

Expressions of Time

Temporal adverbial expressions - or how to say when something happened. Let's take a look at what choices we have to start with:

1. Adverbs of Time

These are itsy words that you can add on to a phrase or sentence to tell people when something happened.

a-bhòn-uiridh	an-uiridh	am bliadhna	an ath bhliadhna	-	-
the year before last	last year	this year	next year	-	-
a-bhòin-dé	an-dé	an-diugh	a-màireach	an-earar	an eararais
the day before yesterday	yesterday	today	tomorrow	the day after tomorrow	three days from now
-	an-raoir	a-nochd	an ath oidhche	-	-
-	last night	tonight	tomorrow night	-	-

Now this does not mean that you can not say <year after next> in Gaelic, it just means that there is no single, easy word for it. Instead you have to employ periphrastic expressions.

-	am bliadhna	an ath-bhliadhna
-	this year	next year
-	a-nochd	an ath-oidhche
-	tonight	
an t-seachdainn seo chaidh	an t-seachdainn-sa	an ath-sheachdainn
last week	this week	next week

2. The Days of the Week

DiLuain	DiMàirt	DiCiadaoin	DiArdaoin	DihAoine	DiSathairne	DiDòmhnaich
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Saturday is also called **Latha na Sàbaid**. Traditionally the usage between the two depends on your denomination - Catholics and Episcopalians using the **DiDòmhnaich** and Presbyterians **Latha na Sàbaid**. For non-denominational reasons, we prefer **DiDòmhnaich** because it fits in with the rest of the paradigm. Be sure to pronounce the long vowel in **Sàbaid**, otherwise it becomes **Latha na Sabaid** 'the Day of Fighting'.

The prefix **Di-** is the equivalent of the English **-day** suffix. Unlike in English however, it is the prefix that is modified to express the concepts of <Monday afternoon>, <Friday night> etc:

madainn Luain	madainn Mhàrt	madainn Chiadaoin	madainn Ardaoin	madainn hAoine	madainn Sathairne	madainn Dòmhnach
Monday morning	Tuesday morning	Wednesday morning	Thursday morning	Friday morning	Saturday morning	Sunday morning
feasgar Luain	feasgar Màrt	feasgar Ciadaoin	feasgar Ardaoin	feasgar hAoine	feasgar Sathairne	feasgar Dòmhnach
Monday afternoon	Tuesday afternoon	Wednesday afternoon	Friday afternoon	Friday afternoon	Saturday afternoon	Sunday afternoon
oidhche Luain	oidhche Mhàrt	oidhche Chiadaoin	oidhche Ardaoin	oidhche hAoine	oidhche Shathairne	oidhche Dhòmhnach
Monday night	Tuesday night	Wednesday night	Thursday night	Friday night	Saturday night	Sunday night

That is the theory anyway ... in colloquial usage, you will often hear people saying things like **Feasgar DihAoine**, **Madainn DiMàirt** etc. The most common ones in colloquial usage are the expressions with **oidhche** such as **Oidhche Luain**, **Oidhche Mhàrt** etc.

3. The Months

Genitives are given in square brackets. For purposes of memorisation it is useful to note that from Septemeber onwards all months are feminine in gender! There are alternate names for some of the months, but we strongly suggest you stick with the recommended ones. Learning a language is difficult enough without having to worry about having 5 different choices for one term...

Gàidhlig	Beurla	Ainmean Eile/Alternate Names
Am Faoilteach (masc) [an Fhaoiltich]	January	Am Faoilleach [an Fhaoillich]; Mios Marbh; Deireadh-Geamhraidh
An Gearran (masc) [an Ghearrain]	February	
Am Màrt (masc) [a' Mhàirt]	March	
An Giblean (masc) [an Ghiblein]	April	
An Céitean (masc) [a' Chéitein]	May	A' Mhàigh (fem) [na Màighe]
An t-Òg mhios (masc) [an Òg mhiosa]	June	Meadhan-Samhraidh
An t-Iuchar (masc) [an Iuchair]	July	Deireadh-Samhraidh; Mios Buidhe
An Lùnasdal (masc) [an Lùnasdail]	August	
An t-Sultain (fem) [na Sultaine]	September	

An Dàmhair (fem) [na Dàmhair]	October	
An t-Samhain (fem) [na Samhna]	November	
An Dùbhlachd (fem) [na Dùbhlachd]	December	Mios na Nollaige

The date in Gaelic is given in the form of the Xth day of the [month]. A few examples:

1st March	A' chiad latha dhen Mhàrt
24th June	An ceathramh latha air fhichead dhen Ògmhios
31st September	A' chiad latha deug air fhichead dhen t-Sultain
22nd December	An darna latha air fhichead dhen Dùbhlachd

Individual years are said by giving the 'hundreds' first and then the 'tens' (without is between the hundreds and the tens) i.e.

