

## Articles and gender of nouns

<i>Definite article</i>	<i>Indefinite article</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>gender</i>
<b>der</b>	<b>ein</b>	Mann ( <i>man</i> )	männlich ( <i>male</i> )
<b>die</b>	<b>eine</b>	Frau ( <i>woman</i> )	weiblich ( <i>female</i> )
<b>das</b>	<b>ein</b>	Kind ( <i>child</i> )	sächlich ( <i>neuter</i> )
<b>die</b>	-	Leute ( <i>people</i> )	Plural ( <i>plural</i> )

The grammatical gender has often nothing to do with the biological gender.

Example: persons	Example: <b>the ocean</b>
<b>der</b> Mann ( <i>man</i> )	<b>der</b> Ozean
<b>die</b> Frau ( <i>woman</i> )	<b>die</b> See (Attention: <b>der</b> See = <i>lake</i> )
<b>das</b> Mädchen ( <i>girl</i> )	<b>das</b> Meer

> *There is no rule or only rules with many exceptions.* <

### **male nouns - DER**

1. all *days, months and seasons*

- **der** Montag (*Monday*)
- **der** Mai (*May*)
- **der** Winter (*winter*)

2. occupations and nationalities when you referring to a male person

- **der** Fahrer (*male driver*)
- **der** Student (*male student*)
- **der** Kanzler (*male chancellor*)
- **der** Russe (*male russian*)

3. names of *cars and trains*

- **der** ICE (*fast train in Germany*)
- **der** Mercedes
- **der** VW (*Volkswagen*)

4. *male people* are usually grammatical male

- **der** Mann (*man*)
- **der** Junge (*boy*)
- **der** Bruder (*brother*)

5. most *mountains and lakes*

- **der** Bodensee (*southgerman lake*)
- **der** Mount Everest
- **der** Kilimandscharo

6. most nouns ending with *-ich, -ig, -ling*

- **der** Honig (*honey*)
- **der** Teppich (*carpet*)
- **der** Schädling (*pest*)

7. most nouns ending with *-el, -en, -er*

- **der** Wagen (*car, carriage/coach*)
- **der** Löffel (*spoon*)
- **der** Becher (*mug*)

**female nouns - DIE**

1. all nouns ending with *-heit, -keit, -schaft, -tät, -ung*
  - **die** Freundschaft (*friendship*)
  - **die** Freiheit (*freedom*)
  - **die** Wohnung (*apartment*)
2. n. ending with *-ik, -ade, -age, -anz, -enz, -ette, -ine, -ion, -ur*
  - **die** Musik (*music*)
  - **die** Sage (*legend*)
  - **die** Nation (*nation*)
3. all cardinal numbers
  - **die** Eins (*one*)
  - **die** Zwei (*two*)
  - **die** Drei (*three*)
- 4.1. female people are usually grammatical female
  - **die** Frau (*woman*)
  - **die** Dame (*lady*)
  - **die** Tochter (*daughter*)
- 4.2. occupations and nationalities ending on *-in* are usually female
  - **die** Fahrerin (*female driver*)
  - **die** Studentin (*female student*)
  - **die** Kanzlerin (*female chancellor*)
  - **die** Russin (*female russian*)
5. most flowers and trees
  - **die** Rose (*rose*)
  - **die** Orchidee (*orchid*)
  - **die** Palme (*palm*)
6. most nouns ending with *-ei, -ie, -ive, -itis, -isse*
  - **die** Polizei (*police*)
  - **die** Linie (*line*)
  - **die** Initiative (*initiative*)

7. most nouns ending with *-e*

- **die** Ecke (*corner*)
- **die** Grenze (*border*)
- **die** Decke (*ceiling*)

