

# BASQUE PROVERBS

# ESAERA ZAHARRAK

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The published sources are cited at the end of the list. The proverbs were posted to Basque-L during the months of July-November 1994 at the rate of about 2 a day.

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Enjoy!

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*Note: This copy was formatted by Blas Uberuaga. The references that were mentioned above have been taken out to lessen the amount of information contained.*

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**BASQUE PROVERBS / ESAERA ZAHARRAK**

**A, zer parea! Karakola eta barea!**

*Oh, what a pair, a snail and a slug.*

FRIENDS, RELATIONSHIPS, MISCHIEF,  
CHARACTER, BEHAVIOR



**Abadearen lapikoa, txikia baina gozoa**

*The priest's pot is small but tasty.*

CLERGY, FOOD



**Aberats izatea baino, izen ona hobe**

*It's better to have a good name than to be rich.*

WEALTH, REPUTATION



**Adiskide onekin, orduak labur**

*With a good friend the hours are short.*

FRIENDSHIP, TIME



**Adiskidegabeko bizitza, auzogabeko heriotza**

*Life without friends means death without neighbors.*

FRIENDSHIP, DEATH, LIFE, LONELINESS



**Aditu nahi ez duenak, ez du esan behar**

*He who doesn't want to hear, shouldn't say.*

TALKING



**Aditzaile onari, hitz gutxi**

*A good listener needs few words.*

TALKING, CONVERSATION



**Agindua zorra, esan ohi da**

*A promise is a debt, it's always been said.*

DEBT, PROMISES



**Aita biltzaileari, seme hondatzaile**

*A thrifty father begets a squandering son.*

FAMILY, DIFFERENCES, FATHERS, SONS



**Aldi luzeak, guztia ahaztu**

*With time, all things are forgotten.*

TIME, FORGIVENESS, FORGETTING



**Alfer egon eta alfer-lana egin, biak berdin**

*Doing nothing and doing useless work are the same thing.*

LAZINESS, WORK



**Alferkeria, askoren ondamendia**

*Laziness leads many people astray.*

LAZINESS



**Alferrak, beti lanez beterik**

*Lazy people are always busy.*

LAZINESS



**Alferrarendako lanik ez, eta astirik ez**

*The lazy person has no work and has no time.*

LAZINESS, TIME



**Alferrarentzat jana eta langilearentzat lana, ez da inoiz faltako**

*There is never a lack of food for the lazy person, nor of work for the industrious.*

LAZINESS, WORK, FOOD



**Alferrik da, ura joan eta gero, presa egitea**

*It is useless, once the water is gone, to hurry.*

OPPORTUNITIES, TIMING



**Amari egindako zorrak ez dira inoiz ordaintzen**

*The debts made to one's mother are never paid.*

MOTHERS, DEBT



**Amen: Zu hor eta ni hemen**  
*Amen: you there and me here*  
 ARGUMENT, DISAGREEMENT



**Apaizaren eltzea, txikia baina betea**  
*The priest's pot is small but full.*  
 CLERGY, FOOD



**Ardi galdua atzeman daiteke, aldi galdua berriz ez**  
*The lost sheep may be recovered, the lost time cannot.*  
 TIME



**Ardi txikia, beti bildots**  
*The small sheep, always a lamb.*  
 REPUTATION, CATEGORIZATION



**Ardiak beeka egonik, ez du jaten belarrik**  
*A bleating sheep eats no grass.*  
 ACTING, TALKING



**Arian, arian, zehetzen da burnia**  
*Working and working at it, iron can be pulverized.*  
 INDUSTRY, PERSISTENCE, PERSEVERANCE



**Arranoak lumak behar, txepetxak ere bai**  
*The eagle needs feathers, and the wren does too.*  
 SIMILARITIES



**Arrotz-herri, otso-herri**  
*A foreign land is a land of wolves.*  
 DISTRUST, STRANGERS, FOREIGNERS



**Aseak gosea ezin ikus**  
*The satiated cannot see the hungry.*  
 HUNGER, INEQUALITY, SELFISHNESS



**Aski ez duena, deusik ez duena**  
*Not having enough is like not having anything*  
 DISSATISFACTION, PRIVATION



**Asko baduk/n, asko beharko duk/n**  
*If you have much, you will need much.*  
 SIMPLICITY, AMBITION, WEALTH



**Asko daki zaharrak, erakutsi beharrak**  
*Old people know much; they were taught by necessity.*  
 NECESSITY, OLD AGE, KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE



**Asko dakin/k/zu, bizitzen baldin badakin/k/zu**  
*You know much if you know how to live.*  
 WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE



**Askoren mina, tontoen atsegina**  
*The stupid find relief in the suffering of others.*  
 CONSOLATION, CONTENTMENT



**Asto askok, lasto asko**  
*A lot of donkeys means a lot of hay.*  
 FAMILY, EXPENSES



**Astoari ezin mendeka, mendeka albardari**  
*Not able to take revenge on the donkey, take it out on the saddle.*  
 REVENGE



**Aukera maukera, azkenik trankera**  
*The choosy one ends up with the ordinary.*  
 CHOICES, RELATIONSHIPS, HUSBANDS, COURTSHIP



**Aurrera begiraten ez duena, atzean dago**  
*Those who don't look forward, stay behind.*  
EXCELLENCE, INDUSTRY



**Azeri zaharrak ile zaharra uzten du, aztura zaharrik ez**  
*The old fox sheds its old hair, but not its old habits.*  
HABITS, OLD AGE



**Azeria solas ematen zaukanean ari, gogo emak heure oiloari**  
*When the fox is engaging you in conversation, keep an eye on your chicken.*  
MISCHIEF, DISTRUST, VIGILANCE



**Azken gaizto egingo duk, txoria, gazterik egiten ez baduk habia**  
*You will have a sad end, bird, if you don't make your nest while you're still young.*  
OLD AGE, YOUTH, WORK



