HU

LANGUAGE COURSE

Hungarian Grammar 2

The Hungarian case system and postpositions, from the accusative to place cases, possession and cases in use.

10 Chapters

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HUNGARIAN GRAMMAR 2

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🧩 Cases — Az esetek

English uses little words (in, on, to, from, with) in front of a noun. Hungarian glues a suffix to the end of the noun instead. This chapter explains the idea, builds the plural, fixes the order in which suffixes pile up, and gives you the map of every case the rest of the course covers. Hungarian Grammar 1 gave you the harmony and linking-vowel rules; here they start doing real work.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

A Hungarian noun does the job of an English preposition by taking a **case suffix** at its very end: *ház* (house) becomes *házban* (in the house). The suffix order is always **stem + plural + possessive + case**, and the case comes last. Adjectives stay as they are; only the noun (and a word like *ez*, this) carries the case.

1. What a case is

A **case** is the form a noun takes to show its job in the sentence: the doer, the thing acted on, the place, the receiver, the means. English shows most of these jobs with word order and prepositions. Hungarian shows them with the ending. The same noun can therefore appear in many shapes:

JOB OF THE NOUN	ENGLISH	HUNGARIAN	CASE
The house is big	the house	**a ház**	nominative (no suffix)
I see the house	the house (object)	**a ház**at	accusative
Inside it	in the house	**a ház**ban	inessive
Going toward it	to the house	**a ház**hoz	allative
Coming away from it	from the house (a person's place)	**a ház**tól	ablative
Together with it	with the house	**a ház**zal	instrumental

Two things to notice. First, the article *a/az* stays in front and never changes. Second, the suffix is written as part of the word, with no space, and always in lower case (even after a name: *Budapestre*).

> **Why learn cases as a system and not as phrases**
>
> In *Hungarian Basic 1–3* you met many of these endings inside ready-made phrases. The phrases work, but a new noun needs a rule. Every case in this course is one suffix with one meaning, and Hungarian Grammar 1 already told you which vowel it takes (chapters 2 and 3). Learn the meaning once and you can apply it to any noun.

2. The nominative: the form with no suffix

The **nominative** (*alanyeset*) is the dictionary form: the noun with nothing added. It is the case of the subject and of the thing being described.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	JOB OF THE NOUN
A ház nagy.	The house is big.	subject
A telefon az asztalon van.	The phone is on the table.	subject (*asztalon* is another case)
Philip tanuló.	Philip is a learner.	describing noun (no *is* needed)

When a Hungarian dictionary or word list gives you a noun, it is always in the nominative singular, and that is the stem you start from.

3. The plural: -k, with a linking vowel

The plural suffix is **-k**. After a consonant it needs a linking vowel to be pronounceable, which is the rule from *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4*. After a final *a* or *e* the stem vowel lengthens and no linking vowel is needed.

STEM ENDS IN…	PLURAL	EXAMPLES
Consonant, back vowels (most words)	**-ok**	asztal → asztal**ok** · ablak → ablak**ok** · orvos → orvos**ok** · telefon → telefon**ok**
Consonant, a few common back words	**-ak**	ház → ház**ak** · fal (wall) → fal**ak** · hal (fish) → hal**ak**
Consonant, front vowels	**-ek**	kert → kert**ek** · szék → szék**ek** · könyv → könyv**ek** · kábel → kábel**ek**
Consonant, many rounded-front words	**-ök**	kör → kör**ök** · sör → sör**ök** · tükör → tükr**ök** (the stem drops its vowel)
Final *a* or *e*	**-k** with a lengthened vowel	alma → alm**ák** · kefe → kef**ék**
Other final vowel	**-k**	autó → autó**k** · fiú → fiú**k** · hajó → hajó**k**

> **The plural after a number: stay singular**
> After a number or a word meaning "many", Hungarian keeps the noun **singular**: **három ház** (three houses), **sok könyv** (many books), **néhány kábel** (a few cables). Use the plural when no number or quantity word is present: **a házak** (the houses). Chapter 10 returns to this in the cases.

4. The order of suffixes on a noun

A noun can carry up to three suffixes, and their order never changes: **plural → possessive → case**. Think of the case as the last coat you put on.

STEM	+ PLURAL	+ POSSESSIVE	+ CASE	MEANING
ház			**ban**	**házban** · in the house
ház	**ak**		**ban**	**házakban** · in the houses
könyv		**em**	**ben**	**könyvemben** · in my book

STEM	+ PLURAL	+ POSSESSIVE	+ CASE	MEANING
barát		**aim** (my … (plural))	**hoz**	**barátaimhoz** · to my friends
szülő		**im** (stem *szüle-*)	**nél**	**szüleimnél** · at my parents'

The possessive endings are the subject of Chapter 8, so here you only need to recognise the pattern: *the case suffix is outermost*. Whatever the stem and the other suffixes look like, the case goes on the end, and the vowel it takes is chosen by the vowel just before it.

5. The map: which case is in which chapter

Grammars count cases differently. A common count is **18**, and a few border cases (such as *-kor*, "at a time") are sometimes added. This table is the course plan: every suffix, its meaning, and the chapter that teaches it.

CASE	SUFFIX	BASIC MEANING	CHAPTER
Nominative	none	subject; dictionary form	1
Accusative	**-t** (with linking vowels)	direct object	2
Dative	**-nak / -nek**	to, for (a person)	3
Inessive	**-ban / -ben**	in	4
Superessive	**-on / -en / -ön** (or **-n**)	on	4
Adessive	**-nál / -nél**	at, by	4
Illative	**-ba / -be**	into	5
Sublative	**-ra / -re**	onto	5
Allative	**-hoz / -hez / -höz**	to, towards	5
Elative	**-ból / -ből**	out of	6
Delative	**-ról / -ről**	off; about	6

CASE	SUFFIX	BASIC MEANING	CHAPTER
Ablative	**-tól / -től**	from (away from)	6
Instrumental	**-val / -vel**	with, by means of	7
Translative	**-vá / -vé**	turning into	7
Causal-final	**-ért**	for; because of	7
Terminative	**-ig**	until; as far as	7
Essive	**-ul / -ül · -ként**	as; in the role of	7
Temporal	**-kor**	at (a time)	7

The 3 × 3 grid of place cases

Nine of these cases are really one idea, repeated: *where something is*, *where it goes to* and *where it comes from*, each for three kinds of place: inside, on the surface, and near/with. Learn the grid once and you have nine endings at a stroke.

	INSIDE	ON THE SURFACE	NEAR / AT SOMEONE
Where? (static)	**-ban / -ben** in the house	**-on / -en / -ön** on the table	**-nál / -nél** at my friend's
Where to?	**-ba / -be** into the house	**-ra / -re** onto the table	**-hoz / -hez / -höz** to my friend's
Where from?	**-ból / -ből** out of the house	**-ról / -ről** off the table	**-tól / -től** from my friend's

6. Where the case goes: the noun, not the adjective

Languages such as German or Latin put the case on the article and the adjective as well as the noun. Hungarian does not. The adjective stays in its dictionary form and only the noun is

marked. The one common exception is a demonstrative (*ez* this, *az* that), which also takes the case.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	WHAT CARRIES THE CASE
a nagy ház**ban**	in the big house	the noun only
a kis szoba**ban**	in the small room	the noun only
ebben a házban	in this house	both *ez* and the noun (*ez* + *ben* becomes *ebben*)
abban a szobában	in that room	both *az* and the noun

Watch out: do not put the case on the adjective

A learner coming from German often writes *a nagyban házban*. In Hungarian only the noun is marked: *a nagy házban*. The adjective also stays singular: *a nagy házakban* (in the big houses), never *a nagyakban házakban*.

In Use — Használatban

Short exchanges showing the plural, the case and the suffix order. Read each aloud and find the nominative stem inside each form.

① Where is it?

A:

Hol van a telefon?

Where is the phone?

B:

Az asztalon, de a kábel a táskában van.

On the table, but the cable is in the bag.

② What is in the boxes?

A:

Mi van a dobozokban?

What is in the boxes?

B:

A kábelek és a billentyűzetek. A telefonok a szekrényben vannak.

The cables and the keyboards. The phones are in the cupboard.

③ Weekend plans

A:

Hol alszol szombaton?

Where are you sleeping on Saturday?

B:

A szüleimnél. Utána a barátaimhoz megyek.

At my parents'. Afterwards I'm going to my friends'.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

IDEA	RULE	EXAMPLE
Nominative	the bare dictionary form	**ház**
Plural	-k, with -ok / -ak / -ek / -ök after a consonant; lengthened vowel after *a*, *e*	**házak** · **kertek** · **almák**
Suffix order	stem + plural + possessive + case	**házakban** · **könyvemben**
Harmony	last vowel of what comes before the case chooses its form	**házban** · **kertben** · **körhöz**
Adjectives	never take the case	**a nagy házban**
After a number	noun stays singular	**három ház**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Which of these is the nominative: *házban, ház, házat*?

▼ Show answer

ház. The nominative has no suffix.

2. Make the plural of *kert*.

▼ Show answer

kertek. Front vowel: -ek.

3. Make the plural of *telefon*.

▼ Show answer

telefonok. Back vowels: -ok.

4. Make the plural of *alma* (apple).

▼ Show answer

almák. A final *a* lengthens before the plural -k.

5. Build "in the houses" from *ház*.

▼ Show answer

házakban. Stem + plural (-ak) + case (-ban).

6. Build "in the gardens" from *kert*.

▼ Show answer

kertekben. Stem + -ek + -ben; the case vowel follows the last vowel, *e*.

7. Build "in my book" from *könyv* + *-em* (my) + the "in" case.

▼ Show answer

könyvemben. Stem + possessive + case.

8. Fix the sentence: *a nagyban házban* (in the big house).

▼ Show answer

a nagy házban. Only the noun takes the case.

9. Fix the sentence: *ez a házban* (in this house).

▼ Show answer

ebben a házban. The demonstrative *ez* also takes the case (*ez* + *ben* becomes *ebben*).

10. Fix the sentence: *három házak* (three houses).

▼ Show answer

három ház. After a number the noun stays singular.

Coming up in Chapter 2: The Accusative. The *-t* ending for the direct object, its linking vowels (*házat, kezet*), the stems that change first, and the personal pronouns *engem* and *téged*.

🎯 The Accusative — A tárgyeset

*The accusative marks the thing an action is done to: I see the house, she reads a book. In Hungarian it is the suffix **-t**, sometimes with a linking vowel in front of it. This chapter shows which form to expect, which stems change before it, and how it behaves with plurals, possessives and pronouns.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The **direct object** takes **-t**. After a vowel the *-t* is added directly (*autó → autót*). After most consonants a **linking vowel** comes first (*-ot / -at* for back words, *-et* for front, *-öt* for rounded front). A group of common endings (*-l, -r, -n, -s, -sz, -z* in longer words) takes *-t* directly: *asztal → asztalt*.

