

Robinson Crusoe

Chapter 1: Start ins Leben

Start in life



LANGUAGE

German 



TRANSLATION

English 



LEVEL

A1 - Beginner



German

1. **Mein Name** ist Robinson Crusoe. Ich wurde 1632 in York, England geboren. Mein Vater **kam** aus Deutschland. **Er war** Kaufmann. **Er** verdiente gutes Geld. Dann **hörte er auf** zu arbeiten. **Er** lebte in York. **Er** heiratete dort **meine Mutter**. Ihr Familienname **war** Robinson.

English

1. My name is Robinson Crusoe. I was born in 1632 in York, England. My father came from Germany. He was a merchant. He earned good money. Then he stopped working. He lived in York. He married my mother there. Her family name was Robinson.

German	English
mein name	my name
ist	is
robinson crusoe	robinson crusoe
ich	i
wurde	was
1632	1632
in york	in york
england	england
geboren	born

German	English
mein vater	my father
kam	came
aus deutschland	from germany
er	he
war	was
kaufmann	a merchant
verdiente	earned
gutes geld	good money
dann	then

German	English
hörte er auf	he stopped
zu arbeiten	working
lebte	lived
heiratete	married
dort	there
meine mutter	my mother
ihr familienname	her family name
robinson	robinson



Language tips

Simple Past (Präteritum) - War, Kam (Related words: **war, kam**)

German uses the Präteritum for storytelling and past events. Notice how 'war' (was) and 'kam' (came) show completed actions. In English, we use simple past forms like 'was' and 'came' for the same purpose.

- ich war → I was
- er kam → he came
- sie lebte → she lived

Possessive Pronouns - Mein/Meine (Related words: **Mein Name, meine Mutter**)

German possessives like 'mein' (my) must match the gender of the noun they describe. 'Mein Name' (masculine) vs 'meine Mutter' (feminine). In English, 'my' never changes.

- mein Vater → my father
- meine Mutter → my mother
- mein Buch → my book

Separable Verbs - Hörte auf (Related words: **hörte er auf**)

The verb 'aufhören' (to stop) splits in the past tense with 'auf' moving to the end. In English, we simply say 'stopped' without any separation.

- er hörte auf → he stopped
- ich höre auf → I stop
- aufhören → to stop

Word Order - Subject-Verb (Related words: **Er, war**)

German maintains strict subject-verb-object order in simple statements. 'Er war Kaufmann' follows the same pattern as English 'He was a merchant', making these sentences easy to understand.



- Er war → He was
- Ich wurde → I was
- Sie kam → She came

German

2. **Ich hatte** zwei ältere Brüder. Ein Bruder **war Soldat**. Er starb in einem Krieg in Flandern. Ich **wusste nie**, was mit meinem anderen Bruder passierte. Meine Eltern wussten auch **nie**, was mit mir passierte. Ich war der dritte Sohn. Mein Vater **brachte** mir keinen Beruf **bei**.

English

2. I had two older brothers. One brother was a soldier. He died in a war in Flanders. I never knew what happened with my other brother. My parents also never knew what happened with me. I was the third son. My father didn't teach me any profession.

German	English	German	English	German	English
ich hatte	i had	einem krieg	a war	meine eltern	my parents
zwei	two	flandern	flanders	wussten	knew
ältere	older	ich wusste	i knew	auch	also
brüder	brothers	nie	never	mir	me
ein bruder	one brother	was	what	ich war	i was
soldat	a soldier	mit	with	der dritte sohn	the third son
er starb	he died	meinem anderen bruder	my other brother	brachte	taught
in	in	passierte	happened	keinen beruf	no profession



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - hatte (Related words: **Ich hatte**)

German uses the simple past (Präteritum) for storytelling. 'Ich hatte' means 'I had', showing possession in the past.

- ich hatte → I had
- du hattest → you had
- er hatte → he had

Articles with Professions - Soldat (Related words: **war, Soldat**)

In German, when stating someone's profession with 'sein' (to be), you often don't need an article. 'Er war Soldat' means 'He was a soldier'.

- Er ist Lehrer → He is a teacher
- Sie war Ärztin → She was a doctor
- Ich bin Student → I am a student

Word Order with 'nie' - Ich wusste nie (Related words: **wusste, nie**)

The German word 'nie' (never) usually comes after the verb, while in English 'never' often comes before the verb.

- Ich wusste nie → I never knew
- Er kam nie → He never came
- Sie sah nie → She never saw

Separable Verbs in Past - brachte...bei (Related words: **brachte, bei**)



The verb 'beibringen' (to teach) separates in the past tense. The prefix 'bei' moves to the end of the sentence.

- Er brachte mir Deutsch bei → He taught me German
- Sie brachte ihm Kochen bei → She taught him cooking
- beibringen → to teach

German

3. Ich begann von Abenteuern **zu träumen**. Ich dachte die ganze Zeit **ans** Reisen. Mein Vater war alt. Er schickte mich zur Schule. Er wollte, **dass** ich Anwalt **werde**. Aber ich wollte nur eine Sache. Ich wollte zur See **fahren**.

English

3. I began to dream of adventures. I thought about traveling all the time. My father was old. He sent me to school. He wanted me to become a lawyer. But I wanted only one thing. I wanted to go to sea.

