

SCENE 7 • GRAMMAR

Hemm, m'hemmx, xejn

There is, there isn't, and nothing

6 Exercises · Duration: 20 min.

The empty flat

Maltese

Read & listen online



hemm is there, as in **hemm, fuq il-kafetterija**. At the front of a sentence it says there is, or there are: **Hemm sodda**. There's a bed. With the two pieces of not, **m'** and **-x**, it says there isn't: **M'hemmx mejda**. There's no table. A thing that isn't there needs no article.

THERE IS, THERE ISN'T

There is	There isn't	Meaning
Hemm sodda.	M'hemmx sodda.	There's a bed. · There's no bed.
Hemm lampa.	M'hemmx lampa.	There's a lamp. · There's no lamp.
Hemm sigġu?	M'hemmx sigġu.	Is there a chair? · There's no chair.
Hemm il-mejda.	M'hemmx il-mejda.	The table is there. · The table isn't there.

With the article, **m'hemmx il-mejda** is about a table you know: it has gone. Lina says just that in the next scene. **m'għandix** works the same way: **M'għandix sigġu**. I don't have a chair.

To ask, add **xi**, some, any: **Hemm xi sigġu?** Is there a chair?
X'hemm? asks what is there, and it is also what's up?, as Ġorġ asks at his door. **X'hemm hemm?** What's in there?

Il-kamra vojta ħafna! Fejn hi l-mejda?

The room is very empty! Where's the table?

M'hemmx mejda.

There isn't a table.

Hemm xi sigġu? Xi sufan?

Is there a chair? A sofa?

Le. Hemm sodda, lampa u bagalja biss.

No. There's only a bed, a lamp and a suitcase.

xejn is nothing. It already says no, so the verb drops its **-x**:
M'hemm xejn. There's nothing. **M'għandi xejn.** I have nothing. **Ma naf xejn.** I know nothing. On its own, **Xejn!** answers Nothing!

WITH XEJN, THE -X GOES

Not	Nothing	Meaning
m'hemmx	m'hemm xejn	there isn't · there's nothing
m'għandix	m'għandi xejn	I don't have · I have nothing
ma nafx	ma naf xejn	I don't know · I know nothing
ma nifhimx	ma nifhem xejn	I don't understand · I understand nothing

Without its **-x**, **nifhimx** gets its **e** back: **ma nifhem xejn.**

Xejn! M'hemm xejn hawn!

Nothing! There's nothing here!

M'għandi xejn: kollox fil-bagalja.

I have nothing: everything is in the suitcase.

GRAMMAR**G1) FIND THE WORDS**

Underline the words for there is and there isn't.

- 1 Hemm il-kamra tal-banju.

Meaning: The bathroom's in there.

- 2 M'hemmx mejda.

Meaning: There isn't a table.

- 3 Xejn! M'hemm xejn hawn!

Meaning: Nothing! There's nothing here!

- 4 Le. Hemm sodda, lampa u bagalja biss.

Meaning: No. There's only a bed, a lamp and a suitcase.

- 5 Hemm xi sigġu? M'hemmx sufan?

Meaning: Is there a chair? Isn't there a sofa?

G2) IS THERE OR ISN'T THERE?

Choose the right word for the gap.

1 Il-kamra vojta: _____ mejda.

- ☐ (A) m'hemmx
- ☐ (B) hemm

Meaning: The room is empty: there's no table.

2 _____ sodda, imma m'hemmx sigġu.

- ☐ (A) Hemm
- ☐ (B) M'hemmx

Meaning: There's a bed, but there's no chair.

3 Fil-gwardarobba _____ Ċikku!

- ☐ (A) hemm
- ☐ (B) m'hemmx

Meaning: Ċikku is in the wardrobe!

4 Xejn! M'hemm _____ hawn!

☐ A kollox

☐ B xejn

Meaning: Nothing! There's nothing here!

5 Xejn! _____ xejn hawn!

☐ A M'hemm

☐ B M'hemmx

Meaning: Nothing! There's nothing here!