1. Which form: the three groups

STEM ENDS IN…	ACCUSATIVE	EXAMPLES
A vowel	**-t**	autó → autó**t** · fiú → fiú**t** · kávé → kávé**t**
Final *a* or *e*	**-t**, with the vowel lengthened	alma → alm**át** · kefe → kef**ét** · szoba → szob**át**
Most consonants, especially *k, g, t, d, p, b, v, m, h* and short stems	**-ot / -at / -et / -öt**	ablak → ablak**ot** · kert → kert**et** · könyv → könyv**et** · szék → szék**et**
Longer stems ending in *l, r, n, ny, s, sz, z, zs*	**-t** directly	asztal → asztal**t** · telefon → telefon**t** · orvos → orvos**t** · ember → ember**t** · kábel → kábel**t**

The choice among *-ot, -at, -et, -öt* follows the harmony rules from *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 2*: back stem, back vowel; front stem, front vowel; rounded front stem, usually *-et* (*könyvet*) or *-öt* when the stem keeps its rounding (*tükröt*).

Short words are the unpredictable ones

One-syllable stems ending in *l, r, z* often take a linking vowel, even though the longer words in the same group do not: **fal → falat**, **hal → halat**, **ház → házat**, but **kör → kört** and **sör → sört**. Treat the accusative as part of learning each short word, as you learned its plural in Chapter 1. A dictionary entry or a quick search settles any doubt.

2. Stems that change before -t

Some stems change in the accusative, just as they do before the plural (*Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 4*). Learn the stem once and every suffix after it works.

CHANGE	NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	ENGLISH
Long vowel shortens	**kéz**	**kezet**	hand
Long vowel shortens	**víz**	**vizet**	water
Long vowel shortens	**nyár**	**nyarat**	summer
Long vowel shortens	**út**	**utat**	road
A *v* appears	**ló**	**lovat**	horse
A *v* appears	**tó**	**tavat**	lake
A *v* appears	**fű**	**füvet**	grass
A *v* appears	**kő**	**követ**	stone
Stem vowel drops	**tükör**	**tükröt**	mirror

3. The accusative of plurals

The plural of Chapter 1 comes first, and the accusative follows it. After the plural *-k* the accusative always has a linking vowel: **-at** for back stems and **-et** for front stems.

SINGULAR	PLURAL	PLURAL ACCUSATIVE	ENGLISH
ablak	ablakok	ablakok**at**	the windows (object)
ház	házak	házak**at**	the houses
kábel	kábelek	kábelek**et**	the cables
alma	almák	almák**at**	the apples
autó	autók	autók**at**	the cars
tükör	tükrök	tükrök**et**	the mirrors

Numbers keep the singular

After a number the noun stays singular, and the accusative goes on that singular form: **két autót** (two cars), **három könyvet** (three books), **sok kábelt** (many cables). Use the plural accusative only when the object has no number or quantity word in front of it: **a könyveket**.

4. The accusative of possessed nouns

A noun that carries a possessive ending (*my house, your book*) takes the accusative too. Chapter 8 teaches the possessive endings; for now notice the shape, which is predictable: **-t** goes straight after the vowel of the third-person ending, and after the other persons it takes a linking vowel (*-at / -et*).

POSSESSED NOUN	ACCUSATIVE	ENGLISH
házam (my house)	**házam**at	my house (object)
könyvem (my book)	**könyvem**et	my book (object)
barátod (your friend)	**barátod**at	your friend (object)
háza (his/her house)	**ház**át	his/her house (object)
könyve (his/her book)	**könyv**ét	his/her book (object)

5. Pronouns and question words

Personal pronouns have their own accusative forms, which you must learn. A pronoun object is usually left out, because the verb ending already carries it (*Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9*: *látlak*, "I see you"). The accusative pronoun appears for emphasis or contrast.

NOMINATIVE	ACCUSATIVE	ENGLISH
én	**engem**	me
te	**téged**	you (singular, informal)
ő	**őt**	him, her
mi	**minket**	us
ti	**titeket**	you (plural, informal)
ők	**őket**	them
ez / az	**ezt / azt**	this / that
mi?	**mit?**	what?
ki?	**kit?**	whom?

6. The accusative and the two conjugations

The accusative is also the signpost for the definite and indefinite conjugations from *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapters 6 to 8*. A definite object (*a házat, a barátomat*) calls for the definite endings, and an indefinite object (*egy házat, két autót*) calls for the indefinite endings.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	OBJECT
Látok egy házat.	I see a house.	indefinite → *látok*
Látom a házat.	I see the house.	definite → *látom*

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	OBJECT
Mit látsz?	What do you see?	question word → indefinite → *látsz*

7. The accusative for time and measure

Besides the object, the accusative also expresses **how long** something lasts and **how much** something measures.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Három órát vártam.	I waited for three hours.	duration
Két hetet maradok.	I'm staying for two weeks.	duration
A csomag két kilót nyom.	The parcel weighs two kilos.	weight

> **Watch out: no accusative after van**
>
> "I have a house" is **Van egy házam**, with the nominative. *Van* and *nincs* do not take an accusative object, because the thing "being there" is the subject. Chapter 8 returns to this.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The accusative in short exchanges. Find the -t in each one, and see which conjugation the verb picks.

① What do you see?

A:

Mit látsz?

What do you see?

B:

Egy házat és két autót látok.

I see a house and two cars.

A:

② Who are you looking for?

A:

Kit keresel?

Who are you looking for?

B:

A barátomat keresem. És a telefonomat is.

My friend. And my phone as well.

És engem látsz?

And do you see me?

B:

Téged is látlak!

I see you too!

③ At the café

A:

Mit kér?

What would you like?

B:

Egy kávét és két sört, kérem.

A coffee and two beers, please.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

STEM	ACCUSATIVE	EXAMPLE
Vowel	-t (a, e lengthen)	**autót** · **almát** · **kefét**
Most consonants	-ot / -at / -et / -öt	**ablakot** · **házat** · **kertet**
Longer stems in l, r, n, s, sz, z	-t	**asztalt** · **orvost** · **telefont**
Changing stems	learn the stem	**kezet** · **lovat** · **tükröt**
Plural	-k + -at / -et	**házakat** · **kábeleket**
Possessed	-at / -et or -át / -ét	**házamat** · **házát**
Pronouns	own forms	**engem** · **téged** · **őt**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put *ablak* (window) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

ablakot. Back stem, consonant *k*: linking vowel *-o-*.

2. Put *kert* (garden) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

kertet. Front stem: *-et*.

3. Put *orvos* (doctor) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

orvost. A longer stem ending in *s* takes *-t* directly.

4. Put *alma* (apple) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

almát. The final *a* lengthens.

5. Put *kéz* (hand) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

kezet. The long vowel shortens.

6. Put *ló* (horse) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

lovat. The stem gains a *v*.

7. Put the plural *házak* in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

házakat. Plural + *-at*.

8. Put *könyvem* (my book) in the accusative.

▼ Show answer

könyvemet. Possessed noun + *-et*.

9. Translate with emphasis: "You see *me*."

▼ Show answer

Engem látsz. The accusative pronoun *engem* carries the emphasis.

10. Translate: "I waited for three hours."

▼ Show answer

Három órát vártam. Duration takes the accusative, and the noun stays singular after the number.

Coming up in Chapter 3: The Dative and "Of". The *-nak / -nek* ending for the receiver, the possessor in *Péternek a könyve*, verbs that take the dative, and the *-é* of "Peter's".

🎁 The Dative — A részes eset

*The dative marks the person (or thing) that receives or benefits: I give the book **to my friend**, I bought this **for you**. In Hungarian it is the simple suffix **-nak / -nek**. The same ending also introduces the possessor in Péternek a könyve, and a related ending, **-é**, gives "Peter's" and "mine".*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The receiver takes **-nak** after back words and **-nek** after front words, with no linking vowel (*a barátomnak, a kertnek*). A possessor may stand in the dative (*Péternek a könyve*) or, more often, stay bare next to the possessed noun (*Péter könyve*). For "Peter's" as a thing in its own right, add **-é**: *Péteré*.

1. The form

The dative is a two-way suffix. The vowel follows *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 2*, and nothing comes between the stem and *-nak / -nek*.

STEM	GROUP	DATIVE	ENGLISH
barát	back	barát**nak**	to/for the friend
tanár	back	tanár**nak**	to/for the teacher
kert	front	kert**nek**	to/for the garden
könyv	front	könyv**nek**	to/for the book
Péter	front	Péter**nek**	to/for Peter
Anna	back	Annának	to/for Anna (final *a* lengthens)
házak (plural)	back	házak**nak**	to/for the houses

STEM	GROUP	DATIVE	ENGLISH
barátom (my friend)	back	**barátomnak**	to/for my friend

> **Do not confuse the case with the verb ending**
>
> *-nak / -nek* is also the 3rd person plural of the present tense (**laknak**, they live; **kérnek**, they ask). The difference is the word it sits on: after a noun it is the dative, after a verb stem it is the verb ending. The context almost never leaves room for doubt.

2. The receiver and "for"

The dative does the job of English "to" for a receiver and of "for" for a beneficiary. Verbs of giving, saying, showing, sending and writing all take it. The direct object still takes the accusative from Chapter 2, so one sentence can carry both cases.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
Adok egy könyvet a barátomnak.	I give a book to my friend.	indefinite object → *adok*
Adom a könyvet a barátomnak.	I give the book to my friend.	definite object → *adom*
Ezt neked vettem.	I bought this for you.	*neked* = for you
Írok a tanárnak.	I'm writing to the teacher.	no direct object
Megmutatom a képet Annának.	I'll show the picture to Anna.	*kép* is the object

3. Verbs that need the dative

Some verbs always take a dative where English would use a direct object. Learn each with its case, because the English translation does not predict it.

VERB	PATTERN	ENGLISH
segít	**Segítek a barátomnak.**	I help my friend.

VERB	PATTERN	ENGLISH
köszön	Köszönöm a tanárnak.	I thank the teacher.
válaszol	Válaszolok Péternek.	I answer Peter.
hisz	Hiszek neked.	I believe you.
telefonál	Telefonálok az orvosnak.	I phone the doctor.
tetszik	A ház tetszik nekem.	I like the house (it pleases me).
kell	Nekem kell egy telefon.	I need a phone.

> **Watch out: tetszik works backwards**
> In *A ház tetszik nekem* the thing liked is the subject (nominative) and the person who likes is the dative. With a plural thing the verb becomes **tetszenek**: **A házak tetszenek nekem.** To say "I like you", use **Tetszel nekem.**

4. The dative pronouns

The personal pronouns have their own dative forms, built on *ne-* plus a personal ending. They are used for emphasis; for ordinary "to me" and "to you" the verb often carries it differently (*Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 9*).

NOMINATIVE	DATIVE	ENGLISH
én	nekem	to/for me
te	neked	to/for you (singular)
ő	neki	to/for him, her
mi	nekünk	to/for us
ti	nektek	to/for you (plural)
ők	nekik	to/for them

NOMINATIVE	DATIVE	ENGLISH
ki?	kinek?	to/for whom?
mi?	minek?	for what?