German	English	German	English	German	English
ich begann	i began	reisen	traveling	werde	become
von	of	alt	old	aber	but
abenteuern	adventures	er schickte	he sent	ich wollte	i wanted
zu	to	mich	me	nur	only
träumen	dream	zur schule	to school	eine sache	one thing
ich dachte	i thought	er wollte	he wanted	zur see	to sea
die ganze zeit	all the time	dass	that	fahren	go
ans	about	anwalt	a lawyer		



Language tips

Infinitive with 'zu' - zu träumen (Related words: **zu, träumen**)

German uses 'zu' + infinitive after certain verbs like 'beginnen' (to begin). This is similar to English 'to' + verb.

- beginnen zu träumen → to begin to dream
- anfangen zu lernen → to start to learn
- versuchen zu verstehen → to try to understand

Contractions - ans (Related words: **ans**)

'Ans' is a contraction of 'an das' (at/about the). German often combines prepositions with articles to make shorter forms.

- ans = an das → about the
- ins = in das → into the
- zum = zu dem → to the

Modal Verb 'wollte' - Past Tense (Related words: **wollte, fahren**)

The modal verb 'wollen' (to want) in past tense is 'wollte'. In German, modal verbs are often used with infinitives at the end.

- Ich wollte gehen → I wanted to go
- Er wollte essen → He wanted to eat
- Sie wollte schlafen → She wanted to sleep

Subordinate Clause with 'dass' (Related words: **dass, werde**)



After 'dass' (that), German uses verb-final word order. Notice how 'werde' comes at the end of the clause.

- Er will, dass ich komme → He wants me to come
- Ich hoffe, dass du verstehst → I hope that you understand
- Sie sagt, dass er arbeitet → She says that he works

German

4. Mein Vater war **darüber** wütend. Meine Mutter war auch wütend. Alle meine Freunde **sagten** mir, ich solle zu Hause bleiben. Aber etwas in mir wollte gehen. Ich konnte **nicht** aufhören, an Schiffe und das Meer zu denken. Ich wusste **nicht**, dass dieser Wunsch mir schreckliche Probleme bringen **würde**.

English

4. My father was angry about it. My mother was also angry. All my friends told me I should stay at home. But something in me wanted to go. I couldn't stop thinking about ships and the sea. I didn't know that this wish would bring me terrible problems.

German	English	German	English	German	English
darüber	about it	etwas	something	und	and
wütend	angry	wollte	wanted	das meer	the sea
alle	all	gehen	to go	denken	think
meine freunde	my friends	ich konnte	i could	dieser wunsch	this wish
sagten	told	nicht	not	schreckliche	terrible
ich solle	i should	aufhören	stop	probleme	problems
zu hause	at home	an	about	bringen	bring
bleiben	stay	schiffe	ships	würde	would



Language tips

Compound Words - **darüber** (Related words: **darüber**)

'Darüber' means 'about it/that'. German uses 'da-' compounds to refer back to something already mentioned, avoiding repetition.

- darüber → about it
- damit → with it
- dafür → for it

Modal Verb 'konnte' - Past Ability (Related words: **konnte, nicht**)

'Konnte' is the past tense of 'können' (can/to be able). It expresses past ability or possibility.

- Ich konnte nicht → I couldn't
- Er konnte schwimmen → He could swim
- Sie konnte lesen → She could read

Indirect Speech - **ich solle** (Related words: **sagten, solle**)

After verbs of saying, German uses subjunctive I ('solle') for indirect speech. This shows reported speech rather than direct quotes.

- Sie sagten, ich solle → They said I should
- Er meint, sie solle → He thinks she should
- Mama sagt, du sollest → Mom says you should



Conditional 'würde' - Would (Related words: würde)

'Würde' expresses conditional meaning (would). Here it shows a future consequence that the narrator didn't know at the time.

- würde bringen → would bring
- würde gehen → would go
- würde helfen → would help

German

5. Eines Tages rief mich **mein Vater** in **sein Zimmer**. **Er war** krank mit Gicht. Er konnte nicht **laufen**. Er wollte ernsthaft mit mir reden. **Warum** **willst du** weggehen? fragte er. **Du** hast hier alles. **Du** kannst ein gutes Leben haben. **Du** kannst Geld verdienen.

English

5. One day my father called me into his room. He was sick with gout. He could not walk. He wanted to talk seriously with me. "Why do you want to go away?" he asked. "You have everything here. You can have a good life. You can earn money."

German	English	German	English	German	English
eines tages	one day	laufen	walk	hast	have
rief	called	ernsthaft	seriously	hier	here
in	into	reden	talk	alles	everything
sein zimmer	his room	warum	why	kannst	can
er war	he was	willst	do want	ein gutes leben	a good life
krank	sick	du	you	haben	have
gicht	gout	weggehen	go away	geld	money
er konnte	he could	fragte	asked	verdienen	earn



Language tips

Simple Past - War (Related words: war, Er war)

In German storytelling, the simple past (Präteritum) is commonly used. 'War' is the past form of 'sein' (to be). In English, this becomes 'was' for singular subjects.

- ich war → I was
- er war → he was
- wir waren → we were

Modal Verbs - Konnte (Related words: konnte, laufen)

The modal verb 'konnte' (could) shows past ability. In German, it's followed directly by an infinitive 'laufen'. In English, we say 'could walk' without 'to'.

- er konnte nicht → he could not
- ich konnte gehen → I could go
- sie konnte sehen → she could see

Possessive Pronouns - Mein/Sein (Related words: mein Vater, sein Zimmer)

German possessives like 'mein' (my) and 'sein' (his) must match the gender of the noun they modify. English possessives don't change form.



