

# **FIRST IRISH GRAMMAR**

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First Irish grammar by The Christian Brothers

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**THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS**

**FIRST  
IRISH GRAMMAR**



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IRISH GRAMMAR,

BY  
THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS



DUBLIN  
M. H. GILL & SON, O'CONNELL STREET

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This Compendium of *Spáiméar na Seóidige* is intended to meet the wants of young students who require, in a concise form, the salient points of Irish Accidence and Syntax.

The Sections throughout the Compendium are numbered as in the larger Grammar, in order to afford facility of reference to those who may desire to obtain more detailed information on any point.

## PART I.

### ACCIDENCE.

1. The Irish alphabet contains eighteen letters; the vowels are  $\Delta$ , e, i, o, u; the consonants, b, c, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, r, s, t.

2.  $\Delta$ , o, u are called **broad** vowels; e and i are called **slender** vowels.

The vowels may be either **long** or **short**. The long vowels are marked by means of a  $\rho$ ine $\Delta$ o ( $\rho$ ) placed over the vowel; e.g., m $\rho$ ir, b $\rho$ i, m $\rho$ e.

7. An Irish consonant is broad whenever it is beside a broad vowel, in the same word; it is slender when beside a slender vowel.

### Aspiration.

15. When we say that an Irish consonant is *aspirated*, we mean that the breath is not completely stopped in the formation of the consonant, and hence the consonantal sound is *continuous*.

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16. Aspiration is marked in writing and in print by placing a dot over the consonant aspirated, e.g., b, c, d.

17. In writing, **nine** of the consonants, viz.,  $\upsilon$ ,  $\varsigma$ ,  $\phi$ ,  $\xi$ ,  $\mu$ ,  $\rho$ ,  $\tau$ , can be aspirated.

### Rules for Aspiration of Initial Consonant.

21. (a) The **possessive adjectives**,  $\mu\omicron$ , *my*;  $\upsilon\omicron$ , *thy*; and  $\Delta$ , *his*, cause aspiration— $\mu\omicron \upsilon\omicron$ , *my cow*.

(b) The **article aspirates** nouns (except those beginning with  $\upsilon$ ,  $\tau$ ,  $\rho$ ), in the nom. and acc. fem. sing., and in the gen. masc. sing.— $\Delta\eta \upsilon\omicron\alpha\eta$ , *the woman*;  $\mu\Delta\varsigma \Delta\eta \rho\eta$ , *(the) son of the man*.

(c) In **compound words** the initial consonant of the second word is aspirated,  $\rho\epsilon\alpha\eta\text{-}\mu\Delta\tau\Delta\eta\eta$ , *a grandmother*.

The letters  $\upsilon$  and  $\tau$  are never aspirated after a word that ends in one of the letters  $\upsilon$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\tau$ ,  $\iota$ ,  $\rho$ .

(d) The **interjection**  $\Delta$ , the sign of the voc. case, causes aspiration in nouns of both genders and both numbers— $\Delta \xi\epsilon\alpha\mu\alpha\eta$ , *(O) James*;  $\Delta \upsilon\omicron\upsilon\eta$ , *Sir*.

(e) An **adjective is aspirated** when it agrees with a fem. noun in the nom. and acc. sing., or with a masc. noun in the gen. sing., and in the dat. and the voc. sing. of both genders; also in the nom. and acc. pl.



when the noun ends in a *slender* consonant—*bó bán*, a white cow; *mac an fíú móir*, (the) son of the big man; *capall móra*, big horses.

(g) A **verb is aspirated**—(1) in the imperfect, the simple past, and the conditional (ordinary forms); (2) after *ní*, *not*; *má*, *if*; *mar*, *as*; *ru* (or *ra*) *before*, and all the compounds of *ro* (§ 278); (3) after the relative particle *a*, e.g., *buail ré*, *he struck*; *ní béiré ré*, *he will not be*.

