

LESSON 7

The Dative Singular Case of Feminine Nouns

Features in Common with the Nominative Singular Nouns

The definite article and definite nouns are identical to nominative singular definite nouns (see Lesson 3).

Features in Common with the Dative Singular Masculine Nouns

Combined forms of the definite article with the simple prepositions ending in a vowel **bho**, **de**, **do**, **fo**, **mu**, **ro** and **tro** are identical to dative singular masculine nouns (see Lesson 6).

Additional Features of Dative Singular Feminine Nouns

Additionally, feminine dative singular nouns show a variety of internal modifications. These changes are the same for **both** definite and indefinite feminine singular nouns. The general principle is to make the final vowel of a word narrow, i.e. an **i**. This practice is known as slenderisation.

In spoken Gàidhlig the internal modifications of the dative singular are frequently not used; the nominative form sufficing, particularly when the noun is indefinite. However, they are used in formal speech and show less erosion in the written language.

To help you recognise the changes they are best placed into distinct types. The nominative definite singular noun is given as a reference point.

Type 1

In monosyllabic nouns a letter **i** is inserted after the last broad vowel after a change in the final broad vowel.

Most common changes are **a >> oi** and **o >> ui**:

Nominative Definite Singular	Dative Definite Singular	Dative Indefinite Singular
a' chas - the leg	air a' chois - on the leg	air cois - on a leg
an long - the ship	air an luing - on the ship	air luing - on a ship

Type 2

In both mono- and polysyllabic nouns a letter **i** is inserted after the broad vowel **a**:

Nominative Definite Singular	Dative Definite Singular	Dative Indefinite Singular
an làmh - the hand	air an làimh - on the hand	air làimh - on a hand
a' mharag - the pudding	leis a' mharraig - with the pudding	le marraig - with a pudding
an tò(i)n - the rump	air an tòin - on the rump	air tòin - on a rump

Type 3

In polysyllabic nouns the final vowel group **ea** will change to **ei**.

Most common change is the ending **-eag >> -eig**:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' chaileag - the girl
an uinneag - the window

Dative Definite Singular

aig a' chaileig - at the girl
ris an uinneig - against the window

Dative Indefinite Singular

aig caileig - at a girl
ri uinneig - against a window

Type 4

The vowel group **ea** will change to **i**:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' chailleach - the old woman
a' chearc - the hen

Dative Definite Singular

dhan chaillich - to the old woman
fon chirc - under the hen

Dative Indefinite Singular

do chaillich - to an old woman
fo chirc - under a hen

Type 5

In monosyllabic nouns the diphthong **ia** will change to **èi**:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' ghrian - the sun

Dative Definite Singular

fon ghrèin - under the sun

Dative Indefinite Singular

fo ghrèin - under a sun

Type 6

In monosyllabic nouns the diphthong **io** will change to **i**:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' chrìoch - the boundary

Dative Definite Singular

aig a' chrìch - at the boundary

Dative Indefinite Singular

aig crìch - at a boundary

Type 7

There is no change when the noun ends in a **vowel** or **-chd**, or if the last vowel is already an **i**:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' chaora - the sheep
an naidheachd - the news
a' chèilidh - the ceilidh

Dative Definite Singular

fon chaora - under the sheep
leis an naidheachd - with the news
aig a' chèilidh - at the ceilidh

Dative Indefinite Singular

fo chaora - under a sheep
le naidheachd - with news
aig cèilidh - at a ceilidh

In a very few cases the dative is irregular or shows no change:

Nominative Definite Singular

a' bhùth - the shop
a' bhean - the wife

Dative Definite Singular

anns a' bhùth - in the shop
leis a' mhnaoi - with the wife

Dative Indefinite Singular

ann am bùth - in a shop
le mnaoi - with a wife

NEW WORDS

Adjectives

dubh - black
olc - evil

geal - white
sàbhailte - safe

Conjunctions

oir - for, because

Nouns

The datives are given in this lesson. For others see the **Vocabulary** section.

