

Was für **ein** Wagen (*subject, What kind of car is that?*
nominative) ist das?

Was für **einen** Wagen (*direct object*) hast du
dir gekauft? *What kind of car did you buy?*

14.7 Indefinite pronouns

An indefinite pronoun indicates an unspecified quantity or quality. For the negative indefinite pronouns **keiner** (*none*), **nichts** (*nothing*) and **niemand** (*nobody*) see 13.4.

Common indefinites are:

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| aller, alle | <i>all (the)</i> | jeder(mann) | <i>everybody</i> |
| ander | <i>other</i> | jemand | <i>somebody</i> |
| beides, beide | <i>both</i> | man | <i>one</i> |
| dergleichen | <i>suchlike</i> | mancher | <i>some, many a</i> |
| einer | <i>(some)one</i> | mehrere (pl.) | <i>several</i> |
| ein bisschen | <i>a little</i> | sämtlicher, -e | <i>all (the)</i> |
| ein paar | <i>a few</i> | solcher, solche | <i>such</i> |
| ein wenig | <i>a little</i> | viel, viele | <i>much, many</i> |
| einiger, einige | <i>some</i> | wenig, wenige | <i>little, few</i> |
| etwas | <i>something</i> | welcher, welche | <i>some, any</i> |
| (coll: was) | | wer | <i>somebody</i> |
| jeder, jeglicher | <i>each, every</i> | | |

Most of these function as pronouns but can also be used with nouns. **Etwas**, **ein paar**, **ein bisschen**, **ein wenig** and **dergleichen** and **desgleichen** do not change. The others agree with the noun they refer to.

irgend (*some ... or other, any ... at all*) is used in combination with many indefinite pronouns to stress their indefinite meaning. It precedes **etwas**, **jemand** and **solcher** as a separate word, but in all other combinations it forms a compound word. The compounds decline in the same way as the pronoun without **irgend**. Examples:

Hat er **irgendetwas** gesagt? *Did he say anything at all?*
Hast du **irgendjemand**/
irgendeinen gesehen? *Did you see anybody?*

The following indefinites frequently cause problems for English speakers.

■ **14.7.1 aller, alle** (*all the, everything, everybody*) is declined like **dieser** (14.4.1):

| | |
|--|---|
| Alle sind hier. | <i>Everybody is here.</i> |
| Alle Arbeiter sind hier. | <i>All the workers are here.</i> |
| Sie war mit allem zufrieden. | <i>She was satisfied with everything.</i> |

However, when **all** precedes **der**, **die**, **das** or another pronoun it usually does not change:

Ihr wisst nicht, was ihr mit **all dem/eurem** Geld
machen sollt. *You don't know what to do
with all that/all your money.*

■ **14.7.2 ander** (*other*) is mostly used as an adjective:
Das ist eine **andere** Sache. *That's a different matter.*

The form **anders** is used after **sein** or as an adverb:
Diese Aufgabe ist **anders**. *This task is different.*
Wir werden das Problem **anders** lösen. *We'll solve the problem
in a different way.*

■ **14.7.3 beide** (*both*) is usually declined like the plural of **dieser**:

Er hat **beide** (Autos) verkauft. *He sold both (cars).*

After a definite article or another pronoun **beide** is declined like an adjective and often corresponds to English *two*:

Die/Diese **beiden** Männer *The/These two men* haben uns geholfen.