

Cuir Ceist Orm

Comhrá

Milsc

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Asking questions and answering them are two of the fundamental structures to be mastered in a new language. There are two types of questions that one can ask, direct questions which contain a word recognizable as a question word, such as 'Who' 'Where' 'When' 'Why' and the like, and questions which are the transformation of a statement into the interrogative form.

To convert a statement into a question, the particles **an** or **nach** are used with verbs in the present or future tenses. **An** introduces a simple question while **nach** introduces a negative question. Both particles cause eclipsis of the initial consonant of the following verb.

To **answer** such questions, merely repeat the verb used in the question in the logical form. Study the examples which follow:

Itheann siad dinnéar mór.

They eat a big dinner.

An itheann siad dinnéar mór?-- Itheann.

Do they eat a big dinner?-- Yes.

Nach itheann siad dinnéar mór?-- Itheann.

Don't they eat a big dinner? -- Yes.

Tuigeann sé mo cheist.

He understands my question

An dtuigeann sé mo cheist? -- Tuigeann.

Does he understand my question? -- Yes.

Nach dtuigeann sé mo cheist? -- Tuigeann.

Doesn't he understand my question? -- Yes.

Ceapann tú an scéal sin.

You believe the tale.

An gceapann tú an scéal sin? -- Ceapaim.

Do you believe that tale? -- Yes.

Nach gceapann tú an scéal sin? -- Ceapaim.

Don't you believe that tale? -- Yes.

Buaileann an fón go minic.

The phone rings often.

An mbuaileann an fón go minic? -- Buaileann.

Does the phone ring often? -- Yes.

Nach mbuaileann an fón go minic? -- Buaileann.

Doesn't the phone ring often? -- Yes.

Déanann Seán a obair bhaile.

Sean does his homework.

An ndéanann Seán a obair bhaile? -- Déanann.

Does Sean do his homework? -- Yes.

Nach ndéanann Seán a obair bhaile? -- Déanann.

Doesn't Sean do his homework? -- Yes.

Faigheann siad an bus ar a naoi a chloig.

They catch the nine o'clock bus.

An bhfaigheann siad an bus ar a naoi a chloig?--Cinnté.¹

Do they catch the nine o'clock bus? -- Yes.

¹ To answer a question, you can also use words like **Cinnté! Ceart go leor! Go Deimhin! D'fheidir. Gan amhras!** This explains why people say that you can't get a 'straight' answer -- yes or no out of an Irishman!

Nach bhfaigheann siad an bus ar a naoi a chloig?-Cinnté.
Don't they catch the nine o'clock bus?

Gluaiseann an traicin go tapa.
The train moves fast.

An ngluaiseann an traicin go tapa? - Go deimhin.
Does the train move fast? -- Indeed, it does.

Nach ngluaiseann an traicin go tapa?-Go deimhin.
Doesn't the train move fast? -- Indeed it does.

Beidh sé ar ais gan mhoill.
He'll be back shortly [without delay].

An mbeidh sé ar ais gan mhoill? -- Beidh.
Will he be back shortly? - Yes.

Nach mbeidh sé ar ais gan mhoill? -- Beidh.
Won't he be back shortly? -- Yes.

Feicim de ghnáth é.
I see him regularly. [as a rule]

An bhfeiceann tú de ghnáth é? -- Feicim.
Do you see him regularly? -- Yes.

Nach bhfeiceann tú de ghnáth é? -- Feicim.
Don't you see him regularly?

Cleachtadh

Change the following sentences to make questions. First, use AN, then use NACH. Answer the questions.

