This crash course is meant to be paired alongside further studies whether at school or for personal curiosity. Think of it as a personal tutor that you can keep in your notes.

Print me. Print me for your friends. Print me for the streets.

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**Pronunciation Guide**

This guide is intended for Hochdeutsch (High German) which is the standard language in Germany. There are many dialects and accents that vary drastically.

* **Ä Ö Ü**: Umlauts flatten the vowel. Try shaping your mouth to make the A/O/U but then say “Eh” when doing it. Also, if you are able to, try finding a video or sound clip of each of these and mimic them as best as you can. Being able to compare how you sound to a native speaker really helps to get better with pronunciation.
	+ Note: Umlauts are very important and can change the meaning of a word entirely. Take time to practice them every day.
* **Soft ‘ch’**: This should sound like a cat hissing. Try pressing the middle of your tongue to the roof of your mouth and push air out.
	+ Note: You can use the English ‘Sh’ sound and most people will understand you.
* **Hard ‘ch’**: Similar to the soft ‘ch’, but instead press the back of your tongue into your throat and force air out. It should sound a little gravily.
* **When to use Soft ‘ch’ vs Hard ‘ch’**: Usually, however not always, one will use the soft ‘ch’ if it shows up in the middle of a word while one would use the hard ‘ch’ if it appears at the end of the word. The more words you learn the easier it will get to get a feel for the difference and when to use them.
	+ Note: There are some exceptions such as the word “ich” which uses the soft ‘Ch’ sound.
* **W**: W’s always make the English ‘V’ sound. The letter is said like “vey”.
* **V**: Usually sounds like ‘F’. The letter is said like “fow”.
* **J**: Always sounds like the English ‘y’. Unless it’s a loan word. For example: [der] Junge is pronounced like “YOOng-uh”. The ‘j’ in [die] Journalistin, however, is more like the 's' in 'pleasure'.
* **Z**: Usually sounds like ‘ts’ in "pots" or "its".
* **S/SS/ß**: Typically when there is only one ‘s’ in a word it sounds like the English letter ‘z’, especially when the word starts with ‘s’ or if ‘s’ is in the middle of the word. When there are two of them together they sound like the English ‘s’. The ‘ß’ makes the same sound as ‘ss’ and is called the sharp s. One can always replace the ß with two s’s, however not usually the other way around.
* **‘E’ at the end of a word**: Always pronounced. So for example, the word “Schade” should sound like “Shah-duh”
* **Soft ‘R’**: German does not have the hard ‘R’ like in American English. The soft ‘R’ sounds exactly like the typical British ‘R’ sound. So, in American English we would say “Car” and the British accent would say something close to “Cah”.
* **Trilled ‘R’**: The trilled ‘R’ is a bit like the Spanish rolled ‘R’. However, in German it is produced with the back of the tongue rather than the front like in Spanish. Try gargling with some water. Now do the same motion without it. However, some dialects use the front of the tongue like in Spanish or a Scottish accent.
* **When to use Soft ‘R’ vs Trilled ‘R’**: The trilled ‘R’ is more of a regional accent (as well as a way to emphasize an ‘r’ in a word) and isn’t typically very common to use. It is also used in some poetry or songs as a “decoration”. If it’s too hard to make the sound, it’s okay to just use the soft ‘R’. Most Germans do this anyway.
* **ei**: When it’s ‘e’ then ‘i’ it sounds like the English word “eye”.
* **ie:** When it’s “i” then ‘e’ it sounds like the English “ee”, like the word “free”.
	+ Beware! Some words don’t always follow this rule, like [die] Familie “Fah-MEE-lee-uh”
* **eu/äu**: ‘Eu’ and ‘äu’sound a bit like the ‘oy’ in “boy”.
* **au**: Sounds like ‘ow’ as in “how now brown cow”
* **sp/st/sch**: The German ‘sch’ is just like the English ‘sh’. When ‘sp’ and ‘st’ begin a word they are pronounced like ‘sh-p’ and ‘sh-t’ respectively. For example the word “stuhl” should sound like “sh-tool”.
* **th**: German does not have the ‘th’ sound and only sounds like ‘t’.
* **qu**: In German this will sound like ‘kv’. So the word “quatsch” should sound like “kv-AH-ch”.
* **Long Vowels (‘aa’, ‘ah’, ‘aß’, ‘ase’ etc):** When vowels are doubled up as in ‘aa’ or ‘oo’, such as in the words das Haar and das Boot, the vowel sound gets stretched out and turns into a long vowel. The same thing applies to vowels followed by ß, a consonant then followed by another vowel (eg. die Nase), and h.
* **Short Vowels:** When a vowel is followed by a doubled up consonant, such as two t’s or p’s in das Wetter and die Suppe, the vowel is always short.