- mein Vater → my father
- sein Zimmer → his room
- ihre Mutter → her mother

Question Word Order (Related words: **Warum, willst, du**)

In German questions starting with 'warum' (why), the verb comes second. In English questions, we often need to add 'do' as a helper verb.

- Warum willst du? → Why do you want?
- Was machst du? → What are you doing?
- Wo bist du? → Where are you?

German

6. Er setzte sich in seinem Bett **auf**. Sein Gesicht war ernst. **Hör** mir **zu**, Sohn. Arme Männer fahren **zur** See. Sie müssen essen. Reiche Männer fahren **zur** See, **um** berühmt **zu werden**. Aber du bist nicht arm. Du bist nicht reich. Du bist in der Mitte.

English

6. He sat up in his bed. His face was serious. "Listen to me, son. Poor men go to sea. They must eat. Rich men go to sea to become famous. But you are not poor. You are not rich. You are in the middle."

German	English
er setzte sich	he sat
seinem bett	his bed
auf	up
sein gesicht	his face
ernst	serious
hör	listen
mir	to me

German	English
sohn	son
arme männer	poor men
sie müssen	they must
essen	eat
reiche männer	rich men
um	to
berühmt	famous

German	English
zu werden	become
du bist	you are
arm	poor
reich	rich
der mitte	the middle



Language tips

Separable Verbs - Aufsetzen (Related words: **setzte sich, auf**)

The verb 'sich aufsetzen' (to sit up) has the separable prefix 'auf' that moves to the end in simple sentences. English keeps phrasal verbs together: 'sat up'.

- er setzte sich auf → he sat up
- ich stehe auf → I get up
- wir machen zu → we close

Imperative - Hör zu (Related words: **Hör, zu**)

The command form 'Hör zu' (listen) uses the imperative mood. German separates the prefix 'zu' from 'hören'. English simply uses 'Listen' without a subject pronoun.

- Hör zu! → Listen!
- Komm her! → Come here!
- Geh weg! → Go away!

Contracted Prepositions - Zur (Related words: **zur See**)



'Zur' is a contraction of 'zu der' (to the). German often contracts prepositions with articles. English keeps them separate: 'to sea'.

- zur See → to sea
- zum Markt → to the market
- vom Haus → from the house

Purpose with Um...zu (Related words: **um, zu werden**)

German uses 'um...zu' plus infinitive to express purpose. English uses 'to' plus verb: 'um berühmt zu werden' becomes 'to become famous'.

- um zu essen → to eat
- um zu lernen → to learn
- um zu arbeiten → to work

German

7. Das Leben in der Mitte ist perfekt, **fuhr** mein Vater **fort**. **Arme Menschen** arbeiten zu hart. Ihre Körper brechen. **Sie haben nie genug** Essen. **Reiche Menschen** haben andere Probleme. **Sie machen sich Sorgen** um ihr Geld. **Sie haben** Feinde.

English

7. "Life in the middle is perfect," my father continued. "Poor people work too hard. Their bodies break. They never have enough food. Rich people have other problems. They worry about their money. They have enemies."

German	English	German	English	German	English
das leben	life	ihre körper	their bodies	sie machen sich	they make themselves
perfekt	perfect	brechen	break	sorgen	worries
fuhr	continued	sie haben	they have	um	about
arme menschen	poor people	genug	enough	ihr geld	their money
arbeiten	work	essen	food	feinde	enemies
zu	too	reiche menschen	rich people		
hart	hard	andere probleme	other problems		



Language tips

Separable Verb Past - Fuhr fort (Related words: **fuhr, fort**)

The separable verb 'fortfahren' (to continue) splits in the past tense with 'fuhr' at the verb position and 'fort' at the end. English keeps it together as 'continued'.

- er fuhr fort → he continued
- sie kam zurück → she came back
- wir gingen weg → we went away

Adjective + Noun Agreement (Related words: **Arme Menschen, Reiche Menschen**)

In phrases like 'Arme Menschen' (poor people), the adjective takes an ending. English adjectives don't change form regardless of the noun.

- arme Menschen → poor people
- reiche Leute → rich people
- kleine Kinder → small children



Reflexive Expression - Sich Sorgen machen (Related words: **Sie machen sich, Sorgen**)

The German expression 'sich Sorgen machen' literally means 'to make oneself worries'. English simplifies this to just 'worry'.

- ich mache mir Sorgen → I worry
- du machst dir Sorgen → you worry
- er macht sich Sorgen → he worries

Word Order with Adverbs (Related words: **Sie haben, nie, genug**)

German places 'nie' (never) between the verb and object. English word order is similar: 'They never have enough food'.

- Sie haben nie Zeit → They never have time
- Ich esse oft Brot → I often eat bread
- Er kommt immer → He always comes

German

8. Aber Menschen in **der Mitte?** **Sie haben** genug. **Sie sind** gesund. **Sie schlafen** nachts gut. Sogar Könige **wünschen sich,** in **der Mittelschicht** geboren zu sein. Die weisen Männer von früher **sagten** es auch. **Sie wollten** gerade genug. Das ist es, was du hast, mein Sohn.

English

8. But people in the middle? They have enough. They are healthy. They sleep well at night. Even kings wish to be born in the middle class. The wise men from before said it too. They wanted just enough. That is what you have, my son.

