

The verb 'Bi' - 'To Be' with Pronouns

[\[MP3 LINK\]](#)

This is the verb to use for 'to be' in most cases. One thing that you cannot use it for is to equate two nouns, e.g. I am a man. I am a teacher. To create that sentence, you need to use the other verb 'to be' - 'Is.'

Gaelic verbs have four forms. Here are the four forms used with 'Bi' (is, am, are) (present tense only):

Tha	___ is... .	positive statement	independent form (one word)
Chan eil	___ is not	negative statement	dependent form (requires two words)
A bheil	Is ___... ?	positive question	dependent form (requires two words)
Nach eil	Isn't ___ ... ?	negative question	dependent form (requires two words)

Verbs alone don't communicate that much useful information. To make some basic sentences, we need some more parts. How about some pronouns to get us started?

mi	me
thu	you (informal)
e	he
i	she
sinn	we
sibh	you (formal & plural)
iad	they

With these two parts, we can make some very simple sentences.

Column A: Verb	Column B: Subject	Column C: other stuff (coming soon)
Tha	mi	...
A bheil	thu	
Chan eil	e	
Nach eil	i	
	sinn	
	sibh	
	iad	

Using the information above, you can mix and match bits from each column to create sentences.

The verb 'Bi' - 'To Be' with Pronouns (cont.)

Examples:

Tha mi ...	/ I am
Tha thu ...	/ You are
Tha e ...	/ He is
Tha i ...	/ She is
Tha sinn ...	/ We are
Tha sibh ...	/ You (pl. or formal) are
Tha iad ...	/ They are
Chan eil mi ...	/ I am not
Chan eil thu ...	/ You are not
Chan eil e ...	/ He is not
Chan eil i ...	/ She is not
Chan eil sinn ...	/ We are not
Chan eil sibh ...	/ You (pl. or formal) are not
Chan eil iad ...	/ They are not
A bheil mi ...	/ Am I ... ?
A bheil thu ...	/ Are you ... ?
A bheil e ...	/ Is he ... ?
A bheil i ...	/ Is she ... ?
A bheil sinn ...	/ Are we ... ?
A bheil sibh ...	/ Are you (pl. or formal) ... ?
A bheil iad ...	/ Are they ... ?
Nach eil mi ...	/ Aren't I ... ?
Nach eil thu ...	/ Aren't you ... ?
Nach eil e ...	/ Isn't he ... ?
Nach eil i ...	/ Isn't she ... ?
Nach eil sinn ...	/ Aren't we ... ?
Nach eil sibh ...	/ Aren't you (pl. or formal) ... ?
Nach eil iad ...	/ Aren't they ... ?

This pattern is important to learn because most other verbs will follow this pattern AND this is the only way to make a present tense in Scottish Gaelic!

Exercises, Verb BI (Present Tense)

Translate the following:

- 1) I am. _____
- 2) You are (formal). _____
- 3) Are they? _____
- 4) Aren't they? _____
- 5) She is not. _____
- 6) Is she? _____
- 7) Isn't she? _____
- 8) He is. _____
- 9) You (informal) are not. _____
- 10) Aren't you (formal)? _____
- 11) We are. _____
- 12) We are not. _____
- 13) They are. _____
- 14) Is he? _____
- 15) Aren't we? _____

Answers

- 1) Tha mi.
- 2) Tha sibh.
- 3) A bheil iad?
- 4) Nach eil iad?
- 5) Chan eil i.
- 6) A bheil i?
- 7) Nach eil i?
- 8) Tha e.
- 9) Chan eil thu.
- 10) Nach eil sibh?
- 11) Tha sinn.
- 12) Chan eil sinn.
- 13) Tha iad.
- 14) A bheil e?
- 15) Nach eil sinn?