

Yabla German Lessons with links to videos containing examples

Two-way Prepositions

Most commonly spoken German prepositions take the [accusative](#) or [dative](#) case (the [genitive](#) case is used more often in the written form). Some prepositions, such as *bis*, *durch*, *für*, *gegen*, *je*, *ohne*, *um* and *wider*, take only the accusative case. Others, like *aus*, *außer*, *bei*, *gegenüber*, *mit*, *nach*, *seit*, *von* and *zu*, take only the dative case.

There are, however, certain prepositions that can take *either* the accusative *or* the dative case, depending on the context: *an*, *auf*, *hinter*, *in*, *neben*, *über*, *unter*, *vor* and *zwischen*. Even experienced German speakers can get it wrong sometimes, so although you've probably learned this before, this may be a good time to review these **two-way (or dual) prepositions**.

The general rule to remember: if the preposition is dealing with "where" something is in a static sense, it takes the dative case; if it is dealing with motion or destination ("where to" or "what about") in an active sense, then it takes the accusative case.

*Der Spiegel hängt **an** der Wand.*

The mirror is hanging **on** the wall.

Caption 34, [Deutschkurs in Tübingen: Mehr Wechselpräpositionen](#)

Since the wall is where the mirror is statically hanging, the feminine noun *die Wand* takes the dative case in this context.

*Sie gehen **an** die Arbeit wieder.*

They're going **to** work again.

Caption 29, [Der Struwwelpeter: Hans Guck-in-die-Luft](#)

Since work is where they are actively going to, the feminine noun *die Arbeit* takes the accusative case. Note that the word *wieder* above has an unusual placement in the sentence; this is because it is part of an old-fashioned poem and needed to rhyme!

*Wie war das Konzert **auf** dem Mond?*

How was the concert **on** the moon?

Caption 8, [Undertube: Peer erzählt einen Witz](#)

Since where they statically are is on the moon, the masculine noun *der Mond* takes the dative case.

*Wir gehen **auf** die Straßen.*

We're going **on** the streets.

Caption 34, Blumio, [Rappen für gute Unterhaltung](#)

Since their destination is actively towards the streets, the plural feminine noun *die Straßen* takes the accusative case.

Further Learning

Look on [Yabla German](#) for other examples of the two-way prepositions *an*, *auf*, *hinter*, *in*, *neben*, *über*, *unter*, *vor* and *zwischen* and discover the different contexts in which they take the dative or the accusative case.

[Continue Reading](#)

Easter Traditions in Germany

Although Easter has been a predominantly Christian holiday in Germany for the last millennia, a number of originally pagan-based traditions still survive. Let's talk about some German Easter traditions and find some examples of the words in other contexts on [Yabla](#).

Although largely supplanted by the Easter Bunny (*Osterhase*), some regions still imagine different animals delivering the eggs. In parts of [North Rhine-Westphalia](#) and [Lower Saxony](#), the eggs are still brought by the Easter Fox (*Osterfuchs*). Parts of [Saxony](#) have the tradition of the Easter Rooster (*Osterhahn*), and [Thuringia](#) still has the Easter Stork (*Osterstorch*).

*Oder die meisten denken, es wäre **Hase** oder **Fuchs**.*

Or most of them think it's **rabbit** or **fox**.

Caption 12, [Queensberry: gegen Pelz](#)

In much the same way as the pagan tradition of the decorated tree came to be associated with Christmas, the Easter Egg Tree (*Ostereierbaum*) is also a popular tradition still in Germany and Scandinavia. Branches are gathered from outside and decorated with colored eggs.

*Da hat der für **Eier** keine Zeit!*

He has no time for **eggs** there!

Caption 56, [Welt-Pi-Tag: Unser Leben mit der Kreiszahl](#)

A favorite cake made during the Easter Holidays is called the "Easter Lamb," or *Osterlamm*, and is baked in the shape of a reclining lamb.

*Die ist ihnen nachgelaufen wie ein **Lamm**.*

She ran after them like a **lamb**.

Caption 20, [Für Tierfreunde: Przewalski Wildpferde](#)

Easter is also a convenient way to remember in German when to put on or remove the snow tires from your car:

*Von O. bis O., also von Oktober bis **Ostern**, sollte man mit Winterreifen fahren.*

From O. to O. [E.], so from October to **Easter** you should drive with winter tires.

Captions 4-5, [Winterreifen: Wenn der erste Schnee naht](#)

*Außerdem steht das **Osterfest** kurz bevor.*

Aside from that, the **Easter celebration** is approaching.

Caption 4, [Papst Franziskus: Der neue Papst hat viel zu tun](#)

Happy Easter holidays to all of you from all of us at [Yabla](#)!

Further Learning

Look on [Yabla German](#) for other examples of some of the bold-faced words above being used in different contexts.

[Continue Reading](#)

"For" is not always "für"

The German [accusative](#) preposition *für* is often translated to the English preposition "for":

*Hier gibt es viele verschiedene Sachen **für** die Familie und **für** die Kinder zu sehen.*

Here there are many different things **for** the family and **for** the children to see.

Caption 8, [Berlin: Domäne Dahlem](#)

However, the English preposition "for" may also be translated to German as *aus*:

*Aber **aus** irgendeinem Grund wollte Pandora im Haus bleiben.*

But **for** some reason Pandora wanted to stay in the house.

Captions 33-34, [Märchen, Sagenhaft: Die Büchse der Pandora](#)

Or as *zum*:

*Fast jedes Ei, das **zum** Verkauf in Supermärkten gedacht ist, muss mit einem Zahlencode gekennzeichnet sein.*

Almost every egg that is intended **for** sale in supermarkets must be marked with a number code.

Captions 9-10, [Bioeier: Wie funktioniert der Erzeugercode?](#)

Or as *seit*:

*Und **seit** wie lange schon? -**Seit** sechzehn Jahren.*

And **for** how long already? -**For** sixteen years.

Caption 6, [Frisbee: Karlsruher Weihnachtsturnier](#)

Remember too that foreign words in general may be translated differently according to context. Just because "for" translates to *seit* in the above example does not mean that *seit* always translates back to "for":

*Aber **seit** ich in Berlin lebe, arbeite ich als Kellnerin und Barista in Cafés.*

But **since** I've lived in Berlin, I've worked as a waitress and barista in cafés.

Caption 16, [Berlin: Judith und die „Brezel Bar“](#)

Further Learning

Search on [Yabla German](#) for the English word "for" to see examples of how this preposition can be translated to German in different contexts.

[Continue Reading](#)

Common German Mistakes: Wie or Als?

German speakers sometimes make the mistake of using *wie* (as, like, how) instead of *als* (than), an error that is a bit puzzling for native English speakers. It is hard for us to imagine saying, for example: "I am taller **as** you" instead of "I am taller **than** you," but in German this is a fairly common error. The following Yabla English translations reflect the corrections to *als*:

*Also wir geben hier mehr her, **wie** [sic, **als**] die Lufthansa da in der... in der Businessclass.*

So we deliver more here **than** Lufthansa there in the... in the business class.

Captions 45-16, [Fluglinien: Niki Air](#)

... **wie** [sic, **als**] wenn man einfach sagt: „Ich hab' dir 'nen ganz gesunden Salat gemacht“.

... **than** if you simply say, “I’ve made you a very healthy salad.”

Captions 32-33, [Kochhaus Berlin: Kochen mit Kindern](#)

The German *als* should be used like the English "than" when showing contrast, as a function word to indicate an inequality between two things:

*Ich sage immer, eher mehr Selbstvertrauen **als** Talent.*

I always say, rather more confidence **than** talent.

Caption 19, [Cassandra Steen: Interview](#)

*Wobei man hier eher vom Fallen **als** vom Fliegen sprechen muss.*

Although in this case it would be more accurate to speak of falling rather **than** of flying.

Caption 5, [Abenteuer und Sport: Fallschirmspringen](#)

Whereas *wie* is used to relate things that are similar in some way, or to give an example:

*Wir haben ein Programm mit Ikonen der Musikgeschichte **wie** Foreigner oder den Simple Minds.*

We have a program with icons of music history **like** Foreigner or Simple Minds.

Captions 7-8, [Das Tollwood-Festival: Rap und Clueso in der Musik-Arena](#)

*Da sind die besten Firmen der Welt dabei **wie** Siemens und andere.*

The best companies in the world are there, **like** Siemens and others.

Caption 40, [Berlins regierender Bürgermeister: Pläne für 2014](#)

Further Learning

Search on [Yabla German](#) for the words *als* and *wie* to find more of the ways these expressions are used in context.

[Continue Reading](#)

[Bist du dir sicher? German Expressions of Certainty](#)

English adjectives for being sure or certain about something are often interchangeable, but German expressions like *bestimmt*, *gewiss*, and *sicher* are more specific to the particular context in which they are used. Let's take a look at all three.

Bestimmt can mean either "definitely"

*Du machst Filme und die Leute sagen „Das wird **bestimmt** so“.*

You make films and the people say, "It will **definitely** be like this."

Caption 34, [Berlinale: Schauspieler Jürgen Vogel](#)

or in the [nominalized](#) noun something specific or in particular:

*Wenn du mal was **Bestimmtes** vorhaben würdest...*

If you were up to something **specific**...

Caption 12, [Wahlspots: Szenen einer Ehe](#)

Gewiss can mean "certain" in the standard sense

*Die Unterstützung des Schirmherrn ist den Fußballfrauen **gewiss**.*

The support of the patron for the women's soccer team is **certain**.

Captions 13-14, [Frauenfußball-WM: Der Bundespräsident am Ball](#)

or as a suggestion of vagueness or uncertainty, a "certain something":

*Aber ein **gewisser** Druck bleibt trotzdem.*

But a **certain** pressure remains nevertheless.

Caption 23, [Cro: mit „Melodie“ an Chartspitze](#)

Sicher can mean "certain"

*Ich bin mir **sicher**, es wird klappen.*

I am **sure** it will work out.

Caption 39, [Yabla-Intro: Jenny](#)

but in other contexts it means "safe":

*Es ist ein **sicherer** Standplatz.*

It is a **safe** location.

Caption 36, [Für Tierfreunde: Falknerei Feldberg](#)

The words *bestimmt*, *gewiss*, and *sicherlich* can be used interchangeably when meaning "of course" or "certainly": *Sicherlich / Bestimmt / Gewiss werden wir die Deutschprüfung bestehen.* (We will certainly pass the German test.)

Further Learning

Search for some uses of *bestimmt*, *gewiss*, and *sicher* (*sicherlich* too) on [Yabla German](#) to learn about the ways some of these expressions are used in context.

[Continue Reading](#)

The "weak masculine" or n-declination

If a German noun ends in an "e," it's usually feminine, but there are also masculine nouns that end with "e" that require special "n" or "-en" endings in all *singular non-nominative cases*. To complicate things further, there are also masculine nouns *not* ending in "e" that require the special endings too!

Basically, the n-declination only occurs with *masculine* nouns, never with feminine or neuter nouns, and only a small percentage of masculine nouns are weak. Besides the rule of masculine nouns ending with -e, there is no hard and fast rule to classify them — they just have to be learned! It's helpful to know that many are professions, animals, and nationalities. Here are a few examples of weak masculine nouns to remember that you will commonly encounter in everyday usage.

Der Junge is a weak masculine noun, which you know because of the masculine *der* and the -e ending. Note that the -e ending changes to -en:

*Der Zauberer sah zu dem zitternden **Jungen** hinab.*

The sorcerer looked down at the trembling **boy**.

Caption 80, [Märchen, Sagenhaft: Der Zauberlehrling](#)

However, *der Nachbar* is also a weak masculine noun, despite the -r ending. Note that the -r ending changes to -rn:

*Du könntest einfach zum **Nachbarn** gehen.*

You could simply go to the **neighbor**.

Caption 25, [Fine: sucht einen Hammer](#)

Der Student is a very common weak masculine noun that takes the -en ending in non-nominative singular:

*Ich habe einen spanischen **Studenten** eingestellt.*

I've hired a Spanish **student**.

Caption 22, [Barbara Schöneberger: Bambi-Verleihung Backstage](#)

Der Herr is a weak masculine noun when it's translated as "lord"

*Sofort rannte er zu seinem **Herrn**.*

Immediately, he ran to his **lord**.

Caption 47, [Märchen, Sagenhaft: Der gestiefelte Kater](#)

and in its more common form as the honorific "Mr." or "Mister"

*Das war eine Idee von **Herrn** Singer.*

That was an idea of **Mister** Singer's.

Caption 35, [Modedesignerin Nina Hollein: Floria Prinzessin von Hessen](#)

Further Learning

Here are some examples of weak masculine nouns requiring the -n or -en endings in non-nominative singular (all of them have the masculine article *der*): *Architekt, Astronaut, Bär, Bauer, Diplomat, Elefant, Emigrant, Held, Idiot, Kamerad, Kandidat, Kapitalist, Kommunist, Kunde, Löwe, Mensch, Neffe, Pilot, Präsident, Rabe, Russe, Schimpanse, Schwede, and Soziologe*. See if you can find some examples of them in context with -n or -en endings on [Yabla German](#). For more reading about this topic, check out the article [Tricky Masculine Nouns in German](#).

[Continue Reading](#)

For vs. für

The English preposition "for" and the German accusative preposition *für* are not only similarly spelled, but are often interchangeable too — the problem arises in cases where they are *not*. Let's first take a look at some examples where "for" can be directly translated as *für*. If something is intended for someone:

*Was kann ich **für** dich tun?*

What can I do **for** you?

Caption 2, [Berlin: Judith und die „Brezel Bar“](#)

When indicating quantity or money:

Für Geld machen Sie alles?

For money you'll do anything?

Caption 62, [Klebt, schmeckt, macht dick: Die Süßigkeitenmesse](#)

For stating a length or period of time:

*Stattdessen wird sie in einen tiefen Schlaf fallen **für** viele Jahre.*

Instead, she will fall into a deep sleep **for** many years.

Caption 29, [Märchen, Sagenhaft: Dornröschen](#)

Some English expressions with "for" also use *für* when translated to German: *für nichts* or *für umsonst* (for nothing); *für immer* (for always or forever); *für nächstes Mal* (for next time).

On the other hand, the English "for" may also be translated as *aus*, *seit*, or *zu*, with expressions like "for some reason" (*aus irgendeinem Grund*), "for a long time" (*seit langem*), and "for sale" (*zum Verkauf*):

*Aber **aus** irgendeinem Grund wollte Pandora im Haus bleiben.*

But **for** some reason Pandora wanted to stay in the house.

Captions 33-34, [Märchen, Sagenhaft: Die Büchse der Pandora](#)

*Er ist Ungar und spielt schon **seit** langem mit uns zusammen.*

He is Hungarian and plays with us **for** a long time already.

Captions 23-24, [Deutsche Bands: Cabanossi](#)

*Fast jedes Ei, das **zum** Verkauf in Supermärkten gedacht ist...*

Almost every egg that is intended **for** sale in supermarkets...

Caption 9, [Bioeier: Wie funktioniert der Erzeugercode?](#)

It's important to remember that prepositions are not always directly translatable; just because "for" is translated as *zu* in one case does not mean that *zu* is always translated into English as "for."

Further Learning

Imagine a typical use of the word "for" in an English sentence, then translate it into German and search [Yabla German](#) for a similar expression to see how it is translated there. Did you get it right?

[Continue Reading](#)

Finances in the New Year

Since most of us are probably pretty broke after holiday expenses, here are some money expressions in German that are good to know!

*Ich hätte zweihundert Schlösser und wär' nie mehr **pleite**.*

I would have two hundred castles and would never again be **broke**.

Caption 19: Rio Reiser: König von Deutschland

The word *pleite* is slang, but if you are seriously *pleite*, you wind up thus:

*Jetzt sind wir **bankrott**, obwohl wir zehn Jahre lang [Geld] gespart haben.*

Now we are **bankrupt**, even though we've saved money for ten years.

Caption 2, Deutschkurs in Tübingen: Weil oder obwohl

The holidays aren't getting cheaper every year, that's for sure. At some point they always start costing money (*ins Geld gehen*):

*Sollte es länger dauern, dann **geht** es aber auch irgendwann mal **ins Geld**.*

Should it take longer, then at some point, however, it will also start **costing money**.

Captions 28-29, Endlich glücklich: Liebe im Netz

And on this, we can all agree:

*Zeit ist **Geld** und **Geld** ist gut.*

Time is **money** and **money** is good.

Caption 9, Jan Wittmer: Leben für den Lebenslauf

Not forgetting, of course, that:

Geld allein ist nicht alles.

Money alone isn't everything.

Caption 62, Für Tierfreunde - Tierheim Nied

Since after all, the holidays should remind us not to forget that **love** is the most important thing of all!

*Zeigt die **Liebe** allen Wesen, die da atmen.*

*Show the **love** to all beings that breathe there.*

Caption 18, Cosma Shiva Hagen: So trägt man Pelz

Further Learning

Do a search on [Yabla German](#) for financial expressions in English and see in what context they are used in German. For a bit of cheer, see what kind of expressions a search for *die Liebe* brings up. Happy New Year from all of us at Yabla!

[Continue Reading](#)

Frohe Weihnachten!