**Bakoitzari berea, eta beti adiskide**  
*To each their own, and always friends.*  
FRIENDSHIP, JUSTICE



**Balantza duen aldera erortzen da arbola**  
*The tree falls towards the side it's leaning.*  
PREDISPOSITION, INCLINATIONS



**Balizko errotak, irinik ez**  
*An imaginary mill produces no flour.*  
ILLUSIONS



**Bat eman eta bi hartu, gure etxean ez berriz sartu**  
*Giving one and taking two, don't come back into our house.*  
SELFISHNESS, DECEIT, DISHONESTY, SNEAKINESS



**Bat izatea hobe, bi itxo egitea baino**  
*It's better to have one than be waiting for two.*  
SECURITY, CERTAINTY



**Begi bat aski du saldunak, ehun ez ditu sobera erostunak**  
*One eye is enough for the seller, but one hundred is not too many for the buyer.*  
BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, BUYING, SELLING



**Begiak noraino, nahia haraino**  
*As far as the eyes can see, that's how far one's desires go.*  
DESIRE, GREED



**Begietatik urruti, bihotzetik urruti**  
*Far from the eyes, far from the heart.*  
FEELINGS



**Beltz guztiak ez dira ikatz**  
*All things black are not coal.*  
DECEPTION, APPEARANCES, COMPARISONS



**Berbak handiak, ezkurak txikiak**  
*The words are big but the acorns are small.*  
TALKING, ACTIONS



**Bere etxe pobrea, erregearena baino hobea**  
*His or her poor house is better than a king's..*  
POVERTY, SIMPLICITY, HAPPINESS, HOME



**Berri gaiztoa bera zaldi**  
*Bad news is its own horse.*  
NEWS



**Beste lekutan ere, zakurrak oinutsik ibiltzen dira**  
*In other places dogs go barefoot too.*  
COMPARISONS, SIMILARITIES



**Besteen faltak aurreko aldean, geureak bizkarrean**

*Other people carry their faults up front. We carry our own behind our backs.*

FAULTS, DIFFERENCES



**Besteren ama ona, norbera askoz hobea**

*Another's mother is good, but our own is much better.*

MOTHERS



**Beti on nahi duena, maiz gaizki**

*The one who wants everything perfect, often gets just the opposite.*

AMBITION, PERFECTION



**Beti ordu duena, beti berandu heldu dena**

*The one who has a lot of time to spare, is the one who always arrives late.*

HABITS, TARDINESS, CONTRAST



**Bi etxetako txakurra, goseak jan**

*A dog which belongs to two houses dies of hunger.*

RESPONSIBILITY



**Bihotzean dagoena, mihira irten**

*What is in the heart, comes to the tongue.*

TALKING, FEELINGS, EMOTIONS



**Bost sosen pupua, eta hamar sosen trapua**

*A ten cent bandage for a five cent booboo.*

EXAGGERATION, COMPLAINING



**Burdina berotan jo behar da**

*Iron must be hammered when it's hot.*

OPPORTUNITIES, COURAGE, INDECISION, PROCRASTINATION



**Burla minena, egia dioena**

*The most painful insult is the one that's true.*

INSULTS, MOCKERY



**Bururik ez duenak, hankak ibili behar**

*If you don't have a good head, then you better have good legs.*

INCOMPETENCE



**Bururik ez duenak, txapel-beharrik ez**

*Those who don't have heads don't need hats.*

INCOMPETENCE



**Buztana lastozkoa duena, suaren beldur**

*Those who have their tail made of straw are afraid of fire.*

WEAKNESS, FEAR



**Dagonean bonbon, ez dagonean egon**

*When there is, spend lavishly, and when there isn't, that's life.*

ADVERSITY, CIRCUMSTANCES



**Dakien gutzia ez derrala, ahala oro jan ez dezala**

*Don't say as much as you know, and don't eat as much as you can.*

TALKING, EATING



**Dakienak, dakien adina esaten du**

*One who knows, tells everything one knows.*

TALKING



**Dakizunaz gutxi mintza zaitetz, ez dakizunaz bat ere**

*Say little about what you know, and don't say anything about what you don't know.*

