

THE FORMS OF THE NOUN

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.

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

Forms of the noun

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

Singular		Plural	
Indefinite	Definite	Indefinite	Definite

In the idefinite form, singular, there is an article in front of the noun: *en*, *ei* or *et*. This correspond 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)	<i>bilen</i> (the car)	<i>biler</i> (cars)	<i>bilene</i> (the cars)
en hage (a garden)	<i>hagen</i>	<i>hager</i>	<i>hagene</i>

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

en støvel (a boot)	<i>støvelen</i>	<i>støvler</i>	<i>støvlene</i>
en sykkel (a bike)	<i>sykkelen</i>	<i>sykler</i>	<i>syklene</i>

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

en tysker (a German)	<i>tyskeren</i>	<i>tyskere</i>	<i>tyskerne</i>
en lærer (a teacher)	<i>læreren</i>	<i>lærere</i>	<i>lærerne</i>

Feminine

Feminines are declined as follows:

ei dør (a door)	<i>døra</i>	<i>dører</i>	<i>dørene</i>
ei jente (a girl)	<i>jenta</i>	<i>jenter</i>	<i>jentene</i>

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 e <u>p</u> le	two vowels → two syllables
et men <u>n</u> es <u>k</u> e	three vowels → three syllables
et <u>tau</u>	one cluster of vowels → one syllable

Neuters with two or more syllables follow this pattern:

et eple (an apple)	<i>eplet</i>	<i>epler</i>	<i>eplene</i>
et problem	<i>problemet</i>	<i>problemer</i>	<i>problemene</i>

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	<i>brød</i>	brødene
et tau (a rope)	tauet	<i>tau</i>	tauene

Irregular nouns

We also have some irregular nouns. You can find a list with some of them at grammatikk.com.

Other related documents

The following documents at grammatikk.com can also be of help.

Substantivets former – tabell (in Norwegian)
 Definite and indefinite form