

ROMANIAN LANGUAGE

Romanian (technically called *Daco-Romanian*) shares practically the same grammar and most of the vocabulary and phonological processes with the other three surviving Eastern Romance languages: Aromanian, Megleno-Romanian, and Istro-Romanian.

As a Romance language, Romanian shares many characteristics with its more distant relatives: Italian, French, Spanish, etc. However, many linguists seem to agree that Romanian has preserved most of the Latin grammar, which could be explained by a host of arguments such as: relative isolation in the Balkans, possible pre-existence of identical grammatical structures in the Dacian or other substratum (as opposed to the Germanic and Celtic substrata that the other Romance languages developed in contact with), and existence of similar elements in the neighboring languages. Examples of Latin grammar elements that survived in Romanian while having disappeared from other Romance languages include: the retention of the neutral gender in nouns (albeit Romanian neuter is a mere combination of masculine and feminine) and the morphological case differentiation in nouns, reduced however to only three forms (nominative/accusative, genitive/dative, and vocative).

Many writings on Romanian grammar, in particular most of those published by the Romanian Academy (*Academia Română*), are prescriptive; the rules regarding plural formation, verb conjugation, word spelling and meanings, etc. are revised periodically to include new tendencies in the language.

Romanian alphabet

The **Romanian alphabet** is a modification of the [Latin alphabet](#) and consists of 28 letters:

A, a (a); Ă, ă (ă); Â, â (â din a); B, b (be); C, c (ce); D, d (de); E, e (e); F, f (fe / ef); G, g (ghe / ge); H, h (ha / haș); I, i (i); Î, î (î din i); J, j (je); K, k (ka); L, l (le / el); M, m (me / em); N, n (ne / en); O, o (o); P, p (pe); R, r (re / er); S, s (se / es); Ș, ș (Șe); T, t (te); Ț, ț (țe); U, u (u); V, v (ve); X, x (ics); Z, z (ze / zet).

The letters Q (read *kü* or *chiu*), W (*dublu ve*), and Y (*igrec* or *i grec*) were officially introduced in the Romanian alphabet in 1982, although they had been used earlier. They occur only in foreign words, such as [quasar](#), [watt](#), and [yacht](#). The letter K is relatively older, but it is still perceived as foreign due to the fact that it appears only in borrowings, many of them still neologisms.

In cases where the word is a direct borrowing having diacritical marks not present in the above alphabet, official spelling tends to favor their use ([München](#), [Angoulême](#) etc., as opposed to the use of [Istanbul](#) over *İstanbul*).

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[\[edit\]](#) Diacritical marks

Pre- (*top*) and post-[1993](#) (*bottom*) street signs in [Bucharest](#), showing the two different spellings of the same name



Five letters of the Romanian Alphabet have diacritical marks. They are considered :

- [Ă ă](#) — *a* with [breve](#)
- [Â â](#) — *a* with [circumflex](#)
- [Î î](#) — *i* with [circumflex](#)
- [Ș ș](#) — *s* with [comma](#)
- [Ț ț](#) — *t* with [comma](#)

The letter *â* is used exclusively in the middle of words; its [majuscule](#) version appears only in all-capitals inscriptions.

The letters *î* and *â* are phonetically and functionally identical. The reason for using both of them is historical, denoting the language's [Latin](#) origin. During the [communist regime](#), the Romanian government largely eliminated the letter *â*, replacing it with *î* everywhere except for the name of the country, which remained *România*. For example, the Latin *angelus* ([angel](#)) became the Romanian *ânger*, but today it is spelled *înger*. Initially, the country name and its derivatives too were spelled with "î" - *Romînia*, *romîn* etc., but this was later reverted; since the first stipulation coincided with the official designation of the country as a [People's Republic](#), the full title of the latter was *Republica Populară Romîună*, whereas the [Socialist Republic](#) proclaimed in 1965 is associated with the spelling *Republica Socialistă România*.

After the fall of the [Ceaușescu](#) regime, the [Romanian Academy](#) decided to reintroduce *â* from 1993 onward, in accordance to the 1904 spelling reform, thus cancelling the effects of the 1949 spelling reform. The choice between *î* and *â* is thus based on a simple rule: the letter is always spelled as *â*, except at the beginning and the end of words, where *î* is used instead. Exceptions include [proper nouns](#) where the usage

of the letters is frozen, whichever it may be, and compound words, whose components are each separately subjected to the rule above, not the resulting word itself (e.g. *ne+îndemânatic => neîndemânatic*, not **neândemânatic*). Quite a number of people and institutions (including major newspapers such as [Evenimentul Zilei](#) and [Cotidianul](#)) continue to write according to the 1949 norms and generally, usage of either the 1949 or 1993 norms is regarded as correct in most situations.

Writing letters *ș* and *ț* with a cedilla instead of a comma is considered incorrect by the language academy. Actual Romanian writings, including books created to teach children to write, treat the comma and cedilla as a variation in font. See [Unicode and HTML](#) below.

[\[edit\]](#) Obsolete letters



An old [manhole cover](#) in Bucharest, writing "Bucharest - sewerage" using etymological spelling, *Bucuresci* - *Canalisare* instead of *București* - *Canalizare*

Before the spelling reform of 1904, there were several additional letters with diacritical marks.

- Vowels:
 - *î* — *i* with [breve](#) served to illustrate the final, "whispered" sound of the [palatalized](#) consonant, in words such as *București* (/bu.ku'reʃtʃi/), *lupi* (/lupʲ/ - "wolves"), and *greci* (/greʃtʃi/ - "Greeks") — *Bucureșci* (the proper spelling at the time used *c* instead of *t*, see [-ești](#)), *lupi*, *greci*. This distinction is no longer considered necessary.
 - *û* — *u* with [breve](#) was used only in the ending of a word. Unvoiced, it served to indicate that the previous consonant was not palatalized, or that the vowel *i* was fully voiced. Once frequent, it survives today only in author [Mateiu Caragiale](#)'s name - originally spelled *Mateiû* (it is not specified whether the pronunciation should adopt a version that he himself probably never used, while in many editions he is still credited as *Matei*).
 - *ě* — *e* with [breve](#). This letter is now replaced with *ă*. The existence of two letters for one sound, the schwa, had an etymological purpose, showing from which vowel ("a" or "e") it originally derived. For example *împărat* - "emperor" (<[Imperator](#)>), *věd* - "I see" (<vedo), *uměr* - "shoulder" (<[humerus](#)>), *pășeri* - "birds" (<cf. [passer](#)>).
- A consonant, *đ* / *Đ* (*d* with comma) was used to indicate the sound *z* where it was derived from a Latin *d*, such as in *đi* - "day" (<dies), *Dumneđeu* - God (<[Domine Deus](#)>), *đână* - "fairy" (<[Diana](#)>).

Their usage was relative even before 1904, with some publications (such as [Timpul](#) or [Universul](#)) choosing to use a simplified and easier to read version, one more similar to today's writing system.

[[edit](#)] Unicode and HTML

There is confusion about how to properly write the characters that denote the sounds /ʃ/ and /tʃ/. Although the officially preferred forms are, respectively, "s with comma below" and "t with comma below", many printed texts (including books created to teach children to write) use "s with cedilla" and "t with cedilla" and in practice it is used as a font variation. Historically, computers have made no distinction between the cedilla and comma below.

This usage has been aggregated into all character encoding standards for Central and Eastern Europe (such as [ISO 8859-2](#)), which include "s" and "t" with cedillas. In addition, several computer fonts, including some of those shipped with [Microsoft Windows](#), have "s-cedilla" with a [cedilla](#) (like the Turkish equivalent), but "t-cedilla" with a [comma](#) below, resulting in inconsistent use diacritical marks. [ISO 8859-16](#) includes "s" and "t" with comma below on the same places "s" and "t" with cedilla were in ISO 8859-2.

Ș and ț were added to [Unicode](#) in September 1999 and hence still aren't in common use. Unicode defines the "comma-below" characters in the Latin Extended-B section ([hex](#) range 0180-024F).

Phoneme	Character	With comma		Character	With cedilla	
		Unicode position (hex)	HTML entity		Unicode position (hex)	HTML entity
/ʃ/	Ș	0218	Ș or Ș	Ș	015E	Ş or Ş
	ș	0219	ș or ș	ș	015F	ş or ş
/tʃ/	Ț	021A	Ț or Ț	Ț	0162	Ţ or Ţ
	ț	021B	ț or ț	ț	0163	ţ or ţ

Vowels with diacritics are coded as follows:

Phoneme	Character	Unicode position (hex)	HTML entity
/ə/	Ă	0102	Ă or Ă
	ă	0103	ă or ă
/î/	Â	00C2	Â or Â or Â
	â	00E2	â or â or â
	Î	00CE	Î or Î or Î
	î	00EE	î or î or î

[[edit](#)] Letters and their pronunciation

See also: [Romanian phonology](#)

Romanian spelling is mostly phonetic. The table below gives the correspondence between letters and sounds. Some of the letters have several possible readings, even if [allophones](#) are not taken into account. When vowels /i/, /u/, /e/, and /o/ are changed into their corresponding [semivowels](#), this is not marked in writing. Letters K, Q, W, and Y appear only in foreign borrowings; the pronunciation of W and Y depends on the origin of the word they appear in.

Letter	Phoneme	Approximative pronunciation
A a	/a/	<i>a</i> in "father"
Ă ă (a with breve)	/ə/	<i>a</i> in "above"
Â â (a with circumflex)	/i/	<i>e</i> in "roses"
B b	/b/	<i>b</i> in "ball"
C c	/k/	<i>c</i> in "cat"
D d	/tʃ/	<i>ch</i> in "chair"
E e	/d/	<i>d</i> in "door"
	/e/	<i>e</i> in "merry"
	/ɛ/	(semivocalic /e/)
	/je/	<i>ye</i> in "yes"
F f	/f/	<i>f</i> in "flag"
G g	/g/	<i>g</i> in "goat"
	/dʒ/	<i>g</i> in "general"
H h	/h/	<i>h</i> in "house"
	/i/	<i>i</i> in "machine"
I i	/j/	<i>y</i> in "yes"
	/i/	(palatalization)
Î î (i with circumflex)	/i/	<i>e</i> in "roses"
J j	/ʒ/	<i>s</i> in "treasure"
K k	/k/	<i>k</i> in "like"
L l	/l/	<i>l</i> in "lamp"
M m	/m/	<i>m</i> in "mouth"
N n	/n/	<i>n</i> in "north"
O o	/o/	<i>o</i> in "floor"
	/ɔ/	(semivocalic /o/)
P p	/p/	<i>p</i> in "post"
Q q	/k/	<i>k</i> in "kettle"
R r	/r/	(trilled r)
S s	/s/	<i>s</i> in "song"
Ș ș (s with comma)	/ʃ/	<i>s</i> in "sugar"
T t	/t/	<i>t</i> in "tip"
Ț ț (t with comma)	/ts/	<i>zz</i> in "pizza"
U u	/u/	<i>u</i> in "group"
	/w/	<i>w</i> in "cow"
V v	/v/	<i>v</i> in "vision"
	/v/	<i>v</i> in "vision"
W w	/w/	<i>w</i> in "west"
	/ks/	<i>x</i> in "six"
X x	/gz/	<i>x</i> in "example"
	/j/	<i>y</i> in "yes"
Y y	/i/	<i>i</i> in "machine"
Z z	/z/	<i>z</i> in "zipper"

[\[edit\]](#) **Phonetic alphabet**

There is a Romanian equivalent to the English-language [NATO phonetic alphabet](#). Most code words are people's first names, with the exception of K, J, Q, W, Y, and Z. Letters with diacritics (Ă, Â, Î, Ș, Ț) are generally transmitted without diacritics (A, A, I, S, T).

Word	IPA (unofficial)	Word	IPA (unofficial)
A Ana	/ˈa.na/	N Nicolae	/ni.koˈla.e/
B Barbu	/ˈbar.bu/	O Olga	/ˈol.ɡa/
C Constantin	/kon.stanˈtin/	P Petre	/ˈpe.tre/
D Dumitru	/du.miˈtru/	Q Q	/kju/
E Elena	/eˈle.na/	R Radu	/ˈra.du/
F Florea	/ˈflo.rɛa/	S Sandu	/ˈsan.du/
G Gheorghe	/ˈɡɛor.ɡe/	T Tudor	/ˈtu.dor/
H Haralambie	/ha.raˈlam.bi.e/	U Udrea	/ˈu.drɛa/
I Ion	/iˈon/	V Vasile	/vaˈsi.le/
J Jiu	/ʒiw/	W dublu V	/du.bluˈve/
K kilogram	/ki.loˈɡram/	X Xenia	/ˈkse.ni.a/
L Lazăr	/ˈla.zər/	Y I grec	/i.ɡrek/
M Maria	/maˈri.a/	Z zahăr	/ˈza.hər/

[[edit](#)] Keyboard layout



Romanian letters Â and Ă on the keyboard of an Apple [MacBook Pro](#)

Although most computer keyboards used in Romania use the [United States](#) standard model (US [QWERTY](#)), there is an official ^{[[citation needed](#)]} Romanian keyboard, based on the [German QWERTZ](#). This keyboard allows a direct access to the Romanian specific characters — ă, î, â, ș, ț (the [Microsoft](#) keyboard layout uses ș, s with [cedilla](#), and not the Ș, s with [comma](#), in use; because of this, a growing number of texts make use of unofficial diacritical marks)

[!	"	#	¤	%	&	/	()	=	?	*	Â	←
]	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	+	,	.	
Tab	Q	W	E	R	T	Z	U	I	O	P	Ă	Î		
Caps Lock	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	Ș	Ț		Enter	
⇧ Shift	Y	X	C	V	B	N	M	;	:	-			⇧ Shift	
Ctrl	Win Key	Alt						Alt Gr	Win Key	Menu	Ctrl			



Romanian keyboard layout (primary)

Reading rules

Reading Romanian involves learning a few rules, quite similar to reading [Italian](#).

- *h* is not silent like in other Romance languages such as Spanish and French, but represents the phoneme /h/, except in the groups *ch* and *gh* (see below)
- *j* represents /ʒ/
- There are two letters with a comma below, S and T, which represent the sounds /ʃ/ and /ts/. However, the allographs with a cedilla instead of a comma, Ș and Ț, became widespread when pre-Unicode and early Unicode [character sets](#) did not include the standard form.
- A final orthographical *i* after a consonant often represents the palatalization of the consonant (e. g. *lup* /lup/ "wolf" vs. *lupi* /lupⁱ/ "wolves").
- *ă* represents the [schwa](#), /ə/.
- *î* and *â* represent /i̯/.
- The letter *e* is generally pronounced as the [diphthong](#) *ie* /je/ when it is in the beginning of a form of the verb *a fi* "to be", e. g. *este* /jeste/ "is". This rule also applies to personal pronouns beginning with *e*, e. g. *el* /jel/ "he".
- *x* represents either the phoneme /ks/ as in *expresie* = expression, or /gz/ as in *exemplu* = example.
- Similarly to the reading rules in [Italian](#), the letters *c* and *g* represent the affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ before *i* and *e*, and /k/ and /g/ elsewhere. When /k/ and /g/ are followed by vowels /e/ and /i/ (or their corresponding [semivowels](#) or the final /i̯/) the digraphs *ch* and *gh* are used instead of *c* and *g*, as shown in the table below.

Group	Phoneme	Pronunciation	Examples
ce, ci	/tʃ/	<i>ch</i> in chest , cheek	<i>cerc</i> (circle), <i>cine</i> (who)
che, chi	/k/	<i>k</i> in kettle , kiss	<i>chem</i> (I call), <i>chimie</i> (chemistry)
ge, gi	/dʒ/	<i>j</i> in jelly , jigsaw	<i>ger</i> (frost), <i>gimnast</i> (gymnast)
ghe, ghi	/g/	<i>g</i> in get , give	<i>ghețar</i> (glacier), <i>ghid</i> (guide)

Punctuation and capitalization

The main particularities Romanian has relative to other languages using the Latin alphabet are:

- The quotation marks use the [Polish format](#) in the format „quote «inside» quote”, that is, 99 down and 99 up for normal quotations, with the addition of non-French double angle quotes without space for inside quotation when necessary.
- Proper quotations which span multiple paragraphs don't start each paragraph with the quotation marks; one single pair of quotation marks is always used, regardless of how many paragraphs are quoted;
- Dialogues are identified with [quotation dashes](#);
- The [Oxford comma](#) before "and" is considered incorrect ("red, yellow and blue" is the proper format);
- Punctuation signs which follow a text in parentheses always follow the final bracket;
- In titles, only the first letter of the first word is capitalized, the rest of the title using sentence capitalization (with all its rules: proper names are capitalized as usual, etc.).
- Names of months and days are not capitalized (*ianuarie* "January", *joi* "Thursday")

- Adjectives derived from proper names are not capitalized (*Germania* "Germany", but *german* "German")

Romanian phonology

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[\[edit\]](#) Phonemes

The [phoneme](#) inventory of Romanian consists of seven [vowels](#), four [semivowels](#), and twenty [consonants](#). In addition, as with all languages, other phonemes can occur occasionally in interjections or recent borrowings.

[\[edit\]](#) Vowels

There are seven vowel [phonemes](#) in Romanian:

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i	ɨ	u
Mid	e	ə	o
Open		a	

While most of the Romanian vowels are relatively straightforward and similar or identical to those in many other languages, the [close central unrounded vowel](#) /ɨ/ might represent a problem for foreign learners since it is missing from most other European languages, including most dialects of English. A practical way to understand the articulation of this vowel is as follows: First pronounce vowel /i/ as in "ease." Then, *without changing the shape of your lips*, try to pronounce vowel /u/ as in "ooze." The sound produced is a good approximation of /ɨ/.

The table below gives a series of word examples for each vowel.