German	English	German	English	German	English
menschen	people	wünschen sich	wish	sagten	said
sie sind	they are	der mittelschicht	the middle class	es	it
gesund	healthy	sein	be	auch	too
sie schlafen	they sleep	die	the	sie wollten	they wanted
nachts	at night	weisen	wise	gerade	just
gut	well	männer	men	das	that
sogar	even	von	from	du hast	you have
könige	kings	früher	before	mein sohn	my son



Language tips

Articles with Nouns - der Mitte (Related words: **der Mitte, der Mittelschicht**)

German nouns have three genders shown by their articles: der (masculine), die (feminine), das (neuter). 'Mitte' is feminine, but here we see 'der' because it's in the dative case after the preposition 'in'. English just uses 'the' for everything.

- die Mitte → the middle (nominative)
- in der Mitte → in the middle (dative)
- die Mittelschicht → the middle class

Present Tense Verbs - Sie haben (Related words: **Sie haben, Sie sind, Sie schlafen**)



In German, verbs change their endings based on who does the action. 'Sie haben' means 'they have'. Notice how German 'Sie' can mean 'they' or formal 'you'. English only changes the verb for third person singular (he/she/it has).

- ich habe → I have
- du hast → you have
- sie haben → they have

Simple Past (Präteritum) - sagten, wollten (Related words: **sagten, Sie wollten**)

The simple past in German adds specific endings to the verb stem. 'Sagten' (said) and 'wollten' (wanted) show actions that happened in the past. This tense is common in written German narratives.

- ich sagte → I said
- sie sagten → they said
- sie wollten → they wanted

Reflexive Verbs - wünschen sich (Related words: **wünschen sich**)

Some German verbs need a reflexive pronoun (sich/mir/dir). 'Wünschen sich' means 'to wish for oneself'. The pronoun changes with the person. In English, we often don't need the reflexive part.

- ich wünsche mir → I wish
- er wünscht sich → he wishes
- sie wünschen sich → they wish

German

9. Mein Vater **redete** weiter. In der Mittelschicht **kannst du** Frieden **haben**. **Du kannst** Freunde **haben**. **Du kannst** einfache Freuden **genießen**. Du arbeitest, aber **nicht zu** hart. Du hast Geld, aber **nicht zu** viel. Du musst **nicht** um Brot **kämpfen**. **Du kannst** ehrlich leben und friedlich sterben.

English

9. My father continued talking. "In the middle class you can have peace. You can have friends. You can enjoy simple pleasures. You work, but not too hard. You have money, but not too much. You don't have to fight for bread. You can live honestly and die peacefully."

German	English
redete	talked
weiter	continued
kannst du	you can
frieden	peace
du kannst	you can
freunde	friends
einfache	simple

German	English
freuden	pleasures
genießen	enjoy
du arbeitest	you work
viel	much
du musst	you must
um	for
brot	bread

German	English
kämpfen	fight
ehrlich	honestly
leben	live
friedlich	peacefully
sterben	die



Language tips

Modal Verbs - Können (Related words: **kannst du, Du kannst**)

The German modal verb 'können' (can) is used with an infinitive at the end. In English, 'can' is followed directly by the base verb without 'to'.

- du kannst haben → you can have
- ich kann sehen → I can see
- wir können gehen → we can go



Word Order - Nicht (Related words: **nicht, zu**)

In German, 'nicht' (not) often comes before what it negates. In English, 'not' usually follows auxiliary verbs or 'to be'.

- nicht zu hart → not too hard
- nicht zu viel → not too much
- ich arbeite nicht → I don't work

Infinitives After Modals (Related words: **haben, genießen, kämpfen**)

After modal verbs like 'können' and 'müssen', German uses the infinitive form at the end of the clause. English places it right after the modal.

- kannst du haben → you can have
- musst du arbeiten → you must work
- will ich gehen → I want to go

Simple Past - Redete (Related words: **redete**)

The German simple past 'redete' (talked) is commonly used in narratives. English also uses simple past for completed actions in stories.

- er redete → he talked
- sie sprach → she spoke
- wir gingen → we went

German

10. Dann wurde seine Stimme härter. Aber **wenn** du zur See **fährst?** **Du wirst** nur Elend finden. Ich warne **dich** jetzt. **Wenn** du gehst, **wirst du** leiden. **Du wirst** allein sein. **Du wirst** hungrig sein. **Du wirst** Stürmen und Krankheit begegnen.

English

10. Then his voice became harder. "But if you go to sea? You will only find misery. I warn you now. If you go, you will suffer. You will be alone. You will be hungry. You will meet storms and illness."

German	English	German	English	German	English
wurde	became	du wirst	you will	wirst du	you will
seine stimme	his voice	elend	misery	leiden	suffer
härter	harder	finden	find	allein	alone
wenn	if	ich warne	i warn	hungrig	hungry
zur	to	dich	you	stürmen	storms
see	sea	jetzt	now	krankheit	illness
fährst	go	du gehst	you go	begegnen	meet



Language tips

Future Tense - Werden (Related words: **Du wirst, wirst du**)

German forms the future with 'werden' + infinitive at the end. English uses 'will' + base verb directly after.

- du wirst finden → you will find
- ich werde gehen → I will go
- sie wird kommen → she will come



Conditional Sentences - Wenn (Related words: wenn, Wenn)

The German word 'wenn' means 'if' or 'when'. In conditional sentences, the verb moves to the end of the 'wenn' clause.

