

## READING



### VOCATIVE ENDINGS: FEMININE GENDER

Read the informative text and examples.

In Polish, nouns have three grammatical genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Recognising the feminine gender is relatively simple — most nouns of this gender end with **-a**, for example **mama** (mom), **lampa** (lamp) or **muzyka** (music). These nouns usually refer to female beings or objects considered feminine.

There is also a group of feminine nouns that end with **-i**, such as **pani** (lady), **sprzedawczyni** (saleswoman), **bogini** (goddess).

Some feminine nouns end with a **consonant**. Most often, this is a soft consonant (**-ść, -źń, -ń, -ć, -ź, -dź, -ś, -ł**), a functionally soft consonant (**-c, -cz, -ż, -sz, -dz**), or, more rarely, the consonant **-w**, as in the words **krew** (blood), **brew** (eyebrow), **marchew** (carrot).

In the vocative case — a form used for directly addressing someone or something — feminine nouns usually change their ending.

#### NOMINATIVE ENDING **-a**

**(NOTE! THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO DIMINUTIVES WITH A SOFT ENDING)**

For feminine nouns ending in **-a** (that are not diminutives with a soft ending), the vocative takes the ending **-o**:

Nominative ending	Examples (nominative)	Vocative (ending: <b>-o</b> )
-a	<b>mama</b> (mom) <b>kobieta</b> (woman) <b>Anna</b> <b>Katarzyna</b> <b>Julia</b> <b>Agnieszka</b> <b>Marta</b> <b>muzyka</b> (music) <b>grupa</b> (group)	<b>mamo</b> <b>kobiet</b> <b>Anno</b> <b>Katarzyno</b> <b>Julio</b> <b>Agnieszko</b> <b>Marto</b> <b>muzyko</b> <b>grupo</b>

#### NOMINATIVE ENDING **-a**

— DIMINUTIVES AND AFFECTIONATE FORMS WITH A SOFT ENDING

For feminine nouns ending **softly** in **-a** (which are diminutives or affectionate forms), the vocative takes the ending **-u**:

Nominative ending	Examples (nominative)	Vocative (ending: <b>-u</b> )
-a	<b>mamusia</b> (mommy) <b>Ania</b> <b>Kasia</b> <b>Agnieszka</b> <b>Martusia</b> <b>babcia</b> (grandma) <b>ciocia</b> (auntie)	<b>mamusiu</b> <b>Aniu</b> <b>Kasiu</b> <b>Agniesiu</b> <b>Martusiu</b> <b>babciu</b> <b>ciociu</b>

### FEMININE NOUNS ENDING IN SOFT CONSONANT

For feminine nouns ending in a **soft consonant**, the vocative takes the ending **-i**. In other words, the soft ending is "lengthened," with the stress shifting to **i**.

Nominative ending	Examples (nominative)	Vocative (ending: <b>-i</b> )
soft consonant (-ść, -źń, -ń, -ć, -ź, -dź, -ś, -l)	<b>*miłość, złość</b> <b>przyjaźń</b> <b>broń, dłoń</b> <b>nić</b> <b>gałąź</b> <b>mieź, odpowiedź</b> <b>wieś</b> <b>sól</b>	<b>miłości, złości</b> <b>przyjaźni</b> <b>broni, dłoni</b> <b>niści</b> <b>gałęzi</b> <b>miedzi, odpowiedzi</b> <b>wsi</b> <b>soli</b>

\* *miłość* (love), *złość* (anger), *przyjaźń* (friendship), *broń* (weapon), *dłoń* (hand), *nić* (thread), *gałąź* (branch), *mieź* (copper), *odpowieź* (answer), *wieś* (village), *sól* (salt)

### FEMININE NOUNS ENDING IN FUNCTIONALLY SOFT CONSONANT

For feminine nouns ending in a **functionally soft consonant**, the vocative takes the ending **-y**:

Nominative ending	Examples (nominative)	Vocative (ending: <b>-y</b> )
functionally soft consonant (-c, -cz, -ź, -sz)	<b>pomoc, noc</b> <b>rzecz, smycz</b> <b>straż, młodzież</b> <b>mysz</b>	<b>pomocy, nocy</b> <b>rzeczy, smyczy</b> <b>straży, młodzieży</b> <b>myszy</b>

\* *pomoc* (help), *noc* (night), *rzecz* (thing), *smycz* (leash), *straż* (guard), *młodzież* (youth), *mysz* (mouse)

### FEMININE NOUNS ENDING IN -w

For feminine nouns ending in the consonant **-w**, the vocative takes the ending **-i**:

Nominative ending	Przykład (mianownik)	Vocative (ending: <b>-i</b> )
-w	<b>krw</b> <b>marchew</b> <b>brew</b>	<b>krwi</b> <b>marchwi</b> (potential form) <b>brwi</b>

\* *krw* (blood), *marchew* (carrot), *brew* (eyebrow)

## FEMININE NOUNS ENDING IN THE VOWEL -i

For feminine nouns ending in the vowel *-i*, the vocative is identical to the nominative:

Nominative ending	Examples (nominative)	Vocative = nominative
-i	<p><b>pani</b></p> <p><b>sprzedawczyni</b></p> <p><b>dozorczyjni</b></p> <p><b>chlebodawczyni</b></p> <p><b>bogini</b></p> <p><b>władczyni</b></p>	<p><b>pani</b></p> <p><b>sprzedawczyni</b></p> <p><b>dozorczyjni</b></p> <p><b>chlebodawczyni</b></p> <p><b>bogini</b></p> <p><b>władczyni</b></p>

\* *pani* (lady), *sprzedawczyni* (saleswoman), *dozorczyjni* (caretaker), *chlebodawczyni* (breadwinner), *bogini* (goddess), *władczyni* (ruler)

## ADJECTIVES

Adjectives in the vocative case remain the same as in the nominative:

- **droga** mama → **droga** mamo (*dear mom*)
- **sympatyczna** koleżanka → **sympatyczna** koleżanko (*friendly colleague*)
- **szanowna** prezeska → **szanowna** prezesko (*honorable chairwoman*)



ADJECTIVE IN THE VOCATIVE CASE = ADJECTIVE IN NOMINATIVE CASE

Although in modern spoken Polish people often use the nominative instead of the vocative, correctly using the vocative sounds more natural and polite, especially in formal situations!