1272	dà ceud deug trì fichead is a dhà dheug
1817	ochd ceud deug is seachd deug
1995	naoi ceud deug ceithir fichead is a cóig deug
2000	bliadhna dà mhìle
2003	dà mhìle is a trì

B.C. and A.D. are expressed similar to English as: R.C. (ro Chrìosd) and A.D. (as déidh Chrìosd), e.g. 347 B.C. is trì ceud dà fhichead is a seachd ro Chrìosd. Optionally sa bhliadhna can be prefixed to any date for clarification, i.e. sa bhliadhna naoi ceud deug trì fichead is a ceithir <in the year 1964>.

BCE? No we don't as it's pointless - it still uses the same date as a reference point so it's no less "offensive" (???) that BC or AD and just adds to the confusion.

The four seasons are expressed as follows (note that the short form of saying <in X> differs slightly from the long form!):

spring	summer	autumn	winter
earrach (m)	samhradh (m)	foghar (m)	geamhradh (m)
gen. & pl. earraich	gen. samhraidh	gen. foghair	gen. geamhraidh
	pl. samhraidhean	pl. foghairean	pl. geamhraidhean
in (the) spring	in (the) summer	in (the) autumn	in (the) winter
anns an earrach	anns an t-samhradh	anns an fhoghar	anns a' gheamhradh
as t-earrach	as t-samhradh	as t-fhoghar	-

4. The Holidays of the Year

Genitives are given in square brackets.

Fao. 1	Latha na Bliadhna Ùire	New Year's Day	Callainn (fem) [Callainne]; Nollaig Bheag (fem) [Nollaige Bige]
Fao. 6	Latha nan Tri Rìgh	Epiphany	Latha Fhéill nan Rìgh; Féill an Taisbeanaidh
Gea. 2	Latha Fhéill Brìghde	Candlemas	Latha Fhéill Brìghde nan Coinnlean; Latha Féill Moire nan Coinnlean
Gea. 14	Latha Fhéill Bhaileintin	Valentine's Day	
Gea.	Latha na Bliadhna Ùire Sìnich	Chinese New Year	
Gea.	DiMàirt Inid	Shrove Tuesday	Pancake Day
Gea.	DiCiadaoin na Luaithe	Ash Wednesday	
Gea.	An Carghas (masc) [a' Charghais]	Lent	
Màr. 1	Latha Dhàibhidh	St. David's Day	
Màr.	Latha na Màthar	Mother's Day/ Mothering Sunday	
Màr. 17	Latha Phàdraig	St. Patrick's Day	Latha Fhéill Pàdraig
Màr.	Seachdainn na Càisge	Holy Week	
Màr.	DiDòmhnach Tùrnais	Palm Sunday	
Màr.	DiArdaoin a' Bhrochain Mhòir	Maundy Thursday	DiArdaoin Inid
Màr.	DihAoine na Ceusta	Good Friday	
Màr.	A' Chàisg (fem) [na Càisge]	Easter	
Màr.	DiSathairne na Càisge	Easter Saturday	
Màr.	A' Chàisg Mhór	Easter Sunday	Latha Guileagan; Latha Bás nan Uighean; DiDòmhnach na Càisge
Màr.	DiLuain na Càisge	Easter Monday	
Màr.	Co-fhad-tràth an Earraich	Vernal Equinox	
Gib. 1	Latha na Gogaireachd	April Fool's Day	Latha Ruith na Cuthaige
Gib. 23	Latha Fhéill Seòrais	St. George's Day	
Céi. 1	Latha Bealltainn	May Day/Beltane	
Céi.	Deasghabhail (fem) [na Deasghabhaile]	Ascension Day	DiArdaoin Freasdail
Céi.	Caingis (fem indef)	Pentecost/Whit Sunday	
Céi.	DiDòmhnach na Trianaid	Trinity Sunday	
Céi.	DiArdaoin Corp Crìosda	Corpus Christi	
Céi.		Transfiguration	
Céi.	Latha Fhéill an Earraich	Spring Bank Holiday	
Òig.	Latha an Athar	Father's Day	
Òig. 21	Grianstad an t-Samhraidh; Latha leth an t-Samhraidh	Summer Solstice; Midsummer's Day	

