
A CONCISE GERMAN GRAMMAR

Timothy Buck

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Preface

This book aims to equip undergraduates with a reliable, readable, and accessible source of information on German grammar which meets the widely-felt need for a comprehensive yet concise guide to the language. It is hoped that, in addition to serving as a reference grammar, it may also be found useful as a 'reading grammar' that a user may gradually work his or her way through. A special feature is the inclusion of supplementary sections dealing with individual prepositions and conjunctions—areas in which students may be glad to have detailed guidance.

The book uses the new spelling system introduced in August 1998.

I am greatly indebted to the late Professor Paul Salmon (Edinburgh University) and Dr Jeffrey Ashcroft (St Andrews University), who read the text in its original version, and Dr Charles Russ (York University), who went through the final draft of the book, for their helpful comments and suggestions; the responsibility for the printed text is, of course, mine.

University of Edinburgh
1999

T.B.

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Pronunciation Guide

PHONETIC SYMBOLS

VOWELS

[a]	a Mann	[o]	o Drogist
[a:]	a Vater, aa Maat, ah Sahne	[o:]	o Sog, oh Bohne, oo Boot
[ɛ]	ä lächeln, e setzen	[ø]	(in oi, oy) Memoiren, loyal
[ɛ:]	ä Mädchen, äh zählen	[u]	u lustig
[e]	e Demokrat	[u]	u Duell
[e:]	e eben, ee Schnee, eh gehen	[u:]	u Fuß, uh Kuh
[ə]	e Sonne	[ü]	u Suite
[ɐ]	er Fenster, r mehr	[œ]	ö fördern
[ɪ]	i Zimmer	[ø]	ö Zölibat
[i]	i direkt	[ø:]	ö böse, öh Söhne
[i:]	i gib, ie lief, ieh sieh, ih ihr	[ʏ]	ü Lücke
[ɪ]	i Australien	[y]	ü Büro, y dynamisch
[ɔ]	o Motte	[y:]	ü Küken, üh Mühe, y typisch

NASAL VOWELS: [ã:] am, an, em, en (*Elan, Amusement*), [ɛ:] aim, ain, ein, en (after i or y), im, in (*Terrain, Teint, Bassin*), [õ:] om, on (*Affront*), [œ:] um (*Parfum*). (They are shortened in unstressed syllables, e.g. *Enquete* [ã-].)

DIPHTHONGS

[aɐ] ai *Mai*, ei *reich* [ɔɐ] äu *Häuptling*, eu *Reue* [aʊ] au *auch*

CONSONANTS

[b]	b haben, bb Ebbe	[ks]	chs Lachs, cks Klecks,
[ç]	ch Licht, g (in -ig) zwanzig	ks Koks, x Lexikon	
[d]	d Ding, dd Widder	[kv]	qu Quelle
[dʒ]	dsch Dschungel, g Gin, j jetten	[l]	l lachen, ll voll
[f]	f fünf, ff Affe, v vier, ph Phobie	[m]	m amüsant, mm hämmern
[g]	g gehen, gg Dogge	[n]	n Sohn, nn Henne
[h]	h Humor	[ŋ]	ng Klingel, n krank
[j]	j jung	[p]	p Pilz, -b Dieb
[k]	k König, ck backen, kk Akkord, c Café, ch Charakter, -g trug	[r]	r rosa, rh Rhabarber
		[s]	s Haus, ss/B hassen, Maß
		[ʃ]	sch Wunsch, sk Ski, ch Branche, s (in sp-, st-) Sport, stehen

[t] t <i>Zeit</i> , th <i>Thema</i> , dt <i>Stadt</i> , -d <i>Land</i>	[ʃ] tsch <i>Quatsch</i> , ch <i>Couch</i>
[ts] z <i>Zahn</i> , zz <i>Skizze</i> , ts <i>Lotse</i> , tz <i>benutzen</i> , ds <i>Landsmann</i> , c <i>Cäsar</i> , t <i>Aktion</i>	[v] w <i>Wald</i> , v <i>Version</i>
	[x] ch <i>lachen</i>
	[z] s <i>so</i>
	[ʒ] g <i>Regime</i> , j <i>Journalist</i>

OTHER SYMBOLS

[ʔ] glottal stop [ˈ] stress mark [.] indicates a syllabic consonant

THE GERMAN ALPHABET

The names of the letters of the German alphabet are pronounced as follows:

A [a:]	H [ha:]	O [o:]	V [faʊ]
B [be:]	I [i:]	P [pe:]	W [ve:]
C [tse:]	J [jɔt, Aust. je:]	Q [ku:, Aust. kve:]	X [ɪks]
D [de:]	K [ka:]	R [ɛr]	Y ['ypsilon]
E [e:]	L [ɛl]	S [ɛs]	Z [tsɛt]
F [ɛf]	M [ɛm]	T [te:]	
G [ge:]	N [ɛn]	U [u:]	

ADDITIONAL SYMBOLS: Ä [ɛ:], Ö [ø:], Ü [y:], (lower case) ß [ɛs'tset].

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Stress falls on the first syllable—with certain exceptions, notably:

(a) **lebendig** *alive*, **die Forélle** *trout*, **die Hornísse** *hornet*, **der Holúnder** *elder*, **der Wachólder** *juniper*; (b) most words of foreign origin, e.g. **die Geographíe** *geography*, **der Theológe** *theologian*, **der Patiént** *patient*, **die ExistéNZ** *existence*, **romántisch** *romantic*, **europäísieren** *to Europeanize*, and nouns ending in -ei, e.g. **die Heucheléi** *hypocrisy*; (c) inseparable verbs, e.g. **begínnen** *to begin*, **entdécken** *to discover*; (d) (with the prefix **ab-**) **abschéulich** *abominable*, **die Abtéilung** *department*; (with the prefix **un-**) **unéndlich** *infinite*, as well as some adjectives which may also have initial stress, e.g. **unerréichbar** *unattainable*; (e) certain compounds, e.g. **das Jahrhúndert** *century*, **die Apfelsíne** *orange*, **die Zweidríttelmehrheit** *two-thirds majority*, **willkómmen** *welcome*, **beiséite** *aside*, **zusámmen** *together*; (f) some place-names, e.g. **Bayréuth**, **Bremerháven**, **Hannóver** *Hanover*, **Heilbrónn**, **Paderbórn**, also names in -in (with final stress), e.g. **Schwerín**; (g) most abbreviations in which the names of the letters are pronounced (the final letter being stressed), e.g. **der BH** *bra*, **die DNŚ** *D.N.A.*

Compound adjectives of the type **stéinált** *as old as the hills*, **stóckfínster** *pitch-dark* take level stress.

An important feature of German speech is the phenomenon known as the glottal stop (as heard, for example, in Cockney *wa'er* for *water*—or indeed sometimes in standard English speech, reinforcing a stressed vowel: *he* | *IS* *lying*!). It occurs before vowels in initial position or following a prefix as well as at the junction of compounds in which the second element begins with a vowel, e.g. *der* | *Arzt* *doctor*, *ver**achten* *to despise*, *die Hoch**ebene* *plateau*; here a consonant must not be carried over to the vowel that follows, as happens in English: contrast *für* | *Eva* with *for* *Eve*, *ein* | *Eis* with *an* *ice*.¹

VOWELS

Vowels are pure and never diphthongized as in Southern English (e.g. *say*, *boat*). They are usually *short* before a double consonant or consonantal cluster, or *ch*, *sch*, or *ng* (e.g. *der Mann* *man*, *hart*² *hard*, *die Kunst* *art*, *der Geruch* *smell*), and *long* before a single consonant or silent *h* (e.g. *der Rat* *advice*, *die Kuh* *cow*), if doubled (e.g. *das Boot* *boat*) or if final and stressed (e.g. *das Büro* *office*); a long stem vowel as in *loben* *to praise* remains long in derived forms, e.g. *lobt*, *lobte*.

Spelling is not, however, an infallible guide to vowel length in German. Exceptions—and they are fairly numerous—to the general rules above include:

(i) WITH LONG VOWEL: *die Art* *kind*, *der Bart* *beard*, *die Jagd* *hunt*, *nach* *after*, *towards*, *der Papst* *pope*, *sprach* *spoke*, *die Sprache* *language*, *zart* *tender*; *die Gebärde* *gesture*, *das Gemälde* *painting*, *das Gespräch* *conversation*, *das Rätsel* *riddle*; *die Beschwerde* *complaint*, *die Erde* *earth*, *erst* *first*, *der Herd* *cooker*, *die Herde* *herd*, *der Krebs* *crustacean*, *cancer*, *das Pferd* *horse*, *das Schwert* *sword*, *stets* *always*, *werden* *to become*, *der Wert* *value*, *wert* *dear*, *worth*; *das Obst* *fruit*, *Ostern* *Easter*, *hoch* *high* (but *die Hochzeit* *wedding*), *der Mond* *moon*, *der Trost* *consolation*; *Österreich* *Austria*, *die Behörde* *authority*, *trösten* *to console*; *das Buch* *book*, *die Buche* *beech*, *der Fluch* *curse*, *fluchen* *to swear*, *die Geburt* *birth*, *der Husten* *cough*, *husten* *to cough*, *der Kuchen* *cake*, *die Suche* *search*, *suchen* *to look for*, *das Tuch* *cloth*, *wusch* *washed*; *düster* *gloomy*, *die Wüste* *desert*.

(ii) WITH SHORT VOWEL: *ab*, *an*, *bis*, *das*, *des*, *es*, *hin*, *in*, *man*, *mit*, *ob*, *um*, *ur-* in *das Urteil* *judgement* and *urteilen* *to judge*, *von*, *was*, *weg*; *am*, *im*, *vom*, *zum*; *das Kap* *cape* (geog.), *der Chef* *boss*, *der Lorbeer* (*o* short) *laurel*, *der Klub* *club*; *die Grammatik* *grammar*, *die Metápher* *metaphor*, *der April*, *das Kapítel* *chapter* (stressed vowels pronounced short).

Vowels in words of foreign origin are generally *short* in unstressed final syllables ending in a consonant, e.g. *der Tábák* *tobacco*, *Jápän*, *der Átläs*,

¹ In English it has been possible, for example, for *an ewt* to evolve into *a newt*; such developments are phonetically impossible in German.

The glottal stop is *not* sounded in certain compounds, e.g. *allein*, *einander*, *vollenden*, also such adverbs as *darauf*, *heraus*, *hinein*, *vorüber*.

² Words containing a *short vowel* + *r* + *consonant* are often mispronounced by English speakers, who tend to substitute a long vowel and drop *r*; *hárt* then sounds like Southern English *heart* (*haht*), *mörgen* *tomorrow* like *Morgan* (*mawgan*), and so on.

das Réquiēm, **Aristóphanēs**, **die Téchnīk** *technology, technique*,³ **das Fázīt** *conclusion (drawn)*, **das Stádiōn** *stadium*, **das Épōs** *epic*. (Exceptions include: **der Bálkān** *the Balkans*, **das Plátīn** *platinum*, **der Álkohōl** *alcohol*, words in *-ian* e.g. **der Thýmiān** *thyme*, *-iv* e.g. **der Kónjunktīv** *subjunctive*.) Those in unstressed non-final syllables ending in a vowel are also short (while retaining the quality of the long vowel), e.g. **elegánt**, **das Rituál**, **der Gorílla**.

CONSONANTS

Consonants calling for special care are: (a) **l** (the 'clear' **l** used initially as in **lang**—similar to initial English **l**—must also be used in other positions, e.g. in **halten**, **Ball**; the 'dark' **l** (approaching **u**) used by English speakers in e.g. *hold*, *ball* is quite out of place in German);⁴ (b) **r** (the 'uvular' **r**—pronounced much like French **r** as in *la rue*—is, despite the shared symbol, entirely different from English **r**; after a long vowel **r** is vocalized, i.e. reduced to a vowel); (c) the two types of **ch**, viz. the 'hard' **Achlaut** akin to Scots *ch* as in *loch*, used after **a**, **o**, **u**, **au**, and the 'soft' **Ichlaut**, a sound like that of **H** in *Hugh* used after other vowels and diphthongs as well as consonants, e.g. in **lächeln**, **Brecht**, **ich**, **Milch**, **durch**.

A striking feature of the German consonant system is the devoicing of **b**, **d**, **g**—i.e. their realization as **p**, **t**, **k**—at the end of a word or element of a compound, or before a suffix, e.g. **gab** *gave*, **die End/station terminus**, **mög/lich possible** (exception: the suffix **-ig**, pronounced as if **-ich**); also in the prefixes **ab-**, **ob-**, **sub-** (**b** pronounced **p**, e.g. **ab/surd**, **das Ob/jekt**, **der Sub/kontinent**) and **ad-** (**d** pronounced **t**, e.g. **das Ad/jektiv**).

AUSTRIAN AND SWISS STANDARD GERMAN

Both Austrian and Swiss standard German differ in their pronunciation from the (North) German standard in a number of ways. For instance, 'front' **r** (produced with the tip of the tongue) is used in Austrian and Swiss (as well as southern German) speech instead of uvular **r**; in native words 'hard' **[x]** replaces 'soft' **[ç]** for **ch** altogether in Swiss German and after **r** (e.g. **durch** **[durx]**) in Austrian German; vowel length may be different.

Some of the more striking differences are found in the pronunciation of words of foreign origin:

(i) for initial **ch** before **e**, **i** **[k]** is used in Austria (and southern Germany), e.g. **die Chemie** **[ke'mi:]** *chemistry*, **China** **[ˈkiːna]**, **der Chirurg** **[kiˈrʊrk]** *surgeon* (= German standard **[ç]**).

(ii) final **-e** is often silent in Austrian German, e.g. **die Clique** **[klɪk]**, **die Nuance** **[nyˈäːs]**, **die Sabotage** **[zaboˈtaːʒ]**.

³ Cf. **die Informatik** *computer science*, **die Klássik** *classicism*, **die Romántik** *romanticism*, **die Lýrik** *lyric poetry*, **die Symbólik** *symbolism*. Some words, however, have final stress and long **i**, e.g. **die Musik** *music*, **die Fabrik** *factory*, **die Physik** *physics*.

⁴ Inevitably, differences noted between German and English pronunciation will not always be valid for all English-speaking areas. Irish English, for example, always has 'clear' **l**.

(iii) **-ment** is generally pronounced [-mənt] in Swiss German, e.g. **das Reglement** [reglə'mənt] *regulations* (= *German standard* [-'mā:]).

(iv) **-on** is [-o:n] in Austria and (commonly) Switzerland (also in southern Germany), e.g. **der Balkon** [bal'ko:n] *balcony* (= *German standard* [-ɔŋ]).

(v) the stress falls on the final syllable in Austrian **der Kaffee** [ka'fe:], **das Platin** [pla'ti:n] *platinum*, **das Sakko** [za'ko:] *sports jacket*, **der Tabak** [ta'bak] *tobacco* (= *initial stress in the German standard*); in **die Mathematik** [mate'ma:tik] *mathematics*, however, it is placed—contrary to German practice ([-ma'ti:k])—on the penultimate. Swiss German tends to shift the stress to the first syllable, e.g. **das Büro** ['by:ro] *office*.

(vi) other words, e.g. Austrian **das Billard** [bi'ja:r] *billiards*, **die Taille** ['tæljə] *waist*, **die Medaille** [me'dæljə] *medal*, **der Chef** [ʃe:f] *boss*; Swiss **der Komfort** [kəm'fɔrt] *comfort, luxury* (= *German standard* ['bɪljart], ['taljə], [me'daljə], [ʃef]; [kəm'fo:ə]).

SPELLINGS AND SOUNDS

SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
a 1 long	[a:]	sagen	like <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>
2 short	[a]	Mann, akut	like Southern English <i>u</i> in <i>fun</i> , Northern English <i>a</i> in <i>man</i>
aa, ah	[a:]	Aal, nah	= a 1
ai	[aɪ]	Mai	like <i>y</i> in <i>my</i> (but with the mouth open wider for the first component than for that of the English diphthong)
au	[aʊ]	Haus	like <i>ou</i> in <i>house</i> (but with the mouth open wider for the first component than for that of the English diphthong)
ä 1 long	[ɛ:]	Mädchen	as ä 2, but with the vowel lengthened; similar to <i>ai</i> in <i>hair</i> (in North Germany <i>e</i> 1 is widely used instead)
2 short	[ɛ]	hätte	like <i>e</i> in <i>set</i>
äh	[ɛ:]	wählen	= ä 1
äu	[ɔʊ]	Fräulein	like <i>oi</i> in <i>noise</i>
b 1	[b]	Bär, haben	as in English
2	[p]	Kalb, Hub-raum, lieb-lich; abstrakt, Objekt, Subjekt; liebt, hübsch, Gelübde	like English <i>p</i> ; b is unvoiced when final, at the end of an element in a compound, or before a suffix; also in the prefixes ab- , ob- , sub- , and before an unvoiced consonant or d , g

⁵ In Germany the word is usually masculine.

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SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
c 1	[k]	Clou	(before a, o, u and l, r) = k
2	[ts]	Cäsar	(elsewhere) = z
ch 1	[x]	auch	(after a, o, u, au) like ch in Scots loch
2	[ç]	lächeln, Bücher, Eiche; Milch, manche, durch; Chemie; Mädchen	(after other vowels and diphthongs; after consonants; at the beginning of words when followed by e or i; also in the suffix -chen) like the h in hue (in words of Greek origin before a, o and l, r) = k
3	[k]	Charakter	
chs	[ks]	Fuchs	(if the s is part of the stem) like English x (but ch and s are articulated separately in e.g. (des) Loch-s, (du) lach-st)
ck	[k]	Bock	= k
d 1	[d]	du, laden	as in English
2	[t]	rund, Wand-uhr, freund-lich, Mäd-chen; Adjektiv; Wodka, widmen	like English t; d is unvoiced when final, at the end of an element in a compound, or before a suffix; also in the prefix ad-, and before an unvoiced consonant or g, m, n, v, w
dt	[t]	Stadt, sandte	like English t
e 1 long	[e:]	Leben	like ay in Scots say or eh in Northern English eh lad
2 short	[e]	Medizin	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as e 1 but shortened
3 short	[ɛ]	Bett	like e in set; the prefixes er-, ver-, and zer- are also pronounced with this vowel
4 neutral	[ə]	Liebe, beginnen	(in unstressed syllables) like a in ago; in the unstressed endings -el, -eln, -em, -en the e is generally dropped in ordinary speech after certain consonants, e.g. Nebel, betteln, messen (cf. the pronunciation of petal, dozen as pet'tl, doz'n) -er: this ending is pronounced [-ɐ], a short vowel close to the u in fun, e.g. ein guter Lehrer; similarly -ern [-ɐn], e.g. wandern
ee, eh	[e:]	See, sehen	= e 1

SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
ei	[aɐ̯]	mein	like <i>y</i> in <i>my</i>
eu	[ɔø]	heute	like <i>oi</i> in <i>noise</i>
f	[f]	fliegen	as in English
g 1	[g]	gehen, Geologie	as in English ('hard' <i>g</i>)
2	[k]	Tag, Weg-weiser, trag-bar; sagt, Jagd	like English <i>k</i> ; g is unvoiced when final, at the end of an element in a compound, or before a suffix; also before an unvoiced consonant or d (NOTE: in North German speech g is generally pronounced here like ch instead, e.g. lag [la:x], Berg [bɛrç]—see ch 1 and 2)
3 -ig	[-ɪç]	König, zwanzig	g is here pronounced like ch 2, except in the South which uses [-ɪk]; similarly before a consonant (e.g. Königs and, with a suffix, Königtum, Ewigkeit) except before -lich (e.g. königlich) and in Königreich , where -ig- is pronounced [-ɪk-]; before a vowel -ig- = [-ɪg-], e.g. Könige, Zwanziger -igst, -igt(e) in verbs ending in -igen also have [ç]: [-ɪçst, -ɪçt(ə)]
h 1	[h]	Herz	as in English
2 silent	—	nehmen; Theater	see (a) ah, eh , etc., in which h is used to show that the preceding vowel is long, (b) th
i 1 long	[i:]	Bibel, Musik	like <i>i</i> in <i>machine</i> , only closer
2 short	[ɪ]	Zitrone	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as i 1 but shortened
3 short	[ɪ]	ich, Logik	like <i>i</i> in <i>sick</i>
4 non-syllabic	[ɪ]	asiatisch, Patient, Milieu, Station, seriös; (before unstressed vowel) Linie [-ɪə], Spanien, Cäsium	(in words of foreign origin before a stressed or unstressed vowel—except after certain consonantal combinations difficult to unite with [ɪ], e.g. Bibliothek, Adria ; here i = [ɪ]) like <i>y</i> in <i>young</i>
ie, ieh, ih	[i:]	Diesel, Vieh, ihn	= i 1; exceptions are vierzehn, vierzig, Viertel (ie = [ɪ]) and vielleicht (ie = [ɪ])
j	[j]	jung	like <i>y</i> in <i>young</i>
k	[k]	kalt	as in English, but with more aspiration before a stressed vowel

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SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
l	[l]	Salz	'clear' / (formed with the tip of the tongue against the teeth-ridge or the upper front teeth)
m	[m]	Mann	as in English
n	[n]	Name	as in English
ng 1, n	[ŋ]	bringen, Ingwer, England, lang, Bank, Sphinx	like <i>ng</i> in <i>singer</i> (NOTE the pronunciation of Eng-land and Eng-länder)
2	[ŋg]	Linguist, Mangan, Tango, Ungarn, Kongo	(in words of foreign origin, medially before a full vowel—i.e. any other vowel than [ə]—or <i>r</i>) like <i>ng</i> in <i>finger</i>
o 1 long	[o:]	Zone	like <i>o</i> in Scots <i>no</i>
2 short	[o]	moralisch, anthropoid	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as <i>o</i> 1 but shortened
3 short	[ɔ]	Osten, geworden	like <i>o</i> in <i>got</i> , but with lip-rounding
oh, oo	[o:]	Sohn, Moos	= <i>o</i> 1
ö 1 long	[ø:]	schön	lips protruded and rounded with tongue in position for <i>e</i> 1
2 short	[ø]	ökonomisch	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as <i>ö</i> 1 but shortened
3 short	[œ]	Köln	lips protruded and rounded with tongue in position for <i>e</i> 3
öh	[ø:]	Höhle	= <i>ö</i> 1
p	[p]	Post, Psychologie	as in English, but with more aspiration before a stressed vowel
ph	[f]	Phonetik	as in English
qu	[kv]	bequem	like <i>kv</i>
r 1	[r]	rot, hart, groß, stören	entirely different from the <i>r</i> (as in <i>run</i>) of most English speakers; produced either by vibrating the uvula (the sound is similar to French <i>r</i> as in <i>rue</i>) or—chiefly in Southern German—by lightly trilling with the tip of the tongue ⁶
2 vocalic	[ɐ]	Ohr, werden	following a long vowel <i>r</i> , in final position or before a consonant, is

⁶ The latter pronunciation is the one used in the singing of classical music.

SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
3 -er	[ɐ]	guter, Lehrer	regularly realized as [ɐ], a (short) <i>a</i> -like sound close to the <i>u</i> in <i>fun</i> see note at e 4
rh	[r]	Rhabarber	= r 1
s 1 voiced	[z]	so, souverän, Schick-sal, lang-sam; rosig; Amsel, impulsiv	like English <i>z</i> : initially before a vowel, and in the suffixes -sal, -sam ; between vowels; and in -ls-, -ms-, -ns-, -rs- ; in the South <i>s</i> is unvoiced in all these positions
2 unvoiced	[s]	Eis, hoffnungslos, bö-s-artig, lös-lich; Szene, Fenster, Prisma; Erbse, Rätsel; Sujet	like <i>s</i> in <i>sit</i> : finally, at the end of an element in a compound, or before a suffix; before a consonant (but see sp-, st- at 3); after a consonant (except in -ls-, -ms-, -ns-, -rs-); and initially before a vowel in some words of foreign origin
3 in sp-, st-	[ʃ]	sprechen, Ge-spräch, Spirale; stehen, er-staunen, Student	= sch : initially or following a prefix—except in a few words of foreign origin in which [s] is retained, e.g. Stewardess (in some both [s] and [ʃ] occur, e.g. Spektrum, steril)
sch	[ʃ]	Fisch	like <i>sh</i> in <i>ship</i> , but with the lips strongly protruded; where -chen follows <i>s</i> , <i>s</i> and ch are pronounced separately, e.g. Häus-chen
ss, ß	[s]	lassen, Soße	like <i>ss</i> in <i>miss</i>
t 1	[t]	Zeit	as in English, but with more aspiration before a stressed vowel
2 in -ti-	[ts]	Tertia, partiell, Patient, Nation, stationär, rationieren	(in words of foreign origin, when -ti- is followed by a vowel) like <i>ts</i> in <i>nuts</i> (NOTE: before a stressed [i:] as in Demokratie <i>t</i> is pronounced as in English)
th	[t]	Theater, Timotheus	= t 1
tz	[ts]	Katze	like <i>ts</i> in <i>nuts</i>
u 1 long	[u:]	rufen	like the second element in the diphthongized pronunciation [uu] of <i>oo</i> as in <i>zoo</i> ; lips strongly rounded and protruded
2 short	[ʊ]	Musik, zusammen	(in words of foreign origin and zu- compounds, in unstressed syllables) as <i>u</i> 1 but shortened

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SPELLING	SYMBOL	EXAMPLES	REMARKS
3 short	[ʊ]	Mutter, Urteil	like <i>u</i> in <i>put</i> , but with more lip-rounding
4 non-syllabic	[ʊ̯]	Suada, aktuell, Statue	(in words of foreign origin) like <i>w</i> in <i>well</i>
uh	[u:]	Schuh	= u 1
ü 1 long	[y:]	drüben	lips positioned for pronouncing u 1 (long u), with tongue in position for i 1 (long i); like French <i>u</i> as in <i>rue</i>
2 short	[y]	Büro	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as ü 1 but shortened
3 short	[ʏ]	hübsch	lips rounded with tongue in position for i 3 (short i)
üh	[y:]	kühl	= ü 1
v 1	[f]	von, Vers, aktiv	like <i>f</i> in <i>fire</i> ; final -v in words of foreign origin is always pronounced [f]
2	[v]	Vase, Klavier, nervös	like <i>v</i> in <i>very</i> : the usual pronunciation of initial and medial v in words of foreign origin
w, wh	[v]	Wasser, Whisky	like <i>v</i> in <i>very</i>
x	[ks]	Xylophon, Sex	like <i>x</i> in <i>six</i>
y 1 long	[y:]	Lyrik	= ü 1
2 short	[y]	Zypresse	(in words of foreign origin in unstressed syllables) as y 1 but shortened; in Zylinder it is pronounced [i]
3 short	[ʏ]	Rhythmus	= ü 3
z	[ts]	zu, Herz	like <i>ts</i> in <i>nuts</i>

ADDITIONAL PRONUNCIATIONS OCCURRING IN WORDS OF FOREIGN ORIGIN. In words of foreign origin, the letters of the German alphabet (and their combinations) may have different values—normally approximating to their pronunciation(s) in the language of origin—from those listed above. Thus **ai** in words of French origin is pronounced [ɛ:] e.g. **Baisse**, [ɛ] e.g. **Baiser**, [aɛ] e.g. **Detail**, while **au** is realized as [o:] e.g. **Hausse**, [o] e.g. **Fauxpas**, [ɔ] e.g. **Chauffeur**; **oi** and **oy** are pronounced [ɔa(:)] e.g. **Memoiren**; and the French nasal vowels are similarly nasalized in German, e.g. **Elan** with [ã:], **Parfum** with [œ:]. (sometimes a denasalized pronunciation is used instead, as in **Ballon** [-'lɔŋ]). Similarly, vowels in words from English are pronounced in an approximately English fashion: **a** is reproduced either as [ɛ] e.g. **trampen** or as [e:] e.g. **Cape**, long **i** as [aɛ] e.g. **live** [laɛf], long **o** (variously spelt) as [o:] e.g. **Toast, Show**, **u** as [a] e.g. **Run**, **y** as [aɛ] e.g. **Nylon** or as [i] e.g. **Party**, and so on.

A number of consonants may have values not found in native German words: **c** is pronounced [s] in e.g. **City**, **Aktrice** [-sə], **ch** is [tʃ] in English words, e.g. **Chip**, but [ʃ] in Gallicisms, e.g. **Chef**; **g** and **j** are both [ɔ̃] e.g. **Gin**, **Jet** and [ʒ] e.g. **Genie**, **Journal**; **gn** is [ɲ] in French and Italian words, e.g. **Champagner**; **ll** is [lj] in **Billard**, **Medaille** [-daljə], **Taille** ['taljə]; **z** is realized as [z] in **Gaze**, as [s] in **Bronze** ['brɔ:sə]. Certain consonants are silent in final position as in the source-language French, e.g. **Premier**, **Etat**, **Palais**. Finally, the combination **dsch**, used to render English **j** in words of Oriental origin, is pronounced [ɔ̃] e.g. **Dschungel**.

PROPER NAMES: A SELECTION

The list that follows contains a selection of well-known personal and place names from the German-speaking countries and outside whose pronunciation is in some way worthy of note.

Several spellings are peculiar to proper names; others may have values found only in proper names:

ae	[ɛ:]	Baer	oey	[ø:]	Bad Oeynhausen
ay	[aɐ]	Bayern, May	-ow	[-o]	Treptow (but [-ɔf] in Russian names)
ey	[aɐ]	Meyer, Loreley	ue	[u:]	Kues
oe	[ø:]	Schroeder		[ʏ]	Mueller
	[œ]	Oetker	ui	[y:]	Duisburg
oe, oi	[o:]	Itzehoe, Troisdorf,	y	[i:]	Schwyz
		Voigt [fo:kt]			

Bach [bax]	Dresden ['dre:sdn]
Baedeker ['bɛ:dəkə]	Duisburg ['dy:sbʊrk]
Bayreuth [baɪ'rʊt]	Erfurt ['ɛrfʊrt]
Beethoven, van ['bɛ:tho:fən (fan)]	Erlangen ['ɛrlaŋən]
Berchtesgaden [bɛrçtəs'ga:dən]	Freud [frɔɪt]
Berlin [bɛr'li:n]	Gelsenkirchen [gɛlzn'kɪrçən]
Bethmann Hollweg ['bɛ:tman 'hɔlvɛ:k]	Goes [gø:s]
Beuys [bɔɪs]	Goethe ['gø:tə]
Bismarck ['bɪsmɑrk]	Gogh, van [gɔx (fan)]
Blücher ['blyçə]	Goya ['go:jə]
Bochum ['bo:xʊm]	Grosz [grɔs]
Bremerhaven [bre:me'ha:fən]	Gstaad [kʃta:t]
Breughel ['brɔɪgəl]	Haydn ['hædn]
Büchner ['by:çnɐ]	Heilbronn [hɛl'brɔn]
Buxtehude [bʊkstə'hʊ:də]	Hohenstaufen [ho:ən'ʃtaʊfən]
Calvin [kal'vi:n]	Hohenzollern [ho:ən'tsɔlən]
Cambridge ['kɛ:mbɪdʒ]	Horváth ['hɔrvɑ:t]
Cervantes [sɛr'vɑntəs]	Ibsen ['ɪpsən]
Chemnitz ['kɛmɪts]	Johannesburg [jo'hanəsburk]
Chiemsee ['ki:mzɛ:]	Johnson ['jo:nzən]
Chur [ku:ɐ]	Kaiserslautern [kæzɛs'laʊtən]
Cuxhaven [kʊks'ha:fən]	Koblenz ['ko:blɛnts]
Dante ['dantə]	Lenin ['lɛ:nɪn]
Darwin ['darvi:n]	Liverpool ['lɪvɪpu:l]

London ['lʌndən],*commonly* ['lʌndŋ]*with unvoiced d***Los Angeles** [ləs 'ændʒələs]**Luther** ['lʊtə]**Magdeburg** ['makdəbʊrk]**Manchester** ['mɛntʃɛstə]**Melbourne** ['mɛlbən]**Mercedes** [mɛr'tse:dəs]**Montreal** [mɒntre'a:l]**Musil** ['mu:zɪl]**Napoleon** [na'pɔ:lɛɒn]**Osnabrück** [ɔsna'bryk]**Ottawa** ['ɒtəvə]**Oxford** ['ɒksfɔ:t]**Pachelbel** ['paxəlbɪl]**Paderborn** [pa:də'bɔ:rn]**Potsdam** ['pɒtsdam]**Recklinghausen** [rɛklɪŋ'həʊzn]**Reclam** ['rɛklam, 're:-]**Roosevelt** ['ro:zəvɛlt]**Roth** [ro:t]**Saarbrücken** [za:ə'brykŋ]**San Francisco** [sanfran'tsɪsko]**Schleswig** ['ʃle:svɪç]**Seghers** ['ze:ɡes]**Soest** [zo:st]**Southampton** [səʊθ'emptŋ]**Stalin** ['sta:lɪn, -t-]**Telemann** ['te:ləman]**Vancouver** [ven'ku:ve]**Velazquez** [ve'laskes]**Virchow** ['fɪrçə, 'vɪr-]**Washington** ['wɒʃɪŋtŋ]**Wilhelmshaven** [vɪlhəms'ha:fŋ]**Zermatt** [tsɛr'mat]

German Spelling

HISTORICAL NOTE

German spelling was standardized as recently as the beginning of the 20th century, a strong impetus towards orthographical unity having been provided by the political union of 1871. It was in 1902 that the Prussian spelling rules—prescribed for use in that state's schools and widely propagated within and beyond Prussia's boundaries by Konrad Duden's *Vollständiges orthographisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache*, published in 1880—were finally given the blessing of the Reich following a special conference held in Berlin. (Austria and Switzerland followed suit.) At that conference changes in the spelling of certain words were decided on, as a result of which books and articles published before 1902 contain words with spellings no longer given in dictionaries. The changes included the replacement of the *c* that remained in some words of foreign origin, which meant that **Citrone** *lemon* became **Zitrone** and **Accusativ** *accusative* **Akkusativ**, and the substitution of **t** for **th** (except in words of foreign origin), whereby for example **Thal** *valley* and **thun** *to do* became **Tal** and **tun** respectively.

1998 saw the adoption—amid considerable controversy—of a further spelling reform (agreed between the German-speaking countries). Among the changes made were: the substitution of **ss** for **ß** after a short vowel, e.g. **daß** > **dass**; the capitalization of the noun in e.g. **recht haben** > **Recht haben**, **außer acht lassen** > **außer Acht lassen**, **auf deutsch** > **auf Deutsch**, **heute morgen** > **heute Morgen**, **im allgemeinen** > **im Allgemeinen**; the writing of verb + verb compounds as two words instead of one, e.g. **kennenlernen** > **kennen lernen**, **stehenbleiben** > **stehen bleiben**; and the respelling, on etymological grounds, not only of words such as **behende** > **behände**, **Gemse** > **Gämse** (cf. **Hand**, **Gams**), but also—quite improperly—of **Quentchen** > **Quäntchen**, **verbleuen** > **verbläuen**, **belemmert** > **belämmert** (as if they were related to **Quantum**, **blau**, **Lamm**). A great many alternative spellings were created: thus, instead of e.g. **Alptraum**, **Au-pair-Mädchen**, **Countdown**, **Facette**, **Necessaire**, **passé**, so dass one may now write **Albtraum**, **Aupairmädchen**, **Count-down**, **Fassette**, **Nessessär**, **passee**, **sodass**. In addition, the rules governing the use of commas were revised.

SPECIAL POINTS

HYPHENATION

The hyphen is used especially (a) when part of a compound word is omitted to avoid repetition, e.g. **Buch- und Zeitungstitel** *titles of books and newspapers* (**Buch-** standing for **Buchtitel**), **ein- und ausatmen** *to breathe in and out* (**ein-** for **einatmen**), **bergauf und -ab** *uphill and downhill* (**-ab** for **bergab**); (b) to break up compounds felt to be unwieldy, e.g. **das Arbeiter-Unfallversicherungsgesetz** *workers' accident insurance law*; and to avoid a sequence of three identical vowels in a compound, e.g. **die Hawaii-Inseln** *the Hawaiian Islands*; (c) in compounds of which one element is a letter, abbreviation, or numeral, e.g. **o-beinig** *bow-legged*, **die U-Bahn** *underground (railway)*, **die CDU-Führung** *the C.D.U. leadership*, **die US-Flotte** *the U.S. fleet*, **der Kfz-Fahrer** *driver of a motor vehicle*, **die 10-Pfennig-Marke** *10 pfennig stamp*; (d) in many compounds incorporating proper names, especially if more than one of the components is a name, e.g. **die Max-Planck-Gesellschaft** *the Max Planck Society*, **der Dortmund-Ems-Kanal** *the Dortmund-Ems Canal*, **der Sankt-Gotthard-Pass** *the St. Gotthard Pass*, **der Konrad-Adenauer-Platz**, **die Friedrich-Schiller-Allee** (but cf.—with a single name component—**der Adenauerplatz**, **die Schillerallee**), **die James-Bond-Filme** *the James Bond films*; in the case of geographical names beginning with an adjectival element or one denoting a point of the compass, such as **Neu-**, **Groß-**, **Nord-**, etc., the compound is formed without hyphenation, e.g. **Kleinasien** *Asia Minor*, **Südafrika** *South Africa*, unless the second component is the name of a city, in which case the hyphen is widely used, e.g. **Groß-London** *Greater London*, **Neu-Delhi** *New Delhi*; geographical names of which the first element ends in an uninflected **-(i)sch** also have a hyphen, e.g. **Britisch-Kolumbien** *British Columbia* (more prevalent, of course, in colonial times: **Belgisch-Kongo** *the Belgian Congo*, **Deutsch-Ostafrika** *German East Africa*, etc.); (e) in compounds such as **die Lohn-Preis-Spirale** *wage-price spiral*, **der Hals-Nasen-Ohren-Arzt** *ear, throat, and nose specialist*; (f) to link two adjectives (see concluding paragraph of *Compound adjectives*, p. 116).

THE SYMBOL ß

ß (known as **Eszett**, which indicates its origin as (long) **s** + **z**) is a ligature peculiar to the German language. It is replaced by **SS** when capital letters are used. Except in Switzerland, where **ss** is regularly used in its place, it is considered incorrect to use **ss** instead of **ß** where it is prescribed (namely, after long vowels and diphthongs).

Note that the following surnames are spelt with final **-ss** in spite of the rules: (**Richard**) **Strauss** (but the Austrian composers, father and son, are spelt **Johann Strauß**), (**Peter**) **Weiss**, (**Carl**) **Zeiss**.

CAPITAL LETTERS

All nouns are written with an initial capital letter.

Initial capitals are also used in the following instances:

- (i) 2ND PERSON PERSONAL PRONOUN **Sie** you (and the corresponding adjective **Ihr** your). (The pronouns **du** and **ihr** are no longer capitalized in letter-writing under the new spelling.)
- (ii) ADJECTIVES following **alles**, **etwas**, **nichts**, etc., e.g. **alles Schöne**, **nichts Gutes** (see p. 53); for *adjectives used as nouns* see p. 55.
- (iii) Certain ADJECTIVES CONNECTED WITH NAMES, TITLES when part of a geographical, historical, or institutional name, e.g. **das Tote Meer** *the Dead Sea*, **die Französische Revolution** *the French Revolution*, **der Zweite Weltkrieg** *the Second World War*, **der Eisener Vorhang** *the Iron Curtain*, **das Auswärtige Amt** *the (German) Foreign Ministry*, **das Rote Kreuz** *the Red Cross*, **die Dritte Welt** *the Third World*.

Initial capitals are *not* used in the following instances:

- (i) The particle **von** in personal names is written with a lower-case initial (but has a capital at the beginning of a sentence, unless it is abbreviated to **v.**).
- (ii) ADJECTIVES OF NATIONALITY, e.g. **britisch** *British*, **südafrikanisch** *South African*. (Adjectives in official titles do, however, have a capital letter, e.g. **die Deutsche Bank**, **die Österreichischen Bundesbahnen**.)

ADJECTIVES IN **-(i)sch** DERIVED FROM A PERSONAL NAME and referring to the achievement of the person concerned may be spelt with either a lower-case letter (e.g. **die darwinsche Evolutionstheorie** *Darwin's theory of evolution*, **die lutherische Bibelübersetzung** *Luther's translation of the Bible*) or a capital letter if an apostrophe is inserted after the name concerned (e.g. **die Darwin'sche Evolutionstheorie**, **die Luther'sche Bibelübersetzung**). The spelling with a lower-case initial is also used where an adjective signifies *named after*, *in the manner or spirit of* (e.g. **platonische Liebe** *platonic love*).

A TYPOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In order to emphasize a word or phrase in German, printers use either *italics*, as in English, or *letter-spacing* (**Sperrdruck**), e.g. **im Plural dagegen . . .** *in the plural, on the other hand, . . .*

TRANSLITERATION OF RUSSIAN NAMES

The differences between the customary German and English transliterations of Russian characters are shown in the following table. In the examples the German transliteration is given in bold, the English in *italics*.

16 GERMAN SPELLING

RUSSIAN CHARACTER		TRANSLITERATION		EXAMPLES
		GERMAN	ENGLISH	
В	в	w	v	Wladimir Vladimir, Rostow Rostov
Е	е	<i>initially, after vowel, etc.:</i>		
		je	ye, e	Jewtuschenko Yevtushenko
Ё	ё	jo	yo	Pjotr Pyotr
		<i>after certain consonants:</i>		
		o	e	Gorbatschow Gorbachev
Ж	ж	sch	zh	Schukow Zhukov
З	з	s	z	Sinowjew Zinoviev, Kasan Kazan
И	и	<i>after Ъ:</i>		
		ji	yi	Iljitsch Ilyich
Й	й	i	y, i	Tolstoi Tolstoy (also representing -ий: Dostojewski Dostoyevsky)
		<i>initially:</i>		
		j	y	Joschkar-Ola Yoshkar-Ola
С	с	<i>between vowels:</i>		
		ss	s	Nekrassow Nekrasov
Х	х	ch	kh	Charkow Kharkov
Ц	ц	z	ts	Winniza Vinnitsa, Solschenizyn Solzhenitsyn
Ч	ч	tsch	ch	Tschernobyl Chernobyl, Schostakowitsch Shostakovich
Ш	ш	sch	sh	Timoschenko Timoshenko
Щ	щ	schtsch	shch	Chruschtschow Khrushchev
Ю	ю	ju	yu	Iljuschin Ilyushin
Я	я	ja	ya	Jakutsk Yakutsk

Punctuation

German punctuation differs from English punctuation in a number of important points:

THE COMMA. The use of the comma in German is strictly *syntactical*, whereas the English comma is often used as a stylistic device to indicate a pause in the sentence: *he, however, was convinced that . . .* (compare: **er aber war überzeugt, dass . . .**), *luckily, she was in when I rang* (**zum Glück war sie zu Hause, als ich anrief**).

The German comma *separates clauses*:

er sagte, er sei zu Fuß gekommen *he said he came on foot*
sie sucht einen Partner, der sie versteht *she is looking for a partner who understands her*

ich konnte ihn schlecht verstehen, weil das Radio so laut war *I had difficulty in understanding him because the radio was so loud*

When, however, clauses are linked by **und** *and* or **oder** *or* there is normally no comma:

sie blieb zu Hause und ihre Mutter ging einkaufen *she stayed at home and her mother went shopping*

For clarity's sake a comma may be used before **und** or **oder** in e.g. **er fotografierte die Berge(,) und seine Frau lag in der Sonne** *he photographed the mountains and his wife lay in the sun*. Also, if a subordinate clause follows **und** or **oder** a comma may be used to make the structure of the sentence clear, e.g. **ich habe ihn oft besucht(,) und wenn er in guter Stimmung war, saßen wir bis spät in die Nacht zusammen** *I have often visited him, and when he was in a good mood we would sit up together until late into the night*.

A comma is optional before an infinitive phrase with **zu**:

sie war bereit(,) an dem Buch mitzuarbeiten *she was willing to collaborate on the book*

er versuchte(,) den Text in seine Muttersprache zu übersetzen *he attempted to translate the text into his mother tongue*

But sometimes one may be necessary to make the meaning clear: the sentence **Sabine versprach ihrem Vater einen Brief zu schreiben** is unclear, and a comma is called for either before or after **ihrem Vater**: **Sabine versprach, ihrem Vater einen Brief zu schreiben** *Sabine promised to write her father a letter* or **Sabine versprach ihrem Vater, einen Brief zu schreiben** *Sabine promised her father that she would write a letter*.

An infinitive phrase (unless it consists solely of **zu** + infinitive) is preceded by a comma where it is anticipated by **es** or a **da**-compound:

sein größter Wunsch ist es, eine Familie zu gründen *it is his greatest wish to start a family*

er freute sich darauf, seine Freundin wiederzusehen *he looked forward to seeing his girl-friend again*

A comma is also optional following a participial phrase at the beginning of a sentence:

durch viele Tassen Kaffee gestärkt(,) nahm der Dozent die Korrektur der Klausuren in Angriff *fortified by many cups of coffee, the lecturer set about marking the examination papers*

The German comma is often placed *between main clauses*, where English would have a semi-colon. The following examples from modern narrative prose are given with the corresponding sentences in published translations:

Die Tür war nur mit Draht gesichert, sie bogen ihn auseinander und traten in die Hütte, . . . *The door was secured only by wire; they bent it apart and stepped into the cabin, . . .* (S. Lenz, *Der Verzicht*, transl. S. Spencer).

Wir kletterten hinüber, Großvater blutete an der Hand, ich am Knie *We clambered over; grandfather's hand was bleeding, so was my knee* (G. de Bruyn, *Fedezeen*, transl. P. Anthony).

Another function not shared with the English comma is as an alternative to a dash or bracket, to indicate the beginning or end of a parenthesis, e.g. **Eines Tages, es war mitten im Winter, stand ein Hirsch in unserem Garten** *One day—it was midwinter—there was a stag standing in our garden.*

Two or more adjectives are separated by a comma when they are of equal weight and could be linked by **und**, e.g. **neue, computergestützte Lehrverfahren** *new, computer-assisted teaching methods*. (The rule is, however, often ignored.) No comma is used if the second adjective and the noun are perceived as forming one concept, e.g. **neue computergestützte Lehrverfahren** *new computer-assisted teaching methods* (as opposed to older computer-assisted teaching methods).

In the case of a series of adjectives there is no comma before **und**, e.g. **junge, gut bezahlte und erfolgreiche Lehrer** *young, well-paid, and successful teachers*.

In numerals the comma marks the *decimal point*, e.g. **17,5** (read as **siebzehn Komma fünf**).

THE COLON. The colon is used broadly as in English. (For its use in introducing direct speech see *Quotation marks* below.) It also appears in the score of games, where English has the dash, e.g. **sie haben 3:4 [drei zu vier] verloren** *they lost 3–4*, **es (or das Spiel) steht 1:0 [eins zu null]** *the score is 1–0*.

A word following a colon is as a rule written with a *capital letter* if the colon introduces an utterance that is effectively a self-contained sentence, e.g. **Wir alle sind einer Meinung: Er ist ein Mensch, dem man voll**

vertrauen kann *We are all of the same opinion: he is a person who can be fully trusted.* Otherwise a small letter is used, as when factors etc. are enumerated or the consequence of some action is stated, e.g. **Das Ende war vorauszusehen: er verlor alles, was er hatte** *The end was foreseeable: he lost everything he had.*

THE FULL STOP (PERIOD). (a) After a numeral, a full stop indicates that it represents an ordinal number, e.g. **am 10.** [read as **zehnten**] **Mai** on 10th May, **Heinrich VIII. [der Achte]** Henry VIII, **12. [zwölfte]** **Auflage** 12th edition. (b) It is used in abbreviations when the words abbreviated are spoken in full, e.g. **d.h. [das heißt]** i.e., **z.B. [zum Beispiel]** e.g., **Frankfurt a.M. [am Main]**, (after the last letter) **Frl. [Fräulein]**, usw. [**und so weiter**] etc. The full stop is *not* used in abbreviations in which the letters are pronounced individually, e.g. **CDU, DNS, EU, LKW** or **Lkw, SPD**, nor in acronyms like **NATO**, nor in the abbreviations of metric weights and measures, e.g. **g** for **Gramm**, **m** for **Meter**.

THE EXCLAMATION MARK. Unlike the English exclamation mark, the German symbol is also used in public notices: **Zutritt verboten!** *No admittance*, **Abflüge werden nicht ausgerufen!** *Departures will not be announced*, **Vorsicht, Glas!** *Glass—with care*. It is sometimes used in addressing someone at the beginning of a letter: **Sehr geehrter Herr Schmidt!, Liebe Anna!** (Here a comma may be used instead, in which case the first word of the text of the letter does not have an initial capital unless capitalized anyway.) Closing formulas such as **herzliche Grüße** *kind regards* do not have the exclamation mark.

THE DASH. Over and above the functions it shares with its English counterpart, the German dash has one special use, namely to indicate some kind of transition, for instance to a new topic, as in the first example (from a letter) that follows; in the second (from a narrative) the passage of time is evoked:

- ... Und ich kann die Arbeiten nachholen, die ich während der Schönwetterperiode vernachlässigt habe.—Da gleich meine Familie nach Hause kommt, muss ich nun schnell mit dem Mittagessenkochen beginnen ... *And I can catch up on the jobs I've neglected during this spell of lovely weather. As my family will be coming home in a minute I must get on with cooking lunch*
- ... Ich kann sagen, dass es der am härtesten verdiente Penny meines Lebens war.—Der Abend kam, und die Stühle wurden leer ... *I may say that it was the hardest-earned penny of my life. Evening came, and the chairs emptied ...* (A. Spoerl, *Memoiren eines mittelmäßigen Schülers*).

BRACKETS. In German square brackets are used when brackets within brackets are required.

QUOTATION MARKS. The normal quotation marks are „“. Officially called **Anführungszeichen**, they are informally known as **Gänsefüßchen**. Quotations are introduced by a colon: **er sagte:** „.....“; if the quotation comes first, a comma follows the quotation: „.....“, **dachte sie**. In literary texts speech or thoughts are sometimes quoted without quotation marks, e.g. **Er sollte ausspannen, sagte die alte Frau, sorgen Sie doch dafür, ihr habt doch noch keine Ferien gehabt in diesem Jahr** ‘He ought to take a rest,’ the old lady said. ‘Why don’t you arrange it? After all, you haven’t had a holiday yet this year’ (I. Bachmann, *Das Gebell*, transl. F. Kyle); **Frau Andrew legt ihren Arm um die Tochter, das hätten wir längst tun sollen, denkt sie, einmal heraus aus dem Alltag, und alles wird gut** Mrs Andrew put her arm round her daughter. ‘We should have done this long ago,’ she thought. ‘Once we get away from the daily routine, everything will be all right again’ (M. L. Kaschnitz, *Jennifers Träume*, transl. H. Taylor). ‘Quotes within quotes’ have single quotation marks. (For the position of quotation marks in e.g. **als Abonnent des „Spiegels“** see p. 40.)

