portuguese nouns and their genders checklist

**A noun is a part of speech that describes a thing, person, place, event, concept or other substance or entity. Nouns in Portuguese are either masculine or feminine; the neuter, or genderless noun, has died out. In a great number of cases, it is usually possible to tell the gender of the noun from its ending. This document indicates whether a noun, or subset of nouns, are masculine or feminine, together with other groups of nouns which take an invariable masculine or feminine form, but may refer to persons or other entities of either gender.**

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FEMININE NOUNS

The following endings denote a feminine noun.

Nouns ending in **–ade** and **–ude**:

**A amizade** friendship

# A igualdade equality

**A piedade** pity

**A prioridade** priority

**A nacionalidade** nationality

**A tranquilidade** tranquillity

# A universidade university

# A juventude youth

**A virtude** virtue

Nouns ending in **–gem**:

**A engrenagem** gear (of car)

**A ferragem** hardwear

**A folhagem** foliage

# A homenagem tribute, homage

**A malandragem** double-dealing, cunning

**A margem** margin

**A paragem** stop

**A viagem** journey

Nouns ending in **–ção**, **-são, -stão or –gião**,corresponding to the English endings –tion, -sion, -stion, -gion.

**A erudição** learning

**A ilustração** illustration

**A imitação** imitation

# A intenção intention

**A nação** nation

**A posição** position

BUT: **O coração** heart

**A decisão** decision

**A evasão** evasion

**A ilusão** illusion

**A combustão** combustion

# A congestão congestion

# A religião religion

**A região** region

Nouns ending in **-cie**:

**A imundície** filth

**A meninice** childhood

**A planície** plain

**A superfície** surface

**A velhice** old age

**Feminine nouns which refer to entities of either gender**

The following nouns are invariably feminine, but may apply to either gender.

|  |
| --- |
| **A besta** beast, animal  **A criança** child  **A pessoa** person  **A testemunha** witness  **A vítima** victim |

MASCULINE NOUNS

*As a general rule*, nouns ending in **unstressed –o** are masculine:

**O amigo** male friend **O marido** husband

**O carro** car **O tio** uncle

**O ano** year **O primo** cousin

An exception to this rule is **a tribo** (tribe) and **a foto** (photo)

# Masculine nouns ending in -a

There are several groups of masculine nouns which end in the vowel **–a**.

1. Firstly, there are a number of nouns which end in **unstressed**

**-a**. The ones you are most likely to come across are:

**O dia** day **O planeta** planet

**O mapa** map **O guia** guide

2. Nouns which end in stressed **–a,** indicated by either the acute

accent or tilde, are also, *as a general rule*, masculine. Some

examples are:

**O chá** tea

**O guaraná** Brazilian herb and soft drink

**O pá** mate, shovel

**O sofá** sofa

**O galã** leading man

# O imã magnet

# O talismã talisman

**O cardigã** cardigan

**O sutiã** brassiere (Braz.)

NOTE: **A maçã** apple

**A lã** wool

3. Words which derive directly from the Greek ending in -ma

are also masculine:

**O drama** drama

**O sistema** system

**O diagrama** diagram

**O programa** programme

# O clima climate

# O telefonema telephone call

# O miasma decay

NOTE: Watch out for: **A fama** fame

**A chama** flame

**Other masculine noun endings**

1. *As a general rule*, nouns ending in **–me** are masculine:

**O legume** vegetable

**O volume** volume

**O cume** top, summit

**O lume** fire or light

**O queixume** lament

**O costume** custom

**O uniforme** uniform

**O nome** name

**O exame** exam

NOTE: watch out for **a fome** hunger

**a vexame** shame, disgrace

2. *As a general rule*, nouns which end in **–r**  are masculine:

**O prazer** pleasure

**O motor** motor

**O andar** floor, storey

**O ar** air

**O ardor** ardour, passion

**O aspirador** vacuum cleaner

**O mar** sea

**O prazer** pleasure

**O colar** necklace

**O humor** humour

**O lar** home

**O furor** fury, rage

**O par** pair, couple

NOTE: **a dor** pain

**a mulher** woman

**a colher** spoon

3. Nouns which end in **–l** are masculine:

**O caracol** snail

**O canil** kennel

**O casal** couple

**O fossil** fossil

**O anel** ring

**O futebol** football

**O fuzil** rifle

**O hospital** hospital

**O têxtil** textile

**O réptil** reptile

**O perfil** profile

**O lençol** sheet

**O painel** panel, picture

**O papel** paper

**O mel** honey

4. Nouns ending in **–m** are masculine:

**O patim** skate

**O jardim** garden

**O capim** grass

**O talharim** tagliatelle or noodles

Masculine and feminine nouns ending in –e, ão and -z

In the case of nouns ending in **–e**, **-ão** and **–z** it is not always possible to tell the gender simply by looking at the endings. Some of the most common nouns in these categories are shown below.

