

BEGINNER'S
GERMAN
DICTIONARY

 Collins

Easy Learning
**German
Dictionary**

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DICTIONARY SKILLS

Using a dictionary is a skill you can improve with practice and by following some basic guidelines. This section gives you a detailed explanation of how to use the dictionary to ensure you get the most out of it.

The answers to all the checks in this section are on page 16.

► MAKE SURE YOU LOOK IN THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE DICTIONARY

The German-English side comes first, followed by the English-German. The middle pages of the book have a blue border so that you can see where one side finishes and the other starts.



1 Which side of the dictionary would you look up to translate "das Fahrrad"?

► FINDING THE WORD YOU WANT

When you are looking for a word, for example **froh**, look at the first letter – **f** – and find the **F** section in the German-English side. At the top of each page, you'll find the first and last words on that page. When you find the page with the words starting with **fr**, scan down the page until you find the word you want. Remember that even if a word has an umlaut on it, for example *für*, it makes no difference to the alphabetical order.

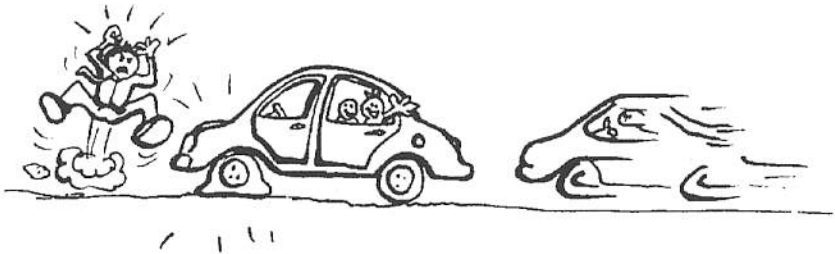
- 2 On which page will you find the word – "gestern"?
- 3 Which comes first – "Bruder" or "Brötchen"?

► MAKE SURE YOU LOOK AT THE RIGHT ENTRY

An entry is made up of a **word**, its translations and, often, example phrases to show you how to use the translations. If there is more than one entry for the same word, then there is an information box to tell you so. Look at the following example entries:

flat ADJECTIVE
see also flat NOUN
① **flach** ◊ *flat shoes* flache Schuhe
♦ a **flat roof** ein Flachdach NEUT
② **platt** (tyre) ◊ *I've got a flat tyre.* Ich habe einen platten Reifen.
flat NOUN
see also flat ADJECTIVE
die **Wohnung** ◊ *She lives in a flat.* Sie wohnt in einer Wohnung.

4 Which entry for "flat" should you look at if you want to translate the phrase "My car has a flat tyre"?



Always pay attention to information boxes – they tell you if there is more than one entry for the same word, give you guidance on grammatical points, or tell you about differences between German and British life.

► CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRANSLATION

The main translation of a word is shown on a new line and is underlined to make it stand out from the rest of the entry. If there is more than one main translation for a word, each one is numbered. If an entry continues over the page there is a signpost to indicate this.

Often you will see phrases in *italics*, preceded by a white diamond ◊. These help you choose the translation you want because they show how the translation they follow can be used.

5 Use the phrases given at the entry "hard" to help you translate: "This bread is hard".

Words often have more than one meaning and more than one translation, for example, a **pool** can be a puddle, a pond or a swimming pool; **pool** can also be a game. When you are translating from English into German, be careful to choose the German word that has the particular meaning you want. The dictionary offers you a lot of help with this. Look at the following entry:

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pool NOUN

1 (puddle)

die Pfütze

2 (pond)

der Teich (PL die Teiche)

3 (for swimming)

das Schwimmbecken (PL die Schwimmbecken)

4 (game)

das Poolbillard ◊ Shall we have a game of pool? Sollen wir eine Partie Poolbillard spielen?

◆ the pools (football) das Toto ◊ to do the pools Toto spielen



The underlining points out all the main translations, the numbers tell you there is more than one possible translation and the words in brackets in *italic* help you choose which translation you want.

6 How would you translate "I like playing pool"?

Never take the first translation you see without looking at the other. Always look to see if there is more than one translation underlined.

Phrases in **bold type** preceded by a black diamond ◆ are phrases which are particularly common or important. Sometimes these phrases have a completely different translation from the main translation; sometimes the translation is the same. For example:

cancer NOUN

der Krebs (GEN des Krebses) ◊ He's got cancer. Er hat Krebs.

◆ I'm Cancer. Ich bin Krebs.

abgemacht ADJECTIVE

agreed ◊ Wir trafen uns zur abgemachten Zeit. We met at the agreed time.

◆ Abgemacht! OK!

When you look up a word, make sure you look beyond the main translations to see if the entry includes any **bold phrases**.