5. The dative possessor: Péternek a könyve

A noun can show its owner in two ways. The usual one puts the owner right in front of the possessed noun, **bare** (nominative), and the possessed noun takes a possessive ending (Chapter 8). The second puts the owner in the **dative** with the article, and it may stand apart from the possessed noun.

BARE POSSESSOR	DATIVE POSSESSOR	ENGLISH
Péter könyve	Péternek a könyve	Peter's book
a tanár autója	a tanárnak az autója	the teacher's car
a barátom háza	a barátomnak a háza	my friend's house

Choose the dative form when the owner is the focus, when the owner is separated from the possessed noun, or when you want to ask *whose?*: **Kinek a telefonja ez?** (Whose phone is this?). The bare form is the everyday one.

The dative possessor also expresses **having** with *van*. **Van egy házam** already says "I have a house", and adding the dative pronoun makes it emphatic: **Nekem van egy házam** (I have a house, as for me). Without a pronoun, **Péternek van egy autója** is the normal form for a named owner.

6. The -é of "Peter's" and "mine"

To say *the thing that belongs to someone* without naming the thing, add **-é** to the owner. The suffix does not change for harmony, and after a final *a* or *e* that vowel lengthens.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
Ez a könyv Péteré.	This book is Peter's.	-é after a consonant
Az autó a tanáré.	The car is the teacher's.	-é after a consonant
Ez a telefon Annáé.	This phone is Anna's.	*a* lengthens
Ezek a könyvek Péteréi.	These books are Peter's.	plural things: *-éi*
Kié ez a kabát?	Whose is this coat?	*ki + é*

The pronouns have set forms for the same idea:

PRONOUN	FORM	MEANING
én	az enyém	mine
te	a tiéd	yours (singular)
ő	az övé	his, hers
mi	a miénk	ours
ti	a tiétek	yours (plural)
ők	az övék	theirs

7. Called something: -nak / -nek in names

The dative also appears when you say what someone or something is called: the name takes *-nak / -nek* before *hívnak* (they call).

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Philipnek hívnak.	I'm called Philip.
Engem Annának hívnak.	I'm called Anna.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Hogy hívnak?	What are you called?

Watch out: dative or direction?

-nak / -nek is for a receiver; going *to* a person or place uses a different case. **Adok a barátomnak** means I give something to my friend; **Megyek a barátomhoz** means I go to my friend's place. Chapter 5 covers *-hoz / -hez / -höz*.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The dative in short exchanges.

① Who is it for?

A:

Kinek adod a könyvet?

Who are you giving the book to?

B:

A barátomnak. Ezt neki vettem.

To my friend. I bought this for him/her.

② Whose is it?

A:

Kié ez a telefon?

Whose is this phone?

B:

Az enyém. És az az autó a szomszédé.

It's mine. And that car is the neighbour's.

③ Names

A:

Hogy hívnak?

What are you called?

B:

Philipnek hívnak. És téged?

I'm called Philip. And you?

A:

Engem Annának hívnak.

I'm called Anna.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

IDEA	FORM	EXAMPLE
Receiver, "for"	-nak / -nek	**a barátomnak · a kertnek**
Dative pronouns	nekem, neked, neki, nekünk, nektek, nekik	**Neked vettem.**
Possessor	bare, or dative + article	**Péter könyve · Péternek a könyve**
"Peter's" (alone)	-é (-éi for plural things)	**Péteré · Annáé**
Mine, yours…	az enyém, a tiéd, az övé, a miénk, a tiétek, az övék	**Ez az enyém.**
Called	name + -nak / -nek + hívnak	**Philipnek hívnak.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. Put *ház* in the dative.

▼ Show answer

háznak. Back vowel: *-nak*.

2. Put *kert* in the dative.

▼ Show answer

kertnek. Front vowel: *-nek*.

3. Put *barátom* (my friend) in the dative.

▼ Show answer

barátomnak.

4. Put *Anna* in the dative.

▼ Show answer

Annának. The final *a* lengthens.

5. Say "to me" and "to them" as pronouns.

▼ Show answer

nekem and **nekik**.

6. Say "I help my teacher".

▼ Show answer

Segítek a tanáromnak. *Segít* takes the dative.

7. Say "Peter's book" in the bare form and the dative form.

▼ Show answer

Péter könyve and **Péternek a könyve**.

8. Say "This phone is mine."

▼ Show answer

Ez a telefon az enyém.

9. Say "This phone is Anna's."

▼ Show answer

Ez a telefon Annáé. *-é* with the final *a* lengthened.

10. Fix the sentence: *Megyek a barátomnak* (I'm going to my friend's).

▼ Show answer

Megyek a barátomhoz. Going to a place or person uses *-hoz / -hez / -höz*, not the dative.

Coming up in Chapter 4: Where? In, On, At. The three "static" place cases: *-ban / -ben*, *-on / -en / -ön* and *-nál / -nél*, and which one a town, a country or a building takes.

📍 Where Something Is — Hol?

*The first row of the 3 × 3 grid from Chapter 1 answers **Hol?** (Where?). It has three cases: **-ban / -ben** (in), **-on / -en / -ön** (on) and **-nál / -nél** (at, by). The endings are easy. The hard part is that English in, on, at do not line up with them, so the work in this chapter is choosing the right case for the right kind of place.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

Use **-ban / -ben** for the **inside** of an enclosed space, **-on / -en / -ön** for a **surface**, an open area, a vehicle or an event, and **-nál / -nél** for **being at or beside** something, above all at a person's place. For towns, countries and a few other names the choice is partly historic, so learn it with the name.

1. The forms

CASE	BACK	FRONT	FRONT, ROUNDED	AFTER A VOWEL
Inessive (in)	-ban	-ben	-ben	same
Superessive (on)	-on	-en	-ön	-n (a, e lengthen)
Adessive (at, by)	-nál	-nél	-nél	same

STEM	IN	ON	AT, BY
ház (house)	házban	házon	háznál
kert (garden)	kertben	kerten	kertnél
tükör (mirror)	tükörben	tükrön	tükörnél
fa (tree)	fában	fán	fánál

STEM	IN	ON	AT, BY
autó (car)	**autóban**	**autón**	**autónál**
tó (lake)	**tóban** / **tavon** (see below)	**tavon**	**tónál**

The stem changes from Chapter 2 return before the case (*tükr-, tav-*). *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5* explains why the plural and case suffixes assimilate in the same way.

2. Which place takes which case

-ban / -ben: enclosed space

KIND OF PLACE	EXAMPLES
Rooms and buildings	**a szobában · az irodában · a boltban · az étteremben · a kórházban · a könyvtárban · az iskolában**
Containers	**a táskában · a dobozban · a szekrényben · a pohárban**
Most foreign cities	**Bécsben · Berlinben · Rómában · Párizsban · Londonban**
Most countries (those in *-ország* and *-ia*)	**Franciaországban · Németországban · Skóciában · Ausztriában**
Cars and taxis	**az autóban · a taxiban**

-on / -en / -ön: surfaces, open areas, vehicles, events

KIND OF PLACE	EXAMPLES
Surfaces	**az asztalon · a falon · a padlón · a polcon**
Open areas and streets	**az utcán · a téren · az úton · a piacon**
Public transport and boats	**a buszon · a vonaton · a villamoson · a hajón · a repülőn**

KIND OF PLACE	EXAMPLES
Islands, hills, lakes	**a szigeten** · **a hegyen** · **a Balatonon**
Institutions and events	**az egyetemen** · **a postán** · **a pályaudvaron** · **a repülőtéren** · **a koncerten** · **a tanfolyamon**
Some towns and Hungary itself	**Szegeden** · **Miskolcon** · **Budapesten** · **Magyarországon**

English does not predict it

English says *on the bus* and *in the car*, and Hungarian happens to agree (**a buszon**, **az autóban**). But English says *at university* and *at the post office*, where Hungarian uses the surface case (**az egyetemen**, **a postán**), and English says *in the street* where Hungarian says **az utcán**. Learn the pairing as a phrase.

Towns: a historic split

There is no rule that tells you whether a Hungarian town takes *-ban/-ben* or *-on/-en/-ön*; the usage is historic. Foreign towns nearly always take *-ban/-ben*. Learn the Hungarian towns you need with their case:

TAKES -BAN / -BEN	TAKES -ON / -EN / -ÖN / -N
Győrben · **Egerben** · **Debrecenben** · **Veszprémben** · **Sopronban**	**Budapesten** · **Szegeden** · **Miskolcon** · **Szolnokon** · **Kecskeméten** · **Székesfehérváron** · **Nyíregyházán**

A few Hungarian towns also have their own special form (**Pécsett**), and some people say one case where others say the other. When a town is not in your list, look it up before you commit.

-nál / -nél: at, by, and at someone's place

The adessive means *at* or *by* without going inside or on. Its most important use is for being **at a person's home or with a person**.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
A barátomnál alszom.	I'm staying at my friend's.
Az orvosnál voltam.	I was at the doctor's.
A szüleimnél lakom.	I live with my parents.
A bejáratnál várlak.	I'll wait for you at the entrance.
A pénztárnál fizetek.	I pay at the till.
Péter magasabb nálam.	Peter is taller than me.

The last row shows another job of the adessive: the thing compared with, after a comparative adjective (*than me*).

3. The pronoun forms

These three cases do not add to a personal pronoun directly. Each has its own set of forms, built on a short stem plus the personal endings you know from the possessives.

PERSON	IN	ON	AT, BY
I	**bennem**	**rajtam**	**nálam**
you (sg)	**benned**	**rajtad**	**nálad**
he, she	**benne**	**rajta**	**nála**
we	**bennünk**	**rajtunk**	**nálunk**
you (pl)	**bennetek**	**rajtatok**	**nálatok**
they	**bennük**	**rajtuk**	**náluk**

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Nálam van a kulcs.	I have the key (it is with me).

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Nálunk jó az idő.	The weather is good at our place.
Nincs benne semmi.	There is nothing in it.
Mi van rajta?	What is on it?

The question words are **Hol?** (where), **Miben?** (in what), **Min?** (on what), **Kinél?** (at whose place). Two small words need no case at all: **itt** (here), **ott** (there) and **otthon** (at home).

> **Watch out: at home is otthon**
>
> Say **Otthon vagyok** (I'm at home), not *a házban vagyok*, unless you really mean "inside the house". *Itthon* is "at home" from the speaker's point of view, in the home country or at one's own house.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The static cases in short exchanges.

① Where do you live?

A:

Hol laksz?

Where do you live?

B:

Skóciában, egy kis lakásban.

In Scotland, in a small flat.

A:

Én Szegeden születtem, de most Budapesten dolgozom.

I was born in Szeged, but now I work in Budapest.

② Where is the key?

A:

Hol van a kulcs?

Where is the key?

B:

Nálad van! Nézd meg a táskában.

You have it! Look in the bag.

A:

Nincs ott. Az asztalon hagytam.

It isn't there. I left it on the table.

③ Where are you?

A:

Hol vagy?

Where are you?

B:

A pályaudvaron, a bejáratnál. És te?

At the station, by the entrance. And you?

A:

Még a buszon, de a következő megállónál leszállok.

