HU

LANGUAGE COURSE

Hungarian Grammar 1

10 Chapters

Philip Osztromok

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📢 The Sound Map — A hangtérkép

Hungarian grammar is built out of sounds. Every suffix you will meet in this course changes its shape depending on the vowel or consonant next to it, so before the rules you need a clear map of the sounds themselves. This chapter is not a second alphabet course: it takes what Hungarian Alphabet 1 taught you letter by letter and re-sorts it into the groups that grammar cares about.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Every grammar rule in this course asks one of three questions about a sound: **Is the vowel back or front?** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 2 and 3) **Is it short or long?** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4) **Is the consonant voiced or voiceless?** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5). Learn the map below and the rules become lookups.

The 14 vowels in three groups

Say a back vowel and your tongue sits towards the back of the mouth and your lips are rounded. Say a front vowel and your tongue moves forward. The front vowels split again: **unrounded** (lips spread, as in English *bed*) and **rounded** (lips rounded while the tongue stays forward, as in German *schön* or French *peu*). Hungarian *Alphabet 1*, chapters 4 to 7, introduced them one pair at a time; here they are together.

GROUP	SHORT	LONG	SAY IT (CAPITALS = THE VOWEL)
Back	**a · o · u**	**á · ó · ú**	a = the *o* in Scottish *hot* · á = *a* in *father* · o = short *go* · ó = long *go* · u = *put* · ú = *moon*
Front, unrounded	**e · i**	**é · í**	e = *bed* · é = *say* without the glide · i = *sit* · í = *see*
Front, rounded	**ö · ü**	**ő · ű**	ö = say *e* with rounded lips · ő = the same, long · ü = say *i* with rounded lips · ű = the same, long

Two pairs differ in more than length

a / **á** and **e** / **é** are different vowels, not just short and long versions of one sound (the short *a* is rounded and far back, the long *á* is open and unrounded; the short *e* is open, the long *é* is closed). The other five pairs differ mainly in length. In writing, the accent marks the length (or, for ö/ü, the long double-acute *ő ű*), so spelling tells you which you need.

Short and long pairs: why the length matters

Length changes the meaning of a word, and, as Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4 shows, it changes how words take suffixes. A few pairs to say aloud:

SHORT	LONG	MEANING	SAY IT
kar	**kár**	arm · damage, pity	KAWR · KAHR
hat	**hát**	six · back	HAWT · HAHT
kor	**kór**	age · illness	KOR · KOHR
kert	**kért**	garden · asked	KEHRT · KAYRT
tör	**tőr**	breaks · dagger	TEUR · TEUR (longer)
ujj	**új**	finger · new	UYY · OOY

The consonants: voiced and voiceless partners

Hungarian consonants come in pairs that differ only in whether the vocal cords vibrate. Put your fingertips on your throat: for a **voiced** consonant you feel a buzz; for a **voiceless** one you do not. This matters in Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5, where suffixes make a consonant take over its neighbour's voicing.

VOICED (BUZZ)	VOICELESS (NO BUZZ)	EXAMPLE PAIR	SAY IT
b	**p**	**bor** wine · **por** dust	BOR · POR
d	**t**	**dél** noon · **tél** winter	DAYL · TAYL

VOICED (BUZZ)	VOICELESS (NO BUZZ)	EXAMPLE PAIR	SAY IT
g	k	**gép** machine · **kép** picture	GAYP · KAYP
z	sz	**zár** lock · **szár** stem	ZAHR · SAHR
zs	s	**zsír** fat · **sír** cries	ZHEER · SHEER
v	f	**vér** blood · **fér** fits	VAYR · FAYR
gy	ty	no common pair; both are 'soft'	DY · TY
dz, dzs	c, cs	rare; see below	DZ, DJ · TS, CH

The Hungarian twist: s and sz

sz is the English *s* (*szia*, SEE-aw) and **s** is the English *sh* (*sál*, SHAHL). The letters look swapped compared with English, so check your reading of every *s*.

The soft consonants

gy (like the *d* in British *due*), **ty** (like the *t* in British *tune*) and **ny** (like the *ny* in *canyon*) are made with the middle of the tongue against the hard palate. **ly** is pronounced exactly like **j** (English *y*): *király* sounds like KEE-rah-y. These are written with two letters but each is one sound and one letter of the alphabet, which matters for sorting and syllable counting.

Stress and rhythm

The stress in a Hungarian word falls on the **first syllable**, always. A suffix never moves it: *HÁZ*, *HÁZ-ban*, *HÁZ-ak-ban*. Long vowels are longer, but they do not carry the stress: in *BU-da-pest* and *DEH-breh-tsen* the stress is at the front and the other syllables are said evenly, without the reduced *uh* sounds of English. Treat every vowel in a word as full.

Questions

A yes/no question is marked by pitch: your voice rises towards the end and then falls on the last syllable. The word order often stays the same as the statement, so *Magyar vagy*. (You are

Hungarian.) and *Magyar vagy?* (Are you Hungarian?) differ only in melody.

What the map is for

QUESTION YOU WILL ASK	CHAPTER	EXAMPLE
Back or front? Rounded or not?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 2 and 3	**ház** → **házban** but **kert** → **kertben**
Short or long?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4	**alma** → **almák** (a becomes á)
Voiced or voiceless?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5	**kéz** + **-val** → **kézzel**

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① Arm or damage?

A:

Kar vagy kár? Nem hallom a különbséget.

Arm or damage? I can't hear the difference.

B:

Kár, hosszú á-val. Figyelj: kar … kár.

Damage, with a long á. Listen: kar … kár.

A:

Most már hallom!

Now I can hear it!

② Where is the stress?

A:

Hogy ejtik: Budapest?

How do you say Budapest?

B:

BU-da-pest. Mindig az első szótagon van a hangsúly.

BU-da-pest. The stress is always on the first syllable.

A:

És Debrecen?

And Debrecen?

B:

DEB-re-cen. Ugyanígy.

DEB-re-cen. The same.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

GROUP	LETTERS	WHAT TO REMEMBER
Back vowels	**a á o ó u ú**	Take back suffixes (-ban, -nak, -hoz)
Front unrounded	**e é i í**	Take front suffixes (-ben, -nek, -hez); i/í/e/é are 'neutral' (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3)
Front rounded	**ö ő ü ű**	Take front suffixes; three-way suffixes use the rounded form (-höz, -ön)
Voiced / voiceless	**b p · d t · g k · z sz · zs s · v f**	Partners in assimilation (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
Soft consonants	**gy ty ny ly**	Each is one letter; ly sounds like j
Stress	first syllable	Never moves, whatever the suffix

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Which vowel group does *u* belong to?

▼ Show answer

Back. (a, á, o, ó, u, ú)

2. Which vowel group does *ö* belong to, and what are its long partner and group-mates?

▼ Show answer

Front rounded. Long partner: ő. Group-mates: ü and ű.

3. Which of these pairs differ in *quality* and not just length: a/á, o/ó, e/é, u/ú?

▼ Show answer

a/á and e/é.

4. Say *kar* and *kár*. Which is 'damage'?

▼ Show answer

Kár, with the long á.

5. Give the voiceless partner of b, d, g and zs.

▼ Show answer

p, t, k and s.

6. How is *ly* pronounced, and what other letter sounds the same?

▼ Show answer

Like English y; the letter j sounds the same.

7. On which syllable is the stress in *házakban* (in houses)?

▼ Show answer

On the first: HÁ-zak-ban. Suffixes never move the stress.

8. *Zár* and *szár* differ in only one sound. Which sound, and is it voiced or voiceless in *szár*?

▼ Show answer

The first consonant (z versus sz). In *szár* it is voiceless.

Coming up in Chapter 2: Vowel Harmony: The Rule. You will meet the single test that tells you whether a word takes *-ban* or *-ben*, *-hoz*, *-hez* or *-höz*.

🎵 Vowel Harmony — A magánhangzó-harmónia

Almost every Hungarian suffix exists in two or three versions, and vowel harmony tells you which to pick. Hungarian Alphabet 1, chapters 8 to 10, introduced the idea; this chapter turns it into a procedure you can run on any word, then sorts the twenty most useful suffixes so you can see the system at a glance.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

A suffix takes its vowel from the vowels of the **stem**. A stem with **back** vowels takes the back form (*-ban*, *-nak*, *-hoz*). A stem with **front** vowels takes the front form (*-ben*, *-nek*, *-hez*), and if the last vowel is **rounded** (ö ő ü ű) a three-way suffix takes its rounded form (*-höz*).

Step 1: find the word group

Look at the vowels of the stem. In this chapter we stay with the clear cases: words whose vowels all belong to one group. Words with mixed vowels or the neutral vowels i, í, e, é need extra care, and Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3 covers them.