7 Look up "fahren" to help you translate the sentence "Ich werde morgen mit dem Zug fahren".

► MAKING USE OF THE PHRASES IN THE DICTIONARY

Sometimes when you look up a word you will find not only the word, but the exact phrase you want. For example, you might want to say "What's the date today?" Look up **date** and you will find the exact phrase and its translation.

Sometimes you have to adapt what you find in the dictionary. If you want to say "I play darts" and look up **dart** you will find:

dart NOUN

der Pfeil (PL die Pfeile)

◆ to play darts Darts spielen

You have to substitute *ich spiele* for the infinitive form *spielen*. You will often have to adapt the infinitive in this way, adding the correct ending to the verb for **ich, du, er** etc and choosing the present, future or past form. For help with this, look at the German verb tables in the middle of the dictionary. **Spielen** is a regular verb so it follows the same pattern as **machen**, which is set out on page 344.

8 How would you say "We played football"?

Phrases containing nouns and adjectives may also need to be adapted. You may need to make the noun genitive, plural or dative plural, or the adjective feminine, neuter or plural. Remember that some nouns have irregular genitive or plural forms and that this information is shown in the entry.

9 How would you say "The red flowers are beautiful"?

► DON'T OVERUSE THE DICTIONARY

It takes time to look up words so try to avoid using the dictionary unnecessarily, especially in exams. Think carefully about what you want to say and see if you can put it another way, using the words you already know. To rephrase things you can:

- ◊ Use a word with a similar meaning. This is particularly easy with adjectives, as there are a lot of words which mean *good, bad, big* etc and you're sure to know at least one.
- ◊ Use negatives: if the cake you made was a total disaster, you could just say that it wasn't very good.
- ◊ Use particular examples instead of general terms. If you are asked to describe the sports facilities in your area, and time is short, you could say something like "In our town there is a swimming pool and a football ground."

10 How could you say "The Black Forest is huge" without looking up the word "huge"?

You can also guess the meaning of a German word by using others to give you a clue. If you see the sentence "*ich lese ein gutes Buch*", you may not know the meaning of the word **lese**, but you know it's a verb because it's preceded by **ich**. Therefore it must be something you can do to a book: **read**. So the translation is: "I'm reading a good book."

11 Try NOT to use your dictionary to work out the meaning of the sentence "Das Mädchen schreibt ihrer Brieffreundin einen Brief auf Deutsch".

0069-3

PARTS OF SPEECH

If you look up the word **flat**, you will see that there are two entries for this word as it can be a noun or an adjective. It helps to choose correctly between the two entries if you know how to recognize these different types of words.

► NOUNS

Nouns often appear with words like *a, the, this, that, my, your* and *his*. They can be singular (abbreviated to SING in the dictionary):

his dog her cat a street



or plural (abbreviated to PL in the dictionary):

the facts those people his shoes our holidays

They can be the subject of a verb:

Vegetables are good for you

or the object of a verb:

I play tennis

I bought my mother a box of chocolates.

12 Which three words in this sentence are nouns?

13 Which of the nouns is plural?

German nouns all start with a capital letter and can be either masculine, feminine or neuter (abbreviated to MASC, FEM or NEUT in the dictionary).

Masculine nouns are shown by **der**:

der Hund der Zug der Arm

feminine nouns are shown by **die**:

die Katze die Milch die Tür

neuter nouns are shown by **das**:

das Auto das Kind das Sofa

The plural form of **der, die** and **das** is **die**. The plural of most feminine German nouns is made by adding **en** or **n**:

die Katzen die Türen die Familien

Many German nouns, however, do not add **en** or **n** in the plural, so the plural of these nouns is shown in the entry:

die Hunde die Häuser die Autos die Wagen die Mütter

1 German **der, die** and **das** (and also **ein** and **eine**) may change when the noun they precede is used in another case, for example in the accusative, genitive or dative case (abbreviated to ACC, GEN and DAT in the dictionary). It is important to learn when you should use each case in German.

The **nominative** case is used to show the subject of a sentence – *the dog* is chasing the cat. All German nouns are shown in the nominative case in the dictionary:

Ich esse ein Eis. Die Katze schläft. Der Ball ist im Garten.

The **accusative** case is used to show the direct object of a sentence – I love *chocolate* – and after certain prepositions e.g. *durch, ohne*:

Ich sehe den Hund. Sie liebt mich. Wir gingen durch den Wald.

The **genitive** case is used to show that something belongs to somebody – my *father's* hat – and after certain prepositions e.g. *wegen*:

das Auto des Mannes der Hund meiner Mutter wegen des schlechten Wetters

The **dative** case is used to show the indirect object of a sentence – she told *me* the news – and after certain prepositions e.g. *mit, aus*:

Ich gebe dem Lehrer das Heft. Er schreibt mir einen Brief. Sie spielen mit dem Ball.