- wenn du gehst → if you go
- wenn es regnet → if it rains
- wenn ich Zeit habe → if I have time

Accusative Pronoun - Dich (Related words: dich)

The pronoun 'dich' is the accusative form of 'du' (you). English doesn't change pronouns for cases, using 'you' for both subject and object.

- ich warne dich → I warn you
- er sieht dich → he sees you
- wir lieben dich → we love you

Verb Changes - Fahren (Related words: fährst)

The verb 'fahren' (to go/drive) changes its stem vowel: 'du fährst'. Many German verbs change their vowel in the second and third person singular.

- du fährst → you go
- er fährt → he goes
- du läufst → you run

German

11. Er begann zu weinen, als er über meinen Bruder sprach, **der** starb. Dein Bruder hörte auch **nicht** auf mich. **Er wollte** Soldat sein. **Er wollte** Ruhm. Jetzt ist er tot in einem fremden Land. Willst du auch fern von zu Hause sterben? Mein Vater konnte **nicht** mehr sprechen.

English

11. He began to cry when he spoke about my brother who died. "Your brother also didn't listen to me. He wanted to be a soldier. He wanted glory. Now he is dead in a foreign land. Do you also want to die far from home?" My father could no longer speak.

German	English	German	English	German	English
er begann	he began	dein bruder	your brother	einem fremden land	a foreign land
weinen	cry	hörte	listened	willst du	do you want
als	when	auf	to	fern	far
über	about	soldat	soldier	zu hause	home
meinen bruder	my brother	sein	to be	sterben	to die
sprach	spoke	ruhm	glory	konnte	could
der	who	ist er	he is	mehr	anymore
starb	died	tot	dead	sprechen	speak



Language tips

Relative Clauses - Der (Related words: der)

The word 'der' here means 'who' and introduces a relative clause about the brother. In German, relative pronouns match the gender of the noun they refer to.



- der Mann, der kommt → the man who comes
- die Frau, die singt → the woman who sings
- das Kind, das spielt → the child who plays

Past Modal - Wollte (Related words: **Er wollte**)

The past form 'wollte' (wanted) is followed by an infinitive. Unlike English which uses 'to' after 'wanted', German places the infinitive at the end without 'zu'.

- er wollte sein → he wanted to be
- ich wollte gehen → I wanted to go
- sie wollte haben → she wanted to have

Phrasal Verb - Auf jemanden hören (Related words: **nicht, auf, mich**)

The expression 'auf jemanden hören' means 'to listen to someone'. The preposition 'auf' with accusative is essential here, unlike English which just uses 'to'.

- auf mich hören → listen to me
- auf ihn hören → listen to him
- auf sie hören → listen to her

Irregular Past - Begann, Sprach, Starb (Related words: **begann, sprach, starb**)

Strong verbs in German change their stem vowel in the past tense. These forms must be memorized as they don't follow regular patterns.

- beginnen → begann (began)
- sprechen → sprach (spoke)
- sterben → starb (died)

German

12. Ich war bewegt von dem, **was** er sagte. Welcher Sohn wäre das nicht? Ich beschloss zu Hause zu bleiben. Ich würde das Meer vergessen. Ich würde meinen Vater glücklich machen. Aber meine Entscheidung hielt nicht lange. Nach ein paar Tagen **wollte** ich wieder gehen.

English

12. I was moved by what he said. What son wouldn't be? I decided to stay at home. I would forget the sea. I would make my father happy. But my decision didn't last long. After a few days, I wanted to leave again.

German	English
bewegt	moved
von dem	by that
er sagte	he said
welcher sohn	what son
wäre	would be
das nicht	that not
ich beschloss	i decided

German	English
zu bleiben	to stay
ich würde	i would
vergessen	forget
meinen vater	my father
glücklich	happy
machen	make
meine entscheidung	my decision

German	English
hielt	lasted
lange	long
nach	after
ein paar tagen	a few days
wieder	again
gehen	to leave



Language tips

Past Tense - war (was) (Related words: **war**)



German uses 'war' for 'was' in the past tense. This is the simple past form of 'sein' (to be), used for completed actions in the past.

- ich war → I was
- er war → he was
- wir waren → we were

Subjunctive Mood - würde (Related words: würde)

The word 'würde' expresses 'would' in German. It's used to talk about hypothetical situations or future in the past. English uses 'would' plus the infinitive.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- er würde kommen → he would come
- wir würden bleiben → we would stay

Word Order - Verb at End (Related words: was, er, sagte)

After 'was' (what), the verb 'sagte' goes to the end in German. In English, the word order stays normal: 'what he said'.

- was er sagte → what he said
- was ich denke → what I think
- was sie will → what she wants

Modal Verb Past - wollte (Related words: wollte)

The modal verb 'wollen' (to want) becomes 'wollte' in the past tense. In English, this becomes 'wanted' followed by 'to' and the infinitive.

- ich wollte gehen → I wanted to go
- sie wollte bleiben → she wanted to stay
- wir wollten essen → we wanted to eat

German

13. Ich wartete ein paar Wochen. Dann sprach ich mit meiner Mutter. Ich dachte, sie wäre leichter zu überzeugen als mein Vater. Mutter, sagte ich, ich bin jetzt achtzehn Jahre alt. Ich kann nicht aufhören, ans Reisen zu denken. Wenn ich hier bleibe, werde ich für immer unglücklich sein.

