

Scotland's Cities: Inverness

The Scottish English Podcast – Episode 24



LANGUAGE LEARNING

*Transcript & Upper-intermediate and Advanced
Vocabulary Guide*

Below is the transcript with all selected B2, C1, and above vocabulary and phrases in **bold**. After the transcript, you'll find a table with definitions, British English pronunciation, and useful collocations/idioms for each highlighted word or phrase.

Transcript: Scotland's Cities: Inverness

Did you know there's a city in Scotland where **ancient stones** whisper of battles, kings and legends.

And just beyond the edge of the city, wild landscapes **beckon the adventurous**.

This is Inverness, the **gateway to the Highlands**. A city where Scotland's **epic history** and **natural beauty** meet in **unforgettable ways**.

Welcome to the Scottish English Podcast, the show where you can learn about Scotland's history and culture all while improving your English.

I'm Claire, and today we are continuing our tour of the Scottish Cities. Today is our fourth city. This is Inverness.

And if you want to push your English a little bit further, why not check out the free transcript that you'll find through the link in the description? There, you'll find vocabulary that I use from today's episode, its description, its pronunciation, and also some idiomatic usage of those phrases.

And while I'm asking you to do things, why not hit that subscribe button so that you know when the next episode of the Scottish English Podcast comes out?

A city **shaped by history** and legend.

Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, sits at a **crossroads of Scottish history**.

Its story stretches back over 4,000 years with the area first settled by ancient peoples who left behind mysterious sites like the Clava Cairns.

These were Bronze age **burial chambers**, and **standing stones**, which still puzzle

archeologists today.

Later, the Picts, famed for their warrior spirit and their **intricate carvings**, ruled this land, **resisting both Roman invaders** and later the Vikings.

The city's **strategic location** where the River Ness meets the Moray Firth made it a **focal point** for power struggles from **clan warfare** all the way to the **Jacobite uprisings**.

Then Shakespeare's Macbeth **immortalized** Inverness Castle in literature.

Famously in the 16th century, Mary Queen of Scots was refused entry into the castle only to return with an army and take it by force.

But perhaps no event shaped Inverness more than the Battle of Culloden in 1746, just a few miles from the city.

This was the last **pitched battle** fought on British soil with Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobite forces being defeated.

This battle led to the end of the Highland clan system and forever changed the course of Scottish history.

A vibrant highland capital

Today, Inverness is one of the UK's fastest growing cities blending its **storied past** with a lively modern spirit.

The **compact city centre** is easy to explore on foot. The red sandstone Inverness Castle **overlooks the River Ness**, and it's a landmark that's now being transformed into an interactive visitor experience.

The Victorian market offers a slice of local life with its independent shops and lively atmosphere, while the nearby Ness Islands provide **tranquil riverside walks**, just a few steps from the city's centre.

A gateway to adventure

What truly sets Inverness apart is its role as the perfect base for Highland adventures.

Just outside the city, the **legendary waters** of Loch Ness await attracting monster hunters and nature lovers alike for boat tours, castle visits, and **breathtaking scenery**.

Explore the **haunting battlefield** of Culloden, wander the **ruins of Urquhart Castle** or set off on the North Coast 500.

This is Scotland's answer to Route 66, a road trip taking you around the north coast of

Scotland, letting you see some of Europe's most spectacular landscapes.

For those seeking even more history, nearby Cawdor Castle is **steeped in myth** and links to Macbeth, while Fort George built after Culloden stands as one of the mightiest **artillery fortresses** in Britain.

A city with highland heart

Inverness may be compact, but it's a city with a big heart and a deep connection to Scotland's past and present.

Whether you're drawn by tales of kings and battles, the call of the wild highlands, or simply the warmth of Highland hospitality, Inverness offers an experience that's both **timeless and ever-changing**.

That's all for today's episode of the Scottish English Podcast. Inverness truly is the gateway to the highlands. A place where history, legend, and adventure come together. If you've enjoyed this journey, do subscribe and join us next time as we head to the next place in our tour of the Scottish Cities: Perth.

That's next time on the Scottish English Podcast. See you then.

