

Estonian in everyday situations

Module 1: Arrival

6 Exercises • Duration: 20 min.

Arrival

Estonian

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Olen, oled, on

Person	olema	Meaning
mina	olen	I — be
sina	oled	you, familiar singular — be
tema	on	he/she — be
meie	oleme	we — be
teie	olete	you, plural/polite — be
nemad	on	they — be

Estonian has no articles corresponding to a or the and no grammatical gender. A pronoun stands for a person: **mina/ma, sina/sa, tema/ta, meie/me, teie/te, nemad/nad**. **Tema/ta** means he or she; learner gender does not change verbs or adjectives.

The present tense describes now or a usual activity. **Olema** means be: **olen, oled, on, oleme, olete, on**. Use familiar **sina/sa** with Liis and polite **teie/te** with an unfamiliar adult. A subject is who the verb describes. **Kas** starts a yes/no question: **Kas te olete uus naaber?**

Mul on, mul ei ole

Form	Example	Meaning
Mul	Mul on võti.	I have a key.
Sul	Sul on võti.	You have a key.
Tal	Tal on kass.	He/she has a cat.
Meil	Meil on kass.	We have a cat.
Teil	Teil on võti.	You have a key, polite/plural.
ei ole	Ma ei ole paha.	I am not bad.

Estonian possession uses a possessor form plus **on**: **mul on** I have, **sul on** you have, **tal on** he/she has, **meil on** we have, **teil on** you have, **neil on** they have. These are short forms of **minul**, **sinul**, **temal**, **meil**, **teil**, **neil**.

Negation puts **ei** before an unchanged verb stem: **ma ei ole**, **sa ei ole**, **ta ei ole**, **me ei ole**, **te ei ole**, **nad ei ole**. **Mul ei ole võtit** means I do not have a key; learn **võtit** whole here before the noun cases are practised. Hunger is **mul on kõht tühi** — literally my stomach is empty.

Kohvi või teed

Form	Example	Meaning
Kohvi	Kohvi, palun.	Coffee, please.
Teed	Teed, palun.	Tea, please.
kooki	Natuke kooki.	A little cake.
või	Kohvi või teed?	Coffee or tea?
ja	Kohvi ja kooki.	Coffee and cake.
meeldib	Mulle meeldib kook.	I like cake.

A noun names a person, thing or idea. Its nominative is the basic dictionary form: **kohv, tee, kook**. The partitive is used for an indefinite amount or what you order: **kohvi, teed, kooki**. Learn **kohvi, palun** and **teed, palun** as useful café phrases.

Või links alternatives and **ja** links a list. **Mulle meeldib** means I like: **mulle meeldib kook**. **Kas maitseb?** asks whether the food tastes good. These are natural phrases even though English uses a different subject.

Elan, elad, elab

Person	elama	Meaning
mina	elan	I — live
sina	elad	you, familiar singular — live
tema	elab	he/she — live
meie	elame	we — live
teie	elate	you, plural/polite — live
nemad	elavad	they — live

The dictionary verb form often ends in **-ma**. Remove **-ma** from **elama** and add **-n, -d, -b, -me, -te, -vad**: **elan, elad, elab, elame, elate, elavad**. These are all six persons. **Mängima** follows **mängin, mängid, mängib, mängime, mängite, mängivad**.

Estonian also has a **da** infinitive, sometimes ending in **-ta** or **-a**. After **tahtma** use this form: **tahan magada**. Learn the pair **magama/magada**. Present **magama** is **magan, magad, magab, magame, magate, magavad**. After **ei**, use **ela/mängi/maga** without a person ending.

Minu, sinu, tema

Form	Example	Meaning
minu	See on minu võti.	This is my key.
sinu	See on sinu võti.	This is your key, familiar.
tema	See on tema võti.	This is his/her key.
meie	See on meie võti.	This is our key.
teie	See on teie võti.	This is your key, polite/plural.
Kus	Kus Muri elab?	Where does Muri live?

A possessive expression shows ownership: **minu võti, sinu võti, tema võti, meie võti, teie võti, nende võti**. These forms do not change for the owner's gender. Short **mu** and **su** are common for **minu** and **sinu**.

Kus? asks where. Useful location chunks are **all, üleval, siin, seal**. A case is a noun form showing its role. **Võti** is nominative, **võtme** is genitive, and **võtit** is partitive. The genitive also stands before a following noun: **Leena võti, kohviku kohal**. Full noun patterns start in module 2.

GRAMMAR**G1) NOTICE THE USEFUL PATTERN**

Underline the form practised in this unit.