Still on the bus, but I'm getting off at the next stop.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

CASE	USE FOR	EXAMPLE
-ban / -ben	inside rooms, buildings, containers; most countries and foreign cities; cars	**a szobában · Bécsben · az autóban**
-on / -en / -ön / -n	surfaces, streets, transport, islands, institutions, events; some towns	**az asztalon · a buszon · Budapesten**
-nál / -nél	at someone's place; at or by a spot; "than"	**a barátomnál · a bejáratnál**
Pronouns	bennem · rajtam · nálam (and so on)	**Nálam van.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "In the house": *ház* + the "in" case.

▼ Show answer

házban.

2. "In the garden": *kert* + the "in" case.

▼ Show answer

kertben.

3. "On the table": *asztal* + the "on" case.

▼ Show answer

asztalon.

4. "On the tree": *fa* + the "on" case.

▼ Show answer

fán. After a vowel the ending is *-n*, and the stem vowel lengthens.

5. "In Budapest."

▼ Show answer

Budapesten. Budapest takes the surface case.

6. "In Hungary."

▼ Show answer

Magyarországon. Hungary is the exception among the *-ország* countries.

7. "In France."

▼ Show answer

Franciaországban.

8. "At the doctor's": *az orvos* + the "at" case.

▼ Show answer

az orvosnál.

9. Say "in me" and "at my place".

▼ Show answer

bennem and **nálam**.

10. Fix the sentence: *A vonatban vagyok* (I'm on the train).

▼ Show answer

A vonaton vagyok. Public transport takes the surface case.

Coming up in Chapter 5: Where To? Into, Onto, Toward. The "to" row of the grid: *-ba / -be*, *-ra / -re* and *-hoz / -hez / -höz*, with the same place sorting you learned here.

➡️ Where To — Hova?

*The second row of the grid answers **Hova?** (Where to?). It has three cases: **-ba / -be** (into), **-ra / -re** (onto) and **-hoz / -hez / -höz** (to, towards). The rule is the one you learned in Chapter 4: whatever place took a static case there takes the matching "to" case here. This chapter shows the match and adds the verbs that need these cases.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The "to" case matches the "where" case: **-ban / -ben → -ba / -be** (into), **-on / -en / -ön → -ra / -re** (onto), **-nál / -nél → -hoz / -hez / -höz** (to a person or spot). Once you know a place takes *-ban*, you know it takes *-ba*; once it takes *-on*, it takes *-ra*.

1. The forms

CASE	BACK	FRONT	FRONT, ROUNDED
Illative (into)	-ba	-be	-be
Sublative (onto)	-ra	-re	-re
Allative (to, towards)	-hoz	-hez	-höz

All three begin with a consonant, so a final *a* or *e* lengthens before them, just as before *-ban* in Chapter 4: **fa → fába, fára, fához**.

STEM	INTO	ONTO	TO
ház	házba	házra	házhoz
kert	kertbe	kertre	kerthez
tükör	tükörbe	tükörre	tükörhöz

STEM	INTO	ONTO	TO
fa	fá**ba**	fá**ra**	fá**hoz**
autó	autó**ba**	autó**ra**	autó**hoz**

2. The match with Chapter 4

Take the pairs from Chapter 4 and move them one row down the grid. The same sorting rules apply: enclosed space, surface, and person.

PLACE	WHERE? (CHAPTER 4)	WHERE TO? (THIS CHAPTER)
house	**házban**	**házba**
school	**iskolában**	**iskolába**
bag	**táskában**	**táskába**
Vienna	**Bécsben**	**Bécsbe**
France	**Franciaországban**	**Franciaországba**
Győr	**Győrben**	**Győrbe**
table	**asztalon**	**asztalra**
street	**utcán**	**utcára**
bus	**buszon**	**buszra**
university	**egyetemen**	**egyetemre**
post office	**postán**	**postára**
Budapest	**Budapesten**	**Budapestre**
Hungary	**Magyarországon**	**Magyarországra**
Szeged	**Szegeden**	**Szegedre**

PLACE	WHERE? (CHAPTER 4)	WHERE TO? (THIS CHAPTER)
my friend	**a barátomnál**	**a barátomhoz**
the doctor	**az orvosnál**	**az orvoshoz**
the entrance	**a bejáratnál**	**a bejárathoz**

The traps: -ba or -ra?

Some everyday places are the opposite of what English suggests. You go **iskolába** (to school) but **egyetemre** (to university), **postára** (to the post office), **pályaudvarra** (to the station), **koncertre** (to a concert) and **piacra** (to the market). You go **moziba** (to the cinema), **színházba** (to the theatre), **bankba** (to the bank) and **munkába** (to work). Learn each place with the pair from Chapter 4.

3. Verbs that use the "to" cases

Movement: going, coming, travelling

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Az iskolába megyek.	I'm going to school.
Budapestre utazom.	I'm travelling to Budapest.
A barátomhoz jövök.	I'm coming to my friend's.
Szegedre érkezünk.	We arrive in Szeged.
Felszállok a vonatra.	I get on the train.

Placing: putting something somewhere

A verb that moves an object into place (*tesz* put, *rak* place, *tölt* pour, *vesz* take out of the box) takes the "to" case for the destination. The static verb *van* takes the case from Chapter 4. Compare the pair:

STATIC (CHAPTER 4)	MOVING (THIS CHAPTER)
A telefon az asztalon van. The phone is on the table.	**A telefont az asztalra teszem.** I put the phone on the table.
A kábel a szekrényben van. The cable is in the cupboard.	**A kábelt a szekrénybe rakom.** I put the cable in the cupboard.
Nálad van a kulcs. You have the key.	**Hozzád viszem a kulcsot.** I'm taking the key to you.

Beyond movement: -ra / -re for "for" and "by"

The sublative has uses far from places. After a time word it means *by* or *for* a deadline, and after a noun it often means *for* a purpose.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Szombatra kész lesz.	It will be ready by Saturday.
Kávéra hívlak.	I'm inviting you for a coffee.
Vacsorára maradsz?	Are you staying for dinner?

4. The pronoun forms

As in Chapter 4, the personal pronouns have their own forms with these cases.

PERSON	INTO	ONTO	TO
I	**belém**	**rám**	**hozzám**
you (sg)	**beléd**	**rád**	**hozzád**
he, she	**belé**	**rá**	**hozzá**
we	**belénk**	**ránk**	**hozzánk**
you (pl)	**belétek**	**rátok**	**hozzátok**

PERSON	INTO	ONTO	TO
they	**beléjük**	**rájuk**	**hozzájuk**

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Hozzám jössz szombaton?	Are you coming to my place on Saturday?
Mit szólsz hozzá?	What do you say to that?
Rád gondolok.	I'm thinking of you.

The question words are **Hova?** (where to), **Mibe?** (into what), **Mire?** (onto what) and **Kihez?** (to whom). A few adverbs need no case: **ide** (to here), **oda** (to there) and **haza** (home, to one's home). They are the "to" partners of *itt, ott, otthon* from Chapter 4.

> **Watch out: -hoz is not the dative**
>
> From Chapter 3, *-nak / -nek* gives the receiver and *-hoz / -hez / -höz* gives the destination. **Adok a barátomnak** means I hand something to my friend; **Megyek a barátomhoz** means I go to my friend's place.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The "to" cases in short exchanges.

① Errands

A:

Hova mész?

Where are you going?

B:

A postára, aztán az orvoshoz.

To the post office, then to the doctor's.

A:

És este?

② Where does it go?

A:

Hova teszem a kábeleket?

Where do I put the cables?

B:

A szekrénybe. A telefont az asztalra.

In the cupboard. The phone on the table.

And in the evening?

B:

Este haza megyek.

In the evening I'm going home.

③ Plans

A:

Jössz hozzám szombaton?

Are you coming to my place on Saturday?

B:

Igen! Utána együtt megyünk a koncertre.

Yes! Afterwards we'll go to the concert together.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

CASE	USE FOR	EXAMPLE
-ba / -be	into enclosed spaces; places that take -ban / -ben	**a szobába** · **Bécsbe**
-ra / -re	onto surfaces, streets, transport, institutions, events; places that take -on / -en / -ön; "by", "for"	**az asztalra** · **az egyetemre** · **szombatra**
-hoz / -hez / -höz	to a person's place or a spot; places that take -nál / -nél	**a barátomhoz** · **a bejárathoz**
Pronouns	belém · rám · hozzám (and so on)	**Hozzám jössz?**
Adverbs	ide · oda · haza	**Haza megyek.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "Into the house": *ház* + the "into" case.

▼ Show answer

házba.

2. "Into the garden": *kert* + the "into" case.

▼ Show answer

kertbe.

3. "Onto the table": *asztal* + the "onto" case.

▼ Show answer

asztalra.

4. "Onto the tree": *fa* + the "onto" case.

▼ Show answer

fára. The final *a* lengthens before a consonant ending.

5. "To Budapest."

▼ Show answer

Budapestre. Budapest took *-en* in Chapter 4, so it takes *-re* here.

6. "To Hungary."

▼ Show answer

Magyarországra.

7. "To France."

▼ Show answer

Franciaországba.

8. "To the doctor's": *az orvos* + the "to" case.

▼ Show answer

az orvoshoz.

9. Say "to me" and "onto it".

▼ Show answer

hozzám and **rá**.

10. Fix the sentence: *Megyek az egyetembe* (I'm going to university).

▼ Show answer

Megyek az egyetemre. University takes the surface case (*egyetemen* in Chapter 4), so the "to" form is *-re*.

Coming up in Chapter 6: Where From? Out of, Off, Away. The last row of the grid: *-ból / -ből*, *-ról / -ről* and *-tól / -től*, with the full 3 × 3 grid pulled together.

⬅️ Where From — Honnan?

*The last row of the grid answers **Honnan?** (Where from?). It has three cases: **-ból / -ből** (out of), **-ról / -ről** (off, down from, and also about) and **-tól / -től** (away from, from a person). The sorting is again the one from Chapters 4 and 5, so this chapter completes the nine-case grid and then looks at the many uses of these endings beyond motion.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

The "from" case matches the "where" and "to" cases: a place that took **-ban** → **-ba** now takes **-ból / -ből**; one that took **-on** → **-ra** takes **-ról / -ről**; one that took **-nál** → **-hoz** takes **-tól / -től**. All three are two-way suffixes (back and front), with no rounded form.

1. The forms

CASE	BACK	FRONT
Elative (out of)	-ból	-ből
Delative (off, about)	-ról	-ről
Ablative (from, away from)	-tól	-től

All three start with a consonant, so a final *a* or *e* lengthens, and a stem that dropped its vowel before a vowel suffix keeps it here (*Chapter 5*).

STEM	OUT OF	OFF, ABOUT	FROM
ház	házból	házról	háztól
kert	kertből	kertről	kerttől
tükör	tükörből	tükörről	tükörtől

STEM	OUT OF	OFF, ABOUT	FROM
fa	fából	fáról	fától
autó	autóból	autóról	autótól

2. The complete grid

Here are all nine cases, with one example in each. Read across a row to see a thing at a place, going to it, and leaving it.