Vocabulary Table

| Word/Phrase | Definition & Pronunciation (UK) | Collocations / Idiomatic Usage |
|------------------------|---|---|
| ancient stones | Very old stones, often with historical significance /ˈeɪn.ʃənt stəʊnz/ | ancient stones whisper, mysterious ancient stones |
| beckon the adventurous | Attract people seeking excitement | beckon the adventurous, adventure beckons |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| | /'bek.ən ði əd'ven.tʃər.əs/ | |
| gateway to the Highlands | Main entry point to the Highlands /'geɪt.weɪ tə ðə 'haɪ.ləndz/ | gateway to adventure, gateway city |
| epic history | Grand, impressive history /'ep.ɪk 'hɪs.tər.i/ | epic history unfolds, epic historical events |
| natural beauty | Attractive scenery not made by humans /'nætʃ.ər.əl 'bjʊ:.ti/ | stunning natural beauty, preserve natural beauty |
| unforgettable ways | Memorable manners or methods /ˌʌn.fə'get.ə.bəl weɪz/ | unforgettable ways to experience |
| shaped by history | Formed or influenced by past events /ʃeɪpt baɪ 'hɪs.tər.i/ | city shaped by history, shaped by events |
| crossroads of Scottish history | A meeting point of important events | at a crossroads, crossroads moment |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| | /'krɒs.rəʊdz əv 'skɒt.ɪf 'hɪs.tər.i/ | |
| burial chambers | Rooms for burying the dead /'ber.i.əl 'tʃeɪm.bəz/ | ancient burial chambers, explore burial chambers |
| standing stones | Upright stones from prehistory /'stæn.dɪŋ stəʊnz/ | mysterious standing stones, circle of standing stones |
| intricate carvings | Complex engraved designs /'ɪn.trɪ.kət 'kɑː.vɪŋz/ | intricate carvings on stone, display intricate carvings |
| resisting both Roman invaders | Fighting against attackers /rɪ'zɪs.tɪŋ bæʊθ 'rəʊ.mən ɪn'veɪ.dəz/ | resisting invaders, fierce resistance |
| strategic location | Important for planning or advantage /strə'tiː.dʒɪk ləʊ'keɪ.jən/ | strategic location for trade, strategic importance |
| focal point | Centre of activity or attention /'fəʊ.kəl pɔɪnt/ | focal point for conflict, become a focal point |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| clan warfare | Fighting between family groups /klæn 'wɔː.feə/ | clan warfare erupted, history of clan warfare |
| Jacobite uprisings | Rebellions supporting the Stuart kings /'dʒæk.ə.bart 'ʌp.raɪ.zɪŋz/ | violent Jacobite uprisings, suppress the uprisings |
| immortalized | Made famous forever /ɪ'mɔː.tə.laɪzd/ | immortalized in literature, immortalized in history |
| pitched battle | Planned, large-scale fight /pɪtʃt 'bæt.əl/ | last pitched battle, pitched battle fought |
| vibrant highland capital | Lively main city in the Highlands /'vaɪ.brənt 'haɪ.lənd 'kæp.ɪ.təl/ | vibrant capital city, vibrant highland culture |
| storied past | Having a long, interesting history /'stɔː.rɪd pɑːst/ | storied past and tradition, blending storied past |
| compact city centre | Small, easy-to-navigate downtown | compact city centre, explore the compact city centre |

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| | / 'kɒm.pækt 'sɪt.i 'sen.tər/ | |
| overlooks the River Ness | Has a view over the river / ,əv.və 'lʊks ðə 'rɪv.ər nəz/ | castle overlooks the river, building overlooks the river |
| tranquil riverside walks | Calm walks along a river / 'træŋ.kwɪl 'rɪv.ə.saɪd wɔːks/ | enjoy tranquil walks, riverside strolls |
| legendary waters | Famous or mythical body of water / 'ledʒ.ən.dri 'wɔː.təz/ | legendary waters of Loch Ness, legendary waters attract |
| breathtaking scenery | Extremely beautiful landscape / 'breθ'teɪ.kɪŋ 'siː.nər.i/ | breathtaking scenery awaits, admire breathtaking scenery |
| haunting battlefield | A battle site that evokes strong emotions / 'hɔːn.tɪŋ 'bæt.əl.fiːld/ | haunting battlefield of Culloden, haunting memories |
| ruins of Urquhart Castle | Remains of a historic castle / 'ruːnz əv 'ɜːkət 'kɑː.səl/ | explore the ruins, castle ruins |

| | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| steeped in myth | Deeply involved with legends /sti:pt ɪn mɪθ/ | steeped in history, steeped in tradition |
| artillery fortresses | Strongholds with heavy guns /ɑ:ˈtɪl.ər.i ˈfɔ:trəsɪz/ | mightiest artillery fortresses, fortress stands |
| timeless and ever-changing | Always relevant, but constantly evolving /ˈtaɪm.ləs ənd ˈev.əˌtʃeɪn.dʒɪŋ/ | timeless beauty, ever-changing landscape |