

German A1 Starter Pack

Your first words, phrases and sounds — enough to begin

BRIX ONLINE ACADEMY / LANGUAGE LEARNING

A1 is the first level of the Common European Framework, and the level every German university, embassy and employer counts from. This pack contains the foundation: how German sounds, the phrases you will use on your first day, and the words that appear most often. Work through it before your first class and you will start ahead.

1. How German sounds

German spelling is consistent — once you know the rules, you can pronounce almost any word on sight. These are the ones that trip up English speakers.

Letter	Sounds like	Example
w	English <i>v</i>	was (what) — "vass"
v	English <i>f</i>	vier (four) — "feer"
z	English <i>ts</i>	zehn (ten) — "tsayn"
s	English <i>z</i> before a vowel	sieben (seven) — "zeeben"
ei	English <i>eye</i>	nein (no) — "nine"
ie	English <i>ee</i>	lieben (to love) — "leebeen"
ch	soft, from the back of the throat	ich (I), Buch (book)
sch	English <i>sh</i>	Schule (school)
ß	double <i>s</i>	heißen (to be called)
ä ö ü	umlauts — change the vowel and often the meaning	schon (already) / schön (beautiful)

The rule that saves you: the umlaut is not decoration. Dropping the dots changes the word. Write them, and say them.

2. Twenty phrases for your first day

German	English
Hallo / Guten Morgen	Hello / Good morning
Guten Tag / Guten Abend	Good day / Good evening
Auf Wiedersehen / Tschüss	Goodbye (formal / informal)
Wie heißen Sie?	What is your name? (formal)
Ich heiße ...	My name is ...
Wie geht es Ihnen?	How are you? (formal)
Mir geht es gut, danke.	I am well, thank you.
Woher kommen Sie?	Where are you from?
Ich komme aus Nigeria.	I am from Nigeria.
Ich wohne in Abuja.	I live in Abuja.
Sprechen Sie Englisch?	Do you speak English?
Ich spreche ein bisschen Deutsch.	I speak a little German.
Ich verstehe nicht.	I do not understand.
Können Sie das wiederholen?	Can you repeat that?
Wie sagt man ... auf Deutsch?	How do you say ... in German?
Entschuldigung	Excuse me / Sorry
Bitte / Danke schön	Please, you're welcome / Thank you very much
Wie viel kostet das?	How much does that cost?

Wo ist die Toilette?

Where is the toilet?

Ich hätte gern ...

I would like ...

3. Your first hundred words

People and family

der Mann — man	die Frau — woman	das Kind — child	der Freund — friend
die Mutter — mother	der Vater — father	die Schwester — sister	der Bruder — brother

Numbers 1-20

1 eins	2 zwei	3 drei	4 vier
5 fünf	6 sechs	7 sieben	8 acht
9 neun	10 zehn	11 elf	12 zwölf
13 dreizehn	14 vierzehn	15 fünfzehn	16 sechzehn
17 siebzehn	18 achtzehn	19 neunzehn	20 zwanzig

Days and time

Montag — Monday	Dienstag — Tuesday	Mittwoch — Wednesday	Donnerstag — Thursday
Freitag — Friday	Samstag — Saturday	Sonntag — Sunday	heute — today
morgen — tomorrow	gestern — yesterday	jetzt — now	später — later

Question words

wer — who	was — what	wo — where	wann — when
warum — why	wie — how	woher — from where	wie viel — how much

Everyday verbs

sein — to be	haben — to have	gehen — to go	kommen — to come
machen — to do	sprechen — to speak	lernen — to learn	arbeiten — to work
essen — to eat	trinken — to drink	wohnen — to live	kaufen — to buy

Places and things

das Haus — house	die Schule — school	die Stadt — city	das Land — country
das Wasser — water	das Brot — bread	das Buch — book	das Geld — money
die Arbeit — work	der Tag — day	die Zeit — time	das Jahr — year

Useful small words

ja — yes	nein — no	und — and	aber — but
nicht — not	auch — also	sehr — very	gut — good
groß — big	klein — small	neu — new	alt — old

4. Three grammar points that unlock A1

Every noun has a gender — and a capital letter

German nouns are **der** (masculine), **die** (feminine) or **das** (neuter), and all of them are written with a capital letter. The gender is rarely logical, so learn it with the word: not *Haus* but *das Haus*. Doing this from day one saves months of correction later.

The two verbs you need first

	sein (to be)	haben (to have)
ich — I	bin	habe
du — you (informal)	bist	hast
er / sie / es — he / she / it	ist	hat
wir — we	sind	haben
ihr — you (plural)	seid	habt
sie / Sie — they / you (formal)	sind	haben

The verb goes second

In a normal German statement the verb sits in second position, whatever comes first.

- **Ich** *lerne* heute Deutsch. — I am learning German today.
- **Heute** *lerne* ich Deutsch. — Today I am learning German.

Notice that when *heute* moves to the front, *ich* moves behind the verb. The verb does not move. In questions, the verb comes first instead: *Lernen Sie Deutsch?*

5. What A1 means

At A1 you can introduce yourself, ask and answer simple personal questions, and handle everyday needs when the other person speaks slowly and clearly. It is the level most commonly asked for in family reunion visas and it is the entry point for A2 and B1 — the levels required for most study and work routes in Germany.

How to use this pack: ten minutes a day beats two hours on Sunday. Say every word aloud, even when reading alone — German is assessed on speaking from the first level.