Vowel	Description	Examples
/a/	Open central unrounded	apă /'a.pə/ <i>water</i> balaur /ba'la.ur/ <i>dragon</i> cânta /kɨn'ta/ <i>to sing</i> erou /e'row/ <i>hero</i>
/e/	Mid front unrounded	necaz /ne'kaz/ <i>trouble</i> umple /'um.ple/ <i>to fill</i> insulă /'in.su.lə/ <i>island</i>
/i/	Close front unrounded	salcie /'sal.tʃi.e/ <i>willow</i> topi /to'pi/ <i>to melt</i> oraş /o'raʃ/ <i>city</i>
/o/	Mid back rounded	copil /ko'pil/ <i>child</i> acolo /a'ko.lo/ <i>there</i>
/u/	Close back rounded	uda /u'da/ <i>to water</i>

	aduc /a'duk/ <i>I bring</i>
	simplu /'sim.plu/ <i>simple</i>
	ăsta /'əs.ta/ <i>this</i>
/ə/ Mid central unrounded	păros /pə'ros/ <i>hairy</i>
	albă /'al.bə/ <i>white (fem. sg.)</i>
	înspre /'ɪn.spre/ <i>toward</i>
/i/ Close central unrounded	cârnat /kɪr'nat/ <i>sausage</i>
	coborî /ko.bo'rɪ/ <i>to descend</i>

[\[edit\]](#) Less frequent vowels

In addition to the seven core vowels, in a number of words of foreign origin (predominantly French) the [close-mid front rounded vowel](#) /ø/ has been maintained without replacing it with any of the existing phonemes, at least in careful speech. These words have become part of the Romanian vocabulary and follow the usual inflexion rules, so that vowel /ø/, though less common, could be considered as part of the Romanian vowel set. Examples: *bleu* /blø/ (*light blue*), *pasteuriza* /pas.tø.ri'za/ (*to pasteurize*), *loess* /løs/ (*loess*).

Similarly, recent borrowings from languages such as [French](#) and [German](#) contain the [close front rounded vowel](#) /y/: *ecru* /e'kry/, *tul* /tyl/, *fürer* /'fy.rer/. Older words that originally had this sound have had it replaced with /ju/, /i.u/, /u/, or /i/. For instance, [Turkish](#) *kül* became *ghiul* /gju/ (*large ring*), [German](#) *Düse* gave *duză* /'du.zə/ (*nozzle*), [French](#) *bureau* became *birou* /bi'row/ (*desk, office*), etc.

[\[edit\]](#) Non-syllabic vowels

A particular variant of vowel /i/, marked in [IPA](#) as /i̯/, is found after consonants in word-final positions and rarely inside words. This phoneme is shorter and weaker than a normal vowel, and cannot support a syllable by itself. It often manifests itself as a [palatalization](#) of the preceding consonant. Its role is often to mark the plural of nouns and adjectives, or the second person of verbs in the indicative or subjunctive mood.

The following examples show that /i̯/ can occur after all consonants; however, a /i̯/ placed after /d/ and /s/ turns them almost invariably into /z/ and /ʃ/, respectively.

Voiceless		Voiced	
Consonant	Examples	Consonant	Examples
/p/	rupi /rup ^{i̯} / <i>you tear</i>	/b/	arabi /a'rab ^{i̯} / <i>Arabs</i>
/t/	proşti /proʃt ^{i̯} / <i>stupid (masc. pl.)</i>	/d/	nădejdi /nə'deʒd ^{i̯} / <i>hopes</i>
/k/	urechi /u'rek ^{i̯} / <i>ears</i>	/g/	unghi /uŋg ^{i̯} / <i>angle</i>
/ts/	roţi /rots ^{i̯} / <i>wheels</i>	–	
/tʃ/	faci /fatʃ ^{i̯} / <i>you do</i>	/dʒ/	mergi /merdʒ ^{i̯} / <i>you go</i>
–		/m/	dormi /dorm ^{i̯} / <i>you sleep</i>
–		/n/	bani /ban ^{i̯} / <i>money (pl.)</i>
/f/	şefi /ʃef ^{i̯} / <i>bosses</i>	/v/	pleşuvi /ple'ʃuv ^{i̯} / <i>bald (masc. pl.)</i>
/s/	bessi /bes ^{i̯} / <i>Bessi</i>	/z/	brazi /bræz ^{i̯} / <i>fir trees</i>
/ʃ/	moşi /moʃ ^{i̯} / <i>old men</i>	/ʒ/	breji /breʒ ^{i̯} / <i>brave (masc. pl.)</i>
/h/	vlahi /vlah ^{i̯} / <i>Wallachians</i>	–	
–		/l/	şcoli /ʃkol ^{i̯} / <i>schools</i>
–		/r/	sari /sar ^{i̯} / <i>you jump</i>

In certain morphological processes /j/ is replaced by the full vowel /i/, for example

- in noun plural genitive formation: *școli* - *școlilor* /ʃkolj/ - /'ʃko.li.lor/ (*schools* - *of the schools*),
- when appending the definite article to some plural nouns: *brazi* - *brazii* /brazj/ - /'bra.zij/ (*fir trees* - *the fir trees*)
- in verb + pronoun combinations: *dați* - *dați-ne* /datsj/ - /'da.tsi.ne/ (*give* - *give us*).

This may explain why /j/ is perceived as a separate sound by native speakers and written with the same letter as the vowel /i/.

The non-syllabic /j/ can be sometimes found inside compound words like *cățiva* /kɨtsi'va/ (*a few*) and *oriunde* /orⁱ'un.de/ (*wherever*), where the first morpheme happened to end in this /j/. A word that contains this phoneme twice is *cincizeci* /tʃintʃi'zetʃj/ (*fifty*).

In old Romanian and still in some local pronunciations there is another example of such a non-syllabic, non-semivocalic phoneme, derived from /u/, which manifests itself as [labialization](#) of the preceding sound. The usual IPA notation is /^w/. It is found at the end of some words after consonants and semivowels, as in *un urs*, pronounced /un 'urs^w/ (*a bear*), or *îmi spui* /ɨmⁱ spuj^w/ (*you tell me*). The disappearance of this phoneme might be attributed to the fact that, unlike /j/, it didn't play any morphological role. It is possibly a trace of Latin endings containing /u/ (*-us*, *-um*), this phoneme is related to vowel /u/ used to connect the definite article "l" to the stem of a noun or adjective, as in *domn* - *domnul* /domn - 'dom.nul/ (*lord* - *the lord*, cf. [Latin dominus](#)).

[\[edit\]](#) Diphthongs and triphthongs

Romanian makes use of many [diphthongs](#) and [triphthongs](#). The semivowels included in these are not marked in writing, which represents a difficulty for those who learn the language. Traditionally Romanian lacks letters *w* and *y* which could have helped in distinguishing vowels from semivowels at least in some cases.

[\[edit\]](#) Descending diphthongs

[Descending \(falling\) diphthongs](#), which have the structure V-S ([vowel-semivowel](#)), are formed using one of the semivowels /j/ and /w/. All combinations are possible except /uw/:

Diphthong	Examples
/aj/	rai /raj/ <i>heaven</i> , aisberg /'ajs.berg/ <i>iceberg</i>
/aw/	sau /saw/ <i>or</i> , august /'aw.gust/ <i>August</i>
/ej/	lei /lej/ <i>lions</i> , trei /trej/ <i>three</i>
/ew/	greu /grew/ <i>heavy</i> , mereu /me'rew/ <i>always</i>
/ij/	mii /mij/ <i>thousands</i> , vii /vij/ <i>you come</i>
/iw/	fiu /fiw/ <i>son</i> , scriu /scriw/ <i>I write</i>
/oj/	oi /oj/ <i>sheep (pl.)</i> , noi /noj/ <i>we</i>
/ow/	ou /ow/ <i>egg</i> , bou /bow/ <i>ox</i>
/uj/	pui /puj/ <i>you put</i> , gălbui /gəl'buɨ/ <i>yellowish</i>
/øj/	râi /røj/ <i>bad (masc. pl.)</i> , văi /vøj/ <i>valleys</i>
/əw/	dulău /du'ləw/ <i>mastiff</i> , rău /rəw/ <i>bad (masc. sg.)</i>
/tj/	câine /'kɨj.ne/ <i>dog</i> , mâinile /'mɨj.ni.le/ <i>the hands</i>

/ɨw/ râu /rɨw/ *river*, brâu /brɨw/ *girdle*

[edit] Ascending diphthongs

[Ascending \(rising\) diphthongs](#), which have the structure S-V (semivowel-vowel) use a set of as much as four semivowels: /ɛ/, /j/, /ɔ/, and /w/.

Diphthong	Examples
/ɛa/	stea /stɛa/ <i>star</i> , mea /mɛa/ <i>my (fem. sg.)</i>
/ɛo/	Gheorghe /'gɛor.ge/ <i>George</i> , ne-o ploua /nɛo.plo'wa/ <i>it would rain us</i>
/ɛu/	(only in word combinations) pe-un /pɛun/ <i>on a</i>
/ja/	ziar /zja/ <i>newspaper</i> , mi-a zis /mja'zis/ <i>(he) told me</i>
/je/	fier /fje/ <i>iron</i> , miere /'mje.re/ <i>honey</i>
/jo/	iod /jod/ <i>iodine</i> , chior /'kjo/ <i>one-eyed</i>
/ju/	iubit /ju'bit/ <i>loved</i> , chiuveță /kju've.tə/ <i>sink</i>
/ɔa/	oameni /'ɔa.menɨ/ <i>people</i> , foarte /'foar.te/ <i>very</i>
/wa/	ziua /'zi.wa/ <i>the day</i> , steaua /'stɛa.wa/ <i>the star</i>
/wə/	două /'do.wə/ <i>two (fem.)</i> , plouă /'plo.wə/ <i>it rains</i>
/wɨ/	plouând /plo'wɨnd/ <i>raining</i> , ouând /o'wɨnd/ <i>laying (eggs)</i>

Diphthongs /ɔa/ and /wa/, although similar and never occurring simultaneously, are different, as it is proved below. In the word

subsuoară /sub.su'ɔa.rə/ *armpit*,

after pronouncing vowel /u/ the mouth opens perceptibly for semivowel /ɔ/. In some regional pronunciations the diphthong /ɔa/ tends to be pronounced as a single vowel /ɔ/ possibly under the influence of the same sound in [Hungarian](#), but such shift does not happen to diphthong /wa/. The example below shows that semivowel /w/ and vowel /o/ are produced in a different manner:

roua /'ro.wa/ *the dew*.

However, there is no minimal pair of words which would show that by switching the diphthong the meaning is changed.

That the semivowel /ɔ/ is close to vowel /o/ is proved by words like **cocoșe** /ko'kɔa.fe/ (*hunches*), in which the two phonemes are only separated by the consonant /k/, allowing comparison. When vowel /u/ is taken as reference, as in the word **cucoane** /ku'kɔa.ne/ (*ladies*), a distinct vocalic shift can be noticed.

[edit] Diphthongs in borrowings

Borrowings from [English](#) have extended the set of ascending diphthongs to also include /jə/, /we/, /wi/, and /wo/. Generally, these borrowings have retained their original spellings, but their pronunciation has been adapted to the Romanian phonology. The table below gives some examples.

Diphthong	Examples
/jə/	yearling /'jɛr.lɨŋ/ <i>one-year-old animal (colt)</i>
/we/	western /'wes.tɛrn/ <i>Western (movie set in the American West)</i>

/wi/ tweeter /'twi.tər/ *high-pitch loudspeaker*
 /wo/ walkman /'wok.men/ *pocket-sized tape/CD player*

Borrowings such as **whisky** and **week-end** are listed in some dictionaries as starting with the ascending diphthong /wi/, which corresponds to the original English pronunciation, but in others they appear with the descending diphthong /uj/, closer to the actual way these words are pronounced by Romanian native speakers.

[\[edit\]](#) **Triphthongs: S-V-S**

There are numerous triphthongs in which the main vowel is clamped between two semivowels:

Triphthong	Examples
/ɛaj/	ceainic /'tʃɛaj.nik/ <i>tea pot</i> , socoteai /so.ko'tɛaj/ <i>you were reckoning</i>
/ɛaw/	beau /bɛaw/ <i>I drink</i> , spuneau /spu'nɛaw/ <i>they were saying</i>
/jaj/	mi-ai dat /mjaj'dat/ <i>you gave me</i> , ia-i /jaj/ <i>take them</i>
/jaw/	iau /jaw/ <i>I take</i> , suiau /su'jaw/ <i>they were climbing</i>
/jej/	iei /jej/ <i>you take</i> , piei /pjej/ <i>skins</i>
/jew/	maieu /ma'jew/ <i>undershirt</i> , eu /jew/ <i>I (myself)</i>
/joj/	i-oi da /joj'da/ <i>I might give him</i> , picioică /pi'tʃjoj.kə/ <i>potato (regionalism)</i>
/jow/	maiou /ma'jow/ <i>undershirt</i>
/ɔaj/	leoaică /le'ɔaj.kə/ <i>lioness</i> , rusoaică /ru'sɔaj.kə/ <i>Russian woman</i>
/waj/	înșeuai /ɪn.ʃe'waj/ <i>(you) were saddling</i>
/waw/	înșeauu /ɪn.ʃe'waw/ <i>(they) were saddling</i>
/wəj/	rouăi /'ro.wəj/ <i>of the dew</i>

Other triphthongs can be built on the same S-V-S pattern, such as /juj/ and /ɔaw/, but they only occur sporadically in interjections and uncommon words.

[\[edit\]](#) **Triphthongs: S-S-V**

These triphthongs start with a glide through *two* semivowels.

Triphthong	Examples
/ɛəa/	pleoape /'pleəa.pe/ <i>eyelids</i> , learcă /'leəa.kə/ <i>soaking (wet)</i>
/jəa/	creioane /kre'jəa.ne/ <i>pencils</i> , aripioară /a.ri'pjəa.rə/ <i>winglet</i>

Triphthong /jɛa/ occurs in the word **ea** /jɛa/ *she*, or in certain areas as a replacement for diphthong /ja/.

[\[edit\]](#) **Consonants**

Standard Romanian has twenty consonants, as listed in the table below.

	<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Labio-dental</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Post-alveolar</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Plosive</u>	p b		t d		k g	

Affricate			ts	tʃ dʒ		
Nasal	m		n			
Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ		h
Liquid			l r			

Besides the consonants in this table, a few consonants can have [allophones](#):

- /k/ and /g/ are palatalized before [vowels](#) /e/ and /i/, their [semivocalic](#) counterparts or the non-syllabic /j/;
- /n/ becomes the velar [ŋ] before /k/, /g/ and /h/;
- /h/ becomes velar or palatal depending on the following sound.

The Romanian consonant set is almost the same as that in [Italian](#), with a few exceptions: The Italian palatal consonants /ɲ/, /ʎ/ and affricate /dʒ/ are missing in standard Romanian, which in turn has the fricative /ʒ/ and the glottal /h/.

Here are some examples, with an approximate indication of how each consonant is pronounced, intended for English native speakers.

Consonant	Pronounced as	Examples
/p/	p in <i>spea</i> k (1)	pas /pas/ <i>step</i> , spate /'spa.te/ <i>back</i> , cap /kap/ <i>head</i>
/b/	b in <i>bo</i> y	ban /ban/ <i>money</i> , zbor /zbor/ <i>I fly</i> , rob /rob/ <i>slave</i>
/t/	t in <i>sto</i> p (1)(2)	tare /'ta.re/ <i>hard</i> , stai /staj/ <i>you stay</i> , sat /sat/ <i>village</i>
/d/	d in <i>da</i> y (2)	dacă /'da.kə/ <i>if</i> , vinde /'vin.de/ <i>he sells</i> , cad /kad/ <i>I fall</i>
/k/	k in <i>sk</i> y (1)	cal /'kal/ <i>horse</i> , ascund /as'kund/ <i>I hide</i> , sac /sak/ <i>sack</i>
/g/	g in <i>go</i>	gol /gol/ <i>empty</i> , pungă /'puŋ.gə/ <i>bag</i> , drag /drag/ <i>dear</i>
/ts/	ts in <i>nu</i> ts	țară /'tsa.rə/ <i>country</i> , ață /'a.tsə/ <i>thread</i> , soț /soț/ <i>husband</i>
/tʃ/	ch in <i>ch</i> in	cer /tʃer/ <i>sky</i> , vacile /'va.tʃi.le/ <i>the cows</i> , maci /matʃi/ <i>poppies</i>
/dʒ/	j in <i>jin</i> gle	ger /dʒer/ <i>frost</i> , magic /'ma.dʒik/ <i>magical</i> , rogi /rodʒi/ <i>you ask</i>
/m/	m in <i>ma</i> n	mic /mik/ <i>small</i> , amar /a'mar/ <i>bitter</i> , pom /pom/ <i>tree</i>
/n/	n in <i>na</i> me	nor /nor/ <i>cloud</i> , inel /i'nel/ <i>ring</i> , motan /mo'tan/ <i>tomcat</i>
/f/	f in <i>fi</i> ne	foc /fok/ <i>fire</i> , afară /a'fa.rə/ <i>out</i> , pantof /pan'tof/ <i>shoe</i>
/v/	v in <i>vo</i> ice	val /val/ <i>wave</i> , covor /ko'vor/ <i>carpet</i> , mov /mov/ <i>mauve</i>
/s/	s in <i>so</i> und	sare /'sa.re/ <i>salt</i> , case /'ka.se/ <i>houses</i> , ales /a'les/ <i>chosen</i>
/z/	z in <i>zo</i> ne	zid /zid/ <i>wall</i> , mazăre /'ma.zə.re/ <i>pea</i> , orez /o'rez/ <i>rice</i>
/ʃ/	sh in <i>sh</i> y	șarpe /'ʃar.pe/ <i>snake</i> , așa /a'ʃa/ <i>so</i> , oraș /o'raʃ/ <i>city</i>
/ʒ/	s in <i>mea</i> sure	jar /ʒar/ <i>embers</i> , ajutor /a.ʒu'tor/ <i>help</i> , vrej /vrejʒ/ <i>stalk</i>
/h/	h in <i>ho</i> pe	horn /horn/ <i>chimney</i> , pahar /pa'har/ <i>glass</i> , duh /duh/ <i>spirit</i>
/l/	l in <i>li</i> ke	lung /luŋg/ <i>long</i> , alună /a'lu.nə/ <i>hazelnut</i> , fel /fel/ <i>sort</i>
/r/	Italian r (3)	repede /'re.pe.de/ <i>quickly</i> , tren /tren/ <i>train</i> , măr /mər/ <i>apple</i>

(1) Note that **p** in *spea*k and **p** in *pea*k are not the same sounds: The second is [aspirated](#). Romanian /p/ is not aspirated. The same holds for /t/ and /k/.

