

Fàilte! A Beginner's Guide to Gaelic



Would you like to be able to use some basic Gaelic in your business, community, project, organisation?

This resource includes commonly used phrases and landscape-related vocabulary, meanings and pronunciations, and links to sound clips where you can hear a native speaker saying them slowly and clearly.

Why learn these Gaelic phrases?

When conducting international trade deals, business people often learn a few phrases in their trade partner's native language. The act of learning at least a token greeting shows courtesy and helps build bridges.

In the case of Gaelic, it also recognises Scotland's rich, multilingual background. If you feel that Scots or Doric are a large part of your identity, you should include them in your correspondence too. It makes you stand out from the rest and may be an ice-breaker in formal situations.

The Chinese call it *guanxi* and in Gaelic the concept is *caidreabh* (pronounced KAJ-rev).



Greetings

fàilte
fàilte gu ... x
madainn mhath
feasgar math
oidhche mhath
an ceartair
mar sin leibh

FAHL-chuh 
FAHL-chuh GOO
MAH-dooyn VAH
FES-gurr MAH
OY-huh VAH
an KYARSH-ter
MAR SIN LAY-v

welcome
welcome to ... x
good morning
good afternoon
good night
just now
goodbye

Watch a short Gaelic lesson on greetings!



Introducing yourself

is mise ... x
dè an t-ainm a th' ort?
dè an t-ainm a th' oirbh?


IS MI-shuh
JAY an TEN-um
ah HORSHT?
JAY an TEN-um
ah HO-riv?

I am ... x
what's your name?
(informal)
what's your name?
(polite)

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Place names

beinn, ben	BINE 	mountain, hill pinnacle, high place
bràigh	BRUY	brow of a hill
caisteal	CASH-ch-yell	castle, fort, tower, garrison
càrn	CAARN	mountain, heap of stones
cnoc	K-NOCK	hill, knoll, hillock, eminence
creag	CRAIG	rock, crag, cliff, precipice
dùn	DOON	heap, hill, fortress, castle
meall	MYAL	lump, mass, great shapeless hill
monadh	MON-uhg	moor, mountain range, heath
sgòrr	SGOH-r	sharp steep hill, rising by itself, peak
sìthean	SHEE-hun	little hill, knoll, fairy hill
sròn	SRON	nose, promontory, ridge of a hill
stac	STAH-ck	high cliff, precipice, projecting rock
tom	TOH-m	round hillock/knoll, rising ground, swell, green eminence

Water

aber (Pictish)	AH-bur	river mouth
abhainn	AH-wain	river
uisge	OOSH-guh	river
allt, uillt	OWL-t	stream or burn
àth	AAH	ford
caochan	COO-hun	boggy or underground streamlet
eas	EH-s	waterfall
eilean	AY-lan	island
inbhir	IN-uh-ver	confluence, meeting place of rivers
linn	LEE-n	pool, pond
loch		lake

Landscapes

achadh	ACH-ug	field
bogach	BOG-ach	marsh, bog
coille	COY-yuh	wood
dail	DAL	river meadow
doire	DOR-uh	grove or thicket of oak
fèith	FAY	bog, bog channel
gleann	GLYOW-n	glen, valley
strath		broad flat river valley

Colours

bàn	BAH-n	white: pale, light, wan, fair
buidhe	BOO-yeh	yellow
dearg	JAH-rug	red: bright, crimson
donn	DOWN	brown
dubh	DOOH	black, dark
fionn	FEW-n	white: pale, lilac, bright
geal	GYAHl	white: clear, radiant, glistening
glas	GLAH-s	grey-green, grey, wan
gorm	GUH-rum	blue: azure
liath	LEE-yuh	light grey
odhar	OH-are	khaki
ruadh	ROO-uhg	ruddy
uaine	OOAH-nye	green