English

13. I waited a few weeks. Then I spoke with my mother. I thought she would be easier to convince than my father. "Mother," I said, "I am now eighteen years old. I cannot stop thinking about traveling. If I stay here, I will be unhappy forever."

German	English	German	English	German	English
ich wartete	i waited	als	than	ans reisen	about traveling
ein paar wochen	a few weeks	mutter	mother	zu denken	thinking
mit meiner mutter	with my mother	sagte	said	bleibe	stay
sie	she	ich bin	i am	werde	will
leichter	easier	achtzehn jahre	eighteen years	für immer	forever
zu überzeugen	to convince	ich kann	i can	unglücklich	unhappy



Language tips

Regular Past Tense - wartete (Related words: wartete)



Regular German verbs form the past tense by adding -te to the stem. 'Warten' becomes 'wartete'. In English, most verbs add -ed: 'waited'.

- ich wartete → I waited
- sie machte → she made
- wir spielten → we played

Irregular Past - sprach (Related words: **sprach**)

Some German verbs change their stem in the past tense. 'Sprechen' becomes 'sprach'. English also has irregular past forms like 'speak' becoming 'spoke'.

- ich sprach → I spoke
- du sprachst → you spoke
- wir sprachen → we spoke

Modal Verb + Infinitive - kann aufhören (Related words: **kann, aufhören**)

After modal verbs like 'kann' (can), German uses the infinitive without 'zu'. English follows the same pattern: 'can stop' (not 'can to stop').

- ich kann gehen → I can go
- sie muss arbeiten → she must work
- wir wollen essen → we want to eat

Future Tense - werde sein (Related words: **werde, sein**)

German forms the future with 'werden' plus infinitive. 'Ich werde sein' means 'I will be'. The infinitive goes to the end of the clause.

- ich werde kommen → I will come
- sie wird gehen → she will go
- wir werden bleiben → we will stay

German

14. Bitte **sprich** mit Vater, **fuhr** ich **fort**. Bitte ihn, mich nur eine Reise machen zu lassen. Wenn es **mir** nicht **gefällt**, komme ich nach Hause. Ich verspreche es. Ich werde doppelt so hart arbeiten, um die verlorene Zeit wettzumachen. Aber meine Mutter **wurde** sehr wütend.

English

14. "Please speak with Father," I continued. "Ask him to let me make just one trip. If I don't like it, I'll come home. I promise it. I will work twice as hard to make up for the lost time." But my mother became very angry.

German	English	German	English	German	English
bitte	ask	eine reise	one trip	ich werde	i will
sprich	speak	zu lassen	to let	doppelt	twice
mit vater	with father	gefällt	pleases	so	as
fort	on	komme	come	die verlorene zeit	the lost time
ihn	him	nach hause	home	wettzumachen	make up
nur	just	ich verspreche	i promise	sehr	very



Language tips



Imperative Mood - sprich (Related words: **sprich**)

The imperative 'sprich' is used for giving commands or making requests to one person informally. In English, we just use the base verb: 'speak'.

- sprich → speak
- komm → come
- geh → go

Separable Verb Past - fuhr fort (Related words: **fuhr, fort**)

The verb 'fortfahren' (to continue) separates in past tense. 'Fuhr' stays with the subject while 'fort' moves to the end. English keeps it together as 'continued'.

- ich fuhr fort → I continued
- sie kam an → she arrived
- wir gingen aus → we went out

Dative with gefallen (Related words: **mir, gefällt**)

The verb 'gefallen' uses dative case. 'Es gefällt mir' literally means 'it pleases to me' but translates as 'I like it' in English.

- es gefällt mir → I like it
- es gefällt dir → you like it
- es gefällt uns → we like it

Past of werden - wurde (Related words: **wurde**)

The verb 'werden' (to become) changes to 'wurde' in past tense. It's used here to show a change of state: 'became angry'.

- ich wurde müde → I became tired
- sie wurde krank → she became sick
- es wurde kalt → it became cold

German

15. Wie kannst du das fragen? sagte sie. Dein Vater liebt dich. Er **will** das Beste für dich. Er **wird** diesem dummen Plan **niemals** zustimmen. Und ich **werde** ihn **nicht** fragen. Ich **werde** dir **nicht** helfen, dein Leben zu zerstören!

English

15. "How can you ask that?" she said. "Your father loves you. He wants the best for you. He will never agree to this stupid plan. And I will not ask him. I will not help you to destroy your life!"

German	English
wie	how
fragen	ask
dein vater	your father
liebt	loves
will	wants
das beste	the best

German	English
für	for
wird	will
diesem	this
dummen	stupid
plan	plan
niemals	never

German	English
zustimmen	agree
dir	you
helfen	help
dein leben	your life
zerstören	destroy



Language tips



Modal Verb - Will (Related words: **will**)

The German verb 'will' means 'wants' in English, not 'will'. It's a modal verb that expresses desire or intention. Don't confuse it with the English future auxiliary 'will'.

- ich will → I want
- er will das Beste → he wants the best
- wir wollen gehen → we want to go

Future Tense - Werden (Related words: **wird, werde**)

German forms the future tense with 'werden' + infinitive. In this text, 'wird...zustimmen' means 'will agree' and 'werde...fragen' means 'will ask'.