(2) Consonants /t/ and /d/ are only similar to their English counterparts. While in English they are [alveolar](#), pronounced by touching the [alveolar ridge](#) with the tip of the tongue, in Romanian and other Romance languages they are [dental](#), obtained by touching the roof of the mouth just behind the teeth with the flat of the tongue. The same remark is valid for consonants /n/, /s/, and /z/, although the difference is not as obvious.

(3) Consonant /r/ is an [alveolar trill](#), informally also called "rolled r," present in a number of languages such as [Italian](#), [Spanish](#), or [Russian](#). Romanian phonetics sources classify this sound as [dental](#). It is sometimes compared with the consonant in the middle of "get up" in informal American English (spelled "geddup" to mark the changed pronunciation); this phrase could be transcribed phonetically in Romanian as "gherap."

[\[edit\]](#) Other consonants

Although not a central part of the Romanian phoneme inventory, other consonants are often used in certain interjections:

- The [dental click](#) /t̪/ (see also [click consonants](#)) is used in an interjection similar to the English "tut-tut" (also spelled "tsk-tsk"), expressing concern, disappointment, disapproval, etc, and generally accompanied by frowning or a comparable facial expression. Usually two to four such clicks in a row make up the interjection; only one click is rare and more than four can be used for over-emphasis. The Romanian spelling is usually "ttt" or "tt̪t̪." Technically, the dental click is obtained by creating a cavity between a velar closure and the tongue touching the alveolar ridge in the same position as for consonant /t/. When the tongue closure is released, the air from outside is sucked in and produces the click.
- The same dental click is used in another interjection, the informal equivalent of "no" ("nu" in Romanian). Only one click is emitted, usually as an answer to a yes/no question. Although there is rarely any accompanying sound, the usual spelling is "nt" or "nt̪," in which the additional "n" has the role of showing either the fact that the click is pronounced stronger, or that the mouth shape before the click is approximately the same as for consonant /n/.
- An interjection that is reluctant to receiving a generally accepted written form is the one pronounced as /a'ha/, but with the mouth shut, and starting with a [glottal stop](#). A possible spelling is "mhm," but in literature "îhî" is generally preferred, although phonetically it is different. This interjection is used as an approval, the answer "yes," or as a sign that the listener is following the story. Phonetically similar, but semantically different, is the English interjection "ahem."
- Another interjection, meaning "no," could be explained as the pronunciation of /a a/ with the mouth shut. Note that the stress pattern is opposite to the previous example, and that the two voicings start with [glottal stops](#), like the English "uh-oh." Possible spellings include: "î-î," "îm-îm," and "m-m."
- Other interjections employing particular consonants are:
 - "Pfu," to express contempt or dissatisfaction, starting with the [voiceless bilabial fricative](#) /ɸ/, sounding like (but being different from) the English "whew," which expresses relief after an effort or danger.
 - "Câh," to express disgust, ending in the [voiceless velar fricative](#) /x/, similar in meaning to English "ugh."
 - "Hm" or "hmm," to show that the speaker is thinking before giving an answer, or to convey the meaning of "let's see..." is pronounced with the mouth shut releasing the air flow through

the nose, without a glottal stop. Depending on the intonation this interjection can take up other meanings as well.

- o "Brrr," to express shivering cold, is made up of a single consonant, the [bilabial trill](#), whose [IPA](#) symbol is /ʙ/. The spelling with several letters **r** is misleading, as the tongue doesn't play an active role; the actual *labial* place of articulation is indicated by letter **b**.

[[edit](#)] Prosody

[[edit](#)] Stress

Romanian has a [stress accent](#), like almost all other [Romance languages](#) (with the notable exception of [French](#)). The position of the stress in a word is usually unpredictable, as it can fall on almost any syllable, making it an intrinsic property of the word. Except for one-syllable words, the stress must be learned with each word. In the examples below, the stress is indicated in the phonetic transcription by a small vertical line *before* the stressed syllable.

frate /'fra.te/ *brother*, copil /ko'pil/ *child*
strugure /'stru.gu.re/ *grape*, albastru /al'bas.tru/ *blue*, călător /kə.lə'tor/ *voyager*

Stress is not normally marked in writing, except occasionally to distinguish between homographs, or in dictionaries for the entry words. When it is marked, the main vowel of the stressed syllable receives an accent (usually [acute](#), but sometimes [grave](#)), for example **véselă** - **vesélă** (*jovial*, fem. sg. - *tableware*). If the accent must be placed on low-case letter "i," the dot is normally replaced by the accent: **copîi** - **cópii** (*children* - *copies*).

In verb conjugation, noun declension, and other word formation processes, stress shifts can occur. Verbs can have homographic forms only distinguished by stress, such as in "el suflă" which can mean "he blows" or "he blew" depending on whether the stress is on the first or the second syllable, respectively. Changing the grammatical category of a word can lead to similar word pairs, such as the verb "a albi" /al'bi/ (*to whiten*) compared to the adjective "albi" /'alb/ (*white*, masc. pl.).

[[edit](#)] Rhythm

Languages such as [English](#), [Russian](#), and [Arabic](#) are called [stress-timed](#), meaning that [syllables](#) are pronounced at a lower or higher rate so as to achieve a roughly equal time interval between [stressed](#) syllables. Another category of languages are [syllable-timed](#), which means that each syllable takes about the same amount of time, regardless of the position of the stresses in the sentence. Romanian is one of the syllable-timed languages, along with other Romance languages ([French](#), [Spanish](#), etc.), [Telugu](#), [Yoruba](#), and many others. (A third timing system is [mora timing](#), exemplified by [Classical Latin](#), [Fijian](#), [Finnish](#), [Hawaiian](#), [Japanese](#), and [Old English](#).)

The distinction between these timing categories may sometimes seem unclear, and definitions vary. In addition, the time intervals between stresses/syllables/morae are in reality only approximately equal, with many exceptions and large deviations having been reported. However, while the actual time may be only approximately equal, the differences are perceptually identical.

In the case of Romanian, consonant clusters are often found both in the syllable [onset](#) and [coda](#), which require physical time to be pronounced. The syllable timing rule is then overridden by slowing down the

rhythm. Thus, it is seen that stress and syllable timing interact. The sample sentences below, each consisting of six syllables, are illustrative:

Mama pune masa. -- *Mom sets the table.*

Mulți puști blonzi plâng prin curți. -- *Many blond kids cry in the courtyards.*

The total time length taken by each of these sentences is obviously different, and attempting to pronounce one of them with the same rhythm as the other results in unnatural utterances. Note that the second sentence features in several places the non-syllabic vowel /j/ which has the effect of lengthening the syllable time.

To a lesser extent, but still perceivably, the syllables are extended in time also on one hand by the presence of liquid and nasal consonants, and on the other by that of semivowels in diphthongs and triphthongs, such as shown in the examples below.

Romanian	English
pic - plic	<i>bit - envelope</i>
cec - cerc	<i>check - circle</i>
zic - zinc	<i>I say - zinc</i>
car - chiar	<i>carriage - even</i>
sare - soare	<i>salt - sun</i>
sta - stea	<i>to stay - star</i>
fî - fii	<i>be (inf.) - be (imperative)</i>

A simple way to evaluate the length of a word, and compare it to another, consists in pronouncing it repeatedly at a natural speech rate.

[\[edit\]](#) Intonation

A detailed description of the [intonation](#) patterns must consider a wide range of elements, such as the focus of the sentence, the theme and the rheme, emotional aspects, etc. In this section only a few general traits of the Romanian intonation are discussed. Most importantly, intonation is essential in [questions](#), especially because, unlike English and other languages, Romanian does not distinguish grammatically declarative and interrogative sentences.

In **non-emphatic yes/no questions** the pitch rises at the end of the sentence until the last stressed syllable. If unstressed syllables follow, they often have a falling intonation, but this is not a rule.

- Ai stins lumina? [ai stins lu ↗ mi ↘ na] (*Have you turned off the lights?*)
- Da. (*I did.*)

In Transylvanian speech these yes/no questions have a very different intonation pattern, usually with a pitch peak at the beginning of the question: [ai ↗ stins lumi ↘ na]

In **selection questions** the tone rises at the first element of the selection, and falls at the second.

- Vrei bere sau vin? [vrei ↗ bere sau ↘ vin] (*Do you want beer or wine?*)
- Bere. (*Beer.*)

Wh-questions start with a high pitch on the first word and then the pitch falls gradually toward the end of the sentence.

- Cine a lăsat ușa deschisă? [ˈcine ↘ a lăsat ușa deschisă] (*Who left the door open?*)
- Mama. (*Mom did.*)

Repeat questions have a rising intonation.

- A sunat Rodica adineauri. (*Rodica just called.*)
- Cine a sunat? [cine a su ↗ nat] (*Who called?*)
- Colega ta, Rodica. (*Your classmate, Rodica.*)

Tag questions are uttered with a rising intonation.

- Ți-e foame, nu-i așa? [ți-e foame, nu-i a ↗ șa] (*You're hungry, aren't you?*)

Unfinished utterances have a rising intonation similar to that of yes/no questions, but the pitch rise is smaller.

- După ce m-am întors... [după ce m-am în ↗ tors...] (*After I came back...*)

Various other intonation patterns are used to express: requests, commands, surprise, suggestion, advice, and so on.

Romanian Grammar

1. Romanian nouns

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Gender

Gender

Romanian [nouns](#) are categorized into three [genders](#), masculine, feminine, and neuter, a feature preserved from [Latin](#). Nouns which in their dictionary form ([singular](#), [nominative](#), with no [article](#)) end in a [consonant](#) or in [vowel/semivowel](#) **u** are mostly masculine or neuter; if they end in **ă** or **a** they are usually feminine. In the [plural](#), ending **i** corresponds generally to masculine nouns, whereas feminine and neuter nouns often end in **e**. As there are many exceptions to these rules, each noun has to be learned together with its gender.

Examples:

- Masculine: *om* (man, human being), *bou* (ox), *copac* (tree);
- Neuter: *drum* (road), *cadou* (present, gift), *exemplu* (example);
- Feminine: *bunică* (grandmother), *carte* (book), *cafea* (coffee).

For nouns designating people and animals the grammatical gender can only be masculine or feminine, and is strictly determined by the biological sex, no matter the phonetics of the noun. For example nouns like *tată* (father) and *popă* (priest) are masculine as they refer to male people, although phonetically they are similar to a large category of feminine nouns. Compare for example the [German](#) nouns *Kind* (child) and *Mädchen* (girl) which are neuter.

For native speakers the general rule for [determining a noun's gender](#) relies on the "one-two" test, which consists in inflecting the noun to both the singular and the plural, together with the [numbers](#) *one* and *two*. Depending on the gender, the numbers will have different forms for each of the three genders, as illustrated below.

- Masculine: *un om, doi oameni* (one human being, two human beings), *un iepure, doi iepuri* (one rabbit, two rabbits). In this case both *un* and *doi* are in their masculine forms.
- Feminine: *o fată, două fete* (one girl, two girls), *o pasăre, două păsări* (one bird, two birds). In this case both *o* and *două* are in their feminine forms.
- Neuter: *un corp, două corpuri* (one body, two bodies), *un sertar, două sertare* (one drawer, two drawers). In this case *un* is in its masculine form while *două* is in its feminine form. This is the only case in which the two numbers have different genders.

Note: [Romanian numbers](#) generally have a single form regardless of the gender of the determined noun. Exceptions are the numbers *un/o* (one) *doi/două* (two) and all the numbers made up of two or more digits when the last digit is 1 or 2; these have masculine and feminine forms. Unlike languages such as [Russian](#), in Romanian there is no neutral form for numbers, adjectives or other noun determiners.

An intrinsic property of Romanian [nouns](#), as in all [Romance languages](#), is their [gender](#). However, while most Romance languages have only two genders, **masculine** and **feminine**, Romanian has a third one, the **neuter**. In Latin, the neuter is a separate gender, requiring all [determiners](#) to have three distinct forms, such as the adjective *bona, bonus, bonum* (meaning *good*). Comparatively, Romanian neuter is a *combination* of the other two genders. More specifically, in Romanian, neuter nouns behave **in the singular as masculine nouns** and **in the plural as feminine nouns**. As such, all noun determiners and all pronouns only have two possible gender-specific forms instead of three. From this perspective, one can say that in Romanian there are really just two genders, masculine and feminine, and the category labeled as neuter contains nouns whose gender switches with the number.

Depending on gender, otherwise similar nouns will [inflect](#) differently. For example, the nouns "câine" (*dog*, compare Latin *canis*) and "pâine" (*bread*, compare Latin *panis*) have phonetically identical endings in the main form (nominative singular), but the former is a masculine noun, while the latter is feminine. For this reason, when inflected they behave in very different manners:

- definite article: "câinele" (*the dog*) - "pâinea" (*the bread*);
- plural, with definite article: "câinii" (*the dogs*) - "pâinile" (*the loafs of bread*);
- genitive/dative: "câinelui" (*of/to the dog*) - "pâinii" (*of/to the bread*).

Also, the gender of a noun determines the morphology of most determiners, such as articles, adjectives, demonstratives, numerals. The two nouns taken as examples above will give:

- indefinite article: "un câine" (*a dog*) - "o pâine" (*a loaf of bread*);
- adjective: "câine alb" (*white dog*) - "pâine albă" (*white bread*);
- determinative demonstrative: "acest câine" (*this dog*) - "această pâine" (*this bread*);

- determinative possessive pronoun: "câinele meu" (*my dog*) - "pâinea mea" (*my bread*);
- cardinal numeral: "doi câini" (*two dogs*) - "două pâini" (*two loafs of bread*), etc.

While in many cases assigning the correct gender may be facilitated by the noun ending or meaning, the distinction is usually difficult for those learning Romanian as a second language. For natives, the *one-two* test is practically infallible: Saying "un câine - doi câini" makes it clear, by the form of the determining numerals, that "câine" is masculine. When the numerals take the forms "o ... - două ..." the noun in question is feminine, and finally the forms "un ... - două ..." are indicative of a neuter noun.

[[edit](#)] Gender assignment: phonetic

The following phonetic rules can be used, to some degree, to infer the grammatical gender for nouns when these are in their nominative singular form, and without any determiner that could help in recognizing the gender.

- Nouns ending in a **consonant** or in [vowel](#) or [semivowel](#) **u** are almost always masculine or neuter:
 - masculine: "om" (*man, human being*), "copil" (*child*), "bou" (*ox, bull*);
 - neuter: "ac" (*needle*), "drum" (*road*), "ou" (*egg*), "lucru" (*thing, job*);
 - feminine proper nouns of foreign origin or diminutives: "Carmen", "Corinuș" (diminutive from "Corina"), "Catrinel", "Lulu."
- Nouns ending in **ă** are feminine with very few exceptions:
 - feminine: "fată" (*girl*), "piatră" (*stone*), "haină" (*coat*);
 - masculine: "tată" (*father*), "popă" (*priest*);
- Nouns ending in *stressed a* (including those ending in stressed **ea** or **ia**) are feminine:
 - "sofa" (*sofa*), "cafea" (*coffee*), "nuia" (*wicker*).
- Nouns ending in **e** are generally feminine, but many masculine and a few neuter exceptions exist:
 - feminine: "carte" (*book*), "femeie" (*woman*), "mare" (*sea*), "cheie" (*key*);
 - masculine: "frate" (*brother*), "iepure" (*hare, rabbit*), "perete" (*wall*);
 - neuter: "nume" (*name*).
- Nouns ending in **i** are mostly masculine or neuter, with some feminine exceptions:
 - masculine: "ochi" (*eye*), "pui" (*chicken*), "unchi" (*uncle*);
 - neuter: "unghi" (*angle*), "ceai" (*tea*), "cui" (*nail*), "nai" (*Pan's pipe*);
 - feminine: "zi" (*day*), "tanti" (*aunt*).

These rules can be further refined when the noun is recognized as being derived from other words by use of specific endings, as follows:

- Masculine nouns:
 - **-ist**: "chimist" (*chemist*), "jurnalist" (*journalist*);
 - **-an, -ian**: "american" (*American*), "fizician" (*physicist*);
 - **-or, -tor**: "profesor" (*teacher, professor*), "muncitor" (*worker*);
 - **-ez**: "englez" (*Englishman*), "chinez" (*Chinese*);
 - **-ar**: "demnitar" (*statesman*), "fierar" (*blacksmith*);
 - others: "geamgiu" (*glazier*), "paznic" (*guard*), "frizer" (*hairdresser*), "român" (*Romanian*), etc.

- Neuter nouns:
 - **-ism**: "capitalism" (*capitalism*), "arhaism" (*archaism*);
 - **-ment, -mânt**: "amuzament" (*amusement*), "abonament" (*subscription*), "învățământ" (*education*) - but "ferment" (*ferment*) is masculine;
 - **-ut, -it, -at**, derived from the past participle of verbs: "început" (*beginning*), "trecut" (*past*), "sfârșit" (*end*), "morărit" (*milling*), "uscat" (*land*), "oftat" (*sigh*);
 - **-aj**: "sondaj" (*poll*), "garaj" (*garage*), "afișaj" (*display*).
- Feminine nouns:
 - **-oare, -toare**: "onoare" (*honor*), "înotătoare" (*swimmer*) - but "soare" is masculine;
 - **-are, -ere, -ire, -âre**, derived from the long infinitive of verbs: "salvare" (*ambulance*), "plăcere" (*pleasure*), "amintire" (*recollection*), "hotărâre" (*decision*);
 - **-siune/tiune**, abstract nouns: "emisiune" (*broadcast, TV show*), "versiune" (*version*), "dimensiune" (*dimension*), "chestiune" (*question*);
 - **-tate**, abstract nouns: "libertate" (*liberty, freedom*), "greutate" (*difficulty*), "calitate" (*quality*), "rapiditate" (*quickness*);
 - **-tudine**, abstract nouns: "longitudine" (*longitude*), "latitudine" (*latitude*);
 - others: "bucurie" (*joy*), etc.

