Episode 028 – Grammar

1. The modal verb "wollen"

You've already learned nearly all the modal verbs: "müssen", "können", "möchten", "sollen" and "dürfen". There's one more - "wollen". Like all the other modal verbs, it is usually used in conjunction with a second verb, the main verb.

The modal verb "wollen" means to want to or intend to do something.

Example:
Harry will frühstücken.

Conjugation
The conjugation of "wollen" is irregular. Pay particular attention to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd person singular:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>ich</th>
<th>will</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>du</td>
<td>willst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>er/sie/es</td>
<td>will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>wir</td>
<td>wollen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ihr</td>
<td>wolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sie</td>
<td>wollen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The difference between "wollen" and "möchten"
"wollen" and "möchten" are similar in meaning. They both describe the intention and desire to do something, but with different intensities.

"möchten" expresses a wish or desire and sounds more polite.
"wollen" is stronger and more concrete.

Examples:
Bedienung: "Was möchten Sie?"
 (= The waitress politely asks what Harry would like.)
Harry: "Ich will Kaffee, Brötchen, Wurst und Käse."
 (= Harry is hungry and wants to eat now.)