

German Language Kit



Expressions - Grammar - Online Resources - Culture



Introduction

Whether you plan to embark on a new journey towards learning German or you just need a basic reference booklet for a trip abroad, the Cactus team has compiled some of the most helpful German expressions, grammar rules, culture tips and recommendations. German is the most significant language in Central Europe, and as such is very popular among Cactus language learners. With its thriving economy, the bustling urban life of its cities, and its stunning landscapes reminiscent of the Grimms' Fairy Tales, Germany and its neighbour Austria are appealing to many language learners. Learning German will enable you to fully enjoy your travel experiences to these countries. While German native speakers often have good English language skills, German language skills are coveted by many multinational companies and will certainly help you get an interview. Learning German is the beginning of an exciting adventure that is waiting for you!



The Cactus Team

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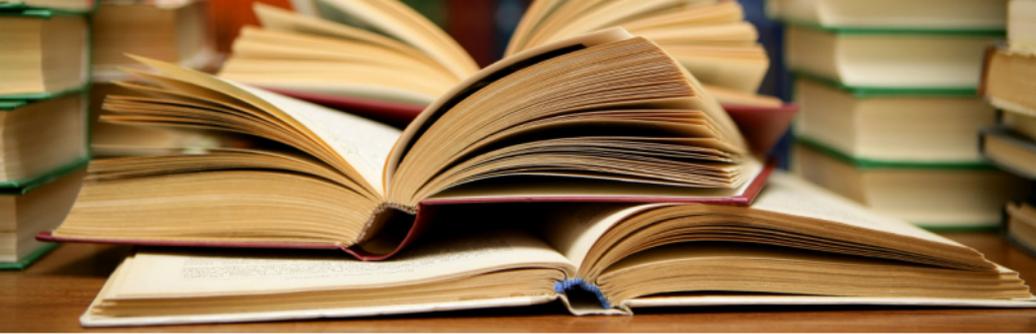
Monday-Thursday: 9am-7pm

Friday: 9am-5pm



Essential Expressions

Hello	Hallo (<i>hah-loh</i>)
Goodbye	Auf Wiedersehen / Tschüss (<i>owf vee-dair-zayn / tchews</i>)
Please	Bitte (<i>bih-tuh</i>)
Thank you	Danke (<i>dahn-kuh</i>)
Yes	Ja (<i>yah</i>)
No	Nein (<i>nine</i>)
Excuse me/sorry	Entschuldigung (<i>ehnt-shool-dih-gun</i>)
My name is...	Ich heiße (<i>ikh hie-ssuh</i>)
What is your name?	Wie heißen Sie? (<i>vee hie-ssen zee</i>)
Nice to meet you	Schön Sie kennenzulernen
Where do you come from?	Woher kommen Sie? (<i>vo-hair koh-men zee</i>)
I come from Great Britain/America	Ich komme aus Grossbritannien/Amerika
How are you?	Wie geht es Ihnen? (<i>vee gayt es ee-nen</i>)
Where is...?	Wo ist...? (<i>voh ist...</i>)
I would like (2 bottles of water)	Ich möchte (zwei Flaschen Wasser) (<i>ikh merkh-tuh</i>)
How much is that?	Wieviel kostet das?
How do I get to...?	Wie komme ich zum (m/n) / zur (f)...?
I don't understand	Ich verstehe nicht (<i>ikh fehr-shtay-eh nikht</i>)
I'm sorry, I don't speak German	Es tut mir leid, ich spreche kein Deutsch
Do you speak English?	Sprechen Sie Englisch? (<i>shprikhst doo eng-lish</i>)



Grammar and Numbers

Articles

Definite articles

		Nominative	Accusative
Singular	Masculine	der Balkon	den Balkon
	Neutral	das Bad	das Bad
	Feminine	die Küche	die Küche
Plural		die Zimmer	die Zimmer

Indefinite articles

		Nominative	Accusative
Singular	Masculine	ein Apfel	einen Apfel
	Neutral	ein Ei	ein Ei
	Feminine	eine Tomate	eine Tomate
Plural		- Tomaten	- Tomaten