Iuc. 15	Latha Màrtainn Builg	St. Swithen's Day	
Lùn. 1	Lùghnasa	Lughnasa (Harvest)	
Lùn.	Latha Fhéill an t-Samhraidh	Summer Bank Holiday	
Sul.	Co-fhad-tràth an Fhoghair	Autumnal Equinox	
Dam. 31	Oidhche Shamhna	All Souls' Day/ Hallowe'en	
Dam. 31/Sam. 1	Latha Samhna	Samhainn	Latha Fhéill Samhna
Sam. 1	Latha nan Uile Naoimhe	All Saints' Day	
Sam. 5	Oidhche Ghuy Fawkes	Guy Fawkes' Night	
Sam. 11	Latha nan Cuimhneachan	Remembrance Day	
Sam.	DiDòmhnach nan Cuimhneachan	Remembrance Sunday	
Sam.	Aidbheint (fem) [na h-Aidmheint]	Advent	
Sam.	A' Chiad Dòmhnach dhen Aidmheint	Advent Sunday	
Sam.	Latha na Taingealachd	Thanksgiving	Latha Buidheachais an Fhoghair; Latha Taingealach an Fhoghair
Sam. 30	Latha Chill Ribhinn	St. Andrew's Day	
Dùb. 6	Latha Bodach na Nollaige	St. Nicholas' Day	
Dùb. 21	Grianstad an Gheamhraidh	Winter Solstice	
Dùb.	An Nollaig (fem) [na Nollaige]	Christmas	
Dùb. 24	Oidhche nam Bannag	Christmas Eve	Oidhche Nollaige
Dùb. 25	Latha na Nollaige	Christmas Day	Latha nam Bannag
Dùb. 26		Boxing Day/ St. Stephen's Day	
Dùb. 28	Latha Fhéill nan Leanabhan Neo-chiontach	Feast of the Holy Innocents	
Dùb. 31	Oidhche Challainn	Hogmanay/ New Year's Eve	

5. Other Adverbs of Time

Most adverbs are formed by the preposition *gu* + ADJ, but there are a number of adverbs that have different formations:

a chaoidh	for ever (after)
a chlisgeadh	suddenly, abruptly
a dh'aithghearr	soon, in a short while
a dh'oidhche	by night, at night time
a ghnàth	habitually, always
a h-uile turas	every time
a h-uile uair	every time, always

a latha	by day, at daytime
ainneamh	seldom
(ann) an ceartair	1) +FUT in a moment 2) +PAST just now
an còmhnaidh	always, continually
an-dràsda	now (in a more broad sense)
an-sin	whereupon, then
air a' mhionaid	this moment, minute
air an uair	just now
air chionn do ...	by the time that
air ball	immediately, straightaway
air tùs	in the beginning, at first
air uairibh	sometimes, at times
(am) fad is a ...	while
am feadh	while, whilst
a-nis	(right) now
(ann) an tiota (beag)	in a twinkling, moment
anns a' bhad	immediately, on the spot
anns a' cheart àm	in the meanwhile
a-rithist	again
á seo suas	henceforward
bho àm gu àm	from time to time, occasionally
bho chionn aimsir	some time ago, long ago
bho chionn ghoirid	a short while ago
bho chionn treis	a while ago
bho seo a-mach	henceforth
car ùine	for a time, during a period
(cho) fad is a ...	as long as ...
fa dheòigh	at last
f(h)ad is a ...	while, during
fad na h-ùine	all the time
ge be uair	whenever, at whichever time
gach uair	whenever, every time
gu bràth	forever
gu cian nan cian	for ever and ever
gu grad	abruptly
gu minic	often
gu seo	thus far, so far
gu sìorraidh	for ever and ever
gu tric	often
gun dàil	immediately, without delay
iomadh uair	often, many times
leis sin	whereupon, with which
mu dheireadh thall	at long last

mu thràth (mar tha)	already
nas motha	no more
ré tamaill	for a time
ri h-ùine	by and by, with time
thuige seo	thus far, so far
tràth is a ...	when
uaireannan	at times, sometimes

Adverbs of time in Gaelic do not require a preposition as certain English expressions do and are simply attached at the end of the phrase, e.g.:

I saw him yesterday.	> Chunnaic mi e an-dé.
I will go there on Monday.	> Théid mi ann DiLuain.
He spent a little while there.	> Bha e ann greis.
We were there for a week.	> Bha sinn ann seachdainn.
She wants to go home for a month.	> Tha i ag iarraidh dol dhachaigh mìos.
What did you do in the afternoon?	> Dé a rinn thu feasgar?
Wait a moment!	> Fuirich tiota!

Particularly the most overused word in modern Gaelic should be avoided - [airson](#).