*Ich hoffe, euch hat's Spaß gemacht, und wünsche euch **frohe Weihnachten!***

I hope it's been fun and I wish you a **merry Christmas!**

Captions 71-72, Frohe Weihnachten: der Christbaum

Beyond "merry Christmas" there are a number of other ways to give season's greetings as well, for instance your Christmas could be *schön*:

*Dann wünsch' ich euch **schöne Weihnachten.***

In which case I wish you a **wonderful Christmas.**

Caption 84, Weihnachtsinterviews: Cettina in Linkenheim

Let's not neglect the period before Christmas, which in German is the same word as in English:

*Der **Advent**, das ist die Zeit vor Weihnachten.*

***Advent**, that is the time before Christmas.*

Caption 3, Weihnachtsmärkte: mit Eva

And if we're going to make it through all the Christmas shopping, we'd better have some *Stollen* to see us through:

*Das ist der **Christstollen**. Der wird auch **Weihnachtsstollen** genannt.*

This is the **Christstollen**. It is also called **Christmas stollen** [fruit cake].

Captions 22-23, Weihnachtessen: mit Eva

If you don't have your Christmas tree yet, you might have to go diving for one!

*Nasse Weihnachten: Der **Tannenbaum** steht fast vier Meter tief unter Wasser.*

Wet Christmas: The **Christmas tree** stands nearly four meters deep under water.

Caption 1, Weihnachten geht baden: Tannenbaum unter Wasser

Further Learning

Do a search on [Yabla German](#) for typical Christmas words and get into the Christmas spirit while improving your German at the same time. Happy holidays!

[Continue Reading](#)

S, ss or ß?

The Swiss have it easy: they completely eliminated the *ß* (*eszett* or "sharp s") some years ago, but since we are teaching [Standard German](#) at Yabla, we should learn a few general rules about which words use s, ss, and *ß*.

What do you need (brauchen)?

The German verb *brauchen* can be translated in a number of ways, including "to need," "to be required," "to make use of," "to take," and "to use," and has some additional idiomatic usages. See some of these subtle differences in context in these Yabla videos:

*Wir **brauchen** jetzt zwei Millionäre.*

We now **need** two millionaires.

Caption 9, Deutschkurs in Blaubeuren: Der Relativsatz

*Es **braucht** Erklärungen, um die Brutalität und Banalität des Unrechts zu verstehen.*

Explanations **are required** to grasp the brutality and banality of this injustice.

Caption 19, DDR zum Anfassen: Ganz tief im Westen

*Von wegen körperloser Sport, hätt' ich meinen Helm doch **gebraucht**.*

As for non-contact sports, I still could have **made use of** my helmet.

Caption 46, Ultimate Frisbee: Oli erklärt das Spiel

*Der Teig hat doch eine ganze Stunde **gebraucht**, um fertig zu werden.*

The batter did indeed **take** a whole hour to be ready.

Caption 17, Weihnachtsplätzchen backen: mit Diane und vielen kleinen Helfern

*Wo werden denn heute noch Katapulte **gebraucht**?*

Where are catapults still **used** today?

Caption 12, Bretten: Das Peter-und-Paul-Fest

Here are a couple of examples of idiomatic usage of *brauchen* too:

*Du **brauchst** mir die nächsten zehn Tage nicht unter die Augen zu kommen.*

For the next ten days, you don't **need** to come under my eyes [idiom: I don't want to see you].

Caption 12: Fußball und die Frauenwelt: Das Foul

*Alle naslang **brauchst** du das.*

You **need** that all noses long [idiom: repeatedly in short intervals].

Caption 18, Otto Waalkes: Die verflixte Rechenaufgabe

Further Learning

For many more examples of *brauchen* and details of its conjugation, see the Yabla video [Konjugation: das Verb „brauchen“](#).

[Continue Reading](#)

German Cooking Verbs Part III

Welcome to the third and last part of our series on German cooking verbs. Take this opportunity to brush up on your cooking verbs with Yabla!

hinzufügen: add (to, into)

*Zur Sahne werde ich den Hartkäse **hinzufügen**.*

To the cream I'll **add** the hard cheese.

Captions 33-34, Cannelloni: mit Jenny

mahlen (fein, grob): grind (finely, coarsely)

*„Heute **mahlen** sie das Getreide mit Strom“, sagte Frederick.*

“Today, they **grind** the grain with electricity,” said Frederick.

Caption 28, Piggeldy und Frederick: Maschine

rühren: stir, mix

*Ich würd' sagen, jeder darf mal **rühren**.*

I would say, everyone gets to **stir**.

Caption 8, Weihnachtsplätzchen backen: mit Diane und vielen kleinen Helfern

schälen: peel

*Zum Beispiel Karotten **schälen**, helfen, wo wir gerade gebraucht werden.*

For example, **peeling** carrots, helping just where we are needed.

Captions 41-42, Bretten: Das Peter-und-Paul-Fest

schlagen: beat a mixture, or crack an egg (also **aufschlagen**)

*Wir nehmen fünf Eier und **schlagen** diese einzeln zu der Mischung hinzu.*

We take five eggs and **crack** them individually into the mixture.

Captions 9-10, Bayrische Spätzle: mit Christiane

Further Learning

Find some German recipes online and try cooking them at home. You can also search [Yabla](#) and find some videos with cooking themes to see some more cooking words in context. Here is a list of some more German verbs used in cooking that start with the letter M: **montieren**: thicken sauce with cold butter; **reduzieren**: reduce, cook down; **reiben**: grate; **schneiden**: cut, chop; **schwenken**: stir in melted butter or fat; **spicken**: add lard or spice under skin of meat; **streichen**: spread; **tranchieren**: carve into slices; **überbacken**: gratinate; **unterheben**: fold in; **verfeinern**: refine; **verquirlen**: whisk, beat; **wiegen, abwiegen**: weigh; **würzen**: season; **zerreiben**: grate; **zerschneiden**: cut up; **ziehen lassen**: marinade or poach; **ziehen**: marinade, steep, simmer; **zusetzen**: add

[Continue Reading](#)

German Cooking Verbs Part II

We're back right away with the second part of our series on German cooking verbs. Take this opportunity to brush up on your cooking verbs with Yabla, and we wish you a *guten Appetit*!

durchrühren: stir together

*Noch mal **durchrühren** und dann ist erst mal wieder der Spargel dran.*

Stir together again and then the asparagus is up again.

Caption 42, Kochhaus Berlin: Rucola-Salat-Rezept

durchziehen: pull through

*Einfach mit dem Messer **durchziehen**.*

Simply **pull through** them with a knife.

Caption 54, Cannelloni: mit Jenny

erhitzen: heat

*Eine kleine Pfanne bei mittelstarker Temperatur mit zwei Esslöffeln Olivenöl **erhitzen**.*

Heat a small pan at medium-high temperature with two tablespoons of olive oil.

Caption 20-21, Das perfekte Dinner: Kochen für Gäste

grillen: grill or barbeque

*Indem wir zusammen sitzen, **grillen**, Musik hören, lachen...*

As we sit together, **grilling**, listening to music, laughing...

Caption 24, Trial-Meisterschaft: in Bensheim

umrühren: stir, stir up

*So, jetzt kannst du noch mal **umrühren**.*

So now you can **stir** it once again.

Caption 27, Weihnachtsplätzchen backen: mit Diane und vielen kleinen Helfern

Further Learning

Find some German recipes online and try cooking them at home. You can also search [Yabla](#) and find some videos with cooking themes to see more cooking words in context. Here is a list of more German verbs used in cooking starting with the letter B: **backen**: bake; **bestreuen**: sprinkle; **braten**: fry or roast (occasionally: grill); **dämpfen**: steam; **dünsten**: lightly cook in butter, oil, or juice; **einlegen**: conserve by pickling or canning; **einmachen**: conserve by canning; **entbeinen**: debone; **entfetten**: skim or remove fat; **flambieren**: set spirits on fire, usually brandy; **garen**: cook; **gerinnen**: curdle; **gratinieren** or **überbacken**: cook in oven or broil; **häuten**: de-skin; **hineinschieben**: place in oven, bake; **hobeln**: grate or slice; **kandieren**: crystallize using sugar; **karamellisieren**: caramelize; **klären**: clarify; **kneten**: knead; **kochen**: boil, cook; **legieren**: bind with egg yolk or cream

[Continue Reading](#)

German Cooking Verbs Part I

If you are studying German, you must be somewhat curious about German foods. This is the perfect opportunity to brush up on your cooking verbs, and Yabla is just the place to start!

abgießen: decant, pour out

*Dafür muss ich das Öl in dem Glas **abgießen**.*

For that, I have to **pour out** the oil in the jar.

Caption 58, Cannelloni: mit Jenny

ablöschen: quench, deglaze, put out a fire

*Achtung beim Spargel, nicht zu lange braten, dann mit Wasser **ablöschen**.*

Be careful with asparagus, don't fry it too long, then **deglaze** it with water.

Caption 37, Kochhaus Berlin: Rucola-Salat-Rezept

abtropfen: drain

*Man holt die raus und lässt die 'n bisschen **abtropfen**.*

You take them out and let them **drain** a little bit.

Caption 26, Bayrische Spätzle: mit Christiane

anrichten: place in serving dish, arrange

*Jetzt nur noch alles auf dem Teller schön **anrichten**.*

Now just **arrange** everything nicely on the plate.

Caption 63, Kochhaus Berlin: Rucola-Salat-Rezept

ausrollen: roll out

*Jetzt wollen wir den Teig **ausrollen**.*

Now we want to **roll out** the batter.

Caption 24, Weihnachtsplätzchen backen: mit Diane und vielen kleinen Helfern

Further Learning

Find some German recipes online and try cooking them at home. You can also search [Yabla](#) and find some videos with cooking themes to see some more cooking words in context. Here is a list of some more German verbs used in cooking starting with the letter A: **(aus)quellen lassen**: expand, rise; **abbrühen**: boil shortly; **abdampfen**: dry out over dry heat; **abkühlen**: cool off, cool down; **abschmecken (degustieren)**: taste and season; **abschütten**: drain; **abseihen**: strain, sieve; **abstechen**: scoop, use a spoon for small portions; **abziehen**: skim or peel; **abzupfen**: pick off; **anbraten**: brown; **anbrennen**: burn; **aufgehen**: rise (yeast, soufflé); **aufkochen**: bring to boil; **aufschlagen**: beat, whip; **aufwärmen**: warm, reheat; **aufziehen**: rise (yeast, soufflé)

[Continue Reading](#).

The placement of nicht in a sentence

Nicht (not) is an adverb, and as a verb modifier will fall easily into place if you observe a few basic rules. It usually comes *before* another adverb or adjective, but unlike the English "not," usually comes *after* verbs.

*Ich mag es **nicht**, Lebensmittel zu verschwenden.*

I do **not** like to waste food.

Caption 50, Werbung gegen Realität: Kunstprojekt Fertigprodukte

The German sentence above states literally: "I like it not..."

Declarative sentences and questions requiring simple yes or no answers usually have *nicht* falling at the end of the sentence, also unlike English:

*Den brauchen wir **nicht**.*

We do **not** need that.

Caption 24, Cannelloni: mit Jenny

*Du weißt auch **nicht**?*

You do **not** know either?

Caption 6, Deutschkurs in Blaubeuren: Der Relativsatz

Nicht falls before the last part of a separable verb and before the infinitive in a sentence with a compound verb:

*Aber die Dortmunder müssen und wollen sich **nicht** verstecken.*

But the Dortmund team does **not** have or want to hide.

Caption 12, Der Pott ist da: Der DFB-Pokal

Nicht is placed after adverbs of chronological time such as *früher* (earlier), *gestern* (yesterday), *heute* (today), *morgen* (tomorrow), and *später* (later).

*Rock 'n' Roll ist heute **nicht** mehr so seins.*
 Rock 'n' roll today is **no** longer really his thing.
 Caption 39, Andreas Bourani: startet durch

In contrast, non-chronological adverbs are usually preceded by *nicht*.

*Das muss **nicht** sofort funktionieren.*
 This does **not** have to work immediately.
 Caption 11, Yoga: Sonnengruß als Aufwärmung

Further Learning

Just remember that *nicht* only comes after chronological adverbs, otherwise *nicht* precedes all other adverbs, verb infinitives, adjectives, and prepositional phrases. See the wonderful examples of the placement of *nicht* at [Grimm Grammar](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page, don't forget to hit the Play button!), then search [Yabla](#) videos to find *nicht* used in different contexts!

[Continue Reading](#).

False Friends ("Falsche Freunde") Part IV

In our last lesson on [false friends](#), we discussed a few false cognates that begin with the letters *C* and *D*. Today, we're moving yet another step down the alphabet to learn about some *falsche Freunde* starting with *E* and *F*:

eventuell: maybe, possibly, perhaps
 False English friend: *eventually*, finally, ultimately, at some later time (German: *endlich, schließlich*)

*Ich rieche daran, ob die wirklich auch nach einer Erdbeere riecht, und **eventuell** könnte ich noch oben schauen.*
 I smell it to see if it also really smells like a strawberry, and **maybe** I could look on top.
 Captions 23-24, Kochhaus Berlin: Frische Zutaten erkennen

die Fabrik: factory
 False English friend: *fabric*, cloth (German: *der Stoff, das Gewebe*)

*Bald waren sie bei einer **Fabrik**, bei einer Farbenfabrik.*
 Soon they were at a **factory**, at a paint factory.
 Caption 6, Piggeldy und Frederick: Malen

der Fotograf: photographer
 False English friend: *photograph*, an image taken by a camera (German: *das Foto*)

*Also so richtig dunkelkammermäßig so, wie **Fotografen** das früher gemacht haben.*
 Well, really like a darkroom, like **photographers** used to do it.
 Caption 51, Lokalthelden: Art House

Further Learning

Try to find more words in German and English that sound similar but have different meanings. For a thorough list of German false friends, take a look at [this extensive chart](#) and then search [Yabla](#) videos to find the words used in context!

[Continue Reading](#).

Some Countries Have Genders Too!

In German most countries are, as in English, just called by their names, such as *Deutschland*, *Frankreich*, and *Belgien*; but some country names require the definite article, just as in English: **the** United States or **the** Netherlands. The rules for whether a country name requires a definite article or not are not always the same as their English equivalents, however, and have a specific feminine or masculine gender too:

*Für mich war es schon ein Erfolg damals mit in **die Türkei** ins Trainingslager zu kommen.*
 For me, it was already a success to come to training camp in **Turkey** at the time.
 Caption 17, Fußball: Spielerportrait Lars Stindl

To "come to training camp in *the* Turkey" would certainly purvey a different meaning than intended, but in German, the country Turkey requires the feminine definite article: **die Türkei**. Some other countries with the feminine definite article are: *die Mongolei*, *die Schweiz*, *die Slowakei*, and *die Ukraine*. Furthermore:

*Es gibt maskuline Länder, zum Beispiel „**der Iran**“.*

There are masculine countries, for example "the **Iran**."
Caption 55, Deutschkurs in Tübingen: Präpositionen

Obviously "the" is used before "Iran" in the English translation only to emphasize the use of the definite article. Some other countries requiring the masculine definite article are: *der Irak*, *der Jemen*, *der Kongo*, *der Libanon*, *der Sudan*, and *der Tschad*. The only countries that require the neuter definite article are those that use the word "Kingdom" in their name such as *das Vereinigte Königreich* (the United Kingdom), but this is clear in the grammar, since *das Königreich* is a neuter noun.

Last but not least come the countries that require the plural definite article:

Frankreich war weitaus rückständiger als die Vereinigten Staaten.
France was much more backward than **the United States**.
Caption 45, Malerei: Impressionistinnen

In most cases, the countries that use plural definite articles are the same as those that do so in English: *die Bahamas*, *die Niederlande*, *die Philippinen*, *die Salomonen*, and *die Seychellen*.

A quick word of warning regarding the use of definite articles and country names: If a country with a non-plural definite article is preceded by an adjective, then the definite article is referring to the neuter noun *das Land* (the country, the nation) and always requires the neuter definite article. Even countries that do not require the definite article in normal usage get the neuter article *das* if they are being described preceded by an adjective. This is actually easier in practice than theory: *Das schöne Frankreich*, *das teure Norwegen*, *das warme Brasilien*.

Further Learning

Browse through [Yabla videos](#) and find some country names being used in context and in different cases like dative, accusative, and genitive. For an interesting in-depth article on the topic, see the ever-fascinating *Zwiebelfisch-ABC* series from *Der Spiegel*.

[Continue Reading](#).

Same word, different gender!

Arme haben Arme
Arme haben Beine
Beine haben keine Arme
Arme Beine!

There are two versions of *Arme* in the above saying, one meaning "poor people" and the other meaning "arms." Actually, German has many homonyms: words that are spelled and pronounced the same, but have different meanings. These are called homonyms. It is especially important to know the genders of German homonyms, since you may wind up saying or writing something entirely different than you intend, merely because you got the gender wrong!

Die Band ist eingespielt; die Models wissen, wie sie laufen müssen.
The band has warmed up; the models know how they must walk.
Caption 29, Mode: Backstage auf der Modenschau

*Allerdings ist es für die Fraport AG nicht **das erste Band**, das in diesem Jahr feierlich durchtrennt wurde.*
However, this is not **the first ribbon** that was ceremoniously cut for the Fraport AG this year.
Caption 22, Rund um den Flughafen: Direktflug Frankfurt-Houston

In addition to *die Band* (the band, or musical group) and *das Band* (the ribbon), there is also a third meaning: *der Band* (the volume of a book). Be careful with your genders so that you don't wind up reading a rock band, cutting the volume of a book, or listening to a ribbon!

