



Aibidil na Gàidhlig le Craobhan



The tree is the longest lasting and most common symbol within Gaelic culture. Traditionally, each of the 18 letters in the Gaelic alphabet were named after different trees and plants.

Below are the traditional names, most of which are no longer used in everyday Gaelic for names of trees or letters but are an interesting insight into the origins of Gaelic.

The Gaelic Alphabet Through Trees



A

Ailm
(al-lim)
Elm



B

Beith
(bay)
Birch



C

Coll
(call)
Hazel



D

Dair
(dahr)
Oak



E

Eadha
(eh-yah)
Aspen



F

Feàrn
(feyarn)
Alder



G

Gort
(gorsht)
Ivy



H

Uath
(oo-ah)
Hawthorn



I

Iogh
(ee-ogh)
Yew



L

Luis
(looss)
Rowan



M

Muin
(moon)
Vine



N

Nuin
(noon)
Ash



O

Oir/Onn
(ohr/awn)
Gorse



P

Peith bhog
(pay voh-k)
Downy Birch



R

Ruis
(roosh)
Elder



S

Suil
(sool)
Willow



T

Teine
(chain-yuh)
Whin



U

Ur
(oor)
Heather