[[edit](#)] Gender assignment: semantic

Rules other than phonetic can be used when the **meaning** of the noun is known or at least its semantic group is recognized. In this category obvious examples are proper names of people, or nouns designating nationality, profession, etc. Nouns referring to animals and birds are always specific to their biological gender, and often occur in pairs the same way as we have *cow* and *bull* in English. Less obvious situations are described below.

- Masculine nouns:
 - most tree names: "brad" (*fir*), "stejar" (*oak*), "mesteacăn" (*birch*), but some are feminine: "salcie" (*willow*), "magnolie" (*magnolia*);
 - mountains and mountain chains, often in the plural: "Carpați" (*Carpathians*), "Bucegi," "Retezat," "Făgăraș". (Because mountains are naturally referred to as, e.g., "the Carpathian mountains", and "mountain" is masculine, its gender "bleeds" to the proper noun, as if it were an adjective; it is possible to construct feminine versions of these names, though they are not used. This often happens for other notable reliefs.)
 - others: months of the year, letters of the alphabet, musical notes, figures, etc.
- Feminine nouns:
 - names of countries and continents when they end in **a**: "Franța" (*France*), "Japonia" (*Japan*), "America" (*America*), otherwise they are neuter: "Mexic" (*Mexico*), "Vietnam" (*Vietnam*);
 - the seasons of the year: "vară" (*summer*), "iarnă" (*winter*);
 - the days of the week: "luni" (*Monday*), "duminică" (*Sunday*). (The word for *day* is feminine, "zi".)

[[edit](#)] Number

Number

Romanian has two [numbers](#): singular and [plural](#). Morphologically the plural form is built by adding specific endings to the singular form. For example, nominative nouns without the definite article form the plural by adding one of the endings **-i, -uri, -e**,

or **-le**. The plural formation mechanism, often involving other changes in the word structure, is an intrinsic property of each noun and has to be learned together with it.

Examples:

- **-i**: *pom* - *pomi* (tree), *cal* - *cai* (horse), *tată* - *tați* (father), *barcă* - *bărci* (boat);
- **-uri**: *tren* - *trenuri* (train), *treabă* - *treburi* (job, task), *cort* - *corturi* (tent);
- **-e**: *pai* - *paie* (straw), *masă* - *mese* (table, meal), *teatru* - *teatre* (theater);

-le: *stea* - *stele* (star), *cafea* - *cafele* (coffee), *pijama* - *pijamale* (pajama)

Like all [Indo-European languages](#), Romanian differentiates morphologically the [singular](#) and the [plural number](#) of nouns. Within the [Romance languages](#), regarding the plural formation, Romanian falls in the group East from the [La Spezia-Rimini line](#) together with [Italian](#). As such, the plural is formed by the addition or change of the final vowel of the singular noun, very often accompanied by other vocalic and/or consonantic shifts in the noun stem, consonant deletion, and/or the interposition of other phonemes. Occasionally, the plural noun has the same form as the singular. A few nouns are defective by missing either the singular or the plural. Finally, some nouns can form the plural in several ways, depending on the meaning. To illustrate, here are just a few examples:

- simple vocalic addition: "elev" - "elevi" (*school student*);
- simple vocalic replacement: "mamă" - "mame" (*mother*);
- vocalic shift in the stem: "măr" - "mere" (*apple*);
- consonantic shift in the stem: "perete" - "pereți" (*wall*);
- consonant deletion in the stem: "cal" - "cai" (*horse*);
- interposition of other phonemes: "cap" - "capete" (*head*);
- plural identical with singular: "unchi" - "unchi" (*uncle*);
- only singular: "rouă" (*dew*);
- only plural: "grâne" (*grain/crops*);
- multiple plural forms: "cap" - "capete" / "capi" / "capuri" (*head / leader / cape*);

Most Romanian plural nouns, in their nominative non-articulated forms, end in "i" with another large category ending in "e". Only some recent borrowings make up the very few exceptions to this rule, which seems to be a very stable feature of the language. Among the old Romanian nouns the only exception is "ou" /oũ/ (*egg*), which due to its particular phonology makes the plural as "ouă" /o.ă/. Comparatively, the phonetically similar adjective "nou" /noũ/ (*new*) forms its plural as "noi" /noĩ/ at all genders, but such a pattern could not be applied to "ou" since "oi" /oĩ/ was already the plural of the equally old noun "oaie" /'ða.ïe/ (*sheep*).

Morphologically, the plural is built by using one of the following four endings: **-i**, **-uri**, **-e**, and **-(e)le**. Of these, the last one used to have few representatives, such as "stea" - "stele" (*star*) and "nuia" - "nuiele" (*wicker*). Subsequent borrowings enlarged this group, in particular a series of nouns from [Turkish](#) ending in stressed "a" which were assigned to the feminine gender (although Turkish nouns do not have gender).

[\[edit\]](#) Plural formation

Like the gender, the plural formation is an intrinsic property of the noun, and is acquired by native speakers one by one together with the respective noun. The tables below show the plural formation modes for nouns according to their gender, in the non-articulated nominative/accusative case. The asterisc (*) indicates irregular plural formation, requiring the insertion of consonants belonging neither to the stem nor to the plural ending, the deletion of stem consonants, or some unusual vocalic shifts.

Plural of *masculine nouns*

Singular	Plural	Examples
		pom - pomi (<i>tree</i>)
-cons.	-cons.+i	doctor - doctori (<i>doctor</i>) copil -* copii (<i>children</i>) om -* oameni (<i>man, human being</i>)
-u	-i	codru - codri (<i>forest</i>) leu - lei (<i>lion</i>)
-e	-i	frate - frați (<i>brother</i>) pește - pești (<i>fish</i>)
-i	-i	ochi - ochi (<i>forest</i>) unchi - unchi (<i>uncle</i>)
-ă	-i	tată - tați (<i>father</i>) popă - popi (<i>priest</i>)

Plural of *feminine nouns*

Singular	Plural	Examples
		casă - case (<i>house</i>)
-ă	-e	fată - fete (<i>girl</i>) zi -* zile (<i>day</i>) lună - luni (<i>moon, month</i>)
-ă	-i	barcă - bărci (<i>boat</i>) soră -* surori (<i>sister</i>) mână -* mâini (<i>hand</i>)
-ă	-uri	marfă - mărfuri (<i>merchandise</i>) dulceață - dulcețuri (<i>jam</i>)
-e	-i	carte - cărți (<i>book</i>) vale -* văi (<i>valey</i>)
-vowel+ie	-vowel+i	baie - băi (<i>bathroom</i>) felie - felii (<i>slice</i>)
-cons.+ie	-cons.+ii	frecție - frecții (<i>massage</i>) farfurie - farfurii (<i>plate</i>)
-a	-ale	basma - basmale (<i>head kerchief</i>) pijama - pijamale (<i>pajamas</i>)
-ea	-ele	cafea - cafele (<i>coffee</i>) saltea - saltele (<i>mattress</i>)
-i	-i	miercuri - miercuri (<i>Wednesday</i>) tanti - tanti (<i>aunt</i>)

Plural of *neuter nouns*

Singular	Plural	Examples
-cons.	-cons.+uri	vin - vinuri (<i>wine</i>) loc - locuri (<i>place</i>)
-cons.	-cons.+e	picior - picioare (<i>foot, leg</i>) oraș - orașe (<i>city</i>) cap -* capete (<i>head</i>)
-u	-uri	lucru - lucruri (<i>thing</i>) pariu - pariuri (<i>bet</i>)
-u	-e	muzeu - muzee (<i>museum</i>) teatru - teatre (<i>theater</i>)

-u	-ă	ou - ouă (<i>egg</i>)
-iu /i̯u/	-ii /i̯i/	exercițiu - exerciții (<i>exercise</i>) fotoliu - fotolii (<i>armchair</i>)
-iu /i̯ũ/	-ie /i.e/	sicriu - sicrie (<i>coffin</i>) burghiu - burghie (<i>drill</i>)
-i /i/	-ie /i̯e/	tramvai - tramvaie (<i>tram</i>) pai - paie (<i>straw</i>)
-i /i/	-iuri	taxi - taxiuri (<i>taxi</i>)
-e	-e	nume - nume (<i>name</i>) prenume - prenume (<i>first name</i>)

[[edit](#)] Pronunciation of plural endings

In writing, all masculine nouns and part of the feminine and neuter nouns end in letter "i" in the plural. However, this letter can correspond phonetically to either vowel /i/, semivowel /i̯/, or non-syllabic /i̯/ (see [Romanian phonology](#)). The exact pronunciation depends on the preceding phonemes:

- after a vowel, it is pronounced as semivowel /i̯/, as in
 - "lei" /le̯i/ (*lions*),
 - "văi" /və̯i/ (*valleys*),
 - "exerciții" /eg.zer'tʃi.tsi̯/ (*exercises*);
- after a consonant or consonant group, it is pronounced as non-syllabic /i̯/, as in
 - "frați" /frat̪i̯/ (*brothers*),
 - "bărci" /bər̪tʃi̯/ (*boats*),
 - "locuri" /lo.kur̪i̯/ (*places*);
- after a consonant group, in nouns that require an additional syllable, it is pronounced as vowel /i/. The need of an additional syllable is phonetic, and is indicated in the masculine singular by the presence of vowel /u/. Examples:
 - "codru" /ko.dru/ - "codri" /ko.dri/ (*forest*),
 - "zimbri" /zim.bru/ - "zimbri" /zim.bri/ (*aurochs*),
 - but "tanti" /tan.ti/ (both pl. and sg., *aunt*).

The plural ending "e" is always a vowel and does not represent a pronunciation problem.

Despite many plural endings changing the number of syllables in the nouns, the word stress does not generally shift. The only exceptions are a few irregular nouns such as: "soră" /so.rə/ - "surori" /su'ror̪i/ and (*sister*), "noră" /no.rə/ - "nurori" /nu'ror̪i/ (*daughter-in-law*).

[[edit](#)] Case

Case

Romanian has inherited from Latin five [cases](#): [nominative](#), [genitive](#), [dative](#), [accusative](#), and [vocative](#). Morphologically the nominative and the accusative are identical; similarly the genitive and the dative share the same form. The vocative is less used as it is normally restricted to nouns designating people or other things we can address; additionally, nouns in the vocative often borrow the nominative form even when there is a distinct vocative form available.

The genitive-dative form is obtained from the nominative. If the noun is determined by an indefinite article then the genitive-dative mark is applied to the article, not to the noun, for example *un băiat - unui băiat* (a boy - of/to a boy); however, for feminine nouns the *plural* form is used even in the singular, for example *o carte - unei cărți* (a book - of/to a book). Similarly, if the noun is determined by the definite article ([enclitic](#) in Romanian, see that section), the genitive-dative mark is added at the end of the noun together with the article, for example *băiatul - băiatului* (the boy - of/to the boy), *cartea - cărții* (the book - of/to the book). Masculine proper names designating people form the genitive-dative by placing the article *lui* before the noun: *lui Brâncuși* (of/to [Brâncuși](#)); the same applies to feminine names only when they don't have a typically feminine ending: *lui Carmen*.

In usual genitival phrases such as *numele trandafirului* (the name of the rose), the genitive is only recognized by the specific ending (*-lui* in this example) and no other words are necessary. However, in other situations the genitival article is required, as for example in *câteva opere ale scriitorului* (some of the writer's works).

Romanian dative phrases have the particularity called [clitic doubling](#) similar to that in [Spanish](#), in which the noun in the dative is doubled by a pronoun. The position of this pronoun in the sentence depends on the [mood](#) and [tense](#) of the [verb](#). For example, in the sentence *Le dau un cadou părinților* (I give a present to [my] parents), the pronoun *le* doubles the noun *părinților* without bringing any additional information.

Syntactically, Romanian nouns can be in any of five [grammatical cases](#):

- [nominative](#), when the noun is the subject;
- [genitive](#), when the noun shows the possessor;
- [dative](#), when the noun shows the receiver of an action;
- [accusative](#), when the noun is the direct object, often also required by prepositions;
- [vocative](#), when the noun shows the (usually animate) addressee of what is said.

The short definitions above are only an approximate indication of the actual usage. Here are some examples with the noun "băiat" (*boy*) in the various cases:

Case	Example
Nominative	Băiatul vecinilor mi-a adus scrisoarea. (<i>The neighbors' boy brought me the letter.</i>)
Genitive	Ochii băiatului erau plini de lacrimi. (<i>The boy's eyes were full of tears.</i>)
Dative	I-am spus băiatului să se liniștească. (<i>I told the boy to calm down.</i>)
Accusative	Am dus băiatul până în fața casei lui. (<i>I led the boy up to in front of his house.</i>)
Vocative	— Băiete , așteaptă până se întorc părinții tăi. (<i>Boy, wait until your parents come back.</i>)

Morphologically, the five cases are expressed by giving the nouns three different forms. The **nominative** and the **accusative** share the same form, the distinction being made from the context, word order, or by the use of particular prepositions. Similarly, the **genitive** and the **dative** share the same form, distinguished syntactically or by the presence of possession articles when the nouns are in the genitive case. The **vocative** is less used than the other four, because it is limited to people, animals, or other things that can be addressed.

Comparatively, other [Romance languages](#), although maintaining a syntactic distinction between cases, have reduced them to a single form and replaced morphological variation with the use of specific prepositions. [Latin](#) used to have up to seven cases, the Romanian five plus the [ablative](#) and the [locative](#).

The case mark is always applied to the article, definite or indefinite, that determines the noun, and sometimes also to the noun itself. The indefinite article, like its English counterpart, is placed before the noun as a separate word, and has in Romanian different forms for the nominative/accusative and for the genitive/dative (the vocative cannot be determined by an indefinite article). On the other hand, the Romanian [definite article](#) is always appended as an ending (see [enclitic](#)). As the plural mark and the case mark are attached also at the end of the word, the declension becomes a complex process of combining all three endings: The definite article has special forms for the various cases and numbers, and is placed *after* the plural mark with possible phonetic changes to make the word easily pronounceable.

The table below gives the complete paradigm of the masculine noun "bou" (*ox*).

	Singular		Plural	
	Indefinite article	Definite article	Indefinite article	Definite article
Nominative	un bou	boul	niște boi	boii
Accusative	/un 'boʊ/ (<i>an ox</i>)	/'bo.ul/ (<i>the ox</i>)	/niʃ.te 'boi/ (<i>some oxen</i>)	/'bo.i.ɨ/ (<i>the oxen</i>)
Genitive	unui bou	boului	unor boi	boilor
Dative	/u.nui 'boʊ/ (<i>to/of an ox</i>)	/'bo.u.luɨ/ (<i>to/of the ox</i>)	/u.nor 'boi/ (<i>to/of some oxen</i>)	/'bo.i.lor/ (<i>to/of the oxen</i>)
Vocative	—	boule /'bo.u.le/ (<i>you, ox</i>)	—	boilor /'bo.i.lor/ (<i>you, oxen</i>)

[\[edit\]](#) Declension with the indefinite article

The general rule for the declension of nouns when they are accompanied by the indefinite article is that the article changes form and the noun keeps its main (nominative) form at all cases. The only exception is the singular of feminine nouns in the genitive/dative forms: Interestingly, they use their respective **plural** nominative forms in addition to inflecting the indefinite article. The tables below give a few examples. Three nouns from each gender were chosen as representatives:

masculine "pom" (*tree*), "frate" (*brother*), "tată" (*father*);
 neuter "loc" (*place*), "scaun" (*chair*), "exercițiu" (*exercise*);
 feminine "casă" (*house*), "floare" (*flower*), "cafea" (*coffee*).

	Singular		
	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	un pom	un loc	o casă
Accusative	un frate	un scaun	o floare
	un tată	un exercițiu	o cafea
Genitive	unui pom	unui loc	unei case
Dative	unui frate	unui scaun	unei flori
	unui tată	unui exercițiu	unei cafele
	Plural		
	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	niște pomi	niște locuri	niște case
Accusative	niște frați	niște scaune	niște flori
	niște tați	niște exerciții	niște cafele
Genitive	unor pomi	unor locuri	unor case

Dative	unor frați	unor scaune	unor flori
	unor tați	unor exerciții	unor cafele

[\[edit\]](#) Declension with the definite article

In the singular, in the nominative/accusative case, the definite article is **-(u)l** or **-le** for masculine and neuter nouns and **(u)a** for feminine nouns. When these forms are changed for the genitive/dative case, the definite article becomes **-lui** for masculine and neuter nouns and **-i** for feminine. To obtain these forms, the definite article for masculine and neuter simply affix the ending **-ui** after consonant **l** (after removing vowel **e** where it exists). In the case of feminine nouns, the genitive/dative is derived not from the singular but from the *plural* non-articulated forms, by adding a semivocalic **-i** at the end.

In the plural, in the nominative/accusative case, the definite article is **-ii /iî/** for masculine nouns, and **-le** for neuter and feminine nouns. To put these forms into genitive/dative the masculine definite article is changed into **-ilor**, and the neuter and feminine definite article is changed into **-lor**.

Nouns with definite article can also be in the vocative case. In the singular, nouns are either left in their nominative/accusative forms, or given the endings specific to gender: **-le** for masculine and neuter nouns, and **-o** for feminine nouns.

The tables below show examples using the same nouns as previously.