*Der damalige **Leiter** des Museums Wiesbaden tauscht Kunst.*
The former director of the Museum Wiesbaden trades art.
Caption 9, Restituierung von Raubkunst: aus der Nazi-Zeit

*Der Herbst steht auf **der Leiter** [dative case of **die Leiter**] und malt die Blätter an.*
Fall stands on **the ladder** and paints the leaves.
Caption 11, Sabine und Ivana: Gedichte im Bus

Der Leiter is the leader, director, or head of an organization, and *die Leiter* is a ladder. Here too, with the wrong gender you may wind up following the ladder or climbing up a director!

Further Learning

Browse through [Yabla videos](#) and find the correct genders of some German homonyms. Here are some examples of homonyms with different genders: *Erbe* (inheritance vs. inheritor), *Gehalt* (salary vs. content), *Junge* (boy vs. young one), *Heide* (moor vs. heathen), *Hut* (hat vs. protection), *Kiefer* (pine tree vs. jaw), *Lama* (llama vs. Tibetan religious leader), *Marsch* (march vs. marsh), *Messer* (knife vs. measuring

device), *Pony* (hairstyle vs. pony), *Schild* (sign vs. shield), *See* (sea vs. lake), *Steuer* (tax vs. steering wheel), *Stift* (pencil vs. monastery), *Tau* (rope vs. dew), *Taube* (pigeon vs. blind person), *Titan* (giant vs. titanium), *Tor* (goal vs. fool), *Verdienst* (income vs. merit), and *Weise* (manner vs. wise person). The next lesson will be about German homonyms with the *same* gender, so put your learning caps on!

[Continue Reading](#)

German Verbs That Sound like English

Words that sound similar and have a common origin are called [cognates](#), and by understanding some basic rules, you can sometimes construct a German verb correctly just by knowing the English verb, which can make learning German much easier.

Most German verbs that are cognates with English are regular verbs that do not require the *ge-* prefix when used in past tense. Don't worry too much about that though, because as you see in the following examples, you can quickly get a feel for which verbs are cognates or not.

If a verb in English ends in a consonant, you can add the German suffix *-ieren* to the English to make it German. As you see, "to profit" becomes "*profitieren*":

*Ich denke, jeder Neue-Welle-Hörer wird davon auch **profitieren**.*

I think every *Neue Welle* listener will **profit** from that too.

Caption 15, Fußball: Saisonpremiere 2009/2010

English verbs ending in vowels drop the last vowel and also get the *-ieren* suffix in German. Here you drop the *-y* from "study" and add the suffix to make "*studieren*":

*Er wird in New York **studieren**.*

He will **study** in New York.

Caption 39, Tapetenwechsel: Barbara Becker mag es aufgeräumt

For English verbs with *-ate* at the end, drop the *-ate* and add *-ieren*, such as here with "conjugate":

*Du musst das Verb **konjugieren**.*

You must **conjugate** the verb.

Caption 20, Deutschkurs in Blaubeuren: Der Relativsatz

Of course in this case, the English *C* is supplanted by the German *K* as well, and this rule applies for most German-English cognates.

English verbs ending in *-ize* become *-isieren*:

*Sie haben sich ein Atelier erschaffen, in dem sie auch ihre eigenen Werke **realisieren**.*

They built a studio for themselves, in which they also **realize** their own works.

Captions 6-7, Lokalhelden: Art House

Further Learning

Browse through [Yabla videos](#) and see if you can construct a German verb that is correct using the above rules, or even with a little help from this list of [German-English cognates](#).

[Continue Reading](#)

Football and Flowers

[Gertrude Stein](#) may have felt that a "rose is a rose is a rose is a rose," but William Shakespeare wrote that "the summer's flower is to the summer sweet," especially after a "barren winter, with his wrathful nipping cold." You probably already know that flowers are *Blumen*, but do you know the names of some of the common varieties? Let's start with some parts of the flower:

*Die Bienen und Hummeln ohne Gegenwind von **Blüte** zu **Blüte** fliegen konnten.*

The bees and the bumblebees could fly from **blossom** to **blossom** without a headwind.

Caption 9, Piggeldy und Frederick: Vergessen

*Irgendwas zum Fressen gibt's eigentlich immer, **Knospen**, **Blätter** oder **Früchte** von Platanen.*

There's always something to eat, **buds**, **leaves**, or **fruit** from the plane trees.

Captions 25-26, Freilebende Papageien: Überwintern in Wiesbaden

And on to some specific flower varieties:

*Ein achtundzwanzig Meter großer Baum und sechzehn riesige beleuchtete **Lilien**...*

A twenty-eight meter tall tree and sixteen gigantic illuminated **lilies**...

Captions 1-2, Der Sternschnuppenmarkt: in Wiesbaden

*Weil heute Valentinstag ist, gibt es besonders viele rote **Rosen**.*

Because today is Valentine's Day, there are especially many red **roses**.

Caption 9, Valentinstag: in Karlsruhe

*Die **Hagebuttenrosen blühten** so rosa wie schon lange nicht mehr.*

The **rose hips** were **blooming** pinker than they had for a long time.

Caption 26, Piggeldy und Frederick: Das Fernweh

Those whose seasonal interests extend beyond the horticultural may enjoy watching some videos on another favorite summer pastime: soccer (aka football). Check out the new [Yabla video](#) at the top of this article and search for more soccer videos on [German Yabla](#).

Further Learning

Take a look at this excellent [list of German flower names](#). See which ones are easy to remember for their similarities to English, and make up a set of flash cards for the ones you find difficult. Hibiscus is clearly *der Hibiskus*, but who could've guessed that baby's breath is *das Schleierkraut*? Then go through the [Yabla videos](#) above and explore the context in which these flowery sentences were used!

[Continue Reading](#).

False Friends ("Falsche Freunde") Part III

In our last lesson on [false friends](#), we discussed a few false cognates that begin with the letter *B*. Today, we're moving one stop further down the alphabet to learn about some *falsche Freunde* starting with *C* and *D*:

der Chef / die Chefin: the boss or departmental head

False English friend: *chef*, the head cook (German: *der Chefkoch / die Chefköchin, der Küchenchef / die Küchenchefin*)

*Ich werde morgen mit meinem **Chef** reden.*

I will talk with my **boss** tomorrow.

Caption 53, Lektionen: Morgen

dezent: discreet, discreetly, low-key, unobtrusive

False English friend: *decent*, appropriate, fitting (German: *anständig, ordentlich*)

*Normalerweise sind die Tuaregs ja auch eher **dezent** gekleidet.*

Normally the Tuaregs are indeed dressed rather **discreetly**.

Caption 46, Rat für nachhaltige Entwicklung: Mode gegen Armut

Dose: can, tin

False English friend: *dose*, a quantity of medicine (German: *die Dosis*)

*... denn über den Schaumwein in **Dosen** geht ihr nichts.*

... because for her, there's nothing like the sparkling wine in **cans**.

Caption 17, Paris Hilton: in Frankfurt

Further Learning

Try to find more words in German and English that sound similar but have different meanings. For a thorough list of German false friends, take a look at [this extensive chart](#) and then search [Yabla](#) videos to find the words used in context!

[Continue Reading](#).

Springtime Activities in Germany

All Mel Brooks jokes aside, Germany is a cold, gray place in winter, and the first hints of spring draw everyone out into the sunshine like hibernating bears emerging from their winter caves. Springtime is *truly appreciated* in Northern Europe, not like your year-round boring Southern California sunshine, and with this special time of year come special springtime activities, as well.

How better to get about than on a bicycle?

Frühlingszeit ist Fahrradzeit, also raus mit dem Fahrrad und ab auf die Piste.

Springtime is bike time, so get out the bike and hit the road.

Caption 1, Fahrrad: Frühjahrs-Check

And as you pass by Viktoriapark in Berlin's Kreuzberg district,

Man kann sich dort sonnen, Frisbee spielen oder ein Picknick machen.

You can sun yourself, play frisbee, or have a picnic.

Caption 9, Berlin: Eva im Viktoriapark

After all that sunshine, what better way to cool off than with some exotically flavored ice cream?

Leopardeneis und Vanilleeis, ein Traum für einen sonnigen Frühlingsnachmittag.

Leopard ice cream and vanilla ice cream, a dream for a sunny spring afternoon.

Caption 46, Eis: Eiskalte Leidenschaft

This is the time to really enjoy life, after all!

Das ist der Frühling... alle freuen sich: die Tiere, die Pflanzen, die Menschen.

This is spring... everyone rejoices: the animals, the plants, the people.

Captions 10-11, Jahreszeiten: Der Frühling

Further Learning

Gardening is also a very popular spring and summer activity. Go to this extensive [garden glossary](#) and then go outside and see if you can put some of your new vocabulary to practical use in nature! After getting some fresh air, see if you can find some of the newly-learned springtime terms in context in a video on [German Yabla](#)!

[Continue Reading](#)

Are you certain?

Has anyone ever had the audacity to doubt you, despite your obvious inborn genius and natural talents? The best response to such outrageous treatment is, of course, to put the disbelievers firmly in their place, and this is best accomplished through modifiers that express *certainly*, ways of emphasizing that there can simply be *no doubt*: you are the greatest, and they are just going to have to live with the fact.

Former German president Christian Wulff may have been forced to resign in a 2012 scandal, but nobody ever doubted his support for the 2011 FIFA Women's World Cup:

Die Unterstützung des Schirmherrn aus dem Schloss Bellevue ist also gewiss.

The support of the patron from Bellevue Castle is **certain**.

Captions 13-14: Frauenfußball-WM: Der Bundespräsident am Ball

As to life after the resignation, Wulff may be facing difficulties similar to those of an animal shelter in Nied:

Die Zeiten werden rauer, so viel steht fest.

The times are getting rougher, that **is for sure**.

Caption 48, Für Tierfreunde: Tierheim Nied

Though Wulff's smile is still looking good, there's always room for improvement, as suggested by Diane and Franca:

Wenn ich weniger Schokolade essen würde, wäre mein Zahnarzt bestimmt zufriedener mit mir.

If I ate less chocolate, my dentist would **certainly** be happier with me.

Captions 30-31: Konjugation: Das Verb „essen“

And were Wulff to be accused of smuggling a polar bear into the Frankfurt Zoo, he would surely respond:

Doch wie Sie sicherlich wissen, gibt's im Frankfurter Zoo keine Eisbären.

But as you **surely** know, there aren't any polar bears in the Frankfurt Zoo.

Caption 11: Umfragen: Zootiere im Winter

Further Learning

Gewiss, feststehen, bestimmt, and *sicherlich* are just a few examples of the many ways of expressing certainty in German. Go to the aforementioned [interview with former German president Christian Wulff on Yabla](#) and see if you can find other examples of Mr. Wulff expressing certainty. As the old saying goes, *Hochmut kommt vor dem Fall*.

[Continue Reading](#)

German: What for?

The German combination of *wo* with a preposition is good for asking questions to clarify specific situations when *warum* (why) is too general. Since *wo* is generally translated as "where" in English, the *wo* + preposition combination can cause confusion among German beginners, since

in this case *wo* is usually translated as "what." If the man is waiting (*Er wartet*), you may be tempted to ask what he is waiting for. *Für was wartet er?* would be wrong and a typical beginner's mistake — correct is *Worauf wartet er?* This translates as "What is he waiting for?", thus *worauf* is "what for."

Wo can be combined with the following prepositions: *an, auf, aus, bei, durch, für, gegen, in, mit, nach, über, unter, von, vor, and zu*. Note that when combining *wo* with a preposition that starts with a vowel, the letter *r* is added between *wo* and the preposition: *woran, worauf, woraus, worin, worüber, worunter*. This may seem complicated at first, but in context you will find it much easier than expected! Here are some examples from Yabla:

*Der Höhepunkt des Abends, **worauf** alle gewartet haben...*

The highlight of the evening, **which** everybody had been waiting for...

Caption 35, Rund um den Flughafen: Der neue Airbus A-380

*Es macht viel Spaß, **wobei** die Füße jetzt langsam anfangen doch etwas zu schmerzen.*

It's a lot of fun, **although** the feet now are indeed slowly starting to ache somewhat.

Captions 10-11, IAA: Traumland für Autobefrister

*Ich weiß nicht, **wovon** Sie sprechen!*

I don't know **what** you're talking about!

Caption 10, Kein Kredit: im Land der Klone

Further Learning

Go to the main [Yabla German page](#) and search for some of the following *wo* + preposition combinations: **woran** = on what, of which; **worauf** = at which, whereupon; **woraus** = from what, whence; **wobei** = whereby, although; **wodurch** = by which means, whereby; **wofür** = for what; **wogegen** = against what; **worin** = in what, wherein; **womit** = whereby, wherewith; **wonach** = after what, whereupon; **worüber** = about what, whereat; **worunter** = under which, from what; **wovon** = from what, whereof; **wovor** = of what, in front of what; **wozu** = what for, why.

[Continue Reading](#)

False Friends ("Falsche Freunde") Part II

In our last lesson on [false friends](#), we discussed a few false cognates that begin with the letter A. Today, we're moving one stop further down the alphabet to learn about some *falsche Freunde* starting with B:

*das **Bad***: the bath or bathroom (room with a bath, *not* the toilet!)

False friend: *bad*: of low quality or poor standard (German: *schlecht*)

*Jetzt packe ich die Sachen vom **Bad** in den Koffer.*

Now I'll pack the things from the **bathroom** into the suitcase.

Caption 18, Christiane: fährt in den Urlaub

bekommen: to get or receive

False friend: *become*: to begin to be, to develop into (German: *werden*)

*Ich hab' noch nie einen Preis **bekommen** in Deutschland.*

I've never **received** an award in Germany.

Caption 17, DIVA-Verleihung: Schauspieler des Jahres

brav: good, well-behaved

False friend: *brave*: possessing or exhibiting courage (German: *tapfer, mutig*)

*Und wer nicht **brav** war, der soll auch noch darum bitten.*

And those who were not **good**, they should even beg for it.

Caption 14, Jan Wittmer: Weihnachtslied

Further Learning

Try to find more words in German and English that sound similar but have different meanings. For a thorough list of German false friends, take a look at [this extensive chart](#).

[Continue Reading](#)

German Soccer Expressions

If you are a soccer fan, you are probably already familiar with many soccer terms, but here are few that may be new for you!

A referee is a *Schiedsrichter*, but just as "ref" is often used as a shorter form for "referee" in English, so too in German is *Schiri* a shortening of *Schiedsrichter*:

*Am besten holt sich jeder **Schiri**...*

It would be best if every **ref** got...

Caption 30, Die OLElympischen Spiele: Laotischer Hühnertanz

The slang term *Gelb sehen*, literally to "see yellow," means a player has been penalized with a yellow penalty card:

*Dafür habe ich aber 'ne **gelbe Karte** wegen Foulspielen an 'n Rasen bekommen.*

For that, however, I received a **yellow card** for foul plays on the field.

Caption 49, RheinMainTV Aktuell: Kick für Kid

In the above caption you see the football terms *das Foulspiel* (foul play) and *der Rasen* (the playing field) too!

A penalty shot is called an *Elfmeter*, literally an "eleven meter," in reference to the distance from the goal, and in this case the shot was *verschossen* or "missed":

*Aus Scham über den **verschossenen Elfmeter** pumpt Vettel erstmal ein paar Liegestütze.*

From shame over the **missed eleven meter** [penalty shot], Vettel first pumps a few push-ups.

Caption 40, Fußball: Prominente beim Benefizspiel

Here we manage to get *four* football terms in a single sentence!

*Es ist ein **Laufduell**, ein **Pass**, der vor die **Abwehr** kommt, und ein **Zweikampf**.*

It's a **sprinting duel**, a **pass** that comes before the **defense**, and a **tackle**.

Caption 37, Fußball: U21-Nationalmannschaft

Further Learning

Pop quiz: without peeking, what do the terms we just read about mean? *Der Schiri, die gelbe Karte, das Foulspiel, der Rasen, verschossen, der Elfmeter, das Laufduell, der Pass, die Abwehr, der Zweikampf*. If you would like to go beyond vocabulary and into some very funny German soccer philosophy, read the article in *der Spiegel* entitled "[German Football's Greatest Sayings](#)."

[Continue Reading](#)

Ich Liebe Dich (In Other Words)

Ich Liebe Dich (In Other Words)

Perhaps you are interested in German because you fell in love, or maybe there is that "special someone" in German class you have a bit of a crush on. We all know the basic *Ich liebe dich* — the Beatles even did a version of "She Loves You" in German ("*Sie liebt dich*") — but how about some other ways to express your attraction for somebody?

It might not be a great idea to say you love somebody too soon, so to play it safe, let's just say you *like* him or her, in which case the verb *mögen* is perfect:

*Oh nein, niemand **mag** mich!*

Oh no, no one **likes** me!

Caption 44, Märchen, Sagenhaft: Das hässliche Entlein

Another way of expressing that you like someone is to say you "have them gladly" (*gern haben*) or care for them (*lieb haben*):

*Wenn man jemanden richtig **gern** und **lieb** hat...*

If you really **love** and **care** for someone...

Caption 42, Valentinstag: In Karlsruhe

Another possibility is *du gefällst mir*, or if you want to make it even stronger, *du gefällst mir sehr*. Then the next step is falling in love, *sich verlieben*:

*Der Prinz **hatte sich verliebt**.*

The Prince had **fallen in love**.

Caption 69, Sagenhaft, Märchen: Aschenputtel

When you are ready to make the leap, however, there is always the classic standby:

John, ich liebe dich. Adrianne, ich liebe dich!