**neuter nouns - DAS**

1. nouns ending with *-lein, -chen*
  - **das** Fräulein (*miss*)
  - **das** Mädchen (*girl*)
  - **das** Kätzchen (*kitten*)
2. most names of hotels, cafes and theaters
  - **das** Hilton
  - **das** Schauspielhaus (*theater*)
  - **das** Hofbräuhaus (*restaurant in Munich*)
3. all colors
  - **das** Blau (*blue*)
  - **das** Rot (*red*)
  - **das** Gelb (*yellow*)
4. all gerunds (verbs which become nouns)
  - **das** Lesen (*reading*)
  - **das** Schreiben (*writing*)
  - **das** Sehen (*seeing*)
5. many cities and countries
  - (**das**) Deutschland (*Germany*)
  - (**das**) Italien (*Italy*)
  - (**das**) Berlin
6. most nouns ending with *-tum, -ment, -um, -ium, -nis*
  - **das** Museum (*museum*)
  - **das** Datum (*date*)
  - **das** Verhältnis (*relationship*)
7. most nouns starting with "Ge" and ending with "e"
  - **das** Gebäude (*building*)
  - **das** Gefüge (*structure*)
  - **das** Gerede (*gossip*)

## Plural

**Basic rules** (there are exceptions, but it works well for about 70% of nouns)

- Male and neuter nouns form the plural with **-e (+ Umlaut)**:  
das Ding (*thing*) -> die Dinge, der Baum (*tree*) -> die Bäume
- Female nouns form the plural with **-(e)n**:  
die Frau (*woman*) -> die Frauen, die Liste (*list*) -> die Listen
- Proper names, abbreviations and foreign words form the plural with **-s**:  
die CDs, die T-Shirts, die Renaults

### Additional rules:

- Some male/neuter form the plural with **-(e)n**:  
der Bär (*bear*) -> die Bären
- Some male/neuter form the plural with **-(e)r (+ Umlaut)**:  
das Kind (*child*) -> die Kinder, der Mann (*man*) -> die Männer.
- Some male (and two neuter) form the plural with **-e + Umlaut**:  
der Sohn (*son*) -> die Söhne
- Some female form the plural with **-e (+ Umlaut)**:  
die Bank (*bank*) -> die Bänke
- Male/neuter on **-el, -en, -er, -lein or -chen** stay without ending in plural:  
der Wagen (*car, carriage/coach*) -> die ~,  
der Lehrer (*teacher*) -> die ~, das Mädchen (*girl*) -> die ~.

Words from Greek or latin sometimes form the plural close to their original language.

- das Visum (*visa*) -> die Visa, die Visen
- der Virus (*virus*) -> die Viren
- der Atlas (*atlas*) -> die Atlanten
- die Pizza (*pizza*) -> die Pizzen, die Pizzas
- das Lexikon (*encyclopedia*) -> die Lexika, die Lexiken

Some words have two plural with different meaning.

- das Wort (*word*) -> die Worte (*poets words*)  
-> die Wörter (*common words in a book or a text*)

## Compounded nouns

There is *no longest word* in German. You can always add another noun to the first one. Compounded nouns take *the article of the last noun*.

- **Die Donau** (*Danube*)
- **Der Donaudampf** (*steam*)
- **Das Donaudampfschiff** (*boat*)
- **Die Donaudampfschiffahrt** (*ride*)
- **Die Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft** (*society*)
- **Der Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftsarbeiter** (*worker, labourer*)
- **Die Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftsarbeitergewerkschaft** (*union*)
- **Die Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaftsarbeitergewerkschaftssitzung** (*meeting*)
- ...

Some words need an "s" between them to make them sound "softer". This happens *often* after compound consonants.

- Arbeits**s**amt (*labour office*)
- Lebens**s**zeichen (*life sign*)
- Verkehrs**s**ampel (*traffic light*)
- Wirtschafts**s**spionage (*economic espionage*)
- Hochzeit**s**stanz (*wedding dance*)

Sometimes you can use a hyphen (-) to separate words and make them easier to read.

- Wirtschafts-Spionage (*economic espionage*)
- Gewerkschafts-Sitzung (*union meeting*)
- Telefon-Seelsorge (*telephonic counseling/care*)