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Collins German Grammar

We would like to give special thanks to
Simone Conboy, Foreign Languages
Consultant, for all her advice on teaching
practice in today's classroom. Her
contribution has been invaluable in the
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FOREWORD FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS

The *Easy Learning German Grammar* is designed to be used with both young and adult learners, as a group reference book to complement your course book during classes, or as a recommended text for self-study and homework/coursework.

The text specifically targets learners from *ab initio* to intermediate or GCSE level, and therefore its structural content and vocabulary have been matched to the relevant specifications up to and including Higher GCSE.

The approach aims to develop knowledge and understanding of grammar and your learners' ability to apply it by:

- defining parts of speech at the start of each major section with examples in English to clarify concepts
- minimizing the use of grammar terminology and providing clear explanations of terms both within the text and in the **Glossary**
- illustrating all points with examples (and their translations) based on topics and contexts which are relevant to beginner and intermediate course content

The text helps you develop positive attitudes to grammar learning in your classes by:

- giving clear, easy-to-follow explanations
- prioritizing content according to relevant specifications for the levels
- sequencing points to reflect course content, e.g. verb tenses
- highlighting useful **Tips** to deal with common difficulties
- summarizing **Key points** at the end of sections to consolidate learning

In addition to fostering success and building a thorough foundation in German grammar, the optional **Grammar Extra** sections will encourage and challenge your learners to further their studies to higher and advanced levels.

INTRODUCTION FOR STUDENTS

Whether you are starting to learn German for the very first time, brushing up on topics you have studied in class, or revising for your GCSE exams, the *Easy Learning German Grammar* is here to help. This easy-to-use guide takes you through all the basics you will need to speak and understand modern, everyday German.

Newcomers can sometimes struggle with the technical terms they come across when they start to explore the grammar of a new language. The *Easy Learning German Grammar* explains how to get to grips with all the parts of speech you will need to know, using simple language and cutting out jargon.

The text is divided into sections, each dealing with a particular area of grammar. Each section can be studied individually, as numerous cross-references in the text point you to relevant points in other sections of the book for further information.

Every major section begins with an explanation of the area of grammar covered on the following pages. For quick reference, these definitions are also collected together on pages x–xiv in a glossary of essential grammar terms.

What is a verb?

A **verb** is a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, what someone or something is, or what happens to them, for example, *be*, *sing*, *live*.

Each grammar point in the text is followed by simple examples of real German, complete with English translations, helping you understand the rules. Underlining has been used in examples throughout the text to highlight the grammatical point being explained.

- If you are talking about a part of your body, you usually use a word like *my* or *his* in English, but in German you usually use the definite article.

Er hat sich das Bein gebrochen.

He's broken his leg.

Sie hat sich die Hände schon gewaschen.

She's already washed her hands.

In German, as with any foreign language, there are certain pitfalls which have to be avoided. **Tips** and **Information** notes throughout the text are useful reminders of the things that often trip learners up.

Tip

Use **Sie** in more formal situations for both singular and plural you.

Key points sum up all the important facts about a particular area of grammar, to save you time when you are revising and help you focus on the main grammatical points.

Key points

- ✓ With masculine singular nouns in the nominative → use **ein**.
- ✓ With feminine singular nouns in the nominative → use **eine**.
- ✓ With plural nouns → use **die**, **der** or **den**, depending on the case.
- ✓ The indefinite article is not usually used when you say what jobs people do.

If you think you would like to continue with your German studies to a higher level, check out the **Grammar Extra** sections. These are intended for advanced students who are interested in knowing a little more about the structures they will come across beyond GCSE.

Grammar Extra!

Some German adjectives are used as feminine nouns. They have feminine adjective endings which change according to the article which comes before them.

eine Deutsche

a German woman

die Abgeordnete

the female MP

➡ For more information on **Adjectives which can be used as nouns** and for **Feminine adjective endings**, see pages 50 and 42.

Finally, the supplement at the end of the book contains **Verb Tables**, where 97 important German verbs are conjugated in full. Examples show you how to use these verbs in your own work. If you are unsure of how a verb conjugates in German, you can look up the **Verb Index** on pages 99–103 to find either the conjugation of the verb itself, or a cross-reference to a model verb, which will show you the patterns that verb follows.

We hope that you will enjoy using the *Easy Learning German Grammar* and find it useful in the course of your study.

GLOSSARY OF GRAMMAR TERMS

ABSTRACT NOUN a word used to refer to a quality, idea, feeling or experience, rather than a physical object, for example, *size, reason, happiness*.

ACCUSATIVE CASE the form of nouns, adjectives, pronouns and articles used in German to show the direct object of a verb and after certain prepositions. Compare with **direct object**.

ACTIVE in an active sentence, the subject of the verb is the person or thing that carries out the action described by the verb.

ADJECTIVE a 'describing' word that tells you more about a person or thing, such as their appearance, colour, size or other qualities, for example, *pretty, blue, big*.

ADVERB a word usually used with verbs, adjectives or other adverbs that gives more information about when, where, how or in what circumstances something happens, for example, *quickly, happily, now*.

AGREE (to) to change word endings according to whether you are referring to masculine, feminine, neuter, singular or plural people and things.

AGREEMENT see **agree (to)**.

APOSTROPHE s an ending ('s) added to a noun to show who or what someone or something belongs to, for example, *Danielle's dog, the doctor's husband, the book's cover*.

ARTICLE a word like *the, a* and *an*, which is used in front of a noun. Compare with **definite article** and **indefinite article**.

AUXILIARY VERB a verb such as *be, have* and *do* when used with a main verb to form some tenses, negatives and questions.

BASE FORM the form of the verb without any endings added to it, for example, *walk, have, be, go*. Compare with **infinitive**.

CASE the grammatical function of a noun in a sentence.

CLAUSE a group of words containing a verb.

COMPARATIVE an adjective or adverb with *-er* on the end of it or *more* or *less* in front of it that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *slower, less important, more carefully*.

COMPOUND NOUN a word for a living being, thing or idea, which is made up of two or more words, for example, *tin-opener, railway station*.

CONDITIONAL a verb form used to talk about things that would happen or would be true under certain conditions, for example, *I would help you if I could*. It is also used to say what you would like or need, for example, *Could you give me the bill?*

CONJUGATE (to) to give a verb different endings according to whether you are referring to *I, you, they* and so on, and according to whether you are referring to past, present or future, for example, *I have, she had, they will have*.

CONJUGATION a group of verbs which have the same endings as each other or change according to the same pattern.

CONJUNCTION a word such as *and, because* or *but* that links two words or phrases of a similar type or two parts of a sentence, for example, *Diane and I have been friends for years.*; *I left because I was bored*. Compare with **co-ordinating conjunction** and **subordinating conjunction**.

CO-ORDINATING CONJUNCTION a word such as *and, but* or *however* that links two words, phrases or clauses.

CONSONANT a letter of the alphabet which is not a vowel, for example, *b, f, m, s, v* etc. Compare with **vowel**.

CONSTRUCTION an arrangement of words together in a phrase or sentence.

DATIVE CASE the form of nouns, adjectives, pronouns and articles used in German to show the indirect object of a verb and after certain verbs and prepositions.

DECLENSION German nouns change according to their gender, case and number. This is called declension.

DEFINITE ARTICLE the word *the*. Compare with **indefinite article**.

DEMONSTRATIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used with a noun to point out a particular person or thing, for example, *this woman, that dog*.

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *this, that, these* and *those* used instead of a noun to point out people or things, for example, *That looks fun*.

DIRECT OBJECT a noun referring to the person or thing affected by the action described by a verb, for example, *She wrote her name.*; *I shut the window*. Compare with **indirect object**.

DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *me, him, us* and *them* which is used instead of a noun to stand in for the person or thing most directly affected by the action described by the verb. Compare with **indirect object pronoun**.

ENDING a form added to a verb stem, for example, *geh → geht*, and to adjectives and nouns depending on whether they refer to masculine, feminine, neuter, singular or plural things.

FEMININE one of three classifications for the gender of German nouns which determines the form of articles, pronouns and adjectives used with the noun and to refer to it. The other two classifications are **masculine** and **neuter**.

FUTURE a verb tense used to talk about something that will happen or will be true.

GENDER whether a noun, article, pronoun or adjective is feminine, masculine or neuter.

GENITIVE CASE the form of nouns, adjectives, pronouns and articles used in German to show that something belongs to someone and after certain prepositions.

IMPERATIVE the form of a verb used when giving orders and instructions, for example, *Shut the door!*; *Sit down!*; *Don't go!*

IMPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to talk about the past, especially in descriptions, and to say what was happening, for example, *It was sunny at the weekend* or what used to happen, for example, *I used to walk to school*. Compare with **perfect**.

IMPERSONAL VERB one which does not refer to a real person or thing and where the subject is represented by *it*, for example, *It's going to rain*; *It's 10 o'clock*.

INDEFINITE ADJECTIVE one of a small group of adjectives used to talk about people or things in a general way, without saying exactly who or what they are, for example, *several, all, every*.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE the words *a* and *an*. Compare with **definite article**.

INDEFINITE PRONOUN a small group of pronouns such as *everything, nobody* and *something*, which are used to refer to people or things in a general way, without saying exactly who or what they are.