John, I love you. Adrianne, I love you!

Captions 13–14, Alexander Hauff: Showreel

Followed ideally by the grand finale:

Ich möchte dich heiraten.

I want to marry you.

Caption 86, Märchen, Sagenhaft: Der Froschkönig

Further Learning

How do I love thee? Rather than getting into counting the ways and all the mathematics involved, why not try getting a taste of [German love poems](#) from the 16th to the 20th centuries, including an exclusive set from [German women poets](#)? Make a vocabulary list of words you are unfamiliar with, and then search on [Yabla](#) to find the ways the words are used in other contexts.

[Continue Reading](#)

False Friends ("Falsche Freunde") Part I

Many words in German look like words in English, but can be tricky because they actually have different meanings. These paired words are called [false friends](#) or false cognates and can be the source of many difficulties when starting to learn a new language. Here are a few examples from Yabla, all starting with the letter A:

absolvieren: to finish a course of study or exam

False friend: *absolve*: to declare (someone) free from guilt, obligation, or punishment (German: *entlasten*)

Auch wenn man ein Studium absolviert hat...

Even after finishing a study...

Caption 63, Lokalhelden: Art House

aktuell: current, latest

False friend: *actual*: existing in fact; real. (German: *eigentlich, wirklich*)

Neunundsechzig ist die aktuelle Diskussion.

Sixty-nine is the current debate.

Caption 46, Kurzfilm-Festival: Shorts at Moonlight

Die Argumentation: the reasoning, process of reasoning

False friend: *argument*: an exchange of diverging or opposite views, typically a heated or angry one (German: *der Streit*)

Das hessische Ministerium hat kein Verständnis für diese Argumentation.

The Hessian Ministry has no understanding for this reasoning.

Captions 28-29, Deutsche Autobahnen: Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzungen

Further Learning

Try to find more words in German and English that sound similar but have different meanings. For a very funny commentary in German containing false friends, read this dialog on [Grimm Grammar](#). *Bis bald!* (No, this is *not* about hair loss...)

[Continue Reading](#)

Dating in German

Expressing dates or the passage of time in German sometimes parallels English, and sometimes doesn't. Let's take a closer look to get our dates straight.

The standard expression "on the [day] of [month]" is similar in form to English:

Am dreizehnten April zweitausendneunundzwanzig...

On the thirteenth of April, two thousand twenty-nine.

..
Caption 48, Unser Universum, Asteroiden: Gefahr aus dem All

The expression of passing time "from the [day] of [month] to the [day] of [month]" goes like this:

Vom achtzehnten Juni bis zum zwölften Juli...
From the eighteenth of June till the twelfth of July.

..
Caption 4, Das Tollwood-Festival: Bap und Clueso in der Musik-Arena

Instead of *vom*, the preposition *ab* can be used to express the start of an event:

Ab Juni wird der Riesenvogel dann in Linienbetrieb gehen.

From June, the giant bird will be starting route service.

Caption 49, Rund um den Flughafen: Der neue Airbus A-380

One German date-related expression that differs from English is "Wir haben gerade":

Wir haben gerade Oktober.

Just now, we have October.

Caption 5, Herbst: mit Eva

Yabla has translated this very literally in order to show the language parallels, but another way of translating *Wir haben gerade Oktober* could be: "It is now October."

Further Learning

If you state the day of the week with the date, you use the form: *Am Freitag, dem 21. Februar*. Note the dative article *dem* used for the month. On the other hand, if you are writing a formal letter, you write the city name and the accusative article: *Berlin, den 21. Februar*. There has been a creeping tendency recently in German to express the year (in German) as *in 2014*, which is an [Anglicism](#) and considered poor style in formal German. Historically, German uses either just *2014* or *im Jahr 2014*, but not *in 2014*. Natives speakers of English learning German often get confused about this; luckily now you know better!

[Continue Reading](#)

Es geht nur ums Geld: German Idioms about Money

Many German expressions having to do with money are very similar to those in English, in fact the expressions may have been derived from and adapted by one or the other of the two languages. Some examples are: *Geld waschen* (to launder money), *Das Geld zum Fenster hinauswerfen* (to throw money out the window) and *nach Geld stinken* (to be filthy rich). Some expressions are not quite so direct, however, such as: *Geld regiert die Welt* (money makes the world go round, literally "money rules the world"), *Im Geld schwimmen* (to roll in money, literally "to swim in money"), and *Das Geld liegt nicht auf der Straße* (money doesn't grow on trees, literally "money doesn't lie on the street"). Here are some more examples from Yabla videos:

This one is pretty obvious:

*Zeit ist **Geld** und **Geld** ist gut.*

Time is **money** and **money** is good.

Caption 9, Jan Wittmer: Leben für den Lebenslauf

Here the expression *Es geht ins Geld* means it will get expensive:

*Dann geht es aber auch irgendwann mal ins **Geld**.*

Then at some point, however, it will also start costing **money**.

Caption 29, Endlich glücklich: Liebe im Netz

But this is the most important thing of all to remember about money:

***Geld** allein ist nicht alles.*

Money alone isn't everything.

Caption 62, Für Tierfreunde: Tierheim Nied

Learning Suggestions

See if you can understand the correct English meanings for the following German money-related expressions without resorting to a search engine or online dictionary by just using the vocabulary you already have: *Geld allein macht nicht glücklich; Wer den Pfennig nicht ehrt, ist des Talers nicht wert* (a hint on this one: a *Taler* is an old-fashioned currency like the dollar or euro); *Sie haben Geld wie Heu; Es geht nur ums Geld*; and last of all, the most difficult one: *Unrecht Gut gedeihet nicht*.

[Continue Reading](#)

Funktionsverben: German Light Verbs

A light verb (*Funktionsverb*, also called vector verb or empty verb) is a verb that has very little intrinsic meaning on its own and requires an additional expression, usually a noun, to give it meaning. Some light verb expressions in German are similar to English, and therefore easy to understand, such as *Einfluss ausüben* (to exert influence), *zu Ende sein* (to be at an end, to be over) or *in Sicht bleiben* (to remain in view). But many other German light verbs do not have direct parallels in English and are somewhat more difficult to understand. Let's look to some Yabla videos for some examples!

in Angriff nehmen (to attack, to tackle, to proceed with):

*Und dann mal schauen, ob wir eventuell irgendwas Live-Mäßiges **in Angriff nehmen**.*

And then see if we perhaps **take on** something live.

Caption 16, RheinMain Szene: Selig

unter Druck stehen (to be under pressure):

*Ich denke, dass die Russen natürlich genauso **unter Druck stehen**.*

I think that the Russians **are** certainly **under** an equal amount of **pressure**.

Caption 13, Fußball: Die deutsche Nationalmannschaft

auf etwas Rücksicht nehmen (to show consideration for):

*Wenn die Menschen doch nur mehr **Rücksicht aufeinander nehmen** würden.*

If only people would **show more consideration for one another**.

Caption 10, Rücksicht im Verkehr: Christophorus, Die Mission

Learning Suggestions

See if you can find out the proper English meanings for the following German expressions containing light verbs: *eine Anwendung finden, in Verlegenheit geraten, eine Mitteilung machen, eine Wahl treffen, unter Beobachtung stehen, zu Ansehen gelangen, in Druck geben, sich in Abhängigkeit befinden, in Erfahrung bringen, in Auftrag geben, in Frage stellen*. If you would like to go deeper into the finer distinctions between active and passive light verbs, [look here](#)!

[Continue Reading.](#)

Classic German Aphorisms for the New Year

Are you bored with the same old clichés every year about the upcoming year? Let's go "back to the future" and take a look at some original aphorisms from classic German authors, followed up with a word from the aphorism used in another context in a Yabla video:

*Wird's besser? Wird's schlimmer? fragt man alljährlich.
Seien wir ehrlich: Leben ist immer **lebensgefährlich**!*
Will it get better? Will it get worse? You ask every year.
Let's be honest: Life is always **life-threatening**!
Erich Kästner (1899–1974)

*Ein paar Jahre zuvor wäre das noch **lebensgefährlich** gewesen.*
A few years prior, this would still have been **life-threatening**.
Caption 14, Curly Horses: Pferdeglück auch für Allergiker

*Ich kann **freilich** nicht sagen, ob es besser wird, wenn es anders wird,
Aber soviel kann ich sagen: Es muss anders werden, wenn es gut werden soll.*
I cannot say, **of course**, if it will be better when it is different,
But this much I can say: It must be different, if it is going to get better.
Georg Christoph Lichtenberg (1742–1799)

*Ja, **freilich**! So machen wir das, jedes Jahr aufs Neue.*
Yes, **of course**! We do it like this every year again and again.
Caption 17, München: Krampuslauf auf dem Christkindmarkt

*Gut ist der Vorsatz, aber die **Erfüllung** ist schwer.*
Good is the resolution, but the **fulfillment** is difficult.
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

*Die Arbeit mit den Tieren ist die **Erfüllung** eines Lebenstraums.*
The work with the animals is the **fulfillment** of a life's dream.
Caption 62, Für Tierfreunde: Falknerei Feldberg

Learning Suggestions

The "Happy New Year!" greeting is different in different parts of Germany: *Frohes neues Jahr* (Northern Hesse); *Frohes neues* (Middle Rhein and Hesse); *Gesundes neues Jahr* (Eastern Germany); *Gesundes neues* (Dresden region); *Gutes neues Jahr* (Austria); *Gutes neues* (Baden-Württemberg, Switzerland and parts of Bavaria); *Prosit Neujahr* (Eastern Austria, Vienna); and *Prost Neujahr* (parts of Western Germany). But are you familiar with the German New Year's greeting "*Ich wünsche dir einen guten Rutsch*"? See last year's Yabla German Lesson "[Rutsch and rutschen; A good "slide" into the New Year!](#)" to find out more!

You can also read something by the authors quoted above. For beginners, Erich Kästner's [Emil und die Detektive](#) makes for a fun read. Readers of all levels can enjoy the many clever sayings of physicist [Georg Christoph Lichtenberg](#), who is known as the father of the German aphorism. For the very advanced, there is Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's [Faust](#), which is considered the most important work in all of German literature.

[Continue Reading.](#)

Some German Words with "Christmas"

In keeping with the holiday spirit, let's take a look at a few German words that can be formed using *Weihnachts*- (Christmas-) as a root. Many of today's standard Christmas traditions originated in Germany, but as you can see from the "[Krampuslauf](#)" video, Germany still has a few Christmas traditions that remain very unique!

If you haven't done your Christmas shopping yet, you only have a couple of days left! Better head down to the *Weihnachtsmarkt*, which, although traditionally Southern German, can also be found in other parts of Germany:

*Hier am Berliner Gendarmenmarkt gibt es auch einen kleinen tollen **Weihnachtsmarkt**.*
Here at the Berlin Gendarmenmarkt, there is also a great little **Christmas market**.
Caption 7, [Weihnachtsmärkte: mit Eva](#)

And while you are there, you'd better pick up something delicious at the *Weihnachtsbäckerei*, because:

*In der **Weihnachtsbäckerei** gibt es manche **Leckerei**.*
 In the **Christmas bakery** there is many a treat.
 Caption 23, [Der Sternschnuppenmarkt: in Wiesbaden](#)

Of course, your main purpose there is not to snack on pastries, but to pick up some *Weihnachtsgeschenke*:

*Hier kann man schöne **Weihnachtsgeschenke** kaufen.*
 You can buy beautiful **Christmas presents** here.
 Caption 14, [Diane: am Weihnachtsmarkt](#)

When you get home, it may be time to decorate the *Weihnachtsbaum*!

*Also der **Weihnachtsbaum** wird bei uns am Vierundzwanzigsten aufgestellt.*
 Well, the **Christmas tree** will be set up at our place on the twenty-fourth.
 Caption 27, [Weihnachtsinterviews: Cettina in Linkenheim](#)

Learning suggestions:

Can you figure out what some of these other words based on *Weihnachts-* (Christmas-) mean?

Weihnachtssachen, Weihnachtsbaumständer, Weihnachtsspenden, Weihnachtstrubel, Weihnachtsferien, Weihnachtsmann, Weihnachtessen

Search for videos on [Yabla](#) that use these words to better understand their meaning and context!

[Continue Reading](#)

Indefinite Quantity Adjectives (Unbestimmte Zahladjektive)

Let's take a look today at adjectives that define quantitative amounts without actually resorting to the specifics of numbers. The most common of them, *vielen* ("much" or "many") and *wenige* ("little" or "not many"), are used irregularly, however, so let's check them out first. When *vielen* and *wenige* occur as a definite article or after a definite article, they are conjugated as normal adjectives:

*Für die **vielen** amerikanischen Soldaten im amerikanischen Sektor...*
 For the **many** American soldiers in the American Sector...
 Caption 9, [Berlin: der alte amerikanische Sektor](#)

But when *vielen* or *wenige* occur without an article before a singular noun, they are usually left unconjugated:

*Aber dafür bleibt wohl **wenig** Zeit.*
 But there seems to be too **little** time for that.
 Caption 25, [Fußball: Torwandschießen](#)

As you can see above, a normal adjective for the feminine word *die Zeit* would, in the nominative case as here, end with an "e." *Wenig* is a little different!

Here are some examples of more typical indefinite quantity adjectives, which are conjugated as normal adjectives. We can start with *alle* ("everything"):

Natürlich stehe ich hinter **allen** Songs.
 Of course I'm behind **all** of the songs.
 Caption 62, [Deutsche Bands: Luxuslärm](#)

And then wind up with *keine* ("none" or "no"):

*Bisher allerdings ist noch **keine** Schildkröte in Sicht.*
 Up to now though there's still **no** turtle in sight.

Caption 43, [Ausgrabungen: Auf den Spuren der Dinosaurier](#)

Some other common indefinite quantity adjectives to look out for are: **beide** (both), **einige** (some), **einzelne** (single, individual), **ganze** (whole), **gesamte** (entire), **manche** (some), **sonstige** (other, further), **übrige** (the rest), **weitere** (further), **zahllose** (innumerable), and **zahlreiche** (numerous).

Learning suggestions:

Keep your eyes out in every Yabla video for the many ways that indefinite quantity adjectives are used, and pay particular attention to the way that *vielen* and *wenige* are conjugated, because the irregular usage will take some training and getting a feel for! For a further foray into the world of indefinite quantity adjectives written in German, take a look [here](#) and [here](#). *Ich wünsche euch **viel** Spaß beim Lernen!*

[Continue Reading](#)

How *bitte* and *bitten* differ from “please” and “to please”

The adverb **bitte** is probably used much more often in German than “please” is in English. This is because it has many different meanings, from “you’re welcome,” “pardon,” “may I help you” and “here you go” all the way back to simple “please.” On the other hand, the verb “to please” has a number of German equivalents, but the German verb **bitten** does *not* mean “to please,” but rather “to ask,” “to request,” “to beg” or “to plead.” So be aware that while these aren’t exactly [false friends](#), they’re not completely equivalent.

The adverb, please!

Let’s first check out the different ways *bitte* is used: *Bitte* is very commonly meant as “you’re welcome,” the standard response after somebody has thanked you for something:

Also, vielen herzlichen Dank, dass ich heute mit dabei sein durfte! -Bitte, bitte!

So, many heartfelt thanks that I was allowed to be here today! -You’re welcome, you’re welcome!

Captions 56-57, [Selbst versucht: Gepäckabfertigung bei Fraport](#)

When you go into a restaurant or shop, often the first thing the waiter or salesperson will ask you is *bitte schön* or sometimes merely *bitte*, which in this case means “may I help you?” The second *bitte* is “please” again!

Ja, bitte schön. -Ich möchte zwei Brötchen und ein Dinkelbrot, bitte.

Yes, may I help you? -I would like two rolls and a spelt bread, please.

Next up, a Yabla example of *bitte* in the sense of “here you are,” a commonplace usage when, for instance, a waiter hands you a menu in a restaurant. Note that the *first* use of *bitte* in this example is the standard meaning “please.”

Genau. -Speisekarten bitte! -So, bitte sehr.

Exactly. -Menus please! -So, here you are.

Captions 6-7, [Melanie und Thomas: Im Restaurant](#)

Lastly, the adverb *bitte* can also be used in the sense of “pardon”:

Ich heiße Angela Merkel. -Wie bitte? -Ich sagte, „Ich heiße Angela Merkel“.

My name is Angela Merkel. -Pardon me? -I said, “My name is Angela Merkel.”

Although at first it may seem a bit confusing with so many possible meanings for *bitte*, the contexts will give you a very good indication of meaning!

The verb "to please"

As we discussed, the German verb *bitten* means "to ask," "to plead," "to entreat," or even "to beg." So how do we "please" someone in German? The German *sich freuen*, *zufrieden sein*, and *zufriedenstellen* are all used in various ways "to please." Here someone is pleased to greet another person:

*Ich bedanke mich und würde **mich freuen**, Sie mal persönlich hier bei uns begrüßen.*

I thank you and would be **pleased** to greet you personally here with us.

Captions 54-55, [Melanie und Thomas: Im Restaurant](#)

And here someone is pleased with the city:

*Ich **bin** extrem **zufrieden** mit Offenburg, wirklich.*

I **am** extremely **pleased** with Offenburg, really.

Caption 8, [Barbara Schöneberger: Bambi-Verleihung Backstage](#)

And here a person is pleased with a film:

*Die abwechslungsreichen Kurzfilme werden an Orten gezeigt, die auch Besucher mit ästhetischem Anspruch äußerst **zufriedenstellen**.*

The varied short films are being shown at places that **please** visitors supremely with an aesthetic claim.