GROUP	VOWELS IN THE STEM	EXAMPLES
Back	a á o ó u ú	**ház** house · **ablak** window · **város** town · **orvos** doctor · **asztal** table
Front, unrounded	e é (with i í)	**kert** garden · **szék** chair · **ember** person · **Pest** · **Debrecen**
Front, rounded	ö ő ü ű (last vowel)	**könyv** book · **tükör** mirror · **Győr** · **kör** circle · **sör** beer

Step 2: pick the suffix

Two-way suffixes have a back form and a front form. Here the pattern with four stems:

STEM	GROUP	-BAN / -BEN (IN)	-NAK / -NEK (TO, OF)	-RA / -RE (ONTO)	-BÓL / -BŐL (OUT OF)
ház	back	házban	háznak	házra	házból
kert	front	kertben	kertnek	kertre	kertből
könyv	front, rounded	könyvben	könyvnek	könyvre	könyvből
város	back	városban	városnak	városra	városból

Three-way suffixes add a rounded form, used *only when the last vowel of the stem is ö, ő, ü or ű*:

STEM	LAST VOWEL	-HOZ / -HEZ / -HÖZ (TO)	-ON / -EN / -ÖN (ON)	-SZOR / -SZER / -SZÖR (TIMES)
ház	á (back)	házhoz	házon	—
kert	e (front, unrounded)	kerthez	kerten	—
tükör	ö (rounded)	tükörhöz	(tükrön, see Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4)	—
kör	ö (rounded)	körhöz	körön	—
ülés	é (unrounded, although it starts with ü)	üléshez	ülésen	—
öt	ö (rounded)	—	—	ötször (five times)
egy	e (unrounded)	—	—	egyszer (once)

Only the LAST vowel decides the rounding

Ülés (meeting, sitting) contains an *ü*, but its last vowel is *é*, which is unrounded, so it takes **-hez** (*üléshez*), not *-höz*. And *tükör* has two front vowels, both of which are rounded here (*ü* then *ö*); the

last vowel is *ö*, so *tükörhöz*. If you see two vowels of different groups in the same stem, go to Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3.

The procedure in four lines

1. Find the **last vowel** of the stem.
2. Is it a, á, o, ó, u, ú? Use the **back** form.
3. Is it ö, ő, ü, ű? Use the **front** form, and for a three-way suffix the **rounded** one.
4. Is it e, é, i or í? It is probably front, but check Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3 before you commit.

The twenty suffixes, sorted by pattern

PATTERN	SUFFIX (BACK / FRONT)	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Two-way	**-ban / -ben**	in	**házban** · **kertben**
Two-way	**-ba / -be**	into	**házba** · **kertbe**
Two-way	**-ból / -ből**	out of	**házból** · **kertből**
Two-way	**-nak / -nek**	to, for; of	**háznak** · **kertnek**
Two-way	**-ra / -re**	onto; for	**házra** · **kertre**
Two-way	**-ról / -ről**	off; about	**házról** · **kertről**
Two-way	**-nál / -nél**	at, by	**háznál** · **kertnél**
Two-way	**-tól / -től**	from (a person)	**háztól** · **kerttől**
Two-way	**-val / -vel**	with	**házzal** · **kerttel** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
Two-way	**-ul / -ül**	as; in a language	**magyarul** · **németül**

PATTERN	SUFFIX (BACK / FRONT)	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Two-way	**-vá / -vé**	becoming	**házzá** · **kertté** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
Three-way	**-hoz / -hez / -höz**	to (a place or person)	**házhoz** · **kerthez** · **körhöz**
Three-way	**-on / -en / -ön**	on	**házon** · **kerten** · **körön**
Three-way	**-szor / -szer / -ször**	times	**hatszor** · **egyszer** · **ötször**
Three-way	**-ok / -ek / -ök**	I (verb ending)	**várok** · **kérek** · **ülök**
Three-way	**-tok / -tek / -tök**	you (plural, verb)	**vártok** · **kértek** · **ültök**
Invariant	**-ig**	until, as far as	**házig** · **kertig**
Invariant	**-ért**	for, because of	**házért** · **kertért**
Invariant	**-ként**	as (a role)	**tanárként** · **mérnökként**
Invariant	**-kor**	at (a time)	**háromkor** · **négykor**

Which ones need no harmony?

A handful of suffixes never change: **-ig, -ért, -ként, -kor**. These are the 'invariant' ones, and learning them first removes four decisions. The same applies to the question words and to many other endings you will meet later.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① Where do you live?

A:

Hol laksz?

Where do you live?

B:

Budapesten, de a nagyszüleim Szegeden laknak.

In Budapest, but my grandparents live in Szeged.

A:

Én Győrben születtem, aztán Pestre költöztem.

I was born in Győr, then I moved to Pest.

② Who are you going to?

A:

Kihez mész?

Who are you going to see?

B:

A barátomhoz. Ott alszom a hétvégén.

To my friend's. I'm sleeping there at the weekend.

A:

Kerthez vagy házhoz?

To the garden or to the house?

B:

A házhoz, a kertben nem lehet aludni!

To the house, you can't sleep in the garden!

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

LAST VOWEL OF THE STEM	TWO-WAY SUFFIX	THREE-WAY SUFFIX	EXAMPLE
a á o ó u ú	back (-ban, -nak)	back (-hoz, -on)	**házban** · **házhoz**
e é	front (-ben, -nek)	unrounded front (-hez, -en)	**kertben** · **kerthez**
ö ő ü ű	front (-ben, -nek)	rounded front (-höz, -ön)	**könyvben** · **körhöz**
i í, or mixed vowels	check Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3	check Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3	—

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. *ház* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

házban. Last vowel á: back.

2. *kert* + -hoz / -hez / -höz

▼ Show answer

kerthez. Last vowel e: front, unrounded.

3. *tükör* + -hoz / -hez / -höz

▼ Show answer

tükörhöz. Last vowel ö: rounded.

4. *könyv* + -nak / -nek

▼ Show answer

könyvnek. Last vowel ö: front.

5. *város* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

városban. Last vowel o: back.

6. *szék* + -on / -en / -ön

▼ Show answer

széken. Last vowel é: unrounded.

7. *Győr* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

Győrben. Last vowel ő: front.

8. *ülés* + -hoz / -hez / -höz

▼ Show answer

üléshez. Last vowel é is unrounded, even though the stem begins with ü.

9. *orvos* + -hoz / -hez / -höz

▼ Show answer

orvoshoz. Last vowel o: back.

10. *Pest* + -on / -en / -ön

▼ Show answer

Pesten. Last vowel e: front, unrounded.

Coming up in Chapter 3: Vowel Harmony: Neutral Vowels and Exceptions. Why *papír* goes with *-ban*, *hotel* with *-ben*, and what to do with *híd*.

⚖️ Neutral Vowels and Exceptions — Semleges magánhangzók

*Chapter 2 gave you the clean rule: the last vowel decides. Now the awkward part. The vowels **i, í, e, é** are called **neutral** because they sit between the back and front groups: they are front vowels in sound but they do not always force a front suffix. This chapter explains what happens to words that contain them, and gives you the short list of true exceptions so that the rule stays a rule.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The neutral vowels **i í e é** do not decide the suffix on their own. In a word with *only* neutral vowels the suffix is almost always **front**. After a back vowel, **i / í** keep the word **back**, and **e** usually pulls it to **front**. A small list of one-syllable words ignore the rule.

Case 1: only neutral vowels, so front

A word made of i, í, e and é takes the front suffix. This is the biggest group and the easiest: when in doubt, go front.

WORD	MEANING	+ -BAN / -BEN	+ -NAK / -NEK	+ -HOZ / -HEZ / -HÖZ
kéz	hand	kézben	kéznek	kézhez
film	film	filmben	filmnek	filmhez
kert	garden	kertben	kertnek	kerthez
víz	water	vízben	víznek	vízhez
ing	shirt	ingben	ingnek	inghez
tévé	TV	tévében	tévének	tévéhez

Case 2: a back vowel, then i or í, so back

When a back vowel is followed by an **i** or **í** the word stays back: the neutral vowel is 'transparent' and the back vowel before it decides.

WORD	MEANING	+ -BAN / -BEN	+ -NAK / -NEK	+ -HOZ / -HEZ / -HÖZ
papír	paper	papír**ban**	papír**nak**	papír**hoz**
taxi	taxi	taxi**ban**	taxi**nak**	taxi**hoz**
iroda	office	irodá**ban** (a lengthens, Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4)	irodá**nak**	irodá**hoz**

Case 3: a back vowel, then e or é

This is the group that surprises learners: the **e** after a back vowel usually pulls the suffix to the **front**, even though the first vowel is back. These are mostly foreign or compound words.

WORD	MEANING	SUFFIX	RESULT
hotel	hotel	-ben, -nek, -hez	hotel**ben** · hotel**nek** · hotel**hez**
tanterem	classroom	-ben, -nek, -hez	tanterem**ben** · tanterem**nek** · tanterem**hez**
Budapest	Budapest	-en (on), -ről	Budapest**en** · Budapest**ről**
kávé	coffee	-ban, -nak (exception: back)	kávé**ban** · kávé**nak** · kávé**hoz**

> **Kávé is the odd one out**
>
> *Kávé* follows the back vowel *á* and takes **back** suffixes (*kávéban*), although *hotel* with an *e* takes front. For words with a back vowel followed by **é** there is no firm rule: learn the word, or check it in a dictionary, which shows the suffix form.

