

Gael-Talk

Learning Gaelic Year 1 Caibideil 9

Nas fheàrr a' Ghàidhlig bhriste n' a' Bheurla chliste

A little reminder –
We really should pay the piper
(*mòran taing* to those who have!)



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This week we will learn ...

- Sean fhacal na seachdain
- How to say you like something or like to do something
- Dialogue –
- Òran na seachdain -
- Dualchas nan Gàidheil –

Sean fhacal na seachdain

Thig crìoch an t-saoghail, ach mairidh ceòl 's gaol.



The end of the world will come, but music and love will endure.

How to say you like something or like to do something

Gaelic rarely gives us a break, but this week will get one, for the structure of saying that we like something or like to do something is in some ways similar to that which we learned in chapter 8 for saying we want something or want to do something.

With one difference (can't get too greedy!).

First the difference, and in some ways it's a big one, for it introduces us to a whole other way of saying "be".

Is -- The Assertive Verb "be"

Gaelic has two words (verbs) to express the idea "to be." We're not going to go into complete details right now, but it's necessary to introduce the overall idea of a very basic way of saying that we like something or like to do something.

- **Bi** – the word we've been using in the form of *tha* and *bha*
- **Is** – the 'assertive' verb that we've seen in our dialogues in such phrases as

'S mise Seumas

The 'S is the contraction for the present tense form of the verb ('to be') *Is* (and you didn't even realize you were using a whole other word!)

So, the basic form of saying that we like something is

'S toil leam uisge-beatha – I like whiskey.

Cha toil leatha cèic – She doesn't like cake.

An toil leat cofaidh – Do you like coffee?*

Nach toil leis tì? – Doesn't he like tea?

*Note: the use of the prepositional pronoun **le (+)** which we will cover below.

**Note: the "toil" the same we learned with "please" – as in "if it is your pleasure" -

- mas e do thoil e (familiar)
- mas e ur toil e (plural, formal)

I promised something "easy" with this form, and here it is. The way that we communicate **we like to do** something is very similar to how we say we **want to do something** – we can use the **a bhith** insertion.

- 'S toil leam **a bhith a' snàmh**. – I like to swim. (like to be swimming)
- 'S toil leatha **a bhith a' dannsadh**. – She likes to dance. (likes to be dancing)
- 'S toil le Seumas **a bhith ag òl** uisge-beatha. – Seumas likes to drink whisky (to be drinking whisky)

Note that if you use a definite article with the noun, the “le” picks up an **s** (actually an ‘is’) ...

- 'S toil leis **na** coin a **bhith a' ruith** anns a' phàirc – **The** dogs like to run in the park (to be running in the park)
- 'S toil leis **an** tidsear a bhith a' leughadh. **The** teacher likes to read.

Otherwise ...

- 'S toil **le** cù a bhith a' ruith anns a' phàirc.
- 'S toil **le** Seumas a bhith a' leughadh.
- 'S toil **le** tidsear a' bhith a' leughadh.

'S toil le (+) means literal something like “Is pleasure with x” and works like this:

Phrase	“literal” translation	Colloquial English meaning
'S toil leam –.	Is pleasure with me	I like
'S toil leat --	Is pleasure with you	you like
'S toil leis –.	Is pleasure with him	– he likes
'S toil leatha –. –	Is pleasure with her	She likes
'S toil leinn –.	Is pleasure with us –	We like
'S toil leibh–.	Is pleasure with you (pl/frml) –	You like
'S toil leotha –	Is pleasure with them –	They like

The **'S** is a contraction for the “assertive” verb to be *Is* (The Gaelic “is” not the English). So, each one of these expressions could be written

- **Is** toil leam
- **Is** toil leat
- ... etc.

Past tense:

The past tense of the Gaelic *Is* is **bu**, so each one of these phrases would look like ...

- **Bu** toil le (+)
- Cha **bu** toil le (+)
- Nach **bu** toil le (+)
- Am* **bu** toil le (+)

(*Following the *bowl of fluffy mashed potatoes* rule.)