**General advice**

* **The first letter of a sentence and all nouns are capitalized.**
	+ **Example:** Gib mir mein Buch, bitte. *(Give me my book, please.)*
* **All personal pronouns are lower case. All proper nouns are capitalized.**

**Awesome Resources and Advice for Learning German**

***DICT.CC is your best friend. The app and the site are the best dictionary.***

| **YouTube Channels:*** DW Deutsch
* Easy German
* Any content that you’re interested in and that’s entirely in german.
* Varion - sketch comedy channel
* Coldmirror - if you're a fan of harry potter
 | **Apps:*** Don’t. They just waste your time and teach you bad habbits.
* Unless it’s a dictionary.
* Flash cards or Anki can be useful, your mileage will vary.

**Subredits:*** r/German
* r/GermanPractice
* r/Dokumentationen
* r/MakeFriendsInGermany
 |
| --- | --- |
| **Other tips and advice:*** Get as much comprehensible input\* as possible everyday. Forever. Watch shows (or read books) that you’ve already seen with English audio or subtitles. Then watch it again in German. In just a couple months you won’t need to watch the english version anymore, trust me. \*when the general meaning is understood.
* If you don’t have time to rewatch something and don’t mind them, children’s books are a great start when buying German books.
* Read about topics that interest you on the German Wikipedia.
* When learning nouns, write the gender and plural along with the noun.
* VPNs are a godsend. (Virtual Private Networks)
* Go to Germany. Seriously, it’ll be fun.
* Meet other German speakers and talk with them only in German.
* Find some German music and listen to it. Do a search for “DFE Episode 25: German Music” for a good list of suggestions. Spotify is a decent resource as well.
* If you like grammar, get a grammar book. Any will do.
* If you don’t like grammar and think it’s boring. Don’t. It’ll just waste your time and won’t help you actually communicate. When’s the last time you saw a 2 year old read a grammar book?
* Start a journal containing all your notes on German grammar and vocabulary. Try to write in it every day using what you know. Write about your daily life and the things you like.
 |

**Emergency German:**

| Hallo. | Hello. |
| --- | --- |
| Guten Morgen/Tag. | Good morning/day. |
| Gute Nacht. | Good night. |
| Mein Name ist…Ich bin…Ich heiße.. | My name is…I am…I am called... |
| Wie geht’s? | How are you doing? |
| Mir geht’s gut/schlecht. | I am good/bad. |
| Ja/Nein | Yes/no |
| Ich spreche .....kein Deutsch...ein bisschen Deutsch. | I speak …...no German....a little bit of German. |
| Sprechen Sie Englisch? | Do you speak english? |
| Entschuldigung (en-shool-dee-gung). | Excuse me.  |
| Könnten Sie mir bitte sagen, wo *[place here]* ist? | Could you please tell me where *[place here]* is. |
| Könnten Sie mir bitte sagen, wann der Bus/Zug ankommt? | Could you please tell me when the bus/train comes? |
| Danke. | Thanks. |
| Bitte. | Please/ You’re welcome. |
| Ich bin ein Amerikaner /Ich bin eine Amerikanerin | I am American (if you’re male) /I am American (if you’re female) |
| Hilfe! Meine Gruppe hat mich verlassen und ich weiß nicht wo ich bin. | Help! My group left me and I don't know where I am.  |

**Die Zahlen (Numbers)**

| 1. eins
2. zwei
3. drei
4. vier
5. fünf
6. sechs
7. sieben
8. acht
9. neun
10. zehn
 | 1. elf
2. zwölf
3. dreizehn
4. vierzehn
5. fünfzehn
6. sechzehn
7. siebzehn
8. achtzehn
9. neunzehn
10. zwanzig
 |
| --- | --- |
| 1. einundzwanzig
2. zweiundzwanzig
3. dreiundzwanzig
4. vierundzwanzig
5. fünfundzwanzig
6. sechsundzwanzig
7. siebenundzwanzig
8. achtundzwanzig
9. neunundzwanzig
 | 30. dreizig40. vierzig50. fünfzig60. sechzig70. siebzig80. achtzig90. neunzig100. hundert101. hundertein |
| 1.000 - tausend10.000 -zehntausend 100.000 - hunderttausend1.000.000 - eine Million1.000.000.000 - eine Milliarde | 368 - dreihundertachtundsechzig1.995 - eintausendneunhundert fünfundneunzig 700.000.000 - siebenhundert Millionen |