Case 4: a front vowel, then a back vowel: the last vowel decides

If the *last* vowel is back, the word takes back suffixes, whatever comes before: *metró* (e, then ó), *kávézó* (café). Practise reading the last vowel first.

WORD	LAST VOWEL	GROUP	RESULT
metró	ó	back	metró**ban** · metró**hoz**
sofőr	ő	front, rounded	sofőr**ben** · sofőr**höz**
fotó	ó	back	fotó**ban** · fotó**hoz**
kerékpár	á	back	kerékpár**ban** · kerékpár**hoz**

The antiharmonic stems: a short list of exceptions

A small group of one-syllable words contains only neutral vowels but takes **back** suffixes: they are 'antiharmonic'. You simply learn them, and since there are few, the list below covers the ones you will meet most often.

WORD	MEANING	TAKES	EXAMPLES
híd	bridge	back	**hídban** · **hídnak** · **hídhoz**
cél	aim, goal	back	**célban** · **célnak** · **célhoz**
sír	grave	back	**sírban** · **sírnak** · **sírhoz**
nyíl	arrow	back	**nyílban** · **nyílnak**
férfi	man	back	**férfinak** · **férfival** · **férfiak** (plural)

> **Same spelling, different word**
>
> *Sír* means 'grave' (*sírban*, in the grave) and also 'cries' (a verb). The two take different suffixes only when they are nouns, so context tells you. Likewise *víz* (water) is a normal front word: *vízben*, not

vízban.

Loanwords, names and compounds

Loanwords follow their *pronunciation*, not their spelling: *film* is pronounced FEELM, so *filmben*. A foreign name that ends in letters that are silent in Hungarian takes the harmony of the sound you say, which can look odd in print: *Edinburgh-ban* (said ED-in-burg). **Compounds** follow the *last part*: *kézikönyv* (handbook) ends in *könyv*, so *kézikönyvben*. Check a dictionary if a name is truly unfamiliar.

A checklist for a doubtful word

1. Is the last vowel **a á o ó u ú**? Back.
2. Is it **ö ő ü ű**? Front.
3. Is it **i / í**? Back if any earlier vowel is back; front if the word is all neutral. Check the antiharmonic list.
4. Is it **e**? Front (*hotelben*). Is it **é**? Front if the word is all neutral; after a back vowel check the dictionary (*kávéban*).

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① At the hotel

A:
Hol szálltál meg Budapesten?
Where did you stay in Budapest?

B:
A hotelben, a hídhoz közel.
In the hotel, close to the bridge.

A:
És a tanteremben tanultál?

② Taxi or metro?

A:
Taxival vagy metróval megyünk?
Shall we go by taxi or by metro?

B:
A metró gyorsabb, a taxi drágább.
The metro is faster, the taxi dearer.

A:
Rendben, megyünk a metróhoz.

And did you study in a classroom?

B:

Nem, a kávézóban, kávéval és papírral!

No, in the café, with coffee and paper!

Fine, let's go to the metro.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

PATTERN	TAKES	EXAMPLES
Only i í e é	front	**kézben · filmben · vízben · tévében**
Back vowel + i / í	back	**papírban · taxiban**
Back vowel + e	front	**hotelben · tanteremben**
Back vowel + é	check the dictionary	**kávéban**
Last vowel is back	back	**metróban · fotóhoz**
Last vowel is ö ő ü ű	front, rounded	**sofőrben · sofőrhöz**
Antiharmonic stems	back	**hídban · célban · sírban**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. *papír* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

papírban. Back vowel a, then í: back.

2. *hotel* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

hotelben. Back vowel o, then e: front.

3. *víz* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

vízben. Only neutral vowels: front.

4. *híd* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

hídban. Antiharmonic: learn it.

5. *kávé* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

kávéban. Back + é: take the dictionary form.

6. *film* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

filmben. Only i: front.

7. *taxi* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

taxiban. Back vowel a, then i: back.

8. *sofőr* + -nak / -nek

▼ Show answer

sofőrnek. Last vowel ő: front.

9. *cél* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

célban. Antiharmonic.

10. *tanterem* + -ben / -ban

▼ Show answer

tanteremben. Back vowel a, then e: front.

Coming up in Chapter 4: Linking Vowels and Stem Changes. Why *ház* becomes *házak* but *kéz* becomes *kezek*, and where the vowel in *tükör* goes.

🔗 Linking Vowels and Stem Changes — Kötőhangzók és tőváltozások

*Harmony chooses between -ban and -ben. This chapter handles the other thing suffixes do: they sometimes bring a **linking vowel** with them, and they sometimes change the **stem** underneath. These two effects explain nearly every 'irregular' plural and accusative in a beginner's book. Most of them are regular once you know the type.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

A stem that ends in a consonant often needs a **linking vowel** (a, o, e or ö) before an ending that starts with a consonant: *ház + k = házak*. Some stems **change** when an ending is added: they shorten (*kéz → kezek*), drop a vowel (*tükör → tükrök*), or lengthen a final vowel (*alma → almák*).

The two endings we use as examples

The **plural** is *-k*, and the **accusative** (the object marker you know from *Kérek egy kávét*) is *-t*. After a vowel they attach directly (*kávé → kávék, kávét*), and after a consonant they usually need a linking vowel first (*kert → kertek, kertet*). The same linking vowels appear before possessive endings (*házam, kertem, könyvem*), so the patterns you learn here are reused again and again.

1. Which linking vowel? The four groups

STEM GROUP	LINKING VOWEL	PLURAL -K	ACCUSATIVE -T	EXAMPLE
Back, 'a' group (a small set)	a	-ak	-at	ház → házak · házat
Back, 'o' group (the larger set)	o	-ok	-ot	ablak → ablakok · ablakot

STEM GROUP	LINKING VOWEL	PLURAL -K	ACCUSATIVE -T	EXAMPLE
Front, unrounded	e	**-ek**	**-et**	**kert → kertek · kertet**
Front, rounded	ö (or e)	**-ök / -ek**	**-öt / -et**	**tükör → tükrök · tükröt**

The a/o split is a dictionary fact

Within back words, some take *-a-* (*házak, halak, házat, halat*) and most take *-o-* (*ablakok, napok, asztalok, vonatok*). The split is not predictable from the spelling, so learn the plural with the word. Dictionaries mark it; so should your vocabulary list. For rounded front words it is the same: *sörök* but *könyvek* (both have *ö*, but they differ).

2. After r, l, ny, s, sz and a few others: no linking vowel in the accusative

After some consonants the accusative -t attaches **straight on**, with no linking vowel. The plural still has its vowel. Compare:

WORD	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	LINKING VOWEL IN ACCUSATIVE?
ember	person	**emberek**	**embert**	no
asztal	table	**asztalok**	**asztalt**	no
tanár	teacher	**tanárok**	**tanárt**	no
lány	girl	**lányok**	**lányt**	no
város	town	**városok**	**várost**	no
orvos	doctor	**orvosok**	**orvost**	no
sör	beer	**sörök**	**sört**	no
ablak	window	**ablakok**	**ablakot**	yes

WORD	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	LINKING VOWEL IN ACCUSATIVE?
kert	garden	**kertek**	**kertet**	yes
könyv	book	**könyvek**	**könyvet**	yes

A tendency, not a law

Stems ending in **-r, -l, -ly, -ny, -s, -sz** mostly take the accusative *-t* directly; stems ending in **-k, -p, -t, -v, -g** usually take a linking vowel. There are a few exceptions in both directions, so treat this as a guide and check the dictionary for any word you will use often.

3. Shortening stems

A few very common nouns have a long vowel in the dictionary form that shortens when an ending is added. The change is regular for each word and it affects the plural, accusative, possessive and most of the cases.

DICTIONARY FORM	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	WHAT CHANGED
kéz	hand	**kezek**	**kezet**	é → e
víz	water	**vizek**	**vizet**	í → i
tűz	fire	**tüzek**	**tüzet**	ű → ü
nyár	summer	**nyarak**	**nyarat**	á → a
kenyér	bread	**kenyerek**	**kenyeret**	é → e

4. The v-stems

A few stems end in a long vowel that grows a **v** before the ending: they are common words, so worth learning as a small set.

DICTIONARY FORM	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	NOTE
ló	horse	**lovak**	**lovat**	ó → ov
tó	lake	**tavak**	**tavat**	ó → av
kő	stone	**kövek**	**követ**	ő → öv
szó	word	**szavak**	**szót**	plural has v, accusative singular does not

5. Vowel-dropping stems

A few two-syllable stems drop the second vowel before an ending that begins with a vowel. You can hear why: the stem is easier to say with one fewer syllable.

DICTIONARY FORM	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	POSSESSIVE (MY)
tükör	mirror	**tükrök**	**tükröt**	**tükröm**
bokor	bush	**bokrok**	**bokrot**	**bokrom**
majom	monkey	**majmok**	**majmot**	**majmom**
teher	load	**terhek**	**terhet**	**terhem**

6. Lengthening final vowels

A noun that ends in a short **a** or **e** lengthens it to **á** or **é** before an ending: the dictionary form is the only one with the short vowel.