TALKING, IGNORANCE



**Danbolin ordainduak soinu txarra jotzen du**

*A paid drum plays bad music.*  
BUSINESS AND COMMERCE



**Dantzatu nahi ez dana, ez doala dantzara**  
*If you don't want to dance you shouldn't go to a dance.*

CHOICES, DECISIONS



**Denbora badoa eta gu harekin**

*Time goes by, and we go with it.*

TIME



**Dezagun gutxi, dezagun beti**

*Let us have little, but let us always have enough.*

WEALTH, SIMPLICITY, CONTENTMENT,  
SECURITY



**Dirua, mutilik hoberena eta nagusirik txarrena**  
*Money is the best of servants, but the worst of bosses.*

MONEY



**Diruak malkarrak zelaitzen**

*Money flattens hilly terrain.*

MONEY



**Edozein txoriri, eder bere habia**

*Every bird thinks its own nest is beautiful.*

HOME



**Edozeinek, edanondoan, dio bere iritzia**

*After drinking everyone gives their opinion.*

DRINKING, TALKING, OPINIONS



**Egarri dagoenarentzat, ur loirik ez**

*For one who is thirsty, there is no muddy water.*

CONTENTMENT, ADVERSITY



**Egi guztiak ez dira on esateko**

*Not all truths are good to say.*

TRUTH, TALKING



**Egia, askoren erregarria**

*For many, the truth hurts.*

TRUTH, PAIN



**Egia da latz eta garratz**

*The truth is bitter and unpleasant.*

TRUTH, PAIN



**Egiak esan eta adiskideak gal**

*Telling the truth, you may lose your friends.*

TRUTH, FRIENDS



**Egizu beti on, ez jakinarren non**

*Do always the right thing, even if you don't know who benefits.*

GOODNESS, ACTION, GENEROSITY



**Eguzki bera, on ala gaiztoentzat**

*The sun shines equally on the good and the bad.*

EQUALITY



**Eguzkia nora, zapiak hara**

*Where the sun is, that's where you should hang your clothes.*

FREEDOM, OPPORTUNITIES, ADAPTATION,  
CIRCUMSTANCES



**Ekark idia, edo begia**

*Bring the ox or bring the eye.*

DEBTS



**Elizatik hurreanena, paradisutik urrunena**

*The closest to the church are the farthest from paradise.*

CHURCHES, RELIGION, PARADISE



**Entzun eta isil, baiezko borobil**

*If you hear something and you don't object, people will assume that you agree.*

AGREEMENT, TALKING



**Eroriz, eroriz, oinez ikasten da**

*By falling, one learns to walk.*

WALKING, OBSTINACY, PERSISTENCE, PERSEVERANCE



**Esaera zaharrak, gezurrik ez**

*The old sayings tell no lies.*

PROVERBS, NATURE



**Esana da erraz eta egina garratz**

*Talking is easy, doing is hard.*

TALKING, ACTION



**Esana esan, emana eman**

*What's said is said, what's given is given.*

TALKING, GIFTS



**Esaten baduk nahi duana, entzungo duk nahi ez duana**

*If you say anything you want, you will hear things you don't want to.*

TALKING, INSULTS, OFFENDING



**Eskola-mutilak sasiz sasi, asko jan eta gutxi ikasi**

*School children from bush to bush, they eat a lot, but learn little.*

STUDENTS, SCHOOLS, LEARNING



**Eskuko behatzak ere, ez zituen Jainkoak berdinak egin**

*God didn't make even the fingers all the same.*

DIFFERENCES



**Etxe hutsa, haserre hutsa**

*In an empty house, there's nothing but anger.*

FAMILY, HOME, ANGER, PRIVATION, SCARCITY



**Etxean gatza ugari dagoela eta, ez dezazula bazkaria gehiegi gazitu**

*Just because there is a lot of salt in the house, you shouldn't make your food too salty.*

EXCESS, MODERATION



**Etxean ikusia, umeak ikasia**

*What is seen at home is what the child learns.*

CHILDREN, HOME, GROWING UP, LEARNING, NURTURE



**Etxeko sua etxeko hautsez estali behar da**

*The home's fire must be put out with the home's ashes.*

FAMILY, HOME, PROBLEMS



**Ez ardo bizidunik, ez andre bizardunik**

*Two things to avoid: sparkling wine and bearded women.*

WINE, WOMEN



**Ez da horixe atzo goizekoa**

*That wasn't invented yesterday.*

HISTORY, INVENTIONS



**Ez da ogirik neke gabarik**

*There is no bread without pain.*

WORK, SUFFERING, DIFFICULTIES



**Ez dakusan begik, ez nigarririk**

*Eyes that don't see don't cry.*

KNOWLEDGE, EMOTIONS, OBLIVIOUSNESS, AWARENESS



**Ez egin gaitzik eta ez izan beldurrik**  
*If you do no wrong, you need not be afraid.*  
GOODNESS, EVIL, FEAR



**Ez egin oihanean, eder ez denik kalean**  
*Don't do in the forest what you shouldn't do in the street.*  
ACTION, RIGHT AND WRONG



**Ez gehiegi hitz egin, ez ba da nahi huts egin**  
*Don't speak too much if you do not want to make mistakes.*  
TALKING, ERROR



**Ez naiz joaten elizara, maingu naizelako; joaten naiz tabernara, ardoa on zaidalako**  
*I don't go to church, because I'm lame; but I do go to the bar, because I like the wine.*  
CHURCHES, DRINKING, EXCUSES



**Ezer ez duena, emateko prest**  
*One who has nothing is always willing to give.*  
GIFTS, GIVING



**Ezina, ekinez egina**  
*Through effort and sacrifice, the impossible can be done.*  
SACRIFICE, DETERMINATION, INDUSTRY, STRUGGLE



**Ezkondu baino lehen, ezagutzea lehenago**  
*Before getting married, get to know your partner.*  
MARRIAGE, RELATIONSHIPS



**Ezkondu baino lehen, kontu zer egiten den**  
*Before you get married, make sure you know what you're doing.*  
MARRIAGE, RELATIONSHIPS



**Gaitz guztiak, bere gaitzagoa**  
*For every evil, there is always something worse.*  
EVIL, COMPARISONS, RELATIVITY



**Gaitza, gaitzagoak derahatza**  
*The worse makes you forget about the bad.*  
RELATIVITY



**Gaitza, ongi hator, baldin bakar bahator**  
*Be welcome, misfortune, as long as you come alone.*  
EVIL, DISEASE



**Gaizki esanak barkatu, ondo esanak ondo hartu**  
*Forgive the badly said, take well the well said.*  
TALKING, CONVERSATION



**Garaipena, neke askoren ondorena**  
*Success is the result of a lot of hard work.*  
SUCCESS, SACRIFICE, SUFFERING



**Gaua, gogapenen ama**  
*Night is the mother of thought.*  
NIGHT, THOUGHT



**Gaur hitza eman, bihar haizeak eraman**  
*Today's promise carries air tomorrow.*  
PROMISES



**Gaurko izerdia, biharko ogia**  
*Today's sweat is tomorrow's bread.*  
EFFORT, SACRIFICE, CONSEQUENCES, RESULTS



**Gaztean alfer, zaharrear lander**  
*In youth, lazy; in old age, destitute.*  
LAZINESS, YOUTH, OLD AGE





**Edukiago eta nahiago**

*The more one has the more one wants.*

AMBITION, CONTENTMENT,  
DISSATISFACTION, WEALTH



**Gehiegi baino, aski hobe**

*Having just enough is better than having too much.*

AMBITION, WEALTH, CONTENTMENT



**Geroa, alferraren leloa**

*The lazy person's motto: 'Later'.*

LAZINESS, PROCRASTINATION



**Gezurra esan nuen etxean: ni baino lehenago  
kalean**

*I told a lie at home and it was in the street before me.*

LIES



**Gezurra esan nuen Getarian, eta ni baino  
lehenago zen atarian**

*I told a lie in Getaria and it was home before me.*

LIES



**Gezurrak hankak motzak ditu**

*Lies have short legs.*

LIES



**Gezurtiak zer duen merezi? Egia esatean ez  
sinetsi**

*What does a liar deserve? To not be believed when  
telling the truth.*

LIES



**Gilen, bihar hilen, etzi ehortziren, etzidamu  
ahantziren**

*Tomorrow will kill you, the next day will bury you,  
and the day after will forget you.*