Singular			
	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	pomul	locul	casa
Accusative	fratele	scaunul	floarea
	tatăl	exercițiul	cafeaua
Genitive	pomului	locului	casei
Dative	fratelui	scaunului	florii
	tatălui	exercițiului	cafelei
Vocative	pomule	[locule]	[casă]
	frate	[scaunule]	[floareo]
	tată	[exercițiule]	[cafeao]
Plural			
	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Nominative	pomii	locurile	casele
Accusative	frații	scaunele	florile
	tații	exercițiile	cafelele
Genitive	pomilor	locurilor	caselor
Dative	fraților	scaunelor	florilor
	taților	exercițiilor	cafelelor
Vocative	pomilor	[locurilor]	[caselor]
	fraților	[scaunelor]	[florilor]
	taților	[exercițiilor]	[cafelelor]

For the vocative, the square brackets are used where the respective forms can be imagined, but are not normally used. Additionally, some nouns can have two versions of vocative which can express slightly different attitudes toward the person (animal, thing, etc.) that is being addressed. For example, "iubit"

(lover) has two vocative forms: "iubite" and "iubitule". The first sounds more direct and might be found in poems and song lyrics (*Oh, my darling!*), while the second sounds more natural in everyday life (*Honey!*).

The genitive/dative forms require a special mention in the case of proper nouns representing people's names. For men's names, the inflection is replaced by placing the article **lui** before the noun, as a separate word.

- Am citit poeziile **lui Eminescu** de nenumărate ori. (*I've read **Eminescu's** poems countless times.*)
- I-am dat **lui Mihai** prăjitura ta. (*I gave your cake **to Mihai**.*)

The same construction is sometimes applied to women's names, but the practice is considered by [prescriptive grammar](#) as incorrect, with the exception of feminine proper nouns that have a masculine-like ending:

- fusta **Mariei** / *fusta **lui Maria** (*Mary's skirt*)
- fusta lui Carmen / *fusta Carmenei (*Carmen's skirt*)

For proper nouns other than those referring to people, the genitive is constructed by inflection, like the common nouns.

[\[edit\]](#) Case usage

The following subsections describe the usage of each case.

[\[edit\]](#) Nominative

[Nominative](#) is the case of the [subject](#) and of the [predicate nominal](#). Here are some examples:

- **Subject:**
 - Apa trece, **pietrele** rămân. (*Water passes, **rocks** stay.*)
 - **Poștașul** sună întotdeauna de două ori. (*The **postman** always rings twice.*)
 - Mă doare **capul**. (*I have a headache. - lit. The **head** hurts me.*)
 - Îmi plac **merele**. (*I like apples - lit. **Apples** are likable to me.*)
- **Predicate nominal:**
 - Fotografia este **o artă**. (*Photography is **an art**.*)
 - Ochii sunt **oglinza** sufletului. (*The eyes are **the soul's mirror**.*)
 - Roma a devenit **un imperiu**. (*Rome became **an empire**.*)

[\[edit\]](#) Genitive

[Genitive](#) usually indicates *possession* or *belonging*, but is also used to show *origin* and others kinds of relationship. Additionally, while most [prepositions](#) require the noun they determine to take the accusative, there are some exceptions in which the genitive (or the dative) is required.

The genitive is most often used in the pattern *noun for possessed* + *noun for possessor*, with the noun denoting the possessor in the genitive case, like for example "balonul copilului" means *child's balloon* (lit. *the balloon of the child*). In such a construction, if the possessed ("balonul", *the balloon*) has the definite article attached to it—the most usual situation—and the possessor ("copilului", *of the child*) comes immediately after, no other words are necessary to express the genitival relationship.

- Ochii **bunicului** sunt albaștri. (*Grandfather's eyes are blue.*)
- Fiul **vecinilor** intră mereu în bucluc. (*The neighbor's son always gets into trouble.*)

In any other construction involving the genitive, the so-called [genitival article](#) (also named [possessive article](#)) must be used, corresponding roughly to the English "of the". This can happen (1) when the possessed has the indefinite article, (2) when other words intervene between the two parts, or (3) when the possessed and possessor switch order in the sentence. The genitival article must agree in number and gender with the possessed, and has the forms below.

	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Singular	al		a
Plural	ai		ale

- **Indefinite article:**
 - Era un mare iubitor **al artelor**. (*He was a great art lover. - lit. lover of the arts*)
 - Au participat și reprezentanți **ai guvernului**. (*Government representatives also took part. - lit. representatives of the government*)
- **Intervening words:**
 - Diametrul aparent **al Lunii** este egal cu **al Soarelui**. (*The Moon's apparent diameter is equal to the Sun's.*)
 - Așa scrie în lecția 10 **a manualului**. (*This is what lesson 10 in the textbook says. - lit. lesson 10 of the textbook*)
- **Reversal** of possessed and possessor, especially in poetry:
 - **Al vieții** vis de aur ca un fulger, ca o clipă-i. ([Eminescu](#): *Life's golden dream is like a flash, like a blink.*)

[\[edit\]](#) Prepositions requiring the genitive

Some prepositions and preposition compounds require the noun they determine to be in the genitive case. Examples:

- *asupra* (*regarding*): o discuție asupra **fluxului** de lucru (*a discussion regarding the workflow, - lit. regarding the flow of the work*);
- *împotriva* (*against*): voturi împotriva **creșterii** impozitului (*votes against tax increase, - lit. against the increase of the tax*);
- *deasupra* (*above*), *înapoia* (*behind*), *înaintea* (*before*), *înăuntrul* (*inside*);
- *în fața* (*in front of*), *în timpul* (*during*), *în jurul* (*around*);
- *la începutul* (*at the beginning of*), *la mijlocul* (*in the middle of*), *la sfârșitul* (*at the end of*);
- *din cauza* (*because of*), *cu ocazia* (*on the occasion of*), *în numele* (*on behalf of*).

Nouns in the genitive can occur in series, as in "culoarea jucăriei copilului prietenului meu" (*my friend's child's toy's color*), but as in English more than three successive nouns become difficult to understand and are considered bad use of the language.

[\[edit\]](#) Dative

The dative is used for the indirect object, that is, the noun representing the person/object that *receives* the action indicated by the verb. The dative is required by a particular series of verbs, many of which express the general idea of *giving*, hence the name. Examples:

- a da (*to give*): I-am dat **câinelui** sandvișul meu. (*I gave my sandwich to the dog.*);
- a spune (*to tell*): Le spui **colegilor** să nu vină mâine? (*Will you tell your workmates not to come tomorrow?*);
- a cere (*to ask for*), a explica (*to explain*), a oferi (*to offer*), a arăta (*to show*), etc;
- Not related to the idea of giving: a folosi (*to be useful to*), a dăuna (*to harm*).

[edit] Clitic doubling

As in the examples above, the dative noun in such constructions is almost always *doubled* by a *personal pronoun*, itself in the dative case, which is placed near the *verb* no matter where the noun is in the sentence. Although not including this logically redundant pronoun does not affect the meaning and still produces grammatically correct sentences, native speakers seldom fail to include it. Depending on the verb mood, tense, and initial phoneme, the doubling personal pronoun will change in several regards: (1) which form, stressed or unstressed, of the pronoun is used, (2) the position relative to the verb or verb parts, and (3) whether it is a true *clitic* attached phonetically to the verb or it is a separate word.

The table below shows these patterns on two verb examples—one starting with a consonant and the other with a vowel—, "a da" (*to give*) and "a arăta" (*to show*). For personal moods only the first person in the singular is shown, as the other forms behave identically. In each table cell, the upper example is for the singular of the personal pronoun, and the lower one for the plural. In all situations the pronoun has the same form for all genders and only changes with number.

<u>Mood</u>	<u>Tense</u>	a da (<i>to give</i>)	a arăta (<i>to show</i>)
Personal moods:			
Indicative	Present	îi dau	îi arăt, i-arăt
		le dau	le arăt, le-arăt
	Compund perfect	i-am dat	i-am arătat
		le-am dat	le-am arătat
	Pluperfect	îi dădusem	îi arătasem, i-arătasem
		le dădusem	le arătasem, le-arătasem
	Imperfect	îi dădeam	îi arătam, i-arătam
		le dădeam	le arătam, le-arătam
	Simple perfect	îi dădui	îi arătai, i-arătai
		le dădui	le arătai, le-arătai
	Future in the past	aveam să-i dau	aveam să-i arăt, aveam să i-arăt
		aveam să le dau	aveam să le arăt, aveam să le-arăt
	Future	îi voi da	îi voi arăta
le voi da		le voi arăta	
Popular future I	o să-i dau	o să-i arăt, o să i-arăt	
	o să le dau	o să le arăt, o să le-arăt	
Popular future II	am să-i dau	am să-i arăt, am să i-arăt	
	am să le dau	am să le arăt, am să le-arăt	
Future perfect	îi voi fi dat	îi voi fi arătat	
	le voi fi dat	le voi fi arătat	
Popular future	o să-i fi dat	o să-i fi arătat	

	perfect I	o să le fi dat	o să le fi arătat
	Popular future	am să-i fi dat	am să-i fi arătat
	perfect II	am să le fi dat	am să le fi arătat
Subjunctive	Present	să-i dau să le dau	să-i arăt, să i-arăt să le arăt, să le-arăt
	Past	să-i fi dat să le fi dat	să-i fi arătat să le fi arătat
Conditional Optative	Present	i-aș da le-aș da	i-aș arăta le-aș arăta
	Past	i-aș fi dat le-aș fi dat	i-aș fi arătat le-aș fi arătat
Presumptive	Present	i-oi da le-oi da	i-oi arăta le-oi arăta
	Present progressive	i-oi fi dând le-oi fi dând	i-oi fi arătând le-oi fi arătând
	Past	i-oi fi dat le-oi fi dat	i-oi fi arătat le-oi fi arătat
Imperative		dă-i — nu îi da, nu-i da dă-le — nu le da	arată-i — nu îi arăta, nu-i arăta arată-le — nu le arăta, nu le-arăta
<i>Non-personal moods:</i>			
Infinitive	Present	a-i da a le da	a-i arăta a le arăta, a le-arăta
	Past	a-i fi dat a le fi dat	a-i fi arătat a le fi arătat
Gerund		dându-i dându-le	arătându-i arătându-le
Participle	Past	dat dat	arătat arătat
Supine		de dat de dat	de arătat de arătat

As the examples show, when the verb is simple (not compound), the doubling pronoun is placed before the verb and has its stressed form. Exception to this rule make the imperative and the gerund, which require the unstressed form bound at the end of the verb. Also, the past participle and the supine do not require the clitic doubling at all. When the verb is compound and includes the conjunction "să" (approximately equivalent to English *to*) or the infinitive preposition "a", the doubling pronoun is placed immediately after "să" / "a" and takes the unstressed form in the singular ("să-i" and "a-i") and the stressed form in the plural ("să le" and "a le"). In all remaining situations the pronoun is placed before the first element of the compound verb and takes the unstressed form, as in "i-am dat" and "le-am dat".

When the verb starts with a vowel and the doubling pronoun comes right before it the use of the stressed or unstressed is optional. In such cases the shorter (clitic) version one is more frequent in speech and informal writing.

The gerund deserves a special mention, as not only is the doubling pronoun placed *after* the verb, but the verb itself receives an [epenthetic](#) "u". This "u" can be likened to the vowels that take this position in the [Latin](#) gerund, and has become the [Italian](#) "o" as in "*sto facendo*" (*I am doing*).

When the stressed doubling pronoun "îi" is placed before the verb (all parts of the verb, if compound), it can turn into its unstressed form if it binds through [elision](#) to the word before it, as in "nu-i dau" (*I don't give him*), "că-i dau" (*that I give him*), "și-i dau" (*and I give him*).

The imperative mood builds its affirmative and negative forms on different patterns, so that the position of the doubling pronoun is different. Compare "dă-i" → "nu-i da", "dă-le" → "nu le da".

In poetry, archaic or regional speech, or invectives, the order of the compound verb elements can switch, and with them the position of the doubling pronoun will change. Compare: "i-am dat" → "datu-i-am", "le-am dat" → "datu-le-am", "le-aș da" → "da-le-aș". Note also the use of the epenthetic "u" again where otherwise a consonant would come just before the pronoun.

Things are further complicated if another pronoun is present which claims a position near the verb, such as the pronoun that replaces or doubles the direct object. Here are some examples of how such situations are handled.

Depending on the gender of the direct object, the pronoun position can be different in certain cases:

I I-am dat câinelui.	→	i	l-	am dat	câinelui.
		dat. masc. sg.	acc. masc. sg.		dat. masc. sg.
I gave it to the dog.		to him (the dog)	it	I gave	to the dog.
I-am dat-o câinelui.	→	i-	am dat	-o	câinelui.
		dat. masc. sg.	acc. fem. sg.		dat. masc. sg.
I gave it to the dog.		to him (the dog)	I gave	it	to the dog.

If two pronouns having identical forms meet, the pronoun doubling the indirect object drops, as it is optional:

Oasele i le dau câinelui.	→	oasele	i	le	dau	câinelui.
		acc. neut. pl.	dat. masc. sg.	acc. fem. pl.		dat. masc. sg.
I give the bones to the dog.		the bones	to him (the dog)	them (the bones)	I give	to the dog.
Oasele le dau câinilor.	→	oasele	Ø	le	dau	câinilor.
		acc. neut. pl.	dat. masc. pl.	acc. fem. pl.		dat. masc. pl.
I give the bones to the dogs.		the bones	to them (the dogs)	them (the bones)	I give	to the dogs.

[\[edit\]](#) Words requiring the dative

Although most [prepositions](#) require the noun they determine to be in the accusative case, a few must be followed by a noun in the dative. Similarly, the dative is required by some [adjectives](#), many of which conveying the general idea of being (or not) beneficial, or having derived from [verbs](#) that themselves require the dative. A few [adverbs](#) showing comparison fall into the same category. Examples:

- **Prepositions:**
 - datorită (*owing to*): Am reușit datorită ajutorului tău. (*I succeeded owing to your help.*);
 - mulțumită, grație (*thanks to*).

- **Adjectives:**
 - favorabil (*favorable*): Am primit numai mesaje favorabile proiectului nostru. (*We received only messages in favor of our project.*);
 - folositor, util (*useful*), propice (*propitious*), recunoscător (*grateful*), dăunător (*harmful*).
- **Adverbs:**
 - asemenea (*like*): De atâta fericire fața ei strălucea asemenea soarelui. (*With so much happiness her face was shining like the sun.*);
 - similar (*similarly*), conform (*according to*), contrar (*contrary to*).

Depending on the sentence [syntax](#), the adverbs above can also work as adjectives, nevertheless requiring the dative.

[\[edit\]](#) Accusative

The [accusative](#) is mainly the case of the [direct object](#), but other nouns can take the accusative form: those [indirect objects](#) which aren't in the [dative case](#), as well as most circumstantials and attributes built with prepositions. Examples:

- Direct object:

Am spart o **farfurie**. (*I broke a **plate**.*)

Cunoști un **profesor** de chitară? (*Do you know a guitar **instructor**?*)

- Indirect object:

Fiul meu vorbește tot timpul despre **avioane**. (*My son always talks about **airplanes**.*)

Mă gândesc adesea la **copilăria** mea. (*I often think about my **childhood**.*)

- Circumstanțial:

Am ajuns în sfârșit la **gară**. (*We finally arrived at the **station**.*)

Ne ducem la **mare** cu **trenul**. (*We're going to the **sea** by **train**.*)

- Attribute:

Am găsit numărul ei în cartea de **telefon**. (*I found her number in the **phonebook**.*)

Oamenii de la **munte** sunt duri. (***Mountain** people are tough.*)

A particularity of Romanian is that the direct object is marked in certain situations by the [preposition](#) *pe*, which in such constructions loses its original meaning (*on, above*). The usage rules for this marker are complex and insufficiently codified; both semantics and morphology comes into play. Examples of direct object with marker "pe" are given below.

- When the noun designates a person or a personified animal/object:

L-am văzut ieri **pe Mihai**. (*I saw Mihai [**person's name: Michael**] yesterday.*)

L-a împușcat **pe lup** în cap. (*He shot the **wolf** in the head.*)

- When the noun designates an inanimate object, if the subject and the direct object are the same noun and they precede the verb:

Cui **pe cui** se scoate. (Proverb: *A nail takes out a nail.*)

- When the noun is preceded by the comparative adverb *ca* (like):

M-a privit ca **pe un străin**. (*He looked at me as if I were a stranger.*)

The same preposition *pe* is used not only with nouns in accusative, but also with other words having the role of the direct object: pronouns (personal, interrogative, relative, demonstrative, indefinite or negative), numerals acting as pronouns, etc.

[\[edit\]](#) Vocative

As the vocative case gives the noun a distinct charge of familiarity, directness, and immediateness, nouns in the vocative are rarely used alone, except when addressing or calling someone. Most of the time, and particularly in writing, such nouns are used together with specific adjectives such as *drag* (dear) and *stimat* (respected, dear). Also, such adjective+noun constructions often include a possessive pronoun. Examples:

- Vocative alone:
 - Băietel! (*You, boy! or Waiter!*)
 - Măi, Ioane, unde ești? (*Hey, Ion, where are you?*) - *măi* is one of a series of interjections used to address someone
 - Bleguților! (*You, little silly buggers!*)
 - Eleno! (*Elena, dear!*)
 - Doamnelor! (*Ladies!*)
- Vocative with adjective:
 - Dragă bunico, (*Dear Grandma*)
 - Stimat domnule director, (used to formally address in writing the manager of an institution)
- Vocative with possessive pronoun and adjective:
 - Dragul meu Radu, (*My dear Radu*)
 - Scumpii noștri prieteni, (*Our beloved friends*)

Articles

[[edit](#)] Definite article

An often cited peculiarity of Romanian is that it is the only [Romance language](#) where [definite articles](#) are attached to the end of the noun as [enclitics](#) (as in [North Germanic languages](#)) instead of in front. They are believed to have been formed, as in other Romance languages, from [Latin](#) demonstrative pronouns. The table below shows the generally accepted [etymology](#) of the Romanian definite article.

