

LESSON 5

Introduction to the Simple Prepositions

To help recognise trends the Simple Prepositions are best placed into distinct groups:

Group 1

aig - at

aig doras - at a door

aig an doras - at the door

gun - without

gun chù - without a dog *

gun an cù - without the dog

air - on

air leabaidh - on a bed

air an leabaidh - on the bed

mar - as, like

mar dhuine - like a man *

mar an duine - like the man

* **mar** and **gun** lenite indefinite nouns except those beginning with **l, n, r, sg, sm, sp** or **st**. (You probably recognise these exceptions from Lesson 4).

Group 2

These prepositions all lenite an indefinite noun except those beginning with **l, n, r, sg, sm, sp** or **st**.

All combine with the singular definite article **an**.

The definite article **an** loses its initial **a**; e.g. **bho + an >> bhon**.

bho/o - from

bho leabhar/o leabhar - from a book

bhon leabhar/on leabhar - from the book

de - of, off

de theine - of fire

den teine * - of the fire

dha/do - to

dha taigh/do thaigh † - to a house

dhan taigh/don taigh - to the house

fo - under, below

fo thruinnsear - under a plate

fon thruinnsear - under the plate

mu - about

mu dhealbh - about a picture

mun dealbh - about the picture

ro - before

ro thubaist - before a accident

ron tubaist - before the accident

tro - through

tro dhoras - through a door

tron doras - through the door

* **den** often appears as **dhen** in both the spoken and written language.

† **dha** does not lenite the following indefinite noun. **do** is the preferred preposition with the indefinite noun.

do has the special reduced form **a (a dh'** before a vowel) when used before placenames:
a Ghlaschu - to Glasgow a dh'I n bhìr Nis - to Inverness

Group 3

These prepositions have separate forms for definite and indefinite nouns. The prepositions assume a final **s** before definite articles.

à (às - with definite noun) - from, out of
à taigh - out of a house
às an taigh - out of the house

ann an (anns - with definite noun) - in
ann an leabaidh - in a bed
ann am bàta - in a boat *
anns an leabaidh - in the bed

gu (also: gus - with definite noun) - to, until
gu taigh - to a house
gun taigh (also: gus an taigh) - to the house

le (leis - with definite noun) - with, by
le leabhar - with a book
leis an leabhar - with the book

ri (ris - with definite noun) - to, at, against
ri sgàthan - against a mirror
ris an sgàthan - against the mirror

* Use **ann am** for nouns beginning with **b, f, m** or **p**

Simple prepositions are often the second element in a complex preposition. The first element never changes in this group:

faisg air leabhar - near a book faisg air an leabhar - near the book

An Idiomatic Use of ann

One important idiomatic use of **ann** is where it denotes presence or existence or when something is happening:

Tha Calum ann - Calum is present/Calum is here

Bha mi ann? - I was present/I was there

Tha cèilidh ann a-nochd - There is a ceilidh on tonight

NEW WORDS

Conjunctions

ach - however

Nouns

cù (m) - dog

rùm (m) - room, free space

truinnsear (m) - plate

sgeilp (f) - shelf

tubaist (f) - accident

dealbh (m) - picture

taigh-òsta (m) - hotel

sgeul (f) - story

toit (f) - smoke

Placenames

Dùn Èideann - Edinburgh

Inbhir Nis - Inverness

Glaschu - Glasgow

Steòrnabhagh - Stornoway

Prepositions

à (às - with definite noun) - from (place), out of

aig - at

ann an (anns - with definite noun) - in

dha/do - to

fo - under, below

gun - without

mar - as, like

ri (ris - with definite noun) - at, against

ro - before

còmhla ri(s) - together with

faisg air - near

thairis air - across

air - on

bho/o - from

de - of, off

gu (gus - with definite noun) - to, until

le (leis - with definite noun) - with, by

mu - about

tro - through

cuide ri(s) - together with

seachad air - past

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English

1. An robh thu anns an eaglais?
2. Tha an gille anns an rùm
3. Cha robh duine aig an doras
4. A bheil thu aig an sgoil? Tha
5. Bha i tinn agus cha robh i aig an sgoil
6. Tha mi glè bhlàth faisg air an teine
7. Bha iad ris an doras
8. Bha sinn ri sgeilp
9. Nach robh sibh air an leabaidh?
10. Tha e à Inbhir Nis
11. Bha iad bhon taigh tron oidhche
12. Nach eil an cù fon leabaidh?
13. Bha i còmhla ris an duine
14. Tha a' chaileag air an làr cuide ri cù
15. Bha leabhar ann

EXERCISE 2 Translate into Gàidhlig

1. The man is busy on the road
2. There is a girl in a boat on the river
3. He is from Stornoway
4. She was in school however he was not
5. Are they not from Edinburgh?, No
6. She is from Glasgow and he is from Edinburgh
7. They were in the hotel, however I was at home
8. We weren't very hot at the fire
9. There is a letter from that girl (nighean)

10. He was in the picture of that story
11. The room was dirty with the smoke
12. The boy was in the house
13. There isn't an empty room in this house

1. Tha am fear trang air an rathad
2. Tha calleag ann am bàta air an abhainn
3. Tha e à Steòrnabhagh
4. Bha i anns an sgoil ach cha robh e
5. Nach eil iad à Dun Eideann? Chan eil
6. Tha i à Glaschu agus tha e à Dun Eideann
7. Bha iad anns an taigh-òsta, ach bha mi aig an taigh
8. Cha robh sinn glè theth aig an teine
9. Tha litir ann bhon nighnean sin
10. Bha e anns an dealbh den sgeul sin
11. Bha an seòmar salach leis an toit
12. Bha am balach anns an taigh
13. Chan eil rùm falamh anns an taigh seo

LESSON 5: ANSWERS 2

1. Were you in (the) church?
2. The boy is in the room
3. There was no-one (a man) at the door
4. Are you at (the) school? Yes
5. She was ill and wasn't at school
6. I am very warm near the fire
7. They were at (against) the door
8. We were at (against) a shelf
9. Were you not on the bed?
10. He is from Inverness
11. They were (away) from home through the night
12. Is the dog not under the bed?
13. She was (along) with the man
14. The girl is on the floor (together) with a dog
15. There was a book there

LESSON 5: ANSWERS 1