- er wird zustimmen → he will agree
- ich werde fragen → I will ask
- wir werden helfen → we will help

Possessive Pronouns - Dein (Related words: **Dein, dein**)

The German 'dein' means 'your' in English. Unlike English, German possessives must match the gender and case of the noun they modify. 'Dein' is used with masculine and neuter nouns in nominative.

- dein Vater → your father
- dein Leben → your life
- deine Mutter → your mother

Negation - Nicht and Niemals (Related words: **nicht, niemals**)

German uses 'nicht' for general negation (not) and 'niemals' for emphatic negation (never). Notice how 'nicht' is placed differently than English 'not'.

- ich werde nicht fragen → I will not ask
- er wird niemals zustimmen → he will never agree
- nicht helfen → not help

German

16. Aber meine Mutter **erzählte** **meinem Vater** von unserem Gespräch. Später **hörte** ich, was er **sagte**. Er seufzte tief. Er **sagte** ihr: "Wenn dieser Junge zu Hause bleibt, **könnte** er glücklich **sein**. Aber wenn er zur See fährt, **wird** er der unglücklichste Mensch auf Erden **sein**. Ich kann meine Erlaubnis nicht geben."

English

16. But my mother told my father about our conversation. Later I heard what he said. He sighed deeply. He said to her: "If this boy stays at home, he could be happy. But if he goes to sea, he will be the unhappiest person on earth. I cannot give my permission."

German	English
erzählte	told
meinem vater	my father
von	about
unserem gespräch	our conversation
später	later
hörte	heard

German	English
seufzte	sighed
tief	deeply
ihr	to her
dieser junge	this boy
bleibt	stays
könnte	could

German	English
fährt	goes
der unglücklichste mensch	the unhappiest person
auf erden	on earth
kann	can
meine erlaubnis	my permission
geben	give



Language tips

Simple Past - Erzählte, hörte, sagte (Related words: **erzählte, hörte, sagte**)

German uses the simple past (Präteritum) for storytelling. These verbs end in -te for he/she/it forms. In English, we add -ed to regular verbs.

- ich sagte → I said
- er hörte → he heard
- sie erzählte → she told

Modal Verb - Könnte (Related words: **könnte**)

The word 'könnte' means 'could' and expresses possibility. It's the subjunctive form of 'können' (can), used for hypothetical situations.

- er könnte → he could
- ich könnte → I could
- wir könnten → we could

Future Tense - Wird...sein (Related words: **wird, sein**)

German forms future with 'werden' + infinitive. 'Er wird...sein' means 'he will be'. The infinitive goes at the end of the sentence.

- ich werde sein → I will be
- du wirst gehen → you will go
- sie wird kommen → she will come

Dative Case - Meinem Vater (Related words: **meinem Vater**)

'Meinem' is the dative form of 'mein' (my), used after verbs like 'erzählen' (to tell). English just uses 'my' regardless of case.

- meinem Vater → to my father
- meiner Mutter → to my mother
- meinem Kind → to my child

German

17. Ich wartete fast ein Jahr. In dieser Zeit versuchten meine Eltern alles. Sie **wollten, dass** ich einen Beruf lerne. Sie **wollten, dass** ich in einem Laden arbeite. Aber **ich weigerte mich**. Ich **konnte** nur an Schiffe und Abenteuer denken. **Nichts anderes** interessierte **mich**.

English

17. I waited almost a year. During this time my parents tried everything. They wanted me to learn a profession. They wanted me to work in a shop. But I refused. I could only think about ships and adventures. Nothing else interested me.

German	English
wartete	waited
fast	almost
ein Jahr	a year
in	during
dieser Zeit	this time
versuchten	tried

German	English
sie	they
wollten	wanted
einen Beruf	a profession
lerne	learn
einem Laden	a shop
arbeite	work

German	English
ich weigerte	I refused
abenteuer	adventures
nichts	nothing
anderes	else
interessierte	interested



Language tips

Reflexive Verb - Ich weigerte mich (Related words: **ich weigerte, mich**)

The verb 'sich weigern' (to refuse) is reflexive, meaning it uses 'mich' (myself) with 'ich'. English simply says 'I refused' without the reflexive pronoun.

- ich weigerte mich → I refused
- du weigertest dich → you refused
- er weigerte sich → he refused

Dass-clauses - Wollten, dass (Related words: **wollten, dass**)

After 'wollten, dass' (wanted that), German uses subjunctive mood. English uses 'wanted me to' + infinitive instead of 'that' clauses.

- Sie wollten, dass ich lerne → They wanted me to learn
- Er will, dass du kommst → He wants you to come

Past Modal - Konnte (Related words: **konnte**)

'Konnte' is the past tense of 'können' (can). German modals change their stem in past tense. English uses 'could' for past ability.

- ich konnte → I could
- sie konnte nicht → she couldn't
- wir konnten gehen → we could go

Word Order - Nichts anderes (Related words: **Nichts, anderes**)

'Nichts anderes' means 'nothing else'. German puts 'anderes' (else) after 'nichts' (nothing), just like in English word order.

- nichts anderes → nothing else
- etwas anderes → something else
- jemand anderes → someone else

German

18. Dann **ging** ich **eines Tages** nach Hull. Ich hatte keinen Plan wegzulaufen. Ich war nur zu Besuch. Aber in Hull **traf** ich einen Freund. Sein Vater besaß ein Schiff, **das** nach London **fuhr**. "**Komm** mit mir!" sagte mein Freund.