1. Tagann an fear sin go dtí an teach gach uile oíche.
2. Faighim an bus ar a seacht a chloig ar maidin.
3. Tuigim an scéal go maith.
4. Ithim mo chuid lóin ag meán lae.
5. Eistean na buachaillí le ceol.
6. Tosaíonn an choirim cheoil ar a hocht a chloig.
7. Buailimid le Liam oíche amárach.
8. Ceapaim go bhfuil sé sin ceart go leor.
9. Tugaimid cabhair dóibh.
10. Itheann siad go minic sa bhialann sin.
11. Olann sé uisce beatha de ghnáth.
12. Siúlann sé timpeall na páirce gach lá.
13. Ritheann na capaill i lár na páirce.
14. Fanfaidh mé sa bhaile inniu.
15. Beidh gloine oráiste agam.
16. Fágfhaidh an bád ar a leathuair tar éis a cúig.
17. Féachann mo Dhaidí ar chlár spóirt go minic.
18. Scriobhann na páistí litreacha chuig Mamó.
19. Tosaíonn na ranganna in am i gcónaí.
20. Críochnaím an obair ar a ceathar iarnóin.
21. Imím abhaile go luath de ghnáth.
22. Éireoidh mé go luath amárach.
23. In Éireann, athraíonn an aimsir go tapa.
24. Cuireann Séamas litir chuig Síle.

25. Déanann Mícheál obair sa ghairdín.
26. Tagann na páistí abhaile tar éis na scoile.
27. Téann Máire go dtí an pub lena cairde.
28. Faigheann sé a lán leabhair on leabhránn.
29. Deir Máire go bhfuil sí ar saoire anois.
30. Cloisim go bhfuil Liam tar éis post a fháil.
31. Caitheim na laethanta saoire cois farraige.
32. Téim go hAifreann ar an Domhnach.
33. Ceannaíonn Mícheál an nuachtán gach lá.
34. Léann sé é freisin.
35. Cosnaíonn sé deich ndollar.
36. Fanann siad linn ag stáisiún na traenach.
37. Canann Máire go maith.
38. Bailíonn Nóra stampaí.
39. Itheann muintir na hIodáile pasta.
40. Imíonn na daltaí abhaile tar éis an chluiche.
41. Freagraíonn na daltaí i gcónaí.
42. Labhraíonn na daoine Gaeilge le chéile.
43. Bíonn sé fuar i gCeanada sa gheimhreadh.
44. Dioltar toitíní sna siopaí.
45. Cuirtear a lán ceisteanna.
46. Ceapfar príomhoide é.
47. Tógfar teach nua dóibh.
48. Caithfidh mé dha bhliain i dToronto.
49. Glaoifidh sí ar a h-athair.
50. Athróidh mé m'uimhir fhóin.

The verb **bí** has two forms, the copula **is** and the verb **tá**. For the copula, the interrogative forms are **an** and **nach**. The verb is included in the interrogative particles themselves. The verb **tá** has the forms **an bhfuil** and **nach bhfuil**. The copula has no distinct future form. For **tá**, the forms are **an/nach mbeidh** for the future and **an/nach mbíonn** for the habitual present form.

To answer questions with **tá**, the answer uses the appropriate form of **tá**. For questions with **is**, the answer uses the form required by the question; **'sí, 'sé, 'siad** or **'sea**.

Make these sentences into questions using first the **an** forms then the **nach** forms. Answer the questions.

1. Is dochtúir é Seán.
2. Máire is ainm di.
3. Is as Boston Liam.
4. Tá sé fuar inniu.
5. Tá an Ghaeilge deacair.
6. Tá na ranganna suimiúil.
7. Tá na múinteoirí go deas.
6. Seán Ó'Conchuir is ainm dó.
7. Tá an ceart agat.
8. Tá Seán ina chónaí in árasán i lár na cathrach.
9. Tá peann luaidhe ansin.
10. Is rúnaí mise.
11. Is í Máire an rúnaí.
12. Is deas an áit í seo.
13. Tá na páistí tinn.
14. Tá linneas cinn orm.
15. Tá carr nua ag m'uncail.

