

The verb TO BE - IS (Part 2: Is Phrases)

This handout is a continuation of the previous handout, The verb TO BE - IS (Part 1: Basics)

5. Is Phrases and Idioms

IS is frequently used in idioms. Pay attention to the tense of IS and the prepositional pronouns used.

A. IS phrases using LE/LEIS

Is toil leam _____.
Cha toil leam _____.
An toil leis _____?
Nach toil leis _____?

I like _____.
I don't like _____.
Does he like _____?
Doesn't he like _____?

Dè as toil leat?
Dè nach toil leat?

What do you like?
What don't you like?

(Some dialects use "Is caomh leam" instead of "Is toil leam")

Note: We must use the regular verb CÒRD, A' CÒRDADH for **liking** in the past and future. (I have a separate handout for that.)

| Le/Leis - With | |
|----------------|-----------|
| leam | with me |
| leat | with you |
| leis | with him |
| leatha | with her |
| leinn | with us |
| leibh | with you |
| leotha | with them |

Changing the tense of IS we get:

Bu toil leam _____.
Cha bu toil leam _____.
Am bu toil leis _____?
Nach bu toil leis _____?

I would like _____.
I would not like _____.
Would he like _____?
Wouldn't he like _____?

Present tense again:

'S fheàrr leatha _____.
Chan fheàrr leatha _____.
An fheàrr leat _____?
Nach fheàrr leat _____?

She prefers _____.
She does not prefer _____.
Do you prefer _____?
Don't you prefer _____?

Changing to the past tense:

B' fheàrr leinn _____.
Cha b' fheàrr leinn _____.
Am b' fheàrr leotha _____?
Nach b' fheàrr leotha _____?

We would prefer _____.
We would not prefer _____.
Would they prefer _____?
Wouldn't they prefer _____?

Examples

At this point, we can't use these constructions with verbs having objects. This requires a construction called the Inverted Nominal, which comes later in the program. Keep it simple for now!

Is toil leam a' chèic mhòr.
Carson as toil leat a' chèic mhòr?

I like the big cake.
Why do you like the big cake?

Remember, the question words want the relative form of the verb, except Càite.

'S toil leam a' chèic mhòr airson gu bheil e snog.
I like the big cake because it is cute.

An toil le Anna a' chaora?
'S toil.
Càit' an toil leat ithe?

Does Anna like the sheep?
Yes.
Where do you like to eat?

Remember, Càite wants the dependent form of the verb.

Bu toil le Seumas sgrìobhadh.
Nach bu toil leinn snàmh?
Cha bu toil idir. Tha i ro fhuar!
Am bu toil leotha cuilean?
Cò nach bu toil cuilean?
Cò mheud cuilean am bu toil leotha?
Remember, Cò mheud takes singular
Bu toil leotha deich cuileanan!

Seumas would like to write.
Wouldn't we like to swim?
Not at all! It is too cold!
Would they like a puppy?
Who wouldn't like a puppy?
How many puppies would they like?

They would like ten puppies!

An fheàrr leis do mhàthair cofaidh?
'S fheàrr leatha cofaidh le bainne.
Nach fheàrr leatha cofaidh le uachdar?
Chan fheàrr!
Carson nach fheàrr leatha cofaidh le uachdar?

Does your mother prefer coffee?
She prefers coffee with milk.
Doesn't she prefer coffee with cream?
No!
Why doesn't she prefer coffee with cream?

Chan fheàrr leatha cofaidh le uachdar airson gun fheàrr leatha cofaidh le bainne!
She doesn't prefer coffee with cream because she prefers coffee with milk!

Am b' fheàrr leatha tì le bainne?
Chan fheàrr. B' fheàrr leatha tì le uachdar.
Dè elie am b' fheàrr leatha leis an tì?
B' fheàrr leatha briosgaidhean.
Am b' fheàrr leatha briosgaid seòclaid chip?

Would she prefer tea with milk?
No. She would prefer tea with cream.
What else would she prefer with the tea?
She would prefer cookies.
Would she prefer a chocolate chip cookie?