Numbers

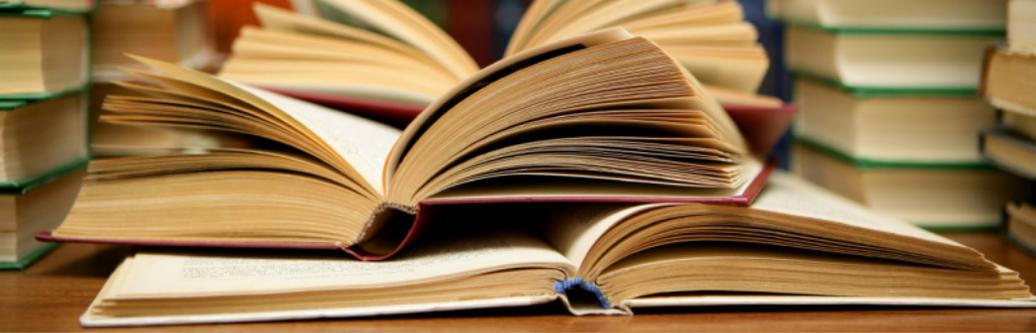
0	null	10	zehn	20	zwanzig	200	zweihundert
1	eins	11	elf	21	einundzwanzig	300	dreihundert
2	zwei	12	zwölf	30	dreiig	400	vierhundert
3	drei	13	dreizehn	40	vierzig	500	fnfhundert
4	vier	14	vierzehn	50	fnfzig	600	sechshundert
5	fnf	15	fnfzehn	60	sechzig	700	siebenhundert
6	sechs	16	sechzehn	70	siebzg	800	achthundert
7	sieben	17	siebzehn	80	achtzig	900	neunhundert
8	acht	18	achtzehn	90	neunzig	1000	eintausend
9	neun	19	neunzehn	100	ehundert		

Possessive: mein

		Nominative
Singular	Masculine	mein Vater
	Neutral	mein Kind
	Feminine	meine Mutter
Plural		meine Eltern

Personal pronouns

Nominative: ich, du, er, es, sie, wir, ihr, sie/Sie



Useful Verbs

Sein (to be)

Present

ich **bin**
du **bist**
er **ist**
wir **sind**
ihr **seid**
sie **sind**

Perfect

ich bin **gewesen**
du bist **gewesen**
er ist **gewesen**
wir sind **gewesen**
ihr seid **gewesen**
sie sind **gewesen**

Past

ich **war**
du **warst**
er **war**
wir **waren**
ihr **wart**
sie **waren**

Pluperfect

ich war **gewesen**
du warst **gewesen**
er war **gewesen**
wir waren **gewesen**
ihr wart **gewesen**
sie waren **gewesen**

Future I

werde **sein**
wirst **sein**
wird **sein**
werden **sein**
werdet **sein**
werden **sein**

Conditional Present

würde **sein**
würdest **sein**
würde **sein**
würden **sein**
würdet **sein**
würden **sein**

Haben (to have)

Present

ich **habe**
du **hast**
er **hat**
wir **haben**
ihr **habt**
sie **haben**

Perfect

ich habe **gehabt**
du hast **gehabt**
er hat **gehabt**
wir haben **gehabt**
ihr habt **gehabt**
sie haben **gehabt**

Past

ich **hatte**
du **hattest**
er **hatte**
wir **hatten**
ihr **hattet**
sie **hatten**

Pluperfect

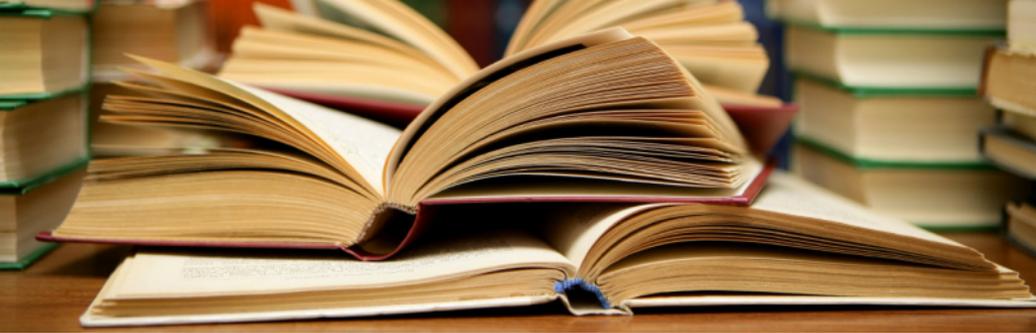
ich hatte **gehabt**
du hattest **gehabt**
er hatte **gehabt**
wir hatten **gehabt**
ihr hattet **gehabt**
sie hatten **gehabt**

Future I

werde **haben**
wirst **haben**
wird **haben**
werden **haben**
werdet **haben**
werden **haben**

Conditional Present

würde **haben**
würdest **haben**
würde **haben**
würden **haben**
würdet **haben**
würden **haben**



Useful Verbs

Werden (to become)

Present

werde
wirst
wird
werden
werdet
werden

Perfect

bin **geworden**
bist **geworden**
ist **geworden**
sind **geworden**
seid **geworden**
sind **geworden**

