

f People's names

The definite article may be used with people's names in informal speech:

Hast du **die** Petra gesehen? *Have you seen Petra?*
Der Herr Lehmann wohnt *Mr Lehmann doesn't live*
nicht mehr hier. *here any more.*

■ **5.2.2** Use and omission of the indefinite article
The indefinite article is used in English but is omitted in German

- with the verbs **sein** (*to be*), **werden** (*to become*) and **bleiben** (*to remain*) and a job title or nationality:
Er ist/wird Ingenieur. *He is/will become an engineer.*
Sind Sie Engländer? *Are you an Englishman?*
Exception: where there is an adjective, e.g.:
Sie ist eine gute Ärztin. *She is a good doctor.*
- after **als** (*as a*):
Als Ausländer sieht man *As a foreigner you see things*
das anders. *differently.*
Als Mutter hat man es in *You won't find this job easy*
diesem Beruf nicht leicht. *as a mother.*
- after prepositions used in certain senses, including **gegen** (*against*) referring to an illness and **ohne** (*without*). (English varies in its use of the article here.)
Das ist ein Beruf **ohne** *That's a job without a future.*
Zukunft.
Gegen Depression lässt *There isn't much one can do*
sich nicht viel tun. *about depression.*
- in certain set phrases:
Das ist Geschmacksache. *That's a matter of taste.*
Sie hat Kopfschmerzen. *She has a headache.*

6 Nouns and gender

A noun is a word which names a person, an animal, a place, a thing, an event or an abstract concept: **Tochter** (*daughter*), **Hund** (*dog*), **München** (*Munich*), **Schiff** (*ship*), **Geburt** (*birth*), **Mut** (*courage*). All nouns are written with an initial capital letter in German (2.2.1).

Nouns are classified as masculine, feminine or neuter. Since their gender is not always predictable, it has to be learnt for each noun. However, there are rules for determining the gender of some groups of nouns.

6.1 Masculine nouns

■ 6.1.1 Masculine by meaning

- male persons and male animals
der Mann (*man*), der Bruder (*brother*), der Schreiner (*carpenter*), der Hund (*dog*), der Kater (*tom-cat*)
- names of days of the week, months, seasons, points of the compass and many nouns referring to weather
der Montag (*Monday*), der Januar (*January*), der Winter (*winter*), der Süden (*south*), der Regen (*rain*)
Exceptions: das Frühjahr (*spring*), die Jahreszeit (*season*), das Wetter (*weather*), das Gewitter (*thunderstorm*), das Eis (*ice*)
- makes of car
der Audi, der BMW, der Rover
- alcoholic drinks
der Brandy, der Cognac, der Schnaps, der Wein
Exception: das Bier