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SUMMARY OF TENSES

The following is a summary of the German tenses and their approximate English equivalents. Each of these tenses is discussed separately in the sections that follow. Notes on usage are also included, as well as conjugations of "sein," "haben," and "werden."

German

English

Present Tenses

Präsens:
Er spielt.

Simple Present:
He plays.

Present Continuous:
He is playing.

Past Tenses

Imperfekt:
Er spielte.

Simple Past:
He played.

Past Continuous:
He was playing.

Perfect Tenses

Perfekt:
Er hat gespielt.

Present Perfect:
He has played.

Present Perfect Continuous:
He has been playing.

Past Perfect Tenses

Plusquamperfekt:
Er hatte gespielt.

Past Perfect:
He had played.

Past Perfect Continuous:
He had been playing.

Future Tenses

Futur I:
Er wird spielen.

Future:
He will play.

Future Continuous:
He will be playing.
He is going to play.

Future Perfect Tenses

Futur II:
Er wird gespielt haben.

Future Perfect:
He will have played.

Future Perfect Continuous:
He will have been playing.

Present Conditional Tenses

Konditional I:
Er würde spielen.

Present Conditional:
He would play.

Pres. Cond. Continuous:
He would be playing.

Present Perfect Conditional Tenses

Konditional II:
Er würde gespielt haben.

Pres. Perf. Cond.:
He would have played.

Pres. Perf. Cond. Cont.:
He would have been playing.

Subjunctive I

Konjunktiv I
Er spiele.

Subjunctive I
He plays.

Subjunctive II

Konjunktiv II
Er spielte.

Subjunctive II
He played.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Verbs](#)

Participles

Participles are infinite verb forms. English and German distinguish between present and past participles.

Present Participle

The present participle in German is built by adding the ending -end to the stem. The German present participle corresponds to the English gerund construction ending in -ing.

Inf. = kommen	to come
Pres. Part. = kommend	coming

Inf. = singen	to sing
Pres. Part. = singend	singing

The present participle is used as an adjective that presents a state or action as continuing and incomplete. It can further be used to imply two states or actions taking place at the same time. Usually, the present participles have active meanings.

Das lachende Kind
The laughing child
Das lachende Kind läuft die Treppe herauf.
The laughing child runs up the stairs.
Das Kind läuft lachend die Treppe herauf.
The child runs laughing up the stairs.

NOTE: Generally, the present participle is not used in predicative form. Thus, in contrast to English, a sentence such as the child is laughing (present continuous) does not exist in German. However, there is a number of present participles that can be used as predicative adjectives. These present participles either have a different meaning than the original stem word, or the original stem word is extinct.

spannen	to span, stretch
but: Das Buch ist spannend.	The book is exciting.
reizen	to irritate
but: Sie ist ganz reizend.	She is very charming.

The Past Participle

The past participle in German is built in different ways, depending on the infinitive, the prefix, and the verb conjugation.

Weak verbs usually add a ge- to the beginning of the verb stem and a -t to the end.

Inf. = kaufen	to buy
Past Part. = gekauft	bought

Verbs that end in -ieren and verbs with non-separable prefixes do not add ge-.

Inf. = studieren	to study
Past Part. = studiert	studied

SEIN, HABEN, & WERDEN

Conjugations

The German verbs "sein," "haben," and "werden" are irregular and are used to form various tenses. They are conjugated as follows:

SEIN (to be)

Present Tense (I am)

Singular:

1. ich bin
2. du bist
3. er/sie/es ist

Plural:

1. wir sind
2. ihr seid
3. Sie, sie sind

Perfect Tense (I was/have been)

Singular:

1. ich bin ... gewesen
2. du bist ... gewesen
3. er/sie/es ist ... gewesen

Plural:

1. wir sind ... gewesen
2. ihr seid ... gewesen
3. Sie, sie sind ... gewesen

Future Tense (I will be/am going to be)

Singular:

1. ich werde ... sein
2. du wirst ... sein
3. er/sie/es wird ... sein

Plural:

1. wir werden ... sein
2. ihr werdet ... sein
3. Sie, sie werden ... sein

Present Conditional (I would be)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... sein
2. du würdest ... sein
3. er/sie/es würde ... sein

Plural:

1. wir würden ... sein
2. ihr würdet ... sein
3. Sie, sie würden ... sein

Subjunctive I (I am)

Simple Past Tense (I was)

Singular:

1. ich war
2. du warst
3. er/sie/es war

Plural:

1. wir waren
2. ihr wart
3. Sie, sie waren

Past Perfect Tense (I had been)

Singular:

1. ich war ... gewesen
2. du warst ... gewesen
3. er/sie/es war ... gewesen

Plural:

1. wir waren ... gewesen
2. ihr wart ... gewesen
3. Sie, sie waren ... gewesen

Future Perfect Tense (I will have been)

Singular:

1. ich werde ... gewesen sein
2. du wirst ... gewesen sein
3. er/sie/es wird ... gewesen sein

Plural:

1. wir werden ... gewesen sein
2. ihr werdet ... gewesen sein
3. Sie, sie werden ... gewesen sein

Present Perfect Conditional (I would have been)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... gewesen sein
2. du würdest ... gewesen sein
3. er/sie/es würde ... gewesen sein

Plural:

1. wir würden ... gewesen sein
2. ihr würdet ... gewesen sein
3. Sie, sie würden ... gewesen sein

Singular:

1. ich sei
2. du seist
3. es/sie/es sei

Plural:

1. wir seien
2. ihr seid
3. sie seien

Subjunctive II

Present (I were)

Singular:

1. ich wäre
2. du wärst
3. er/sie/es wäre

Plural:

1. wir wären
2. ihr wärt
3. sie wären

Subjunctive II Past (I would have been)

Singular:

1. ich wäre ... gewesen
2. du wärst ... gewesen
3. er/sie/es wäre ... gewesen

Plural:

1. wir wären ... gewesen
2. ihr wärt ... gewesen
3. sie wären ... gewesen

HABEN (to have)

Present Tense (I have)

Singular:

1. ich habe
2. du hast
3. er/sie/es hat

Plural:

1. wir haben
2. ihr habt
3. Sie, sie haben

Simple Past Tense (I had)

Singular:

1. ich hatte
2. du hattest
3. er/sie/es hatte

Plural:

1. wir hatten
2. ihr hattet
3. Sie, sie hatten

Perfect Tense (I had/I have had)

Singular:

1. ich habe ... gehabt
2. du hast ... gehabt
3. er/sie/es hat ... gehabt

Plural:

1. wir haben ... gehabt
2. ihr habt ... gehabt
3. Sie, sie haben ... gehabt

Past Perfect Tense (I had had)

Singular:

1. ich hatte ... gehabt
2. du hattest ... gehabt
3. er/sie/es hatte ... gehabt

Plural:

1. wir hatten ... gehabt
2. ihr hattet ... gehabt
3. Sie, sie hatten ... gehabt

Future Tense (I will have/am going to have) Future Perfect Tense (I will have had)

Singular:

1. ich werde ... haben
2. du wirst ... haben
3. er/sie/es wird ... haben

Plural:

1. wir werden ... haben
2. ihr werdet ... haben

Singular:

1. ich werde ... gehabt haben
2. du wirst ... gehabt haben
3. er/sie/es wird ... gehabt haben

Plural:

1. wir werden ... gehabt haben
2. ihr werdet ... gehabt haben

3. Sie, sie werden ... haben

Present Conditional (I would have)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... haben
2. du würdest ... haben
3. er/sie/es würde ... haben

Plural:

1. wir würden ... haben
2. ihr würdet ... haben
3. Sie, sie würden ... haben

SUBJUNCTIVE I (I have)

Singular:

1. ich habe
2. du habest
3. es/sie/es habe

Plural:

1. wir hatten
2. ihr hättet
3. sie hatten

Subjunctive II Present (I had)

Singular:

1. ich hätte
2. du hättest
3. er/sie/es hätte

Plural:

1. wir hätten
2. ihr hättet
3. sie hätten

3. Sie, sie werden ... gehabt haben

Present Perfect Conditional (I would have had)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... gehabt haben
2. du würdest ... gehabt haben
3. er/sie/es würde ... gehabt haben

Plural:

1. wir würden ... gehabt haben
2. ihr würdet ... gehabt haben
3. Sie, sie würden ... gehabt haben

Subjunctive II Past (I would have had)

Singular:

1. ich hätte ... gehabt
2. du hättest ... gehabt
3. er/sie/es hätte ... gehabt

Plural:

1. wir hätten ... gehabt
2. ihr hättet ... gehabt
3. sie hätten ... habt

WERDEN (to become)

Present Tense (I become/am becoming)

Singular:

1. ich werde
2. du wirst
3. er/sie/es wird

Plural:

1. wir werden
2. ihr werdet
3. Sie, sie werden

Perfect Tense (I have become/became)

Singular:

1. ich bin ... geworden

Simple Past Tense (I became/was becoming)

Singular:

1. ich wurde
2. du wurdest
3. er/sie/es wurde

Plural:

1. wir wurden
2. ihr wurdet
3. Sie, sie wurden

Past Perfect Tense (I had become)

Singular:

1. ich war ... geworden

2. du bist ... geworden
3. er/sie/es ist ... geworden

Plural:

1. wir sind ... geworden
2. ihr seid ... geworden
3. Sie, sie sind ... geworden

Future Tense (I will/am going to become)

Singular:

1. ich werde ... werden
2. du wirst ... werden
3. er/sie/es wird ... werden

Plural:

1. wir werden ... werden
2. ihr werdet ... werden
3. Sie, sie werden ... werden

NOTE: Oftentimes, this form is shortened to "ich werde ..., etc."

Present Conditional (I would become)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... werden
2. du würdest ... werden
3. er/sie/es würde ... werden

Plural:

1. wir würden ... werden
2. ihr würdet ... werden
3. Sie, sie würden ... werden

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Verbs](#)

2. du warst ... geworden
3. er/sie/es war ... geworden

Plural:

1. wir waren ... geworden
2. ihr wart ... geworden
3. Sie, sie waren ... geworden

Future Perfect Tense (I will have become)

Singular:

1. ich werde ... geworden sein
2. du wirst ... geworden sein
3. er/sie/es wird ... geworden sein

Plural:

1. wir werden ... geworden sein
2. ihr werdet ... geworden sein
3. Sie, sie werden ... geworden sein

Present Perfect Cond. (I would have become)

Singular:

1. ich würde ... geworden sein
2. du würdest ... geworden sein
3. er/sie/es würde ... geworden sein

Plural:

1. wir würden ... geworden sein
2. ihr würdet ... geworden sein
3. Sie, sie würden ... geworden sein

PRESENT TENSE

The German Present Tense (Präsens) is formed as follows:

Regular Verbs:

Example: spielen

Singular:

1. ich spiele
2. du spiel**st**
3. er/sie/es spiel**t**

Plural:

1. wir spiel**en**
2. ihr spiel**t**
3. Sie, sie spiel**en**

[Vowel-Changing Verbs](#)

Example: fahren

Singular:

1. ich fahre
2. du fähr**st**
3. er/sie/es fähr**t**

Plural:

1. wir fahr**en**
2. ihr fahr**t**
3. Sie, sie fahr**en**

USAGE: The German Present Tense is equivalent to both the English Present Tenses (Simple Present and [Present Continuous](#)). It is used to talk about facts, or events that happen routinely, or about events that are in process at the moment. It is also used in colloquial language as a substitute for [Future Tense](#), to talk about planned or upcoming events.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," and "werden"](#)

[Future Tense](#)

PAST TENSE

The German Past Tense (Imperfekt) is characterized by either the "t" inserted after the stem ([weak verbs](#)) or by a change in the stem vowel ([strong verbs](#)):

Weak Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich spiel**te**
2. du spiel**test**
3. er/sie/es spiel**te**

Plural:

1. wir spiel**ten**
2. ihr spiel**tet**
3. Sie, sie spiel**ten**

Strong Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **fuhr**
2. du **fuhrst**
3. er/sie/es **fuhr**

Plural:

1. wir **fuhr**en****
2. ihr **fuhr**t****
3. Sie, sie **fuhr**en****

A third group of verbs is characterized by both by the t inserted after the stem **and** by a change in the stem vowel ([irregular verbs](#)). Historical sound assimilations are responsible for possible additional changes in the stem consonants.

Irregular Verbs:

Example: bringen (to bring)

rennen (to run)

Singular:

1. ich brach**te**
2. du brach**test**
3. er/sie/es brach**te**

Plural:

1. wir brach**ten**
2. ihr brach**tet**
3. Sie, sie brach**ten**

Singular:

1. ich ran**nte**
2. du ran**ntest**
3. er/sie/es ran**nte**

Plural:

1. wir ran**nten**
2. ihr ran**ntet**
3. Sie, sie ran**nten**

USAGE: The German Past Tense is primarily used for narratives and historic or literary writing. It can, however, be used as the equivalent of both the English Simple Past (e.g., I played/I drove) and the [Past Continuous Tense](#) (e.g., I was playing/I was driving).

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," and "werden"](#)
[Perfect Tense](#)

PERFECT TENSE

The German Perfect Tense (Perfekt) is formed with the past participle of the verb + the Present Indicative form of its auxiliary. Only the auxiliary is conjugated.

Most past participles are formed with the "ge-" prefix. The past participles of weak verbs take a "-t" ending, those of strong verbs often undergo a vowel change in the stem and take an "-en" ending, and those of irregular verbs undergo a vowel change **and** take a -t ending.

Weak Verbs + "haben":

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich habe **gespielt**
2. du hast **gespielt**
3. er/sie/es hat **gespielt**

Plural:

1. wir haben **gespielt**
2. ihr habt **gespielt**
3. Sie, sie haben **gespielt**

Strong Verbs + "haben":

Example: singen (to sing)

Singular:

1. ich habe **gesungen**
2. du hast **gesungen**
3. er/sie/es hat **gesungen**

Plural:

1. wir haben **gesungen**
2. ihr habt **gesungen**
3. Sie, sie haben **gesungen**

NOTE: If a verb is intransitive and reflects a change of state or position, its Perfect Tense is formed with the auxiliary "sein" instead of "haben."

Weak Verbs + "sein"

Example: wandern (to hike)

Singular:

1. ich **bin** gewandert
2. du **bist** gewandert
3. er/sie/es **ist** gewandert

Plural:

1. wir **sind** gewandert
2. ihr **seid** gewandert
3. Sie, sie **sind** gewandert

Strong Verbs + "sein"

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **bin** gefahren
2. du **bist** gefahren
3. er/sie/es **ist** gefahren

Plural:

1. wir **sind** gefahren
2. ihr **seid** gefahren
3. Sie, sie **sind** gefahren

NOTE: Some German verbs taking "sein" as an auxiliary in the Perfect Tense include: "altern (to age), bleiben (to stay), eilen (to hurry), entstehen (to come into existence), fallen (to fall), gehen (to go), klettern (to climb), kommen (to come), laufen (to run), rasen (to speed), reisen (to travel), reiten (to ride), schwimmen (to swim), segeln (to sail), springen (to spring), steigen (to climb), sterben (to die), umziehen (to move), verschwinden (to disappear), wachsen (to grow)." In the Perfect Tense, "sein" and "werden" also take the auxiliary "sein."

NOTE: Some German verbs do not form their past participles by adding the prefix "ge," but add only "t" to the stem. They are generally words of foreign origin, e.g. studieren /studiert, gratulieren /gratuliert, kalkulieren /kalkuliert.

NOTE: For additional information on usage of past participles, see: [Passive Voice](#)

[Past Perfect Tense](#)
[Future Perfect Tense](#)
[Present Perfect Conditional](#)
[Future Perfect Subjunctive](#)
[Present and Past Perfect Subjunctives](#)

USAGE: The German Perfect Tense describes past events and is equivalent in meaning to the English Simple Past (for finished action, e.g., I played /I drove) and the English Present Perfect Tense (for unfinished action, e.g., I have played /I have driven).

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)
[Modal Auxiliaries](#)

PAST PERFECT TENSE

The German Past Perfect Tense (Plusquamperfekt) is formed with the [past participle](#) of the verb + Past Tense (Imperfekt) form of its [auxiliary](#). Only the auxiliary is conjugated.

Weak Verbs + ["haben"](#) :

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **hatte** gespielt
2. du **hattest** gespielt
3. er/sie/es **hatte** gespielt

Plural:

1. wir **hatten** gespielt
2. ihr **hattet** gespielt
3. Sie, sie **hatten** gespielt

Weak Verbs + ["sein"](#)

Example: wandern (to hike)

Singular:

1. ich **war** gewandert
2. du **warst** gewandert
3. er/sie/es **war** gewandert

Plural:

1. wir **waren** gewandert
2. ihr **wart** gewandert
3. Sie, sie **waren** gewandert

Strong Verbs + ["haben"](#) :

Example: singen (to sing)

Singular:

1. ich **hatte** gesungen
2. du **hattest** gesungen
3. er/sie/es **hatte** gesungen

Plural:

1. wir **hatten** gesungen
2. ihr **hattet** gesungen
3. Sie, sie **hatten** gesungen

Strong Verbs + ["sein"](#)

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **war** gefahren
2. du **warst** gefahren
3. er/sie/es **war** gefahren

Plural:

1. wir **waren** gefahren
2. ihr **wart** gefahren
3. Sie, sie **waren** gefahren

USAGE: Like the English Past Perfect Tense (e.g., he had played / he had driven), the German Past Perfect Tense describes an action in the remote past.

Sequentially Ordered Actions:

The Past Perfect Tense is also used to indicate that one action clearly preceded another or was interrupted when another began.

Er **war** gerade am Bahnhof **angekommen**, He had just arrived at the train station
als der Zug abfuhr. when the train pulled away.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," and "werden"](#)
[Perfect Tense](#)

FUTURE TENSE

The German Future Tense (Futur I) is formed with the auxiliary "werden" + the verb in its infinitive form. Only "werden" is conjugated.

Weak Verbs + "werden"

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **werde spielen**
2. du **wirst spielen**
3. er/sie/es **wird spielen**

Plural:

1. wir **werden spielen**
2. ihr **werdet spielen**
3. Sie, sie **werden spielen**

Strong Verbs + "werden"

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **werde fahren**
2. du **wirst fahren**
3. er/sie/es **wird fahren**

Plural:

1. wir **werden fahren**
2. ihr **werdet fahren**
3. Sie, sie **werden fahren**

USAGE: The German Future Tense is equivalent to both English future forms (I will play, I am going to play). It is therefore used to discuss future events that are either planned or inevitable.

NOTE: In colloquial speech, German speakers often substitute Present Tense for Future Tense (Futur I) when they talk about upcoming events or actions.

Morgen werde ich spielen. (Future) (Futur I)

Morgen spiele ich. (Present, understood as Future) (Futur I)

I will play tomorrow.

I play tomorrow.

Related Topics:

[Present Tense](#)

[Future Perfect Tense](#)

[Future Subjunctive](#)

[Future Perfect Subjunctive](#)

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

The German Future Perfect Tense (Futur II) is composed of "werden" + the Perfect Tense (past participle + auxiliary). Only "werden" is conjugated. The participles retain their appropriate auxiliary verbs and the auxiliary is placed at the end of the sentence.