The rules for the changes to **der, die, das, ein** and **eine** are shown here:

	MASC SING	FEM SING	NEUT SING	PL
NOM	der	die	das	die
ACC	den	die	das	die
GEN	des	der	des	der
DAT	dem	der	dem	den

h-1090

fliegen → Föhn

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- [2] bow tie** ◇ *Er trug eine Fliege.* He was wearing a bow tie.
- fliegen** VERB (IMPERFECT **flog**, PERFECT **ist geflogen**)
to fly
- fliehen** VERB (IMPERFECT **floh**, PERFECT **ist geflohen**)
to flee
- die **Fliese** NOUN
tile
- das **Fließband** NOUN (PL die **Fließbänder**)
assembly line
- fließen** VERB (IMPERFECT **floss**, PERFECT **ist geflossen**)
to flow
- fließend** ADJECTIVE, ADVERB
[1] running ◇ *fließendes Wasser* running water
[2] fluent ◇ *Sie spricht fließend Englisch.* She is fluent in English.
- flink** ADJECTIVE
nimble
- die **Flitterwochen** FEM PL NOUN
honeymoon
- flitzen** VERB (PERFECT **ist geflitzt**)
to dash
- die **Flocke** NOUN
flake ◇ *eine Schneeflocke* a snowflake
- flog** VERB *see fliegen*
- der **Floh** NOUN (PL die **Flöhe**)
flea
- der **Flohmarkt** NOUN (PL die **Flohmärkte**)
flea market
- die **Floskel** NOUN
set phrase
- floss** VERB *see fließen*
- die **Flosse** NOUN
[1] fin ◇ *die Flosse eines Hais* a shark's fin
[2] flipper ◇ *Er hat seine Flossen mit ins Schwimmbad genommen.* He took his flippers with him to the swimming baths.
- die **Flöte** NOUN
[1] flute ◇ *Cordula spielt Flöte.* Cordula plays the flute.
[2] recorder ◇ *Phil spielt Flöte.* Phil plays the recorder.
- fluchen** VERB
to curse
- flüchtig** ADJECTIVE
at large ◇ *Der Einbrecher ist noch flüchtig.* The burglar's still at large.
♦ **jemanden nur flüchtig kennen** to know somebody only superficially
- der **Flüchtling** NOUN (PL die **Flüchtlinge**)
refugee
- der **Flug** NOUN (PL die **Flüge**)
flight ◇ *Der Flug nach Atlanta ist verspätet.* The flight to Atlanta's been delayed.
- das **Flugblatt** NOUN (PL die **Flugblätter**)
leaflet
- der **Flügel** NOUN (PL die **Flügel**)

- [1] wing** ◇ *die Flügel des Adlers* the eagle's wings
[2] grand piano
- der **Fluggast** NOUN (PL die **Fluggäste**)
airline passenger
- die **Fluggesellschaft** NOUN
airline
- der **Flughafen** NOUN (PL die **Flughäfen**)
airport
- der **Fluglotse** NOUN (GEN des **Fluglotsen**, PL die **Fluglotsen**)
air traffic controller
- der **Flugplan** NOUN (PL die **Flugpläne**)
flight schedule
- der **Flugplatz** NOUN (GEN des **Flugplatzes**, PL die **Flugplätze**)
[1] airport ◇ *Wir bringen dich zum Flugplatz.* We'll take you to the airport.
[2] airfield ◇ *Dieser Flugplatz ist nur für Privatflugzeuge.* This airfield is only for private planes.
- der **Flugschein** NOUN (PL die **Flugscheine**)
plane ticket
- das **Flugticket** NOUN (PL die **Flugtickets**)
plane ticket
- das **Flugzeug** NOUN (PL die **Flugzeuge**)
aeroplane
- die **Flugzeugführung** NOUN
hijacking
- das **Fluor** NOUN
fluorine
- der **Flur** NOUN (PL die **Flure**)
corridor
Be careful! Flur does not mean floor.
- der **Fluss** NOUN (GEN des **Flusses**, PL die **Flüsse**)
river
- das **Flüsschen** NOUN (PL die **Flüsschen**)
little river
- flüssig** ADJECTIVE
liquid
- die **Flüssigkeit** NOUN
liquid
- das **Flussufer** NOUN (PL die **Flussufer**)
river bank ◇ *am Flussufer* on the river bank
- flüstern** VERB
to whisper
- die **Flut** NOUN (PL die **Fluten**)
[1] flood ◇ *Wir haben eine Flut von Briefen bekommen.* We received a flood of letters.
[2] high tide ◇ *Das Schiff läuft bei Flut aus.* The ship sails at high tide.
- das **Flutlicht** NOUN (PL die **Flutlichter**)
loodlight
- der **Föhn** NOUN (PL die **Föhne**)
[1] foehn wind ◇ *Heute ist Föhn.* There's a foehn wind blowing today.

