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WHAT IS THE ACCUSATIVE CASE?

The **accusative** case is also known as the direct object.

But: We also use the accusative case after specific verbs and prepositions.

The direct object is the person or thing that is acted upon.

The question words for the accusative case are „Wen?“ and „Was?“

Examples:

- „Der Mann hat **ein Pferd**.“

What does the man have? – **Ein Pferd!**

The accusative is always used when the main verb is “haben” because “haben” always requires a direct object.

- „Der Junge schenkt einer Freundin **die Blumen**.“

What does the boy give to his friend? – **Die Blumen!**

“Die Blumen” is the direct object because it is being acted upon - it is given to the girl.

ACCUSATIVE – DECLENSION

The article always has to match the case!

	Definite Article:	Indefinite Article:
Masculine:	den Mann	einen Mann
Feminine:	die Frau	eine Frau
Neuter:	das Kind	ein Kind
Plural:	die Eltern	- Eltern

USES OF THE ACCUSATIVE CASE

USE: AS ACCUSATIVE OBJECT

In sentences that only have one object, the object is in the accusative case.

Exception: when the verb or preposition requires a specific case.

- „Ich habe **ein Eis**.“
- „Er singt **ein Liebeslied**.“
- „Er spielt **den Ball**.“

Most verbs use accusative objects. It's not too complicated because the accusative object is usually also the direct object. That means it is acted upon; it doesn't do anything or receive anything.

→ Direct Object → **Accusative**

USE: AFTER CERTAIN PREPOSITIONS

The prepositions **“um”**, **“durch”**, **“ohne”**, **“bis”**, **“für”**, and **“gegen”** **ALWAYS** require the accusative case.

- „Er fährt **durch den Tunnel**.“
- „Die Blumen sind **für meine Freundin**.“
- „Der Mann geht **um das Haus**.“

The preposition doesn't care if it's a direct or indirect object. No matter what, the preposition determines the case. **ALWAYS!!!**



Remember:

When there is a preposition before the noun, no other rules matter:

Only the rules of the preposition count!

It doesn't matter if it's a direct or indirect object or if the verb requires a specific case.

VERBS WITH TWO ACCUSATIVE OBJECTS

There's a small number of verbs that use two accusative objects. That means there are three nouns: one subject in the nominative case and two objects in the accusative case, with no prepositions in front of them. This doesn't happen too often, and most native speakers try to avoid using these verbs.

There are five common verbs that theoretically need a subject and two accusative objects: "abfragen", "abhören", "lehren/unterrichten", "nennen", and "kosten".

Examples:

- „*Mein Vater* fragt **mich die Vokabeln** ab.“

“**Mich**” and “**die Vokabeln**” are the two objects, and both are accusative.

Grammatically, you couldn't leave either one out without leaving an open question.

But: In informal language, we often drop the “**mich**” when it's clear that we're talking about the speaker.

- „*Der Lehrer* lehrt **uns die deutsche Sprache**.“

“**Uns**” and “**die deutsche Sprache**” are the two objects, and both are in the accusative case.

But: In informal language, we often drop the “**uns**” because it's obvious.

- „*Der Apfel* kostet **mich einen Euro**.“

“**Mich**” and “**einen Euro**” are two accusative objects.

But: If we are talking about ourselves, or something universally true, we will leave out the person.

- „*Das Auto* kostet **den Mann einen Jahreslohn**.“

Warning: In this case, it's not obvious who we are talking about, so we can't leave out “**den Mann**”. Both objects are direct objects and therefore accusative.

- „*Er* nennt ***mich einen Idioten***.“

“*Mich*” and “*einen Idioten*” are both direct objects and therefore accusative.

We can NOT leave out “mich” because it wouldn’t be obvious who is called an idiot.

In informal language, we’d often use indirect speech:

„*Er* sagt, dass *ich ein Idiot* sei.“

(Indirect speech with the “Konjunktiv 1”)

SUMMARY

- The accusative case usually indicates the direct object.
- The accusative case is also used with specific prepositions and verbs.
- A few verbs require two accusative objects.

YOUR To-DO LIST



- Learn the prepositions in your native language! When you know what prepositions are, it makes learning them in German easier.
- Do the accusative exercises starting on the next page.

PS: Don’t worry, I will explain the two-case prepositions in the chapter on the dative case! If you don’t know what these are, no worries. I’ll explain it there.

