

da- Compounds

You already know that when we are talking about people or things, we do not have to keep repeating the names of people or items. Instead, we can replace full nouns with pronouns:

Wir sehen das Buch .	<i>We see the book.</i>
Wir sehen es .	<i>We see it.</i>
Wir helfen dem Kind .	<i>We're helping the child.</i>
Wir helfen ihm .	<i>We're helping him.</i>

In each of these cases, pronouns can replace nouns representing either people or things. However, objects of prepositions work differently. When the noun being replaced refers to a person, then a pronoun can be used. In this case the substitution will mean him, her, them, etc.

Wir sprechen mit dem Mann .	<i>We're talking to the man.</i>
Wir sprechen mit ihm .	<i>We're talking to him.</i>

However, when objects following prepositions refer to inanimate objects or things, and we want to say 'with it', 'for it', 'to it', etc., we cannot simply replace the full noun with a pronoun. Instead, German replaces the noun with **da-**, which it attaches to the front of the preposition.

Ich verstehe nichts von diesem Thema.	<i>I understand nothing about this topic.</i>
Ich verstehe nichts davon (NOT 'von ihm').	<i>I understand nothing about it.</i>
Haben Sie etwas gegen diesen Film?	<i>Do you have something against this film?</i>
Haben Sie etwas dagegen?	<i>Do you have something against it?</i>
Wir haben uns für das rote Auto entschieden.	<i>We have decided on the red car.</i>
Wir haben uns dafür entschieden.	<i>We have decided on it.</i>

When the preposition begins with a **vowel**, an **-r-** is added to aid pronunciation, thus making the compound dar + preposition.

Wir sprechen über das Buch.	<i>We're talking about the book.</i>
Wir sprechen darüber .	<i>We're talking about it.</i>
Wir freuen uns auf das Wochenende.	<i>We are looking forward to the weekend.</i>
Wir freuen uns darauf .	<i>We are looking forward to it.</i>