How to Say Animal Names in Other Languages

KS2 MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES Ages 9-12 ⏰ 3 min read

What Are Animal Names in Other Languages?

When you learn a new language like **Spanish**, **French**, or **German**, one of the most fun things to discover is how to say the names of animals. In English, we call a dog a **dog**, but in Spanish it's a **perro**, in French it's a **chien**, and in German it's a **Hund**. Every language has its own special words for all the creatures we know and love.

Learning animal names is brilliant for beginners because animals are everywhere and easy to point at and remember. Whether you're at a **zoo**, watching a nature documentary, or reading a picture book, you'll spot chances to use these new words.

Think of it like collecting trading cards – each new animal name is like finding a new card to add to your collection of **vocabulary**.

Why Do Languages Have Different Animal Names?

Each language developed separately over **thousands of years**. The sounds that work well in Spanish are different from the sounds in English, so people in Spain created their own word for a cat: **gato**. In France, they say **chat**. These words often came from ancient languages and just stuck around as languages evolved.

Some animal names are similar across languages because they come from the same family of languages. For instance, the English word **cat** is similar to the German **Katze** – they both sound a bit alike because English and German are **cousin languages** that share ancient roots.

Useful Animal Names to Learn

Here are some common animals and how to say them in **three popular languages**:

Dog: perro (Spanish), chien (French), Hund (German)
Cat: gato (Spanish), chat (French), Katze (German)
Bird: pájaro (Spanish), oiseau (French), Vogel (German)

Fish: pez (Spanish), poisson (French), Fisch (German)
Lion: león (Spanish), lion (French), Löwe (German)

Think of it like learning someone's nickname – once you know that a cat in French is **chat**, you can use it whenever you talk about cats with French speakers.

How Learning Animal Names Helps

When you learn animal words in another language, you're not just memorising random sounds – you're building real **communication skills**. You can describe what you see at a farm, ask questions at a wildlife park, or understand stories and films in another language. These words are useful because animals are a safe, friendly topic that anyone can chat about, even if they're still learning a language together.

The best way to remember animal names is to use them regularly – draw pictures and label them, watch nature shows in another language, or play games with flashcards. The more you say them and write them, the more they stick in your brain.

Free for educational use