Weak Verbs + "werden"

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **werde gespielt haben**
2. du **wirst gespielt haben**
3. er/sie/es **wird gespielt haben**

Plural:

1. wir **werden gespielt haben**
2. ihr **werdet gespielt haben**
3. Sie, sie **werden gespielt haben**

Strong Verbs + "werden"

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **werde gefahren sein**
2. du **wirst gefahren sein**
3. er/sie/es **wird gefahren sein**

Plural:

1. wir **werden gefahren sein**
2. ihr **werdet gefahren sein**
3. Sie, sie **werden gefahren sein**

USAGE: Like the English Future Perfect Tense, the German Future Perfect Tense describes an action that is projected to be completed in the future. (e.g., I will have played/I will have driven.)

Related Topics:

[Future Tense](#)

[Future Subjunctive](#)

[Future Perfect Subjunctive](#)

PRESENT CONDITIONAL

In German, Present Conditional (Konditional I) is formed using "würden" (conditional of "werden") + the infinitive of the main verb.

Weak Verbs

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **würde spielen**
2. du **würdest spielen**
3. er/sie/es **würde spielen**

Plural:

1. wir **würden spielen**
2. ihr **würdet spielen**
3. Sie, sie **würden spielen**

Strong Verbs

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **würde fahren**
2. du **würdest fahren**
3. er/sie/es **würde fahren**

Plural:

1. wir **würden fahren**
2. ihr **würdet fahren**
3. Sie, sie **würden fahren**

USAGE: Present Conditional parallels the English construction "would" + infinitive. It is used to talk about hypothetical events, i.e. those that would happen if certain conditions prevailed, and therefore expresses improbability. It can also be used to qualify a claim or to express a wish, hope, intention, or speculation. The Present Conditional is basically interchangeable with the Subjunctive II, spoken German however prefers the Present Conditional. In conditional clauses, both, the Present Conditional and the Subjunctive II have to be used in order to be grammatically correct. But again, common usage tends to avoid the Subjunctive II forms, particularly those of strong verbs.

Wenn ich Zeit **hätte** (Subjunctive II), **würde** ich in die Berge **fahren** (Present Conditional).

If I had time, I would drive to the mountains.

Wenn es nicht **regnete** (Subjunctive II), **würde** ich gerne **spazierengehen** (Present Conditional).

If it didn't rain, I would like to go for a walk.

NOTE: The Present Conditional forms of haben and sein are not used; instead, the Subjunctive II forms are used. The same is true for modal verbs and wissen, although the avoidance of the Present Conditional in these cases is not as strict, particularly in spoken German.

Wenn ich gestern die Lotterie gewonnen hätte, **wäre** ich jetzt reich und **hätte** viel Geld.

If I had had won the lottery yesterday, I would be rich now and would have lots of money.

Wenn ich mehr gelesen hätte, **wüßte** ich die Antworten für den Test.

If I had read more, I would know the answers for the test.

NOTE: The Present Conditional with "würden" is also used colloquially to express polite requests, subjective speculations, hopes, or plans.

Ich **würde sagen**, daß wir bis morgen fertig sein können.

I would say that we can be done by tomorrow.

Ich **würde vorschlagen**, daß wir heute nach Hamburg fahren.

I would suggest that we drive to Hamburg today.

Ich **würde gerne** mitgehen.

I would like to come along.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Present Tense](#)

[Present Perfect Conditional](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

PRESENT PERFECT CONDITIONAL

German employs Present Perfect Conditional (Konditional II) in contrary-to-fact statements. It is formed using "würden" + the past participle of the main verb + the infinitive of the auxiliary. Only "würden" is declined. When this conditional occurs in a subordinate clause, the auxiliary is placed at the end of the sentence. However, since the Conditional forms of haben, sein, wissen, and the modal verbs is generally avoided, the Present Perfect Conditional is hardly ever used and usually replaced by the Past Subjunctive II.

Weak Verbs

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **würde gespielt haben**
2. du **würdest gespielt haben**
3. er/sie/es **würde gespielt haben**

Plural:

1. wir **würden gespielt haben**
2. ihr **würdet gespielt haben**
3. Sie, sie **würden gespielt haben**

Strong Verbs

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **würde gefahren sein**
2. du **würdest gefahren sein**
3. er/sie/es **würde gefahren sein**

Plural:

1. wir **würden gefahren sein**
2. ihr **würdet gefahren sein**
3. Sie, sie **würden gefahren sein**

USAGE: Present Perfect Conditional refers to an action that would have been performed in the past if certain conditions had prevailed. It therefore denotes impossibility. The Present Perfect Conditional is basically interchangeable with the Past Subjunctive II; spoken German however prefers the Present Perfect Conditional. In conditional clauses, both, the Present Perfect Conditional and the Subjunctive II have to be used.

Wenn er den Vertrag **gelesen hätte** (Past Subjunctive II), **würde** er die Details **begriffen haben** (Present Perfect Conditional).

If he had read the contract, he would have understood the details.

Hätten Sie an die Fahrkarte **gedacht** (Past Subjunctive II), **würden** wir schon in Dortmund **angekommen sein** (Present Perfect Conditional).

Had you remembered the ticket, we would already have arrived in Dortmund.

Wenn wir Zeit **gehabt hätten** (Past Subjunctive II), **würden** wir ins Kino **gegangen sein** (Present Perfect Conditional).

If we had had time, we would have gone to the movie theater.

NOTE: In order to avoid the conditional forms of haben and sein, the Past Subjunctive II forms are usually preferred. Thus, the following sentences are much more common than the examples above:

Wenn er den Vertrag gelesen hätte, **hätte** er die Details **begriffen**.

If he had read the contract, he would have understood the details.

Hätten Sie an die Fahrkarte gedacht, **wären** wir schon in Dortmund **angekommen**.

Had you remembered the ticket, we would already have arrived in Dortmund.

Wenn wir Zeit gehabt hätten, **wären** wir ins Kino **gegangen**.

If we had had time, we would have gone to the movie theater.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Perfect Tense](#)

[Present Conditional](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

[Syntax](#)

SUBJUNCTIVE I

Indirect Speech

German uses Subjunctive I (Konjunktiv I) for indirect or reported speech. It parallels the present tense indicative with the exception of the third person singular, in which the "t" is dropped. Irregular verbs may have stem changes in the third person as well.

Weak Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich spiele
2. du spiel**st**
3. er/sie/es spiele

Plural:

1. wir spiel**en**
2. ihr spielt
3. Sie, sie spiel**en**

Strong Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich fah**re**
2. du fähr**st**
3. er/sie/es fah**re**

Plural:

1. wir fah**ren**
2. ihr fahrt
3. Sie, sie fah**ren**

USAGE: Subjunctive I is used to discuss an event or action that the speaker does not witness or participate in, but only hears described. There is therefore some uncertainty as to the truth of what is happening or has happened. Since the plural forms are identical to the regular present tense verb forms, the Subjunctive II forms are used instead for plural.

Sie fragte: "Soll ich den Hund füttern?"

She asked, Shall I feed the dog?

Sie fragte, ob sie den Hund füttern **solle**. She asked whether she should feed the dog.

Er behauptet: "Ich habe nichts gestohlen." He claimed, I haven't stolen anything.

Er behauptet, daß er nichts gestohlen **habe**. He claimed that he didn't steal anything.

Er bestätigt: "Ja, ich treibe Sport."

He confirms, Yes, I do sports.

Er bestätigt, daß er Sport **treibe**.

He confirms that he does sports.

Er sagte: Sie haben den Hund gefüttert.

Er sagte, sie **haben** den Hund gefüttert. (Subjunctive I)

Er sagte, sie **hätten** den Hund gefüttert. (Subjunctive II)

Related Topics:

[Present Tense](#)

[Indirect Speech](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

SUBJUNCTIVE II

Indirect Speech & Contrary-to-Fact Statements

German uses Subjunctive II (Konjunktiv II) for contrary-to-fact statements. It parallels the Past Tense (Imperfekt) except that irregular verbs add an umlaut to the stem.

Weak Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich spielte
2. du spiel**st**
3. er/sie/es spiel**te**

Plural:

1. wir spiel**ten**
2. ihr spiel**tet**
3. Sie, sie spiel**ten**

Strong Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich f**ühre**
2. du f**ührest**
3. er/sie/es f**ühre**

Plural:

1. wir f**ühren**
2. ihr f**ühret**
3. Sie, sie f**ühren**

Wenn er Sport **triebe**, sähe er anders aus.

If he did sports, he would look differently.

Wenn Sie nach Konstanz **führen**, könnten Sie von der Reise erzählen.

If you drove to Constance, you could tell about the trip.

USAGE: Subjunctive II is also employed in polite requests.

Hätten Sie vielleicht etwas Kleingeld?

Would you have any small change?

Könnten Sie mir bitte helfen?

Could you help me please?

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Past Tense](#)

[Indirect Speech](#)

[Syntax](#)

FUTURE SUBJUNCTIVE

The Future Subjunctive (Futur I Konjunktiv) is formed in German using "werden" + infinitive. "Werden" is conjugated in the conjunctive mood.

Weak Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **werde spielen**
2. du **werdest spielen**
3. er/sie/es **werde spielen**

Plural:

1. wir **werden spielen**
2. ihr **werdet spielen**
3. Sie, sie **werden spielen**

Strong Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **werde fahren**
2. du **werdest fahren**
3. er/sie/es **werde fahren**

Plural:

1. wir **werden fahren**
2. ihr **werdet fahren**
3. Sie, sie **werden fahren**

USAGE: Future Subjunctive is used where indirect speech is required and the actions discussed are projected to take place at some point in the future.

Sie sagten, daß sie Tennis **spielen werden**.

They said that they were going to play tennis.

Er meinte, er **werde** nach Göttingen **fahren**.

He said that he was going to drive to Göttingen.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Future Tense](#)

[Future Perfect Tense](#)

[Subjunctive I](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

[Future Perfect Subjunctive](#)

FUTURE PERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE

The Future Perfect Subjunctive (Futur II Konjunktiv) is formed in German as follows:

Weak Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **werde gespielt haben**
2. du **werdest gespielt haben**
3. er/sie/es **werde gespielt haben**

Plural:

1. wir **werden gespielt haben**
2. ihr **werdet gespielt haben**
3. Sie, sie **werden gespielt haben**

Strong Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **werde gefahren sein**
2. du **werdest gefahren sein**
3. er/sie/es **werde gefahren sein**

Plural:

1. wir **werden gefahren sein**
2. ihr **werdet gefahren sein**
3. Sie, sie **werden gefahren sein**

USAGE: The Future Perfect Subjunctive is used where [indirect speech](#) is required and the actions discussed are projected to be completed at some point in the future.

Er sagte, er **werde** bis Montag mindestens den ersten Teil des Buches **gelesen haben**.

He said he will have read at least the first part of the book by Monday.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Future Tense](#)

[Future Perfect Tense](#)

[Subjunctive I](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

[Future Subjunctive](#)

[Indirect Speech](#)

PRESENT & PAST PERFECT SUBJUNCTIVES

Indirect speech

The German Present Perfect Subjunctive (Perfekt Konjunktiv) is formed using the past participle + auxiliary. "Haben" and "sein" are conjugated in their respective subjunctive forms. The Present Perfect Subjunctive corresponds to the past form of Subjunctive I, the Past Perfect Subjunctive corresponds to the past form of Subjunctive II (Subjunctive I and Subjunctive II actually have each only one form for present and one form for past).

Present Perfect Subjunctive (Past Subjunctive I)

Transitive Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **habe gespielt**
2. du **habest gespielt**
3. er/sie/es **habe gespielt**

Plural:

1. wir **haben gespielt**
2. ihr **habt gespielt**
3. Sie, sie **haben gespielt**

Intransitive Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **sei gefahren**
2. du **seist gefahren**
3. er/sie/es **sei gefahren**

Plural:

1. wir **seien gefahren**
2. ihr **seiet gefahren**
3. Sie, sie **seien gefahren**

Past Perfect Subjunctive (Past Subjunctive II)

Transitive Verbs:

Example: spielen (to play)

Singular:

1. ich **hätte gespielt**
2. du **hättest gespielt**
3. er/sie/es **hätte gespielt**

Plural:

1. wir **hätten gespielt**
2. ihr **hättet gespielt**
3. Sie, sie **hätten gespielt**

Intransitive Verbs:

Example: fahren (to drive)

Singular:

1. ich **wäre gefahren**
2. du **wärest gefahren**
3. er/sie/es **wäre gefahren**

Plural:

1. wir **wären gefahren**
2. ihr **wäret gefahren**
3. Sie, sie **wären gefahren**

USAGE: Although the forms of Present Perfect Subjunctive and Past Perfect Subjunctive are closely related, they are used according to whether they are forms of Subjunctive I (Present Perfect Subjunctive) or Subjunctive II (Past Perfect Subjunctive).

Thus, the Present Perfect Subjunctive is used to express past tense in indirect speech:

Er sagt: Gestern **bin** ich nach München **gefahren**.

He said, yesterday, I drove to Munich.

Er sagt, er **sei** am Tag zuvor nach München **gefahren**.

He said that he had driven to Munich the day before.

The Past Perfect Subjunctive, on the other hand, is used to express past contrary-to-fact statements. Since the [Present Conditional](#) is interchangeable with the present tense forms of Subjunctive II, and the [Present Perfect Conditional](#) is hardly ever used and usually replaced by the past tense form of Subjunctive II (Past Perfect Subjunctive), the Past Perfect Subjunctive serves as the past tense form for both Conditional and Subjunctive II.

Hätte er das Auto **repariert** (Past Subjunctive II), dann **wären** wir längst unterwegs (Present Subjunctive II).

Had he repaired the car, we would already be on the road.

Wenn Sie das Radio **gekauft hätten** (Past Subjunctive II), **hätten** wir uns das Konzert **angehört** (Past Subjunctive II).

If you had bought the radio, we would have listened to the concert.

The following example contrasts the preferred usage of Past Perfect Subjunctive (Past Subjunctive II) with that of Present Perfect Conditional:

Er **wäre** gestern nach München **gefahren** (Past Subjunctive II), wenn sein Auto nicht kaputt gewesen wäre.

He would have driven to Munich yesterday, if his car had not been broken.

Er **würde** gestern nach München **gefahren sein** (Present Perfect Conditional), wenn sein Auto nicht kaputt gewesen wäre.

He would have driven to Munich yesterday, if his car had not been broken.

NOTE: The Present Perfect Subjunctive and the Past Perfect Subjunctive of modal verbs use the double infinitive just as regular present and past perfect tenses of modal verbs.

Er sagt, er **habe** gestern nicht nach München **fahren können**, da sein Auto kaputt gewesen sei.

He said, he had not been able to drive to Munich yesterday since his car was broken.

Wenn er das Auto repariert hätte, **hätten** wir längst unterwegs **sein können**.

If he had repaired the car, we could already have been on the road.

Related Topics:

[Indirect Speech](#)

[Modal Auxiliaries](#)

[Syntax](#)

INDIRECT SPEECH

Introduction

When one speaker reports the words of another or recounts an event, German employs the [Subjunctive I](#) mood. Indirect or reported speech is used more frequently in German than in English, and it is particularly pervasive in media and journalistic writing where the writer can be held legally accountable for the correctness of stated facts.

Some verbs that are frequently used to introduce indirect speech include:

sagen	(to say)
erzählen	(to tell)
fragen	(to ask)
denken	(to think)
schreiben	(to write)
glauben	(to believe)
meinen	(to say)
mitteilen	(to inform)

NOTE: These verbs are frequently followed by "daß" clauses, which require that the verb be placed at the end of the sentence.

Sie **sagte**, daß er nicht gekommen sei.

She said that he had not come.

Er **meinte**, daß sie nach Kanada gereist seien.

He said that they had traveled to Canada.

NOTE: The tense of a statement made using [indirect speech](#) generally corresponds to that of the indicative statement made by the original speaker.

Er sagte: "Ich werde nach Hause kommen." (Future Tense)

He said, I will come home.

Er sagte, er werde nach Hause kommen. (Future Subj. I)

He said that he was going to come home.

Er sagte: Ich komme am Samstag zur Party. (Present Tense)

He said, I come to the party on Saturday.

Er sagte, daß er am Samstag zur Party komme. (Present Subj. I)

He said that he was going to come to the party on Saturday.

Er sagte: "Ich kam nach Hause." (Past Tense)

He said, I came home.

Er sagte, daß er nach Hause gekommen sei. (Pres. Perf. Subj. I)

He said that he had come home.

NOTE: Indirect Questions also take their verbs in the appropriate subjunctive forms. These questions are frequently introduced by such interrogatives as "ob," "was," "wie," "wo," "wann," etc.

Direct Question:

"Wann spielt er?"

When does he play?

Indirect Question: Sie fragte, wann er spiele. She asked when he would play.
"Hat er gespielt?" Did he play?
play. Sie fragte, ob er gespielt habe. She asked whether he did

"Wohin sind Sie gefahren?" Where did you go?
Er fragte, wohin sie gefahren seien.
He asked where they had gone.

Since the plural forms of the Present Subjunctive I are identical to the plural forms of the regular present tense, the plural forms of Present Subjunctive II are chosen instead to convey reported speech.

"Wie fahren sie?" How do they go?
Er fragte, wie sie führen. He asked how they went.

Wann spielen wir? When do we play?
Er fragte, wann sie spielten. He asked when they played.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Past Tense](#)

[Perfect Tense](#)

[Future Tense](#)

[Subjunctive I](#)

[Subjunctive II](#)

[Syntax](#)

PASSIVE VOICE

Formation in Various Tenses

Passive Voice is used more frequently in German than it is in English, but their constructions are parallel. It occurs in the active voice sentence when the order of subject and object are reversed, or when the performer of the action is omitted altogether. Passive Voice is formed using "werden" or "sein" (conjugated) + past participle.

Present Tense:

Active:

Wir wählen den Präsidenten.
(Subj. Pred.Obj.)

We elect / are electing the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident wird gewählt.
(Subj. Predicate)

The President is elected / is being elected.

Future Tense:

Active:

Wir werden den Präsidenten wählen.

We will / are going to elect the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident wird gewählt werden.

The President will / is going to be elected.

Past Tense:

Active:

Wir wählten den Präsidenten.

We elected the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident wurde gewählt.

The President was elected.

Perfect Tense:

Active:

Wir haben den Präsidenten gewählt.

We have elected the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident ist gewählt worden.

The President has been elected.

Past Perfect Tense:

Active:

Wir hatten den Präsidenten gewählt.

We had elected the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident war gewählt worden.

The President had been elected.

Future Perfect Tense:

Active:

Wir werden den Präsidenten gewählt haben. We will have elected the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident wird gewählt worden sein. The President will have been elected.

Present Conditional

Active:

Wir würden den Präsidenten wählen. We would elect the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident würde gewählt werden. The President would be elected.

Present Perfect Conditional

Active:

Wir würden den Präsidenten gewählt haben. We would have elected the President.

Passive:

Der Präsident würde gewählt worden sein. The President would have been elected.

USAGE: Passive voice creates a sense of objectivity and is therefore often employed in journalistic reporting and other factual or technical writing.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Summary of Tenses](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

MODAL AUXILIARIES AND "WISSEN"

A modal verb can express capability, possibility, permissibility of doing something, or an obligation or preference to do it. German uses the following [modal auxiliaries](#):

German Modal Verb	English Meaning
dürfen	may, to be allowed to
können	can, to be able to
mögen	may, to express possibility; to like, care for
müssen	must, to have to
sollen	shall, to be supposed to
wollen	to want to

NOTE: German modal verbs can also stand alone in a sentence.

Example:

Ich **muß** nach Hause.

I must go home.