	Masculine		Feminine	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	Lat. <i>illum</i>	Lat. <i>illi</i>	Lat. <i>illa</i>	Lat. <i>illae</i>
Accusative	→ Rom. <i>-lu</i> → <i>-l</i> , <i>-le</i>	→ Rom. <i>-l'i</i> → <i>-i</i>	→ Rom. <i>-euă</i> → <i>-eau</i> → <i>-a</i>	→ Rom. <i>-le</i>
Genitive	Lat. <i>illui</i>	Lat. <i>illorum</i>	Lat. <i>illaei</i>	Lat. <i>illorum</i>
Dative	→ Rom. <i>-lui</i>	→ Rom. <i>-lor</i>	→ Rom. <i>-ei</i>	→ Rom. <i>-lor</i>

Examples:

- Masculine nouns (singular, nominative/accusative):

codru - *codrul* (forest - the forest);
pom - *pomul* (tree - the tree);
frate - *fratele* (brother - the brother);
tată - *tatăl* (father - the father).

- Neuter nouns (singular, nominative/accusative):

teatru - *teatrul* (theater - the theater);
loc - *locul* (place - the place);

- Feminine nouns (singular, nominative/accusative):

casă - *casa* (house - the house);
floare - *floarea* (flower - the flower);
cutie - *cutia* (box - the box);
stea - *steaua* (star - the star);

[[edit](#)] Indefinite article

The Romanian indefinite article, unlike the definite article, is placed before the noun, and has likewise derived from [Latin](#):

	Masculine		Feminine	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	Lat. <i>unum</i>	Lat. <i>ne scio</i>	Lat. <i>unam</i>	Lat. <i>ne scio</i>
Accusative	→ Rom. <i>un</i>	→ Rom. <i>niște</i>	→ Rom. <i>o</i>	→ Rom. <i>niște</i>
Genitive	Lat. <i>unius</i>	Lat. <i>unorum</i>	Lat. <i>unae</i>	Lat. <i>unorum</i>
Dative	→ Rom. <i>unui</i>	→ Rom. <i>unor</i>	→ Rom. <i>unei</i>	→ Rom. <i>unor</i>

Nouns in the vocative case cannot be determined by an indefinite article.

Examples of indefinite article usage:

- Masculine:
 - nominative/accusative: singular *un copil* (a child) - plural *niște copii* ([some] children);
 - genitive/dative: singular *unui copil* (of/to a child) - plural *unor copii* (of/to [some] children);
- Neuter:
 - nominative/accusative: singular *un loc* (a place) - plural *niște locuri* ([some] places);
 - genitive/dative: singular *unui loc* (of/to a place) - plural *unor locuri* (of/to [some] places);
- Feminine:
 - nominative/accusative: singular *o masă* (a table) - plural *niște mese* ([some] tables);
 - genitive/dative: singular *unei mese* (of/to a table) - plural *unor mese* (of/to [some] tables);

[\[edit\]](#) Article appended to adjectives

When a [noun](#) is determined by an [adjective](#), the normal word order is *noun + adjective*, and the article (definite or indefinite) is appended to the noun. However, the word order *adjective + noun* is also possible (and mostly used for emphasis on the adjective), in which pattern the article and any case marker that may be present is applied to the adjective instead. Examples follow.

- Noun + adjective (normal order):

un student bun (a good student);
studentul bun (the good student);
unui student bun (to a good student);
studentului bun (to the good student).

- Adjective + noun (reversed order):

un bun student (a good student);
bunul student (the good student);
unui bun student (to a good student);
bunului student (to the good student).

[\[edit\]](#) Genitival article

There are situations in Romanian when the noun in the genitive requires the presence of the so-called genitival (or possessive) article (see for example the section "[Genitive](#)" in "[Romanian nouns](#)"), somewhat similar to the English preposition *of*, for example in *a map of China*. In Romanian this becomes *o hartă a Chinei*, where "a" is the genitival article. The table below shows how the genitival articles depend on gender and number.

	Masculine	Neuter	Feminine
Singular	al		a
Plural	ai		ale

The genitival article also has genitive/dative forms, which are used only with a possessive pronoun. They are: *alui* (m. sg.), *alei* (f. sg.), and *alor* (pl., both genders). These forms are rarely used—especially the singular ones—and the sentences are usually rephrased to avoid them.

Adjectives

Romanian adjectives determine the quality of things. They always define a *noun* or *pronoun*, *numeral* or *copulative verb*, so they can only fulfill the syntactical functions of *attribute* and *predicative denominator*

	Singular	Plural
Masculine	<i>frumos</i>	<i>frumoși</i>
Feminine	<i>frumoasă</i>	<i>frumoase</i>

- The number of equal forms an adjective takes in the singular are called endings, *terminații* (in this case 2)
- The number of equal forms an adjective takes both in the singular and the plural are called flexionary forms, *forme flexionare* (in this case 4)

	Singular	Plural
Masculine	<i>verde</i>	<i>verzi</i>
Feminine	<i>verde</i>	<i>verzi</i>

- In this case we have 1 ending and 2 flexionary forms.

	Singular	Plural
Masculine	<i>oranj</i>	<i>oranj</i>
Feminine	<i>oranj</i>	<i>oranj</i>

- In this case we have 1 ending and 1 flexionary form. If it is so, we call the adjective *invariable*, otherwise it is *variable*

Syntactical functions of the adjective can be:

- Attribute, in case it defines a noun, pronoun or numeral. (Ex: The blond boy is here; *Băiatul blond este aici*)
- Predicative Denominator, in case it defines a copulative verb. (Ex: The boy is blond ; *Băiatul este blond*)

An adjective also can have stages of comparison.

- Positive Stage (*frumos*, beautiful)
- Comparative Stage
 - Of superiority (*mai frumos*, more beautiful)
 - Of equality (*la fel de frumos*, as beautiful as)
 - Of inferiority (*mai puțin frumos*, less beautiful)

- Superlative Stage
 - Relative
 - Of superiority (*cel mai frumos*, the most beautiful)
 - Of inferiority (*cel mai puțin frumos*, the least beautiful)

Absolute (*foarte frumos*, very beautiful)

Pronouns

There are eight personal pronouns in Romanian:

		Singular	Plural
First person		<i>eu</i>	<i>noi</i>
Second person		<i>tu</i>	<i>voi</i>
Third person	Masc.	<i>el</i>	<i>ei</i>
	Fem.	<i>ea</i>	<i>ele</i>

The pronouns above are those in the [nominative case](#). They are usually omitted in Romanian unless required to disambiguate the meaning of a sentence. Usually, the verb ending provides information about the subject.

The [accusative](#) forms of the pronouns come in two forms: a stressed and an unstressed form:

		Singular		Plural	
		Stressed	Unstressed	Stressed	Unstressed
First person		<i>(pe) mine</i>	<i>mă</i>	<i>(pe) noi</i>	<i>ne</i>
Second person		<i>(pe) tine</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>(pe) voi</i>	<i>vă</i>
Third person	Masc.	<i>(pe) el</i>	<i>îl</i>	<i>(pe) ei</i>	<i>îi</i>
	Fem.	<i>(pe) ea</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>(pe) ele</i>	<i>le</i>

The [dative](#) forms of the pronouns:

		Singular		Plural	
		Stressed	Unstressed	Stressed	Unstressed
First person		<i>mie</i>	<i>îmi</i>	<i>nouă</i>	<i>ne</i>
Second person		<i>ție</i>	<i>îți</i>	<i>vouă</i>	<i>vă</i>
Third person	Masc.	<i>lui</i>	<i>îi</i>	<i>lor</i>	<i>le</i>
	Fem.	<i>ei</i>	<i>îi</i>	<i>lor</i>	<i>le</i>

The [genitive](#) forms of the pronouns:

	Singular	Plural

First person		<i>meu</i>	<i>nostru</i>
Second person		<i>tău</i>	<i>vostru</i>
Third person	Masc.	<i>lui</i>	<i>lor</i>
	Fem.	<i>ei</i>	

The possessive pronouns are formed by using the articles *al* for masculine/neuter singular, *a* for feminine singular, *ale* for feminine/neuter plural or *ai* for masculine plural in front of the corresponding genitive form (example: *al meu* ; *a mea* ; *ai mei* ; *ale mele* = mine).

[\[edit\]](#) Reflexive pronouns

	Singular	Plural
First person	<i>mă</i>	<i>ne</i>
Second person	<i>te</i>	<i>vă</i>
Third person	<i>se</i>	

Numbers

The **Romanian numbers** are the system of [number names](#) used in [Romanian](#) to express counts, quantities, ranks in ordered sets, fractions, multiplication, and other information related to numbers.

In Romanian grammar, unlike English, the words representing [numbers](#) are considered to form a distinct [part of speech](#), called *numeral* (plural: *numerale*). Examples:

- Cardinal
 - Proper: *doi* (*two*);
 - Multiplicative: *îndoit* (*double*);
 - Collective: *amândoi* (*both*);
 - Distributive: *câte doi* (*in twos*);
 - Fractional: *doime* (*half*);
 - Adverbial: *de două ori* (*twice*);
- Ordinal: *al doilea* (*the second*).

In [Romanian grammar](#), the words expressing numbers are a separate [part of speech](#), called *numeral* (plural: *numerale*), along with [nouns](#), [verbs](#), etc. (Note that English [numeral](#) and Romanian *numeral* have different meanings; also, Romanian *număr* only partially overlaps in meaning with English *number*.) Nevertheless, these words play the same roles in the sentence as they do in English: [adjective](#), [pronoun](#), [noun](#), and occasionally others. This article focuses on the mechanism of naming numbers in Romanian and the use of the number names in sentences.

It should be noted that the symbols for numbers in Romanian texts are the same as those used in English, with the exception of using the [comma](#) as the [decimal separator](#) and the period or the space (ideally a narrow space) for grouping digits by three in large numbers. For example, in Romanian *1,5 V* means one and a half volts, and 1.000.000 or 1 000 000 means one million.

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[\[edit\]](#) **General characteristics**

As in other numeral systems, the Romanian number names use a limited set of words and combining rules, which can be applied to generate the name of any number within sufficiently large limits.

The general characteristics of the number formation rules in Romanian are:

- The numeration base used is [decimal](#).
- Word order is [big-endian](#) with the exception of numbers from 11 to 19.
- Large numbers use the [long scale](#), unlike in English.

- Connection words are used in certain situations.
- Some number names have two gender-specific forms.

[[edit](#)] Cardinal numbers

[Cardinal numbers](#) are the words we use for counting objects or expressing quantity.

[[edit](#)] Number name for 0

The number **0** is called *zero*. Like in English it requires the [plural](#) form of [nouns](#): *zero grade* (*zero degrees*, with *grade* being the plural form of *grad*). Unlike English, the reading of number/numeral 0 is always *zero* and never replaced with words like *oh*, *naught*, *nil*, *love*, etc.

[[edit](#)] Numbers from 1 to 10

The number names from 1 to 10 derive from [Latin](#). The table below gives the [cardinal numbers](#) in [Romanian](#) and its three dialects, [Aromanian](#), [Megleno-Romanian](#) and [Istro-Romanian](#).

Number	Romanian	Aromanian	Megleno-Romanian	Istro-Romanian	Latin
1	unu ¹	unu ¹	unu ¹	ur ¹	unus
2	doi ¹	doi ¹	doi ¹	doi ¹	duo
3	trei	trei	trei	trei	tres
4	patru	patru	patru	pâtru	quattuor
5	cinci	ținți ²	ținți	ținț	quinque
6	șase	șase	șasi	șâse	sex
7	șapte ³	șapte	șapti	șâpte	septem
8	opt	optu	uopt	opt	octo
9	nouă	noauă	nou	devet ⁴	novem
10	zece	date	zeți	deset ⁴	decem

Notes

1. When counting, the number names for 1 and 2 have the forms given in the table; however, when used in a sentence, they change according to the gender of the [noun](#) they modify or replace. It is worth noting that the two adjectival forms of the cardinal number for 1 (*un* and *o*) are identical with the corresponding indefinite articles.

- *un băiat* (*one boy, a boy*),
- *unul dintre băieți* (*one of the boys*),
- *o fată* (*one girl, a girl*),
- *una dintre fete* (*one of the girls*),
- *doi băieți* (*two boys*),
- *două fete* (*two girls*).

2. The name for number *five* in Aromanian, written *ținți* or *tsintsi*, might be responsible for nicknaming the [Aromanians](#) "tsintsar".

3. Sometimes pronounced as "șapte", more common when communicating telephone numbers in order to avoid a possible confusion between "șase" and "șapte".

4. In Istro-Romanian, depending on the speaker, some number names are replaced with their [Croatian](#) (slavic) equivalents.

[\[edit\]](#) Numbers from 11 to 19

Unlike all other [Romance languages](#), Romanian has a consistent way of naming the numbers from 11 to 19. These are obtained by joining three elements: the units, the word *spre* (derived from Latin *super* = *over*, currently meaning *towards*), and the word for *ten*. For example, *fifteen* is *cincisprezece*: *cinci* + *spre* + *zece*, which literally means "five over ten". This is the only exception to the [big-endian](#) principle of number naming.

The table below gives the forms of all nine such number names. Each number in the series has one or more shortened variants, often used in informal speech, where the element *-sprezece* is replaced by *-șpe*. Grammarians consider the informal variants to be indicative of careless speech.

Number	Formal Romanian	Informal Romanian	Aromanian
11	unsprezece	unșpe	unsprădzatse
12	doisprezece ¹	doișpe	doisprădzatse
13	treisprezece	treișpe	treisprădzatse
14	paisprezece ²	paișpe	pasprădzatse
15	cincisprezece ³	cinșpe (not <i>cincișpe</i>)	tsisprădzatse
16	șaisprezece ²	șaișpe	șasprădzatse
17	șaptesprezece	șapteșpe	șaptesprădzatse
18	optsprezece ⁴	optișpe, optîșpe, opșpe	optusprădzatse
19	nouăsprezece	nouășpe	naosprădzatse

Notes

1. The number name for 12 given in the table is the masculine form; this is the only number in this range that also has a feminine form: *douăsprezece* (informal *douășpe*). However, the masculine form is sometimes used even with feminine nouns, especially when the number follows the noun it determines, as in *ora doisprezece* (12 o'clock) or *clasa a doisprezecea* (12th grade, see below for ordinal numbers); such use is considered incorrect.

2. Number names for 14 and 16 do not exactly follow the forming rule, possibly under the influence of the number names for 12 and 13. The forms *patrusprezece* and *șasesprezece* do exist, but are perceived as hypercorrect and very rarely used (one might hear them in telephone conversations, when the correct transmission may be a concern).

3. Instead of *cincisprezece* sometimes *cinsprezece* is used.

4. The number name for 18 is notorious for being the word in Romanian with the longest [consonant](#) cluster (five consonants with no intervening [vowels](#)): *ptspr*, split into two syllables, *opt-spre-ze-ce*. For this reason, the variants *opsprezece* (with a missing *t*) and *optîsprezece* or *optisprezece* (with an additional vowel to break the consonant cluster) are frequent.^[1]

[\[edit\]](#) Numbers from 20 to 99

The numbers in this range that are multiple of 10 (that is, 20, 30, ..., 90) are named by joining the number of tens with the word *zeci* (the plural of *zece*), as shown in the table below. Note that they are spelled as a single word.

Number Romanian Aromanian

20	douăzeci	ying'its
30	treizeci	treidzîtsi
40	patruzeci	patrudzîtsi
50	cincizeci ¹	tsindzîtsi
60	șaizeci ²	șaidzîtsi
70	șaptezeci	șaptidzîtsi
80	optzeci ¹	opdzîtsi
90	nouăzeci	naudzîtsi

Notes

1. *Cincizeci* is often pronounced (but not written) *cinzeci*. Similarly, *optzeci* is often pronounced *obzeci*.
2. *Șaizeci* does not follow the formation rule exactly. The expected form *șasezeci* does not exist.

The other numbers between 20 and 99 are named by combining three words: the number of tens, the [conjunction](#) *și* (*and*), and the units. For example, [42](#) is *patruzeci și doi*.

For those numbers whose unit figure is 1 or 2 the corresponding number name has two gender-dependent forms:

- masculine: *treizeci și unu de bărbați* (31 men); *treizeci și doi de bărbați* (32 men);
- feminine: *treizeci și una de femei* (31 women); *treizeci și două de femei* (32 women);
- neuter: *treizeci și unu de grade* (31 degrees); *treizeci și două de grade* (32 degrees).

[\[edit\]](#) Short versions

The numbers from 20 to 99 also have an informal, simplified pronunciation: The part *zeci* shortens to *ș* /ʃ/ when the units name starts with an [unvoiced consonant](#) or a [vowel](#). For 50 and 80 *zeci* only reduces to *zeș*. When the next word starts with a [voiced consonant](#) the same rule applies except that *ș* is pronounced voiced as *j* /ʒ/. The same rule applies if the units number is 0 and if the next word is the preposition *de*. Examples:

- *șaptezeci și cinci* → *șapteșcinci* (75);
- *cincizeci și unu* → *cinzeșunu* (51);
- *optzeci și opt* → *obzeșopt* (88);
- *treizeci și doi* → *treijdoi* (32);
- *douăzeci de ori* → *douăjde ori* (20 times).

In regional speech further simplification is possible, such as *cinzeci și* becoming *cinș*. Also, the number 48, when it refers to the [revolutions of 1848](#), is pronounced *pașopt*, which also gave words like *pașoptist* (meaning *participant in the Romanian 1848 Revolution* or *supporter of its ideology*).

[\[edit\]](#) Numbers from 100 to 999

Any given number from 100 to 999 can be named by first saying the hundreds and then, without any connecting word, the two-digit number of tens and units; for example, 365 is *trei sute șaizeci și cinci*.

Note that the word for *hundred* is *sută*, and that if the number of hundreds is 2 or larger, the plural *sute* is required. The noun *sută* itself is feminine and as such the numbers 100 and 200 are *o sută* and *două sute*.

In fast utterances, the numbers 500 and 800 are usually pronounced *cinsute* and *opsute*, instead of the standard forms *cinci sute* and *opt sute*, respectively. In writing, however, the informal variants are only used for stylistic effects.

