

# THE FORMS OF THE NOUN

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In Norwegian, the nouns fall into three groups: masculines, feminines and neuters. These are the grammatical *genders* (in Norwegian: kjønn) of the nouns.

## Which gender is the noun?

Usually, we cannot tell which gender a noun is, just by looking at it. We have to learn it for each noun. However, here is a little help.

All *feminines* can also be used as masculines. We can say *ei bok – boka* (feminine) or *en bok – boken* (masculine). It is most common to use the feminine form for words for female persons, like *ei jente – jenta*. But it is also possible to say *en jente – jenten*.

Only about 25% of the nouns are *neuters*. Therefore, you should focus on learning them. The rest you can treat as masculines. A [list of some frequent neuters](#) can be found at [grammatikk.com](http://grammatikk.com).

Nouns ending in *-sjon*, *-ning*, *-het* or *-else* are masculines.

## Forms of the noun

The nouns have four forms along to dimensions: singular – plural and indefinite – definite (In Norwegian: ubestemt – bestemt).

Singular		Plural	
Indefinite	Definite	Indefinite	Definite

In the indefinite form, singular, there is an article in front of the noun: *en*, *ei* or *et*. This corresponds to the English *a(n)*. You can learn more about the use of the indefinite article in the document [Ubestemt artikkel](#) (Norwegian text).

The noun also has an article in the definite form, both singular and plural. In English this is a little word in front of the noun: *the*, but in Norwegian it is a suffix.

Now, let us have a look at the forms for masculines, feminines and neuters.

## Masculine

The masculines fall into three groups. Most masculines follow this declension:

en bil (a car)	<u>bil</u> en (the car)	<u>bil</u> er (cars)	<u>bil</u> ene (the cars)
en hage (a garden)	<u>hag</u> en	<u>hag</u> er	<u>hag</u> ene

Masculines ending in *-el* have a contraction in the plural.

en støvel (a boot)	støvel <u>e</u> n	støv <u>l</u> er	støv <u>l</u> ene
en sykkel (a bike)	sykk <u>e</u> len	sykk <u>l</u> er	sykk <u>l</u> ene

Masculines ending in *-er* have special forms in the plural. These are often words for persons, like nationalities and professions.

en tysker (a German)	tysker <u>e</u> n	tysker <u>e</u>	tysker <u>e</u> ne
en lærer (a teacher)	lærer <u>e</u> n	lærer <u>e</u>	lærer <u>e</u> ne

## Feminine

Feminines are declined as follows:

ei dør (a door)	dø <u>r</u> a	dø <u>r</u> er	dø <u>r</u> ene
ei jente (a girl)	jent <u>a</u>	jent <u>e</u> r	jent <u>e</u> ne

The plural forms of the feminines and most masculines are identical.

## Nøytrum

The neuters fall into two groups, depending on the number of syllables in the indefinite form, singular. A word usually has as many syllables as there are vowels or clusters of vowels (called diphthongs) in it:

et <u>h</u> us	one vowel → one syllable
et <u>e</u> p <u>l</u> e	two vowels → two syllables
et <u>m</u> en <u>n</u> es <u>k</u> e	three vowels → three syllables
et <u>t</u> au	one cluster of vowels → one syllable

Neuters with two or more syllables follow this pattern:

et eple (an apple)	epl <u>e</u> t	epl <u>e</u> r	epl <u>e</u> ne
et problem	proble <u>m</u> et	proble <u>m</u> er	proble <u>m</u> ene

The plural is identical with that of the feminines and most masculines.

Short neuters with just one syllable have no -er in the plural:

et brød (a bread)	brødet	<u>brød</u>	brødene
et tau (a rope)	tauet	<u>tau</u>	tauene

### Irregular nouns

We also have some irregular nouns. You can find a [list](#) with some of them at [grammatikk.com](http://grammatikk.com).

### Other related documents

The following documents at [grammatikk.com](http://grammatikk.com) can also be of help.

[Substantivets former – tabell](#) (in Norwegian)

[Definite and indefinite form](#)