(h) The word following *ba* and *baod* (the past tense and conditional of *ar*) is usually aspirated—*ba maic liom*, *I liked*.

(i) The **simple prepositions** (except *as*, *ar*, *san*, *so*, *i*, and *le*) cause aspiration—*vo páirias*, *ó Séagán*.

(j) The **Numeral adjectives**, *don*, *one*; *da*, *two*; *céad*, *first*; *tréar*, *third*, cause aspiration: *da capall*, *two horses*; *an céad buacail*, *the first boy*.

### Eclipsis.

22. Eclipsis is the suppression of the sound of the initial consonant of a word by prefixing another consonant whose sound is substituted.

23. Only **seven** consonants can be eclipsed, viz. : *b*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *p*, *t*. Each consonant has its own eclipsing letter.

25.	b	is eclipsed by m,	as	Δ mbó,	their cow.
	o	„	„	Σ,	„ Δη ζαπαλλ, our horse.
	o	„	„	η,	„ Δη νυάν, our poem.
	ρ	„	„	β,	„ ι βφυιλ, in blood.
	Σ	„	„	ης,*	„ Δ ηςέ, their goose.
	ρ	„	„	β,	„ Δ βραπίεαρ, their paper.
	τ	„	„	ο,	„ Δ οταρηβ, their bull.

### Rules for Eclipsis.

26. (a) The **possessive adjectives plural**—*ἀη, our; ουη, your; Δ, their*, cause eclipsis: *Δ mbάο, their boat.*

(b) The **article eclipses** in the gen. pl. (both genders)—*ιάμα να βρεαρ, (the) hands of the men.*

(c) The **simple prepositions followed by the article eclipse** the initial of singular nouns—*αη αν ζαπαλλ, on the horse; ΔΣ αν βρεαρ, at the man.*

οο and οε followed by the article *may aspirate*: *οο'η φεαρ, or οο'η βρεαρ, to the man.*

(d) The **Numeral adjectives** *ρεατ, οετ, ναοι, and οειε (7, 8, 9, 10), and their compounds 27, 28, &c., cause eclipsis*—*ρεατ mβα, seven cows.*

(e) The **initial of a verb is eclipsed** after *αν, εά, εα (not) σο, οά, μυηα (mυηα), ναε, and the relative Δ preceded by a*

\* Only the η is written. See large Grammar on this point.

preposition—*καὶ ὅπου εἶ, where is he? καὶ ὅπου εἶ οὐκ ἐστὶν, is he not sick?*

### Insertion of η, τ, and η.

27. (a) When a word begins with a vowel, η is prefixed in all positions, in which a consonant would be eclipsed unless the preceding word ends in η—*ἀπὸς ἡ-ἀφῆς; ῥαεὶς ἡ-ἀφῆς; but, ἀπὸς ἀν ἡ-ῥαε.*

(b) Prepositions (except *οὐ* and *οὐκ*) ending in a vowel prefix η to the poss. adjs. *α* (= *his, her, their*), *ἀπὸς, ὅπου*: *λέ ἡ-α μητέρα, with his mother.*

28. (a) The article prefixes τ to masc. nouns beginning with a vowel in the nom. and acc. sing.—*ὁ τ-ἄφῆς; ἁ τ-ἀφῆς.*

(b) If a noun begins with ρ followed by a vowel or by ι, η, or ρ, the article prefixes τ in the nom. and acc. fem. and the gen. masc. sing.—*ὁ τ-ῤῥῆς, the eye; ἁ τ-ῤῥῆς, the nose; τὸς ἁ τ-ῤῥῆς, the priest's house.*

(c) τ is often prefixed to ρ after words ending in η: *ὁ τ-ῤῥῆς ἀφῆς.*

29. Particles which neither aspirate nor eclipse, and which end in a vowel, prefix η to words beginning with a vowel: e.g., *α, her, ὅ, so, λέ, ὅρα (ῥα), εἶ, τῤῥῆς,*