

LESSON 25

The Past Tense - Irregular Verbs

As you discovered in Lesson 8 a continuous action in the past is expressed by using the past tense of the verb **To Be** with the **present participle**:

Bha e a' cluich anns a' phàirc fad an là an-dè - He was playing in the park all day yesterday

To express a single completed action in the past you must use the past tense (or finite) of a verb. Fortunately, this corresponds very closely in meaning with the finite verb in English.

There are only 10 irregular Gàidhlig verbs, and fortunately not all are irregular through all their tenses. They are presented in a table analogous to the one in for the Past Tense of the Regular Verbs

Verbal Noun	Root	Independent	Dependent
breith - bearing/catching/ - grasping	beir	rug	d'rug †
cluinntinn - hearing	cluinn	chuala	cuala
dèanamh - doing/making	dèan	rinn	d'rinn †
dol - going	rach	chaidh	deach
faicinn - seeing	faic	chunnaic	faca
faighinn - getting/obtaining	faigh	fhuair *	d'fhuair
ràdh - saying	abair	thuirt	tuirt
ruigsinn - reaching/arriving ‡	ruig	ràinig	d'ràinig †
tighinn - coming	thig	thàinig	tàinig
toirt - taking/ - giving (+ preposition do)	thoir	thug	tug

* the initial **fh** of **fhuair** is not silent but is voiced as **h**.

† the vestigial **d'** is optional.

‡ **ruighinn** and **ruigheachd** are alternative verbal nouns.

As with the regular verb add either **Cha/Chan** (before a vowel), **An/Am** or **Nach** to the dependent form to get the negative and interrogative forms of the verb. Remember **Cha/Chan** will lenite words beginning with **b, f, m, p, c** or **g**.

Example Uses:

Rug i orm - She grasped me

Cha d'rug i orm - She didn't grasp me

An d'rug i orm? - Did she grasp me?

Nach d'rug i orm? - Didn't she grasp me?

Rinn mi - I did/made

Cha d'rinn mi - I didn't do/make

An d'rinn thu? - Did you do/make?

Nach d'rinn thu? - Did you not do/make?

Chuala tu * - You heard
Cha chuala tu - You didn't hear
An cuala tu? - Did you hear?
Nach cuala tu? - Did you not hear?

Chaidh mi - I went
Cha deach mi - I didn't go
An deach thu? - Did you go?
Nach deach thu? - Did you not go?

Chunnaic thu - You saw
Chan fhaca tu † - You didn't see
Am faca tu? - Did you see?
Nach fhaca tu? ‡ - Did you not see?

Fhuair mi - I got
Cha d'fhuair mi - I didn't get
An d'fhuair thu? - Did you get?
Nach d'fhuair thu? - Did you not get?

Thuir mi - I said
Cha tuirt mi - I didn't say
An tuirt thu? - Did you say?
Nach tuirt thu? - Did you not say?

Ràinig mi - I arrived/reached
Cha d'ràinig mi - I didn't arrive/reach
An d'ràinig thu? - Did you arrive/reach?
Nach d'ràinig thu? - Did you not arrive/reach?

Thàinig mi - I came
Cha tàinig mi - I didn't come
An tàinig thu? - Did you come?
Nach tàinig thu? - Did you not come?

Thug mi - I took
Cha tug mi - I didn't take
An tug thu? - Did you take?
Nach tug thu? - Did you not take?

* use **tu** instead of **thu** with both the dependent and independent forms of the past tense of the verb **cluinn**.

† use **tu** instead of **thu** with the dependent forms of the past tense of the verb **faic**.
‡ **faca** changes to **fhaca** after the dependent particle **nach**.

With the Dependent Clause

Some examples are given below.

The pattern is the same as the verb **To Be** (see Lesson 15):

Tha e ag ràdh gun cuala e - He says that he heard
Tha e ag ràdh nach cuala e - He says that he didn't hear
Tha e ag ràdh gum faca e - He says that he saw
Tha e ag ràdh nach fhaca e ‡ - He says that he didn't see

‡ **faca** changes to **fhaca** after the negative relative particle **nach**.