	INSIDE	ON THE SURFACE	AT / NEAR A PERSON
Where?	a házban	az asztalon	a barátomnál
Where to?	a házba	az asztalra	a barátomhoz
Where from?	a házból	az asztalról	a barátomtól

PLACE	WHERE?	WHERE TO?	WHERE FROM?
school	iskolában	iskolába	iskolából
Győr	Győrben	Győrbe	Győrből
France	Franciaországban	Franciaországba	Franciaországból
car	autóban	autóba	autóból
bus	buszon	buszra	buszról
university	egyetemen	egyetemre	egyetemről
Budapest	Budapesten	Budapestre	Budapestről
Hungary	Magyarországon	Magyarországra	Magyarországról
the doctor	az orvosnál	az orvoshoz	az orvostól

The car and the bus: getting off and getting out

The car pair shows why the grid matters: you sit *in* a car and get **kiszáll az autóból** (out of it), but you are *on* a bus and **leszáll a buszról** (off it). The prefixes *ki-, le-, el-* often accompany these cases, but verb prefixes are an Intermediate topic; here, just notice that the case is what carries the direction.

3. Uses beyond movement

-ból / -ből: out of, made of, some of

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Kimegyek a házból.	I go out of the house.	motion
Az asztal fából készült.	The table is made of wood.	material
A csapat öt emberből áll.	The team consists of five people.	consist of
Kérek a kávéból.	I'd like some of the coffee.	part of a whole
Kifogyott a tejből.	It ran out of milk.	run out of
Skóciából jövök.	I come from Scotland.	origin

-ról / -ről: off, down from, and about

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Leveszem a telefont az asztalról.	I take the phone off the table.	motion
Leszállok a buszról.	I get off the bus.	motion
Magyarországról jövök.	I come from Hungary.	origin (surface towns and countries)
A könyv a háborúról szól.	The book is about the war.	topic

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Beszélünk a filmről.	We talk about the film.	topic
Hallottam rólad.	I've heard about you.	topic
Fordítok magyarról angolra.	I translate from Hungarian into English.	language

-tól / -től: from a person, since, and afraid of

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Elmegyek a barátomtól.	I leave my friend's place.	motion from a person
Ajándékot kaptam a barátomtól.	I got a present from my friend.	source
Messze van a háztól.	It's far from the house.	distance
Félek a kutyától.	I'm afraid of the dog.	fear
Hétfőtől péntekig dolgozom.	I work from Monday to Friday.	start of a period
Ez az időtől függ.	That depends on the weather.	depends on

> **Watch out: a person is -tól, not -ból**
>
> A thing comes *out of* a house (**házból**), but a gift comes *from* a person (**a barátomtól**). Writing *a barátomból* would mean "out of my friend". The same applies to *kap* (receive), *kér* (ask for), *kérdez* (ask) and *búcsúzik* (say goodbye to): they all go with *-tól / -től*.

4. The pronoun forms

PERSON	OUT OF	OFF, ABOUT	FROM
I	**belőlem**	**rólam**	**tőlem**
you (sg)	**belőled**	**rólad**	**tőled**

PERSON	OUT OF	OFF, ABOUT	FROM
he, she	**belőle**	**róla**	**tőle**
we	**belőlünk**	**rólunk**	**tőlünk**
you (pl)	**belőletek**	**rólatok**	**tőletek**
they	**belőlük**	**róluk**	**tőlük**

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Mesélj magadról!	Tell me about yourself!
Tőled kaptam.	I got it from you.
Semmi sem lesz belőle.	Nothing will come of it.

The question words are **Honnan?** (where from), **Miből?** (out of what), **Miről?** (about what), **Kitől?** (from whom) and **Kiről?** (about whom). The case-free adverbs are **innen** (from here), **onnan** (from there) and **hazulról** (from home), completing the sets *itt, ide, innen* and *ott, oda, onnan*.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The "from" cases in short exchanges.

① Where are you from?

A:

Honnan jössz?

Where do you come from?

B:

Skóciából, de Szegedről származom.

From Scotland, but my family is from Szeged.

A:

② Where did you get it?

A:

Honnan vetted ezt a kábelt?

Where did you get this cable?

B:

A szekrényből, abból a dobozból.

From the cupboard, from that box.

Messze laksz a szüleidtől?

Do you live far from your parents?

B:

Elég messze, de sokat beszélünk.

Quite far, but we talk a lot.

③ The book

A:

Miről szól a könyv?

What is the book about?

B:

A háborúról. A barátomtól kaptam.

The war. I got it from my friend.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

CASE	USE FOR	EXAMPLE
-ból / -ből	out of enclosed spaces; material; consist of; origin	**a házból · fából · Skóciából**
-ról / -ről	off surfaces and transport; about; origin from surface places	**az asztalról · a háborúról**
-tól / -től	from a person; distance; fear; from a time	**a barátomtól · hétfőtől**
Pronouns	belőlem · rólam · tőlem (and so on)	**Tőled kaptam.**
Adverbs	innen · onnan · hazulról	**Onnan jövök.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "Out of the house": *ház* + the "out of" case.

▼ Show answer

házból.

2. "Out of the garden": *kert* + the "out of" case.

▼ Show answer

kertből.

3. "Off the table": *asztal* + the "off" case.

▼ Show answer

asztalról.

4. "From Budapest."

▼ Show answer

Budapestről. Budapest took *-en* and *-re*, so it takes *-ről*.

5. "From Hungary."

▼ Show answer

Magyarországról.

6. "From France."

▼ Show answer

Franciaországból.

7. "From my friend": *a barátom* + the "from a person" case.

▼ Show answer

a barátomtól.

8. Say "about you" and "from them".

▼ Show answer

rólad and **tőlük**.

9. Translate: "The book is about the war."

▼ Show answer

A könyv a háborúról szól.

10. Fix the sentence: *Kapok egy levelet a barátomból* (I get a letter from my friend).

▼ Show answer

Kapok egy levelet a barátomtól. A person as the source takes *-tól / -től*.

Coming up in Chapter 7: Instrumental, Translative and the Rest. *-val / -vel* (with), *-vá / -vé* (becoming), *-ért* (for), *-ig* (until), *-ul / -ül* and *-ként* (as), and *-kor* (at a time).

🧰 The Other Cases — A többi eset

The place cases and the accusative and dative are done. Seven endings remain, and each has its own job: ***-val / -vel*** *(with, by means of),* ***-vá / -vé*** *(becoming),* ***-ért*** *(for, in exchange for),* ***-ig*** *(until, as far as),* ***-ul / -ül*** *and* ***-ként*** *(as), and* ***-kor*** *(at a time). Only the first two need real care, because their v changes.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

-val / -vel and **-vá / -vé** start with *v* only after a vowel; after a consonant the *v* becomes **a copy of that consonant** (*kéz → kézzel, ház → házzá*). The other five endings never change their consonants and, except for *-ul / -ül*, never change their vowels.

1. The instrumental: -val / -vel

The instrumental means **with** (accompanying someone), **by** or **with** (a tool, a means of transport). It is the case behind the assimilation rule in *Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 5*.

STEM ENDS IN…	SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
A vowel	**-val / -vel**	autó → autó**val** · fa → fá**val** · kávé → kávé**val** · tanú → tanú**val**
A single consonant	the *v* copies it	kéz → kéz**zel** · ház → ház**zal** · toll → toll**al** · kert → kert**tel** · barát → barát**tal** · Péter → Péter**rel**
A digraph (*sz, zs, cs, gy, ny, ty, ly*)	the digraph doubles in spelling	busz → bus**szal** · kulcs → kulc**csal** · hegy → heg**gyel** · lány → lán**nyal**
v	stays *v*	könyv → könyv**vel**

Spelling note: when the *v* copies a digraph, the doubled digraph is written with only its first letter doubled: *sz + sz* becomes *ssz*, *cs + cs* becomes *ccs*, *gy + gy* becomes *ggy*, *ny + ny* becomes *nny*. So: **busszal**, **kulccsal**, **heggyel**, **lánnyal**.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
A barátommal megyek.	I'm going with my friend.	accompaniment
Busszal megyek.	I'm going by bus.	means of transport
Tollal írok.	I write with a pen.	tool
Kézzel csinálom.	I make it by hand.	manner
Találkozom Péterrel.	I'm meeting Peter.	verb that needs it

Verbs that need *-val / -vel* include *találkozik* (meet), *beszél* (talk to), *foglalkozik* (deal with), *egyetért* (agree with) and *megismerkedik* (get to know). Learn each with its case, as with the dative verbs in Chapter 3.

The personal forms are **velem, veled, vele, velünk, veletek, velük**, and the question words are **Kivel?** (with whom) and **Mivel?** (with what, by what means).

2. The translative: -vá / -vé

The translative (the "becoming" case) names the state something **turns into**. It follows exactly the same *v*-assimilation rule as the instrumental.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
A víz jéggé fagy.	The water freezes into ice.	*jég + gé*
A fiú orvossá válik.	The boy becomes a doctor.	*orvos + sá*
Péter elnökké lett.	Peter became president.	*elnök + ké*
A szobát irodává alakítom.	I'm turning the room into an office.	after a vowel: *-vá*
Mivé lett?	What did it become?	question word

> **Watch out: lesz can take the nominative instead**

> For a simple change of profession or state, *lesz* (will be, became) takes the plain nominative: **Tanár lesz** (He/she will be a teacher). The translative *tanárrá lesz / válik* stresses the process of changing and is used in more formal or descriptive writing. Both are correct; the nominative is the everyday one.

3. The causal-final: -ért

The causal-final has one invariant form, **-ért**, and covers three ideas: **for the sake of**, **in exchange for** and **to fetch**.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Ezt a barátomért teszem.	I'm doing this for my friend.	for the sake of
Ezer forintot fizetek a könyvért.	I pay a thousand forints for the book.	price
Elmegyek a kenyérért.	I'm going to get the bread.	to fetch
Köszönöm a meghívásért!	Thank you for the invitation!	gratitude
Bocsánat a késésért.	Sorry for being late.	apology
Miért?	Why? (for what)	question word

The personal forms are **értem, érted, érte, értünk, értetek, értük**.

4. The terminative: -ig

The terminative is another invariant ending. **-ig** marks the **end point** in space (as far as), in time (until) and in duration (for).

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Budapestig megyek.	I'm going as far as Budapest.	space
Péntekig dolgozom.	I'm working until Friday.	time

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	USE
Hétfőtől péntekig dolgozom.	I work from Monday to Friday.	with *-tól* (Chapter 6)
Egy hétig maradok.	I'm staying for a week.	duration
Meddig maradsz?	How long are you staying? / Until when?	question word

Duration can also take the accusative from Chapter 2 (**Két hetet maradok**). The two forms are close; *-ig* looks at the end point, the accusative at the length. The pronoun-like forms are **eddig** (until now), **addig** (until then) and **idáig** (up to here).

5. The essive: -ul / -ül and -ként

Two endings both mean **as**, with different jobs.