[\[edit\]](#) Large numbers

The table below lists the numbers representing powers of 10 larger than 100, that have a corresponding single-word name. The word for 1000 is feminine, all the others are neuter; this is important in the number naming. In Romanian, neuter [nouns](#) behave like masculine in the singular and like feminine in the plural.

Number	Romanian		Aromanian	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1000 = 10 ³	mie	mii	ńil'e	ńil'i
10 ⁶	milion	milioane	miliune	miliuni
10 ⁹	miliard	miliarde		
10 ¹²	bilion	bilioane		
10 ¹⁵	biliard	biliarde		
...		

Unlike in most English-speaking countries, Romanian large numbers use the [long scale](#), that is, a thousand million is not a billion, but a milliard.

To say any cardinal number larger than 1000 the number is split in groups of three digits, from right to left (into units, thousands, millions, etc.), then the groups are read from left to right as in the example below.

12,345,678 (written in Romanian 12.345.678) = *douăsprezece milioane trei sute patruzeci și cinci de mii șase sute șaptezeci și opt*

When a digit is zero, the corresponding quantity is simply not pronounced:

101,010 (written in Romanian 101.010) = *o sută una de mii zece*

In writing, the groups of three digits are separated by dots. The comma is used as [decimal separator](#). This may be confusing for native English speakers, who use the two symbols the other way around.

[\[edit\]](#) Preposition "de"

[Syntactically](#), when a cardinal number determines a [noun](#) and when the number has certain values, the [preposition](#) *de* (roughly equivalent to *of*) is inserted between the number name and the modified noun in a way similar to English *hundreds of birds*. Example: *șaizeci de minute* (*sixty minutes*).

The rules governing the use of preposition *de* are as follows:

- For numbers from 0 to 19 *de* is not used. The same applies to numbers whose last two digits make a number in the range from 1 to 19. Examples: *șapte case* (*seven houses*), *șaisprezece ani* (*16 years [old]*), *o sută zece metri* (*110 meters*).
 - An exception to this rule is when the objects that are counted are symbols (letters, numbers). In this case, for better understanding the meaning, *de* can be used, although the practice is sometimes criticized. Example: *se scrie cu doi de i* (*is written with two i's*), *doi de zece* (*two tens, two A grades*).
 - Another exception is for numbers whose last two digits are 01, in which case *de* is optional. Examples: *o mie una de ori* (*1001 times*), *o sută unu dalmațieni* (*101 Dalmatians*). In the latter case the choice might be influenced by [euphony](#) (avoidance of the [alliteration](#)).
- For integer numbers from 20 to 100, preposition *de* is placed between the number name and the modified noun. The same applies to numbers whose last two digits are either 00 or make a number in the range from 20 to 99. Examples: *douăzeci de metri* (*twenty meters*), *o mie de ori* (*a thousand times*).
 - In technical contexts, to save space, the preposition *de* may be dropped, especially in writing: *200 metri plat* (*200 meters sprint*). In expressing quantities using measurement units the preposition *de* is never written, but usually pronounced: *24 V* → *douăzeci și patru de volți* (*24 Volt*).
- For non-integer [decimal](#) numbers *de* is never used: *20,5 kg* (read *douăzeci virgulă cinci kilograme: 20.5 kg*).

Preposition *de* is also used for naming the number itself, for example numbers from 20,000 to 999,999 need it to count the thousands: *douăzeci de mii de exemplare* (*twenty thousand copies*). The same applies to all other cases where the number of thousands, millions, billions, etc. is in the range from 20 to 999. Again, in technical contexts, this *de* may be dropped.

[\[edit\]](#) Agreement between number name and modified noun

The number name and the noun it modifies must agree in [number](#) and [gender](#).

The rule for number agreement is simple: When the number is 1, the modified noun is put in its singular form, otherwise it takes the plural form, including the case of number 0 and all non-integer numbers.

The gender agreement is somewhat complicated by the fact that the [Romanian nouns](#) are classified into three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Specifically, the neuter gender is a combination of the other two: A neuter noun behaves like a masculine noun in the singular, and like a feminine noun in the plural. The gender has implications on the morphology of some of the grammatically connected words, including the number names.

When the units digit of a number is 1 or 2, its name has two distinct forms, masculine and feminine. The only exception is *unsprezece* (*eleven*) which has only one form used for both genders.

The gender agreement requires the choice of masculine number names for masculine nouns, and feminine number names for feminine nouns. For the neuter nouns the agreement is obtained by choosing the masculine name of the number not just for number 1, but for all other numbers whose units digit is 1, despite the fact that the noun behaves as feminine; for numbers whose last digit is 2 the feminine numeral is chosen. Examples:

Number	Masculine noun	Neuter noun	Feminine noun
	<i>copil (child)</i>	<i>scaun (chair)</i>	<i>oră (hour)</i>
1	un copil	un scaun	o oră
2	doi copii	două scaune	două ore
11	unsprezece copii	unsprezece scaune	unsprezece ore
12	doisprezece copii	douăsprezece scaune	douăsprezece ore
21	douăzeci și unu de copii	douăzeci și unu de scaune ¹	douăzeci și una de ore
22	douăzeci și doi de copii	douăzeci și două de scaune	douăzeci și două de ore

Note

1. Although, as a neuter noun in the plural, *scaune* behaves like a feminine noun, the masculine form of the numeral "douăzeci și unu" is used. This is due to the fact that "unu" (*one*) also represents a number by itself; in the singular, the neuter noun requires a masculine modifier. If the noun is also modified by an adjective, the feminine form of the adjective is used: *douăzeci și unu de scaune galbene* (21 yellow chairs).

[[edit](#)] Distributive numbers

The distributive number is used to show how a larger quantity is divided into smaller, equal portions. These numbers are named using the cardinal number names and the word *cîte*, roughly meaning *each*, but requiring a different word order. The following examples show some distributive numbers in various [cases](#):

- *Punem cîte patru prăjituri pe fiecare farfurie.* (We put four cakes on each plate.)
- *Copiii merg doi cîte doi.* (The children are walking two by two.)
- *Hai să ne despărțim în grupe de cîte trei.* (Let's split in groups of three each.)
- *Au fost expuse desenele a cîte doi elevi din fiecare clasă.* (The drawings of two students in each class were displayed.)
- *Am dat formularele cîte unui copil din fiecare grupă.* (I gave the forms to one child in each group.)
— *Am dat formularele la cîte doi copii din fiecare grupă.* (I gave the forms to two children in each group.)

[[edit](#)] Collective numbers

Collective numbers are used when all members of a group are referred to by their number, like English *all four wheels*. Generally, for sets of more than a few elements, the word *toți / toate* (*all*, masculine / feminine) is used together with the cardinal number. The use of the demonstrative *cei / cele* is optional in the nominative-accusative, but required in the genitive-dative. The genitive-dative form is *tuturor celor* for both genders. In the following examples note that the modified noun always has the nominative form, and that the definite article goes to the demonstrative where it is used:

- nominative-accusative:
 - masculine: *toți șapte piticii, toți cei șapte pitici* (all seven dwarfs);
 - feminine: *toate trei fiicele, toate cele trei fiice* (all three daughters);
- genitive-dative:
 - *tuturor celor șapte pitici* (of/to all seven dwarfs);
 - *tuturor celor trei fiice* (of/to all three daughters);
- genitive (another pattern, using the preposition *a*):
 - *numele a toți șapte piticii, numele a toți cei șapte pitici* (the names of all seven dwarfs);
 - *numele a toate trei fiicele, numele a toate cele trei fiice* (the names of all three daughters);

- dative (another pattern, using the preposition *la*):
 - *le-am spus la toți șapte piticii, le-am spus la toți cei șapte pitici* (I told all seven dwarfs);
 - *le-am spus la toate trei fiicele, le-am spus la toate cele trei fiice* (I told all three daughters).

[[edit](#)] Special words

When the number is 2 or sometimes 3 or 4, special words are used instead of *toți*, just as the word *both* replaces **all two* in English. The most frequent of these words are:

- *amîndoi, amîndouă* (*both*), with the genitive-dative form *amîndurora*, which doesn't follow the usual declination rules;
- *ambii, ambele* (*both*, but somewhat formal);
- *tustrei, tustrele* (*all three*). This and the following collective numerals are used mainly for people and reflects a rather old style.
- *cîteșitrei, cîteșitrele* (*all three*);
- *tuspatru* (*all four*);
- *cîteșipatru* (*all four*).

[[edit](#)] Adverbial numbers

The adverbial number is the number used to show the repetition of a certain event, in constructions such as *de cinci ori* (*five times*). The table below shows a few examples of adverbial numbers.

Number	Adverbial number	English
1	o dată	once
2	de două ori	twice
3	de trei ori	three times
12	de douăsprezece ori	twelve times
21	de douăzeci și una de ori	twenty-one times
22	de douăzeci și două de ori	twenty-two times

For number 1 the usual form is *o dată* (*once, one time*). The construction *o oară* is possible, but rarely used. In the plural, the adverbial numbers are formed using the preposition *de*, the cardinal number in the feminine, and the noun *ori* (*times*), which is the plural of the feminine noun *oară*.

Sample sentences:

- *Am citit cartea de trei ori.* (I've read the book three times.)
- *„Poștașul sună întotdeauna de două ori”* ("The postman always rings twice")

Approximate numbers can be used, like in the examples below.

- *Ți-am spus de zeci de ori că nu mă interesează.* (I've told you dozens [textually: tens] of times I'm not interested.)
- *Am ascultat cântecul acesta de sute de ori.* (I've listened to this song hundreds of times.)

[[edit](#)] Multiplicative numbers

For some numbers, special words are used to show multiplication of size, number, etc. The table below gives the most frequent such words, with their English equivalents.

Number	Multiplicative number		Adverbial equivalent	English
	traditional	neologism		
2	îndoit	dublu	de două ori mai (mult)	double, twice as (much)
3	întreit	triplu	de trei ori mai (mult)	triple, three times as (much)
4	împătrit	cvadruplu	de patru ori mai (mult)	quadruple, four times as (much)
5	încincit	cvintuplu	de cinci ori mai (mult)	quintuple, five times as (much)
10	înzecit	–	de zece ori mai (mult)	ten times as (much)
100	însutit	–	de o sută de ori mai (mult)	a hundred times as (much)
1000	înmiit	–	de o mie de ori mai (mult)	a thousand times as (much)

The traditional multiplicative numbers are formed from the respective cardinal number with the [prefix](#) *în-* (changed into *îm-* when the following sound is a bilabial plosive), and the [suffix](#) *-it*, the same used to form the past participle of a large category of [verbs](#).

In contemporary Romanian the neologisms are more frequently used.

The multiplicative number can be used as adjective and as adverb. Examples:

- Adjective (note the gender agreement):
 - *salariu întreit, salariu triplu* (*triple wage, wage three times as much*);
 - *putere întreită, putere triplă* (*three times more power*).
- Adverb (no agreement required):
 - *Am muncit întreit. Am muncit triplu.* (*I worked three times harder.*)
 - *Am câștigat înzecit față de anul trecut.* (*I earned ten times as much as last year.*)

Often instead of the multiplicative numbers an adverbial construction is used. This can be applied for any number larger than 1.

- *Am muncit de trei ori mai mult decât anul trecut și am câștigat un salariu de zece ori mai mare.* (*I worked three times more than last year and earned a salary ten times bigger.*)

[\[edit\]](#) Fractional numbers

Numbers expressed as parts of a unit (such as "two thirds") are named using the cardinal number, in its masculine form, with the suffix *-ime*. Other morphological changes take place, as shown below.

Number	Name	Notes
1/2	(o) doime	Also: <i>o jumătate</i>
1/3	(o) treime	
1/4	(o) pătrime	Also: <i>un sfert</i>
1/5	(o) cincime	
1/6	(o) șesime	
1/7	(o) șeptime	
1/8	(o) optime	

1/9	(o) noime
1/10	(o) zecime
1/100	(o) sutime
1/1000	(o) miime
1/1,000,000	(o) milionime

A number like $3/5$ is expressed as *trei cincimi* (*three fifths*). Since all the fractional number names behave like feminine nouns, when the numerator is 1, 2, or any other number with a distinct feminine form, that form must be used: *două treimi* ($2/3$). The preposition *de* is used depending also on the numerator: *douăzeci de sutimi* ($20/100$), *o sută zece miimi* ($110/1000$).

In music several other such words are frequently used for note lengths:

- *șaisprezecime* ([sixteenth note](#));
- *trezecișidoime* ([thirty-second note](#));
- *șaizecișipătrime* ([sixty-fourth note](#)), etc.

Fractions involving larger numbers tend to become hard to read. Especially in mathematics it is common to read fractions only using cardinal numbers and the words *pe* or *supra* (*on, over*). For example *două treimi* (*two thirds*) becomes *doi pe trei* or *doi supra trei*.

[\[edit\]](#) Percents

[Percentages](#) (%) and [permillages](#) (‰) are read using the words *la sută* and *la mie*, like in the examples: *cinci la sută* (5%), *nouă la mie* (9‰). For percentages an alternative reading uses the neuter noun *procent*, meaning 1%; the previous example becomes *cinci procente*.

[\[edit\]](#) Decimal fractions

Numbers represented as decimal fractions (for example 1.62) are expressed by reading in order the integer part, the decimal separator, and the fractional part. This is the same as in English, with the following exceptions:

- The [decimal separator](#) is the [comma](#), in Romanian *virgulă*. For example 2.5 is written 2,5 and pronounced *doi virgulă cinci*.
- The fractional part is read as a multi-digit number, not by saying each digit independently. For example 3.14 (written 3,14) is pronounced *trei virgulă paisprezece* (literally *three comma fourteen*). However, when the number of decimals is too large, they can be read one by one as a string of digits: *trei virgulă unu patru unu cinci nouă* (3.14159).
- Decimal fractions whose integer part is 0 (like 0.6) are always pronounced in Romanian together with the initial *zero*: 0,6 is read *zero virgulă șase*, unlike English *point six*.

In some situations it is customary to say *cu* (*with*) instead of *virgulă*. For example, medical staff might be heard stating the [body temperature](#) in words like *treizeci și șapte cu cinci*, meaning 37.5 °C.

[\[edit\]](#) Ordinal number

The [ordinal number](#) is used to express the position of an object in an ordered sequence, as shown in English by words such as *first, second, third*, etc. In Romanian, with the exception of number 1, all ordinal numbers

are named based on the corresponding cardinal number. Two gender-dependent forms exist for each number. The masculine form (also used with neuter nouns) ends in *-lea*, whereas the feminine form ends in *-a*. Starting from 2 they are preceded by the possessive article *al / a*.

Examples:

- *Am terminat de scris al treilea roman. (I finished writing the third novel.)*
- *Locuim la a cincea casă pe dreapta. (We live in the fifth house on the right.)*

[\[edit\]](#) Basic forms

The basic forms of the ordinal number are given in the table below. All other forms are made using them.

Number	Ordinal number		English
	masculine	feminine	
1	primul (întîiul)	prima (întîia)	the first
2	al doilea	a doua	the second
3	al treilea	a treia	the third
4	al patrulea	a patra	the fourth
5	al cincilea	a cincea	the fifth
6	al şaselea	a şasea	the sixth
7	al şaptelea	a şaptea	the seventh
8	al optulea	a opta	the eighth
9	al nouălea	a noua	the ninth
10	al zecelea	a zecea	the tenth
100	al o sutălea	a o suta	the one hundredth
1000	al o mielea	a o mia	the one thousandth
10 ⁶	al un milionulea	a o milioana	the one millionth
10 ⁹	al un miliardulea	a o miliarda	the one billionth
...

[\[edit\]](#) 11-19

Ordinal numbers in this range can be formed by modifying the corresponding cardinal number: the ending *-zece* is transformed into *-zecelea* and *-zecea* for the masculine and feminine ordinal number. Examples:

- *al unsprezecelea, a unsprezecea (the 11th);*
- *al doisprezecelea, a douăsprezecea (the 12th),* note the gender difference *doi-*, *două-*;
- *al treisprezecelea, a treisprezecea (the 13th),* and so on.

[\[edit\]](#) 20-99

Ordinal numbers in this range that have the unit digit 0 are formed by replacing the ending *-zeci* of the corresponding cardinal number with *-zecilea* and *-zecea* (masculine and feminine):

- *al douăzecilea, a douăzecea (the 20th);*
- *al treizecilea, a treizecea (the 30th),* and so on.

When the unit digit is not 0, the cardinal number is used for the tens and the ordinal number for the units. The only exception is when the unit digit is 1; in this case, instead of *primul*, *prima* a different word is used: *unulea*, *una*. Examples:

- *al douăzeci și unulea*, *a douăzeci și una* (the 21st);
- *al douăzeci și doilea*, *a douăzeci și doua* (the 22nd);
- *al douăzeci și treilea*, *a douăzeci și treia* (the 23rd), and so on.

[\[edit\]](#) All other numbers

The general rule for ordinal number formation is to combine the following elements:

- the possessive article *al*, *a*;
- the cardinal number without the last pronounced digit;
- the ordinal number corresponding to the last pronounced digit.

Examples:

- 101st: *al o sută unulea*, *a o sută una*;
- 210th: *al două sute zecelea*, *a două sute zecea*;
- 700th: *al șapte sutelea*, *a șapte suta*;

As seen in the last example above, the ordinal form of the plural of 100, 1000, etc is needed for this process. These forms are:

Number	Ordinal number	
	masculine	feminine
n * 100	sutelea	suta
n * 1000	miilea	mia
n * 10 ⁶	milioanelea	milioana
n * 10 ⁹	miliardelea	miliarda
...

