

LESSON 55

Verbs and Prepositions

As in English many verbs in Gàidhlig have an associative preposition. As in other languages the prepositions aren't always equivalent to those in English.

A common problem is deciding which preposition to use where English uses **to** :

Preposition	Verb	Usage
a dh'ionnsaigh †	rach a dh'ionnsaigh - go to(wards)	Chaidh mi a dh'ionnsaigh na h-uinneige - I went to(wards) the window
air	tòisich air - start to	Thòisich iad air seinn - They started singing
airson †	any verb + to (in order to)	Sheas sinn airson seinn - We stood to sing
chun †/gu	cuir gu - send to / remit	Cò thuige a chuireadh an litir? - Who was the letter sent to?
	rach gu - go (up)to	Chaidh mi gu mullach na beinne - I went to the top of the mountain
	sgriobh gu - write to	Sgrìobhaidh mi gu mo charaid-phinn - I'll write to my penfriend
	thoir gu - pass to	An toir thu thugam an salann? - Can you pass me the salt?
do/dha	minich do - explain to	Cha deach sin a mhìneachadh dhomh - That wasn't explained to me
	rach do - go (in)to	Thèid sinn dhan bhùth - We'll go into the shop
	seall do - show to	Sheall e dhomh an càr ùr aige - He showed (to) me his new car
	teagaisg do/ionnsaich do - teach to	Dè dh'ionnsaich iad dhut? - What did they teach (to) you?
	thoir do - give to	Thoir dhomh do làmh - Give me your hand
gus	any verb + to (in order to)	Thàinig mi gus seinn - I came to sing
ri(s)	bruidhinn ri - speak to	Cò ris a bha thu a' bruidhinn? - Who were you speaking to?
	can ri/abair ri - tell/say to	Na can ri duine sam bith sin - Don't tell that to anyone
	èist ri - listen to	An do dh'èist thu ris an tidsear? - Did you listen to the teacher?

ri(s)	feuch ri - try to	Feuchaidh mi ri thighinn - I'll try to come
	leugh ri - read to	Leugh an sgeul ris - Read him the story
	reic ri - sell to	Reic i an càr aice ris - She sold her car to him
	tòisich ri - start to	Thòisich iad ri seinn - They started singing
	seinn ri - sing to	Sheinn i ris an leanabh - She sang to the baby
	verb To Be + ri - need to	Tha agam ri dhol dhachaigh - I have to go home

† prepositions taking the genitive case of nouns.

Where verbs requiring prepositions can be followed by another verb then the verbal noun is used. Exceptions in both literature and the spoken language are the verbs **To Be** (bhith), **To Go** (dhol) and **To Come** (thighinn):

Thòisich i air ràdh ris an duine - She started to say to the man

Dh'fheuch e ri breith air - He tried to catch up on him

Dh'èist mi a-rithist gu bhith cinnteach - I listened again to be sure

Chrom mi gus èisteachd riutha - I stooped to listen to them

A bheil agad ri dhol ann? - Do you have to go there?

Where verbs requiring prepositions can be followed by another verb and direct object then word order reversal takes place. Here the object comes first followed by **a + lenited verbal noun**. The **a** is dropped before verbal nouns beginning with vowel or beginning with **f + vowel**.

The noun object should not be declined by the preposition:

Thòisich mi air a' cheist a fhreagairt - I started to answer the question

Dh'fheuch iad ri taigh a thogail an sin - They tried to build a house there

Bha agam ri an dinnear a dheasachadh - I had to prepare the dinner

Dh'fheuch e ri dealbh fhaicinn - He tried to see a picture

Thòisich i ri am bainne òl - She started to drink the milk

Chaidh mi gus a' chlann a thogail - I went to collect the children

Thàinig e airson càr ùr a cheannach dhì - He came to buy her a car

Sheas mi gus an dealbh fhaicinn na b' fheàrr - I stood to see the picture better

When the object of the sentence is a pronoun then the pronoun is replaced by its possessive adjective placed before the verbal noun. The possessive adjectives **mo**, **do** and **a** (his/its) lenite the following word whenever possible. In a number of cases augmented prepositions can be used (see Appendix 1):