Past

wurde
wurdest
wurde
wurden
wurdet
wurden

Pluperfect

war **geworden**
warst **geworden**
war **geworden**
waren **geworden**
wart **geworden**
waren **geworden**

Future I

werde werden
wirst werden
wird werden
werden werden
werdet werden
werden werden

Conditional Present

würde werden
würdest werden
würde werden
würden werden
würdet werden
würden werden

Kommen (to come)

Present

komme
kommst
kommt
kommen
kommt
kommen

Perfect

bin **gekommen**
bist **gekommen**
ist **gekommen**
sind **gekommen**
seid **gekommen**
sind **gekommen**

Past

kam
kamst
kam
kamen
kamt
kamen

Pluperfect

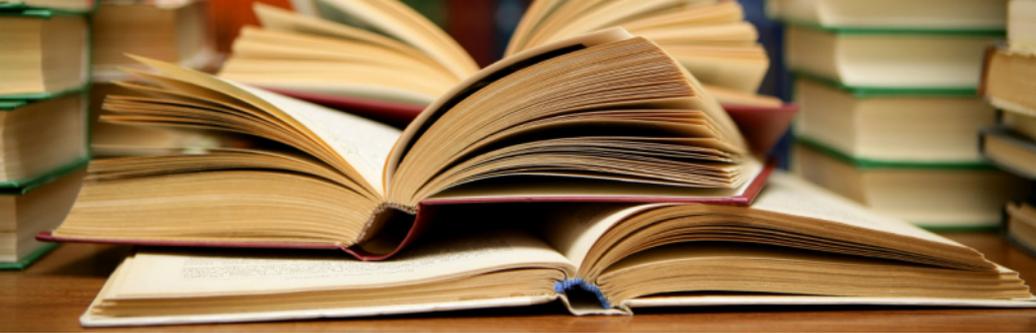
war **gekommen**
warst **gekommen**
war **gekommen**
waren **gekommen**
wart **gekommen**
waren **gekommen**

Future I

werde kommen
wirst kommen
wird kommen
werden kommen
werdet kommen
werden kommen

Conditional Present

würde kommen
würdest kommen
würde kommen
würden kommen
würdet kommen
würden kommen



Useful Verbs

Arbeiten (to work)

Present
arbeite
arbeitest
arbeitet
arbeiten
arbeitet
arbeiten

Perfect
habe gearbeitet
hast gearbeitet
hat gearbeitet
haben gearbeitet
habt gearbeitet
haben gearbeitet

Past
arbeitete
arbeitetest
arbeitete
arbeiteten
arbeitetet
arbeiteten

Pluperfect
hatte gearbeitet
hattest gearbeitet
hatte gearbeitet
hatten gearbeitet
hattet gearbeitet
hatten gearbeitet

Future I
werde arbeiten
wirst arbeiten
wird arbeiten
werden arbeiten
werdet arbeiten
werden arbeiten

Conditional Present
würde arbeiten
würdest arbeiten
würde arbeiten
würden arbeiten
würdet arbeiten
würden arbeiten

Heißen (to call / to tell)

Present
heiße
heißt
heißt
heißen
heißt
heißen

Perfect
habe geheißen
hast geheißen
hat geheißen
haben geheißen
habt geheißen
haben geheißen

Past
hieß
hiebest
hieß
hieBen
hießt
hieBen

Pluperfect
hatte geheißen
hattest geheißen
hatte geheißen
hatten geheißen
hattet geheißen
hatten geheißen

Future I
werde heißen
wirst heißen
wird heißen
werden heißen
werdet heißen
werden heißen

Conditional Present
würde heißen
würdest heißen
würde heißen
würden heißen
würdet heißen
würden heißen



Online Resources

There are so many free online resources that it is sometimes difficult to know which ones to use, and to identify which ones are good. Cactus has carefully assessed the wide range of free language learning resources available online to provide you with a selection of our most recommended, useful and reliable sources of information for learning German. These can be used as a helpful support to language learning whilst taking one of our face-to-face German courses.

Dictionaries

WordReference is a popular bilingual dictionary, and combines its own dictionary with the long-established Collins dictionary. WordReference also includes a handy German verb conjugator and a forum where users can get help with German language related questions.

Reverso is a well-established online bilingual dictionary. It includes an English-German dictionary, along with other handy tools such as a translator and spellchecker.

Grammar

Mein Deutschbuch has an excellent grammar section, as well as verb lists and online exercises. In German only.

Verbformen offers online German verb tenses tables for almost any verb with example sentences. In German only.