So, sentences would look like:

- **Bu** toil leam biadh Meagsagach. I **liked** Mexican food.
- Cha **bu** toil leis biadh Meagsagach. – He **didn't** like Mexican food

- Nach **bu** toil leotha biadh Meagsagach? – **Didn't** they like Mexican food?
- Am **bu** toil leibh biadh Meagsagach? – **Did** you all like Mexican food? (or 'you' formal)

Bu can also communicate the subjunctive or the conditional – in other words, *would* or *would be*:

- Bu toil leis cofaidh. – He **would like** coffee.
- Bu toil leam a bhith a' dol dhan a' chèilidh. – I **would like** to go to the ceilidh.

Admittedly, taken out of context a single sentence might be ambiguous in the sense that

Bu toil leis cofaidh

Might mean

- He **would** like coffee

Or

- He **did** like coffee.

Context – in this context – however, is everything and should make it clear which meaning is intended.

One last note on **toil**: sometimes you will see it spelled **toigh**. If this is the case, don't freak out, don't be confused! It is the same word. The spelling used here (*toil*) is the one more commonly used today.

Dialogue:

'S toil leam biadh Meagsagach.

Catriona, Una, Seonaidh, and Calum are discussing what to do one evening.

Catriona	Càit' a bheil thu a' dol a-nochd, Una?
Una	Tha mi a' dol dhan chèilidh còmhla ri Raonaid. Tha sinn ag iarraidh a bhith a' seinn aig a' chèilidh. Càit' a bheil thu fhèin a' dol?
Catriona	Chan eil fhios 'm.
Una	Trobhad dhan chèilidh còmhla ruinn, ma tha.
Catriona	Chan toil leam cèilidhean.
Seonaidh	An toil leat biadh Meagsagach?
Catriona	'S toil. Tha e uabhasach math.
Seonaidh	Tha mise agus Calum ag iarraidh a bhith a' dol a-mach dhan taigh-bìdh Meagsagach a-nochd. Thugainn còmhla ruinn.
Catriona	Ceart gu leòr. Cuin a tha sibh a' dol a-mach?
Calum	Aig ochd uairean.
Una	Tha dannsa ann as dèidh a' chèilidh.
Seonaidh	Cò tha a' cluich aig an dannsa?
Una	An còmhlan <i>Na Bà Sgiathadh</i> . Tha iad math fhèin. An toil leat ^{sa*} iad, a Sheonaidh?
Seonaidh	Chan eil iad dona, ach cha toil le Calum iad idir, idir, idir.
Una	Nach toil leat iad, a Chalum?
Calum	Cha toil.
Una	Carson?
Calum	Tha iad grod!
Seonaidh	Cuin a tha an dannsa a' tòiseachadh?
Una	Mu aon uair deug.
Calum	Uill, bu toil leam a bhith a' dol còmhla ribh, 's dòcha. 'S toil leam a bhith a' dannsadh, cia ta.

Note on pronunciation:

Bh: at the beginning of a word, always a 'v' sound.

However, in middle of word sometimes a 'v' and sometimes silent:

Abhainn pronounced either > aa-ven or aa-wen

***leatsa** = the -sa suffix is emphatic

An toil **leatsa** iad? Do **you** like them?

We can also achieve this effect by using "fhèin":

An toil leat fhèin iad?

