

# German Language Kit



Expressions - Grammar - Online Resources - Culture



## Introduction

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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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## Essential Expressions

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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 heiÙe ( <i>ikh hie-ssuh</i> )
What is your name?	Wie heiÙen 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	<b>der</b> Balkon	<b>den</b> Balkon
	Neutral	<b>das</b> Bad	<b>das</b> Bad
	Feminine	<b>die</b> Küche	<b>die</b> Küche
Plural		<b>die</b> Zimmer	<b>die</b> Zimmer

#### Indefinite articles

		Nominative	Accusative
Singular	Masculine	<b>ein</b> Apfel	<b>einen</b> Apfel
	Neutral	<b>ein</b> Ei	<b>ein</b> Ei
	Feminine	<b>eine</b> Tomate	<b>eine</b> Tomate
Plural		- Tomaten	- Tomaten

### Numbers

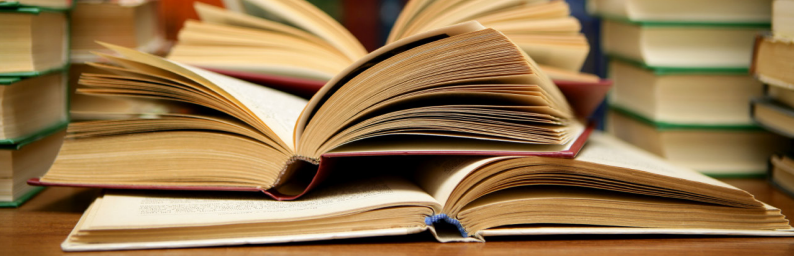
0	<b>null</b>	10	<b>zehn</b>	20	<b>zwanzig</b>	200	<b>zweihundert</b>
1	<b>eins</b>	11	<b>elf</b>	21	<b>einundzwanzig</b>	300	<b>dreihundert</b>
2	<b>zwei</b>	12	<b>zwölf</b>	30	<b>dreiig</b>	400	<b>vierhundert</b>
3	<b>drei</b>	13	<b>dreizehn</b>	40	<b>vierzig</b>	500	<b>fnfhundert</b>
4	<b>vier</b>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

### Possessive: mein

		Nominative
Singular	Masculine	<b>mein</b> Vater
	Neutral	<b>mein</b> Kind
	Feminine	<b>meine</b> Mutter
Plural		<b>meine</b> Eltern

### Personal pronouns

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



## Useful Verbs

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### 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

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### 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

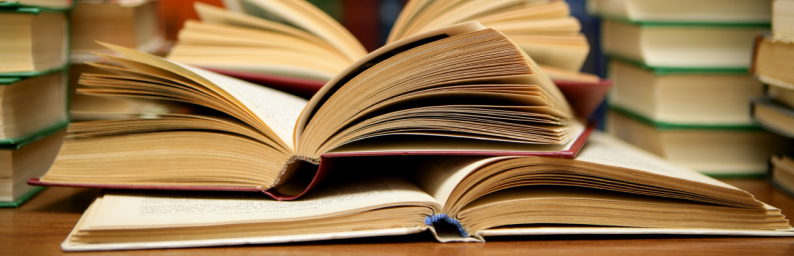
war **gekommen**  
warst **gekommen**  
war **gekommen**  
waren **gekommen**  
wart **gekommen**  
waren **gekommen**

#### 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

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### 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  
hießen  
hiebt  
hießen

**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

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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

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### 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

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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

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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

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### 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

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- **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

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- *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

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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](mailto:info@cactustefl.com).

## Visit our websites

### Language Holidays

[cactuslanguage.com](http://cactuslanguage.com)

### UK Group Evening Courses

[languagecoursesuk.co.uk](http://languagecoursesuk.co.uk)

### Private Tuition

[cactuslanguagegetraining.com](http://cactuslanguagegetraining.com)

### TEFL

[cactustefl.com](http://cactustefl.com)

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