**Noun Gender**

In German, all nouns have a “gender”. They can either be masculine (der Löffel - the spoon), feminine (die Gabel - the fork), or neuter (das Messer - the knife). These aren’t inherently reflective of biological gender nor do native speakers give much credence to the gender. Bluntly put, “gender” is a grammatical tool for specificity (for further reading I recommend “Der, Die, Das” by Constantin Vayenas). At first, there doesn’t seem to be a logical system and I highly recommend memorizing the gender with the noun. However, there are some generalized rules which can help you learn a word’s gender.

* Nouns within similar categories tend to share the same gender.
(eg. days/months/years/seasons are masculine)
* Nouns borrowed or invented tend to share the same gender of nouns already present in german. Although borrowed nouns will often share the original gender of the original language if that language has gender.
* More often than not nouns ending in “-e”, “-ie”, “-ur”, and “-ung” tend to be feminine.
(die Zeitung, die Hölle)
* Things of, and found in nature tend to be neuter.
(das Leben, das Wasser)
* Diminutive endings like “-chen” and “-lein” will always be neuter.
* Almost half of all nouns are feminine. When in doubt, just assume feminine and you’re statistically bound to be right.

Paying attention to the articles and adjective endings surrounding a word can also hint at what gender that given word is.

**German Cases**

German has four different cases. Nominative, Accusative, Dative, and Genitive. Each case serves a grammatical function and gives specificity to the audience.

For, an admittedly odd, example:

*“Ich gab einen Ball des Drachens zu dem Hund”*\*

*“I gave the dog a ball of the dragon”*

\*this is for clarity, normally one contracts “zu dem” to “zum”

All of the nouns here (Ball/Drachen/Hund) are masculine. “einen Ball” lets the audience know that the ball is the thing being given, “des Drachens” denotes that the ball is of any particular dragon, and “zu dem Hund” shows the dog is the entity receiving the ball. While there is a general word order that sounds the most natural (you’ll get the feel for it after a while), one could in theory rearrange all the words and the meaning would not be lost. Additionally one can stress the importance of each noun by placing it first within the sentence.

zb.:

*“Er wirft den Ball dem Hund.”*

*“He throws the ball to the dog.”*

*“Dem Hund wirft er den Ball.”*

*“He throws the ball to the dog.”*

*“Den Ball wirft er dem Hund.”*

*“He throws the ball to the dog.”*

**Nominative Case**

This case reflects the subject of a sentence. Anything following the verbs ***Sein*** (to be)/***Werden*** (to become)/***Heißen*** (to be called) is in the nominative. Think of it as making an equation.

Example (Subject in Blue, adj. ending underlined):

Das ist mein grüner Wagen.

*That is my green car.*

**Nominative Pronouns**

|  | **Personal Pronouns** | **Dependent Possessive Pronouns**(these always precede a noun) | **Independent Possessive Pronouns**(these don’t precede nouns) | **In/Dependent Possessive Pronouns** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Neuter** | **Masculine** | **Neuter** | **Feminine/Plural** |
| *1st sing.* | ich | mein | meiner | meins | meine |
| *2nd sing. informal* | du | dein | deiner | deins | deine |
| *3rd sing.* | er | sein | seiner | seins | seine |
| *3rd sing.* | es | sein | seiner | seins | seine |
| *3rd sing.* | sie | ihr | ihrer | ihres | ihre |
| *1st plural* | wir | unser | unserer | unseres | unsere |
| *2nd plural* | ihr | euer | euerer | eures | eure |
| *3rd plural* | sie | ihr | ihrer | ihres | ihre |
| *2nd sing. formal* | Sie | Ihr | Ihrer | Ihres | Ihre |

**Accusative Case**

This case has a subject and a direct object. This case is used when a subject is acting on the direct object. Most verbs will use this case.