Vocabulary

<p>aig a' cheilidh – at the ceilidh aig ochd uairean – 8 o'clock a-nochd – tonight biadh – food biadh Meagsagach – Mexican food bu toil leam – I would like ceart gu leòr – right enough! Right! chan eil fhios 'm (chan eil fhios agam) – I don't know cia tà – though (as a punctuation at the end of a phrase or sentence, not a conjunction) Cò tha a' cluich – who is playing còmhla ri Raonaid – along with Rachel còmhla ribh – with you (pl. / form.) còmhla ruinn – (along) with us</p>	<p>còmhlan – band (musical) Cuin a tha sibh a' dol a-mach – when are you going out? dannsa – dance dhan chèilidh – to the ceilidh dona – bad grod – rotten, lousy idir – at all (repeated for emphasis) ma tha – then (as a punctuation at the end of a phrase or sentence, not a conjunction) mu aon uair deug – about 11 o'clock Na Bà Sgiathadh – The Flying Cows 's dòcha – perhaps taigh-bìdh – restaurant thugainn – come (imperative) trobhad – come (imperative)</p>
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A' rumastaireachd ann am bogsa nan roimhearan Rummaging around the preposition box

Le agus le +

The word “le” means “with” in English in one sense, and sometimes “by” as in a book’s author –

- *Moby Dick* **le** Herman Melville.

In this chapter’s lesson, it is used in the expression “toil le (+)” to signify liking something, and is often used in its prepositional pronoun form:

Le + mi = leam	With me	Le + sinn = leinn	With us
Le + thu = leat	With you	Le + sihbh = leibh	With you (plural / formal)
Le + e = leis	With him	Le + iad = leotha	With them
Le + i = leatha	With her		

We’ve already seen this at work in the expression for thank you:

- Tapadh leat - thanks with you – (Thank you)
- Tapadh leibh – thanks with you (pl / frml) – (Thank you)

When you’re not referring to a pronoun (me, him, her, etc), but to a name you simply use le + (name):

- 'S toil **le Seonaidh** dannsa. Seonaidh likes dancing.
- Cha toil **le Calum** an còmhlan. Calum doesn’t like the band.
- Cha toil **le coin** cait. Dogs don’t like cats.

Following the rule of “*vowels in different words don’t like to hang out together*” – when whatever is doing the liking is a noun with a definite article, the “le” take the form of “leis” –

- 'S toil **leis an teaghlach** biadh Meagsaganach. – The family likes Mexican food.
- 'S toil **leis na coin** a bhith a’ ruith anns a’ choille. – The dogs like to run in the forest.

Special note:

The preposition *ri* and its prepositional pronoun *ri (+)*

The word **le** means “with” only in certain circumstances. As we see in the dialogue, another word phrase is used to mean a person going / being **with** another person. This is **còmhla ri (+)** which can be translated as “with” or “along with.”

Phrase	translation
Còmhla rium	(along) With me
Còmhla riut	(along) With you
Còmhla ris	(along) With him
Còmhla rithe	(along) With her
Còmhla rinn	(along) With us
Còmhla ribh	(along) With you (pl / frml)
Còmhla riutha	(along) With them

Again, as with le (+), when used with a definite noun,

- 'S toil leam a bhith a' dol **còmhla ri** Seumas. – I like to go with Seumas.
- 'S toil leam a bhith a' dol **còmhla ris** an teaghlach. – I like to go with the family.

We'll encounter other forms of this preposition / prepositional pronoun later.

You do not say,






- *'S toil leam a bhith a' dol **le** Seumas.

*Does not occur.

Eacarsaichean

Eacarsaich #1:

Pick the appropriate prepositional pronoun

<p>'S toil leis / leotha a' Ghàidhlig.</p>	
<p>Cha toil leinn / leis cèilidhean</p>	
<p>'S toil leotha / leibh a bhith a' seinn</p>	
<p>Cha toil leatha / leinn an oifis.</p>	
<p>'S toil leat / leinn a bhith a' seòladh anns a' bhàta còmhla ri chèile. * Còmhla ri chèile = with each other</p>	

Eacarsaich #2:

Read the information about the following people. Then answer the questions about what they like and don't like by filling in the blanks in the sentences below.

Seamus: 'S toil le Seamus a bhith a' seòladh anns a' bhàta agus ag iasgach. 'S toil leis cuideachd a bhith a' sgrìobhadh bàrdachd agus a' cluich camanachd. 'S toil leis a bhith a dannsadh agus cha toil leis an Fhraing.

