

Declension of the Danish nouns

Number

The Danish nouns – like the English - decline according to number: en bombe, 2 bomber, (a bomb, 2 bombs), et hus, 2 huse (a house, 2 houses). The regular plural endings are –e and –r.

Gender

Unlike the English nouns however, the Danish nouns decline according to gender in singular – marked out by the article **en** or **et** before the noun: **en** stol, **et** bord. (a chair, a table). These articles must be learned by hearth as part of the word. In plural the difference in gender between **en-** and **et-** words is not visible: 2 stole, 2 borde.

Definiteness

As already mentioned, the indefinite singular articles are **en** or **et**. Definite articles fall in two cases: 1) Stand-alone noun or 2) Noun with an adjective. For stand-alone nouns, **the** is an ending i Danish: –**en**, –**et**. But if the noun is preceded by an adjective, Danish has definite article **den**, **det** before the adjective/noun, like in English.

- 1) **En** stol, stolen; **et** bord, bordet (a chair, **the** chair; a table, **the** table)
- 2) **En** lille stol, **den** lille stol; **et** lille bord, **det** lille bord. (a little chair, **the** little chair; a **little** table, **the** **little** table).

The corresponding plural definite articles are –**ne** and **de** for both genders:

- 1) 2 stole, stolene (2 chairs, **the** chairs)
- 2) 2 små stole, **de** små stole (2 small chairs, **the** small chairs)

The forms of the nouns and their meaning

	INDEFINITE		DEFINITE	
	(general)	(unknown)	(known)	(demonstrative)
Singular (n-ord)	banan <i>banana</i>	en banan <i>a banana</i>	bananen the <i>banana</i>	den banan (der!) <i>that banana</i>
plural	bananer <i>bananas</i>	nogle bananer <i>some bananas</i>	bananerne the <i>bananas</i>	de bananer (der!) <i>those bananas</i>
Singular (t-ord)	bord <i>table</i>	et bord <i>a table</i>	bordet the <i>table</i>	det bord (der!) <i>that table</i>
plural	borde <i>tables</i>	nogle borde <i>some tables</i>	bordene the <i>tables</i>	de borde (der!) <i>those tables</i>

General form:

Noun without article describes an **abstract** type. For uncountables like kød (meat) singular is used, for countables plural. The general form is often used in connection with an unstressed verb, thus forming a phrasal verb – a new more specific verb: at lave mad (to cook).

- Det smager af banan. (It tastes like banana)
- Gider du dække bord? (Could you set the table?)
- Nicaragua eksporterer bananer. (Nicaragua exports banana)

Unknown form:

The indefinite article en/et/noget/nogle (a, some) introduces a **concrete** thing or amount in the context - or a new feature or aspect of the thing. By using the indefinite article you give focus to the noun and connect it to the other nouns in the text. It is a bit like introducing a new person in a novel.

- Vil du have en banan? (Do you want a banana?)
- På restauranten fandt vi et bord til to personer. (In the restaurant we found a table for 2)
- Der ligger nogle bananer i køkkenet. (There are some bananas in the kitchen)

Known form:

The definite article is in Danish an ending. Instead of writing “the” before the word, you add the endings “-en”, (singular en-words) “-et”, (singular et-words) or “-ne”, (plural). The ending says: you know from the context what I mean! Like a person in a novel that you do not have to pay attention to.

- Han havde lagt sin pose med frugt på stolen og opdagede pludselig, at han sad på bananen. (He had set down his bag of fruits on the chair and suddenly found himself sitting on the banana)
- Er bordet stort nok? (Is the table big enough?)
- Er alle bordene optaget? (Are all the tables taken?)

Demonstrative form:

Den, det, de before the noun in most cases translates into this/that, these/those. They are pointers saying: that one, look at it!

- Hvem har lagt den banan på min stol? (who has placed that banana on my chair?)
- Du kan ikke sidde ved det bord. Det er reserveret til chefen. (You can't sit at that table. It has been reserved for the boss.)
- De borde, der står derovre, er på udsalg. (Those/the tables standing over there are on sale.)