

Ezaugarri nagusiak

Ea **ba,** **Euskal** **mitologiaren**
Let's see then Basque mythology's

nolakoa den ulertzeko, **lehenik,** **mitoa** **eta**
what kind is in order to understand first myth and
in order to understand what (it) is like

mitologia zer den argitzea komeni zaigu.
mythology what is to clarify convenient is to us
is advisable for us

Mitoek gizakiak dituen galdera sakonenei eta
Myths mankind has-that (to the) question(s) most profound and

bere inguruan sortzen zaizkion gertakari
(in) his surroundings emerge to him-that (to) happening(s)
around him

ulertezinei erantzuna ematen diete.
incomprehensible answer give to them

Bizitzaren misterioak eragiten duen jakin-min eta
Life's mystery bring about does-that curiosity and
the mystery of life

egon-ezinari erantzuten die eta bere inguruko
anxiety-to answer to them and its around
(it) answers around him

fenomeno naturalei azalpena ematen die.
phenomenon natural-to explanation give to them
to the natural phenomena (it) gives

Azalpen eta erantzun guztiak era fantastikoan
explanation(s) and answer(s) all (in a) manner fantastical
in a fantastical manner

ematen dira. Gizakiaz gaindiko ahalmenak dituen jainko
give are human super abilities have-that god(s)
take place superhuman

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tells us that the indirect object is *you*, and *-t* tells us the subject is *I*.

3. *giltzak eman dizkidate*

keys / given / them to me they have (they gave/have given me the keys)

...*dizki*- tells us we have a plural object (the keys), we have *-da-* instead of *-t-* because it's not the end of the word and it tells us that *I* is the indirect object, and lastly *-te* tells us that the subject is 3rd person plural *they*.

Negative Sentences

Negative sentences are formed with the word *ez* (no). When we negate a sentence, the order changes a bit, generally sending the participle to the end of the phrase:

Giltzak eman dizkidate → *Ez dizkidate giltzak eman*
Etxea ikusi duzu → *Ez duzu etxea ikusi*

If you are new to studying Basque, we hope these tips help you get a better grasp on Basque word order better and make the cases more accessible. This is by no means a comprehensive grammar of the language, but we hope it's enough to get you started! If you have any questions about the text or the translation, please get in touch, we'd be happy to answer your questions. We hope you enjoy learning Basque and learning about the incredible world of Basque mythology!

The most common forms you will see are the du/ditu forms. Let's analyze a few examples:

1. *etxea ikusi duzu*
the house / seen / it you have (I saw/have seen the house)
...*du-* tells us that the object is 3rd person singular (referring to the house) and *-zu* that the subject is *you*.
2. *entzun zaitut*
heard / you I have (I heard/have heard you)
...*zaitu-* tells us that the object is 2nd person singular (*you*) and *-t* that the subject is *I*.
3. *sagarrik erosi dituzte*
apples / bought / them they have (I bought/have bought apples)
...*ditu-* tells us that the object is 3rd person plural (referring to the apples) and *-zte* tells us that the subject is also 3rd person plural *they*.

nor-nori-nork

These verbs contain quite a bit of information, they have a subject, an indirect object, and a direct object. These are often verbs of giving, showing, and telling, like *esan* (to say), *eman* (to give), and *erakutsi* (to show). Let's look at the present tense forms:

	t/da	t
	k/n	k/n
	o	-
di(zki)	gu	gu
	zu	zu
	zue	zue
	e	te

The *t/da* just means that if there's anything after it, the *t* changes into *da*. So we say *esan dit* (he/she told me) but *esan didazu* (you told me). Here are a couple examples:

1. *mutilek esango dit*
the boy / will tell / it to me (the boy will tell me)
...*di-* tells us that the object is 3rd person singular, *-t-* tells us that *I* am the indirect object, and the empty ending tells us that the subject is 3rd person singular, the boy.
2. *argazkiak erakutsi dizkizut*
pictures / shown / them to you I have (I showed/have shown you the pictures)
...*dizki-* tells us that the object is plural (pictures), *-zu-*

natzai	t
hatzai	k/n
zai	o
gatzai	gu
zatzai	zu
zatzai+te	zue
zai	e

The most common forms you will see are the *zai-* and *zai*-forms. These are the third person singular and plural forms. The form on the left tells us the subject (the *nor*) and the form on the right tells us the indirect object (the *nori*). An example might help clear this up:

gustatzen zatzait

be pleasing / you are to me (I like you)

...*gustatu* is the verb *to be pleasing, to like*. We can see that the subject is *you* because of the *zatzai-* (you) form. We can tell who the indirect object is from the *-t* (to me) form. It is confusing at first, but once you get used to it, it's interesting just how much information can be put into one little verb!