Iseabail: 'S toil le Iseabail a bhith a' seinn agus a' dannsadh aig na geamannan Ghàidhlig agus 's toil leatha a bhith a' coimhead air an telebhisean agus a' cluich teanas. Cha toil leatha ball-coise agus cha toil leatha biadh Meagsaganach.

Dòmhnall: 'S toil le Dòmhnall a bhith a' seinn an fhidhill. 'S toil leis cuideachd a bhith a' cluich golf. Cha toil leis idir a bhith a chluich ball-coise.

Màiri: 'S toil le Màiri a bhith ag èisteachd ri ceòl. 'S toil leatha cuideachd a bhith a' seinn agus a' ruith. Cha toil leatha a bhith a' fuireach ann am baile mòr, agus cha toil leatha biadh Meagsaganach.

Fill in the spaces in the sentences below:

1. Cha toil le _____ agus _____ ball-coise.
2. _____ toil le _____ agus _____ biadh Meagsaganach.
3. 'S toil le _____ agus _____ a bhith a' seinn.
4. _____ toil le _____ agus _____ a bhith a' dannsadh.
5. _____ toil le _____ a bhith a' fuireach ann am baile mòr.

Eacarsaich #3: Còmhradh –

Use the following questions to prompt a conversation. Prepare answers and follow-up questions:

1. An toil leat a bhith a' coimhead air an telebhisean?
2. An toil leat biadh Meagsaganach?
3. An toil leat a bhith a' seinn aig a' chèilidh?
4. An toil leat a bhith a' dol dhan chèilidh?
5. An toil leat cait no coin?
6. An toil leat a bhith a ruith?
7. An toil leat a bhith a' seòladh air a' mhuir?
8. An toil leat a bhith ag iasgach?
9. An toil leat a bhith ag ithe iasg?
10. An toil leat a bhith a' leughadh?

Vocabulary:

Baile mòr – big city

Camanchd – shinty, a game kind of like field hockey.

Còmhlà ri chèile = with each other

Fidheall / air an fhidhill = fiddle, on the fiddle

Seòladh = sail

Teanas = tennis

Òran na seachdain -

'S iomadh rud a chunna mi -

First the words to the song:

'S iomadh rud a chunna' mi, 's iomadh rud a rinn mi,
'S iomadh rud a chunna' mi a-muigh air feadh na h-oidhche,
'S iomadh rud a chunna' mi, 's iomadh rud a rinn mi,
'S iomadh rud a chunna' mi a-muigh air feadh na h-oidhche.

I've seen many things, I've done many things,
I've seen many things, out all night,
I've seen many things, I've done many things,
I've seen many things, out all night

Chunna' mi na piseagan, na piseagan, na piseagan,
Chunna' mi na piseagan air spiris Mac an t-Saighdeir
Chunna' mi na piseagan, na piseagan, na piseagan
Chunna' mi na piseagan air spiris Mac an t-Saighdeir

I saw the kittens, the kittens, the kittens,
I saw the kittens on the Soldier's son's roost
I saw the kittens, the kittens, the kittens,
I saw the kittens on the Soldier's son's roost

Chunna' mi na cudaigean, na cudaigean, na cudaigean
Chunna' mi na cudaigean a' cluich air Allt na Muilne
Chunna' mi na cudaigean, na cudaigean, na cudaigean
Chunna' mi na cudaigean a' cluich air Allt na Muilne

I saw the cuddies, the cuddies, the cuddies
I saw the cuddies play on the Allt na Muilne river
I saw the cuddies, the cuddies, the cuddies
I saw the cuddies play on the Allt na Muilne river


Now, learn the song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eeOXNf9xao>

Ceàrn na Dualchais

Bealltainn

(May Day, Beltane)



Latha Buidhe Bealltainn
Day of Golden (fortunate, glad,
grateful) Bealltainn

- 1st day of summer -- An Cèitean -- May in contemporary Gaelic -- derived from *a' chiad Shamhradh* -- the first of summer
- beginning of the year -- signified the opening of the year to the season of life, having come out of the darkness of winter.

