

# German Cases Cheat Sheet

## Definite and Indefinite Articles + Pronouns

Below are several charts. In German, the endings change for Definite (The) and Indefinite (A) Articles. These need to be memorized as they are important and cannot be ignored. Personal Pronouns seem more complicated at first, but remember, you can do it.

- She, They, and You (formal) all use "sie/Sie."
- In writing, a good way to tell them apart is:
  - **You (formal)** is always uppercase "Sie" and comes after a verb that ends in -en.
  - **She** is typically followed by "ist" (is) or a verb that has a -t ending (with exceptions).
  - **They** is typically followed by "sind" (are) or comes before a verb that ends in -en.

### Examples:

- *kaufen Sie/Sie sind* | you buy/you are
- *sie kauft/sie ist* | she buys/she is
- *sie kaufen/sie sind* | they buy/they are

Sometimes, you will have to rely on context. A note on **Sie**: I'm not too sure why the verb comes before the pronoun. I've heard that it can be seen as more of a demand, or that it's a bit old-fashioned, but take these with a grain of salt, and maybe ask a few native speakers to get their opinion.

## Case Chart - The

Case	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	Der	Das	Die
Accusative	Den	Das	Die
Dative	Dem	Dem	Der
Genitive	Des	Des	Der

## Case Chart - A

Case	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	Ein	Ein	Eine
Accusative	Einen	Ein	Eine
Dative	Einem	Einem	Einer
Genitive	Eines	Eines	Einer

## Case Chart - Personal Pronouns

Case	1st Person	2nd Person	3rd Person
Nominative	Ich	Du	Er/Sie/Es
Accusative	Mich	Dich	Ihn/Sie/Es
Dative	Mir	Dir	Ihm/Ihr/Ihm
Genitive	Meiner	Deiner	Seiner/Ihrer

## Nominative

The **Nominative** case is the simplest one and is the subject of a sentence. This means it is the thing performing the action.

You can usually tell that something is **Nominative** if it's followed by "Sein" (to be) or "ist" (is) as in "This thing is something."

**Examples:**

- *Meine Mutter ist Ärztin* (My mother is a doctor)
- *Der Fisch ist rot* (The fish is red)
- *Der Hund beißt den Mann* (The dog bites the man) (*Note: The man is in the accusative case*)

The nominative is usually the subject of the sentence, but not always. Keep this in mind.

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## Dative

The **Dative** case in English is known as the indirect object. The indirect object is used when referring to something that isn't directly affected by the verb. The **Dative** case is used after certain verbs and prepositions, which must be memorized.

**Example:**

- *Der Polizist gibt dem Fahrer einen Strafzettel.* (The policeman is giving the driver a ticket.)

In this example, the **Dative** case is "the driver," as the policeman is giving a ticket *to* him, not giving *the driver* to something. The policeman is giving the ticket, which makes it the **Accusative** object (the direct object).

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## Accusative

The **Accusative** case is very important. It is the direct object, meaning it's affected by a transitive verb.

The order of words may change compared to English word order, but as long as you have the proper **Accusative** articles, the meaning remains clear.

**Example:**

- *Den Mann beißt der Hund.* (The dog bites the man)

**What's a transitive verb?**

A transitive verb is a type of verb that needs to be followed by an object.

**Examples:**

- *Ich habe...* (I have)
- *Sie kauft...* (She buys)
- *Er kann...* (He can)

These don't make sense without a second object to receive the action.

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## Genitive

The **Genitive** case shows possession in German. There are also "Genitive Prepositions" that will change an object into this case.

**Example:**

- *Das Auto meines Bruders* (My brother's car)

Noun endings change in the **Genitive** case, adding -es or -s as appropriate.

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## Miscellaneous

This is a list of things that need to be explained or shown but didn't have a good spot to place them.

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## Direct vs Indirect

**Example: "Jack bought his son a car."**

- **Jack** is the subject of the sentence, so he would be in the **Nominative** case.
- **The car** is the object Jack is buying, so it's in the **Accusative** case.

- **His son** is the one being affected by the direct object, so it's in the **Dative** case.
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## Time and Distance

When talking about time or distance, use the **Accusative** case.

### Examples:

- *Einen Kilometer* (one kilometer)
- *Einen Monat* (one month)
- *Einen Minuten* (one minute)