Transitive Verbs

nor-nork

These are your standard transitive verbs. They have a subject and an object, verbs like *ikusi* (to see), *erosi* (to buy), and *jakin* (to know). The auxiliary verb tells us who the subject is, ie. who's performing the action, and who/what the object is, ie. who's receiving the action. Here's the *nork* auxiliary verb in the present tense (the left side is the object/*nor* and the right side is the subject/*nork*):

nau	t
hau	k/n
du	o
gaitu	gu
zaitu	zu
zaituzte	zue
ditu	(z)te

[one](#) from Wikipedia) and either printing it out or keeping it handy on your phone/computer. Luckily, most verbs in Basque aren't usually conjugated, they use an auxiliary verb along with the participle.

The participle has three main forms, the perfect stem (*egin, hartu, ikusi*), which is the dictionary form, the future stem (*egingo, hartuko, ikusiko*), and the imperfect stem (*egiten, hartzen, ikusten*). These combine with the auxiliary verb to give us a flexible range of tenses.

The auxiliary verb has a few different types, depending on what kind of verb it is. Verbs are generally split into transitive verbs, whose subject takes the ergative/nork case, and intransitive verbs, whose subject takes the absolutive/nor case. Intransitive verbs take the auxiliary verb *izan* and transitive verbs take the auxiliary *ukan*. Let's look at the intransitive verbs first.

Intransitive Verbs

nor

These are your standard intransitive verbs. They have a subject but no object, such as *joan* (to go), *etorri* (to come), and *jaiki* (to get up). The auxiliary verb only tells us the subject, ie. who's performing the action. The *nor* auxiliary verb looks like this in the present tense:

naiz
haiz
da
gara
zara
zarete
dira

nor-nori

These verbs have a subject and an indirect object, but no direct object. We don't have many of these kinds of verbs in English, but they are more common in Basque. If you know some Spanish, many of these verbs should feel familiar to you. First, let's look at the present tense forms:

non-transitive verbs, similar to Spanish:

me gusta → *gustatzen zait*

"she/he/it is pleasing to me" (I like it/him/her)

se me ha muerto el gato → *katua hil zait*

"to me the cat has died" (my cat has died)

- **noren** - The genitive case. Shows possession, similar to English 's or *of*.
- **norentzat** - The benefactive case. Almost always translated as *for*. It shows who something is for, who or what it was intended for.
- **norekin** - The comitative case. Generally can be translated as *with* when talking about company (being with someone) and not what you used to do something, which is our next case.
- **nola** - The instrumental case. This shows what you use to do something. It's also used with languages to say *in X language*, eg. *euskaraz* (in Basque) or *ingelesez* (in English). Another use is with the meaning of *about*, eg. *zutaz hitz egin* (to talk about you).
- **non** - The inessive case. This talks about where and when. It usually means *in*, *at*, or *on*, though it's often left untranslated in English when talking about times.
- **nora** - The allative case. This case answers the question "to where?" You'll generally translate it as *to* when referring to a direction, going someplace.
- **nondik** - The ablative case. This case answers the questions "from where?" and "since when?" and can usually be translated as *from* or *since*. It also can be used to show which way you are going, in which case it usually takes the meaning of *through* or *by*.
- **nongo** - This is another genitive case, but is used for places. This case can be a bit confusing and it can be difficult to decide which one to use, but in general we use this case when talking about a place or time, such as *goizeko hamarrak* (ten of the morning, 10am) or *kotxeko giltzak* (keys of the car, car keys). It's also frequently used to talk about where a person or thing is from, eg. *Bilboko taberna bat* (a "Bilbao" bar, a bar in Bilbao) or *Nafarroakoa naiz* (I am of Navarre, I'm from Navarre).

3. Verbs

The Basque verb system is infamous for being complex. It's not really that complex once you start to get familiar with it, but there are a lot of forms and it can take a long time to get used to them. I recommend finding a Basque verb chart (such as [this](#)