

Basics 2

Pets

In English, there's a saying that a dog is a man's best friend. But in Germany, cats are by far more popular than dogs!

Seeing spots?

Don't worry, it's not you! German vowels sometimes have two dots above them, called **umlauts**. They change the vowel's pronunciation.

ä

Bär (as in "rare")

ö

schön

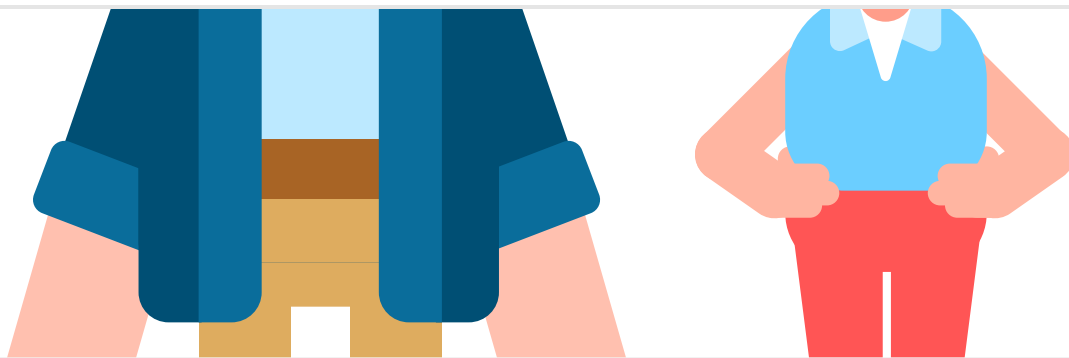
say "ee", but with "o" shaped lips


A bit more gender

Remember how you say **mein Vater** but **meine Mutter**? Well, **mein** isn't the only word that changes form!



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 **die** Frau, **der** Mann

the woman, the man

The word **der** also changes depending on the gender of the word it's paired with. If it's masculine, it's **der**. If it's feminine, it's **die**.

Hello, Ms. Cat!

It's not just words for people that have gender—all words do! For example, words like **Bär** and **Hund** are masculine, while **Eule** and **Katze** are feminine.



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 der Hund und die Katze

the dog and the cat

So how do you know if a word is feminine or masculine? Unfortunately, it's not always logical— it's just something you'll have to learn!

So when you're learning German words, don't just memorize **Bär** or **Katze**. Instead, memorize the whole phrase, **der Bär** or **die Katze**.