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WHAT IS THE DATIVE CASE?

The **dative** case is also known as the indirect object.

But: We also use the dative case after specific verbs and prepositions, as well as in connection with specific adjectives.

The indirect object is the person or object that receives something (that something is usually the direct object).

The question words for the dative case are “Wem?” and “Was?”

- „Das Auto gehört **dem Mann**.“

Who does the car belong to? – **Dem Mann!**

The verb “gehören” ALWAYS requires a noun in the dative case.

- „Der Junge schenkt **einer Freundin** die Blumen.“

Who does the boy give the flowers to? – **Einer Freundin!**

“Freundin” is the indirect object. She receives the flowers!

What does the boy give to his friend? – **Die Blumen!**

“Die Blumen” is the direct object, which is acted upon.

DATIVE – DECLENSION

The article always has to match the case!

	Definite Article:	Indefinite Article:
Masculine:	dem Mann	einem Mann
Feminine:	der Frau	einer Frau
Neuter:	dem Kind	einem Kind
Plural:	den Eltern	- Eltern

SPECIAL FEATURES

When the plural form doesn't end in “-s” or “-n”, you have to add an extra “-n” to the end in the dative case.

- die *Fahrräder* – **den Fahrräder**n
- die *Bilder* – **den Bilder**n
- die *Tische* – **den Tischen**n
- die *Autos* – **den Autos** → no “n”
- die *Frauen* – **den Frauen** → no extra “n”

USES OF THE DATIVE CASE

USE: AS INDIRECT OBJECT

In sentences with more than one object, the indirect object is in the dative case.

- „Er gibt **dem Mann** die Schlüssel.“

The person performing the action (“er” → subject → **nominative**) gives something (“die Schlüssel” → direct object → **accusative**) to someone (“der Mann” → indirect object → **dative**).



Tip:

If there is a preposition before a noun, it can NOT be the indirect object. In this case, the preposition determines the case.

The noun in the dative case is usually the person who receives something (the accusative object).

USE: AS DATIVE OBJECT

After certain verbs (those with dative complements) we always use the dative case.

For example, the verbs: “helfen”, “gehören”, and “zuhören”.

- „Ich helfe **dem Mann**.“
- „Das Auto gehört **einem Kollegen**.“
- „Ich höre **meiner Freundin** zu.“

These verbs always require the dative case. The object is technically the direct object, but the verb still requires the dative case to be used. → **It's dative because that's what the verb says!**

So you know which verbs always require the dative case, I made a list of all these dative verbs. You received this file as a download when you purchased this ebook.

USE: AFTER CERTAIN PREPOSITIONS

The prepositions “ab”, “aus”, “bei”, “gegenüber”, “mit”, “nach”, “seit”, “von”, and “zu” are always followed by a noun in the **dative** case. No exceptions!

- „Er kommt aus **dem Haus**.“
- „Du bist bei **einer Freundin**.“
- „Der Mann geht zu **dem Bahnhof**.“

**Notice:**

Just like with accusative: When there's a preposition in front of the noun, the preposition determines the case. None of the other rules matter!

It doesn't matter if it's a direct or indirect object or if the verb requires a specific case.

The preposition tells you which case to use. ALWAYS!

Those exercises were taken from:

German Cases: Nominative, Accusative, Dative and Genitive

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PREPOSITIONS THAT USE BOTH DATIVE AND ACCUSATIVE

Most prepositions only use one case, but there are also some so-called two-case prepositions. That means, depending on the role of the preposition, it could use either of two different cases.

The two-case prepositions are: an, auf, hinter, in, neben, unter, über, and zwischen.



auf



über



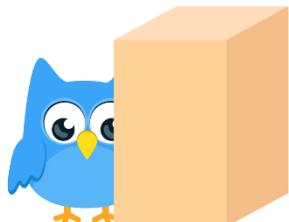
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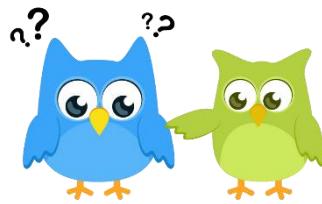
vor



hinter



neben



an



in



zwischen

These prepositions require different cases depending on whether you use them with a temporal, local, causal, or modal meaning.