Captions 3-4, [Kurzfilm-Festival: Shorts at moonlight](#)

Learning suggestions:

Some other words meaning "to please," which have varied shades of meaning such as "to make happy" and "to like," are *beglücken*, *behagen*, and *zu Gefallen sein*. See if you can find a variety of these usages on [Yabla](#) and also check out [Linguee](#), a great language resource site that takes published translations and posts them side by side with the original language so that you can see some real-world examples of words in different contexts. *Ich denke, es wird euch gefallen!*

[Continue Reading](#)

Halt oder ich schieße! The many ways to say "stop" in German

Many of you probably know the stock line *Halt oder ich schieße!* (Stop or I'll shoot!) from old American and British WWII movies, but did you know there are many other ways to say "stop" in German? The German verbs *halten* and *stoppen* are easy to remember, since they have the English equivalent verbs "halt" and "stop," but **separable verbs** such as *aufhören* and *anhalten* are a bit trickier!

Let's first take a look at a couple of examples using the verb *halten* in the **imperative mood**, both from the classic children's book series *Der Struwwelpeter*:

Halt! *Das ist noch gutgegangen und die Fischlein sehen's mit Bangen.*

Stop! That still went well and the little fish watch it with fear.

Caption 12, [Der Struwwelpeter: Hans Guck-in-die-Luft](#)

Robert, **halt!** *Dein Schirm fliegt fort.*

Robert, **stop!** Your umbrella is flying away.

Caption 9, [Der Struwwelpeter: Der fliegende Robert](#)

Next we see the use of the verb *stoppen*:

*Bislang konnte das die Ausbreitung der Läden aber nicht **stoppen**.*

So far, however, this hasn't **stopped** the spread of the shops.
Caption 35, [Perlente: In allen Mündern](#)

And even an example using both *halten* and *stoppen* in the imperative mood:

Stopp! Stopp, stopp, stopp, stopp, stopp! Halt!
Stop! Stop, stop, stop, stop, stop! Hold on!
Caption 24, [Deutschkurs in Blaubeuren: Der Relativsatz - Part 2](#)

Note that Yabla purposefully translated *halten* as "hold on" in order to differentiate it from the translations of *stoppen* as "stop."

Another very useful German word for "stop" is *aufhören*, which is a separable verb that is most commonly used when you want an activity to stop. Here in the **conditional mood**:

*Nein, wenn wir keine Lust mehr hätten, würden wir ja **aufhören**.*
No, if we had no more desire, yes, we would **stop**.
Caption 25, [Die Beatles: in Deutschland](#)

In the imperative mood, the verb's lexical core is separated from its particle:

Hör auf! -Du musst genau *hinsehen*.
Stop! -You must watch closely.
Caption 13, [Filmtrailer: Wir sind die Nacht](#)

And here an example using the **present perfect tense**:

*Sie hat überhaupt nicht mehr **aufgehört** mit Eismachen.*
She just never **stopped** making ice cream.
Caption 6, [Eis: Eiskalte Leidenschaft](#)

The separable verb *anhalten*, on the other hand, is used primarily to indicate the stopping of moving objects or vehicles:

*Ein Mann fährt mit seinem Auto. Dann wird er von der Polizei **angehalten**.*
A man is driving in his car. Then he is **stopped** by the police.
Captions 2-3, [Sabine erzählt Witze: Die Pinguine](#)

It is possible to confuse *anhalten* with the verb for "to keep" (*halten*) and the preposition "on" (*an*). Usually the context makes it obvious:

*Ihren Pfiffi sollten sie aber lieber **an** der kurzen Leine **halten**.*
But you had better **keep** your Fifi **on** a short leash.
Caption 39, [Für Tierfreunde: Geparden](#)

Another version of "stop" with a very specific context is *stehen bleiben*, alternately written as one word (*stehenbleiben*), which is when a person stops walking or running:

*Das heißt, jedes Mal, wenn man gefangen hat, muss man **stehen bleiben**.*
That means, every time you catch it, you have to **stop**.
Caption 9, [Ultimate Frisbee: Spielregeln](#)

How would you translate the following?

Stopp, halt, hör auf mit dem Anhalten!

Note that in the above sentence, the verb *anhalten* has been **nominalized** into the noun *Anhalten*. Many of the alternate German words for "stop" may be translated, depending on the context, with other English synonyms for "stop," such as "cease," "discontinue," "interrupt," "turn off," "shut down," "finish," "break off," "close," or "end."

Learning suggestions:

When you're watching Yabla videos, see if you can spot any other German versions of "stop." You may learn some more synonyms for "stop" [here](#).

[Continue Reading](#)

Doch, the German super-word!

Faster than a short sentence, more powerful than a rebuttal, and able to refute strong statements in a single syllable... DOCH!

The multi-functional word *doch*, in some cases fulfilling the role of "but" (or "still" or "nevertheless") in English, has the capability to do with one word what in English requires an entire phrase: to negate a preceding negative statement with an affirmative. In German, English phrases such as "On the contrary" and "Yes, I do" can be replaced with the monosyllabic *doch*.

Before you attempt to prematurely launch a speedy *doch* at an angry policeman or boss, however, let us first examine the simpler usages of *doch* translated as "but":

Doch jeder weiß hier, das ist die Luft, die brennt

But everyone here knows, that's the air that's burning

Caption 45, 2raumwohnung: 36 Grad

And "however":

Doch am Ende dieses Weges wird Europa stärker aus der Krise hervorgehen.

However, at the end of this path Europe will go forth from the crisis stronger.

Caption 38, Angela Merkel: Neujahrsansprache - Part 1

And "indeed":

Doch das scheint sich nun geändert zu haben.

Indeed, now this seems to have changed.

Caption 7, Apple-Trojaner: Wie man ihn beseitigt - Part 1

And as an affirmative:

Aber wir hatten 'nen guten Start in Braunschweig und machen eigentlich ganz gut weiter, doch.

But we had a good start in Braunschweig and have actually continued quite well, **really**.

Caption 8, Cassandra Steen: Interview - Part 1

Here are some examples showing the full power of *doch* as a negation:

Der Eierkumpel von nebenan, der wusste nämlich nicht, was Pi ist! -Doch!

The egg pal [egg seller] next to you, he didn't know what pi is! -**Yes, he did!**

Captions 22-23, Welt-Pi-Tag: Unser Leben mit der Kreiszahl - Part 1

Ich weiß nicht, ob man als Frankfurter mal nach Mainz fährt. -Doch, war ich auch schon...

I don't know if you'd go to Mainz as someone from Frankfurt. -**Yes, you would.** I've been there too...

Captions 19-20, Museumsuferfest: Jazzmusiker Daniel Stelter - Part 1

Here we see *doch* first in the affirmative sense, then in the more sophisticated negation sense, all in a single caption:

Männer kommen doch nicht hierher, oder? -Doch, natürlich.

Men don't **really** come here, or? -**Yes they do**, of course.

Caption 24, Waxhouse: Brasilianische Haarentfernung - Part 1

So remember the the two main uses of *doch*:

1. As a simple affirmative ("really"), negating adverb ("however"), or transitional word ("but"):

Er hat es doch nicht getan.

He did not **really** do it.

Doch wissen wir, was es bedeutet.

But we know what it means.

2. As an all-powerful negation to a previous negative statement:

Er hat es nicht getan. -Doch.

He did not do it. -**Yes, he did do it.**

Sie waren nicht dort. -Doch.

They were not there. -Yes, they were there.

By learning the use of the powerful *doch*, you will be able to negate, with a minimum of syllables, any negative statements with which you disagree! Hast du nicht verstanden?

-Doch!

Learning suggestions:

Get some great explanations and examples of *doch* [here](#) and (as a PDF) [here](#).

More advanced learners will enjoy this explanation in German, from [Wiktionary](#).
[Continue Reading](#)

When Same Is Not the Same

In English we are pretty casual about the word “same,” but German makes some important distinctions. Let’s see how.

Earth has only one moon, so when we say we see the “same” moon, there’s no question. We’re talking about one and the same. That’s when, in German, we use the demonstrative pronoun, *derselbe* (or any of its declensions, which you can see [here](#)). In this particular case we have a masculine noun, *der Mond* in the accusative case, so *derselbe* becomes *denselben*:

Wir sehen denselben Mond, und wir sind größer, denn die Sterne bleiben stehen

We see **the same** moon, and we are bigger, because the stars stand still

Captions 13-14, Kolkhorst: Der Mond

In the next example, we can see that Charlie and Raymond have discovered they are brothers. They have the self-same parents. Once again, we want *derselbe*. *Der Vater* is masculine and is in the accusative case, so it gets *denselben*. *Die Mutter* is feminine so it gets *dieselbe*.

...als Charlie erfährt, dass Raymond und er denselben Vater und dieselbe Mutter haben.

...when Charlie learns that Raymond and he have **the same** father and **the same** mother.

Caption 23, Theater: Rainman - Part 1

But sometimes we say things are the same when they only appear to be. They may be very similar, or one a copy of the other. That’s when we use *gleich* or *der gleiche*. It’s a normal adjective, so it changes depending on gender and case. Below, the speaker describes a recurring event:

Es ist leider noch immer jedes Jahr das Gleiche.

Unfortunately it is still **the same** every year.

Caption 1, Für Tierfreunde: Tierheim Nied

Singer-songwriter Cassandra Steen talks about making mistakes: two separate ones, but of the same kind. You guessed it. It has to be *der gleiche*!

Wenn Aussagen ignoriert werden. Wenn der gleiche Fehler zweimal passiert.

When statements are ignored. When the same mistake happens twice.

Caption 4, Cassandra Steen: Interview - Part 4 of 4

Note that when we use *der gleiche*, the article is separate from the word. But when we use *derselbe*, *dieselbe*, or *dasselbe*, the article is connected to the word. In either case, the article to use and the ending of “*gleich*” or “*selb*” depend on the gender and case of the noun being modified.

Hopefully you’ve gained some insight on the German way of talking about things that are “the same.” You may never think about the word “same” in the same way again!

Learning suggestion:

Get some great explanations and examples of *derselbe* and *der gleiche* [here](#).

More advanced learners will enjoy this explanation, in German, from [Spiegel Online Kultur](#).
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Summer Living in Germany

Summer has arrived, which in Germany means that life moves outside. The *Biergärten* are open, the *Freibäder* (open-air swimming pools) are busy with swimmers and sunbathers alike, and the smell of *Bratwurst* and barbecues fills the summer air.

Not everyone has the luxury of having a garden attached to their house, which is why many Germans like to have a *Schrebergarten* (garden plot or allotment), often with a small hut or house built on it, which they visit for the day or for a vacation.

Ich hab' ja auch so 'nen kleinen Schrebergarten.

I also have such a little **garden plot**.

Caption 3, Ausbilder Schmidt: Klimabotschafter

If you have neither a garden nor a *Schrebergarten*, there are many beautiful *Seen* (lakes) in Germany. Nothing beats a hot summer's day of lazing by the water, swimming, and riding a pedal boat. Peter Fox sings all about the fun to be had at a German lake:

Und der Mond scheint hell auf mein Haus am See

And the moon shines brightly onto my house on the **lake**

Caption 18, Peter Fox: Haus am See

When dinnertime comes around, *Grillen* (barbecuing) is the way to go. Since the laws are more relaxed in Germany, people barbecue in parks and on beaches without any trouble from the authorities, just as long as the litter gets disposed of!

Wir grillen, die Mamas kochen und wir saufen Schnaps

We **barbecue**, the mamas cook and we guzzle schnapps

Caption 29, Peter Fox: Haus am See

See not only means "lake" but also "sea," as in *der Ostsee* (the Baltic Sea). However, the most common word for sea is *das Meer*:

Du wirst bestimmt irgendwo am Strand sein. -Ja, genau. Am Meer.

You will surely be somewhere at the beach. -Yes, exactly. **At the sea**.

Caption 50, Konjugation: Das Verb „sein“

If you do go to the *See* or the *Meer*, you should know that there are two words for "swimming" in German, *schwimmen* and *baden gehen*, which literally translates as "to go bathing." While *schwimmen* is something you would likely do in a *Schwimmbecken* (pool), *baden gehen* is mostly used for swimming in lakes or the sea:

Man kann baden gehen, man kann Freunde treffen draußen.

You can **go swimming**, you can meet friends outside.

Captions 15-16, Jahreszeiten: Der Sommer

Of course summer isn't all fun and games. If you are stuck in the city, it can get hot and sticky. Rappers Culcha Candela, while singing about how unbearable it can get, offer a solution.

Feuchtes Tuch auf 'm Kopf

Wet cloth on the head

Ich werd' sonst noch bekloppt vom Hitzeschock

Otherwise I'll just go nuts from heat shock

Captions 29-30, Culcha Candela: Sommer im Kiez

Extremely popular all over Germany, *Eisdielen* or *Eiscafé* (ice cream parlors) are hives of activity during the summer months.

Kaum scheint die Sonne, zieht es die Schleckermäuler an die Eisdielen.

The sun is scarcely shining and it draws [those with a] sweet tooth to the **ice-cream parlors**.

Caption 1, Eis: Eiskalte Leidenschaft

And of course, summer is the time to think about vacation, *den Sommerurlaub* or *die Sommerferien*. *Der Urlaub* is a vacation where you go away somewhere, but *die Ferien* means a break from school, college, or work. Both can bring good memories:

Ich ging früher im Urlaub immer reiten.

I used to always go horseback riding during **vacation**.

Wir gingen immer in den Sommerferien.

We always went during **summer holidays**.

Captions 16 and 19, Konjugation: Das Verb „gehen“

Schöne Sommerferien!

[Continue Reading](#)

Wann/Wenn/Als

In English there is only one word for "when," but in German there are three words: *wann*, *wenn*, and *als*. In German, it's very important to use

the correct word, otherwise the whole meaning of the sentence can change.

Wann is a question word used to ask “at what time” directly as a question, as Diane demonstrates:

*Und **wann** läuft der?*

And **when** does it run [start]?

Caption 40, Diane erklärt: Fragewörter

When you ask a question about the past, you also need to use *wann*:

***Wann** hast du Wiener Kurti zuletzt gesehen?*

When did you last see "Wiener Kurti" [a nickname]?

Caption 67, Alexander Hauff: Showreel - Part 2

Or when you ask indirectly, as Piggeldy does to Frederick when talking about the arrival of summer:

*Dann wollen wir mal den Frühling fragen, **wann** der Sommer kommt.*

Then we want to ask spring **when** summer is coming.

Caption 17, Piggeldy und Frederick: Sommer

Wenn is the most common form of “when,” referring to time in the following examples:

***Wenn** er hinter der Bar steht, gibt er alles, wie viele seiner Kollegen.*

When he is standing behind the bar, he gives it everything, like many of his colleagues.

Caption 34, Cocktails mixen: So „shaken“ die Besten

When planning a journey, you would use *wenn* as shown here:

*Okay, und **wenn** ich im Europapark bin, wo kann ich dann übernachten?*

Okay, and **when** I arrive at Europapark, where can I spend the night?

Caption 21, Reiseplanung: Gespräch mit einer Reiseberaterin

Wenn doesn't just mean “when”; in German it is also used to express “if”:

*Wir würden uns freuen, **wenn** alle Menschen auf PETA.de [www.peta.de] unsere Onlinepetition unterstützen.*

We would be happy, **if** all people would support our online petition on PETA.de [www.peta.de].

Caption 13, PETA-Aktion: Gegen das Wal-Massaker

And the third word for “when” is *als*, which is always used to describe an event that has already happened or a single point in time. *Wann* or *wenn* just wouldn't be correct here. Remember this and you're halfway there!

*Und haben Sie schon mal gedacht irgendwann, **als** Sie Ihre Fotos gesehen haben...*

And did you ever think, at some point, **when** you saw your photos...

Caption 30, Bambi-Verleihung: No-Gos auf dem roten Teppich

It's also shown here as Angela Merkel talks about a past atrocity:

***als** im Herbst eine rechtsextremistische Terror- und Mörderbande aufgedeckt wurde.*

when in the fall a right-wing extremist terrorist [organization] was uncovered.

Caption 58 Angela Merkel: Neujahrsansprache - Part 1

So as you see, distinguishing between *wann*, *wenn*, and *als* is not so difficult if you remember the basics outlined above!

Machen or Tun?

One of the challenges in learning a language is making the right choice among words with similar meanings. *Tun* means “to do.” Simple enough, but another word means “to do” too. *Machen* basically means “to make,” and is very often used just like in English (see explanations and examples [here](#)), but it also means “to do.” So which one do we use, and when? Usage changes from area to area and sometimes from generation to generation, but as a very general guide, if there is no particular object, *machen* and *tun* are usually interchangeable.

Piggeldy and Frederick happen to be talking about a sheep.

*Es hat eben gesagt, was es den ganzen Tag **tut**.*

It just said what it **does** the whole day.

Caption 33, Piggeldy und Frederick: Das Schaf

Piggeldy could have said:

*Es hat eben gesagt, was es den ganzen Tag **macht**.*
It just said what it **does** the whole day.

And here, someone is suspected of cheating at German Monopoly:

*Was **machst** du da an der Kasse?*
What **are** you **doing** there at the cash register?
Caption 26, Monopoly: Geheime Tipps und Tricks

He could have said:

*Was **tust** du da an der Kasse?*
What **are** you **doing** there at the cash register?

