) *fine*  
taigh (10) *house*  
taigh-òsta (3) *hotel*  
tapadh leat (1) *thank you (familiar)*  
tapadh leibh (1) *thank you (polite and plural form)*  
Tha i snog (1) *It is nice*  
Tha mi a' faicinn (8) *I see*  
Tha mi cho làn ri ugh (6) *I'm full up*  
Tha mi cinnteach gum bi (3/5) *I'm sure there will*

Tha mi duilich (3/5) *I'm sorry*  
Tha mi gam faicinn (9) *I see them*  
tha mi 'n dòchas (8) *I hope*  
Tha mi 'n dòchas gum bi biadh math ann (3/5) *I hope there will be good food there*  
Tha mi 'n dòchas nach bi (3/5) *I hope it won't*  
Tha mise à Dun Èideann (2) *I'm from Edinburgh*  
Tha piob ann (7) *There are bagpipes*  
Tha sinne à Inbhir Nis. (2) *We're from Inverness*  
thu (1) *you (familiar)*  
ti (6) *tea*  
tidsear (2) *teacher*  
tioram (8) *dry*  
tir (10) *land*  
Tìr Mòr (3/8) *mainland*  
Tobar Mhoire (3/1) *Tobermory*  
trang (5) *busy*  
tràth (3/1) *early*  
trèan (4) *train*  
turas (3/4) *journey, trip*

uaine (10) *green*  
uaireannan (3/8) *sometimes*  
ùbhlán (9) *apples*  
Uibhist (7) *Uist*  
Uibhist a Deas (8) *South Uist*  
Uibhist a Tuath (3/4) *North Uist*  
Ùige (3/4) *Uig*  
uighean (9) *eggs*  
uinnein (3/6) *onion*  
uisge-beatha (6) *whisky*

grannda (10) *ugly*  
gu cèilidh (3) *to a ceilidh*  
gu leòr (8) *plenty*

i (1) *it, she*  
iad (3) *they*  
iasg (10) *fish*  
idir (7) *at all*  
im (6) *butter*  
Inbhir Pheotharain (3/2) *Dingwall*  
iolaire (3/8) *eagle*  
iolairean (3/8) *eagles*  
Is mise... (1) *I am...*  
ithe (6) *eat*

lagar (3/7) *lager*  
latha (3/4) *day*  
le (6) *with*  
leann (6) *beer*  
Leòdhas (3/4) *Lewis*  
loch (8) *loch, lake*  
lochan (8) *lochs*  
Loch Euphort (8) *Loch Eport*  
Loch Nis (2) *Loch Ness*

madainn (1) *morning*  
madainn Diciadain (4) *Wednesday morning*  
madainn mhath (1) *good morning*  
mar-thà (3/10) *already*  
mas e ur toil e (6) *please, if you please*  
math (1) *good*  
ma-thà (6) *then*  
mi (2) *I, me*  
miorbhaileach (8) *marvellous*  
mise (1) *I, me (emphatic)*  
mo (2) *my*  
mo bhanacharaid (1) *my female friend*  
mo bhràthair (2) *my brother*

mo charaid (1) *my friend*  
mòr (10) *big, large*  
muc-mhara (3/8) *whale*  
muir (10) *sea, ocean*

nach bi i (8) *that it won't be*  
nach eil (1) *isn't it*  
Nach eil fios agad? (3/7) *Don't you know?*  
naoi uairean (4) *nine o'clock*  
no (4) *or*  
nurs (2) *nurse*

obair (2) *work, occupation*  
Obar Dheathain (5) *Aberdeen*  
Obh! Obh! (3) *Oh my goodness!*  
oidhche Haoine (4) *Friday night*  
oileanach (2) *student*  
oilthigh (3/1) *university*  
Oilthigh Ghlaschu (3/1) *Glasgow University*  
òrain (7) *songs*  
òrain Ghàidhlig (7) *Gaelic songs*  
òran (7) *song*

pinnt (3/6) *pint*  
piob (7) *bagpipes*  
port-adhar (4) *airport*  
prògram (5) *programme*

ri (3/4) *to*  
rianh (3/4) *ever*  
ri òl (6) *to drink*  
rud (10) *thing*  
rud (10) *thing*  
rudeigin (3/9) *something*

sailead (3/6) *salad*  
sa mhadainn (3) *in the morning*  
san Eilean Sgitheanach (2) *in the Isle of Skye*

James *Hello. I'm James.*  
Catriona *Good morning, James. I'm Catriona.*  
James *How are you, Catriona?*  
Catriona *Fine, thank you. How are you yourself?*  
James *Very well, thanks. It's nice today, isn't it?*  
Catriona *Yes indeed! It's beautiful.*

## Insight

### Forms of address

When addressing someone by name, you put an **a** before the name which, in many cases, changes form. For example, **Seumas**, *James*, becomes **A Sheumais** which is equivalent to saying *Oh James*. If the name begins with a vowel, the usual form of the name is retained and is not preceded by **a**.

Catriona *Hello, Michael. How are you tonight?*  
Michael *Not bad, thank you. How are you yourself?*  
Catriona *Just as usual, thank you. This is James.*  
Michael *Good afternoon, James.*  
Catriona *This is my friend, Michael.*  
James *Good afternoon, Michael. This is my friend, Anna.*

## Insight

### Formal and informal usage

Gaelic, like French, employs two forms of the pronoun *you*.

**Thu** is the form used when you know someone well while **sibh** is used in more formal situations and when being polite. Therefore, you would ask a friend how (s)he is with **Ciamar a tha thu?** but say **Ciamar a tha sibh?** to a stranger.

## Conversation 2: Getting to know people

### PART 1: FINDING OUT WHERE PEOPLE ARE FROM

#### CD1, TR11

<b>Mairead</b>	Is mise Mairead. Seo mo bhràthair, Calum.
<b>Seumas</b>	Is mise Seumas. Seo mo bhanacharaid, Anna.
<b>Mairead</b>	Cò às a tha sibh?
<b>Anna</b>	Tha mise à Dun Eideann.
<b>Seumas</b>	Agus tha mise à Canada – à Ceap Breatainn. Cò às a tha sibh fhèin?
<b>Calum</b>	Tha sinne à Inbhir Nis.
<b>Seumas</b>	Ah! Inbhir Nis! Faisg air Loch Nis. Bha sinn ann ach chan fhaca sinn an uilebheist!

**Cò às a tha sibh? (2)** *Where are you from?*

**còc (3/6)** *coke*

**co-dhiù (8)** *anyway*

**cofaidh (6)** *coffee*

**coiseachd (8)** *walking*

**Còmhlan an Eilein (7)** *The Island Band*

**Còmhlan Chailein (3)** *Colin's Band*

**Cò tha cluich? (3)** *Who is playing?*

**cuideachd (6)** *also*

**cuin? (3)** *when?*

**cùrsa (3/1)** *course*

**cus (3/7)** *too much*

**dannsa (3)** *dance*

**daor (9)** *expensive, dear*

**dà uair sa mhadainn (3)** *two o'clock in the morning*

**dealbh (10)** *picture*

**dealbhan (3/10)** *pictures*

**Dè an obair a th'agad? (2)** *What is your occupation?*

**Dè bha thu ris? (5)** *What were you up to?*

**Dè do bheachd? (9)** *What do you think?*

**Dè eile a dh'fheumas tu? (9)** *What else do you need?*

**Dè ghabhas sibh? (6)** *What will you have?*

**deich uairean (4)** *ten o'clock*

**dè seòrsa? (6)** *what kind?*

**Dè seòrsa leann a th' agaih? (6)** *What kind of beer have you got?*

**Dè tha sibh a' dèanamh? (3)** *What are you doing?*

**dhachaigh (8)** *home, homewards*

**dha-rìribh (5)** *indeed*

**Diciadain (4)** *Wednesday*

**didseatach (3/9)** *digital*

**direach san àbhaist (1)** *just as usual*

**diùid (7)** *shy*

**dotair (3/2)** *doctor*

**dubh (10)** *black*

**duilich (3/5)** *sad, sorry*

**duine (3/10)** *man*

**e (3)** *it, he*

**eadar (3)** *between*

**eile (7)** *another*

**eun (3/8)** *bird*

**fàinneachan (9)** *rings*

**faisg air (2)** *near*

**Faodaidh sinn (4)** *we can, we may*

**feallà-dhà (10)** *joking, fun*

**fear (6)** *one*

**feasgar (4)** *afternoon, evening*

**feasgar Dihaoine (4)** *Friday afternoon, Friday evening*

**feasgar math (1)** *good afternoon, good evening*

**fèidh (8)** *deer*

**feòil (9)** *meat*

**feòil uan (3/6)** *lamb (meat)*

**feumaidh mi (9)** *I must*

**feumaidh sinn (8)** *we must*

**fidheall (7)** *fiddle, violin*

**fion dearg (6)** *red wine*

**fion geal (6)** *white wine*

**fliuch (8)** *wet*

**Fraingis (6)** *French (language)*

**fuair (8)** *cold*

**fuirich mionaid (4)** *wait a minute*

**furasta (3/4)** *easy*

**gabhadh (7)** *I will, yes*

**gabhadh mi (6)** *I'll take*

**gèam (5)** *game, match*

**gèam ball-coise (5)** *football match*

**glè mhath (1)** *very well, very good*



àrd-sgoil (3/1) *high school*  
 a' ruighinn (4) *arrive, arriving, reach, reaching*  
 as dèidh sin (3/6) *after that*  
 a' seinn (3/3) *singing*  
 a' sgioblachadh (5) *tidying*  
 a' smaoinichadh (10) *thinking*  
 a' stad (3) *stopping*  
 a' tilleadh (4) *return, returning*  
 a' tòiseachadh (3) *starting, beginning*

bainne (9) *milk*  
 ball-coise (5) *football*  
 banacharaid (2) *female friend*  
 Barraigh (3/4) *Barra*  
 bàta (10) *boat*  
 bàt'-aiseig (3/4) *ferry*  
 beag (10) *small, little*  
 beanntan (8) *hills, mountains*  
 beanntan na Hearadh (8) *the hills of Harris*  
 beathaichean (8) *animals*  
 beathaichean gu leòr (8) *plenty of animals*  
 Beinn na Fadhlà (3/4) *Benbecula*  
 Beurla (6) *English (language)*  
 bha sinn ann (2) *we were there*  
 bhios (3/3) *will be*  
 bhodca (3/6) *vodka*  
 biadh (6) *food*  
 bidh iad gan dèanamh (9) *they make them*  
 bidh sin math (3) *that will be good*  
 blàth (8) *warm*  
 bogsa (7) *accordion*  
 bonaid (3/9) *bonnet*  
 bonaidean (3/9) *bonnets*  
 bradan (3/6) *salmon*  
 bràistean (9) *brooches*  
 brèagha (1) *beautiful*  
 briosgaid (6) *biscuit*  
 brot (5) *soup*

bus (4) *bus*  
 bùth (9) *shop*  
 càise (6) *cheese*  
 càit a bheil? (3) *where is?*  
 caoraich (8) *sheep*  
 caraid (2) *friend*  
 ceannaich (3/9) *buy*  
 Ceannaichidh sinn (3/9) *We will buy*  
 ceart (10) *right*  
 ceart gu leòr (3/4) *right enough, OK*  
 cèic (6) *cake*  
 cèilidhean (7) *ceilidhs*  
 ceithir uairean (4) *four o' clock*  
 ceòl (7) *music*  
 ceòl a' bhogsa (7) *accordion music*  
 Cha bhi mi fhèin ag ithe feòil. (9) *I myself don't eat meat.*  
 cha ghabh (7) *I will not, no*  
 chan eil dona (1) *not bad*  
 Chan eil fios agam. (9) *I don't know.*  
 chan fhaca sinn (2) *we didn't see*  
 cha robh (10) *wasn't, weren't, no*  
 Cha toil leam càise (6) *I don't like cheese*  
 chì mi (4) *I'll see*  
 cho (7) *so, as*  
 cho...ri (3/4) *as...as*  
 chun an dannsa (3) *to the dance*  
 Ciamar a tha sibh? (1) *How are you? (polite and plural)*  
 Ciamar a tha sibh fhèin? (1) *How are you yourself? (polite and plural)*  
 Ciamar a tha thu? (1) *How are you? (familiar)*  
 Ciamar a tha thu fhèin? (1) *How are you yourself? (familiar)*  
 cidsin (3/5) *kitchen*  
 cinnteach (10) *sure, certain*  
 cladach (3/8) *shore*  
 clàr-bidh (3/6) *menu*