DEATH



**Gogo den tokian, aldaparik ez**

*In a place of one's liking, there are no hills.*

HAPPINESS, CONTENTMENT, OPTIMISM



**Goiz jagia, ez da egunsentia**

*Just because you get up doesn't mean it's dawn.*

MORNING, WAKING



**Gorostian gorosti, eta Donostian donosti**

*In the holly tree you will find holly, and in Donostia  
(San Sebastian), Donostia.*

CUSTOMS



**Gure beiak erro handiago eta zuenak esne  
gehiago**

*Our cow has a larger teat, but yours gives more milk.*

ENVY, DECEPTION, COMPARISONS,  
APPEARANCES



**Gutxi edatea eta gutxi sinistea, zintzoaren egitea**

*The wise person drinks little and believes little.*

DRINKING, TRUST, CREDULITY



**Guztia gura izatea, guztia galtzea**

*Wanting everything, you will lose everything.*

AMBITION, EXCESS



**Guztien adiskide dena, ez da inorena**

*One who is everybody's friend, is no one's friend.*

FRIENDSHIP



**Guztien gogora egitea, da gauza nekea**

*Pleasing everyone is tiresome.*

ACTION, TASTE, PLEASING



**Gutxiegi eta larregia, beti kaltegarria**

*Too little or too much: both are harmful.*

EXCESS



**Gutxika gutxika, asko egiten da**

*Little by little, much is done.*

INDUSTRY, PERSISTENCE, PERSEVERANCE



**Haitzean jaiok, haitzera nahi**

*What's born on rocks, to the rocks wants to return.*

HOME, PEOPLE AND PLACES



**Handiak, txikia ahantzarazten**

*The big things make you forget about the little things.*

FORGETTING



**Haria meheenean eten ohi da**

*A thread usually breaks where it is thinnest.*

WEAKNESS



**Harri ibiliak goroldiorik ez, erle uxatuak  
aberaskarik ez**

*A rolling stone gathers no moss; and a bee that  
scares easily builds no honeycomb.*

ACTION, ACTIVITY, BUSINESS



**Hartuak, emana zor**

*That which is taken is owed.*

GRATITUDE, DEBT, GIFTS, RECEIVING,  
GIVING



**Hartzen dena, zortzen dena**

*What you receive, you owe.*

DEBT, GIFTS, GRATITUDE, RECEIVING



**Haurrak hazi, nekeak hasi**

*One's troubles really begin when one begins to raise  
children.*

CHILDREN, FAMILY, TROUBLES,  
DIFFICULTIES



**Hauxe da lorra! Goian zerua eta behean lurra**

*What a life! Below the earth and above the sky.*

POVERTY



**Hazi gaiztoa, bera sortzen**

*The bad seed grows by itself.*

EVIL, NATURE



**Hegaztia airerako, gizona lanerako**

*Birds are meant to fly and people are meant to work.*

WORK



**Hil arteraino bizi, han arte ez izi**

*Live until you die. Until then, don't panic.*

LIFE, ADVERSITY, CALMNESS



**Hilak lurpera, biziak mahaira**

*May the dead go under ground and the living to the  
table.*

DEATH, BURIAL, FEASTS, MOURNING



**Hiru belarritan igaren hitz isila, orotan lasterka  
dabila**

*A secret that has been through three ears is soon  
found running all over the place.*

SECRETS, GOSSIP



**Hitzontzi, hutsontzi**

*Lots of talk, lots of mistakes.*

TALKING, ERROR



**Hobe da ezer, ezer ez baino**

*Something is always better than nothing.*

PROPERTY, SECURITY



**Hobe da gorde eta ez eske**

*It is better to save than beg.*

THRIFT, SECURITY, BEGGING, LOOKING  
AHEAD, SAVING



**Hobe da oinez eta segurora, eta ez zaldiz eta zulara**

*It's better to go by foot and arrive safely than to go on horseback and fall into a hole.*

SAFETY, SECURITY, CERTAINTY,  
CONTRASTS



**Hobe da txori bat eskuan, eta ez bost ezkurreen**

*One bird in the hand is better than five in the tree.*

SAFETY, SECURITY, CERTAINTY



**Hordikeria, gizatasunaren lotsaria**

*Drunkenness is a disgrace to humanity.*

DRINKING



**Ibiltari gauean, logura goizean**

*Late night walkers are sleepy in the morning.*

MORNING, NIGHT, SLEEP



**Idia adarretik eta gizona hitzetik**

*Hold oxen by their horns and people to their word.*

PROMISES, TALKING, RESPONSIBILITY



**Igaitea gorago, eroria dorpeago**

*The higher the climb, the harder the fall.*

FAILURE, CONSEQUENCES



**Igaroa, igaro**

*The past has passed.*

TIME



**Ihaurk egin dezakeana ez utzi besteri egiten**

*Don't let another do what you can do yourself.*

RESPONSIBILITY, DISTRUST



**Inoren oiloak, gureak baino arraultz gehiago**

*Everybody else's chickens lay more eggs than ours.*

ENVY



**Iretargia argi da, baina eguna baizen argi ez.  
Inoren ama ona da, baina norberena baizen ona ez.**

*The moon is bright, but not as bright as the sun.  
Anybody else's mother is good, but not as good as one's own.*

