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Nouns

NOUNS – L2: GERMAN GENDER

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Video Lesson:

<https://easy-deutsch.com/yt/nounsL2/>

HOW MANY GENDERS DO WE USE IN GERMAN?

The German language has three different genders:

- masculine (der)
- feminine (die)
- neuter (das)

In English, all of those are "the".

But the English language uses genders as well: for people!

→ That's why you use "he", "she" and "it".

German does the same, but things can be masculine ("der") or feminine ("die") as well. Also, some nouns that describe a person are neuter ("das").



EXAMPLES

- "der Mann" – the man
- "die Frau" – the woman
- "das Kind" – the child
- "das Baby" – the baby
- "die Flasche" – the bottle
- "der Eimer" – the bin



HOW DO WE DETERMINE THE GENDER?

The most important rule:

There is no universal rule that works in every situation. In German, you can't tell the gender just by looking at the noun. Always learn the article along with the noun!

(Use my vocabulary list sample to prevent difficulties in the future.)

There are no rules, BUT:

There are specific characteristics of the noun that can help you determine the article. These are related to the meaning or the ending of the noun.

MASCULINE NOUNS

Characteristics	Examples
Male people	der Mann, der Student, der Vater, ...
Occupations	der Architekt, der Arzt, der Mechaniker, ...
Cardinal Directions	der Westen, der Osten, der Norden, ...
Days, Months, Seasons	der Montag, der März, der Winter, ...
Most rivers outside of Germany	der Nil, der Amazonas, der Ganges, ...
Most mountains	der Kilimandscharo, der Mt. Everest, der Vesuv, ...
Precipitation	der Regen, der Schnee, der Hagel, ...
Nouns that end in: -ling	der Liebling, der Schmetterling, der Lehrling, ...
Nouns that end in: -ismus	der Kommunismus, der Kapitalismus, der Hinduismus, ...
Nouns that end in: -ich	der Teppich, der Kranich, der Deich, ...

More endings that (usually!) indicate masculine nouns: -ig, -ent, -ier, -ist, -or, -ör, -iker, -ast, -eur.

These are the most important ones, but it's still the best to always learn the article together with the meaning of the word.

FEMININE NOUNS

Characteristics	Examples
Female People	die Frau, die Lehrerin, die Schwester, ...
Occupations that end in -in or -frau	die Architektin, die Sekretärin, die Hotelfachfrau, ...
Most rivers within Germany	die Elbe, die Donau, die Isar, ...
The names of flowers, ships/boats, and motorcycles	die Orchidee, die Titanic, die Kawasaki, ...
Nouns that end in: -heit	die Einheit, die Freiheit, die Gesundheit, ...
Nouns that end in: -keit	die Geschwindigkeit, die Möglichkeit, die Einsamkeit, ...
Nouns that end in: -schaft	die Wirtschaft, die Landschaft, die Freundschaft, ...
Nouns that end in: -ion	die Revolution, die Tradition, die Position, ...
Nouns that end in: -ung	die Endung, die Verbindung, die Beziehung, ...

More endings that (usually) indicate feminine nouns: -anz, -ik, -tät, -ur, -ei, -sis, -ive, -ade.

These are the most important ones, but it's still the best to always learn the article together with the meaning of the word.

NEUTER NOUNS

Characteristics	Examples
Colors and the names of hotels	das Rot, das Hilton, das Blau, ...
Nominalization (creating a noun from a verb)	das Rennen, das Laufen, das Rechnen, ...
Nouns that end in: -chen	das Mädchen, das Brötchen, das Zeichen, ...
Nouns that end in: -lein	das Fräulein, das Blümlein, das Männlein, ...
Nouns that end in: -ment	das Instrument, das Experiment, das Apartment, ...
Nouns that end in: -ing	das Doping, das Timing, das Training, ...

More endings that (usually) indicate neuter nouns: -tel, -in, -tum, -um, -ment, -o, -ma, -ett.

These are the most important ones, but it's still the best to always learn the article together with the meaning of the word.

HOW DO GERMANS DETERMINE THE GENDER?

Native German speakers know which gender they have to use because it just "sounds right".

Unfortunately, you aren't a native German speaker.

Germans who aren't German teachers wouldn't be able to tell you any of the rules I taught you in this lesson!

Short Summary - We determine the gender by:

- Biological gender,
- Endings,
- Meaning, sound, and other characteristics.

COMPOUND NOUNS

If a noun contains multiple other words that are getting compound, the last noun determines the gender of the compound word.

Examples:

- "der Schrank + **die** Tür" = "**die** Schranktür"
- "das Bett + **die** Decke" = "**die** Bettdecke"
- "die Hand + **das** Tuch" = "**das** Handtuch"

GENDER OF PLURAL NOUNS

FINALLY, GOOD NEWS!!!**There is only one form in plural.**

- "der Ball" → "**die** Bälle"
- "die Frau" → "**die** Frauen"
- "das Haus" → "**die** Häuser"



TOO MANY RULES FOR YOU?

Take a look at the next page!

My article guide will help you guess 75% of all articles correctly without using a dictionary!

TASK



Take my vocabulary list sample for nouns and write down your new words by filling in all the information in the list. (Only if you aren't doing it already!)

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