INDIRECT OBJECT a noun or pronoun typically used in English with verbs that take two objects. For example, in *I gave the carrot to the rabbit*, the *rabbit* is the indirect object and *carrot* is the direct object. With some German verbs, what is the direct object in English is treated as an indirect object in, for example, *Ich helfe ihr* → *I'm helping her*. Compare with **direct object**.

INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN when a verb has two objects (a direct one and an indirect one), the indirect object pronoun is used instead of a noun to show the person or the thing the action is intended to benefit or harm, for example, *me* in *He gave me a book* and *Can you get me a towel?* Compare with **direct object pronoun**.

INDIRECT SPEECH the words you use to report what someone has said when you aren't using their actual words, for example, *He said that he was going out*.

INFINITIVE the form of the verb with *to* in front of it and without any endings added, for example, *to walk*, *to have*, *to be*, *to go*. Compare with **base form**.

INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVE a question word used with a noun to ask *who?*, *what?* or *which?* for example, *What instruments do you play?*; *Which shoes do you like?*

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN one of the words *who*, *whose*, *whom*, *what* and *which* when they are used instead of a noun to ask questions, for example, *What's happening?*; *Who's coming?*

MASCULINE one of three classifications for the gender of German nouns which determines the form of articles, pronouns and adjectives used with the noun and to refer to it. The other two classifications are **feminine** and **neuter**.

MIXED VERB a German verb whose stem changes its vowel to form the imperfect tense and the past participle, like strong verbs. Its past participle is formed by adding *-t* to the verb stem, like weak verbs. Compare with **strong verb** and **weak verb**.

MODAL VERBS are used to modify or change other verbs to show such things as *ability*, *permission* or *necessity*. For example, *he can swim*, *may I come?* and *he ought to go*.

NEGATIVE a question or statement which contains a word such as *not*, *never* or *nothing*, and is used to say that something is not happening, or is not true, for example, *I never eat meat*; *Don't you love me?*

NEUTER one of three classifications for the gender of German nouns which determines the form of article, pronouns and adjectives used with the noun and to refer to it. The other two classifications are **masculine** and **feminine**.

NOMINATIVE CASE the basic form of nouns, pronouns, adjectives and articles used in German and the one you find in the dictionary. It is used for the subject of the sentence. Compare with **subject**.

NOUN a 'naming' word for a living being, thing or idea, for example, *woman*, *desk*, *happiness*, *Andrew*.

OBJECT a noun or pronoun which refers to a person or thing that is affected by the action described by the verb. Compare with **direct object**, **indirect object** and **subject**.

OBJECT PRONOUN one of the set of pronouns including *me*, *him* and *them*, which are used instead of the noun as the object of a verb or preposition. Compare with **subject pronoun**.

ORDINAL NUMBER a number used to indicate where something comes in an order or sequence, for example, *first*, *fifth*, *sixteenth*.

PART OF SPEECH one of the categories to which all words are assigned and which describe their forms and how they are used in sentences, for example, *noun*, *verb*, *adjective*, *preposition*, *pronoun*.

PASSIVE a form of the verb that is used when the subject of the verb is the person or thing that is affected by the action, for example, *we were told*.

PAST PARTICIPLE a verb form, for example, *watched*, *swum* which is used with an auxiliary verb to form perfect and pluperfect tenses and passives. Some past participles are also used as adjectives, for example, *a broken watch*.

PERFECT one of the verb tenses used to talk about the past, especially about actions that took place and were completed in the past. Compare with **imperfect**.

PERSONAL PRONOUN one of the group of words including *I*, *you* and *they* which are used to refer to yourself, the people you are talking to, or the people or things you are talking about.

PLUPERFECT one of the verb tenses used to describe something that *had* happened or had been true at a point in the past, for example, *I'd forgotten to finish my homework*.

PLURAL the form of a word which is used to refer to more than one person or thing. Compare with **singular**.

POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE one of the words *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our* or *their*, used with a noun to show that one person or thing belongs to another.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUN one of the words *mine*, *yours*, *hers*, *his*, *ours* or *theirs*, used instead of a noun to show that one person or thing belongs to another.

PREPOSITION is a word such as *at*, *for*, *with*, *into* or *from*, which is usually followed by a noun, pronoun or, in English, a word ending in *-ing*. Prepositions show how people and things relate to the rest of the sentence, for example, *She's at home*; *a tool for cutting grass*; *It's from David*.

PRESENT a verb form used to talk about what is true at the moment, what happens regularly, and what is happening now, for example, *I'm a student*; *I travel to college by train*; *I'm studying languages*.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE a verb form ending in *-ing* which is used in English to form verb tenses, and which may be used as an adjective or a noun, for example, *What are you doing?*; *the setting sun*; *Swimming is easy!*

PRONOUN a word which you use instead of a noun, when you do not need or want to name someone or something directly, for example, *it*, *you*, *none*.

PROPER NOUN the name of a person, place, organization or thing. Proper nouns are always written with a capital letter, for example, *Kevin*, *Glasgow*, *Europe*, *London Eye*.

QUESTION WORD a word such as *why*, *where*, *who*, *which* or *how* which is used to ask a question.

REFLEXIVE PRONOUN a word ending in *-self* or *-selves*, such as *myself* or *themselves*, which refers back to the subject, for example, *He hurt himself*; *Take care of yourself*.

REFLEXIVE VERB a verb where the subject and object are the same, and where the action 'reflects back' on the subject.

A reflexive verb is used with a reflexive pronoun such as *myself*, *yourself*, *herself*, for example, *I washed myself*; *He shaved himself*.

RELATIVE CLAUSE part of the sentence in which the relative pronoun appears.

RELATIVE PRONOUN a word such as *that*, *who* or *which*, when it is used to link two parts of a sentence together.

SENTENCE a group of words which usually has a verb and a subject. In writing, a sentence has a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark at the end.

SINGULAR the form of a word which is used to refer to one person or thing. Compare with **plural**.

STEM the main part of a verb to which endings are added.

STRONG VERB a German verb whose stem changes its vowel to form the imperfect tense and the past participle. Its past participle is not formed by adding -t to the verb stem. Also known as irregular verbs. Compare with **weak verb**.

SUBJECT the noun or pronoun used to refer to the person which does the action described by the verb, for example, *My cat doesn't drink milk*. Compare with **object**.

SUBJECT PRONOUN a word such as *I*, *he*, *she* and *they* which carries out the action described by the verb. Pronouns stand in for nouns when it is clear who is being talked about, for example, *My brother isn't here at the moment. He'll be back in an hour*. Compare with **object pronoun**.

SUBJUNCTIVE a verb form used in certain circumstances to express some sort of

feeling, or to show doubt about whether something will happen or whether something is true. It is only used occasionally in modern English, for example, *If I were you, I wouldn't bother.*; *So be it.*

SUBORDINATE CLAUSE a clause which begins with a subordinating conjunction such as *because* or *while* and which must be used with a main clause. In German, the verb always goes to the end of the subordinate clause.

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION a word such as *when*, *because* or *while* that links the subordinate clause and the main clause in a sentence. Compare with **subordinate clause**.

SUPERLATIVE an adjective or adverb with -est on the end of it or *most* or *least* in front of it that is used to compare people, things or actions, for example, *thinnest*, *most quickly*, *least interesting*.

SYLLABLE consonant+vowel units that make up the sounds of a word, for example, ca-the-dral (3 syllables), im-po-ssi-ble (4 syllables).

TENSE the form of a verb which shows whether you are referring to the past, present or future.

VERB a 'doing' word which describes what someone or something does, what someone or something is, or what happens to them, for example, *be*, *sing*, *live*.

VOWEL one of the letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o* or *u*. Compare with **consonant**.

WEAK VERB a German verb whose stem does not change its vowel to form the imperfect tense and the past participle. Its past participle is formed by adding -t to the verb stem. Also known as regular verbs. Compare with **strong verbs**.

NOUNS

What is a noun?

A **noun** is a 'naming' word for a living being, thing or idea, for example, *woman*, *happiness*, *Andrew*. German nouns change, according to their **gender**, **case** and **number**. This is called declension.

Using nouns

- In German, all nouns are either **masculine**, **feminine** or **neuter**. This is called their **gender**. In English, we call all things – for example, *table*, *car*, *book*, *apple* – 'it', but in German, even words for things have a gender. It is important to know that the gender of German nouns rarely relates to the sex of the person or thing it refers to. For example, in German, the word for "man" is masculine, but the word for "girl" is neuter and the word for "person" is feminine.

der Mann	man
das Mädchen	girl
die Person	person

Tip

German nouns are **always** written with a capital letter.

- Whenever you are using a noun, you need to know whether it is masculine, feminine or neuter as this affects the form of other words used with it, such as:

- adjectives that describe it
- articles (such as **der** or **ein**) that go before it
- pronouns (such as **er** or **sie**) that replace it

⇒ For more information on **Adjectives**, **Articles** or **Pronouns**, see pages 40, 25 and 69.

- You can find information about gender by looking the word up in a dictionary – in the *Easy Learning German Dictionary*, for example, you will find the **definite article** (the word for *the*) in front of the word. When you come across a new noun, always learn the word for *the* that goes with it to help you remember its gender.

- **der** before a noun tells you it is masculine
- **die** before a noun tells you it is feminine
- **das** before a noun tells you it is neuter

⇒ For more information on the **Definite article**, see page 25.