Ich **soll** nach Hause.

I am supposed to go home.

Since modal auxiliaries combine with the infinitive, the [Perfect Tense](#) of modals require the combination of three verb forms: a conjugated form of *haben* or *sein*, the modal verb, and the infinitive. In this case, the modal verb is used in its infinitive form instead of the past [participle](#) form. Both infinitives stand together at the end of the sentence, the modal verb infinitive in the last position. This is called the double infinitive.

Combining ["haben"](#) with a modal + [infinitive](#). (double infinitive)

Example: Ich **habe** es **machen dürfen**.

I was permitted to do it.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Perfect Tense](#)

REFLEXIVE VERBS

A reflexive verb is accompanied by a pronoun that refers back to the subject. The reflexive pronouns can be either in the Accusative or in the Dative case, depending on whether the reflexive pronoun itself is the direct object or not. In many cases, German uses a reflexive verb when English does not.

Ich wasche mich .	I wash myself.
Ich wasche mir die Hände.	I wash my hands.

Some German reflexive verbs and their meanings are:

German Reflexive Verbs

with Accusative Reflexive Pronoun English Meaning

sich aufhalten	to stay, be detained
sich beeilen	to hurry, hasten
sich befinden	to be, find oneself
sich bemühen	to endeavor, make an effort
sich ereignen	to happen, occur
sich erholen	to recuperate, relax
sich erinnern	to remember
sich erkälten	to catch a cold
sich freuen	to be glad, rejoice
sich fürchten	to be afraid, to fear
sich irren	to be mistaken
sich langweilen	to be bored
sich setzen	to sit down
sich verspäten	to be late
sich wundern	to be surprised, amazed

German Reflexive Verbs

with Dative Reflexive Pronoun English Meaning

sich etwas abgewöhnen	to give up something
sich etwas anschaffen	to buy something for oneself
sich etwas ansehen	to look at something
sich etwas ausdenken	to come up with something

Related Topics:

[Verbs with Separable Prefixes](#)
[Verbs with Inseparable Prefixes](#)
[Reflexive Pronouns](#)
[Personal Pronouns](#)

VERBS WITH SEPARABLE PREFIXES

German uses separable prefixes (prepositions or [adverbs](#) of place) that, when added to a [verb](#), alter its meaning. The most commonly used of these include:

ab-	fort-	hinein-	weg-
an-	her-	mit-	wieder-
auf-	heraus-	nach-	zu-
aus-	herein-	über-	zurück-
auseinander-	hin-	unter-	zusammen-
ein-	hinaus-	vor-	

gehen - to go
ausgehen - to go out

nehmen - to take
mitnehmen - to take along

Prefixes are detached from their verbs in the [Present Tense](#) and the [Past Tense](#) (and in the [Imperative](#)). They then move to the end of the sentences.

Ich gehe aus. (Present)	I go out
Ich ging aus. (Past)	I went out.
Gehe aus! (Imperative)	Go out!

In the [Perfect Tense](#), the prefix is attached to the participle:

Ich bin ausgegangen.	I went / have gone out.
Ich habe es mitgenommen.	I took / have taken it along / with (me).

In the [Infinitive Constructions](#) with zu, the root infinitive, the prefix, and the zu form a single form:

Ich habe versucht, ihn anzurufen .	I tried to call him.
Es ist schwierig, gleichzeitig dem Professor zuzuhören und alles	It is difficult to listen to the professor and write aufzuschreiben .

same time

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Summary of Tenses](#)

[Verbs with Inseparable Prefixes](#)

VERBS WITH INSEPARABLE PREFIXES

The inseparable prefixes in German are: be-, ent-, emp-, er-, ge-, ver-, zer-, hinter-, miß-, wider-. These verbs do not take "ge" in the past participle.

1. The prefix "be" intensifies the meaning of the verb.

arbeiten - work	bearbeiten - work through, work over, put into final form
denken - think	bedenken - consider, review, reflect upon
schreiben - write	beschreiben - describe, circumscribe

2. The prefix "ent" (or "emp" as in "empfangen") denotes origin or separation from something.

ehren - honor	entehren - dishonor, disgrace
kommen - come	entkommen - escape, come away
stehen - stand	entstehen - originate, come to be

3. The prefix "er" denotes a change from a less to a more complete or thorough state.

wachen - be awake	erwachen - awaken fully
lernen - learn	erlernen - acquire full knowledge of, acquire skill at something
tragen - carry	ertragen - bear, be burdened with

4. The prefix "ge" denotes a shift from an individual action, to participation in a larger, collective action.

NOTE: "ge" verbs are not to be confused with past participles.

frieren - freeze	gefrieren - congeal
fallen - fall, strike	gefallen - affect pleasantly, please someone
horchen - listen	gehörchen - obey, respond to orders

5. The prefix "ver" can have the negative meaning of undoing or reversing the action performed, or it can be an intensifier.

A) Reversing the action of the verb:

führen - lead	verführen - mislead, seduce
kaufen - buy	verkaufen - sell
lernen - learn	verlernen - unlearn, forget

B) As an intensifier:

schlucken - swallow	verschlucken - swallow whole
schneiden - cut	verschneiden - cut to pieces
mischen - mix	vermischen - mix up, meld

6. The prefix "zer" denotes separation and carries the action to an extreme degree.

stören - disturb	zerstören - totally destroy
brechen - break	zerbrechen - break to pieces
schneiden - cut	zerschneiden - cut to pieces

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Prefixes That Are Either Separable or Inseparable](#)

PREFIXES THAT ARE EITHER SEPARABLE OR INSEPARABLE

Some German verbs take prefixes that are either separable or inseparable, and their meanings change accordingly. They include, for example:

durch	through
über	over
unter	under
um	around
wieder	again

NOTE: The [past participle](#) of these verbs can be formed in two ways, only one of which uses the "ge" of the participle.

Separable:

Der Hund **holt** den Ball **wieder**.
The dog fetches the ball.

Wir **stellen** die Möbel **um**.
We move the furniture.

Er **lief** die Schuhsohlen **durch**.
He wore the soles through.

Inseparable:

Er **wiederholt** das Gedicht.
He repeats the poem.

Die Truppen **umstellen** die Stadt.
The troops surround the town.

Die Entwicklung **durchlief** mehrere Stadien.
The development passed through several stages.

[Past Participles:](#)

Der Hund **hat** den Ball **wiedergeholt**. Er **hat** das Gedicht **wiederholt**.
The dog has fetched the ball. He has repeated the poem.

Wir **haben** die Möbel **umgestellt**. Die Truppen **haben** die Stadt **umstellt**.
We have moved the furniture. The troops have surrounded the town.

Er **hat** die Schuhsohlen **durchgelaufen**. Die Entwicklung **hat** mehrere Stadien **durchlaufen**.
He has worn the soles through. The development has passed through several stages.

Related Topics:

[Perfect Tense](#)

[Prepositions with Accusative Case](#)

VERBS TAKING THE GENITIVE CASE

The following is a partial list of German verbs that take the [genitive case](#).

bedürfen	to need, require
sich erinnern	to remember
gedenken	to commemorate
sich bedienen	to make use of
sich bemächtigen	to seize
sich schämen	to be ashamed of
sich vergewissern	to assure oneself of

Wir gedenken seiner Leitungen.

We commemorate his achievements.

Er bedient sich seiner hohen Stellung, um seine Ziele zu erreichen.

He makes use of his high position to achieve his goals.

Sie schämt sich ihrer Herkunft.

She is ashamed of her origins.

Related Topics:

[Reflexive Verbs](#)

[Verbs with Inseparable Prefixes](#)

[Prepositions with Genitive Case](#)

VERBS TAKING THE DATIVE CASE

Some German verbs take their objects in the [dative case](#). The following is a partial list:

antworten	to answer
begegnen	to meet
danken	to thank
dienen	to serve
drohen	to threaten
folgen	to follow
fehlen	to be missing, lacking
gefallen	to please
gehörchen	to obey
gehören	to belong
geschehen	to happen
glauben	to believe
helfen	to help
passen	to fit, suit
schaden	to harm, damage
schmeicheln	to flatter
vertrauen	to trust

Examples:

Das Kind antwortet seiner Mutter.
Er begegnet seinem Freund.
Er glaubt ihrer Geschichte.
Der Anzug paßt ihm ausgezeichnet.
Der Hund vertraut seinem Besitzer.

The child answers its mother.
He meets his friend.
He believes her story.
The suit fits him perfectly.
The dog trusts its owner.

Related Topics:

[Verbs with Inseparable Prefixes](#)

[Verbs Taking the Accusative Case](#)

VERBS TAKING THE ACCUSATIVE CASE

Many German verbs take their objects in the accusative case. They are called [transitive](#) verbs. Included in this group are:

machen	to make, do
bauen	to build
backen	to bake
essen	to eat
schreiben	to write
lesen	to read
schaffen	to do, create
stellen	to put
setzen	to set
trinken	to drink
legen	to lay
fallen	to fall

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Accusative Case](#)

IMPERATIVE FORM

The German Imperative Form is used to give a command or make a suggestion. It occurs only in second person singular/plural and with the polite form of address, "Sie":

Example: bringen to bring
 Bringe ! Bring (it) ! (you, familiar, sing.)
 Bringt ! Bring (it) ! (you, familiar, pl.)
 Bringen Sie ! Bring (it) ! (you, formal, sing. or pl.)

Example: fragen to ask
 Frage ! Ask ! (you, familiar, sing.)
 Fragt ! Ask ! (you, familiar, pl.)
 Fragen Sie ! Ask ! (you, formal, sing. or pl.)

The related expression in first person plural, let us do something, translates as follows:
Lets go to the party! Gehen wir zur Party!

NOTE: Some Imperative Forms are exceptions to this pattern in so far as they do not take a final "e." They include:

	(you, familiar, sing.)	(you, familiar, pl.)	(you, formal, sing. or pl.)
treten	Tritt !	Tretet !	Treten Sie !
geben	Gib !	Gebt !	Geben Sie !
sprechen	Sprich !	Sprecht !	Sprechen Sie !
sehen	Sieh !	Seht !	Sehen Sie !
nehmen	Nimm !	Nehmt !	Nehmen Sie !
essen	iß !	Eßt !	Essen Sie !

NOTE: The Imperative Forms of the verb "sein" (to be) are:

Sei ! (you, familiar, sing.)
Seid ! (you, familiar, pl.)
Seien Sie ! (you, formal, sing. or pl.)

Related Topics:

[Verbs](#)

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

THE IMPERSONAL "ES"

German frequently uses the impersonal "**es**" + **verb** construction to describe conditions, emotional states, or natural events. The most commonly used expression with "es" is:

es gibt there is, there are

Es gibt viele Studenten an der Universität.

An alternate for this is:

es ist / es sind there is, there are

Es sind viele Studenten an der Universität.

NOTE: Whereas es gibt expresses a more general condition, es sind tends to describe a momentary condition. Therefore, the implications are slightly different.

Es gibt viele Studenten an der Universität. Many students are attending the university.
Es sind viele Studenten an der Universität. At this moment, there are many students on
campus (but at another time, the situation might be different).

Additional constructions with "es" include:

es geht mir gut	I am well
es gelingt mir	I succeed at something
es gefällt mir	I like it
es tut mir leid	I am sorry

"Es" is also frequently used with [Reflexive Pronouns](#):

es freut mich	I am glad
es wundert mich	I am surprised

And, in talking about natural events:

es schneit	it is snowing
es regnet	it is raining
es donnert	it is thundering
es blitzt	it is lightening
es dämmert	it is getting dark / light

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Pronouns](#)

[Reflexive Pronouns](#)

NEGATIVE STATEMENTS

Negative sentences in German are formed using either "kein" (declined) (none/none of/not any) or "nicht" (not). The phrases "gar nicht," "gar nichts" (nothing at all), and "gar kein(e)" (none at all) are used for emphasis. "Kaum" (hardly), "wenig" (a few/little), and "nur wenig" (only a little) are additional negative qualifiers.

Negative Statements - Singular

German

English

Er hat **kein** Geld ausgegeben.

He spent **no** money.
He did **not** spend any money.

Er hat **gar kein** Geld ausgegeben.

He spent **no** money **at all**.
He did **not** spend money **at all**.

Er hat **kaum** Geld ausgegeben.

He spent **hardly any** money.

Er hat **wenig** Geld ausgegeben.

He spent **little** money.

Er hat **nur wenig** Geld ausgegeben.

He spent **only little** money.

Er hat das Geld **nicht** ausgegeben.

He did **not** spend the money.

Er hat das Geld **gar nicht** ausgegeben.

He did **not** spend **any** of the money.

Er hat **gar nichts** ausgegeben.

He spent **nothing at all**.

Negative Statements - Plural

German

English

Sie hat **keine** Fragen gestellt.

She did **not ask** any questions.
She asked **no** questions.

Sie hat **gar keine** Fragen gestellt.

She did **not** ask **any** questions at all.
She asked **no** questions **at all**.

Sie hat **kaum** Fragen gestellt.

She **hardly** asked **any** questions.

Sie hat **wenige** Fragen gestellt.

She asked **few** questions.

Sie hat **nur wenige** Fragen gestellt.

She asked **only a few** questions.

Sie hat die Fragen **nicht** gestellt.

She did **not** ask the questions.

Sie hat die Fragen **gar nicht** gestellt.

She did **not** ask the questions **at all**.

Sie hat **gar nichts** gefragt.

She did **not** ask **anything at all**.

Position of "nicht"

Er hat ihr gestern die Wahrheit **nicht gesagt**. He did **not tell** her the truth yesterday.
(Implying he used a different means of communication; he wrote a letter explaining the truth to her.)

Er hat ihr gestern **nicht die Wahrheit** gesagt. He did **not tell** her **the truth** yesterday.

Er hat ihr **nicht gestern** die Wahrheit gesagt. It was **not yesterday** that he told her the truth.

Er hat **nicht ihr** gestern die Wahrheit gesagt. It was **not her** to whom he told the truth
yesterday.
Nicht er hat ihr gestern die Wahrheit gesagt. It was **not he** who told her the truth
yesterday.

Related Topics:

[Perfect Tense](#)

[The Indefinite Article](#)

INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

German uses **infinitive** constructions of several types. Some of them are:

1. Infinitives used as nouns, which are equivalent to the English "ing" forms.

Schwimmen ist gesund.
Swimming is healthy.

Das **Singen** der Vögel weckt ihn auf.
The singing of the birds awakens him.

2. The infinitive + "zu" can replace a subject:

Seine Rettung war unmöglich.
His rescue was impossible.
Es war unmöglich, ihn **zu retten**.
It was impossible to rescue him.

Selbstbeherrschung ist nicht leicht.
Self-control is not easy.
Es ist nicht leicht, sich **zu beherrschen**.
It is not easy to control oneself.

3. The infinitive + "zu" can replace an object:

Er plante eine Reise nach Afrika.
He plans a trip to Africa.
Er plante, nach Afrika **zu reisen**.
He planned to travel to Africa.

Ich habe die Hausarbeit angefangen.
I have begun the homework.
Ich habe angefangen, die Hausarbeit **zu machen**.
I have begun doing the homework.

4. German also uses each of the following constructions with an **infinitive**:
"um + zu" (in order to), "ohne zu" (without doing...), and
"anstatt zu" (instead of doing...):

Der Polizist stürzte sich ins Wasser, **um** das Kind **zu retten**.
The policeman threw himself into the water in order to save the child.

Er arbeitete viel, **ohne** Erfolge **zu** verzeichnen.
He worked a lot without achieving any success.

Ich nahm den Platz vorne, **anstatt** nach hinten **zu** gehen.
I took the seat in the front instead of going to the back.

5. **Infinitives** can also be combined with "zu" after "sein" or "haben" in a construction equivalent to the English "have to" or "must."

Der Wagen ist **zu** reinigen.
The car has to be cleaned.
Der Arbeiter hat den Wagen gut **zu** reinigen.
The worker must clean the car well.

NOTE: In the case of verbs with separable prefixes, "zu" is inserted between the prefix and stem in an infinitive construction.

Man sollte das Formular einsenden.
One ought to mail in the form.
Das Formular ist ein**zu**senden.
The form must be mailed in.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Summary of Tenses](#)

THE DEFINITE ARTICLE

The definite article in German (equivalent to the English "the") is declined as follows:

SINGULAR			
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.:	der	die	das
Gen.:	des	der	des
Dat.:	dem	der	dem
Acc.:	den	die	das

PLURAL			
	Masculine, Feminine, Neuter		
Nom.:	die		
Gen.:	der		
Dat.:	den		
Acc.:	die		

USAGE: Whereas the article is required in English, it is sometimes omitted altogether in German and vice-versa.

Er ist Arzt.	He is a doctor.
Er ging zur Schule.	He went to school.

NOTE: The [definite article](#) is frequently combined with certain prepositions to yield the following contractions:

an	+	dem	=	am
an	+	das	=	ans
auf	+	das	=	aufs
bei	+	dem	=	beim
durch	+	das	=	durchs
für	+	das	=	fürs
in	+	dem	=	im
in	+	das	=	ins
unter	+	dem	=	unterm
von	+	dem	=	vom
vor	+	das	=	vors
zu	+	dem	=	zum
zu	+	der	=	zur

Related Topics:

[The Indefinite Article](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

THE INDEFINITE ARTICLE

The indefinite article in German (equivalent to the English "a / an") is declined as follows:

	SINGULAR		
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.:	ein	eine	ein
Gen.:	eines	einer	eines
Dat.:	einem	einer	einem
Acc.:	einen	eine	ein

NOTE: The indefinite "[ein](#)" has no plural form, however, "keine" ("no / none of") is declined as follows:

	SINGULAR		
	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.:	kein	keine	kein
Gen.:	keines	keiner	keines
Dat.:	keinem	keiner	keinem
Acc.:	keinen	keine	kein

	PLURAL		
	Masculine, Feminine, Neuter		
Nom.:	keine		
Gen.:	keiner		
Dat.:	keinen		
Acc.:	keine		

USAGE: German usage of the definite and indefinite article varies slightly from English. Where the article is required in English, it is sometimes omitted altogether in German and vice-versa.

Er ist Arzt.	He is a doctor.
Er ging zur Schule.	He went to school.

Related Topics:

[Negative Statements](#)

[The Definite Article](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

GENDER AND DECLENSION

The principal parts of German nouns are: Nominative (sing.), Genitive (sing.), and Nominative (pl.).

der Vater	(m. nom. sing.)
des Vaters	(m. gen. sing.)
die Väter	(m. nom. pl.)

NOTE: In addition to capitalizing proper names and the first word in each sentence, German capitalizes all nouns. This also applies to adjectives and infinitives when they become nouns.

der **blaue** Wagen / die Fahrt ins **Blaue**
die **neuesten** Nachrichten / das **Neueste** vom Tag
Sie **sammeln** Briefmarken / das **Sammeln** von Briefmarken
Sie **lachen** oft / sein **Lachen** nervt mich

All German nouns have grammatical gender. Unlike English, which classifies nouns by their natural gender, German does not determine grammatical gender by a rigid set of rules. Instead, it classifies nouns by their endings (with some exceptions). It is necessary to know the gender of a noun before it can be declined. The main groups of German nouns are:

MASCULINE NOUNS

1. Nouns that are naturally of masculine gender, many of which contain one or two syllables and/or end in "e":

der Mann	the man
der Junge	the boy

2. Nouns ending in "er":

der Lehrer	the teacher
der Bäcker	the baker

3. Nouns ending in "ich," "ig," and "ing":

der Teppich	the carpet
der König	the king
der Jüngling	the youth

4. Nouns ending in "en":

der Boden	the ground
der Hafen	the harbor
der Wagen	the car

5. Some nouns that begin with "Ge" and are collective concepts.

der Gewinn	the profit
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der G edanke	the thought
der G ebrauch	the use

SOME ADDITIONAL MASCULINE NOUNS include: names of days, months, seasons (der Montag, der Februar, der Frühling), and times of day (der Morgen, der Abend--exception: die Nacht).