Yellow flowers

- such as primrose, rowan, hawthorn, gorse, hazel, and marsh marigold were placed at doorways and windows in 19th century Ireland, Scotland and Mann.
- Yellow = buidhe / the color of the sun





Wreathes fashioned for
people & milk cows



Offerings & procession

- Another common tradition on the first day of May was to leave offerings such as dumplings or coins in exchange for good health by the side of wells.
- Procession of the May Queen signifying her journey towards summer.

Water associated with Goddess Danu

- Rain-charms were also used at Beltane.
- Sacred wells were visited and the ceremony performed with their waters, these perhaps being sprinkled over the tree or the fields to promote a copious rainfall for the benefit of vegetation.
- The use of such rites at Beltane and at other festivals may have given rise to the belief that wells were especially efficacious then for purposes of healing.
- The custom of rolling in the grass to benefit by May dew was probably connected with magical rites in which moisture played an important part.
- Remembered in such customs as young girls washing their faces in the morning May Day dew to preserve youthfulness and attractiveness



Portals between the worlds open

- The Gaelic belief recognizes no Fairyland or realm different from the earth's surface
- The dwellings are underground, but it is on the natural face of the earth the Fairies find their sustenance, pasture their cattle, and on which they forage and roam.
- The major seasonal pivot points are the last night of every quarter (*a h-uile latha ceann raidhe*), particularly the nights before Beltane, the first of summer, and Hallowmas, the first of winter.
- On these nights, and on Fridays, and on the last night of the year, the Fairies are given to leaving home, and taking away whomsoever of the human race they find helpless, or unguarded or unwary.





Special days ...
captured in this sean-fhacal

- Beannachd ‘nan siubhal ‘s nan imeachd!
‘S e ‘n-diugh Dihaoine, cha chluinn iad sinne.
 - Blessing on their going and leaving! This is Friday -- they won't hear us.
 - (A charm against fairies who were believed to be in Fairyland on Fridays.)

Beltane festival held in
“God’s house” -- nature

- Ancient Druids thought it degrading to him whose temple is the universe, to suppose that he would dwell in any house made with hands.
- These celebrations were held out in the open, usually on hills with the grandest views of nature and nearest the seat of warmth and order, the sun.



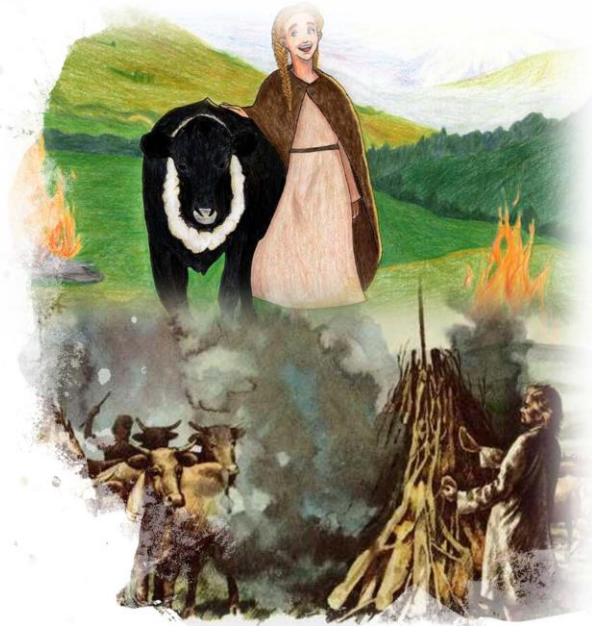
An teine èiginn the need fire

- All fires in community extinguished
- The Beltane fire – the tein' èiginn -- kindled
- all household fires re-lighted from that;
- this probably symbolized the fire of the sun having been “put out” over the winter months and its “re-lighting” in the spring



The Beltane fires protected ...