We've seen how *machen* and *tun* can be interchangeable. In practice, though, German speakers will use one over the other in a given situation. So pay attention. Little by little, you will start getting a feel for which one sounds more natural. The important thing is to know when *machen* and *tun* cannot replace each other.

When you are making an apology, go for *tun*.

*Es **tut** mir sehr **leid**, dass ich dich danach gefragt habe.*

I am very **sorry** that I asked you about it.
Caption 36, Piggeldy und Frederick: Sprichwörter

When you accept an apology, you'll use *machen*.

*Das **macht** nichts.*
It doesn't **matter**.

When you want to explain that you're busy, *tun* is the right verb to use:

*Was willst du von mir? Ich hab' **zu tun**.*

What do you want from me? I have [things] **to do**.
Caption 66, Alexander Hauff: Showreel - Part 2

And pretending to do something is child's play, as long as you remember to use *tun*!

Ich könnt' *so tun*, als ob ich dir zum Beispiel eine verpasse.
I could **pretend**, for example, as if I were to sock you one.
Caption 89, Bürger Lars Dietrich: Schlecht Englisch kann ich gut - Part 2

Learning tip:

On the Yabla video page, do searches with *machen* and *tun* in any or all of their conjugations, and see where they are used. Then go to the video itself to see the context and the translation.

Another suggestion: Think of a sentence using one or the other, like *Was tust du denn so in deiner Freizeit?* and Google it to see if and how many times it comes up. If you searched *tun* where most of the time *machen* is used, you will find that Google gives results for *machen*—the more commonly used word.

Have a look at this [blog](#) about *machen* and *tun*.

[Continue Reading](#)

False Friends

You may have come across the phrase “false friends” or “false cognates” (as they are more accurately known) during your language training. So what does it mean? It has nothing to do with disloyal friends, although linguistic false friends can also be treacherous. They are words that sound similar or are spelled identically but have different meanings in their respective language.

Here are some common German phrases with their English “false friend” below them.

Be careful what **aktuell** actually means:

German: **aktuell** – topical, current, up-to-date

English: **actually** – *eigentlich, tatsächlich, wirklich*

*Eigentlich stammt es aus dem **aktuellen** Album der Rocksängerin.*

Actually, it comes from the rock singer’s **current** album.

Caption 9, Liza: ein Lied für Opel

When Germans talk about the imminent future, you may think they're talking about someone's lack of hair:

German: **bald** – soon

English: **bald** – *kahl*

*...die olympischen Winterspiele, die **bald** in Vancouver stattfinden werden.*

...the Winter Olympic Games that will **soon** take place in Vancouver.

Caption 3, Deutsche Sporthilfe: Ball des Sports - Part 2

Watch what you give someone on their birthday!

German: **das Gift** – poison, venom

English: **gift** – *das Geschenk*

*Sein **Gift** ist vergleichbar mit einem Bienenstich.*

His **poison** is comparable to a bee sting.

Caption 9, Summer Cheergirl 2010: Fotoshooting mit Skorpionen

If you want to make a marriage proposal to a German, pay attention to how you ask...

German: **sich engagieren** – to be committed, get involved

English: **to get engaged** – *sich verloben*

*Find' ich das immer gut, **sich** für solche Sachen zu **engagieren**.*

I think [it's] always good to **get involved** in such things.

Caption 8, Luxuslärm: rockt gegen's Saufen

The winter is dragging on and spring seems a long way off, but we all know it will come eventually. However, confusing “eventually” with the German *eventuell* makes spring seem far less likely:

German: **eventuell** – possibly, perhaps

English: **eventually** – *schließlich, endlich, irgendwann*

***Eventuell** habe ich in der einen oder anderen Situation emotional überreagiert.*

Possibly I overreacted emotionally in one or another situation.

Caption 28, Filmtrailer: Keinohrhasen

You may describe a horse as being *brav*, but this has nothing to do with being brave!

German: **brav** – well, well-behaved, dutifully

English: **brave** – *mutig, tapfer*

*Die schönste Wiesen-Erfahrung? Dass immer die Pferde **brav** gingen.*

The best meadow experience? That the horses always went **dutifully**.

Caption 9, Oktoberfest München: Auf der Wiesen - Part 2

As you can see, using “false friends” in the wrong context can be embarrassing, but most of the time it is just a funny mistake. However, you should try to learn these deceitful words to avoid any faux pas!

[Continue Reading](#).

All You Need Is Liebe

Did you know that the Beatles, owing in part to the time they spent in Hamburg at the start of their career, released a version of "She Loves You" in German? Its title is „*Sie liebt dich*."

The German noun and verb for love (*Liebe, lieben*) are used with more variety of meaning than “love” in English. So, *liebe* (dear) Yabla

subscribers, let's see all of the different ways we can make love work for us in German!

As illustrated above, the adjective *liebe/lieber* (dear) is used as an informal form of address. We see this usage in the following Yabla video, starting at the very top: with God.

Du lieber Gott, welchen Weg müssten die denn abends zurücklegen, wenn Köln Gulu wäre?

Dear God, which way would they have to travel in the evening, if Cologne were Gulu [a city in Uganda]?

Caption 47, World Vision: Wolfgang Niedecken

Working our way down from God to tattoo exhibitions, we find:

Liebe Zuschauer, es fand eine Tattoo-Ausstellung in Frankfurt im Hotel „Roomers“ statt.

Dear viewers, a tattoo exhibition took place in Frankfurt at the Hotel Roomers.

Caption 1, Tätowierungen: Tattoo-Ausstellung

If you would prefer your *Liebe* to mean more than merely "dear," listen to how Thomas uses a variation of the root word (*lieb*) to mean "rather" or "preferably":

Aber ich glaube, ich nehm' mir lieber ein Taxi.

But I believe I'd **rather** take a taxi.

Caption 49, Melanie und Thomas: treffen sich

This can work to express superlative preferences as well:

Am liebsten vermutlich eine Sendung...

Most preferably, presumably, a broadcast...

Caption 54, Frauenfußball-WM - Der Bundespräsident am Ball - Part 1

If you prefer popularity to love, add the *be-* prefix for a refreshing change of meaning:

Orangensaft ist sehr beliebt in Deutschland.

Orange juice is very **popular** in Germany.

Caption 11, Jenny beim Frühstück: Teil 1 - Part 1

Add *-haber* to *lieb* to stir up some enthusiasm:

Machst du ja auch Auftragswerke für Kunden oder für Interessenten und Liebhaber.

You also do contract work for customers or for potential buyers and **enthusiasts**.

Caption 2, Lokalhelden: Art House - Part 2

Liebhaber can also mean "lover" in the more intimate sense:

Tristan und Isolde waren Liebhaber.

Tristan and Isolda were **lovers**.

And in the end, it is best to make love, even while preparing for war:

In zwei Sekunden Frieden stiften, Liebe machen, den Feind vergiften...

In two seconds make peace, make **love**, poison the enemy...

Caption 3, Andreas Bourani: Alles nur in meinem Kopf - Part 1

So you see that in German, the word for "love" (*Liebe*) is the basis for a number of different expressions ranging from "dear" to "preferably" to "enthusiast" to the actual object of one's desire.

[Continue Reading](#)

Rutsch and rutschen: A good "slide" into the New Year!

The most typical New Year's greeting in Germany is the slang phrase *Einen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr!* or simply *Guten Rutsch!* These can be translated literally as "A good slide into the New Year!" or "Good slide!"

Dann wünsch' ich euch schöne Weihnachten, 'nen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr und viel Spaß beim Anschauen. Tschüß!

In which case I wish you a wonderful Christmas, a good **slide** into [start to] the New Year and a lot of fun while watching. Bye!

Captions 83-84, Weihnachtsinterviews: Cettina in Linkenheim

The word *Rutsch* means a downward sliding movement, and the greetings are meant to convey a smooth transition into the New Year, though the origin of the phrase is still uncertain. Let's have a look at the more ordinary ways *Rutsch* and *rutschen* are used.

In an interview, Germany's top windsurf star, Bernd Flessner, is asked if he can get from Altenteil Halpen to the Lighthouse *in einem Rutsch* (in one go [literally "through in one slide"]). The answer? Yes!

*In einem **Rutsch** durch? -In einem **Rutsch**.*

In one **go**? -In one **go**.

Caption 9, Das "Race around Fehmarn": Neuer Surfrekord

A professor involves his talking pet bird named Dodo in demonstrating Newton's law of inertia using the "*Dodomobil*," (really just a shoebox). The verb *rutschen* (to slide or skid) is in more common usage than the noun *Rutsch*:

*Dann... theoretisch, fährt dann das Dodomobil oder **rutscht**, besser gesagt... **rutscht** das Dodomobil unendlich weiter.*

Then... theoretically, the Dodomobile then continues to drive... or **slide**, rather... the Dodomobile continues to **slide** infinitely.

Captions 38-39: Das 1. Newtonsche Gesetz: erklärt am Beispiel des Dodomobils - Part 1

Piggeldy and Frederick are playing on a *Rutschbahn* (a slide):

*„Richtig“, schrie Frederick und **rutschte** die **Rutschbahn** hinunter.*

"Right," shouted Frederick and **slid** down the **slide**.

Caption 36, Piggeldy und Frederick: Spielen

Watch out, Grandma! Here *rutschen* takes on another meaning:

*Dann **rutscht** die Oma auf einer Bananenschale aus.*

Then the grandmother **slips** on a banana peel.

Caption 27: Sabine und Ivana - erzählen Witze

So whether you are sliding down a slide, sliding into the New Year, or slipping on a banana peel, understanding this versatile word can help you have a *guten Rutsch ins Deutsch!*

[Continue Reading.](#)

Hier liegt der Hund begraben: That is exactly the point!

German has many colorful idioms and slang expressions, some of which closely parallel those in English but many of which have completely different meanings that are occasionally difficult to interpret. German idioms and slang expressions using the word *Hund* (dog) are plentiful and provide an interesting insight into the wide variety of German expressions.

Here are some examples using the word *Hund* which parallel the English:

*Was kostet ein **Hundeleben**?*

What does a **dog's life** cost? [Idiom: What is the price of living in poverty?]

Caption 1, Queensberry: gegen Pelz

müde wie ein Hund sein (to be as tired as a dog)

treu wie ein Hund sein (to be as faithful as a dog)

jemanden wie einen Hund behandeln (to treat someone like a dog)

wie ein Hund leben / ein Hundeleben führen (to lead a dog's life)

vor die Hunde gehen (to go to the dogs, to be faring poorly)

Ein toter Hund beißt nicht mehr. (Dead dogs don't bite.)

Hunde, die bellen, beißen nicht. (Literally: Dogs that bark don't bite; his bark is worse than his bite.)

Es hat keinen Sinn, schlafende Hunde zu wecken. (Literally: It makes no sense to wake sleeping dogs; let sleeping dogs lie.)

Other German slang and idiomatic usages of *Hund* are more difficult, since they have no direct parallel expressions in English:

*Und genau hier liegt der **Hund** begraben.*

And this is exactly where the **dog** is buried. [Idiom: And that is exactly the crux of the matter.]

Caption 35, Für Tierfreunde: Tierheim Nied

Here are some usages of *Hund* with no direct English parallels:

ein gemeiner Hund (literally: a mean dog; a mean person, a nasty piece of work)

kein Hund (nobody, no one)

armer Hund (literally: poor dog; poor devil, poor wretch)

jemanden auf den Hund bringen (literally: to bring someone to the dogs; to ruin someone's health or nerves)

des Pudels Kern (literally: at the core of the poodle; at the crux of the matter) This phrase is from the classic German writer Goethe's work *Faust I: Mephistopheles*.

Kein Hund nimmt von jemandem mehr einen Bissen Brot. (Literally: No dog takes a bite of bread from someone anymore; no one wants to know someone, no one wants anything to do with someone.)

Learning idiomatic and slang expressions is not only fun, but it also brings you closer to the culture whose language you are learning—and impresses native speakers. So don't be a *fauler Hund* (lazy dog): use Yabla to improve your skills with idioms and slang!

[Continue Reading](#)

Eben: Exactly just even!

While watching Yabla videos, especially interviews, you may well have noticed that German speakers love using the word *eben*. Used as an adjective, *eben* means "even" or "flat or level"; as an adverb it means "evenly."

But there's more to it. Let's take a closer look!

Der kultivierte Camper ist eben anspruchsvoller geworden.

The cultivated camper has **just** become more discriminating.

Caption 5, Glamping: Camping mit Stil

Eben is used in this video to emphasize the fact that there are some people who are used to high standards and will not be satisfied spending their holidays in a simple tent made of four poles and a piece of cloth (whereas others surely will!). People are different. *Das ist eben so!* (That's just the way it is!) So the example of *eben* in this video is used in the sense of "just" or "simply."

In [Unser Universum: Der tiefste Blick ins All](#), we learn that it also means "exactly" or "precisely":

Was wir oder unsere Teleskope sehen, ist das Licht, das von eben diesem Himmelskörper ausgeht

What we or our telescopes are seeing is the light that radiates **precisely** from this heavenly body

Captions 35-36, Unser Universum: Der tiefste Blick ins All

Eben can also describe something that has happened just now:

Marco du hast eben schon aufgelegt

Marco you **just** DJed

Caption 2, Big City Beats: DJ Marco Petralia

Learning suggestion:

Sicher ist es nicht eben einfach (of course it's not **exactly** easy) to implement *eben* correctly in your conversation right away, but as with everything: *Übung macht eben den Meister!* (practice **just** makes perfect!). So why not start right now and create three sentences in which *eben* is used as "exactly," another three in which it is used as "just," and three more in which it has the meaning of "just now."

Examples:

Das ist eben der Film, den wir gestern in der Vorschau gesehen haben. (That's **exactly** the movie we saw yesterday in the preview.)

Ich esse eben gerne mein Frühstück im Bett. (I **just** love having my breakfast in bed.)

Ich bin eben am Flughafen angekommen. (I have **just** arrived at the airport.)

Viel Spaß! (Have fun!)

[Continue Reading](#)

Laufen: Extrapolations on a Useful Verb

Gehen means "to go," *rennen* means "to run." But what is *laufen* all about? *Laufen* can mean all of the above! It means "to walk", "to run," or simply "to go." Note that its noun form, *das Laufen*, is neuter (in fact, all noun forms of verb infinitives are neuter), and means "a race" or

"racing."

In *Jan Wittmer - Ich laufe (Tim Bendzko)*, we have an example where *laufen* has the meaning of "to run":

Und ich laufe
 And I **run**
Ich laufe davon
 I **run** from it
Und ich laufe
 And I **run**
So schnell und so weit ich kann
 As fast and as far as I can
 Captions 6-9, Jan Wittmer - Ich laufe (Tim Bendzko)

In this video, Jan Wittmer sings over and over again the line *Ich laufe davon*. He is running away. He is not just walking, he is running as *schnell* (fast) and as *weit* (far) as he can.

You would say *Ich laufe jeden Tag ins Büro* (I walk to the office every day) if you wanted to use *laufen* in the sense of walking. Surely you do not run to the office every day in your suit and high heels, with your laptop tucked under your arm, unless you overslept or your profession happens to involve *Marathon laufen*!

On the other hand, let's say you're in a singles bar looking for the perfect partner, like Tanya and Sandra in [RheinMain Szene - Singles der Woche](#). You might be tempted to say something along the lines of:

Also, mit ein Meter sechsundsiebzig ist es nicht so einfach. Hier laufen so viele kleine Männer rum.
 Well, being one meter seventy-six is not so easy. Here there are a lot of short men **walking** around.
 Caption 34, RheinMain Szene - Singles der Woche

So if you want to start using *laufen* in conversation, just pay attention to the pace you want to emphasize.

Wir drücken dir die Daumen, dass alles gut läuft beim Lernen mit Yabla!
 We're crossing our fingers that everything **goes** well with Yabla learning!

Learning tip:

After you've established a firm grip on a useful German verb, take the next step. For instance, you're stuck in traffic. Put the time to good use by composing a simple sentence using the verb in the present tense. (One immediately comes to mind: *Ich laufe davon*.) Now alter the same sentence, changing its verb tense only, and see how many sentences you can come up with. It's an ambitious goal, but getting comfortable with all 12 German tenses won't happen overnight. So let's get crackin'! No, seriously, think about it: when speaking your own language, notice how often and effortlessly you shift from one tense to another within a single conversation. When you get back home, check your results in Baron's 501 *German Verbs*, a must-have for any aspiring German speaker, or [click here](#) for a useful website about verbs.

[Continue Reading](#)

German Slang Part 1

In our last newsletter we covered [one way to sound more like a German speaker](#). This time we'll talk about another: using slang or colloquial language. *Tschüss* (bye) is a good example of this. It is an informal way of saying goodbye and in many situations of even passing familiarity, it is how people part.

Let's look at some more slang you can sprinkle into your German speech.

In [Highend-Fashion aus dem Kloster - Ein Mönch als Maßschneider](#), we learn that:

die Catwalks der Welt sind voll von schicken und vor allem nicht ganz billigen Klamotten.
 the catwalks of the world are full of chic and, above all, not exactly inexpensive **clothing**
 Caption 2, [Highend-Fashion aus dem Kloster - Ein Mönch als Maßschneider](#)

Klamotten is a very common colloquialism for "clothing." As with all such words, you might use it with a hip store clerk or a friend, but not with a complete stranger or even a less familiar coworker.