DICTIONARY FORM	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	POSSESSIVE (MY)
alma	apple	**almák**	**almát**	**almám**
szoba	room	**szobák**	**szobát**	**szobám**

DICTIONARY FORM	MEANING	PLURAL	ACCUSATIVE	POSSESSIVE (MY)
iskola	school	iskolák	iskolát	iskolám
kefe	brush	kefék	kefét	kefém

Careful with e-final words

Words in **-a** lengthen in every form. Words in **-e** lengthen to **é** in the same way. Words that already end in a long vowel (*kávé, autó, hajó*) just add the ending: *kávék, autót, hajók*. Do not forget *fa* (tree), which follows the same lengthening rule: *fák, fát*.

A word that does several things at once

Real words can combine these effects. Work through them one at a time: *tükör* (mirror) drops its vowel and takes a linking vowel (*tükrök*); *víz* (water) shortens and takes a linking vowel (*vizet*); *alma* (apple) lengthens and then adds *-k* directly (*almák*).

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① At home

A:

Milyen a lakásod?

What's your flat like?

B:

Három szobám és két nagy ablakom van.

I have three rooms and two big windows.

A:

Van tükröd is a szobában?

Is there a mirror in the room too?

② Shopping

A:

Mit kérsz?

What would you like?

B:

Egy kis vizet és két almát.

A little water and two apples.

A:

Kenyeret is?

Bread too?

B:

B:

Igen, a falon van egy nagy tükör.

Yes, there's a big mirror on the wall.

Igen, és három kávét!

Yes, and three coffees!

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

CHANGE	EXAMPLE	DICTIONARY TIP
Linking vowel a / o (back)	**házak** · **ablakok**	learn the plural with the noun
Linking vowel e / ö (front)	**kertek** · **sörök**	rounded stems vary (könyvek)
No linking vowel (r, l, ny, s …)	**embert** · **asztalt** · **lányt**	accusative only
Shortening	**kéz → kezek**	kéz, víz, tűz, nyár
v-stems	**ló → lovak**	ló, tó, kő, szó
Vowel dropping	**tükör → tükrök**	tükör, bokor, majom, teher
Lengthening	**alma → almák**	all nouns ending in short a / e

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Plural of *ház*

▼ Show answer

házak. 'a' group.

2. Plural of *könyv*

▼ Show answer

könyvek. Front rounded, but takes -ek.

3. Plural of *kéz*

▼ Show answer

kezek. The long é shortens.

4. Plural of *tükör*

▼ Show answer

tükrök. The second vowel drops, and the linking vowel is ö.

5. Plural of *alma*

▼ Show answer

almák. The final a lengthens to á.

6. Accusative of *ablak*

▼ Show answer

ablakot. Linking o after k.

7. Accusative of *ember*

▼ Show answer

embert. No linking vowel after r.

8. Accusative of *asztal*

▼ Show answer

asztalt. No linking vowel after l.

9. Accusative of *lány*

▼ Show answer

lányt. No linking vowel after ny.

10. Accusative of *víz*

▼ Show answer

vizet. The long í shortens, and a linking e is added.

Coming up in Chapter 5: Consonant Changes at the Joins. Why *kéz* + *-val* is *kézzel*, not *kézval*, and how a suffix can change the sound next to it.

🔀 Consonant Changes at the Joins — Hangváltozások a toldalékoknál

*Vowels harmonise; consonants **assimilate**, which means that where a suffix meets a stem one consonant can take over the sound of the other. The changes are regular and you already met the commonest one: kéz + -val is kézzel, not kézval. This chapter gives you the rules, and the one that you will need again in Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 7: the j of the definite verb endings.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The **v** of *-val/-vel* and *-vá/-vé* becomes a copy of the last consonant of the stem: *ház + -val = házzal*. After a vowel it stays *v*: *nő + -vel = nővel*. The **j** of the definite endings *-ja, -juk, -ják, -játok* becomes *s, sz* or *z* after a stem that ends in *s, sz* or *z*: *olvas + -ja = olvassa*.

1. The v of -val / -vel

Harmony still chooses back (*-val*) or front (*-vel*), as in Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 2 and 3. Assimilation then changes the *v* to the last consonant of the stem.

STEM	MEANING	ENDS IN	RESULT WITH -VAL / -VEL
ház	house	z	házzal (not házval)
kéz	hand	z	kézzel
kert	garden	t	kerttel
barát	friend	t	baráttal
tanár	teacher	r	tanárral
ember	person	r	emberrel
asztal	table	l	asztallal

STEM	MEANING	ENDS IN	RESULT WITH -VAL / -VEL
film	film	m	filmmel
könyv	book	v	könyvvel (v + v, no change)
nő	woman	vowel	nővel (the v stays)
autó	car	vowel	autóval

2. Digraphs are doubled by writing the first letter twice

A stem that ends in a two-letter consonant (*sz, cs, gy, ny, zs*) gets the **long** version of that sound, and Hungarian spelling writes a long digraph by doubling the *first* letter: *sz* becomes *ssz*, *cs* becomes *ccs*, *gy* becomes *ggy*, *ny* becomes *nny*, and *zs* becomes *zzs*.

STEM	MEANING	ENDS IN	RESULT	WHY IT IS WRITTEN THIS WAY
busz	bus	sz	buszszal → busszal	sz + sz = ssz
kulcs	key	cs	kulcscsal → kulccsal	cs + cs = ccs
hegy	mountain	gy	hegygyel → heggyel	gy + gy = ggy
lány	girl	ny	lánynyal → lánnyal	ny + ny = nny
garázs	garage	zs	garázszsal → garázzsal	zs + zs = zzs

> **Never three the same**
> If the stem already ends in a double letter, you do not write three: *toll* (pen) + *-lal* = *tollal*, not *tolllal*. The sound is still long; the spelling just stops at two.

3. -vá / -vé (becoming)

The 'translative' suffix *-vá / -vé* (the thing something turns into) follows the same assimilation as *-val/-vel*: *tanárrá*, *orvossá*, *mérnökké*, *kertté*; after a vowel it keeps its *v*: *fiúvá*. It appears with

verbs like *válik* (becomes) and *tesz* (makes into).

STEM	RESULT	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
tanár	tanárrá	**Tanárrá akar válni.** She wants to become a teacher.
orvos	orvossá	**Orvossá lett.** He became a doctor.
mérnök	mérnökké	**Mérnökké lesz.** He will become an engineer.
fiú	fiúvá	**Fiúvá vált.** He turned into a boy.

4. The j of the definite endings

The definite endings of the verb *-ja, -juk, -jük, -ják, -játok* (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 7) begin with **j**. When the verb stem ends in **s, sz** or **z**, the j changes into a copy of that sound, which is again written double. Back verbs have a *j* in the 3rd person (*-ja, -ják*); front verbs use *-i* and *-ik* there, which have no *j*, but their 1st person plural *-jük* does, so it assimilates too: *néz* + *-jük* = *nézzük*.

VERB	MEANING	HE/SHE (IT)	WE	THEY
olvas	read	olvas**sa**	olvas**suk**	olvas**sák**
mos	wash	mos**sa**	mos**suk**	mos**sák**
hoz	bring	hoz**za**	hoz**zuk**	hoz**zák**
néz	watch (front)	néz**i**	néz**zük**	néz**ik**
lát	see	lát**ja**	lát**juk**	lát**ják**
ad	give	ad**ja**	ad**juk**	ad**ják**

The last two rows show the *other* case: the j stays when the stem ends in t, d and most other consonants.

5. Voicing in speech: the spelling keeps the stem

In ordinary speech a voiceless consonant before a voiced one is often pronounced voiced (approximately). The *spelling* does not follow it, so you do not need to change what you write; you only need to know that you may hear it. Examples: *képből* (out of the picture) sounds roughly like *kébből*, and *két gyerek* (two children) like *kéd gyerek*. Spelling stays *képből* and *két gyerek*; this is one reason Hungarian spelling is described as 'etymological'. Hungarian Alphabet 1, chapter 11 gave you the voiced and voiceless pairs.

> **Do I have to speak it this way?**
>
> No. If you say *képből* with a clear *p*, a Hungarian will understand you at once; native speakers differ in how strongly they assimilate. The point of this section is to explain why you may hear a pronunciation that does not match the spelling.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① Who with? How?

A:

Kivel mész az orvoshoz?

Who are you going to the doctor with?

B:

A lányommal. Busszal megyünk.

With my daughter. We're going by bus.

A:

Én az autómmal megyek, a kulccsal együtt.

I'm going in my car, keys and all.

② Who reads it?

A:

Mit olvasol?

What are you reading?

B:

Egy könyvet. És az újságot ki olvassa?

A book. And who reads the newspaper?

A:

Apa olvassa, és a híreket mi is együtt olvassuk.

