

7.4 Double plurals

A few nouns have two plurals with different meanings, the most common being:

die Bank	[die Bänke (<i>benches</i>) die Banken (<i>banks</i>)
die Mutter	[die Mütter (<i>mothers</i>) die Muttern (<i>nuts for bolts</i>)
der Stock	[die Stöcke (<i>sticks</i>) die Stockwerke (<i>storeys</i>)
das Wort	[die Wörter (<i>single words of a language</i>) die Worte (<i>words in context/in a speech</i>)

7.5 Different uses in German and English

■ 7.5.1 Some nouns are singular in German, but their English equivalent is generally plural. Examples:

das Aussehen	<i>looks</i>	die Hose	<i>trousers</i>
das Benehmen	<i>manners</i>	der Lohn	<i>wages</i>
der Besitz	<i>possessions</i>	das Protokoll	<i>minutes</i>
die Brille	<i>glasses</i>	die Schere	<i>scissors</i>
der Dank	<i>thanks</i>	die Treppe	<i>stairs</i>
das Fernglas	<i>binoculars</i>	die Waage	<i>scales</i>

■ 7.5.2 A few nouns are used only or mainly in the plural in German. Common examples:

die Eltern	<i>parents</i>	die Lebensmittel	<i>food</i>
die Ferien	<i>holidays</i>	die Leute	<i>people</i>
die Flitterwochen	<i>honeymoon</i>	die Noten	<i>(sheet) music</i>
		die Trümmer	<i>rubbles</i>
die Kosten	<i>cost(s)</i>	die Zinsen	<i>interest</i>

8 Nouns and cases

Nouns, as well as pronouns, adjectives and articles, are used in the four cases: nominative, accusative, dative and genitive. Cases are used in German to indicate the relationship of words to other parts of a clause or sentence.

8.1 Use of cases

■ 8.1.1 The nominative case is used

- for the subject of a clause or sentence:
Der Apfel ist lecker. *The apple is tasty.*
- for the complement of the verbs **sein** (*to be*), **werden** (*to become*), **bleiben** (*to stay*), **heißen** (*to be called*), **scheinen** (*to seem*) and the passive of **nennen** (*to be called*). For examples see 30.5.

■ 8.1.2 The accusative case is used

- for the direct object of a verb (the noun or pronoun that receives the action of a verb):
Sie hat **einen Vorschlag** gemacht. *She made a suggestion.*
Wir haben **ihn** unterstützt. *We supported him.*
- after certain prepositions (see 15.3, 15.4)

■ 8.1.3 The dative case is used

- for the indirect object of a verb:
Ich gab **dem Kind** den Ball. *I gave the child the ball.*
(*indirect object*) den Ball
(*direct object*).
- for the object of certain verbs (see 30.3)
- after certain prepositions (see 15.2, 15.4)