-ul / -ül: languages and fixed expressions

This ending follows two-way harmony (*-ul* back, *-ül* front) and is used above all to say **in a language**. After a vowel the ending is the same: **franciául**.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
magyarul · angolul · oroszul	in Hungarian · in English · in Russian
németül · törökül · franciául	in German · in Turkish · in French
Hogy mondják ezt magyarul?	How do you say this in Hungarian?
Beszélsz angolul?	Do you speak English?

-ként: in the role of

The ending **-ként** is invariant and means *as* in the sense of "in the role or capacity of".

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Tanárként dolgozom.	I work as a teacher.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Ajándékként kaptam.	I got it as a present.
Példaként mondom.	I say it as an example.

6. The temporal: -kor

The ending **-kor** gives a **point in time**: a clock time, a meal, a festival. It is invariant and attaches directly to the number or the word.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
háromkor · négykor · hétkor	at three · at four · at seven
fél háromkor	at half past two
három órakor	at three o'clock
ebédkor · vacsorakor	at lunchtime · at dinnertime
karácsonykor · húsvétkor	at Christmas · at Easter
Mikor?	When?

> **Watch out: days and seasons use another case**
> *-kor* is for clock times and events, not for days or seasons. Those take the surface case from Chapter 4: **hétfőn** (on Monday), **nyáron** (in summer). Chapter 10 collects the time expressions.

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

The remaining cases in short exchanges.

① Getting there

A:

② How long?

A:

Kivel jössz a koncertre?

Who are you coming to the concert with?

B:

A barátommal. Busszal megyünk.

With my friend. We're going by bus.

A:

Mi autóval megyünk. Gyere velünk!

We're going by car. Come with us!

Meddig maradsz?

How long are you staying?

B:

Péntekig. Háromkor indul a vonatom.

Until Friday. My train leaves at three.

A:

Miért mész haza?

Why are you going home?

B:

Tanárként dolgozom hétfőtől.

I start work as a teacher on Monday.

③ Languages and thanks

A:

Beszélsz magyarul?

Do you speak Hungarian?

B:

Egy kicsit. Angolul jobban beszélek. Köszönöm a meghívásért!

A little. I speak English better. Thank you for the invitation!

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

CASE	SUFFIX	EXAMPLE
Instrumental	-val / -vel (the v copies a final consonant)	**autóval** · **házzal** · **busszal**
Translative	-vá / -vé (same rule)	**jéggé** · **orvossá**
Causal-final	-ért	**a barátomért** · **a kenyérért**

CASE	SUFFIX	EXAMPLE
Terminative	-ig	**péntekig · Budapestig**
Essive	-ul / -ül (languages) · -ként (role)	**magyarul · tanárként**
Temporal	-kor	**háromkor · karácsonykor**
Pronouns	velem · értem (and so on)	**Velünk jössz?**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "With the house": *ház* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

házzal. The *v* copies the *z*.

2. "With the garden": *kert* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

kerttel.

3. "By car": *autó* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

autóval. After a vowel the *v* stays.

4. "By bus": *busz* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

busszal. The digraph *sz* doubles: *ssz*.

5. "With the key": *kulcs* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

kulccsal. The digraph *cs* doubles: *ccs*.

6. "With the girl": *lány* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

lánnyal.

7. Say "with me" and "for them".

▼ Show answer

velem and **értük**.

8. Translate: "The water freezes into ice."

▼ Show answer

A víz jéggé fagy.

9. Say "until Friday" and "at four".

▼ Show answer

péntekig and **négykor**.

10. Fix the sentence: *Beszélek magyaron* (I speak Hungarian).

▼ Show answer

Beszélek magyarul. Languages take *-ul / -ül*, and are not capitalised.

Coming up in Chapter 8: Possession and Cases Together. The possessive endings on nouns (*házam, házad, háza*), the structure *a barátom háza*, adding cases after possessives, and *van / nincs* with possessors.

🏠 Possession — A birtoklás

*Hungarian has no word for "my", "your" or "his" in front of a noun. The **possessed noun** carries a personal ending that says whose it is: ház (house) becomes házam (my house), házad (your house). Because this ending sits before the case suffix, you have been meeting possessed nouns since Chapter 1 (házamban, barátomnak, könyvemet). This chapter gives the endings in full and shows how the cases attach to them.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

A possessed noun takes **one of six personal endings** (my, your, his/her, our, your plural, their). A *plural* possessed noun adds **-i-** before the person (*házaim*, my houses). A noun owner stands bare in front of the possessed noun, which takes the **3rd person singular** ending (*a barátom háza*). Case suffixes then go after the possessive ending, as always.

1. The six endings

Three families of stems cover most nouns. The singular endings are:

OWNER	HÁZ (BACK, -A TYPE)	BARÁT (BACK, -O TYPE)	KERT (FRONT)	AUTÓ (VOWEL)
my	ház**am**	barát**om**	kert**em**	autó**m**
your (sg)	ház**ad**	barát**od**	kert**ed**	autó**d**
his, her	ház**a**	barát**ja**	kert**je**	autó**ja**
our	ház**unk**	barát**unk**	kert**ünk**	autó**nk**
your (pl)	ház**atok**	barát**otok**	kert**etek**	autó**tok**
their	ház**uk**	barát**juk**	kert**jük**	autó**juk**

More examples of the same families: **könyvem, könyved, könyve, könyvünk, könyvetek, könyvük** (front, like *kert* but with *-e* in the 3rd person); **ablakom, ablakod, ablaka** and **asztalom, asztalod, asztala** (the *-o* type); **tükröm, tükröd, tükre** (*tükör* drops its vowel before the ending).

> **The choices that are lexical**
>
> Whether a back noun takes *-am* or *-om*, and whether the 3rd person is *-a / -e* or *-ja / -je*, is decided word by word. Compare **háza** and **könyve** with **barátja**, **kertje** and **telefonja**. Learn the 3rd person form together with each new noun, as you learned the plural and the accusative.

2. Plural possessed nouns: -i-

When there is **more than one** thing owned, an **-i-** comes before the person ending. The first and second person endings lose the linking vowel of the singular, and the 3rd person singular becomes just *-i*.

OWNER	HÁZ (HOUSES)	BARÁT (FRIENDS)	KERT (GARDENS)
my	ház**aim**	barát**aim**	kert**jeim**
your (sg)	ház**aid**	barát**aid**	kert**jeid**
his, her	ház**ai**	barát**ai**	kert**jei**
our	ház**aink**	barát**aink**	kert**jeink**
your (pl)	ház**aitok**	barát**aitok**	kert**jeitek**
their	ház**aik**	barát**aik**	kert**jeik**

Compare **a házam** (my house) with **a házaim** (my houses), and **a barátom** (my friend) with **a barátaim** (my friends). The suffix *-i-* marks *the things owned are many*; it says nothing about how many owners there are.

3. A noun as the owner: a barátom háza

When the owner is a noun, it stands **bare** in front of the possessed noun, which takes the **3rd person singular** ending (or *-i* for several things), even if the owner is plural.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	NOTE
a tanár autója	the teacher's car	bare owner
a barátom háza	my friend's house	owner itself possessed
a barátaim háza	my friends' house	plural owner, still *-a*
a gyerekek játékai	the children's toys	several things owned: *-i*
Péternek a könyve	Peter's book	dative owner (Chapter 3)

A pronoun owner is usually left out, because the ending already says who. If you add it, for emphasis, the pronoun comes with the article:

NEUTRAL	WITH THE PRONOUN (EMPHATIC)	ENGLISH
a házam	**az én házam**	my house
a házad	**a te házad**	your house
a háza	**az ő háza**	his/her house
a házunk	**a mi házunk**	our house
a házatok	**a ti házatok**	your (pl) house
a házuk	**az ő házuk**	their house

4. Possessed nouns are definite

A noun with a possessive ending counts as **definite**. As a direct object it therefore calls for the **definite conjugation** (*Hungarian Grammar 1, chapter 8*) and the accusative from Chapter 2.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH	OBJECT
Szeretek egy házat.	I like a house.	indefinite → *szeretek*
Szeretem a házamat.	I like my house.	possessed → *szeretem*
Keresem a kulcsomat.	I'm looking for my key.	possessed → *keresem*

5. Adding the cases

The case suffix goes **after** the possessive ending, and the harmony rules apply to the whole word. There is one change to know: a 3rd person singular ending *-a / -e* (or *-ja / -je*) **lengthens to -á / -é** before a case that starts with a consonant. The other persons stay as they are.

POSSESSED NOUN	+ -BAN / -BEN	+ -NAK / -NEK	+ -VAL / -VEL
házam (my)	**házamban**	**házamnak**	**házammal**
kerted (your)	**kertedben**	**kertednek**	**kerteddel**
háza (his/her)	**házában**	**házának**	**házával**
könyve (his/her)	**könyvében**	**könyvének**	**könyvével**
barátja (his/her)	**barátjában**	**barátjának**	**barátjával**
házunk (our)	**házunkban**	**házunknak**	**házunkkal**
házaim (my houses)	**házaimban**	**házaimnak**	**házaimmal**

The same possessed form works for every case in Chapters 4 to 7: **a házamba**, **a házamból**, **a házamnál**, **a házamra**, **a házamért**, **a házamig**. The 3rd person becomes **a házába**, **a házából**, **a házánál**. Only the owner and the stem change; the case rules are the ones you already know.

6. Having: van and nincs

Hungarian has no verb "to have". Possession is expressed with *van* (there is) or *nincs* (there is not) and a possessed noun, with the nominative and no article.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Van egy házam.	I have a house.
Két testvérem van.	I have two brothers/sisters.
Nincs időm.	I have no time.
Nincs pénzem.	I have no money.
Vannak barátaim.	I have friends.
Nincsenek barátaim.	I don't have friends.
Péternek van egy autója.	Peter has a car.
Nekem van egy autóm.	I have a car (emphatic).

The owner can be put in the dative (Chapter 3) for emphasis or when it is a noun: **Kinek van kulcsa?** (Who has a key?). The question forms are **Kinek a háza?** (whose house) and **Kié?** (whose is it).

> **Watch out: no article, no accusative**
> The thing you have after *van* and *nincs* takes **no** accusative and, when it is a new thing, **no** article: **Van autóm** or **Van egy autóm**, not *Van az autómat*. With a known thing you say where it is instead: **Az autóm itt van** (my car is here).

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

Possession in short exchanges.

① Family

A:

② Where is my key?

A:

Van testvéred?

Do you have a brother or sister?

B:

Igen, két testvérem van: egy bátyám és egy húgom.

Yes, I have two: an older brother and a younger sister.

A:

És a szüleid?

And your parents?

B:

A szüleim Szegeden laknak.

My parents live in Szeged.

Hol van a kulcsom?

Where is my key?

B:

Nálad van, a táskádban.

You've got it, in your bag.

A:

Nincs ott!

It isn't there!

B:

Akkor az asztalodon, vagy a kabátod zsebében.

Then on your table, or in your coat pocket.

③ Whose car?

A:

Kinek az autója ez?

Whose car is this?

B:

A szomszédomé. Az ő autója piros, a miénk kék.

