

SCENE 1 • GRAMMAR

Il-ġar, il-ġara, jien Marija

Who is who, and the article

7 Exercises · Duration: 20 min.

Arrival

Maltese

Read & listen online



Every Maltese noun is masculine or feminine. Most feminine nouns end in **-a**: **ċavetta**, a key, and **ġara**, a neighbour (a woman). Most nouns that end otherwise are masculine: **ġar**, a neighbour (a man), **taragħ**, the stairs, **isem**, a name. A few feminine nouns don't end in **-a**, and **dar**, a house, is one of them. Names work the same way: **Marija** and **Lena** are feminine, **Ċikku** and **Lukas** masculine. Tap a word in the tables to hear it.

MASCULINE AND FEMININE

Masculine	Feminine	Meaning
ġar	ġara	neighbour
taragħ	ċavetta	the stairs · a key
isem	dar	a name · a house
Ċikku · Lukas	Marija · Lena	

Words that describe a noun, the adjectives, come after it and take its gender: **ġdid**, new, for a masculine noun, **ġdida** for a feminine one. That is why Marija asks Lukas and Lena two different questions. **dan** and **din**, this, work the same way: **dan Ċikku**, **din id-dar**.

Int il-ġar il-ġdid?

Are you the new neighbour? (to Lukas)

Int il-ġara l-ġdida?

Are you the new neighbour? (to Lena)

Din id-dar tiegħi.

This is my house.

The article, the word for the, is **il-**, joined to its noun with a hyphen: **il-ġar**. Before a vowel it is just **l-**: **l-isem**, the name. Before the sun letters **ċ d n r s t x ż z** the l takes the sound of the next letter: **iċ-ċavetta**, **id-dar**, **it-taraġ**. After a word that ends in a vowel, the i drops: **hawn hi ċ-ċavetta**, **il-ġara l-ġdida**.

THE ARTICLE IL-

Before	Article	Example	Meaning
Most letters	il-	il-ġar	the neighbour
A vowel	l-	l-isem	the name
A sun letter	iċ-	iċ-ċavetta	the key
	id-	id-dar	the house
	it- ...	it-taraġ	the stairs
After a vowel	l-	il-ġara l-ġdida	the new neighbour
	ċ-	Hawn hi ċ-ċavetta.	Here's the key.
	d- ...		

The sun letters are **ċ d n r s t x ż z**. An adjective after the noun takes the article too: **il-ġar il-ġdid**, the new neighbour (literally the neighbour the new).

The pronouns say who: **jien**, I, **int**, you, **hu**, he, **hi**, she. They are the same for the 1st person (the speaker), the 2nd person (the one you speak to) and the 3rd person (everyone else), in the singular (one) and the plural (more than one). And in the present Maltese has no word for am, is or are: **Jien Marija**. I'm Marija. **Dan Ċikku**. This is Ċikku.

THE PRONOUNS

Pronoun	Example	Meaning
Singular		
jien	Jien Marija.	I · I'm Marija.
int	Int il-ġar il-ġdid?	you · Are you the new neighbour?
hu · hi	Hu mhux tiegħi.	he · she · He isn't mine.
Plural		
aħna	Aħna ġirien.	we · We're neighbours.
intom	Intom ġirien.	you · You're neighbours.
huma	Huma ġirien.	they · They're neighbours.

int is one person, **intom** several. A thing is **hu** or **hi**, like its noun: **hawn hu**, here it is, for a masculine word, **hawn hi** for a feminine one like **iċ-ċavetta**.

TIP

One person is always **int**, a child or an old lady, a friend or a stranger. Respect shows in the title: **Sinjura Marija**.

Jien Marija.

I'm Marija.

Dan Ċikku. Hu mhux tiegħi.

This is Ċikku. He isn't mine.

Aħna ġirien.

We are neighbours.

GRAMMAR**G1) FIND THE WORDS**

Underline the words for I, you, he, she, we and they.

- 1 Jien Marija, u int il-ġara l-ġdida.

Meaning: I'm Marija, and you're the new neighbour.

- 2 Dan Ċikku. Hu mhux tiegħi.

Meaning: This is Ċikku. He isn't mine.

- 3 Min int? Int Ċikku!

Meaning: Who are you? You're Ċikku!

- 4 Aħna ġirien, u huma ġirien.

Meaning: We are neighbours, and they are neighbours.

G2) THE RIGHT ARTICLE

Choose the article that fits the word.

