

# **The Nominative Case & Word Order in Statements**

# The Nominative Case

As you learn German, you will learn that there are four cases in German (nominative, accusative, dative, genitive). When we use a noun or pronoun in a sentence, we also assign specific cases to those nouns and pronouns to signal their function in the sentence. You have seen many examples of the nominative case in your first few weeks of German.

**Die Tafel** ist weiß.

**Meine Partnerin** heißt Karla.

Das ist **ein Buch**. **Es** ist blau.

**Monique** wohnt in Montreal.

The bolded parts are in the nominative case, because they are the subject of the sentence.

You must remember: The **subject** of a sentence is always in the **nominative** case.

If you want to read more about the four cases in German, [here](#) is a website that explains all four of them.

# Word Order in Statements

In English, the word order in a statement is usually:  
subject – verb – complement

subject	verb	complement
Lee	studies	chemistry.

When you add another word or expression to the beginning of the sentence, the word order does not change.

	subject	verb	complement
This term,	Lee	studies	chemistry.

In German, in contrast, the verb is **always** in second position.

I	II	III
subject	verb	complement
<i>Lee</i>	<i>studiert</i>	<i>Chemie.</i>

If you start the sentence with something other than the subject, **the subject follows the verb and moves into position III**. We also call this an “inverted word order”.

I	II	III	IV
	verb	subject	complement
<i>Dieses Semester</i>	<i>studiert</i>	<i>Lee</i>	<i>Chemie.</i>

## Examples of inverted or regular word order:

*Im Sommer studiere **ich** nicht. [or] **Ich** studiere im Sommer nicht.*

*Dieses Semester habe **ich** um 10 Uhr Deutsch. [or] **Ich** habe dieses Semester um 10 Uhr Deutsch.*

*Jeden Abend arbeite **ich** von 17 bis 22 Uhr. [or] **Ich** arbeite jeden Abend von 17 bis 22 Uhr.*

Do you notice the position of the verb?? It is ALWAYS in second position.

**\*Achtung\*** There is **no comma** after the expression at the beginning of an inverted word order sentence in German.