The Assertive Verb and The Relative Clause

Some examples are given below.

The pattern is the same as the verb **To Be** (see Lesson 21):

I s mise a chaidh - I t's I who went
I s mise nach deach - I t's I who didn't go
'S ise a rinn sin - I t's she who did that
'S ise nach d'rinn sin - I t's she who didn't do that

The Interrogative Pronouns

Some examples are given below.

The pattern is the same as the verb **To Be** (see Lesson 22):

Dè rinn thu leis a' phàipear is glaoth? - What did you make with the paper and glue?

Cò thuirt sin? - Who said that?

Carson a thug e airgead dhut? - Why did he give you some money?

Ciamar a rinn thu sin? - How did you do that?

Cuin a thàinig iad? - When did they come?

Càit an d' fhuair thu sin? - Where did you get that?

With Conjunctions

Some examples are given below.

The pattern is the same as the verb **To Be** (see Lesson 23):

Thuirt mi an naidheachd ris nuair a chunnaic mi e - I told him the news when I saw him

Sgioblaich mi an taigh mus d'ràinig iad - I tidied the house before they arrived

Bha sinn toilichte ged nach tàinig i - We were happy (even) although she didn't come

Tha e air a dhòigh on a fhuair e an càr ùr - He is overjoyed since he got the new car

Mura tug thusa air falbh e, cò thug? - If you didn't take it away, who did (take)?

NEW WORDS

Nouns

glaoth (m) - glue

fuaim (f) - noise, sound

Verbs

beir, breith (air) - bear, catch, grasp dèan, dèanamh - do, make

ruig, ruigsinn - reach, arrive sgioblaich, sgioblachadh - tidy

Verbal phrases

Tha mi air mo dhòigh - I am overjoyed

Tha sinn air ar dòigh - We are overjoyed

Tha thu air do dhòigh - You are overjoyed

Tha sibh air ur dòigh - You are overjoyed

Tha e air a dhòigh - He is overjoyed

Tha iad air an dòigh - They are overjoyed

Tha i air a dòigh - She is overjoyed

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English

1. Am faca sibh cò bha anns an talla? Chunnaic
2. Thug mi an dèideag air falbh bhuaipe
3. Cha tàinig iad gus meadhan-oidhche
4. Rug i leanabh bòidheach
5. Nach d'ràinig thu an taobh eile? Ràinig
6. Chaidh sinn sìos dhan tràigh an-dè
7. An d' rinn sibh dìnnear dhaibh? Cha d' rinn
8. Càit an cuala tu an sgeul sin?
9. Cò fhuair taigh ùr?

10. Nach tuirt e gun deach i air falbh a-raoir? Thuirt

EXERCISE 2 Translate into Gàidhlig

1. He came in late last night
2. I caught/grasped him on the hand
3. Did you see that film? No
4. When did you arrive yesterday?
5. I gave the book to my brother when I saw him
6. We saw an eagle in the sky
7. Who got a letter from them?
8. Why didn't they say they were tired?
9. We heard a terrible noise
10. I was happy before he came

1. Thainig e a-staigh anmoch a-raoir
2. Rug mi air an làimh air
3. Am faca sibh an dealbh sin? Chan fhaca
4. Cui a ràinig thu an-dè?
5. Thug mi an leabhar do mo bhràthair nuair a chunnaic mi e
6. Chunnaic sinn iolair e anns an speur
7. Cò fhuaire litir bhupa?
8. Carson nach tuirt iad gun robh iad sgìth?
9. Chuala sinn fuaim uabhasach
10. Bha mi toilichte mus tainig e

LESSON 25: ANSWERS 2

1. Did you see who was in the hall? Yes
2. I took the toy away from her
3. They didn't come until midnight
4. She bore (gave birth to) a beautiful baby
5. Didn't you reach the other side? Yes
6. We went down to the beach yesterday
7. Did you make dinner for them? No
8. Where did you hear that tale?
9. Who got a new house?
10. Didn't he say that she went away last night? Yes

LESSON 25: ANSWERS 1