***Haben*** (to have) is always in the accusative.

Example (Subject in Blue, dir. obj. in Red, adj. ending underlined):

Ich werfe einen grünen Ball.

*I am throwing a green ball.*

***Words that trigger Accusative:***

Durch, Für, Gegen, Ohne, Um

**Accusative Pronouns**

|  | **Personal Pronouns** | **In/Dependent Possessive Pronouns** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Neuter** | **Feminine** | **Plural** |
| **Adjective** | **Pronoun** |
| *1st sing.* | mich | meinen | mein | meins | meine | meine |
| *2nd sing. informal* | dich | deinen | dein | deins | deine | deine |
| *3rd sing.* | ihn | seinen | sein | seins | seine | seine |
| *3rd sing.* | es | seinen | sein | seins | seine | seine |
| *3rd sing.* | sie | ihren | ihr | ihres | ihre | ihre |
| *1st plural* | uns | unseren | unser | unseres | unsere | unsere |
| *2nd plural* | euch | euren | euer | eures | eure | eure |
| *3rd plural* | sie | ihren | ihr | ihres | ihre | ihre |
| *2nd sing. formal* | Sie | Ihren | Ihr | Ihres | Ihre | Ihre |

**Dative Case**

This case includes the indirect object. Think of it as the subject doing an action to an object for another subject rather than to the 2nd subject. ***Antworten*** (to answer), ***Danken*** (to thank), ***Gefallen*** (to please), ***Helfen*** (to help), and ***Raten*** (to advise) are a few examples of verbs in the Dative case.

Example (Subject in Blue, dir. obj. in Red, indir. obj. in Violet adj. endings underlined):

Ich habe einen golden Ring zu meinem Mann geschenkt.

*I gave my husband a gold ring.*

***Words that trigger Dative:***

Aus, Außer, Bei, Mit, Nach, Seit, Von, Zu

**Dative Pronouns**

|  | **Personal Pronouns** | **In/Dependent Possessive Pronouns** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Neuter** | **Feminine** | **Plural** |
| *1st sing.* | mir | meinem | meinem | meiner | meinen |
| *2nd sing. informal* | dir | deinem | deinem | deiner | deinen |
| *3rd sing.* | ihm | seinem | seinem | seiner | seinen |
| *3rd sing.* | ihm | seinem | seinem | seiner | seinen |
| *3rd sing.* | ihr | ihrem | ihrem | ihrer | ihren |
| *1st plural* | uns | unserem | unserem | unserer | unseren |
| *2nd plural* | euch | eurem | eurem | eurer | euren |
| *3rd plural* | ihnen | ihrem | ihrem | ihrer | ihren |
| *2nd sing. formal* | Ihnen | Ihrem | Ihrem | Ihrer | Ihren |

**Genitive Case**

This case primarily denotes possession.

Example: (Blue is subject, Green is possessive object, underline is preposition)

Das Wort des Tages.

*The word of the day.*

**Genitive Pronouns**

|  | **Personal Pronouns** | **Dependent Possessive Pronouns** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Neuter** | **Feminine** | **Plural** |
| *1st sing.* | meiner | meines | meines | meiner | meiner |
| *2nd sing. informal* | deiner | deines | deines | deiner | deiner |
| *3rd sing.* | seiner | seines | seines | seiner | seiner |
| *3rd sing.* | seiner | seines | seines | seiner | seiner |
| *3rd sing.* | ihrer | ihres | ihres | ihrer | ihrer |
| *1st plural* | unser | unseres | unseres | unserer | unserer |
| *2nd plural* | euer | eures | eures | eurer | eurer |
| *3rd plural* | ihrer | ihres | ihres | ihrer | ihrer |
| *2nd sing. formal* | Ihrer | Ihres | Ihres | Ihrer | Ihrer |

**Adjective Word Endings**

All adjectives reflect the gender of the noun they’re describing (the technical term being declination). Depending on the case and gender of the noun and whether or not the noun is definite, indefinite, or unpreceded, the ending will change.

zb.:

*“Der schwarze Hund.”*

*“The black dog.”*

*“Ich habe einen schwarzen Hund.”*

*“I have a black dog.”*

*"Schwarzer Hund.”*

*“Black dog.”*

|  | **Definite “Der” Words** | **Indefinite “Ein” Words** | **Unpreceded Words** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *masc.* | *neuter* | *fem.* | *plural* | *masc.* | *neuter* | *fem.* | *plural* | *masc.* | *neuter* | *fem.* | *plural* |
| *nominative* | -e | -e | -en | -er | -es | -e | -en | -er | -es | -e |
| *accusative* | -en | -en | -en |
| *dative* | -en | -en | -em | -er | -en |
| *genitive* | -en | -er |

**Der Words**

Der Words are all of the definite articles.

|  | **Nominative** | **Accusative** | **Dative** | **Genitive** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* |
| the/that | d- | -er | -as | -ie | -en | -as | -ie | -em | -er | -en | -es | -er |
| this | dies- | -es | -e | -es | -e |
| every/any | jed- |
| every | all- |
| which | welch- |
| such | solch- |
| some | manch- |
| that | jen- |

**Ein Words**

Ein Words are all of the indefinite articles.

|  | **Nominative** | **Accusative** | **Dative** | **Genitive** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Masc.* | *neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* | *Masc.* | *Neu.* | *Fem.* | *Pl.* |
| a | ein- | - | -e | -en | - | -e | -em | -er | -en | -es | -er |
| my | mein- |
| your sg. | dein- |
| his | sein- |
| its | sein- |
| her | ihr- |
| our | unser- |
| your pl. | euer- | eure | euren | eure | eurem | eurer | euren | eures | eurer |
| their | ihr | -e |  | -e | -em |  |  | -es | -er |
| Yourformal | Ihr |
| not (a) | kein |

**Present Tense Conjugation**

Regular verbs will take the stem of a verb and apply the appropriate ending that reflects the subject. For example: In the verb rennen, renn is the stem.

 Ich renne (I run) vs. Fred/er rennt (Fred/he runs).

| ich | -e | wir | -en |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| du | -st | ihr | -t |
| er/es/sie | -t | sie | -en |
| Sie | -en |

Some verbs are slightly irregular. If the stem of a verb ends in a “d” or “t” then an “e” is sandwiched in between the stem and the ending for “du, er/es/sie, and ihr”.

zb. antworten

| ich | antworte | wir | antworten |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| du | antwortest | ihr | antwortet |
| er/es/sie | antwortet | sie | antworten |
| Sie | antworten |

Other verbs are even more irregular and will contain what’s called a “stem-vowel change” for the “du and er/es/sie” forms. Not all stem-vowel changes follow the same rules and will typically need to be memorized.

zb. lesen and tragen

| ich | lese | trage | wir | lesen | tragen |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| du | l**ie**st | tr**ä**gst | ihr | lest | tragt |
| er/es/sie | l**ie**st | tr**ä**gt | sie | lesen | tragen |
| Sie | lesen | tragen |

**Separable Prefixes**

Some verbs can have a prefix on them that will change the meaning of the original verb. Sometimes the meaning can be obvious and sometimes not (aussehen literally means “out seeing”, but aufhören literally means “on hearing”). The prefix will get detached from the verb in particular cases and placed at the end of a clause.

zb. aussehen (to look, as in, “you look pretty”)

Du siehst so schön aus.

However, when used with a modal verb, the prefix is kept attached to the main verb.

zb. müssen / absagen (have to, must / to cancel)

Leider muss ich absagen.

Similarly, the prefix is kept on to the main verb in the perfect past tense, but it is placed before the “ge-” prefix. In the simple past the prefix can be either attached or placed at the end of the clause.

zb. aufhören (to stop)

Er hat es aufgehört

Er hörte es auf | Er aufhörte es

**TeKaMoLo**

German Word Order

German word order is a little different than in English. A helpful learning tool to remember the most native sounding order is TeKaMoLo.

**Temporal-***the when*

**Kausal-***the why*

**Modal-***the how*

**Lokal-***the where*

*zb.* Ich reise nächstes Jahr an einem langen Flug nach Frankfurt.