My neighbour's. His car is red, ours is blue.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

IDEA	FORM	EXAMPLE
Singular endings	-m, -d, -a/-ja/-e/-je, -nk (-unk/-ünk), -tok (-atok/-etek), -uk/-ük (-juk/-jük)	**házam** · **kertje** · **házunk**
Plural possessed	-i- before the person	**házaim** · **barátai**

IDEA	FORM	EXAMPLE
Noun owner	bare owner + 3rd person singular	**a barátom háza**
Pronoun owner	article + pronoun (emphatic)	**az én házam**
Case after a possessive	3rd person -a/-e lengthens; others stay	**házában** · **házamban**
Having	van/nincs + possessed noun (nominative)	**Van egy házam.**
Definiteness	possessed object → definite verb	**Keresem a kulcsomat.**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "My house": *ház* + my.

▼ Show answer

házam.

2. "Your garden" (singular you): *kert* + your.

▼ Show answer

kerted.

3. "Our book": *könyv* + our.

▼ Show answer

könyvünk.

4. "Their car": *autó* + their.

▼ Show answer

autójuk.

5. "My friends": *barát* + several, mine.

▼ Show answer

barátaim.

6. "In my house."

▼ Show answer

a házamban.

7. "In his/her house."

▼ Show answer

a házában. The 3rd person *-a* lengthens before *-ban*.

8. "With my friend": *a barátom* + the "with" case.

▼ Show answer

a barátommal.

9. Say "I have no time."

▼ Show answer

Nincs időm.

10. Fix the sentence: *Látok a házamat* (I see my house).

▼ Show answer

Látom a házamat. A possessed noun is definite, so the verb takes the definite ending.

Coming up in Chapter 9: Postpositions. *előtt, mögött, alatt, fölött, mellett, között, után, helyett*, their "to" and "from" forms, and the personal forms (*mellettem, utána*).

📌 Postpositions — Névutók

*A **postposition** is the Hungarian version of an English preposition, with one difference: it comes after the noun and is a separate word. The table is in front of the window becomes az ablak előtt, literally "the window in-front-of". Postpositions cover the relations that the case suffixes of Chapters 4 to 7 do not: under, behind, above, between, next to, after, instead of, without and more.*

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

A postposition follows a **bare noun** (no case ending): *az asztal alatt*, *a házak mögött*. The spatial ones come in **three forms** that mirror the grid (where, to, from): *alatt, alá, alól*. With a pronoun, the postposition takes **personal endings** and the pronoun disappears: *alattam* (under me), *mellette* (next to him).

1. The three-form sets

Six postpositions of position each have a form for **where** (static), **to** (movement towards) and **from** (movement away). It is the same three-row system as the place cases, so the choice of form depends on the verb.

MEANING	WHERE?	WHERE TO?	WHERE FROM?
in front of	**előtt**	**elé**	**elől**
behind	**mögött**	**mögé**	**mögül**
under	**alatt**	**alá**	**alól**
above	**fölött** (also *felett*)	**fölé**	**fölül**
next to	**mellett**	**mellé**	**mellől**
between, among	**között**	**közé**	**közül**

STATIC	MOVING TO	MOVING FROM
A macska az asztal alatt van. The cat is under the table.	**A macska az asztal alá megy.** The cat goes under the table.	**A macska az asztal alól jön.** The cat comes out from under the table.
Az autó a ház mögött áll. The car is behind the house.	**Az autót a ház mögé teszem.** I put the car behind the house.	**A gyerek a ház mögül jön.** The child comes from behind the house.
A kulcs a könyv mellett van. The key is next to the book.	**A kulcsot a könyv mellé rakom.** I put the key next to the book.	**A kulcsot a könyv mellől veszem el.** I take the key from beside the book.

Watch out: no case before a postposition

The noun stays in its dictionary form: **az asztal alatt**, not *az asztalon alatt*. After a plural it takes the plural only (**a házak mögött**), and after a number it stays singular (**két ház között**). The same goes for a possessed noun: **a házam előtt** (in front of my house).

2. Postpositions in time

Several of the same words, and a few new ones, mark time.

POSTPOSITION	MEANING IN TIME	EXAMPLE
előtt	before	**ebéd előtt** · before lunch
után	after	**ebéd után** · after lunch
alatt	during; within	**az óra alatt** · during the lesson · **egy hét alatt** · within a week
óta	since	**hétfő óta** · since Monday · **Szeptember óta** · since September

POSTPOSITION	MEANING IN TIME	EXAMPLE
múlva	in (a length of time from now)	**két hét múlva** · in two weeks
között	between	**kettő és három között** · between two and three

The question words are **Mióta?** (since when), **Mikor?** (when) and **Mennyi idő alatt?** (within how long).

3. Other postpositions

POSTPOSITION	MEANING	EXAMPLE
helyett	instead of	**Kávé helyett teát kérek.** · I'd like tea instead of coffee.
nélkül	without	**Cukor nélkül kérem.** · I take it without sugar.
szerint	according to	**A tanár szerint nehéz.** · According to the teacher it is hard.
miatt	because of	**Az eső miatt maradok.** · I'm staying because of the rain.
ellen	against	**Az eső ellen esernyőt viszek.** · I take an umbrella against the rain.
felé	towards	**Budapest felé megyek.** · I'm heading towards Budapest.
szemben	opposite (takes *-val / -vel*)	**A postával szemben van.** · It is opposite the post office.

> **Because of: miatt or -ért?**
>
> *miatt* gives the **cause**, usually a bad one: **Az eső miatt késtem** (I was late because of the rain).
> *-ért* (Chapter 7) gives the **purpose or benefit**: **A barátomért teszem** (I do it for my friend).

Near and far use cases, not postpositions

közel (near) and *messze / távol* (far) take the case endings from Chapters 5 and 6: **közel van a házhoz** (it's near the house), **messze van a háztól** (it's far from the house).

4. The personal forms

With a pronoun, a postposition takes **personal endings**, like the possessive endings of Chapter 8. The separate pronoun is dropped. The 3rd person singular is the bare form with *-e* or *-a*.

PERSON	ELŐTT	MELLETT	UTÁN	NÉLKÜL	SZERINT	MIATT
I	előttem	mellettem	utánam	nélkülem	szerintem	miattam
you (sg)	előtted	melletted	utánad	nélküled	szerinted	miattad
he, she	előtte	mellette	utána	nélküle	szerinte	miatta
we	előttünk	mellettünk	utánunk	nélkülünk	szerintünk	miattunk
you (pl)	előttetek	mellettetek	utánatok	nélkületek	szerintetek	miattatok
they	előttük	mellettük	utánuk	nélkülük	szerintük	miattuk

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
Szerintem nehéz, de szép nyelv.	In my opinion it's a hard but beautiful language.
Mellettem ülsz?	Are you sitting next to me?
Nélküled nem megyek.	I'm not going without you.
Utána sétálunk.	Afterwards we'll go for a walk.

The "between" set is irregular in its short forms: **köztem, közted, közte, köztünk, köztetek, közöttük**. The "towards" form is **felém, feléd, felé, felénk, felétek, feléjük**.

5. Case or postposition?

When English uses a preposition, you choose between a case suffix and a postposition. This table sorts the common prepositions.

ENGLISH	HUNGARIAN WAY	EXAMPLE
in, on, at	case (Chapter 4)	**a házban · az asztalon · a barátomnál**
to, into, onto	case (Chapter 5)	**a házba · az asztalra**
from, out of, off	case (Chapter 6)	**a házból · az asztalról**
with, by	case (Chapter 7)	**busszal · a barátommal**
for	case: *-ért* or the dative	**a könyvért · neked**
until, since	*-ig* (case) · *óta* (postposition)	**péntekig · hétfő óta**
under, behind, above, next to, between	postposition	**az asztal alatt · a ház mögött**
before, after, instead of, without, according to	postposition	**ebéd után · cukor nélkül**

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

Postpositions in short exchanges.

① Where is the cat?

A:

Hol van a macska?

Where is the cat?

B:

② Learning Hungarian

A:

Mióta tanulsz magyarul?

How long have you been learning Hungarian?

B:

Az asztal alatt.

Under the table.

A:

És a kulcs?

And the key?

B:

A könyv mellett, az ablak előtt.

Next to the book, in front of the window.

Szeptember óta.

Since September.

A:

És mit gondolsz?

And what do you think?

B:

Szerintem nehéz, de szép nyelv.

I think it's a hard but beautiful language.

③ Coffee

A:

Kérsz kávét cukorral?

Would you like coffee with sugar?

B:

Cukor nélkül. A kávé után kérek egy teát.

Without sugar. After the coffee I'd like a tea.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

IDEA	RULE	EXAMPLE
Position	noun + postposition, bare noun	**az asztal alatt**
Three forms	where · to · from	**alatt · alá · alól**
Time	előtt, után, alatt, óta, múlva	**ebéd után · hétfő óta**
Pronouns	personal endings, no pronoun	**mellettem · nélküle**
Plural, number	plural noun; singular after a number	**a házak mögött · két ház között**
Near, far	case, not postposition	**közel a házhoz**

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "Under the table" (static).

▼ Show answer

az asztal alatt.

2. "Behind the house" (static).

▼ Show answer

a ház mögött.

3. "In front of the house" (static).

▼ Show answer

a ház előtt.

4. "Under the table" with movement (the cat goes…).

▼ Show answer

az asztal alá.

5. "From behind the house" (the child comes…).

▼ Show answer

a ház mögül.

6. "Next to me."

▼ Show answer

mellettem.

7. "After lunch."

▼ Show answer

ebéd után.

8. "Without sugar."

▼ Show answer

cukor nélkül.

9. "In my opinion."

▼ Show answer

szerintem.

10. Fix the sentence: *a házban mellett* (next to the house).

▼ Show answer

a ház mellett. A postposition follows the bare noun.

Coming up in Chapter 10: Cases in Use. What the verb governs, case in time expressions, cases after numbers, a step-by-step decision procedure, an error-spotting clinic, and the **Course Complete** recap.

🧭 Putting the Cases to Work — Esetek használatban

Nine chapters have given you the parts: the plural, the accusative, the dative, the nine place cases, the other seven endings, the possessives and the postpositions. This last chapter joins them. It shows which case a verb demands, how time expressions choose their cases, what happens after numbers, and then gives you a single procedure for choosing any ending, followed by a clinic of ten typical mistakes and the course recap.

THE RULE IN ONE BOX

To choose a case, ask in this order: **1.** what job does the noun do? **2.** if it is a place: static, to or from, and enclosed, surface or person? **3.** does the verb or the expression demand a particular case? **4.** build the word: stem, plural, possessive, case, then harmony and *v*-assimilation. If it is "under, behind, before, after, without", use a postposition instead.

1. What the verb governs

Some verbs demand a particular case, and English often hides it behind a preposition (*believe in*, *afraid of*) or none at all (*help*, *meet*). Learn each verb with its case, as a pair.