- We refer to something as singular when we are talking about just one, and as plural when we are talking about more than one. The singular is the form of the noun you will usually find when you look a noun up in the dictionary. As in English, nouns in German change their form in the plural.

die Katze cat → **die Katzen** cats

- Adjectives, articles and pronouns are also affected by whether a noun is singular or plural.

Tip

Remember that you have to use the right word for *the*, *a* and so on according to the gender and case of the German noun.



Gender

- In German a noun can be masculine, feminine or neuter. Gender is quite unpredictable – the best thing is simply to learn each noun with its definite article, that is the word for *the* (**der**, **die** or **das**) which goes with it:

der Teppich	carpet
die Zeit	time
das Bild	picture

However, there are some clues which can help you work out or remember the gender of a noun, as explained below.

1 Masculine nouns

- Nouns referring to male people and animals are masculine.

der Mann	man
der Löwe	(male) lion

- Seasons, months, days of the week, weather and points of the compass are masculine.

der Sommer	summer
der August	August
der Freitag	Friday
der Wind	wind
der Norden	north

- Most nouns referring to things that perform an action are also masculine.

der Wecker	alarm clock
der Computer	computer

Grammar Extra!

German nouns taken from other languages and ending in **-ant**, **-ast**, **-ismus**, and **-or** are masculine:

der Trabant	satellite
der Ballast	ballast
der Kapitalismus	capitalism
der Tresor	safe

- Nouns with the following endings are masculine.

Masculine Ending	Example	Meaning
-ich	der Teppich	carpet
-ig	der Essig	vinegar
-ling	der Frühling	spring

Key points

- ✓ Nouns referring to male people and animals are masculine.
- ✓ Seasons, months, days of the week, weather and points of the compass are masculine.

2 Feminine nouns

- Most nouns ending in **-e** are feminine.

<u>die Falte</u>	crease, wrinkle
<u>die Brücke</u>	bridge

- ❗ Note that male people or animals ending in **-e** are masculine, and, nouns beginning with **Ge-** and ending in **-e** are normally neuter.

<u>der Löwe</u>	the lion
<u>das Getreide</u>	crop

- Nouns with the following endings are feminine.

Feminine Ending	Example	Meaning
-heit	<u>die Schönheit</u>	beauty
-keit	<u>die Sehenswürdigkeit</u>	sight
-schaft	<u>die Gewerkschaft</u>	trade union
-ung	<u>die Zeitung</u>	newspaper
-ei	<u>die Bäckerei</u>	bakery

Grammar Extra!

German nouns taken from other languages and ending in **-anz**, **-enz**, **-ie**, **-ik**, **-ion**, **-tät**, **-ur** are feminine, with some exceptions.

<u>die Distanz</u>	distance	BUT: <u>der Kranz</u>	wreath
<u>die Konkurrenz</u>	rivalry		
<u>die Theorie</u>	theory	BUT: <u>das Knie</u>	knee
<u>die Panik</u>	panic	BUT: <u>der Pazifik</u>	Pacific
<u>die Union</u>	union	BUT: <u>der Spion</u>	spy
<u>die Elektrizität</u>	electricity		
<u>die Temperatur</u>	temperature	BUT: <u>das Abitur</u>	A levels

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

- Numbers used in counting, for example one, three, fifty are feminine.

Er hat eine Drei gekriegt. He got a three.

- In German, there are sometimes very different words for male and female, just as in English.

<u>der Mann</u>	man
<u>die Frau</u>	woman
<u>der Vater</u>	father
<u>die Mutter</u>	mother
<u>der Bulle</u>	bull
<u>die Kuh</u>	cow

- Many masculine German nouns can be made feminine by adding **-in** in the singular and **-innen** in the plural.

<u>der Lehrer</u>	(male) teacher
<u>die Lehrerin</u>	(female) teacher
<u>Lehrer und Lehrerinnen</u>	(male and female) teachers
<u>der Leser</u>	(male) reader
<u>die Leserin</u>	(female) reader
<u>unsere Leser und Leserinnen</u>	our readers

Grammar Extra!

Some German adjectives are used as feminine nouns. They have feminine adjective endings which change according to the article which comes before them.

<u>eine Deutsche</u>	a German woman
<u>die Abgeordnete</u>	the female MP

- ➡ For more information on Adjectives which can be used as nouns and for Feminine adjective endings, see pages 50 and 42.

Key points

- ✓ Most nouns ending in **-e** are feminine.
- ✓ Many feminine nouns end in: **-heit**, **-keit**, **-schaft**, **-ung**, **-ei**.
- ✓ Masculine German words referring to people can be made feminine by adding **-in** in the singular and **-innen** in the plural.
- ✓ Numbers used in counting are feminine.

3 Neuter nouns

- Most nouns beginning with **Ge-** are neuter.

das Geschirr	crockery, dishes
das Geschöpf	creature
das Getreide	crop

- Nouns ending in **-lein** or **-chen** are also neuter. These are called the diminutive form and refer to small persons or objects.

Endings to form the diminutive	Example	Meaning
-lein	das Kindlein	little child
-chen	das Häuschen	little house

- ❗ Note that if these words have one of the vowels **a**, **o** or **u**, an umlaut should be added above the vowel. The final **-e** should also be dropped before these endings

der Bach → Bäch → das Bächlein	(small) stream
die Katze → Kätz → das Kätzchen	kitten

- Fractions are also neuter.

ein Drittel davon	a third of it
--------------------------	---------------

- Nouns which refer to young humans and animals are neuter.

das Baby	baby
das Kind	child
das Kalb	calf
das Lamm	lamb

- ❗ Note that the animals themselves can be any gender.

der Hund	dog
die Schlange	snake
das Vieh	cattle

- Infinitives (the "to" form of verbs) used as nouns are neuter.

das Schwimmen	swimming
das Spielen	playing
das Radfahren	cycling

- ➡ For more information on **Infinitives**, see page 134.

- Nouns with the following endings are neuter.

Neuter Ending	Example	Meaning
-nis	das Ereignis	event
-tum	das Eigentum	property

Grammar Extra!

German nouns taken from other languages and ending in **-at**, **-ett**, **-fon**, **-ma**, **-ment**, **-um** are neuter.

das Reservat	reservation	
das Tablett	tray	
das Telefon	phone	
das Thema	subject, topic	
das Medikament	drug	
das Ultimatum	ultimatum	BUT: der Reichtum wealth
das Studium	studies	

Key points

- ✓ Most nouns beginning with **Ge-** are neuter.
- ✓ The diminutive form of nouns is neuter.
- ✓ Nouns referring to young humans and animals are neuter.
- ✓ The "to" forms of verbs (called infinitives) used as nouns are neuter.
- ✓ Nouns ending in **-nis** or **-tum** are neuter.

4 Compound nouns

What is a compound noun?

A **compound noun** is a noun made up of two or more words, for example, **tin-opener** and **railway station**.

- In German, these words nearly always take their gender from the LAST noun of the compound word.

die Armbanduhr (Armband + die Uhr)	wristwatch
der Tomatensalat (Tomaten + der Salat)	tomato salad
der Fußballspieler (Fußball + der Spieler)	footballer

Grammar Extra!

Some German nouns have more than one gender. A few nouns have two genders and sometimes one of them can only be used in certain regions.

der/das Marzipan	marzipan	(<i>der Marzipan</i> is used mostly in Austria)
der/das Keks	biscuit	(<i>das Keks</i> is used mostly in Austria)
der/das Kaugummi	chewing gum	

Other nouns have two genders and the meaning of the word changes depending on which gender it has.

der Band	volume, book
das Band	ribbon, band, tape; bond
der See	lake
die See	sea
der Leiter	leader, manager
die Leiter	ladder

➤ In German, abbreviations have the same gender as the word they come from.

die BRD	the Federal Republic of Germany (from die Bundesrepublik Deutschland)
die DB	the German Railways (from die Deutsche Bahn)
das ZDF	German TV channel (from das Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen)

Key points

- ✓ Compound nouns are nouns made up of two or more words and usually take their gender from the last part of the compound word.
- ✓ Some German nouns have more than one gender and this can affect their meaning.
- ✓ German abbreviations have the same gender as the words they come from.

The Cases

➤ In German, there are four grammatical cases – nominative, accusative, genitive and dative. The case you should use depends on the grammatical function of the noun in the sentence.

1 The nominative case

➤ The nominative case is the basic form of the noun and is the one you find in the dictionary.

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	der Wagen ein Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied

⇒ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

➤ The nominative case is used for:

- the subject of the sentence, that is the person, animal or thing 'doing' the action

Das Mädchen singt.

The girl is singing.

Die Katze schläft.

The cat is sleeping.

- after the verbs **sein** (meaning to be) and **werden** (meaning to be, to become)

Er ist ein guter Lehrer.

He is a good teacher.

Das wird ein Pullover.

It's going to be a jumper.

2 The accusative case

➤ The article for feminine and neuter nouns in the accusative case has the same form as in the nominative. **Der** for masculine nouns changes to **den** and **ein** to **einen**.

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	der Wagen ein Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied
Accusative	den Wagen einen Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied

⇒ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

➤ The accusative case is used:

- to show the direct object of a verb. This is the person, animal or thing affected by the action of the verb.

He gave me a book. → *What did he give me?* → a book (=direct object)

Can you get me a towel? → *What can you get me?* → a towel (=direct object)

Ich sehe den Hund. → *What do I see?* → **den Hund** (=direct object)

Er hat ein Lied gesungen. → *What did he sing?* → **ein Lied** (=direct object)

- after certain prepositions (words in English such as *at, for, with, into* or *from*) which are always used with the accusative.