## Insight

### Lenition

All nouns in Gaelic are either masculine or feminine. When a noun is feminine, the word describing it is often lenited. Lenition is shown in writing by the inclusion of an **h** as the second letter of the word. In the greeting *Good morning*, **Madainn mhath**, the word *good*, **math** has been lenited to **mhath** because **madainn** is feminine.

<b>Margaret</b>	<i>I'm Margaret. This is my brother, Calum.</i>
<b>James</b>	<i>I'm James. This is my friend, Anne.</i>
<b>Margaret</b>	<i>Where are you from?</i>
<b>Anne</b>	<i>I'm from Edinburgh.</i>
<b>James</b>	<i>And I'm from Canada – from Cape Breton. Where are you from yourself?</i>
<b>Calum</b>	<i>We're from Inverness.</i>
<b>James</b>	<i>Ah! Inverness! Near Loch Ness. We were there but we didn't see the monster!</i>

## PART 2: FINDING OUT ABOUT PEOPLE'S JOBS AND WHERE THEY LIVE

CD1, TR15

<b>Seumas</b>	A bheil sibh a' fuireach ann an Inbhir Nis?
<b>Calum</b>	Tha mise a' fuireach ann an Inbhir Nis ach tha Mairead a' fuireach ann an Glaschu.
<b>Anna</b>	Dè an obair a th' agad, a Mhairead?
<b>Mairead</b>	'S e nurs a th' annam. Dè an obair a th' agad fhèin, Anna?
<b>Anna</b>	'S e oileanach a th' annam. Ann an Dùn Èideann. Dè an obair a th' agadsa, a Chalum?
<b>Calum</b>	'S e tidsear a th' annam.
<b>Seumas</b>	Tha mise a' fuireach san Eilean Sgitheanach an-dràsta. Tha mi ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig.

### Insight

#### Occupations

To tell someone what your occupation is, you use **'S e** followed by the word for the job and then **a th' annam**. To state that you are a nurse, you would say **'S e nurs a th' annam** which is literally *It is a nurse that is in me*.

## Gaelic–English glossary

NB: Numbers indicate the conversation in which the vocabulary item first appears.

<b>a (4)</b> to	<b>airson a dhol (3)</b> want to go
<b>Abair sealladh! (8)</b> What a view!	<b>àite (4)</b> place
<b>a bheil sibh? (2)</b> are you?	<b>a-màireach (3)</b> tomorrow
<b>a bheil sibh ag iarraidh? (6)</b> do you want?	<b>am baile (4)</b> the town, the city
<b>A bheil Gàidhlig agaibh? (6)</b> Do you speak Gaelic?	<b>am bi...? (3/4)</b> will...be?
<b>A bheil thu gam faicinn? (9)</b> Do you see them?	<b>am fear sin (6)</b> that one
<b>à Ceap Breatainn (2)</b> from Cape Breton	<b>am plèana (4)</b> the plane
<b>ach (2)</b> but	<b>An ceannaich sinn? (3/9)</b> Shall we buy?
<b>a choimhead TV (5)</b> to watch TV	<b>an-diugh (1)</b> today
<b>a' còcaireachd (5)</b> cooking	<b>an-dràsta (2)</b> just now
<b>a' coimhead (9)</b> looking, seeming	<b>An gabh thu ceic eile? (7)</b> Will you have another cake?
<b>adag (3/6)</b> haddock	<b>An gabh thu fhèin òran? (7)</b> Will you sing a song yourself?
<b>a' dèanamh? (3)</b> doing, making	<b>a' nigheadaireachd (5)</b> washing, doing the washing
<b>a' dol (3)</b> going	<b>a-nis (6)</b> now
<b>à Dùn Èideann (2)</b> from Edinburgh	<b>ann an Glaschu (2)</b> in Glasgow
<b>a' dustadh (5)</b> dusting	<b>ann an Inbhir Nis (2)</b> in Inverness
<b>a' fàgail (4)</b> depart(ing), leave, leaving	<b>anns a' bhaile (5)</b> in town, in the town
<b>a' fuine (5)</b> baking	<b>a-nochd (1)</b> tonight
<b>a' fuireach (2)</b> staying, living	<b>a-raoir (3/7)</b> last night
<b>ag iarraigeadh (5)</b> ironing	<b>an robh? (5)</b> was?, were?, was it?
<b>ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig (2)</b> learning Gaelic	<b>an seo (4)</b> here
<b>a Ghlaschu (4)</b> to Glasgow	<b>an sgoil (3)</b> the school
<b>agus (2)</b> and	<b>an sin (8)</b> there
<b>a h-uile seòrsa (6)</b> every kind	<b>An t-Òban (3/4)</b> Oban
<b>aig ochd uairean (3)</b> at eight o'clock	<b>an talla (3)</b> the hall
<b>air (4)</b> on	<b>an uair sin (7)</b> then, after that
<b>air a' mhonadh (8)</b> on the moor	<b>an uilebheist (2)</b> the monster
<b>air a' phlèana (4)</b> on the plane	<b>aon uair deug (3)</b> eleven o'clock
<b>airgead (9)</b> money	<b>aran (5)</b> bread
<b>airson (3)</b> for	

**James** *Do you live in Inverness?*  
**Calum** *I live in Inverness but Margaret lives in Glasgow.*  
**Anne** *What is your occupation, Margaret?*  
**Margaret** *I'm a nurse. What is your own occupation, Anne?*  
**Anne** *I'm a student. In Edinburgh. What is your occupation, Calum?*  
**Calum** *I'm a teacher.*  
**James** *I'm living on the Isle of Skye just now. I'm learning Gaelic.*

## Insight

### Locations

To indicate location, you usually insert **ann an** before the place name as in **ann an Glaschu**, *in Glasgow*. However, when the name of the place begins in B, F, M or P, **ann am** is the form used. So, *in Mull* is **ann am Muile**.

## Conversation 3: Socializing with friends

### PART 1: PLANNING A NIGHT OUT

CD1, TR19

<b>Seumas</b>	Dè tha sibh a' dèanamh a-nochd?
<b>Mairead</b>	Tha sinn a' dol gu cèilidh san taigh-òsta. Dè tha sibh fhèin a' dèanamh?
<b>Anna</b>	Tha sinn a' dol gu dannsa. Cuin a tha an cèilidh a' tòiseachadh?
<b>Mairead</b>	Aig ochd uairean.
<b>Calum</b>	Càit a bheil an dannsa?
<b>Seumas</b>	Anns an talla.
<b>Mairead</b>	Cuin a tha an dannsa a' tòiseachadh?
<b>Anna</b>	Aig aon uair deug.
<b>Calum</b>	A bheil sibh airson a dhol chun a' chèilidh?
<b>Anna</b>	Tha gu dearbh. A bheil sibhse airson a dhol chun an dannsa?
<b>Mairead</b>	O tha!
<b>Calum</b>	Bidh sin math.

### Insight

#### Going to

There are several words for *to* in Gaelic. If you want to say that you are going to a certain type of event, you use **gu** as in **gu dannsa**, *to a dance*. However, when talking about one specific event, you use **chun** eg **chun an dannsa**, *to the dance*.

### PART 2: DISCUSSING THE NIGHT OUT

CD1, TR23

<b>Mairead</b>	Càit a bheil an talla?
<b>Anna</b>	Tha e faisg air an taigh-òsta.
<b>Seumas</b>	Tha e eadar an taigh-òsta agus an sgoil.
<b>Calum</b>	Cò tha cluich aig an dannsa?
<b>Seumas</b>	Còmhlan Chailein.
<b>Mairead</b>	A bheil iad math?
<b>Anna</b>	Tha gu dearbh.

### Singular

Preposition	1st	2nd	3rd Masc.	3rd Fem.
<b>aig at</b>	<b>agam at me</b>	<b>agad at you</b>	<b>aige at him/it</b>	<b>aice at her/it</b>
<b>air on</b>	<b>orm on me</b>	<b>ort on you</b>	<b>air on him/it</b>	<b>oirre on her/it</b>
<b>ann in</b>	<b>annam in me</b>	<b>annad in you</b>	<b>ann in him/it</b>	<b>inntè in her/it</b>
<b>às out of</b>	<b>asam out of me</b>	<b>asad out of you</b>	<b>às out of him/it</b>	<b>aiste out of her/it</b>
<b>de of, off</b>	<b>dhiom of me</b>	<b>dhiot of you</b>	<b>dheth of him/it</b>	<b>dhith of her/it/them</b>
<b>do to</b>	<b>dhomh to me</b>	<b>dhut to you</b>	<b>dha to him/it</b>	<b>dhi to her/it them</b>
<b>gu/chun to</b>	<b>thugam to me</b>	<b>thugad to you</b>	<b>thuige to him/it</b>	<b>thuice to her/it</b>
<b>le with, by</b>	<b>leam with me</b>	<b>leat with you</b>	<b>leis with him/it</b>	<b>leatha with her/it</b>
<b>ri to</b>	<b>rium to me</b>	<b>riut to you</b>	<b>ris to him/it</b>	<b>rithe to her/it</b>

### Plural

Preposition	1st	2nd	3rd
<b>aig at</b>	<b>againn at us</b>	<b>agaibh at you</b>	<b>aca at them</b>
<b>air on</b>	<b>oirnn on us</b>	<b>oirbh on you</b>	<b>orra on them</b>
<b>ann in</b>	<b>annainn in us</b>	<b>annaibh in you</b>	<b>annta in them</b>
<b>às out of</b>	<b>asainn out of us</b>	<b>asaibh out of you</b>	<b>asta out of them</b>
<b>de of, off</b>	<b>dhinn of us</b>	<b>dhibh of you</b>	<b>dhiubh of them</b>
<b>do to</b>	<b>dhuinn to us</b>	<b>dhuibh to you</b>	<b>dhaibh to them</b>
<b>gu/chun to</b>	<b>thugainn to us</b>	<b>thugaibh to us</b>	<b>thuca to them</b>
<b>le with, by</b>	<b>leinn with us</b>	<b>leibh with you</b>	<b>leotha with them</b>
<b>ri to</b>	<b>rinn/ruinn to us</b>	<b>ribh/ruibh to you</b>	<b>riutha to them</b>

## 6 'A' AND 'THE'

Gaelic does not have an equivalent to the little word 'a' (or 'an') which you find in English. A noun in Gaelic such as *cèic* can mean *cake* or *a cake*.

