

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 Kasette	die Mutter die Kasette	der Mutter der Kasette
<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

DIESER-WORDS

The determiners *dieser*, *jeder*, *welcher*, and *alle* are called *dieser*-words. Their endings are similar to those of the definite articles. Note that the endings of the *dieser*-words are very similar to the definite articles.

SUMMARY OF DIESER-WORDS

<i>dieser</i>	<i>this, that, these</i>
<i>jeder</i>	<i>each, every</i>
<i>alle</i>	<i>all</i>
<i>welcher</i>	<i>which, what</i>

	NOMINATIVE			ACCUSATIVE			DATIVE		
<i>Masculine</i>	<i>dieser</i>	<i>jeder</i>	<i>welcher</i>	<i>diesen</i>	<i>jeden</i>	<i>welchen</i>	<i>diesem</i>	<i>jedem</i>	<i>welchem</i>
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>diese</i>	<i>jede</i>	<i>welche</i>	<i>diese</i>	<i>jede</i>	<i>welche</i>	<i>dieser</i>	<i>jeder</i>	<i>welcher</i>
<i>Neuter</i>	<i>dieses</i>	<i>jedes</i>	<i>welches</i>	<i>dieses</i>	<i>jedes</i>	<i>welches</i>	<i>diesem</i>	<i>jedem</i>	<i>welchem</i>
<i>Plural</i>	<i>diese</i>	<i>alle</i>	<i>welche</i>	<i>diese</i>	<i>alle</i>	<i>welche</i>	<i>diesen</i>	<i>allen</i>	<i>welchen</i>

THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

Another type of word that is used with nouns is the *indefinite article*: *ein*, *eine*, *ein* in German, *a*, *an* in English. There is no plural form of *ein*.

SUMMARY OF INDEFINITE ARTICLES

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE
<i>Masculine</i>	<i>ein</i>	<i>einen</i>	<i>einem</i>
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>eine</i>	<i>eine</i>	<i>einer</i>
<i>Neuter</i>	<i>ein</i>	<i>ein</i>	<i>einem</i>
<i>Plural</i>	—	—	—

THE NEGATING WORD KEIN

The word *kein* is also used with nouns and means *no*, *not*, or *not any*. Unlike *ein*, *kein* has a plural form.

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE
<i>Masculine</i>	<i>kein</i>	<i>keinen</i>	<i>keinem</i>
<i>Feminine</i>	<i>keine</i>	<i>keine</i>	<i>keiner</i>
<i>Neuter</i>	<i>kein</i>	<i>kein</i>	<i>keinem</i>
<i>Plural</i>	<i>keine</i>	<i>keine</i>	<i>keinen</i>

THE POSSESSIVES

These words also modify nouns and tell you *whose* object or person is being referred to (*my* car, *his* book, *her* mother). These words have the same endings as *kein*.

SUMMARY OF POSSESSIVES

	BEFORE MASCULINE NOUNS			BEFORE FEMININE NOUNS		BEFORE NEUTER NOUNS		BEFORE PLURAL NOUNS	
	NOM	ACC	DAT	NOM & ACC	DAT	NOM & ACC	DAT	NOM & ACC	DAT
<i>my</i>	mein	meinen	meinem	meine	meiner	mein	meinem	meine	meinen
<i>your</i>	dein	deinen	deinem	deine	deiner	dein	deinem	deine	deinen
<i>his</i>	sein	seinen	seinem	seine	seiner	sein	seinem	seine	seinen
<i>her</i>	ihr	ihren	ihrem	ihre	ihrer	ihr	ihrem	ihre	ihren
<i>our</i>	unser	unseren	unserem	usere	unserer	unser	unserem	unsere	unseren
<i>your</i>	euer	eueren	euerem	eure	eurer	euer	euerem	eure	eueren
<i>their</i>	ihr	ihren	ihrem	ihre	ihrer	ihr	ihrem	ihre	ihren
<i>your</i>	Ihr	Ihren	Ihrem	Ihre	Ihrer	Ihr	Ihrem	Ihre	Ihren

Commonly used short forms for

unseren:	unsren or unsern	<i>for</i> unsere:	unsre
eueren:	euren or euern	euere:	eure
<i>for</i> unserem:	unsrem or unserm	<i>for</i> unserer:	unsrer
euerem:	eurem or euerm	euerer:	eurer

NOUN PLURALS

Noun class and plural forms are not always predictable. Therefore, you must learn each noun together with its article (**der, die, das**) and with its plural form. As you learn more nouns, however, you will discover certain patterns. Although there are always exceptions to these patterns, you may find them helpful in remembering the plural forms of many nouns.

Most German nouns form their plurals in one of two ways: some nouns add endings in the plural; some add endings and/or change the sound of the stem vowel in the plural, indicating the sound change with the umlaut (¨). Only the vowels **a, o, u**, and the diphthong **au** can take the umlaut. If a noun has an umlaut in the singular, it keeps the umlaut in the plural. Most German nouns fit into one of the following five plural groups.

