



## DUTCH FOR BEGINNERS

### Lesson 25: Demonstratieven (aanwijzende voornaamwoorden)

In this class, I'll teach you how we use the demonstrative pronouns **deze**, **die**, **dit**, and **dat**. In Dutch we also sometimes call this *aanwijzende voornaamwoorden*. You use these pronouns to “demonstrate” or to “introduce” something. Look at these example sentences:

1. **Dit** is mijn jas.  
**This** is my jacket.
2. **Deze** jas is heel oud.  
**This** jacket is very old.
3. **Dat** daar is ook een jas van mij.  
**That** one over there is a jacket of mine as well.
4. **Die** jas is nieuw.  
**That** jacket is new.
5. **Dit** zijn mijn katjes.  
**These** are my cats.
6. **Dit** katje heet Nala en **dat** katje heet Veggie.  
**This** cat is called Nala, and **that** cat is called Veggie.

Let's first take a look at sentences 2, 4, and 6. In sentence 2, we use **deze** *jas*, in sentence 4, **die** *jas*, and in sentence 6, **dit** *katje* and **dat** *katje*. Why is that?

There are two main rules that determine which demonstrative you use in front of a noun:

1. Is the noun a **de-word** or **het-word**?<sup>1</sup>
2. Is it close (**dichtbij**) or far away (**ver weg**)?

	dichtbij	ver weg
de-woord	deze	die
het-woord	dit	dat

In sentences 2 and 4, we used a **de-word** (*de jas*). In sentence 2, it was close by; in sentence 4, it was far away. In sentence 6 we used a **het-word** (*het katje*). And we assume from the sentence that Nala was closer to me than Veggie was.

In the other sentences (1, 3, and 5) we didn't put the demonstratives in front of the nouns, but we introduced the jacket and the cats. When something is close, we use **dit is/zijn**, and when it's far away, we use **dat is/zijn**.

<sup>1</sup> If you want to learn more about the categories for **de** and **het**, please go back to lesson 11.