In English, 'the' is used to specify the particular object under discussion, e.g. 'the shop at the end of the street'. There are several different forms of 'the' in Gaelic. The table below indicates which one to use when the noun is the subject of the sentence:

Gender & number	First letter of noun	Form of article	Example
Masculine singular	b, f, m, p	am	<b>am baile</b> ( <i>the town</i> )
	a, e, i, o, u	an t-	<b>an t-ugh</b> ( <i>the egg</i> )
	other letters	an	<b>an leabhar</b> ( <i>the book</i> )
Feminine singular	b, c, g, m, p	a' + (len)	<b>a' bheinn</b> ( <i>the hill</i> )
	f	an + (len)	<b>a' chraobh</b> ( <i>the tree</i> )
	sl, sn, sr, s + vowel other letters	an t- an	<b>an fhàinne</b> ( <i>the ring</i> ) <b>an t-sràid</b> ( <i>the street</i> ) <b>an sgoil</b> ( <i>the school</i> )
Masculine, feminine plural	consonant vowel	na na h-	<b>na lochan</b> ( <i>the lochs</i> ) <b>na h-adan</b> ( <i>the hats</i> )

These forms change when the nouns are in other cases, e.g. genitive and dative.

## 7 PREPOSITIONAL PRONOUNS

Prepositions like **aig** (*at*) and **air** (*on*) combine with the pronouns thus:

**aig** (*at*) + **mi** (*I*) = **agam**

**air** (*on*) + **thu** (*you*) = **ort**

A list of the more common prepositional pronouns is given below.

**James** *What are you doing tonight?*  
**Margaret** *We're going to a ceilidh in the hotel. What are you doing yourselves?*  
**Anne** *We're going to a dance. When does the ceilidh start?*  
**Margaret** *At 8 o'clock.*  
**Calum** *Where is the dance?*  
**James** *In the hall.*  
**Margaret** *When does the dance start?*  
**Anne** *At 11 o'clock.*  
**Calum** *Do you want to go to the ceilidh?*  
**Anne** *Yes indeed. Do you want to go to the dance?*  
**Margaret** *Oh yes!*  
**Calum** *That will be good.*

**Margaret** *Where is the hall?*  
**Anne** *It's near the hotel.*  
**James** *It's between the hotel and the school.*  
**Calum** *Who's playing at the dance?*  
**James** *Colin's Band.*  
**Margaret** *Are they good?*  
**Anne** *Yes, indeed.*

**Mairead** Cuin a tha an dannsa a' stad?  
**Anna** Aig dà uair sa mhadainn.  
**Calum** Obh! Obh! Bidh sinn sgìth a-màireach.

## Conversation 4: Making travel arrangements

### PART 1: BOOKING FLIGHTS

#### CD1, TR27

**Tè oifis** Madainn mhath. Loganair an seo.  
**Seumas** Madainn mhath. Tha mi airson siubhal a Ghlaschu Diciadain.  
**Tè oifis** A bheil sibh airson siubhal sa mhadainn no feasgar?  
**Seumas** Sa mhadainn. A bheil àite air a' phlèana madainn Diciadain?  
**Tè oifis** Fuirich mionaid agus chì mi.  
 \*\*\*  
 Tha.  
**Seumas** Cuin a tha am plèana a' ruighinn Glaschu?  
**Tè oifis** Bidh am plèana ann an Glaschu aig deich uairean. Cuin a tha sibh a' tilleadh?  
**Seumas** Feasgar Dihaoine.

### PART 2: DISCUSSING TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

#### CD1, TR31

**Anna** Cuin a tha thu a' dol a Ghlaschu?  
**Seumas** Madainn Diciadain.  
**Anna** Cuin a tha am plèana a' fàgail?  
**Seumas** Aig naoi uairean sa mhadainn.  
**Anna** A bheil trèan a' dol eadar Port-adhar Ghlaschu agus am baile?  
**Seumas** Chan eil ach tha bus ann.  
**Anna** Cuin a tha thu a' tilleadh?  
**Seumas** Feasgar Dihaoine. Tha am plèana a' fàgail aig ceithir uairean.

Initial letter	Lenited version	Pronounced as
m	mh	v
p	ph	f
s	sh	h
t	th	h

Certain consonants cannot be lenited in this way – 'l', 'n', 'r' and 'sg', 'sm', 'sp', 'st'.

### 3 GENDER

There is no neuter gender in Gaelic so all nouns are either masculine or feminine. This has implications for the form of adjective that accompanies the noun. For example, a feminine noun usually causes lenition of the following adjective, e.g. **sgèulachd mhath** (a good story). A masculine noun does not.

### 4 POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

The pronoun forms below are used to indicate possession:

my	<b>mo (+ lenition)</b>	our	<b>ar</b>
your	<b>do (+ lenition)</b>	your	<b>ur</b>
his	<b>a (+ lenition)</b>	their	<b>an or am</b>
her	<b>a</b>		

### 5 'YES' AND 'NO'

There is no single word for 'yes' or 'no' in Gaelic. To answer 'yes' to a question, you respond with the positive form of the verb used when asking the question. To answer 'no' to a question, you respond with the negative form of the verb used when asking the question. Here are some examples:

	Yes	No
<b>A bheil thu deiseil?</b> (Are you ready?)	<b>Tha.</b>	<b>Chan eil.</b>
<b>An robh sibh trang?</b> (Were you busy?)	<b>Bha.</b>	<b>Cha robh.</b>
<b>An gabh thu deoch?</b> (Will you have a drink?)	<b>Gabhaidh.</b>	<b>Cha ghabh.</b>

## Grammar

### 1 WORD ORDER

In English, the subject usually comes first in a statement and is followed by the verb or doing word. For example:

Subject	Verb	Other
We	were	tired

In Gaelic, however, the order is different – the verb normally comes at the beginning of a statement and is followed by the subject:

Verb	Subject	Other
Bha (were)	sinn (we)	sgìth (tired)

There is also a difference in word order involving the naming words, nouns, and the describing words (adjectives), that accompany them. In English, the adjective comes before the noun as in a 'good book'. In Gaelic, the order is reversed to **leabhar math**, where **leabhar** is the word for a book and **math** means good.

### 2 LENITION

It is common in Gaelic to change the initial sound of a word from the normal sound of the first letter. This change, known as 'lenition' or 'aspiration', is shown in writing by the insertion of an 'h' as the second letter of the word. An example of the change can be seen in the word **math** for good. When it is preceded by **glè** meaning very, it becomes **mhath**. The initial sound changes from 'm' to 'v'. Lenition takes place under certain conditions, e.g. in an adjective following a feminine noun and it is only shown in the consonants below:

Initial letter	Lenited version	Pronounced as
b	bh	v
c	ch	'ch' as in 'loch'
d	dh	a voiced 'ch'
f	fh	silent or 'h' only
g	gh	a voiced 'ch'

Margaret When does the dance stop?  
Anne At 2 o' clock in the morning.  
Calum Oh my goodness! We'll be tired tomorrow.

Airport staff Good morning. Loganair here.  
James Good morning. I want to travel to Glasgow on Wednesday.  
Airport staff Do you want to travel in the morning or the afternoon?  
James In the morning. Is there a place on the plane on Wednesday morning?  
Airport staff Wait a minute and I'll see.  
\*\*\*  
Yes.  
James When does the plane arrive in Glasgow?  
Airport staff The plane will be in Glasgow at 10 o'clock. When are you returning?  
James On Friday afternoon.

Anne When are you going to Glasgow?  
James On Wednesday morning.  
Anne When does the plane depart?  
James At 9 o'clock in the morning.  
Anne Is there a train going between Glasgow Airport and the city?  
James No, but there is a bus.  
Anne When are you coming back?  
James On Friday afternoon. The plane leaves at 4 o'clock.

**Anna** Glè mhath. Faodaidh sinn a dhol chun an dannsa Oidhche Haoine.

### Insight

#### Forms of the article

There is no indefinite article in Gaelic so *a boat* is simply **bàta**. However, Gaelic has several words for the definite article, *the*. Two common forms, **an** and **am**, appear in this conversation. They are used before masculine nouns as in **an dannsa**, *the dance* and **am baile**, *the town*. Other forms include **a'**, **an t-**, **t-** and **na**.

## Conversation 5: Discussing everyday activities

### PART 1: DISCUSSING WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING

#### CD1, TR35

**Anna** Dè bha thu a' dèanamh an-diugh, a Mhòrag?  
**Mòrag** Bha mi anns a' bhaile sa mhadainn.  
**Anna** An robh am baile trang?  
**Mòrag** Bha gu dearbh.  
**Anna** Agus dè bha thu ris feasgar?  
**Mòrag** Bha mi a' nigheadaireachd agus ag iarnaigeadh agus a' dustadh agus a' sgioblachadh.  
**Anna** Bha thu trang dha-rìribh!  
**Mòrag** Dè bha thu fhèin ris, Anna?  
**Anna** Bha mi a' còcaireachd agus a' fuine.  
**Mòrag** Dè bha thu a' dèanamh?  
**Anna** Bha mi a' dèanamh brot agus aran.