Glossary Of Grammatical Terms

Terms used in these definitions which are defined in the glossary are asterisked.

ACCUSATIVE. A *case that is used chiefly to identify the *direct object of a *finite verb.

ADJECTIVAL NOUN. An adjective used as a noun. In the sentence *the rich pay higher taxes*, the word *rich* is an adjectival noun (with the *definite article).

ADJECTIVE. A word describing a noun, e.g. *large*, *exciting*.

ADVERB. A word that modifies a whole sentence (*happily* in *happily, he still had the address*), a verb (*strongly* in *he swam strongly*), an adjective (*extremely* in *an extremely interesting article*), or another adverb (*extraordinarily* in *she sang extraordinarily well*).

AGREEMENT. Having the same *number, *gender, *case, or person.

ANTECEDENT. A word or phrase to which a *relative pronoun refers. In the sentence *people who say that shouldn't*, the word *people* is the antecedent of *who*.

APPOSITION. A construction in which a noun or noun phrase is placed after another noun or noun phrase in order to qualify or explain it. In the sentence *the mayor, the brother of the local MP, is unmarried* the phrase *the brother of the local MP* is in apposition to *the mayor*.

ARTICLE. See *Definite article, *Indefinite article.

AUXILIARY VERB. A verb used to indicate the *tense, voice, or mood of another verb. In the sentences *he will eat* and *he was killed*, *will* and *was* are auxiliary verbs.

CASE. The indication of the role played by a noun or pronoun etc. in the sentence by means of *inflection. In English, case still survives in the pronouns *I/me*, *he/him*, *they/them*, etc.

CLAUSE. A distinct part of a sentence, including a *subject and a predicate. The sentence *she often visits Tuscany because she likes the climate* contains two clauses: *she often visits Tuscany* and *because she likes the climate*.

COMPARATIVE. The form produced in English by adding *-er* or prefixing *more* to an adjective or adverb: *larger* and *more interesting* are comparatives.

COMPLEMENT. An adjective or noun used after verbs such as *to be* or *to become*, and describing the *subject of the verb. In the sentences *I was delighted* and *I was a soldier* the words *delighted* and *a soldier* are complements.

COMPOUND. A word formed by joining two (or more) existing words together, e.g. *teapot*, *machine-readable*, *test-drive*.

CONCESSIVE CLAUSE. A *clause describing a state of affairs that might have been expected to rule out what is described in the main clause but in fact does not, e.g. *although he had no money* in the sentence *although he had no money, he did not consider himself poor*.

CONJUGATION. The complete set of the *inflections of a verb.

CONJUNCTION. A word that connects *clauses, sentences, or words in the same clause, e.g. *and*, *or*, *when*.

DATIVE. A *case used chiefly to express the *indirect object of a verb.

DECLENSION. The *inflection of nouns, pronouns, or adjectives for *case, *number, and *gender.

DEFINITE ARTICLE. *The* in English, *der*, *die*, *das* in German.

DEMONSTRATIVE. A word used to point out a particular person or thing, e.g. *this*, *that*. Demonstratives may be adjectives or pronouns.

DEPENDENT CLAUSE. See *Subordinate clause.

DIRECT OBJECT. The person or thing that is directly affected by the action of the verb. In the sentence *Mahler composed symphonies*, the word *symphonies* is the direct object.

FINITE VERB. A verb form that agrees with its *subject in person and *number. *Am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, and *were* are the finite forms of *to be*; the non-finite forms are *be*, *being*, and *been*.

GENDER. The classification of a noun or pronoun as (in German) masculine, feminine, or neuter. In English gender is only found in pronouns (*he*, *she*, *it*, etc.).

GENITIVE. A *case that is used to indicate possession.

HISTORIC PRESENT. The present *tense used to recount past events, with the intention of making the narrative more vivid.

IMPERATIVE. The form of the verb used to express commands.

IMPERSONAL VERB. A verb used only with a formal *subject (*it*) and expressing an action not attributable to a definite subject, e.g. *it is raining*.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE. *A*, *an* in English, *ein* in German.

INDICATIVE. The form of the verb used to make statements or ask questions.

INDIRECT OBJECT. The person or thing that is indirectly affected by the action of the verb. In English the indirect object either precedes the *direct object (e.g. *the postman gave my father the parcel*) or follows it in a phrase introduced by *to* (e.g. *the postman gave the parcel to my father*).

INDIRECT QUESTION. A question reported in *indirect speech, e.g. *he asked what they were doing*.

INDIRECT (OR REPORTED) SPEECH. The reporting of something said by conveying what was meant rather than quoting the exact words, e.g. *They told me their name was Smith* as opposed to *They told me, 'Our name is Smith'*.

INFINITIVE. The basic form of a verb. In English, it is usually preceded by *to*, e.g. *to think*.

INFLECTION. (a) Changing the form of a word to show its grammatical function in a sentence. (b) A suffix used to inflect a word.

INTERJECTION. A word or phrase used as an exclamation.

INTERROGATIVE. Interrogative words are used to ask a question, e.g. the interrogative adverb *when?*, the interrogative pronoun *who?*

INTRANSITIVE VERB. A verb which does not take a *direct object.

MODAL AUXILIARY. A verb that is used with another verb (not a modal auxiliary) to express possibility, permission, or obligation, e.g. *can*, *may*, *must*.

MODAL PARTICLE. A word used to express the speaker's attitude to what is being said, e.g. *just* in the sentence *we just have to soldier on*.

NOMINATIVE. A *case expressing the *subject or *complement of a verb.

NOUN. A word that names a person or thing, e.g. *man*, *Tutankhamun*, *house*, *mouse*, *grammar*.

NUMBER. The classification of words by their singular or plural forms.

OBJECT. see *Direct object, *Indirect object.

PASSIVE. Form of the verb used when the grammatical *subject is affected by the action of the verb, e.g. *they were injured by a passing bus*.

PAST PARTICIPLE. A verb form used with an *auxiliary to form compound past tenses and the *passive, e.g. *eaten/gegessen*.

PAST TENSE. A *tense formed in English by adding *-ed* to the verb and in German by adding *-te* to the verb stem, or (in both languages) by changing the stem vowel, e.g. *played/spielte*, *gave/gab*.

PERFECT TENSE. A *tense formed in English with the present tense of the *auxiliary *have* and the *past participle, e.g. *I have played*; and in German with the present tense of either the auxiliary *haben* or the auxiliary *sein* and the past participle, e.g. *ich habe gespielt*, *ich bin gegangen*.

PLUPERFECT TENSE. A *tense formed in English with the past tense of the *auxiliary *have* and the *past participle, e.g. *I had played*; and in German with the past tense of either the auxiliary *haben* or the auxiliary *sein* and the past participle, e.g. *ich hatte gespielt*, *ich war gegangen*.

PREFIX. An element added to the beginning of a word, e.g. *anti-*, *dis-*, *un-*.

PREPOSITION. A word such as *at*, *on*, *by*, *with* used before a noun or pronoun to show place, time, method, etc.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE. The verb form made in English by adding *-ing* to the verb, in German by adding *-d* to the infinitive.

PRONOUN. A word such as *he, we, mine, which* that is used instead of a noun usually already mentioned.

REFLEXIVE VERB. A verb used *transitively with the reflexive pronoun (e.g. *himself, ourselves*) as its *direct object.

RELATIVE PRONOUN. A pronoun that refers to an *antecedent and attaches a *subordinate clause to it, e.g. *which* in the sentence *that is the dog (antecedent) which chased the postman*.

REPORTED SPEECH. See *Indirect speech.

STRONG VERB. Verb forming the *past tense and *past participle by internal vowel change, e.g. *sing, sang, sung*.

SUBJECT. The word(s) in a sentence about which something is stated, e.g. *the countryside* in the sentence *the countryside fascinated him*.

SUBJUNCTIVE. A verb form that is used in German chiefly to convey *indirect speech and in conditional sentences.

SUBORDINATE (OR DEPENDENT) CLAUSE. A *clause that is dependent on a main clause and which cannot convey a meaning on its own, e.g. *when she heard the news* in the sentence *she laughed when she heard the news*.

SUFFIX. An element added to the end of a word, e.g. *-able, -ness*.

SUPERLATIVE. The form produced in English by adding *-est* or prefixing *most* to an adjective or adverb: *tallest* and *most exciting* are superlatives.

TENSE. The form of the verb that indicates the time of the action or state expressed by the verb.

TRANSITIVE VERB. A verb taking a *direct object.

VERB. A word expressing an action, an event, or a state, e.g. *take, happen, remain*.

VERBAL NOUN. A noun formed from a verb, e.g. *talking, swimming*.

WEAK MASCULINE. In German, a noun which adds *-en* or *-n* in all cases (singular and plural) except the *nominative singular, e.g. *der Mensch, der Schotte*.

WEAK VERB. A verb forming the *past tense and *past participle by adding (in English) the suffix *-(e)d* (e.g. *grill, grilled, grilled*) and not by changing the vowel.

Case and Gender

CASE

GERMAN AND ENGLISH: A HISTORICAL NOTE. German and English are cousins in the Germanic family of languages, and the similarities between them, resulting from their common origin, are obvious to anyone studying German. With the passage of time, however, they have grown further apart: phonetically, lexically, and, to a very significant degree, grammatically.

The grammar of Old English was much like that of modern German, as illustrated by the word order and use of inflexions in a sentence of King Alfred's: *Da ongan ic, ongemang oðrum mislicum and manigfealdum bisgum ðisses kynerices, ða boc wendan on Englisc* 'Then I began, among other diverse and manifold affairs of this kingdom, to turn (translate) the book into English'. But in the succeeding centuries English grammar became greatly simplified, shedding most of the inflexional endings whose counterparts German still retains. At the same time English word order grew more fixed and now has the basic pattern Subject-Verb(-Object): whether we say *the man fleas the dog*, *the fleas dog the man*, or even *the fleas man the dog* it is always clear who is doing what to whom—because of the word-order.

German has not undergone these sweeping grammatical changes—a fact which is of major consequence for the study of German by English speakers. To return to our first example: a German would most likely say **der Mann flöht den Hund** with the subject first, but it is also possible to say **den Hund flöht der Mann**; the sense is the same, only the emphasis is different. That it is the dog that is the object of the action is clear not from the word order but from the fact that the word for *the* in front of **Hund** is in the accusative case and that in front of **Mann** is in the nominative.

German case endings are therefore important, often being the means whereby the relationship between words is shown; and any learner aiming to communicate in German (whether spoken or written) with competence and confidence needs to learn and be able to produce the various inflexional endings accurately.

German has four cases: the **NOMINATIVE**, **ACCUSATIVE**, **GENITIVE**, and **DATIVE**.

The **NOMINATIVE** is used:

(i) for the **SUBJECT**⁷ of a sentence or clause:

der Lehrer fährt einen Mercedes the teacher drives a Mercedes
die Geschäftsfrau ist Französin the businesswoman is French
das Videospiel interessiert mich nicht the video game doesn't interest me

(ii) for the **COMPLEMENT** of **sein** to be, **werden** to become, **bleiben** to remain, **heißen** to be called:

Herr Stumpf ist ein begabter Lehrer Herr Stumpf is a gifted teacher
das Buch wurde ein großer Erfolg the book was a great success
er blieb ihr guter Freund he remained her good friend

⁷ Grammatical terms are explained in a special glossary, pp. 21–4.

The ACCUSATIVE is used:

(i) for the DIRECT OBJECT of a verb:

kennen Sie *den* Lehrer? *do you know the teacher?*

wir haben *die* Französin wiedererkannt *we recognized the Frenchwoman*
das Museum enthält viele Kostbarkeiten *the museum contains many precious objects*

(ii) after certain PREPOSITIONS (see p. 66):

ich habe einen Aufsatz für unseren Lehrer geschrieben *I've written an essay for our teacher*

wir sind ohne unsere Mutter nach Athen gestartet *we set off for Athens without our mother*

(iii) with a handful of adjectives in constructions with **sein** or **werden**:
gewohnt *used to* (with **sein**), **satt** *fed up with* (with **sein**, **werden**), **wert** *worth* (with **sein**), and **schuldig** in **jemandem etwas schuldig sein** *to owe someone something*:

ich bin solche Temperamentsausbrüche nicht gewohnt *I'm not used to such temperamental outbursts*

du bist mir eine Erklärung schuldig *you owe me an explanation*

der Teppich ist das Geld nicht wert *the carpet isn't worth the money*

(iv) in expressions of DEFINITE TIME:

sie fahren jeden Morgen mit der Straßenbahn *they go by tram every morning*

wir haben den ganzen Nachmittag gesucht *we've been looking the whole afternoon*

dieses Jahr gab es eine gute Ernte *there was a good crop this year*

(v) to indicate (a) DURATION OF TIME (the phrase often being reinforced by **lang**), (b) DISTANCE COVERED:

es hat den ganzen Morgen (lang) geschneit *it's been snowing/it snowed all morning*

er ist mit dem Auto den Berg hinuntergefahren *he drove down the hill/mountain in the car*

The GENITIVE is used:

(i) to indicate POSSESSION:⁸

das Haus unseres Lehrers *our teacher's house*

die Hoffnungen der jungen Frau *the young woman's hopes*

⁸ Note that the thing or person possessed precedes the possessor in German. With personal names, however, the possessor is named first (without an apostrophe), e.g. **Friedrichs Auto** *Friedrich's car*, **Tschechows Dramen** *Chekhov's dramas*.

(ii) after certain PREPOSITIONS (see p. 66):

sie hat trotz ihres Akzents den Job bekommen *she got the job in spite of her accent*

sie haben während der Pause Eis gegessen *during the interval they ate ice cream*

(iii) (chiefly in literary usage) with a few verbs taking a GENITIVE OBJECT, including:

sich bedienen *to use, make use of*

bedürfen *to need, require*

sich enthalten *to refrain/abstain from*

sich entsinnen *to recall*

sich erfreuen *to enjoy (good health, privilege, etc.)*

sich erinnern *to recall (usually sich erinnern an + acc.)*

gedenken *to think of, remember*

harren *to await*

sich rühmen *to boast of*

sich schämen *to be ashamed of*

sich vergewissern *to make sure of*

Thus:

diese Tatsachen bedürfen keiner Erklärung *these facts need no explanation*

er konnte sich eines Lächelns nicht enthalten *he could not refrain from smiling*

(iv) with certain ADJECTIVES (the genitive noun or pronoun precedes the adjective):

ich bin mir seiner Macht bewusst *I'm conscious of his power*

sie fühlte sich seiner nicht würdig *she did not feel worthy of him*

(v) in expressions of INDEFINITE TIME:

eines Tages werde ich einen Volvo kaufen *one day I'm going to buy a Volvo*

er ist eines Morgens tot aufgefunden worden *he was found dead one morning*

(vi) in set phrases EXPRESSING MANNER, including:

allen Ernstes *in all seriousness*

schweren Herzens *with a heavy heart*

gemessenen Schrittes *with measured tread*

erster/zweiter Klasse (fahren) *(to travel) first/second class*

Where the genitive case cannot be shown, it is replaced by **von**, e.g. **der Export von Kohle** *the export of coal*, **als Übersetzer von Storms Gedichten** *as a translator of Storm's poems*, **die Lösung von Problemen** *the solving of*

problems (as opposed to **die Lösung schwieriger Probleme** *the solving of difficult problems*, where the **-er** ending indicates the genitive plural).

In spoken German the genitive is commonly replaced by **von** + the dative.

The DATIVE is used:

(i) for the INDIRECT OBJECT of a verb:

sein Vater hat ihm ein neues Wörterbuch gekauft *his father has bought him a new dictionary*

wer hat unserem Lehrer den Mercedes gestohlen? *who stole the Mercedes from our teacher?*

(ii) with a number of common verbs taking a DATIVE OBJECT, including:

antworten *to answer*

begegnen *to meet (by chance)*

bekommen *to agree with (of food)*

danken *to thank*

dienen *to serve*

entsprechen *to correspond to*

folgen *to follow*

gefallen *to please*

gehören *to obey*

gehören *to belong to*

helfen *to help*

nützen *to be of use to*

passen *to fit*

raten *to advise*

schaden *to harm, damage*

stehen *to suit*

trauen *to trust*

widerstehen *to resist*

Thus:

der Polizist hat mir sehr unfreundlich geantwortet *the policeman answered me in a very unfriendly manner*

das Mädchen ist ihrem Vater gefolgt *the girl followed her father*

der Patient hilft der Krankenschwester *the patient is helping the nurse*

der Hut steht dir nicht *that hat doesn't suit you*

(iii) after certain PREPOSITIONS (see p. 66):

der Chef hat das Projekt aus verschiedenen Gründen abgelehnt *the boss turned down the project for various reasons*

sie besucht das Museum mit ihrem Bruder *she is visiting the museum with her brother*

(iv) with certain ADJECTIVES and NOUNS (where English uses *to*; the dative noun or pronoun precedes the adjective):

seine Haltung war *mir* unbegreiflich *his attitude was incomprehensible to me*

sie war *ihrem Sohn* eine gute Mutter *she was a good mother to her son*

APPPOSITION. Nouns in apposition (i.e. positioned after another noun or a pronoun and used—in G. N. Garmonsway's definition—to 'amplify and parallel' it) take the same case as the noun or pronoun they refer to, e.g. *sie hat ihrem Onkel, dem Zollbeamten, lange nicht geschrieben* *she hasn't written to her uncle, the customs officer, for a long time*. Here the two nouns concerned are both in the dative. Other examples:

(with accusative) *sein Krieg gegen die Sowjetunion, den letzten Verbündeten Großbritanniens auf dem Kontinent* *his war against the Soviet Union, Great Britain's last ally on the Continent*

(with genitive) *eine Beschreibung seines Geburtsortes, eines Dorfes in der Normandie* *a description of his birthplace, a village in Normandy*

(with dative) *am Sonntag, dem 1. Februar* *on Sunday, February 1st*

(with dative) *das Bild stammt von dem Maler Hans Holbein dem Jüngeren* *the picture is by the painter Hans Holbein the Younger*⁹

GENDER

German has three genders: MASCULINE, FEMININE, and NEUTER; in the plural no distinction of gender is made. Compound nouns, e.g. *der Apfelbaum* *apple tree*, take the gender of their last component (in this instance *der Baum*).¹⁰

The gender of nouns is often indicated by the preceding word, especially the definite article (*der* masculine, *die* feminine, *das* neuter). Unlike gender in English, which is based on sex (*he, she, it*), gender in German is arbitrary (although usually male beings are masculine and female beings feminine).

Often the ending of a noun shows its gender:

ENDING	GENDER	EXAMPLES
–ade (pl. -n)	F	<i>die Brigade</i> <i>brigade</i> , <i>die Limonade</i> <i>fizzy drink</i> , <i>die Olympiade</i> <i>Olympics</i>
–age (pl. -n)	F	<i>die Sabotage</i> <i>sabotage</i> , <i>die Persiflage</i> <i>spoof</i> , <i>die Etage</i> <i>floor, storey</i>
–ant (weak)	M	<i>der Demonstrant</i> <i>demonstrator</i> , <i>der Elefant</i> <i>elephant</i> , <i>der Konsonant</i> <i>consonant</i> , <i>der Diamant</i> <i>diamond</i>

⁹ Note also appositional phrases introduced by *als* or *wie*, e.g. *sie feierten ihn als Helden* *they acclaimed him as a hero*, *in einer slawischen Sprache wie dem Russischen* *in a Slavonic language like Russian*. (The nominative is, however, used when an *als*-phrase without article follows the genitive, e.g. *der Ruf Josef Stalins als Staatsmann* *Joseph Stalin's reputation as a statesman*; with *wie*, case agreement is sometimes dropped in favour of the nominative, e.g. *für einen Menschen wie du (dich)* *for a person like you*.)

¹⁰ Note, however, that while *der Teil* *part* is masculine several of its compounds are neuter: *das Abteil* *compartment (of train)*, *das Gegenteil* *opposite*, *das Urteil* *judgment; verdict*.

ENDING	GENDER	EXAMPLES
-anz (pl. -en)	F	die Arroganz <i>arrogance</i> , die Diskrepanz <i>discrepancy</i> , die Resonanz <i>resonance</i> ; <i>response</i>
-ar (= person) (pl. -e)	M	der Bibliothekar <i>librarian</i> , der Missionar <i>missionary</i> , der Kommentar <i>comment</i> ; <i>commentary</i> ¹¹
-är (= person) (pl. -e)	M	der Legionär <i>legionnaire</i> ; <i>legionary</i> , der Millionär <i>millionaire</i> ¹²
-at (= person) (weak)	M	der Demokrat <i>democrat</i> , der Kandidat <i>candidate</i> , der Soldat <i>soldier</i> , der Adressat <i>addressee</i> ¹³
-chen (pl. same)	N	das Kaninchen <i>rabbit</i> , das Kätzchen <i>kitten</i> ; <i>catkin</i>
-ei (-elei, -erei) (pl. -en)	F	die Kartei <i>card index</i> , die Nörgelei <i>grumbling</i> , die Kellerei <i>wine cellars</i> , die Meuterei <i>mutiny</i>
-ent (weak)	M	der Student (university etc.) <i>student</i> , der Dirigent <i>conductor</i> (of orchestra) ¹⁴
-enz (pl. -en)	F	die Tendenz <i>tendency, trend</i> , die Frequenz <i>frequency</i> (physics); <i>numbers attending</i> ; <i>volume of traffic</i>
-er (from verb) (pl. same)	M	der Schneider <i>tailor</i> , der Angeber <i>boaster</i> , <i>show-off</i> , der Rechner <i>calculator</i>
-heit (pl. -en)	F	die Schönheit <i>beauty</i> , die Menschheit <i>humanity, humankind</i>
-ie (pl. -n)	F	die Chemie <i>chemistry</i> , die Phobie <i>phobia</i>
-ik (pl. -en)	F	die Informatik <i>computer science</i> , die Technik <i>technology</i> ; <i>technique</i> , die Romantik <i>Romanticism</i> ¹⁵
-in (pl. -nen)	F	die Journalistin (woman) <i>journalist</i> , die Füchsin <i>vixen</i>

¹¹ Other masculines in -ar include **der Jaguar**, **der Januar** *January*, **der Februar** *February*. Neuter are e.g. **das Inventar** *inventory*, **das Mobiliar** *furnishings*, **das Glossar** *glossary*, **das Formular** *form*.

¹² Note **das Militär** *armed forces, army*.

¹³ The inanimate **der Automat** *slot- or vending-machine; automaton* is also declined as a weak noun. Other masculines in -at (not, however, declined weak) include **der Apparat** *apparatus*; *set*; *camera*, **der Salat** *salad*; *lettuce*, **der Spinat** *spinach*, **der Muskat** *nutmeg*, **der Passat** *trade wind*, **der Senat** *senate* (plurals add -e). The many neuters in -at include **das Internat** *boarding school*, **das Konsulat** *consulate*, **das Transplantat** *transplant (= organ)*, **das Telefonat** *telephone call*, **das Quadrat** *square*, **das Resultat** *result*, **das Format** *size*; *format*; *calibre*, **das Attentat** *attempted assassination* (plurals likewise add -e).

¹⁴ Also masculine (but not declined weak) are **der Akzent** *accent*, **der Orient** *the Middle East*; *neuters* include **das Transparent** *banner*, **das Kontingent** *quota*; *contingent*, **das Äquivalent** *equivalent* (Plurals add -e).

¹⁵ Exceptions: the oceans **der Atlantik** and **der Pazifik**, **der Katholik** *Catholic*.

ENDING	GENDER	EXAMPLES
-ion (pl. -en)	F	die Nation <i>nation</i> , die Kommission <i>commission</i> ¹⁶
-ismus (pl. -ismen)	M	der Sozialismus <i>socialism</i> , der Sadismus <i>sadism</i>
-ist (weak)	M	der Journalist <i>journalist</i> , der Spezialist <i>specialist</i>
-ität (pl. -en)	F	die Aggressivität <i>aggressiveness</i> , die Universität <i>university</i>
-keit (pl. -en)	F	die Einigkeit <i>unity</i> , die Dankbarkeit <i>gratitude</i>
-ling (pl. -e)	M	der Lehrling <i>apprentice</i> , der Prüfling <i>examinee</i>
-ma (pl. -men)	N	das Thema <i>topic; subject; theme</i> , das Prisma <i>prism</i>
-ment (pl. -e)	N	das Dokument <i>document</i> , das Moment <i>factor</i> ¹⁷
-or (pl. -en)	M	der Professor <i>professor</i> , der Sektor <i>sector</i> ¹⁸
-schaft (pl. -en)	F	die Gewerkschaft <i>trade union</i> , die Leidenschaft <i>passion</i>
-tum	N	das Heldentum <i>heroism</i> , das Unternehmertum <i>employers (collectively)</i> ¹⁹
-um (pl. varies)	N	das Zentrum <i>centre</i> , das Maximum <i>maximum</i>
-ung (pl. -en)	F	die Hoffnung <i>hope</i> , die Regierung <i>government</i>
-ur (pl. -en)	F	die Natur <i>nature</i> , die Fraktur <i>Gothic type; fracture (medicine)</i> ²⁰
-us (pl. varies)	M	der Rhythmus <i>rhythm</i> , der Zirkus <i>circus</i>

Most nouns in **Ge-** are neuter, e.g. **das Gebäude** *building*, **das Gesicht** *face*, **das Gerippe** *skeleton*, **das Gehalt** *salary*, as are all nouns with **Ge-** prefixed to verb-stems and denoting a continual activity or repeated occurrence, e.g. **das Gebrüll** *roaring*. Note, however, the masculines **der Gebrauch** *use*, **der Gedanke** *thought, idea*, **der Gefallen** *favour*, **der Gehalt** (*intellectual*) *content* (in Austrian German also *salary*), **der Gehorsam** *obedience*, **der Genosse** *comrade*, **der Genuss** *pleasure; consumption*, **der Geruch** *smell*, **der Gesang** *song; singing; canto*, **der Geschmack** *taste, flavour*, **der Gestank** *stink*, **der Gewinn** *profit; winnings*; and the feminines **die Gebühr** *fee; charge*, **die Geburt** *birth*, **die Geduld** *patience*, **die Gefahr** *danger*, **die Gemeinde** *community; municipality; parish*, **die Geschichte** *history; story*, **die Gestalt** *shape, form; build*, **die Gewalt** *force; authority*, **die Gewähr** *guarantee*.

¹⁶ Not to be confused with the unstressed neuter ending **-ion** (plural **-ien**) in words of Greek origin, e.g. **das Stadion** *stadium*, **das Symposium** *symposium*.

¹⁷ Exceptions: **der Moment** *moment*, **der Zement** *cement*.

¹⁸ Exception: **das Labor** *laboratory*.

¹⁹ Exceptions: **der Irrtum** *error*, **der Reichtum** *wealth*.

²⁰ Exception: **das Abitur** *Abitur* (school-leaving examination at the Gymnasium).

Articles

DEFINITE ARTICLE

der, die, das the

	SINGULAR			PLURAL
	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.	ALL GENDERS
NOM.	der	die	das	die
ACC.	den	die	das	die
GEN.	des	der	des	der
DAT.	dem	der	dem	den

Certain other words take the same endings as the definite article, namely **dieser, diese, dieses** *this, that*, **jeder, jede, jedes** *each, every*, **jener, jene, jenes** *that*, **mancher, manche, manches** *many a*, **solcher, solche, solches** *such a*, **welcher, welche, welches** *which*—with the exception that where the definite article takes the form **die** they have the ending **-e** (e.g. **diese**), and in the nominative and accusative neuter they have the ending **-es** (e.g. **dieses**).

The use of the definite article in German broadly corresponds to that of English *the*. There are, however, certain differences in usage:

(i) = no article in English:

(a) **ABSTRACT NOUNS** (e.g. **die Natur** *nature*, **das Leben** *life*, **das Schicksal** *fate*, **die Liebe** *love*, **die Jugend** *youth*, **die Zeit** *time*, **die Wissenschaft** *scholarship, science*, **das Bankwesen** *banking*, **die Gesellschaft** *society*, **die Klassik** *classicism*, **der Kommunismus** *Communism*, **das Christentum** *Christianity*); sometimes, however, the article is omitted, its use (or non-use) often being as much a question of style and usage as of grammar;

(b) **CONCEPTS** such as **der Himmel** *heaven*, **die Hölle** *hell*, **das Paradies** *paradise*, and the **INSTITUTIONS** **das Parlament** *Parliament*, **die Schule** *school*, **das Gefängnis** *prison*, **das Krankenhaus** *hospital*, **die Kirche** *church*;

(c) **der Mensch** *man*, **die Leute** *people*;

(d) **THE NAMES OF THE SEASONS, MONTHS, and also MEALS** (e.g. **der Frühling** *spring*, **der Juni** *June*, **das Frühstück** *breakfast*), although in certain contexts—e.g. **es war Frühling/Juni** *it was spring/June*—the article is dropped; in the case of the **DAYS OF THE WEEK** the article is sometimes used (e.g. **(der) Montag** *Monday*; *on Monday* etc. is **am Montag** etc.);

(e) **MASCULINE and FEMININE GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES** (e.g. **die Schweiz** *Switzerland*, **die Provence** *Provence*, **die Schellingstraße** *Schellingstrasse*, **der Petersplatz** *St Peter's*

Square, der Hydepark Hyde Park, der Kilimandscharo Kilimanjaro, der Vesuv Vesuvius, der Titicacasee Lake Titicaca), also **das Elsass** ['ɛlzas] *Alsace*;

(f) PROPER NAMES PRECEDED BY AN ADJECTIVE (e.g. **die kleine Susi** *little Susi*, **das heutige Frankreich** *present-day France*);

(g) IN CERTAIN PHRASES, e.g. **im/ins Ausland** *abroad*, **im Bett** *in bed*, **in der Stadt** *in town*, **mit der Bahn, dem Schiff**, etc. *by rail, ship*, etc., **mit der Post** *by post*.

(ii) = possessive adjective in English—referring to PARTS OF THE BODY OR ARTICLES OF CLOTHING:

er steckte die Hände in die Taschen *he put his hands in his pockets*

er zog die Jacke aus *he took off his jacket*

ich schüttelte ihr die Hand *I shook her hand*

sie wusch sich (DAT.) die Haare *she washed her hair*

das Blut schoss ihr ins Gesicht *blood rushed to her face*

The possessive adjective is, however, used for the subject, e.g. **seine Augen sind blau** *his eyes are blue*.

(iii) = *a*—used distributively, e.g. **fünf Mark das Pfund** *five marks a pound*.

INDEFINITE ARTICLE

ein *a*

	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.
NOM.	ein	eine	ein
ACC.	einen	eine	ein
GEN.	eines	einer	eines
DAT.	einem	einer	einem

The negative **kein** *not a/any, no* takes the same endings in the singular as **ein**; the plural forms are (NOM., ACC.) **keine**, (GEN.) **keiner**, (DAT.) **keinen**.

The use of the indefinite article broadly corresponds to that of English *a*. There are, however, certain differences in usage:

(i) no article in German = *a*—with nouns indicating PROFESSION OR NATIONALITY (or other geographical identification) used as the complement of **sein**, **werden**, or **bleiben**:

er war Architekt *he was an architect*

sie ist Neuseeländerin *she's a New Zealander*

er ist Bayer/Berliner *he's a Bavarian/Berliner*

The article is also as a rule omitted with other nouns referring to an individual belonging to a category of persons, although in some cases usage vacillates between using and omitting the article:

sie ist Witwe *she's a widow*

er wollte Junggeselle bleiben *he wanted to stay a bachelor*

er ist (ein) Katholik *he's a Catholic*

er war schon immer (ein) Optimist *he was always an optimist*

Where the noun is preceded by an adjective the article is always used:

er war ein hervorragender Architekt *he was an outstanding architect*

ich bin ein unverbesserlicher Optimist *I'm an incurable optimist*

(ii) **als** without article = *as a* (or, in appropriate contexts, *as the*), e.g. **als Mensch** *as a human being*, **als Warnung** *as a warning*; in a case like **er starb als Christ** *he died a Christian*, *a* alone is used.

(iii) **ein** = *a pair of* . . . s, e.g. **eine Brille** *a pair of glasses*, **eine Schere** *a pair of scissors*, **eine Zange** *a pair of tongs*, **eine Hose** *a pair of trousers*.

(iv) **ein** = *a piece of* . . . or is rendered by the English noun alone, e.g. **eine Information** *(a piece of) information*, **eine Nachricht** *(a piece of) news*, **ein Rat** *(a piece of) advice*.

(v) *not a* is expressed by **kein**:

kein Laut war zu hören *not a sound was to be heard*

ich hatte kein Auto *I didn't have a car*

(vi) The indefinite article is omitted in many descriptive phrases of the type PREPOSITION + ADJECTIVE + NOUN where English has *a*, e.g. **ein Haus mit flachem Dach** *a house with a flat roof*, **auf geheimnisvolle Weise** *in a mysterious manner*, **in hohem Alter** *at an advanced age*, **mit lauter/leiser Stimme** *in a loud/low voice*, **mit großer Mehrheit** *by a large majority*.

OMISSION OF ARTICLE WITH NOUNS USED IN PAIRS. The definite article is frequently omitted where nouns are used in pairs:

der Einfluss von Sonne und Mond auf Ebbe und Flut *the influence of the sun and moon on the tides*

das einzige dicht besiedelte Gebiet zwischen Tweed und Forth *the only densely populated area between the Tweed and the Forth*

Nouns

SINGULAR

German nouns, which are written with a capital initial letter, may be divided into three main groups in the singular:

(i) **MASCULINES** (except weak masculines) and **NEUTERS**. These form the genitive by adding **-s** (e.g. **der Deckel lid / des Deckels, das Fenster window / des Fensters**) or, in the case of native (but not 'foreign') monosyllables, **-es** (e.g. **der Tag day / des Tages, das Schiff ship / des Schiffes**: contrast **das Gen gene / des Gens**).²¹ (Exception: monosyllables ending in a vowel or vowel + **h**, e.g. **der Schuh shoe / des Schuhs**.)

Nouns ending in **s, ss, ß, tz, x, or z** also add **-es** (e.g. **der Komplex complex / des Komplexes, das Walross walrus / des Walrosses**),²² with the exception of those in **-as, -os, -us**, which have *no* genitive ending (e.g. **der Kubismus cubism / des Kubismus, das Epos epic / des Epos**) (note, however, **der Bus bus / des Busses**).²³ In the case of *abbreviations* the ending **-s** is optional.

The optional dative ending **-e** (after monosyllables)—so common in the writings of, for example, Thomas Mann or Hermann Broch—has fallen largely into disuse; it survives chiefly in set phrases such as **auf dem Lande in the country, in hohem Maße to a high degree, zu Hause at home**.

(ii) **WEAK MASCULINES**. These take the ending **-en** or (when **e** is already present) **-n** in all cases of the singular except the nominative (also throughout the plural):

NOM.	der Mensch (<i>man</i> , ²⁴ <i>person</i>)	der Hase (<i>hare</i>)
ACC.	den Menschen	den Hasen
GEN.	des Menschen	des Hasen
DAT.	dem Menschen	dem Hasen

This category includes (a) nouns (designating chiefly persons) that end in **-ant, -ent, -ist, -graph, -loge**, e.g. **der Demonstrant demonstrator, der Student student, der Realist realist, der Geograph geographer, der Theologe theologian**; and (b) nouns in **-e** denoting nationalities, e.g. **der Chinese**

²¹ Native monosyllabic nouns sometimes, especially in less formal usage, have the ending **-s** instead.

²² Neuter nouns in **-nis** double the **s**, e.g. **das Ereignis event / des Ereignisses**.

²³ In some disyllabic nouns with unstressed prefixes (e.g. **der Vertrag contract, treaty**) and, especially for reasons of euphony, certain 'foreign' nouns of more than one syllable (e.g. **das Produkt product**) the ending **-es** may occur as an alternative to **-s**.

²⁴ *Man* in the sense of *homo sapiens*.

Chinese, **der Franzose** *Frenchman*, **der Schwede** *Swede*. (Not, however, **der Deutsche** *German*, which is declined like an adjective: see p. 55.)

Der Herr *gentleman, master* has the ending **-n** in the accusative, genitive, and dative singular (but **-en** in the plural).

A small group of nouns—sometimes known as ‘mixed’ nouns—are declined like weak masculines except in the genitive singular, which has the ending **-ns**. They are: **der Buchstabe** *letter (of the alphabet)*, **der Gedanke** *thought; idea*, **der Glaube** *belief*, **der Name** *name*, **der Wille** *will*. One neuter noun, **das Herz** *heart*, follows a similar pattern: **Herz, Herz, Herzens, Herzen**.

(iii) **FEMININES**. These remain unchanged throughout the singular.

PLURAL

The nominative, accusative, and genitive plural forms are identical; the dative plural adds **-n** (e.g. **die Häuser** *the houses*, dative **den Häusern**) where **n** is not already present, except in the case of nouns that add **-s** to form the plural.

Plurals are formed in various ways in German: by adding **-e** with or without umlaut (¨), **-en** or **-n**, **-er** with or without umlaut, **-s** (chiefly added to words of foreign origin), or—in the case of nouns ending in **-el**, **-en**, **-er**—by retaining the singular form unchanged or with umlaut.

(i) **-e** or **-e**:

(a) most **MASCULINES**; of those which can mutate the vowel, some do while others do not—e.g. **der Arm** *arm* / **Arme**, **der Arzt** *doctor* / **Ärzte**, **der Baum** *tree* / **Bäume**, **der Fisch** *fish* / **Fische**.

(b) a number of major **FEMININE** monosyllables, always with umlaut—e.g. **die Angst** *fear; anxiety* / **Ängste**, **die Frucht** *fruit* / **Früchte**, **die Gans** *goose* / **Gänse**, **die Nacht** *night* / **Nächte**.

(c) some **NEUTER** monosyllables, without umlaut (except **das Floß** *raft* / **Flöße**)—e.g. **das Boot** *boat* / **Boote**, **das Jahr** *year* / **Jahre**, **das Pferd** *horse* / **Pferde**, **das Spiel** *game* / **Spiele**.

(ii) **-en** or **-n**:

(a) most **FEMININES**: 1. the vast majority of those ending in a consonant take **-en**—e.g. **die Schlacht** *battle* / **Schlachten**, **die Tat** *deed* / **Taten**, **die Uhr** *clock; watch* / **Uhren**, **die Zeit** *time* / **Zeiten**; likewise nouns in **-ei**, **-heit**, **-in** (with doubling of **n** in the plural), **-keit**, **-schaft**, **-ung**—e.g. **die Bäckerei** *bakery* / **Bäckereien**, **die Füchsin** *vixen* / **Füchsinnen**, **die Bemerkung** *remark* / **Bemerkungen**; 2. all feminines ending in **-e** take **-n** in the plural—e.g. **die Blume** *flower* / **Blumen**, **die Farbe** *colour; paint* / **Farben**, **die Minute** *minute* / **Minuten**, **die Schwalbe** *swallow* / **Schwalben**.

(b) a number of **MASCULINES** and a few **NEUTERS**—e.g. **der Schmerz** *pain* / **Schmerzen**, **der See** *lake* / **Seen**, **der Staat** *state* / **Staaten**, **der Strahl** *ray* / **Strahlen**; **das Auge** *eye* / **Augen**, **das Ohr** *ear* / **Ohren**, **das Bett** *bed* / **Betten**, **das Ende** *end* / **Enden**.

(c) all **WEAK MASCULINES**—e.g. **der Hase** *hare* / **Hasen**, **der Prinz** *prince* / **Prinzen**, **der Student** *student* / **Studenten**.

(d) nouns in -or (which shift the stress in the plural)—e.g. **der Organisator** *organizer* / **Organisatören**, **der Professor** *professor* / **Professoren**.

(e) nouns of foreign origin in which -en replaces the singular ending to form the plural—e.g. **das Drama** *drama* / **Dramen**, **das Epos** *epic* / **Epen**, **das Konto** (*bank*) *account* / **Konten**, **das Album** *album* / **Alben**, **das Individuum** *individual* / **Individuen**, **der Rhythmus** *rhythm* / **Rhythmen**, **der Organismus** *organism* / **Organismen**.

(iii) -er or -er:

most NEUTERS and a few MASCULINES, with umlaut where possible—e.g. **das Dorf** *village* / **Dörfer**, **das Ei** *egg* / **Eier**, **das Kind** *child* / **Kinder**, **das Land** *country* / **Länder**; **der Geist** *mind; spirit; ghost* / **Geister**, **der Gott** *god* / **Götter**, **der Mann** *man; husband* / **Männer**, **der Wald** *forest* / **Wälder**.

(iv) -s:

(a) some nouns of foreign origin—e.g. **der Bikini** *bikini* / **Bikinis**, **der Store** *net curtain* / **Stores**, **der Laptop** *laptop* / **Laptops**, **der Streik** *strike* / **Streiks**; **die City** *city centre* / **Citys**, **die Hazienda** *hacienda* / **Haziendas**, **die Sauna** *sauna* / **Saunas**; **das Büro** *office* / **Büros**, **das Ensemble** *ensemble* / **Ensembles**, **das Kino** *cinema* / **Kinos**.

(b) the nautical terms **das Deck** *deck* / **Decks**, **das Dock** *dock* / **Docks**, **das Wrack** *wreck* / **Wracks**.

(c) a few words which form a colloquial plural in -s in addition to the standard form—e.g. **der Kerl** *fellow* / **Kerle**, coll. **Kerls**, **das Fräulein** *young lady* / **Fräulein**, coll. **Fräuleins**.

(v) - or -e: nouns in -el, -en, -er:

(a) MASCULINES, usually with umlaut where possible—e.g. **der Engel** *angel* / **Engel**, **der Vogel** *bird* / **Vögel**, **der Garten** *garden* / **Gärten**, **der Vater** *father* / **Väter**.

(b) NEUTERS, without umlaut (except **das Kloster** *monastery; convent* / **Klöster**)—e.g. **das Segel** *sail* / **Segel**, **das Zeichen** *sign* / **Zeichen**, **das Ufer** *shore* / **Ufer**, **das Zimmer** *room* / **Zimmer**.

(c) two FEMININES: **die Mutter** *mother* / **Mütter**, **die Tochter** *daughter* / **Töchter**.

(vi) other endings used with words of foreign origin:

e.g. **das Adverb** *adverb* / **Adverbien**, **das Prinzip** *principle* / **Prinzipien**; **der Atlas** *atlas* / **Atlanten**; **das Paradoxon** [pa'ra:dɔksɔn] *paradox* / **Paradoxa**; grammatical terms such as **das Nomen** *noun* / **Nomina**, **das Tempus** *tense* / **Tempora**, **der Kasus** *case* / **Kasus** [-u:s], **der Modus** *mood* / **Modi**.

Some nouns have different plural forms corresponding to different meanings of the singular: e.g. **der Bau** *building* / **Bauten**, *burrow, earth* / **Baue**; **der Faden** *thread* / **Fäden**, *fathom* / **Faden**; **das Wort** *word* / **Worte** (*connected*) *words*, **Wörter** (*single*) *words* as in a **Wörterbuch**.

Other nouns do not have a plural form as such, the place of the 'missing' plural being taken by a compound in the plural, e.g. **der Tod** *death*—**Todesfälle** *deaths* (literally *cases of death*), **der Sport** *sport*—**Sportarten** *sports* (literally *types of sport*), **der Käse** *cheese*—**Käsesorten** *cheeses* (literally *kinds of cheese*).

POINTS REGARDING NUMBER (INCLUDING AGREEMENT IN NUMBER) WHERE GERMAN USAGE DIFFERS FROM ENGLISH

(i) Some German nouns in the singular correspond to an English plural, and vice versa:

(a) German singular = English plural, e.g. **der Hafer** *oats*, **das Gemüse** *vegetables*, **das Geweih** *antlers*, **die Treppe** *stairs*, **die Kaserne** *barracks*, **das Feuerwerk** *fireworks*, **das Uhrwerk** *works (of a clock or watch)*, **der Erlös** *proceeds*, **der Lohn** *wages*, **der Schadenersatz** *damages*, **der Dank** *thanks*, **der Inhalt** *contents*, **das Mittel** *means*, **die Umgebung** *surroundings*, **die Mathematik** *mathematics*, **die Physik** *physics*, the names of the suits in cards (**Herz** *hearts*, **Karo** *diamonds*, **Pik** *spades*, **Kreuz** *clubs*), **das Mittelalter** *the Middle Ages*, **Westindien** *the West Indies*.

(b) German plural = English singular, e.g. **die Haare** (also **das Haar**) *hair* (in collective sense), **die Möbel** *furniture*, **die Lebensmittel** *food*, **die Flitterwochen** *honeymoon*, **die Zinsen** *interest (on money lent)*, **die Fortschritte** *progress (as in Fortschritte machen to make progress)*, **die Kenntnisse** *knowledge (of a subject etc.)*.

(ii) In the case of masculine and neuter nouns indicating a weight or measure, as well as the feminine **Mark**, the singular form is used after numerals (or expressions such as **ein paar** *a few*, **mehrere** *several*) instead of the plural, e.g. **zwei Glas Bier** *two glasses of beer*, **drei Pfund Tee** *three pounds of tea*, **vier Dutzend Eier** *four dozen eggs*, **zehn Grad (Celsius)** *ten degrees (Celsius)*, **vier Paar Schuhe** *four pairs of shoes*, **fünf Stück (Apfelsinen etc.)** *five (oranges etc.)*, **50 000 Mann** *50,000 men* (if viewed as a single unit, as when constituting a fighting force: **eine Armee von 50 000 Mann** *an army of 50,000 men*), **100 Schritt** *100 paces*, **20 Pfennig** *20 pfennigs*, **30 Mark** *30 marks*, **50 englische Pfund** *50 pounds sterling*, **100 Dollar** *100 dollars*. (Feminine nouns of this type—except **Mark**—form the plural in the usual way, e.g. **drei Tassen Tee** *three cups of tea*, **100 Drachmen** *100 drachmas*.) On the other hand, where the items referred to are conceived of essentially as individual objects, the plural form is used, e.g. **zwei Fässer Bier** *two (individual) barrels of beer* (to be compared with **zwei Fass Bier** *two barrels of beer as a quantity ordered etc.*).

(iii) If two or more attributes refer to identical nouns, only the last noun is given—in the singular (whereas English has the plural), e.g. **das Alte (Testament understood) und Neue Testament** *the Old and New Testaments*, **im 17., 18. und 19. Jahrhundert** *in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries*. (This also applies when two compounds share the same last element, e.g. **in der Morgen- und Abendausgabe** *in the morning and evening editions*.)

(iv) In German the singular is used in a distributive sense (where English has the plural) with reference to something concrete or abstract that applies to a number of persons:

wir nahmen den Hut ab *we took off our hats*
alle hoben die rechte Hand *all raised their right hands*
sie redete die Leute nie mit dem Namen an *she never addressed people by their names*
manche Leute haben ein sehr leichtes Leben *some people have very easy lives*

(v) Where a noun denoting a quantity (such as **eine Anzahl** *a number*, **eine Menge** *a quantity*, **eine Herde** *a herd*) is followed by a plural noun, it may take a singular or plural verb according to whether the emphasis is more on the noun of quantity or on the following plural noun respectively, e.g. **ein Dutzend Eier kostet 5 Mark** *a dozen eggs cost 5 marks*, **eine riesige Menge Menschen war(en) versammelt** *a huge crowd of people was gathered* (**war** stresses the collective presence of the crowd, **waren** emphasizes the people concerned).

(vi) **Die USA** *the USA*, like **die Vereinigten Staaten** *the United States*, is treated as plural, e.g. **die USA haben den Vertrag ratifiziert** *the USA has ratified the treaty*; the corresponding personal pronoun is therefore **sie** (plural), translated by *it, she*.

(vii) Even if the complement precedes the verb and subject, the verb agrees in number with the subject, e.g. **seine große Leidenschaft sind Schmetterlinge** *his great passion is butterflies*.

(viii) The English plural form in phrases of the type *in . . . respects/ways* corresponds to a German singular:

in mancher Beziehung/Hinsicht *in some respects*
auf verschiedene Weise *in various ways*
auf tausenderlei Art *in a thousand ways*

PROPER NAMES

FORENAMES and SURNAMES, whether masculine or feminine, take -s in the genitive singular, e.g. **Juttas Fahrrad** *Jutta's bicycle*, **(Richard) Wagners Opern** or **die Opern (Richard) Wagners** *(Richard) Wagner's operas*, **die Ermordung Kennedys** *Kennedy's assassination*. (After **s**, **ss**, **ß**, **tz**, **x**, or **z** an apostrophe is used, e.g. **Agnes' Hut** *Agnes's hat*, **Strauß' Walzer** *Strauss's waltzes*, **Marx' Ideen** *Marx's ideas*; however, **von** is sometimes used instead, e.g. **die Walzer von Strauß**; especially with classical names the definite article is often used to indicate genitive case, e.g. **der Tod des Sokrates** *the death of Socrates*; **Jesus Christus** has the genitive **Jesu Christi**.) Surnames usually add -s in the plural, those ending in a sibilant add -ens, e.g. **(die) Schulzens** *the Schulzes*.

GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES also take the genitive -s (unless feminine like **die Schweiz** *Switzerland*), e.g. **die Bevölkerung Dänemarks** *the population of Denmark*,

die Geschichte Roms *the history of Rome*, **außerhalb Moskaus** *outside Moscow*. (After *s*, *ss*, *ß*, *tz*, *x*, or *z* it is customary to use *von*, e.g. **das Erbe von Byzanz** *the heritage of Byzantium*, **die Theater von Paris** *the theatres of Paris*.)²⁵

The names of continents (other than **die Antarktis** *Antarctica*), countries and regions (with certain exceptions, e.g. **der Sudan** *the Sudan*, **der Balkan** *the Balkans*, **die Schweiz**, **die Türkei** *Turkey*, **die Provence** *Provence*, **die Normandie** *Normandy*, **die Bretagne** *Britanny*, **die Toskana** *Tuscany*, (plural) **die USA** *the USA*)²⁶ and cities are all used without an article, and are neuter—as becomes apparent when, exceptionally, the definite article is required, namely when an adjective precedes the name or a genitive phrase follows, e.g. **das südliche Spanien** *southern Spain*, **das Frankreich Ludwigs XIV.** (= **des Vierzehnten**) *the France of Louis XIV*, **das Warschau von heute** *present-day Warsaw*.