[1] The foehn wind is a dry, warm wind usually found to the north of the Alps.

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- [2] hair dryer**
föhnen VERB
to blow-dry
- die **Folge** NOUN
[1] result ◇ *Er starb an den Folgen des Unfalls.* He died as a result of the accident.
♦ **etwas zur Folge haben** to result in something ◇ *Deine Faulheit wird schlechte Noten zur Folge haben.* Your laziness will result in bad marks.
♦ **Folgen haben** to have consequences ◇ *Das wird schlimme Folgen haben.* That'll have serious consequences.
[2] episode ◇ *Hast du die letzte Folge der "Lindenstraße" gesehen?* Did you see the latest episode of "Lindenstraße"?
♦ **ein Roman in Folgen** a serialized novel
- folgen** VERB (PERFECT **ist gefolgt**)
to follow ◇ *Uns ist ein grünes Auto gefolgt.* We were followed by a green car. ◇ *Folgen Sie dem Wagen da.* Follow that car.
♦ **ich konnte ihm nicht folgen.** I couldn't follow what he was saying.
♦ **Meine Kinder folgen nicht immer.** My children don't always do what they're told.
- folgend** ADJECTIVE
following
- die **Folgerung** NOUN
conclusion
- folglich** ADVERB
consequently
- folgsam** ADJECTIVE
obedient
- die **Folie** NOUN
foil
- foltern** VERB
to torture
- der **Fön** (R) NOUN (PL die **Föhne**)
hair dryer
- fordern** VERB
to demand
- die **Forderung** NOUN
demand
- die **Forelle** NOUN
trout ◇ *drei Forellen* three trout
- die **Form** NOUN
[1] shape ◇ *Das Auto hat eine elegante Form.* The car has an elegant shape.
[2] mould ◇ *Das Metall wird in eine Form gegossen.* The metal is poured into a mould.
[3] baking tin
- das **Format** NOUN (PL die **Formate**)
format
formatieren VERB (PERFECT **hat formatiert**)
to format
- die **Formel** NOUN
- formula**
- formen** VERB
to form
- förmlich** ADJECTIVE
formal
- das **Formular** NOUN (PL die **Formulare**)
form ◇ *ein Formular ausfüllen* to fill in a form
- formulieren** VERB (PERFECT **hat formuliert**)
to formulate
- der **Forscher** NOUN (PL die **Forscher**)
[1] research scientist ◇ *Die Forscher haben noch keinen Impfstoff gegen Aids entwickelt.* Research scientists have still not developed an AIDS vaccine.
[2] explorer ◇ *Ein Gruppe von Forschern ist im Amazonasgebiet verschollen.* A group of explorers is missing in the Amazon region.
- die **Forschung** NOUN
research
- fort** ADVERB
gone ◇ *Mein Geldbeutel ist fort.* My purse is gone.
♦ **und so fort** and so on
♦ **in einem fort** on and on
♦ **Fort mit dir!** Away with you!
- sich **fortbewegen** VERB (PERFECT **hat sich fortbewegt**)
to move
- fortbleiben** VERB (IMPERFECT **blieb fort**, PERFECT **ist fortgeblieben**)
to stay away
- fortfahren** VERB (PRESENT **fährt fort**, IMPERFECT **fuhr fort**, PERFECT **ist fortgefahren**)
[1] to leave ◇ *Sie sind gestern fortgefahren.* They left yesterday.
[2] to continue ◇ *Er fuhr in seiner Rede fort.* He continued with his speech.
- fortgeschritten** ADJECTIVE
advanced
- der **Fortschritt** NOUN (PL die **Fortschritte**)
progress ◇ *Fortschritte machen* to make progress
- fortschrittlich** ADJECTIVE
progressive
- fortsetzen** VERB (PERFECT **hat fortgesetzt**)
to continue
- die **Fortsetzung** NOUN
[1] continuation ◇ *die Fortsetzung des Krieges* the continuation of the war
[2] sequel ◇ *Hast du die Fortsetzung gelesen?* Have you read the sequel?
♦ **Morgen kommt die Fortsetzung des Krimis.** The detective story will be continued tomorrow.
♦ **Fortsetzung folgt** to be continued
- das **Foto** NOUN (PL die **Fotos**)
photo
- der **Fotoapparat** NOUN (PL die **Fotoapparate**)
camera

F

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