Pronunciation

Forvo is a free and comprehensive pronunciation guide maintained by native speakers around the world. It includes the pronunciation of more than 3 million words in 325 languages.



Online Resources

Vocabulary

Memrise is a popular website and mobile app which enables you to memorise German vocabulary. It is a great and fun way to learn new vocabulary in addition to your language course.

Quizlet is a fun and simple website and mobile app which will help you develop your German vocabulary using flash cards.

Cram has a large list of flash cards to help you learn new German words. It also has a mobile app, so you can memorise German vocabulary anywhere anytime.

Language Guide is a project helping German language students to build their vocabulary using an image and sound dictionary.

Mobile app

Duolingo is a fun mobile app which offers a comprehensive series of vocabulary, pronunciation and translation exercises. It is a great way to practice what you learn during your German evening courses while on the go.



Take a Language Holiday

Taking an immersion course abroad is a very efficient way to quickly improve your German language skills. Not only it will increase your confidence in speaking German, but it will also be a unique opportunity to discover and experience the culture of a German-speaking country and practice German with native speakers on a daily basis. Cactus has teamed up with the best language schools across the world to offer you a first-rate language learning experience.

Germany

Germany has much to offer to German language learners. Set in the very heart of Europe, German has a rich and complex history, and a fascinating culture. You will be charmed by its gorgeous landscapes, its vibrant cities, and its picturesque villages and towns acting as open-air museums. Cactus offers German immersion courses in various locations across Germany, including:

- **Augsburg:** one of Germany's oldest city, its location is ideal to explore Bavaria;
- **Berlin:** the German capital is famous for its fashionable art and entertainment scene, as well as its great parks and museums;
- **Cologne:** with a stunning architecture and a multicultural population, Köln, as it is known in German, is a vibrant city;
- **Frankfurt:** known as Germany's financial centre, this city also boast a thriving cultural life;
- **Hamburg:** this welcoming Northern German city has much to offer, with a huge variety of entertainment on offer;
- **Lindenberg:** Cactus offers Junior camps in this idyllic little resort town tucked away in the foothills of the Alps.
- **Munich:** the capital of Bavaria, Munich is proud of its traditions and has a rich cultural scene.



Cultural Differences

Every culture has its specificities, and as fascinating as they can be, not knowing them can prove surprising and challenging when travelling. To help you blend into the local culture and make the most of your time in Germany, we have listed some of the most striking cultural differences you should be aware of, along with some helpful tips.

Etiquette

There are a few etiquette rules you should follow when travelling to Germany:

- ‘Du’ (you) is used only for friends or between young people. Otherwise, you should use ‘Sie’.
- When entering a shop, it is customary to greet the shop assistant with ‘guten tag’ or ‘hallo’ and say ‘auf wiedersehen’ when leaving. In Bavaria, ‘grüss gott’ is generally used instead of ‘guten tag’.
- Similarly, Germans usually say ‘guten appetit’ before eating.
- In restaurants, tipping is done by ‘rounding up’ to the next euro.

Opening Times

Opening times in Germany and in the UK are similar, but be aware that you won’t find any shops open on Sundays.

Directness

Just like many other European people, the Germans are known to be more direct than the British. A ‘no’ simply means ‘no’, and a ‘yes’ means ‘yes’. As a result, if you say no the first time to someone offering you something, this person won’t be insisting any more. Likewise, if you want something, a mere ‘yes please’ will be enough. And finally, ‘maybe’ tends to imply ‘yes’.



German Culture Recommendations

Books

German literature is widely recognised as one of the most significant in the world and there is a variety of genres you can choose from to practice German. It is almost impossible to make an exhaustive list of books to read when it comes to German literature, but we would certainly recommend these for those who are learning the language:

- *Der ideale Moment, Urlaub intensiv, and Testament mit Hund* by Claudia Peter: these stories have been written specifically for beginners and elementary learners, and include exercises.
- *Das kleine Ich bin ich*, by Mira Lobe: translated in many other languages, this children's book follows the story of a nameless animal looking for an identity.
- *Die roten Matrosen*, by Klaus Kordon: this trilogy will be particularly interesting to advanced learners, especially those planning to visit Berlin.
- *Das Parfum. Die Geschichte eines Mörders*, by Patrick Süskind: more than 20 million copies of this hugely popular book have been sold worldwide. Set in 18th century France, this novel follows the story of a murderer born with no body scent and a supernatural talent for discerning scents. Its captivating plot is an ideal way for advanced learners to expand their vocabulary.

Music and Films

Germany has made some the finest contributions to worldwide cinema, and its film industry is one of the world's most recognised and thriving ones. There are many Germany films you should watch, but as a new learner we would recommend popular and easy-to-understand films such as:

- *Good Bye Lenin!* (2003): this tragicomedy takes place in 1989, shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall. It is emblematic of the reunification and its consequences.