1 Din _____ tiegħi.

- ☐ A id-dar
- ☐ B il-dar

Meaning: This is my house.

2 Hawn hi _____ tiegħek.

- ☐ A il-ċavetta
- ☐ B ċ-ċavetta

Meaning: Here is your key.

3 _____ tiegħi! Saħħa, ċavetta...

- ☐ A lċ-ċavetta
- ☐ B Il-ċavetta

Meaning: My key! Goodbye, key...

4 Dan _____.

- ☐ A il-taraġ
- ☐ B it-taraġ

Meaning: These are the stairs.

5 _____ tiegħi Marija.

- ☐ A Il-isem
- ☐ B L-isem

Meaning: My name is Marija.

6 Dan _____ il-ġdid.

- ☐ A iġ-ġar
- ☐ B il-ġar

Meaning: This is the new neighbour.

G3) MASCULINE OR FEMININE?

Choose the form that fits the noun.

1 Int il-ġar il-_____?

- ☐ A ġdida
- ☐ B ġdid

Meaning: Are you the new neighbour (a man)?

2 Int il-ġara l-_____?

- ☐ A ġdid
- ☐ B ġdida

Meaning: Are you the new neighbour (a woman)?

3 Din iċ-ċavetta l-_____.

- ☐ A ġdid
- ☐ B ġdida

Meaning: This is the new key.

4 _____ id-dar tiegħi.

- ☐ A Din
- ☐ B Dan

Meaning: This is my house.

5 _____ Ċikku.

- ☐ A Dan
- ☐ B Din

Meaning: This is Ċikku.

6 Hawn hi ċ-ċavetta _____.

- ☐ A l-ġdid
- ☐ B l-ġdida

Meaning: Here is the new key.

7 Marija hi l-_____ tiegħi.

- ☐ A ġar
- ☐ B ġara

Meaning: Marija is my neighbour.

8 Din _____ ġdida.

- ☐ A taraġ
- ☐ B ċavetta

Meaning: This is a new key.

9 Din _____.

- ☐ A Ċikku
- ☐ B Marija

Meaning: This is Marija.

10 Din _____.

- ☐ A Lena
- ☐ B Lukas

Meaning: This is Lena.

G4) THE KEY, THE HOUSE, THE STAIRS

Fill the gaps with the words from the box.

ġar ġara

Jien Marija, il-_____ tiegħek.

Meaning: I'm Marija, your neighbour.

Il-ġar L-isem

_____ tiegħi Marija.

Meaning: My name is Marija.

iċ-ċavetta it-taraġ id-dar

Dan _____, u din _____.

Meaning: These are the stairs, and this is the house.

ċavetta Id-dar Iċ-ċavetta

_____ tiegħi! Saħħa, _____...

Meaning: My key! Goodbye, key...

G5) WHO IS WHO?

Match the pairs.

① hu

Ⓐ they

② intom

Ⓑ you (several people)

③ huma

Ⓒ you (one person)

④ hi

Ⓓ he (or it)

⑤ jien

Ⓔ she (or it)

⑥ int

Ⓕ I

⑦ aħna

Ⓖ we

G6) PUT THE WORDS IN ORDER

Put the words in order.

- 1 din Jien id-dar u tiegħi. Marija,

Meaning: I'm Marija, and this is my house.

- 2 Int il-ġara l-ġdida?

Meaning: Are you the new neighbour?

- 3 u tiegħi ċ-ċavetta tiegħi. id-dar Din

Meaning: This is my house and my key.

- 4 hu mhux u Dan Ċikku, tiegħi.

Meaning: This is Ċikku, and he isn't mine.

G7) THE RIGHT WORDS

Choose the right words for the situation.

- 1 An old woman at the door asks if you are the new neighbour. Say yes, and give your name. You say:**

- ☐ A Le. Din id-dar tiegħi.
- ☐ B Saħħa!
- ☐ C Iva. Jisimni Lena.

- 2 The landlady hands you your key. You say:**

- ☐ A Grazzi!
- ☐ B Min hu?
- ☐ C Bonswa!

- 3 A grey cat walks in. Ask who this is. You say:**

- ☐ A Għandi pjaċir.
- ☐ B U dan min hu?
- ☐ C Hawn hi ċ-ċavetta tiegħek.

4 Marija tells you who the cat is, and that he isn't hers. Marija says:

- ☐ A Dan Ċikku. Mhux tiegħi.
- ☐ B Dan Ċikku. Hu tiegħi.
- ☐ C Din Ċikku. Mhux tiegħi.