

GRAMMAR SUMMARY

NOUNS AND THEIR MODIFIERS

In German, nouns (words that name a person, place, or thing) are grouped into three classes or genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. All nouns, both persons and objects, fall into one of these groups. There are words used with nouns that signal the class of the noun. One of these is the definite article. In English there is one definite article: *the*. In German, there are three, one for each class: *der*, *die*, and *das*.

THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

SUMMARY OF DEFINITE ARTICLES

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE
<i>Masculine</i>	der	den	dem
<i>Feminine</i>	die	die	der
<i>Neuter</i>	das	das	dem
<i>Plural</i>	die	die	den

When the definite article is used with a noun, a noun phrase is formed. Noun phrases that are used as subjects are in the nominative case. Nouns that are used as direct objects or the objects of certain prepositions (such as *für*) are in the accusative case. Nouns that are indirect objects, the objects of certain prepositions (such as *mit*, *bei*), or the objects of special verbs (see page 340) are in the dative case. Below is a summary of the definite articles combined with nouns to form noun phrases.

SUMMARY OF NOUN PHRASES

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE
<i>Masculine</i>	der Vater der Ball	den Vater den Ball	dem Vater dem Ball
<i>Feminine</i>	die Mutter die Kassette	die Mutter die Kassette	der Mutter der Kassette
<i>Neuter</i>	das Mädchen das Haus	das Mädchen das Haus	dem Mädchen dem Haus
<i>Plural</i>	die Kassetten die Häuser	die Kassetten die Häuser	den Kassetten den Häusern