German Culture Recommendations

- **Revanche** (2008): this enthralling Austrian thriller follows an ill-fated romance and explores the themes of guilt and fate.
- **Die Bitteren Tränen der Petra von Kant** (1972): a classic of German cinema addressing the question of psychological abuse through the relationship between Petra von Kant and her maid Marlene.
- **Nirgendwo in Afrika** (2001): a touching film telling the story of a German Jewish family fleeing Nazi Germany in 1938 and trying to adapt to Kenya, where they strive to build a new life. The characters speak clearly, making this film easy-to-understand for German language learners.
- **Das weiße Band** (2009): this black-and-white drama film set in a German village just before World War I depicts family and society. Dark yet powerful, this film is easy to follow for German learners as the characters speak slowly and clearly.

Music-wise, there are many songs with German lyrics you could listen to in order to practice your listening skills. Depending on your preferences, you may be more interested in German rap or instead in rock. Listening to easy-to-understand song will prove more efficient for beginners and elementary German learners. Here are a few we picked up for you:

- **Der, die, das**, by Sesamstraße: this children's song comes from the German version of 'Sesame Street', and is ideal for beginners as it makes an extensive use of question words and is very easy-to-understand.
- **Komm, gib mir deine Hand**, by The Beatles: you may have already heard this song, translated from English by the famous band when they started in Hamburg before becoming international stars. Using simple vocabulary, this song is easy to follow for German learners.



German Culture Recommendations

- *Guten Morgen, Sonnenschein*, by Nana Mouskouri: this catchy song using simple grammar will help you develop your German vocabulary.

Food

German, Austrian and Swiss cuisines are mostly known for their sausages and meat dishes, and for their delicacies and desserts such as the Black Forest cake and strudels. These three countries have made significant contributions to European gastronomy across the centuries. As result, it can be hard to decide which dish to choose from, but we thought you should taste these:

- **Currywurst:** this popular German fast food dish consists of a steamed and fried pork sausage served with fries and a curry sauce. It can be found across the entire country.
- **Wurstsalat (*Sausage Salad*):** sausages are extremely popular in Germany, and it is no surprise the Germans have created a salad version. This salad is made of sausages cut into slices, onion rings, gherkins, and seasoned with salt and pepper.
- **Wiener Schnitzel:** one of the most renowned Viennese specialties, this tasteful meal dish consists of a breaded and pan fried cutlet made from veal, served with potatoes and vegetables.
- **Quarkkälchen:** this Saxon pancake is made of potatoes, cheese, eggs and cinnamon or raisins.
- **Apfelstrudel (*Apple Strudel*):** originating from Austria, this delightful pastry simply made of flour, butter and apples is well-known well beyond the borders of the German speaking world.
- **Sachertorte:** this delicious Austrian sponge chocolate cake with a layer of apricot jam is a famous specialty created by Franz Sacher in the 19th century.



Start Learning German

With so many language learning options available ranging from evening classes to online courses, it is often difficult to know where to start your German language learning journey. It's important to assess which type of language course or combination of courses is the most appropriate for you. To help you make the right choice, the experts at Cactus have compared the benefits of each alternative and provided a comprehensive list of language learning options to get you started.

Language Holidays: Immersion courses are an excellent way to learn and practice German on a daily basis while discovering the local culture. For more information about our language holidays destinations, please see page 10.

Group Evening Courses: Evening classes in the UK are ideal if you want to learn German after work or your studies. They will help you learn German quickly in a sociable environment and they offer excellent preparation for a language holiday abroad, as they will enable you to understand the basics of German prior to your trip.

Private Tuition: If you can't fit a group language course in your schedule or you prefer to study in your own time, one-to-one German classes are the perfect solution. Cactus offers both face-to-face and Skype German language lessons.

TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language): Living abroad is a dream that many long for, and it is often said to be the best way to achieve fluency in a foreign language. For fluent English speakers, one of the easiest ways to live abroad is by teaching English as a Foreign Language. You can become an English teacher abroad by taking a TEFL course with Cactus. We offer CELTA and Trinity Cert TESOL preparation courses across the world, including in Germany and Switzerland. For more information about TEFL courses and advice on how to become a TEFL teacher, please visit our dedicated [website](#), or email us at info@cactustefl.com.

Visit our websites

Language Holidays

cactuslanguage.com

UK Group Evening Courses

languagecoursesuk.co.uk

Private Tuition

cactuslanguagegetraining.com

TEFL

cactustefl.com

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