

# Follow up No.2 – GERMAN

## (KS2 Module 1- Grammar)

### Making Nouns Plural in German

A nice activity based on The Four Friends is one, which combines classroom instructions with the animal characters. Divide children into four groups and give each group one of the animal characters. Call out a familiar classroom instruction for one of the groups e.g. *Schafe, steht auf!* (Sheep, stand up!). For this activity you will need to be aware of the most common way in which to make singular nouns in German plural. As in English there is more than one way!

Forming the plural is quite complex in German, and you may wish to adopt an approach where you highlight plural endings, as and when your class meets them, and think about previous nouns which have the same plural ending, rather than present children with 'rules' for pluralisation. In English, French and Spanish many plurals are formed by adding 's' or 'es'. This does not apply to German. Very few nouns form the plural in this way. Additionally, the endings of plural nouns can change according to the 'case' of the noun – nominative, accusative, genitive or dative. This can also change the definite article. Examples given below are for nouns in the *nominative* case where the definite article is always *die*.

The majority of feminine nouns form their plural by –n, –en, or –nen as an ending.  
Example: *die Frage, die Fragen* (question/questions); *die Frau, die Frauen*, (woman/women); *die Lehererin, die Leherinnen* (female teacher/teachers)

Masculine and neuter nouns often add –e or –er to form the plural.  
Example: *das Pferd, die Pferde*, (horse/horses); *das Kind, die Kinder* (child/children); *der Tisch, die Tische* (table/tables)

There are many nouns which have no plural ending, i.e. the noun remains the same whether it is singular or plural. So the singular and plural form is identical and it is only the definite article which changes. They are usually masculine or neuter nouns with –en, –er, –el endings.  
Example: *das Kaninchen, die Kaninchen* (rabbit/rabbits); *der Lehrer, die Lehrer* (male teacher/teachers); *der Onkel, die Onkel* (uncle/uncles)

Some nouns in this category have an umlaut added to the plural if the first vowel is a, o or u.  
Example: *der Apfel, die Äpfel* (apple/apples); *der Vater, die Väter* (father/fathers)

Some masculine nouns form the plural by adding –e ending + an umlaut to the first vowel if it is a, o or u. A few feminine nouns follow this pattern

Example: *der Stuhl, die Stühle* (chair, chairs); *die Maus, die Mäuse* (mouse/mice)

NB: It is usually singular nouns with one syllable which are in this category.

Nouns which do add an 's' to form the plural tend to be words derived from other languages.

Example *der Park, die Parks*; *die DVD, die DVDs*; *das Baby, die Babys*