Es ist für seine Freundin.

It's for his girlfriend.

Es ist schwierig ohne einen Wagen.

It's difficult without a car.

durch das Rauchen wurde ich krank.

Smoking made me ill.

⇒ For more information on **Prepositions followed by the accusative case**, see page 156.

- after certain prepositions of place when movement is involved:

an

on, to, at

auf

on, in, to, at

hinter

behind

in

in, into, to

neben

next to, beside

über

over, across, above

unter

under, among

vor

in front of, before

zwischen

between

Stell dein Rad neben mein Auto.

Put your bike next to my car.

Sie legten ein Brett über das Loch.

They put a board over the hole.

- ⓘ Note that when there is no movement involved after these prepositions, the **dative case** is used.

Sie geht in die Stadt. (accusative)

She's going into town.

Er war in der Stadt. (dative)

He was in town.

⇒ For more information on **Prepositions followed by the accusative or the dative case**, see page 158.

- in many expressions of time and place which do not have a preposition

Das macht sie jeden Donnerstag.

She does that every Thursday.

Die Schule ist einen Kilometer entfernt.

The school is a kilometre away.

- in some set expressions

Guten Abend!

Good evening!

Vielen Dank!

Thank you very much!

3 The genitive case

- Der for masculine nouns and das for neuter nouns change to **des**. Ein changes to **eines**. The endings of **masculine** and **neuter singular** nouns also change in the genitive case.

- s is added to masculine and neuter nouns ending in **-en, -el, -er**.

der Wagen car → **des Wagens**

das Rauchen smoking → **des Rauchens**

der Esel donkey → **des Esels**

der Computer computer → **des Computers**

Ich mag die Farbe des Wagens.

I like the colour of the car.

Die Größe des Computers

The size of the computer isn't

ist nicht wichtig.

important.

- es is added to most masculine and neuter nouns of one syllable ending in a consonant.

der Freund friend → **des Freundes**

der Mann man → **des Mannes**

der Sitz seat → **des Sitzes**

der Arzt doctor → **des Arztes**

der Tisch table → **des Tisches**

das Schloss castle → **des Schlosses**

Die Schwester des Arztes hilft manchmal in der Sprechstunde.

The doctor's sister helps him in the surgery sometimes.

Das Museum befindet sich in der Nähe des Schlosses.

The museum is near the castle.

- Die changes to **der** and **eine** to **einer** in the genitive. The endings of **feminine singular** nouns in the genitive case are the same as in the nominative.

die Ärztin (female) doctor → **der Ärztin**

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	der Wagen ein Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied
Accusative	den Wagen einen Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied
Genitive	des Wagens eines Wagens	der Dose einer Dose	des Lieds eines Lieds

➤ The genitive case is used:

- to show that something belongs to someone

Das Auto der Frau war rot.

The woman's car was red.

Der Hund meiner Mutter ist ganz klein.

My mother's dog is really small.

- after certain prepositions which always take the genitive

Wegen des schlechten Wetters müssen wir nach Hause gehen.

We'll have to go home because of the bad weather.

Trotz ihrer Krankheit geht sie jeden Tag spazieren.

She goes for a walk every day, despite her illness.

- in some expressions of time

eines Tages

one day

4 The dative case

➤ **Der** changes to **dem** and **ein** to **einem** in the dative. Singular nouns in the dative have the same form as in the nominative.

dem Auto

to the car

dem Mädchen

to the girl

➤ **Die** changes to **der** and **eine** to **einer** in the dative. Singular nouns in the dative have the same form as in the nominative.

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	der Wagen ein Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied
Accusative	den Wagen einen Wagen	die Dose eine Dose	das Lied ein Lied
Genitive	des Wagens eines Wagens	der Dose einer Dose	des Lieds eines Lieds
Dative	dem Wagen einem Wagen	der Dose einer Dose	dem Lied einem Lied

➤ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

➤ **-e** is added to some nouns in certain set phrases.

Wir gehen nach Hause.

We're going home.

Er hat sich zu Tode gearbeitet.

He worked himself to death.

Grammar Extra!

-e may also be added to the dative singular of masculine and neuter nouns to make the phrase easier to pronounce

zu welchem Zwecke?

to what purpose?

➤ The dative case is used:

- to show the indirect object of a verb – an indirect object answers the question *who to/for?* or *to/for what?*

He gave the man the book. → *Who did he give the book to?* → the man
(= noun indirect object)

Er gab dem Mann das Buch.

- after certain verbs

Er hilft seiner Mutter im Haushalt.

He helps his mother with the housework.

➤ For more information on **Verbs followed by the dative case**, see page 148.

- after certain prepositions which always take the dative

Nach dem Essen gingen wir spazieren.

After eating we went for a walk.

Er kam mit einer Freundin.

He came with a friend.

➤ For more information on **Prepositions followed by the dative case**, see page 153.

- after certain prepositions to show position

an

on, to, at

auf

on, in, to, at

hinter

behind

in

in, into, to

neben

next to, beside

über

over, across, above

unter

under, among

vor

in front of, before

zwischen

between

Ich sitze neben dem Fenster.

I'm sitting next to the window.

Die Katze lag unter dem Tisch.

The cat lay under the table.

- 7 Note that when there is some movement involved after these prepositions, the **accusative case** is used.

Er war in der Stadt. (dative)

He was in town.

Sie geht in die Stadt. (accusative)

She's going into town.

- ➡ For more information on **Prepositions followed by the accusative or the dative case**, see page 158.

- in certain expressions

Mir ist kalt.

I'm cold.

- instead of the possessive adjective (*my, your, his, her, its, our or their*) to refer to parts of the body and items of clothing

Ich habe mir die Haare gewaschen.

I washed my hair.

Zieh dir die Jacke aus.

Take your jacket off.

- ➡ For more information on **Possessive adjectives**, see page 37.

- Changes to the definite and indefinite articles **der, die or das** and **ein, eine or ein** for each case are summarized in the table below, to help make it easier for you to remember them.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular
Nominative	der ein	die eine	das ein
Accusative	den einen	die eine	das ein
Genitive	des eines	der einer	des eines
Dative	dem einem	der einer	dem einem

- ➡ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

Key points

- ✓ In German, there are four grammatical cases – nominative, accusative, genitive and dative.
- ✓ The case you use depends on the grammatical function of the noun in the sentence.
- ✓ The nominative case is used to show the subject of a sentence and after the verbs, **sein** and **werden**.
- ✓ The accusative case is used to show the direct object of a sentence and after certain prepositions.
- ✓ The genitive case is used to show that something belongs to somebody, and after certain prepositions.
- ✓ The dative case is used to show the indirect object of a sentence, and after certain prepositions and verbs.

Forming plurals

- In English we usually make nouns plural by adding an -s to the end (*garden* → *gardens*; *house* → *houses*), although we do have some nouns which are irregular and do not follow this pattern (*mouse* → *mice*; *child* → *children*).
- In German, there are several different ways of making nouns plural.
- The definite article changes in the plural, as shown in the table below:

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular	All Genders Plural
Nominative	der	die	das	die
Accusative	den	die	das	die
Genitive	des	der	des	der
Dative	dem	der	dem	den

➡ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

Tip

Nouns in the dative plural **ALWAYS** end in **-n**, except those nouns which come from other languages. Most of their plural forms end in **-s**. For example:

Mit den Autos hatte sie ständig Probleme. The cars caused her constant problems.

1 Feminine plural nouns ending in -n, -en, -nen

- Most German feminine nouns form their plural by adding **-n**, **-en** or **-nen** to their singular form.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	die Blume (flower) die Frau (woman) die Lehrerin (teacher)	die Blumen die Frauen die Lehrerinnen
Accusative	die Blume die Frau die Lehrerin	die Blumen die Frauen die Lehrerinnen
Genitive	der Blume der Frau der Lehrerin	der Blumen der Frauen der Lehrerinnen
Dative	der Blume der Frau der Lehrerin	den Blumen den Frauen den Lehrerinnen

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

Die Blumen waren nicht teuer.

The flowers weren't expensive.

Die Lehrerinnen sind ziemlich jung.

The (female) teachers are quite young.

Das Leben der Frauen in vielen Ländern ist schwierig.

In many countries, women's lives are difficult.

Wo gehst du mit den Blumen hin?

Where are you going with the flowers?

2 Nouns with no ending in the plural

- Many nouns have no plural ending – these are mostly masculine or neuter nouns ending in **-en**, **-er** or **-el**.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	der Kuchen (cake) der Lehrer (teacher) der Onkel (uncle)	die Kuchen die Lehrer die Onkel
Accusative	den Kuchen den Lehrer den Onkel	die Kuchen die Lehrer die Onkel
Genitive	des Kuchens des Lehrers des Onkels	der Kuchen der Lehrer der Onkel
Dative	dem Kuchen dem Lehrer dem Onkel	den Kuchen den Lehrern den Onkeln

Die Kuchen sehen lecker aus.

The cakes look delicious.

Die Onkel kommen morgen an.

The uncles are coming tomorrow.

Das war die Schuld der Lehrer.

That was the teachers' fault.

Es gibt ein kleines Problem mit den Kuchen.

There's a slight problem with the cakes.