Examples:

- „**In einer Stunde** wird er nach Hause gehen.“
“In” as a temporal preposition always uses the **dative** case.
- „Ich gehe **in die Kirche**.“
“In” as a local preposition uses the **accusative** case here.

I created a table with an overview of when each preposition uses which case. You received it as a separate download when you bought the ebook.

When you learn the meaning of a preposition, you need to memorize the case at the same time.

TWO-CASE PREPOSITIONS AS LOCAL PREPOSITIONS

Local prepositions are those dealing with location; in some books they are also called “locative prepositions”. When using two-case prepositions as local prepositions, you need to decide between accusative and dative. Your choice depends on what's going on in the sentence.

Local prepositions describe either a place or movement from point A to point B. They answer the questions: “Wo?”, “Wohin?”, and “Woher?”

Prepositions answering the question “Wo?” (Where?):

an, auf, hinter, in, neben, unter, über, zwischen, **bei, gegenüber**

Prepositions answering the question “Wohin?” (Where to?):

an, auf, hinter, in, neben, unter, über, zwischen, **zu, nach**

Prepositions answering the question “Woher?” (Where from?):

aus, von

The prepositions marked in red always use the dative case, no matter what's going on in the sentence. All the other prepositions are two-case prepositions and can be used with either the dative or accusative case (depending on the situation).

When answering the question “Wo?” (NO movement from A to B): → **Dative**

When answering the question “Wohin?” (movement from A to B): → **Accusative**

Wo? „Ich bin **auf** der Kiste.“



Wohin? „Ich gehe **auf** die Kiste.“



More Examples:

Wo? → Dative

„Ich bin **im** Supermarkt.“

„Er sitzt **auf** der Bank.“

„Sie steht **neben** ihrer Mama.“

„Ich bin **hinter** der Kirche.“

„Wir warten **an** der Bushaltestelle.“

Wohin? → Accusative

„Ich gehe **in** den Supermarkt.“

„Er setzt sich **auf** die Bank.“

„Sie stellt sich **neben** ihre Mama.“

„Ich gehe **hinter** die Kirche.“

„Wir gehen **an** die Bushaltestelle.“

THE DATIVE CASE WITH SPECIFIC ADJECTIVES

With certain adjectives, the dative case is required. It's usually adjectives that are combined with the verb "sein".

It seems like this might be another thing you have to memorize, but it's quite simple:

1. The adjective has to come after the noun it describes.

- „Dein Verhalten ist **mir** peinlich.“ = The adjective comes after the noun it describes: "Verhalten".
- „Das ist **ein** peinliches Verhalten.“ = The adjective comes before the noun "Verhalten" → no dative case

2. The adjective has to be more directly related to the object than the subject.

- „**Mein** Vater ist peinlich.“ = The adjective refers to the subject.
- „Mein Vater ist **mir** peinlich.“ = The adjective refers to the pronoun "mir".

The first sentence describes a general fact that everyone thinks, while the second sentence only talks about what I ("ich") think about my father. In the second case, we don't know what other people think about my father. It's similar to using "to me" in English.

More common examples:

- „**Mir** ist heute ganz schlecht.“
- „Das ist **mir** neu.“
- „Das sind Sie **mir** schuldig.“
- „Mein Mann ist **mir** treu.“
- „Meine Kinder sind **mir** wichtig.“

More adjectives that use the dative case:

ähnlich, bekannt, bewusst, böse, dankbar, fremd, gefährlich, klar, lästig, möglich, nahe, nützlich, peinlich, recht, schädlich, sympathisch, überlegen, unterlegen, verbunden, willkommen

In a separate downloadable list you can find examples with all the adjectives that require a specific case.

SUMMARY

- The dative case is used for the indirect object and specific verbs, prepositions, and adjectives.
- For two-case prepositions, the case depends on whether it's being used as a causal, local, modal, or temporal preposition.
- For local prepositions (those talking about location), we use the dative case when answering the question "Wo?" ("Where?" - position) and the accusative case when answering the question "Wohin?" ("Where to?" - movement).
- Some adjectives (usually in combination with "sein") require the dative case when the adjective comes after the noun, and the adjective refers more directly to the object than the subject.

YOUR To-DO LIST



- Create your own vocabulary lists following my template (found in the bonus downloads) and start using it right away. Use different colors for the different cases.
- When you write the verbs in the color of the case, you will automatically remember which case you need to use.
- Do the dative case exercises starting on the next page.

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