Dad reads it, and we read the news together too.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

WHERE	WHAT HAPPENS	EXAMPLE
-val / -vel	v copies the last consonant	**házzal** · **kerttel** · **emberrel**
-val / -vel after a vowel	v stays	**nővel** · **autóval**
-val / -vel after a digraph	the first letter doubles	**busszal** · **kulccsal** · **lánnyal**
-val / -vel after a double letter	never three	**tollal**
-vá / -vé	same as -val	**tanárrá** · **mérnökké**
j of -ja / -juk / -ják	copies s, sz, z	**olvassa** · **hozzuk**
j after t, d, other consonants	stays	**látja** · **adjuk**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. *ház* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

házzal. The v becomes z.

2. *kéz* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

kézzel. Front stem, v becomes z.

3. *kert* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

kerttel. Front stem, v becomes t.

4. *busz* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

busszal. Digraph sz is doubled to ssz.

5. *tanár* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

tanárral. Back stem, v becomes r.

6. *lány* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

lánnyal. Digraph ny is doubled to nny.

7. *kulcs* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

kulccsal. Digraph cs is doubled to ccs.

8. *nő* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

nővel. After a vowel the v stays, and ő is front.

9. *olvas* + -ja (he/she reads it)

▼ Show answer

olvassa. The j becomes s, written double.

10. *hoz* + -juk (we bring it)

▼ Show answer

hozzuk. The j becomes z, written double.

Coming up in Chapter 6: Two Conjugations: What and Why. Why Hungarian has two sets of verb endings and the simple test that tells you which one to use.

🧩 Two Conjugations — Két ragozás

*Almost every Hungarian verb has two complete sets of present-tense endings. English speakers meet this as 'the definite conjugation' and often feel they will never get it. They will, because the choice follows one simple test. This chapter explains what the two conjugations are, gives the test, and teaches the **indefinite** forms in full; Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 7 gives the definite forms.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The verb's ending tells the listener whether the **object** is a specific, known thing. If the verb has **no object**, or the object is **not specific** (*egy könyvet*, 'a book'), use the **indefinite** endings. If the object is **specific** (*a könyvet*, 'the book'), use the **definite** endings.

The test: what is the object?

Ask *what or whom?* after the verb. If there is an answer, check whether it is a specific thing both people know about. Compare:

INDEFINITE (A BOOK, ANY BOOK)	DEFINITE (THIS PARTICULAR BOOK)	WHY
Olvasok egy könyvet. I'm reading a book.	**Olvasom a könyvet.** I'm reading the book.	a / az makes the object definite
Kérek egy kávét. I'd like a coffee.	**Kérem a kávét.** I'd like the coffee.	same pattern
Látok egy filmet. I'm watching a film.	**Látom a filmet.** I see the film.	same pattern
Tanulok magyarul. I'm learning Hungarian.	**Tanulom a nyelvet.** I'm learning the language.	no article, adverb magyarul; versus a nyelvet

INDEFINITE (A BOOK, ANY BOOK)	DEFINITE (THIS PARTICULAR BOOK)	WHY
Dolgozom.	—	no object at all; always indefinite (and -ik, see Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9)

> **You have already met both**
>
> Hungarian Basic Conversation 1, chapter 8 used *Kérek egy kávét* (a coffee) and *A számlát kérem* (the bill). Hungarian Basic Conversation 2, chapter 2 contrasted *szeretek úszni* (I like swimming) with *szeretem a zenét* (I like the music). This course explains why those pairs differ.

The present indefinite endings

The indefinite endings depend on harmony, using the group of the verb *stem*: back, front unrounded or front rounded. The 3rd person singular has **no ending** at all.

PERSON	BACK	FRONT, UNROUNDED	FRONT, ROUNDED
én (I)	-ok	-ek	-ök
te (you)	-sz	-sz	-sz
ő (he/she)	—	—	—
mi (we)	-unk	-ünk	-ünk
ti (you, plural)	-tok	-tek	-tök
ők (they)	-nak	-nek	-nek

Three model verbs

PERSON	VÁR (WAIT) · BACK	KÉR (ASK FOR) · FRONT	ÜL (SIT) · FRONT ROUNDED
én	vár**ok**	kér**ek**	ül**ök**
te	vár**sz**	kér**sz**	ül**sz**

PERSON	VÁR (WAIT) · BACK	KÉR (ASK FOR) · FRONT	ÜL (SIT) · FRONT ROUNDED
ő	vár	kér	ül
mi	várunk	kérünk	ülünk
ti	vártok	kértek	ültök
ők	várnak	kérnek	ülnek

Verbs whose stem ends in -s, -sz or -z

The 2nd person *-sz* would produce an awkward cluster after an s, sz or z, so these verbs use **-ol / -el / -öl** instead. Everything else is regular.

PERSON	OLVAS (READ) · BACK	NÉZ (WATCH) · FRONT	FŐZ (COOK) · FRONT ROUNDED
én	olvasok	nézek	főzök
te	olvasol	nézel	főzöl
ő	olvas	néz	főz
mi	olvasunk	nézünk	főzünk
ti	olvastok	néztek	főztök
ők	olvasnak	néznek	főznek

Which verbs are 'neutral' for harmony?

A verb like *ír* (writes) has only the neutral vowel *í*, so you might expect front, but it takes back endings: *írok, írsz, ír, írunk, írtok, írnak*. The rules for neutral vowels in Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3 apply to verbs too, and the dictionary shows the pattern. For many neutral-vowel verbs you will see both: *kér* (front) and *ír* (back).

Intransitive verbs and -ik verbs

Verbs with no object (*megy*, *jön*, *alszik*, *dolgozik*) always use the indefinite set. A large group, the **-ik verbs**, has a few forms that look like the definite endings (*dolgozom*, *eszem*) even though they are indefinite: Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9 explains them. Do not worry about them yet.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① At the café

A:

Mit kérsz?

What would you like?

B:

Kérek egy kávét. Te mit kérsz?

I'd like a coffee. What would you like?

A:

Én egy teát kérek.

I'll have a tea.

② A quiet evening

A:

Mit csinálsz?

What are you doing?

B:

Olvasok egy könyvet, te pedig vársz a telefonra.

I'm reading a book, and you are waiting for the phone call.

A:

Igen, várok. De mit nézünk este?

Yes, I'm waiting. But what shall we watch this evening?

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

PERSON	BACK	FRONT, UNROUNDED	FRONT, ROUNDED	-S / -SZ / -Z STEMS (2ND)
én	-ok	-ek	-ök	same
te	-sz	-sz	-sz	-ol / -el / -öl
ő	—	—	—	same
mi	-unk	-ünk	-ünk	same

PERSON	BACK	FRONT, UNROUNDED	FRONT, ROUNDED	-S / -SZ / -Z STEMS (2ND)
ti	-tok	-tek	-tök	same
ők	-nak	-nek	-nek	same

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. I read a book. (olvas)

▼ Show answer

Olvasok egy könyvet. Indefinite 1st person singular.

2. You wait (vársz). Which verb ending is it?

▼ Show answer

Indefinite 2nd person singular, back: -sz.

3. We ask for a coffee. (kér)

▼ Show answer

Kérünk egy kávét. Front unrounded: -ünk.

4. You (singular) watch a film. (néz)

▼ Show answer

Nézel egy filmet. Stem ends in z: -el.

5. They cook soup. (főz)

▼ Show answer

Főznek egy levest. Front rounded, -nek.

6. She is sitting. (ül)

▼ Show answer

Ül. No ending in the 3rd person singular.

7. You (plural) are waiting. (vár)

▼ Show answer

Vártok. Back: -tok.

8. I write a letter. (ír)

▼ Show answer

Írok egy levelet. Neutral stem, back ending.

9. Which is definite? *Kérek egy kávét* or *Kérem a kávét*?

▼ Show answer

Kérem a kávét. The object has the article a.

10. Which conjugation does *Megyek* use?

▼ Show answer

Indefinite. The verb has no object.

Coming up in Chapter 7: The Definite Conjugation: Forms. The second set of endings, in full, for all three harmony groups, and what happens to the j.

🔑 The Definite Conjugation — A határozott ragozás

Now the second set. The definite endings are not harder than the indefinite ones; there are just six more of them to learn, and they follow the same harmony groups. If you know the endings from Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 6, you only need to see how they change. This chapter gives the full tables and then the contrast between the two sets, side by side.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The definite endings are **-om/-em/-öm, -od/-ed/-öd, -ja/-i, -juk/-jük, -játok/-itek, -ják/-ik.** They are chosen by harmony: the first of each pair for back verbs, the second for front verbs (and for the -öm and -öd endings, front rounded verbs). The j assimilates after s, sz or z (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5).