CASE	VERBS	EXAMPLE
Accusative	*lát, olvas, keres, kér, szeret*	**Keresem a kulcsomat.** · I'm looking for my key.
Dative	*segít, köszön, válaszol, telefonál, hisz* (believe someone)	**Hiszek neked.** · I believe you.
Inessive	*hisz* (believe in), *bízik* (trust), *reménykedik* (hope)	**Hiszek benned.** · I believe in you.
Instrumental	*találkozik, beszél, foglalkozik, egyetért*	**Találkozom Péterrel.** · I'm meeting Peter.

CASE	VERBS	EXAMPLE
Sublative	*gondol* (think of), *számít* (count on), *figyel* (pay attention to), *vigyáz* (look after), *emlékszik* (remember)	**Rád gondolok.** · I'm thinking of you.
Delative	*beszél* (about), *álmodik* (dream about), *hall* (hear about), *olvas* (read about)	**Beszélünk a filmről.** · We're talking about the film.
Ablative	*fél* (be afraid of), *függ* (depend on), *kap* (receive from), *kérdez* (ask), *tanul* (learn from)	**Félek a kutyától.** · I'm afraid of the dog.
Elative	*áll* (consist of), *él* (live on), *vizsgázik* (take an exam in)	**Magyarból vizsgázom.** · I'm taking a Hungarian exam.
Causal-final	*fizet* (pay for), *megy* (go to fetch), *harcol* (fight for)	**A kenyérért megyek.** · I'm going to get the bread.

> **One verb, several cases, several meanings**
>
> Verbs of speaking and believing show how much the case matters. **Beszélek Péterrel a filmről** = I talk *to* Peter *about* the film (instrumental plus delative). **Hiszek neked** = I believe *you* (what you say); **Hiszek benned** = I have *faith in* you. A single ending changes the meaning, so keep each verb with its case.

2. Cases in time expressions

Time words use a mixture of cases. Learn them as set groups.

KIND OF TIME	PATTERN	EXAMPLES
Clock times	*-kor* (Chapter 7)	**háromkor** · **fél háromkor** · **hétkor**
Days	superessive *-on / -en / -ön / -n*	**hétfőn** · **kedden** · **szerdán** · **csütörtökön** · **pénteken** · **szombaton**
Sunday, parts of the day	no ending	**vasárnap** · **reggel** · **délután** · **este**

KIND OF TIME	PATTERN	EXAMPLES
Seasons	mixed, learn each	**tavasszal** · **nyáron** · **ősszel** · **télen**
Months and years	inessive *-ban / -ben*	**szeptemberben** · **májusban** · **2026-ban**
This, next, last	superessive for weeks, inessive for months	**jövő héten** · **múlt héten** · **jövő hónapban** · **jövőre**
By a deadline	sublative *-ra / -re*	**szombatra** · **holnapra**
How long	accusative · *-ig* · *alatt* · *át*	**két órát** · **két óráig** · **két óra alatt** · **két órán át**
Ago	possessed *-e* · instrumental	**két hete** · **két héttel ezelőtt**
Every	*minden* + singular	**minden nap** · **minden hétfőn**

3. Cases after numbers and quantity words

After a number, *sok* (many), *néhány* (a few) or *minden* (every), the noun stays **singular** and takes the case normally.

HUNGARIAN	ENGLISH
két házban	in two houses
három barátommal	with three of my friends
sok könyvet	many books (object)
minden házban	in every house
néhány kábellel	with a few cables

A number can also describe a group of people with *-an / -en*: **Hányan vagytok?** (How many of you are there?) and **Négyen vagyunk.** (There are four of us.) Numbers take case endings too: **háromra** (by three o'clock, for three).

4. The decision procedure, worked through

Take the sentence *"After lunch I go to my friends' place with my sister by bus."* Each phrase answers one of the questions in the rule box.

ENGLISH	JOB	HUNGARIAN	CHAPTER
after lunch	time, "after"	**ebéd után**	9
by bus	means of transport	**busszal**	7
to my friends' place	"to a person's place"	**a barátaimhoz**	5, 8
with my sister	accompaniment	**a húgommal**	7, 8

Full sentence: **Ebéd után busszal megyek a barátaimhoz a húgommal.**

A second example with an object, a place and a verb of placing: *"We put the cables from the box into the cupboard."* The cables are definite (*a kábeleket*, Chapter 2), the box is an enclosed space ("out of"), the cupboard is an enclosed space ("into"), and the verb is definite because the object is: **A kábeleket a dobozból a szekrénybe tesszük.**

5. Error clinic: ten common mistakes

Each wrong sentence is a mistake that learners make. Try to fix it before you read the right column.

WRONG	RIGHT	WHY	CHAPTER
Megyek a barátomnak.	**Megyek a barátomhoz.**	direction, not a receiver	3, 5
Az iskolába vagyok.	**Az iskolában vagyok.**	static, so "in"	4
a nagyban házban	**a nagy házban**	adjectives take no case	1
Kapok a barátomból.	**Kapok a barátomtól.**	a person is the source	6

WRONG	RIGHT	WHY	CHAPTER
három házak	**három ház**	singular after a number	1
Látok a házamat.	**Látom a házamat.**	possessed object is definite	8
Beszélek magyaron.	**Beszélek magyarul.**	languages take *-ul / -ül*	7
A vonatban vagyok.	**A vonaton vagyok.**	transport takes the surface case	4
az asztalon alatt	**az asztal alatt**	postposition follows a bare noun	9
házval	**házzal**	the *v* copies a final consonant	7

6. A short text to read

Read the text, then look at the table underneath to see which case each phrase uses.

> Hétfőn reggel busszal megyek az egyetemre. Az egyetemen találkozom a barátommal, és együtt a könyvtárba megyünk. A könyvtárban három könyvet keresek a háborúról. Ebéd után a szüleimnek telefonálok, mert szombaton Szegedre utazom. Péntekig dolgozom, aztán vonattal megyek haza.
>
> On Monday morning I go to the university by bus. At the university I meet my friend, and together we go to the library. In the library I look for three books about the war. After lunch I phone my parents, because on Saturday I'm travelling to Szeged. I work until Friday, then I go home by train.

PHRASE	CASE OR POSTPOSITION	CHAPTER
Hétfőn	superessive (day)	4, 10
busszal	instrumental	7
az egyetemre	sublative	5
az egyetemen	superessive	4

PHRASE	CASE OR POSTPOSITION	CHAPTER
a barátommal	possessive + instrumental	7, 8
a könyvtárba	illative	5
a könyvtárban	inessive	4
három könyvet	accusative after a number	2, 10
a háborúról	delative (about)	6
Ebéd után	postposition	9
a szüleimnek	possessive + dative	3, 8
szombaton	superessive (day)	10
Szegedre	sublative (a town)	5
Péntekig	terminative	7
vonattal	instrumental	7

🗣️ In Use — Használatban

Cases working together in short exchanges.

① How many of you?

A:

Hányan vagytok?

How many of you are there?

B:

Négyen vagyunk: én, a húgom és két barátom.

There are four of us: me, my sister and two friends.

② Arrival

A:

Mikor érkezel?

When are you arriving?

B:

Szombaton, háromkor. Busszal jövök Szegedről.

On Saturday, at three. I'm coming by bus from Szeged.

A:

A pályaudvaron várlak.

I'll wait for you at the station.

③ The weekend

A:

Mit csinálsz hétvégén?

What are you doing at the weekend?

B:

Péntekig dolgozom, szombaton a barátaimmal megyek a koncertre. Vasárnap pihenek.

I work until Friday, on Saturday I'm going to the concert with my friends. On Sunday I rest.

📋 Quick Reference — Gyorstábla

The whole case system in one table.

CASE	SUFFIX	MEANING	CHAPTER
Nominative	none	subject; dictionary form	1
Accusative	-t (with linking vowels)	object; duration; measure	2
Dative	-nak / -nek	to, for (a person); owner	3
Inessive · Superessive · Adessive	-ban/-ben · -on/-en/-ön/-n · -nál/-nél	in · on · at	4
Illative · Sublative · Allative	-ba/-be · -ra/-re · -hoz/-hez/-höz	into · onto · to	5
Elative · Delative · Ablative	-ból/-ből · -ról/-ről · -tól/-től	out of · off, about · from	6

CASE	SUFFIX	MEANING	CHAPTER
Instrumental	-val / -vel	with, by means of	7
Translative	-vá / -vé	becoming	7
Causal-final	-ért	for, in exchange for, to fetch	7
Terminative	-ig	until, as far as, for (duration)	7
Essive	-ul / -ül · -ként	in a language · as	7
Temporal	-kor	at (a time)	7
Possessive endings	-m, -d, -a/-ja, -unk, -tok, -uk; plural -i-	my, your, his/her, our, your, their	8
Postpositions	noun + word	under, behind, before, after, without	9

🖍️ Try It Yourself — Gyakorlás

Mixed practice from the whole course. Say the answer first, then click to check.

1. "To school."

▼ Show answer

iskolába.

2. "At university."

▼ Show answer

az egyetemen.

3. "From my friend" (a gift from my friend).

▼ Show answer

a barátomtól.

4. "With my sister" (younger sister, *húg*).

▼ Show answer

a húgommal.

5. "In two houses."

▼ Show answer

két házban. Singular after a number.

6. "There are four of us."

▼ Show answer

Négyen vagyunk.

7. "On Saturday" and "in September".

▼ Show answer

szombaton and **szeptemberben**.

8. "I believe you" and "I believe in you".

▼ Show answer

Hiszek neked. and **Hiszek benned.**

9. "She is looking for her keys" (her = hers, *kulcs* keys as one object).

▼ Show answer

Keresi a kulcsát. A possessed object is definite.

10. "I'll wait for you at the entrance."

▼ Show answer

A bejáratnál várlak. *-nál* for "at", and *várlak* for "I ... you".

🎓 Course Complete — Hungarian Grammar 2

WHAT YOU CAN NOW DO

You can build any Hungarian noun in any case: the plural, the possessive, and the case suffix with the right harmony and assimilation. You can sort places into inside, surface and person, and choose the static, "to" or "from" form. You can tell when to use a postposition, and you know the common verbs that demand a particular case.

CHAPTER	TITLE	THE KEY IDEA
1	How Cases Work	stem + plural + possessive + case; the map of all cases
2	The Accusative	-t, linking vowels, changing stems, pronouns
3	The Dative and "Of"	-nak / -nek, -é, "called", verbs that take the dative
4	Where? In, On, At	-ban, -on, -nál, and which place takes which
5	Where To?	-ba, -ra, -hoz, matched to Chapter 4
6	Where From?	-ból, -ról, -tól, and the complete 3 × 3 grid
7	Instrumental, Translative and the Rest	-val, -vá, -ért, -ig, -ul, -ként, -kor
8	Possession and Cases Together	the possessive endings, -i-, cases after possessives, van / nincs
9	Postpositions	alatt, mögött, után, nélkül, and their personal forms
10	Cases in Use	verb government, time, numbers, a decision procedure

What comes next: The natural follow-up is **Hungarian Grammar 3** on tenses and moods: the full past, the future, the conditional, and the imperative and subjunctive, with their definite forms. For practice in real situations, use the Hungarian Basic Conversation courses, now with the case system in your hands.