

## Tips

### How do I involve others? Can I nest alone?

- The most important thing about involving others in your nest is to keep it positive. Tell your housemates/family and frequent guests why you want to have an Irish nest and invite them to participate but do not obligate them. As soon as it becomes a chore for anyone or a source of conflict, it stops working well.
- If others don't understand Irish, you can address them in Irish in your nest and then follow it with a translation in English (or another language they speak). They might answer you in English and that's okay.
- You can nest alone! Talking to yourself will take some getting used to, but it's an excellent language-learning tactic.

### How should I progress?

- Start with a self-narration domain that you do every day. There are some pre-made kitchen domain cards available on Gaeilge an Chuain. Feel free to adapt or add your own!
- When comfortable, add in other self-narration domains. Go at your own pace: some people add a new domain every week, but you might need more or less time.
  - Consider keeping a language journal to track your domains and reflect on the process.
- When ready, add in dialogue domains.
- Next, add in sentence frame domains. These will help you start improvising.
- Once you have ~15 domains going, you're ready to declare a language nest! Do your best to use only Irish in your nest.

This explainer and kit is adapted from Ladino en Kaza, a Ladino language nest resource created and managed by Julia Peck. She offers templates free of charge for other language revivalists to adapt for any language. For more information on Ladino in Kaza please visit <https://www.ladinoenkaza.com/home>. Thank you Julia!

# Do nead teanga Gaeilge

## Your Irish language nest

### GETTING STARTED



### What is a home language nest?

A language nest is a dedicated room in your home where you try to use as much Irish as possible. It draws on the metaphor of a nest to denote a safe place for the language to thrive and for you to grow as a speaker as you incorporate the language into your daily activities, and make a habit of using it.

### Why make a home language nest in Irish?

Many users of Irish today – from new learners to fluent speakers – have a difficult time finding places to speak it, but having a language nest carves out that space in your home and in your life. We nest at home because that's where we often spend time with loved ones and family, raise children, engage in rituals and cultural practices, form our daily habits, and in general do lots of talking. Dedicating a particular room to Irish makes regular, committed use of the language more manageable: outside of that room you can speak other languages freely. Soon, you'll see how natural it will feel to use Irish in your nest.

### Who should use this kit?

This kit is designed for anyone – with any level of knowledge – interested in speaking more Irish. While you will likely learn things about Irish sentence structure from the materials, they aren't designed to teach grammar. The focus here is on using language in daily life. For those who want to reach high levels of Irish proficiency, language nesting can be an excellent accompaniment to language classes or other forms of formal study.

## How does it work?

### Step 1: Choose a room for your nest

There are pre-made domain cards available, but feel free to make your own based on the room you choose.

### Step 2: Identify your domains

We build up to a language nest by learning to carry out the daily activities we already do in that room (called "domains") one by one in Irish. For the room you've chosen, make a list of the activities you do regularly and pick out the domain cards relevant to you.

### Step 3: Post the domain cards

Use putty/sticky tack to hang up the cards in this kit somewhere relevant and visible (i.e. for washing your hands, put the card over the sink).

### Step 4: Narrate your activities in Irish!

One by one, focus on a domain in your list. Whenever you do that domain in your nest (i.e. whenever you wash your hands in your kitchen), use the domain card to help you carry it out in Irish. See "How should I progress?" for more details.

### Step 5: Create more cards

As you progress, add more cards or more complicated phrases on to your cards. Pull phrases from your textbooks, books in Irish, or reach out to your Irish teacher or other Irish speakers for help.

### Step 6: Build up your nest

Make your nest strong by including others: once you have a domain or new phrase down, teach someone else! See "How do I involve others?" for more details.

## About the Domain Cards

The domain cards come in three types:



- Self-narration: written in the first person. Talk out loud while you do the activity, following along with the domain card as long as you need.
- Dialogues: modeled conversations about a particular domain. You can get family/housemates to talk with you, or you can talk with an imaginary friend.
- Sentence frames: structures with blanks where you can insert the information that's relevant to your life, a bit like Mad Libs. Each sentence frame card comes with a filled-in example so you can see how it works.

## Color-coding

The text on the cards is color-coded so that words in Irish are the same color as their English equivalents below. For example, in the below sentence, *Está* is brown, which corresponds to English "it is", also in brown. The colors have nothing to do with parts of speech; it's all about matching the Irish with English translations.

Tá sé *réitithe* le *hól*.  
It is *ready* to *drink*.