16. Is carr nua é.
 17. Tá an obair déanta agam.
 18. Beidh pionta beorach agam.
 19. Bionn m'athair ag obair óna 9 go dtí a 5 gach lá.
 20. Beimid go léir ann roimh lón.

To ask questions when the verb is in the past tense, the interrogative particles are **ar** and **nár**. Both of these cause **lenition** of the following consonant where this is possible. The questions are answered as in the present and future, either repeating the verb in the question in the appropriate form, or with some adverb either assenting or negating the verb in the question.

Study these examples;

Phós Mícheál anuraidh.

Michael got married last year.

Ar phós Mícheál anuraidh? -- Phós.

Did Michael get married last year? -- Yes.

Nár phós Mícheál anuraidh? -- Phós.

Didn't Michael get married last year? -- Yes.

Scríobh mé litir chuig Mamó inné.

I wrote Grandma a letter yesterday.

Ar scríobh tú litir chuig Mamó inné? -- Scríobh.

Did you write Grandma a letter yesterday? -- Yes.

Nár scríobh tú litir chuig Mamó inné? -- Scríobh.

Didn't you write Grandma a letter yesterday? -- Yes.

D'ól mé gloine beorach tar éis lóin.

I drank a glass of beer after lunch.

Ar ól tú gloine beorach tar éis lóin? -- D'ól.

Did you drink a glass of beer after lunch? -- Yes.

Nár ól tú gloine beorach tar éis lóin? -- D'ól.

Didn't you drink a glass of beer after lunch? -- Yes.

Chuir mé an litir sa phost.

I mailed a letter.

Ar chuir tú an litir sa phost? -- Chuir.

Did you mail the letter? -- Yes.

Nár chuir tú an litir sa phost? -- Chuir.

Didn't you mail the letter? -- Yes

Bhuail sé le Mícheál sa bhialann.

I met Michael in the restaurant.

Ar bhuail sé le Mícheál sa bhialann? -- Bhuail.

Did he meet Michael in the restaurant? -- Yes.

Nár bhuail sé le Mícheál sa bhialann? -- Bhuail.

Didn't he meet Michael in the restaurant? -- Yes.

Cleachtadh

Convert these sentences into questions and answer them. Use both **ar** and **nár**.

1. Chuir mé litir abhaile inniu.
2. D'ól muid deoch sa teach tabhairne tar éis na hoibre.
3. Chaith mé seachtain leo anuraidh.
4. D'ith na páistí ceapairí cáise.
5. Cheap mé é sin freisin.
6. Thug sibh an labhair dom Dé Máirt.
7. Bhuail mé le Síle ar an trsráid.
8. D'fhan sí sa bhaile tráthnóna inne.
9. D'fhág Mam an nóta ar doras an chuisneora.
10. D'fhéach said ar chlár teilifíse.
11. Lean mé iad.
12. D'ullmhaigh sé an suipéar go tapa.
13. D'imigh Seán ag obair ar a ceathar a chloig.
14. Scriobh mé cúpla litir chuig mo mháthair.
15. Chuaigh sí ar ais tar éis an lóin.
16. Chonaic mé aréir é sin.
17. D'fhan sí linn cúpla seachtain.
18. Thosaigh an rás ar a naoi.
19. Cheannaigh mé carr nua anuraidh.
20. Tháinig sé abhaile tar éis na hoibre.
21. Chuir mé litir sa phost.
22. Shiúil me ar an trá.
23. D'fhreastal mé ar cúrsaí san ollscoil.
24. Bhíomar síos i nDulainn.
25. Thugamar na leannaí chun na trá i lár an tsamhraidh.
26. Chaith mé trí bliana i Madrid.