bùth (f) - shop	cailleach, caillich (f) - old woman
caora (f) - sheep	cas, cois (f) - leg, foot
cearc, circ (f) - hen, chicken	cèilidh (f) - ceilidh
crìoch, crìch (f) - end, boundary	feannag, feannaig (f) - crow
fearg, feirg (f) - anger	Gàidhlig (f) - Gàidhlig language
grian, grèin (f) - sun	làmh, làimh (f) - hand
madainn (f) - morning	muir (f) - sea
naidheachd (f) - news	poit (f) - pot
sgeulachd (f) - story, tale	slat, slait (f) - rod, wand
sgiath, sgèith (f) - wing, shield	sràid (f) - street
tò(i)n, tòin (f) - rump, backside	ùine (f) - time, spell
uinneag, uinneig (f) - window	

EXERCISE 1 Translate into English (In brackets are common spoken forms. These should not be written)

1. Tha an litir seo dhan chaillich (dhan chailleach)
2. Bha a' ghrian blàth anns a' mhadainn
3. Nach robh iad aig a' mhuir tron oidhche? Bha
4. Bha i anns an leabaidh tron mhadainn
5. Bha sgeul mun chaileig (mun chaileag) sin anns an naidheachd
6. Tha a' Ghàidhlig glè inntinneach, nach eil?
7. Bha sgeulachd inntinneach anns an litir
8. Tha an nighean ris an uinneig (ris an uinneag) oir tha a' ghrian blàth
9. Bha slat fhada ùr ann anns a' bhùth
10. Tha bùth ùr ann air an t-sràid sin
11. Nach robh iad ùine fhada anns a' bhaile
12. Tha an sgeulachd ghoirid seo anns a' Ghàidhlig
13. Bha an cù donn air an fheur ris a' ghrèin (ris a' ghrian)
14. Bha sgiath dhonn air a' chirc (air a' chearc)

EXERCISE 2 Translate into Gàidhlig

1. The old woman was in the shop in the morning
2. She was at the shop along with the girl
3. The girl was safe under the shield
4. The evil hand was on the wand
5. I wasn't at the window in the morning
6. He was in bed through the night
7. He was red with anger
8. The chicken is in the pot
9. The black sheep (sing.) is very hot under the sun
10. Weren't you at the ceilidh? Yes, I was there a short spell
11. The dog was near the girl

12. Crows are black, but there is a white wing on that crow
13. The girl is wet because she was in the sea
14. The story was terrible at the end

- LESSON 7: ANSWERS 2** (In brackets are common spoken forms. These should not be written)
1. Bha a' chailleach anns a' bhùth anns a' mhadainn
 2. Bha i aig a' bhùth còmhla ris a' chailleig (ris a' chailleag)
 3. Bha a' chailleag sàbhailte fon sgeith (fon sgiath)
 4. Bha an lamh olc air an t-slat (air an t-slat)
 5. Cha robh mi aig an uinneig (aig an uinneag) anns a' mhadainn
 6. Bha e anns an leabaidh tron oidhche
 7. Bha e dearg le feirg (le fearg)
 8. Tha a' chearc anns a' phoit
 9. Tha a' chaora dhùbh gile theth fon ghreìn (fon ghrian)
 10. Nach robh thu ann aig a' chèilidh? Bha, bha mi ann uine ghoirid
 11. Bha an cù faisg air a' chailleig (air a' chailleag)
 12. Tha feannagan dubh, ach tha sgiath gheal air an Theannaig sin (air an Theannag sin)
 13. Tha an nighean fliuch oir bha i anns a' mhuir
 14. Bha an sgeulachd uabhasach aig a' chrìch (aig a' chrìoch)

- LESSON 7: ANSWERS 1**
1. This letter is for the old woman
 2. The sun was warm in the morning
 3. Were they not at (the) sea through the night? Yes
 4. She was in (the) bed during (through) the morning
 5. There was a story about that girl in the news
 6. Gàidhlig is very interesting, isn't it?
 7. There was an interesting story in the letter
 8. The girl is at the window because the sun is warm
 9. There was new long (fishing) rod in the shop
 10. There is a new shop on that street
 11. Weren't they a long time in (the) town?
 12. This short story is in Gàidhlig
 13. The brown dog on the grass was (exposed) to the sun
 14. The hen had a brown wing (lit. There was a brown wing on the hen)