MOTHERS



**Iturri txikiak, handiak adina egarria kendu**

*A small fountain quenches your thirst as well as a big one.*

SIMPLICITY



**Izena duen guztiak izatea ere badauke**

*Everything with a name exists.*

NAMES, EXISTENCE



**Izenak ez du egiten izana**

*A name doesn't make something true.*

NAMES, EXISTENCE



**Jaio zara, hilko zara**

*You were born, you will die.*

LIFE, DEATH, CERTAINTY



**Jakindunen artean dabilena, jakindun**

*One who spends his time among wise people is also wise.*

WISDOM



**Jakiteak ez du ogirik jaten**

*Knowledge doesn't eat bread.*

KNOWLEDGE



**Jakiteko hartzen, ikas ezazu ematen**

*To know how to receive, learn to give.*

GIFTS, GIVING, TAKING



**Jan behar ba duk/n, lan egin beharko duk/n**  
*If you must eat, then you must work.*  
WORK, EATING, SURVIVAL



**Jan eta edan eta pakea eman**  
*Eat and drink and be quiet.*  
EATING



**Jan-edanaren gozoa! Kontu-emanaren gaiztoa!**  
*How sweet it is to eat and drink! How terrible to have to pay the bill!*  
EATING, DRINKING, PAYING



**Jaten duten santuekin, ez dago fidatzerik**  
*Those who eat with saints cannot be trusted.*  
RELIGION, TRUST, DECEPTION,  
APPEARANCES, SAINTLINESS



**Jende ederra, jende alferra**  
*Beautiful people are lazy people.*  
LAZINESS, BEAUTY



**Kanpoan uso, etxean otso**  
*A dove to the world, but a wolf at home.*  
HOME, RELATIONSHIPS



**Katurik ez dagoen etxean, saguak dantzan**  
*In a house without a cat, the mice are dancing.*  
FREEDOM, MISCHIEF



**Etorkizuna, kontakizuna**  
*The future has yet to be told.*  
FUTURE



**Kontuak garbi, eta adiskide zahar**  
*If your accounts are settled, your friendships will last.*  
DEBTS, FRIENDS



**Lagun onak, ondu; gaiztoak, gaiztotu**  
*A good friend makes one a better person, a bad friend makes one worse.*  
FRIENDS



**Lan baratza, lan aratza**  
*A job done slowly, is a job done well.*  
WORK



**Lan lasterra, lan alferra**  
*Hasty work is useless work.*  
RUSHING



**Lanik errazena, agintzea**  
*The easiest of jobs is giving orders.*  
WORK, HIERARCHY



**Lapiko txikiak, laster gainez**  
*A small pot soon overflows.*  
NATURE, CONSEQUENCES, LIMITATIONS



**Lastoaren sua, ez da luzaroko sua**  
*Fire from straw is not long-lasting.*  
DECEPTION, LAZINESS, APPEARANCES



**Lastozko isatsa duenak, atzera begira**  
*Those who have tails made of straw are always watching their backs.*  
FEAR, WEAKNESS



**Lehen hala, orain hola, gero ez jakin nola**  
*Before, things were that way; now, this way; and it is not known how they will be later.*  
CHANGE, FUTURE



**Lehenean barka, bigarrean urka**  
*The first time, forgive; the second time, hang.*  
FORGIVENESS, PUNISHMENT, CRIMES,  
FAULTS, CAPITAL PUNISHMENT



**Lehenik jan, gero lan**

*First eat, then work.*  
EATING, WORK



**Lekuan lekuan ardiak, beltzen artean zuriak**  
*In any place you will always find white sheep among  
the black ones*  
DIVERSITY



**Lur bigunean, zulo handia**  
*In soft ground, big hole.*  
CIRCUMSTANCES, RELATIVITY



**Lurra bigunago, harra barrenago**  
*The softer the ground, the deeper the worm goes.*  
DECEIT



**Lurrak hazi, lurrak jan behar**  
*The earth makes us grow and the earth must eat us.*  
DEATH, BIRTH, GROWING UP



**Mando merkea, nagusiaren nekea**  
*A cheap mule is more work for the owner.*  
BUSINESS AND COMMERCE, QUALITY



**Mendiak mendia behar ez du, baina gizonak  
gizona bai**  
*Mountains don't need other mountains, but people do  
need other people.*  
SOCIETY



**Mihiak ez du hezurrik hausten, baina bai  
hautsarazten**  
*The tongue cant' break bones, but it can cause them  
to be broken.*  
TALKING, PAIN



**Mihiaz egiten den mina, da azken sendatzen dena**  
*The pain caused by the tongue is the last to heal.*  
TALKING, PAIN



**Munduan nahi duenak luzaroan bizi, oiloekin  
ohera eta txoriekin jagi**  
*Those who want to live long go to bed with the  
chickens and get up with the birds.*  
LIFE, WAKING, SLEEP



**Nagi: utz nazak jaikitzen, has nadin lan egiten**  
*Laziness: let me get up so that I may begin to work.*  
LAZINESS, WAKING, WORK



**Nagia, beti lantsu**  
*Lazy people are always busy.*  
LAZINESS, WORK



**Nagusi eroa baino, gogorra hobea**  
*A harsh boss is better than a crazy one.*  
MENTAL HEALTH, WORK, BOSSES



**Nahi bada jan, egin behar da lan**  
*If one wants to eat, then one must work.*  
WORK



**Nahi dukana hiretzat, besterentzat**  
*What you want for yourself, want also for others.*  
SOCIETY, GOLDEN-RULE



**Nahi izatea da ahal izatea**  
*Wanting is being able*  
DESIRE, ABILITY



**Nahiago dut behin to, eta ez hamabi emango**  
*I prefer one 'take this' to twelve 'I-will-give-you'-s.*  
SAFETY, SECURITY, CONTRAST, GIVING



