



**learning target**

Aim of this section is to learn the meaning and use of wo- / da compounds.

German	English
Ich freue mich <b>darauf</b> .	I'm looking forward to it.
Er träumt <b>davon</b> .	He dreams about it.
<b>Worüber</b> denkst du nach?	What are you thinking about?

**rules**

Wo- / da compounds require some explanation because they don't exist in English. In German, however, they play quite an important role and are often used.

**Da compounds**

Several months ago we spoke about pronouns (ich, du, er, sie, es...). Pronouns can be used to avoid repetitions and make sentences shorter:

example:

1. **Cathy, Joy and Kristine** sind Freunde. **Cathy, Joy and Kristine** gehen oft zusammen ins Kino.  
 (Cathy, Joy and Kristine are friends. Cathy, Joy and Kristine often go together to the cinema.)
2. **Cathy, Joy and Kristine** sind Freunde. **Sie** gehen oft zusammen ins Kino.  
 (Cathy, Joy and Kristine are friends. They often go together to the cinema.)

In the first example I used twice "Cathy, Joy and Kristine". It sounds strange and makes the sentence unnecessary long. In the second example I replaced the name of the three girls by "sie" (they). You know who I mean with "sie" because I used the names in the sentence before already.

Da compounds have exactly the same purpose but they don't replace a person. They replace an inanimate object. To be exact: da compounds replace the object which follows a preposition.

example 1:

1. Ich kann **den Schlüssel** nicht finden. Ich suche *nach* **dem Schlüssel**.  
 (I can't find the key. I'm looking for the key.)
2. Ich kann **den Schlüssel** nicht finden. Ich suche **danach**.  
 (I can't find the key. I'm looking for it.)

Because I don't want to write again "Schlüssel" I replace it by "danach". "Danach" consists of the word "da" and the preposition "nach" which belongs to the verb "suchen" (to look for = suchen nach).



example 2:

1. Ich vermisse **unsere gemeinsame Zeit**. Ich träume oft *von* **unserer gemeinsamen Zeit**.  
(I miss our common time. I often dream about our common time.)
2. Ich vermisse **unsere gemeinsame Zeit**. Ich träume oft **davon**.  
(I miss our common time. I often dream about it.)

Because I don't want to write again "unsere gemeinsame Zeit" I replace it by "davon".

"Davon" consists of the word "da" and the preposition "vor" which belongs to the verb "träumen" (to dream about = träumen von).

We can summarize so far:

- "Da compounds" have the same function as pronouns but they just replace inanimate objects if the inanimate object follows a preposition.
- They always consists of "da" and "preposition" which belongs to the verb.
- If you want to translate a "da compound" into English split up the preposition and translate the "da" into "it". It's not completely correct but helps to understand the meaning for now.

example 3:

1. **Liebe** ist ein schönes Thema. Wir sprechen oft *über* **Liebe**.  
(Love is a nice topic. We often speak about love.)
2. **Liebe** ist ein schönes Thema. Wir sprechen oft **darüber**.  
(Love is a nice topic. We often speak about it.)

In this example the "da compound" consists of "da" + "r" + "preposition".

There is one additional rule we have to consider:

If the preposition starts with a vowel (a,e,u,o,) or an umlaut (ä,ü,ö) you have to put a "r" between "da" and the "preposition": **da + r + preposition**



**Wo compounds**

"Wo compounds" have the same function as "da compounds". They also replace the inanimate object following the preposition.

The difference is: "da compounds" are used in statements and "wo compounds" are used in questions.

example 1:

- question: **Wonach** suchst du? answer: Ich suche *nach* **dem Schlüssel**.  
 (What are you looking for? -> I'm looking for the key.)

As you can see the example the "wo compound" is a kind of question word which consists of "wo" and "preposition" which belongs to the verb (to look for = suchen nach).

If you try to translate a "wo compound" don't translate the "wo" into "where" because here it has actually the meaning of "what".

example 2:

- question: **Wovon** träumst du? answer: Ich träume *von* **unserer gemeinsamen Zeit**.  
 (What are you dreaming about? -> I'm dreaming about our common time.)

If the preposition starts with a vowel or an umlaut put a "r" between the "wo" and the "preposition".

example 3:

- question: **Woüber** sprechen sie? answer: Sie sprechen *über* **Liebe**.  
 (What are they talking about? -> They are talking about love.)

**Wo - Da compounds vs. personal pronouns**

I noticed that you still struggle to decide whether you have to use a wo - da compound or a personal pronoun. The following overview might help you:

	<b>inanimate objects</b>	<b>animate objects (people)</b>
<b>statements</b>	<b>da compound</b> da + (r) + preposition	preposition + pronoun
<b>questions</b>	<b>wo compound</b> wo + (r) + preposition	preposition + question word



### statements

#### example 1:

- Ich freue mich **auf** das Wochenende (=inanimate object).  
(I'm looking forward to the weekend.)

↳ Ich freue mich **darauf**.

- Ich freue mich **auf** meine Frau (=animate objects).  
(I'm looking forward to my wife.)

↳ Ich freue mich **auf sie**.

#### example 2:

- Ich denke **an** den Urlaub (=inanimate object).  
(I'm thinking about the holiday.)

↳ Ich denke **daran**.

- Ich denke **an** meinen Vater (=animate objects).  
(I'm thinking about my father.)

↳ Ich denke **an ihn**.

### questions

#### example 1:

- Ich ärgere mich **über** die Arbeit (=inanimate object).  
(I'm angry about the work.)

↳ **Worüber** ärgerst du dich?

- Ich ärgere mich **über** meinen Chef (=animate objects).  
(I'm angry about my boss.)

↳ **Über wen** ärgerst du dich?

#### example 2:

- Ich träume oft **von** einem eigenen Haus (=inanimate object).  
(I often dream about an own house.)

↳ **Wovon** träumst du?

- Ich träume **von** meinem Bruder (=animate objects).  
(I often dream about my brother.)

↳ **Von wem** träumst du?