6 Ella, ma _____. X'hemm fil-gwardarobba?

☐ A nifhem

☐ B nifhimx

Meaning: Ella, I don't understand. What's in the wardrobe?

7 U _____ hemm?

☐ A kif hemm

☐ B x'hemm

Meaning: And what's in there?

8 _____ sigġu u m'għandix sufan.

- ☐ A Mhux għandi
- ☐ B M'għandix

Meaning: I don't have a chair and I don't have a sofa.

9 Kollox fil-bagalja. M'għandi _____ hawn.

- ☐ A xejn
- ☐ B kollox

Meaning: Everything is in the suitcase. I have nothing here.

10 Ma _____ x'hemm fil-gwardarobba.

- ☐ A nafx
- ☐ B naf

Meaning: The wardrobe? I don't know what's in it.

G3) AN EMPTY ROOM

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

x'hemm min

U _____ hemm?

Meaning: And what's in there?

Hemm M'hemmx

_____ il-kamra tal-banju.

Meaning: The bathroom's in there.

m'għandix Hemm M'hemmx għandi

_____ mejda, u _____ sigġu.

Meaning: There's no table, and I don't have a chair.

xejn kollox

U fil-gwardarobba? M'hemm _____?

Meaning: And in the wardrobe? Is there nothing?

xejn nifhimx

Ella titkellem malajr, u jien ma nifhem _____.

Meaning: Ella speaks fast, and I understand nothing.

nafx naf xejn

Ma _____: m'għandi _____ fil-gwardarobba.

Meaning: I don't know: I have nothing in the wardrobe.

G4) PUT THE WORDS IN ORDER

Put the words in order.

- 1 Hemm sodda, biss. bagalja lampa u

Meaning: There's only a bed, a lamp and a suitcase.

- 2 fil-kamra. M'hemmx mejda

Meaning: There's no table in the room.

- 3 Hemm hawn? siġġu xi

Meaning: Is there a chair here?

- 4 xejn fil-gwardarobba. M'hemm

Meaning: There's nothing in the wardrobe.

5 l-appartament tiegħi. M'għandi imma xejn,

Meaning: I have nothing, but the flat is mine.

6 Ma hemm. x'hemm nafx

Meaning: I don't know what's in there.

7 Skużani, nifhimx. ma

Meaning: Sorry, I don't understand.

8 Jien m'għandix sufan.

Meaning: I don't have a sofa.

G5) THE RIGHT WORDS

Choose the right words for the situation.

- 1 Ella asks where your table is. You don't have one. You say:**
 - ☐ A Hemm mejda.
 - ☐ B Mhux mejda.
 - ☐ C M'hemmx mejda.

- 2 You'd like to know if there is a sofa somewhere. You say:**
 - ☐ A Hemm xi sufan?
 - ☐ B M'hemmx sufan.
 - ☐ C Xejn sufan?

- 3 Ella opens the wardrobe, sees Ćikku on his heap of treasures, and slams it shut. Ella says:**
 - ☐ A Xejn! Hemm xejn hawn!
 - ☐ B Xejn! M'hemm xejn hawn!
 - ☐ C Xejn! M'hemmx xejn hawn!

4 Ask Ella what's in the wardrobe. You say:

- ☐ A Hemm fil-gwardarobba?
- ☐ B X'hemm fil-gwardarobba?
- ☐ C Min hemm fil-gwardarobba?

5 Tell Ella you don't have a chair. You say:

- ☐ A M'għandix sigġu.
- ☐ B M'għandi sigġu.
- ☐ C Ma għandix sigġu.

G6) QUESTION AND ANSWER

Match each question to its answer.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ 1 Kollox fil-bagalja? | ☐ A Xejn! |
| ☐ 2 Hemm xi sigġu? | ☐ B Iva, kollox. |
| ☐ 3 X'hemm hemm? | ☐ C M'għandix mejda. |
| ☐ 4 Fejn hi l-mejda? | ☐ D Il-kamra tal-banju. |
| ☐ 5 X'hemm fil-gwardarobba? | ☐ E Le, m'hemmx. |