### PART 2: DISCUSSING PLANNED ACTIVITIES

#### CD1, TR39

**Mòrag** Dè tha thu a' dèanamh a-nochd?  
**Anna** Tha mi dol a choimhead TV.

## Listening skills: Survival phrases

*I don't understand.*  
*Slowly, please.*  
*Say that again, please.*  
*Do you speak Gaelic?*  
*I am learning Gaelic.*  
*I don't know.*  
*Can we...?*  
*Where is...?*  
*Where are the toilets?*  
*Where is the hotel?*  
*excuse me*  
*sorry*  
*How much is all that?*  
*please*  
*Thank you very much*  
*OK*  
*It doesn't matter.*  
*I'm lost, can you help me?*

**Chan eil mi a' tuigsinn.**  
**Air do shocair, mas e do thoil e.**  
**Can sin a-rithist, mas e do thoil e.**  
**A bheil Gàidhlig agad?**  
**Tha mi ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig.**  
**Chan eil fhios agam.**  
**An urrainn dhuinn...?**  
**Càit a bheil...?**  
**Càit a bheil na taighean-beaga?**  
**Càit a bheil an taigh-òsta?**  
**gabh mo leisgeul**  
**tha mi duilich**  
**Dè na tha sin?**  
**mas e do thoile/mas e ur toil e**  
**Mòran taing**  
**ceart gu leòr**  
**Is coma./Chan eil e gu diofar.**  
**Tha mi air chall, an tèid agad air mo chuideachadh?**



For learners working independently, there are successful distance learning or online options. **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig’s ‘Cùrsa Inntrigidh’** (*Gaelic access course*) aims to take beginners up to a level suitable for university entry through a combination of online materials, telephone tutorials and optional intensive weekend courses. This course takes students from all over the world. Gaelic is also taught in other countries, including Canada and the USA. **An Comann Gàidhealach Ameireaganach** ([www.acgamerica.org](http://www.acgamerica.org)) is a useful first point of reference for finding out about learning opportunities in North America.

**Anne**      *Very good. We can go to the dance on Friday night.*

**Anne**      *What were you doing today, Morag (Marion)?*  
**Marion**    *I was in town in the morning.*  
**Anne**      *Was the town busy?*  
**Marion**    *It was indeed.*  
**Anne**      *And what were you up to in the afternoon?*  
**Marion**    *I was washing and ironing and dusting and tidying.*  
**Anne**      *You were indeed busy!*  
**Marion**    *What were you up to yourself, Anne?*  
**Anne**      *I was cooking and baking.*  
**Marion**    *What were you making?*  
**Anne**      *I was making soup and bread.*

**Marion**    *What are you doing tonight?*  
**Anne**      *I’m going to watch TV.*

**Mòrag** Dè tha thu dol a choimhead?  
**Anna** Tha mi dol a choimhead prògram air siubhal.  
**Mòrag** Cuin a tha e a' tòiseachadh?  
**Anna** Aig naoi uairean. Dè tha thu fhèin dol a dhèanamh?  
**Mòrag** Tha mi a' dol gu gèam ball-coise.  
**Anna** Cò tha cluich?  
**Mòrag** Obar Dheathain agus Inbhir Nis.  
**Anna** Bidh sin math. Cuin a tha e a' tòiseachadh?  
**Mòrag** Aig ochd uairean.

### Insight

#### Verbal nouns

As the name suggests, a verbal noun can be both a verb and a noun. Verbal nouns are common in both English and Gaelic. In English, the verbal noun is distinguished by the ending *-ing*. In Gaelic, the verbal noun is marked by the **a'** that normally precedes it eg **a' còcaireachd**, *cooking*.

## Conversation 6: Visiting a pub

### PART 1: ORDERING A DRINK

#### CD2, TR2

**Seumas** Feasgar math. A bheil Gàidhlig agaibh?  
**Fear a' Bhàir** Tha gu dearbh. Cò às a tha sibh?  
**Seumas** Tha mi à Canada, ach tha mi a' fuireach san Eilean Sgitheanach an-dràsta. Tha mi ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig.  
**Fear a' Bhàir** Glè mhath. Dè ghabhas sibh ri òl? Leann, uisge-beatha, fion dearg, fion geal...  
**Seumas** Dè seòrsa leann a th' agaibh?  
**Fear a' Bhàir** Tha a h-uile seòrsa againn. Tha fear às an Eilean Sgitheanach againn cuideachd.  
**Seumas** Gabhaidh mi am fear sin ma-thà.

Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow have long established Celtic Studies departments.

### GAELIC IN THE MEDIA

The BBC is the main producer of Gaelic radio and television programmes through its **Craoladh nan Gàidheal** service. Residents in most parts of Scotland can tune in to a good variety of Gaelic radio programmes 14 hours each weekday. There is now a dedicated BBC Alba television channel, carrying several hours of Gaelic output daily. Gaelic language programmes and online resources can be accessed at any time on the BBC Scotland Gaelic website at [www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/alba](http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/alba). The website has playback facilities for all broadcast programmes.

Gaelic is not as well served by the print media. Most Gaelic input comes in the form of weekly columns and occasional items or features in local newspapers for example, the Oban Times, West Highland Free Press, and Inverness Courier. 'The Scotsman' is the only national daily that carries regular Gaelic items. There is also a quarterly mainly literary magazine, 'Gath'.

### LEARNING GAELIC

Provision for learning Gaelic ranges from weekly evening classes to full-time immersion courses. Many local authority education departments and some universities and colleges offer evening classes as part of their lifelong learning programmes, while **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig** in Skye and some further education colleges provide immersion courses. A number of Gaelic agencies organize other forms of intensive course, including one which adopts the Welsh Wlpan model and another based on learning in the home. The Gaelic College also runs a series of one- and two-week short courses in the language and in aspects of the culture. A voluntary sector co-ordinating body, **Clì Gàidhlig**, promotes short courses around Scotland and represents adult learners' interests. It is a good reference point for finding out what provision is available in, and beyond, Scotland ([www.cli.org.uk](http://www.cli.org.uk)).

and intricate variations on the theme.

Unaccompanied psalm singing, in which a precentor sings a line of a tune and the congregation repeat it in a highly ornamented way, is a very distinctive type of religious praise which has been called ‘the soul music of the Highlands’. Gaelic has many kinds of work-song which reflect the rhythms of certain forms of labour and are designed to lighten the burden of the work. Waulking songs, used in the shrinking of the tweed, are a particularly rhythmic and appealing genre. **Puirt-a-beul**, or *Mouth music*, are uptempo songs to which the likes of strathspeys and reels can be danced.

All these forms of music and song are fostered by **fèisean**, community-led festivals, which provide tuition for young people in traditional arts and sports. A national organization, **Fèisean nan Gàidheal**, provides a support structure for the network of 43 **fèisean** held throughout Scotland.

Gaelic music and song is showcased at annual events like the National Mod and Glasgow’s Celtic Connections Festival. The National Mod is a competitive festival akin to the Welsh Eisteddfod and is held in a different venue each October.

### GAELIC IN EDUCATION

Gaelic features in the curriculum of a small minority of Scottish schools in one, or more, of three ways – as a subject of study for learners, as a subject for fluent speakers and as a medium of education. Most schools with Gaelic are in the Highlands and Islands.

Provision of Gaelic-medium education was first made in 1985 in two urban Primary schools. Today, over 3,000 pupils are educated through the medium of Gaelic in 137 nursery, primary and secondary centres across Scotland and there are thriving all-Gaelic schools in Glasgow and Inverness. The Gaelic College, **Sabhal Mòr Ostaig** on Skye, offers further and higher education courses in Gaelic. Other partner colleges in the UHI Millennium Institute, which aims to become the University of the Highlands and Islands, also offer some Gaelic provision. The

**Marion** *What are you going to watch?*  
**Anne** *I’m going to watch a programme on travel.*  
**Marion** *When does it start?*  
**Anne** *At 9 o’clock. What are you going to do yourself?*  
**Marion** *I’m going to a football match.*  
**Anne** *Who’s playing?*  
**Marion** *Aberdeen and Inverness.*  
**Anne** *That’ll be good. When does it start?*  
**Marion** *At 8 o’clock.*

**James** *Good afternoon. Do you speak Gaelic?*  
**Barman** *Yes indeed. Where are you from?*  
**James** *I’m from Canada, but I’m living in the Isle of Skye just now. I’m learning Gaelic.*  
**Barman** *Very good. What will you have to drink? Beer, whisky, red wine, white wine...*  
**James** *What kind of beer have you got?*  
**Barman** *We have every kind. We have one from the Isle of Skye too.*  
**James** *I’ll take that one then.*

## PART 2: ORDERING FOOD

### CD2, TR6

- Fear a' Bhàir** Dè ghabhas sibh ri ithe?  
**Seumas** Oh, a bheil biadh agaibh cuideachd?  
**Fear a' Bhàir** Tha.  
**Seumas** Dè seòrsa?  
**Fear a' Bhàir** Well, tha brot againn.  
**Seumas** Glè mhath, gabhaidh mi brot le aran is ìm, mas e ur toil e.  
**Fear a' Bhàir** A bheil sibh ag iarraidh càise leis an aran cuideachd?  
**Seumas** Chan eil, tapadh leibh. 'S toil leam aran is ìm, ach cha toil leam càise.  
\*\*\*  
**Fear a' Bhàir** A bheil sibh airson tì no cofaidh a-nis, le cèic no briosgaid?  
**Seumas** Chan eil, tapadh leibh. Tha mi cho làn ri ugh!

### Insight

#### Have and take

There is no direct Gaelic equivalent of English *have*. If you want to say something is in your possession, you say it's *at you*. **Tha Gàidhlig agam** means *Gaelic is at me*, or *I have Gaelic*. But English *have* can also be used in the sense of taking or receiving – *What will you have to eat?* – in this case you use the Gaelic word for *take* (**gabh**) **Dè ghabhas sibh ri ithe?**

## Conversation 7: At a ceilidh

### PART 1: TALKING ABOUT THE MUSIC

#### CD2, TR10

- Seumas** Tha còmhlan eile ann a-nochd.  
**Anna** Tha. Tha Còmhlan Chailein san Eilean Sgitheanach a-nochd. Tha Còmhlan an Eilein againn an seo.

**t-Sagairt** or **MacTaggart** is *Son of the Priest*. Surnames beginning in Gil or Gill are derived from the word for *a lad*, **gille**. Examples of these are Gillies, Gilchrist and Gillespie, where the second element refers to Jesus, Christ and Bishop respectively. Other common surnames which are Gaelic in origin are those of the clans Campbell and Cameron. The bearers of these names might prefer not to know their meanings: 'squint mouth' and 'squint nose'! The word 'clan' itself comes from the Gaelic word for *children*, **clann**. There are many Scottish first names which also come from Gaelic. Alasdair, Calum, Catriona, Duncan, Eilidh, Finlay, Fiona, Hamish, Iain, Kirsty, Lachlan, Mairi, and Sheena are some of the better-known ones.

### PLACE NAMES

Gaelic elements are found widely in place names across Scotland and provide evidence that the language was spoken in most parts of the country at one time. The Gaelic element often occurs as the first part of a name as with **Ach/Auch** (*a field*), **Bal** (*town, township*), **Dun/Dum** (*fort*), **Inver** (*river mouth*), **Kil** (*church or cell*), **Kin/Ken** (*head of, end of*) and **Strath** (*wide valley*). The names Auchinleck, Balmoral, Dundee, Inverness, Kilmarnock, Kingussie and Strathclyde contain these elements. Adjectives such as **mòr** (*big*), **beag** (*small*), **bàn** (*fair*) and **dubh** (*black*) are common as second or third elements in names and they often appear in anglicized form as -more, -beg, -bane and -du/-dhu. Bens, glens, cairns, craigs, lochs and skerries abound on maps of Scotland and demonstrate the widespread impact of Gaelic. Further information about the meaning and origin of place names can be obtained from the **Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba (AAA) Gaelic Place-Names of Scotland** project website [www.gaelicplacenames.org](http://www.gaelicplacenames.org).