Another example one comes across commonly is *blau*, meaning "drunk":

und ähm, ich find' diese Aktion "bunt statt blau" total wichtig
 and um, I think this campaign "**Colorful instead of Blue [Drunk]**" is totally important
 Caption 3, [Luxuslärm - rockt gegen's Saufen Slang can vary greatly by region](#).

The word *Kiez*, used in the following example, is fairly specific to Berlin, where it means a small, cohesive neighborhood. It is also used in

Hamburg, and to a lesser extent in Hannover, where it is suggestive of prostitution. By contrast, it is entirely unfamiliar in most of southern Germany.

Gitarist Jürgen Ehle wohnt seit fünfundzwanzig Jahren in dem Kiez und schwelgt in Erinnerungen.

Guitarist Jürgen Ehle has lived for twenty-five years in the **area** and luxuriates in memories.

Captions 3-4, [Pankow - Rolling Stones des Ostens](#)

That just about wraps things up for now. *Tschüss* and till next time!

Staff Favorites

[Luxuslärm - rockt gegen's Saufen](#)

Binge drinking? Band members of German band Luxuslärm and their fans have a very strong opinion when it comes to this topic. The band is sponsoring the campaign "*bunt statt blau*" [colorful instead of blue (drunk)] which is now happening at many schools. Support it [here](#).

[Pankow - Rolling Stones des Ostens](#)

Pankow - one of Berlin's suburbs and the living room of the legendary band of the same name. PANKOW guitar player Jürgen Ehle luxuriates in memories.

[Abendessen Mit Marko](#)

Learning Tip

Getting frustrated with the pace of your learning? Try this fun exercise. Watch a video that is a level of difficulty higher than usual and then go back to one you had to work particularly at to master. You will find that you have come a longer distance than you had thought.

[Continue Reading](#)

The Many Ways to Say “Well”

Sounding like a native speaker in a newly acquired language can be tricky. There are all of those grammar rules and new vocabulary words and social conventions to be considered. One way you can make yourself sound more like a German speaker is by learning some of the common “filler” words people use in conversation. The word “well” is such a word in English. Let's learn some equivalent words a German speaker might use.

Here are two variations on *ja* (yes) which are used in this way:

Tja, was hat das mit Hollywood zu tun?

Well, what does this have to do with Hollywood?

Caption 6, [Fastnacht - Karneval - Quartier Latin - Part 1 of 2](#)

Na ja, das is' halt mein Titel, ja.

Well, that is just my title, yes.

Caption 83, [Bürger Lars Dietrich - Schlecht Englisch kann ich gut - Part 2 of 2](#)

Deciding whether to use *tja* or *na ja* is a bit of an art, but you can think of it this way: *tja* might also be translated as "hmm" or "let me think"; *na ja* might be translated as "you know."

Also, which is commonly used to mean “therefore” or “so,” often finds its way into conversations like this one:

Also, wir waren schon damals eigentlich...

Well, we were already back then actually...

Caption 33, [Bürger Lars Dietrich - Schlecht Englisch kann ich gut - Part 2 of 2](#)

When used as a filler, *also* is generally applied for one of two reasons. In the example above, it is used because the speaker is thinking back or reminiscing. It can also serve to add emphasis or impact to a declarative statement, like this one about a subject of controversy:

Also, da scheiden sich die Geister.

Well, here the spirits divide [opinions differ].

Caption 13, [Fastnacht - Karneval - Quartier Latin - Part 1 of 2](#)

Well, that's it for now! Be sure to watch your inbox for your next Yabla German lesson, coming soon.

Staff Favorites

[Bürger Lars Dietrich - Schlecht Englisch kann ich gut - Part 2 of 2](#)

A German comedian with an East German background, Citizen Lars Dietrich continues to answer Raudy's questions, and among others, gives evidence of his previous career as a stuntman...

[Der Polar - Ich bin bei dir](#)

German singer-songwriter Der Polar sings his emotional song *Ich bin bei dir* (I am with you).

[Piggeldy und Frederick - Gesang](#)

Enjoy another walk through the fields with pig brothers Piggeldy and Frederick. This time Piggeldy wants to know what "song" is. Also available as an app.

Learning Tip

Trying to learn how to pronounce German? Go through a video that is short and sweet at least two or three times. Then practice saying the things that are said by the participants of the video. Take turns speaking each individual participant, so that you start to get the hang of some of the nuance of tone and pronunciation.

[Continue Reading](#)

[If Wishes Were Horses and When Pigs Fly - Wenn](#)

English speakers learning the word *wenn* for the first time often find the parallels to "when" helpful at first. But *wenn* can also mean "if." For example, a German child pleading for something and promising to be good in return can expect to hear:

Wenn das Wörtchen wenn nicht wär, wär mein Vater Millionär.

If the word "if" did not exist, my father would be a millionaire.

This is comparable to the English expression "If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride" and can be translated more idiomatically as "When pigs fly."

While the uses of *wenn* in German are varied, it is most commonly used in such simple cases as:

Ich habe kein Geld, wenn ich Dinge einkaufe.

I have no money if I shop for things.

Caption 40, [Deutschkurs in Tübingen: Die Konjunktion "wenn"](#)

The German use of *wenn... dann* is also parallel to the English "if... then." We see this in [Auftrumpfen: Mit Kitsch und Protz](#) :

*aber auch wenn die Zeit noch 'n bisschen schwierig ist,
dann nimmt man sich gern zu Hause 'n bisschen Ablenkung davon..
but even if times are still a bit tough,
then it is nice to have a bit of distraction from that at home...*
Captions 7 and 8, [Auftrumpfen: Mit Kitsch und Protz](#)

Sometimes *wenn* really does mean "when":

*und der, wenn er wild wird, uns Sand in die Augen weht
and the one that, when it becomes wild, blows sand into our eyes*
Caption 17, [Piggeldy und Frederick: Der Wind](#)

So now you see that that *Wenn das Wörtchen wenn nicht wär*, there would be quite a few things you'd have trouble expressing!

Staff Favorites

[Auftrumpfen: Mit Kitsch und Protz](#)

Flaunting, not scrounging is the order of the day: at the consumer goods trade fair Tendance it's all about the careful "blending." This is what the customers want, at least according to designers who introduce ever more pseudo-luxury goods. Copyright dpa

[Piggeldy und Frederick: Der Wind](#)

Who would not want a big brother to answer all possible questions? Piggeldy has such a brother. He wants to know a great deal of Frederick. In this episode, Frederick explains what wind is.

Also available as an [app](#)

[Frankfurt: Der Friedberger Platz](#)

The Friedberger Platz is a happening place in Frankfurt and, other than a few minor glitches, even a pleasure for the bar owners, whose establishment are hopping every Friday evening.

Learning Tip

When going through your videos, pay particular attention to a specific aspect of the language, such as a tense, a part of speech (such as the *wenn* above) or a tricky bit of vocabulary. And then reward yourself by watching one of the fun episodes to allow your mind to process.

[Continue Reading](#)

Your Royal Highness or Hey you - Forms of Address in German

At the beginning of *Modedesignerin Nina Hollein - Floria Prinzessin von Hessen - Part 2 of 3*, the interviewer asks the host of the fashion show, Floria Princess of Hesse, how she is to be properly addressed.

... also das ganz Korrekte ist „Königliche Hoheit“,
... that is, the really correct [way] is "Royal Highness,"

Caption 8, *Modedesignerin Nina Hollein - Floria Prinzessin von Hessen - Part 2 of 3*

Germans have a reputation for formal address. Traditionally, even co-workers of many years always addressed each other in the formal second person (*Sie*) and used both formal titles (*Herr Doktor*) and the person's last name. Anyone who has watched "The Sound of Music" knows that young ladies are to be addressed as *Fräulein*.

All of these things have changed a great deal in the past twenty years, and it is now much more common to address even a band you've never met before, as in the following example, in the informal second person (*du* or *ihr*, not *Sie*), or at least only use their first and last name without a formal title.

Und [...] ihr habt ja auch was mitgebracht...
And [...] you have also brought something along...

Caption 8, *Undertube - Jeans Team - Part 1 of 2*

The way of distinguishing between married and unmarried young women has all but disappeared, so if you meet a woman for the first time it is always appropriate to address her with *Frau* and her last name. Even Princess Floria ends her thoughts on the topic, which began today's lesson, by saying that the formal mode of address would be inappropriate in this context.

...aber das ist, glaub' ich, etwas fehl am Platz.
...but that is, I believe, somewhat out of place.

Caption 9, *Modedesignerin Nina Hollein - Floria Prinzessin von Hessen - Part 2 of 3*

It is still most polite to wait to be offered the informal (*du*) if the person you are meeting is your senior or in a position of authority.

Remember that while *Sie* sounds like the third person feminine or third person plural (*sie*), it is distinguished from them by always being capitalized. Also, it is conjugated like the third person plural (*Sie/sie haben*), not the second or third person singular (*du hast* or *sie hat*).

Staff Favorites

Undertube - Jeans Team - Part 1 of 2

Undertube is a show by four young persons who interview indie artists on the subways in Berlin, Cologne and Munich. This time [Jeans Team](#) are answering questions.

DDR zum Anfassen - Ganz tief im Westen

Relics of the GDR Worker and Farmers' state can be found of all places in the deepest southwest of the former Federal Republic of Germany. For many years now the museum in Pforzheim has been touted as the only one in West Germany devoted to the topic of the GDR. Copyright dpa

IAA - Traumland für Autobegisterter

Going all out: The automotive industry presents itself at the International Autoshow in Frankfurt as a successful market. The trade show booths are large and flashy, there is little sign of the crisis. The manufacturers do admit that steep growth is a thing of the past. Copyright dpa

Learning Tip

When learning a new vocabulary noun, memorize the definite article (*der, die, das*) along with the vocabulary word itself. That way you won't have to figure out what the grammatical gender is when it comes time to use it.

[Continue Reading](#)

Separable or not separable... that is the question!

Separable Verbs: verbs with a stressed prefix, that are separated when used in a sentence
i.e. *mitkommen, mitfeiern, einladen*

In each and every episode, we've all come to almost know by heart Frederick's blustery invitation to his younger brother, spoken as our beloved porcine brothers embark upon another stroll in the country. Let's all chime in with Frederick...

„*Komm mit.*“

"Come with [me]."

Caption 5, [Piggeldy und Frederick: Langeweile](#)

Mitkommen means "to come" or "to come along." The prefix *mit-* is stressed which indicates that it is a separable prefix verb. Notice in this present tense construction: the verb is in the second position and the separable prefix is at the end. Here the German appears benignly analogous to our English. However, *Vorsicht!* Don't be lulled to sleep!

In this next clip that reports the celebration of World Pi Day, notice what happens when additional information is included in the predicate.

Da feierst du jetzt' auch nich' mit beim Welt-Pi-Tag, oder?

Now you also don't **celebrate along** on World Pi Day or [do you]?

Caption 67, [Welt-Pi-Tag - Unser Leben mit der Kreiszahl](#)

Where does the additional information, (namely... *jetzt, auch, nicht*) appear? *Richtig!* It is sandwiched between the conjugated verb and the prefix.

This is also the case for *einladen* (to invite).

Heute lade ich alle meine Freunde zu mir nach Hause ein.

Today I will **invite** all of my friends to my home.

Note:

The prefixes of separable verbs are, by and large, prepositions or adverbs, but sometimes even verbs or nouns, all meaning that they are independent words. And, since no one is born a master, you can learn more about separable verbs [here](#) and [here](#).

Staff Favorites

[Culcha Candela - ziehen Bilanz](#)

Famous Berlin band Culcha Candela has put together its "best of" album and aims at performing in the home country of each of its band members. After Columbia, Poland and Germany, Korea and Uganda are still on the list.

[Welt-Pi-Tag - Unser Leben mit der Kreiszahl](#)

North Americans celebrate World Pi Day country-wide. Germans on the other hand seem to have forgotten all about the famous 3.14.

[Deutschkurs für Anfänger - Buchstaben und Zahlen](#)

This is a wonderful clip for everyone! Learn or refresh all letters of the alphabet as well as the numbers from 1-40!

Learning Tip

To practise recognizing separable verbs, select 3 clips. Watch each with both captions on. Pause and analyze the sentences which you think might contain a separable verb. Pay close attention to the correct pronunciation of the verb. Use the loop function of the Yabla Player to listen to it repeatedly and say the infinitive out loud, stressing the prefix, until you get it right. Do this exercise for all 3 clips (add more if necessary)! This will help you differentiate between stressed and unstressed prefixes and any remaining "separation anxiety" will end in smoke.

[Continue Reading](#)

Modal Particles: schon, ja, halt

Modal or "flavoring" particles: *schon, ja, halt*

words used in colloquial speech indicating a certain attitude of the speaker

Although Germans have a fondness for foreign cuisine, they will always stay faithful to their *Currywurst* (curried sausage). There are an estimated 2,000 sausage stands in Berlin and even a [museum](#) solely dedicated to this popular German snack. *Berliner* Frank Spieß, owner of the unique sausage stand "Curry and Chili," offers 12! levels of spiciness, emphatically ensuring that some, indeed, like it hot!

Also, *die Leute haben **schon**, äh, Spaß daran*,
 So, the people **indeed** have, uh, fun with it,
 Caption 48, [Currywurst - Berlins schärfstes Stück](#)

As a modal particle the word *schon* (in bold) means "indeed" as opposed to the literal meaning "already" when used as an adverb.

*Ich bin **schon** ein Fußballfan, aber kein eingefleischter.*
 I am **indeed** a soccer fan but not a die-hard one.

By adding a *ja* to her sentence, Eva, who takes us on a tour through Berlin's Viktoriapark, implies that it's well-known that the Kreuzberg ("cross hill") isn't really that high with its modest 66 meters.

*Das ist **ja** nicht besonders groß*
 That isn't particularly tall
 Caption 14, Berlin - Eva im Viktoriapark

Halt is another very commonly used modal particle which can be translated as "just", "simply" or "as a matter of fact." Drummer Thomas Holtgreve of German band Frida Gold uses it to add accent, attitude and emphasis.

*Ein bisschen auf die Spitze getrieben **halt**, so.*
Just pushed it a little bit to the extreme, so.
 Caption 19, Frida Gold - Making of "Zeig mir wie du tanzt" - Part 1

For a list and more example sentences of German modal particles you can go [here](#) and [here](#).

In conclusion, modal particles are uninflected parts of speech used to convey impatience, surprise, disbelief, or urgency along with the statement. Try them out and give your next conversation "*auf Deutsch*" an authentic, casual feel.

Staff Favorites

[Jonathan Johnson - die Berliner Mauer und Ost-Berlin](#)

August 1961 was the month in which the construction of the Berlin Wall got underway. Join Jonathan on his exclusive tour through former East Berlin.

[Berlin - Eva im Viktoriapark](#)

Enjoy a bird's-eye view of the multicultural Berlin district Kreuzberg from the top of the Kreuzberg ("cross hill," named after the Iron Cross memorial).

[Kurzfilm Festival - Horst](#)

Horst's girlfriend just broke up with him and now his next-door neighbor asks a rather unusual favor of him.

Learning Tip

If you want to fine tune your understanding of modal particles go to the Videos tab on german.yabla.com and enter the modal particle you want to practice into the search box. All videos containing said particle will appear. Focus only on watching those clips and your understanding of informal German along with the selected modal particles is sure to improve.

[Continue Reading](#)

[True Friends!](#)

True friends:

word pairs in two languages that look or sound similar, AND share a common meaning

Last month's lesson on "false friends" showed that German words that have similar sounding and written English counterparts aren't what one might take them for, at first glance.

The good news is that there are hundreds of these jewels, the so-called "true friends," that are lying about in plain sight. Yours for the taking! After studying articles and tenses for countless hours, what a welcome change! They are, indeed, "true friends" to the savvy German learner who is bound and determined to keep his eye peeled for them, ready to pocket them and place them in the strongbox of his *Wortschatz* (vocabulary, literally treasure of words). In the text below are some dead reliable "true friends."

German children *lernen* (learn) from early on, that at bedtime *der Sandmann* (the sandman) comes around with his bag of sand to tell a story and then sprinkle *Sand* (sand) in their eyes, which is said to make them sleepy. The stories of pig brothers Piggeldy and Frederick form a part

of this collection. In every episode Piggeldy asks his older brother a question which they then try to explore together. The questions revolve around the simplest of matters, around almost *philosophische Konzepte* (philosophical concepts) like rain, the sky, tidying up...

Look at the caption below from our feature clip

[Piggeldy und Frederick - Regen](#)

and see that "true friends" do, in fact, contribute to sentence comprehension.

*Sie liefen eine **Weile** durchs **Moor***

They walked a **while** through the **moor**

Caption 7, Piggeldy und Frederick - Regen

For more examples of true friends, please go [here](#).

Staff Favorites

Lektionen - Morgen

Anna feels overwhelmed by all the things she has planned to do today. Her friend confides a secret to her which she hopes will help her... Have I aroused your curiosity? Here's a hint: In dealing with that proverbial "to-do list" the ability to conceptualize in the future tense sure comes in handy!

Frida Gold - Wovon sollen wir träumen

In this song German band Frida Gold ponders what's really important in life and how it is easy to loose sight of it, particularly for us in a society where "bigger", "better", "faster", "more" - all seem to be the motto.

Unser Universum - Die Sonne

The sun is the star that breathes life into our planet. Learn more about the sun in this informative and captivating clip.