Mountains (and mountain ranges) have the definite article, and are usually masculine, e.g. **der Brocken** *the Brocken*, **der Montblanc** *Mont Blanc*, **der Fudschijama** *Fujiyama*, **der Mount Everest** *Mount Everest*, **der Ural** *the Urals* (but **die Eifel**). Some occur as plurals, e.g. **die Alpen** *the Alps*, **die Vogesen** *the Vosges*, **die Pyrenäen** *the Pyrenees*, **die Kordilleren** *the Cordilleras*.

Rivers in Germany are mostly feminine (e.g. **die Mosel** *the Moselle*, **die Donau** *the Danube*), as are foreign rivers in *-a* and *-e* (e.g. **die Wolga** *the Volga*, **die Themse** *the Thames*, **die Seine**); but several major German rivers (e.g. **der Rhein**, **der Main**, **der Neckar**, **der Inn**) and most foreign ones (e.g. **der Amazonas** *the Amazon*, **der Jangtse(kiang)** *the Yangtze (Kiang)*, **der Limpopo**, **der Mississippi**, **der Tweed**) have masculine gender.

The planets also have the definite article, and are mostly masculine: **der Merkur** *Mercury*, **der Mars** *Mars*, **der Jupiter** *Jupiter*, **der Saturn** *Saturn*, **der Uranus** *Uranus*, **der Neptun** *Neptune*, **der Pluto** *Pluto*; two are feminines: **die Venus** *Venus*, **die Erde** *Earth*.

CARS are generally masculine, e.g. **der Mercedes**, **der Renault**, **der Rolls-Royce**, **der Volvo**. **SHIPS** are usually feminine, e.g. **die „Graf Spee“**, **die „Titanic“** [ti'ta:nik]; so too are **AIRCRAFT**, e.g. **die Boeing**, **die DC-8**, **die Messerschmitt** (but **der Airbus**, **der Jumbo**).

The titles of **WORKS OF ART**, **NEWSPAPERS**, **ETC.** are inflected, e.g. **hast du „Iwan den Schrecklichen“ gesehen?** *have you seen 'Ivan the Terrible'?* Where a title beginning with a definite article is in an oblique case the article is placed outside the quotation marks, e.g. **als Abonnent des „Spiegels“** *as a subscriber to 'Der Spiegel'*, **im „Kapital“ heißt es . . .** *it says in 'Das Kapital' . . .*; the article is dropped following an artist's name in the genitive, e.g. **die**

²⁵ *Von* is also usual in e.g. **der König/Präsident von . . .** *the King/President of . . .* (but **der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten**).

²⁶ The article is optional in (der) **Irak** *Iraq*, (der) **Iran** *Iran*, (der) **Jemen** *Yemen*.

Ouvertüre zu Wagners „Fliegendem Holländer“ *the overture to Wagner's 'Flying Dutchman'.*

LANGUAGES

Languages with names in **-isch** (**-sch**) have two forms: the *uninflected* form (e.g. **Englisch**, **Deutsch**), which is neuter, although the gender is not always apparent, and the—likewise neuter—*inflected* form, consisting of the corresponding adjectival noun with definite article (e.g. **das Englische/Deutsche**); other languages such as (**das**) **Hindi** *Hindi*, (**das**) **Suaheli** *Swahili*, (**das**) **Hausa** *Hausa*, also (**das**) **Esperanto** *Esperanto* have a single name only.

The uninflected form is used to refer either to a language in a general sense (without an article)—e.g. **Deutsch sprechen** *to speak German*, **gut/fließend Deutsch sprechen** *to speak German well/fluently*, **Serbokroatisch ist nicht mein Fall** *Serbo-Croat is not my cup of tea*—or to a particular type of the language concerned, e.g. **gutes Deutsch** *good German*, **das amerikanische Englisch** *American English*, **Luthers Deutsch** *Luther's German*, **das Kaufmannsdeutsch** *commercial German*, **im heutigen Deutsch** *in present-day German*. The adjectival noun, on the other hand, can only refer to a language in a general sense, *the . . . language*, e.g. **das Englische ist eine indogermanische Sprache** *English is an Indo-European language*, **die Aussprache des Russischen** *the pronunciation of Russian*, also **etwas aus dem (Deutschen etc.) ins (Englische etc.) übersetzen** *to translate something from (German etc.) into (English etc.)*.

In *German, English, etc.* is **auf Deutsch, Englisch, etc.**; where an adjective precedes the noun **in** is used, e.g. **in fließendem/gebrochenem Deutsch** *in fluent/broken German*. In *Hindi, Hausa, etc.* = **auf Hindi, Hausa, etc.**

ADVERBIAL USE OF deutsch etc.: e.g. **deutsch denken/sprechen** *to think in German/speak (in) German*, **der Brief ist deutsch geschrieben** *the letter is (written) in German (also in Deutsch)*.

Pronouns

PERSONAL PRONOUNS

SINGULAR

	1ST PERS. I	2ND PERS. YOU (FAMILIAR FORM)	3RD PERS. HE/SHE/IT		
			MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.
NOM.	ich	du	er	sie	es
ACC.	mich	dich	ihn	sie	es
GEN.	meiner	deiner	seiner	ihrer	seiner
DAT.	mir	dir	ihm	ihr	ihm

SINGULAR AND PLURAL

Sie you

NOM.	Sie
ACC.	Sie
GEN.	Ihrer
DAT.	Ihnen

PLURAL

	1ST PERS. WE	2ND PERS. YOU (FAMILIAR FORM)	3RD PERS. THEY
NOM.	wir	ihr	sie
ACC.	uns	euch	sie
GEN.	unser	euer	ihrer
DAT.	uns	euch	ihnen

NOTE: The genitive forms are relatively rare, occurring chiefly with verbs and adjectives that govern the genitive.

The familiar 2nd person pronouns **du** and **ihr** are used when addressing relatives, close friends, one's peers (among certain groups such as workmen), children, animals, God (**Du**), and (in poetry) personified inanimate objects;

the reader of a book, advertisement, etc. is also addressed in the familiar form, e.g. **siehe** . . . *see* . . . , **trink Coca-Cola** *drink Coca-Cola*, and in the plural **schützt unsere Wälder!** *protect our forests*. Otherwise **Sie** is used.

The personal pronouns of the 3rd person singular agree in gender with the noun they refer to, thus *it* may be expressed by **er** (referring to a masculine), **sie** (referring to a feminine) or **es** (referring to a neuter), e.g. **ich liebe diesen Garten—er ist so groß** *I love this garden—it's so large*. (The use in English of *she* to refer to countries necessarily differs from German usage: the great majority of countries being neuter in German, they are referred to by **es**.)

Although in accordance with the rules of congruence one would expect the neuter pronoun to be used in connection with the neuter nouns **Mädchen** and **Fräulein**, in practice 'natural gender' tends to assert itself, and the feminine pronoun is widely used instead, e.g. **was hat das Mädchen?—ist sie immer so?** *what's wrong with the girl?—is she always like that?* (Likewise, the feminine possessive adjective **ihr** is widely used instead of neuter **sein**, e.g. **das Mädchen von nebenan hat ihren Pass verloren** *the girl next door has lost her passport*.) In the case of the relative pronoun, however, congruence is always observed, e.g. **das Fräulein, das** (neuter relative pronoun) **uns bediente** *the young lady who served us*.

After the commoner prepositions (**an, auf, aus, bei, durch, für, gegen, hinter, in, mit, nach, neben, über, unter, um, von, vor, zu, zwischen**) the personal pronouns of the 3rd person are normally used with reference to persons, e.g. **mit ihm** *with him*. If things are referred to, an adverbial compound consisting of **da-** (before a vowel **dar-**) + preposition is generally used instead, e.g. **damit** *with it/them*, **darauf** *on it/them*; not infrequently, however, the construction preposition + pronoun is preferred, e.g. **mehrere Jungen stehen um einen Fußball—und wissen nicht, was sie mit ihm** (= **damit**) **anfangen sollen** (newspaper report) *several boys are standing round a football, not knowing what to do with it*.

The particle **da-** (**dar-**) is also used to anticipate a following noun clause with **dass**, **ob**, etc. or a construction with **zu** + infinitive:

(i) (with **dass**-clause) *the fact that* or *—ing*, e.g. **ich machte ihn darauf aufmerksam, dass es regnete** *I drew his attention to the fact that it was raining*, **ihre Enttäuschung darüber, dass sie übergangen wurde** *her disappointment at being passed over*.

(ii) (with **ob, was, wie**, etc.): **da**-element untranslated, e.g. **wir haben noch nicht darüber entschieden, ob . . .** *we haven't yet decided on whether . . .*, **wir sind uns darin einig, wie . . .** *we're in agreement on how . . .*

(iii) (with **zu** + infinitive) *—ing*, with **da**-element untranslated, e.g. **der Kaiser träumte davon, Oberitalien zu erobern** *the emperor dreamed of conquering Northern Italy*; or (**dazu zu** . . .) *to* + infinitive, e.g. **sie brachte ihn dazu, seinen Job aufzugeben** *she got him to give up his job*.

In a clause introduced by **wie** *such as*, a 3rd person pronoun is used to refer to the antecedent, e.g. (with pronoun as subject) **der traditionelle Empfang für die Vertreter der Kirche, wie er in der Ära Ulbricht üblich**

war the traditional reception for the representatives of the Church, such as was customary in the Ulbricht era, (as object) **Geschichten, wie man sie überall in der Welt lesen kann** stories such as one may read all over the world; the pronoun **einer, eine, ein(e)s** one may be used in a similar way, e.g. **ein Sonnenaufgang, wie wir noch nie einen gesehen hatten** a sunrise such as we had never seen before.

Es has a number of special functions:

(i) It is used with the verb **sein** with DEMONSTRATIVE FORCE, e.g. **es ist der Briefträger** it's the postman, (with plural noun determining number of verb) **es sind meine Tanten** it's my aunts.

It's me etc.: The personal pronoun is here followed by the verb **sein** (the number and person of which it determines) and **es**, e.g. **ich bin's** (or **bin es**) it's me, **er war's** (or **war es**) it was him (in questions the verb comes first, e.g. **bist du's** (or **du es**)? is it you?). The same word order applies when a relative clause follows, e.g. **ich war es, der/die . . .** it was I who. . .

(ii) It anticipates:

(a) a NOUN SUBJECT (which tends to be emphasized by the construction), e.g. **es geschah etwas Merkwürdiges** something remarkable happened, **es wurde ein Stück aufgeführt, das . . .** a play was performed which . . ., (= there) **es scheint keiner zu Hause zu sein** there doesn't seem to be anybody at home, also the formulaic **es war einmal . . .** once upon a time there was . . .; where the anticipated subject is in the plural, the verb is also, e.g. **es kamen viele Briefe** many letters came, **es sind nicht alle Schlangen giftig** not all snakes are poisonous, **es waren zwei Fliegen im Zimmer** there were two flies in the room (see p. 95).

(b) a NOUN CLAUSE OF INFINITIVE PHRASE, e.g. (as subject, = English *it*) **es ist möglich, dass . . .** it is possible that . . ., **es ist mir egal, ob . . .** it makes no difference to me whether . . ., **es lohnt sich zu . . .** it pays to . . .; (as object—sometimes optional) (es) **verheimlichen, dass . . .** to conceal the fact that . . ., **es ablehnen zu . . .** to decline to . . ., (es) **vorziehen zu . . .** to prefer to . . ., (= English *it*) **es für richtig halten zu . . .** to think it right to. . .

(iii) In sentences such as **er ist gutmütig und wird es immer sein** he is good-natured and always will be, **ihre Mutter war eine Dame, sie aber war es nicht** her mother was a lady, but she was not it COMPLETES THE PREDICATE, in place of an adjective or a noun already referred to (here **gutmütig, eine Dame**); in English this **es** has no equivalent, the complement being understood. **Es** is also without a corresponding pronoun in English in CLAUSES OF COMPARISON beginning **als/wie es . . .** = English *than/as* + inversion, e.g. **wie es Sitte ist** as is the custom, **wie es sich gehört** as is proper, **als es der Fall ist** than is the case.

(iv) It is used as an INDEFINITE OBJECT in many idioms (cf. English *it* in *to carry it off, to go it alone*), e.g. **es weit bringen** to go a long way, go far, **es eilig haben** to be in a hurry, **es gut meinen** to mean well, **es zu bunt treiben** to go too far.

REFLEXIVE PRONOUNS

The reflexive pronouns are identical with the personal pronouns in all instances except the accusative and dative (singular and plural) of the 3rd person (**er, sie, es**; pl. **sie**) and of **Sie**—in these instances the form **sich** is used; thus the conjugation of **sich waschen** to *wash (oneself)* runs:

ich wasche mich	wir waschen uns
du wäschst dich	ihr wascht euch
er/sie/es wäscht sich	sie, Sie waschen sich

When the reflexive pronoun is in the dative, the conjugation—illustrated by **sich** (DAT.) **schmeicheln** to *flatter oneself*—goes as follows:

ich schmeichele mir	wir schmeicheln uns
du schmeichelst dir	ihr schmeichelt euch
er/sie/es schmeichelt sich	sie, Sie schmeicheln sich

The perfect and pluperfect tenses are conjugated with **haben**—except where the reflexive pronoun is used as a dative in the reciprocal sense with a verb that takes **sein**, in which case this auxiliary is used, e.g. **sie sind sich neulich vor dem Bahnhof begegnet** *they recently met outside the station*.

The reflexive pronouns refer back to the subject performing the action concerned, as do the English equivalents *myself, yourself, oneself*, etc.²⁷ After a preposition English substitutes a personal pronoun for the reflexive, e.g. *I have no money on me*, thus paralleling German in the 1st and 2nd persons where there is no special reflexive form: **ich habe kein Geld bei mir**; but in the 3rd person, for which German has the reflexive **sich**, the latter must be used, e.g. *he closed the door behind him* **er schloss die Tür hinter sich**.

The reflexive pronouns may be reinforced by **selbst** (colloquially **selber**) when emphasis is called for, e.g. **sie bemitleiden sich selbst** *they feel sorry for themselves*.

See also p. 92, *Reflexive verbs*.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

There are two forms of possessive pronoun in German:

(i) (the usual form) **meiner, meine, mein(e)s** *mine*, **deiner** etc. *yours* (familiar), **seiner** etc. *his, its*, **ihrer** etc. *hers, its*, **uns(e)rer** etc. *ours*, **eu(e)rer** etc. *yours* (familiar plural), **ihrer** etc. *theirs*, **Ihrer** etc. *yours*; these are declined like the definite article:

²⁷ This reflexive use of the English pronouns formed with *-self* should be distinguished from their function as *emphatic* pronouns, for which the German equivalent is **selbst** (colloquially **selber**), e.g. *the author himself was present* **der Autor selbst war** / **war selbst anwesend**, *she does the cooking herself* **sie kocht selbst**, *I myself have found that . . .* **ich habe selbst die Erfahrung gemacht, dass . . .**

	SINGULAR			PLURAL
	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.	ALL GENDERS
NOM.	meiner	meine	mein(e)s	meine
ACC.	meinen	meine	mein(e)s	meine
DAT.	meinem	meiner	meinem	meinen

The genitive is not shown, being replaced by **von** + dative, e.g. **von meinem/meiner/meinen** *of mine*. Examples:

ihr Hut ist noch da, aber meiner ist verschwunden *her hat's still there, but mine's disappeared*

mein Auto ist größer als deins *my car's bigger than yours*

Vati hat meinen Pass—wer hat deinen? *Dad's got my passport—who's got yours?*

(ii) (in literary usage) with the definite article and weak endings, either with or without **-ig-**: **der/die/das . . . (ig)e**, e.g. **der/die/das mein(ig)e** *mine*.

There also exists an archaic literary form, namely uninflected **mein, dein, sein, unser, euer** (not, however, **ihr** or **Ihr**), used predicatively as the complement of **sein, werden**, etc. to express possession, e.g. **Dein ist mein Herz** *Thine is my heart* (in Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*).

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

	wer? who?	was? what?
NOM.	wer?	was?
ACC.	wen?	was?
GEN.	wessen?	wessen?
DAT.	wem?	—

The neuter pronoun **was** is replaced by **wo-** (or **wor-** before vowels) when the sense *what* + preposition is to be conveyed; this form combines with the preposition concerned to form a compound, thus *what . . . with?* is expressed by **womit?**, *what . . . on?* by **worauf?**

RELATIVE PRONOUNS

	SINGULAR			PLURAL
	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.	ALL GENDERS
NOM.	der	die	das	die
ACC.	den	die	das	die
GEN.	dessen	deren	dessen	deren
DAT.	dem	der	dem	denen

The relative pronoun (*who, which, that*) agrees in gender and number with its antecedent (the noun it refers to), while its case is determined by its function within the clause. It is never omitted. The relative clause is always separated by commas from the rest of the sentence; the finite verb goes to the end of the clause. Examples: **die Illustrierte, die (Acc.) ich kaufen wollte** *the magazine (which) I wanted to buy*, **der Klub, dem ich angehöre** *the club I belong to (to which I belong)*. (When the antecedent is a 1st or 2nd person pronoun, German repeats the pronoun concerned after the relative pronoun, e.g. **ich, der ich immer so geduldig bin** *I who am always so patient*.)

PRONOMINAL ADVERBS such as **womit, worin, worüber** occur, if the antecedent is a thing, in more formal prose as an alternative to the construction PREPOSITION + RELATIVE PRONOUN (e.g. **die Welt, worin**—instead of **in der**—**wir leben** *the world in which we live*); but they are now relatively uncommon—the combination of preposition and relative pronoun being generally preferred—except where the antecedent is a pronoun such as **das, alles, einiges, etwas, nichts**:

etwas, wofür man bezahlt werden sollte *something for which one should be paid*

alles, worüber sie geschrieben hat *everything about which she has written*

or a clause:

der Kugelstoßer hatte acht Stunden lang trainiert, wovon er ziemlich erschöpft war *the shot-putter had been training for eight hours, as a result of which he was pretty worn out*

Was AS A RELATIVE: **Was** is used after **das** or neuter indefinites—e.g. **alles, was** *everything that*, **einiges, was** *some things that*, **etwas, was** *something that*, **nichts, was** *nothing that*—as well as neuter superlative adjectives used as nouns:

das Mindeste, was du tun kannst *the least you can do*

das Beste, was Händel je komponiert hat *the best thing Handel ever composed*

It is also used where a clause is the antecedent:

das Fußballspiel musste abgebrochen werden, was wir sehr bedauerten *the football match had to be stopped, which (= which fact) we very much regretted*

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

The forms are the same as those of the relative pronouns (above)—except that the *genitive plural* form **deren** is replaced by **derer** when followed by a relative clause, e.g. **die Gesichter derer, die jahrelang gewartet hatten** *the faces of those who had been waiting for years*. Translations vary according to context:

der/die mit der Perücke *the one with the wig*
die Unfallrate der Aeroflot ist nicht höher als die vergleichbarer westlicher Fluggesellschaften *Aeroflot's accident rate is no higher than that of comparable Western airlines*

Sorgen?—wir haben deren genug *worries?—we have enough of them/those*

ach der! *oh him / that one!*

mein Rat ist der: . . . *my advice is this:* . . .

The genitive forms **dessen** and **deren** are sometimes used in place of the possessive adjectives **sein** (*his, its*) and **ihr** (*her, its, their*); they always refer back to the last-mentioned noun. This substitution need only be employed where ambiguity could arise, e.g. **am nächsten Tag besuchten sie sein Freund und dessen Sohn** (avoiding the ambiguous **sein Sohn**) *the next day they were visited by his friend and the latter's son*.

INDEFINITE PRONOUNS

(i) **man** *one, you, they, we, people*:²⁸

This pronoun has no oblique cases, being replaced in the accusative by **einen** and in the dative by **einem**; **sich** serves as its reflexive pronoun and **sein** as its possessive adjective (*one's, your*) in the oblique cases.

In some instances constructions with **man** are rendered by the English passive. Examples of usage:

man weiß nie, was geschehen kann *one never knows what may happen*

man behauptet, er sei nach Australien ausgewandert *they say he has (he is said to have) emigrated to Australia*

das tut einem gut *that does one good*

man hat mir gesagt, dass . . . *I've been told that . . .*

(ii) **jemand** *someone* and **niemand** *no-one, not . . . anyone*:

NOM.	jemand	niemand
ACC.	jemand(en)	niemand(en)
GEN.	jemand(e)s	niemand(e)s
DAT.	jemand(em)	niemand(em)

Someone/no-one + adjective is expressed by **jemand/niemand** + the appropriate neuter adjectival noun, e.g. *someone interesting* **jemand Interessantes**, *with someone interesting* **mit jemand Interessantem**; *someone/no-one else* is **jemand/niemand anders** (South German **anderer**).

Einer and **keiner** are common alternatives to **jemand** and **niemand** respectively.

(iii) **etwas** *something* and **nichts** *nothing, not . . . anything*:

²⁸ The overuse of **Leute** in German, where **man** would be appropriate, is very characteristic of English learners' German' (Martin Durrell).

These pronouns are indeclinable and occur in the nominative and accusative, and after prepositions.

Etwas may be followed by a noun, with the sense *some*, e.g. **etwas (frische) Milch** *some (fresh) milk*; or it may be an adverb meaning *somewhat*.

(iv) **viel** *much*, **(ein) wenig** *(a) little*

These pronouns are indeclinable in the singular, but decline in the plural: **viele** *many*, **wenige** *few*. (The latter should not be confused with **weniger** (indeclinable) *less*.)

(v) **alles** *everything*, *all* and (plural) **alle** *all*, *everyone*:

NOM.	alles	alle
ACC.	alles	alle
GEN.	—	aller
DAT.	allem	allen

Colloquially **alles** may also signify *everyone*.

Adjectives and Adverbs

FORMS

In predicative use, the adjective in German is not inflected, e.g. **die Musik ist schön** *the music is beautiful*, **das Wasser ist heiß** *the water is hot*. Used attributively, i.e. preceding a noun, it is inflected (as shown below), e.g. **die schöne Musik** *the beautiful music*, **heißes Wasser** *hot water*.

Most adjectives may be used in the uninflected form as adverbs, e.g. **sie hat das Lied sehr schön gesungen** *she sang the song very beautifully*.

The adjective is declined as follows:

(i) **WEAK DECLENSION**. Following the definite article or other words declined like the definite article (**dieser, jeder, jener, mancher, solcher, welcher**):

SINGULAR

	MASC. (<i>the big dog</i>)	FEM. (<i>the big cat</i>)	NEUT. (<i>the big animal</i>)
NOM.	der große Hund	die große Katze	das große Tier
ACC.	den großen Hund	die große Katze	das große Tier
GEN.	des großen Hundes	der großen Katze	des großen Tieres
DAT.	dem großen Hund	der großen Katze	dem großen Tier

PLURAL

NOM.	die großen Tiere
ACC.	die großen Tiere
GEN.	der großen Tiere
DAT.	den großen Tieren

(ii) **MIXED DECLENSION**. Following the indefinite article, **kein** *not a, no* or possessive adjective (**mein, dein**, etc.):

SINGULAR

	MASC.	FEM.	NEUT.
NOM.	ein großer Hund	eine große Katze	ein großes Tier
ACC.	einen großen Hund	eine große Katze	ein großes Tier
GEN.	eines großen Hundes	einer großen Katze	eines großen Tieres
DAT.	einem großen Hund	einer großen Katze	einem großen Tier

PLURAL

NOM.	meine großen Katzen
ACC.	meine großen Katzen
GEN.	meiner großen Katzen
DAT.	meinen großen Katzen

(iii) **STRONG DECLENSION.** Without article (here the adjective—through its ending—indicates the case of the noun):

SINGULAR

	MASC. (<i>good wine</i>)	FEM. (<i>warm milk</i>)	NEUT. (<i>fresh water</i>)
NOM.	guter Wein	warme Milch	frisches Wasser
ACC.	guten Wein	warme Milch	frisches Wasser
GEN.	guten Weines	warmer Milch	frischen Wassers
DAT.	gutem Wein	warmer Milch	frischem Wasser

PLURAL

NOM.	gute Weine
ACC.	gute Weine
GEN.	guter Weine
DAT.	guten Weinen

These strong endings are also used after uninflected words (e.g. **viel/wenig heißes Wasser** *lots of/little hot water*, **welch glücklicher Zufall!** *what a happy coincidence!*, **trotz allerlei leckerer Torten** *in spite of all kinds of delicious gateaux*, **mit vier englischen Freunden** *with four English friends*), proper nouns in the genitive (e.g. **in Schillers großem Schreibtisch** *in Schiller's large desk*), and the genitive of the relative pronoun (e.g. **der Briefträger, dessen neues Fahrrad zehn Gänge hat** *the postman, whose new bicycle has ten gears*).

When personal pronouns are followed by attributive adjectives or adjectival nouns, these generally take a strong ending also, e.g. [**Da steh' ich nun,**] **ich armer Tor!** (*Faust* I) *poor fool that I am!*, **du Glücklicher!** *you lucky fellow!* A weak ending, however, is usual in the nominative plural, e.g. **wir (erfahrenen) Angestellten** *we (experienced) employees* (it is also preferred in the dative singular feminine); **we Germans wir Deutschen** (but *Deutsche* also occurs).

When inflected, adjectives ending in **-el** always drop **e**, e.g. **edel** *noble* but **ein edler Ritter** *a noble knight*, **miserabel** *awful* but **sein miserables Deutsch** *his awful German*. Adjectives in **-en** and **-er** usually retain **e**, although in elevated style it is sometimes elided. (Exceptions: adjectives of foreign origin in **-er**, e.g. **makaber** *macabre*, and those with a diphthong + **-er**, e.g. **sauer** *sour*, which regularly elide **e**, e.g. **eine makabre Geschichte** *a macabre story*, **sauere Äpfel** *sour apples*.)

Two or more adjectives before a noun have the same ending, e.g. **ein großer, runder Tisch** *a large round table*.

The adjectives **viel** *much* and **wenig** *little* are not declined in the singular:

sie trinkt viel Milch *she drinks a lot of milk*

er kommt mit wenig Geld aus *he manages on little money*

but are declined in the plural:

viele Geschäftsleute *many businessmen*

mit wenigen Ausnahmen *with few exceptions*

Four categories of adjective take no ending:

(i) certain adjectives of foreign origin: **prima** (commercial) *first-class*, (coll.) *great* and the colour adjectives **beige**, **chamois**, **creme** *cream*, **lila** *purple*, **oliv** *olive*, **orange**, **rosa** *pink*; of these only **prima**, **lila**, and **rosa** are normally used attributively (e.g. **ein rosa Kleid** *a pink dress*), while the others are usually compounded with **-farben** or **-farbig** (*-coloured*) to avoid using the uninflected forms: **beigefarben**, **olivfarben**, etc.

(ii) **ganz** and **halb** before geographical names without the definite article, e.g. **ganz Zypern** *the whole of Cyprus*, **halb Europa** *half Europe*.

(iii) adjectives in **-er** derived from a place-name, e.g. **ein Wiener Walzer** *a Viennese waltz*, **die Londoner Theater** *the London theatres*, **Pariser Chic** [*ʃik*] *Parisian chic*.

(iv) adjectives in **-er** referring to a decade, e.g. **die neunziger Jahre** *the nineties* (such expressions may now also be written as one word: **die Neunzigerjahre** etc.).

The declension of ADJECTIVES FOLLOWING INDEFINITE ADJECTIVES (e.g. **alle**, **einige**, **mehrere**) is as follows:

(i) To adjectives following **einige** *some*, **ein paar** *a few*, **mehrere** *several*, **verschiedene** *various*, **viele** *many*, **wenige** *few*—all of which refer to a certain quantity (as opposed to all) of something—strong plural endings are added:

einige alte Lieder *some old songs*

die Werke mehrerer/vieler berühmter Komponisten *the works of several/many famous composers*

Exceptionally, **manche** *some* is followed by adjectives with either strong or weak plural endings, e.g. **manche reiche(n) Leute** *some rich people*.

(ii) To adjectives following **alle** *all (the)* weak endings are added:

alle guten Nachschlagewerke *all good reference works*

die Ansichten aller ausländischen Studenten *the views of all foreign students*

Beide *both* and **sämtliche** *all (the)* are usually followed by adjectives with weak endings, but strong endings sometimes occur.

Alles Schöne, nichts Gutes, etc.:

(i) adjectives following **alles, manches, vieles, wenig** are written (with the exception of **ander**) with a capital letter and take the weak neuter singular endings, e.g. (NOM., ACC.) **alles Schöne** *everything beautiful*, (GEN.) **alles Schönen**, (DAT.) **allem Schönen**;

(ii) adjectives following **allerlei, etwas, manch, nichts, viel, wenig** are written (with the exception of **ander**) with a capital letter and take the strong neuter singular endings, e.g. (NOM., ACC.) **nichts Gutes** *nothing good*, (GEN., rare) **nichts Guten**, (DAT.) **nichts Gutem**.

POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES

The possessive adjectives are: **mein** *my*, **dein** *your* (familiar form), **sein/ihr/sein** *his/her/its*, **Ihr** *your*, **unser** *our*, **euer** *your* (familiar form, plural) and **ihr** *their*; they are declined like **kein** (p. 33). The possessive adjectives of the 3rd person singular agree in gender with the noun they refer to, thus *its* may be expressed by **sein** (referring to a masculine or neuter) or **ihr** (referring to a feminine), e.g. **die Partei hat ihre Anhänger enttäuscht** *the party has disappointed its supporters*.

COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS

The comparative and superlative of adjectives is formed by adding **-er** and **-st (-est)** respectively:

langsam *slow*—**langsamer** *slower*—**langsamst-** *slowest*

interessant *interesting*—**interessanter** *more interesting*—**interessantest-** *most interesting*

(German has only this one way of forming the comparative and superlative—unlike English, which uses both *-er, -est* and *more . . . , most . . .*.)

The comparative of adverbs is identical with that of the corresponding adjective, e.g. **langsamer** *more slowly*. The superlative of adverbs is formed according to the pattern **am**—**sten**, e.g. **am langsamsten** *most slowly*.

Adjectives in **-el** drop the **e** in the comparative, e.g. **dunkel** *dark*—**dunkler**—**dunkelst-**; adjectives in **-en** and **-er** sometimes drop **e** in spoken German when inflected (but adjectives with a diphthong + **-er** always drop the **e**, e.g. **sauer** *sour*—**saurer**—**sauerst-**, **teuer** *expensive*—**teurer**—**teuerst-**).

In the superlative, **e** is inserted before **st**, for euphony's sake, in adjectives ending in **-d, -s, -sch, -sk, -ss, -ß, -t, -tz, -x, -z**, e.g. (**wild** *wild*) **wildest-**, (**hübsch** *pretty*) **hübschest-**, (**süß** *sweet*) **süßest-**—unless they have more than one syllable, e.g. (**praktisch** *practical*) **praktischst-**, (**bedeutend** *important*) **bedeutendst-**, (**ausgezeichnet** *excellent*) **ausgezeichnetst-** (exception: **berühmt** *famous*—with stress on the final syllable—which adds **e**: **berühmtest-**). After a diphthong or long vowel the insertion of **e** is optional, e.g. (**frei** *free*) **frei(e)st-**, (**früh** *early*) **früh(e)st-**.

The following common adjectives (and one adverb) mutate the stem vowel in the comparative and superlative, as **alt**—**älter**—**ältest**:-

alt old	kurz short
arm poor	lang long
dumm stupid	oft often
grob coarse	scharf sharp
hart hard	schwach weak
jung young	schwarz black
kalt cold	stark strong
klug clever	warm warm
krank sick	

With **fromm** *pious*, **gesund** *healthy*, and **rot** *red* mutation of the vowel is optional: in the case of **fromm** the form without umlaut is commoner, while **gesund** and **rot** usually have the umlaut.

Certain adjectives and adverbs are compared irregularly:

groß *big; tall; great*—**größer**—**größt**-
gut *good*—**besser**—**best**-
hoch *high*—**höher**—**höchst**-
nah *near, close*—**näher**—**nächst**-
viel *much*—**mehr**—**meist**-
bald *soon*—**eher**—**am ehesten**
gern *gladly*—**lieber**—**am liebsten**

-er and -er is expressed in German by **immer** + comparative, e.g. **immer schneller** *faster and faster*, **immer lauter** *louder and louder*.

The comparative form of some common adjectives has a second function, namely to indicate a fairly high degree of the quality concerned, without any comparison being made; this is known as the 'absolute comparative'. Examples: **eine größere Summe** *a largish sum*, **ein jüngerer Ehepaar** *a youngish couple*, **eine längere Reise** *a longish journey*, **seit längerer Zeit** *for some time now*; in adverbial use **öfter** *quite often*.

The predicative superlative—as in *which newspaper is the most interesting?*—occurs in two forms: **der/die/das** —**ste** and **am** —**sten**, e.g. **welche Zeitung ist die interessanteste / ist am interessantesten?** (i.e. of the newspapers being compared). Where items in the same category are compared but without their common denominator (*Zeitung* etc.) being stated, **am** —**sten** is used, e.g. „Die Welt“ ist interessanter als die „FAZ“, aber die „Süddeutsche Zeitung“ ist am interessantesten. The form **am** —**sten** is also used when there is no comparison with others (English sometimes inserts *at its* before the superlative), e.g. **der Vierwaldstätter See ist im Frühling am schönsten** *the Lake of Lucerne is (at its) loveliest in spring*.

When *most* is used in an absolute sense (i.e. without a comparison being made) it may be expressed by **äußerst**, e.g. *I was most grateful* **ich war äußerst dankbar**; the adverbial construction **aufs** —**ste** is used when

rendering statements such as *I was most pleasantly surprised* **ich war aufs angenehmste überrascht**.

ADJECTIVES USED AS NOUNS

German adjectives—and adjectival participles—may be used as nouns. They are written with a capital letter and are declined like ordinary adjectives, e.g. **der/die Erwachsene** *adult*:

SINGULAR

	MASCULINE	FEMININE
NOM.	der Erwachsene ein Erwachsener	die, eine Erwachsene
ACC.	den, einen Erwachsenen	die, eine Erwachsene
GEN.	des, eines Erwachsenen	der, einer Erwachsenen
DAT.	dem, einem Erwachsenen	der, einer Erwachsenen

PLURAL

NOM.	die Erwachsenen Erwachsene
ACC.	die Erwachsenen Erwachsene
GEN.	der Erwachsenen Erwachsener
DAT.	den Erwachsenen Erwachsenen

Masculine, feminine, or plural adjectival nouns denote persons:

der/die Alte *old man/woman* (from **alt** *old*)

der/die Fremde *stranger* (from **fremd** *strange*)

der/die Deutsche *German* (from **deutsch** *German*)

der/die Reisende *traveller* (from **reisend** *travelling*)

der/die Geschiedene *divorcee* (from **geschieden** *divorced*)

Although without adjectival counterpart, **der Beamte** *official, civil servant* is included in this category as it is declined like an adjective. (Its feminine equivalent is, however, **die Beamtin**.)

Neuter adjectival nouns express abstract concepts:

das Gute *the good, that which is good* (from **gut** *good*)

das Edle *that which is noble* (from **edel** *noble*)

Sometimes the English equivalent is a full (abstract) noun, e.g. **sie hat einen ausgeprägten Sinn für das Schöne** *she has a keen sense of beauty*. They are also used to refer to a particular feature or quality, where English has the . . . thing, e.g. **das Interessante an diesem Buch** *the interesting thing about this book*. Neuter past participles used as nouns express what has been

done or has happened, e.g. **das Erreichte** *what has been / was achieved*, **das soeben Geschehene** *what has just happened*.

Used without the article, neuter adjectival nouns are collective in sense, often being rendered by . . . *things*:

er hat auf diesem Gebiet Erstaunliches geleistet *he has done amazing things in this field*

—likewise the neuter indefinite pronouns (spelt with a small letter), e.g. **manches** *some things*, **mehreres** *several things*. Neuter substantival past participles without the article are often used as collectives, e.g. **Geräuchertes** *smoked foods* (from **geräuchert** *smoked*), **Handgearbeitetes** *hand-made articles* (from **handgearbeitet** *handmade*), **Gefälschtes** *forgeries* (from **gefälscht** *forged*). All these words are in the singular and therefore take a singular verb, unlike their English translations, e.g. **manches war mir unklar** *some things were unclear to me*, **Wichtiges ist vernachlässigt worden** *important things have been neglected*.

MODAL PARTICLES

A number of German adverbs also serve as modal particles. The function of these heavily-used words—which also occur in a variety of combinations—is to indicate a speaker's *attitude* to what he or she is saying; while English has one or two words of this type such as *surely*, *just* it often relies on emphasis or tone of voice (or else phrases like *I suppose*, *I dare say*) to convey the same kind of nuance.

ABER

Reinforces an exclamation:

das ist aber originell! *that is original, I must say!*

du kommst aber früh / bist aber gewachsen / siehst aber komisch aus! *goodness, you are early / have grown / do look odd!*

das war aber ein Rennen! *what a race!, that was some race!*

AUCH

Reinforces a statement:

das will auch etwas heißen *that really means something*

Confirms:

sie sah krank aus und sie war es auch *she looked ill, and she was*

States why something is only to be expected:

er spielt sehr gut—er übt aber auch in jeder freien Minute *he plays very well—but then he uses every free minute to practise*

Corrects an erroneous impression:

das hat auch niemand behauptet *nobody said it was / he would / you did etc.*

Expresses criticism, displeasure:

du bist auch zu gar nichts nütze! *you're absolutely useless!*

er kann auch nie den Mund halten *he never can keep his mouth shut*

Seeks reassurance:

hast du die Haustür auch richtig abgeschlossen? *are you sure you locked the front door properly?*

hast du es dir auch gut überlegt? *have you really given it careful thought?*

Conveys exasperation:

warum bist du auch so spät gekommen? *well, why did you come so late?*

Reinforces a command:

zieh dich auch immer warm an *make sure you always dress up warmly*
nun hör aber auch zu! *now listen!*

BLOSS (bloß)

Reinforces questions and commands:

warum haben wir unsere Aktien bloß nicht gestern verkauft? *why on earth didn't we sell our shares yesterday?*

wo bleibt er bloß so lange? *wherever has he got to?*

sag bloß nicht, du hast es vergessen *don't tell me you forgot it!*

geh mir bloß aus dem Weg! *get out of my way, will you!*

mach dir bloß keine Sorgen! *don't you worry!*

Expresses a wish:

wenn er bloß bald käme! *if only he'd come soon!*

hätte ich das bloß nicht gesagt! *if only I hadn't said that!*

DENN

Used chiefly in questions; has the effect of making them sound less abrupt:

wer ist denn da? *who's there?*

was ist denn heute mit ihm los? *what's the matter with him today?*

ist sie denn da gewesen? *was she there, then?*

wie geht's dir denn? *how are things?*

was sollen wir denn machen? *what are we to do?*

wozu denn? *what for?*

May contain a note of impatience or reproach:

bedient denn hier niemand? *isn't anyone serving here?*

bist du denn blind? *are you blind?*

DOCH

As a stressed particle, contradicts or rectifies:

er hat 'doch gelogen! *I tell you, he was lying!*

es ist 'doch wahr! *it is true!*

sie hat also 'doch keinen Pass! *so she hasn't got a passport!*
ihr wollt also 'doch heiraten? *so you are going to get married after all?*

As an unstressed particle, reinforces a statement:

ich bin doch kein Roboter! *I'm not a robot!*
sie fand, dass er im Pyjama doch schon recht alt aussah *she thought that he did look really rather old in his pyjamas*
es wäre doch gelacht, wenn ich das nicht schaffe! *it would be ridiculous if I didn't manage that!*
aber mein Schatz, du weißt doch, dass du bei mir immer an erster Stelle stehst! *but darling, you know that you always come first with me!*

Seeks reassurance:

das ist doch nicht dein Ernst! *surely you're not serious?*
du bist mir doch nicht etwa böse? *you're not cross with me, are you?*

Reinforces a command:

beeil dich doch! *do hurry!*
sei doch geduldig! *do be patient!*
reg dich doch nicht so auf! *don't get so worked up!*
 (with **endlich**, more impatient) **hör doch endlich auf!** *do stop it, for heaven's sake!*
 (with **mal**, encouraging) **schau doch mal vorbei!** *do drop by sometime*

Reinforces an exclamation:

das ist doch unerhört! *that's outrageous!*
wie schön es hier doch ist! *how lovely it is here!*

Expresses an urgent wish:

wenn doch die CDU mehr Mut hätte! *if only the CDU had more courage!*

Indicates an effort to recollect something:

wie heißt doch der Film? *what's the film called again?*

Indicates surprised recognition:

das ist doch Renate! *why, it's Renate!*

EBEN

States an inescapable fact:

wir müssen eben warten, bis der Briefträger kommt *we'll just have to wait till the postman comes*
er ist eben zu nichts zu gebrauchen *he's simply useless*
es ist eben so *that's how it is*
das ist es eben! *that's just it!*

In a command, indicates the lack of an alternative:

dann bleib eben zu Hause! *well, just stay at home, then*

ERST

Intensifies:

sie ist schon hübsch, aber du solltest erst ihre Schwester sehen! *she is pretty, I'll grant you, but you should see her sister!*

wäre ich erst wieder zu Hause! *if only I were back home again!*

ETWA

Occurs in questions which the speaker hopes will be contradicted by the person addressed:

bist du etwa krank? *you're not ill, are you?*

hast du mich etwa vergessen? *you don't mean to say you've forgotten me?*

Sie sind doch wohl nicht etwa beleidigt? *surely you're not offended, are you?*

Underlines a negative statement:

du brauchst nicht etwa zu denken, ich hätte es nicht bemerkt *you needn't think I hadn't noticed*

HALT

(South German) = **eben**.

JA

As a stressed particle, reinforces a command:

sei 'ja vorsichtig! *do be careful!*

erzähl das 'ja nicht deiner Mutter! *mind you don't tell your mother!*

vergiss 'ja nicht, die Rechnung zu bezahlen! *whatever you do, don't forget to pay the bill!*

As an unstressed particle, draws the listener's attention to something he or she is assumed to know or agree with:

du weißt ja, wie er ist *you know what he's like*

sie fährt ja immer Ski *she's always skiing*

wir sind ja alle einmal jung gewesen *(after all,) we were all young once*

May also give the reason for what is stated in the preceding clause:

wir können nicht gehen, sie ist ja noch nicht fertig *we can't go—she isn't ready yet*

mach dir keine Sorgen, du hast ja genug Zeit *don't worry, you've plenty of time*

In concessive use:

sein Plan ist ja interessant, aber unrealistisch *his plan is interesting but unrealistic*

ich kann es ja versuchen, aber . . . *I can of course try but . . .*

In an exclamation, underlines the utterance or expresses surprise:

das ist ja fürchterlich! *that's just awful!*

du bist ja ganz nass! *oh, you're all wet!*

es schneit ja! *oh, it's snowing!*

or registers the expected arrival of someone or something:

da bist du ja! *ah, there you are!*

MAL

Used very widely in commands and requests, the tone of which is made less abrupt by its inclusion:

hier, probier mal meinen Stift *here—try my pencil*

hör mal! *listen!*

stell dir das mal vor! *just imagine*

Augenblick mal! *just a minute!*

For **doch mal** see **doch**.

NOCH

Indicates an effort to recollect something:

wie hieß er noch? *what was his name again?*

NUN MAL

Expresses resignation:

ich bin nun mal so *that's the way I am*

damit muss man nun mal rechnen *that's what you have to expect*

NUR

Reinforces questions and commands:

wo bleibt sie nur? *wherever has she got to?*

was hat er nur? *whatever is the matter with him?*

was soll ich nur mit dir anstellen? *what am I to do with you?*

sag mir nur nicht, du hast mich vergessen! *don't tell me you've forgotten me!*

stell dir nur vor! *just imagine!*

nur nicht so laut! *not so loud!*

nur keine Ausreden! *no excuses!*

Gives encouragement or reassurance:

kommen Sie nur herein! *do come in!*

nur keine Angst! *don't be afraid*

Expresses a wish:

wenn er nur nach Hause kommen würde! *if only he'd come home!*

hätte ich das nur nicht gesagt! *if only I hadn't said that!*

SCHON

Reinforces a statement:

Maria ist schon ein ganz besonderes Mädchen *Maria really is a very special girl*

das war schon erstaunlich / ein Erlebnis *that was quite extraordinary / an experience*

du hast schon Glück gehabt, dass du nicht umgekommen bist! *you're lucky you weren't killed!*

Expresses confidence or reassurance:

ich schaffe das schon *I'll manage(, don't worry)*

sie wird den Schlüssel schon finden *she'll find the key all right*

Expresses scepticism:

wer glaubt schon einem Astrologen? *whoever believes an astrologer?*

was weißt du schon von Informatik? *what do you know about computer science?*

was ändert das schon? *what difference does that make?*

Reinforces a command:

fang schon an! *do start!*

mach schon! *get a move on!*

Used concessively:

wenn ich schon gehen muss *if I have to go*

das ist schon wahr, aber . . . *that is true, but . . .*

das schon, aber . . . *yes, I do / she has / they will etc., but . . .*

Used in response to a question or negative assertion:

„Ob man das auch in Deutschland glaubt?“—„In Bayern schon“ *‘Do they believe that in Germany, too?’—‘They do in Bavaria’*

„Das kann man einfach nicht machen!“—„Zu Hause schon!“ *‘You simply can’t do that!’—‘You can at home!’*

VIELLEICHT

Reinforces an exclamation:

das ist vielleicht originell! *that is original, I must say!*

du hast vielleicht Glück! *you are lucky!*

da habe ich vielleicht gelacht! *did I laugh!*

das war vielleicht eine Reise! *what a journey (that was)!, that was some journey!*

In yes/no questions, indicates that a negative answer is expected:

ist das vielleicht dein Ernst? *you’re not serious, are you?*

WOHL

Expresses a supposition:

du glaubst wohl, ich entschuldige mich bei ihr? *I suppose you think I’m going to apologize to her?*

sie wird wohl den Zug verpasst haben *she’s probably missed the train, I expect she’s missed the train*

ich war wohl falsch verbunden *I must have got the wrong number*
es sieht wohl so aus *it would seem so*

Mensch, der ist wohl verrückt! *good Lord, he must be crazy!*

Used concessively:

das ist wohl möglich, aber . . . *that is no doubt possible, but . . .*

Reinforces a command:

wirst/willst du wohl damit aufhören! *will you stop that!*

In a question, expresses curiosity:

ob sie wohl mitkommt? *I wonder if she'll come with us?*

wie er wohl mit sechzig aussieht? *what will he look like at sixty, I wonder?*

Numerals

CARDINAL NUMBERS

0 null	21 einundzwanzig
1 eins	22 zweiundzwanzig
2 zwei	23 dreiundzwanzig etc.
3 drei	
4 vier	30 dreißig
5 fünf	40 vierzig ['fir-]
6 sechs [-ks]	50 fünfzig
7 sieben	60 sechzig [-ç-]
8 acht	70 siebzig
9 neun	80 achtzig [-xts-]
10 zehn	90 neunzig
11 elf	100 hundert
12 zwölf	101 hundertheins etc.
13 dreizehn	200 zweihundert
14 vierzehn ['fir-]	1000 tausend
15 fünfzehn	10 000 zehntausend
16 sechzehn [-ç-]	100 000 hunderttausend
17 siebzehn	1 000 000 eine Million
18 achtzehn [-xts-]	2 000 000 zwei Millionen
19 neunzehn	1 000 000 000 eine Milliarde
20 zwanzig	1 000 000 000 000 eine Billion

Note the omission of *s* in the spelling of *sechzehn* and *sechzig* and of *en* in *siebzehn* and *siebzig*.

Numbers are written as one word, starting with the greatest magnitude, but units—followed by **und**—precede tens, e.g. 2468 is *zweitausendvierhundertachtundsechzig*.

One is *eins*, unless prefixed to another number or **und** + another number, when *ein* is used, e.g. *seventy-one* is *einundsiebzig*. *Ein* is uninflected in *ein bis zwei*, *ein oder zwei* (e.g. *ein oder zwei Minuten lang* for a minute or two); also in *ein Uhr* one o'clock. Before a noun, *ein* is used with the same endings as those of the indefinite article, e.g. *er hat einen Onkel und eine Tante* he has one uncle and one aunt (unlike the indefinite article, *ein* *one* is stressed in spoken German). The pronoun *one* is rendered by *einer*, *eine*, *ein(e)s* (declined like *dieser* etc.), e.g. *einer der Männer sprach mit einer der Frauen* one of the men was speaking to one of the women, *ein(e)s der Fotos ist eine Fälschung* one of the photos is a forgery.

A special alternative to **zwei** exists in the shape of (the originally feminine) **zwo**, which is used—for example, on the telephone or when a judge announces a score at some sporting event—to avoid confusion between **zwei** and **drei**. **Zwei** and **drei** have genitive forms, **zweier** of two and **dreier** of three, but in everyday German **von zwei/drei** is usual.

Uninflected and written with a small letter, **hundert** and **tausend** may be used adjectivally, e.g. **hundert Menschen** a hundred people, **tausend Bücher** a thousand books (note that in **einige hundert/Hundert Menschen**, **mehrere tausend/Tausend Bücher**, etc. a capital letter is optional). Capitalized and with a plural in **-e**, they function as nouns, e.g. **Hunderte/Tausende von quakenden Fröschen** hundreds/thousands of croaking frogs (thus also compounds, e.g. **Hunderttausende von Käfern** hundreds of thousands of beetles); unless preceded by **einiger**, **mehrerer**, **vieler**, etc. indicating the genitive, they take **-er** in the genitive plural, e.g. **die Ansichten Hunderter** (but **vieler Hunderte**) **von Studenten** the views of hundreds (many hundreds) of students.

Eine Million, **eine Milliarde** a billion, and **eine Billion** a million million, U.S. a trillion are nouns and are always inflected in the plural, e.g. **zwei Millionen Einwohner** two million inhabitants, **Millionen von Sternen** millions of stars.

Like **das Hundert** and **das Tausend**, **das Dutzend** dozen forms the plural with **-e** (genitive **-er** unless preceded by **einiger**, **mehrerer**, **vieler**, etc.) (but after a numeral the singular form is used, e.g. **vier Dutzend Eier** four dozen eggs: see p. 38, (ii)).

DECIMALS are separated from whole numbers by a comma, e.g. **17.5** is **17,5** (read **siebzehn Komma fünf**).

