The Plural Of Nouns – Part 1

➔ A noun’s gender can be seen from its accompanying definite article in Singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>feminine</th>
<th>neuter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>der Mann</td>
<td>die Frau</td>
<td>das Kind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➔ But: All nouns take the **definite article “die” in Plural**. Hence, you cannot tell a noun’s gender from its Plural form!

➔ In contrast to English, which mainly uses -s to form the Plural endings, German still applies the **old Germanic plural forms**, which are much more complex!

➔ German Plurals are formed through (1) **vowel changes** and/or various kinds of (2) **suffixes**:

- die Tür – die Türen
- das Kind – die Kinder
- der Tisch – die Tische
- das Haus – die Häuser
- der Schlüssel – die Schlüssel
- das Sofa – die Sofas
- der Baum – die Bäume
- der Mann – die Männer
- die Frau – die Frauen
- der Hund – die Hunde
➔ Vowel changes can (but do not necessarily!) occur when the noun contains a, o or u, which change to ä, ö or ü.

➔ Which suffix to use is often influenced by the noun’s gender, the amount of its syllables and its endings.
BUT: There are many overlapping possibilities and patterns!

➔ There are a total of 12 different Plural forms in German. They often follow a pattern, but mostly need to be learned by heart!

- no vowel change / no suffix
- vowel change / no suffix
- no vowel change / suffix -s
- no vowel change / suffix -n
- no vowel change / suffix -en
- no vowel change / suffix -nen
- no vowel change / suffix -e
- vowel change / suffix -e
- no vowel change / suffix -er
- vowel change / suffix -er
- irregular plural forms
- nouns that exist only in Singular or Plural

Ultimately: Always learn the gender and plural together with the noun.

The subsequent chapters will introduce each Plural category one by one.