Learning Tip

Have you noticed that every clip features the speech rate under the Videos tab of our GermanYabla site? If not, go to the Vocab tab (which you will find on the Videos page below each clip). In addition to a vocabulary list for the clips, you will also find the speech rate at the top.

As a rule, pick videos with a speech rate that is right for your level and stick with it until you feel comfortable increasing it. If you feel up to the challenge, try a couple of clips out of your comfort zone with higher speech rates and see how much content you can glean intuitively. You may be pleasantly surprised.

[Continue Reading](#)

Beware of False Friends!

False Friends:

word pairs in two languages that look or sound similar, but differ in meaning.

Have a look at the text below about this month's featured video which includes a few false friends in German (in bold italics) and see if you can determine their true meaning in English!

A recent study investigating male dance moves that catch a woman's eye has shown that certain dance moves executed by men are more likely to grab women's attention than others. Neither robot impersonation and windmill-like flailing of the arms nor ***dezen*** dance moves (...*noch dezent* Tanzbewegungen...) set female hearts racing! Men might ***sich*** auch ***blamieren*** if they dance in circles (*Männer könnten sich auch blamieren, wenn sie im Kreis tanzen.*).

If they, however, emphasized upper body movement, paid attention to the right action in the left shoulder, the neck and the right knee and incorporated variety into their dance patterns they might ***bekommen*** what they are after (*...könnten sie bekommen, was sie suchen*). This just leaves one question open: Which traits lie hidden behind those moves?

- *dezent* = discreet, subtle ≠ decent
- *sich blamieren* = make a fool of oneself ≠ to blame
- *bekommen* = receive, get ≠ to become

Consider an example from one of our staff favorites.

*Bitte, seien Sie jetzt ganz **still**.*

Please, be completely **silent** now.

[Caption 60, Magie - Die Zaubershow](#)

For more examples of false friends, please go [here](#). And take this [quiz](#) that tests your grasp of some common false friends!

Staff Favorites[Berlin Chats - Paula & Heide](#)

Join old friends Paula and Heide at a cafe in Berlin where they have tons to catch up on over coffee.

[Deutschkurs in Tübingen - Vorbereitung auf den Test](#)

German tenses can sometimes be a tough nut to crack. This clip helps you review the present, past and present perfect tenses and, at the same time, gives you the opportunity to practice sample sentences using verbs in the above tenses.

[Magie - Die Zaubershow](#)

Magicians have the skill to keep young and old spellbound. Although it is commonly known that there is always a logical explanation behind the tricks, it is the illusion that fascinates and mesmerizes us. So without further ado, curtain up for the one and only *Yabla the Great!*

Learning Tip

Pick two to three clips from one category, e.g. food, which discuss the same or a similar subject. Watch them in ascending order according to their level of difficulty. While watching you will notice that some of the vocabulary is the same. This exercise will enhance your contextual understanding, as well as, reinforce familiar words, consolidate your grasp of newer words and improve your listening skills.

[Continue Reading](#)[Pesky Prepositions](#)

Pesky Prepositions:

At Easter time *in* (in) Germany, *außer* (aside from) the popular Easter egg hunt, there are also old Easter customs. My grandmother always used to tell me that young women would go to a brook *am* (on the) Eve of Easter Sunday and trickle water *über* (over) themselves. *Durch* (By) this practice they hoped to attain and preserve beauty. The catch was that they were not allowed to utter a single word *auf* (on) their journey. Whether or not it is true remains a mystery. I hope you all had a Happy Easter!

Now for something completely different. What comes to mind when you hear words like construction waste, scrap iron, sheet metal, etc.? ...Scrapyard!

Swiss musicians Bubble Beatz recycle and collect such items and incorporate them *in* (into) their so called "Trash Machine." Going *unter* (by) the name of "most attractive scrap heap *von der* (of) Switzerland", Bubble Beatz jump *herum* (around) and deliver a wild, sweat-inducing performance *mit* (with) elements of house, industrial and drum 'n bass *auf* (on) said Machine.

So prepositions are on the menu today! Those essential little words that usually introduce prepositional phrases to indicate the relation between things in a sentence.

Take a look at a few examples:

im Augenblick mit ihrer "Trash Machine" auf Deutschland-Tour.

at the moment **with** their "Trash Machine" **on** Germany tour.

Caption 4, Bubble Beatz - Supertalente vom Schrottplatz

Some prepositions are identical in German and in English. But others just make us want to tear our hair out.

Nach Augen, die mich interessieren

For eyes that interest me

Caption 30, Frida Gold - Wovon sollen wir träumen

Das Tier um die Beine geschlungen und dann Kopf an Kopf posieren.

The animal looped **around** the legs and then posing **head to head**.

Caption 22, Summer Cheergirl 2010 - Fotoshooting mit Riesenschlangen - Part 1 of 2

If prepositions seem difficult, don't despair! As you know, practice makes perfect. So test yourself with these fun exercises [here](#) and [here](#).

Staff Favorites[Jenny und Alena - Handball](#)

Alena is a pro handball player and apparently the sport is not quite as harmless as it seems. Jenny is surprised to find out about all the different

injuries Alena has sustained so far, in her career.

[RheinMain Szene - Selig - Part 1 of 3](#)

This Hamburg-based rock band represents a mix of experimental 70's rock and grunge. Calling themselves "Hippie-Metal" heros, they recently reunited after a 10-year hiatus. In this clip Selig gives us a taste of their latest sound and members discuss their comeback.

[Summer Cheergirl 2010 - Fotoshooting mit Riesenschlangen - Part 1 of 2](#)

Does the rule that the bigger the scorpion, the less lethal they are, also hold true for snakes? If so, would you switch places with the contestants in Summer Cheergirl 2010? Presented by Rhein/MainTV, it was Germany's hottest cheerleading contest from last summer. See for yourself, how the girls perform in front of the camera with their boa-constricting counterparts.

Learning Tip

Choose a clip according to your level of proficiency. While watching it, click on the words whose meaning you're unsure of. After watching the clip, access your flashcards by clicking the Flashcard tab. All the words that you clicked have been compiled into sets. Review your flashcard set. Now watch the clip again. Has your listening comprehension improved? Finally, speaking aloud in German, recount what you saw and heard in the clip. Summarize the gist. Try using words you've just learned. At first, this will seem difficult. But over time you'll be amazed at your increased fluency!

[Continue Reading](#)

[Lightning-quick, crow-black and Co! Compound Adjectives](#)

Compound Adjectives:

I invite you to take a journey with me back to the Middle Ages. At the Medieval Christmas market, soul-snatcher Markus lures us to abandon ourselves to the vice of gambling. Of course, there is a reward involved!

*Für jeden Mitspieler gibt es einen Edelstein des **immerwährenden** Glückes,*

For every player there is a precious stone of **everlasting** happiness,

Caption 9, Mittelalterlicher Markt - Mäuseroulette

What makes this precious stone so enticing? The aspect that it's *immerwährend*, right? *Immerwährendes Glück* is something everyone dreams of. When you use compound adjectives you can include additional information in a sentence and still keep it compact. They prevent you from having to write lengthy versions like *...einen Edelstein des Glückes, das immer währt*. This clause is grammatically correct and has the same meaning. (There is another compound adjective hidden in the above clip. See if you can find it!)

Compare the sentence lengths of the German and English clauses below.

*diesmal mit **systemkonformen** Kunstwerken.*

this time with artworks **in conformity with the system**.

Caption 6, Restituierung von Raubkunst - aus der Nazi-Zeit - Part 2 of 2

The words in bold emphasize clearly that compound adjectives can shorten a German sentence without having to omit any wanted information.

Have you seen and spoken this tongue-twister before? *Kohlpechrabenschwarz* (coal-pitch raven-black). If you haven't, try saying it just for fun! This compound adjective emphasizes the absolute blackness of something. So compound adjectives are also used to intensify and creatively underscore a noun's attributes in ways that one of the off-the-shelf variety cannot achieve.

Note: If you're searching for the definition of an adjective and aren't getting results, it may be a compound. In this case, break it into its component parts and search their meanings individually.

For an exercise on the formation of compound adjectives go [here](#).

Staff Favorites

[Frida Gold - Zeig mir wie du tanzst](#)

This is a fresh German band from Bochum whose sound, according to them, is "pop all the way" with electro-beats. And they just supported queen of pop, Kylie Minogue, on her Germany tour. So *listen out* for them!

[Queensberry - gegen Pelz](#)

All-female German pop band Queensberry campaigns for the animal rights organization PETA. In this clip they go to unusual lengths to call to our attention that fake fur isn't necessarily fake. Would you rather go naked than wear fur?

[Restituierung von Raubkunst - aus der Nazi-Zeit - Teil 2](#)

Apart from a beautiful exterior, that dates back to the early 19th century, the Wiesbaden Museum also boasts impressive paintings, sculptures and other works of art from the 12th to the 21st century. Art often changes hands, not always legally and sometimes as the result of historic

events. This is why the Wiesbaden Museum has also dedicated itself to provenance research which is the subject of this video.

Learning Tip

Set small, achievable short-term goals. While watching the videos:

- Write down and learn 10 words or useful phrases of your choice every day. Repeat them on Saturday. Take Sunday off.
- Make a list of your typical German errors. Do an error analysis and consciously review the grammar.

Finally, if progress is slow, keep at it. Take the long view. Recall where you started and how far you've come. Bear always in mind that learning a second language is a life-long endeavor that will enrich your life for years to come!

[Continue Reading](#)

Do you speak Germish?

Anglicisms

anglicism: an English word or phrase that is used in another language

Germans can't do without them. There are some though, who don't feel the need to add a couple of English words to their mother tongue for good measure. Three students sharing an apartment in Berlin, for example, went as far as translating anglicisms back into German and introduced fines for every slip-up in Germish.

March is Carnival season or "The Fifth Season" in Germany. People dress up and masquerade to chase and scare away winter. In this month's featured video three veterans explain the old Carnival tradition, dating back to the Middle Ages. Note the following anglicism:

Und am Sonntag is' Pause, "beauty sleep", oder...

And on Sunday a break, **beauty sleep**, or...

Caption 65, Fastnacht - Karneval - Karnevalisten

Anglicisms are very common in German.

In our video about the famous Austrian tattoo artist Mario Barth, in which he expresses his support for the animal rights organization PETA, you'll find a number of them.

und hat das "Statement" gesetzt "Ink, not Mink" [Tinte nicht Nerz].

and has made the **statement** "Ink, not Mink".

Caption 10, Tierfreund Mario Barth - Der Tätowierer der Stars - Part 1 of 3

Finally: Longing for your summer vacation or just a brief holiday get-a-way to a warmer clime? Then take a look at "*Christiane - fährt in den Urlaub.*" Test your understanding of spoken German in this practical scenario and search for **das Handy*** in the clip. Regarding this anglicism, German has taken an English adjective and morphed it into a noun. Can you guess what it is? She says before leaving on her trip: *Ah, was ich immer vergesse, das Aufladegerät fürs Handy.*

* Tipp auf Deutsch für Fortgeschrittene: **Das Handy** ist eine Erfindung der modernen Kommunikationstechnologie, ohne die viele von uns nicht mehr aus dem Haus gehen.

Staff Favorites

Longboarding - Mit Lassrollen

Invented by the Swiss, longboarding is the summer alternative to snowboarding. Tom, an avid and experienced boarder of all kinds, was mesmerized by these longboards and opened the first longboard shop not only in Berlin, but in all of Germany.

Montag - Tausend Jahre sind ein Tag

The music of Hamburg-based band Montag has a very much down-to-earth feel to it. A lot of the songs are recorded in their home; so not only is their distinctive sound captured on the album, but also everyday noises, like kids laughing in the back alley or birds singing outside.

Der Struwwelpeter - Hans Guck-in-die-Luft

Der Struwwelpeter is a 19th century children's book written by Heinrich Hoffmann. It is still very popular today in Germany even if the authoritarian style of parenting depicted in it has long been discredited and discarded.

Learning Tip

If you want to reinforce the use of words in your favorite vocabulary list, go to the Video tab on [Yabla German](#) and type the word into the search box on the upper right side of the page. A list of every video containing this word will be generated. The captions from each clip in which the word occurs will appear. Try this and easily discover the word's correct use in different contexts.

[Continue Reading](#)

Fun with Idioms

Idiomatic Expressions

Although languages are always changing due to influences of society, forms of government and historical events, some elements of language, such as idiomatic phrases, have been preserved in languages for centuries.

They come in handy in every context, for example, in the lyrics of Berlin hip hop/reggae band Culcha Candela.

*Alles **im Eimer**...*

Everything's **down the drain [in the bucket]**...

Caption 2, Culcha Candela - Schöne Neue Welt

Let's look at something else that can be *im Eimer* (ruined; done for; broken).

*Nachdem er das Auto gegen die Wand gefahren hatte, war es **im Eimer**.*

After he had driven the car against the wall, it **was broken**.

You are probably familiar with the sensation of having a dry mouth. Well, Thomas Raudnitzky was experiencing just that while being awarded the Metropolitan Prize for hosting the trendy magazine RheinMain Szene.

*... mir **blieb** auch irgendwie **die Spucke** weg.*

... somehow "**the spit stayed away** from me" [**at a loss for words**].

Caption 4, Preisverleihung - Bestes Magazin

Now take a look at Lucas' "dry mouth" experience while test-riding a crazy new roller coaster in our video about Lucas' not so run-of-the-mill hobbies.

*Da **bleibt** einem wirklich kurz **die Spucke im Hals stecken**.*

For a moment, **the spit** really **gets stuck in your throat** [it's really **jaw-dropping**].

Caption 24, Lucas' Hobbys - Achterbahn und Bungee

Figuratively, this expression means to be utterly surprised, stunned or at a loss for words. In biblical times already, it was observed that someone salivates less when afraid. This was interpreted as a sign of God that the accused was guilty, who, out of fear, was unable to say anything that could have saved him.

Use these sites to find more examples of idiomatic phrases: [phrasen.com](#), [German proverbs](#).

Staff Favorites

[Culcha Candela - Schöne Neue Welt](#)

This band from Berlin can best be described as a mixed bag! Not only do the band members come from four different continents but it's their music style as well, which incorporates elements of reggae, dance hall, hip hop and rap. With sociopolitical content and extremely danceable beats, they are sure to get anyone jiving!

[Mittelalterlicher Weihnachtsmarkt - Diane in der Schandgeige](#)

In this clip you get a taste of Middle High German which people spoke from the 11th to the 14th century. It is not that dissimilar to present-day German. At the medieval Christmas Market in Durlach, Markus, the soul snatcher, is on the lookout for his next victim...

[Ich suche eine Wohnung - Fine](#)

Fine is apartment hunting in Berlin. She is looking for a shared apartment which is always a little bit of a gamble. Let's take a look at how it went.

Learning Tip

A great way to improve your listening skills is watching the clips first once without captions. This will help you to focus more on the audio. Then watch them again, this time with captions. Repeat these two steps a couple of times. Do you notice an improvement? Keep practicing!

[Continue Reading](#)

Versatile Verbs

aufheben: to suspend; to pick up

Have you ever longed to put the pedal to the metal? Car enthusiasts throughout the world dream of hitting the Autobahn in their favorite gas

guzzler. In a recent move that has environmentalists upset and speed demons ecstatic, Germany has removed more barriers to high-velocity travel:

*Das Verkehrsministerium **hat** einige Tempolimits **aufgehoben**.*

The Ministry of Transport **has lifted** some of the speed limits.

Caption 2, Deutsche Autobahnen: Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzungen

The infinitive of the verb in bold is *aufheben*. As with many other German verbs, it has numerous meanings in different contexts. In this case it means to "suspend something", to "declare something as invalid."

*Die Geldstrafe **wurde aufgehoben**.*

The fine **was cancelled**.

*Mit dem Ende der Apartheid **wurde** das Handelsembargo gegen Südafrika **aufgehoben**.*

With the end of apartheid, the trade embargo against South Africa **was lifted**.

In our video about Karlsruhe's phenomenal ultimate frisbee team, we encounter another meaning of *aufheben*, "to pick up":

*... du würdest ihn einfach **aufheben**.*

... you'd simply **pick it up**.

Caption 19, Ultimate Frisbee: Oli erklärt das Spiel - Part 1

Have you heard the expression *Viel Aufhebens um etwas machen*? In the figurative sense, the expression means to "make a fuss about something." It originated from the language of fencers, who, prior to fighting, picked up their swords from the ground, accompanied by elaborate ceremonies and boastful words.

Keep an eye out for these and other uses of *aufheben*, an extremely versatile German verb!

Staff Favorites

[Zu Besuch bei Jenny - In der Wohnung - Part 1](#)

Jenny invites you into her apartment and shows you the different rooms. The detailed description of every room as well as of the things in them will familiarize you with a German apartment in no time. Are you curious yet?

[Grammatik - Der bestimmte Artikel](#)

In this clip Jenny explains *der*, *die*, *das* and gives examples for each of them.

[Sportfreunde Stiller - "Ein Kompliment" unplugged, München](#)

Listening to this song by German rock band Sportfreunde Stiller will make you get goosebumps all over. But this successful band doesn't just write love songs. They also have a big interest in soccer and brought out an album solely dedicated to this sport. They even named themselves after their former soccer coach Mr. Stiller.

Learning Tip

While watching new videos, make sure to click on any word whose meaning you aren't totally sure of. You'll see the definition appear to the right of the caption, and the word will be added to your own personalized flashcard list (<http://german.yabla.com/flashcards.php>) for later review. It's a great way to watch yourself improve!

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