Dh'fheuch iad ri freagairt - They tried to answer her

Thòisich i air a bhiadhadh - She started to feed him

Bha agam ri òl - I had to drink it

Thàinig mi gan gluasad - I came to (in order to) move them
Sheas mi ga fhaicinn na b' fheàrr - I stood to see it better
Tha mi a' dol ga choinneachadh - I am going to meet her

Word Order Inversion after an Adjective

Where an infinitive follows an adjective word order reversal takes places with direct nouns. Here the object comes first followed by **a + lenited verbal noun**. The **a** is dropped before verbal nouns beginning with vowel or beginning with **f + vowel**:

Is math mo sheanmhair fhaicinn a-rithist - It's good to see my grandmother again
Bha mi toilichte mo sheanair fhaicinn a-rithist - I was pleased to see my grandfather again
A bheil thu dèonach litir a sgrìobhadh dhomhsa? - Are you willing to write a letter for me?

When the object of the sentence is a pronoun then the pronoun is replaced by its possessive adjective placed before the verbal noun. The possessive adjectives **mo**, **do** and **a** (his/its) lenite the following word whenever possible:

Bhithinn toilichte an cuideachadh - I would be pleased to help them
An robh i èasgaidh a dhèanamh? - Was she keen to do it?

NEW WORDS

Adjectives

èasgaidh - keen

Nouns

bonnach (m) - cake

salann (m) - salt

cùis (f) - subject, matter

Verbs

crom, cromadh - bend, stoop

fuin, fuine - bake

iomair, iomramh - row

sguir, sguir (de) - stop, desist

tachair, tachairt - happen

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English

1. Thòisich sinn ri am bàta iomramh
2. Dh'fheuch mi ri iasg a ghlacadh anns an allt sin
3. Bha aice ri bonnach fhuine airson a' chèilidh
4. Cuin a thòisich sibh ri Gàidhlig ionnsachadh?
5. An do dh'fheuch thu mullach na beinne a ruigsinn
6. Bidh agad ri an làr salach a sguabadh
7. Feuchaidh mi ri an rathad dhan bhaile a shealltainn dhaibh
8. Càit an tòisich mi ri innse dhaibh na thachair
9. Thàinig sinn gus na beanntan fhaicinn
10. Is math ur faicinn a-rithist

EXERCISE 2 Translate into Gàidhlig

1. She started to scold him because he had broken the plate
2. The boy tried to hit me with a stone
3. She started knitting when she was quite young
4. He tried to carry his brother on his shoulders
5. Will you stop deceiving them?
6. Don't try to build a fire with wet wood
7. Will you try to open this bottle for me
8. They had to take his advice in the matter
9. I was so pleased to hear her voice
10. She went to help the children

1. Thoisich i ri trod ris a chionn 's gun do bhris e an truinnsar
2. Dh'fheuch am balach ri mo bhualadh le cloich
3. Thoisich i ri fighe nuair a bha i gu math og
4. Dh'fheuch e ri a bhràthair a ghùil an air a ghualinean
5. An sguir thu dem mealladh?
6. Na feuchaidh ri teine a thogail le fiodh fliuch
7. Am feuch sibh ri am botal seo fhosgladh dhomh
8. Bha aca ri a' chomhairle aige a ghabhail anns a' chùis
9. Bha mi cho toilichte an gutn aice a chluinntim
10. Chaidh i gus a' chlànn a chuideachadh

LESSON 55: ANSWERS 2

1. We started to row the boat
2. I tried to catch a fish in that burn
3. She had to bake some cakes for the ceilidh
4. When did you start learning Gàidhlig?
5. Did you try to reach the top of the mountain
6. I'll need to sweep the dirty floor
7. I'll try to show them the road to town
8. Where can (will) I begin to tell them what happened
9. We came to see the mountains
10. It's good to see you again

LESSON 55: ANSWERS 1