27. Shuigh sé in aice leis an bhfuinneog.
27. Bhuailéamar leis na tuishmitheoirí tar éis na cóisire.
28. D'imir na buachailí sa chlos scoile.
29. Cheannaíomar éadaí scoile dosna páistí.
30. Seas sé suas go tobann.
31. Cheannaigh mé dhá leabhar sa siopa leabhar.
32. Dhíol sé trí charr inné.
33. Mhúin an múinteoir na briathra neamhrialta.
34. Chríochnaigh an rang ar a trí.
35. D'éirigh sé as an tobac.
36. D'ordaigh sé cupán caife agus píosa ciste.
37. Chuala mé é sin.
38. Scuab siad an t-urlár i rith na h-oíche.
39. Ghearr Maire a lámh.
40. Chréid na daoine go léir an bhreag.
41. D'fhill a chairde go Nua Eabhrac.
42. Líon an freastalaí an gloine d'uisce fuar.
45. Dhoirt sé an t-uisce amach ar an talamh.
46. Shábhail na fir dóiteáin an leanbh.
47. Thriomaigh na feirmeoirí an fear.
48. Thuig mé an cheist.
49. D'fhreagar Mícheal é.
50. Bhailigh sé stampaí Éireannacha.

Some verbs have a special form used after the interrogative particle called a **dependent** form [because the form is used only in specific circumstances, such as here]. With some verbs, the dependent verb is found only in the past tense, with others in the future or present.

Study these examples:

tá mé
níl mé
an bhfuil mé
nach bhfuil *mé*

bhí mé
ní raibh mé
an raibh mé
Nach raibh

féim
ní théim
an dtéim
nach dtéim

chuaigh mé
níor chuaigh mé
ní dheachaigh mé
ar chuaigh tú
an ndeachaigh tú
nár chuaigh tú
nach ndeachaigh tú

deirim
ní dheirim
an ndeirim
nach ndeirim

dúirt mé
ní dúirt mé
an ndúirt mé
nach ndúirt mé

feicim
ní fheicim
an bhfeicim
nach bhfeicim

chonaic mé
ní fhaca mé
an bhfaca mé
nach bhfaca mé

faighim
ní fhaighim
an bhfaighin
nach bhfaighim

gheobhaidh mé
ní bhfaighidh mé
an bhfaighidh mé
nach bhfaighidh mé

déanann sé
ní dhéanann sé
an ndéanann sé
nach ndéanann sé

fuair mé
ní bhfuair mé
an bhfuair mé
nach bhfuair mé

gheobhainn
ní bhfaighinn
an bhfaighinn
nach bhfaighinn

rinne sé
dhein sé
ní dhearna sé
níor dhein sé
an ndearna sé
ar dhein sé
nach ndearna sé
nar dhein sé

As you see from these, the **dependent** form of the verb can differ significantly from the root form. The verb **faigh** has irregular forms both in the past tense, future and conditional. Some verbs like **déan** and **teigh** have both regular forms and alternative irregular dependent forms. The irregular verbs use **an** and **nach** to form questions in the past tense followed by **úrú** (eclipsis) rather than the expected **seimhiú** (lenition).

To answer, repeat the appropriate form the verb used in the question form.

Cleachtadh

Change the following sentences to the interrogative form. Repeat the exercise in the past tense, and the future tense to practice the irregular forms. Make any necessary substitutions in the adverbs of time so that the sentence makes sense.

Answer the questions.

1. Tá Nóra tinn inniu.
2. Tá Liam ina chónaí i mBoston le cúig bliana anuas.
3. Téim a chodladh roimh meán oíche.
4. Deir mo Dhaideo scéalta grinn.
5. Déanann Roibeard a dhícheall i gcónaí.
6. Faigheann Síle an nuachtán gach lá.
7. Feiceann na cailíní na capaill ag rith timpeall na páirce.
8. Ní théann na daltaí go dtí an iarsmalann go minic.
9. Ní fhaighim locht ar bith air.
10. Déan do rogha rud.
11. Téann an cóta leat.
12. Faigheann a lán saighdiúirí bás i gcath.
13. Téann mÓ Mhamaí i bhfeabhas.
14. Feictear go bhfuil sé ar tí éirigh as.
15. Faigheann Joyce aitheantas tar éis an t-urscéal **A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man** a foilsiú.