Cha b' fheàrr. B' fheàrr leamsa briosgaid seòclaid chip, b' fheàrr leathasa briosgaid im cnòtha-talmhainn.

No. *I* would prefer a chocolate chip cookie, *SHE* would prefer a peanut butter cookie.

B. IS phrases using DO/DON

These next four require the use of the preposition 'Do/Don.'

'S urrainn dhomh _____.
Chan urrainn dhomh _____.
An urrainn dhut _____?
Nach urrainn dhut _____?

I can _____.
I can't _____.
Can you _____?
Can't you _____?

Past tense:

B' urrainn do Bhob _____.
Cha b' urrainn do Bhob _____.
Am b' urrainn do Bhob _____?

Bob could _____.
Bob couldn't _____.
Could Bob _____?

Nach b' urrainn do Bhob _____? Couldn't Bob _____?

Bu choir dha _____.
 Cha bu choir dha _____.
 Am bu choir dhi _____?
 Nach bu choir dhi _____?

He should _____.
 He shouldn't _____.
 Should she _____?
 Shouldn't she _____?

| Do/Don - To | |
|-------------|---------|
| dhomh | to me |
| dhut | to you |
| dha | to him |
| dhi | to her |
| dhuinn | to us |
| dhuibh | to you |
| dhaibh | to them |

Notice that this next construction looks similar to the **prefer** constructions above, but the preposition has changed:

'S fheàrr dhuinn _____.
 Chan fheàrr dhuinn _____.
 An fheàrr dhuibh _____?
 Nach fheàrr dhuibh _____?

We had better _____.
 We had better not _____.
 Had you better _____?
 Hadn't you better _____?

Examples

'S urrainn dhomh dannsadh.
 An urrainn dhut cèic ithe?

I can dance.
 Do you like eating cake?
 (The cake comes before eating!)

An urrainn dhut ruith?
 Chan urrainn. Tha mo chas briste.
 Obh obh! An urrainn dhut itealaich?
 Chan urrainn.
 Carson nach urrainn dhut itealaich?
 Chan eil sgiath agam.
 Nach urrainn dhut leum?
 'S urrainn gu dearbh.

Can you run?
 No. My leg is broken.
 Oh dear? Can you fly?
 No.
 Why can't you fly?
 I don't have wings.
 Can't you jump (hop)?
 Yes, indeed.

Am b' urrainn dhut snàmh?
 Could you swim?

Cha b' urrainn don nighean cadal.
 Carson nach b' urrainn don nighean cadal?

The girl couldn't sleep.
 Why couldn't the girl sleep.

Cha b' urrainn don nighean cadal airson gun robh caora a-muigh.
 The girl couldn't sleep because a sheep was outside.

Am bu choir don chaora a bhith a-staigh san taigh?
 Should the sheep be inside the house?

Cha bu choir idir!
 Nach bu choir don chaora a bhith a-muigh?

Not at all!
 Shouldn't the sheep be outside?

Bu choir, ach cha bu choir don chaora a bhith a' coimhead tron uinneig.
 Yes, but the sheep should not be looking through the window.

Càit' am bu choir don chaora a bhith?
 Bu choir don chaora a bhith air a' monadh!

Where should the sheep be?
 The sheep should be on the moor!

'S fheàrr don chaora fhàlbh dhan mhonadh a-maireach.
 The sheep had better go to the moor tomorrow.

Nach fheàrr don nighean cadal a-nochd?
'S fheàrr gu dearbh!

Hadn't the girl better sleep tonight?
Yes indeed!

C. Useful IS phrases

Mas e ur toil e
Mas e do thoil e

Please (polite/plural)
Please (informal, singular)

'S e ur beatha
'S e do bheatha

You're welcome (polite/plural)
You're welcome (informal, singular)

Is beag orm...

I hate...

Is bochd sin

that's a pity

b' àill leibh
b' àill leat

Pardon? (polite/plural)
Pardon? (informal, singular)

Part three of this handout: Verb - Is (Emphasis).