### GAELIC MUSIC AND SONG

Music, song and poetry were integral to Clan society and culture and continue to play a prominent part in Gaelic community life. The great Highland bagpipe and the **clàrsach**, or *harp*, were the traditional instruments of Gaelic society. One form of bagpipe music, **ceòl mòr** (*great music*), is considered by some experts to be Scotland's most significant contribution to world music. It consists of a slow theme tune

## Cultural information

### THE GAELIC LANGUAGE

In the 2001 Census 60,000 Scots identified themselves as Gaelic speakers while a further 30,000 claimed an understanding of the language. The strongest Gaelic communities are in the Western Isles but there are substantial numbers of Gaelic speakers in urban centres such as Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness. The Gaelic language and culture was introduced to North America by emigrants from Scotland displaced by the Highland Clearances and Gaelic can still be heard in parts of Nova Scotia in Canada.

Strenuous efforts are being made to arrest the decline in the number of Gaelic speakers and the language today enjoys an unprecedented level of official recognition and support. The Scottish Government has taken a number of significant steps to enhance the status of the language and to secure its future. **Bòrd na Gàidhlig**, an official agency for language regeneration was set up in 2002, a Gaelic Language Act was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament in 2005 and the first National Plan for the language was published in 2007.

### THE GAELIC INFLUENCE ON SCOTLAND

The impact of the Gael is evident in the very name of the country. The Gaelic-speaking people who arrived in modern day Argyll and Galloway in the fourth and fifth centuries AD were known to the Romans as 'Scotti' and the country in which they settled came to be called Scotland. The country's Gaelic heritage is perhaps most readily apparent nowadays in personal names and place names.

### PERSONAL NAMES

A quick scan of a telephone directory in any area of Scotland reveals the extent to which surnames beginning with Mac or Mc predominate. These names derive from the Gaelic word **mac** meaning *son*. So **MacDhòmhnaill** or **MacDonald** is *Son of Donald* while **Mac an**

- Barman** *What will you have to eat?*  
**James** *Oh, do you have food as well?*  
**Barman** *Yes.*  
**James** *What kind?*  
**Barman** *Well, we have soup.*  
**James** *Very good. I'll have soup with bread and butter, please.*  
**Barman** *Would you like cheese with the bread too?*  
**James** *No thank you. I like bread and butter, but I don't like cheese.*  
\*\*\*  
**Barman** *Would you like tea or coffee now, with cake or a biscuit?*  
**James** *No thank you. I'm full up!*

- James** *There's another band tonight.*  
**Anne** *Yes. Colin's Band are in the Isle of Skye tonight. We have the Island Band here.*

**Seumas** Tha pìob ann, tha fìdheall ann, agus tha bogsa ann cuideachd. Glè mhath. 'S toil leam ceòl a' bhogsa.  
**Anna** An toil? Cha toil leamsa idir e. 'S fheàrr leam fhèin a' phìob no an fhidheall.  
**Seumas** Tha seinneadair ann cuideachd. 'S toil leamsa òrain Ghàidhlig.  
**Anna** An toil? Glè mhath. An gabh thu fhèin òran, ma-thà?  
**Seumas** Oh, cha ghabh. Tha mi diùid.

## PART 2: TALKING ABOUT THE REFRESHMENTS

CD2, TR14

**Seumas** Tha Còmhlan an Eilein math, nach eil?  
**Anna** Tha, tha iad glè mhath.  
**Seumas** 'S toil leam cèilidhean ann an Uibhist. Tha am biadh math cuideachd, nach eil?  
**Anna** Tha, an gabh thu cèic eile?  
**Seumas** Gabhaidh, an gabh thu fhèin cèic?  
**Anna** Cha ghabh, ach gabhaidh mi briosgaid. An gabh thu uisge-beatha eile?  
**Seumas** Gabhaidh gu dearbh.  
 \*\*\*  
**Anna** A bheil thu airson dannsa, ma-thà?  
**Seumas** Tha gu dearbh. Agus an uair sin gabhaidh mi òran. Chan eil mi cho diùid a-nis.

### Insight

#### Yes and no

In Gaelic you say *yes* or *no* by affirming or negating the verb used in the preceding question or statement. So to agree that the food is good (**Tha am biadh math**) you repeat the *is* – **tha**. But to decline the invitation to *sing (take) a song (An gabh thu òran?)* you use the negative form of *take* – **cha ghabh**.

**Ishbel** What have you got, Kenneth?  
**Kenneth** I've got a CD by the Island Band.  
**Ishbel** The Island Band? Are they from Lewis?  
**Kenneth** I'm sorry, but they're not. They're from Uist.  
**Ishbel** Oh well, they'll be very good, then.  
**Kenneth** Mmm, I'm not sure.  
**Ishbel** Well, well, the CD looks nice anyway.  
**Kenneth** Does it? I haven't got my glasses.  
**Ishbel** Oh yes. There's a pretty little picture on it. It's bagpipes and a fiddle.  
**Kenneth** Very good. What have you got yourself, Ishbel?  
**Ishbel** I've got a camera. And I've got pictures already. Look!  
**Kenneth** Who's this?  
**Ishbel** This is John and Jean. They're dancing. And this is Elizabeth. She's eating and drinking.  
**Kenneth** Oh yes, and this is a big ugly man. Is he singing?  
**Ishbel** Yes, he's singing a beautiful song from Lewis.  
**Kenneth** Who is it?  
**Ishbel** Don't you know, Kenneth?  
**Kenneth** No, not at all.  
**Ishbel** It's a teacher. It's Kenneth MacLeod himself!  
**Kenneth** Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!

## Conversation 3/10: Discussing gifts

### CD3, TR62

The week's course is over, and the party for the teachers and students has just finished. After the party the teachers talk about their presents.

- Iseabail** Dè th' agad, a Choinnich?  
**Coinneach** Tha CD agam, le Còmhlan an Eilein.  
**Iseabail** Còmhlan an Eilein? A bheil iad à Leòdhas?  
**Coinneach** Tha mi duilich, ach chan eil. Tha iad à Uibhist.  
**Iseabail** Och well, bidh iad glè mhath, ma-thà.  
**Coinneach** Mmm, chan eil mi cinnteach.  
**Iseabail** Well, well, tha an CD a' coimhead snog co-dhiù.  
**Coinneach** A bheil? Chan eil mo speuclairean agam.  
**Iseabail** Oh tha. Tha dealbh bheag bhrèagha air. 'S e pìob agus fìdheall a th' ann.  
**Coinneach** Glè mhath. Dè th' agad fhèin, Iseabail?  
**Iseabail** Tha camara agam. Agus tha dealbhan agam mar-thà. Seall!  
**Coinneach** Cò tha seo?  
**Iseabail** Seo Seonaidh agus Sìne. Tha iad a' dannsa. Agus seo Ealasaid. Tha i ag ithe agus ag òl.  
**Coinneach** Oh seadh, agus seo duine mòr grannda. A bheil e a' seinn?  
**Iseabail** Tha, tha e a' seinn òran brèagha à Leòdhas.  
**Coinneach** Cò th' ann?  
**Iseabail** Nach eil fios agad, a Choinnich?  
**Coinneach** Chan eil, chan eil idir.  
**Iseabail** 'S e tidsear a th' ann. 'S e Coinneach MacLeòid fhèin a th' ann!  
**Coinneach** Obh, obh, obh!

- James** *There are bagpipes, there's a fiddle, and there's an accordion too. Very good. I like accordion music.*  
**Anne** *Do you? I don't like it at all. I myself prefer the bagpipes or the fiddle.*  
**James** *There's a singer too. I like Gaelic songs.*  
**Anne** *Do you? Very good. Will you sing a song yourself, then?*  
**James** *Oh no (I will not). I'm shy.*
- James** *The Island Band are good, aren't they?*  
**Anne** *Yes, they're very good.*  
**James** *I like ceilidhs in Uist. The food's good too, isn't it?*  
**Anne** *Yes, will you have another cake?*  
**James** *Yes, will you have a cake yourself?*  
**Anne** *No, but I'll have a biscuit. Will you have another whisky?*  
**James** *Yes, indeed.*  
\*\*\*  
**Anne** *Do you want to dance then?*  
**James** *Yes, indeed. And then I'll sing a song. I'm not so shy now.*

## Conversation 8: Out hillwalking

### PART 1: ON THE CLIMB

#### CD2, TR18

- Anna** Tha i brèagha an-diugh, nach eil?  
**Mairead** Tha, tha i snog an-dràsta, co-dhiù. Tha mi 'n dòchas nach bi i fliuch fuar feasgar.
- Anna** Gu dearbh, tha mi 'n dòchas nach bil 'S e latha math a th' ann airson coiseachd air a' mhonadh.  
**Mairead** 'S e, 's e latha blàth tioram a th' ann.  
**Anna** Tha beathaichean gu leòr air a' mhonadh, nach eil? Tha mi a' faicinn caoraich an seo, ach dè tha mi a' faicinn an sin?  
**Mairead** 'S e fèidh a tha thu a' faicinn an sin.  
**Anna** An e?  
**Mairead** 'S e. 'S e fèidh a th' anna.

### PART 2: AT THE TOP

#### CD2, TR22

- Anna** Abair sealladh, a Mhairead!  
**Mairead** Tha e brèagha, nach eil?  
**Anna** Oh tha, tha gu dearbh. Dè an loch a tha mi a' faicinn an seo?  
**Mairead** 'S e Loch Euphort a th' ann. Tha lochan gu leòr ann an Uibhist, nach eil?  
**Anna** Tha! Agus dè na beanntan a tha mi a' faicinn an sin?  
**Mairead** 'S e beanntan na Hearadh a tha thu a' faicinn an sin.  
**Anna** Tha seo miorbhaileach! Ach a bheil mi a' faicinn sgòthan ann an Uibhist a Deas?  
**Mairead** Tha. Feumaidh sinn a dhol dhachaigh, no bidh sinn fliuch!

### Insight

#### To be or not to be?

Where English has one verb *to be*, whether you want to say *I am John* or *I am cold*, Gaelic has two – **Is** *mise Iain* and **Tha** *mi fuar*. Consider when you say something is something else, whether you are defining its identity or just describing an attribute. Use *Is* (often just 'S) for the first and *tha* for the second.