- Some of these nouns also have an umlaut added to the first vowel **a**, **o** or **u** in the plural.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	der Apfel (apple) der Garten (garden)	die Äpfel die Gärten
Accusative	den Apfel den Garten	die Äpfel die Gärten
Genitive	des Apfels des Gartens	der Äpfel der Gärten
Dative	dem Apfel dem Garten	den Äpfeln den Gärten

- Die Äpfel sind nicht reif genug. The apples aren't ripe enough.
 Die Gärten waren wunderschön. The gardens were beautiful.
 Schau mal die Größe der Äpfel an! Look at the size of the apples!
 Den Äpfeln fehlt ein bisschen Sonne. The apples need a bit of sun.

3 Plural nouns ending in -e

- Some masculine nouns add an umlaut above the first vowel **a**, **o** or **u** and an **-e** ending to form the plural. A few feminine nouns with **a** in the stem also follow this pattern. Nouns in this group often have one syllable only.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	der Stuhl (chair) die Angst (fear)	die Stühle die Ängste
Accusative	den Stuhl die Angst	die Stühle die Ängste
Genitive	des Stuhl(e)s der Angst	der Stühle der Ängste
Dative	dem Stuhl der Angst	den Stühlen den Ängsten

- Die Stühle sind neu. The chairs are new.
 Die Regierung muss die Ängste der Bevölkerung ernst nehmen. The government has to take the population's fears seriously.
 Die Farbe der Stühle. The colour of the chairs.
 Der Tischler macht den Stühlen neue Beine. The carpenter is making new legs for the chairs.

4 Masculine and neuter plural nouns ending in -e, -er or -er

- Masculine or neuter nouns often add **-e** or **-er** to form the plural.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	das Geschenk (present) der Tisch (table) das Kind (child)	die Geschenke die Tische die Kinder
Accusative	das Geschenk den Tisch das Kind	die Geschenke die Tische die Kinder
Genitive	des Geschenks des Tisches des Kindes	der Geschenke der Tische der Kinder
Dative	dem Geschenk dem Tisch dem Kind	den Geschenken den Tischen den Kindern

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

- Die Geschenke sind auf dem Tisch. The presents are on the table.
 Ich muss die Kinder abholen. I have to pick up the children.
 Die Auswahl der Tische im Laden The shop had a large selection
 war groß. of tables.
 Sie geht mit den Kindern spazieren. She's going for a walk with the
 children.

- Some masculine and neuter nouns add an umlaut above the first vowel **a**, **o** or **u** and an **-er** ending in the plural.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	das Dach (roof) der Mann (man)	die Dächer die Männer
Accusative	das Dach den Mann	die Dächer die Männer
Genitive	des Dach(e)s des Mannes	der Dächer der Männer
Dative	dem Dach dem Mann	den Dächern den Männern

- Die Dächer werden repariert. The roofs are being repaired.
 Man hatte die Männer völlig vergessen. The men had been completely forgotten.
 Was ist die Rolle der Männer in unserer Gesellschaft? What is the role of men in our society?
 Die Frauen sollten den Männern nicht immer recht geben. Women should not always agree with men.

5 Some unusual plurals

- There is another group of German nouns which don't follow any of the rules for forming plurals – you just have to remember them! Here are some of the most common ones. As you will see, many of them are words from other languages, and it is common for such words to form their plural by adding **-s**:

Singular	Meaning	Plural
das Auto	car	die Autos
das Hotel	hotel	die Hotels
das Restaurant	restaurant	die Restaurants
das Baby	baby	die Babys
das Thema	theme, topic, subject	die Themen
das Drama	drama	die Dramen
das Risiko	risk	die Risiken
der Park	park	die Parks
der Chef	boss, chief, head	die Chefs
die Firma	firm	die Firmen

Die Hotels in der Stadt sind ziemlich teuer.

Die Risiken sind sehr hoch.

Die Kinder finden die Babys ganz niedlich.

Was hältst du von den Preisen der Autos?

Das ist die Stadt mit den vielen Parks.

The hotels in town are quite expensive.

The risks are very high.

The children think the babies are really cute.

What do you think of the prices of the cars?

That's the town with all the parks.

6 Plural versus singular

- Some nouns are always plural in English, but singular in German.

eine Brille	glasses, spectacles
eine Schere	scissors
eine Hose	trousers

- These nouns are only used in the plural in German to mean more than one pair.

zwei Hosen	two pairs of trousers
------------	-----------------------

7 Nouns of measurement and quantity

- These nouns, used to describe the quantity or size of something, usually remain singular, even if preceded by a plural number.

Möchten Sie zwei Stück? Would you like two?

Ich wiege fünfzig Kilo. I weigh eight stone.

- The substance which they measure follows in the same case as the noun of quantity, and **NOT** in the genitive case as in English.

Sie hat drei Tassen Kaffee getrunken. She drank three cups of coffee.

Er wollte zwei Kilo Kartoffeln. He wanted two kilos of potatoes.

Drei Glas Weißwein, bitte! Three glasses of white wine, please.

Key points

- Most German feminine nouns form their plural by adding **-n**, **-en** or **-nen** to their singular form.
- Many nouns have no plural ending – these are mostly masculine or neuter singular nouns ending in **-en**, **-er** or **-el**. Some of these nouns also have an umlaut added to the vowel in the plural.
- Some masculine nouns add an umlaut above the first vowel **a**, **o** or **u** and an **-e** ending to form the plural. A few feminine nouns with **a** in the stem also follow this pattern.
- Masculine and neuter nouns often add **-e** or **-er** in the plural, and can sometimes add an umlaut above the first vowel **a**, **o** or **u**.
- There are some unusual plural nouns in German which don't follow any pattern.
- Some nouns are always plural in English, but singular in German.
- Nouns of measurement and quantity usually remain singular even if preceded by a plural number.
- The substance which they measure follows in the same case as the noun of quantity.

Weak nouns

- As we have seen, German nouns may change, according to their gender, case and number. This is called declension.
- Some masculine nouns have a weak declension – this means that they end in **-en** or, if the word ends in a vowel, in **-n**, in every case EXCEPT in the nominative singular case.
- Weak masculine nouns follow the pattern shown:

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	der Junge	die Jungen
Accusative	den Jungen	die Jungen
Genitive	des Jungen	der Jungen
Dative	dem Jungen	den Jungen

- Weak masculine nouns include:

- those ending in **-og(e)** referring to men
 - der Psychologe** the psychologist
 - Der Psychologe half ihm in seiner Krise.** The psychologist helped him through his crisis.
- those ending in **-aph** (or **-af**) or **-oph**
 - der Paragraf** the paragraph
 - der Philosoph** the philosopher
 - Der Paragraf umfasste 350 Wörter.** The paragraph was 350 words long.
- those ending in **-ant**
 - der Elefant** the elephant
 - der Diamant** the diamond
 - Der Diamant war sehr viel Geld wert.** The diamond was worth a lot of money.
- those ending in **-t** referring to men
 - der Astronaut** the astronaut
 - der Komponist** the composer
 - der Architekt** the architect
 - Um Astronaut zu werden, muss man jahrelang trainieren.** You have to train for years to become an astronaut.

- some other common masculine nouns:

der Bauer	farmer
der Chirurg	surgeon
der Franzose	Frenchman
der Kollege	colleague
der Mensch	human being
der Ochse	ox
der Spatz	sparrow
Der junge Franzose wollte Schottland besuchen.	The young French guy wanted to visit Scotland.
Ich habe den Franzosen seit einer Woche nicht mehr gesehen.	I haven't seen the French guy for a week.

Grammar Extra!

The noun **der Name** follows the same pattern as **der Junge**, except in the genitive singular, where it adds **-ns** instead of just **-n**. **Der Buchstabe** (meaning letter (of the alphabet)), **der Funke** (meaning spark) and **der Gedanke** (meaning thought) also follow this pattern.

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	der Name	die Namen
Accusative	den Namen	die Namen
Genitive	des Namens	der Namen
Dative	dem Namen	den Namen

Das hängt von der Wichtigkeit des Namens ab.	That depends on how important the name is.
---	--

Proper nouns

What is a proper noun?

A **proper noun** is the name of a person, place, organization or thing. Proper nouns are always written with a capital letter, for example, *Kevin, Glasgow, Europe, London Eye*.

- In German, names of people and places only change in the genitive singular when they add **-s**, unless they are preceded by the definite article or a demonstrative adjective (in English, *this, that, these* and *those*).

Annas Buch	Anna's book
Klaras Mantel	Klara's coat
die Werke Goethes	Goethe's works
BUT	
der Untergang der Titanic	the sinking of <u>the</u> Titanic

⇒ For more information on **Articles** and **Demonstrative adjectives**, see pages 25 and 31.

Grammar Extra!

Where proper names end in **-s, -sch, -ss, -ß, -x, -z, or -tz**, adding an extra **-s** for the genitive makes them very difficult to pronounce. This is best avoided by using **von** + the dative case.

das Buch von Hans	Hans's book
die Werke von Marx	the works of Marx
die Freundin von Klaus	Klaus's girlfriend

- **Herr** (meaning Mr) is always declined when it is part of a proper name.

an Herrn Schmidt	to Mr Schmidt
Sehr geehrte Herren	Dear Sirs

- Surnames usually form their plurals by adding **-s**, unless they end in **-s, -sch, -ss, -ß, -x, -z, or -tz**, in which case they add **-ens**. They are often preceded by the definite article.