Where English uses a comma in the numerical representation of thousands etc. German uses a space or full stop (period) (in numbers of more than four figures).

ORDINAL NUMBERS

- 1st **erst-**
- 2nd **zweit-** (**zwot-**: see *Cardinal numbers*)
- 3rd **dritt-**

Other ordinals up to 19th are formed by adding **-t** to the cardinal number, e.g. **viert-** fourth; seventh is **siebt-**, eighth is **acht-** (with the loss of one t). Ordinals from 20th upwards are formed by adding **-st** to the cardinal, e.g. **zwanzigst-** twentieth, **tausendst-** thousandth.

When written as figures—Roman numerals included—they are followed by a full stop (period), e.g. **3. [dritter] Versuch** 3rd attempt, **Heinrich VIII. [der Achte]** Henry VIII.

Being adjectives, the ordinal numbers are declined according to the standard adjectival patterns. Ordinals may combine with a superlative, e.g. **zweitgrößt-** second largest, **dritthöchst-** third highest.

FRACTIONS

Die Hälfte *half* is feminine; all others are neuter, and are formed by adding **-tel** (a reduced form of **Teil** *part*) to the ordinal (whose final **t** is suppressed), e.g. **ein Viertel** ['fir-] *a quarter, fourth*, **ein Sechstel** *a sixth*, **ein Zwanzigstel** *a twentieth*, **ein Tausendstel** *a thousandth*, **zwei Drittel** *two thirds*.

... and *a half* is expressed by **-(und)einhalb**, e.g. **sechs(und)einhalb** *six and a half*; *one and a half* is usually **anderthalb**, although **ein(und)einhalb** also occurs. (These forms are invariable.)

SUFFIXES ADDED

-ens added to the ordinal number = **-ly**, e.g. **drittens** *thirdly*.

-erlei (invariable) = ... *kinds of*, e.g. **dreierlei** *three kinds of*.

-fach = *-fold*, e.g. **zweifach** *twofold*.

-mal = ... *times*, e.g. **vierhundertmal** *four hundred times*.

USE AS NOUNS

Cardinal numbers may be used as nouns; they have feminine gender, and add **-en** to form the plural, e.g. **zwei römische Achten** *two Roman eights*, **die Eins ist gerade abgefahren** *the (number) one has just left*.

DATES

For the days of the month the ordinals are used, as in English, e.g. **der 17.** (pronounced **siebzehnte**) **Juli** *17th July*; as the date on a letter, this is written (e.g.) **Hamburg, den 17. Juli** (or **17.7.** i.e. **siebzehnten siebten**) **2001**. *On 17th July is am 17. Juli. In 19—, 20—, etc. is expressed either by the date alone (e.g. 1920 trat er zurück in 1920 he resigned) or by the phrase im Jahre 1920 etc. A date in the 11th century begins tausend . . . , e.g. 1066 is tausendsechshundsechzig; in the same way 21st century dates begin zweitausend. . . .*

The twenties etc. of a century are known as die zwanziger etc. Jahre (also spelt Zwanzigerjahre etc.). Here -er is added to the cardinal number (zwanzig etc.); the word so formed is invariable (die zwanziger Jahre, in den zwanziger Jahren in the twenties, etc.). He's in his twenties is er ist in den Zwanzigern; she's in her early/mid-/late twenties is sie ist Anfang/Mitte/Ende Zwanzig.

Prepositions

(For detailed treatment of individual prepositions see pp. 117–154.)

Prepositions in German govern particular cases: accusative (e.g. **für** *for*, **ohne** *without*), genitive (e.g. **trotz** *in spite of*, **während** *during*) or dative (e.g. **aus** *out of, from*, **mit** *with*). Some prepositions govern two cases—accusative and dative—depending on circumstances. If the preposition indicates rest or motion within a place the dative is used:

der Rentner saß auf der Bank *the pensioner was sitting on the bench*

das Bild hängt an der Wand *the picture is hanging on the wall*

sie gingen im Garten spazieren *they went for a walk in the garden*

while if movement to a place is involved the accusative is used:

der Rentner setzte sich auf die Bank *the pensioner sat (down) on the bench*

er hängt das Bild an die Wand *he is hanging the picture on the wall*

sie gingen in den Garten hinaus *they went out into the garden*

In the case of **auf** and **über** the accusative is also the case normally used in figurative contexts, e.g. (with **auf** + ACC.) **eifersüchtig/stolz auf** *jealous/proud of*, **auf diese Weise** *in this way*, **warten auf** *to wait for*, **sich verlassen auf** *to rely on*; (with **über** + ACC.) **über alles Lob erhaben** *beyond praise*, **herrschen über** *to rule over*, **reden/schreiben über** *to talk/write about*, **sich wundern über** *to be surprised at*. (Two important exceptions are **beruhen auf** (+ DAT.) *to be based on* and **bestehen auf** (+ DAT.) *to insist on*.)

Some prepositions may follow the word they govern, e.g. **allen Erwartungen entgegen** *contrary to all expectations*, **der Schule gegenüber** *opposite the school*, **Ihren Anordnungen gemäß** *in accordance with your instructions*, **meiner Ansicht nach** *in my opinion*.

In other instances a preposition is used in conjunction with another word, either preceding the noun (in the case of **bis**, e.g. **bis zu** *as far as; until*) or enclosing it. Examples of the latter type are: **um . . . willen** *for the sake of*, the noun concerned being placed in the genitive, and phrases consisting of preposition (+ noun) + adverb, such as:

an . . . (DAT.) entlang *along* (coast etc.)

auf . . . (ACC.) zu *towards; up to*

hinter . . . (DAT.) her (run etc.) *after*

hinter/unter . . . (DAT.) hervor

from behind/under

nach . . . hin *towards*

um . . . herum *round*

von . . . an *from . . . (onwards)*

von . . . aus *from*

zu . . . hinaus *out of*

(door, window)

Some prepositions combine with the definite article in contracted forms:

am = an dem	überm (coll.) = über dem
ans = an das	übers (coll.) = über das
aufs = auf das	ums = um das
beim = bei dem	unterm (coll.) = unter dem
durchs = durch das	unters (coll.) = unter das
fürs = für das	vom = von dem
hinterm (coll.) = hinter dem	vorm (coll.) = vor dem
hinters (coll.) = hinter das	vors (coll.) = vor das
im = in dem	zum = zu dem
ins = in das	zur = zu der

German does not always use a preposition where English has one:

(i) Sometimes German uses a GRAMMATICAL CASE where English has a preposition to indicate the relationship between words, notably:

(a) the DATIVE as the equivalent of *to* (with verbs of giving etc. to indicate the indirect object, e.g. *why did you give it to him?* **warum hast du es ihm gegeben?**, *she wrote to him often* **sie hat ihm oft geschrieben**; also such verbs as *to belong to* **gehören + DAT.**, *to correspond to* **entsprechen + DAT.**, *to listen to* **zuhören + DAT.**, *it seems to me that . . .* **mir scheint, dass . . .**; usages such as *she was a good mother to him* **sie war ihm eine gute Mutter**; and with some adjectives such as *similar to* **ähnlich + DAT.**, *superior to* **überlegen + DAT.**, *loyal to* **treu + DAT.**, *unknown to* **unbekannt + DAT.**, e.g. *their intentions are unknown to me* **ihre Absichten sind mir unbekannt**);

(b) the GENITIVE where English has *of* (e.g. *the coast of Italy* **die Küste Italiens**, *a sense of relief* **ein Gefühl der Erleichterung**), *in* (e.g. *a bend in the road* **eine Biegung der Straße**, *a change in the weather* **eine Änderung des Wetters**), *to* (e.g. *visitors to the museum* **die Besucher des Museums**, *to be witness to a scene* **Zeuge einer Szene sein**).

(ii) In other cases a PREFIX is the German equivalent of an English preposition; thus *from* may be expressed by the separable prefix **ab-** in **ich habe ihm das alte Radio abgekauft** *I bought the old radio from him*, and by the inseparable prefix **ent-** in **sie entriss ihm die Handtasche** *she snatched the handbag from him*, while *at* may be rendered by the separable prefix **zu-** in **sie lächelte ihm zu** *she smiled at him*.

(iii) In certain instances APPPOSITION occurs in German where English has *of*, e.g. *a glass of water* **ein Glas Wasser**, *the city of Cologne* **die Stadt Köln**, *the University of Edinburgh* **die Universität Edinburg**, *the Isle of Man* **die Insel Man**, *in the month of May* **im Monat Mai**.

If (in *a glass of water* etc.) the second noun is qualified by an adjective, German has two possibilities: (a) apposition (with case agreement)—the

usual construction, thus *a glass of cold water* **ein Glas kaltes Wasser**, *I'd like a cup of hot coffee* **ich möchte eine Tasse heißen Kaffee**, *with a piece of French cake* **mit einem Stück französischem Kuchen**; (b) the genitive—sometimes encountered in literary style, e.g. **ein Glas kalten Wassers**.

(iv) German often has a COMPOUND NOUN where English has two nouns linked by a preposition, most frequently of:

OF

corner of the mouth

der Mundwinkel

side of the street **die Straßenseite**

year of manufacture **das Baujahr**

colour of (one's) skin **die Hautfarbe**

work of art **das Kunstwerk**

voyage of discovery **die**

Entdeckungsfahrt

head of state **das Staatsoberhaupt**

point of departure/view **der**

Ausgangspunkt/Standpunkt

sense of direction **der Ortssinn**

knowledge of English **die**

Englischkenntnisse

FOR

need for adventure

das Abenteuerbedürfnis

suggestion for improvement

der Verbesserungsvorschlag

IN

difference in meaning

der Bedeutungsunterschied

TO

claim to power

der Machtanspruch

damage to property **der**

Sachschaden

(v) In TIME PHRASES signifying *at the beginning* / *in the middle* / *at the end* of German dispenses with a preposition, e.g. *at the beginning of May* / *this month* **Anfang Mai** / **dieses Monats**, *in the middle of next week* **Mitte nächster Woche**, *at the end of 1984* / *the eighties* **Ende 1984** / **der achtziger Jahre**. Similarly, *in* in dates is not translated, thus *in 2003* is simply **2003** (see also p. 65).

The converse is sometimes true:

(i) The sense of the preposition **bei** is often expressed in English by a conjunction:

beim Überqueren der Straße *when/while crossing the road*

bei ausgeschalteter Maschine *when the machine is/was switched off*

bei nasser Fahrbahn *if the road is/was wet*

(ii) Where German uses an intransitive verb with **mit** to express certain acts carried out using a part of the body (or something held in the hand, e.g. a stick or whip) English employs a transitive verb:

ich nickte mit dem Kopf *I nodded my head*

wir stampften mit den Füßen *we stamped our feet*

sie wackelte mit den Hüften *she wiggled her hips*

der Spaniel wedelte mit dem Schwanz *the spaniel wagged its tail*

er knallte mit der Peitsche *he cracked his whip*

(iii) **in** (+ Acc.) and **zu** denoting a change of state have no equivalent in English in instances such as:

ein britischer General hat Fort Duquesne in Pittsburgh umbenannt
a British general renamed Fort Duquesne Pittsburgh
er wurde zum Bundeskanzler gewählt *he was elected Federal Chancellor*

German verbs fall broadly into two groups: weak and strong verbs. Weak verbs form the past tense by adding -te to the stem and the past participle by prefixing ge- to the stem and adding -t; there are also some irregular verbs that are conjugated weak but which also exhibit vowel change in the past tense and past participle. Strong verbs change the stem vowel in the past tense and, in most cases, the past participle; the latter has the prefix ge- and ends in -en.

Examples:

weak: *leben* to live (stem: leb-) past tense: *lebte* lived past participle: *gelebt* lived
 irregular weak: *nennen* to name past tense: *nannte* named past participle: *genannt* named
 strong: *singen* to sing past tense: *sang* sang past participle: *gesungen* sung

CONJUGATION OF VERBS

The conjugation of weak and strong verbs is as follows:

INDICATIVE

PRESENT TENSE		WEAK (Examples: <i>leben</i> to live, <i>arbeiten</i> to work)		STRONG (Examples: <i>singen</i> to sing, <i>geben</i> to give)	
ich	lebe	arbeite	arbeite	singe	gebe
du	lebst	arbeitest	arbeitest	singst	gibst
er/sie/es	lebt	arbeitet	arbeitet	singt	gibt
wir	leben	arbeiten	arbeiten	singen	geben
ihr	lebt	arbeitet	arbeitet	singt	gibt
sie	leben	arbeiten	arbeiten	singen	geben
PAST TENSE					
ich	lebte	arbeitete	arbeitete	sang	gab
du	lebstest	arbeitetest	arbeitetest	sangst	gabst
er/sie/es	lebte	arbeitete	arbeitete	sang	gab
wir	lebten	arbeiteten	arbeiteten	sangen	gaben
ihr	lebtet	arbeitetet	arbeitetet	sangt	gabt
sie	lebten	arbeiteten	arbeiteten	sangen	gaben

Verbs

German verbs, like English verbs, fall broadly into two groups: weak and strong verbs. **WEAK** verbs form the past tense by adding **-te** to the stem, and the past participle by prefixing **ge-** to the stem and adding **-t**; there are also some irregular verbs that are conjugated weak but which also exhibit vowel change in the past tense and past participle. **STRONG** verbs change the stem vowel in the past tense and, in most cases, the past participle; the latter has the prefix **ge-** and ends in **-en**.

Examples:

WEAK. leben to live (stem: **leb-**), past **lebte** lived, past participle **gelebt** lived

IRREGULAR WEAK. nennen to name, past **nannte** named, past participle **genannt** named

STRONG. singen to sing, past **sang** sang, past participle **gesungen** sung

CONJUGATION OF VERBS

The conjugation of weak and strong verbs is as follows:

INDICATIVE

	WEAK (Examples: leben to live, arbeiten to work)	STRONG (Examples: singen to sing, graben to dig)
--	--	--

PRESENT TENSE

ich	lebe	arbeite	singe	grabe
du	lebst	arbeitest	singst	gräbst
er/sie/es	lebt	arbeitet	singt	gräbt
wir	leben	arbeiten	singen	graben
ihr	lebt	arbeitet	singt	grabt
sie, Sie	leben	arbeiten	singen	graben

PAST TENSE

ich	lebte	arbeitete	sang	grub
du	lebstest	arbeitetest	sangst	grubst
er/sie/es	lebte	arbeitete	sang	grub
wir	lebten	arbeiteten	sangen	gruben
ihr	lebtet	arbeitetet	sangt	grubt
sie, Sie	lebten	arbeiteten	sangen	gruben

PERFECT TENSE

= present tense of the auxiliary **haben** (p. 74) + past participle (usually at end of clause); in the case of verbs of motion or change of state (e.g. **kommen** to come, **einschlafen** to fall asleep), verbs meaning to happen (e.g. **geschehen**) or to succeed or fail (e.g. **gelingen**, **misslingen**: **es gelingt**, **misslingt**),²⁹ **bleiben** to remain, and **sein** to be, the auxiliary **sein** (p. 74) is used instead of **haben** (cf. archaic English *I am come*, *Christ is risen*, etc.); e.g.:

ich habe etc. . . . **gelebt** *I have* etc. *lived*

ich bin etc. . . . **gekommen** *I have* etc. *come*

In the South, **sein** is also used with **liegen** to lie, **sitzen** to sit, and **stehen** to stand, e.g. **da ist die Leiche gelegen** *that's where the body was lying*.

Some verbs of motion take **sein** if indicating movement to a place or distance covered (e.g. **ich bin zur Insel / hundert Meter geschwommen** *I swam to the island / a hundred metres*), but **haben** or **sein** if an activity as such is referred to (e.g. **ich habe/bin zwei Stunden geschwommen** *I've been swimming for two hours*, **wir haben/sind in diesem Sommer viel gesegelt** *we've done a lot of sailing this summer*). The verbs concerned are: **paddeln** to paddle (a canoe), **reiten** to ride, **rudern** to row, **schwimmen** to swim, **segeln** to sail, **tauchen** to dive.

PLUPERFECT TENSE

= past tense of the auxiliary **haben** (or **sein** where appropriate) + past participle (usually at end of clause), e.g.:

ich hatte etc. . . . **gelebt** *I etc. had lived*

ich war etc. . . . **gekommen** *I etc. had come*

FUTURE TENSE

= present tense of the auxiliary **werden** (p. 74) + infinitive (usually at end of clause), e.g.:

ich werde etc. . . . **leben** *I shall* etc. *live*

ich werde etc. . . . **kommen** *I shall* etc. *come*

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

= present tense of the auxiliary **werden** + (usually at end of clause) past participle + **haben** (or **sein** where appropriate), e.g.:

ich werde etc. . . . **gelebt haben** *I shall* etc. *have lived*

ich werde etc. . . . **gekommen sein** *I shall* etc. *have come*

NOTES on verb forms:

(i) WEAK VERBS IN **-eln**, **-ern**: The stem of these verbs is obtained by removing the final **n**; thus **rudern** to row has as its stem **ruder-** (present indicative **rudere**, **ruderst**, **rudert**, pl. **rudern**, **rudert**, **rudern**; past **ruderte** etc.; past participle **gerudert**). In

²⁹ Exception: **klappen** to work out all right (*es hat geklappt*).

the 1st singular present the **e** is often omitted in verbs in **-eln** (e.g. **ich hand(e)le** / *act*), seldom in **-ern** verbs.

(ii) **VERBS WITH STEM ENDING IN d or t:** (a) In weak verbs of this type the stem is followed by **e** throughout (present indicative **-e, -est, -et**, pl. **-en, -et, -en**; past **-ete** etc.; past participle **ge—et**), e.g. **arbeiten** (see tables above), **reden** *to talk*. (b) In the present tense of strong verbs which do not change the stem vowel (e.g. **leiden** *to suffer*) the stem is likewise followed by **e** (thus 2nd and 3rd singular **leidest, leidet**). Those that do change the stem vowel, e.g. **halten** *to hold, keep*, etc., **raten** *to advise, guess*, **gelten** *to be valid* etc., add **-st, -** (zero ending) to the stem in the 2nd and 3rd singular respectively, thus **hältst, hält; rätst, rät; giltst, gilt**; but several verbs deviate slightly from this pattern, namely **bersten** *to burst*, **laden** *to load*, **treten** *to step*, **werden** *to become*: **birst, birst; lädst, lädt; trittst, tritt; wirst, wird**. In the past tense, **e** is inserted in the 2nd plural (e.g. **littet, hieltet, ludet**).

(iii) **WEAK VERBS WITH STEM ENDING IN A CONSONANT (EXCEPT l, r) + m, n:** As with weak verbs in the preceding category, the stem is followed throughout by **e**, e.g. (with the same endings as those shown at (ii) for weak verbs) **widmen** *to dedicate*, **atmen** *to breathe*, **leugnen** *to deny*, **öffnen** *to open*, **zeichnen** *to draw*.

(iv) **VERBS WITH STEM ENDING IN (a) s, ss, ß, tz, z:** the 2nd singular present normally has the ending **-t** and thus coincides with the 3rd singular, e.g. (**wachsen** *to grow*) **wächst, (beißen** *to bite*) **beißt, (schwitzen** *to sweat*) **schwitzt**; (b) **sch:** the 2nd singular present retains the **s** of the normal **-st** ending, e.g. (**waschen** *to wash*) **wäschst**. The 2nd singular past of strong verbs (a, b) has **-est**, e.g. (**wachsen**) **wuchsest**, but informally the ending may be reduced to **-t**, e.g. **wuchst**.

(v) Many **STRONG VERBS CHANGE THE STEM VOWEL** in the 2nd and 3rd singular present (**a > ä, e > i** or **ie, o > ö, au > äu**), e.g. (**graben**, see above) **gräbst, gräbt; (helfen** *to help*) **hilfst, hilft; (lesen** *to read*) **liest, liest; (stoßen** *to push*) **stößt, stößt; (laufen** *to run*) **läufst, läuft**.

SUBJUNCTIVE

	PRESENT		PAST	
	(WEAK)	(STRONG)	(WEAK)	(STRONG)
ich	lebe*	grabe*	lebte	grübe
du	lebest*	grabest*	lebstest	grüb(e)st
er/sie/es	lebe	grabe	lebte	grübe
wir	leben*	graben*	lebten	grüben
ihr	lebet*	grabet*	lebtet	grüb(e)t
sie, Sie	leben*	graben*	lebten	grüben

*The asterisked forms of the present subjunctive do not normally occur in practice, being replaced by the corresponding forms of the past subjunctive.

The traditional terms for the two basic tenses of the subjunctive—the 'present subjunctive' and 'past subjunctive', parallel to the present and past indicative—are here retained as they are widely used and familiar to many

readers. It should, however, be borne in mind that (unlike in the indicative) no difference of time is implied. (It is for this reason that German grammarians nowadays refer to the two tenses as **Konjunktiv I** and **II**.)

The **PAST SUBJUNCTIVE OF STRONG VERBS** is formed with the endings shown above (**grübe** etc.). Where possible, the vowel of the past indicative is mutated (e.g. **sang** *sang*, subjunctive **sänge**); in certain instances a mutated vowel not corresponding to that of the indicative is used (e.g. **half** *helped*, subjunctive **hülfe**; **starb** *died*, subjunctive **stürbe**; **schalt** *scolded*, subjunctive **schölte**), while in a few cases both forms of past subjunctive exist side by side (e.g. **stand** *stood*, subjunctive **stünde**, **stände**). The **PAST SUBJUNCTIVE**—rarely used—OF THE **IRREGULAR WEAK VERBS** **brennen**, **kennen**, **nennen**, and **rennen** has the same vowel as the present tense (**brennte** etc.); **senden** and **wenden** have **sendete**, **wendete**; **bringen** and **denken** mutate the vowel of the indicative: **brächte**, **dächte**.

The **COMPOUND TENSES** are formed as for the indicative, except that the subjunctive forms of the auxiliaries **haben**, **sein**, and **werden** are used in place of the indicative forms.

IMPERATIVES: e.g. (singular) **leb(e)!**, **grab(e)!**; (plural) **lebt!**, **grabt!**; (Sie form) **leben Sie!**, **graben Sie!** Where the ending **-e** is optional the form without **-e** is generally preferred except in more elevated style, e.g. **frag deinen Onkel!** *ask your uncle!*, **schlaf gut!** *sleep well!*

Verbs such as **atmen**, **öffnen** (see p. 72, Note (iii)) do not drop the ending, e.g. **atme!** *breathe!*, **öffne!** *open!*; verbs in **-eln** likewise retain it, but often omit the penultimate **e**, e.g. **hand(e)l!** *act!* Strong verbs that change **e** to **i** or **ie** in the 2nd and 3rd singular present also have this change of vowel in the imperative singular (**-e** is not added, except in **siehe** (direction in or to a book etc.) *see*), e.g. (**helfen**) **hilf!**, (**lesen**) **lies!** (Strong verbs that mutate other vowels in the 2nd and 3rd singular, on the other hand, do not mutate in the imperative, e.g. (**blasen**) **blas(e)!**, (**laufen**) **lauf(e)!**)

PARTICIPLES: e.g. (present) **lebend**, **grabend**; (past: weak) **gelebt**, **gearbeitet**, (strong) **gesungen**, **gegraben**.

PAST PARTICIPLES:

(i) The prefix **ge-** is omitted from the past participle of verbs not stressed on the first syllable, i.e. verbs with an inseparable prefix (e.g. **beginnen** *to begin*, past participle **begonnen**), those ending in **-ieren** (e.g. **halbieren** *to halve*, past participle **halbiert**) and a handful of other verbs such as **offenbaren** *to reveal*, **prophezeien** *to prophesy*, **schmarotzen** *to sponge*. It is also omitted where a separable prefix is attached to such verbs, e.g. **anerkennen** *to acknowledge*, **ausrangieren** *to discard* (past participles **anerkannt**, **ausrangiert**).

(ii) The *modal verbs* (**dürfen**, **können**, etc.—see below) have *two past participles*: one formed with **ge-** (**gedurft**, **gekonnt**, etc.) and one identical with the infinitive, used when a dependent infinitive precedes the past participle. A few other verbs also have a second past participle analogous to those of the modal verbs, notably **brauchen**

(with a negative, e.g. **er hat nicht zu schießen brauchen** *he didn't need to shoot*), **hören** *to hear* and **sehen** *to see* (e.g. **ich habe ihn kommen sehen** *I saw him come*), and **lassen** (e.g. **er hat die Teller fallen lassen** *he dropped the plates*, **sie hat es auf der Fensterbank liegen lassen** *she left it on the window-sill*—although the participle with **ge-** (**fallen gelassen** etc.) may, and in the passive must, be used).

PASSIVE VOICE

The passive is formed by using the appropriate tense of **werden** together with the past participle of the verb concerned (which usually goes to the end of the clause). In the perfect and pluperfect tenses the past participle of **werden** takes the form **worden**. The future passive is often replaced by the present passive.

PRESENT TENSE

e.g. **ich werde** etc. . . . **gefragt** *I am etc. asked*

PAST TENSE

e.g. **ich wurde** etc. . . . **gefragt** *I was etc. asked*

PERFECT TENSE

e.g. **ich bin** etc. . . . **gefragt worden** *I have etc. been asked*

PLUPERFECT TENSE

e.g. **ich war** etc. . . . **gefragt worden** *I etc. had been asked*

FUTURE TENSE

e.g. **ich werde** etc. . . . **gefragt werden** *I shall etc. be asked*

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

e.g. **ich werde** etc. . . . **gefragt worden sein** *I shall etc. have been asked*

CONJUGATION OF HABEN, SEIN, AND WERDEN

	haben		sein		werden	
	INDIC.	SUBJ.	INDIC.	SUBJ.	INDIC.	SUBJ.
PRESENT TENSE						
ich	habe	habe*	bin	sei	werde	werde*
du	hast	habest*	bist	sei(e)st	wirst	werdest*
er/sie/es	hat	habe	ist	sei	wird	werde
wir	haben	haben*	sind	seien	werden	werden*
ihr	habt	habet*	seid	seiet*	werdet	werdet*
sie, Sie	haben	haben*	sind	seien	werden	werden*

*The asterisked forms are in practice normally replaced by the past subjunctive.

PAST TENSE

ich	hatte	hätte	war	wäre	wurde	würde
du	hattest	hättest	warst	wär(e)st	wurdest	würdest
er/sie/es	hatte	hätte	war	wäre	wurde	würde
wir	hatten	hätten	waren	wären	wurden	würden
ihr	hattet	hättet	wart	wär(e)t	wurdet	würdet
sie, Sie	hatten	hätten	waren	wären	wurden	würden

The COMPOUND TENSES are formed in the usual way (*sein* and *werden* take the auxiliary *sein*): (perfect) *ich habe* etc. . . . *gehabt*, *ich bin* etc. . . . *gewesen*, *ich bin* etc. . . . *geworden*; (pluperfect) *ich hatte* etc. . . . *gehabt*, *ich war* etc. . . . *gewesen*, *ich war* etc. . . . *geworden*; (future) *ich werde* etc. . . . *haben/sein/werden*; (future perfect) *ich werde* etc. . . . *gehabt haben / gewesen sein / geworden sein*. (For the subjunctive substitute the corresponding subjunctive forms of the auxiliaries *haben* or *sein* as appropriate.)

IMPERATIVES: (singular) *hab(e)!*, *sei!*, *werde!*; (plural) *habt!*, *seid!*, *werdet!*; (Sie form) *haben Sie!*, *seien Sie!*, *werden Sie!*

PARTICIPLES: (present) *habend*, *seiend*, *werdend*; (past) *gehabt*, *gewesen*, *geworden* or (in passive constructions) *worden*.

CONJUGATION OF MODAL VERBS AND WISSEN

German has a set of verbs called 'modal' verbs—related to the English modals *can*, *may*, etc.—which, unlike their English cognates, also have an infinitive form. They are **dürfen** *to be allowed to* (present *darf* etc. also *may*), **können** *to be able to* (*kann* etc. also *can*), **mögen** *to like (to)* (*mag* etc. also *may*), **müssen** *to have to* (*muss* etc. also *must*), **sollen** *to be (supposed) to*, **wollen** *to want (to)*. These verbs (the meanings and uses of which are treated more fully on p. 95) exhibit several special features: (a) the 1st and 3rd singular present forms are identical (like their English counterparts: *I can*, *he can*); (b) the vowel of the present singular differs from that of the plural and infinitive (except in the case of *sollen*); (c) each modal verb has two past participles, one with *ge-* and one (used with a dependent infinitive) identical with the infinitive; (d) a dependent infinitive is used without *zu*, e.g. *er wollte es nicht lesen* *he did not want to read it*.

The conjugation of the modal verbs is shown together with that of the similarly-conjugated *wissen* *to know*:

	dürfen	können	mögen	müssen	sollen	wollen	wissen
PRESENT TENSE (INDICATIVE)							
ich	darf	kann	mag	muss	soll	will	weiß
du	darfst	kannst	magst	musst	sollst	willst	weißt
er/sie/es	darf	kann	mag	muss	soll	will	weiß
wir	dürfen	können	mögen	müssen	sollen	wollen	wissen
ihr	dürft	könnt	mögt	müsst	sollt	wollt	wisst
sie, Sie	dürfen	können	mögen	müssen	sollen	wollen	wissen

The PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE is regular, having the vowel of the infinitive throughout: (dürfen) ich *dürfe*, du *dürfest*, er/sie/es *dürfe*, wir *dürfen*, ihr *düret*, sie and Sie *dürfen*; (können) ich *könne* etc.; (mögen) ich *möge* etc.; (müssen) ich *müsse* etc.; (sollen) ich *solle* etc.; (wollen) ich *wolle* etc.; (wissen) ich *wisse* etc. (The plural forms are in practice normally replaced by the past subjunctive.)

PAST TENSE (INDICATIVE)

ich	durfte	konnte	mochte	musste	sollte	wollte	wusste
du	durftest	konntest	mochtest	musstest	solltest	wolltest	wusstest
er/sie/es	durfte	konnte	mochte	musste	sollte	wollte	wusste
wir	durften	konnten	mochten	mussten	sollten	wollten	wussten
ihr	durftet	konntet	mochtet	musstet	solltet	wolltet	wusstet
sie, Sie	durften	konnten	mochten	mussten	sollten	wollten	wussten

The PAST SUBJUNCTIVE is conjugated like the indicative, but (except in the case of **sollen**, **wollen**) with the vowel mutated: (dürfen) ich *dürfte* etc.; (können) ich *könnte* etc.; (mögen) ich *möchte* etc.; (müssen) ich *müsste* etc.; (sollen) ich *sollte* etc.; (wollen) ich *wollte* etc.; (wissen) ich *wüsste* etc.

The COMPOUND TENSES are regular. A special feature of the *perfect* and *pluperfect* is that they are constructed with either (a) a past participle of the type **ge—t**, e.g. **ich habe ihn nie gemocht** *I never liked him*, or (b) (if another infinitive is dependent on the modal) a past participle identical with the infinitive, e.g. **ich habe es nicht lesen können** *I was unable to read it*, **sie hatte es bezahlen müssen** *she had had to pay for it*. In the future the modal verb follows its infinitive, e.g. **ich werde kommen können** *I shall be able to come*.

IMPERATIVES of **wissen**: **wisse!**; **wisst!**; **wissen Sie!**

PAST PARTICIPLES: (a) **gedurft**, **gekonnt**, **gemocht**, **gemusst**, **gesollt**, **gewollt**, **gewusst**; (b) (modal verbs only: with dependent infinitive) **dürfen**, **können**, **mögen**, **müssen**, **sollen**, **wollen**.

USE OF TENSES

Unlike English, German does not have both simple and continuous forms; the context normally makes clear whether, for example, **sie isst Pfannkuchen** means *she eats pancakes* or *she is eating pancakes*.

(i) The **PRESENT** tense may refer not only to present actions and events but very often also—as sometimes in English—to those in the future when the context makes it clear that future time is meant:

ich bin gleich wieder da *I'll be right back*
ich fahre morgen nach Köln *I'm going to Cologne tomorrow*
sie findet es nie *she'll never find it*

As the historic present it may also 'bring alive' past occurrences in vivid narrative style:

der Prinz ist zwölf Jahre alt, als sein Vater stirbt *the prince was twelve years old when his father died*

An important difference in usage between the two languages is that an action begun in the past and still going on is expressed in English by the perfect tense, in German by the present tense:

ich bin seit 3 Uhr / seit Jahren hier *I've been here since 3 o'clock / for years*

In negative statements both languages have the perfect:

ich habe ihn seit Jahren nicht (mehr) gesehen *I haven't seen him for years*

(ii) Reporting the past:

(a) The **PAST** tense reports past actions and events, and is the tense in which most narrative prose is written:

Im Herbst des Jahres 1787 unternahm Mozart in Begleitung seiner Frau eine Reise nach Prag (Mörike) *In the autumn of 1787 Mozart, accompanied by his wife, went on a journey to Prague*

Sie warf mir einen scheuen feindseligen Blick zu und blickte sich suchend um (Ernst Penzoldt) *She gave me a shy, hostile glance and looked round in search of something*

It may also describe a past state or situation:

sie sah krank aus *she looked ill*
er saß in der Ecke und las *he sat in the corner reading*

In addition, the past tense is used in: **es wirkten mit . . .** *those taking part were . . .*, **Sie hörten/sahen . . .** *you have been listening to/watching. . .*

In sentences such as:

ich wartete seit 3 Uhr/seit Jahren *I'd been waiting since 3 o'clock/for years*

the use of the past tense—where English has the pluperfect—is analogous to the use of the present described in (i) above, 2nd paragraph. In negative statements both languages have the pluperfect:

ich hatte ihn seit Jahren nicht (mehr) gesehen *I hadn't seen him for years*

(b) The **PERFECT** tense is used, like its English counterpart, to refer to past events that have a bearing on the present:

er hat viele Romane gelesen *he has read many novels*
es hat geschneit! *it's been snowing!*
ist er schon angekommen? *has he arrived yet?*

In spoken German it is also extensively used to refer to past actions and events (where English has the past tense):

wir sind letztes Jahr nach Indien getrampt *last year we hitch-hiked to India*
in Piräus haben sie Schilder mit der Aufschrift „Not inside the grass“ entdeckt *in Piraeus they discovered signs saying 'Not inside the grass'*
sie hat in einem Hotel gearbeitet *she worked in a hotel*

Here the perfect tense has made considerable inroads on the territory of the past tense; but past tense forms (including those of **haben**, **sein**, **werden**, the modal auxiliaries and such widely used verbs as **denken**, **sagen**, **gehen**, **kommen**, **stehen**) are still common—except in the South, where the colloquial perfect reigns supreme.

Just as the present tense is often used to indicate future time, so the perfect is commonly employed in place of a future perfect:

bis du zurückkommst, habe ich das Buch zu Ende gelesen *by the time you return I'll have finished the book*

In subordinate clauses the perfect may be used in both English and German with the force of a future perfect:

ich möchte lieber warten, bis wir genug gespart haben *I'd prefer to wait until we've saved enough*

USED TO, WOULD: The force of *used to* is usually conveyed by the adverb **früher**:

Südtirol gehörte früher zu Österreich *South Tyrol used to be part of Austria*
er hat früher bei der Post gearbeitet *he used to work for the Post Office*
sie kommen nicht so oft wie früher *they don't come as often as they used to*

—except where another adverb of time makes **früher** redundant. *Would* indicating habitual action as in *she would visit her two nieces every year* is expressed by the past tense:

sie besuchte jedes Jahr ihre beiden Nichten

(c) The **PLUPERFECT** tense is used like its English counterpart:

ich hatte den Wecker nicht gehört *I hadn't heard the alarm clock*
sie waren beim Fernsehen eingeknickt *they had nodded off while watching TV*

(iii) Future time is often expressed by the present tense (see (i), 1st paragraph). The **FUTURE** tense may be used to indicate a future event:

die Messe wird nächstes Jahr in Mailand stattfinden *the fair will be held in Milan next year*

to predict:

die Preise werden wohl wieder steigen *prices will probably go up again*

to express an intention:

ich werde es mir überlegen *I'll think about it*

(In this last function **werden** competes with **wollen**: **ich will es mir überlegen**. But only **wollen** is used (a) to express the idea of willingness to do something, e.g. **willst du mir helfen?** *will you help me?*, **die Russen wollen nicht unterschreiben** *the Russians won't sign*, (b) to make a suggestion, e.g. **wollen wir ins Museum gehen?** *shall we go to the museum?*)

The future tense, often supported by the adverbs **schon** or **wohl**, may also suggest a probability:

sie wird schon recht haben *I expect she's right*

es wird schon so sein, wie er sagt *it'll be as he says*

This is also true of the future perfect:

er wird (wohl) zu viel gegessen haben *I expect he's eaten too much*

sie werden inzwischen abgereist sein *they'll have left by now*

es wird ihm doch nichts passiert sein? *I trust nothing's happened to him?*

THE PASSIVE

In the passive the direct object of an active construction (e.g. *the article* in *I wrote the article*) becomes the subject (*the article was written by me*).

The German passive is formed with the auxiliary **werden** + the past participle of the verb:

die Brücke wird gebaut *the bridge is being built*

das Haus wurde selten angestrichen *the house was rarely painted*

er ist/war angegriffen worden *he has/had been attacked*

(with the present passive indicating future time):

der neue Bahnhof wird am Montag eröffnet *the new station will be opened on Monday*

wann werde ich abgeholt? *when will I be collected?*

Unlike English *to be*, **sein**—which normally denotes a state, not an action—is *not* used to form the passive.³⁰ A clear distinction needs to be made between, for example, *the bridge was built* (= the construction of the bridge was carried out) **die Brücke wurde gebaut** and *the bridge was built* (= was complete) **die Brücke war gebaut**. (In the latter statement the past participle functions like an adjective.)

³⁰ **Werden** is, however, replaced by **sein** as the auxiliary for passive statements (a) in the imperative and present subjunctive, e.g. **es sei darauf hingewiesen, dass . . .** *attention is drawn to the fact that . . .*, (b) (sometimes) in the infinitive, when used with a modal verb, e.g. **das will vorsichtig gemacht sein** *that needs to be done carefully*.

The AGENT (the subject of the verb in an active construction, the 'doer') in a passive construction is usually indicated by the preposition **von** *by*:

die Buchdruckerkunst ist von Gutenberg erfunden worden *printing was invented by Gutenberg*

er wurde von seiner Mutter geweckt *he was awoken by his mother*

Although used chiefly with a person as agent, **von** may also occur with an inanimate agent if it is perceived as the 'doer' of the action:

Guernica wurde von Hitlers Bombern zerstört *Guernica was destroyed by Hitler's bombers*

The MEANS by which an action is carried out is usually indicated by **durch** (also *by*):

er wurde durch den Lärm geweckt *he was woken by the noise*

Guernica wurde durch Hitlers Bomben zerstört *Guernica was destroyed by Hitler's bombs*

Following a verbal noun the agent is, exceptionally, indicated by **durch**:

die Erfindung der Buchdruckerkunst durch Gutenberg *the invention of printing by Gutenberg*

Points about the passive:

(i) *I WAS OFFERED, TOLD, ETC.:* A significant difference between English and German usage lies in the fact that in English the indirect object of the verb (in the active) can become the subject of the passive (e.g. *I was offered a place at London University*), whereas in German this is not possible—only the direct object (here *a place*, which is what is really being offered) can become the subject of the passive: **mir wurde ein Studienplatz an der Universität London angeboten**; cf. *I was told that that was not true* **mir wurde** (or **es wurde mir**) **gesagt, dass das nicht stimmte**, *I was ordered to shoot* **mir wurde** (or **es wurde mir**) **befohlen zu schießen** (*befehlen to order takes the dative*).

(ii) *ALTERNATIVES TO THE PASSIVE:* Often where the passive is used in English, German employs some other construction. Very commonly, when no agent is specified, **man** is used with an active verb:

man hat gesagt, dass . . . *it has been said that . . .*

man hörte ihn singen *he was heard singing*

In the case of verbs taking an indirect object in the active, an active construction with **man** may be preferred:

man hat mir einen Studienplatz angeboten *I was offered a place*

man versprach uns bessere Arbeitsbedingungen *we were promised better working conditions*

man hat ihr einen anderen Arzt empfohlen *she was recommended another doctor*

while sometimes a construction with **bekommen** + past participle is used:

sie hat das Buch zugeschickt bekommen *she was sent the book*

ich habe einen Studienplatz angeboten bekommen *I was offered a place*

To be given something and to be told something are often expressed in German by the active verbs bekommen and erfahren, e.g. I was given a present by them ich habe von ihnen ein Geschenk bekommen, at the airport I was told that the plane was two hours late am Flughafen erfuhr ich, dass das Flugzeug zwei Stunden Verspätung hatte.

Sometimes German uses a REFLEXIVE VERB, in 'cases where things come about of themselves' (George O. Curme), e.g. **sich widerspiegeln in** *to be reflected in*, **sich erfüllen** (of wish etc.) *to be fulfilled*, **sich bestätigen** (of suspicion etc.) *to be confirmed*; and sometimes an INTRANSITIVE VERB, e.g. **heißen** *to be called*, **gelten als** *to be regarded as*, **erschrecken** *to be frightened*, **ertrinken** *to be drowned*, **umkommen** *to be killed*, **verloren gehen** (of thing) *to get lost*, **heiraten** *to get married*.

Where English has *can* + passive, German very frequently uses **lassen** + **sich** + infinitive:

das lässt sich machen *that can be done*

Prousts Werke lassen sich nicht leicht zusammenfassen *Proust's works cannot easily be summarized*

NOTE: An active construction with inverted word order (see p. 105) in German frequently corresponds to a parallel passive construction in English, e.g. **schon am nächsten Tag besuchten ihn seine Freunde aus Neapel** *the very next day he was visited by his friends from Naples*, **mich fasziniert der Gedanke, dass ...** *I'm fascinated by the thought that ...*

(iii) THE IMPERSONAL PASSIVE: A widely-used construction in German is the impersonal passive, which is used with *intransitive* verbs to indicate an activity without reference to a specific agent:

es wurde gestreikt *there was a strike*

freitags wurde getanzt *on Fridays there was dancing*

wann wird geheiratet? *when's the wedding?*

(with a personal subject—*someone*—supplied in the English translation):

er muss immer fürchten, dass mitgehört wird *he always has to fear that someone is listening in*

(with a prepositional object, again with a personal subject supplied in the translation):

an der neuen Schule wird bereits zwei Jahre gebaut *they've already been working on the new school for two years*

Note that the impersonal **es** is omitted when not in initial position.

THE SUBJUNCTIVE

The subjunctive mood survives in English only in a limited number of constructions of the type *they requested that he withdraw from the contest* and

in a few petrified usages such as *be that as it may, if I were you, suffice it to say* or indeed *Britannia rule the waves*. In German, by contrast, it continues to play a major role as the second mood of the verb alongside the indicative; and the student of German needs to be familiar with its forms and uses.

Chief uses of the subjunctive:

(i) INDIRECT (OF REPORTED) SPEECH: In *written* German, e.g. in newspaper reports, when the verb in the main clause (the 'verb of saying') is in the *past* tense, the verb in the subordinate clause goes into the subjunctive (**dass** is very frequently omitted); unlike its English counterpart, it retains the tense of the original statement or question:

sie sagte, er habe sie missverstanden (original statement: **er hat mich missverstanden**) *she said he had misunderstood her*

ich fragte ihn, ob er teilnehmen könne (original question: **können Sie teilnehmen?**) *I asked him if he could take part*

Where, however, the present subjunctive forms are identical with the indicative forms (e.g. **ich habe, wir spielen**) and therefore not distinctive, the past subjunctive is used instead:

sie sagte, ich hätte sie missverstanden *she said I had misunderstood her*
er behauptete, wir spielten kein Tennis *he maintained we did not play tennis*

A common alternative—although not in newspaper reports—is the indicative with (except in the case of questions) **dass**, again with the verb in the tense of the original utterance:

sie sagte, dass er sie missverstanden hat

ich fragte ihn, ob er teilnehmen kann

In *spoken* German the present subjunctive is avoided, and either the past subjunctive or the present indicative (the tense of the original utterance) used instead:

sie sagte, er hätte/hat sie missverstanden

ich fragte ihn, ob er teilnehmen könnte/kann

When the verb of saying is in the *present* tense, it is usually followed by the indicative:

er sagt, dass er an einem Reiseführer schreibt *he says he is writing a guidebook*

but the subjunctive (again often without **dass**) may also be used:

er sagt, dass er an einem Reiseführer schreibe

—implicit here, as always, in the subjunctive of indirect speech is an attitude of detachment on the part of the speaker or writer: no view is expressed as to the truth or otherwise of the words reported.

As the subjunctive reports what has been said, it is naturally much used in newspaper reports where someone's opinion or account of something is being quoted; and since the subjunctive forms are clearly recognizable as indicating indirect speech, German is able to dispense with the phrases (of the type *he said, they maintained*, and so on) that from time to time may need to be used in an English text to indicate that indirect speech is continuing. The following extract from a newspaper report illustrates the use of the subjunctive to express indirect speech:

Vor Journalisten sagte er, er werde solange in Frankreich bleiben, bis sein Volk dem Weg der Demokratie folge. „Ich bin hier, um den Widerstand meines Volkes zu ermutigen.“ Er habe seit seiner Amtsenthebung in T. gelebt, und es sei ihm sogar möglich gewesen, „in den Straßen umherzugehen, ohne entdeckt zu werden“.

Speaking to journalists he said that he would stay in France until such time as his people followed the path of democracy. 'I am here to encourage the resistance of my people.' He had [, he went on,] been living in T. since his removal from office, and it had even been possible for him 'to walk about the streets without being discovered'.

Sometimes verbs of saying are omitted altogether, since the subjunctive itself implies that a person's words are being reported (which in translation is conveyed by phrases of the *he/she said* type):

Er hat mir schon beim ersten Telefongespräch einen Besuch in W. ausgedrückt. Da sei nichts zu sehen *He talked me out of visiting W. in our very first phone call. He said there wasn't anything to see there*

The subjunctive is also used following verbs (or their corresponding nouns) referring to an *opinion* or *belief* from which the writer or speaker wishes to distance him- or herself:

er bildet sich ein, er sei Napoleon *he imagines he is Napoleon*
der Glaube, dass der Krieg unabwendbar sei *the belief that war is (was) inevitable*

es ist ein Irrtum zu meinen, dass Umweltschutz wenig Geld koste *it's a mistake to think that conservation doesn't cost much money*

Where an assumption has subsequently been proved false, the subjunctive is again used:

ich dachte, du hättest meinen Brief bekommen *I thought you'd received my letter*

(ii) **CONDITIONAL STATEMENTS** (so-called 'unreal condition'—referring to an improbable eventuality, expressed by the past subjunctive, or one that was but is no longer possible, expressed by the pluperfect subjunctive):

(past subjunctive) **wenn ich ein Wörterbuch hätte, könnte ich das Wort nachschlagen** *if I had a dictionary I could look the word up*

(pluperfect subjunctive) **wenn er gekommen wäre, hätten wir viel Spaß gehabt** *if he had come we'd have had a lot of fun*

(If the verb in the *if* clause is in the present tense ('open condition') the indicative is used, e.g. **wenn es regnet, können wir ins Theater gehen** *if it rains we can go to the theatre.*)

The past subjunctive forms that are in regular use are **hätte** and **wäre**, the modal auxiliaries **dürfte**, **könnte**, **möchte**, **müsste**, **sollte**, **wollte** (and South German **bräuchte**) and those of the commonest strong verbs (e.g. **ginge**, **käme**, **ließe**, **täte**) together with **wüsste**. (Past subjunctives of other strong verbs are confined to formal prose.) Otherwise, in spoken German and extensively in the written language, the past subjunctive is replaced (and in the case of the commonest strong verbs, may be replaced) by the construction **würde** + infinitive:

wenn er härter arbeiten würde, wäre seine Familie besser dran *if he worked harder his family would be better off*

wenn ich das Geld abheben würde, könnte ich morgen in die USA fliegen *if I withdrew the money I could fly to the USA tomorrow*

In the **wenn**-clause **sollte** + infinitive sometimes replaces the subjunctive, e.g. **wenn die Vorstellung später beginnen sollte** *if the performance were to begin later.*

(iii) IN *AS IF* CLAUSES: The (usually past) subjunctive is used in clauses introduced by **als ob/wenn** or (in literary usage) **als** with inversion:

sie sieht (so) aus, als ob sie krank wäre *she looks as if she were ill*

ihm war, als müsste er davonlaufen (literary) *he felt as if he had to run away*

(iv) IN CLAUSES INTRODUCED BY **damit**: In literary German the subjunctive is sometimes used instead of the indicative in clauses introduced by **damit** *so that*.

(v) IN CONCESSIVE CLAUSES: The subjunctive is used in set expressions: **wie dem auch sei** *be that as it may*, **koste es, was es wolle** *cost what it may*, **komme, was da wolle** *come what may*.

(vi) EXPRESSING A WISH, COMMAND, ETC.: The present subjunctive is used to express:

(a) a *wish* in certain set phrases (3rd person singular, e.g. **es lebe . . . !** *long live . . . !*, **Dein Reich komme** *Thy kingdom come*, **Gott behüte!** *heaven forbid!*, **hol ihn der Teufel!** *to hell with him!*, also the South German greeting **grüß Gott!**); the present subjunctive of **mögen** is used in all persons to express *may . . .*, e.g. **mögen Sie lange leben!** *may you live long!*

(b) an *exhortation* or a *command*: in the 3rd person singular, the subjunctive may serve to exhort (in literary language, e.g. **Edel sei der Mensch, hilfreich und gut** (Goethe) *Let man be noble, helpful, and good*); it may be used with imperative force (e.g. **wer dagegen ist, der trete vor!** *anyone not in favour step forward!*, (with **man** as subject) **man wende sich an . . .** *apply to . . .*, in recipes etc. **man nehme . . .** *take . . .*) or to express a proposition

(e.g. ABC sei ein gleichschenkliges Dreieck *let ABC be an isosceles triangle*); in the 1st person plural³¹ it is used in the sense of *let's . . . !*:

seien wir ehrlich! *let's be honest!*

also fangen wir an! *let's start then!*

The past and pluperfect subjunctives, accompanied by **doch** (or **bloß**, **nur**, **doch bloß/nur**), express a (heartfelt) wish that the speaker cannot expect to see realized, *if only . . .*:

wenn sie doch käme! *if only she would come!*

hätte ich doch mehr Zeit! *if only I had more time!*

wenn er das nur nicht gesagt hätte! *if only he hadn't said that!*

(vii) **VARIOUS USES** in which the subjunctive, always less direct than the indicative, adds a nuance of caution, tentativeness to a statement:

(a) making a *polite utterance*, e.g. **eine Frage hätte ich noch** *there's one more thing I'd like to ask*, **ich hätte gern sechs Eier** *I'd like six eggs*, **ich hätte gern Herrn X gesprochen** *I wonder if I might speak to Mr X?*, **hätten Sie sonst noch einen Wunsch?** (in a shop) *is there anything else I can get you?*;

(b) referring to the *completion* of something, e.g. **das wär's!** *that's that!*, **da wären wir endlich!** *here we are at last!*;

(c) **ich wünschte**: the past subjunctive has the special sense *I wish*, e.g. **ich wünschte, ich hätte ihn nie getroffen** *I wish I'd never met him*;

(d) with **beinahe**, *fast* **almost**, e.g. **das Auto wäre beinahe umgekippt** *the car nearly tipped over*, **fast hätte ich den Fehler übersehen** *I almost overlooked the mistake*;

(e) in clauses introduced by **(an)statt dass** *instead of (-ing)*, **nicht dass** *not that*, **ohne dass** *without (-ing)*, **(zu . . .) als dass** *(too . . .) to*; in these instances the (less tentative, more direct) indicative may also be used.