FEMININE NOUNS

1. Nouns with endings "ei," "heit," "keit," "schaft," and "ung":

die Bäckerei	the bakery
die Frei h eit	the liberty
die Heiter k eit	the cheerfulness
die Bekann t schaft	the acquaintance
die Send u ng	the program

2. Nearly all nouns ending in "e":

die Größ e	the size
die Blum e	the flower

3. Nouns derived from masculine nouns by adding "in":

die Freund i n	the girlfriend
die Lehrer i n	the (woman) teacher

4. Nouns of foreign origin ending in "ie," "ion," "ik," or "tät":

die Harmon i e	the harmony
die Nation i on	the nation
die Technik i k	the technology
die Universit ä t	the university

5. Some nouns that begin with "Ge" and are collective concepts:

die G estalt	the shape
die G efahr	the danger

SOME ADDITIONAL FEMININE NOUNS include: names of German rivers (die Oder, die Weser, die Rhine) and names of numbers and numerals (die Eins, die Hundert). Exception: der Rhein

NEUTER NOUNS

1. Most nouns ending in "nis," "all," "sel," "tum," and "ium":

das Verständ n is	the understanding
das Interv a ll	the interval
das Rät s el	the riddle
das Eigent u m	the property
das Gymnas i um	the high school

2. Some nouns of foreign origin:

das Auto	the car
das Konzert	the concert
das Produkt	the product

3. Nouns formed from [adjectives](#) or [infinitives](#):

das Gute	the good (thing)
das Neue	the new (thing)
das Arbeiten	the working
das Trinken	the drinking

4. Nouns taking the diminutive endings "chen" and "lein":

das Städt chen	the small town
das Häus lein	the small house

5. Nouns describing people or animals that are not yet adults:

das Kind	the child
das Kalb	the calf
das Lamm	the lamb
das Fohlen	the foal

6. Some nouns that begin with "Ge" and are collective concepts:

das Ge treide	the cereal
das Ge biet	the region
das Ge lächter	the laughter

NOTE: The gender and number of the article preceding a compound noun is dictated by the gender and number of the last word of the compound.

	Singular:		Plural:	
	das Schul zimmer	(das Zimmer)	die Schul zimmer	classroom
	der Konzerts aal	(der Saal)	die Konzerts äle	concert
hall	die Natur wissenschaft		(die Wissenschaft)	die
Natur wissenschaften				natural sciences
	die Haust ür	(die Tür)	die Haust üren	house
door	der Bekannten kreis	(der Kreis)	die Bekannten kreise	circle of acquaintances
	das Weing las	(das Glas)	die Weing läser	wine
glass				

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[Plural Formation of Nouns](#)

NOMINATIVE CASE

The nominative case is used to identify a noun or pronoun as the subject of a verb. It is also used in sentences using the verb "to be."

Das Auto fährt schnell. The car drives fast.
Das ist **ein neues Auto**. This is a new car.

Die Frau kennt die Schüler. The woman knows the student.
Sie ist **eine alte Dame**. She is an old lady.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[The Definite Article](#)

[The Indefinite Article](#)

GENITIVE CASE

The genitive case is used to denote possession, or relation of origin.

Die Geschichte **des Landes**.
The history of the country.

Das Haus **seiner Eltern**.
The house of his parents.

Die Stimme **des Mannes**.
The man's voice.

Prepositions taking genitive case include:

abseits	bezüglich	jenseits	ungeachtet
angesichts	diesseits	kraft	unterhalb
(an)statt	hinsichtlich	längs	während
anstelle	infolge	oberhalb	wegen
aufgrund	inmitten	trotz	zeit
außerhalb	innerhalb	um ... willen	zugunsten

Anstatt des Autos kaufte er ein Motorrad.

Instead of a car he bought a motorcycle.

Die Kinder spielen **außerhalb des Gartens**.

The children played outside the backyard.

Der Markt liegt **diesseits des Flusses**.

The market is on this side of the river.

Er beendet das Studium **innerhalb eines Jahres**.

He finishes his studies within one year.

Die Kirche steht **jenseits der Stadt**.

The church is beyond the city.

Trotz der Technik leben wir einfach.

Inspite of the technology we lead a simple life.

Wegen des Wetters fahren wir nicht nach München.

Due to the weather we will not go to Munich.

Während des Vortrages denkt er an seine Familie.

During the lecture he is thinking of his family.

Related Topics:

[Prepositions With Genitive Case](#)

[Verbs Taking the Genitive Case](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

DATIVE CASE

The dative case identifies a noun or pronoun as the indirect object of a sentence. It is also required with certain verbs and prepositions.

Wir schenken **dem Kind** das Buch.

We give the child the book.

Or: We give the book to the child.

Sie empfiehlt **dem Mann** einen Anzug.

She recommends the man a suit.

Or: She recommends a suit to the man.

Er antwortet **mir**.

He answers me.

Ich danke **dir**.

I thank you.

Prepositions taking dative case include, for example:

aus	out of, from
außer	except for
bei	at, with, near
binnen	within
entgegen	contrary to
entsprechend	according to
fern	far (away) from
gegenüber	opposite
gemäß	according to
mit	with
nach	after
seit	since
von	from, of
zu	to
zuliebe	for the sake of

Er geht **aus dem Haus**.

He goes out of the house.

Außer diesem Wagen besitze ich nichts.

Except for this car I don't own anything.

Ich wohne **bei meinem Großvater**.

I live with my grandfather.

Das Gebäude ist **gegenüber der Bücherei**.

The building is opposite the library.

Ich reise **mit meiner Familie**.

I travel with my family.

Related Topics:

[Verbs Taking the Dative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Dative Case](#)

[Prepositions With Either Accusative or Dative Case](#)

ACCUSATIVE CASE

The accusative case identifies the direct object of a sentence. It is also required with certain prepositions.

Der Junge kauft **das Fahrrad**.
Thomas findet **den Schlüssel**.
Das Mädchen **spielt ein Lied**.

The boy buys the bicycle.
Thomas finds the key.
The girl plays a song.

Prepositions taking accusative case include, for example:

durch	through
für	for
gegen	against
ohne	without
um	at, about, around
bis auf	except for
wider	against

Er fährt **durch den Wald**.

He drives through the forest.

Sie arbeitet **für meine Eltern**.

She works for my parents.

Er kämpfte **gegen den Weltmeister**.

He fights against the world champion.

Sie lernen sehr schnell **ohne die Bücher**.

They learn very fast without the books.

Ich wohne **um die Ecke von hier**.

I live around the corner from here.

Die Wohnung ist **bis auf die Küche** möbliert.

The apartment is furnished except for the kitchen.

Wider seinen Willen ging er hin.

He went there against his will.

Related Topics:

[Verbs Taking the Accusative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Accusative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Either Accusative or Dative Case](#)

PLURAL FORMATION OF NOUNS

Unlike English nouns, which generally add "s" or "es" to form the plural, German nouns form their plurals in several different ways. Although there are some exceptions, it is nearly impossible to establish rules for the formation of the plural. Plural forms are grouped as follows:

1) Many nouns form their plurals by making the following changes:

Add ending -e :

One-syllable masculine and neuter nouns:

der Arm	the arm	das Brot	the bread
die Ar me	the arms	die Bro te	the breads

Two-syllable nouns ending in -ich, -ig, and -ing also form their plurals like this:

der Bottich	the tub	der Käfig	the cage
die Bottic he	the tubs	die Käfig e	the cages

der Lehrling	the apprentice
die Lehrl inge	the apprentices

into Multisyllable nouns with certain endings, such as -al, -ar, -at, -ier, -iv, may also fall into this category:

der Aktionär	the share-holder	der Apparat	the appliance
die Aktionä re	the share-holders	die Apparat e	the appliances

das Stative	the tripod
die Stativ e	the tripods

Add ending -e + umlaut to stem vowel:

der Fuß	the foot	die Stadt	the city
die Fü ße	the feet	die Stä dte	the cities

Add ending -er:

der Leib	the body	das Bild	the picture
die Leib er	the bodies	die Bild er	the pictures

Add ending -er + umlaut to stem vowel:

der Mann	the man	das Haus	the house
die Mä nner	the men	die Hä user	the houses

2) Many masculine or neuter nouns ending in -er, -el, -en, or -ein do not take an additional ending but may add an umlaut to the stem vowel. [Diminutives](#) belong into the group of plurals without any changes, as do some neuter nouns ending in -e.

No plural ending:

der Lehrer die Lehrer	the teacher the teachers	das Fenster die Fenster	the window the windows
der Schlüssel die Schlüssel	the key the keys	das Segel die Segel	the sail the sails
die Wagen der Wagen	the car the cars	die Mädchen das Mädchen	the girl the girls
das Blümchen die Blümchen	the little flower the little flowers	das Vöglein die Vöglein	the little bird the little birds
das Gehege die Gehege	the preserve the preserves	das Gehäuse die Gehäuse	the casing the casings

No plural ending + umlaut to stem vowel:

der Vater die Väter	the father the fathers	das Kloster die Klöster	the convent the convents
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Two feminine nouns fall into this category:

die Mutter die Mütter	the mother the mothers	die Tochter die Töchter	the daughter the daughters
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- 3) Nouns of foreign origin, mostly English or French, and abbreviations form their plural by adding an -s ending:

Add ending -s:

der Chef die Chefs	die Bar die Bars	das Kino die Kinos	the movie theater the movie theaters
der LKW (Lastkraftwagen) die LKWs		the truck the trucks	

- 4) All nouns ending in -is take an -se ending in the plural:

Add ending -se:

die Kenntnis die Kenntnisse	the knowledge *the knowledges	das Gefängnis die Gefängnisse	the prison the prisons
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- 5) Many nouns with the singular ending -e form their plurals by adding an -n ending. Also, some nouns ending in -er or -el, most of them feminine, fall into this category.

Add ending -n:

der See die Seen	the lake the lakes	der Junge die Jungen	the boy the boys
die Freude die Freuden	the joy the joys	das Auge die Augen	the eye the eyes

der Muskel	the muscle	die Leiter	the director
die Muskeln	the muscles	die Leitern	the directors

- 6) Most feminine nouns form their plurals by adding -en. Included in this group are all feminine nouns ending in: -ei, -heit, -keit, -schaft, -ung, -anz, -enz, -ion, -tät, and -ur. In addition, masculine nouns ending in -and, -ant, -ent, -et, -ist, -it, and -or, and some one-syllable nouns take this plural ending:

Add ending -en:

die Frau	the woman	die Brauerei	the brewery
die Frauen	the women	die Brauereien	the breweries
die Feinheit	the detail	die Freundschaft	the friendship
die Feinheiten	the details	die Freundschaften	the friendships
die Wanderung	the hike	die Nation	the nation
die Wanderungen	the hikes	die Nationen	the nations
die Rarität	the rarity	die Kultur	the culture
die Raritäten	*the rarities	die Kulturen	the cultures
der Konfirmand	the confirmand	der Dirigent	the director
die Konfirmanden	the confirmands	die Dirigenten	the directors
der Polizist	the police officer	der Doktor	the doctor
die Polizisten	the police officers	die Doktoren	the doctors
der Meteorit	the meteorite	der Herr	the gentleman
die Meteoriten	the meteorites	die Herren	the gentlemen

- 7) Feminine nouns ending in -in add the ending -nen to form the plural:

Add ending -nen:

die Lehrerin	the (woman) teacher
die Lehrerinnen	the (woman) teachers
die Freundin	the girlfriend
die Freundinnen	the girlfriends

- 8) Nouns derived from Latin, Greek, and Italian often have irregular plural forms, especially nouns ending in -a, -o, -um, -us. Their singular ending is replaced with the plural ending -en.

Delete singular ending, replace with -en:

das Thema	the topic	das Konto	the account
die Themen	the topics	die Konten	the accounts
das Studium	the study	der Algorithmus	the algorithm
die Studien	the studies	die Algorithmen	the algorithms

NOTE: The plural categories do not necessarily reflect categories of [declension](#). Please refer to the chapter on Gender and Declension and to the Globalink Power Translator 6.0 Manual.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Nominative Case](#)

[Genitive Case](#)

[Dative Case](#)

[Accusative Case](#)

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

A Personal Pronoun is used to take the place of a noun. In German, the familiar forms, "du" and "ihr," are used when addressing family members, close friends, and children. Otherwise, the formal "Sie" is preferred. The German pronouns are:

Singular					
	I	you (fam.)	he	she	it
Nom.:	ich	du	er	sie	es
Gen.:	meiner	deiner	seiner	ihrer	seiner
Dat.:	mir	dir	ihm	ihr	ihm
Acc.:	mich	dich	ihn	sie	es

Plural				
	we	you	they (fam.)	you (formal)
Nom.:	wir	ihr	sie	Sie
Gen.:	unser	euer	ihrer	Ihrer
Dat.:	uns	euch	ihnen	Ihnen
Acc.:	uns	euch	sie	Sie

NOTE: The informal personal and possessive pronouns in second person singular and plural are capitalized in letters as an indication of politeness.

Informal:

Ich danke Dir für Deinen Brief.	I thank you for your letter.
Wir danken Euch für Euren Brief.	We thank you for your letter.
Hast Du meinen Brief erhalten?	Did you receive my letter?
Habt Ihr meinen Brief erhalten?	Did you receive my letter?
Hoffentlich kann ich Dich bald besuchen.	Hopefully, I can visit you soon.
Hoffentlich kann ich Euch bald besuchen.	Hopefully, I can visit you soon.

Formal:

Auf **Ihre** Anfrage möchte ich **Ihnen** mitteilen, daß **Sie** uns gerne besuchen können.
In response to your question I would like to inform you that you are welcome to visit us.

Related Topics:

[Possessive Adjectives](#)

[Reflexive Pronouns](#)

POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES

The German Possessive Adjectives are:

Singular:	Plural:
mein my	unser our
dein your (fam.)	euer your (fam.)
sein his, its	ihr their
ihr her	Ihr your (formal)

Possessive adjectives are declined in a pattern similar to that of "[ein](#)."

SINGULAR

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.:	mein	meine	mein
Gen.:	meines	meiner	meines
Dat.:	meinem	meiner	meinem
Acc.:	meinen	meine	mein

PLURAL

Masculine, Feminine, Neuter

Nom.:	meine
Gen.:	meiner
Dat.:	meinen
Acc.:	meine

USAGE German uses the definite article instead of the possessive adjective when speaking about parts of the body. Sometimes, reflexive constructions or dative pronouns are used to express the possessive relationship.

Er machte **den** Mund nicht auf.
He didn't open his mouth.

Ich wasche **mir** die Hände. Ich wasche **ihm** das Gesicht.
I wash **my** hands. I wash **his** face.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[The Indefinite Article](#)

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

The German Demonstrative Pronouns are:

der, die, das	the
jeder	every
mancher	some
welcher	which
dieser	this one
jener	that one
solcher	such

derjenige / diejenige / dasjenige / diejenigen the one who / those who
derselbe / dieselbe / dasselbe / dieselben the same who

NOTE: "Jeder," "jener," "mancher," "solcher," and "welcher" are declined like "dieser."

Declension of **dieser**

SINGULAR

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.:	dieser Mann	diese Frau	dieses Kind
Gen.:	dieses Mannes	dieser Frau	dieses Kindes
Dat.:	diesem Mann	dieser Frau	diesem Kind
Acc.:	diesen Mann	diese Frau	dieses Kind

PLURAL

Masculine, Feminine, Neuter

Nom.:	diese Kinder
Gen.:	dieser Kinder
Dat.:	diesen Kindern
Acc.:	diese Kinder

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

RELATIVE PRONOUNS

There are two Relative Pronouns in German, "**der**" and "**welcher**." They are declined according to their function in the relative clause ([subject](#), [direct object](#), [indirect object](#), [object of a preposition](#), or [possessive pronoun](#)). They are:

	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
Nom.:	der	die	das	die
Gen.:	dessen	deren	dessen	deren
Dat.:	dem	der	dem	denen
Acc.:	den	die	das	die

Der Mann, **der** das Buch geschrieben hat, wohnt in der Stadt.
The man who wrote that book lives in the city.

Das Haus, **dessen** Fenster kaputt sind, ist um die Ecke von hier.
The house, whose windows are broken, is located around the corner from here.

Der Junge, **dem** er hilft, lernt schnell.
The boy, whom he is helping, is learning fast.

Die Geschichte, **die** er erzählt, scheint wahr zu sein.
The story which he tells appears to be true.

Das Buch, **das** auf dem Tisch liegt, ist interessant.
The book, which is lying on the table, is interesting.

NOTE: The [declension](#) of "**Welcher**" parallels that of "**dieser**," except it has no [genitive](#) forms. It is, however, used less frequently than "**der, die, das**" and their related forms.

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[Syntax](#)

INTERROGATIVES

The German Interrogatives are:

wer	who	wann	when
wo	where	weswegen	on account of what
warum	why	weshalb	for what reason
was für ein	what kind of	wie	how
was	what	wieviel	how much/many
welche(r)	which one		

Wer spielt Fußball?	Who plays soccer?
Wo ist das Lebensmittelgeschäft?	Where is the grocery store?
Warum antwortet er nicht?	Why doesn't he answer?
Was für ein Lied ist das?	What kind of a song is that?
Was haben Sie gestern gemacht?	What did you do yesterday?
Wann fängt der Vortrag an?	When does the lecture start?
Wie lernt man Spanisch?	How does one learn Spanish?
Welche Blumen nehmen Sie?	Which flowers do you take?

NOTE: "Wer" refers to persons and is inflected:

Nom.:	wer	who
Gen.:	wessen	whose
Dat.:	wem	to whom
Acc.:	wen	whom

Wer kommt?	Who is coming?
Wessen Buch ist dies?	Whose book is this?
Wem hat er das Buch gegeben?	To whom did he give the book?
Wen besuchen Sie?	Whom are you visiting?

Welch- belongs to the group of "der"-Words and is inflected according to gender, case and number of the following noun.

Welcher neue Film hat dir am besten gefallen?	Which new film do you like best?
Mit welchem Stift schreibst du?	With which pen are you writing?

NOTE: "Wo" can be combined with some prepositions to create additional interrogatives with specific meanings.

Woraus besteht es?	Of what does it consist?
Wofür arbeiten die Menschen?	To what end do people work? / are they working?
Wogegen kämpfen sie?	Against what are they fighting?
Woher weiß man das?	How do we know that?
Womit schreiben Sie?	With what do you write?
Worüber reden sie?	What are they talking about?

Worauf hat er geantwortet?
Worin besteht die Lösung?
Wovon hat er das gemacht?
Wozu brauchst Du das Buch?

To what did he answer?
Of what does the solution consist?
From what did he make that?
For what purpose do you need the book?

NOTE: Questions without interrogatives begin with the verb.

Kauft er den Wagen? Is he buying the car?
Trinkt er gelegentlich ein Glas Wein? Does he drink a glass of wine
occasionally?