**Nahigabeko ezkontzea, neke eta kaltea**  
*An involuntary marriage brings nothing but troubles  
and tribulations.*

MARRIAGE



**Nekatzen da emalea, baina ez hartzailea**  
*The giver tires, but not the taker.*

GIFTS, RECEIVING, GIVING



**Neke gabarik ez da bizitzerik**  
*Without suffering, there is no life.*

LIFE, SUFFERING



**Neke ondoren, poza**  
*After the suffering comes joy.*  
SUFFERING, HAPPINESS, JOY, CONSOLATION



**Nekez hartutako gauza, nekez utzi**  
*What is obtained with suffering, with suffering is  
given up.*

SUFFERING



**Nere etxeko kea, auzoko sua baino hobea**  
*The smoke of my house is better than the fire of my  
neighbor's.*

DIFFERENCES, COMPARISONS



**Nerea neretzat, zurea biontzat**  
*Mine for me, yours for both of us.*  
PROPERTY, SELFISHNESS, SHARING



**Nola bizi, hala hil**  
*How you live is how you will die.*

LIFE, DEATH



**Nola soinu, hala dantza**  
*As is the music, thus will be the dance.*  
ADAPTATION, CONSEQUENCES, RESULTS



**Nolako egurra, halako sua**  
*As is the wood, thus will be the fire.*  
CONSEQUENCES, RESULTS



**Non gogoia, han zangoia**  
*Where the mind goes, the legs follow.*  
AMBITION, WILL, HEDONISM



**Non hilgo zara, haraxe joango zara**  
*You are going to the place where you will die.*

DEATH



**Nori berea, da zuzenbidea**  
*To each their own, that is justice.*

JUSTICE



**Nork bere opilari ikatza**  
*People always put the coals next to their own bread.*  
SELFISHNESS, EGOCENTRICITY



**Nork dabilen bideak harrapatu ohi du**  
*The road which each walks will usually catch him or  
her.*

CONSEQUENCES



**Nork nori, zartagina zaharrak pertzari: "Utikan,  
beltz hori!"**

*Look who's talking! The old frying pan said to the  
pot: "Get out of there, you black!"*  
DIFFERENCES, SIMILARITIES



**Odolak, su gabe diraki**  
*The blood, without fire, boils.*  
EMOTIONS, BLOOD



**Ogi gogorrari, hortzak zorrotz**  
*If the bread is hard, give it a sharp tooth.*  
PROBLEMS, ADVERSITY, NECESSITY,  
ADAPTATION



**Ohakoan dena ikasten, ez da jagoiti ahazten**

*What's learned in the cradle is never forgotten.*

HOME, NURTURE



**Ohitura gaiztoa, berandu ahaztua**

*Bad habits are not easily forgotten.*

HABITS



**Ohiturak lege ohi dakar**

*Custom usually becomes law.*

CUSTOMS



**Ohoïn handiak urkarazten txikiak**

*Big thieves execute little ones.*

POWER, CRIMES, THIEVES



**Oihal txarra, merke dalarik, garesti da**

*Bad cloth, being cheap, is expensive.*

BUSINESS AND COMMERCE



**Oilo ibiltari, azerien janari**

*The wandering hen will be food for the fox.*

NATURE, CHOICES, ADVERSITY,  
CONSEQUENCES



**Oiloari, oloa, astoari, lastoa**

*To the hen, oats, to the donkey, straw.*

JUSTICE, NATURE



**On egin dizuela janak eta kalterik ez edanak**  
*May the food do you good and the drink do you no harm.*

EATING, DRINKING



**Onak on direla, hobeak hobe**

*As good as the good ones are, the better ones are even better.*

DIFFERENCES, COMPARISONS



**Onegi dena beretzat ez da aski besterentzat**  
*One who is too good to oneself is not good enough to others.*

SELFISHNESS, EGOCENTRISM, SOCIETY



**Ongi nahi hauenak negar eginaraziko dauk/daun/dizu, gaizki nahi hauenak barre eginaraziko dauk/daun/dizu**

*The one who loves you will make you cry, the one who hates you will make you laugh.*

LOVE, HATE



**Orain oraingo eta gero geroko**

*Now the present and later the future.*

THE PRESENT, THE FUTURE



**Ordu batean ezin dana, bitan egiten da**

*What can't be done in one hour, can be done in two.*

TIME, PATIENCE, PERSISTENCE



**Orratzak baino hariak luzeago izan behar du**  
*The thread must always be longer than the needle.*

TOLERANCE, PATIENCE



**Osasuna, paregabeko ondasuna**

*Health is an asset without equal.*

HEALTH



**Otso gosea, ibiltari**

*A hungry wolf wanders.*

HUNGER, NEEDS, RESTLESSNESS



**Otsoak otsoari gaitzik ez, eta lapurrak lapurrari laztan**

*Wolves don't harm other wolves, and thieves give affection to other thieves.*

ENEMIES, THIEVES, THREATS



**Sabelak egitean gur-gur, barteko afariak agur**

*When the stomach begins to growl, the previous night's dinner is saying good-bye.*

FOOD, EATING, SIGNS



**Sasian jaioak, sasian nahi; gure mandoak ez du  
etxera nahi**

*What's born in the bush, in the bush wants to be; our mule doesn't want to come home.*