- 1 Mina olen Lukas. Teie olete siin.

Meaning: I am Lukas. You are here, polite/plural.

- 2 Mina olen Lena. Teie olete siin.

Meaning: I am Lena. You are here, polite/plural.

- 3 Mina olen Lukas. Teil on võti.

Meaning: I am Lukas. You have a key, polite/plural.

- 4 Mina olen Lena. Teil on võti.

Meaning: I am Lena. You have a key, polite/plural.

- 5 Mina olen Lukas. Kohvi ja kooki.

Meaning: I am Lukas. Coffee and cake.

- 6 Mina olen Lena. Kohvi ja kooki.

Meaning: I am Lena. Coffee and cake.

- 7 Mina olen Lukas. Te elate siin.

Meaning: I am Lukas. You live here, polite/plural.

- 8 Mina olen Lena. Te elate siin.

Meaning: I am Lena. You live here, polite/plural.

G2) MIXED PERSON FORMS 1

Choose the right word for the gap.

- 1 Ma _____ siin.

- ☐ A on
- ☐ B oled
- ☐ C olen

Meaning: I am here.

2 Sa _____ siin.

- ☐ A olen
- ☐ B on
- ☐ C oled

Meaning: You (familiar singular) are here.

3 Ta _____ siin.

- ☐ A on
- ☐ B olen
- ☐ C oled

Meaning: He/she is here.

4 Me _____ siin.

- ☐ A olen
- ☐ B oleme
- ☐ C oled

Meaning: We are here.

5 Te _____ siin.

- ☐ A olete
- ☐ B oled
- ☐ C olen

Meaning: You (polite/plural) are here.

6 Ma _____ siin.

- ☐ A elad
- ☐ B elab
- ☐ C elan

Meaning: I live here.

G3) MIXED PERSON FORMS 2

Choose the right word for the gap.

1 Sa _____ siin.

- ☐ A elab
- ☐ B elad
- ☐ C elan

Meaning: You (familiar singular) live here.

2 Ta _____ siin.

- ☐ A elab
- ☐ B elan
- ☐ C elad

Meaning: He/she lives here.

3 Me _____ siin.

- ☐ A elad
- ☐ B elan
- ☐ C elame

Meaning: We live here.

4 Te _____ siin.

- ☐ A elan
- ☐ B elad
- ☐ C elate

Meaning: You (polite/plural) live here.

5 Nad _____ siin.

- ☐ A elad
- ☐ B elan
- ☐ C elavad

Meaning: They live here.

G4) RECALL THE PERSON FORMS 1

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

oled oleme on olen

Ma _____ siin.

Meaning: I am here.

on olen oled oleme

Sa _____ siin.

Meaning: You (familiar singular) are here.

olen on oled oleme

Ta _____ siin.

Meaning: He/she is here.

oled olen on oleme

Me _____ siin.

Meaning: We are here.

olete olen on oled

Te _____ siin.

Meaning: You (polite/plural) are here.

oled on olen elan

Ma _____ siin.

Meaning: I live here.

G5) RECALL THE PERSON FORMS 2

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

elad elab elate elame

Sa _____ siin.

Meaning: You (familiar singular) live here.

elame elate elab elad

Ta _____ siin.

Meaning: He/she lives here.

elab elad elate elame

Me _____ siin.

Meaning: We live here.

elate elab elame elad

Te _____ siin.

Meaning: You (polite/plural) live here.

elame elavad elad elab

Nad _____ siin.

Meaning: They live here.

G6) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

Choose the right words for the situation.

1 Lukas: I am Lukas/Lena. You are here, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lukas. Teie olete siin.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lukas. Teie olen siin.

2 Lena: I am Lukas/Lena. You are here, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lena. Teie olen siin.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lena. Teie olete siin.

3 Lukas: I am Lukas/Lena. You have a key, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lukas. Mul on võti.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lukas. Teil on võti.

4 Lena: I am Lukas/Lena. You have a key, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lena. Teil on võti.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lena. Mul on võti.

5 Lukas: I am Lukas/Lena. Coffee and cake. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lukas. Kohvi ilma kooki.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lukas. Kohvi ja kooki.

6 Lena: I am Lukas/Lena. Coffee and cake. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lena. Kohvi ilma kooki.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lena. Kohvi ja kooki.

7 Lukas: I am Lukas/Lena. You live here, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lukas. Te elan siin.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lukas. Te elate siin.

8 Lena: I am Lukas/Lena. You live here, polite/plural. You say:

- ☐ A Mina olen Lena. Te elan siin.
- ☐ B Mina olen Lena. Te elate siin.