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[Nominative Case](#)

[Genitive Case](#)

["Da"- and "Wo"-Compounds](#)

[Dative Case](#)

[Accusative Case](#)

[Syntax](#)

REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

A reflexive pronoun is one that refers the action back to the subject. Reflexive pronouns can also serve as intensifiers. German has reflexive pronouns for the [accusative](#) and [dative cases](#) respectively:

Accusative: mich uns
 dich euch
 sich sich

Ich wasche **mich**.
Du wäschst **dich**.
Er wäscht **sich**.
Wir waschen **uns**.
Ihr wascht **euch**.
Sie waschen **sich**.

I wash myself.
You wash yourself.
He washes himself.
We wash ourselves.
You wash yourselves.
They wash themselves.

Dative: mir uns
 dir euch
 sich sich

Ich kaufe **mir** ein Buch.
Du kaufst **dir** ein Buch.
Er kauft **sich** ein Buch.
Wir kaufen **uns** ein Buch.
Ihr kauft **euch** ein Buch.
Sie kaufen **sich** ein Buch.

I buy myself a book.
You buy yourself a book.
He buys himself a book.
We buy ourselves a book.
You buy yourselves a book.
They buy themselves a book.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Reflexive Verbs](#)

DECLENSION OF ADJECTIVES

In contrast to English, German adjectives take endings. These endings are dependent on the gender and case of the noun modified. Adjectives can be: 1) preceded by a definite article or "der" word, 2) preceded by an indefinite article or "ein" word, or 3) unpreceded.

1. Adjectives preceded by a "der" word:

SINGULAR		
Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.: der junge Mann	die junge Dame	das alte Haus
Gen.: des jungen Mannes	der jungen Dame	des alten Hauses
Dat.: dem jungen Mann	der jungen Dame	dem alten Haus
Acc.: den jungen Mann	die junge Dame	das alte Haus
PLURAL		
Masc., Fem., Neuter		
Nom.: die jungen Männer		
Gen.: der jungen Männer		
Dat.: den jungen Männern		
Acc.: die jungen Männer		

2. Preceded by an "ein" word:

SINGULAR		
Masculine	Feminine	Neuter
Nom.: ein junger Mann	eine junge Dame	ein altes Haus
Gen.: eines jungen Mannes		einer jungen Dame eines alten Hauses
Dat.: einem jungen Mann	einer jungen Dame	einem alten Haus
Acc.: einen jungen Mann	eine junge Dame	ein altes Haus
PLURAL		
Masc., Fem., Neuter		
Nom.: keine jungen Männer		
Gen.: keiner jungen Männer		
Dat.: keinen jungen Männern		
Acc.: keine jungen Männer		

3. Unpreceded:

SINGULAR		
Masculine	Feminine	Neuter

Nom.:	junger Mann	junge Frau	junges Mädchen
Gen.:	jungen Mannes	junger Frau	jungen Mädchens
Dat.:	jungem Mann	junger Frau	jungem Mädchen
Acc.:	jungen Mann	junge Frau	junges Mädchen

PLURAL

Masc., Fem., Neuter

Nom.:	junge Männer
Gen.:	junger Männer
Dat.:	jungen Männern
Acc.:	junge Männer

NOTE: Predicate adjectives remain undeclined.

Meine Eltern sind **nett**.
 My parents are nice.
 Das Motorrad meines Freundes ist **blau**.
 My friends motorcycle is blue.

NOTE: In German and English, participles can function like adjectives or nouns. They are declined like adjectives.

Present participles used as adjectives

die lachenden Kinder ...	The laughing children...
das fließende Wasser...	The flowing water...

Present participles used as nouns

Inf. = reisen
 Pres. Part. = reisend

Der Reisende ging ins Hotel. The travelers go into the hotel.
 Sie kannten den Reisenden. They knew the traveler.

Inf. = feiern
 Pres. Part. = feiernd

Die Feiernden liefen durch die Altstadt.
 The celebrating people ran through Old Town.
 Der Polizist verhaftete die Feiernden.
 The police arrested the celebrating people.

ALSO: Adjective constructions with a present participle + "zu" are common.

das zu reinigende Zimmer	the room to be cleaned
die zu erledigende Arbeit	the work to be done
Also: das abzuschickende Paket	the package to be mailed

Past Participles used as [adjectives](#)

Der gestrickte Pullover ... The knitted sweater ...
Ein verlorenes Spiel ... A lost match ...

Past Participles used as [nouns](#)

Inf. = einmachen to preserve
Past Part. = eingemacht

Das Eingemachte meiner Mutter schmeckt gut.
My mothers preserves taste good.

Inf. = sich verloben to become engaged
Past Part. = verlobt

Die Verlobten planen ihrer Hochzeitsfeier.
The engaged couple plans their wedding celebration.

NOTE: In addition to using single adjectives, German frequently uses [attributive phrases](#), which serve as adjectives. The [nouns](#), articles, and [adjectives](#) embedded in them are [declined](#). When translated into English, these expressions are frequently streamlined; sometimes they are rendered as [relative clauses](#).

Die Technik des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts...
Twentieth century technology...

Das neulich veröffentlichte Buch..
The newly published book...

Die schon längst geplante Party...
The party, which was planned long ago,...

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[The Indefinite Article](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Syntax](#)

COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE FORMS OF ADJECTIVES

German adjectives have comparative and superlative forms that approximately parallel those of English. They are:

klein, kleiner, am kleinsten small, smaller, smallest
nett, netter, am nettesten nice, nicer, nicest
hübsch, hübscher, am hübschesten pretty, prettier, prettiest

EXCEPTIONS include:

gut, besser, am besten good, better, best
viel, mehr, am meisten much, more, most

NOTE: In some comparative and superlative forms, an umlaut is added:

groß, größer, am größten big, bigger, biggest
alt, älter, am ältesten old, older, oldest
jung, jünger, am jüngsten young, younger, youngest

NOTE: There is sometimes a slight variation in spelling of these forms.

hoch, höher, am höchsten high, higher, highest

NOTE: In contrast to English, multisyllable adjectives do not form their comparatives with "more" / "most." Instead they add "er" and "est."

schwierig, schwieriger, am schwierigsten
difficult, more difficult, most difficult
unzufrieden, unzufriedener, am unzufriedensten
dissatisfied, more dissatisfied, most dissatisfied
intensiv, intensiver, am intensivsten
intensive, more intensive, most intensive

Related Topics:

[The Definite Article](#)

[The Indefinite Article](#)

[Declension of Adjectives](#)

[Adverbs](#)

ADVERBS

Unlike English, which adds "ly" to many of its [adjectives](#) to produce [adverbs](#), German does not use any special adverb endings.

Das ist ein **schnelles** Auto. (adj.) This is a fast car.
Thomas fährt **schnell**. (adv.) Thomas drives fast.

Das Restaurant ist besonders **gut**. (adj.) The restaurant is especially good.
Es ist **gut** besucht. (adv.) It is well-frequented.

Das ist ein **langsames** Lied. (adj.) This is a slow song.
Er singt **langsam**. (adv.) He sings slowly.

NOTE: Some German words ending in "weise" can serve as adverbs:

Glücklicherweise ist er gut angekommen.
Fortunately, he arrived safely.

Seltsamerweise haben wir nichts von ihr gehört.
Oddly enough, we haven't heard anything from her.

NOTE: German also uses adverbs of time and place that roughly parallel English:

Er fährt **täglich** nach Köln.
He drives to Cologne every day.

Sie waren **wochenlang** krank.
They were sick for weeks.

Mittags ging die Familie zum Restaurant.
Every midday, the family went to the restaurant.

NOTE: Adverbs are frequently used to begin German sentences.

Leider konnte er nicht dabei sein.
Unfortunately, he couldn't be present.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Declension of Adjectives](#)

PREPOSITIONS WITH GENITIVE CASE

The following are the German prepositions that take the [genitive case](#):

abseits	diesseits	seitens
angesichts	hinsichtlich	trotz
anhand	infolge	willen
anlässlich	innerhalb	ungeachtet
anstelle	jenseits	unterhalb
(an)statt	kraft	während
aufgrund	längs	wegen
außerhalb	laut	zeit
beiderseits	mangels	zugunsten
bezüglich	oberhalb	zwecks

Ich wohne **abseits der** Hauptstraße.

I live away from the main street.

Anstatt eines Konzerts gab es einen Vortrag.

Instead of a concert they gave a lecture.

Innerhalb der Stadtmauer sind viele alte Häuser.

Inside of the city walls are many old houses.

Jenseits des Feldes verläuft eine kleine Straße.

Beyond the field is a small road.

Trotz der Zeitknappheit schaffen wir es.

In spite of the lack of time we made it.

Um Himmels **willen!**

For Christ sake!

Während des Films wurde viel gelacht.

During the film there was much laughter.

Wegen des Wetters gingen wir nicht einkaufen.

Because of the weather we didnt go shopping.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Genitive Case](#)

PREPOSITIONS WITH DATIVE CASE

The following are the German prepositions that take [dative case](#):

aus	gegenüber
außer	gemäß
bei	mit
binnen	nach
entgegen	seit
entsprechend	von
fern	zu
	zuliebe

Sie kommen jetzt **aus der Kirche**.

They are coming out of the church.

Außer ihm ist niemand hier.

Except for him there is nobody here.

Er arbeitet **bei einer großen Firma**.

He works for a large company.

Wir tanzen **mit der Gruppe**.

We dance with the group.

Nach dem Film trinken wir ein Bier.

After the film we drink a beer.

Er studiert **seit** drei Jahren.

He has been studying for three years.

Von wem haben Sie den Regenschirm?

Who gave you the umbrella?

Sie muß heute **zur Bücherei**.

She has to go to the library today.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Dative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Either Accusative or Dative Case](#)

PREPOSITIONS WITH ACCUSATIVE CASE

The following are the German prepositions that take the [accusative case](#):

durch
für
gegen
ohne
um
bis
wider

Wir laufen **durch den Wald**.

We run through the forest.

Sie spielt die Sonate **für uns**.

They played the sonata for us.

Gegen Husten nimmt man Zitronensaft.

For a cough you take lemon juice.

Ohne die Bücher kannst du auch lernen.

You can learn without the books as well.

Der Marktplatz liegt **um die Ecke** von hier.

The market square is around the corner from here.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Accusative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Either Accusative or Dative Case](#)

PREPOSITIONS WITH EITHER ACCUSATIVE OR DATIVE CASE

The following are the German prepositions that can take either accusative or dative case. If a preposition takes the accusative case, it is because the verb indicates motion or change of position. If a sentence with an accusative preposition is put into a question, the interrogative is *wohin*, (where to) in order to express the change of location. If the same preposition is followed by the dative case, it is because it indicates location. The interrogative in this case would be *wo* (where).

an
auf
hinter
in
neben
über
unter
vor
zwischen

Er stand **an der Tür**. (dat.) **Wo** stand er?
He stood at the door. Where did he stand?
Er ging **an die Tafel**. (acc.) **Wohin** ging er?
He went to the board. Where(to) did he go?

Auf der Straße sieht man keine Autos. (dat.) **Wo** sieht man keine Autos?
There are no cars in the street. Where are no cars?
Wir sind nicht **auf die Straße gegangen**.(acc.) **Wohin** sind wir nicht gegangen?
We didnt go out to the street. Where(to) didnt we go?

Die Männer arbeiteten **hinter der Kirche**. (dat.)
The men work behind the church.
Die Männer gingen **hinter die Kirche**. (acc.)
The men went behind the church.

Wir sind **im Fluß geschwommen**. (dat.)
We swam in the river.
Wir sind **in den Fluß gesprungen**. (acc.)
We jumped into the river.

Neben der Stadtmauer ist ein Teich. (dat.)
Next to the city wall is a pond.
Sie sind **neben die Stadtmauer gezogen**.(acc.)
They moved next to the city wall.

Über dem Rathaus sieht man eine Fahne. (dat.)
Above the city hall one can see a flag.
Wir sind **über das Rathaus geflogen**.(acc.)
We flew across the city hall.

Unter der Brücke leben Frösche.(dat.)
Under the bridge, frogs live.
Er hat das Blatt **unter die Tür gesteckt**.(acc.)
He put the paper under the door.

Sie wohnen **zwischen der Kirche und der Schule**. (dat.)

They live between the church and the school.
Er ist **zwischen die beiden Mauern gekrochen**.(acc.)
He crawled between the two walls.

Related Topics:

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Dative Case](#)

[Accusative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Dative Case](#)

[Prepositions with Accusative Case](#)

"Da"- and "Wo"-Compounds

Da- and wo-compounds consist of da and wo, respectively, and a preposition. Da- compounds are used in statements, wo-compounds in direct or indirect questions.

USAGE: A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition followed by an article, possibly an attribute, and a noun, e.g.

auf dem großen Tisch	on top of the big table
ohne meinen Bruder	without my brother
vor der Schule	in front of the school

All nouns can be replaced by personal pronouns. Dem großen Tisch becomes ihm; meinen Bruder becomes ihn; der Schule becomes ihr. However, if a preposition is followed by a personal pronoun and this pronoun represents an object or concept (i.e. not an animate noun), a da-compound has to be used. Therefore, auf dem großen Tisch becomes darauf; vor der Schule becomes davor. Ohne meinen Bruder becomes ohne ihn; personal pronouns that represent animate nouns are never combined in either da- or wo-compounds. If a preposition that starts with a vowel is part of the compound, an additional r is inserted. The original noun and the implied personal pronoun disappear completely. If used as an interrogative, the wo-compound is used.

Some common compounds:

darauf (da + r + auf)	worauf (wo + r + auf)
darunter (da + r + unter)	orunter (wo + r + unter)
damit (da + mit)	womit (wo + mit)
dafür (da + für)	ofür (wo + für)

Worauf wartet ihr?

What are you waiting **for**?

Das ist ein Bleistift. Man kann **damit** schreiben.

This is a pencil. You can write **with it**.

Das ist mein Bruder. Ich warte **auf ihn**.

This is my brother. I wait for him.

Prepositions that take the Genitive case act very unpredictable. In general, the Genitive case is used much less than the other cases and many expressions using the Genitive are archaic. By now, the most commonly used Genitive prepositions (wegen, während, trotz, statt) are accepted as grammatically correct when followed by Datives.

trotz des schlechten Wetters = trotz dem schlechten Wetter
inspite of the bad weather
wegen des starken Verkehrs = wegen dem starken Verkehr
because of the heavy traffic
wegen seiner (obsolete) = wegen ihm
because of him

The forms of the da- and wo-compounds of this group of prepositions, therefore, vary considerably--if they exist at all.

Some examples:

trotzdem
stattdessen
deswegen
währenddessen

weswegen

Es ist heute schlechtes Wetter. **Trotzdem** gehen wir schwimmen.

Today is really bad weather. **Inspite of it** we go swimming.

Ich bin krank. **Deswegen** kann ich nicht kommen.

I am sick. **Because of it** I cannot come.

Mein Bruder ist hier. **Wegen ihm** kann ich nicht kommen.

My brother is here. Because of him I cannot come.

Some prepositions (dative, accusative, or genitive) do not form da- or wo-compounds at all. In that case, the personal pronoun is used whether it represents an animate noun or not.

Some examples:

ohne
außer
bis
seit

Ohne mein Auto kann ich nicht leben. Was mache ich nur **ohne es**?

Without my car I cannot live. What am I going to do **without it**?

Related Topics:

[Prepositions](#)

[Pronouns](#)

SYNTAX

Declarative Sentences, Questions, Imperatives

The word order in German sentences, questions, and imperatives is variable and flexible. Because of this, the scope of this section is limited to those aspects of German grammar that may be difficult for native English speakers.

I. DECLARATIVE SENTENCES

A. The Main Elements:

1. Subject:

The subject of a sentence can be a noun or proper name, a noun phrase, or a pronoun. It is always in the nominative case. In addition, a (subordinate) clause may function as the subject of a sentence.

Der Bus fährt zum Bahnhof. The bus goes to the station.
Peter hat ein neues Fahrrad. Peter has a new bicycle.
Sie hat das große Los gewonnen. She hit the jackpot.
Daß er kommt, ist so gut wie sicher. That he will come is almost certain.

2. Predicate:

The predicate can be either an inflected verb form or a combination of inflected auxiliary and infinitive verb forms (participle and/or infinitive). If the predicate consists of several parts, the participle and/or infinitive are in the final position of the sentence.

Der Briefträger **kommt** jeden Morgen gegen 10 Uhr.
The mail carrier comes every morning about 10 o'clock.
Der Briefträger **ist** heute morgen nicht **gekommen**.
Today, the mail carrier did not come.
Wir **haben** den Briefträger heute morgen noch nicht **gesehen**.
This morning, we haven't seen the mail carrier yet.
Gestern **haben** wir unsere Post schon früh **bekommen**.
Yesterday, we received our mail already early.

3. Object:

The object of a sentence can be a noun or proper name, a noun phrase, or a pronoun. Most verbs take their objects in the accusative and/or the dative case. The accusative object is the direct object, whereas the dative object is generally the indirect object. Only a few verbs require the object in the genitive case. A subordinate clause may also function as an object.

Verbs Taking the Accusative Case:

Er kauft **den Computer**. He buys the computer.
Dein Vater hat **Klaus** gerufen. Your father has called Klaus.
Wir sehen **rapide Fortschritte** in der Entwicklung der Technik.
We see rapid progress in the development of technology.
Ich weiß nicht, **wann er kommt**. I don't know when he will come.

Verbs Taking the Dative Case:

Das kleine Mädchen hilft **seinem Vater**.
The little girl helps her father.
Sie hat **Frau Kleinberger** geschrieben.
She has written to Mrs. Kleinberger.
Dieses Buch gehört **dem neuen Studenten**.
This book belongs to the new student.
Der Anzug paßt **ihm**.
The suit fits him.

When both an accusative (direct) object and a dative (indirect) object follow the verb, the sequence of the two objects generally depends on whether they are nouns, pronouns, or one noun and one pronoun.

Der Junge gab dem Mann **sein Geld**.
(Two nouns: Dative precedes **Accusative**.)
The boy gave the man his money.

Der Junge gab es **dem Mann**.
Der Junge gab ihm **das Geld**.
(One noun, one pronoun: pronoun precedes **noun**)
The boy gave it to the man.
The boy gave him the money.

Der Junge gab es **ihm**.
(Two pronouns: Accusative precedes **Dative**)
The boy gave it to him.

Exceptions to this general rule include instances where the speaker wishes to emphasize a particular object or where a subordinate clause refers to the object.

Der Junge gab sein Geld **dem Mann** (und nicht der Frau).
The boy gave his money to the man.
Der Junge gab sein Geld **dem Mann**, der ihm das Radio verkaufen wollte.
The boy gave his money to the man who wanted to sell him the radio.

Verbs Taking the Genitive Case:

Sein Verhalten spottet **jeder Beschreibung**.

His behavior defies description.

Wir gedenken **der Gefallenen aller Kriege**.

We remember the dead of all wars.

Wir gedenken **ihrer**.

We remember her.

Subordinate clause:

Wir wissen nicht, **ob sie morgen kommen**.

We don't know whether she will come tomorrow.

Sie haben gesehen, **wie der Mann verletzt wurde**.

They have seen how the man was hurt.

4. Other elements of a sentence:

A sentence may also contain prepositional objects, adverbial phrases or adverbs.