- people led their livestock around the fire or between twin fires to grant them protection and imbue them with fruitfulness for the coming year.



Beltane Bannocks

- Everyone present would then take an oatmeal cake, called the *bannach Bealltainn* or "Beltane bannock". A bit of it was offered to and so forth) and a bit was offered to each of the animals that might harm their livestock (one to the fox, one to the eagle, and so forth).
- One of the slices marked with charcoal. The slices would be put in a bonnet and everyone would take one out while blindfolded.



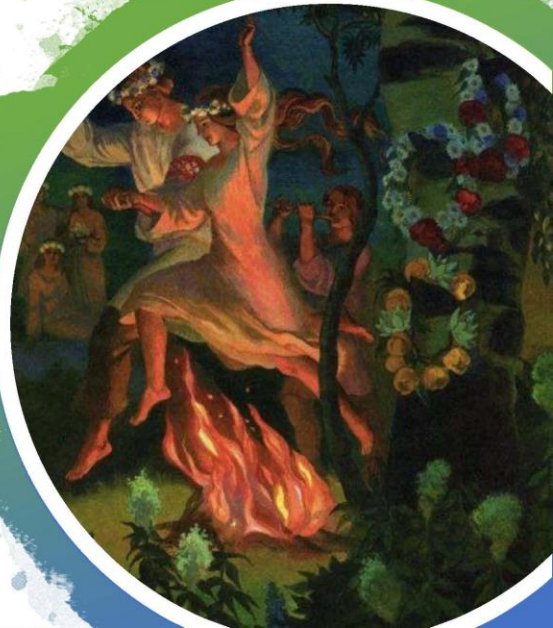
Magickal Meals

Beltane Bannocks



Whoever got the marked piece ...

- ... would have to leap through the fire three times.
- Or, those present would pretend to throw them into the fire and, for some time afterwards, they would speak of them as if they were dead.
- This "may embody a vestigial memory of actual human sacrifice"



Beltane Blessing ...

Beannaich, a Thrianailt fhoir nach gann,
(Bless, O Threefold true and bountiful,)

-- A' Mhaighdean, a Mhàthair, 's a' Chailleach --
Maiden, mother, and old woman

Mi fèin, mo chèile agus mo chlann,
(Myself, my spouse and my children,)

Mo chlann mhaoth 's am màthair chaomh 'n an ceann,
(My tender children and their beloved mother at their head,)

Air chlàr chubhir nan raon, air airidh chaon nam beann,
(On the fragrant plain, at the gay mountain sheiling,)



Symbolism of ancient rite

- The May king and queen represent the spirits of vegetation and fertility, and whose marriage or union magically assisted growth and fertility, as in numerous examples of this ritual marriage.
- Perhaps, in ancient times a considerable amount of sexual license took place with the same magical purpose. (*think, spring break only with 'sympathetic magic'!*)
- Sacred marriage and festival orgy were an appeal to the forces of nature to complete their beneficial work, as well as a magical aid to them in that work.



Springtime fertility festival

- sometimes incorporating dancing around the maypole (phallic symbol)



The bonfire was a sun-charm, representing and assisting the sun.

- Lighting the Beltane fires on the first of May was symbolic act – probably via sympathetic magic – to summon the growing power of the sun and cleanse the community of the dark months spent indoors.





King of the May

- was originally a priest-king, the incarnation of the spirit of vegetation.
- He or his surrogate was may have been slain, while his bodily force was unabated, in order that it might be passed on undiminished to his successor.
- But the persistent place given to the May queen rather than to the king suggests the earlier prominence of women and of female spirits of fertility or of a great Mother-goddess in such rites.
- in Perthshire the man chosen by the drawing of the bannach lottery was still called the Beltane carlane or cailleach ("old woman")



Modern Bealltainn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFCK4D6lwNU>

- Dualchas nan Gàidheil -