HOME, PEOPLE AND PLACES



**Senide urruna baino, auzo hurra hobe**

*A nearby neighbor is preferable to a faraway relative.*

NEIGHBORS, RELATIVES



**Su gabarik, ez da kerik**

*Without fire, there is no smoke.*

FIRE, SMOKE, SIGNS



**Sua eta ura, belaunetik behera**

*Fire and water, from the knee down.*

FIRE, DANGER, WATER



**Sugabeko etxea, gorputza odolgabea**

*A house without a fire is a body without blood.*

HOME, FIRE



**Tantaka-tantaka upela bete**

*Drop by drop the barrel fills.*

TIME, PATIENCE, PERSISTENCE



**Tresnak jabea dirudi**

*The tool resembles its owner.*

APPEARANCES



**Txakur zaunkaria, gutxitan ozkaria**

*A dog who barks rarely bites.*

ANIMALS, BEHAVIOR, CHARACTER,  
AGGRESSION, DECEPTION, APPEARANCES



**Txalupan nagusi asko daudenean, arrantza gutxi**

*When there are many captains in the boat, the catch is always small.*

FISHING, WORK, SOCIETY



**Txapel batekin bi buru ezin estali**

*You can't cover two heads with one hat.*

OVEREXTENDEDNESS



**Txintzarri mihigabea, sasian usteldu**

*A bell without a clapper will rot in the bush.*

FUTILITY



**Txori ttattarra, abesti ttattarra**

*An insignificant bird sings an insignificant song.*

INEVITABILITY, ANIMALS, BEHAVIOR,  
CONSEQUENCES, EXPECTATIONS



**Umeak! Isilik oiloak pixa egin arte**

*Children! Be quiet until the chickens pee.*

CHILDHOOD



**Umearen zentzuna, etxean entzuna**

*What children learn is what they hear at home.*

CHILDHOOD, EDUCATION



**Ur beroaz erre txakurra, epelaren beldur da**

*A dog who got burned with hot water is afraid of warm water.*

FEAR



**Ur handietan, arrain handiak**

*In big waters, big fish.*

DIFFERENCES, RELATIVITY



**Urak dakarrena, urak darama**



*What water brings, water takes away.*  
DESTINY, CHANGE, LUCK



**Urde goseak, ezkurra amets**  
*A hungry pig dreams about acorns.*  
NEED, NECESSITY



**Urri, baina ongi**  
*Little, but good.*  
SIMPLICITY



**Urrun helduko da, baratz doalarik, geratu gabe doana**

*Far will reach, going slowly, one who goes without stopping.*

PATIENCE, PERSISTENCE



**Urrunago, gezurrak handiago**  
*The farther away, the bigger the lies.*



**Urruneko eltzea urrez, hara orduko lurrez**  
That distant golden pot up close is clay.  
(SELF-)DECEPTION, ILLUSIONS,  
APPEARANCES



**Urrutiago, berriak handiago**  
The farther away, the bigger the news.

NEWS



**Urrutiko intxaurreak, hamalau; alderantzean, lau**  
The fourteen distant walnuts turn out to be only four up close.

(SELF-)DECEPTION, APPEARANCES



**Urte askotan, txapela kaskoan**  
For many years, your hat on your head.

BIRTHDAYS



**Urte euritsu, urte ogitsu**  
A year full of rain is a year full of wheat.

WEATHER, BREAD



**Ustea ez da jakitea**  
Believing is not knowing.  
BELIEF, OPINIONS



**Usteak, alde erdia ustel**  
Opinions are half rotten.  
OPINIONS



**Utseginaz, utsegiteak zuzentzen dira**  
By making mistakes, mistakes are corrected.  
ERROR, MISTAKES



**Utzi ezan/ezak/ezazu ona hobegatik**  
*Leave the good for the better.*  
DESIRE, AMBITION, ASPIRATION



**Zahar eroa, gazte zoroa baino txarrago**  
*A crazy old person is worse than a foolish young person.*

YOUTH, OLD AGE, STUPIDITY, MENTAL  
ILLNESS, INSANITY



**Zahar-ele, zuhur-ele**  
*The old one's words are wise words.*

TALKING, OLD AGE



**Zaharrari azkar joateko eta haurrari geldi egoteko esatea, berdin da**  
*To tell the old person to hurry and the child to be still is the same thing.*