The endings

PERSON	BACK	FRONT, UNROUNDED	FRONT, ROUNDED
én (I)	-om	-em	-öm
te (you)	-od	-ed	-öd
ő (he/she)	-ja	-i	-i
mi (we)	-juk	-jük	-jük
ti (you, plural)	-játok	-itek	-itek
ők (they)	-ják	-ik	-ik

Four model verbs, in full

PERSON	VÁR (WAIT FOR) · BACK	KÉR (ASK FOR) · FRONT	FŐZ (COOK) · FRONT ROUNDED	OLVAS (READ) · BACK, -S STEM
én	várom	kérem	főzöm	olvasom
te	várod	kéred	főzöd	olvasod
ő	várja	kéri	főzi	olvassa
mi	várjuk	kérjük	főzzük	olvassuk
ti	várjátok	kéritek	főzitek	olvassátok
ők	várják	kérik	főzik	olvassák

Look at főzzük

The 1st person plural of a front verb ending in z is *főzzük* (we cook it): the j of *-jük* assimilates to z and is written double. Compare *nézzük* (we watch it). The *-sz/-z/-s* assimilation applies to front verbs here too, because *-jük* contains a j. The 3rd person singular *-i* has no j, so there is no change there: *főzi, nézi*.

Indefinite and definite side by side

The two conjugations differ in the 1st person plural, the 3rd person plural, the 2nd person plural and most of all the 3rd person singular. Compare *kér* (ask for):

PERSON	INDEFINITE	DEFINITE	EXAMPLE
én	kérek	kérem	Kérek egy kávét. / Kérem a kávét.
te	kérsz	kéred	Kérsz egy teát? / Kéred a teát?
ő	kér	kéri	Kér egy üveget. / Kéri az üveget.
mi	kérünk	kérjük	Kérünk egy asztalt. / Kérjük az asztalt.
ti	kértek	kéritek	Kértek egy levest? / Kéritek a levest?
ők	kérnek	kérik	Kérnek egy szobát. / Kérik a szobát.

Stems ending in t, d, and other consonants

A stem ending in **t** or **d** keeps its consonant, and the j stays: *lát → látja, látjuk, látják*; *ad → adja, adjuk, adják*. Verbs of more than one syllable work the same way: *tanul → tanulom, tanulod, tanulja, tanuljuk, tanuljátok, tanulják*. The pattern is regular for nearly every verb you will meet.

VERB	MEANING	ÉN	TE	Ő	MI	TI	ŐK
lát	see	látom	látod	látja	látjuk	látjátok	látják
tanul	learn	tanulom	tanulod	tanulja	tanuljuk	tanuljátok	tanulják
szeret	love, like	szeretem	szereted	szereti	szeretjük	szeretitek	szeretik
ért	understand	értem	érted	érti	értjük	értitek	értik
ír	write	írom	írod	írja	írjuk	írjátok	írják

> **Formal 'you'**
> The polite *Ön* and *Önök* use the 3rd person: *Ön kéri?* ('Would you like it?', formal) and *Önök kérik?*. So the 3rd person definite forms *kéri, kérik* are the ones you will use most in shops, cafés and offices.

Minimal pairs: same sentence, different object

INDEFINITE	DEFINITE
Szeretek egy filmet. I like a film (any film).	**Szeretem a filmet.** I like the film.
Értek magyarul. I understand Hungarian (the language, in general).	**Értem.** I understand (it).
Várok egy barátot. I'm waiting for a friend.	**Várom a barátomat.** I'm waiting for my friend.
Ír egy levelet. She writes a letter.	**Írja a levelet.** She is writing the letter.

In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① The bill

A:

Kéri a számlát?

Would you like the bill?

B:

Igen, kérem. És a borravalót is hozzáadják?

Yes, please. And is the tip added as well?

A:

Igen, hozzáadjuk.

Yes, we add it.

② Dinner at home

A:

Ki főzi a vacsorát?

Who's cooking dinner?

B:

Én főzöm, te pedig hozod a kenyeret.

I'm cooking it, and you bring the bread.

A:

Rendben, hozom.

Fine, I'll bring it.

③ A letter

A:

Olvassátok a levelet?

Are you reading the letter?

B:

Igen, olvassuk, de nem értjük.

Yes, we're reading it, but we don't understand it.

A:

Én értem. Mindjárt elmagyarázom.

I understand it. I'll explain it in a moment.

Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

PERSON	BACK	FRONT, UNROUNDED	FRONT, ROUNDED	REMEMBER
én	-om	-em	-öm	vowel matches harmony
te	-od	-ed	-öd	
ő	-ja	-i	-i	j after s, sz, z: -sa, -za
mi	-juk	-jük	-jük	j copies s, sz, z
ti	-játok	-itek	-itek	front: -itek, no j
ők	-ják	-ik	-ik	front: -ik, no j

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. lát: te

▼ Show answer

látod. Back, 2nd person.

2. néz: mi

▼ Show answer

nézzük. j copies z.

3. olvas: ő

▼ Show answer

olvassa. j copies s.

4. főz: én

▼ Show answer

főzöm. Front rounded: -öm.

5. kér: ti

▼ Show answer

kéritek. Front: -itek.

6. tanul: ők

▼ Show answer

tanulják. Back: -ják.

7. szeret: ő

▼ Show answer

szereti. Front: -i.

8. vár: mi

▼ Show answer

várjuk. Back: -juk.

9. ír: te

▼ Show answer

írod. Neutral stem, back ending.

10. ért: ők

▼ Show answer

értik. Front: -ik.

Coming up in Chapter 8: When Is the Object Definite? The full list of what counts as definite, the surprising cases, and why 'I understand' can be a complete sentence.

🔍 When Is the Object Definite? — Mikor határozott a tárgy?

You know both sets of endings. The remaining skill is the choice, and it depends on a short list of words. This chapter gives you that list, with the surprises, and then lets you see how a single verb can carry a whole sentence: Értem. means 'I understand it', complete.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The definite endings are used when the **direct object** is: a noun with **a / az**; a **proper name**; a noun with a **possessive ending** (*a barátom*); **ez / az** or **ezt / azt** (this, that); the 3rd-person pronouns **őt, őket**; the question word **melyik**; or a **hogy-clause**. Everything else is indefinite.

Definite objects (use the definite endings)

WHAT THE OBJECT IS	EXAMPLE	TRANSLATION
Noun with a / az	**Látom a házat.**	I see the house.
Proper name	**Ismerem Annát.** · **Várom Philipet.**	I know Anna. · I'm waiting for Philip.
Noun with a possessive ending	**Várom a barátomat.** · **Szeretem az anyámat.**	I'm waiting for my friend. · I love my mother.
ez / az and ezt / azt	**Ezt kérem.** · **Azt a könyvet olvasom.**	I'd like this. · I'm reading that book.
őt / őket (him, her, them)	**Látom őt.** · **Várom őket.**	I see him/her. · I'm waiting for them.
melyik (which one)	**Melyiket kéred?** · **Melyik könyvet olvasod?**	Which one do you want? · Which book are you reading?

WHAT THE OBJECT IS	EXAMPLE	TRANSLATION
hogy-clause	**Tudom, hogy itt vagy.** · **Azt hiszem, hogy igaz.**	I know that you are here. · I think it's true.

The verb can stand alone

When the object is understood, the definite ending shows it: *Kéred? — Kérem.* ('Would you like it?' — 'Yes, please.') and *Tudom.* ('I know [it].'). That is why *Szeretném* means 'I would like it' (a specific thing) and *Szeretnék* 'I would like something' (Hungarian Basic Conversation 3, chapter 1).

Indefinite objects (use the indefinite endings)

WHAT THE OBJECT IS	EXAMPLE	TRANSLATION
Noun with egy	**Kérek egy kávét.**	I'd like a coffee.
Noun with a number	**Olvasok három könyvet.**	I'm reading three books.
Noun with a quantity word (sok, kevés)	**Látok sok embert.**	I see many people.
valami, valaki, semmi	**Kérek valamit.** · **Nem látok semmit.**	I'd like something. · I don't see anything.
mit, kit, mennyit, hányat	**Mit kérsz?** · **Kit vársz?**	What do you want? · Who are you waiting for?
milyen (what kind of)	**Milyen könyvet olvasol?**	What kind of book are you reading?
engem, téged, minket, titeket	**Lát engem.** · **Vár téged.**	He sees me. · She is waiting for you.
No object at all	**Dolgozom.** · **Megyek.**	I'm working. · I'm going.

Two pairs that look alike

INDEFINITE	DEFINITE	WHY
Milyen könyvet olvasol?	Melyik könyvet olvasod?	milyen = what kind (unspecified), melyik = which one (specific)
Kit látsz?	Melyiket látod?	kit = whom, melyiket = which one

Me and you are indefinite

A strange fact of Hungarian: the 1st and 2nd person pronouns *engem, téged, minket, titeket* as objects use the **indefinite** endings (*Lát engem*, not *Látja engem*). The 3rd person *őt, őket* uses the definite. For 'I … you' the language has a special form, *-lak/-lek*, covered in Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9.

Common verbs and clauses

Several frequent verbs introduce a clause that works as the object, and the definite ending is the rule: *Tudom, hogy …* (I know that …), *Azt hiszem, hogy …* (I think that …), *Azt mondja, hogy …* (he says that …), *Azt gondolom, hogy …* (I think that …). The little word *azt* ('it') is often omitted, but the verb still takes the definite endings: *Tudom, hogy jössz.*

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① Which coffee?

A: Melyiket kéred, a kicsit vagy a nagyot?
Which would you like, the small one or the big one?