Die Schmidts haben uns zum Abendessen eingeladen.	The Schmidts have invited us to dinner.
Die Schultzens waren nicht zu Hause.	The Schultzes weren't at home.

⇒ For more information on **Articles**, see page 25.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

Articles

What is an article?

In English, an **article** is one of the words *the, a, and an* which is used in front of a noun.

1 Different types of articles

- There are two types of article:

- the **definite** article: *the* in English. This is used to identify a particular thing or person.
I'm going to the supermarket.
That's the woman I was talking to.
- the **indefinite** article: *a* or *an* in English, *some* or *any* (or no word at all) in the plural. This is used to refer to something unspecified, or something that you do not really know about.
Is there a supermarket near here?
I need a day off.

2 The definite article

- In English the definite article *the* always keeps the same form.

the book
the books
with *the* books

- In German, however, the definite article has many forms. All German nouns are either **masculine, feminine** or **neuter** and, just as in English, they can be either singular or plural. The word you choose for *the* depends on whether the noun it is used with is masculine, feminine or neuter, singular or plural AND it also depends on the case of the noun. This may sound complicated, but it is not too difficult.

Die Frau ging spazieren.	The woman went for a walk.
Der Mann ist geschieden.	The man is divorced.
Sie fährt mit dem Auto in die Stadt.	She travels into town by car.
Die Farbe der Jacke gefällt mir nicht.	I don't like the colour of the jacket.
Ich muss die Kinder abholen.	I have to pick up the children.
Das will ich mit den Behörden besprechen.	I want to discuss that with the authorities.

⇒ For more information on **Nouns**, see page 1.

- The definite article changes for masculine, feminine and neuter singular nouns.

	Definite Article + Noun	Meaning
Masculine	<u>der Mann</u>	the man
Feminine	<u>die Frau</u>	the woman
Neuter	<u>das Mädchen</u>	the girl

- The plural forms of the definite article are the same for all genders.

	Definite Article + Plural Noun	Meaning
Masculine	<u>die Männer</u>	the men
Feminine	<u>die Frauen</u>	the women
Neuter	<u>die Mädchen</u>	the girls

Tip

It is a good idea to learn the article or the gender with the noun when you come across a word for the first time, so that you know whether it is masculine, feminine or neuter. A good dictionary will also give you this information.

- The definite article also changes according to the case of the noun in the sentence – nominative, accusative, genitive or dative.

➡ For more information on **Cases**, see page 9.

- The forms of the definite article in each case are as follows:

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular	All Genders Plural
Nominative	<u>der</u>	<u>die</u>	<u>das</u>	<u>die</u>
Accusative	<u>den</u>	<u>die</u>	<u>das</u>	<u>die</u>
Genitive	<u>des</u>	<u>der</u>	<u>des</u>	<u>der</u>
Dative	<u>dem</u>	<u>der</u>	<u>dem</u>	<u>den</u>

Der Mann ging ins Haus.

The man went into the house.

Die Frau geht jeden Abend schwimmen.

The woman goes swimming every night.

Sie wollen das Mädchen adoptieren.

They want to adopt the girl.

Die zwei Frauen nebenan wollen ihr Haus renovieren.

The two women next door want to renovate their house.

Der Mann mit der reichen Frau.

The man with the rich wife.

Die Mädchen gehen morgen ins Kino.

The girls are going to the cinema tomorrow.

Ich will nicht nur mit den Männern arbeiten.

I don't just want to work with the men.

Key points

- ✓ The definite article changes for masculine, feminine and neuter singular nouns.
- ✓ The plural forms of the definite article are the same for all genders.
- ✓ The form of the definite article also changes depending on the case of the noun in the sentence.

3 Using the definite article

- The definite article in German (der, die or das) is used in more or less the same way as we use *the* in English, but it is also used in German in a few places where you might not expect it.
- The definite article is used with words like *prices*, *life* and *time* that describe qualities, ideas or experiences (called abstract nouns) rather than something that you can touch with your hand. Usually, *the* is missed out in English with this type of word.

Die Preise sind wirklich hoch.

Prices are really high.

Das Leben ist schön.

Life is wonderful.

Die Zeit vergeht schnell.

Time passes quickly.

- ❓ Note that these nouns are sometimes used **WITHOUT** the article.

Es braucht Mut.

It needs (some) courage.

Gibt es dort Leben?

Is there (any) life there?

- You also use the definite article with the genitive case to show that something belongs to someone.

die Jacke der Frau

the woman's jacket

- i** Note that you do not usually use the definite article with the genitive case if the noun is a proper name or is being used as a proper name.

A proper name is the name of a person, place, organization or thing.

Jans Auto

Jan's car

Muttis Auto

Mummy's car

Occasionally, the definite article IS used with proper names:

- to make the sex of the person or the case clearer

Er hat es der Frau Kekilli gegeben. He gave it to Frau Kekilli.

- where an adjective is used before the proper name

Die alte Frau Schnorr ist gestorben. Old Frau Schnorr has died.

- in certain informal situations or to emphasize something

Ich habe heute den Kevin gesehen. I saw Kevin today.

- In German, you have to use the definite article in front of masculine and feminine countries and districts, but you don't need it for neuter ones.

Die Schweiz ist auch schön. Switzerland is also beautiful.

Deutschland ist sehr schön. Germany is very beautiful.

Grammar Extra!

You also use the definite article when geographical names are preceded by an adjective.

das heutige Deutschland today's Germany

- The definite article is used with names of seasons.

Der Winter kommt bald. Soon it will be winter.

- You often use the definite article with meals.

Im Hotel wird das Abendessen ab acht Uhr serviert. Dinner is served from eight o'clock in the hotel.

- i** Note that there are certain expressions with meals when you don't use the definite article.

Um acht Uhr ist Frühstück. Breakfast is at eight o'clock.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

- You also use the definite article with the names of roads.

Sie wohnt jetzt in der Geisener Straße.

She lives in Geisener Road now.

- The definite article is used with months of the year, except after the prepositions **seit**, **nach** and **vor**.

Der Dezember war ziemlich kalt.

The December was quite cold.

Wir sind seit September hier.

We have been here since September.

- ➡ For more information on **Prepositions**, see page 153.

- If you're talking about prices and want to say *each*, *per* or *a*, you use the definite article.

Die kosten fünf Euro das Pfund.

They cost five euros a pound.

Ich habe sechs Euro das Stück bezahlt.

I paid six euros each.

- In certain common expressions the definite article is used.

in die Stadt fahren

to go into town

mit der Post

by post

mit dem Zug/Bus/Auto

by train/bus/car

Grammar Extra!

In German, the definite article can be used instead of a **demonstrative adjective**.

Du willst das Buch lesen!

You want to read that book!

- ➡ For more information on **Demonstrative adjectives**, see page 31.

- In German, the definite article is left out:

- of certain set expressions

von Beruf

by profession

Nachrichten hören

to listen to the news

4 Shortened forms of the definite article

➤ After certain prepositions, the definite article can be shortened, though it is best to avoid using some of these forms in writing:

- **für das → fürs**
Es ist fürs Baby. It's for the baby.
- **vor dem → vorm**
Es liegt vorm Haus. It's lying in front of the house.
- **um das → ums**
Es geht ums Geld. It's a question of money.

➤ The following shortened forms can be used in writing:

- **an dem → am**
Am 1. Mai fahren wir in die Ferien. We go on holiday on the 1st of May.
- **in dem → im**
Das Buch liegt im Haus. The book's in the house.
- **zu dem → zum**
Ich muss zum Bahnhof gehen. I have to go to the station.
- **zu der → zur**
Sie geht jeden Tag zur Schule. She goes to school every day.

➡ For more information on **Shortened forms of prepositions**, see page 165.

Key points

- ✓ The definite article is used in German with:
 - abstract nouns
 - the genitive case to show possession
 - proper names, in certain exceptional cases
 - masculine and feminine countries and districts
 - names of seasons and with months of the year, except after the prepositions **seit**, **nach** and **vor**
 - names of roads
 - meals and prices
- ✓ The definite article in German can be used in certain set expressions.
- ✓ When combined with certain prepositions, the definite article can be shortened.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

5 Words declined like the definite article

➤ These words follow the same patterns as the definite article:

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
Plural only	alle	alle	aller	allen
Singular	beides	beides	beides	beiden
Plural	beide	beide	beider	beiden
Singular	dieser, diese, dieses	diesen, diese, dieses	dieses/diesen, dieser, dieses/diesen	diesem, dieser, diesem
Plural	diese	diese	dieser	diesen
Singular	einiger, einige, einiges	einigen, einige, einiges	einiges/einigen, einiger, einiges/einigen	einigem, einiger, einigem
Plural	einige	einige	einiger	einigen
Singular	jeder, jede, jedes	jeden, jede, jedes	jedes/jeden, jeder, jedes/jeden	jedem, jeder, jedem
Plural	jede	jede	jeder	jeden
Singular	jener, jene, jenes	jenen, jene, jenes	jenes/jenen, jener, jenes/jenen	jenem, jener, jenem
Plural	jene	jene	jener	jenen
Singular	mancher, manche, manches	manchen, manche, manches	manches/manchen, mancher, manches/manchen	manchem, mancher, manchem
Plural	manche	manche	mancher	manchen
Singular	solcher, solche, solches	solchen, solche, solches	solches/solchen, solcher, solches/solchen	solchem, solcher, solchem
Plural	solche	solche	solcher	solchen
Singular	welcher, welche, welches	welchen, welche, welches	welches/welchen, welcher, welches/welchen	welchem, welcher, welchem
Plural	welche	welche	welcher	welchen

❗ Note that **dieser** or **jener** are used to translate the English demonstrative adjectives *this*, *that*, *these* and *those*.

