

The *Book of Is* Companion

When to use 'Is':

Defining - You MUST use 'Is' when using a noun to define another noun (equating nouns).

Emphasizing - You can rewrite most 'Bi' sentences as 'Is' sentences for added emphasis. (But NOT the reverse!)

Special 'Is' phrases and idioms - These are old constructions that you just have to learn and memorize (along with the prepositional pronouns involved).

Once you identify that you want to use the 'Is' verb, it MUST be constructed in one of the following four patterns: (*Note the use of the column method, and the cloud stands in for the missing bit of 'Is' in the present tense so it follows the usual pattern.*)

<p>Form 1: Is + personal pronoun + definite noun</p> <p>Used for Defining: I am the... . He is not the... . Are they the...? Yes. Isn't she the...? No.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Verb</th> <th>Pronoun</th> <th>Definite Noun</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Is</td> <td>mise</td> <td>an tìdsear.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chan ☁</td> <td>esan</td> <td>am bèicear.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>An ☁</td> <td>iadsan</td> <td>na h-oileanaich?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>'S iad.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nach ☁</td> <td>ise</td> <td>Anna? Chan i.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This form every one learns when giving their name. For other questions, the responses can be tricky. Some people just use this form when asked for their name and use Form 2 for everything else.</p>	Verb	Pronoun	Definite Noun	Is	mise	an tìdsear.	Chan ☁	esan	am bèicear.	An ☁	iadsan	na h-oileanaich?	'S iad.			Nach ☁	ise	Anna? Chan i.	<p>Form 2: 'S e + definite noun + definite noun</p> <p>Used for Defining: Does all that Form 1 does, plus: Bob is the baker. I am not the good baker. Is his brother the teacher? Yes. Isn't Ann the teacher? No.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Verb</th> <th>Def. Noun</th> <th>Definite Noun</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>'S e</td> <td>Bob</td> <td>am bèicear.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chan ☁ e</td> <td>mise</td> <td>am bèicear math.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>An ☁ e</td> <td> a bhràthair</td> <td>an tìdsear? 'S e.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nach ☁ e</td> <td>Anna</td> <td>an tìdsear? Chan e.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This form greatly simplifies the responses to questions.</p>	Verb	Def. Noun	Definite Noun	'S e	Bob	am bèicear.	Chan ☁ e	mise	am bèicear math.	An ☁ e	a bhràthair	an tìdsear? 'S e.	Nach ☁ e	Anna	an tìdsear? Chan e.							
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<p>Form 3a: 'S e ... a ...</p> <p>Used for defining with indefinite nouns Used for emphasizing nouns. I am a teacher. Bob is not a baker. Is she a teacher? Yes. Isn't he a baker? No.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Verb</th> <th>Indefinite</th> <th>Rel.</th> <th>Subject</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>'S e</td> <td>tìdsear</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>annam.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chan ☁ e</td> <td>bèicear</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>ann am Bob.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>An ☁ e</td> <td>tìdsear</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>innte? 'S e.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nach ☁ e</td> <td>bèicear</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>ann? 'Chan e.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This form requires the use of the preposition 'ann' (ann an, ann am, anns a', annam, annad, ann, innte, annainn, annaibh, anna).</p>	Verb	Indefinite	Rel.	Subject	'S e	tìdsear	a tha	annam.	Chan ☁ e	bèicear	a tha	ann am Bob.	An ☁ e	tìdsear	a tha	innte? 'S e.	Nach ☁ e	bèicear	a tha	ann? 'Chan e.	<p>Form 3b: 'S ann ... a ...</p> <p>Used for emphasizing things other than nouns. I am <i>tired</i>. (not hungry) He is not <i>at the door</i>. (he's on the phone) Is Ann <i>early</i>? (She's usually late.) Aren't you <i>drinking</i> wine? (instead of buying it)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Verb</th> <th>Not noun</th> <th>Rel.</th> <th>Subject</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>'S ann</td> <td>sgìth</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>mi.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chan ☁ ann</td> <td>aig an doras</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>e.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>An ☁ ann</td> <td>tràth</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>Anna?</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nach ☁ ann</td> <td>ag òl fìon</td> <td> a tha</td> <td>thu?</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>There is always a greater context with this form. 'S ann or Chan ann are the answers.</p>	Verb	Not noun	Rel.	Subject	'S ann	sgìth	a tha	mi.	Chan ☁ ann	aig an doras	a tha	e.	An ☁ ann	tràth	a tha	Anna?	Nach ☁ ann	ag òl fìon	a tha	thu?
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Form 4: Is Phrases

Used for a number of purposes and requires a prepositional pronoun.

Is idioms with 'Le/Leis'

Is toil	[like]
Bu toil	[would like]
'S fheàrr	[prefer]
B' fheàrr	[would prefer]

me	leam
you	leat
him	leis
her	leatha
us	leinn
you	leibh
them	leotha

Is idioms using 'Do/Don'

'S urrainn	[Can/Able]
B' urrainn	[Could]
Bu choir	[Should]
'S fheàrr	[Had better]

me	dhomh
you	dhut
him	dha
her	dhi
us	dhuinn
you	dhuibh
them	dhaibh

Is toil leam cèic.

[I like cake.]

Cha bu toil leis tì.

[I would not like tea.]

An fheàrr le Anna tì? 'S fheàrr.

[Does Anna prefer tea? Yes.]

Nach b' fheàrr leotha fion dearg? Cha b' fheàrr.

[Wouldn't they prefer red wine? No.]

'S urrainn dhomh snàmh.

[I can swim.]

Cha b' urrainn dha ithe.

[He could eat.]

Am bu choir dhuinn falbh? Bu choir.

[Should we leave? Yes.]

Nach fheàrr do dh'Anna falbh? Chan fheàrr.

[Hadn't Anna better leave? No.]

Quiz

Put a piece of paper over the answers along the right side of the page, then choose 'Bi' or 'Is' for the following English sentences if you wrote them in Gaelic. Assume emphasis is not needed.

	Bi	Is	Answer
1. I am cold.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha mi fuar.
2. I am a teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is 'S e tidsear a tha annam.
3. I am reading a book.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha mi a' leughadh leabhar.
4. The dog is under the table.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha an cù fon a' bhòrd.
5. He is eating cake.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha e ag ithe cèic.
6. He likes cake.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is Is toil leis cèic.
7. He is a baker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is 'S e bèicear a tha ann.
8. He is the baker.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is Is (or 'S e) esan am bèicear.
9. He enjoys baking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha bèicearachd a' còrdadh ris.
10. He likes cooking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is Is toil leis bèicearachd.
11. He is a good cook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is 'S e bèicear math a tha ann.
12. She has a dog.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha cù aice.
13. The dog is large and black.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha an cù mòr agus dubh.
14. Anna is Scottish.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is 'S e Albannach a tha ann an Anna.
15. Anna is from Scotland.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha Anna à Alba.
16. Scotland is beautiful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bi Tha Alba brèagha.

(Extra credit) Scotland is *beautiful!* Is 'S ann brèagha a tha Alba.

This document is meant to be a 'cheat sheet.' Please see *The Book of Is* for a more complete discussion.