Prepositional Object:

Some German verbs can be connected to their objects by a preposition. In many cases, the English translations either do not use any preposition or use a different

one. These verbs include:

warten auf	to wait for
beginnen mit	to begin with
sprechen über	to talk about
sprechen von	to talk about
verhandeln mit	to negotiate with
nachdenken über	to think about
hoffen auf	to hope for
denken an	to think of
sorgen für	to look after
fragen nach	to ask for

Sie sprachen **über die Installation der neuen Anlage**.

They talked about the installation of the new appliance.

Der junge Mann wartet **auf seine Freundin**.

The young man is waiting for his girlfriend.

Wir hoffen **auf eine umgehende Antwort**.

We are hoping for a speedy response.

Adverbs and adverbial phrases:

Adverbs and adverbial phrases modify either the verb or the whole sentence expressing time, place, reason or mode.

Abends geht Herr Schwarz **gern mit seinem Hund** spazieren.

In the evening, Mr Schwarz likes to walk his dog.

Wir haben **in diesem überaus kalten Winter** viel Öl verbraucht.

We have used up a lot of oil in this extremely cold winter.

Er mußte **in Hamburg** umsteigen.

He had to change trains in Hamburg.

Wegen des schlechten Wetters wurde das Endspiel verschoben.

Because of the bad weather the final had been postponed.

B. Clauses:

A sentence may consist of a main clause containing, at a minimum, a subject and a predicate.

Er schläft. He is sleeping.

A sentence may also be a more complicated structure consisting of a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses.

Er schläft, nachdem er den ganzen Tag schwer gearbeitet hat, obwohl das Telefon dauernd klingelt.

He is sleeping after having worked hard the whole day although the telephone is ringing constantly.

In German, the word order in main clauses differs from that found in subordinate clauses.

1. Main clauses:

A main clause may begin with the subject of the sentence, one of the objects, an adverb/adverbial phrase, or a subordinate clause. The first position in the sentence is generally one of emphasis. For example, to emphasize an object,

begin the sentence with that object.

Dem habe ich es aber gegeben. I showed him good.
Darauf freuen wir uns. We are looking forward to it.

As a general rule, the inflected verb form is the second element in a main clause. It may be preceded by a subject, object, adverbial phrase, or even a subordinate clause.

Simple Tenses:

Er schläft. He is sleeping.
(Subject + predicate)

Die Besucher sehen die blühenden Bäume.
(Subject + predicate + accusative object)
The visitors see the blooming trees.

Den Söhnen hinterließ der alte Mann das Geschäft.
(Dative object + predicate + subject + accusative object)
To his sons, the old man left his business.

Jeden Morgen laufen wir dreimal um den Häuserblock.
(adverbial phrase + predicate + subject + adverb + adverbial phrase)
Every morning we run three times around the block.

Als du gestern anrufst, arbeitete ich an meinem Auto.
(Subordinate clause + predicate + subject + adverbial phrase)
When you called yesterday I was working on my car.

In compound tenses and constructions with modal auxiliaries, the inflected auxiliary is the second element of the sentence and the infinitive and/or participle part of the predicate moves to the end:

Compound Tenses:

Er hat geschlafen. He has slept.
Die Besucher werden die blühenden Bäume sehen.
The visitors will see the blooming trees.

Den Söhnen würde der alte Mann das Geschäft hinterlassen.
To his sons, the old man would leave the business.

Jeden Morgen waren wir dreimal um den Häuserblock gelaufen.
Each morning, we had run three times around the block.

Constructions with modal auxiliaries:

Simple Tenses:

Er darf nicht schlafen. He must not sleep.
Die Besucher können die blühenden Bäume sehen.
The visitors can see the blooming trees.

Den Söhnen will der alte Mann das Geschäft hinterlassen.
To his sons, the old man is going to leave the business.

Jeden Morgen sollten wir dreimal um den Häuserblock laufen.
Every morning, we should run around the block.

Als du gestern anrufst, mußte ich an meinem Auto arbeiten.
When you called yesterday, I had to work on my car.

Compound Tenses:

Er hat nicht schlafen dürfen. He wasn't allowed to sleep.

Die Besucher werden die blühenden Bäume sehen können.
 The visitors will be able to see the blooming trees.
 Den Söhnen wird der alte Mann das Geschäft hinterlassen wollen.
 To his sons, the old man is probably going to leave the business.
 Jeden Morgen sollten wir dreimal um den Häuserblock gelaufen sein.
 Every morning we should have run three times around the block.
 Als du gestern anrufst, mußte ich an meinem Auto arbeiten lassen.
 When you called yesterday, I had to have my car worked on.

NOTE: In main clauses, separable prefixes get separated from the verb when the verb is in a Simple Tense. The prefix then goes to the end.

Er schläft ein.	He falls asleep.
Er schläft nicht ein.	He doesnt fall asleep.
Er gab viel Geld aus.	He spent a lot of money.
Er gab nicht viel Geld aus.	He didnt spent a lot of money.

BUT: In compound tenses and modal constructions, the verb with the separable prefix is either an infinitive or a past participle and the prefix is not separated.

Er kann nicht einschlafen.	He cannot go to sleep.
Er ist eingeschlafen.	He has fallen asleep.
Er hat viel Geld ausgegeben.	He has spent a lot of money.
Er will nicht viel Geld ausgeben.	He doesnt want to spend a lot of money.

NOTE: Coordinating conjunctions join two clauses and give them equal weight. These conjunctions are not elements of the clause and therefore do not affect the word order.

The coordinating conjunctions are:

und	and
oder	or
bzw. (beziehungsweise),	respectively
aber	but
doch	however
jedoch	however
allein	however
sondern	but
denn	because

Er kann nicht kommen, **denn** er ist krank.
 He cannot come because he is sick.
 Der Arzt ist auf Urlaub, **aber** seine Vertreterin kann Ihnen helfen.
 The doctor is on vacation but his substitute can help you.
 Die Schüler haben kein Geld für diese Reise, **und** ihre Eltern wollen ihnen das Geld nicht geben.
 The students dont have any money for this trip and their parents dont want to give it to them.

NOTE: Coordinate clauses are usually separated from each other by a comma. The exception are clauses sharing the same subject and joint by und.
 only

Gestern bin ich schwimmen gegangen und heute gehe ich tanzen.
 Yesterday, I went swimming and today I go dancing.

A similar sentence with two different subjects, however, requires the separating comma.

Gestern ist mein Bruder schwimmen gegangen, und heute gehe ich schwimmen.

Yesterday, my brother went swimming, and today I go swimming.

2. Subordinate clauses:

By definition, a subordinate clause cannot stand by itself and is always dependent on a main clause. The statement made in the subordinate clause does not have the same weight as that of the main clause.

There are different types of subordinate clauses:

1. Clauses introduced by a subordinating conjunction
2. Infinitive clauses
3. Relative clauses
4. Participle clauses
5. Indirect questions

EXAMPLES:

1. **Nachdem er den Brief gelesen hatte**, rief er den Kunden sofort an.
After having read the letter, he immediately called the customer.
2. Ich freue mich, **Sie kennenzulernen**.
I am pleased to meet you.
3. Der Brief, **der heute morgen ankam**, enthielt gute Nachrichten.
The letter that came this morning contained good news.
4. **Dem Beispiel seines Vaters folgend**, wurde er Arzt.
Following his fathers example he became a doctor.
5. Die Kinder konnten uns nicht sagen, **wo wir die nächste Tankstelle finden konnten**.
The children couldnt tell us where we could find the nearest gas station.

Subordinate clauses can precede the main clause, they can be inserted into it, or they can follow it. The predicate is always at the end of the subordinate clause, with the inflected verb form (if there is one) at the end. If the subordinate clause contains a double infinitive construction, the inflected verb precedes the two infinitives.

Er wußte nicht, was er an ihrer Stelle **hätte** machen können.
He didnt know what he could have done in her place.

NOTE: Subordinate clauses are always separated from the main clause by commas.

Subordinating conjunctions are:

als

as

nachdem	after
bis	until
während	during
ehe	before
bevor	before
sobald	as soon as
solange	as long as
wenn	when
weil	because
da	since
zumal da	particularly since
damit	in order to
daß	that
falls	in case of
sofern	as long as
soweit	as far
obwohl	although
obgleich	althoug
obschon	although
wenn auch	even though
indem	by (+Gerund)
wie	as
als ob	as if
ohne daß	without (+Gerund)
ob	whether

Additional subordinating conjunctions include:

um zu	in order to
ohne zu	without (+Gerund)
statt zu	instead of
anstatt zu.	instead of

These conjunctions introduce an infinitive clause. They take an infinitive at the end of the subordinate clause instead of an inflected verb form. Since the infinitive does not show person or number, both, the main clause and the subordinate clause must have the same subject.

Er studierte Sprachen, **um** im internationalen Wirtschaftsbereich arbeiten **zu** können.

He studied languages in order to be able to work in the area of international economy.

Sie spielten die ganze Spielzeit, **ohne** einen Verlust **zu** erleiden.

The played the whole season without suffering a loss.

NOTE: Subordinating conjunctions are sometimes omitted but understood.

a) Conditional clauses may begin with the inflected verb form.

Hätte er gestern angerufen, hätte er das Neueste erfahren.
(Wenn er gestern angerufen hätte,)

Had he called yesterday, he would have learned the latest news.

Wärest Du gestern gekommen, hätten wir zusammen üben können.
(Wenn Du gestern gekommen wärest, ...)

Had you come yesterday, we could have practiced together.
Regnet es, gehen wir ins Kino.
(Falls es regnet, ...)
In case of rain we go to the movie theater.

b) Subordinate clauses with the conjunction **daß** may be connected to the **main clause** omitting the conjunction "**daß**." In this case, the subordinated clause has the same word order as a main clause.

Er sagte, **er habe** kein Geld.
(..... , daß er kein Geld habe.)
He said (that) he didnt have any money.
Sie weiß, **wir haben** uns ein neues Auto **gekauft**.
(....., daß wir uns ein neues Auto gekauft haben.)
She knows (that) we bought a new car.
Wir hoffen, **es geht** dir bald besser.
(....., daß es dir bald wieder besser geht.)
We hope (that) you are feeling better soon.

NOTE: In subordinate clauses, separable prefixes do not become detached from the verb, even in Simple Tenses:

Er weiß, daß er viel Geld **ausgibt**.
He knows that he spends a lot of money.
Sie war froh, als er endlich **einschlief**.
She was glad when he finally fell asleep.

II. QUESTIONS:

A. Questions that require a "Yes" or "No" answer begin with the **inflected verb** form. The separable prefix, **past participle**, or **infinitive** goes to the end of the question.

Fahren Sie morgen nach Berlin?
Will you go to Berlin tomorrow?
Legst Du ein Paar Tage Urlaub **ein**?
Will you take a few days vacation?
Habt Ihr schon Eure Uhren **umgestellt**?
Did you already reset your watches?
Haben Sie das neue Buch über die Erschließung Sibiriens **gelesen**?
Did you read the new book on the development of Siberia?
Hast Du meine Schlüssel **gesehen**?
Did you see my keys?
Darf ich bitte Ihren Ausweis **sehen**?
May I see your ID?

B. Questions beginning with an interrogative pronoun take the **inflected verb** form in the second position and the **past participle** or **infinitive** at the end.

Wer **hat** meine Autoschlüssel **gesehen**?
Who has seen my car keys?
Wen **wirst** Du **wählen**?
Who are you going to vote for?
Was **hast** Du ihm **erzählt**?

What did you tell him?
Warum **kommt** er erst morgen?
Why does he come only tomorrow?
Wie **heißen** Ihre Kinder?
What are your children called?
Wo **ist** die Post?
Where is the post office?
Worüber **habt** Ihr **gesprochen**?
What did you talk about?
Wann **wollen** wir ins Kino **gehen**?
When do we want to go to the movie theater?

A question can also begin with a preposition before the interrogative pronoun. The preposition governs the case of the following interrogative pronoun and is considered part of it, i.e. this combination is counted as the first element, with the inflected verb form following in the second place.

Über wen habt Ihr gesprochen?
About who did you talk?
Um was geht es hier eigentlich?
What is this all about?
Auf wen ist er so wütend?
At who is he so mad?
Bei wem hast Du angerufen?
Who did you call?

"Wessen" + noun (whose + noun) is also considered as one element and the inflected verb form immediately follows this combination.

Wessen Koffer steht noch bei der Gepäckausgabe?
Whose suitcase is still standing at the luggage claim?
Wessen Auto hat unsere Einfahrt blockiert?
Whose car is blocking our driveway?

III. IMPERATIVES:

A. Direct Commands:

In direct commands, one of the imperative forms of the verb begins the sentence.

Mach schnell!
Hurry up!
Gebt dem Hund den Knochen!
Give the bone to the dog!
Beantworten Sie unser Schreiben bitte so bald wie möglich!
Please answer our letter as soon as possible!
Sei vorsichtig!
Be careful!
Seid bitte nicht so laut!
Please don't be so noisy!
Seien Sie bitte so freundlich, mir das Buch einzuwickeln.
Please be so kind and wrap the book for me.

NOTE: The separable prefix of a compound verb is placed at the end in a command or request.

Komm bitte **herein!**

Please come in!

Stell den Fernseher **ab!**

Turn off the TV!

Lesen Sie diesen Vertrag bitte sorgfältig **durch!**

Please read through this contract carefully!

B. General Instructions:

In general instructions, the [imperative](#) is often replaced by the [infinitive](#) and the [infinitive](#) is placed at the end of the sentence:

Vor Gebrauch **schütteln!**

Shake well before use!

Kühl **lagern!**

Store in a cool place!

Nicht **stürzen!**

Do not throw!

Zuerst die Systemdiskette **installieren.**

First install the system disk.

Dann die Wörterbuchdisketten der Reihe nach **kopieren.**

Then copy the dictionary disks one after the other.

Related Topics:

[Conjugations of "sein," "haben," & "werden"](#)

[Summary of Tenses](#)

[Perfect Tense](#)

[Indirect Speech](#)

[Modal Auxiliaries](#)

[Imperative Form](#)

[Gender and Declension](#)

[Interrogatives](#)

[Adverbs](#)

Conjunctions

A **Conjunction** serves as a link between words, phrases, clauses or sentences. Some German conjunctions are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **aber** (but), **weil** (because), and **denn** (because).

Coordinating Conjunctions link two independent clauses in a sentence. Some coordinating conjunctions in German are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **sowohl** (as well as), **aber** (but), **sondern** (rather), **jedoch** (nevertheless), and **denn** (because / for).

A **Subordinating Conjunction** signals an inversion in the word order of the clause it introduces.

EXAMPLE: Er ging in die Stadt, **weil** er die Kunstaussstellung besuchen wollte.

He went into town because **he** wanted to see the art exhibit.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[SYNTAX](#)

THE CLOCK AND THE CALENDAR

Time of Day

Germany uses a 24-hour clock, so that any time after 12:00 noon will be a number higher than 12 (e.g. 4:00 p.m. = 16:00 Uhr).

Er fängt bei der Arbeit um 7.00 Uhr an. He starts at work at 7:00 a.m.	American equivalent: 7:00 a.m.
Um zwölf Uhr mittags ißt er in der Kantine. At 12:00 noon he eats in the canteen.	12:00 noon
Um zwanzig Uhr fünfzehn trinkt er ein Glas Wein. At 8:15 p.m. he drinks a glass of wine.	8:15 p.m.
Um Mitternacht herum schläft er ein. At about 12:00 midnight he falls asleep.	12:00 midnight

Days of the Week

Sonntag	Sunday
Montag	Monday
Dienstag	Tuesday
Mittwoch	Wednesday
Donnerstag	Thursday
Freitag	Friday
Samstag	Saturday

Months

Januar	January
Februar	February
März	March
April	April
Mai	May
Juni	June
Juli	July
August	August
September	September
Oktober	October
November	November
Dezember	December

Seasons

der Frühling	Spring
der Sommer	Summer
der Herbst	Fall, Autumn
der Winter	Winter

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

CARDINAL & ORDINAL NUMERALS

Cardinal Numbers:

0 = null	10 = zehn
1 = ein(s)	11 = elf
2 = zwei	12 = zwölf
3 = drei	13 = dreizehn
4 = vier	14 = vierzehn
5 = fünf	15 = fünfzehn
6 = sechs	16 = sechzehn
7 = sieben	17 = siebzehn
8 = acht	18 = achtzehn
9 = neun	19 = neunzehn

NOTE: Beyond the number "20" the numerals are read in German, literally as "one and twenty," "two and twenty," "four and fifty," etc.

20 = zwanzig
21 = ein und zwanzig
22 = zwei und zwanzig
40 = vierzig
50 = fünfzig
60 = sechzig
70 = siebzig
80 = achtzig
90 = neunzig
100 = (ein)hundert
101 = (ein)hunderteins
121 = (ein)hundertein und zwanzig
1000 = (ein)tausend
1 000 000 = eine Million
1 000 000 000 = eine Milliarde
1 000 000 000 000 = eine Billion

Ordinal numbers:

Up to twenty, the ordinal numbers are formed from the cardinals by adding "t". Ordinal numbers are inflected like adjectives:

vier / vier t - (4th)	der vierte Juli; am fünften August
zehn / zeh n t- (10th)	
achtzehn / achtzeh n t- (18th)	

From twenty onwards, they are formed by adding "st":

zwanzig / zwanzig st - (20th)	sein zwanzigster Geburtstag
einundzwanzig / einundzwanzig st - (21st)	
(ein)hundert / (ein)hundert st - (100th)	

Exceptions: erst- (1st), dritt- (3rd), siebt- or siebent- (7th), acht- (8th)

der erste Tag	the first day
beim dritten Versuch	with the third attempt

der siebte Wochentag the seventh day of the week
im achten Stock at the eighth floor

Fractions:

German fractions are expressed by adding "el" or "stel" to the names of the ordinal numbers:

ein Drittel (1/3)
ein Viertel (1/4)
ein Achtel (1/8)
ein Zwanzigstel (1/20)

Numerical Notation:

German uses commas instead of periods to indicate decimals.

\$20.25 = 20,25 Dollar
\$50.95 = 50,95 Dollar

NOTE: German does not insert a comma but a period as a place marker in numbers of more than four digits.

English	German
15,575	15.575
200,000	200.000

Related Topics:

[Non-Grammatical Forms](#)

[Miscellaneous](#)

Non-Grammatical Forms

Many common, small words and interjections are employed in a way that doesn't fit into any pre-existing lexical category. These are classified in the dictionary with the NonGrammatical part of speech. Non-Grammatical words and expressions do not inflect.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS](#)

Title Forms

Common German titles applied to persons are Herr (Mr.), Frau (Mrs./Ms.), Doktor, and their associated abbreviations. These words typically occur before proper nouns and have certain restrictions concerning co-occurrence with articles.

