



Pierogi Times

Your weekly dose of Polish language and culture.

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Cracking the Case!

Why **kot** changes in **kota**?

Why Polish changes the ends of words? Well... English and Polish organize information differently. English depends mostly on word order while Polish instead of relying on word order, changes the endings of words (nouns through declension, verbs - conjugation).



The **cat** bites the **man**.

The **man** bites the **cat**.



Kot gryzie **człowieka**.

Człowieka gryzie **kota**.



In English the words stay the same, but changing the order changes the meaning. In Polish, although the word order changes, the endings in "człowieka" tell us that the cat is still doing the biting.

mianownik

The **cat** bites the **man**.

→ **Kot** gryzie **człowieka**.

The **man** bites the **cat**.

→ **Człowiek** gryzie **kota**.

biernik

uwaga!
rzeczowniki
żywotne!

Those endings in Polish nouns tell us who is doing the action, who receives it, where something happens, who owns something, and much, much more. That system of changing endings in nouns and adjectives is called declension and we use *przypadki* (cases).

The good news is that you already use the same ideas in English—you just express them with word order and prepositions like "to", "with", "from", "about" etc. Polish often puts that information directly into the ending of the noun instead.

Polish has 7 cases, and that might seem intimidating at first. But you won't learn all seven at once! One case at a time, with lots of practice and real-life examples. As you become more comfortable, you'll feel which case to use.



mianownik / nominative

Kto? Co? / Who? What?
(subject)



dopełniacz / genitive

Kogo? Czego? / Whose?
(possession)



celownik / dative

Komu? Czemu? / To whom? For what?
(receiver)



biernik / accusative

Kogo? Co? / Whom? What?
(direct object)



narzędnik / instrumental

Z kim? Z czym? / With whom? With what?
(company/instrument)



miejsownik / locative

O kim? O czym? / About whom? About what?
(topic/location)



wołacz / vocative

O! / Hey, you!
(calling someone)

Potrenuj miejscownik w...



Polish piosenka
of the week!



[Song - link](#)

Say it!

Try and don't cry ;)

Dziewięćsetdziewięćdziesięćdziewięćtysięcznik

Literally it means "something or someone numbered 999,000".

Don't panic! Even most Polish people have never used this word in everyday conversation! ;-)