B: A nagyot kérem. És te mit kérsz?
The big one, please. And what do you want?

A:

② Do you know her?

A: Ismered Annát?
Do you know Anna?

B: Igen, ismerem. Tudom, hogy a barátod.
Yes, I know her. I know that she's your friend.

A: Azt nem tudom, hogy hol lakik.

Én egy kis teát kérek.

I'd like a small tea.

I don't know where she lives.

③ At the station

A:

Látod Philipet a peronon?

Do you see Philip on the platform?

B:

Nem látom, de látok sok embert.

I don't see him, but I see many people.

A:

Értem, akkor várjuk.

I see, then we'll wait for him.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

OBJECT	CONJUGATION	EXAMPLE
a / az + noun	definite	**Látom a házat.**
Proper name	definite	**Ismerem Annát.**
Possessed noun (my, your …)	definite	**Várom a barátomat.**
ez / az, ezt / azt	definite	**Ezt kérem.**
őt, őket	definite	**Látom őt.**
melyik	definite	**Melyiket kéred?**
hogy-clause	definite	**Tudom, hogy itt vagy.**
egy, number, sok, valami, semmi	indefinite	**Kérek egy kávét.**
mit, kit, milyen	indefinite	**Mit kérsz?**

OBJECT	CONJUGATION	EXAMPLE
engem, téged, minket, titeket	indefinite	**Lát engem.**
No object	indefinite	**Dolgozom.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Choose: Én ____ egy levelet. (ír)

▼ Show answer

írok. Object with egy: indefinite.

2. Choose: Én ____ a levelet. (ír)

▼ Show answer

írom. Object with a: definite.

3. Te ____ Annát? (ismer)

▼ Show answer

ismered. A name is definite.

4. Mit ____? (kér, te)

▼ Show answer

kérsz. Mit asks for an unknown thing: indefinite.

5. Melyiket ____? (kér, te)

▼ Show answer

kéred. Melyik is definite.

6. ____, hogy itt vagy. (tud, én)

▼ Show answer

Tudom. A hogy-clause as object: definite.

7. Lát ____ engem. (lát, ő)

▼ Show answer

Lát engem. First-person object pronouns are indefinite.

8. Lát ____ őt. (lát, ő)

▼ Show answer

Látja őt. Third-person object: definite.

9. Három könyvet ____. (olvas, én)

▼ Show answer

olvasok. A number makes the object indefinite.

10. Azt a könyvet ____. (olvas, én)

▼ Show answer

olvasom. Azt a makes it definite.

Coming up in Chapter 9: -lak/-lek, the -ik Verbs and the Irregulars. 'I ... you' in one word, the verbs with -ik, and the short list that breaks the pattern.

🔗 -lak/-lek, the -ik Verbs and the Irregulars — Különleges igék

*You now have the two main conjugations. Three groups do not quite fit them, and each is small enough to learn as a block: the one-word **'I … you'** form, the big family of **-ik verbs**, and a handful of **irregular verbs** that you already use every day.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

-lak / -lek means 'I … you' in one word (*látlak*, 'I see you'). **-ik verbs** have *-ik* in the 3rd person singular and take **-m** instead of **-k** in the 1st person singular (*eszem*, *iszom*, *dolgozom*). A short list of verbs (*van, megy, jön, tesz, vesz, visz, hisz, lesz*) has its own forms that you learn by heart.

1. -lak / -lek: 'I … you'

When the subject is **I** and the object is **you** (singular or plural), Hungarian does not use the indefinite or the definite ending. It uses **-lak** (back verbs) or **-lek** (front verbs, including rounded ones). The object pronoun *téged / titeket* is normally dropped.

VERB	MEANING	I … YOU	EXAMPLE
lát	see	lát**lak**	**Látlak.** I see you.
hall	hear	hal**lak**	**Hallak.** I can hear you.
vár	wait for	vár**lak**	**Várlak.** I'm waiting for you.
hív	call	hív**lak**	**Hívlak.** I'll call you.
szeret	love	szeret**lek**	**Szeretlek.** I love you.
kér	ask	kér**lek**	**Kérlek.** Please (lit. I ask you).

VERB	MEANING	I ... YOU	EXAMPLE
néz	watch, look at	**nézlek**	**Nézlek.** I'm looking at you.
hoz	bring	**hozlak**	**Hozlak.** I'll bring you.

Kérlek is a phrase you already know

Kérlek is the informal 'please', literally 'I ask you'. It is a -lek form: *kér* + *-lek*. The formal 'please' is *kérem* (definite), as in *Kérem a számlát*. So the choice between the two is the choice between informal and formal, and between *-lek* and the definite ending.

2. The -ik verbs

About a hundred common verbs have *-ik* in the dictionary form (3rd person singular): *eszik, iszik, alszik, dolgozik, lakik, úszik, vacsorázik, reggelizik*. Their indefinite forms are partly their own, and **1st person singular ends in -m**. Compare:

PERSON	ESZIK (EAT) · INDEFINITE	ESZIK · DEFINITE	ISZIK (DRINK) · INDEFINITE	ISZIK · DEFINITE
én	**eszem**	**eszem**	**iszom**	**iszom**
te	**eszel**	**eszed**	**iszol**	**iszod**
ő	**eszik**	**eszi**	**iszik**	**issza**
mi	**eszünk**	**esszük**	**iszunk**	**isszuk**
ti	**esztek**	**eszitek**	**isztok**	**isszátok**
ők	**esznek**	**eszik**	**isznak**	**isszák**

Do not be fooled by eszem and iszom

The 1st person singular is the **same** in the indefinite and the definite for an -ik verb (*eszem* / *eszem*). That is why *Eszem egy almát* ('I eat an apple') and *Eszem az almát* ('I eat the apple') both use *eszem*. Likewise *eszik* is both 'he/she eats' (indefinite) and 'they eat it' (definite). Context makes it clear.

PERSON	DOLGOZIK (WORK)	LAKIK (LIVE)	ALSZIK (SLEEP)
én	dolgozom	lakom	alszom
te	dolgozol	laksz	alszol
ő	dolgozik	lakik	alszik
mi	dolgozunk	lakunk	alszunk
ti	dolgoztok	laktok	alszotok
ők	dolgoznak	laknak	alszanak

You met *reggelizik, dolgozik, vacsorázik* in Hungarian Basic Conversation 2, chapter 1, where the routine verbs were given as ready-made phrases. Now you can see the system behind them.

3. The irregular verbs

Most irregular verbs are irregular in the **present** only because their stem changes between forms, so they are worth learning as a table. *Van* (is), *megy* (goes) and *jön* (comes) have no object and therefore only the indefinite set.

PERSON	VAN (BE)	MEGY (GO)	JÖN (COME)	LESZ (WILL BE)
én	vagyok	megyek	jövök	leszek
te	vagy	mész	jössz	leszel
ő	van	megy	jön	lesz
mi	vagyunk	megyünk	jövünk	leszünk
ti	vagytok	mentek	jöttök	lesztek
ők	vannak	mennek	jönnek	lesznek

Four common verbs with a stem ending in *-sz* are regular in the endings but have different infinitives, so they look odd: *tesz* (put, do; infinitive *tenni*), *vesz* (buy, take; *venni*), *visz* (carry; *vinni*) and *hisz* (believe; *hinni*). They take the ordinary -sz-stem endings:

PERSON	VESZ · INDEFINITE	VESZ · DEFINITE	VISZ · INDEFINITE	VISZ · DEFINITE
én	veszek	veszem	viszek	viszem
te	veszel	veszed	viszel	viszed
ő	vesz	veszi	visz	viszi
mi	veszünk	vesszük	viszünk	visszük
ti	vesztek	veszitek	visztek	viszitek
ők	vesznek	veszik	visznek	viszik

In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① On the phone

A:

Halló, hallak? Rossz a vonal.

Hello, can you hear me? The line is bad.

B:

Én is hallak, de nagyon halkan. Hol vagy?

I can hear you too, but very quietly. Where are you?

A:

A buszon. Hívlak, ha leszállok.

On the bus. I'll call you when I get off.

② An ordinary day

A:

Hol laksz, és hol dolgozol?

Where do you live, and where do you work?

B:

Edinburghban lakom, és egy irodában dolgozom.

I live in Edinburgh and I work in an office.

A:

Mit eszel ebédre?

What do you eat for lunch?

B:

Egy szendvicset eszem, és teát iszom.

I eat a sandwich and drink tea.

③ Visiting

A:

Jössz vasárnap?

Are you coming on Sunday?

B:

Jövök, és viszek egy tortát. Szeretlek!

I'm coming, and I'm bringing a cake. Love you!

A:

Én is szeretlek. Várlak!

Love you too. I'll be waiting for you!