1. Nouns that do not have any ending in the plural. Sometimes they take an umlaut.
NOTE: There are only two feminine nouns in this group: **die Mutter** and **die Tochter**.

der Bruder, die Brüder
der Lehrer, die Lehrer
der Onkel, die Onkel
der Mantel, die Mäntel

der Schüler, die Schüler
der Vater, die Väter
die Mutter, die Mütter
die Tochter, die Töchter

das Fräulein, die Fräulein
das Mädchen, die Mädchen
das Poster, die Poster
das Zimmer, die Zimmer

2. Nouns that add the ending **-e** in the plural. Sometimes they also take an umlaut.
NOTE: There are many one-syllable words in this group.

der Bleistift, die Bleistifte
der Freund, die Freunde
der Paß, die Pässe

der Sohn, die Söhne
die Stadt, die Städte

das Jahr, die Jahre
das Spiel, die Spiele

3. Nouns that add the ending **-er** in the plural. Whenever possible, they take an umlaut, i.e., when the noun contains the vowels **a, o, u**, or the diphthong **au**. NOTE: There are no feminine nouns in this group. There are many one-syllable words in this group.

das Buch, die Bücher
das Fach, die Fächer

das Haus, die Häuser
das Land, die Länder

4. Nouns that add the ending **-en** or **-n** in the plural. These nouns never add an umlaut.
NOTE: There are many feminine nouns in this group.

der Herr, die Herren
der Junge, die Jungen
die Briefmarke, die Briefmarken
die Familie, die Familien
die Farbe, die Farben
die Frau, die Frauen

die Klasse, die Klassen
die Karte, die Karten
der Name, die Namen
der Vetter, die Vettern
die Küche, die Küchen
die Schwester, die Schwestern

die Tante, die Tanten
die Wohnung, die Wohnungen
die Zahl, die Zahlen
die Zeitung, die Zeitungen

Feminine nouns ending in **-in** add the ending **-nen** in the plural.

die Freundin, die Freundinnen
die Lehrerin, die Lehrerinnen

die Verkäuferin, die Verkäuferinnen

5. Nouns that add the ending **-s** in the plural. These nouns never add an umlaut.
NOTE: There are many words of foreign origin in this group.

der Kuli, die Kulis
die Kamera, die Kameras

das Auto, die Autos
das Hobby, die Hobbys

SUMMARY OF PLURAL ENDINGS

Group	1	2	3	4	5
Ending:	-	-e	-er	-(e)n	-s
Umlaut:	sometimes	sometimes	always	never	never

PRONOUNS

PERSONAL

REFLEXIVE

	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	DATIVE
Singular					
1st person	ich	mich	mir	mich	mir
2nd person	du	dich	dir	dich	dir
3rd person	<i>m.</i> er	ihn	ihm	} sich	} sich
	<i>f.</i> sie	sie	ihr		
	<i>n.</i> es	es	ihm		
Plural					
1st person	wir	uns	uns	uns	uns
2nd person	ihr	euch	euch	euch	euch
3rd person	sie	sie	ihnen	sich	sich
<i>you</i> (formal, sing. & pl.)	Sie	Sie	Ihnen	sich	sich

DEFINITE ARTICLES AS DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

The definite articles can be used as demonstrative pronouns, giving more emphasis to the sentences than the personal pronouns *er, sie, es*. Note that these demonstrative pronouns have the same forms as the definite articles. An exception is *denen*.

Wer bekommt *den* Cappuccino? *Der* ist für mich.

	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	denen

INTERROGATIVES

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

	PEOPLE	THINGS
<i>Nominative</i>	wer? <i>who?</i>	was? <i>what?</i>
<i>Accusative</i>	wen? <i>whom?</i>	was? <i>what?</i>
<i>Dative</i>	wem? <i>to, for whom?</i>	

OTHER INTERROGATIVES

wann? <i>when?</i>	wie viele? <i>how many?</i>	welche? <i>which?</i>
warum? <i>why?</i>	wo? <i>where?</i>	was für (ein)? <i>what kind of (a)?</i>
wie? <i>how?</i>	woher? <i>from where?</i>	
wieviel? <i>how much? how many?</i>	wohin? <i>to where?</i>	

PREPOSITIONS

<i>Accusative</i>	durch, für, gegen, ohne, um
<i>Dative</i>	aus, bei, mit, nach, seit, von, zu
<i>Two-Way: Dative-wo? Accusative-wohin?</i>	an, auf, hinter, in, neben, über, unter, vor, zwischen

MAKING COMPARISONS

	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Comparative</i>
1. <i>All comparative forms end in -er.</i>	schnell	schneller
2. <i>Most one-syllable forms have an umlaut.</i>	alt	älter
3. <i>Exceptions must be learned as they appear.</i>	dunkel gut	dunkler besser

<i>Equal Comparisons:</i>	Er spielt so gut wie ich (spiele). <i>He plays as well as I (do).</i>
<i>Unequal Comparisons:</i>	Sie spielt besser als ich (spiele). <i>She plays better than I (do).</i>
<i>Comparative adjectives before nouns:</i>	der bessere Wagen ein schöneres Auto

NOTE: Comparative adjectives before nouns have the same endings as descriptive adjectives (see page 337).