Interrogative adverbs and pronouns

Direct questions may be introduced by question words which always occur at the beginning of a sentence and the verb which normally occupies the first position in the sentence comes second..

When the interrogative pronoun is object of a preposition e.g. for whom, in what etc. the interrogative pronoun in Irish is followed by the prepositional pronoun. Questions using these structures often cause problems for students and are marked with an * in the examples. Study these forms carefully.

Here are some examples:

Cé hé/ hí/ hiad/ tusa?	Who is (are) he/ her/ them/ you?
Cérbh é sin?	Who is that?
Cérb iad?	Who are they?
Cérb díobh é?	Who are his people?
Cérbh iad na cuairteoirí?	Who are the visitors?
Cé hiad na cuairteoirí?	Who are the visitors?
Cé aige* a bhfuil sé?	Who has it?
Cé air* a raibh tú ag caint?	Who were you talking about?
Cé ann* a gcreidfimid?	Who will we believe in?
Cé dó* ar thug tú an leabhar?	Who did you give the book to?
Cé dó* seo?	Who is this for?
Cé faoi* a bhfuil siad ag magadh?	Who are they making fun of?
Cé leis* an nuachtán?	Who does the paper belong to?
Cé uaidh* a fhuair tú é?	Who did you get it from?
Cé leis* ar thóg tú é?	What did you lift it with?

Cé ann* ar chaill sé é?	What did he hide it in?
Cén fear é?	What man is he?
Cén lá den tseachtain é?	What day of the week is it?
Cén aois iad?	What age are they?
Cén áit?	At/in what place?
Cén fáth?	Why? For what reason?
Cén chaoi a bhfuil tú?	How are you?
Cé againne* is airde?	Which of us is tallest?
Cé acu* a dúirt é sin?	Which of them said that?
Cé acu* bean is sine?	Which of the women is oldest?
Cé acu* guna no sciorta ata ann?	Which is it, a dress or a skirt?
Cén bhean atá i gceist agat?	Which woman are you talking about?
Cé acu* duine a bhfuil aithne aici air? "	Which person does she know?
Cé mar a thaitin sé leat?	How do you like it?
Cé ina choinne* a raibh an fhoireann ag imirt?	Who was the team playing against?
Cé air* a bhfuil an locht?	Who's to blame?
Cé chuige* a bhfuil tú ag scríobh?	Who are you writing to?
Cé leis* a bhfuil sé pósta?	Who's he married to?
Cá fhad an scannán?	How long is the movie?
Cá roimhe* a bhfuil eagla ort?	What are you afraid of?
Cá hard é?	How high is it?
Cá miste duit?	What is it to you?
Cá fhad anseo tú?	How long are you here?
Cá mhinice a thágann	How often does the bus come?

an bus?	
Cé chomh minic is a thagann an bus?	How often does the bus come?
Cá ndeachaigh siad?	Where did they go?
Cár ² chuir tú an carr?	Where did you put the car?
Cár thairbhe duit é?	What good was it to you?
Cár bh as é?	Where was he from?
Cár bh ³ ard é?	How tall was he?
Cá (cé) mhéad atá air?	How much does it cost?
Cá mhéad a bhí air?	How much was it?
Cad de* a dhein sé é?	What did he make it of?
Cad chuige é sin?	What's that for?
Cad faoi* ar chaill sé é?	What did he hide it under?
Cad leis*a bhí siad ag troid?	What were they fighting with?
Cad (Céard) atá uait?	What do you want?
Cad is ainm duit?	What's your name?
Cén t-ainm atá ort?	What's your name?
Cad nach ndearna sé?	What did he not do?
Cén t-am é?	What time is it?
Cá huair? Cén uair?	When? What time?
Cathain a chuala tú é sin?	When did you hear that?
Cén t-am an lón?	What time is lunch?
Conas atá tú?	How are you?