- Johnny** *Jean, look here. Bagpipes! That'll be good for Kenneth.*  
**Jean** *Yes, but John, we haven't got enough money for that.*
- Johnny** *Oh no. I'm sorry.*  
**Jean** *But look at this. A nice red bonnet. Will that be good for Ishbel?*
- Johnny** *I'm not sure. Does Ishbel like bonnets?*  
**Jean** *I don't know. But I like it anyway.*  
**Johnny** *Oh yes. And have you got enough money?*  
**Jean** *No.*  
**Johnny** *Right. We need something else, then. Look, there are CDs here.*
- Jean** *Music will be good, I'm sure.*  
**Johnny** *Yes, and these CDs aren't expensive at all. There's one by the Island Band. Shall we buy that for Kenneth?*
- Jean** *Yes, we'll buy it. What else do we need?*  
**Johnny** *We need something for Ishbel, Jean.*  
**Jean** *I see a little digital camera there. Will that be good?*
- Johnny** *Yes. But have we got enough money?*  
**Jean** *Yes, I'm sure.*  
**Johnny** *Very good. We'll buy the CD for Kenneth and the camera for Ishbel.*



## Conversation 3/9: Shopping for presents

### CD3, TR55

Towards the end of the week some of the students visit the local gift shop to get some presents for their teachers. Jean and Johnny discuss what to buy.

- Seonaidh** A Shìne, seall seo. Pìob! Bidh sin math airson Coinneach.  
**Sìne** Bithidh, ach a Sheonaidh, chan eil airgead gu leòr againn airson sin.
- Seonaidh** Och chan eil. Tha mi duilich.  
**Sìne** Ach seall seo. Bonaid shnog dhearg. Am bi sin math airson Iseabail?
- Seonaidh** Chan eil mi cinnteach. An toil le Iseabail bonaidean?  
**Sìne** Chan eil fios agam. Ach 's toil leam fhèin e co-dhiù.  
**Seonaidh** Oh seadh. Agus a bheil airgead gu leòr agad?  
**Sìne** Chan eil.
- Seonaidh** Ceart. Feumaidh sinn rudeigin eile, ma-thà. Seall, tha CDs an seo.  
**Sìne** Bidh ceòl math, tha mi cinnteach.  
**Seonaidh** Bidh, agus chan eil na CDs seo daor idir. Tha fear ann le Còmhlan an Eilein. An ceannaich sinn sin airson Coinneach?
- Sìne** Seadh, ceannaichidh. Dè eile a dh'fheumas sinn?  
**Seonaidh** Feumaidh sinn rudeigin airson Iseabail, a Shìne.  
**Sìne** Tha mi a' faicinn camara beag didseatach an sin. Am bi sin math?
- Seonaidh** Bithidh. Ach a bheil airgead gu leòr againn?  
**Sìne** Tha, tha mi cinnteach.  
**Seonaidh** Glè mhath. Ceannaichidh sinn an CD airson Coinneach agus an camara airson Iseabail.

- Anne** *It's beautiful today, isn't it?*  
**Margaret** *Yes, it's nice just now, anyway. I hope it won't be wet and cold this afternoon.*
- Anne** *Indeed, I hope not! It's a good day for walking on the moor.*  
**Margaret** *Yes, it's a warm, dry day.*
- Anne** *There are lots of animals on the moor, aren't there? I see sheep here, but what do I see there?*  
**Margaret** *It's deer you see there.*
- Anne** *Is it?*  
**Margaret** *Yes, they're deer.*

- Anne** *What a view, Margaret!*  
**Margaret** *It's beautiful, isn't it?*
- Anne** *Oh yes, yes indeed. What's the loch I see here?*  
**Margaret** *It's Lochport. There are plenty of lochs in Uist, aren't there?*
- Anne** *Yes! And what are the mountains I see there?*  
**Margaret** *It's the hills of Harris you see there.*
- Anne** *This is marvellous! But do I see clouds in South Uist?*  
**Margaret** *Yes. We must go home, or we'll be wet.*

## Conversation 9: At the shops

### PART 1: SHOPPING FOR FOOD

CD2, TR26

- Anna** Feumaidh mi ùbhlán agus uighean. A bheil thu gam faicinn?  
**Mairead** Tha, tha mi a' faicinn ùbhlán. Ach chan eil mi a' faicinn uighean idir.  
**Anna** Seadh, tha na h-ùbhlán a' coimhead snog, nach eil? Dè do bheachd?  
**Mairead** Tha iad math, agus chan eil iad daor idir. Dè eile a dh'fheumas tu?  
**Anna** Well, feumaidh mi càise agus bainne cuideachd. Càite bheil iad?  
**Mairead** Seall! Tha mi gam faicinn an sin.  
**Anna** Seadh, tapadh leat. Agus a bheil feòil ann cuideachd?  
**Mairead** Tha, ach chan eil i a' coimhead math idir. Ach cha bhi mi fhèin ag ithe feòil co-dhiù.  
**Anna** Nach bi?  
**Mairead** Cha bhi. Cha bhi mi ag ithe feòil idir.

### PART 2: SHOPPING FOR PLEASURE

CD2, TR30

- Anna** 'S e bùth shnog a th' ann, a Mhairead, nach e?  
**Mairead** 'S e, nach e? An toil leat fàinneachan is bràistean?  
**Anna** 'S toil gu dearbh.  
**Mairead** Bidh iad gan dèanamh sa bhùth seo fhèin.  
**Anna** Am bi? Tha iad glè mhath.  
**Mairead** Tha gu leòr ann.  
**Anna** Tha, ach tha iad a' coimhead daor. Chan eil airgead gu leòr agam.  
**Mairead** Seadh, ach tha airgead gu leòr aig Seumas, nach eil?  
**Anna** Chan eil fios agam, a Mhairead! Chan eil fios agam idir!

- Kenneth** *This place is nice, isn't it, Elizabeth?*  
**Elizabeth** *Yes. It's a beautiful place.*  
**Kenneth** *Yes. You see the sea here, and you see the mountains there. And you see the ferry travelling between the island and the mainland.*  
**Elizabeth** *Do you walk on the shore every day?*  
**Kenneth** *Yes. I'm here early in the morning every day.*  
**Elizabeth** *The view is marvellous, isn't it?*  
**Kenneth** *Yes. Yes, indeed.*  
**Elizabeth** *Now. What do I see there? Is it a plane?*  
**Kenneth** *No. It's not a plane at all. It's a bird.*  
**Elizabeth** *A bird? What kind? It's so big!*  
**Kenneth** *Yes, isn't it? Indeed that is not a small bird. It's an eagle. And look! There's another one.*  
**Elizabeth** *Eagles! Do you see them here every day?*  
**Kenneth** *Not every day. But I see them sometimes.*  
**Elizabeth** *Do you see other animals here too?*  
**Kenneth** *Yes. I see deer on the moor...*  
**Elizabeth** *Yes, and what else?*  
**Kenneth** *Well, sometimes in the sea I see a whale.*

## Conversation 3/8: Taking a walk

CD3, TR49

One afternoon Kenneth takes his class out for a walk along the shoreline behind the college. Elizabeth is in the group.

- Coinneach** Tha an t-àite seo snog, nach eil Ealasaid?  
**Ealasaid** Tha. 'S e àite brèagha a th' ann.  
**Coinneach** 'S e. Chì thu a' mhuir an seo, agus chì thu na beanntan an sin. Agus chì thu am bàt-aiseig a' siubhal eadar an t-eilean agus Tìr Mòr.  
**Ealasaid** Am bi sibh a' coiseachd air a' chladach a h-uile latha?  
**Coinneach** Bithidh. Bidh mi an seo tràth sa mhadainn a h-uile latha.  
**Ealasaid** Tha an sealladh mìorbhaileach, nach eil?  
**Coinneach** Tha. Tha gu dearbh.  
**Ealasaid** A-nis. Dè tha mi a' faicinn an sin? An e plèana a th' ann?  
**Coinneach** Chan e. Chan e plèana a th' ann idir. 'S e eun a th' ann.  
**Ealasaid** Eun? Dè seòrsa? Tha e cho mòr!  
**Coinneach** Tha, nach eil? Gu dearbh chan e eun beag a tha sin. 'S e iolaire a th' ann. Agus seall! Sin fear eile.  
**Ealasaid** Iolairean! Am bi sibh gam faicinn an seo a h-uile latha?  
**Coinneach** Cha bhi a h-uile latha. Ach bidh mi gam faicinn uaireannan.  
**Ealasaid** Am bi sibh a' faicinn beathaichean eile an seo cuideachd?  
**Coinneach** Bithidh. Bidh mi a' faicinn fèidh air a' mhonadh...  
**Ealasaid** Seadh, agus dè eile?  
**Coinneach** Well, uaireannan anns a' mhuir bidh mi a' faicinn muc-mhara.

- Anne** *I need apples and eggs. Do you see them?*  
**Margaret** *Yes, I see apples. But I don't see eggs at all.*  
**Anne** *Yes, I see. The apples look nice, don't they? What do you think?*  
**Margaret** *They're good, and they're not at all expensive. What else do you need?*  
**Anne** *Well, I need cheese and milk too. Where are they?*  
**Margaret** *Look! I see them there.*  
**Anne** *Right, thank you. And is there meat as well?*  
**Margaret** *Yes, but it doesn't look good at all. But I (myself) don't eat meat anyway.*  
**Anne** *Don't you?*  
**Margaret** *No. I don't eat meat at all.*
- Anne** *It's a nice shop, Margaret, isn't it?*  
**Margaret** *Yes, isn't it? Do you like rings and brooches?*  
**Anne** *Yes, indeed.*  
**Margaret** *They make them in this very shop.*  
**Anne** *Do they? They're very good.*  
**Margaret** *There are plenty.*  
**Anne** *Yes, but they look expensive. I don't have enough money.*  
**Margaret** *I see, but James has plenty of money, doesn't he?*  
**Anne** *I don't know, Margaret! I don't know at all!*

## Insight

### Future or habitual?

Here's a case where Gaelic does with one verb form what English does with two. In the last conversation, we had **Bidh sinn fliuch** – *We will be wet* (future). Now we've got the same tense (in the negative) in **Cha bhi mi ag ithe feòil** – *I don't eat meat* (habitual). Remember that the future tense in Gaelic also covers habitual actions.

## Conversation 10: At the museum and art centre

### PART 1: IN THE ART GALLERY

#### CD2, TR34

- Seumas** Oh, 'S toil leam an dealbh seo. Muir is Tìr. Seall!  
**Calum** Dè th' ann?  
**Seumas** Chan eil mi cinnteach. An e taigh a tha seo?  
**Calum** 'S e, 's e taigh beag geal a th' ann, tha mi a' smaoin eachadh.  
**Seumas** Ach dè an rud mòr uaine a tha seo? An e eilean a th' ann?  
**Calum** Chan e. 'S e a' mhuir a th' ann, nach e?  
**Seumas** Oh 's e, 's e. Tha thu ceart. Agus dè an rud dubh a tha seo anns a' mhuir?  
**Calum** 'S e bàta a th' ann, no an e iasg mòr a th' ann? No 's dòcha eilean beag.  
**Seumas** Oh seadh. Tha thu ceart. Tha an dealbh seo brèagha, nach eil?  
**Calum** Mmm, chan eil mi cinnteach.