- **alle, aller, allen** (plural only)
Wir haben alle gesehen. all, all of them
Die Eltern fahren mit allen Kindern weg. We saw all of them.
The parents went off with all their children.

- **beide** (plural only)
Ich habe beide Bücher gelesen. both
I've read both books.
- **dieser, diese, dieses**
Dieser junge Mann ist begabt. this, this one, these
This young man is talented.
Dieses alte Haus ist wirklich schön. This old house is really beautiful.
- **einiger, einige, einiges**
Einige von uns gingen spazieren. some, a few, a little
Some of us went for a walk.
Wir haben einiges gesehen. We saw quite a lot of things.
- **jeder, jede, jedes**
Jeder Schüler bekommt ein Zeugnis. each, each one, every
Every pupil receives a report.
Sie kommt jedes Mal zu spät. She comes late every time.
- **jener, jene, jenes**
Jener Junge hatte seine Brieftasche verloren. that, that one, those
That boy had lost his wallet.
- **mancher, manche, manches**
Mancher Mann bleibt gern mit den Kindern zu Hause. many a, some
Some men like staying at home with the children.
Manches Auto fährt schneller als 220 km/h. Some cars can go faster than 220 km/h.
- **solcher, solche, solches**
Ein solches Mountainbike hätte ich auch gern. such, such a
I'd really like to have a mountain bike like that too.
- **welcher, welche, welches**
Welche Frau hat die Stelle bekommen? which, which one
Which woman got the job?

Grammar Extra!

sämtliche and **irgendwelcher** also follow the same pattern as the definite article:

- **sämtliche**
Sie besitzt Tolkiens sämtliche Werke. all, entire (usually plural)
She owns the complete works of Tolkien.
- **irgendwelcher, -e, -es**
Sind noch irgendwelche Reste da? some or other
Is there anything left? or
Is there still something left?

► The words listed above can be used as:

- articles
Dieser Mann kommt aus Südamerika. This man comes from South America.
Sie geht jeden Tag ins Büro. She goes to the office every day.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

- pronouns – a pronoun is a word you use instead of a noun, when you do not need or want to name someone or something directly, for example, *it, you, none*.

Willst du diesen?

Do you want this one?

Man kann ja nicht alles wissen.

You can't know everything.

Es gibt manche, die keinen Alkohol mögen.

There are some people who don't like alcohol.

⇒ For more information on **Pronouns**, see page 69.

Grammar Extra!

einiger and **irgendwelcher** end in **-en** in the genitive before masculine or neuter nouns ending in **-s**.

Er musste wegziehen wegen irgendwelchen Geredes.

He had to move away because of some gossip.

jeder, welcher, mancher and **solcher** can also do this or can have the usual **-es** ending.

Das Kind solcher Eltern wird Probleme haben.

The child of such parents will have problems.

Trotz jeden Versuchs scheiterten die Verhandlungen.

Despite all attempts, the negotiations failed.

- **solcher, beide** and **sämtliche** can be used after another article or possessive adjective (in English, one of the words *my, your, his, her, its, our* or *their*).

Ein solches Rad habe ich früher auch gehabt.

I used to have a bike like that too.

Diese beiden Männer haben es gesehen.

Both of these men have seen it.

- Although **beide** generally has plural forms only, there is one singular form, **beides**. While **beide** is more common and can refer to both people and things, **beides** refers only to things. **Beide** is used for two examples of the same thing or person, while **beides** is used for two different examples.

Es gab zwei Bleistifte und er hat beide genommen.

There were two pencils and he took both.

BUT

Es gab einen Bleistift und ein Bild und er hat beides genommen.

There was one pencil and one picture and he took both.

- ❗ Note that **beides** is singular in German, whereas **both** is plural in English.

Beides ist richtig.

Both are correct.

- **dies** often replaces the nominative and accusative **dieses** and **diese** when it is used as a pronoun.

Hast du dies schon gelesen?

Have you already read this?

Dies sind meine neuen Sachen.

These are my new things.

- ⇒ For more information on **Pronouns**, see page 69.

- **alle** also has a fixed form – **all** – which is used together with other articles or possessive pronouns.

All sein Mut war verschwunden.

All his courage had disappeared.

Was machst du mit all diesem Geld?

What are you doing with all this money?

- **ganz** can be used to replace both **alle** and **all** and is declined like an adjective.

Sie ist mit dem ganzen Geld verschwunden.

She disappeared with all the money.

- ⇒ For more information on **Adjectives**, see page 40.

- **ganz** must be used:

- in time phrases

Es hat den ganzen Tag geschneit.

It snowed the whole day long.

- when talking about geography

Im ganzen Land gab es keinen besseren Wein.

There wasn't a better wine in the whole country.

- with nouns referring to a collection of people or animals (*collective nouns*)

Die ganze Gesellschaft war auf der Versammlung vertreten.

The entire company was represented at the meeting.

Grammar Extra!

derjenige/diejenige/dasjenige (the one, those) is declined in the same way as the definite article (**der**) + a weak adjective.

- ⇒ For more information on **Weak adjectives**, see page 42.

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	derjenige Mann	diejenige Frau	dasjenige Kind
Accusative	denjenigen Mann	diejenige Frau	dasjenige Kind
Genitive	desjenigen Mann(e)s	derjenigen Frau	desjenigen Kind(e)s
Dative	demjenigen Mann	derjenigen Frau	demjenigen Kind

derselbe/dieselbe/dasselbe (the same, the same one) is declined in the same way as **derjenige**. However, after prepositions, the shortened forms of the definite article are used for the appropriate parts of **derselbe**.

zur selben (=zu derselben) Zeit

at the same time

im selben (=in demselben) Zimmer

in the same room

- ⇒ For more information on **Shortened forms of prepositions**, see page 165.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

Key points

- ✓ There is a group of words which are declined like the definite article **der**.
- ✓ These words can be used as articles or pronouns.
- ✓ **solcher**, **beide** and **sämtliche** can be used after another article or possessive adjective.
- ✓ **beide** generally has plural forms only, but there is one singular form, **beides**.
- ✓ When it is used as a pronoun **dies** often replaces the nominative and accusative **dieses** and **diese**.
- ✓ **alle** also has a fixed form, **all**.
- ✓ **ganz** must be used instead of **alle** in certain situations.

6 The indefinite article

- In English we have the indefinite article *a*, which changes to *an* in front of a word that starts with a vowel. In the plural we say either *some*, *any* or nothing at all.

- In German the word you choose for *a* depends on whether the noun it is used with is masculine, feminine or neuter, singular or plural AND it also depends on the case of the noun.

Da ist ein Auto.

There's a car.

Sie hat eine Wohnung.

She has a flat.

Er gab es einem Kind.

He gave it to a child.

- It has no plural forms.

Computer sind in letzter Zeit teurer geworden.

Computers have become more expensive recently.

- The indefinite article is formed as follows:

Case	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nominative	ein	eine	ein
Accusative	einen	eine	ein
Genitive	eines	einer	eines
Dative	einem	einer	einem

7 Using the indefinite article

- The indefinite article is used very much as in English.

Da ist ein Bus.

There's a bus.

Sie hat eine neue Jacke.

She has a new jacket.

Sie gab es einer alten Dame.

She gave it to an old lady.

► In certain situations, you do not use the indefinite article:

- when talking about the job someone does

Sie ist Ärztin. She's a doctor.

- when talking about someone's nationality or religion

Sie ist Deutsche. She's (a) German.

Er ist Moslem. He's (a) Muslim.

? Note that the indefinite article **IS** used when an adjective comes before the noun.

Sie ist eine sehr begabte Journalistin. She's a very talented journalist.

- in certain fixed expressions

Es ist Geschmacksache. It's a question of taste.

Tatsache ist ... It's a fact ...

- after **als** (meaning *as*)

Als Lehrerin verdiene ich nicht gut. I don't earn very much as a teacher.

Als Großmutter darf ich meine Enkel verwöhnen. As a grandmother, I'm allowed to spoil my grandchildren.

8 The indefinite article in negative sentences

► In English we use words like *not* and *never* to indicate that something is not happening or is not true. The sentences that these words are used in are called **negative sentences**.

I **don't** know him.

I **never** do my homework on time.

► In German, you use a separate negative form of the indefinite article, which is formed exactly like **ein** in the singular, and also has plural forms. It means *no/not a/not one/not any*.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular	All Genders Plural
Nominative	kein	keine	kein	keine
Accusative	keinen	keine	kein	keine
Genitive	keines	keiner	keines	keiner
Dative	keinem	keiner	keinem	keinen

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

Er hatte keine Geschwister.

He had no brothers or sisters.

Ich sehe keinen Unterschied.

I don't see any difference.

Das ist keine richtige Antwort.

That's no answer.

Kein Mensch hat es gesehen.

Not one person has seen it.

Tip

This negative form of the indefinite article is even used when the positive form of the phrase has no article.

Er hatte Angst davor.