Examples with large numbers:

- 1500th: *al o mie cinci sutelea*, *a o mie cinci suta*;
- 2000th: *al două miilea*, *a două mia*;
- 17,017th: *al șaptesprezece mii șaptesprezecilea*, *a șaptesprezece mii șaptesprezecea*
- 20,000th: *al douăzeci de miilea*, *a douăzeci de mia*;
- 2,000,000th: *al două milioanelea*, *a două milioanea*;
- 2,000,000,000th: *al două miliardelea*, *a două miliarda*;
- 5,500,000,000th: *al cinci miliarde cinci sute de milioanelea*, *a cinci miliarde cinci sute de milioanea*
- 8,621,457,098th: *al opt miliarde, șase sute douăzeci și unu de milioane*, *patru sute cincizeci și șapte de mii*, *nouăzeci și optulea*; *a opt miliarde, șase sute douăzeci și una de milioane*, *patru sute cincizeci și șapte de mii*, *nouăzeci și opta*

[\[edit\]](#) Reverse order

In certain situations the word order in expressing the ordinal number. This occurs when the object is not necessarily perceived as an element in a sequence but rather as an indexed object. For example, instead of *al treilea secol* the expression *secolul al treilea* (*third century*) is used. Note that the noun must have the definite article appended. Other examples:

- *etajul al cincilea* (*fifth floor*);
- *partea a doua* (*second part, part two*);
- *volumul al treilea* (*third volume, volume three*);
- *grupa a patra* (*fourth group*).

For simplification, often the cardinal number replaces the ordinal number, although some grammarians criticize this practice: The form *secolul douăzeci* is seen as an incorrect variant of *secolul al douăzecilea* (*20th century*).

For number 1, the correct form of the ordinal number in this reverse-order construction is *întîi*, in both genders: *deceniul întîi* (*first decade*), *clasa întîi* (*first grade*). For the feminine, sometimes *întîia* is used, although this is not considered correct.

The same reverse order is used when naming historical figures:

- [Carol I](#) (read *Carol Întîi*);
- [Carol al II-lea](#) (read *Carol al Doilea*).

As seen above, ordinal numbers are often written using [Roman numerals](#), especially in this reverse order case. The ending specific to the ordinal numbers (*-lea, -a*) must be preserved and connected to the Roman numeral with a hyphen. Examples:

- *secolul al XIX-lea* (*19th century*);
- *clasa a V-a* (*5th grade*);
- *volumul I, volumul al II-lea* (*volume I, II*).

[\[edit\]](#) Pronunciation

In the morphological processes described above, some pronunciation changes occur that are usually marked in writing. This section gives a few details about those pronunciation aspects not "visible" in the written form.

See also: [Romanian phonology](#).

[\[edit\]](#) Non-syllabic "i"

The letter *i* in the word *zeci* (both as a separate word and in compounds), although thought by native speakers to indicate an independent sound, is only pronounced as a palatalization of the previous consonant. It does not form a syllable by itself: *patruzeci* (*forty*) is pronounced /pa.tru'zeʦʲ/. The same applies to the last *i* in *cinci*: /ʧintʃʲ/, including compounds: 15 is pronounced /'ʧintʃʲ.spre.ze.ʦʲe/ and 50 is /ʧintʃʲ'zeʦʲ/.

However, in the case of ordinal numbers in the masculine form, before *-lea* the nonsyllabic *i* becomes a full syllabic *i* in words like *douăzecilea* (*20th*) /do.wə'zeʦʲi.ʎə/ and in *cincilea* (*5th*) /'ʧin.ʦʲi.ʎə/.

[Semivocalic](#) *i* does not change its quality: *trei* /trej/, *treilea* /'trej.lɛa/, *treia* /'tre.ja/.

[[edit](#)] Stress

The stress in numbers from 11 to 19 is on the units number, that is, the first element of the compound. Since in all nine cases that element has the stress on its first syllable, the compound itself will also have the stress on the first syllable. The same is valid for the informal short versions:

- *unsprezece* /'un.spre.ze.tʃe/, *unșpe* /'un.ʃpe/ (11);
- *șaptesprezece* /'ʃap.te.spre.ze.tʃe/, *șapteșpe* /'ʃap.te.ʃpe/ (17);

Numbers in the series 20, 30, ..., 90 have the normal stress on the element *-zeci*. However, a stress shift to the first element often occurs, probably because that element carries more information:

- *treizeci* /trej'ze.tʃi/ (30);
- „Șaizeci? — Nu, *șaptezeci!*” /'ʃap.te.ze.tʃi/ (*Sixty? — No, seventy!*)

[[edit](#)] Usage

Dates. Calendar dates in Romanian are expressed using cardinal numbers, unlike English. For example, *the 21st of April* is *21 aprilie* (read *douăzeci și unu aprilie*). For the first day of a month the ordinal number *întîi* is often used: *1 Decembrie* (read *Întîi Decembrie*; upper case is used for names of national or international holidays). Normally the masculine form of the number is used everywhere, but when the units digit is 2, the feminine is also frequent: *2 ianuarie* can be read both *doi ianuarie* and *două ianuarie*; the same applies for days 12 and 22.

Centuries. Centuries are named using ordinal numbers in reverse order: *14th century* is *secolul al paisprezecelea* (normally written *secolul al XIV-lea*). Cardinal numbers are often used although considered incorrect: *secolul paisprezece*. See [above](#) for details.

Royal titles. Ordinal numbers (in reverse word order) are used for naming ruling members of a [monarchy](#) and the [Popes](#). For example: *Carol al II-lea*, *Papa Benedict al XVI-lea*. See [above](#) for details.

[[edit](#)] Particularities

- In Romanian, a number like 1500 is never read in a way similar to English *fifteen hundred*, but always *o mie cinci sute* (*a thousand five hundred*).
- Sometimes, the numbers 100 and 1000 are spelled out as *una sută* and *una mie*, instead of the usual *o sută*, *o mie*. This is to ensure that the number of hundreds or thousands is understood correctly, for example when writing out numbers as words, mostly in contexts dealing with money amounts, in forms, telegrams, etc. For example, the [100 lei](#) note is marked with the text "UNA SUTĂ LEI". Such a spelling is very formal and used almost exclusively in writing.
- In [poor translations](#) from English to Romanian it is possible to find the word *billion* translated as *bilion* instead of *miliard*, although the Romanian *bilion* means a number 1000 times larger (in English it corresponds to *trillion*). The reverse is also possible.
- The title of the book *Arabian Nights* is translated into Romanian as "O mie și una de nopți" ("One thousand and one nights"), using the conjunction *și* although not required by the number naming rules.

Romanian verbs

Unlike [English](#) but similar to other [Indo-European languages](#), [verbs](#) in Romanian are highly inflective. They [conjugate](#) according to [mood](#), [tense](#), [voice](#), [person](#) and [number](#). [Aspect](#) is not an independent feature in Romanian verbs. Also, [gender](#) is only distinct in [adjective](#)-like forms of the verb.

As in all [Romance languages](#), Romanian [verbs](#) are highly inflected according to person, number, tense, mood, voice. The usual word order in sentences is SVO (Subject - Verb - Object). Romanian verbs are categorized into four large conjugation groups depending on the ending in the infinitive mood. The actual conjugation patterns for each group are multiple.

- First conjugation: verbs ending in *-a*, such as *a da* (to give), *a cânta* (to sing), including those ending in [hiatus](#) *ea* such as in *a crea* (to create);
- Second conjugation: verbs ending in *-ea* (only when *ea* is a [diphthong](#)), such as *a putea* (can), *a cădea* (to fall);
- Third conjugation: verbs ending in *-e*, such as *a vinde* (to sell), *a crede* (to believe);
- Fourth conjugation: verbs ending in *-i* or *-î*, such as *a veni* (to come), *a urî* (to hate).

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[\[edit\]](#) Verb paradigm

There are nine [moods](#) a verb can be put into, with five of them being personal — having a different form for each [person](#) — and four non-personal. As an example, the tables below show the verb *a face* (to do) at all moods, tenses, persons and numbers. Only positive forms in the active voice are given. The corresponding [personal pronouns](#) are not included; unlike English verbs, Romanian verbs generally have different forms for each person and number, so that pronouns are most often dropped or only used for emphasis. The English equivalents in the tables (one for each mood and tense) are only an approximative indication of the meaning.

Personal moods

Mood	Tense	Number and person						English equivalent (only sg. 1st)
		Singular			Plural			
		1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd	
Indicative	Pluperfect	<i>făcusem</i>	<i>făcuseși</i>	<i>făcuse</i>	<i>făcuserăm</i>	<i>făcuserăți</i>	<i>făcuseră</i>	I had done
	Imperfect	<i>făceam</i>	<i>făceai</i>	<i>făcea</i>	<i>făceam</i>	<i>făceai</i>	<i>făceau</i>	I was doing
	Compound perfect	<i>am făcut</i>	<i>ai făcut</i>	<i>a făcut</i>	<i>am făcut</i>	<i>ați făcut</i>	<i>au făcut</i>	I did
	Simple perfect	<i>făcui</i>	<i>făcuși</i>	<i>făcu</i>	<i>făcurăm</i>	<i>făcurăți</i>	<i>făcură</i>	I (just) did
	Future in the past	<i>aveam să fac</i>	<i>aveai să faci</i>	<i>avea să facă</i>	<i>aveam să facem</i>	<i>aveai să faceți</i>	<i>aveau să facă</i>	I was going to do
	Present	<i>fac</i>	<i>faci</i>	<i>face</i>	<i>facem</i>	<i>faceți</i>	<i>fac</i>	I do, I am doing
	Future	<i>voi face</i>	<i>vei face</i>	<i>va face</i>	<i>vom face</i>	<i>veți face</i>	<i>vor face</i>	I will do
	Future (popular, 1)	<i>am să fac</i>	<i>ai să faci</i>	<i>are să facă</i>	<i>avem să facem</i>	<i>aveți să faceți</i>	<i>au să facă</i>	I'll do
	Future (popular, 2)	<i>o să fac</i>	<i>o să faci</i>	<i>o să facă</i>	<i>o să facem</i>	<i>o să faceți</i>	<i>o să facă</i>	I'll do
	Future perfect	<i>voi fi făcut</i>	<i>vei fi făcut</i>	<i>va fi făcut</i>	<i>vom fi făcut</i>	<i>veți fi făcut</i>	<i>vor fi făcut</i>	I will have done
Subjunctive	Past	<i>să fi făcut</i>	<i>să fi făcut</i>	<i>să fi făcut</i>	<i>să fi făcut</i>	<i>să fi făcut</i>	<i>să fi făcut</i>	that I did, to have done
	Present	<i>să fac</i>	<i>să faci</i>	<i>să facă</i>	<i>să facem</i>	<i>să faceți</i>	<i>să facă</i>	that I do, to do
Optative & Conditional	Past	<i>aș fi făcut</i>	<i>ai fi făcut</i>	<i>ar fi făcut</i>	<i>am fi făcut</i>	<i>ați fi făcut</i>	<i>ar fi făcut</i>	I would have done
	Present	<i>aș face</i>	<i>ai face</i>	<i>ar face</i>	<i>am face</i>	<i>ați face</i>	<i>ar face</i>	I would do
Presumptive	Past	<i>oi fi făcut</i>	<i>oi fi făcut</i>	<i>o fi făcut</i>	<i>om fi făcut</i>	<i>oți fi făcut</i>	<i>or fi făcut</i>	I might have done
	Present	<i>oi face</i>	<i>oi face</i>	<i>o face</i>	<i>om face</i>	<i>oți face</i>	<i>or face</i>	I might do
	Present progressive	<i>oi fi făcând</i>	<i>oi fi făcând</i>	<i>o fi făcând</i>	<i>om fi făcând</i>	<i>oți fi făcând</i>	<i>or fi făcând</i>	I might be doing
Imperative	Present	–	<i>fă!</i>	–	–	<i>faceți!</i>	–	do! (2nd

Non-personal moods

Mood	Tense	Verb forms	English equivalent
Infinitive	Past	<i>a fi făcut</i>	to have done
	Present	<i>a face</i>	to do
Participle	Past	<i>făcut</i> (sg., masc.)	done
		<i>făcută</i> (sg., fem.)	
		<i>făcuți</i> (pl., masc.)	
		<i>făcute</i> (pl., fem.)	
Gerund	–	<i>făcând</i>	doing
Supine	–	<i>de făcut</i>	(something) to do

Verbs in the past participle usually behave like [adjectives](#), and thus must agree in number, gender, and case with the noun they determine.

[[edit](#)] Conjugation groups

From an etymological point of view, Romanian verbs are categorized into four large conjugation groups depending on the ending in the infinitive mood. This categorization is currently taught in schools.

Conjugation Ending	Examples	Notes
I	– <i>a</i> <i>a da</i> (to give) <i>a cânta</i> (to sing) <i>a crea</i> (to create)	verbs ending in hiatus <i>ea</i> are included here
II	– <i>ea</i> <i>a putea</i> (can) <i>a cădea</i> (to fall) <i>a vedea</i> (to see)	only when <i>ea</i> is a diphthong
III	– <i>e</i> <i>a vinde</i> (to sell) <i>a crede</i> (to believe) <i>a alege</i> (to choose) <i>a ști</i> (to know)	
IV	– <i>i</i> or – <i>î</i> <i>a veni</i> (to come) <i>a hotărî</i> (to decide)	

Most verbs fall in the first conjugation group with another large number ending in –*i* (fourth group).

This classification only partially helps in identifying the correct conjugation pattern; each group is further split into smaller classes depending on the actual morphological processes that occur. For example, verbs *a cânta* (to sing) and *a lucra* (to work) both belong to the first conjugation group, but their indicative first person singular forms are *eu cânt* (I sing) and *eu lucrez* (I work), showing different conjugation mechanisms.

A more appropriate classification, which provides useful information on the actual conjugation pattern, groups all regular verbs into 11 conjugation classes, as shown below.

Class	Identification	Examples (one from each sound change type)
V ₁	infinitive ending in – <i>a</i> , present indicative without infix	<i>a ajuta</i> , <i>a arăta</i> , <i>a aștepta</i> , <i>a ierta</i> , <i>a toca</i> , <i>a apăra</i> , <i>a îmbrăca</i> , <i>a prezenta</i> , <i>a apăsa</i> , <i>a măsură</i> , <i>a căpăta</i> , <i>a semăna</i> , <i>a pieptăna</i> , <i>a</i>

		<i>amâna, a intra, a lătra, a apropia, a mângâia, a tăia, a despuia</i>
V ₂	infinitive ending in <i>-a</i> , present indicative with infix <i>-ez-</i>	<i>a lucra, a studia</i>
V ₃	infinitive ending in <i>-i</i> , present indicative singular 3rd person ending in <i>-e</i>	<i>a fugi, a despărți, a ieși, a repezi, a dormi, a muri, a veni, a sui, a îndoii, a jupui</i>
V ₄	infinitive ending in <i>-i</i> , present indicative singular 3rd person ending in <i>-ă</i>	<i>a oferi, a suferi</i>
V ₅	infinitive ending in <i>-i</i> , present indicative singular 3rd person ending in <i>-ește</i>	<i>a povesti, a trăi</i>
V ₆	infinitive ending in <i>-î</i> , present indicative singular 3rd person ending in <i>-ă</i>	<i>a vâri, a cobori</i>
V ₇	infinitive ending in <i>-î</i> , present indicative singular 3rd person ending in <i>-ăște</i>	<i>a hotărî</i>
V ₈	infinitive ending in diphthong <i>-ea</i>	<i>a apărea, a cădea, a șede, a vedea, a putea</i>
V ₉	infinitive ending in <i>-e</i> , past participle ending in <i>-ut</i>	<i>a pierde, a cere, a crede, a bate, a cunoaște, a coase, a vinde, a ține, a umple</i>
V ₁₀	infinitive ending in <i>-e</i> , past participle ending in <i>-s</i>	<i>a prinde, a rade, a roade, a plânge, a trage, a merge, a zice, a întoarce, a permite, a scoate, a pune, a rămâne, a purcede, a scrie</i>
V ₁₁	infinitive ending in <i>-e</i> , past participle ending in <i>-t</i> or <i>-pt</i>	<i>a rupe, a fierbe, a înfrânge, a sparge, a frige, a coace</i>

Nevertheless, even such a classification does not consider all possible sound alternances. A full classification, considering all combinations of sound changes and ending patterns, contains about seventy types, not including irregular verbs.

[\[edit\]](#) Irregular verbs

There are various kinds of irregularity, such as multiple radicals whose choice is conditioned phonetically or etymologically, and exceptional endings. The following is a list of the most frequent irregular verbs: *a avea* (to have), *a fi* (to be), *a vrea* (to want), *a sta* (to sit, stand, remain), *a da* (to give), *a arunca* (to throw), *a lua* (to take), *a bea* (to drink), *a ști* (to know), *a usca* (to dry), *a continua* (to continue), *a mânca* (to eat), *a face* (to do), *a zice* (to say), *a duce* (to carry).

Prepositions

The preposition before a noun determines which case the noun must take.

No prepositions take nouns in the nominative case.

[\[edit\]](#) Accusative

- pe + Direct Object (for names)
- cu, de la, and other... + Indirect Object
- la, and other + Circumstantial Objects
- pentru + Attribute

[\[edit\]](#) Dative

- grație
- datorită
- mulțumită
- conform
- contrar
- potrivit
- aidoma
- asemenea

[\[edit\]](#) Genitive

Other prepositions require the genitive case of nouns. Note that some prepositions of this sort have evolved from phrases with feminine nouns and, as a consequence, require a feminine possessive form when the object is a pronoun; e.g., *împotriva mea* (against me).

Interjections

In Romanian there are many interjections, and they are commonly used. Those that denote sounds made by animals or objects are called *onomatopee*. Below are shown some interjections and their approximative equivalent in English.

Vai! - Oh My God!

Ah!

Oh!/Oauuuu! - WOW!

Of! - say it when something is bothering you

Hmmm! - say it when you're thinking

Onomatopoeia

lipa-lipa (the sound of a duck's steps)

țuști (a sound designating a quick move)

mor-mor (the sound of a bear)

cu-cu-ri-gu (the sound of a cock)

hau-hau/ham-ham (the sound of a dog)

miauuu (the sound of a cat)

cip-cirip (sound of birds singing)

muuuu (the sound of a cow)

Interjectons can take functions as parts of a sentence.e.g.:

Mi-am luat o fustă *hmm-hmm*.

I just bought a very cool dress. *here hmm-hmm has the meaning of cool, and is an attribute*