### PART 2: IN THE ART CENTRE CAFÉ

#### CD2, TR38

- Seumas** Bha an dealbh sin snog, nach robh?  
**Calum** Cha robh. Bha e grannda.  
**Anna** Dè bh' ann?  
**Seumas** Well, bha taigh dubh ann.

- Johnny** *The food was good, wasn't it?*  
**Jean** *Yes, it's a good hotel, isn't it?*  
**Johnny** *Yes. And it was good beer too.*  
**Jean** *Was it? I wasn't drinking beer at all. I was drinking whisky.*  
**Johnny** *Was it good?*  
**Jean** *Yes. It was very good. I don't drink beer at all. I don't like it.*  
**Johnny** *I like beer and whisky, but I was wanting lager last night.*  
**Jean** *The music was good too, wasn't it?*  
**Johnny** *Yes. The band was very good. Where were they from?*  
**Jean** *They were from Cape Breton.*  
**Johnny** *Oh, yes, yes. And who was singing?*  
**Jean** *Johnny, don't you know? It's Kenneth that was singing.*  
**Johnny** *Is it? And was he dancing too?*  
**Jean** *Yes, he and Ishbel were dancing.*  
**Johnny** *Were they? Well, well. It was a good night, wasn't it?*  
**Jean** *Yes. But you yourself were drinking too much beer!*  
**Johnny** *You're right, Jean. You're absolutely right.*

### Conversation 3/7: Talking about the night out

CD3, TR43

Next day during the coffee break Jean and Johnny talk about the night out.

- Seonaidh** Bha am biadh math, nach robh?  
**Sìne** Bha. 'S e taigh-òsta math a th' ann, nach e?  
**Seonaidh** 'S e. Agus 's e leann math a bh' ann cuideachd.  
**Sìne** An e? Cha robh mise ag òl leann idir. Bha mi ag òl uisge-beatha.  
**Seonaidh** An robh e math?  
**Sìne** Bha. Bha e glè mhath. Cha bhi mi ag òl leann idir. Cha toil leam e.  
**Seonaidh** 'S toil leamsa leann agus uisge-beatha. Ach 's e lagar a bha mi ag iarraidh a-raoir.  
**Sìne** Bha an ceòl math cuideachd, nach robh?  
**Seonaidh** Bha. Bha an còmhlan glè mhath. Cò às a bha iad?  
**Sìne** Bha iad à Ceap Breatainn.  
**Seonaidh** Oh, bha, bha. Agus cò bha a' seinn?  
**Sìne** A Sheonaidh, nach eil fios agad? 'S e Coinneach a bha a' seinn!  
**Seonaidh** An e? Agus an robh e a' dannsa cuideachd?  
**Sìne** Bha, bha e fhèin agus Iseabail a' dannsa.  
**Seonaidh** An robh? Well, well. 'S e oidhche mhath a bh' ann, nach e?  
**Sìne** 'S e. Ach bha thu fhèin ag òl cus leann!  
**Seonaidh** Tha thu ceart, a Sìne. Tha thu glè cheart.

- James** *Oh, I like this picture. Sea and Land. Look!*  
**Calum** *What is it?*  
**James** *I'm not sure. Is this a house?*  
**Calum** *Yes, it's a small white house, I think.*  
**James** *But what's this big green thing? Is it an island?*  
**Calum** *No. It's the sea, isn't it?*  
**James** *Oh yes, yes. You're right. And what's this black thing in the sea?*  
**Calum** *It's a boat, or is it a big fish? Or maybe a small island.*  
**James** *Oh yes. You're right. This picture's pretty, isn't it?*  
**Calum** *Mmm, I'm not sure.*

- James** *That picture was nice, wasn't it?*  
**Calum** *No. It was ugly.*  
**Anne** *What was it?*  
**James** *Well, there was a black house.*

**Calum** Cha robh an taigh dubh, bha e geal.  
**Seumas** Oh bha, bha. Tha thu ceart. 'S e am bàta a bha dubh.  
**Calum** Chan e. Chan e bàta a bh' ann. 'S e iasg a bh' ann.  
**Seumas** Well, cha robh sinn cinnteach.  
**Mairead** Dè eile bh' ann?  
**Seumas** Well, bha eilean uaine ann cuideachd, nach robh? No an robh e dearg? Bha e glè bheag co-dhiù.  
**Anna** Dè? Eilean dearg? A Sheumais! A bheil thu ri fealla-dhà?

## Insight

### Present and past

To change the English *am, is* or *are* to *was* or *were* couldn't be easier in Gaelic. **Tha** becomes **bha** – just one letter and a slight change of pronunciation! In the negative it's slightly more complex – **chan eil** becomes **cha robh**, but even so it's simpler than English!

Learning Gaelic isn't necessarily an uphill struggle. Sometimes it's easier than English. Keep it up!

**Barman** *What will you have to drink?*  
**Ishbel** *I'll have a vodka and coke.*  
**Kenneth** *I'll have a pint of beer.*  
**Barman** *Do you want food as well?*  
**Ishbel** *Yes indeed.*  
**Barman** *Here's our menu, then.*  
**Ishbel** *The food looks good.*  
**Kenneth** *There are two kinds of soup. Soup of the day and tomato soup.*  
**Barman** *Today's soup of the day is onion soup.*  
**Kenneth** *Very good. I'll have that.*  
**Ishbel** *I'll have the salad to start with.*  
**Barman** *What will you have after that?*  
**Ishbel** *I'll have fish. I like fish.*  
**Barman** *Is it salmon or haddock that you'll have?*  
**Ishbel** *The salmon, thank you.*  
**Kenneth** *I prefer meat.*  
**Barman** *We have steak and lamb.*  
**Kenneth** *I'll take the steak please.*

## Conversation 3/6: Bar meal

### CD3, TR37

Ishbel and Kenneth, two of the tutors from the Gaelic course at the College on Skye, go to a local hotel one evening for a bar meal. They are served by the barman.

- Barman** Dè ghabhas sibh ri òl?  
**Iseabail** Gabhaidh mise bhodca agus còc  
**Coinneach** Gabhaidh mise pinnt leann  
**Barman** A bheil sibh ag iarraidh biadh cuideachd?  
**Iseabail** Tha gu dearbh  
**Barman** Seo an clàr-bìdh againn, ma-thà  
**Iseabail** Tha am biadh a' coimhead math  
**Coinneach** Tha dà sheòrsa brot ann. Brot an latha agus brot tomàto  
**Barman** 'S e brot uinnein brot an latha an-diugh.  
**Coinneach** Glè mhath. Gabhaidh mise sin.  
**Iseabail** Gabhaidh mise an sailead airson tòiseachadh.  
**Barman** Dè ghabhas sibh as dèidh sin?  
**Iseabail** Gabhaidh mise iasg. 'S toil leam iasg.  
**Barman** An e am bradan no an adag a ghabhas sibh?  
**Iseabail** Am bradan, tapadh leibh.  
**Coinneach** 'S fheàrr leamsa feòil.  
**Barman** Tha staoig agus feòil uan againn.  
**Coinneach** Gabhaidh mise an staoig mas e ur toil e.

- Calum** *The house wasn't black, it was white.*  
**James** *Oh, yes, yes. You're right. It's the boat that was black.*  
**Calum** *No. It wasn't a boat. It was a fish.*  
**James** *Well, we weren't sure.*  
**Margaret** *What else was there?*  
**James** *Well, there was a green island as well, wasn't there? Or was it red? It was very small anyway.*  
**Anne** *What? A red island? James! Are you joking?*

## Conversation 3/1: Tutors meet

### CD3, TR2

Ishbel is a tutor on a week-long Gaelic course at the Gaelic College on the Isle of Skye. She meets another of the tutors, Kenneth, the evening before the start of the course. They introduce each other and get talking.

- Iseabail** Hello. Is mise Iseabail Chaimbeul.  
**Coinneach** Feasgar math, Iseabail. Is mise Coinneach MacLeòid. Ciamar a tha sibh?  
**Iseabail** Tha mi gu math, tapadh leibh. Ciamar a tha sibh fhèin?  
**Coinneach** Tha mi gu dòigheil, taing. Tha i brèagha an-diugh.  
**Iseabail** Tha i snog a-nis ach bha i fliuch sa mhadainn. Cò às a tha sibh, a Choinnich?  
**Coinneach** Tha mi à Leòdhas ach tha mi a' fuireach ann an Glaschu an-dràsta. Cò às a tha sibh fhèin, Iseabail?  
**Iseabail** À Muile.  
**Coinneach** A bheil sibh a' fuireach ann am Muile?  
**Iseabail** Tha. Tha mi a' fuireach ann an Tobar Mhoire.  
**Coinneach** A bheil sibh ag obair ann an Tobar Mhoire?  
**Iseabail** Tha. Tha mi ag obair anns an Àrd-sgoil. 'S e tidsear a th' annam. Dè an obair a th' agaibh fhèin?  
**Coinneach** 'S e sgrìobhadair a th' annam. Tha mi ag obair aig Oilthigh Ghlaschu airson dà bhliadhna.  
**Iseabail** Cuin a tha an cùrsa a' tòiseachadh a-màireach?  
**Coinneach** Aig naoi uairean sa mhadainn.  
**Iseabail** Tha sin tràth!

- Kenneth** *Do you like the Isle of Skye, Ishbel?*  
**Ishbel** *Yes I do, Kenneth. I do indeed. But I prefer Mull.*  
**Kenneth** *Oh yes. And I myself prefer Lewis!*  
**Ishbel** *I'm sure, but this island is good too. It's beautiful, isn't it?*  
**Kenneth** *Yes indeed.*  
**Ishbel** *And, at home, I iron and dust and tidy every day. Here I don't do that at all.*  
  
**Kenneth** *No, I'm sure not. But I like working at home too.*  
**Ishbel** *What? Are you kidding? You dust and tidy every day, do you?*  
**Kenneth** *Ah well, no. Not every day, anyway. But I like ironing.*  
**Ishbel** *Do you?*  
**Kenneth** *Yes. And I like cooking too.*  
**Ishbel** *Oh you do, do you? Do we have a kitchen here?*  
**Kenneth** *No. I'm sorry. We'll have to go to the hotel for food.*  
**Ishbel** *Well, I'm sorry too. I hope there will be good food there.*  
**Kenneth** *I'm sure there will be!*



### Conversation 3/5: Conversation in common room

#### CD3, TR31

After a day's tuition, Kenneth and Ishbel relax in the staff common room.

**Coinneach** An toil leat an t-Eilean Sgitheanach, Iseabail?

**Iseabail** 'S toil, a Choinnich. 'S toil gu dearbh. Ach 's fheàrr leam Muile

**Coinneach** Oh seadh. Agus 's fheàrr leam fhèin Leòdhas!

**Iseabail** Tha mi cinnteach, ach tha an t-eilean seo math cuideachd. Tha e brèagha, nach eil?

**Coinneach** Tha gu dearbh.

**Iseabail** Agus, aig an taigh, bidh mi ag iarraigeadh agus a' dustadh agus a' sgioblachadh a h-uile latha. An seo, cha bhi mi a' dèanamh sin idir.