THE INFINITIVE

The position of the infinitive is treated on p. 107.

(i) The infinitive is in most cases preceded by **zu**, in the same way that *to* precedes the English infinitive:

sie versucht zu schlafen *she's trying to sleep*

du brauchst nicht zu warten *you needn't wait*

er beabsichtigte den Brief am nächsten Tag zu schreiben *he intended to write the letter the next day*

Where the verb concerned has a separable prefix, **-zu-** is inserted between the prefix and the simple verb:

er beabsichtigte dieses Hobby aufzugeben *he intended to give up this hobby*

³¹ The forms are indistinguishable from the indicative except in the case of **sein** (**seien wir**).

The infinitive with **zu** has *passive sense* when used with the verb **sein** (cf. English *the house is to let*):

kein Laut war zu hören *not a sound was to be heard*

diese Hitze ist nicht zu ertragen *this heat is (not to be borne =) unbearable*

diese Frage ist leicht zu beantworten *this question is (easily to be answered =) easy to answer*

die Personalausweise sind am Eingang vorzuzeigen *identity cards are to be shown at the entrance*

The infinitive with **zu** is used in combination with certain prepositions: **um . . . zu** (in order) *to*, **(an)statt . . . zu** *instead of (-ing)*, **ohne . . . zu** *without (-ing)*, e.g. **um/ (an)statt/ohne die Tür abzuschließen** (in order) *to lock the door / instead of locking the door / without locking the door*. **Um . . . zu** is also sometimes used without any implication of purpose, like English *to + infinitive*, to indicate someone's destiny, e.g. **sie trennten sich, um einander nie wiederzusehen** *they parted, never to see each other again*.

(ii) INFINITIVE WITHOUT **zu**: used after certain verbs, notably:

(a) the modal verbs (**dürfen, können, mögen, müssen, sollen, wollen**):

sie darf die Bibliothek nicht benutzen *she is not allowed to use the library*

ich wollte ihn sprechen *I wanted to speak to him*

(b) the auxiliary **lassen** *to let (do something)*:

sie ließ den Gepard entkommen *she let the cheetah escape*

(with infinitive in passive sense) *to have (something done)*:

er ließ die Nationalhymne fünfmal spielen *he had the national anthem played five times*

(c) the verbs of perception **hören** *to hear*, **sehen** *to see*, **fühlen** *to feel*, **spüren** *to feel, sense*:

sie hörte ihn kommen *she heard him coming*

ich fühlte mein Herz schlagen *I felt my heart beating*

(d) **bleiben** (denoting a situation) and **gehen** (referring to an activity), e.g. **stehen bleiben** *to remain standing; to stop*, **schwimmen gehen** *to go swimming*;

(e) (if the infinitive stands on its own, without an object etc.) **helfen** (+ DAT.) *to help*, **lehren** *to teach*, **lernen** *to learn*:

sie half mir abtrocknen *she helped me to dry up*

er muss erst schwimmen lernen *he must learn to swim first*

Contrast: **man lehrte uns alle Fremdwörter nachzuschlagen** *we were taught to look up all the foreign words*.

The simple infinitive is also used as an *imperative* to convey brief directions, e.g. **weitermachen!** *carry on!*, **alles aussteigen!** *all change!*, **rückwärts**

einsteigen! (on Austrian tramcars) *board at the rear*, **Einfahrt freihalten!** *keep entrance clear*, (with suppression of the reflexive pronoun) **nicht hinauslehnen!** *do not lean out of the window*.

The infinitive may be used as a *noun*, in which case it has neuter gender and is written with a capital letter, e.g. **das Reisen** *travel(ling)*, **das Lesen** *reading*; it may form part of a compound, e.g. **das Kopfschütteln** *shaking/shake of the head*, **das Menschsein** *being human, humanity*, **das Zuhörenmüssen** *having to listen*. The infinitive—in an infinitive phrase with **zu**—may also play a nominal role as, for example, the subject of the verb in:

einen Eisbären zu füttern ist gefährlich (here **zu** is optional) *feeding a polar bear is dangerous*

zu sagen, dass sie Glück hatten, ist unrealistisch *to say that they were lucky is unrealistic*

or as the complement in:

sein Ziel war eine Goldmedaille zu gewinnen *his goal was to win a gold medal*

PARTICIPLES

The present and past participles may, as in English, be used adjectivally:

ein lächelndes Gesicht *a smiling face*

ein ausgebildeter Dolmetscher *a trained interpreter*

sie ist einfach reizend *she's simply delightful*

ich war entsetzt *I was horrified*

Examples of adverbial use:

fragend/entsetzt schaute sie ihn an *she looked at him questioningly / in horror*

überraschend früh *surprisingly early*

The participles may occur (chiefly in written German) in a participial phrase preceding the noun (see p. 111, *Adjectival and participial phrases*):

die im Teich schwimmenden Hechte *the pike swimming in the pond*

der als Verbrecher entlarvte Präsident *the president (who was) exposed as a criminal*

The construction with **zu** + present participle has passive force (the so-called *gerundive*):

das zu lösende Problem *the problem to be solved*

In literary style—the construction is rather less common than its English counterpart—the present participle sometimes occurs in a participial phrase with adverbial force (with the participle coming last):

die Route verläuft, etwa der tschechischen Grenze folgend, durch den Bayrischen Wald *roughly following the Czech border, the route runs through the Bavarian Forest*

(with this literary-sounding construction used to telling ironic effect):

... Dettmar Cramer, der nichts sagte, dies aber perfekt artikuliert (from a review of a TV programme) ... Dettmar Cramer, who said nothing, albeit with perfect articulation

The similar past participle construction may have the participle at the beginning or the end:

von seiner schauspielerischen Anlage überzeugt (or überzeugt von seiner schauspielerischen Anlage) ging er zum Theater *convinced of his talent as an actor, he went on the stage*

The English present participle (-ing) is rendered by other constructions in German in a number of situations:

(i) (=relative clause) e.g. *a teacher driving a minibus* ein Lehrer, der einen Kleinbus fährt/fuhr

(causal: *da* ...) e.g. *having nothing to do, I went for a walk* da ich nichts zu tun hatte, ging ich spazieren, *this being the case, ...* da dies der Fall ist/war, ...

(temporal: *als* ..., *nachdem* ..., *während* ...) e.g. *hearing the doorbell, he went to open the door* als er die Klingel hörte, ging er die Tür öffnen, *having written the article, I went to bed* nachdem ich den Artikel geschrieben hatte, ging ich ins Bett, *and then, raising his baton, he looks up at the box* und dann sieht er, während er den Dirigentenstab hebt, zur Loge hinauf; sometimes two clauses linked by *und* are used, e.g. *taking out his knife, he opened the letter* er nahm sein Messer heraus und öffnete den Brief, *he left early, only later realizing that he had left his umbrella behind* er ging früh und merkte erst später, dass er seinen Schirm vergessen hatte, (simultaneous actions) *there she stood waiting* da stand sie und wartete, *he sat peeling potatoes* er saß und schälte Kartoffeln

(ii) WITH VERBS OF PERCEPTION: expressed by the infinitive, e.g. *she heard him coming* sie hörte ihn kommen (see p. 86, *The infinitive* (ii) (c)); frequently, especially with more complex sentences, a clause with *wie* is used, e.g. *he could see Donald being propped against the wall* er sah, wie Donald gegen die Wand gelehnt wurde, *he heard the rain falling* er hörte, wie der Regen fiel

(iii) *spend time -ing, be busy -ing*: here the participle is rendered by *mit* + infinitive noun or, if followed by an object etc., by *damit* + infinitive phrase, e.g. *he spends most of his time reading / collecting beer-mats* er verbringt die meiste Zeit mit Lesen / damit, Bierdeckel zu sammeln, *she was busy hanging out the washing* sie war damit beschäftigt, Wäsche aufzuhängen

(iv) *come -ing*: translated by *kommen* + past participle of the verb of motion concerned, e.g. *they came running along* sie kamen angelaufen

The German past participle is also used as an *imperative*, to express peremptory—especially military—commands, e.g. *stillgestanden!* *attention!* (from *stillstehen* to stop), *abgessen!* *dismount!* (from *absitzen* to dismount).

SEPARABLE AND INSEPARABLE VERBS

The German vocabulary contains a large number of verbs formed with prefixes, either separable and stressed (e.g. **auf-** in **aufgeben** to give up) or inseparable and unstressed (e.g. **be-** in **bekommen** to get). Eight prefixes are inseparable: **be-**, **emp-**, **ent-**, **er-**, **ge-**, **miss-** (normally), **ver-**, **zer-**; the rest are or (in the case of variable prefixes) may be separable. The variable prefixes **durch-**, **hinter-**, **über-**, **um-**, **unter-**, **voll-**, **wider-**, **wieder-** may occur as either separable or inseparable prefixes; in some instances the same verb occurs in both separable and inseparable forms, e.g. **úmfahren** to knock down as opposed to **umfáhren** to go/drive/sail round.

SEPARABLE VERBS

These have no exact counterpart in English, but may be compared with phrasal verbs such as *give up*, *take over*, *stick out*. Unlike the adverbial element in these English verbs, however, the German separable prefix goes right to the end in a main clause in the present and past tenses, e.g. **ich gehe heute abend mit meiner Freundin aus** I'm going out with my girlfriend tonight; but where (in a subordinate clause) the verb itself is in final position, the prefix is reunited with the simple verb in the sequence prefix-verb, e.g. **wenn ich mit meiner Freundin ausgehe** if/when I go out with my girlfriend, **wusstest du nicht, dass sie mit ihm ausgeht?** didn't you know she's going out with him?

Separable prefixes precede, and are joined to, the verb in the infinitive (e.g. **ausgehen**) and the present participle (e.g. **ausgehend**); where the infinitive is used with **zu** the latter is inserted between the prefix and the simple verb (e.g. **auszugehen**); in the past participle the prefix precedes the **ge-** element (e.g. **ausgegangen**).

Examples:

aufgeben to give up (ich gebe . . . auf, (wenn etc.) ich . . . aufgebe, ich habe . . . aufgegeben)

einzahlen to pay in (ich zahle . . . ein, (wenn etc.) ich . . . einzahle, ich habe . . . eingezahlt)

mithalten to keep up (ich halte . . . mit, (wenn etc.) ich . . . mithalte, ich habe . . . mitgehalten)

Some separable verbs are formed by prefixing a noun or adjective to the simple verb, e.g. **teilnehmen** to take part (from **Teil** part and **nehmen** to take), **fernsehen** to watch television (from **fern** far and **sehen** to see). These are handled in exactly the same way as other separable verbs, thus **ich nehme . . . teil**, (wenn etc.) **ich . . . teilnehme**, **ich habe . . . teilgenommen**; **ich sehe . . . fern**, (wenn etc.) **ich . . . fernsehe**, **ich habe . . . ferngesehen**.

NOTE: The beginner needs to remember that before looking up a verb in the dictionary one should first look at the end of the clause (usually marked in German by some form of punctuation) to see whether a separable prefix is there. If so, it is the entry

for the *compound verb* (consisting of prefix + (simple) verb) that must be consulted; thus in the case of a sentence such as **der Mond übt auf die Erde eine Kraft aus** it is **ausüben** to exert etc., and not **üben** to practise etc., that should be looked up: *the moon exerts a force on the earth.*

INSEPARABLE VERBS

Some verbs are formed with inseparable prefixes, e.g. **erreichen** to reach, **vergessen** to forget. As their name suggests, these prefixes cannot be detached from the verb. The past participle of such verbs, unlike that of separable verbs, has no **ge-**; **ge-** may, however, itself be an inseparable prefix, as in **genehmigen** to approve.

There is in addition a class of compound verbs—they may conveniently also be termed inseparable—some of which are derived from compound nouns (e.g. **frühstücken** to have breakfast, **handhaben** to handle from **das Frühstück**, **die Handhabe**) while others are formed by other means (e.g. **schlafwandeln** to walk in one's sleep). All are stressed on the first syllable and conjugated weak; their past participles are formed with the prefix **ge-** (in contrast with the inserted **-ge-** in the past participles of separable verbs like **teilnehmen**—see above): **gefrühstückt**, **gehandhabt**, **geschlafwandelt**.

REFLEXIVE VERBS

Reflexive verbs—for their conjugation see *Reflexive pronouns*, p. 45—are verbs whose subject and object refer to the same person or thing:

ich wasche mich jeden Tag *I wash (myself) every day*

das Fenster öffnet sich *the window opens (literally: itself)*

wir haben uns verteidigt *we defended ourselves*

With the reflexive pronoun in the dative, as the indirect object:

ich will mir einen Volvo kaufen *I'm going to buy (myself) a Volvo*
(when referring to a part of one's body):

ich wasche mir die Hände vor jeder Mahlzeit *I wash my hands before every meal*

sie hat sich das Bein gebrochen *she's broken her leg*

Some verbs exist only in the reflexive form, e.g. **sich beeilen** to hurry, **sich auskennen** to know one's way around. Others are strictly speaking verbs that may also be used reflexively, e.g. **(sich) rasieren** to shave, **(sich) anpassen** to adapt; semantically the reflexive use may be quite unconnected with that of its non-reflexive counterpart, e.g. **sich betragen** to behave, cf. **betragen** to amount to.

A number of reflexive verbs are followed by: (a) the GENITIVE, e.g. **sich schämen** to be ashamed of, **sich bemächtigen** to take possession of; (b) the DATIVE, e.g. **sich anvertrauen** to confide in, **sich nähern** to approach, **sich widersetzen** to resist;

(c) a PREPOSITION, e.g. **sich erinnern an** (+ACC.) *to remember*, **sich verlassen auf** (+ACC.) *to rely on*, **sich auseinandersetzen mit** *to grapple with* (a problem etc.), **sich sehnen nach** *to long for*, **sich wundern über** (+ACC.) *to be surprised at*.

The scope of the reflexive verb is wider in German than in English, and its English equivalent may be (apart from a parallel reflexive construction):

(i) an INTRANSITIVE VERB (the reflexive sense being implied), e.g. **sich anziehen/ausziehen** *to dress/undress*, **sich konzentrieren** *to concentrate*, **sich leeren** (of a room etc.) *to empty*, **sich zeigen** (of fear etc.) *to show*.

(ii) a TRANSITIVE VERB + NOUN OBJECT, e.g. **sich kämmen** *to comb one's hair*, **sich räuspern** *to clear one's throat*, **sich bessern** *to mend one's ways*, **sich versuchen als** *to try one's hand as*.

(iii) a VERB IN THE PASSIVE, e.g. **sich bestätigen** (of a suspicion etc.) *to be confirmed*, **sich erfüllen** (of a wish, prophecy) *to be fulfilled*, **sich wieder finden** (of a lost object) *to be found*.

(iv) a TRANSITIVE VERB USED INTRANSITIVELY WITH PASSIVE FORCE, e.g. **das wird sich nie in Kanada verkaufen** *that'll never sell in Canada*, **der Roman liest sich gut** *the novel reads well*; with **leicht** and **schwer** the reflexive verb is translated by *to be easy/hard to* . . . , e.g. **das Lied singt sich leicht/schwer** *the song is easy/hard to sing*, **das sagt sich leicht** *that's easy to say*.

(v) *to* . . . *one's way*, e.g. **sich (zum Fenster etc.) tasten** *to feel one's way*, **sich durchkämpfen** *to fight one's way through*.

Certain verbs are used in an impersonal construction with adverbs such as **gut**, **leicht**, e.g. **hier fährt/schläft es sich gut** *this is a good road for driving on / a good place to sleep*, **es schreibt sich so schwer mit einem ausgetrockneten Filzstift** *it's so hard writing with a dried-out felt pen*.

RECIPROCAL USE

A second function of reflexive verbs (in the plural) is to express reciprocity; the reflexive pronoun here is equivalent to English *one another*, *each other*. Examples:

sie lieben sich *they love each other*

wann sehen wir uns wieder? *when will we see each other again?*

Again, the reflexive pronoun is often left untranslated in English, e.g. **die Kinder schlugen sich um das neue Spielzeug** *the children fought* (i.e. *each other*) *over the new toy*, **schreibt ihr euch (DAT.) noch?** *do you still write* (i.e. *to each other*)?

The reflexive verb with reciprocal force can even, in certain instances, be used with a singular subject, usually in combination with **mit**, e.g. **er duzt sich mit ihr** *he is on first-name terms with her* (cf. **sie duzen sich** *they are on first-name terms*).

An alternative to the reciprocal reflexives **uns/euch/sich** in both the accusative and the dative is **einander**, which is invariable. It is, however, restricted to more elevated style—except after a preposition, when only **einander** is possible; the preposition and **einander** join to form one word (with the stress remaining on the second syllable of **einander**), e.g. **wir tanzten miteinander** *we danced with one another*, **seid nett zueinander!** *be nice to one another!*

In cases where the reflexive pronoun might be ambiguous—e.g. **sie trösteten sich** *they comforted themselves/each other*—reciprocal **uns/euch/sich** may be reinforced by **gegenseitig** (literally *mutually*): **sie trösteten sich gegenseitig**.

IMPERSONAL VERBS AND CONSTRUCTIONS

A number of German verbs are used impersonally (i.e. in the 3rd person singular with the impersonal pronoun **es**), some of which have impersonal equivalents in English:

es regnet *it rains/is raining*

es handelt sich um . . . *it is a matter of . . . ; it is about . . . ; he/she/it is . . . , they are . . .*

Other examples have *there is . . .* in the translation:

es klopft *there is a knock at the door*

es zieht *there is a draught*

es riecht nach Gas *there is a smell of gas*

es knallte *there was a bang*

Yet other examples have a noun subject where the German sentence has **es**:

es klingelt *the doorbell is ringing*

es wimmelte von Insekten/Touristen *the place was swarming with insects/tourists*

How a person feels may also be expressed by an impersonal construction:

es ist mir (or **mir ist**) **warm/kalt** *I'm (feeling) warm/cold*

es graut mir (or **mir graut**) **vor** (+ DAT.) *I dread*

es ist mir (or **mir ist**), **als ob . . .** *I feel as if . . . ; it seems to me that . . .*

Note that **es** is omitted if it does not begin the sentence.

TRANSLATION OF 'THERE IS/ARE . . .': These are translated by **es gibt** (+ACC.), when the existence of something or someone is referred to and/or when one could logically insert *in the nature of things* in the sentence concerned:

there are spiders throughout Africa **es gibt Spinnen überall in Afrika**

are there people on Mars? **gibt es Menschen auf dem Mars?**

there wasn't much snow this winter **es gab in diesem Winter wenig Schnee**

there was nothing to eat **es gab nichts zu essen**

there's always a lot to do before Christmas **vor Weihnachten gibt es immer viel zu tun**

there are several reasons for it **es gibt mehrere Gründe dafür**

Es ist/sind, on the other hand, is concerned not with existence but with presence, namely in a specified, limited place:

there is nobody there at the moment **es ist im Augenblick niemand da**

there were many clouds in the sky **es waren viele Wolken am Himmel**

there are too many tourists in the town **es sind zu viele Touristen in der Stadt**

Es is omitted when not in initial position:

im Augenblick ist niemand da

ich nehme an (I assume), dass im Augenblick niemand da ist

There is a certain amount of overlap between the two constructions, and it is not always possible to draw hard and fast distinctions.

In many contexts other translations are used, e.g. (LOCATION: **stehen**) *there are three apple trees in the garden* **es stehen drei Apfelbäume im Garten**, (**liegen**) *there were many books on the table* **auf dem Tisch lagen viele Bücher**; (PREVALENCE: **herrschen**) *there is uncertainty as to whether . . .* **es herrscht Ungewissheit darüber, ob . . .**, *there was great excitement* **es herrschte große Aufregung**; (EXISTENCE: **bestehen**) *there is the possibility/danger that . . .* **es besteht die Möglichkeit/Gefahr, dass . . .**, *there is no reason to suppose/no doubt that . . .* **es besteht kein Grund zur Annahme / kein Zweifel, dass . . .**; (COLLECTIVE ACTIVITY: impersonal passive—see p. 81) *there was a strike* **es wurde gestreikt**, *on Fridays there was dancing* **freitags wurde getanzt**; (PHENOMENA: **es** + verb used impersonally—see above) *there is a draught* **es zieht**.

THE MODAL VERBS AND *BRAUCHEN*

The modal verbs are used, chiefly in conjunction with a dependent infinitive, to express possibility, permission, necessity, obligation, inclination, or volition. (For their conjugation see p. 75.) The relationship between the German modals and their English counterparts (*can, may*, etc.) is complicated partly by the fact that the English verbs are defective—the infinitives, for example, are lost—and by the absence from English of an equivalent to **dürfen**, and partly because their usage coincides in some respects, but differs in others.

A feature common to all German modal verbs is the use of *elliptical constructions* involving the omission of: (a) VERBS OF MOTION (**gehen, fahren, kommen**), e.g. *sie will in die Stadt / zu ihrer Mutter* **she wants to go into town / to her mother**, *muss er mit?* **must he come too?**, *ich durfte nicht zurück* **I wasn't allowed (to go) back**, *ich kann nicht weiter* **I can't go on**, *er soll nach Hause* **he is to go home**, *wo willst du hin?* **where do you want to go?** (cf. in English *the truth will out*); (b) **tun**, e.g. *ich darf es* **I'm allowed to do it**, *er kann alles* **he can do everything**, *was soll ich hier?* **what am I doing here?**, (for *ich habe es tun können/müssen*) **ich habe es gekonnt/**

gemusst *I was able/had to do it.*³² (For other ellipses specific to **können** and **sollen** see those verbs below.)

For the special word order that applies when a compound tense of a modal occurs in a subordinate clause (e.g. . . . **dass ich habe kommen können**) see p. 107, *Subordinate clauses*, exception (iii).

INDICATIVE AND SUBJUNCTIVE

The distinction between indicative and subjunctive forms is especially noteworthy in the past tense of modal verbs, where the indicative refers to a real event in the past while its subjunctive counterpart may express a possibility (usually conveyed in English by *would*):

INDICATIVE

SUBJUNCTIVE

durfte *was allowed to*

dürfte *would be allowed to*

konnte *was able to, could*

könnte *would be able to, could; might*

musste *had to; was bound to*

müsste *would have to; would be bound to*

NOTE: English *could* so to speak straddles this dividing line in that it has two senses, one relating to a past event (*was able to*), the other to a possibility (*would be able to; might*): (a) (*was able to konnte*): *how could you do this to me? wie konntest du mir das bloß antun?* (b) (*would be able to könnte*): *I could sell the piano ich könnte das Klavier verkaufen; (might könnte): it could rain tomorrow es könnte morgen regnen* (For further examples see **können** (i) and (iii), below.)

COULD HAVE, SHOULD HAVE, ETC.

An unrealized possibility, expressed in English by constructions such as *could have, should have*, is conveyed in German by the pluperfect subjunctive: **hätte . . . können, hätte . . . sollen**, etc.:

ich hätte kommen können, wenn ich genug Zeit gehabt hätte *I could have come if I'd had enough time*

du hättest daran denken sollen, bevor du Mitglied wurdest *you should have thought of that before you joined*

The other forms are **hätte . . . dürfen** *would have been allowed to*, **hätte . . . mögen** *would have liked to*, **hätte . . . müssen** (1) *would have had to / been bound to*, (2) *ought to / should have*, **hätte . . . wollen** *would have wanted to*; for examples see the verbs concerned below.

All these constructions carry the implication . . . *but did not*. (Contrast the following two translations of *he could have written it*: **er hätte es schreiben können** (*but did not*), **er könnte es geschrieben haben** (*he might have done, and quite possibly did*)).

³² Cf. Martin Luther's defiant **Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders** *Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise* (spoken at the Diet of Worms, 1521).

Elliptical constructions from which an infinitive is omitted (see above) also occur, e.g. **ich hätte sonst nach Hause gemusst** (for **gehen müssen**) *I would otherwise have had to go home*, **er hätte es nicht gekonnt** (for **tun können**) *he wouldn't have been able to do it*.

DÜRFEN PERMISSION

(i) *to be allowed to, (I etc.) may:*

darf ich rauchen? *may I smoke?*

das Mädchen durfte erst abends fernsehen *the girl wasn't allowed to watch TV till the evening*

wir dürften am nächsten Tag das Land verlassen *we would be allowed to leave the country the next day*

sie haben die Moschee nicht besuchen dürfen *they weren't allowed to visit the mosque*

das hättest du nicht erklären dürfen *you wouldn't have been allowed to explain that*

This verb also occurs in various polite utterances, e.g. **ich darf Sie im Namen der Stadt begrüßen** *may I welcome you on behalf of the town*, **was darf es sein?** (asked by shop assistant) *can I help you?*, (by a waiter or waitress) *what will you have?*, **darf es etwas in Seide sein?** *may I show you something in silk?* (cf. in a formal letter **wir dürfen Ihnen mitteilen, dass . . .** *we have pleasure in informing you that . . .*); and in remarks such as **ich darf Sie daran erinnern/darauf hinweisen, dass . . .** *may I remind you/point out that . . .*

In negative use: (prohibition) e.g. **Ärzte dürfen hier nicht rauchen** *doctors are not allowed to smoke here*. Commonly (*I etc.*) *must not* is the English equivalent, e.g. **du darfst die Kinder nicht allein lassen** *you mustn't leave the children on their own*, **das darf man nicht laut sagen** *one mustn't say that out loud*.

(ii) *to have reason to, (I etc.) can:*

du darfst stolz auf ihn sein *you can be proud of him*

wenn man es ein Haus nennen darf *if one can call it a house*

man darf annehmen, dass . . . *one can assume that . . .*

das dürfen Sie mir ruhig glauben *you can take my word for it*

(iii) PROBABILITY (past subjunctive) **dürfte** *should, ought to:*

es dürfte einfach sein, ihren neuen Roman ins Deutsche zu übersetzen *it should be easy to translate her new novel into German*

Sometimes *probably* catches the flavour:

das dürfte stimmen *that's probably true*

The past subjunctive may also express a polite request:

dürfte ich dieses Buch mitnehmen? *may I take this book with me?*

dürfte ich Sie um Feuer bitten? *could I trouble you for a light?*

(iv) **hätte nicht ... dürfen** *should not have, ought not to have*, e.g. **das hättest du nicht schreiben dürfen** *you shouldn't have written that*.

Bedürfen (+GEN.) *to need* is conjugated like **dürfen**.

KÖNNEN ABILITY, POSSIBILITY

(i) *to be able to, (I etc.) can; to manage to:*

ich kann Auto fahren *I can drive*, **kannst du mir helfen?** *can you help me?*, **wie kann er so etwas sagen?** *how can he say such a thing?*

wir konnten nachts nicht schlafen *we couldn't sleep at night*, **wie konnte ich nur so dumm sein!** *how could I be so stupid!*, **von unseren Springreitern konnte nur einer eine Medaille gewinnen** *only one of our show-jumpers managed to win a medal*

ich könnte Sie am Bahnhof abholen *I could meet you at the station*, **könntest du mir einen Gefallen tun?** *could you do me a favour?*

er hat sie nie vergessen können *he's never been able to forget her*

ich hätte kommen können, wenn ich genug Zeit gehabt hätte *I could have come if I'd had enough time*

(For the distinction between **konnte** and **könnte** see p. 94, *Indicative and subjunctive*.)

May be used with verbs of perception in the sense *to be able to stand*:

sie kann kein Blut riechen/sehen *she can't stand the smell/sight of blood*

ich kann das nicht mehr hören! *I can't bear to hear that any longer!*

Also used with a direct object with reference to a skill:

Ute kann (gut) Englisch *Ute can speak (good) English*

Erich kann dieses Gedicht auswendig *Erich knows this poem by heart*

The passive construction is very common in the past tense, e.g. (*it was possible to . . .*) **mit dem neuen Ventilator konnte eine gute Wärmeverteilung garantiert werden** *with the new fan it was possible to guarantee a good distribution of heat*, (*. . . managed to . . .*) **der Verbrecher konnte schnell gefasst werden** / **von der Polizei gefasst werden** *they / the police soon managed to catch the criminal*; cf. **das will gekonnt sein** *you have to have the knack*.

(ii) PERMISSION, SANCTION, ETC. (*I etc.) can:*

kann ich nach Hause gehen? *can I go home?*

meinetwegen können sie zu Ostern kommen *as far as I'm concerned they can come at Easter*

das kannst du unmöglich tragen! *you can't possibly wear that!*

(iii) POSSIBILITY (*I etc.) may:*

das kann sein *that may be*, **ich kann mich irren** *I may be wrong*, **der Arzt**

kann jeden Augenblick kommen *the doctor may come any moment*,

sie kann es getan haben *she may have done it*, **das Paket kann**

verloren gegangen sein *the parcel may have got lost*; cf. **man kann nie wissen** *you never know, you never can tell*
es könnte durchaus stimmen *it could well be true*, **du könntest recht haben** *you could be right*, **er könnte krank / in Lissabon sein** *he could be ill / in Lisbon*, **sie könnte mich gesehen haben** *she could have seen me*, **es könnten hundert gewesen sein** *it could have been a hundred* (see also p. 94, *Could have, should have, etc.*)

(iv) POTENTIAL (I etc.) *can*:

sie kann sehr freundlich sein *she can be very friendly*
die Winter können dort sehr kalt sein *the winters can be very cold there*
das kann jedem passieren *that can happen to anyone*

MÖGEN INCLINATION; POSSIBILITY

(i) *to like* (often reinforced by **gern**; the commonest sense—used most frequently in the past subjunctive **möchte** *would like*):

(a) with noun or pronoun object:

ich mag seine Schwiegermutter *I like his mother-in-law*, **magst du Kaffee?** *do you like coffee?*, **sie mag kein Bier** *she doesn't like beer*

wir mochten ihn alle gern *we all liked him*

ich möchte noch etwas Wein *I'd like some more wine*, **er möchte nicht, dass sein Angebot missverstanden wird** *he wouldn't like his offer to be misunderstood*

ich habe diesen Tizian nie gemocht *I've never liked this Titian*

(b) with an infinitive (often in negative use):

ich mag keinen Knoblauch essen *I don't like to eat garlic*

sie mochte es ihm nicht sagen *she didn't like to tell him*

ich möchte am liebsten nach Spanien fahren *I'd like most of all to go to Spain*, (in weakened sense) **man möchte meinen, er sei der Chef** *you'd think he was the boss*

er hatte nicht fragen mögen *he hadn't liked to ask*

das hätte ich hören mögen *I'd have liked to hear that*

(ii) SUPPOSITION (chiefly in literary style) (I etc.) *may*:

(in general use) **(das) mag sein** *that may be so*

das Stück mag schon vor dem Krieg entstanden sein *the play may have been written before the war*

diese Romane mochten an Intellektuelle gerichtet sein *these novels may have been aimed at intellectuals*

In questions, *can* (I etc.):

was mag der Verfasser damit gemeint haben? *what can the author have meant by that?*

was mochte sie dazu bewogen haben, so zu handeln? *what could have induced her to act like that?*

Estimating, (I etc.) *would*:

sie mag/mochte zehn Jahre alt sein *she would be/have been about ten years old*

es mochte 3 Uhr gewesen sein, als die Polizei erschien *it would have been about 3 o'clock when the police appeared*

(iii) CONCESSIVE USE (I etc.) *may*:

was ich auch tun mag *whatever I may do*

However . . . ; . . . though . . . :

die schwarzen Polizisten mochten auf ihren Pfeifen trillern, soviel sie wollten . . . *however much the black policemen blew their whistles . . .*

mochte ich mich hierin auch geirrt haben . . . *mistaken though I may have been about this . . .*

(iv) WISH, REQUEST

In formal German the present subjunctive **möge** may express a wish, *may . . . , let . . .*:

möge es ihm gelingen! *may he succeed!*

das möge dir zur Warnung dienen *let that be a warning to you*, **das mögen andere beurteilen** *let others be the judge of that*

In subordinate clauses (. . . **möge** . . . or past subjunctive . . . **möchte** . . .) a request may be expressed:

sagen Sie ihm, er möge/möchte sofort kommen *ask him to come at once*

Vermögen (literary) *to be able to* is conjugated like **mögen**.

MÜSSEN OBLIGATION, NECESSITY

(i) *to have to*, (I etc.) *must*, NECESSITY also *to need*:

sie muss den Aufsatz bis Freitag abgeben *she has to hand in the essay by Friday*, **ich muss unbedingt einen Dolmetscher holen** *I really must fetch an interpreter*, **man muss sich nur sein Bild ansehen** *one has only to / need only look at his picture*, **das muss nachgestellt / gestrichen / gut überlegt werden** *that needs adjusting / a coat of paint / careful consideration*

nach dem Anschluss mussten Wiener Fußballer für Deutschland spielen *after the Anschluss Viennese footballers had to play for Germany*, **musste es soweit kommen?** *did it have to come to that?*

er müsste sich einen neuen Job suchen *he'd have to look for a new job*
die Russen haben sehr lange warten müssen *the Russians have had to wait a very long time*

ich hätte unter diesen Umständen ein neues Thema wählen müssen *under these circumstances I'd have had to choose a new topic*

NOTE: When used with a negative, **müssen** retains the sense of compulsion (contrast English *must not*, which indicates a prohibition and has to be translated by **nicht dürfen**, e.g. *I mustn't read it* **ich darf es nicht lesen**):³³

das muss nicht der Fall sein *that doesn't have to / needn't be the case,*
man muss kein Sozialdemokrat sein, um diese Politik zu verstehen
you don't have to / needn't be a Social Democrat to understand this policy

sie musste es nicht tun / hat es nicht tun müssen *she didn't have/need to do it*

(ii) INEVITABILITY *to be bound to*:

das muss er ja sagen *he's bound to say that*

früher oder später musste es so kommen *sooner or later it was bound to happen,*
acht Briefe, die ihre Mitschuld an der Ermordung Darnleys erweisen mussten *eight letters which were bound to prove her complicity in Darnley's murder*

eine solche Ausstellung müsste großes Aufsehen erregen *an exhibition like that would be bound to cause a great stir*

seine Wiederwahl hätte zu einer wirtschaftlichen Krise führen müssen
his re-election would have been bound to lead to an economic crisis

(iii) LOGICAL DEDUCTION (*I etc.*) *must*:

sie muss schon sehr krank sein, wenn ihre Mutter ein Telegramm schickt *she must be very ill for her mother to send a telegram*

das Flugzeug muss auf Zypern gelandet sein *the aircraft must have landed in Cyprus,*
Kolumbus muss Nordamerika entdeckt haben *Columbus must have discovered North America*

das Flugzeug musste im Dschungel abgestürzt sein *the aircraft must have crashed in the jungle* (in narrative; **musste** because the assumption was made in the past)

(iv) INNER COMPULSION *to have to, (I etc.) cannot help -ing*:

ich muss immer daran denken, wenn sie diese Melodie spielen *I can't help thinking of it whenever they play this tune*

wir mussten lachen *we had to laugh/couldn't help laughing*

(v) EMOTIVE USE *to have to, (I etc.) would (have to)*:

gerade an meinem Geburtstag muss es natürlich regnen *of course it would (have to) rain on my birthday,*
warum musste das ausgerechnet mir passieren? *why did it have to happen to me of all people?*

(He etc.) *will*:

er muss ständig dazwischenreden *he will keep interrupting*

³³ In North German usage, however, the 2nd person may be used like English *must not*, e.g. **du musst nicht traurig sein** *you mustn't be sad*.

(vi) **müsste, hätte . . . müssen**: The past and pluperfect subjunctive may also signify *ought to*, *should* and *ought to/should have* respectively:

sie müssten heute in London sein *they ought to be in London today*, **es müsste doch möglich sein** *it ought to be possible*, **Gerlinde ist hübsch, nur sie müsste schlanker sein** *Gerlinde is pretty, only she ought to be slimmer*

sie hätte Lehrerin werden müssen *she ought to have been a teacher*

The meaning of these subjunctive forms is not identical with that of **sollte** and **hätte . . . sollen** (although they share the same translations with them). **Müsste** and **hätte . . . müssen** do not carry the implication of an obligation that characterizes the latter; rather, they refer to what may be reasonably thought or assumed in the circumstances.

Müsste also expresses wishful thinking:

reich müsste man sein! *wouldn't it be nice to be rich!*

hier müsste man wohnen! *this is the place to live!*

so müsste das Wetter den ganzen Sommer lang bleiben! *the weather should stay like this right through the summer!*

SOLLEN OBLIGATION, INTENTION, REPORT

(i) *to be to*; *to be supposed to*:

ich soll um 4 Uhr dort sein *I'm (supposed) to be there at 4 o'clock*, **die Soldaten sollen das Land verteidigen** *the soldiers are supposed to defend the country*, **was soll man darunter verstehen?** *what is one (supposed) to understand by that?*

wir sollten das Buch lesen / haben das Buch lesen sollen *we were (supposed) to read the book*, **was sollte ich machen?** *what was I (supposed) to do?*, **wie sollte er das wissen?** *how was he (supposed) to / could he know that?*

NOTE: English usage differs from German in saying e.g. *I don't know what to do*, *she didn't know who(m) to ask* = **ich weiß nicht, was ich tun soll**, **sie wusste nicht, wen sie fragen sollte**.

In 1st-person questions *shall* is sometimes used, e.g. **soll ich mitkommen?** *shall I come too?*, **was soll ich ihm sagen?** *what shall I tell him?*, (making a suggestion) **sollen wir nach Hause gehen?** *shall we go home?*

When the emphasis is on the fact that it is someone's wish—often that of the speaker or writer—that is involved, the English translation is usually . . . *want(s)* (someone or something) *to* . . . :

sie soll sich hier wie zu Hause fühlen *I/we want her to feel at home here*

meine Bücher sollen preiswert sein *I want my books to be good value for money*

ich soll das alles heute nachmittag tippen? *you want / he wants etc. me to type all that this afternoon?*

Sollen often expresses an instruction, e.g. **er soll sofort nach Hause kommen** *he's to come home at once*, **du sollst nicht stehlen** etc. (Bible) *thou shalt not steal* etc. **Man soll . . .** *one should . . .* may occur in exhortations instead of **man sollte . . .**, e.g. **man soll immer die Wahrheit sagen** *one should always tell the truth*.

A note of warning or challenge (*let . . .*) is sounded in e.g. **das soll dir eine Warnung sein** *let that be a warning to you*, **das sollen sie nur versuchen!** *just let them try!*

(ii) WHAT IS INTENDED *to be to; to be supposed to; to be intended/meant to:*

ein neues Krankenhaus soll hier gebaut werden *a new hospital is to be built here*, **die Gesamtschulen in Großbritannien sollen der jungen Generation die Möglichkeit bieten, eine auf individuelle Fähigkeiten abgestimmte Ausbildung zu erhalten** *Britain's comprehensive schools are intended to offer the younger generation the opportunity of receiving an education geared to pupils' individual abilities*

diese Figuren sollten lebenslustige Schäferinnen darstellen *these figures were supposed to represent shepherdesses full of the joys of life*, **sein letztes Werk sollte eine Warnung vor dieser Ideologie sein** *his last work was intended to be / intended as a warning against this ideology*

Compare also the promise **es soll nicht wieder vorkommen** *it won't happen again*.

Elliptical use: **Was soll . . . ?** *what's the point of . . . ?*, e.g. **was soll das ganze Geld?** *what's the point of all this money?*

(iii) REPORT, RUMOUR *to be said/reported to:*

jeder zweite Deutsche soll Übergewicht haben *every second German is said to be overweight*, **Renate soll zuviel getrunken haben / sehr intelligent gewesen sein** *Renate is said to have drunk too much / been very intelligent*

(iv) OBLIGATION (past and pluperfect subjunctive) **sollte** *ought to, should*, **hätte** *ought to/should have*:

du solltest dich schämen *you ought to be ashamed of yourself*, **wir sollten einfach weggehen** *we should just go away*

er hätte früher daran denken sollen *he should have thought of that earlier*

(v) WHAT IS DESTINED TO HAPPEN (past indicative) **sollte** *was (destined) to, would*:

kurz danach sollte er den Thron besteigen *soon afterwards he was to ascend the throne*

sie sollte Polen nie wiedersehen *she would never again see Poland*

Compare also **es hat so/nicht sein sollen** *it was meant/not to be*.

(vi) POSSIBILITY (past subjunctive) **sollte . . . ?** *could . . . ?*:

sollte er recht haben? *could he be right?*, **sollte ich das wirklich vergessen haben?** *could I really have forgotten that?*

(vii) **CONDITIONAL** (past subjunctive) **sollte** *should, were to*:

wenn es schneien sollte, (dann) bleiben wir zu Hause *if it should/were to snow we'll stay at home*

solltest du meine Hilfe brauchen *should you need/if you should need my help*

(viii) **IN IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS** **sollte** *would, should*:

man sollte glauben/meinen, dass . . . *you would think that . . .*, **es sollte mich wundern, wenn . . .** *I should be surprised if . . .*

WOLLEN VOLITION

(i) *to want to*:

ich will Arzt werden *I want to be a doctor*

er wollte den Grund nicht wissen/hat den Grund nicht wissen wollen *he didn't want to know the reason*

sie hatte nicht lange bleiben wollen *she hadn't wanted to stay long*

das hätte er bestimmt als Ausrede benutzen wollen *I'm sure he would have wanted to use that as an excuse*

If the emphasis is on someone's willingness to do something, **will** (past **would**) is usual, e.g. **willst du mir helfen?** *will you help me?*, **sie will nicht unterschreiben** *she won't sign*, **er wollte es nicht zugeben** *he wouldn't admit it*. In negative use **wollen** may also occur with an inanimate subject, e.g. **die Tür will nicht zugehen** *the door won't shut*, **die Wunde wollte nicht heilen** *the wound wouldn't heal*, **der Motor wollte nicht anspringen** *the engine wouldn't/refused to start*. (Compare also **es will mir nicht eingehen, dass . . .** *I can't grasp the fact that . . .*, **die Arbeit will mir heute nicht schmecken** *I don't feel like work today*, **der Film wollte kein Ende nehmen** *the film went on for ever*, **nicht enden wollender Beifall** *unending applause*.)

Wollen is often used with a direct object: *to want*:

willst du Kartoffelpüree? *do you want mashed potatoes?*

sie wollten keine Kinder *they didn't want any children*

ich habe doch nur dein Bestes gewollt *I only wanted what was best for you*

(with **dass**-clause) **ich will, dass sie mitkommt** *I want her to come with us*

To like in e.g. **wenn du willst** *if you like*, **ganz wie du willst** *just as you like*.

Ich wollte (past subjunctive) expresses a wish, e.g. **ich wollte, ich hätte mehr Zeit** *I wish I had more time*.

(ii) **SUGGESTION OR REQUEST** (a) **wollen wir . . . ?** *shall we . . . ?*, e.g. **wollen wir gehen?** *shall we go?*; **wir wollen . . .** *let's . . .*, e.g. **komm, wir wollen es noch einmal versuchen!** *come on, let's try again!*, **wir wollen uns doch nichts vormachen** *let's not kid ourselves*; (b) **wollen Sie bitte . . .** *will/would you please . . .*, e.g. **wollen Sie bitte Platz nehmen** *will you please take a seat*, **wollen Sie bitte so freundlich sein und mir den Weg zeigen**

would you please be so kind as to show me the way (a different tone is heard in **willst du / wollt ihr wohl ruhig sein! will you be quiet!**).

(iii) INTENTION (I etc.) **will, to be going to, to plan to:**

ich will sie morgen früh anrufen I'll ring her tomorrow morning, **wie willst du ihm das erklären?** how will you / how are you going to explain that to him?, **wir wollen im Sommer nach Teneriffa segeln** we plan to sail to Tenerife in the summer

sie wollte mich ursprünglich nächsten Freitag besuchen she was originally going to visit me next Friday

(iv) IMMINENT ACTION **to be about to, to be going to:**

wir wollten gerade einkaufen gehen, als Karls Onkel auftauchte we were just about to go shopping when Karl's uncle turned up

die Sonne wollte eben untergehen the sun was just about to go down, **es sieht aus, als wollte es regnen** it looks as if it's going to rain

(v) **to be intended/meant to:**

seine Bilder wollen die rätselhafte Beschaffenheit des Menschen dokumentieren his pictures are intended to record man's enigmatic nature

die Sendung wollte vor den Gefahren des Massentourismus warnen the programme was meant to alert us to the dangers of mass tourism

(vi) NECESSITY: . . . **will + past participle + sein**³⁴ (a) . . . **must/has to be + past participle**, e.g. **Geld will erst mal verdient sein, ehe man es ausgibt** money must first be earned before you spend it; (b) . . . **needs + gerund**, e.g. **diese Entscheidung will überlegt sein** this decision needs thinking about.

(vii) **to claim:**

sie will Visagistin sein she claims to be a make-up artist

er will seine Frau 1939 kennen gelernt haben he claims to have met his wife in 1939, **sie will zur Party eingeladen worden sein** she claims to have been invited to the party

Compare the idioms **ich will nichts gehört/gesehen haben** I didn't hear/see a thing (i.e. pretending that I didn't), **keiner/niemand will es gewesen sein** no-one wants to admit it was him.

(viii) CONCESSIVE (present subjunctive) **wolle in komme, was da wolle** come what may, **koste es, was es wolle** cost what it may.

(ix) CONDITIONAL (past subjunctive) **wollte = were to:**

wenn man alles glauben wollte, was der Minister sagt if one were to believe everything the minister says

³⁴ Regarding this use of **sein** with passive force see p. 79, footnote 30.

es wäre tragisch, wollte man die Rechte dieses Stammes außer Acht lassen *it would be tragic if the rights of this tribe were to be disregarded*

(X) IN IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS: **das will ich hoffen/meinen!** *I should hope/think so!*, **das will ich dir gern glauben** *I quite believe it.*

The quasi-modal **BRAUCHEN** *to need (to)*

This verb, although not itself a modal verb, is included here since it resembles such verbs in several ways: (a) The past participle formed with **ge-** (**gebraucht**) is replaced by the infinitive form when a dependent infinitive precedes, e.g. **sie hätte nicht zu kommen brauchen** *she needn't have come*. (b) In subordinate clauses an auxiliary verb precedes a dependent infinitive, e.g. **wenn sie nicht hätte zu kommen brauchen** *if she hadn't needed to come* (see p. 107, *Subordinate clauses* (iii)). (c) While the infinitive is preceded by **zu** in established usage (e.g. **niemand braucht es zu wissen** *nobody need know*, **du brauchst nur seinen Namen zu sagen** *you need only say his name*), **zu** is omitted colloquially by some speakers—a construction that is widely regarded as unacceptable. (d) Finally, although in standard usage the past subjunctive is, as with all other weak verbs, identical with the indicative form (**brauchte**), a second, distinctively subjunctive form **bräuchte** has evolved in southern German.

Its use as an auxiliary is limited to constructions with a negative or **nur**; otherwise **müssen** is used. Examples:

I need to do it **ich muss es tun**

it needed to be done **es musste getan werden**

I don't need to do it **ich brauche es nicht zu tun**

it didn't need to be done **es brauchte nicht getan zu werden**

Like the true modals, **brauchen** may also be used elliptically, e.g. **ich brauche heute nicht in die Stadt** *I don't need to go into town today.*

Word Order

MAIN CLAUSES

In a main clause (except in the case of a question or command) the finite verb forms the *second element* in the sentence. It may, as usually in English, follow the subject, e.g. **der Mann reitet auf dem Pferd** *the man is riding the horse*; but it may also follow another element, in which case the subject comes after the finite verb, as happens in English in cases like *no sooner was she . . . , only later did they . . .*—this is known as *inversion*.

Examples:

(finite verb follows adverb) **gestern habe ich im Garten gearbeitet** *yesterday I worked in the garden*

(finite verb follows complement) **ein Experte ist er nicht, aber . . .** *he's no expert, but . . .*

(finite verb follows object) **dieses Wort kenne ich nicht** *I don't know this word*

(finite verb follows appositional phrase) **Däne von Geburt, lebt er jetzt auf Kreta** *a Dane by birth, he now lives in Crete*

(finite verb follows past participle: i) **viele haben diesen Roman gelesen, verstanden haben ihn nur wenige** *many people have read this novel, but few have understood it*

(finite verb follows past participle: ii) **sie forderten, dass die Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands aufgegeben werden solle; begründet wurde diese Forderung mit dem Argument, dass . . .** *they demanded that the reunification of Germany should be abandoned, basing their demand on the argument that . . .*

(finite verb follows infinitive) **„Setzen wir Deutschland, sozusagen, in den Sattel! Reiten wird es schon können“** (Bismarck, 1867) *'Let us put Germany, so to speak, in the saddle! She'll be able to ride all right'*

(finite verb follows subordinate clause) **weil es heute so warm ist, können wir draußen essen** *because it's so warm today we can eat outdoors*

Inverted word-order is often used (as in the second example above) to emphasize the word or phrase placed before the verb, and may serve to underline a contrast (fifth example); not all inversion, however, is emphatic (see e.g. the first and last examples). Inverted order may also establish a link with the preceding sentence or clause (sixth example).