# Nouns ending in –e

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MASCULINE | FEMININE |
| **O peixe** fish  **O cárcere** prison O cheque cheque **O desfile** procession  **O envelope** envelope  **O esmalte** nail polish  **O ente** being  **O estresse (Br.)** stress  **O gabinete** office  **O chicote** whip O limite limit **O monte** hill, pile O leste east **O resgate** ransom  **O pé** foot  **O recorte** cutting, clip O sangue bloodO satellite satelliteO traje dress, suit NOTE:  **O parente** relative | **A frase** sentence  **A tarde** afternoon  **A frente** front  **A gafe** gaffe  **A greve** strike  **A lente** lens  **A massacre** massacre  **A maré** tide A mercê mercy |

**Masculine nouns which refer to entities of either gender**

The following nouns are invariably masculine, but may apply to either gender.

|  |
| --- |
| **O animal** animal  **O anjo** angel  **O cônjuge** spouse  **O indivíduo** individual |

**Nouns ending in –ão**

Nouns ending in **–ão** (NOT **ção** or **são**) can be masculine or feminine.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MASCULINE | FEMININE |
| O avião aeroplaneO escorregão slip-up **O pão** bread  **O travão** brake  **O trovão** thunder  **O volcão** volcano | A escuridão darknessA escravidão slavery **A mão** hand  **A vastidão** immensity |

# Nouns ending in –z

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MASCULINE | FEMININE |
| **O xerez** sherry  **O arroz** rice  **O cartaz** poster, bill  **O xadrez** chess | **A luz** light  **A maciez** softness  **A matriz** womb, mould  **A palidez** paleness |

**Some irregular feminine and masculine nouns:**

**relatives, professions, titles, nationalities, animals**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| MASCULINE | **NOUN** | FEMININE |
| O judeuO europeuO alemãoO catalão | **Jew**  **European**  **German**  **Catalan** | A judeiaA europeiaA alemãA catalã |
| O paiO avôO maridoO sogroO genroO irmãoO padrastoO rapaz | **Father**  **Grandfather/grandmother**  **Husband/wife**  **Father-in-law**  **Son-in-law/daughter-in-law**  **Brother/sister**  **Stepfather/stepmother**  **Boy/girl** | A mãeA avóA esposaA sograA genraA irmãA madrasta **A rapariga (Pt)** |
| **O ator**  **O embaixador**  **A monge**  **O poeta**  **O juiz**  **O campeão**  **O herói**  **O cidadão** | **Actor/actress**  **Ambassador**  **Monk/nun**  **Poet**  **Judge**  **Champion**  **Hero**  **Citizen** | A atrizA embaixatrizA monjaA poetisaA juizaA campeãA heroinaA cidadã |
| O reiO príncipeO duqueO condeO barãoO cavaleiro | **King/queen**  **Prince/princess**  **Duke/duchess**  **Count/countess**  **Baron/baroness**  **Gentleman/lady** | A rainhaA princesaA duquesaA condesaA baronesaA dama |
| O boiO galoO cão | **Bull/cow**  **Cock/hen**  **Dog/bitch** | A vacaA galinha **A cadela**  **or a cachorra (Br.)** |

**Nouns which are invariable in gender**

Another group of nouns, referring to profession, status or nationalities are invariable, that is, they don’t change whether the person they are referring to is male or female. Gender is indicated by the definite article **o** or **a** or the indefinite article **um** or **uma**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **o/a camarada**  **o/a carioca**  **o/a colega**  **o/a indígena**  **o/a guia**  **o/a patriota** | comrade  native of Rio de Janeiro  colleague, classmate  indigenous person  guide  patriot |
| **o/a homicídio**  **o/a suicídio** | homicide, murdered person  suicide |
| **o/a burocrata**  **o/a democrata** | bureaucrat  democrat |
| **o/a canadense**  **o/a estadunense**  **o/a timorense** | Canadian  native of the United states of America  native of East Timor |
| **o/a artista**  **o/a motorista**  **o/a taxista**  **o/a tenista** | artist  driver  taxi driver  tennis player |
| **o/a estudante**  **o/a cliente**  **o/a doente**  **o/a gerente** | student  client, customer  invalid, ill person  boss, manager |
| **o/a cadete**  **o/a intérprete** | cadet  interpreter |
| **o/a jovem** | young person |

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by