**Coinneach** Cha bhi, tha mi cinnteach. Ach 's toil leam fhèin obair aig an taigh cuideachd.

**Iseabail** Dè? A bheil thu ri fealla-dhà? Bidh thu a' dustadh agus a' sgioblachadh a h-uile latha, am bi?

**Coinneach** Ah, well, cha bhi. Cha bhi a h-uile latha, co-dhiù. Ach 's toil leam iarraigeadh.

**Iseabail** An toil?

**Coinneach** 'S toil. Agus 's toil leam còcaireachd cuideachd.

**Iseabail** Oh seadh, an toil? A bheil cidsin againn an seo?

**Coinneach** Chan eil. Tha mi duilich. Feumaidh sinn a dhol dhan taigh-òsta airson biadh.

**Iseabail** Well, tha mise duilich cuideachd. Tha mi 'n dòchas gum bi biadh math ann.

**Coinneach** Tha mi cinnteach gum bi!

**Ishbel** Hello. I'm Ishbel Campbell.

**Kenneth** Good evening, Ishbel. I'm Kenneth MacLeod. How are you?

**Ishbel** I am well, thank you. How are you yourself?

**Kenneth** I'm fine, thanks. It's beautiful today.

**Ishbel** It's nice now but it was wet in the morning. Where are you from, Kenneth?

**Kenneth** I'm from Lewis but I'm living in Glasgow just now. Where are you from yourself, Ishbel?

**Ishbel** From Mull.

**Kenneth** Do you live in Mull?

**Ishbel** Yes. I live in Tobermory.

**Kenneth** Do you work in Tobermory?

**Ishbel** Yes. I work in the High School. I'm a teacher. What do you do yourself?

**Kenneth** I'm a writer. I'm working at Glasgow University for two years.

**Ishbel** When does the course start tomorrow?

**Kenneth** At nine o'clock in the morning.

**Ishbel** That's early!

## Conversation 3/2: Introductions in class

### CD3, TR8

At the start of the course at the Gaelic College in Skye, Ishbel introduces herself to the class and asks members of the class to introduce themselves and to share some information about each other.

- Iseabail** Madainn mhath. Is mise Iseabail Chaimbeul. Tha mi à Muile. Tha mi a' fuireach ann an Tobar Mhoire. 'S e tidsear a th' annam.
- Sìne** Madainn mhath. Is mise Sìne NicAlasdair. Tha mi à Ile ach tha mi a' fuireach ann am Peairt a-nis.
- Iseabail** A bheil thu ag obair ann am Peairt?
- Sìne** Tha. 'S e rùnaire a th' annam.
- Iseabail** Càit a bheil thu ag obair, a Sìne?
- Sìne** Tha mi ag obair ann an oifis bheag anns a' bhaile.
- Iseabail** An toil leat an obair?
- Sìne** Tha e ceart gu leòr. Is toil leam a bhith a' fuireach ann am Peairt, ge-tà. 'S e baile brèagha a th' ann agus tha bùthan math ann.
- Iseabail** Glè mhath. Cò tha seo a-nis?
- Seonaidh** Is mise Seonaidh Camshron.
- Iseabail** Cò às a tha thu, a Sheonaidh?
- Seonaidh** Tha mi à Inbhir Pheotharain.
- Iseabail** A bheil thu a' fuireach ann an Inbhir Pheotharain?
- Seonaidh** Chan eil. Tha mi a' fuireach ann an Dùn Èideann an-diugh.
- Iseabail** Dè tha thu a' dèanamh ann an Dùn Èideann?
- Seonaidh** Tha mi ag obair ann an ospadal ann an Dùn Èideann. 'S e dotair a th' annam.
- Iseabail** An toil leat Dùn Èideann?
- Seonaidh** 'S toil. 'S toil leam Dùn Èideann ach 's fheàrr leam Inbhir Pheotharain. Chan eil e cho mòr no cho trang.

- Chris** *I'm from Barra.*
- Lady** *Were you ever in Barra?*
- Gent** *No. Is it a nice place?*
- Tè** *Oh yes indeed! It's a beautiful island.*
- Gent** *Is it a big island?*
- Chris** *No. It's not as big as the Isle of Skye or Lewis.*
- Gent** *How do you travel to Barra?*
- Lady** *You can go there by plane or ferry.*
- Chris** *A plane goes there every day from Glasgow.*
- Lady** *And a plane goes there from Benbecula too.*
- Gent** *Is there a boat to Barra every day?*
- Chris** *Yes. There's a ferry from Uist to Barra every day and there is another ferry between Oban and Barra.*
- Lady** *You can travel to Barra from the Isle of Skye easily enough. Do you have a car?*
- Gent** *No.*
- Chris** *That's alright. You can take a bus to Uig and a ferry from Uig to North Uist and you can take another bus then to South Uist.*
- Lady** *You'll see beautiful sights on that trip – mountains and lochs and islands.*
- Gent** *The trip won't be dear, will it?*
- Chris** *It won't be dear at all. You can come back here from Barra or you can go to Oban by ferry.*

### Conversation 3/4: Conversation in hotel bar

#### CD3, TR24

The students from the course at the Gaelic College on Skye meet some other customers in the hotel bar. Chris, one of the students, gets talking to a couple.

**Chris** 'S ann à Barraigh a tha mise.  
**Tè** An robh sibh riamh ann am Barraigh?  
**Fear** Cha robh. An e àite snog a th' ann?  
**Tè** Oh 's e gu dearbh! 'S e eilean brèagha a th' ann.  
**Fear** An e eilean mòr a th' ann?  
**Chris** Chan e. Chan eil e cho mòr ris an Eilean Sgitheanach no ri Leòdhas.  
**Fear** Ciamar a tha thu siubhal gu Barraigh?  
**Tè** Faodaidh tu dhol ann air plèana no air bàta.  
**Chris** Tha plèana a' dol ann a h-uile latha à Glaschu.  
**Tè** Agus tha plèana a' dol ann à Beinn na Fadhla cuideachd.  
**Fear** Am bi bàta a' dol gu Barraigh a h-uile latha?  
**Chris** Bidh. Tha bàt'-aiseig eadar Uibhist is Barraigh a h-uile latha agus tha bàt'-aiseig eile eadar an t-Òban agus Barraigh.  
**Tè** Faodaidh tu siubhal a Bharraigh às an Eilean Sgitheanach furasta gu leòr. A bheil càr agaibh?  
**Fear** Chan eil.  
**Chris** Tha sin ceart gu leòr. Faodaidh tu bus a ghabhail gu Ùige agus bàt'-aiseig à Ùige gu Uibhist a Tuath agus faodaidh tu a dhol air bus eile an uair sin gu Uibhist a Deas.  
**Tè** Chì thu seallaidhean brèagha air an turas sin – beanntan is lochan is eileanan.  
**Fear** Cha bhi an turas daor, am bi?  
**Chris** Cha bhi e daor idir. Faodaidh tu tilleadh an seo à Barraigh no faodaidh tu a dhol dhan Òban air a' bhàt'-aiseig.

**Ishbel** *Good morning. I'm Ishbel Campbell. I'm from Mull. I live in Tobermory. I'm a teacher.*  
**Jean** *Good morning. I'm Jean MacAllister. I'm from Islay but I live in Perth now.*  
**Ishbel** *Do you work in Perth?*  
**Jean** *Yes. I'm a secretary.*  
**Ishbel** *Where do you work, Jean?*  
**Jean** *I work in a small office in the town.*  
**Ishbel** *Do you like the work?*  
**Jean** *It's alright. I like living in Perth, though. It's a beautiful city and it has good shops.*  
**Ishbel** *Very good. Who is this now?*  
**Johnny** *I'm Johnny Cameron.*  
**Ishbel** *Where are you from, Johnny?*  
**Johnny** *I'm from Dingwall.*  
**Ishbel** *Do you live in Dingwall?*  
**Johnny** *No. I live in Edinburgh nowadays.*  
**Ishbel** *What do you do in Edinburgh?*  
**Johnny** *I work in a hospital in Edinburgh. I'm a doctor.*  
**Ishbel** *Do you like Edinburgh?*  
**Johnny** *Yes. I like Edinburgh but I prefer Dingwall. It isn't so big or so busy.*

### Conversation 3/3: Discussing what to do one evening

#### CD3, TR14

A number of the students at the Gaelic College discuss what to do one evening after classes.

- Oileanach Fireann 1** Càite bheil sinn a' dol a-nochd, ma-thà?  
**Ealasaid** Chan eil mise a' dol a-mach idir. Tha mi a' fuireach a-staigh.
- Oileanach Fireann 1** Carson, Ealasaid?  
**Ealasaid** Tha prògram math air an telebhisean.
- Oileanach Fireann 2** Cuin a tha e air?  
**Ealasaid** Tha e a' tòiseachadh aig seachd uairean.
- Oileanach Fireann 2** Cuin a tha e a' stad?  
**Ealasaid** Aig ochd uairean.
- Oileanach Fireann 1** Faodaidh sinn a dhol a-mach an uairsin.  
**Ealasaid** OK ma-thà. Càit a bheil sibh a' dol?
- Oileanach Fireann 2** Tha sinn a' dol gu Taigh-òsta an Eilein.  
**Oileanach Boireann** A bheil sibh a' gabhail biadh san taigh-òsta?  
**Oileanach Fireann 2** Tha. Tha biadh math ann agus chan eil e daor.
- Oileanach Fireann 1** Bidh ceòl san taigh-òsta a-nochd cuideachd  
**Oileanach Fireann 2** Agus òrain Ghàidhlig.  
**Ealasaid** Cò bhios a' cluich agus a' seinn?  
**Oileanach Fireann 1** Bidh còmhlan à Ceap Breatainn a' cluich agus bidh seinneadairean à Uibhist is à Leòdhas ann.
- Oileanach Boireann** Bidh oidhche mhath ann.

- Male Student 1** *Where are we going tonight then?*  
**Elizabeth** *I'm not going out at all. I'm staying in.*
- Male Student 1** *Why, Elizabeth?*  
**Elizabeth** *There's a good programme on television.*
- Male Student 2** *When is it on?*  
**Elizabeth** *It starts at seven o'clock.*
- Male Student 2** *When does it stop?*  
**Elizabeth** *At eight o'clock.*
- Male Student 1** *We can go out then.*  
**Elizabeth** *OK then. Where are you going?*
- Male Student 2** *We are going to the Island Hotel.*  
**Female Student** *Are you having food in the hotel?*
- Male Student 2** *Yes. There is good food there and it isn't dear.*  
**Male Student 1** *There will be music in the hotel tonight too.*  
**Male Student 2** *And Gaelic songs.*  
**Elizabeth** *Who will be playing and singing?*
- Male Student 1** *A band from Cape Breton will be playing and there will be singers from Uist and Lewis there.*  
**Female Student** *It will be a good night.*