Exceptionally, inversion does not occur in main clauses following a *concessive clause* beginning with the equivalent of *whatever, whoever, however*, etc.:

was (immer) du auch sagst, ich halte an meiner Meinung fest *whatever you say, I'm sticking to my opinion*

The verb precedes the subject in the *imperative* (**Sie** form) and *direct questions* (unless the subject is an interrogative pronoun):

stehen Sie auf! *get up!*

warum hast du es getan? *why did you do it?*

Similarly in the 1st person plural present subjunctive used in exhortations:

gehen wir nach Hause! *let's go home*

Inverted order occurs in some *exclamations*:

hab ich's mir doch gedacht! *I thought as much!*

war das eine Hetze! *what a rush that was!*

hat die aber Glück gehabt! *was she lucky!*

wären wir doch in Leipzig geblieben! *if only we'd stayed in Leipzig!*

While it is quite usual for an English sentence to begin with two adverbs (or adverbial phrases), in German the position of the finite verb as the second element rules out such a word order, and in an equivalent German sentence the verb stands *between* the adverbs, e.g. *two weeks ago, under similar circumstances, she would not have hesitated to do it* **vor zwei Wochen hätte sie unter ähnlichen Umständen nicht gezögert es zu tun.** (Compare, however, *on the right, next to the piano, stood the two American ladies* **rechts, neben dem Klavier, standen die beiden amerikanischen Damen:** adverbs of the same type, which effectively form a unit, are not separated.)

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

In a subordinate clause the finite verb *goes to the end*:

wir wussten, dass sie nicht kommen konnten *we knew that they couldn't come*

ich fragte, wann er angekommen sei *I asked when he had arrived*

das Mädchen, das eine blaue Bluse anhatte *the girl (who was) wearing a blue blouse*

sobald ich die Grenze erreichte *as soon as I reached the border*

Exceptions to this rule:

(i) After the conjunction **denn** the word order is that of a main clause, e.g. **sie gingen langsam, denn es war sehr heiß in der Wüste** *they walked slowly, it being very hot in the desert.*

(ii) When the conjunction **dass** is omitted after **sagen, glauben**, etc., the word order is that of a main clause, e.g. **er sagte, er habe von dieser Grammatik kein Wort verstanden** *he said he hadn't understood a word of this grammar.*

(iii) The auxiliary **haben** precedes the dependent infinitive in constructions with modal verbs (or other verbs having a second past participle identical with the infinitive), e.g. **wenn ich das hätte aussprechen können** *if I'd been able to pronounce that*, **sie beklagte sich, dass sie die Insel nicht habe besuchen dürfen** *she complained that she hadn't been allowed to visit the island*. The auxiliary **werden** likewise precedes the dependent infinitive in constructions with modal verbs, e.g. **es stellte sich heraus, dass ich den Laden würde behalten können** *it turned out that I would be able to keep the shop*.

(iv) Inversion occurs:

(a) when in a conditional clause **wenn** *if* + verb at the end of the clause is replaced by inversion of subject and verb, e.g. **kommt der Pianist nicht, dann kann das Konzert nicht stattfinden** *if the pianist doesn't come the concert can't take place*, **wäre ich sofort aufgestanden, hätte ich den Zug noch erreicht** *if I'd (had I) got up immediately I would have caught the train*.

(b) when **als** is used in the sense of *as if*, e.g. **es sieht aus, als würde es bald regnen** *it looks as if it'll rain soon*.

(c) (in literary style) when used with **doch** to convey causal force, e.g. **das Dorf ist sehr ruhig, liegt es doch abseits der Hauptverkehrsstraßen** *the village is very quiet, situated as it is away from the main roads*.

If two (or more) clauses have compound tenses with the same auxiliary, the latter is 'held over' until the end of the second (last) clause, e.g. **nachdem ich gebadet und mein Haar gewaschen hatte, machte ich mir ein Omelett** *after I'd had a bath and washed my hair I made myself an omelette*.

It follows from the rule regarding the position of the verb in a subordinate clause that when *one subordinate clause is enclosed within another* the verb goes to the end in both clauses, e.g. **er wusste, dass sich das junge Paar, das sehr wenig Geld hatte, die neue Sitzgarnitur nicht leisten konnte** *he knew that the young couple, who had very little money, could not afford the new suite*.

INFINITIVES, PAST PARTICIPLES, AND SEPARABLE PREFIXES

Infinitives, past participles, and separable prefixes go to the end of a main clause:

(infinitive) **Indonesien wird auf seinen Anspruch nicht verzichten**
Indonesia will not give up her claim

(past participle) **wir haben viel Geld verloren** *we've lost a lot of money*
(separable prefix) **der Schäferhund hielt die Herde zusammen** *the sheepdog kept the flock together*

(An infinitive follows a past participle, e.g. **die Räder müssen ausgewuchtet werden** *the wheels need balancing*.)

This rule, helpful though it is as a general guideline for the student of German, is not rigidly observed in that:

- (i) one or more prepositional phrases sometimes follow such words:

er wird sich bestimmt entschuldigen für seinen Fehler *he's sure to apologize for his mistake*

dieses Auto wird gern gekauft wegen der geringen Unterhaltungskosten *this car sells well because of its low maintenance costs*

wir schalten um nach München (TV announcement) *we're going over to Munich*

This phenomenon is particularly common in the spoken language, but may also be encountered in written German. It is a question of style whether one writes e.g. **ein Film, in dem scharfe Kritik am Leben der oberen Zehntausend Roms geübt wird** *a film in which the life of Rome's high society is sharply criticized* or . . . **in dem scharfe Kritik geübt wird am Leben der oberen Zehntausend Roms.**

- (ii) phrases of comparison introduced by **als** *than* and **wie** *as, like* follow them:

sie hätte keinen besseren Begleiter haben können als diesen schneidigen jungen Flieger *she could have had no better escort than this dashing young aviator*

man muss den Kopf drehen wie ein Flamingo *you have to turn your head like a flamingo*

Note that when a subordinate clause follows a main clause containing an infinitive, past participle, or separable prefix as final element, the latter separates the subordinate clause from the word it refers back to:

all das war in einer Nation entstanden, die . . . *all this had come into being in a nation which . . .*

er sprach die Hoffnung aus, dass . . . *he expressed the hope that . . .*

In a subordinate clause infinitives and past participles occupy the penultimate position, immediately before the finite verb (e.g.—to return to the examples given under *Subordinate clauses* above—**. . . dass sie nicht kommen konnten, . . . wann er angekommen sei**); separable prefixes are compounded with the verb (e.g. **. . . das eine blaue Bluse anhatte**).

COMPLEMENTS

Complements—both nouns and adjectives—come last:

er ist seit vielen Jahren Dirigent *he's been a conductor for many years*

sie ist nach meiner Meinung eine bewundernswerte Frau *she's an admirable woman in my opinion*

Pferde sind in der Regel gehorsam *horses are obedient as a rule*

die Tage sind im Winter kurz *the days are short in winter*

POSITION AND ORDER OF OBJECTS AND ADVERBS

(i) POSITION OF THE PRONOUN OBJECT (INCLUDING REFLEXIVE PRONOUN):

(a) In a main clause with the subject first, it comes immediately after the finite verb:

man hat es in Sambia entdeckt *it was discovered in Zambia*

der Werbespot rentiert sich nicht mehr *the commercial no longer pays*

(b) In a subordinate clause or when there is inversion in the main clause, it generally precedes the subject if the latter is a noun (or indefinite pronoun such as **jemand, nichts**) but always follows if it is a personal pronoun:

da mir der Zollbeamte (but **da er mir**) **den Pass wegnehmen wollte**
as the customs officer (he) wanted to take away my passport

letztes Jahr hat ihn ein Hund (but **hat er ihn**) **gebissen** *last year a dog (it) bit him*

plötzlich öffnete sich sein Fallschirm (but **öffnete er sich**) *suddenly his parachute (it) opened*

kann sich ein Rentner (but **kann er sich**) **so ein großes Haus leisten?**
*can a pensioner (he) afford such a big house?*³⁵

(ii) DIRECT AND INDIRECT OBJECTS OF THE VERB:

(a) two nouns: dative precedes accusative:

er gab dem Jungen ein Spielzeug *he gave the boy a toy*

die Prinzessin gewährte der Presse ein weiteres Interview *the princess granted the press another interview*

A dative object denoting a thing normally follows an accusative object denoting a person, e.g. **sie überließ ihren Partner seinem Schicksal** *she left her partner to his fate.*

(b) two pronouns: accusative precedes dative:

er gab es ihm *he gave it to him*

(c) pronoun precedes noun:

er gab es dem Jungen *he gave it to the boy*

er gab ihm ein Spielzeug *he gave him a toy*

(iii) ADVERBS AND ADVERBIAL PHRASES: The usual order is Time–Manner–Place (although this is not rigidly applied and variations may occur for the sake of emphasis):

sie sind gestern (T) mit dem Bus (M) nach Zürich (P) gefahren *they went by bus to Zurich yesterday*

Where there are two or more adverbs (or adverbial phrases) of time the more general precedes the more specific, e.g. **sie kommt jeden Abend um 8 nach Hause** *she comes home at 8 every evening.*

³⁵ It is not uncommon, however, for the pronoun object (including the reflexive pronoun) to follow the noun subject, e.g. **da der Zollbeamte mir den Pass wegnehmen wollte.**

Numerous adverbial phrases are used in conjunction with a verb to form a set phrase of the type **in Betracht ziehen** *to take into account*. (Other examples are **in Frage** (or **infrage**) **stellen** *to call in question*, **zur Folge haben** *to lead to*, **zu Stande** (or **zustande**) **bringen** *to bring about, achieve*.) They may be compared to separable prefixes, occupying the same position in the sentence as the latter (e.g. **hinzu kam, dass der Vulkanausbruch in ganz Europa Wetterveränderungen zur Folge hatte** *added to which the eruption of the volcano led to changes in the weather throughout Europe*).

(iv) **ADVERBS AND NOUN OBJECTS**: When both an adverb (or adverbial phrase) and a direct noun object are present, the former generally precedes the latter:

wir erwarten seit fünf Monaten eine Gehaltserhöhung *we've been expecting a salary increase for five months*

Amnesty International erhielt 1977 den Friedensnobelpreis *Amnesty International received the Nobel peace prize in 1977*

Emphasis may, however, reverse this order, e.g. (with the time stressed) **wir erwarten eine Gehaltserhöhung seit fünf Monaten**.

(v) **POSITION OF nicht** *not*:

(a) **Nicht** is normally placed after an object (but before an infinitive, past participle, or separable prefix) when it negates an entire sentence or clause:

wir brauchen seine Hilfe nicht *we don't need his help*

ich habe es nicht gesehen *I haven't seen it*

sag das nicht! *don't say that!*

warum liest du das Buch nicht? *why don't you read the book?*

But it precedes a complement:

diese Bemerkung war nicht sehr freundlich *that remark was not very friendly*

das ist nicht meine Schuld *that's not my fault*

or a prepositional phrase:

steig nicht auf den Berg! *don't climb the mountain!*

(b) If a particular word or phrase is negated, **nicht** then precedes that word or phrase:

nicht jeder kann das *not everyone can do that*

ich habe nicht dich gemeint, sondern Jürgen *I didn't mean you, I meant Jürgen*

ich bin nicht im geringsten beleidigt *I'm not in the least offended*

(c) Common combinations (with **nicht** placed second): **auch nicht** *not . . . either*, **noch nicht** *not yet*, **gar/überhaupt nicht** *not at all*.

ADJECTIVAL AND PARTICIPIAL PHRASES (ATTRIBUTIVE)

A common feature of written German is the adjectival or participial phrase preceding the noun, e.g. **der für die Schulen zuständige Minister** *the minister responsible for schools* (literally *the for schools responsible minister*), **ein nach Kapstadt bestimmtes Schiff** *a ship bound for Cape Town* (literally *a for Cape Town bound ship*), **diese Fußball spielenden Mädchen** *these girls playing football* (literally *these football playing girls*).

This construction can be a stumbling-block for the beginner, not only because the order of words is unfamiliar but also because the article is separated (sometimes considerably) from the noun it refers to. To translate the construction it is necessary first to identify and translate the article (or similar word) and the noun it refers to, which will always follow the adjective or participle concerned:

1	4	3	2
der	[für die Schulen	zuständige]	Minister
ein	[nach Kapstadt	bestimmtes]	Schiff
diese	[Fußball	spielenden]	Mädchen

The adjective or participle (3) is then translated, and finally any words (4) that come between the article etc. and the adjective or participle.

The adjectival or participial phrase may immediately follow an adjective (plus comma), whereas in English their equivalents would be separated by the noun concerned, e.g. **auf jene sorglose, für die Jugend typische Weise** *in the carefree manner typical of the young*.

This construction may also occur where an adjective or participle functions as a noun, e.g. **der von der Polizei Gesuchte** *the man wanted by the police*, **die Hoffnungslosigkeit der politischen Asyl Suchenden** *the hopelessness of those seeking political asylum* (**politisches Asyl** = object).

Word Formation

NOUN SUFFIXES

-CHEN (pl. same), N. DIMINUTIVE suffix (making the noun neuter and usually causing the stem-vowel to be mutated where possible), e.g. **das Lämmchen** *little lamb* (**Lamm** *lamb*); nouns in **-e** and **-en** lose these endings before **-chen**, e.g. **das Schürzchen** *little apron* (**Schürze** *apron*), **das Fädchen** *little thread* (**Faden** *thread*).

-EI (with verbs ending in **-eln**, **-ern**), **-erei** (pl. **-en**), F.

1. **-ing** (ACTIVITY OR PRODUCT OF AN ACTIVITY), e.g. **die Schnitzerei** (wood-)carving (**schnitzen** *to carve*); denoting a continual or repeated activity, the suffixes often have a pejorative flavour, e.g. **die Schreiberei** (*endless*) writing (**schreiben** *to write*), **die Fragerei** (*tiresome*) questioning (**fragen** *to ask*). (The neuter prefix **Ge-** may be used in the same way, e.g. **das Gegacker** (*constant*) cackling (**gackern** *to cackle*), **das Gesinge** (*irksome*) singing (**singen** *to sing*).)

2. (**-erei** only) **-ery**, e.g. **die Bäckerei** *bakery* (**Bäcker** *baker*).

-ER (pl. same), M.

1. (from verbs). Denotes a PERSON ENGAGED IN AN ACTIVITY, e.g. **der Brauer** *brewer* (**brauen** *to brew*), or a TOOL, e.g. **der Öffner** *opener* (**öffnen** *to open*).

2. (added to place-names). Denotes an INHABITANT, e.g. **der Berliner** *Berliner*, **der Stockholmer** *inhabitant of Stockholm*.

-EREI: see **-ei**.

-HEIT, F. Denotes a QUALITY: **-ness**, **-ity**, etc., e.g. **die Faulheit** *laziness* (**faul** *lazy*), **die Gleichheit** *equality* (**gleich** *equal*). Some nouns also function as countables (pl. **-en**), e.g. **die Schönheit** *beauty* (= quality or woman).

-IN (pl. **-nen**), F. FEMININE suffix (usually with mutation of stem-vowel where possible): *female* . . . ; *woman* . . . ; **-ess**; *she-*; e.g. **die Arbeiterin** (*female*/woman) worker (**Arbeiter** *male worker*), **die Ärztin** (*woman*) doctor (**Arzt** *male doctor*), **die Französin** *Frenchwoman* (**Franzose** *Frenchman*), **die Russin** *Russian* (*woman*) (**Russe** (*male*) *Russian*), **die Gräfin** *countess* (**Graf** *earl, count*), **die Füchsin** *vixen* (**Fuchs** *fox*), **die Hündin** *bitch* (**Hund** *dog*).

-KEIT, **-igkeit**, F. Denotes a QUALITY: **-ness**, **-ity**, etc., e.g. **die Einsamkeit** *loneliness* (**einsam** *lonely*), **die Ewigkeit** *eternity* (**ewig** *eternal*), **die Hoffnungslosigkeit** *hopelessness* (**hoffnungslos** *hopeless*), **die Genauigkeit** *accuracy, precision* (**genau** *accurate, precise*). Some nouns also function as countables (pl. **-en**), e.g. **die Unzulänglichkeit** *inadequacy*.

-LEIN (pl. same), n. Chiefly poetic: DIMINUTIVE suffix making the noun neuter and causing the stem-vowel to be mutated where possible, e.g. **das Bächlein** *little stream* (**Bach** *stream*).

-LING (pl. -e), m.

1. Used (often pejoratively) to refer to INDIVIDUALS WITH A PARTICULAR QUALITY, e.g. **der Neuling** *novice* (**neu** *new*), **der Schwächling** *weakling* (**schwach** *weak*), **der Primitivling** *primitive person*.

2. Used of PERSONS UNDERGOING SOMETHING, e.g. **der Prüfling** *examinee* (**prüfen** *to examine*), **der Lehrling** *apprentice* (**lehren** *to teach*).

3. **der Zwilling** *twin*, **der Drilling** *triplet*, **der Vierling** *quadruplet*, etc.

-SCHAFT (pl. -en), f.

1. Denotes a GROUP OF PERSONS, e.g. **die Studentenschaft** *student body*.

2. Denotes a ROLE OR OFFICE: —ship etc., e.g. **die Urheberschaft** *authorship*, **die Vaterschaft** *paternity* (**Vater** *father*), **die Präsidentschaft** *presidency* (**Präsident** *president*).

-TUM, n. (except **der Irrtum** *error*, **der Reichtum** *wealth*)

1. . . . world, . . . civilization, e.g. **das Germanentum** *the Germanic world*.

2. —ism, —ry, e.g. **das Nomadentum** *nomadism*, **das Luthertum** *Lutheranism*, **das Heldentum** *heroism*, **das Rittertum** *chivalry* (**Ritter** *knight*).

3. Denotes an OFFICE, e.g. **das Papsttum** *papacy* (**Papst** *pope*).

4. Forms a COLLECTIVE NOUN, e.g. **das Beamtentum** *officialdom*, *civil servants* (**Beamte(r)** *official*, *civil servant*).

-UNG (pl. -en), f. Forms VERBAL NOUNS: —ing, —tion, etc., e.g. **die Atmung** *breathing* (**atmen** *to breathe*), **die Erklärung** *explanation* (**erklären** *to explain*).

ADJECTIVAL SUFFIXES

-ARTIG. —like, e.g. **schlangenartig** *snake-like*; of a . . . kind, e.g. **andersartig** *of a different kind*.

-BAR (added to verb stems). —able, —ible, e.g. **übersetzbar** *translatable* (**übersetzen** *to translate*), **essbar** *edible* (**essen** *to eat*).

-FÄHIG.

1. *able to*, e.g. **arbeitsfähig** *able to work*.

2. —able, —ible, e.g. **transportfähig** *transportable*; *capable of*, e.g. **entwicklungsfähig** *capable of development*; also indicates ELIGIBILITY, e.g. **gesellschaftsfähig** *socially acceptable*.

-HAFT. Forms adjectives indicating a QUALITY, e.g. **vorteilhaft** *advantageous* (**Vorteil** *advantage*), **damenhaft** *lady-like* (**Dame** *lady*), **greisenhaft** *senile* (**Greis** *old man*), **episodenhaft** *episodic* (**Episode** *episode*).

-IG. Forms adjectives indicating a **QUALITY** (often with vowel mutation), e.g. **sandig** *sandy* (**Sand** *sand*), **wässerig** *watery* (**Wasser** *water*), **mutig** *courageous* (**Mut** *courage*). Referring to time, indicates duration, e.g. **dreistündig** *lasting three hours, three-hour* (**Stunde** *hour*).

-ISCH.

1. Forms (especially pejorative) adjectives indicating a **QUALITY** (sometimes with vowel mutation), e.g. **kindisch** *childish* (**Kind** *child*), **herrisch** *imperious* (**Herr** *master*), **bäurisch** *boorish* (**Bauer** *farmer, peasant*).

2. (in words of foreign origin) **-ic(al)**, e.g. **historisch** *historic(al)*, **dramatisch** *dramatic*, **mathematisch** *mathematical*.

3. Forms **ADJECTIVES FROM PROPER NOUNS**, e.g. **platonisch** *Platonic, platonic*, **europäisch** *European*, **israelisch** *Israeli*.

-LICH (often with mutation of the stem-vowel).

1. Forms adjectives indicating a **QUALITY**, e.g. **tödlich** *fatal* (**Tod** *death*), **menschlich** *human* (**Mensch** *human being*), **mündlich** *oral* (**Mund** *mouth*). Referring to time, indicates periodic recurrence: **-ly**, e.g. **zweistündlich** *two-hourly*.

2. (especially with **COLOUR WORDS**) **-ish**, e.g. **bläulich** *bluish* (**blau** *blue*), **rötlich** *reddish* (**rot** *red*).

3. (**ADDED TO VERB STEMS**) **-able, -ible**, e.g. **erhältlich** *obtainable* (**erhalten** *to obtain*), **unglaublich** *incredible* (**glauben** *to believe*).

-LOS. **-less, without . . .**, e.g. **hoffnungslos** *hopeless* (**Hoffnung** *hope*), **widerstandslos** *without resistance* (**Widerstand** *resistance*).

-MÄSSIG (-mäßig).

1. In the sense in *accordance with* (sometimes **-gemäß** is used instead), e.g. **verfassungsmäßig** *constitutional* (**Verfassung** *constitution*), **gewohnheitsmäßig** *habitual* (**Gewohnheit** *habit*).

2. *in terms of, as regards*, e.g. **qualitätsmäßig** *in terms of / as regards quality*.

3. In the sense *in the nature of*, e.g. **behelfsmäßig** *makeshift* (**Behelf** *makeshift*).

4. In adverbial use, denotes **MANNER**, e.g. **karteimäßig** (record etc.) *on index cards* (**Kartei** *card index*), **zahlenmäßig** (express etc.) *in figures* (**Zahl** *figure*).

-SAM. Forms adjectives indicating a **QUALITY**, e.g. **gewaltsam** *violent* (**Gewalt** *force, violence*), **sparsam** *thrifty* (**sparen** *to save*), **bedeutsam** *significant* (**bedeuten** *mean, signify*).

COMPOUND NOUNS

The German convention of writing compounds (including long ones) as single words sometimes leads beginners to regard them—or German—as difficult; and Mark Twain complains, in his tongue-in-cheek essay on 'The Awful German Language', of these 'mountain-ranges stretching across

the page', suggesting they should only be allowed to be uttered with intervals. (One wonders what he would have made of some of the coinages current in present-day computerese, for instance **das Unterbrechungsanforderungsflipflop**, alias *interrupt request latch*.) In fact, however, English and German are not so different here—it is merely a matter of orthography: English does not always join up the elements to make a formal compound, whereas German does, e.g. *life insurance company* **die Lebensversicherungsgesellschaft**, *media research* **die Medienforschung**. A more substantial difference between the two languages in the matter of compounds lies in the fact that German often has a compound where English uses something else, for example a phrase with nouns linked by *of* (*work of art* **das Kunstwerk**), adjective + noun (*man-made fibre* **die Kunstfaser**, *human geography* **die Kulturgeographie**), or a word consisting of one element only (*desk* **der Schreibtisch**, *skunk* **das Stinktier**).

German compound nouns may be composed of the following elements: (a) NOUN + NOUN, e.g. **der Marktplatz** *market-place*; (b) ADJECTIVE OR PARTICIPLE + NOUN, e.g. **der Billigflug** *cheap flight*, **der Gebrauchtwagen** *used car*; (c) NUMERAL + NOUN, e.g. **der Dreifuß** *tripod*; (d) VERB-STEM + NOUN, e.g. **das Rennpferd** *racehorse*; (e) PREPOSITION + NOUN, e.g. **der Nachsommer** *Indian summer*; (f) PRONOUN + NOUN, e.g. **das Selbstvertrauen** *self-confidence*.

Not even the largest dictionary can include all possible compound nouns, and if a word is not given in a dictionary it should be broken down into its component parts, consideration of which should suggest a possible translation. In this connection, it is helpful to have a knowledge of how compounds of type (a) (noun + noun: the commonest type) are put together:

(i) NOUN 1 + NOUN 2, directly joined: e.g. **der Milchmann** *milkman*, **die Hausfrau** *housewife*, **das Zahnfleisch** *gums*.

(ii) NOUN 1 (WITH LOSS OF FINAL -e) + NOUN 2: e.g. **die Kirschblüte** *cherry blossom* (cf. **die Kirsche**), **das Endstadium** *final stage* (cf. **das Ende**).

(iii) NOUN 1 + LINKING ELEMENT + NOUN 2:

(a) -e-: e.g. **die Mausefalle** *mousetrap* (cf. **die Maus**), **das Tagebuch** *diary* (cf. **der Tag**).

(b) -(e)n-: e.g. **der Schwanengesang** *swan-song* (cf. **der Schwan**), **die Sonnenuhr** *sundial* (cf. **die Sonne**), **die Menschenrechte** *human rights* (cf. **der Mensch**).

(c) -(e)ns-: e.g. **der Schmerzensschrei** *scream of pain* (cf. **der Schmerz**), **die Willensfreiheit** *free will* (cf. **der Wille**).

(d) -er-: e.g. **der Kinderschuh** *child's shoe* (cf. **das Kind**), **die Bildersprache** *imagery* (cf. **das Bild**), **der Eierlikör** *advocaat* (cf. **das Ei**).

(e) -s-, also -es-: e.g. **der Geburtstag** *birthday* (cf. **die Geburt**), **der Produktionsausfall** *loss of production* (cf. **die Produktion**), **die Schönheitskönigin** *beauty queen* (cf. **die Schönheit**), **das Volkslied** *folk-song* (cf. **das Volk**), **das Hilfsverb** *auxiliary (verb)* (cf. **die Hilfe**); **der Freundeskreis** *circle of friends* (cf. **der Freund**), **die Bundesregierung** *the (Federal) Government* (cf. **der Bund**), **das Liebesgedicht** *love-poem* (cf. **die Liebe**).

Sometimes the first noun appears in different forms: e.g. (**die Geburt** *birth*) **die Geburtenkontrolle** *birth control*, **der Geburtsort** *place of birth*;

(der Mann *man*) das Mannloch *manhole*, das Mannesalter *manhood*, die Männerstimme *male voice*.

A few regional variations occur: North German **Rinder-**, **Schweine-** and **Gänse-** (followed by e.g. **-braten** *roast beef, pork, goose*) become **Rinds-**, **Schweins-** and **Gans-** on southern menus. Austrian usage replaces *e* by *s* in words such as **die Aufnahmeprüfung** *entrance examination*, **der Ausnahmefall** *exception(al case)*, **die Einnahmsquelle** *source of income*; and inserts linking *s* in e.g. **der Fabrikarbeiter** *factory hand*, **der Gesangsverein** *choral society*, **die Zugverbindung** *train connection*.

COMPOUND ADJECTIVES

German compound adjectives may be composed of the following elements:

(i) NOUN + ADJECTIVE (OR PARTICIPLE)—sometimes directly joined, sometimes connected by a linking element or with the loss of final *-e*: e.g. (with noun as object of present participle) **atemberaubend** *breathtaking*; (corresponding to genitive construction) **siegessicher** *sure of victory*, (to dative construction) **umweltfeindlich** *damaging to the environment*; (corresponding to prepositional constructions) **kalorienreich** *rich in calories*, **schrankfertig** *washed and ironed* (literally *wardrobe-ready*); (with participles: instrumental) **efeuumrankt** *ivy-clad*, **computergestützt** *computer-assisted*, **handgemalt** *hand-painted*, **fetttriefend** *dripping with fat*; (with participles: locative) **stadtbekannt** *known all over the town*, **endbetont** *with final stress*; (comparison, intensification) **stocksteif** *stiff as a poker*, **splitter(faser)nackt** *stark naked*.³⁶

(ii) ADJECTIVE + ADJECTIVE: e.g. **kleinlaut** *subdued*, **dunkelrot** *dark red*; ('copulative' compounds with two elements of equal weight) **nasskalt** *cold and wet*, **bittersüß** *bitter-sweet*, **schwarzweiß** *black and white*; (colour adjectives denoting a particular shade) **blaugrün** *bluish-green*; ('parasynthetic' compounds in *-ig*, the second elements of which do not exist as independent adjectives) **blauäugig** *blue-eyed*, **kurzlebig** *short-lived*, **viertürig** *four-door*.

(iii) VERB-STEM + ADJECTIVE: e.g. **kauf lustig** *in a buying mood* (cf. **kaufen**), **experimentierfreudig** *keen on experimenting* (cf. **experimentieren**), **schreibfaul** (literally *writing-lazy*) **sein** *to be a poor correspondent* (cf. **schreiben**).

Hyphenated adjectival combinations represent a looser kind of association of two adjectives, the hyphen indicating that they retain their separate force, e.g. **seine nüchtern-kalte Beurteilung der Situation** *his sober, cold assessment of the situation*. The hyphen is used in combinations such as **deutsch-englisch** (of relations etc.) *Anglo-German*. Note also **römisch-katholisch** *Roman Catholic*, **griechisch-orthodox** *Greek Orthodox*, **maria-theresianisch** *of the reign of Empress Maria Theresa* [German *Theresia*].

³⁶ Certain compounds which combine a noun with a past participle are neither instrumental nor locative in sense. A number of formations with **-betont** are used in the sense *with . . . emphasized*, e.g. **taillenbetont** *with the waist emphasized*, i.e. *emphasizing the waist*, **gefühlsbetont** *emotional, emotive*; in the similar formation **hirnverbrannt** *hare-brained* the French *cerveau brûlé* *hothead* is reproduced, in form if not in meaning.

Guide to Prepositions

Abbreviations used for newspaper titles:

FAZ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

MM *Münchner Merkur*

NZZ *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*

SZ *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

Reference works:

Aktuell *Aktuell: Das große Lexikon der Gegenwart* (Dortmund: Chronik Verlag, 1984 ff.)

PersonenLexikon *Das große PersonenLexikon* (Dortmund: Chronik Verlag, 2nd ed., 1988)

AB (+ dative)

1. (indicating time) FROM (. . . ONWARDS):

ab Mitte der achtziger Jahre (also **Achtzigerjahre**) *from the mid-eighties*

ab Ostern *from Easter*

Kinder ab sechs Jahren *children from the age of six*

When the article is omitted the accusative may also be used in e.g. **ab nächstem/nächsten Montag** (*as*) *from next Monday*.

2. (indicating place) FROM (. . . ONWARDS):

die Lok, die den „Schweiz-Express“ ab Basel zog (*Spiegel*) *the engine that pulled the 'Swiss Express' from Basle*

3. (indicating lower limit) FROM . . . UPWARDS:

ab \$50 *from \$50 upwards*

die Dienstgrade ab Oberst *ranks from colonel upwards*

AN

1. (+ dative)

1. (indicating place)

(a) ON (the side of):

an der Wand *on the wall*

am Berg *on the hill/mountain*

Wir lagen . . . an der Bahnböschung (Ch. Wolf) *We lay on the railway embankment*

(b) (proximity) AT:

er stand **am** Fenster *he stood at the window*

Da standen sie . . . **an** der Gartenpforte (Ch. Wolf) *There they stood at the garden gate*

BY:

sie wärmten sich die Hände **am** Ofen *they warmed their hands by the stove*

(c) ON (the edge of):

an der Grenze *on the border*

am Stadtrand *on the outskirts of the town/city*

Trier liegt **an** der Mosel *Trier is on the Moselle*

der Laden liegt direkt **an** der Hauptstraße *the shop is right on the main street*

an der Südküste von Island (Brecht) *on the southern coast of Iceland*

(d) (with part of the body) ON:

An einer Hand fehlte dem Kerl ein Finger (Zwerenz) *On one hand the fellow was missing a finger*

(e) **am** Himmel *in the sky* (as opposed to **im** Himmel *in heaven*)

(f) AGAINST:

Rita lehnte zum Sterben müde **an** einem Baum (Ch. Wolf) *Rita, dead tired, was leaning against a tree*

(g) . . . **an** TO . . . :

Rücken **an** Rücken *back to back*

Wange **an** Wange *cheek to cheek*

Stoßstange **an** Stoßstange *bumper to bumper*

(h) AT:

der Ort, **an** dem es passierte *the place at which it happened*

An allen größeren Kreuzungen sind Panzer aufgefahen (Spiegel) *At all the major crossroads tanks have moved into position*

am Ausgang der Zeile *at the end of the line*

an der Spitze der Kolonne *at the head of the column*

im ersten Stock des Schulgebäudes, **an** strategischer Stelle (Kempowski) *on the first (U.S. second) floor of the school building, at a strategic point*

an den amerikanischen Universitäten *at American universities*

(i) (suspension) FROM:

die Lampe hängt **an** der Decke *the lamp hangs from the ceiling*

(j) (creative activity in progress) expressed by English continuous tense:

sie schreibt **an** einem Roman *she is writing a novel*

er webte **an** einem Teppich *he was weaving a carpet*

(k) (nibbling, sipping, sniffing, etc.) AT, or expressed by transitive verb:

die Maus hat **am** Käse geknabbert *the mouse has nibbled at the cheese*

sie nippte **am** Wein *she sipped (at) the wine*

der Dalmatiner schnupperte **am** Laternenpfahl *the Dalmatian sniffed (at) the lamp-post*

2. (indicating time)

(a) ON:

Es hat **am** Montag geregnet (Wohmann) *It rained on Monday*

Aber **an** anderen Tagen speiste er in Restaurants (Hesse) *But on other days he dined in restaurants*

But often not translated by a preposition:

Am nächsten Morgen, als ich aufwachte, war die Weimarer Republik verschwunden (Zwerenz) *The next morning, when I woke up, the Weimar Republic had disappeared*

IN:

am Tage *in the daytime, by day*

in der Imbissstube, **in** der ich **am** Morgen gefrühstückt hatte (Böll) *in the café in which I had had breakfast in the morning*

(b) (South German) (with festivals) AT:

an Ostern/Pfingsten/Weihnachten *at Easter/Whitsun/Christmas*

3. (with part of the body) BY:

Zwei Offiziere ergreifen ihn **an** den Armen (Weiss) *Two officers grab him by the arms*

4. (indicating means) BY:

sie erkannte ihn **an** seiner Stimme *she recognized him by his voice*

An seiner Nase habe ich gesehen, dass er ein Russe war (Böll) *I could tell by his nose that he was Russian*

BY MEANS OF:

er hat es **an** einem Beispiel gezeigt *he demonstrated it by means of an example*

Gerade wollte er . . . den heimlichen Charakter der Stadt **an** den Regeln des Ruderns erläutern (Lenz) *He was just about to explain the secret character of the town by means of the rules of rowing*

5. (indicating cause) OF, FROM:

Das . . . Kind war **an** einem Hitzschlag gestorben (Wohmann) *The child had died of heat-stroke*

Etwa 85 Prozent aller **an** Lungenkrebs Erkrankten waren Raucher (Aktuell) *About 85 per cent of all those suffering from lung cancer were smokers*

BY:

die Partei scheiterte **an** der Fünfprozentklausel *the party was defeated by the five-per-cent rule*

An der polnischen Frage entzündete sich der Zweite Weltkrieg (Kleiner Brockhaus) *The Second World War was sparked off by the Polish question*

6. (indicating inherent quality) ABOUT:

Das Wichtige an Felice war, dass es sie gab (Canetti) *The important thing about Felice was that she existed*

was so deutsch ist an der deutschen Kunst (FAZ) *what is so German about German art*

was mir an ihnen auffiel *what struck me about them*

IN:

es ist nichts an dem Gerücht *there is no truth in the rumour*

ich weiß nicht, was du an ihm findest *I don't know what you see in him*

7. (in respect of) IN:

reich an Vitaminen *rich in vitamins*

er ist uns an Intelligenz überlegen *he is superior to us in intelligence*

Zugleich gewinnt der Islam an politischer Bedeutung (Aktuell) *At the same time Islam is gaining in political importance*

OF:

das Angebot an Gemüse *the selection of vegetables*

ein hohes Maß an moralischer Integrität (SZ) *a high degree of moral integrity*

BY WAY OF:

was an Dokumenten zur Verfügung stand (Welt) *what was available by way of documents*

(with object of action) or:

der Export an Kaffee *the export of coffee*

Verrat an einem Freund *betrayal of a friend*

die Kritik an den herkömmlichen psychiatrischen Institutionen (Aktuell) *the criticism of traditional psychiatric institutions*

das Massaker an französischen Zivilisten (Spiegel) *the massacre of French civilians*

II. (+ accusative)

1. (indicating motion) TO:

Die sowjetische Flotte rückt immer näher an das amerikanische Hoheitsgebiet (MM) *The Soviet fleet is moving closer and closer to American territory*

Der Pförtner legte sein Ohr an das Fenster (Lenz) *The porter put his ear to the window*

ON (the side of):

er schrieb die Formel an die Tafel *he wrote the formula on the blackboard*

sie klopfte an ihre Tür *they knocked on her door*

AGAINST:

der Hagel prasselte an die Fenster *the hail beat against the windows*

sie wurden an die Wand gestellt *they were stood against the wall*

AT, BY:

sie setzte sich **an** den Tisch / das Feuer *she sat down at the table / by the fire*

2. (in figurative use) to:

er schreibt nie **an** seine Mutter *he never writes to his mother*

Tuzzi, **an** den diese Frage . . . gerichtet war (Musil) *Tuzzi, to whom this question was addressed*

eine Rückgabe des Landes **an** die Ureinwohner (Spiegel) *a return of the land to its original inhabitants*

Er will wissen, wer ihn **an** die Stasi verraten hat (Zeit) *He wants to know who betrayed him to the Stasi*

Lawrence verstand es, sich **an** arabische Verhältnisse anzupassen (PersonenLexikon) *Lawrence knew how to adapt to Arabian conditions*

ON:

ihre Ansprüche **an** das Leben (Ch. Wolf) *her demands on life*

die deutsche Kriegserklärung **an** Russland *the German declaration of war on Russia*

OF:

Er dachte nicht **an** die verlorene Chance (Lenz) *He did not think of the lost opportunity*

Es war die Erinnerung **an** eine sonderbar ausgegangene Leidenschaft (Musil) *It was the memory of a passion that had ended strangely*

3. (usually with definite article) ROUGHLY:

an die 500 Bewerber pro Monat (Spiegel) *roughly 500 applicants per month*

ANSTATT = statt

AUF

1. (+ dative)

1. (indicating place)

(a) ON:

das Glas steht **auf** dem Tisch *the glass is on the table*

Hier, **auf** dem Primrose Hill, ging Marx spazieren (Weiss) *Here, on Primrose Hill, Marx would go for walks*

(b) AT:

ich habe sie **auf** der Post / einer Party getroffen *I met her at the post office/a party*

ich habe **auf** der Tagung schlecht geschlafen *I didn't sleep well at the conference*

das rätselhafte Geschehen **auf** Schloss Fenimore *the mysterious events at Castle Fenimore*

die Ampel stand **auf** Rot *the lights were at red*

(c) IN:

Ihretwegen hatte die Mutter auf den Feldern . . . gearbeitet (Ch. Wolf)

For their sake their mother had worked in the fields

Und draußen auf der Straße kamen sie vorbeigezogen (Böll) *And out*

in the street they came marching past

auf Bahn sechs in lane six

auf Ferrari in a Ferrari

Also with names of islands:

auf Zypern/Teneriffa/den Bahamas in Cyprus/Tenerife/the Bahamas

2. ON (holiday, journey, etc.):

Er befand sich auf einem kurzen Urlaub in Luxor (C. W. Ceram) *He was*

on a short holiday in Luxor

auf ihrem Spaziergang durch Venedig (Th. Mann) *on their walk through*

Venice

auf dem Weg zum Pol on the way to the Pole

II. (+ accusative)

1. (indicating motion)

(a) ON:

er stellte das Glas auf den Tisch *he put the glass on the table*

sie setzte sich auf die Mauer *she sat down on the wall*

Eine Haarnadel fiel auf den Teppich (A. Zweig) *A hairpin fell on the carpet*

Er lachte und tippte ihr auf die Nase (Ch. Wolf) *He laughed and tapped*

her on the nose

Also used when someone writes, draws, etc. something on something:

der einzige, der den Einfall gehabt hat, auf eine Banane zu schreiben:

es lebe Togo (Böll) *the only one to have the idea of writing on a banana:*

Long live Togo

(b) INTO:

er ging auf die Straße / das Feld *he went into the street/field*

(c) TO:

sie ging auf die Post / eine Party *she went to the post office / a party*

2. AT:

er zielte auf die Scheibe *he aimed at the target*

indem sie misstrauisch auf die Preise sah (Bachmann) *by looking askance*

at the prices

Ernst Wendland . . . deutete auf den Zug (Ch. Wolf) *Ernst Wendland*

pointed at the train

3. (indicating time)

(a) FOR (prospective period):

der Bundestag wird auf vier Jahre gewählt *the Bundestag is elected for*

four years

Compare **auf immer** *for ever*, **auf unbestimmte Zeit** *indefinitely*.

(b) ... **auf** AFTER . . . :

Monat auf Monat *month after month*

4. (indicating manner) IN:

auf diese Weise *in this way*

Also with names of languages:

auf Deutsch *in German*

5. (in figurative use)

(a) **auf den ersten Blick** *at first sight*

(b) (*in response to*; often supported by following **hin**) AT:

auf meinen Wunsch (hin) *at my request*

ON:

auf meinen Rat (hin) *on my advice*

(c) FOR:

Bestellungen auf Trauerkränze werden sorgfältig und prompt ausgeführt (florist's notice) *Orders for wreaths carefully and promptly carried out*

Horst Rudolf, der ... auf ein Auto sparte (Ch. Wolf) *Horst Rudolf, who was saving for a car*

Schon mit fünf Jahren wurde Liza Minnelli auf Hollywood getrimmt (Zeit) *When only five Liza Minnelli was already being groomed for Hollywood*

OF:

Renate ist auf Ulrike(s) Erfolg) eifersüchtig *Renate is jealous of Ulrike('s success)*

er ist stolz auf seine Medaille *he is proud of his medal*

ON:

Schließlich einigte man sich auf einen Kompromiss (FAZ) *Finally they agreed on a compromise*

Das Institut soll sich auf Kulturprogramme konzentrieren (FAZ) *The institute is to concentrate on cultural programmes*

TO:

die Stadt ist jetzt auf Erdgas umgestellt *the town is now converted to natural gas*

Den Begriff „Engländer“ auf die Schotten anzuwenden, diesen Fauxpas begeht man kein zweites Mal (Zeit) *Applying the term 'Engländer' to the Scots is a faux pas you don't commit twice*

das Recht auf Glück *the right to happiness*

6. (*per*) TO:

solange auf einen Indianer etwa hundert Büffel kamen (Spiegel) *as long as there were approximately a hundred buffalo to every (American) Indian*

AUS (+ dative)1. (indicating motion) **OUT OF:**

Ich beugte mich aus dem Fenster (Penzoldt) *I leaned out of the window*

Den Mantel hatte er schon aus dem Schrank genommen (Ch. Wolf)
He had already taken the coat out of the wardrobe

2. (indicating origin, source) **FROM:**

Nachrichten aus den USA *news from the U.S.A.*

Ölscheichs aus dem Nahen Osten (Zeit) *oil sheikhs from the Middle East*

die Richtung, aus der sie die Schüsse hörten (Lenz) *the direction from which they heard the shots*

aus zuverlässiger Quelle *from a reliable source*

3. **MADE OF:**

Schultornister aus imitiertem Leder (Grass) *satchels made of imitation leather*

OF:

eine Währungsordnung, die aus verschiedenen Währungsblöcken zusammengesetzt ist (Aktuell) *a monetary system composed of various currency blocs*

eine botanische Sinfonie aus Buchen und Linden und Eichengruppen (Spiegel) *a botanical symphony of beeches and lime trees and groups of oaks*

4. (indicating reason) **OUT OF:**

Ich . . . guckte aus lauter Verlegenheit unters Bett (Zwergen) *I looked under the bed out of sheer embarrassment*

aus Höflichkeit/Stolz/Verzweiflung *out of politeness/pride/despair*

AUSSER (außer) (+ dative)1. **APART FROM, EXCEPT:**

Außer den Bulgaren stieg keiner aus (Lenz) *Apart from the Bulgarians nobody got out*

außer uns war niemand da *nobody was there apart from (except) us*

2. **BEYOND:**

es steht außer jedem Zweifel *It is beyond all doubt*

3. **OUT OF:**

sie waren alle außer Atem *they were all out of breath*

der Aufzug ist außer Betrieb *the lift is out of order*

AUSSERHALB (außerhalb) (+ genitive)**OUTSIDE:**

- sie wohnt außerhalb der Stadt** *she lives outside the town*
außerhalb der Zone, in der interplanetarer Staub die astronomischen Beobachtungen stört (FAZ) *outside the zone in which interplanetary dust interferes with astronomical observations*
Tatsachen, die man außerhalb Großbritanniens leicht unterschätzt *facts that are easily underestimated outside Britain*

BEI (+ dative)**1. (indicating place)****(a) BY, NEXT TO:**

er saß bei ihr *he sat by (next to) her*

NEAR:

Bei Trincomalee hielten die Rebellen einen Bus an (MM) *Near Trincomalee the rebels stopped a bus*

Offenbach bei Frankfurt *Offenbach near Frankfurt*

(with reference to battle) or:

die Schlacht bei Hastings *the Battle of Hastings*

(b) AT (SOMEONE'S) HOUSE:

bei uns (zu Hause) *at our house*

WITH:

er wohnt bei seinen Eltern *he lives with his parents*

c/o (in address):

bei Schmidt *c/o Schmidt*

(c) AT:

beim Bäcker/Metzger/Arzt *at the baker's/butcher's/doctor's*

wir arbeiten bei Woolworth *we work at Woolworth's*

sie kauft ihre Kleidung bei C & A *she buys her clothes at C & A's*

IN:

mein Sohn ist beim Militär *my son is in the forces*

meine Tochter ist beim Film *my daughter is in films*

WITH:

er ist beim Ulmer Theater *he's with the Ulm theatre company*

ich versicherte meinen Wagen bei der ARAG *I insured my car with ARAG*

(d) ON (someone's person):

der Brief wurde bei ihm gefunden *the letter was found on him*

ich habe kein Geld bei mir *I haven't any money on me*

(e) AMONG:

ich lebte jahrzehntelang bei den Eskimos *I lived for decades among the Eskimos*

bei seinen Papieren war ein wichtiger Brief *among his papers was an important letter*

(f) IN (the works of):

bei Goethe in Goethe

(g) FROM:

Ich lieh beim alten Kreft ein Boot für zwei Stunden (Grass) *I borrowed a boat from old Kreft for two hours*

sie nimmt Englischstunden bei einem Waliser *she's taking English lessons from a Welshman*

2. (indicating means) BY:

Maria . . . nahm mich bei der Hand (Grass) *Maria took me by the hand*
ich nannte ihn beim Vornamen *I called him by his first name*

3. ON THE PART OF:

eine Abkürzung sollte nur da verwendet werden, wo beim Leser die Kenntnis der Abkürzung vorausgesetzt werden kann *an abbreviation should only be used where a knowledge of the abbreviation can be assumed on the part of the reader*

4. (indicating specific instance)

(a) IN THE CASE OF, WITH:

die Reparatur dauert bei Puppen zwei Wochen *in the case of (with) dolls the repair takes two weeks*

er hat viel Glück bei Frauen *he's very successful with women*

(b) AMONG:

bei Metzgern findet man diese Ansicht häufig *this view is common among butchers*

5. (indicating time, circumstances)

(a) AT:

bei Sonnenaufgang *at sunrise*

bei Kriegsende *at the end of the war*

bei seiner Geburt *at his birth*

beim Frühstück *at breakfast*

bei der Premiere von Tschechows „Drei Schwestern“ (Stern) *at the premiere of Chekhov's 'Three Sisters'*

bei ihrem Anblick *at the sight of her*

bei dem bloßen Gedanken *at the mere thought of it*

ON:

bei seiner Ankunft *on his arrival*

Wie bei allen feierlichen Gelegenheiten stand der Oberst aufrecht (Kafka) *As on all ceremonial occasions the colonel stood erect*

IN:

er hat bei einem Autounfall seine Eltern verloren *he lost his parents in a car accident*

der Handy ['hendi] ist beim Transport beschädigt worden *the mobile phone has been damaged in transit*

(with verbal noun) **WHEN, AS, WHILE:**

bei der Aufteilung Preußens *when Prussia was divided*

die beleibte Sopranistin riss bei ihrem Auftritt eine Kulisse um *when making her entrance the stout soprano knocked down a bit of the scenery*

bei der Ausfahrt aus dem Bahnhof *as the train left the station*

beim Anflug auf München (of aircraft) *while approaching Munich*

beim Skilaufen *while skiing*

ON:

der Satellit verglühte beim Wiedereintritt in die Atmosphäre *the satellite burnt out on re-entering the earth's atmosphere*

IN:

beim Bewältigen dieser Aufgabe *in accomplishing this task*

(with sein etc.) **—ING:**

wir sind gerade beim Aufräumen *we're just tidying up*

sie waren beim Rätselraten *they were doing puzzles*

wir sahen den Kindern beim Spielen zu *we watched the children playing*

ich erwischte ihn beim Lügen *I caught him lying*

(b) (indicating prevailing conditions) **BY:**

bei Kerzenlicht *by candlelight*

IN:

es ist gefährlich bei Nebel zu fahren *it's dangerous to drive in fog*

Hans Castorp wuchs auf bei miserabilem Wetter (Th. Mann) *Hans Castorp grew up in dreadful weather*

WITH:

sie schläft immer bei offenem Fenster *she always sleeps with the window open*

OVER:

bei einem Glas Bier / einer Tasse Tee *over a glass of beer / a cup of tea*

(c) (indicating simultaneous developments etc.) **AS:**

Die Emigrantenzahl fiel—bei wachsendem Wohlstand der Bundesrepublik—auf 200 000 zurück (Zeit) *As the Federal Republic's prosperity increased (so) the number of emigrants went down to 200,000*

WHILE:

Im neuen Telefonnetz sind bei unveränderter Gesprächigkeit der Einwohner die Gebühreneinnahmen um 20 Prozent gesunken (Zeit) *In the new telephone system receipts have fallen by 20 per cent while the loquaciousness of the inhabitants has remained unchanged*

(d) (indicating condition) **IF:**

bei richtiger Anwendung dieses Verfahrens *if this process is properly applied*

bei Achsenbruch *if an axle breaks*

WHERE:

bei folgendem Akzent *where the stress follows*

bei steigender Produktion *where production is rising*

IN THE EVENT OF:

bei Nichteinhaltung dieser Bestimmung *in the event of failure to comply with this regulation*

ON:

bei näherer Bekanntschaft *on closer acquaintance*

6. IN VIEW OF:

bei der Größe des Fundes *in view of the size of the find*

WITH:

bei solchen Preisen *with prices like that*

bei deinem Aussehen solltest du doch keine Probleme haben *with your looks you shouldn't have any problems*

7. (in spite of) FOR, WITH:

bei all seinen Fehlern *for (with) all his faults*

bei alledem *for all that*

beim besten Willen *with the best will in the world*

BINNEN (+ dative)

WITHIN (period of time):

die Befürchtungen, dass binnen vier Jahren bei Opel 7500 Stellen verschwinden *(Spiegel) the fears that within four years 7,500 jobs will go at Opel*

Occasionally used with the genitive in literary usage.

