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VERBS L16.1 – VERBS WITH NOMINATIVE COMPLEMENTS

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NOMINATIVE COMPLEMENTS

Verbs always require a noun in the nominative case.

The verb cannot stand alone and needs a subject. → The subject is, therefore, a nominative complement. The subject can be a person or a thing.

EXAMPLES

- „*Der Mann* geht mit ihr spazieren.“
"Der Mann" is the subject → **Nominative**
- „*Wir* sind mit dem Zug nach Berlin gefahren.“
"Wir" is the subject → **Nominative**
- „*Das Haus* steht direkt am Strand.“
"Das Haus" is the subject → **Nominative**

VERBS WITH TWO NOMINATIVE COMPLEMENTS

The verbs "sein", "werden", "bleiben" and "heißen" require a second nominative complement in addition to the subject:

- „*Der Mann* ist ein Idiot.“
- „*Mein Sohn* wird ein Pilot.“
- „*Er* bleibt ein Lehrer.“

When you use these verbs without a preposition, the corresponding object is always in the nominative form. Why? Both nouns/pronouns are referring to the same person.



ATTENTION

If they are followed by measurements (weight, length, time, ...), you have to use the accusative case! (The question is "how...?" → Not the same person. → No nominative)

"Der Schrank ist **einen Meter** hoch."

BUT: "Der Schrank ist **ein alter Schrank**."

"Er bleibt **einen Monat** im Krankenhaus."

"Der Tisch ist **einen Meter achtzig** lang."

SENTENCES WITHOUT NOMINATIVE

When we give commands (imperative), we don't need a nominative complement since we talk to the person we want to perform the action. (The subject is implied, just like in English):

- „**Komm** sofort nach Hause!" (Come home immediately!)

In impersonal passive, the subject could be unknown. In passive voice, the person who is performing the action is not important. → Therefore, it is possible to have a sentence without a subject and therefore without nominative (L15.4 Impersonal Passive).

- „Auf den Mann **wurde geschossen**."

SUMMARY

- In general, every verb needs a subject → Every verb has a nominative complement.
- Only the imperative and impersonal passive can be used without the nominative complement.

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