2 Note the form **cár** with past tense verbs. It is a combination of **cá** where + **ar** = the interrogative particle for the past tense.

3 as in **Cé tusa?** This is a combination of **cá** with the copula. There are many such combined forms, but they are slowly being replaced by the simple interrogative forms with the copula itself being left unexpressed.

Conas a deirfa é sin as Gaeilge?	How would you say that in Irish?
Conas sin?	How is that?
Cá mhéad atá agat orm?	How much do I owe you?
Cá fhad a bheidh tú ag fanacht?	How long will you be staying?
Cá mhéad saoire atá agat?	How long are your holidays?

Sometimes you will be tempted to try to translate English structures directly but this may produce unidiomatic or incomprehensible structures in Irish. In these cases, the idea must be expressed in another form, with a tag, for example.

**After how many weeks did he come home?
He came home after a few weeks, didn't he?
D'fhill sé abhaile tar éis cúpla seachtain, nach ea?**

Cleachtadh

Translate the following questions into Irish:

1. What is that girl's name?
2. Who did you go to the movies with?
3. At what time are we going to meet Liam and his wife?
4. What time does the movie start at?
5. Under what pen-name did he write?
6. How old was he when he composed that piece of music?
7. How often do you go to the museum?
8. How many times do I have to repeat the question?
9. Who is this magazine for?
10. Why aren't you ready yet?
11. How much did you spend on that dress?
12. How much does a theatre ticket cost?
13. Who are you writing to?
14. Who does this car belong to?
15. Who will she be staying with?
16. How important is this information to us?
17. Where are we meeting the others after work?
18. Where did you get the Irish newspaper?
19. Which of you is going to the post office?
20. Which book do you prefer?
21. How many of the books cost less than \$15.?
22. How high is Mount Everest?
23. What is the highest mountain in Ireland?
24. What's the capital city of Russia?
25. What's the population of New York City?
26. What are they complaining about?
27. Who are they complaining to?

28. What were they talking about?
29. Who were they talking about?
30. Whose coat is this?
31. Who are you working for?
32. What are you working for?
33. How long have you been working here?
34. Where do you live?
35. What time is supper at?
36. How often does the boat leave for Dublin?
38. How interesting is the film?
39. How many kids does he have?
40. What's his oldest daughter's name?
41. What kind of car do you prefer?
42. Which do you prefer, beer or wine?
43. Which dress do you prefer, the black one or the blue one?
44. Which students work hardest?
45. When did you arrive?
46. When did the train leave?
47. How many times have you seen **Gone With the Wind**?
48. What were you watching on TV?
49. What time is your favourite TV show at?
50. What else is new?

Questions in Indirect Speech

In reported (indirect) speech, **cloninsint**, questions are merely incorporated into the sentence without alteration except to ensure harmony in the sequence of tenses..

Cén t-am é? -- An bhfuil a fhios agat **cén t-am é?**

What time is it? -- Do you know what time it is?

Cé hí an bhean sin? -- Fuair mé amach **cérbh í an bhean sin.**

Who's that woman? -- I found out who that woman was.

Conas a deirfá é sin as Gaeilge? -- Abair liom **conas a deirfá é sin as Gaeilge.**

How would you say that in Irish? -- Tell me how you would say that in Irish.

Cleachtadh

Preface these questions with either **ceapaim/ ní a fhios agam / faigh amach / abair linn.**

1. **Cén t-am an lón?**
2. **Cén fear ar cheannaigh an teach sin?**
3. **Cá mhéad atá ar an gcóta?**
4. **Cad as Seán?**
5. **Cé acu siopa is fearr.?**
6. **Cathain a chuala tú é sin?**
7. **Cé dó an t-airgead?**
8. **Cén fáth nach bhfuil an tuairisc réidh?**
9. **Cén aois do mhac?**
10. **Cén áit í seo?**