OLD AGE, CHILDHOOD



**Zakur handiak, zaunka handia**  
*A big dog has a big bark*  
NATURE, CORRELATIONS



**Zapatak zapata jagoten du, abarkak abarka ez**  
*The shoe takes care of the shoe, the clog doesn't the clog.*

WEALTH, CLASS, POVERTY



**Zeinek bera nolako, besteak uste halako**  
*Everyone believes that everyone else is like them.*

BELIEF



**Zenbat buru, hainbat aburu**  
*How many heads, that many opinions.*

OPINIONS



**Zer egingo dugu? Hil arte bizi**  
*What will we do? Live until death.*  
ACQUIESCENCE, SELF-RESIGNATION



**Zer ikusi, hura ikasi**  
*What one sees is what one learns.*

LEARNING



**Zeuen izenean eta neure gizenean**  
*To your name and to my fattening.*

DRINKING



**Zeuen osasunerako eta neure onerako**  
*To your health, and for my good.*

DRINKING



**Zor zaharra, izen txarra**  
*An old debt is a bad name*  
DEBT, REPUTATION



**Zor zaharra, zor txarra**  
*An old debt is a bad debt.*

DEBT



**Zorra, lorra**  
*A debt is pain.*

DEBT



**Zozoak beleari ipurbeltz**  
*The blackbird calling the crow: black ass*  
INSULTS, COMPLAINTS



**Zuharrari ez eska gari**  
*From the elm tree don't ask for wheat.*  
NATURE, EXPECTATIONS



**Zura berago, harra barrenago**  
*The softer the wood, the deeper the worm goes.*  
TOLERANCE, PATIENCE, INDULGENCE



**Zuri guztiak ez dira irin**  
*Everything white is not flour.*  
REALITY, APPEARANCES



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**INDEX**


---

- ability, 12  
 acquiescence, 17  
 acting, 2  
 action, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9  
 actions, 3  
 activity, 9  
 adaptation, 5, 13  
 adversity, 4, 5, 9, 13, 14  
 aggression, 15  
 agreement, 6  
 ambition, 2, 4, 8, 13, 16  
 anger, 6  
 animals, 15  
 appearances, 3, 8, 11, 15, 16, 17  
 argument, 2  
 aspiration, 16  
 awareness, 6  
 beauty, 11  
 begging, 9  
 behavior, 1, 15  
 belief, 16, 17  
 birth, 12  
 birthdays, 16  
 blood, 13  
 bosses, 12  
 bread, 16  
 burial, 9  
 business, 9  
 business and commerce, 3, 5,  
     12, 14  
 buying, 3  
 calmness, 9  
 capital punishment, 11  
 categorization, 2  
 certainty, 3, 10  
 change, 11, 16  
 character, 1, 15  
 childhood, 15, 16  
 children, 6, 9  
 choices, 2, 5, 14  
 churches, 5, 7  
 circumstances, 4, 5, 12  
 class, 17  
 clergy, 1, 2  
 comparisons, 3, 7, 8, 13, 14  
 complaining, 4  
 complaints, 17  
 consequences, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14,  
     15  
 consolation, 2, 13  
 contentment, 2, 5, 8  
 contrast, 4, 12  
 contrasts, 10  
 conversation, 1, 7  
 correlations, 16  
 courage, 4  
 courtship, 2  
 credulity, 8  
 crimes, 11, 14  
 customs, 8, 14  
 danger, 15  
 death, 1, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13  
 debt, 1, 9, 17  
 debts, 5, 11  
 deceit, 3, 12  
 deception, 3, 8, 11, 15, 16  
 decisions, 5  
 desire, 3, 12, 16  
 destiny, 16  
 determination, 7  
 differences, 1, 4, 6, 13, 14, 15  
 difficulties, 6, 9  
 disagreement, 2  
 disease, 7  
 dishonesty, 3  
 dissatisfaction, 2, 8  
 distrust, 2, 3, 10  
 diversity, 12  
 drinking, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 17  
 eating, 11  
 eating, 4, 11, 12, 14, 15  
 education, 15  
 effort, 7  
 egocentricity, 13  
 egocentrism, 14  
 emotions, 4, 6, 13  
 enemies, 14  
 envy, 8, 10  
 equality, 5  
 error, 7, 9, 16  
 evil, 7, 9  
 exaggeration, 4  
 excellence, 2  
 excess, 6, 8  
 excuses, 7  
 existence, 10  
 expectations, 15, 17  
 expenses, 2  
 experience, 2  
 failure, 10  
 family, 1, 2, 6, 9  
 fathers, 1  
 faults, 4, 11  
 fear, 4, 7, 11, 15  
 feasts, 9  
 feelings, 3, 4  
 fire, 15  
 fishing, 15  
 food, 1, 2, 15  
 foreigners, 2  
 forgetting, 1, 9  
 forgiveness, 1, 11  
 freedom, 5, 11  
 friends, 1, 5, 11  
 friendship, 1, 3, 8  
 futility, 15  
 future, 11  
 future, the, 14  
 generosity, 5  
 gifts, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13  
 giving, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13  
 golden-rule, 12  
 goodness, 5, 7  
 gossip, 9  
 gratitude, 9  
 greed, 3  
 growing up, 6, 12  
 habits, 3, 4, 14  
 happiness, 3, 8, 13  
 hate, 14  
 health, 14  
 hedonism, 13  
 hierarchy, 11  
 history, 6  
 home, 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 15  
 hunger, 2, 14  
 husbands, 2  
 ignorance, 4  
 illusions, 3, 16  
 inclinations, 3  
 incompetence, 4  
 indecision, 4  
 indulgence, 17  
 industry, 2, 7, 9  
 inequality, 2  
 inevitability, 15  
 insanity, 16  
 insults, 4, 6, 17  
 inventions, 6  
 joy, 13

## Esaera Zaharrak

- justice, 3, 13, 14
- knowledge, 2, 6, 10
- laziness, 1, 7, 8, 11, 12
- learning, 6, 17
- lies, 8, 16
- life, 1, 9, 10, 12, 13
- limitations, 11
- loneliness, 1
- looking ahead, 9
- love, 14
- luck, 16
- marriage, 7, 13
- mental health, 12
- mental illness, 16
- mischievousness, 1, 3, 11
- mistakes, 16
- mockery, 4
- moderation, 6
- money, 5
- morning, 8, 10
- mothers, 1, 4, 10
- mourning, 9
- names, 10
- nature, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17
- necessity, 2, 13, 16
- need, 16
- needs, 14
- neighbors, 15
- news, 3, 16
- night, 7, 10
- nurture, 6, 14
- obliviousness, 6
- obstinacy, 6
- offending, 6
- old age, 2, 3, 7, 16
- opinions, 5, 16, 17
- opportunities, 1, 4, 5
- optimism, 8
- overextendedness, 15
- pain, 5, 12
- paradise, 5
- patience, 14, 15, 16, 17
- paying, 11
- people and places, 9, 15
- perfection, 4
- perseverance, 2, 6, 9
- persistence, 2, 6, 9, 14, 15, 16
- pleasing, 8
- poverty, 3, 9, 17
- power, 14
- predisposition, 3
- present, the, 14
- privation, 2, 6
- problems, 6, 13
- procrastination, 4, 8
- promises, 1, 7, 10
- property, 9, 13
- proverbs, 6
- punishment, 11
- quality, 12
- reality, 17
- receiving, 9, 13
- relationships, 1, 2, 7, 11
- relatives, 15
- relativity, 7, 12, 15
- religion, 5, 11
- reputation, 1, 2, 17
- resignation, 17
- responsibility, 4, 10
- restlessness, 14
- results, 7, 13
- revenge, 2
- right and wrong, 7
- rushing, 11
- sacrifice, 7
- safety, 10, 12
- saintliness, 11
- saving, 9
- scarcity, 6
- schools, 6
- secrets, 9
- security, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12
- selfishness, 2, 3, 13, 14
- selling, 3
- sharing, 13
- signs, 15
- similarities, 2, 3, 13
- simplicity, 2, 3, 5, 10, 16
- sleep, 10, 12
- smoke, 15
- sneakiness, 3
- society, 12, 14, 15
- sons, 1
- strangers, 2
- struggle, 7
- students, 6
- stupidity, 16
- success, 7
- suffering, 6, 7, 13
- survival, 11
- taking, 10
- talking, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16
- tardiness, 4
- taste, 8
- thieves, 14
- thought, 7
- threats, 14
- thrift, 9
- time, 1, 2, 5, 10, 14, 15
- timing, 1
- tolerance, 14, 17
- troubles, 9
- trust, 8, 11
- truth, 5
- vigilance, 3
- waking, 8, 12
- walking, 6
- water, 15
- weakness, 4, 9, 11
- wealth, 1, 2, 5, 8, 17
- weather, 16
- will, 13
- wine, 6
- wisdom, 2, 10
- women, 6
- work, 1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 15
- youth, 3, 7, 16