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS](#)

[Non-Grammatical Forms](#)

COMMONLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

a. = auch
a. = 1. aus; 2. an, am (before names of rivers)
A. A. = Auswärtiges Amt
a. a. O. = 1. am angeführten Orte (= loc.cit.); 2. an andern Orten
Abb. = Abbildung
abds. = abends
Abf. = Abfahrt
Abg. = Abgeordnete(r)
Abh. = Abhandlung
abh. = abhängig
Abk. = Abkürzung
Abs. = 1. Absatz; 2. Absender
Abschn. = Abschnitt
Abt. = Abteilung
a. d. = an der (before names of rivers)
a. D = außer Dienst (Mil.)
ADGB. = Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
Adj. = Adjektiv
Adv. = Adverb
AEG = Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft
a. G. = auf Gegenseitigkeit
A. G. = 1. Aktiengesellschaft; 2. Atomgewicht
ahd. = althochdeutsch
Akk. = Akkusativ
a./L. = an der Lahn; e.g. Marburg a./L.
allg. = allgemein
a./M. = am Main; e.g. Frankfurt a./M.
amerik. = amerikanisch
amtl. = amtlich
anerk. = anerkannt
Ang., Angeb. = Angebot
Angekl. = Angeklagte(r)
Anh. = Anhang
Ank. = Ankunft
Anl. = Anlage
Anm. = 1. Anmerkung; 2. Anmeldung
Anz. = Anzeigen or Anzeiger
a./O. = an der Oder; e.g. Frankfurt a./O.
AOK = Allgemeine Ortskrankenkasse
Arch. = Architektur
a./Rh. = am Rhein; e.g. Bonn a./Rh.
Art. = Artikel
a./S. = an der Saale; e.g. Halle a./S.
A. T. = Altes Testament
attr. = attributiv
Aufl. = Auflage
Ausl. = Ausland
ausschl. = ausschließlich

Bankw. = Bankwesen
Bauw. = Bauwesen

bayr. = bayrisch
Bd. = 1. Band; 2. Bund; pl. Bde. = Bände
Bearb. = Bearbeiter or Bearbeitung
Beibl. = Beiblatt
Beih. = Beiheft
beil. = beiliegend
Bem. = Bemerkung
Ber. = Bericht
bes. = besonders
betr. = betreffend, betreffs
bev. = bevollmächtigt
bez. = 1. bezahlt; 2. bezüglich; 3. beziehungsweise
Bez. = Bezeichnung
Bgb. = Bergbau
BGB = Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch
Bhf. = Bahnhof
Bibliotheksw. = Bibliothekswesen
BMW = Bayerische Motorenwerke
Buchw. = Buchwesen
b. w. = bitte wenden (= P.T.O.)
bzw. = beziehungsweise

CDU = Christlich-Demokratische Union
Chir. = Chirurgie

d. = der, des, dem, den, die, das
dass. = dasselbe
Dat. = Dativ
DB = Deutsche Bundesbahn
DBP = Deutsche Bundespost
ders. = derselbe
D.G.B. = Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund
dgl. = dergleichen, desgleichen; u. dgl. = und dergleichen
d. h. = das heißt
d. i. = das ist (= i.e.)
DIN = Deutsche Industrie-Norm.
Dipl.-Ing. = Diplomingenieur
Dipl.-Kaufm. = Diplomkaufmann
d. J. = 1. dieses Jahres; 2. der Jüngere
d. M. = dieses Monats (= inst.)
Dm. = Durchmesser
DM = Deutsche Mark
DNB = Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro
d. O. = der Obige (often in place of a signature)
DPA = Deutsche Presse-Agentur
Dr. Ing. = Doktor der Ingenieurwissenschaft
Dr. jur. = doctor juris utriusque (= LL.D.)
Dr. med. = doctor medicinae (= M.D.)
DSG = Deutsche Schlafwagen-Gesellschaft
dt. = deutsch
Dtschld. = Deutschland
Dtzd. = Dutzend
d.u. = dienstuntauglich (Mil.)
d. Vf. = der Verfasser
dz. = 1. derzeit; 2. Doppelzentner

D-Zug = Durchgangszug

ebd. = ebenda
ehem. = ehemalig
eigtl. = eigentlich
Einl. = Einleitung
einschl. = einschließlich
Eisenb. = Eisenbahn
El. = Elektrizität
Entschl. = Entschließung
entspr. = entsprechend
entw. = entweder
erg. = ergänze
etw. = etwas
europ. = europäisch
ev. = 1. evangelisch; 2. eventuell
E. V. = Eingetragener Verein
evang. = evangelisch
evtl. = eventuell
EWG = Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft (= EEC, Common Market)
exkl. = exklusive
Expl. = Exemplar
E-Zug = Eilzug

FDP = Freie Demokratische Partei
FD-Zug = Fern-D-Zug
ff. = folgende
F. f. = Fortsetzung folgt
Fem. = Femininum
fig. = figürlich
Fil. = Filiale
Finanzw. = Finanzwesen
Flugw. = Flugwesen
folg. = folgend
Forstw. = Forstwirtschaft
Forts. = Fortsetzung
Forts. f. = Fortsetzung folgt
fr. = franko, frei
Fr. = Frau
Frh., Frhr. = Freiherr
Frl. = Fräulein
frz. = französisch
Funkw. = Funkwesen

geb. = 1. geboren; 2. gebunden
gebr. = gebräuchlich, gebraucht
Gebr. = Gebrüder
gegr. = gegründet
gem. = 1. gemäß; 2. gemischt
Gen. = Genitiv
germ. = germanisch
Gesch. = Geschichte
geschr. = geschrieben
gest. = gestorben
gew. = gewöhnlich

gez. = gezeichnet
Ggs. = Gegensatz
GmbH = Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung
Gramm. = Grammatik

H. = Haben (Guthaben)
Handb. = Handbuch
Hausw. = Hauswirtschaft
Hbf. = Hauptbahnhof
H(d)b = Handbuch
Hdl. = Handel
herg. = hergestellt
hg. = herausgegeben
HGB. = Handelsgesetzbuch
HO = Handelsorganisation
Hpt. = Haupt
Hr. - Herr; pl. HH. = Herren
hrsg. = herausgegeben
Hrsg. = Herausgeber
Hs. = Handschrift (= MS.); pl. Hss. (= MSS.)

I. A. A. = Internationales Arbeitsamt
i. allg. = im allgemeinen
i. b. = im besonderen
i. D. = 1. inklusive Dividende; 2. im Dienst; 3. im Durchschnitt
i. e. S. = im engeren Sinne
I. G. = Industriegewerkschaft
i. J. = im Jahre
Ind. = Industrie
Inf. = Infinitiv
Ing. = Ingenieur
Inh. = Inhalt
inkl. = inklusive
insb. = insbesondere
insbes. = insbesondere
Inst. = Institut
Int. = Interjektion
intr. = intransitiv
i. Sa. = in Sachsen
i. V. = in Vertretung
i. W. = 1. in Westfalen; 2. in Worten; 3. innere Weite
i. w. S. = im weiteren Sinne

Jg. = Jahrgang (of a periodical)
Jh. = Jahrhundert
jmd. = jemand
jmdm. = jemandem
jmdn. = jemanden
jmds. = jemandes
Jur. = Jura, Rechtswesen

Kap. = Kapitel
kath. = katholisch
kaufm. = kaufmännisch
K.-G. (a.A.) = Kommanditgesellschaft (auf Aktien)

kHz = Kilohertz (Rad.)
Kl. = Klasse
km = Kilometer
KO = Konkursordnung
Koeff., Koeffiz. = Koeffizient
Konj. = Konjunktion
konst. = konstant
KPD = Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
Kunstgew. = Kunstgewerbe
Kunstw. = Kunstwort or Kunstwerk
Kurz w. = Kurzwort
kW, kw = Kilowatt
kWh = Kilowattstunde
Kyb. = Kybernetik
KZ = Konzentrationslager
K. Z. = Kurszettel

l = Liter
L.A.G. = Lastenausgleichsgesetz
Landw. = Landwirtschaft
lat. = lateinisch
Lfg., Lfrg. = Lieferung
LKW., Lkw. = Lastkraftwagen
LPG = Landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaft
Luftf. = Luftfahrt

m = Meter
m. = mit
MA = Mittelalter
m. A. n. = meiner Ansicht nach
Mar. = Marine
Mask. = Maskulinum
Math. = Mathematik
m. a. W. = mit anderen Worten
m. b. H. = mit beschränkter Haftung
M. d. B. = Mitglied des Bundestags
M. d. L. = Mitglied des Landtags
mdt. = mitteldeutsch
m. E. = meines Erachtens
Met. = Metallurgie
MEZ = Mitteleuropäische Zeit (one hour in advance of Greenwich time, but corresponding to the English summer time)
mg = Milligramm
mhd. = mittelhochdeutsch
Mil. = Militärwesen
Mitt. = Mitteilung(en)
Mitw. - Mitwirkung
mm = Millimeter
möbl. = möbliert
Ms., Mskr. = Manuskript
Mss. = Manuskripte
Münzk. = Münzkunde
Münzw. = Münzwesen
m. W. = meines Wissens

n. = neutral, sächlich
nachm. = nachmittags
Naturw. = Naturwissenschaft
n. Chr. = nach Christo, nach Christi Geburt (= A.D.)
NDR = Norddeutscher Rundfunk
neb. = neben
Neutr. = Neutrum
nhd. = neuhochdeutsch
no., ntto. = netto
Nom. = Nominativ
Norm. = Normen
Nr. = Nummer (= No.)
N. T. = Neues Testament
Num. = Numerale, Zahlwort
NWDR = Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk

o. = 1. oben; 2. ohne; 3. oder
o. ä. = oder ähnliches
Obb. = Oberbayern
obh. = oberhalb
Obj. = Objekt
od. = oder
o. D(b). = ohne Dividende(nbogen)
o. dgl., o. drgl. = oder dergleichen
OEZ = osteuropäische Zeit
österr. = österreichisch
Ostpr. = Ostpreußen

p. = pro
Päd. = Pädagogik, Erziehungswesen
Parapsych. = Parapsychologie
Part. = Partizip
Parteiw. = Parteiwesen
Path. = Pathologie, Krankheitslehre
Perf. = Perfekt
Pf. = Pfennig
Pfd. = Pfund
Pfd. St. = Pfund Sterling
Pharm. = Pharmazie, Arzneikunde
Pharmakol. = Pharmakologie, Arzneimittelkunde
Pkt. = 1. Punkt; 2. Paket
PKW = Personenkraftwagen
Pl. = Plural
Pr. = 1. Presse; 2. preußisch
Progr. = Programm
Pron. = Pronomen
Proz. = Prozent; proz. = prozentig
PS = Pferdestärke (= H.P.)
p. t. = pro tempore

r. = rund
RA = Rechtsanwalt
rd. = rund, etwa
Rechtsw. = Rechtswesen
Ref. = 1. Referent; 2. Referate

refl. = reflexiv
Reg.-Bez. = Regierungsbezirk
Rh. = Rhein, rheinisch

s. = siehe
S. = Seite (= p.)
s. a. = Siehe auch
s. a. S. = Siehe auch Seite
Sammelbez. = Sammelbezeichnung
SBB = Schweizer Bundesbahnen
Schulw. = Schulwesen
Sek. = Sekunde
Ser. = Serie
Sg., Sing. = Singular
Skt. = Sankt
sm = Seemeile
s. o. = siehe oben
sog., sogen. = sogenannt
soz. = sozialistisch
Sp. = Spalte
Sp. = Sport
Spr. = Sprache
Sprw. = Sprichwort
S. S. = Sommersemester
St. = 1. Stück; 2. Stunde
Std. = Stunde(n)
StGB = Strafgesetzbuch
Str. = Straße
s. u. = siehe unten
süddt. = süddeutsch
s. Z. = seinerzeit

Tech. = Technik
teilw. = teilweise
Tel. = Telegraphie u. Telephonie / Fernmeldewesen
term. techn. = terminus technicus
Text. = Textilwesen
T. H. = Technische Hochschule
Tl. = Teil
Typ. = Typographie, Buchdruck

u. = 1. und; 2. unter; 3. unten
U. = 1. Uhr; 2. Umdrehung
u. a. = unter anderem / und anderes
u. ä. = und ähnliches
u. A. w. g. = um Antwort wird gebeten (= R.S.V.P.)
übers. = übersetzt
übl. = üblich
u. dgl. = und dergleichen
u. E. = unseres Erachtens
u.e.a. = und einige andere
Uffz. = Unteroffizier (= N.C.O.)
u. ff. = und folgende
UKW = Ultra-Kurzwellen (Rad.)
U./M. = Umdrehungen in der Minute

umg. = umgangssprachlich
Umg. = Umgebung
unbest. = unbestimmt
ung. = ungefähr
unz. = unzählbar or unzulänglich
ursp. = ursprünglich
urspr. = ursprünglich
usf. = und so fort (= etc.)
usw. = und so weiter (= etc.)
u. U. = unter Umständen
u. v. a. = und viele andere
u. zw. = und zwar

V. = Verb
v. Chr. (G.) = vor Christi (Geburt) (= B.C.)
VEB = Volkseigener Betrieb
Verf. = Verfasser
Vergl. = Vergleich
verk. = verkürzt
Verk. = Verkehrswesen
verl. = verlängert
Verl. = Verleger, Verlag
verw. = verwandt
vgl. = vergleiche (= cp.)
vgl. o. = vergleiche oben
v. H. = vom Hundert
V. i. = intransitives Verb
v. o. = von oben
VO = Verordnung
Volksk. = Volkskunde
vollst. = vollständig
Vorges. = Vorgeschichte
vorm. = vormittags (= a.m.)
Vors. = Vorsitzende(r)
Vors. = Vorsilbe
V. refl. = reflexives Verb
v. R. w. = von Rechts wegen
V. t. = transitives Verb
v. u. = von unten

W = Watt
Westf. = Westfalen
WEZ = westeuropäische Zeit (= G.M.T.)
Wirtsch. = Wirtschaft
wiss. = wissenschaftlich
W. S. = Wintersemester

z. = zu, zum, zur
Z. = Zeile
zahlb. = zahlbar
zahlr. = zahlreich
z. B. = zum Beispiel
z. E. = zum Exempel (= e.g.)
zgl. = zugleich
z. H. = zu Händen, zuhänden

Zszg. = Zusammensetzung
Zt. = Zeit
z. T. = zum Teil
Ztg. = Zeitung
Ztgs. = Zeitungswesen
zus. = zusammen
Zus. = Zusammensetzung(en)
Zusschr. = Zusammenschreibung
zw. = 1. zwischen; 2. zwar
z. Z., z. Zt. = zur Zeit

Related Topics:

[Contents](#)

[Non-Grammatical Forms](#)

Prefix

A prefix is a syllable or group of syllables placed before a base word or another prefix to alter the meaning of a word. In German, modified noun or verb forms often function as prefixes in the creation of compound nouns.

Examples:

miß: verstehen -> mißverstehen

un: glücklich -> unglücklich

Wohn (wohnen): Zimmer -> Wohnzimmer

Related Topics:

"Da"- and "Wo"-Compounds

VERBS WITH INSEPARABLE PREFIXES

VERBS WITH SEPARABLE PREFIXES

PREFIXES THAT ARE EITHER SEPARABLE OR INSEPARABLE

GLOSSARY

Accusative Case	Contrary-To-Fact-Statement	Infinitive Clause	Predicate Noun
Adjectives	Coordinating Conjunctions	Inflected Noun	Principle Parts of a Noun
Adverb	"Daß" Clauses	Inflected Verb	Principle Parts of a Verb
Adverbial Phrases	Dative Case	Intransitive Verb	Pronoun
Attributive Phrases	Declension	Main Clause	Relative Clause
Auxiliary Verbs	"Der" Words	Modal Auxiliary	Relative Pronouns
Case	Diminutive Endings	Nominative Case	Simple Tenses
Clause	Direct Object	Noun	Subject
Compound Nouns	"Du," "Dir," "Dich"	Object of a Preposition	Subjunctive Mood
Compound Tenses	"Ein" Words	Passive Voice	Subordinate Clause
Conditional Clause	Genitive Case	Past Participle	Subordinating Conjunction
Conditional Mood	Imperative Form	Possessive Pronoun	Syntax
Conjugation	Indirect Object	Predicate	Transitive Verb
Conjunction	Indirect Speech	Predicate Adjective	Verb
Continuous Tenses	Infinitive Weak Verbs	Strong Verbs	Irregular Verbs
Changing Verbs			Vowel-

ACCUSATIVE CASE denotes the direct object.

EXAMPLE: Er hat **das Auto** geparkt. He parked the car.

When a preposition takes the accusative case, it can indicate that something or someone is directly affected or acted upon.

ADJECTIVES describe or qualify nouns. They answer the question "**What sort of...?**". German adjectives take case endings differing from those of nouns, and their declensions change slightly depending on whether or not they are preceded by an article.

An **ADVERB** describes or qualifies a verb, adjective, or another adverb and answers the question "**How...?**" or "**In what manner...?**". There are no special forms or endings for German adverbs.

ADVERBIAL PHRASES are descriptive phrases answering the questions, "**How...?**", "**In what manner...?**", "**When...?**", "**Where...?**", or "**Why...?**". German makes frequent use of them, often at the beginning or end of a sentence.

EXAMPLE: **Wegen des schlechten Wetters** sind wir nicht nach Dortmund gefahren.
On account of the bad weather, we didn't go to the Dortmund.

ATTRIBUTIVE PHRASES are descriptive phrases that answer the question "**What sort of...?**". They contain most or all of the elements of a full sentence and are usually translated into English as relative clauses.

EXAMPLE: Er hat **das neulich von ihr gekaufte** Auto geparkt.
He parked the car which she recently bought.

AUXILIARY VERBS are the helping verbs "**sein**" (to be), "**haben**" (to have), and "**werden**" (to become). They are used to form the various tenses.

CASE classifies a noun according to the role it plays in a sentence. There are four German noun cases: **nominative** (subject), **genitive** (possession or relation of origin), **dative** (indirect object), and **accusative** (direct object).

A **CLAUSE** is a phrase or group of words that includes at least a subject and a verb and forms part of a larger sentence.

EXAMPLE: Wir sahen den Mann, **der sein Haus verkauft hat**.
We saw the man who sold his house.

COMPOUND NOUNS consist of two or more nouns combined into a single word. They are used frequently in German, oftentimes to achieve specificity. The last element of the compound dictates the gender of the entire word.

EXAMPLES:

das Glas	the glass
das Weinglas	the wine glass
die Wissenschaft	science

die Naturwissenschaft natural science

COMPOUND TENSES consist of a main verb + auxiliary (conjugated). They can occur in the Present, Past, and Future Perfect.

EXAMPLES: Er **hat gespielt**... He played...
 Er **hatte gespielt**... He had played...
 Er **wird gespielt haben**... He will have played

A **CONDITIONAL CLAUSE** is the phrase or group of words that states the condition for realization of the action described by the main clause of a sentence.

EXAMPLE: **Wenn er ein Auto hätte**, könnte er nach Holland fahren.
 If he had a car, he could drive to Holland.

The **CONDITIONAL MOOD** is used when an action or event is hypothetical or unreal. German uses conditional to express speculation about events or actions, or for indirect speech.

The **CONJUGATION** of a verb is its listing according to person (1st, 2nd, 3rd), number (singular/plural), tense (present, past, future, etc.), and/or conditional or subjunctive mood.

A **CONJUNCTION** serves as a link between words, phrases, clauses or sentences. Some German conjunctions are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **aber** (but), **weil** (because), and **denn** (because).

CONTINUOUS TENSES are used in English to indicate that an action is progressive or ongoing.

A **CONTRARY-TO-FACT STATEMENT** describes a condition or set of conditions that do not actually exist or are impossible. It is accompanied by a second clause that describes what would happen if the condition(s) were fulfilled.

EXAMPLE: **Wenn das Auto nicht so teuer wäre**, könnten wir es kaufen.
 If the automobile were not so expensive, we could buy it.

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS link two independent clauses in a sentence. Some coordinating conjunctions in German are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **sowohl** (as well as), **aber** (but), **sondern** (rather), **jedoch** (nevertheless), and **denn** (because / for).