**Comparatives and Superlatives**

*It’s like when you’re comparing A and B, but you know C is the best.*

Forming comparatives in German is fairly simple. Typically when comparing two things, “-er” will be added to an adjective. Much like English’s “quick” vs. “quicker” (“I thought I was quick, but she’s quicker!”). In German, “schnell” and “ schneller” (“Ich dachte dass ich schnell bin, aber sie ist schneller!”). Although there are irregularities in German, much like “good/better” in English. Additionally some words will have a vowel change similarly to stem-vowel changes for some verbs. Here are some common ones:

| **English Adj.** | **Adjective***no ending* | **Comparative**“-er” ending | **Superlative**“-[e]sten” ending |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| good | gut | besser | am besten |
| much | viel | mehr | am meisten |
| Technically an adverb expressing fondness of that action | gern | lieber | am liebsten |
| high | hoch | höher | am höchsten |
| near | nah | näher | am nächsten |

Superlatives are the extreme end. So if chocolate is good, chocolate ice cream is better, then chocolate ice cream with hot fudge is the best.

* To compare two things as equals, one uses the “so...wie...” construction.
	+ Tobi ist so groß wie sein Bruder.
	+ Tobi is as tall as his brother.
* To compare one thing as inferior, one uses the “nicht so...wie...” construction
	+ Fred ist nicht so schnell wie Alexa.
	+ Fred is not as fast as Alexa.
* To compare one thing as superior, one uses the “...als...”
	+ Eine Katze ist kleiner als ein Elefant.
	+ A cat is smaller than an elephant.
* To say something is the most, one just adds “...am -sten” to the adjective. If the adj. ends in “d” or “t” add “...am -esten”.
	+ Er ist am schnellsten!
	+ He is the fastest!

**Time and Time expressions**

| der Morgen\*, - | der Vormittag, -e | der Mittag, -e | der Nachmittag, -e | der Abend, -e | die (Mitter)Nacht, ¨-e |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| morning | \*\* | noon/midday | afternoon | evening | (mid)night |

\*note: The word for “tomorrow” is the same word, however lowercase because it is an adverb.

\*\*note: Largely interchangeable for “Morgen”, but is typically used for the late morning (~9am to ~noon)

| vor...vorgestern | vorgestern | gestern | heute | morgen | übermorgen | über...übermorgen |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| \*\*\*the day before yesterday | yesterday | today | tomorrow | \*\*\*the day after tomorrow |

\*\*\*note: One can attach as many “vor-”s and “über-”s, to the point of absurdity, to get as many “days before/after” one desires.

die Woche, -n (the week)

| der Sonntag, -e | der Montag, -e | der Dienstag, -e | der Mittwoch, -e | der Donnerstag, -e | der Freitag, -e | der Samstag, -e |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |

der Monat, -e (the month) | das Jahr, -e (the year)

| Januar\* | Februar\* | März\* | April\* | Mai\* | Juni\*\* |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Juli\*\* | August\* | September\* | Oktober\* | November\* | Dezember\* |

note: All months are masculine. Pluralizing is rare, but can happen.

\*note: plural ends in nothing \*note: plural ends in -e \*\*note: plural ends in -s

**Telling the Time**

There are two common ways to tell time in German,

colloquial (12 hour clock) and standard (24 hour clock).

Standard German time is very simple and straightforward. Since it’s in 24hr time there is no need for “am/pm”. One just says “[hour] Uhr [minutes]”.

z.b.:

3:05 → drei Uhr fünf.

15:25 → fünfzehn Uhr fünfundzwanzig.

Colloquial time is a little more complex. One gives however many minutes before or after the hour that it currently is (Five after three). When using colloquial time one will be as specific as needed with time of day. If someone asks for the time and it’s clearly daylight out then saying “Viertel nach Sechs” would imply in the evening.

One can be specific with the minutes by giving the number exactly

z.b.:

3:15am → fünfzehn nach drei morgens (früh).

*“Fifteen after three in the morning.”*

Or one can use fractions much like “half” and “quarter” in english. Be wary though the bottom of the hour in German is considered halfway to the next hour. So unlike the English “half past 3”, 3:30 would be considered “halfway before 4” (halb vier). Further adding to the confusion one can also give how many minutes before or after “halfway before 4”.

z.b.:

3:15am → viertel nach drei morgens (früh).

*“Quarter after three in the morning.”*

3:25pm → fünf vor halb vier nachmittags.

*“Five before half 4 in the afternoon.”*

| Midnight - Noon | der Mittag, -e | 12:01pm - ~5pm | ~6pm - ~8pm | ~9pm - Midnight | die, Mitternacht, ¨-e |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| morgens | nachmittags | abends | nachts |
| a.m. | Midday | p.m. | Midnight |