BIS (+ accusative of noun without article, or followed by second preposition, which determines the case)

1. (indicating time)

(a) UNTIL, TILL:

bis Ostern/Ende Juli waren wir verreist *we were away until (till) Easter/the end of July*

ich bin bis nächsten Montag da *I'll be here until (till) next Monday (with dates) to (usually represented by -):*

F. D. Roosevelt (1882 bis 1945) *F. D. Roosevelt (1882–1945)*

von . . . bis *FROM . . . TO:*

von 8 bis 10 (Uhr) *from 8 to 10 (o'clock)*

von Montag bis Freitag *from Monday to Friday*

(b) BY:

sie ist bis Dienstag zurück *she'll be back by Tuesday*

Bis Mittwoch waren die Israelis bis zum Suez-Kanal vorgedrungen *(Zeit) By Wednesday the Israelis had pushed forward as far as the Suez Canal*

(c) Frequently used before adverbs and adverbial phrases; UNTIL, TILL:

bis jetzt *until (till) now*

bis dahin *until (till)/by then*

bis vor einem Jahr *until (till) a year ago*

Compare **bis bald/später/Dienstagabend!** *see you soon/late/on Tuesday evening*

Before an article or a demonstrative, possessive, or interrogative adjective:
BIS ZU

(i) UNTIL, TILL:

bis zum Jahr der ersten Ausgrabung (C. W. Ceram) *until (till) the year of the first excavation*

bis zu diesem Augenblick *until (till) this moment*

bis zu ihrem Tod *until (till) her death*

TO:

sie kämpften bis zum bitteren Ende *they fought to the bitter end*

(ii) BY:

Da Neufundland und Manitoba bis zum Stichtag nicht unterzeichnet hatten (Aktuell) *As Newfoundland and Manitoba had not signed by the deadline*

2. (indicating place) AS FAR AS:

der Zug fährt bis Rom *the train goes as far as Rome.*

(Alternative: **bis nach Rom**. A phrase in apposition is in the dative, e.g. **der Zug fährt bis Rom, der Hauptstadt Italiens.**)

Before an article etc.: **BIS** + second preposition:

wir gingen bis an die Grenze *we went as far as the frontier*

er versank bis an die Hüften im Schnee *he sank up to his hips in the snow*

bis auf drei Kilometer vom Dorf *to within three kilometres of the village*

er ist bis vor das Haus gefahren *he drove (right) up to the house*

sie schlenderten bis zum nächsten Restaurant *they strolled as far as the next restaurant*

voll bis zum Rand *full to the brim*

3. (with numerals) OR, TO:

wir werden drei bis vier Tage bleiben *we'll stay three to (or) four days*

TO:

40 bis 50 Leute *40 to 50 people*

18 bis 20 Dollar *18 to 20 dollars*

BIS AUF

(a) (RIGHT) ONTO/TO:

er stieg bis aufs Dach / bis auf den Gipfel *he climbed (right) onto the roof / to the summit*

(b) TO WITHIN (see **bis 2**)

(c) DOWN TO:

bis auf den letzten Tropfen *down to the last drop*

(d) EXCEPT (FOR):

alle Inseln bis auf Spiekeroog *all the islands except (for) Spiekeroog*

DANK (+ genitive or dative; in plural usually + genitive)

THANKS TO:

er konnte das Problem dank seiner Erfahrung lösen *he was able to solve the problem thanks to his experience*

Dank finanzieller Opfer seiner Mutter konnte er studieren (PersonenLexikon) *Thanks to his mother's financial sacrifices he was able to go to university*

DIESSEITS (+ genitive)

ON THIS SIDE OF:

diesseits des Kanals *on this side of the Channel*

DURCH (+ accusative)

1. (of place) THROUGH:

Ich hatte gespürt, wie die Nadel sich durch die Haut bohrte (Böll) *I had felt the needle boring through my skin*

[Ich] schlenderte durch die kleine Stadt (Penzoldt) *I strolled through the little town*

geschützt vor dem eisigen Wind, der hoch durch die Kiefern strich (de Bruyn) *protected from the icy wind, which blew through the tops of the pine trees*

OF:

wir machten eine Rundreise durch Neusüdwaales *we went on a tour of New South Wales*

ein Querschnitt durch die Bevölkerung *a cross-section of the population*

2. THROUGH (the agency of):

ich habe es durch einen Freund erfahren *I found out through a friend*

3. (indicating means) BY (MEANS OF):

(a)

wir haben die alte Methode durch eine neue ersetzt *we've replaced the old method by (means of) a new one*

[Churchill] demonstrierte ihnen durch seine Gegenwart, wie sehr es auf sie ankam (Canetti) *Churchill showed them by (means of) his presence how much they mattered*

durch die Beobachtung des Himmels *by watching the sky*

(b) (with passive: see p. 80) BY:

das Kongobecken wird durch den Kongo entwässert *the Congo basin is drained by the Congo*

4. (indicating cause) AS A RESULT OF:

durch die Epidemie war die Bevölkerung sehr gelichtet *as a result of the epidemic the population was greatly reduced*

BECAUSE OF:

durch den Regen wurde die Straße unpassierbar *because of the rain the road became impassable*

FOR:

die Stadt Göttingen, berühmt durch ihre Würste und ihre Universität (Heine) *the town of Göttingen, famed for its sausages and its university*

5. (of time; Austrian) FOR:

durch zwei Jahre bemühte er sich um ein Visum *for two years he tried to obtain a visa*

ENTGEGEN (+ dative; may also follow the noun)

CONTRARY TO:

der Biss der Tarantel ist entgegen dem Volksglauben harmlos *the bite of the tarantula is harmless, contrary to popular belief*

ENTLANG

ALONG:

Used *before* a noun in the dative (sometimes genitive), **entlang** indicates a location:

tückische Sümpfe, die sich entlang der iranischen Grenze erstrecken (Spiegel) *treacherous marshes, which extend along the Iranian border*

Used *after* a noun in the accusative, it indicates motion, either alongside or (in the case of, for example, a road or river) along the surface of:

sie fuhren die Küste/Straße entlang *they drove along the coast/road*

ENTSPRECHEND (+ dative; usually follows the noun)

IN ACCORDANCE WITH:

sie handelten den Anweisungen entsprechend *they acted in accordance with instructions*

FÜR (+ accusative)

1. (in various contexts):

das Geschenk ist für dich *the present is for you*

Aber es war für ihn zweifellos notwendig, eine neue Ehe einzugehen (Brecht) *But it was undoubtedly necessary for him to marry again*

Sie betonen, dass große Buchstaben eine wichtige Orientierungshilfe für die meisten Menschen sind (Aktuell) *They stress that capital letters are an important aid to orientation for most people*

China ist groß genug für viele Autohersteller (Spiegel) *China is big enough for many car manufacturers*

Der Bundesgrenzschutz ist zuständig für die Sicherung der Staatsgrenze (Aktuell) *The Federal Border Police is responsible for protecting the nation's borders*

für einen Engländer spricht er sehr gut Deutsch *for an Englishman he speaks very good German*

er wollte für seine Hilfe keine Bezahlung nehmen *he wouldn't take any payment for his help*

Es war nicht klug von dir, für einen Mantel dein Leben zu wagen (Hesse) *It wasn't wise of you to risk your life for a coat*

Denken Sie sich nur für einen Moment in die Lage von Eltern (Wohmann) *Imagine just for one moment the situation of parents*

ich bin nur für drei Tage hier *I'm only here for three days*

2. (blind, receptive, etc.) to:

Diese Partei war blind geworden für rechtsstaatliche Grundsätze (Zeit) *This party had grown blind to constitutional principles*

3. (as perceived by) to:

für norddeutsche Ohren klingt es fremd *it sounds strange to North German ears*

4. (typical etc.) of:

das ist typisch/charakteristisch für ihn *that's typical/characteristic of him*
zwei Beispiele für die ökologischen und ökonomischen Risiken (FAZ) *two examples of the ecological and economic risks*

5. (indicating succession) ... für ... AFTER ... :

Jahr für Jahr *year after year*

Abend für Abend *evening after evening*

... BY ... :

Schritt für Schritt *step by step*

• In the combination **was für ein** what kind of the case of **ein** is not affected by **für**; it is declined like a normal indefinite article:

was für ein Mann ist er? *what kind of man is he?*

mit was für einem Auto fährt er nach Hause? *what kind of car is he driving home in?*

GEGEN (+ accusative)

1. (indicating place) AGAINST:

[Er] lehnte das Fahrrad gegen einen Baum (Lenz) *He leant the bicycle against a tree*

Goldfische drückten ihre blasierten Gesichter gegen die Wände hellgrüner Aquarien (Böll) *Goldfish pressed their blasé faces against the walls of light green aquaria*

UP TO:

sie hielt das Dia gegen das Licht *she held the slide up to the light*

INTO:

er ist gegen einen Baum gefahren *he ran into a tree*

ich bin gegen den Stuhl gestoßen *I bumped into the chair*

2.

(a) (indicating opposition) **AGAINST:**

ich bin gegen den Plan *I'm against the plan*

eine Volkserhebung gegen die Türken *a popular uprising against the Turks*

nach den gegen ihn vorgebrachten Beschuldigungen (Welt) *according to the accusations made against him*

(contrary to):

gegen meinen Rat / alle Erwartungen *against my advice / all expectations*

(b) **FOR:**

hast du Tabletten gegen Kopfschmerzen? *have you got tablets for a headache?*

3. (indicating time, quantity)

(a) **ABOUT:**

wir treffen uns (so) gegen 8 Uhr *we're meeting at about 8 o'clock*

es waren gegen 100 Leute anwesend *there were about 100 people present*

(b) **TOWARDS:**

gegen Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts *towards the end of the 17th century*

4. (in exchange for) **FOR:**

sie hat ihre Wohnung gegen eine größere getauscht *she's exchanged her flat for a larger one*

gegen ein entsprechendes Honorar *for an appropriate fee*

gegen Barzahlung *for cash*

5. **COMPARED WITH:**

gegen gestern ist es heute kalt *it's cold compared with yesterday*

GEGENÜBER (+ dative; sometimes placed after a noun, always after a pronoun)

1. **OPPOSITE:**

gegenüber unserem Haus (unserem Haus gegenüber) *opposite our house*

Er setzte sich mir gegenüber (Bernhard) *He sat down opposite me*

2. (indicating manner, attitude, etc.) TOWARDS:

sein Verhalten mir *gegenüber* his behaviour *towards* me
 unsere Politik *gegenüber* Russland our policy *towards* Russia
 die ambivalente Haltung der Menschen *gegenüber* der modernen
 Architektur people's ambivalent attitude *towards* modern architecture

TO:

er ist ihr *gegenüber* besonders höflich he's particularly polite *to* her

3. VIS-À-VIS:

Gewerkschaften zum Schutz der Arbeiter *gegenüber* dem Staat (Weiss)
 trade unions for the protection of the workers *vis-à-vis* the state

4. COMPARED WITH:

seiner Schwester *gegenüber* war er klein / ein Anfänger he was small/
 a beginner *compared with* his sister

Die Mitglieder [der Jugendorchester] sind *gegenüber* vielen Berufsor-
 chestern privilegiert (FAZ) The members of the youth orchestra are privi-
 leged *compared with* many professional orchestras

GEMÄSS (gemäß) (+ dative; usually follows the noun or pronoun) (esp. in formal usage)

IN ACCORDANCE WITH:

sie handelten ihren Prinzipien *gemäß* they acted *in accordance with* their
 principles

gemäß Artikel 1 des Grundgesetzes *in accordance with* Article 1 of the
 Basic Law

HINTER

1. (+ dative; indicating place)

1. BEHIND:

die Reihe der Männer *hinter* den Sandsäcken (Grass) the row of men
behind the sandbags

sie versteckte sich *hinter* einem Baum she hid *behind* a tree

2. AFTER:

eine Haltestelle *hinter* dem Bahnhof one stop *after* the station
hinter diesem Wort stand ein Fragezeichen *after* this word there was a
 question mark

BEYOND:

fünf Kilometer *hinter* München/der Grenze five kilometres *beyond*
 Munich/the border

- II. (+ accusative; indicating motion into a position behind) **BEHIND:**
er setzte sich hinter den Polizisten *he sat down behind the policeman*
Die Sonne war schon hinter das Dach des vierstöckigen Hauses getaucht
 (Ch. Wolf) *The sun had already dipped behind the roof of the four-storey house*
- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position behind the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used:
sie ging hinter ihm die Straße entlang *she walked along the street behind him*
 (Their relative positions do not change.)

IN

- I. (+ dative)
- (indicating place) **IN:**
Sein Hausschlüssel lag im Briefkasten (Frisch) *His front-door key was in the letter-box*
im Vordergrund steht eine Birke *in the foreground stands a birch tree*
in Mailand *in Milan*
in Australien *in Australia*
 AT:
im Theater / im Kino / in der Oper *at the theatre/cinema/opera*
in der Schule *at school*
 ON:
im Fernsehen/Radio *on television/the radio*
 - (indicating time)
- (a) **IN:**
in den letzten Jahren *in the last few years*
im Januar *in January*
im Winter *in (the) winter*
 AT:
in diesem Augenblick *at this moment*
in seinem Alter *at his age*
- (b) (referring to period within which something occurs) **IN:**
Der Roman hat in dieser Zeit eine Auflage von 225 000 Exemplaren erlebt (Zeit) *In this period the novel sold 225,000 copies*
der Computer hat in fünf Sekunden alles gelöst *the computer solved everything in five seconds*
- (c) (referring to what will occur) **IN . . . 's/ . . . s' TIME:**
in acht Tagen *in a week's time*
Und in hundert Jahren, dann spielen sie noch (Brecht) *And in a hundred years' time they'll still be playing*
 Compare **heute in einer Woche** *a week today, today week*

3. (in figurative use) IN:

er ist in Geschäftssachen gut bewandert *he's well versed in business matters*
in englischer Sprache *in English*

In various expressions:

im Durchschnitt *on average*
im Gegenteil *on the contrary*
in dieser Hinsicht *in this respect*
in gewissem Maße *to a certain extent*

II. (+ accusative)

1. (indicating motion) IN(To):

Als die Katze . . . ins Zimmer schlich (Frisch) *When the cat slunk into the room*
sie stellte den Besen in die Ecke *she put the broom in the corner*
Auffauchzend warf er sich in die Brandung (Penzoldt) *Shouting for joy he threw himself into the waves*
Rita lehnte sich in ihren Stuhl zurück (Ch. Wolf) *Rita leant back in her chair*
er schrieb seinen Namen in die linke obere Ecke der Postkarte *he wrote his name in the top left-hand corner of the postcard*

TO:

sie ging ins Theater / ins Kino / ins Konzert / in die Oper *she went to the theatre/cinema/concert/opera*
ich gehe täglich ins Büro *I go to the office every day*
 Also with the names of countries or regions that have a definite article:
er ist in die Schweiz / in die Vereinigten Staaten gefahren *he's gone to Switzerland/the United States*

2. (in figurative use) INTO:

der Dozent hat das Buch ins Japanische übersetzt *the lecturer translated the book into Japanese*
der Prinz wurde in einen Frosch verwandelt *the prince was turned into a frog*
er hat sich in diesen Zustand hineingesteigert *he worked himself up into this state*

INFOLGE (+ genitive)

AS A RESULT OF:

der Eisenbahnbetrieb konnte infolge des Unglücks nicht aufrechterhalten werden *the rail service could not be maintained as a result of the accident*

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, **infolge von** is usual:

infolge von Straßenumleitungen konnte ich nicht rechtzeitig hier sein as a result of traffic diversions I couldn't be here on time

INNERHALB (+ genitive)

INSIDE, WITHIN:

innerhalb des Gebäudes inside the building

innerhalb einer Woche within a week

innerhalb der Partei galt er als Einzelgänger within the party he was regarded as a loner

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, **innerhalb von** is used:

innerhalb von fünf Jahren within five years

JENSEITS (+ genitive)

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF:

jenseits des Flusses on the other side of the river

BEYOND:

jenseits des Ozeans beyond the ocean

KRAFT (+ genitive; in formal usage)

BY VIRTUE OF:

kraft seines Amtes by virtue of his office

LÄNGS (+ genitive, occasionally dative; indicating place)

ALONG(SIDE):

der Weg längs des Bahndamms mit den Brennnesselstauden (Wohmann) the track along(side) the railway embankment with the clumps of stinging nettles

LAUT (+ genitive or dative; in formal usage)

ACCORDING TO (quoting report, person's words, etc.):

laut dieses Berichtes, laut diesem Bericht according to this report

When **laut** is used with a name or a noun standing on its own this is not inflected:

laut Gesetz according to the law

laut Tony Blair according to Tony Blair

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, the dative is used:

laut Briefen aus Kärnten according to letters from Carinthia

MIT (+ dative)1. **WITH** (in various contexts):

sie fuhren **mit** ihrem Onkel nach Sorrent *they went **with** their uncle to Sorrento*
 Würstchen **mit** Kartoffelsalat *sausages **with** potato salad*
 die Wartesäle **mit** ihrem lauen Kaffee (Böll) *the waiting-rooms **with** their lukewarm coffee*
 mit Zustimmung seiner Eltern ***with** the consent of his parents*
 mit diesem Ziel vor Augen ***with** this goal in view*
 mit jedem Tag erholte er sich ***with** every day he got better*
 mit einsetzendem Winter ***with** the onset of winter*

2. (indicating instrument, means) **WITH**:

es ist üblich, **mit** Messer und Gabel zu essen *it is customary to eat **with** a knife and fork*

er schlug einen Nagel **mit** dem Hammer in die Wand *he knocked a nail in the wall **with** the hammer*

BY:

mit dem Auto/der Bahn/der Straßenbahn/dem Flugzeug/dem Schiff
by car/train/tram/plane/ship

mit der Post *by post*

er verdient seinen Lebensunterhalt **mit** Zeichnen *he earns his living by drawing*

IN:

mit leiser Stimme *in a low voice*

3. (indicating age, speed, rate) **AT**:

mit 15 Jahren *at (the age of) 15*

mit 80 Kilometern in der Stunde *at 80 kilometres per hour*

das Bevölkerungswachstum [Kenias], das **mit** jährlich 3,4 Prozent zu den höchsten in der Welt zählt (Aktuell) *Kenya's population growth, which at 3.4 per cent annually is among the highest in the world*

4. (used with an intransitive verb in the case of a physical action involving the use of a part of the body (or object held in the hand); no prepositional equivalent in English, which uses a transitive verb):

Sie . . . stampfte heftig **mit** dem Fuß auf (Penzoldt) *She stamped her foot violently*

der Hund wedelte **mit** dem Schwanz *the dog wagged its tail*

sie knallte **mit** der Peitsche *she cracked her whip*

das Gespenst rasselte **mit** seinen Ketten *the ghost clanked its chains*

MITTELS (+ genitive; in formal usage)

BY MEANS OF:

sie öffneten die Kisten **mittels** eines Brecheisens *they opened the crates by means of a crowbar*

When **mittels** is used with a noun standing on its own, this is not inflected:

mittels Draht *by means of wire*

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, the dative is used:

mittels Drähten *by means of wires*

NACH (+ dative)

1. (indicating direction)

(a) TOWARDS:

Chorillo ... sah nach dem Meer wie verzaubert (Penzoldt) *Chorillo looked towards the sea as if enchanted*

Also with points of the compass (also -WARDS):

nach Süden *towards the south, southwards*

AT:

der Lümmel warf den Ball nach dem Lehrer *the lout threw the ball at the teacher*

der Dackel schnappte nach den Wespen *the dachshund snapped at the wasps*

FOR:

und plötzlich griff er nach der Hand des anderen (H. Mann) *and suddenly he reached for the other man's hand*

(b) TO (with place-names or names of countries used without an article):

jeden Abend fährt er zurück nach Berlin *every evening he drives back to Berlin*

Die Hauptmasse der britischen Armee konnte sich nach England retten (Meyers Standardlexikon) *The bulk of the British army managed to escape to England*

2. (indicating time)

(a) PAST:

zehn Minuten nach fünf *ten minutes past five*

AFTER:

in den ersten Nächten nach seiner Entlassung (Bernhard) *during the first few nights after his release*

(b) (next in importance to) AFTER:

er war nach dem Kaiser der mächtigste Mann der Welt *after the Emperor he was the most powerful man in the world*

3. FOR:

das Verlangen nach sozialer Gerechtigkeit (FAZ) *the longing for social justice*

ihre Forderung nach einer Lohnerhöhung *their demand for a wage increase*

sie graben nach Gold *they're digging for gold*

er fischt nach Komplimenten *he's fishing for compliments*

4. (sometimes follows the noun) ACCORDING TO:

nach dem Gesetz *according to the law*

nach Schätzungen der Weltgesundheitsorganisation *according to estimates produced by the World Health Organization*

nach Machiavelli *according to Machiavelli*

nach den neuesten Methoden *according to the latest methods*

BY:

seiner/ihrer Anlage *nach by disposition*

nach meiner Uhr *ist es schon halb zwölf* *by my watch it's already half past eleven*

es wird nach dem Gewicht verkauft *it's sold by weight*

ich kenne sie nur dem Namen *nach* *I only know her by name*

JUDGING BY:

ihrer Akzent *nach* *stammt sie aus Schwaben* *judging by her accent she comes from Swabia*

IN:

meiner Ansicht/Meinung *nach* (also *nach meiner Ansicht/Meinung*) *in my opinion*

AFTER:

ein Gemälde *nach Raffael* *a painting after Raphael*

die Stadt wurde nach ihrem Gründer benannt *the town was named after its founder*

NEBEN

I. (+ dative)

1. (indicating place) BESIDE, NEXT TO:

die Bettlerin, die neben dem Torbogen saß (Broch) *the beggar woman, who sat beside (next to) the archway*

2. IN ADDITION TO:

neben Geschichte *studiert er auch Theologie* *in addition to history he studies theology*

3. COMPARED WITH:

neben seiner Schwester *ist er ziemlich klein* *compared with his sister he is rather small*

II. (+ accusative, indicating motion into a position next to)

BESIDE, NEXT TO:

sie setzte sich neben ihn *she sat down beside (next to) him*

er legte die Stoppuhr neben das Buch *he put the stop-watch beside (next to) the book*

- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position next to the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used:

sie ging neben ihm die Straße entlang *she walked along the street beside (next to) him*

(Their relative positions do not change.)

OB (+ genitive, occasionally dative; in literary or ironical use)

ON ACCOUNT OF:

sie nannten ihn ob seiner Nase Knolle *they called him Schnozzle on account of his nose*

- Except in Switzerland, the original sense ABOVE is obsolete. It survives in South German and Austrian place-names, e.g. **Rothenburg ob der Tauber**, **St. Oswald ob Eibiswald** (in Styria).

OBERHALB (+ genitive)

ABOVE:

oberhalb 2000 Meter geht der Regen in Schnee über *above 6,000 feet the rain turns into snow*

oberhalb des Dorfes *above the village*

OHNE (+ accusative)

1. WITHOUT:

er ist ohne seine Familie in Urlaub gefahren *he's gone on holiday without his family*

Ohne is normally used without the indefinite article:

geht sie immer ohne Hut? *does she always go without a hat?*
ein Zimmer ohne Tür *a room without a door*

2. NOT COUNTING:

ohne Vororte hat die Stadt 600 000 Einwohner *the city has 600,000 inhabitants not counting the suburbs*

SEIT (+ dative)

1. SINCE (point of time):

ich wohne hier seit 1998 *I've lived here since 1998*

2. FOR (period):

ich wohne hier seit drei Jahren *I've lived here for three years*
die ersten Wahlen seit Jahrzehnten *the first elections for decades*

For the use of tenses with **seit** see *Use of tenses*, p. 77.

STATT (+ genitive)

INSTEAD OF:

statt eines Blumenstraußes brachte er Pralinen mit *instead of a bunch of flowers he brought chocolates*

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, the dative is used:

statt Eiern haben wir Spargel gekauft *instead of eggs we bought asparagus*

• When **statt** is used as a conjunction, the case following **statt** is determined by the verb concerned:

ich gab das Geld ihm statt ihr *I gave the money to him instead of her*
(= *instead of to her*)

TROTZ (+ genitive; South German, Austrian, Swiss + dative)

IN SPITE OF:

trotz der drastischen Kürzungen im Wehretat (Spiegel) *in spite of the drastic cuts in the defence budget*

The dative may also be used when there is no article (e.g. **trotz nassem Asphalt** *in spite of wet asphalt*), and must be used when the genitive plural form is not distinctive:

trotz Computern *in spite of computers*

ÜBER**1. (+ dative)****1. (indicating place) ABOVE, OVER:**

das Bild hängt über dem Schreibtisch *the picture hangs above the desk*

Nebel lag über dem Dorf *fog hung over the village*

sie trug einen Mantel über ihrem Kleid *she wore a coat over her dress*

2. OVER:

wir besprachen es über einem Glas Wein *we discussed it over a glass of wine*

3. (forget, overlook, etc.)**(a) IN:**

über all der Aufregung habe ich es nicht bemerkt *in all the excitement I didn't notice it*

(b) BECAUSE OF:

Über Suez hat die Welt Edens Verdienste um den Weltfrieden fast vergessen (Zeit) *Because of Suez the world has almost forgotten Eden's contribution to world peace*

II. (+ accusative)

1. (indicating motion) ABOVE:

er hängte das Bild über den Schreibtisch *he hung the picture above the desk* (motion into a position above)

OVER:

die Wellen schlugen über den Deich *the waves broke over the dike*

Ich lehnte mich über die Reling (Penzoldt) *I leant over the rail*

ACROSS:

Sie fuhren über eine Brücke (Lenz) *They drove across a bridge*

sie segelten über den See *they sailed across the lake*

schwarze Wolken jagten über den Himmel *black clouds raced across the sky*

die Fahndung dehnte sich über das ganze Land aus *the search extended across the whole country*

ALONG:

er raste über die Autobahn *he tore along the autobahn*

DOWN:

Tränen liefen ihr über die Backen *tears ran down her cheeks*

BEYOND:

sein Einfluss reichte weit über die Grenzen seines Heimatlandes *his influence reached far beyond the frontiers of his native land*

- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position above the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used:

das Flugzeug kreiste über der Stadt *the plane was circling above the city*

2. VIA:

wir sind über Lüttich gefahren *we came/went via Liège*

die Sendung ist über den Fernmeldesatelliten ausgestrahlt worden *the programme was broadcast via the communications satellite*

3. (indicating time)

(a) OVER:

über Ostern fahren wir weg *we're going away over Easter*

kann ich über Nacht bleiben? *can I stay overnight?*

(b) (used after noun, indicating duration):

er hat die ganze Zeit / den ganzen Abend über getrunken *he was drinking all the time / all evening*

4. (indicating quantity) OVER:

über hundert Autofahrer *over a hundred car drivers*

Kinder über zwölf Jahre *children over twelve years of age*

es kostete über 50 Mark *it cost over 50 marks*

5.

(a) (concerning) ABOUT:

nach langen Querelen mit den Deutschen **über** technische Details *after a long dispute with the Germans about technical details*

wir müssen **über** die Zukunft nachdenken *we must think about the future*

ON:
ein Symposium **über** den Philosophen Günther Anders (FAZ) *a symposium on the philosopher Günther Anders*

die Zeitung berichtet auch **über** die Innenpolitik *the newspaper also reports on home affairs*

AT:

ich staunte **über** seine Überheblichkeit *I was amazed at his arrogance*
meine Entrüstung **über** diese Äußerung *my indignation at this remark*

(b) (bill, cheque) FOR:

eine Rechnung/ein Scheck **über** 500 Mark *a bill/cheque for 500 marks*

6. (indicating power, victory, etc.) OVER:

der König herrschte **über** sein Volk *the king ruled over his people*

der leichte Sieg der Deutschen **über** Frankreich *the Germans' easy victory over France*

7. ... **über** ... AFTER ... :

die Bank machte Fehler **über** Fehler *the bank made mistake after mistake*

sie schrieb einen Brief **über** den anderen *she wrote one letter after another*

UM (+ accusative)

1. (indicating place) ROUND, AROUND:

die Entdeckung eines elften Ringes **um** den Planeten *the discovery of an eleventh ring (a)round the planet*

Sie setzten sich alle **um** den Tisch (Ch. Wolf) *They all sat down (a)round the table*

Drei Monate im Jahr reist sie **um** die Welt (Stern) *For three months a year she travels (a)round the world*

Um is frequently reinforced by **herum**:

sie standen **um** den Tisch **herum** *they stood (a)round the table*

2. (indicating time)

(a) AT (specified time of day):

ich stehe jeden Tag **um** 9 Uhr auf *I get up every day at 9 o'clock*

(b) AROUND, ABOUT:

er wurde **um** diese Zeit abends lebendig **around** (about) *this time in the evening he came to life*

sie ist **um** 1960 (herum) geboren *she was born around (about) 1960*

sie wollen **um** Weihnachten (*herum*) nach Schottland kommen *they're planning to come to Scotland around Christmas*

3. (to the extent of) **BY:**

sie hatte sich **um** zehn Jahre verschätzt *she was out (in her calculations) by ten years*

Die Bevölkerung wächst jährlich **um** zwei Prozent (Aktuell) *Each year the population increases by two per cent*

die Festspiele sind **um** einen Tag verlängert worden *the festival has been extended by one day*

Oftentimes not translated:

die Haltestelle ist **um** 20 Meter versetzt worden *the bus/tram stop has been moved 20 yards*

sie war **um** vieles jünger als ihr Mann *she was much younger than her husband*

ich glaube, du spielst diese Passage **um** eine Nuance zu laut *I think you play this passage a shade too loud*

4. (in respect of)

(a) **ABOUT:**

Meternagel war so blass geworden, dass Rita Angst **um** ihn bekam (Ch. Wolf) *Meternagel had turned so pale that Rita grew worried about him*

(b) **FOR:**

Der irische Autofahrer . . . muss ständig **um** sein Leben . . . kämpfen (Böll) *The Irish motorist must constantly fight for his life*

OVER:

Zwei Tage lang streikten Frankreichs Eisenbahner—nicht **um** Lohn, sondern **um** bessere Arbeitsbedingungen (Welt) *For two days France's railwaymen went on strike—not over pay but better working conditions*

(c) **FOR:**

diese Bitte **um** Hilfe *this request for help*

das Mädchen wandte sich an mich **um** Rat *the girl turned to me for advice*

5. (South German, Austrian) **FOR** (price):

ein Buch **um** 100 Schilling *a book for 100 schillings*

6. (indicating deprivation, loss) **OUT OF:**

sie haben ihn **um** sein ganzes Geld betrogen *they cheated him out of all his money*

7. . . . **um** **AFTER** . . . :

Monat **um** Monat *month after month*

UNTER**I. (+ dative)****1. (indicating place)****(a) UNDER, BELOW, BENEATH:**

der Hund saß unter dem Tisch *the dog sat under the table*

die Familie, die unter uns wohnte *the family which lived below us*

800 Meter unter dem Meeresspiegel *800 metres below sea level*

(b) AMONG:

er fand die Rechnung unter ihren Papieren *he found the bill among her papers*

in Südafrika war er unter Freunden *in South Africa he was among friends*

Spürt man eine neue Rivalität unter den Spielern? (*Stern*) *Does one detect a new rivalry among the players?*

2. (indicating quantity) UNDER:

Kinder unter acht Jahren *children under eight years of age*

3. (indicating circumstances) UNDER:

unter diesen Umständen *under these circumstances*

TO:

unter lautem Beifall *to loud applause*

(with verbal noun) expressed by —ING:

unter Missachtung aller ethischen Gesichtspunkte *disregarding all ethical considerations*

OR WHILE —ING:

man bringe das Wasser unter Beigabe von etwas Essig zum Kochen
bring the water to the boil while adding a little vinegar

II. (+ accusative, indicating motion)**1. (into a position under) UNDER, BELOW, BENEATH:**

der Ball war unter den Tisch gerollt *the ball had rolled under the table*

die Sonne ist unter den Horizont getaucht *the sun dipped below the horizon*

Ich ... guckte aus lauter Verlegenheit unters Bett (*Zwergen*) *I looked under the bed out of sheer embarrassment*

- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position under the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used. Thus, *if one drives under the bridge* is expressed by **wenn man unter der Brücke durchfährt**; **wenn man unter die Brücke fährt** would mean that one drives to a position under the bridge and stops there.

2. AMONG:

er verteilte sein Geld unter die Armen *he distributed his money among the poor*

UNTERHALB (+ genitive)

BELOW:

*unterhalb des Dorfes below the village***VON (+ dative)**

1. FROM:

*das Regenwasser tropft vom Dach the rainwater is dripping from the roof**sie erhoben sich von ihren Stühlen they got up from their chairs**sie kommt gerade vom Arzt she's just come from the doctor**ich habe einen Brief von meiner Freundin bekommen I've received a letter from my girl-friend**die Affen legen keinen Wert darauf, von uns abzustammen the apes attach no importance to being descended from us*

OFF, FROM:

er sprang vom Dach He jumped off (from) the roof

2. (indicating cause etc.) FROM:

er ist müde vom weiten Weg he's tired from the long walk

WITH:

die Berge sind weiß vom Schnee the hills are white with snow

(with passive—indicating agent—or expressing authorship etc.) BY:

*sie ist vom Hund gebissen worden she's been bitten by the dog**das Stück ist von Shakespeare the play is by Shakespeare**ein Bild von Tizian a painting by Titian**sie hat ein Kind von ihm she has a child by him*

3. (indicating means)

(a) OUT OF:

ich habe das Geschenk von meinem Taschengeld bezahlt I paid for the present out of my pocket-money

(b) ON:

Tante Jane lebte nur von Tee, schwarzem Kaffee und zwei Tassen Fleischbrühe täglich (Musil) Aunt Jane lived solely on tea, black coffee, and two cups of broth a day

4. ABOUT:

*Von ihrer Ehe sprach sie nie (Bachmann) She never spoke about her marriage**Auch glaube ich, etwas von einem dreijährigen Kind gelesen zu haben (Grass) I also think I read something about a three-year-old child**von seinem Lebensweg ist wenig bekannt little is known about his life*

5. (in various contexts) or:

(a) Where the genitive is not shown:

der Geruch von Tomaten *the smell of tomatoes*

der Export von Kohle *the export of coal*

(b) To indicate a quality:

eine Frau von großer Schönheit *a woman of great beauty*

ein Edelstein von großem Wert *a gem of great value*

eine Angelegenheit von größter Wichtigkeit (Musil) *a matter of the greatest importance*

(c) In descriptive phrases of the type **ein . . . von:**

ein Riese von einem Mann *a giant of a man*

(d) *consisting of:*

eine Inflationsrate von zwei Prozent *an inflation rate of two per cent*

(e) *on the part of:*

das war nett von ihr *that was nice of her*

6. (partitive use) of:

einige von ihnen *some of them*

kein Wort von dem, was du sagst, ist wahr *not one word of what you say is true*

OUT OF:

in drei von zehn Fällen *in three cases out of ten*

SOME OF:

er hat von der Milch getrunken *he's drunk some of the milk*

7. (as part of a name, functions as the nobiliary particle—cf. French *de*):

J. W. von Goethe

• The genitive is sometimes replaced by **von**, especially in spoken German:

einige von meinen Freunden (also **einige meiner Freunde**) *some of my friends*

der neue Freund (von) meiner Schwester *my sister's new boy-friend*

VOR

I. (+ dative)

1. (indicating place)

(a) IN FRONT OF:

Bewerber . . . standen Schlange vor dem Schloss (de Bruyn) *Suitors queued up in front of the castle*

AT (door, gate, etc.):

Immer länger wurde die Schlange vor dem Schalter (Böll) *Longer and longer grew the queue at the counter*

OFF (coast etc.):

Das Zentrum möchte die Ölsuche vor Norwegen gänzlich untersagen
(Zeit) *The Centre Party [of Norway] would like to prohibit completely the search for oil off Norway*

OUTSIDE (town, harbour, building, etc.):

sie trafen sich vor dem Bahnhof *they met outside the station*
auf einer Straße vor Bad Langenschwalbach (C. W. Ceram) *on a road outside Bad Langenschwalbach*

BEFORE:

Sie müssen vor der Kirche links abbiegen *you must turn left before the church*

(b) (in the presence of) IN FRONT OF:

als meine Schwiegermutter mir dann vor den beiden Mädchen ungastliches Verhalten vorwarf (Brigitte) *when my mother-in-law then accused me in front of the two girls of inhospitable conduct*

to (audience):

sie spielten vor ausverkauftem Haus *they played to a full house*
seine Rede vor der Jungen Union (Zeit) *his speech to the Young Christian Democrats*

(c) (bow etc.) to:

die Achtung derer . . . , die bisher vor mir den Hut gezogen hatten
(Hesse) *the respect of those who had hitherto taken off their hats to me*
die ganze Armee kapitulierte vor dem Feind *the whole army surrendered to the enemy*

(d) AHEAD OF:

Schmidt liegt zwei Runden vor den anderen *Schmidt is two laps ahead of the others*

2. (indicating precedence) OVER:

die Rettung von Menschenleben hat den Vorrang vor allen anderen Maßnahmen *the saving of human lives takes precedence over all other measures*

3. (indicating time)

(a) BEFORE:

Er ließ unmittelbar vor seiner Moskau-Reise den Hafen verminen
(Spiegel) *He had the harbour mined immediately before his trip to Moscow*
vor dem letzten Ausbruch des Vesuvs (C. W. Ceram) *before the last eruption of Vesuvius*

Stalin wollte die Reichshauptstadt vor den Westalliierten erreichen und einnehmen (Spiegel) *Stalin wanted to reach and take the capital of the Reich before the Western allies*

TO:

zehn Minuten vor sechs *ten minutes to six*

(b) AGO:

Zwischenfälle, die sich vor drei Wochen in Laibach zutrug (Zeit)
incidents which occurred three weeks ago in Ljubljana

Heute vor einer Woche wurde Elisabeth . . . ins Krankenhaus eingeliefert (Wohmann) *A week ago today Elisabeth was admitted to hospital*

4. (indicating cause) WITH:

Sie zitterte am ganzen Leibe vor Zorn und Leidenschaft (Penzoldt) *Her whole body was trembling with anger and passion*

weiß vor Wut *white with rage*

FOR:

sie machte vor Freude einen Luftsprung *she jumped for joy*

5. (in respect of)

(a) FROM:

Schutz vor dem Verkehrslärm (Zeit) *protection from traffic noise*

um uns vor völligem Verhungern zu bewahren (Kafka) *to keep us from total starvation*

solange nichts davon vor ihm verborgen wird (Canetti) *so long as nothing of that is kept from him*

(b) AGAINST:

als Churchill dann begann, vor der Befriedungspolitik zu warnen (H. Höpfl) *when Churchill then began to warn against the policy of appeasement*

(c) FOR:

aus Achtung vor seinen Eltern *out of respect for his parents*

Man hatte eine gewisse Ehrfurcht vor ihr (Musil) *People felt a certain reverence for her*

(d) OF:

Angst vor dem Liebesverlust (S. Freud) *fear of the loss of love*

II. (+ accusative, indicating motion into a position in front of) IN

FRONT OF:

sie stellte die Blumen vor das Fenster *she placed the flowers in front of the window*

er setzte sich vor die Tür *he sat down in front of the door*

OUTSIDE:

er ging vors Haus *he went outside the house*

sie stellte das gestohlene Auto vor die Polizeiwache *she parked the stolen car outside the police station*

- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position in front of the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used:

sie ging vor ihm die Straße entlang *she walked along the street in front of him*

(Their relative positions do not change.)

WÄHREND (+ genitive, colloquially also + dative)**DURING:**

Die Dramatiker sind während des Festivals anwesend (NZZ) *The dramatists are present during the festival*

während der Unterredung mit seiner Schwester (Bernhard) *during my conversation with his sister*

Sometimes expressed by the conjunctions **AS** or **WHILE**:

Eine Emsige liest während der Wanderung im Brevier (S. Wichmann) *One industrious girl is reading her breviary as they walk*

• **Während**, unlike French *pendant*, is not used to refer to duration; for in e.g. *she lived abroad for five years* is expressed by the accusative: **sie lebte fünf Jahre im Ausland**.

WEGEN (+ genitive, colloquially also + dative; may follow the noun esp. in formal usage)**BECAUSE OF, ON ACCOUNT OF:**

wegen des schlechten Wetters sind wir zu Hause geblieben *because of the bad weather we stayed at home*

Die Leiche . . . beschlagnahmte man wegen Seuchengefahr (Grass) *The body was seized because of the danger of an epidemic*

weil wir ihn der vielen Russen wegen . . . nicht beerdigen konnten (Grass) *because we couldn't bury him on account of all the Russians*

FOR THE SAKE OF:

ich mache die Arbeit ihrer selbst wegen *I do the work for its own sake*

Gewiss bestehe kein Anlass, sich wegen Elisabeth Sorgen zu machen (Wohmann) *There was, I said, certainly no reason to worry about Elisabeth*
wir müssen wegen des Liefertermins anfragen *we must inquire about the delivery date*

Where the genitive plural form is not distinctive, the dative is used:

wegen Magengeschwüren *because of stomach ulcers*

ZU (+ dative)1. (indicating place, in set phrases) **AT, ON, TO:**

zu Hause *at home*

zu jemandes Füßen *at someone's feet*

zu beiden Seiten (der Straße etc.) *on either side (of the street etc.)*

zu jemandes Linken/Rechten *to someone's left/right*

2. (indicating direction) **TO:**

er ging zum Fenster *he went to the window*

ich fahre dich zum Flughafen *I'll drive you to the airport*

Missionen zum Nachbarplaneten der Erde, dem Mars *missions to Earth's neighbouring planet, Mars*

der Übergang zur Marktwirtschaft *the transition to a market economy*

3. (indicating time, occasion)

(a) AT:

Lord Carnarvon befand sich zu dieser Zeit in England (C. W. Ceram)

Lord Carnarvon was in England at this time

wir fahren zu Ostern nach Dänemark *at Easter we're going to Denmark*

(b) FOR:

was hast du zum Geburtstag / zu Weihnachten bekommen? *what did you get for your birthday / for Christmas?*

4. (indicating purpose) FOR:

Die Sowjetunion verkaufte eine Raumstation an Japan zu Forschungszwecken (Aktuell) *The Soviet Union sold a space station to Japan for research purposes*

die Vorbereitungen zur Uraufführung seiner achten Sinfonie *preparations for the first performance of his eighth symphony*

Stoff zu einem neuen Kleid *material for a new dress*

(with definite article) AS:

zur Belohnung für ihre Dienste *as a reward for her services*

Zu + verbal noun frequently = to + infinitive:

Übungen zur Entspannung der Muskeln *exercises to relax the muscles*

Zur Fassung von Beschlüssen ist eine absolute Mehrheit von 35 Stimmen nötig (Aktuell) *An absolute majority of 35 votes is required to pass resolutions*

5. (in respect of)

(a) TO:

er war sehr freundlich zu mir *he was very friendly to me*

FOR:

seine Liebe zu seiner Frau *his love for his wife*

(b) TO(WARDS):

die Haltung Roosevelts zu diesem Problem *Roosevelt's attitude to(wards) this problem*

(c) ON:

die drei amerikanischen Dissertationen zu Fallada *the three American theses on Fallada*

ein Standardwerk zur deutschen Sprache *a standard work on the German language*

hat er sich zu dieser Statistik geäußert? *has he commented on these statistics?*

(d) WITH:

wegen seiner Beziehungen zu einer Geisha (Welt) because of his relationship with a geisha

6. (indicating change of state):

ihm ist Kalifornien zur zweiten Heimat geworden *California has become his second home*

INTO:

die Kirche hatte sich zu einer politischen Macht entwickelt *the church had developed into a political power*

er verzog den Mund zu einem Grinsen *he twisted his mouth into a grin*

TO FORM:

die Firmen sind zu einem großen Unternehmen verschmolzen *the firms have merged to form a large company*

With a complement in English (but no preposition):

Eisenhower wurde zweimal zum Präsidenten der USA gewählt
Eisenhower was twice elected President of the USA

7. to (someone's surprise, regret, satisfaction, etc.):

zu meiner großen Verwunderung hat er sofort geantwortet *to my great surprise he answered immediately*

8. WITH:

nehmen Sie Milch zum Tee? *do you take milk with your tea?*

9. (with numerals)

(a) (indicating price) AT:

zu niedrigen Preisen *at low prices*

sie verkauften Äpfel zu 1 Mark das Pfund *they sold apples at 1 mark a pound*

(b) (indicating ratio) TO:

zehn zu eins *ten to one*

(c) (indicating score):

(Es steht) 5:1 [pronounced fünf zu eins] *(The score is) 5-1*

ZUFOLGE (+ dative; follows the noun or pronoun)

ACCORDING TO:

Umfragen zufolge sprachen sich 56% der Befragten für die politische Souveränität ihrer Provinz aus (Aktuell) *According to opinion polls 56% of those interviewed expressed their support for the political sovereignty of their province*

dem Zeugen zufolge hatte der Radfahrer keine Schuld an dem Unfall
according to the witness the cyclist was not to blame for the accident

ZULIEBE (+ dative; follows the noun or pronoun)

FOR (someone's) SAKE:

ich habe es dir zuliebe getan *I did it for your sake***ZWISCHEN**

I. (+ dative)

1. BETWEEN:

er saß zwischen seiner Frau und seiner Nichte *he sat between his wife and his niece***es ist zwischen sechs und sieben Uhr passiert** *it happened between six and seven o'clock***die fundamentalen Unterschiede zwischen christlicher und islamischer Kultur** *the fundamental differences between Christian and Islamic culture***die offene Konfrontation zwischen Rauchern und Nichtrauchern** (Aktuell) *the open confrontation between smokers and non-smokers*

2. AMONG:

der Pass war zwischen den Papieren in der Schublade *the passport was among the papers in the drawer***die neuen Wohnsiedlungen zwischen den grünen Hügeln Kuala Lumpurs** (Welt) *the new housing estates among the green hills of Kuala Lumpur*

II. (+ accusative, indicating motion into a position between or among)

1. BETWEEN:

er setzte sich zwischen Herrn und Frau Schmidt *he sat down between Herr and Frau Schmidt***er parkte das Auto zwischen zwei andere** *he parked the car between two others*

- Motion may be involved that is not directed towards a position between the person or thing referred to; then the dative is used:

sie ging zwischen ihren Brüdern *she walked between her brothers*

(Their relative positions do not change.)

2. AMONG:

er hat zwischen den Salat Radieschen gesät *he's sown radishes among the lettuce***CROSS-REFERENCE LIST OF ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS**

Items are cross-referred to the list of German prepositions beginning on p. 117. Prepositions not rendered by a German preposition are also included, with translations.

ABOUT 1. (*concerning*) **über** ACC. (II 5a), p. 144; **wegen**, p. 151.

2. (time) **um** (2b), p. 144; [- . . . o'clock] **gegen** (3a), p. 133; (quantity) **gegen** (3a), p. 133; **etwa, ungefähr**.

3. (quality: e.g. *the important thing* -) **an** DAT. (I 6), p. 120

ABOVE (place) **über** DAT. (I 1), p. 142, **oberhalb**, p. 141; (motion) **über** ACC. (II 1), p. 143

ACCORDING TO **nach** (4), p. 140; **zufolge**, p. 153; **laut**, p. 137

ACROSS (motion) **über** ACC. (II 1), p. 143; - *the street* **gegenüber**

AFTER 1. (time) **nach** (2a), p. 139

2. (place) **hinter** DAT. (I 2), p. 134

3. (*next in importance to*) **nach** (2b), p. 139

4. [*name* -] **nach** (4), p. 140

AGAINST 1. (place) **gegen** (1), p. 132; [*lean* -] **an** DAT. (I 1f), p. 118; **gegen** (1), p. 132

2. (opposition) **gegen** (2a), p. 133

ALONG **entlang**, p. 131

AMONG (place) **bei** (1e), p. 125, **unter** DAT. (I 1b), p. 146; **zwischen** DAT. (I 2), p. 154; (motion) **unter** ACC. (II 2), p. 146; **zwischen** ACC. (II 2), p. 154

APART FROM **außer** 1, p. 124; **abgesehen von**.

AROUND 1. (place) **um** (1), p. 144

2. (time) **um** (2b), p. 144; [- . . . o'clock] **gegen** (3a), p. 133; (quantity) **gegen** (3a), p. 133; **etwa, ungefähr**.

AT 1. (place) **an** DAT. (I 1h), p. 118; [- window] **an** (I 1b), p. 118; (in front of) **vor** DAT. (I 1a), p. 148; [- *baker's* etc.] **bei** (1c), p. 125; [- *theatre* etc.] **in** DAT. (I 1), p. 135; [- *post office, conference, etc.*] **auf** DAT. (I 1b), p. 121; [*aim, point* -] **auf** ACC. (II 2), p. 122; [*nibble* etc. -] **an** DAT. (I 1k), p. 118; (motion: *sit down* -) **an** ACC. (II 1), p. 120

2. (time) **zu** (3a), p. 152; [- *moment*] **in** DAT (I 2a), p. 135; [- . . . o'clock] **um** (2a), p. 144; [- *sunrise, breakfast, etc.*] **bei** (5), p. 126

3. [- *age, speed, rate*] **mit** (3), p. 138

4. [- *price*] **zu** (9a), p. 153

5. (*in response to*: *request* etc.) **auf** ACC. (II 5b), p. 123

6. [*amazed* etc. -] **über** (II 5a), p. 144

BECAUSE OF **wegen**, p. 151

BEFORE (place) **vor** (I 1a), p. 148; (time) **vor** (I 3a), p. 149

BEHIND (place) **hinter** DAT. (I 1), p. 134; (motion) **hinter** ACC. (II), p. 135

BELOW, BENEATH (place) **unter** DAT. (I 1a), p. 146, **unterhalb**, p. 147; (motion) **unter** ACC. (II), p. 146

BESIDE (place) **neben** DAT. (I 1), p. 140; (motion) **neben** ACC. (II), p. 140

BETWEEN (place) **zwischen** DAT. (I 1), p. 154; (motion) **zwischen** ACC. (II 1), p. 154

BEYOND [- border etc.] **hinter** DAT. (II 2), p. 135; [- ocean etc.] **jenseits**, p. 137

BY 1. (place) **bei** (1a), p. 125; [*sit down* -] **an** ACC. (II 1), p. 120; (motion: past) **an** . . . DAT. **vorbei**.