"DAß" CLAUSES require that the verb be placed at the end of the sentence.

The **DATIVE CASE** identifies a noun as an indirect object, or as the dative object of a verb.

EXAMPLES: Er gab **mir** eine Zigarette. He gave me a cigarette.
 Antworte **ihm**! Answer him!

When a preposition takes the dative case, it indicates location, an indirect effect, or relationship.

The **DECLENSION** of a noun or a pronoun is its listing by number, gender, and case.

"DER" WORDS are adjectives (demonstrative and other types) that are declined like the German definite article "der" (the). They include: "dieser" (this one), "mancher" (many), "jeder" (each one), "jener" (every one), "solcher" (such a...), and "welcher" (which one).

DIMINUTIVE ENDINGS on nouns imply smaller form or lesser quality. They can also express affection or endearment.

EXAMPLES: das Kind / das Kindlein
 das Kind / das Kindchen

The **DIRECT OBJECT** is the person, place, or thing that is the direct recipient of the action described by a verb.

EXAMPLE: Er hat **das Auto** geparkt. He parked the car.

"DU," "DIR," "DICH:" German capitalizes **"Du," "Dir," "Dich"** in correspondence as a polite form of address.

"EIN" WORDS are possessive adjectives that are declined like **"ein."** They include **"mein," "dein," "sein,"** and **"kein."**

GENITIVE CASE denotes possession or relation of origin. When a preposition takes the genitive case, it indicates separation, division of a whole, or a causal relation.

EXAMPLES:	anläßlich	on the occasion of
	mangels	in the absence of
	während	in the course of
	wegen	on account of

The **IMPERATIVE FORM** of a verb is used to give a command or make a suggestion. These forms are short and derived from the verb stem.

EXAMPLES:	Geh in die Stadt!	Go into town!
	Gib mir das Heft!	Give me the notebook!

An **INDIRECT OBJECT** is the person or thing "to whom" or "for whom" an action is performed. It is indicated by the dative case.

INDIRECT SPEECH is reported speech, in contrast to speech quoted verbatim. German uses a special set of verb forms (Konjunktiv I and II) to indicate that there is some doubt as to the accuracy of the report.

An **INFINITIVE** is the most basic form of a verb. It has no person, number, or tense. German infinitives end in **"en."**

EXAMPLE:	spielen	to play
	fahren	to drive

An **INFINITIVE CLAUSE** with **"um + zu"** (in order to) indicates purpose or intent.

EXAMPLE: Er ging in die Diskothek, **um zu** tanzen.

An **INFLECTED NOUN** is one that is given in its proper case (Gen., Dat., Acc.), and identified by number and gender.

EXAMPLE: des Hauses (neut., sing., genitive)

An **INFLECTED VERB** is one which has been identified as singular/plural and assigned endings for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person.

EXAMPLE: fährt (sing., 3rd person, pres.)

An **INTRANSITIVE VERB** is a verb that does not describe an action, but merely expresses state of affairs, change, or natural process. It therefore does not take an object.

Irregular verbs have the characteristics of both weak **and** strong verbs. They change their stem vowel **and** add -t in past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of irregular verbs ends in -t.

EXAMPLE: bringen - (ich/er) **brachte** - **gebracht**
wissen - (ich/er) **wußte** - **gewußt**

A **MAIN CLAUSE** is the independent or principal clause in a sentence. It does not depend on another clause for its meaning and can stand on its own as a full sentence.

EXAMPLES: **Ich werde ihm Bescheid sagen.**
I will let him know.
Es ist klar, daß ich ihm Bescheid sagen werde.
It is obvious that I'll let him know.

A **MODAL AUXILIARY** is used with an infinitive to modify an action or indicate that it occurs in some manner other than as a simple fact or event.

EXAMPLE: Wir **Können** schnell **denken**.
We can think quickly.

NOMINATIVE CASE is used for the subject of a sentence.

A **NOUN** names a person, place, or thing.

The **OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION** is a noun that follows a preposition. Certain German prepositions take their objects in the dative case, others require the accusative (some can take either dative or accusative), and others require the genitive.

PASSIVE VOICE occurs when the positions of the subject and object in the active voice sentence are reversed, or when the performer of the action is omitted altogether. It is used frequently in German and conveys a sense of anonymity or objectivity.

A **PAST PARTICIPLE** is most often formed by adding "**ge**" to the present perfect stem of the verb and is used in the compound tenses. Note that many words of foreign origin form their participles without "**ge**."

EXAMPLES:	gefahren	driven
	gespielt	played
	studiert	studied
	gratuliert	congratulated

A **POSSESSIVE PRONOUN** answers the question "**Whose...?**". The German possessive pronouns are: **mein** (my), **dein** (your), **sein** (his/its), **ihr** (hers), **unser** (our), **euer** (your, inf.), **ihr** (their), **Ihr** (your, form.).

A **PREDICATE** is a verb or linking verb ["**sein**" (to be)].

A **PREDICATE ADJECTIVE** describes the subject of a predicate.

EXAMPLE: Er ist **charmant**. He is charming.

A **PREDICATE NOUN** is equivalent in meaning to the subject and is linked to it by a predicate.

EXAMPLE: Er ist **Ingenieur**. He is an engineer.

The **PRINCIPAL PARTS OF A NOUN** serve as a guide to its declension.

EXAMPLE: das Haus / des Hauses / die Häuser

The **PRINCIPAL PARTS OF A VERB** serve as a guide to formation of its various tenses.

EXAMPLE: fahren / fährt / fuhr / gefahren

A **PRONOUN** can substitute for a noun. Like German nouns, pronouns have gender, number, and case.

A **RELATIVE CLAUSE** refers back to a noun or pronoun that precedes it. It is introduced by a relative pronoun, which may be inflected, depending on its function in the relative clause.

EXAMPLE: **Der Mann, der nebenan wohnt**, hat sein Haus verkauft.
The man who lives next door has sold his house.

RELATIVE PRONOUNS introduce German relative clauses. They are declined according to the role they play in the relative clause in which they occur.

The **SIMPLE TENSES** are those consisting of only a main verb, e.g., the Present and Simple Past (Imperfekt) Tenses, and/or the Conditional and Subjunctive forms derived from these.

Strong verbs change their stem vowel in past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of strong verbs

ends in -en.

EXAMPLE: gehen - (ich/er) ging - gegangen
schwimmen - (ich/er) schwamm - geschwommen

The **SUBJECT** of a sentence performs the action (active voice) or receives the action (passive voice) expressed by the verb.

The **SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD** indicates that a situation is hypothetical, unreal, wished or hoped for, or somehow speculative in nature. German uses special verb forms to indicate this (Konjunktiv I and II).

A **SUBORDINATE CLAUSE** is a secondary clause. Its meaning depends on the independent or main clause.

A **SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION** signals an inversion in the word order of the clause it introduces.

EXAMPLE: Er ging in die Stadt, **weil** er die Kunstaussstellung besuchen wollte.
He went into town **because** he wanted to see the art exhibit.

SYNTAX is the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences.

A **TRANSITIVE VERB** describes an action that directly affects someone or something. Transitive verbs therefore take a direct object.

A **VERB** is a word that expresses an action.

Vowel-changing verbs change their stem vowel in **second** and **third person singular** in present tense. The other verb forms follow the regular pattern.

EXAMPLE:	ich fahre	ich lese	ich helfe
	du fährst	du liest	du hilfst
	er/sie/es fährt	er/sie/es liest	er/sie/es hilft
	wir fahren	wir lesen	wir helfen
	ihr fahrt	ihr lest	ihr helft
	sie fahren	sie lesen	sie helfen

Weak verbs add -t to the stem in the past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of weak verbs ends in -t.

EXAMPLE: kaufen - (ich/er) kaufte - gekauft

Accusative Case

ACCUSATIVE CASE denotes the direct object.

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On account of the bad weather, we didn't go to the Dortmund.

Attributive Phrases

ATTRIBUTIVE PHRASES are descriptive phrases that answer the question "**What sort of...?**". They contain most or all of the elements of a full sentence and are usually translated into English as relative clauses.

EXAMPLE: Er hat **das neulich von ihr gekaufte** Auto geparkt.
He parked the car which she recently bought.

Auxiliary Verbs

AUXILIARY VERBS are the helping verbs "**sein**" (to be), "**haben**" (to have), and "**werden**" (to become). They are used to form the various tenses.

Case

CASE classifies a noun according to the role it plays in a sentence. There are four German noun cases: **nominative** (subject), **genitive** (possession or relation of origin), **dative** (indirect object), and **accusative** (direct object).

Clause

A **CLAUSE** is a phrase or group of words that includes at least a subject and a verb and forms part of a larger sentence.

EXAMPLE: Wir sahen den Mann, **der sein Haus verkauft hat**.
We saw the man who sold his house.

Conditional Clause

A **CONDITIONAL CLAUSE** is the phrase or group of words that states the condition for realization of the action described by the main clause of a sentence.

EXAMPLE: **Wenn er ein Auto hätte**, könnte er nach Holland fahren.
If he had a car, he could drive to Holland.

Conditional Mood

The **CONDITIONAL MOOD** is used when an action or event is hypothetical or unreal. German uses conditional to express speculation about events or actions, or for indirect speech.

Continuous Tenses

CONTINUOUS TENSES are used in English to indicate that an action is progressive or ongoing.

Contrary-to-Fact-Statement

A **CONTRARY-TO-FACT STATEMENT** describes a condition or set of conditions that do not actually exist or are impossible. It is accompanied by a second clause that describes what would happen if the condition(s) were fulfilled.

EXAMPLE: **Wenn das Auto nicht so teuer wäre**, könnten wir es kaufen.
If the automobile were not so expensive, we could buy it.

Compound Nouns

COMPOUND NOUNS consist of two or more nouns combined into a single word. They are used frequently in German, oftentimes to achieve specificity. The last element of the compound dictates the gender of the entire word.

EXAMPLES:	das Glas	the glass
	das Weinglas	the wine glass
	die Wissenschaft	science
	die Naturwissenschaft	natural science

Compound Tenses

COMPOUND TENSES consist of a main verb + auxiliary (conjugated). They can occur in the Present, Past, and Future Perfect.

EXAMPLES:	Er hat gespielt ...	He played...
	Er hatte gespielt ...	He had played...
	Er wird gespielt haben ...	He will have played

Conjugation

The **CONJUGATION** of a verb is its listing according to person (1st, 2nd, 3rd), number (singular/plural), tense (present, past, future, etc.), and/or conditional or subjunctive mood.

Conjunction

A **CONJUNCTION** serves as a link between words, phrases, clauses or sentences. Some German conjunctions are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **aber** (but), **weil** (because), and **denn** (because).

Coordinating Conjunctions

COORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS link two independent clauses in a sentence. Some coordinating conjunctions in German are: **und** (and), **oder** (or), **sowohl** (as well as), **aber** (but), **sondern** (rather), **jedoch** (nevertheless), and **denn** (because / for).

"Daß" Clauses

"DAß" CLAUSES require that the verb be placed at the end of the sentence.

Dative Case

The **DATIVE CASE** identifies a noun as an indirect object, or as the dative object of a verb.

EXAMPLES: Er gab **mir** eine Zigarette. He gave me a cigarette.
Antworte **ihm**! Answer him!

When a preposition takes the dative case, it indicates location, an indirect effect, or relationship.

Declension

The **DECLENSION** of a noun or a pronoun is its listing by number, gender, and case.

"Der" Words

"DER" WORDS are adjectives (demonstrative and other types) that are declined like the German definite article "der" (the). They include: "dieser" (this one), "mancher" (many), "jeder" (each one), "jener" (every one), "solcher" (such a...), and "welcher" (which one).

Diminutive Endings

DIMINUTIVE ENDINGS on nouns imply smaller form or lesser quality. They can also express affection or endearment.

EXAMPLES: das Kind / das Kindlein
 das Kind / das Kindchen

Direct Object

The **DIRECT OBJECT** is the person, place, or thing that is the direct recipient of the action described by a verb.

EXAMPLE: Er hat **das Auto** geparkt. He parked the car.

"Du," "Dir," "Dich"

"DU" AND "DICH:" German capitalizes **"Du," "Dir," "Dich"** in correspondence as a polite form of address.

"Ein" Words

"EIN" WORDS are possessive adjectives that are declined like "ein." They include "mein," "dein," "sein," and "kein."

Genitive Case

GENITIVE CASE denotes possession or relation of origin. When a preposition takes the genitive case, it indicates separation, division of a whole, or a causal relation.

EXAMPLES:	anlässlich	on the occasion of
	mangels	in the absence of
	während	in the course of
	wegen	on account of

Imperative Form

The **IMPERATIVE FORM** of a verb is used to give a command or make a suggestion. These forms are short and derived from the verb stem.

EXAMPLES:

Geh in die Stadt!
Gib mir das Heft!

Go into town!
Give me the notebook!

Indirect Speech

INDIRECT SPEECH is reported speech, in contrast to speech quoted verbatim. German uses a special set of verb forms (Konjunktiv I and II) to indicate that there is some doubt as to the accuracy of the report.

Indirect Object

An **INDIRECT OBJECT** is the person or thing "to whom" or "for whom" an action is performed. It is indicated by the dative case.

Infinitive

An **INFINITIVE** is the most basic form of a verb. It has no person, number, or tense. German infinitives end in "**en**."

EXAMPLES: **spielen** to play
 fahren to drive

Infinitive Clause

An **INFINITIVE CLAUSE** with "**um + zu**" (in order to) indicates purpose or intent.

EXAMPLE: Er ging in die Diskothek, **um zu** tanzen.

Inflected Noun

An **INFLECTED NOUN** is one that is given in its proper case (Gen., Dat., Acc.), and identified by number and gender.

EXAMPLE: des Hauses (neut., sing., genitive)

Inflected Verb

An **INFLECTED VERB** is one which has been identified as singular/plural and assigned endings for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person.

EXAMPLE: fährt (sing., 3rd person, pres.)

Intransitive Verb

An **INTRANSITIVE VERB** is a verb that does not describe an action, but merely expresses state of affairs, change, or natural process. It therefore does not take an object.

Main Clause

A **MAIN CLAUSE** is the independent or principal clause in a sentence. It does not depend on another clause for its meaning and can stand on its own as a full sentence.

EXAMPLE:

Ich werde ihm Bescheid sagen.

I will let him know.

Es ist klar, daß ich ihm Bescheid sagen werde.

It is obvious that I'll let him know.

Modal Auxiliary

A **MODAL AUXILIARY** is used with an infinitive to modify an action or indicate that it occurs in some manner other than as a simple fact or event.

EXAMPLE: Wir **Können** schnell **denken**.
We can think quickly.

Nominative Case

NOMINATIVE CASE is used for the subject of a sentence.

Noun

A **NOUN** names a person, place, or thing.

Object of a Preposition

The **OBJECT OF A PREPOSITION** is a noun that follows a preposition. Certain German prepositions take their objects in the dative case, others require the accusative (some can take either dative or accusative), and others require the genitive.

Passive Voice

PASSIVE VOICE occurs when the positions of the subject and object in the active voice sentence are reversed, or when the performer of the action is omitted altogether. It is used frequently in German and conveys a sense of anonymity or objectivity.

Past Participle

A **PAST PARTICIPLE** is most often formed by adding "**ge**" to the present perfect stem of the verb and is used in the compound tenses. Note that many words of foreign origin form their participles without "**ge**."

EXAMPLES:	gefahren	driven
	gespielt	played
	studiert	studied
	gratuliert	congratulated

Possessive Pronouns

A **POSSESSIVE PRONOUN** answers the question "**Whose...?**". The German possessive pronouns are: **mein** (my), **dein** (your), **sein** (his/its), **ihr** (hers), **unser** (our), **euer** (your, inf.), **ihr** (their), **Ihr** (your, form.).

Predicate

A **PREDICATE** is a verb or linking verb ["**sein**" (to be)].

Predicate Adjective

A **PREDICATE ADJECTIVE** describes the subject of a predicate.

EXAMPLE: Er ist **charmant**. He is charming.

Predicate Noun

A **PREDICATE NOUN** is equivalent in meaning to the subject and is linked to it by a predicate.

EXAMPLE: **Er ist Ingenieur.** He is an engineer.

Principal Parts of a Noun

The **PRINCIPAL PARTS OF A NOUN** serve as a guide to its declension.

EXAMPLE: das Haus / des Hauses / die Häuser

Principal Parts of a Verb

The **PRINCIPAL PARTS OF A VERB** serve as a guide to formation of its various tenses.

EXAMPLE: fahren / fährt / fuhr / gefahren

Pronoun

A **PRONOUN** can substitute for a noun. Like German nouns, pronouns have gender, number, and case.

Relative Clause

A **RELATIVE CLAUSE** refers back to a noun or a pronoun that precedes it. It is introduced by a relative pronoun, which may be inflected, depending on its function in the relative clause.

EXAMPLE: **Der Mann, der nebenan wohnt,** hat sein Haus verkauft.
The man who lives next door has sold his house.

Relative Pronouns

RELATIVE PRONOUNS introduce German relative clauses. They are declined according to the role they play in the relative clause in which they occur.

Syntax

SYNTAX is the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences.

Subjunctive Mood

The **SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD** indicates that a situation is hypothetical, unreal, wished or hoped for, or somehow speculative in nature. German uses special verb forms to indicate this (Konjunktiv I and II).

Subject

The **SUBJECT** of a sentence performs the action (active voice) or receives the action (passive voice) expressed by the verb.

Simple Tenses

The **SIMPLE TENSES** are those consisting of only a main verb, e.g., the Present and Simple Past (Imperfekt) Tenses, and/or the Conditional and Subjunctive forms derived from these.

Subordinate Clause

A **SUBORDINATE CLAUSE** is a secondary clause. Its meaning depends on the independent or main clause.

Subordinating Conjunction

A **SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION** signals an inversion in the word order of the clause it introduces.

EXAMPLE: Er ging in die Stadt, **weil** er die Kunstaussstellung besuchen wollte.
He went into town **because** he wanted to see the art exhibit.

Transitive Verb

A **TRANSITIVE VERB** describes an action that directly affects someone or something. Transitive verbs therefore take a direct object.

Verb

A **VERB** is a word that expresses an action.

Weak Verbs

Verbs are characterized by the way they build their past tense forms and past participles. Weak verbs add -t to the stem in the past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of weak verbs ends in -t.

kaufen - (ich/er) kaufte - gekauft

Strong Verbs

Verbs are characterized by the way they build their past tense forms and past participles. Strong verbs change their stem vowel in past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of strong verbs ends in -en.

gehen - (ich/er) ging - gegangen

schwimmen - (ich/er) schwamm - geschwommen

Irregular Verbs

Verbs are characterized by the way they build their past tense forms and past participles. Irregular verbs have the characteristics of both weak and strong verbs. They change their stem vowel and add -t in past tense and for the past participle. The past participle of irregular verbs ends in -t.

bringen - (ich/er) brachte - gebracht

wissen - (ich/er) wußte - gewußt

Vowel-Changing Verbs

Some German verbs change their stem vowel in second and third person singular in present tense. The other verb forms follow the regular pattern.

ich fahre	ich lese	ich helfe
du fährst	du liest	du hilfst
er/sie/es fährt	er/sie/es liest	er/sie/es hilft
wir fahren	wir lesen	wir helfen
ihr fahrt	ihr lest	ihr helft
sie fahren	sie lesen	sie helfen