He was frightened.

Er hatte keine Angst davor.

He wasn't frightened.

Grammar Extra!

The negative form of the indefinite article is also used in many informal expressions.

Sie hatte kein Geld mehr.

All her money was gone.

Es waren keine drei Monate vergangen, als ...

It was less than three months later that ...

Es hat mich keine zehn Euro gekostet.

It cost me less than ten euros.

If you want to emphasize the **ein** in the sentence, **nicht ein** can be used instead of **kein**.

Nicht ein Kind hat es singen können.

Not one child could sing it.

➡ For more information on **Negatives**, see page 179.

Key points

- ✓ The indefinite article is used in German:
 - to translate the English *a* and *any* in the singular
 - to translate the English *some* or *any* in the plural
 - in negative sentences in its separate negative form, **kein**, to translate *not* or *never*
- ✓ The indefinite article in German is NOT used when:
 - talking about someone's job, nationality or religion, unless an adjective is used before the noun
 - in certain set expressions or after **als** meaning *as*

9 Words declined like the indefinite article

► The following words are **possessive adjectives**, one of the words *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our* or *their* used with a noun to show that one person or thing belongs to another. They follow the same pattern as the indefinite articles **ein** and **kein**.

mein	my
dein	your (singular familiar)
sein	his/its
ihr	her/its
unser	our
euer	your (plural familiar)
ihr	their
Ihr	your (polite singular and plural)

➤ Possessive adjectives are formed in the following way.

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
Singular	mein, meine, mein	meinen, meine, mein	meines, meiner, meines	meinem, meiner, meinem
Plural	meine	meine	meiner	meinen
Singular	dein, deine, dein	deinen, deine, dein	deines, deiner, deines	deinem, deiner, deinem
Plural	deine	deine	deiner	deinen
Singular	sein, seine, sein	seinen, seine, sein	seines, seiner, seines	seinem, seiner, seinem
Plural	seine	seine	seiner	seinen
Singular	ihr, ihre, ihr	ihren, ihre, ihr	ihres, ihrer, ihres	ihrem, ihrer, ihrem
Plural	ihre	ihre	ihrer	ihren
Singular	unser, unsere, unser	unseren, unsere, unser	unseres, unserer, unseres	unserem, unserer, unserem
Plural	unsere	unsere	unserer	unseren
Singular	euer, eu(e)re, eu(e)res	eu(e)ren, eu(e)re, eu(e)res	eu(e)res, eu(e)rer, eu(e)res	eu(e)rem, eu(e)rer, eu(e)rem
Plural	eu(e)re	eu(e)re	eu(e)rer	eu(e)ren
Singular	ihr, ihre, ihr	ihren, ihre, ihr	ihres, ihrer, ihres	ihrem, ihrer, ihrem
Plural	ihre	ihre	ihrer	ihren
Singular	Ihr, Ihre, Ihr	Ihren, Ihre, Ihr	Ihres, Ihrer, Ihres	Ihrem, Ihrer, Ihrem
Plural	Ihre	Ihre	Ihrer	Ihren

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

Mein kleiner Bruder will auch mitkommen.	My little brother wants to come too.
Wo steht dein altes Auto?	Where is your old car?
Er spielt Fußball mit seiner Tante.	He is playing football with his aunt.
Was ist mit ihrem Computer los?	What is wrong with her computer?
Ihre Kinder sind wirklich verwöhnt.	Their children are really spoiled.
Wie geht es Ihrer Schwester?	How is your sister?
Ich will meine Kinder regelmäßig sehen.	I want to see my children regularly.

Grammar Extra!

Possessive adjectives are often followed by other adjectives in German sentences. These adjectives then have the same endings as the indefinite article.

Er liebt sein altes Auto.	He loves his old car.
Sie hat ihren neuen Computer verkauft.	She sold her new computer.
Wo ist deine rote Jacke?	Where is your red jacket?

irgendein (meaning *some ... or other*) and its plural form **irgendwelche** also take these endings.

Er ist irgendein bekannter Schauspieler.	He's some famous actor or other.
Sie ist nur irgendeine alte Frau.	She's just some old woman or other.
Sie hat irgendein neues Buch gekauft.	She bought some new book or other.
Ich muss irgendwelche blöden Touristen herumführen.	I have to show some stupid tourists or other round.

Key point

- ✓ Possessive adjectives, one of the words *my, your, his, her, its, our* or *their*, are declined like the indefinite articles **ein** and **kein**.

ADJECTIVES

What is an adjective?

An **adjective** is a 'describing' word that tells you more about a person or thing, such as their appearance, colour, size or other qualities, for example, *pretty*, *blue*, *big*.

Using adjectives

- Adjectives are words like *clever*, *expensive* and *silly* that tell you more about a noun (a living being, thing or idea). They can also tell you more about a pronoun, such as *he* or *they*. Adjectives are sometimes called 'describing words'. They can be used right next to a noun they are describing, or can be separated from the noun by a verb like *be*, *look*, *feel* and so on.

a clever girl

an expensive coat

a silly idea

He's just being silly.

- ⇒ For more information on **Nouns** and **Pronouns**, see pages 1 and 69.

- In English, the only time an adjective changes its form is when you are making a comparison.

She's cleverer than her brother.

That's the silliest idea I ever heard!

- In German, however, adjectives usually agree with what they are describing. This means that their endings change depending on whether the person or thing you are referring to is masculine, feminine or neuter, and singular or plural. It also depends on the case of the person or thing you are describing and whether it is preceded by the definite or indefinite article.

Das neue Buch ist da.

The new book has arrived.

Ich wollte es der alten Frau geben.

I wanted to give it to the old woman.

Sie erzählte mir eine langweilige Geschichte.

She told me a boring story.

Die deutschen Traditionen

German traditions

- ⇒ For more information on **Cases** and **Articles**, see pages 9 and 25.

- As in English, German adjectives come BEFORE the noun they describe, but AFTER the verb in the sentence. The only time the adjective does not agree with the word it describes is when it comes AFTER the verb.

eine schwarze Katze

a black cat

Das Buch ist neu.

The book is new.

Key points

- ✓ Most German adjectives change their form according to the case of the noun they are describing and whether the noun is masculine, feminine or neuter, singular or plural.
- ✓ In German, as in English, adjectives come before the noun they describe, but AFTER the verb in the sentence.

Making adjectives agree

1 The basic rules

- In dictionaries, only the basic form of German adjectives is shown. You need to know how to change it to make it agree with the noun or pronoun the adjective describes.
- To make an adjective agree with the noun or pronoun it describes, you simply add one of three sets of different endings:

2 The Weak Declension

- The endings used after the definite articles **der**, **die** and **das** and other words declined like them are shown below.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular	All Genders Plural
Nominative	-e	-e	-e	-en
Accusative	-en	-e	-e	-en
Genitive	-en	-en	-en	-en
Dative	-en	-en	-en	-en

- The following table shows you how these different endings are added to the adjective **alt**, meaning *old*, when it is used with the definite article.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular
Nominative	der <u>alte</u> Mann	die <u>alte</u> Frau	das <u>alte</u> Haus
Accusative	den <u>alten</u> Mann	die <u>alte</u> Frau	das <u>alte</u> Haus
Genitive	des <u>alten</u> Mann(e)s	der <u>alten</u> Frau	des <u>alten</u> Hauses
Dative	dem <u>alten</u> Mann	der <u>alten</u> Frau	dem <u>alten</u> Haus

Nominative:

Der alte Mann wohnt nebenan.

The old man lives next door.

Accusative:

Ich habe die alte Frau in der Bibliothek gesehen.

I saw the old woman in the library.

Genitive:

Die Besitzerin des alten Hauses ist ganz reich.

The owner of the old house is very rich.

Dative:

Er hilft dem alten Mann beim Einkaufen.

He helps the old man to do his shopping.

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.

- These are the plural endings of adjectives in the weak declension.

Plural	All Genders
Nominative	die <u>alten</u> Männer/Frauen/Häuser
Accusative	die <u>alten</u> Männer/Frauen/Häuser
Genitive	der <u>alten</u> Männer/Frauen/Häuser
Dative	den <u>alten</u> Männern/Frauen/Häusern

3 The Mixed Declension

- The endings used after **ein**, **kein**, **irgendein** and the possessive adjectives are shown below.
- 7 Note that this declension differs from the weak declension only in the three forms underlined below.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular	All Genders Plural
Nominative	- <u>er</u>	-e	-es	-en
Accusative	- <u>en</u>	-e	-es	-en
Genitive	- <u>en</u>	-en	-en	-en
Dative	- <u>en</u>	-en	-en	-en

- For more information on the **Possessive adjectives**, see page 37.

- The following table shows you how these different endings are added to the adjective **lang**, meaning *long*.

Case	Masculine Singular	Feminine Singular	Neuter Singular
Nominative	<u>ein langer</u> Weg	<u>eine lange</u> Reise	<u>ein langes</u> Spiel
Accusative	<u>einen langen</u> Weg	<u>eine lange</u> Reise	<u>ein langes</u> Spiel
Genitive	<u>eines langen</u> Weg(e)s	<u>einer langen</u> Reise	<u>eines langen</u> Spiel(e)s
Dative	<u>einem langen</u> Weg	<u>einer langen</u> Reise	<u>einem langen</u> Spiel

For further explanation of grammatical terms, please see pages x-xiv.