

Folge 029 – Grammatik

1. The pronoun "es" (review)

"es" is a pronoun that usually substitutes a neuter noun.

Example:

Ist **das** Bett zu hart? - Nein, **es** ist nicht zu hart. (**es** = it **das** Bett = the bed)

But:

Es gibt Pinguine.

The "es" in the above sentence has a different function. It isn't the replacement for a particular noun; instead it serves as the subject of the sentence without really meaning anything. This construction is frequently used in impersonal turns of phrase in which there is no other subject. It is comparable to "there is" or "there are".

Idiomatic expressions	<i>Es gibt ... Es geht mir gut. Es tut mir leid.</i>
Time expressions	<i>Wie spät ist es?</i>
Weather	<i>Es regnet. Es ist heiß.</i>

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2. Modal verbs (summary)

Modal verbs usually modify another verb in the sentence - the main verb. They provide more information about the nature of the action expressed by the main verb. You have learned all about the modal verbs "können", "müssen", "sollen", "dürfen", "wollen" and "möchten".

Modal verbs are irregular, but their endings in the 1st and 2nd person singular and in the 1st and 2nd person plural are identical respectively. Here is an overview of their conjugation in the present tense:

	<i>können</i>	<i>müssen</i>	<i>sollen</i>	<i>dürfen</i>	<i>wollen</i>	<i>möchten</i>
ich	kann	muss	soll	darf	will	möchte
du	kannst	musst	sollst	darfst	willst	möchtest
er/sie/es	kann	muss	soll	darf	will	möchte
wir	können	müssen	sollen	dürfen	wollen	möchten
ihr	könnt	müsst	sollt	dürft	wollt	möchtet
sie	können	müssen	sollen	dürfen	wollen	möchten

The modal verbs change the meaning of a sentence.

Example:

Ihr **spielt** mit dem Pinguin. = *The children are playing with the penguin.*

Ihr **dürft** mit dem Pinguin **spielen**. = *The children have permission to play with the penguin.*

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The modal verbs are used in the following situations:

"können" indicates the ability or opportunity to do something.

Examples:

*Harry **kann** Deutsch sprechen.*

= Harry has learned German and can (has the ability) to speak the language.

*Sie **können** gerne ein anderes Zimmer haben.*

= You are welcome to have a different room. You can have a different room.

"dürfen" gives permission to do something.

Examples:

*Der Pinguin **darf** bleiben, aber nur eine Nacht.*

= The penguin may stay for one night.

***Dürfen** wir mit dem Pinguin spielen?*

= Are we allowed to / may we play with the penguin?

"dürfen" + negation means that someone does not have the permission / may not do something.

Examples:

*Pinguine **dürfen nicht** im Hotel übernachten.*

= Penguins are not allowed to stay in the hotel.

*Der Pinguin **darf nicht** bleiben.*

= The penguin may not stay. The hotelier prohibits it.

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"müssen" indicates an order or necessity.

Examples:

*Der Pinguin **muss** das Hotel verlassen.*

= The hotelier demands that the penguin be removed from the hotel.

*Ich **muss** jetzt gehen.*

= I have to go now.

"sollen" means should or ought to.

It denotes a challenge or strong recommendation for someone to do something or conveys someone else's instructions.

Examples:

*Kinder zum Hotelier: Der Pinguin **soll** bleiben.*

= The children request that the penguin be permitted to stay.

*Krankenschwester zu Harry: Sie **sollen** zum Doktor gehen.*

= The nurse relays to Harry that the doctor would like to see him now.

"wollen" means to want to do something. It is used to express a strong wish, desire or intention to do something.

Examples:

*Ich **will** jetzt frühstücken.*

= I am hungry and want to eat now.

*Wir **wollen** heiraten.*

= We intend to be married. / We want to get married.

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"möchten" means someone would like to do something. Like "wollen", it signifies the wish to do something, but it is more polite.

Examples:

*Harry **möchte** in die Stadt fahren.*

= Harry would like to go to the city.

*Was **möchten** Sie (haben)?*

= The waitress politely asks Harry what he would like to order.