2. (time) **bis** (1b), p. 128; **bis zu** (ii) (p. 129).

3. (means) (*by means of*) **durch** (3), p. 130; [*recognize* etc. -] **an** DAT. (I 4), p. 119; [*take, call*, etc. -] **bei** (2), p. 126; [*grab* etc. -] **an** DAT. (I 3), p. 119; [- *car, train*, etc.] **mit** (2), p. 138

4. (*according to*) **nach** (4), p. 140

5. (*to the extent of*) **um** (3), p. 145

6. [- *Shakespeare* etc.] **von** (2), p. 147; —ing **indem**, p. 163; **dadurch**, **dass**.

BY MEANS OF **durch** (3a), p. 130; **mittels**, p. 138; [*demonstrate* etc. -] **an** DAT. (I 4), p. 119

BY THE TIME **bis** (2), p. 129

BY WAY OF **an** DAT. (I 7), p. 120

CONTRARY TO **entgegen**, p. 131

DOWN (away from one) . . . **hinab**, . . . **hinunter**; (towards one) . . . **herab**, . . . **herunter**.

DURING **während**, p. 151

EXCEPT (FOR) **außer** (1), p. 124; **bis auf** (d) (p. 129).

FOR 1. (various senses) **für** (1), p. 131; (expressing indirect object) dative case or **für** [e.g. *I bought a present for him* **ich habe ihm ein Geschenk gekauft** or **ich habe ein Geschenk für ihn gekauft**].

2. (time: length of time) . . . ACC. (**lang**) [e.g. - *three days* **drei Tage (lang)**]; (past time continuing) **seit** (2), p. 141; [*go away* etc. -] **für** (1), p. 131; [*elect* -] **auf** ACC. (II 3a), p. 122

3. (occasion: - *Christmas* etc.) **zu** (3b), p. 152

4. (purpose) **zu** (4), p. 152; [*tablets* etc. -] **gegen** (2b), p. 133

5. [*bill, cheque* -] **über** ACC. (II 5b), p. 144

6. (*in exchange for*) **gegen** (4), p. 133

7. [*request* etc. -] **um** (4c), p. 145; [*longing, demand*, etc.] **nach** (3), p. 139; [*fight* -] **um** (4b), p. 145

8. [*respect* -] **vor** DAT. (I 5c), p. 150

FROM 1. **von** (1), p. 147; [*hang -*] **an** DAT. (I 1i), p. 118

2. (origin, source) **aus** (2), p. 124

3. (protection) **vor** DAT. (I 5a), p. 150; *... onwards* **ab**, p. 117;
von ... an.

IN 1. (place) **in** DAT. (I 1), p. 135; [*- field, street, Cyprus, etc.*] **auf** DAT. (I 1c), p. 122; [*- sky*] **an** (I 1e), p. 118

2. (time) **in** DAT. (I 2), p. 135; [*- morning etc.*] **an** DAT. (I 2a), p. 119

3. (circumstances) [*- fog etc.*] **bei** (5b), p. 127; [*- accident*] **bei** (5a), p. 126

4. [*- manner*] **auf** ACC. (II 4), p. 123; [*- low etc. voice*] **mit** (2), p. 138

5. [*- opinion*] **nach** (4), p. 140

6. [*rich etc. -*] **an** DAT. (I 7), p. 120

IN ACCORDANCE WITH **entsprechend**, p. 131; **gemäß**, p. 134

INSIDE **innerhalb**, p. 137

IN SPITE OF **trotz**, p. 142

INSTEAD OF **statt**, p. 142, **anstatt**, p. 121

INTO 1. **in** (II), p. 136; [*run, bump -*] **gegen** (1), p. 132

2. (change of state) **zu** (6), p. 153; **in** (II 2), p. 136

IN FRONT OF 1. (place) **vor** DAT. (I 1a), p. 148; (motion) **vor** ACC. (II), p. 150

2. (in presence of) **vor** DAT. (I 1b), p. 149

NEAR **bei** (1a), p. 125; **in der Nähe + GEN./von**

NEXT TO (place) **bei** (1a), p. 125; **neben** DAT. (I 1), p. 140; (motion) **neben** ACC. (II), p. 140

OF 1. genitive case [e.g. *the solving - difficult problems* **die Lösung schwieriger Probleme**] or, where the genitive cannot be shown, **von** (5a), p. 148 [e.g. *the solving - problems* **die Lösung von Problemen**]

2. (consisting of: *inflation rate etc. -*) **von** (5d), p. 148

3. [*jealous, proud -*] **auf** ACC. (II 5c), p. 123

4. [*typical etc. -*] **für** (4), p. 132

OFF 1. (from) **von** (1), p. 147

2. [*- coast etc.*] **vor** DAT. (I 1a), p. 149

ON 1. (place: on top of) **auf** DAT. (I 1), p. 121; (on side of) **an** DAT. (I 1a), p. 117; [*- border, coast, etc.*] **an** DAT. (I 1c), p. 118; (on s.o.'s person) **bei** (1d), p. 125; (motion: *put, draw, etc.*) **auf** ACC. (II 1a), p. 122

2. (time: *- Friday etc.*) **an** DAT. (I 2a), p. 119

3. (*about*) **über** ACC. (II 5), p. 144; [*comment etc. -*] **zu** (5c), p. 152

4. [*- holiday, journey*] **auf** DAT. (I 2), p. 122

5. [- arrival, occasion] **bei** (5a), p. 126; [- closer acquaintance] **bei** (5d), p. 127

6. [- TV, radio] **in** DAT. (I 1), p. 135

7. [demands -] **an** ACC. (II 2), p. 121; [agree, concentrate -] **auf** ACC. (II 5c), p. 123

ON ACCOUNT OF **wegen**, p. 151

OPPOSITE **gegenüber** (1), p. 133

OUT OF 1. (motion) **aus** (1), p. 124

2. (reason) **aus** (4), p. 124

3. (means) **von** (3a), p. 147

4. [cheat etc. -] **um** (6), p. 145

5. (partitive) **von** (6), p. 148

OUTSIDE (place) **außerhalb**, p. 125; [- town, harbour, etc.] **vor** DAT. (I 1a), p. 148; (motion) **vor** ACC. (II), p. 150

OVER 1. (place) **über** DAT. (I 1), p. 142; (motion) **über** ACC. (II 1), p. 143

2. [- glass of beer etc.] **bei** (5b), p. 127; **über** DAT. (I 2), p. 142

3. (time: - Easter etc.) **über** ACC. (II 3a), p. 143

4. (precedence) **vor** DAT. (I 2), p. 149

5. (quantity) **über** ACC. (II 4), p. 143

6. [power, victory, etc. -] **über** ACC. (II 6), p. 144

7. [strike -] **um** (4), p. 145

PAST 1. (place) **an** . . . DAT. **vorbei**; (beyond) **hinter** DAT.

2. (time: minutes -) **nach** (2a), p. 139

ROUND **um** (. . . herum) (see **um** (1), p. 144).

SINCE **seit** (1), p. 141

THANKS TO **dank**, p. 130

THROUGH 1. (place) **durch** (1), p. 130

2. (through agency of) **durch** (2), p. 130

THROUGHOUT 1. (place) **im/in der ganzen** . . . [e.g. - the country **im ganzen Land**]; (with name of country, city, etc.) **in ganz** . . .

2. (time) **den ganzen / die ganze / das ganze** . . . **hindurch** [e.g. - the war **den ganzen Krieg hindurch**].

TILL see *until*.

TO 1. (direction) **zu** (2), p. 151; **an** ACC. (II 1), p. 120; (with name of country, city, etc.) **nach** (1b), p. 139, (with such name preceded by definite article) **in** ACC. (II 1), p. 136; [- theatre etc.] **in** ACC. (II 1), p. 136

2. (expressing indirect object) dative case is used [e.g. *I'll give it - her later ich gebe es ihr später*].

3. (time: *minutes* -) **vor** DAT. (I 3a), p. 149
4. [*address question* etc. -] **an** ACC. (II 2), p. 121
5. [*three - four* etc.] **bis** (3), p. 129
6. (ratio: *10 - 1* etc.) **zu** (9b), p. 153; (*per*) **auf** ACC. (II 6), p. 123
7. [- *applause*] **unter** (I 3), p. 146
8. [- *s.o.'s surprise, dismay*, etc.] **zu** (7), p. 153
9. [*attitude* -] **zu** (5b), p. 152
10. [*polite* etc. -] **gegenüber** (2), p. 134, **zu** (5a), p. 152

TOWARDS 1. (direction) **auf** . . . ACC. **zu**.

2. (time) **gegen** (3b), p. 133
3. [*attitude* -] **gegenüber** (2), p. 134, **zu** (5b), p. 152

UNDER 1. (place) **unter** DAT. (I 1a), p. 146; (motion) **unter** ACC. (II 1), p. 146

2. (quantity) **unter** DAT. (I 2), p. 146
3. [- *circumstances*] **unter** DAT. (I 3), p. 146

UNTIL **bis** (1a), p. 128; **bis zu** (i), p. 129

VIA **über** ACC. (II 2), p. 143

VIS-À-VIS **gegenüber** (3), p. 134

WITH 1. **mit**, p. 138

2. (*in view of*) **bei** (6), p. 128
3. (*in spite of*) **bei** (7), p. 128
4. [*tremble* etc. -] **vor** (I 4), p. 150

WITHIN 1. (time) **binnen**, p. 128; **innerhalb**, p. 137

2. (place) **innerhalb**, p. 137

WITHOUT **ohne** (1), p. 141

Guide to Conjunctions

For abbreviations used see Guide to Prepositions, p. 117.

ABER

BUT:

sie ist groß, aber nicht stark *she is tall but not strong*
er wollte kommen, aber er durfte nicht *he wanted to come, but he wasn't allowed to*

Aber may also, however, function as an adverb and come later in the clause (sometimes expressed by **HOWEVER**):

er wollte kommen, er durfte aber nicht
Im Norden [Schottlands] aber kann man stundenlang wandern an ve lassenen Seen (St. Zweig) *In the north, however, one can walk for hours on end by solitary lochs*
Sabine schrieb, Heinrich aber spielte Schach *Sabine was writing, but Heinrich was playing chess*

When two verbs share the same subject, **aber** is often placed after the second verb:

sie schreibt gern Romane, baut aber ungern Betten *she likes to write novels, but dislikes making beds*

ALLEIN (in literary usage)

BUT:

er rief um Hilfe, allein es war zu spät *he cried for help, but it was too late*

ALS

1. (followed by noun)

(a) **AS (A/THE):**

Sie könnten eines Tages als Lord Kilmarnock . . . erwachen (Th. Mann)
you could wake up one day as Lord Kilmarnock

Sie arbeitet als Politesse in Stuttgart (Bunte) *She works as a traffic warden in Stuttgart*

Not translated in:

wir gingen als gute Freunde auseinander *we parted good friends*
er ist als Held/Bettler/Christ gestorben *he died a hero/beggar/Christian*

(b) (with causal nuance) **BEING:**

Als aufgeklärter Amerikaner glaubte er nicht an Gespenster (Zeit) *Being an enlightened American he did not believe in ghosts*

2. (introducing clause)

(a) (indicating past time) **WHEN:***als er nach Hause kam* **when** *he came home**als der Krieg vorbei war* **when** *the war was over***BY THE TIME:***als die Aufführung zu Ende war, war ich total erschöpft* **by the time** *the performance was over I was completely exhausted***AS:***als ich in die Stadt zurückfuhr* **as** *I drove back into town**gerade als ich einschlafen wollte* **just as** *I was going off to sleep*Or expressed by **—ING:***Komm, hier, sagte sie leise, als sie hörte, wie er sich in der Dunkelheit vorsichtig hinter ihr hertastete* (Kluge) *'Come on, over here,' she said softly, hearing him feel his way gingerly behind her in the darkness***Als** is also used with the present tense in the 'historic present':*Als ich die Namen Edith Piaf und Judy Garland ins Gespräch werfe* (interview in *Brigitte*) **When** *I casually mentioned the names of Edith Piaf and Judy Garland*

and in the synopses of literary works:

als der Prinz einsieht, dass er Unrecht hat **when** *the prince realizes that he is wrong*(b) (with inversion, verb in subjunctive; in literary usage) **AS IF/THOUGH:***Sie spielte, als beachte sie ihn nicht, mit ihrem offenen Haar* (Penzoldt) *She was playing with her loose hair as if taking no notice of him*3. (expressing comparison) **THAN:***er ist intelligenter als ich* **he's more intelligent than me***sie ist jünger, als sie aussieht* **she's younger than she looks****ALS OB****AS IF:***sie sieht/sah aus, als ob sie krank wäre* **she looks/looked as if she were ill****BEVOR****BEFORE:***Sie wollte ihn noch einmal sehen, bevor sie abreiste* (Kluge) *she wanted to see him once more before she left**das muss geändert werden, bevor sich noch mehr Unfälle ereignen* **that must be changed before more accidents happen****BIS**1. **UNTIL, TILL:***ich bleibe hier, bis der Regen aufhört* **I'm staying here until (till) the rain stops**

2. BY THE TIME:

bis sie die Schule verlässt, ist sie ein reifer Mensch *by the time she leaves school she'll be a mature person*

3. (Austrian, in colloquial usage) WHEN

DA (indicating cause)

AS, SINCE:

da er taub war, hörte er es nicht *as (since) he was deaf he didn't hear it*

DAMIT [da:'mit] (indicating purpose)

SO THAT:

das Mädchen schrieb sich selber Briefe, damit man denken sollte, sie hätte einen Freund *the girl wrote letters to herself so that people would think she had a boyfriend*

DASS

THAT:

es tut mir leid, dass ich Sie beleidigt habe *I'm sorry that I offended you*
ich wusste nicht, dass er Österreicher war *I didn't know that he was Austrian*
Meine Gefühle sind so national, dass ich nur ein deutsches Mädchen lieben könnte (A. Hitler) *My feelings are so national that I could only love a German girl*

THE FACT THAT:

Dann aber kam noch hinzu, dass er ungern nein sagte (Kluge) *But then there was also the fact that he didn't like to say no*
ich machte ihn darauf aufmerksam, dass es regnete *I drew his attention to the fact that it was raining*

FOR . . . TO:

Es ist notwendig, dass die Partei wieder zur Avantgarde des Proletariats wird (Weiss) *It is necessary for the Party to become once again the avant-garde of the proletariat*

DENN

1. (indicating reason, cause) **BECAUSE, AS, SINCE**, (in formal usage) **FOR:**

Das ist gefährlich, denn in den nächsten Monaten muss viel geschehen (FAZ) *That is dangerous because in the next few months a lot has to be done*

Ich rückte das Licht in die Mitte des Schreibtisches, dann aber wieder weg und löschte es schließlich ganz aus, denn er wollte kein Licht (Bernhard) *I moved the lamp to the middle of the desk, then moved it away again before finally switching it off altogether, since he didn't want any light*

- **Denn** is used with main clause word order; a sentence may not begin with a **denn**-clause.

2. **THAN:**

(a) (to avoid repetition of als):

Die Schriftstellerinnen dieser Zeit sind mehr als Persönlichkeiten denn als Autorinnen interessant (SZ) *The women writers of this period are interesting more as personalities **than** as authors*

(b) **denn je (zuvor) THAN EVER (BEFORE):**

es ist kälter denn je *it's colder **than ever***

DOCH**BUT:**

sie versprach zu kommen, doch ihre Mutter wurde krank *she promised to come, **but** her mother fell ill*

EHE (esp. in literary usage)**BEFORE:**

Dann dauert es noch zwei Jahre, ehe die Russen am Atlantik sind (Böll)
*Then it'll take another two years **before** the Russians get to the Atlantic*

ehe . . . nicht UNTIL:

Ich glaube . . . kein Wort davon, ehe ich es nicht mit meinen eigenen Augen gesehen habe (Penzoldt) *I won't believe a word of it **until** I've seen it with my own eyes*

ENTWEDER . . . ODER**EITHER . . . OR:**

entweder hat sie unsere Verabredung vergessen, oder sie hat nicht kommen können *either she forgot our date, or she couldn't come*
er kann entweder den Apfel oder die Orange haben, aber nicht beides
*he can have **either** the apple or the orange, but not both*

FALLS1. **IF:**

Falls es mir gelingt, die erste kritische Zeit zu überleben (Kafka) *If I (Should I) succeed in surviving the first critical period*

2. **IN CASE:**

ich nehme das Buch mit, falls er dort sein sollte *I'll take the book with me **in case** he should be there*

INDEM**BY —ING:**

Eine Sprache erlernt man, indem man sie liebt (Wohmann) *You learn a language **by** loving it*

Ich verdiente mir mein Brot, *indem* ich . . . Kanarienvögel, Papageien und Katzen ausstopfte (Th. Mann) *I earned a living by stuffing canaries, parrots, and cats*

- The original sense of the conjunction, namely AS, WHILE, is now obsolete.

NACHDEM

AFTER:

Nachdem ihr Dolmetscher sie ins Bild gesetzt hatte (Lenz) *After* her interpreter had put her in the picture

OB

WHETHER:

Ich . . . wusste noch nicht, *ob* ich in meiner alten Schule war (Böll) *I didn't know yet whether I was in my old school*

Oskar war es gleichgültig, *ob* wir blieben oder gingen (Grass) *It didn't matter to Oskar whether we stayed or went*

(in elliptical construction) expressed by direct question:

ob er es schafft? *will he manage(, I wonder)?*

ob ich Deutscher sei? *was I German(, he asked)?*

OBGLEICH, OBWOHL

ALTHOUGH:

Nach Zwiebeln roch es, *obgleich* Zwiebeln knapp waren (Grass) *There was a smell of onions, although onions were scarce*

Erst bei Metro Goldwyn Mayer erhielt [Clark Gable] seine Chance—*obwohl* man dort an seinen abstehenden Ohren Anstoß nahm (Bunte) *It was Metro Goldwyn Mayer that gave Clark Gable his chance—although there they took exception to his protruding ears*

ODER

OR:

ich werde sie anrufen *oder* ihr schreiben *I'll ring her up or write to her*
sollten wir links *oder* rechts fahren? *should we drive on the left or the right?*

SEIT(DEM)

SINCE:

seit(dem) ich in Straßburg wohne, fühle ich mich wie ein Europäer *since I've been living in Strasbourg I've felt like a European*

seit(dem) ich in Straßburg wohnte, fühlte ich mich wie ein Europäer *since I'd been living in Strasbourg I'd felt like a European*

seit(dem) sie ein Haus gekauft hat, kauft sie nicht mehr so viel Kleidung *since she bought a house she no longer buys so many clothes*

SO (introducing concessive clause)

HOWEVER:

so arm er auch ist, ich kann ihm nicht helfen *however poor he is, I can't help him*

SOBALD

AS SOON AS:

sobald ich nach Hause komme, wedelt unser Hund mit dem Schwanz
as soon as I come home our dog wags his tail

SODASS, SO DASS (indicating result)

SO THAT:

ihre Mutter ist wieder da, sodass (so dass) wir gehen können *their mother is back, so that we can go*

SOFERN

PROVIDED (THAT):

sofern das Wetter schön bleibt, machen wir am Montag einen Ausflug
provided (that) the weather stays fine we'll go on an outing on Monday

SOLANGE

AS LONG AS, SO LONG AS:

Aber war das möglich, solange der letzte Milchzahn fehlte?
(Herzmanovsky-Orlando) But was that possible as (so) long as the last milk tooth was missing?

SONDERN

BUT (on the contrary):

Die Juden schreiben Jiddisch nicht in lateinischen, sondern in hebräischen Buchstaben (S. Landmann) *The Jews write Yiddish not in Roman but in Hebrew characters*

nicht nur . . . , sondern auch NOT ONLY . . . BUT ALSO:

sie ist nicht nur jung, sondern auch intelligent *she's not only young, but also intelligent*

SOOFT

WHENEVER:

sie besucht ihn, sooft er es wünscht *she visits him whenever he wishes*

SOSEHR

HOWEVER MUCH:

sosehr ich sie vermissee, ich gehe zu ihr nicht zurück *however much I miss her, I'm not going back to her*

SOVIEL

AS FAR AS, SO FAR AS:

soweit ich weiß, ist dieses Modell nicht mehr erhältlich *as (so) far as I know, this model is no longer available*

SOWEIT

1. AS FAR AS, SO FAR AS:

soweit ich es beurteilen kann, wird ihr neuer Roman ein großer Erfolg *as (so) far as I can judge, her new novel will be a great success*

2. (IN) SO FAR AS:

ich will gerne helfen, soweit ich dazu in der Lage bin *I'd like to help (in) so far as I'm able to*

SOWIE

AS WELL AS:

wir besuchten Kairo, Mombasa und Daressalam sowie mehrere Städte in Südafrika *we visited Cairo, Mombasa, and Dar es Salaam as well as several cities in South Africa*

TROTZDEM (colloquial)

EVEN THOUGH:

er ist zufrieden, trotzdem er nicht viel Geld hat *he is content, even though he does not have much money*

UND

AND:

ich fühle mich krank, und ich bin es auch *I feel ill, and I am*

WÄHREND

1. WHILE, AS:

Während ich mich mit seiner Schwester unterhielt (Bernhard) *While I talked to his sister*

Während er dies sagte, lächelte er ganz durchtrieben (Hesse) *As he said this, he smiled quite craftily*

2. (whereas) WHILE:

während er sehr sparsam ist, kauft sie sich teure Videos *while he is very thrifty, she buys herself expensive videos*

WEIL

BECAUSE:

sie kann nicht kommen, weil sie krank ist *she can't come because she's ill*

The **weil**-clause may optionally be anticipated by **darum**, **deshalb**, or **deswegen** in the main clause; this has the effect of emphasizing the reason given:

ich habe ihn deshalb eingeladen, weil er ein einflussreicher Politiker ist
I invited him because he's an influential politician or the reason I invited him is that he's an influential politician

WENN

1. **WHEN** (referring to the present or future, or to a repeated occurrence in the past):

Diese Farben des Sticklebmännchens gewinnen noch an Tiefe und Leuchtkraft, wenn sich ein Weibchen nähert (K. Lorenz) *These colours of the male stickleback gain in intensity and luminosity when a female approaches*

Wenn du nach Pisa kommst, zeige ich dir den Schiefen Turm *when you come to Pisa I'll show you the Leaning Tower*

Wenn er sie kommen sah, nahm er seine Brille ab (Ch. Wolf) *When (whenever) he saw her coming he would take off his glasses*

2. **IF**:

Wenn der, den ich verdächtige, der Mörder ist (Dürrenmatt) *If the man I suspect is the murderer*

wenn ich das gewusst hätte, wäre ich zu einem anderen Zahnarzt gegangen *if I had known that I would have gone to another dentist*

Note, however, that **wenn** can be ambiguous, meaning either *when* or *if*; thus, **wenn sich ein Weibchen nähert** and **wenn du nach Pisa kommst** in 1 may also mean *if a female approaches* and *if you come to Pisa*. The context usually makes it clear which sense is meant.

Wenn . . . einmal **ONCE**:

wenn er einmal ins Erzählen kommt, hört er nie auf *once he starts telling stories he never stops*

WIE

AS:

ich war ziemlich überrascht, wie du dir vorstellen kannst *I was rather surprised, as you can imagine*

Note the use of **wie** to introduce a clause corresponding to an English parenthesis without a conjunction:

eine Maßnahme, die, wie er hoffte, die Situation verbessern würde
a measure which would, he hoped, improve the situation

das war, wie wir schnell erkannten, keine Lösung des Problems *this was, we quickly realized, no solution to the problem*

ZUMAL

ESPECIALLY AS:

er hat viel Verständnis für Kinder, zumal er selbst sechs hat *he has a lot of understanding for children, especially as he himself has six*

CROSS-REFERENCE LIST OF ENGLISH CONJUNCTIONS

Items are cross-referred to the list of German conjunctions beginning on p. 160

AFTER **nachdem**, p. 164

ALTHOUGH **obgleich, obwohl**, p. 164

AND **und**, p. 166

AS 1. (followed by noun) **als** (1a), p. 160

2. (introducing clause: e.g. - *you can imagine*) **wie**, p. 167

3. (time) **während**, p. 166

4. (cause) **da**, p. 162

AS IF **als ob**, p. 161

BECAUSE **weil**, p. 166

BEFORE **bevor**, p. 161; **ehe**, p. 163

BUT **aber**, p. 160; **allein**, p. 160; **doch**, p. 163; (on the contrary) **sondern**, p. 165

EITHER . . . OR **entweder . . . oder**, p. 163

FOR **denn** (1), p. 162

IF **wenn** (2), p. 167; **falls** (1), p. 163

IN CASE **falls** (2), p. 163

ONCE **wenn . . . einmal** (see **wenn**, p. 167).

OR **oder**, p. 164; [e.g. *three - four*] **bis** (3), p. 162

SINCE 1. (cause) **da**, p. 162

2. (time) **seit, seitdem**, p. 164

SO THAT 1. (purpose) **damit**, p. 162

2. (result) **sodass, so dass**, p. 165

THAT **dass**, p. 162

TILL see *until*.

UNLESS **es sei denn, (dass); wenn . . . nicht**.

UNTIL **bis** (1), p. 161

WHEN (with present tense) **wenn** (1), p. 167; (with past tense) **als** (2), p. 161, (repeated occurrence) **wenn**, p. 167. See also **bei** (5a, with verbal noun), p. 127; **bei** is also frequently used to refer to circumstances indicated in English by *when* [e.g. *when the traffic lights are red* **bei Rotlicht**, *when the temperature outdoors is 20°* **bei 20° Außentemperatur**].

(NOTE: As an interrogative adverb *when* is **wann** [e.g. *when were you born?* **wann bist du geboren?**], also in indirect speech [e.g. *I asked her when she was born* **ich fragte sie, wann sie geboren sei**].)

WHETHER **ob**, p. 164

WHILE 1. (time) **während** (1), p. 166. See also **bei** (5a, with verbal noun), p. 127.

2. (whereas) **während** (2), p. 166

Conjugation of Strong and Irregular Verbs

Strong Verbs

(grouped according to vowel change)

Only a selection of verbs is given here, to illustrate the various types; details of conjugation are given for all strong verbs in the alphabetical list below.

The parts shown are: (a) the infinitive, (b) (only shown—in brackets—where vowel change is involved) the 2nd and 3rd persons singular of the present tense, (c) the past tense, (d) the past participle.

a—(ä)—ie—a

- (i) **schlafen** to sleep—(schläfst, schläft)—schief—geschlafen
blasen to blow—(bläst, bläst)—blies—geblasen
raten to advise—(rätst, rät)—riet—geraten
- (ii) **fallen** to fall—(fällst, fällt)—fiel—gefallen
halten to hold etc.—(hältst, hält)—hielt—gehalten
lassen to let etc.—(lässt, lässt)—ließ—gelassen

a—(ä)—u—a

- (i) **fahren** to go, drive—(fährst, fährt)—fuhr—gefahren
laden to load—(lädst, lädt)—lud—geladen
tragen to carry, wear—(trägst, trägt)—trug—getragen
- (ii) **wachsen** to grow—(wächst, wächst)—wuchs—gewachsen
waschen to wash—(wäschst, wäscht)—wusch—gewaschen

e—(ie or i)—a—e

- (i) **sehen** to see—(siehst, sieht)—sah—gesehen
lesen to read—(liest, liest)—las—gelesen
geben to give—(gibst, gibt)—gab—gegeben
treten to step etc.—(trittst, tritt)—trat—getreten
- (ii) **messen** to measure—(misst, misst)—maß—gemessen
vergessen to forget—(vergisst, vergisst)—vergaß—vergessen
essen to eat—(isst, isst)—aß—gegessen

- (iii) (with
- i**
- or
- ie**
- in infinitive and present):

bitten to ask—**bat**—**gebeten****liegen** to lie—**lag**—**gelegen****sitzen** to sit—**saß**—**gessen****e—(i or ie)—a—o**

- (i)
- helfen**
- to help—(hilfst, hilft)—
- half**
-
- geholfen**

sterben to die—(stirbst, stirbt)—**starb**—**gestorben****werfen** to throw—(wirfst, wirft)—**warf**—**geworfen**

- (ii)
- sprechen**
- to speak—(sprichst, spricht)—
- sprach**
-
- gesprochen**

treffen to hit, meet—(triffst, trifft)—**traf**—**getroffen**

- (iii)
- stehlen**
- to steal—(stiehst, stiehlt)—
- stahl**
-
- gestohlen**

befehlen to order—(befiehst, befiehlt)—**befahl**—**befohlen**

- (iv)
- nehmen**
- to take—(nimmst, nimmt)—
- nahm**
-
- genommen**

i—a—o or u

- (i)
- schwimmen**
- to swim—
- schwamm**
-
- geschwommen**

beginnen to begin—**begann**—**begonnen**

- (ii)
- finden**
- to find—
- fand**
-
- gefunden**

klingen to sound—**klang**—**geklungen****trinken** to drink—**trank**—**getrunken****ei—i—i, ei—ie—ie**

- (i)
- reiten**
- to ride—
- ritt**
-
- geritten**

beißen to bite—**biss**—**gebissen****pfeifen** to whistle—**pfiß**—**gepiffen**

- (ii)
- bleiben**
- to remain—
- blieb**
-
- geblieben**

schweigen to be silent—**schwieg**—**geschwiegen****ie—o—o**

- (i)
- schießen**
- to shoot—
- schoß**
-
- geschossen**

riechen to smell—**roch**—**gerochen**

- (ii)
- fliegen**
- to fly—
- flog**
-
- geflogen**

frieren to freeze—**fror**—**gefroren****ziehen** to pull, draw—**zog**—**gezogen**

FOUR MAJOR VERBS

(past in **ie**; same vowel or diphthong in infinitive and past participle)**heißen** to be called—**hieß**—**geheißen****laufen** to run—(läufst, läuft)—**lief**—**gelaufen****rufen** to call—**rief**—**gerufen****stoßen** to push etc.—(stößt, stößt)—**stieß**—**gestoßen**

ALPHABETICAL LIST

NOTE: When a prefix is added to a strong or irregular verb, the conjugation forms normally remain the same. It should, however, be noted that there are certain verbs whose last element happens to be identical with a strong verb but which are conjugated *weak*, being formed on the pattern prefix + noun + **-en** (e.g. **beauftragen**, **veranlassen** incorporating **der Auftrag**, **der Anlass**).

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where <i>vowel</i> <i>change</i> is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
backen <i>to bake</i> (2nd, 3rd singular also bäckst , bäckt)	backte , obsolescent buk (büke)	gebacken
befehlen <i>to order</i> (befiehl (s)t)	befahl (beföhle/befähle)	befohlen
beginnen <i>to begin</i>	begann (begänne , also begönne)	begonnen
beißen <i>to bite</i>	biss	gebissen
bergen <i>to rescue</i> etc. (birg (s)t)	barg (bärke)	geborgen
bersten <i>to burst</i> (birst , birst)	barst (bärste)	(ist) geborsten
bewegen <i>to induce</i>	bewog (bewöge)	bewogen
In the sense <i>to move</i> (also figuratively) conjugated weak		
biegen <i>to bend</i> ; (intr.) <i>to turn</i>	bog (böge)	(intr. ist) gebogen
bieten <i>to offer</i>	bot (böte)	geboten
binden <i>to tie, bind</i>	band (bände)	gebunden
bitten <i>to ask</i>	bat (bäte)	gebeten
blasen <i>to blow</i> (bläst , bläst)	blies	geblasen
bleiben <i>to remain</i>	blieb	(ist) geblieben
braten <i>to roast; to fry</i> (brätst , brät)	briet	gebraten
brechen <i>to break</i> (brich (s)t)	brach (bräche)	(intr. ist) gebrochen
brennen <i>to burn</i>	brannte (brennte rare)	gebrannt
bringen <i>to bring; to take</i>	brachte (brächte)	gebracht
denken <i>to think</i>	dachte (dächte)	gedacht
dreschen <i>to thresh; (coll.) to thrash</i> (drisch (s)t)	drosch (drösche)	gedroschen
dringen : with various prepositions, e.g. auf <i>to</i> <i>insist on</i> , in <i>to penetrate</i>	drang (dränge)	(hat/ist) ³⁷ gedrungen
dürfen <i>to be allowed to</i> (for conjugation see p. 76)		
empfehlen <i>to recommend</i> (conjugated like befehlen , above)		

³⁷ Hat with **dringen auf**, otherwise ist.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where vowel change is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where vowel change is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if sein, also haben/sein in special cases)
erlöschen to go out (of fire) (erlisch(s)t)	erlosch (erlösche)	(ist) erloschen
erschallen to ring out	erscholl (erschölle)/ erschallte	(ist) erschollen / erschallt
erschrecken to be frightened (erschrick(s)t)	erschrak (erschräke)	(ist) erschrocken
As a transitive verb to frighten conjugated weak		
essen to eat (isst, isst)	aß (äße)	gegessen
fahren to drive (a vehicle); (intr.) to go (in a vehicle) (fähr(s)t)	fuhr (führe)	(intr. ist) gefahren
fallen to fall (fäll(s)t)	fiel	(ist) gefallen
fangen to catch (fäng(s)t)	fang	gefangen
fechten to fence (fichtst, ficht)	focht (föchte)	gefochten
finden to find	fand (fände)	gefunden
flechten to weave; to plait (flichtst, flicht)	flocht (flöchte)	geflochten
fliegen to fly	flog (flöge)	(intr. ist) geflogen
fliehen to flee	floh (flöhe)	(intr. ist) geflohen
fließen to flow	floss (flosse)	(ist) geflossen
fressen to eat (of animal) etc. (frisst, frisst)	fraß (fräße)	gefressen
frieren to freeze	fror (fröre)	(hat/ist) ³⁸ gefroren
gären to ferment	gor (göre)/ gärte	(hat/ist) ³⁹ gegoren / gegärt
Weak in figurative use		
gebären to give birth to (obsolescent: gebier(s)t)	gebar (gebäre)	geboren
geben to give (gib(s)t)	gab (gäbe)	gegeben
gedeihen to thrive	gedieh	(ist) gediehen
gehen to go; to walk	ging	(ist) gegangen
gelingen to succeed (impersonal)	gelang (gelänge)	(ist) gelungen
gelten to be valid etc. (giltst, gilt)	galt (gälte/gölte)	gegolten
genesen to recover	genas (genäse)	(ist) genesen
genießen to enjoy	genoss (genösse)	genossen
geschehen to happen (3rd singular only: geschieht)	geschah (geschähe)	(ist) geschehen

³⁸ Das Wasser ist gefroren (completed action), but heute Nacht hat es gefroren it was freezing last night, also ich habe gefroren I was cold.

³⁹ Only hat in the figurative sense.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where vowel change is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where vowel change is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if sein, also haben/sein in special cases)
gewinnen to win; to gain	gewann (gewönne/ gewänne)	gewonnen
gießen to pour	goss (gösse)	gegossen
gleichen (+ DAT.) to resemble	glich	geglichen
gleiten to glide; to slide	glitt	(ist) geglichen
glimmen to glow	glomm (glömme)/ glimmte	geglommen
In figurative use conjugated strong		
graben to dig (gräb(s)t)	grub (grübe)	gegraben
greifen to grasp; to seize	griff	gegriffen
haben to have (for conjugation see p. 74)		
halten to hold; (intr.) to stop (hältst, hält)	hielt	gehalten
hängen to hang (intr.)	hing	gehangen
As a transitive verb to hang conjugated weak		
hauen to hit etc.	haute/hieb ⁴⁰	gehauen
heben to lift	hob (höbe)	gehoben
heißen to be called	hieß	geheißen
helfen (+ DAT.) to help (hilf(s)t)	half (hülfe, also hälfe)	geholfen
kennen to know (be acquainted with)	kannte (kennte rare)	gekannt
klimmen to climb	klomm (klömme)/ klimmte	(ist) geklommen / geklimmt
klingen to sound	klang (klänge)	geklungen
kneifen to pinch	kniff	gekniffen
kommen to come	kam (käme)	(ist) gekommen
können to be able to (for conjugation see p. 96)		
kriechen to creep; to crawl	kroch (kröche)	(ist) gekrochen
laden to load; to invite (läd(s)t)	lud (lüde)	geladen
lassen to let etc. (lässt, lässt)	ließ	gelassen
laufen to run; to walk (läuf(s)t)	lief	(intr. ist) gelaufen
leiden to suffer	litt	gelitten
leihen to lend	lieh	geliehen
lesen to read (liest, liest)	las (läse)	gelesen
liegen to lie	lag (läge)	gelegen
lügen to (tell a) lie	log (löge)	gelogen
mahlen to grind	mahlte	gemahlen
meiden to avoid	mied	gemieden

⁴⁰ The form **hieb** occurs chiefly when a blow is aimed at someone, e.g. **er hieb mit dem Schwert auf den Angreifer** he hit out at the attacker with his sword.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where <i>vowel</i> <i>change</i> is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
melken to milk	melkte , obsolescent molk (mölke)	gemolken , also gemelkt
messen to measure (<i>misst, misst</i>)	maß (mäße)	gemessen
misslingen to fail (of attempt etc.) (conjugated like gelingen , above)		
mögen to like; may (for conjugation see p. 76)		
müssen to have to (for conjugation see p. 76)		
nehmen to take (<i>nimm(s)t</i>)	nahm (nähme)	genommen
nennen to name	nannte (<i>nennte</i> rare)	genannt
pfeifen to whistle	pfiff	gepfiffen
preisen to praise	pries	gepriesen
quellen to swell; to well (from) (<i>quill(s)t</i>)	quoll (quölle)	(ist) gequollen
raten to guess; (+ DAT.) to advise (<i>rätst, rät</i>)	riet	geraten
reiben to rub	rieb	gerieben
reißen to tear	riss	(intr. ist) gerissen
reiten to ride	ritt	(intr. hat/ist) ⁴¹ geritten
rennen to run; to race	rannte (<i>rennte</i> rare)	(ist) gerannt
riechen to smell	roch (röche)	gerochen
ringen to wrestle	rang (ränge)	gerungen
rinnen to run, flow	rann (ränne, also rönne)	(ist) geronnen
rufen to call	rief	gerufen
salzen to salt	salzte	gesalzen
saufen to drink (of animal) etc. (<i>säuf(s)t</i>)	soff (söffe)	gesoffen
saugen to suck	sog (söge)/ saugte ⁴²	gesogen/gesaugt ⁴²
schaffen to create	schuf (schüfe)	geschaffen
In the senses to manage (to do); to do, get done conjugated weak		
scheiden to separate; (intr.) to part	schied	(ist) geschieden
scheinen to shine; to seem	schien	geschienen
scheißen (vulgar) to shit	schiss	geschissen
schelten to scold (<i>schiltst, schilt</i>)	schalt (schölte)	gescholten

⁴¹ See p. 73.⁴² The weak form is always used in **Staub saugen** to vacuum-clean.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where <i>vowel</i> <i>change</i> is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
scheren to crop; to clip; to shear	schor (schöre)	geschoren
schieben to push	schob (schöbe)	geschoben
schießen to shoot	schoss (schösse)	(intr. ist) geschossen
schinden to ill-treat; to sweat (labour)	schindete	geschunden
schlafen to sleep (schlāf(s)t)	schlief	geschlafen
schlagen to hit; to beat (schlāg(s)t)	schlug (schlūge)	geschlagen
schleichen to creep	schlich	(ist) geschlichen
schleifen to sharpen	schliff	geschliffen
The separate verb schleifen to drag is conjugated weak		
schließen to close	schloss (schlöße)	geschlossen
schlingen to tie (knot) etc.	schlang (schlänge)	geschlungen
schmeißen (coll.) to chuck	schmiss	geschmissen
schmelzen to melt (schmilzt, schmilzt)	schmolz (schmolze)	(intr. ist) geschmolzen
schneiden to cut	schnitt	geschnitten
schreiben to write	schrieb	geschrieben
schreien to shout; to cry out	schrie	geschrien [-'fria:n]
schreiten to stride	schrift	(ist) geschritten
schweigen to be silent	schwie	geschwiegen
schwellen to swell (schwill(s)t)	schwoll (schwölle)	(ist) geschwollen
As a transitive verb to swell (sails etc.) conjugated weak		
schwimmen to swim; to float	schwamm (schwämme, also schwämme)	(hat/ist) ⁴³ geschwommen
schwinden to dwindle; to vanish	schwand (schwände)	(ist) geschwunden
schwingen to swing; to brandish	schwang (schwänge)	geschwungen
schwören to swear (affirm solemnly)	schwor (schwüre)	geschworen
sehen to see (sieh(s)t)	sah (sähe)	gesehen
sein to be (for conjugation see p. 74)		
senden to send; to broadcast	sandte/sendete (sendete rare)	gesandt/gesendet
In the sense to broadcast only sendete, gesendet		
sieden to boil	sott (sötte)/siedete	gesotten/gesiedet
Only weak when intransitive; kochen is the usual word for both transitive and intransitive senses		

⁴³ See p. 73.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where vowel change is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where vowel change is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
singen to sing	sang (sänge)	gesungen
sinken to sink	sank (sänke)	(ist) gesunken
sinnen to ponder	sann (sänne)	gesonnen
sitzen to sit	saß (säße)	gesessen
sollen to be supposed to (for conjugation see p. 76)		
spalten to split	spaltete	gespalten/gespaltet
speien to spit; to vomit	spie	gespien [-'jpi:ən]
spinnen to spin	spann (spönnne/spänne)	gesponnen
spleißen to splice	spliss	gesplissen
sprechen to speak (sprich(s)t)	sprach (spräche)	gesprochen
sprießen to sprout	spross (sprösse)	(ist) gesprossen
springen to jump	sprang (spränge)	(ist) gesprungen
stechen to prick; to stab; to sting (stich(s)t)	stach (stäche)	gestochen
stecken to be (in a certain place, state)	steckte , literary stak (stäke)	gesteckt
As a transitive verb to put, stick only weak		
stehen to stand	stand (stünde, also stände)	gestanden
stehlen to steal (stiehl(s)t)	stahl (stähle)	gestohlen
steigen to climb; to rise	stieg	(ist) gestiegen
sterben to die (stirb(s)t)	starb (stürbe)	(ist) gestorben
stieben to fly (of sparks) etc.	stob (stöbe)/stieberte	(hat/ist) gestoben/ gestiebt
stinken to stink	stank (stänke)	gestunken
stoßen to push etc.; (intr.) with various prepositions, e.g. <i>auf</i> to come across / up against (stößt, stößt)	stieß	(intr. ist)⁴⁴ gestoßen
streichen to stroke; to spread; to cross out; (intr.) to sweep (across) etc.	strich	(intr. ist)⁴⁵ gestrichen
streiten to quarrel; to argue	stritt	gestritten
tragen to carry; to wear (träg(s)t)	trug (trüge)	getragen
treffen to hit; to meet (triff(s)t)	traf (träfe)	getroffen
treiben to drive etc.; (intr.) to sprout; to drift	trieb	(intr. hat/ist)⁴⁶ getrieben

⁴⁴ Except in the case of *stoßen an* to *adjoin*.

⁴⁵ Except when an act of stroking is referred to, e.g. *sie hat ihm über den Kopf gestrichen* she stroked his head.

⁴⁶ *Hat getrieben* when the verb means to sprout, *ist getrieben* when it means to drift.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
treten to kick; (intr.) to step; to tread (<i>trittst, tritt</i>)	trat (<i>träte</i>)	(intr. <i>ist</i>) getreten
trinken to drink	trank (<i>tränke</i>)	getrunken
trügen to deceive (by nature)	trog (<i>tröge</i>)	getrogen
tun to do; (coll.) to put	tat (<i>täte</i>)	getan
verderben to spoil; to ruin; to corrupt; (intr.) to go bad (<i>verdirb(s)t</i>)	verdarb (<i>verdürbe</i>)	(intr. <i>ist</i>) verdorben
verdrießen to vex	verdross (<i>verdrösse</i>)	verdrossen
vergessen to forget (<i>vergisst, vergisst</i>)	vergaß (<i>vergäße</i>)	vergessen
verlieren to lose	verlor (<i>verlöre</i>)	verloren
verschleifen to wear out	verschliss	verschlissen
wachsen to grow (<i>wächst, wächst</i>)	wuchs (<i>wüchse</i>)	(<i>ist</i>) gewachsen
wägen to ponder (someone's words)	wog (<i>wöge</i>), also <i>wägte</i>	gewogen , also gewägt
waschen to wash (<i>wäscht, wäscht</i>)	wusch (<i>wüsche</i>)	gewaschen
weben to weave	webte / figuratively wob (<i>wöbe</i>)	gewebt /figuratively gewoben
weichen to ease (of pressure etc.); (+ <i>DAT.</i>) to give way to	wich	(<i>ist</i>) gewichen
weisen to point (at etc.)	wies	gewiesen
wenden to turn	wandte/wendete ⁴⁷ (<i>wendete</i> rare)	gewandt / gewendet ⁴⁷
werben to win (customers etc.); to recruit (<i>wirb(s)t</i>)	warb (<i>würbe</i>)	geworben
werden to become (for conjugation see p. 74)		
werfen to throw (<i>wirf(s)t</i>)	warf (<i>würfe</i>)	geworfen
wiegen to weigh The verb wiegen to rock; to sway (<i>hips</i>) is conjugated weak	wog (<i>wöge</i>)	gewogen
winden to wind; to winch	wand (<i>wände</i>)	gewunden
wissen to know (fact etc.) (for conjugation see p. 76)		
wollen to want (to) (for conjugation see p. 76)		
wringen to wring	wrang (<i>wränge</i>)	gewrungen

⁴⁷ In certain senses, only **wendete**, **gewendet** are used, notably when a change of direction is involved (e.g. *sie hat das Auto gewendet*) and—in reflexive use—when a change in the weather or someone's luck is referred to.

INFINITIVE (with 2nd, 3rd singular present where <i>vowel change</i> is involved)	PAST (with subjunctive in brackets where <i>vowel</i> <i>change</i> is involved)	PAST PARTICIPLE (with auxiliary, if <i>sein</i> , also <i>haben/sein</i> in special cases)
zeihen (+ GEN.) <i>to accuse of</i> (obsolescent)	zieh	geziehen
ziehen <i>to pull; to draw</i> (intr.) <i>to move, go</i>	zog (zöge)	(intr. ist) ⁴⁸ gezogen
zwingen <i>to force</i>	zwang (zwänge)	gezwungen

⁴⁸ **Hat** is, however, used with certain intransitive senses, including *to move* (in chess); *to pull* (of vehicle); *to stand* (of tea); (coll.) *to work* (of excuse etc.).

A Note on Dictionaries

MONOLINGUAL DICTIONARIES

G. Drosdowski (ed.), *Duden: Deutsches Universalwörterbuch A-Z* (3rd edition: Mannheim, 1996)

A comprehensive treatment of the German lexis; uses the new spelling.

D. Götz, G. Haensch, H. Wellmann (eds.), *Langenscheidts Großwörterbuch: Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (6th edition: Berlin & Munich, 1997)

Specifically aimed at foreign learners; provided with excellent examples.

G. Wahrig, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (new edition: Gütersloh, 1997; ed. R. Wahrig-Burfeind)

Uses the new spelling.

Two useful Duden Taschenbücher documenting vocabulary specific to Austrian and Swiss German are:

J. Ebner, *Wie sagt man in Österreich?: Wörterbuch der österreichischen Besonderheiten* (2nd edition: Mannheim, 1980)

K. Meyer, *Wie sagt man in der Schweiz?: Wörterbuch der schweizerischen Besonderheiten* (Mannheim, 1989)

BILINGUAL DICTIONARIES

P. Terrell et al., *Collins German-English, English-German Dictionary* (3rd edition: Glasgow, 1997)

With its impressively extensive coverage of the German and English vocabularies and rich documentation of contemporary usage, this dictionary might seem the ideal tool for the student of German. Its authors have, however, shown a disturbing indifference to the need for accuracy—to such an extent that it can only be regarded as seriously flawed. Only a handful of examples of errors noted (a number of which also appear in the *Collins German Concise Dictionary*) can be given here: wrong gender (**Asbest** n. [should be m.]), wrong plural (**Tief**, -e [-s]), wrong case (**fern** + gen. [+ DAT.]), wrong type of prefix (**anerziehen** insep. [sep.]—and **antizipieren** is given as insep.), wrong auxiliary (**zerbröckeln** h. [sn.]), wrong category of verb (**herumfliegen** v.i. [v.r.]), sense labelled subjunctive (**sollen** f); wrong pronunciation (**Erz-** arch- with long [short] e); German words misspelt (at **Stunde**: **acht-Stunden-Tag** [**Achtstundentag**]), English words misspelt (at **kribbeln**: *teaming with ants*); mistranslations (**Raumklang** *stereoscopic* [*stereophonic*] *sound*, **Überraschungsmoment** *moment* [*element*] of *surprise*, **Volksbefragung** *public opinion poll* [*referendum*], **nachdatieren** *to postdate* [*to antedate*]).

W. Scholze-Stubenrecht, J. B. Sykes (eds.), *The Oxford-Duden German Dictionary* (revised edition: Oxford, 1997)

This dictionary does not provide the same depth of treatment as the Collins. In the first ten pages of English-German, for example, the following items are absent: *abasement, abnegate, abreact, abusiveness, accordionist, accoutrements, action-packed, activism, adamantine, admonitory, adopted (son etc.), advance booking/party/warning, aerobicatic*. But the reliability of the dictionary is not in doubt.

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For the conjugation of strong and irregular verbs see the alphabetical list on pp. 170–7.

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A Concise German Grammar

Timothy Buck

A Concise German Grammar aims to equip undergraduates with a comprehensive yet compact account of German grammar. There has long been a need for an easy-to-use guide to the subject that answers users' questions without confronting them with a bewildering mass of secondary detail. Clear and accessible, including many lively examples of modern usage, this practical book can be used both to learn German grammar and as an essential reference for students of German, from senior secondary school right through to the end of university studies. Leading the field by using the new German spelling, the book also includes a glossary of grammatical terms and detailed alphabetical guides to prepositions and conjunctions.

Timothy Buck is Senior Lecturer in German at the University of Edinburgh. He previously worked as Lektor in English at the University of Göttingen from 1963–5.

'Buck's Grammar gives the student an admirably succinct yet complete, up-to-date and accessible guide. It uses a traditional scheme and terminology, the exposition is in reassuringly plain language, and the examples are invariably helpful and take the user imaginatively from the statement of a rule to a picture of contemporary usage. The Concise Grammar should become the recommended or prescribed choice for first-year university courses. Its reliability and user-friendliness will commend it as a handy reference and source of lucid explanation to teachers at all levels.'

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