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

GROUP	RULE	EXAMPLE
I … you	verb stem + -lak (back) or -lek (front)	**látlak** · **szeretlek** · **kérlek**
-ik verbs, indefinite	-m, -l / -sz, -ik, -unk, -tok, -nak	**eszem** · **iszol** · **eszik**
-ik verbs, definite	normal definite ending	**eszi** · **esszük** · **isszák**
van	irregular	**vagyok** · **vagy** · **van** · **vannak**
megy	irregular	**megyek** · **mész** · **mennek**
jön	irregular	**jövök** · **jössz** · **jönnek**
tesz, vesz, visz, hisz	regular sz-stem endings	**veszek** · **veszem** · **vesszük**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. I see you. (lát)

▼ Show answer

Látlak. Back verb + -lak.

2. I love you. (szeret)

▼ Show answer

Szeretlek. Front verb + -lek.

3. Please (informal, 'I ask you'). (kér)

▼ Show answer

Kérlek. Front verb + -lek.

4. You (singular) eat. (eszik)

▼ Show answer

Eszel. -ik verb, 2nd person singular.

5. I drink tea. (iszik)

▼ Show answer

Iszom teát. -ik verb, 1st person -m.

6. You live in Edinburgh. (lakik)

▼ Show answer

Edinburghban laksz. -ik verb with -sz.

7. You (plural) are at home. (van)

▼ Show answer

Otthon vagytok. Irregular.

8. You (singular) go home. (megy)

▼ Show answer

Hazamész. Irregular, stem change.

9. We come on Sunday. (jön)

▼ Show answer

Vasárnap jövünk. Irregular, stem change.

10. We buy the bread. (vesz)

▼ Show answer

Vesszük a kenyeret. Definite 1st person plural, j assimilated.

Coming up in Chapter 10: Putting It Together. One decision procedure for every verb, an error clinic, two short texts, and the Course Complete recap.

🏁 Putting It Together — Összefoglalás

You now have the pieces. Here they are joined into one procedure, followed by a clinic on the usual mistakes and two short texts to read and correct. It ends with the Course Complete recap and a pointer to what comes next.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

For any suffix: **last vowel → harmony group** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 2 and 3), then **linking vowel or stem change** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4), then **consonant change** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5). For any verb: **which group → is there an object → is it definite** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 6 to 8), then **check for -lak/-lek, -ik or an irregular verb** (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9).

The procedure for a suffix

STEP	QUESTION	WHERE TO LOOK
1	What is the last vowel of the stem? Back, front or front rounded?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 2
2	Is it one of the neutral vowels (i í e é) or a mixed or foreign word? Is it an antiharmonic stem (híd, cél)?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3
3	Does the stem end in a consonant and need a linking vowel? Does it shorten, drop a vowel or lengthen?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4
4	Does the suffix start with v or j, or does the stem end in a digraph? Assimilate and double.	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5

The procedure for a verb

STEP	QUESTION	WHERE TO LOOK
1	Is the stem back, front or front rounded? Does it end in s, sz or z?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 6
2	Is there an object? Is it definite (a/az, a name, my/your, ez/az, őt/őket, melyik, a hogy-clause)?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 8
3	Choose the indefinite or the definite endings.	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 6 and 7
4	Is the verb an -ik verb, an irregular verb, or is it 'I … you'?	Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9

The error clinic

Each of these mistakes is common, and each one is a rule from this course in disguise.

MISTAKE	CORRECT	RULE
kézval	**kézzel**	v copies the last consonant (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
papírben	**papírban**	back vowel + í stays back (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3)
hotelban	**hotelben**	back vowel + e goes front (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 3)
házok	**házak**	ház is in the 'a' group (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4)
kézek	**kezek**	the long vowel of kéz shortens (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4)
olvasja	**olvassa**	the j copies s (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
Kérem egy kávét.	**Kérek egy kávét.**	egy makes the object indefinite (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 8)
Szeretek a zenét.	**Szeretem a zenét.**	a makes the object definite (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 8)

MISTAKE	CORRECT	RULE
Te olvasasz.	**Te olvasol.**	-s stems take -ol in the 2nd person (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 6)
Látlak téged.	**Látlak.**	-lak already contains 'you', so téged is normally dropped (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9)
Én megek.	**Én megyek.**	megy is irregular (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9)

Read and fix: a short text

This text is written correctly. Read it aloud and, for every word in bold, say which rule made it take that shape.

*Reggel hétkor kelek. Készítek egy kávét, és a kávét **az ablaknál** iszom. **Olvasom** a híreket, aztán **busszal** megyek a munkahelyre. Egész nap dolgozom, este pedig a **barátommal** vacsorázom, és **beszélgetünk**.*

WORD	RULE
ablaknál	back stem ablak + -nál (harmony, Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 2)
Olvasom	definite, because the object is a híreket (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 8)
busszal	busz + -val: v copies sz and the digraph doubles (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
barátommal	barátom + -val: v copies m (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5)
beszélgetünk	front verb, indefinite 1st person plural (Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 6)

Read and fix: a text with mistakes

This text has five mistakes. Find them first, then check the answers below.

*Anna **hotelban** lakik Budapesten. Minden reggel **olvasja** az újságot. Egy kávét **kérem**, és **kézval** eszik egy szendvicset. Este **szeretek** a zenét.*

▼ Show the answers

1. *hotelban → hotelben* (back vowel + e goes front).
2. *olvasja → olvassa* (the j copies s).
3. *kérem → kérek* (egy kávét is indefinite).
4. *kézval → kézzel* (v copies z).
5. *szeretek → szeretem* (a zenét is definite).

Course Complete — Gratulálok!

You have worked through the sound map, the whole harmony system, the stem changes, the consonant changes and both verb conjugations. Here is what you can now do:

CHAPTER	YOU CAN NOW…
1 · The Sound Map	sort the vowels and consonants into the groups that grammar uses
2 · Vowel Harmony: The Rule	choose between -ban and -ben, -hoz, -hez and -höz for clear cases
3 · Neutral Vowels and Exceptions	handle papír, hotel, kávé and the antiharmonic stems
4 · Linking Vowels and Stem Changes	form plurals and accusatives, including kezek, vizet, tükrök and almák
5 · Consonant Changes at the Joins	write kézzel, busszal, lánnyal and olvassa
6 · Two Conjugations	decide between the indefinite and the definite and form the indefinite
7 · The Definite Conjugation	form the definite for back, front and rounded verbs
8 · When Is the Object Definite?	apply the list of triggers and read a one-word sentence like Értem
9 · -lak/-lek, -ik Verbs and Irregulars	use látlak, eszem, iszom, vagyok, megyek and jövök

CHAPTER	YOU CAN NOW…
10 · Putting It Together	run one procedure for any suffix and any verb

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The rule in real sentences. Read each exchange aloud and spot the pattern.

① Dinner plans

A:

Mit főzöl vasárnapra?

What are you cooking for Sunday?

B:

Egy gulyást főzök. A húst megveszem, a kenyeret te hozod.

A goulash. I'll buy the meat, and you bring the bread.

A:

Rendben, hozom. Hívlak, ha elindulok.

Fine, I'll bring it. I'll call you when I set off.

② A new flat

A:

Látod a lakást a térképen?

Do you see the flat on the map?

B:

Látom, a hídhoz közel van. Hány szobája van?

Yes, it's close to the bridge. How many rooms does it have?

A:

Három szobája és egy kis kertje. Szeretem!

Three rooms and a small garden. I love it!

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

TOPIC	REMEMBER	EXAMPLE
Harmony	last vowel decides; check neutral vowels and antiharmonic stems	**házban** · **kertben** · **hídban**
Linking vowels and stems	a/o and e/ö; shortening; vowel drop; lengthening	**házak** · **kezek** · **tükrök** · **almák**

TOPIC	REMEMBER	EXAMPLE
Consonants	v copies the last consonant; digraphs double; j copies s, sz, z	**kézzel** · **busszal** · **olvassa**
Conjugation	no object or indefinite object: indefinite; definite object: definite	**Kérek egy kávét.** · **Kérem a kávét.**
Special verbs	-lak/-lek, -ik verbs, van/megy/jön/tesz/vesz/visz/hisz/lesz	**látlak** · **eszem** · **vagyok**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. *kert* + -val / -vel

▼ Show answer

kerttel. v copies t.

2. *papír* + -ban / -ben

▼ Show answer

papírban. Back vowel + í.

3. Plural of *kéz*

▼ Show answer

kezek. The vowel shortens.

4. Accusative of *ember*

▼ Show answer

embert. No linking vowel after r.

5. Kér: én, a számla (the bill)

▼ Show answer

Kérem a számlát. Definite object.

6. Olvas: te, egy újság (a newspaper)

▼ Show answer

Olvasol egy újságot. -s stem, 2nd person indefinite.

7. Néz: mi, a film (the film)

▼ Show answer

Nézzük a filmet. j copies z.

8. Eszik: ő, egy alma (an apple)

▼ Show answer

Eszik egy almát. -ik verb, 3rd person singular.

9. Lát: én, te

▼ Show answer

Látlak. Back verb + -lak.

10. Menni: ti

▼ Show answer

Mentek. Irregular.

Course complete. Next: Hungarian Grammar 2 is not outlined yet. A natural next step is the case system and postpositions, using the suffix, harmony and stem rules you now know. Ask for *hungarian_grammar_2* when you are ready.