English

18. Then one day I went to Hull. I had no plan to run away. I was only visiting. But in Hull I met a friend. His father owned a ship that went to London. "Come with me!" said my friend.

German	English	German	English	German	English
ging	went	in hull	in hull	nach london	to london
nach hull	to hull	traf	met	fuhr	went
hatte	had	einen freund	a friend	komm	come
keinen plan	no plan	sein vater	his father	mein freund	my friend
wegzulaufen	to run away	besaß	owned		
zu besuch	visiting	ein schiff	a ship		



Language tips

Irregular Past - Ging, traf (Related words: **ging, traf**)

Strong verbs like 'gehen' (go) and 'treffen' (meet) change their stem in past tense. 'Ging' means 'went' and 'traf' means 'met'.

- ich ging → I went
- er traf → he met
- wir gingen → we went

Imperative - Komm! (Related words: **Komm**)

'Komm!' is the command form (imperative) of 'kommen'. German drops the -en ending for informal commands. English uses the base form of the verb.

- Komm! → Come!
- Geh! → Go!
- Warte! → Wait!

Relative Clause - Das...fuhr (Related words: **das, fuhr**)

'Das' introduces a relative clause describing the ship. It means 'which' or 'that' in English. The verb 'fuhr' goes to the end of the relative clause.

- ein Schiff, das fuhr → a ship that went
- der Mann, der kam → the man who came

Genitive Expression - Eines Tages (Related words: **eines Tages**)

'Eines Tages' means 'one day'. This uses the genitive case to express time. English simply says 'one day' without case marking.

- eines Tages → one day
- eines Morgens → one morning
- eines Abends → one evening

German

19. Es kostet dich nichts, **fuhr** er **fort**. Das Schiff **meines Vaters** hat Platz. London ist aufregend. Du wirst es lieben! **Ich hätte** nein sagen **sollen**. **Ich hätte** nach Hause gehen **sollen**. Aber ich dachte nicht **nach**. Ich betete nicht.

English

19. "It costs you nothing," he continued. "My father's ship has room. London is exciting. You will love it!" I should have said no. I should have gone home. But I didn't think. I didn't pray.

German	English
es kostet	it costs
das schiff	the ship
meines vaters	of my father
hat	has
platz	room

German	English
london	london
aufregend	exciting
lieben	love
ich hätte	i should have
nein	no

German	English
sagen	said
gehen	gone
ich betete	i prayed



Language tips

Separable Verbs - fortfahren (Related words: fuhr, fort)

The verb 'fortfahren' (to continue) can be separable. Here 'fuhr er fort' shows the prefix 'fort' separated and moved to the end. In English, this simply becomes 'he continued'.

- er fuhr fort → he continued
- ich fahre fort → I continue
- fortfahren → to continue

Genitive Case - meines Vaters (Related words: meines Vaters)

German uses genitive case to show possession: 'meines Vaters' (of my father). The possessive 'mein' changes its ending to match the genitive. In English, we simply use 'of my father' or 'my father's'.

- das Haus meines Vaters → my father's house
- das Auto meiner Mutter → my mother's car
- der Freund meines Bruders → my brother's friend

Subjunctive with Modal - hätte...sollen (Related words: Ich hätte, sollen)

German 'hätte...sollen' expresses regret about the past, meaning 'should have'. The subjunctive 'hätte' combines with the modal verb 'sollen' to show what should have been done differently.

- ich hätte sagen sollen → I should have said
- du hättest gehen sollen → you should have gone
- er hätte fragen sollen → he should have asked

Separable Verb Prefix - nachdenken (Related words: dachte, nach)

The verb 'nachdenken' (to think/reflect) separates in past tense: 'dachte nach'. The prefix 'nach' moves to the end. In English, we just say 'think' or 'reflect' without separation.

- ich dachte nach → I thought
- er denkt nach → he thinks
- nachdenken → to think/reflect

German

20. **Am 1. September 1651** betrat ich dieses Schiff. Ich schrieb **meinen Eltern** nicht. Ich bat nicht um den Segen meines Vaters. Es war der Anfang all meiner Probleme. Das Schiff **verließ** Hull und fuhr **aufs offene Meer**.

English

20. On September 1, 1651, I boarded this ship. I didn't write to my parents. I didn't ask for my father's blessing. It was the beginning of all my problems. The ship left Hull and sailed onto the open sea.

German	English	German	English	German	English
am	on	ich bat	i asked	verließ	left
1. september 1651	september 1, 1651	den segen	the blessing	hull	hull
betrat	boarded	es war	it was	fuhr	sailed
dieses schiff	this ship	der anfang	the beginning	aufs offene meer	onto the open sea
ich schrieb	i wrote	all	of all		
meinen eltern	to my parents	meiner probleme	my problems		



Language tips

Date Format - Am 1. September (Related words: **Am, 1. September 1651**)

German dates use 'am' (on the) with ordinal numbers: 'am 1. September' (on the 1st of September). English reverses the order to 'September 1' and doesn't need 'the'.

- am 1. Januar → on January 1st
- am 25. Dezember → on December 25th
- am 3. März → on March 3rd

Dative with Verbs - schrieb meinen Eltern (Related words: **schrieb, meinen Eltern**)

German 'schreiben' takes dative case for the recipient: 'meinen Eltern' (to my parents). The dative shows who receives the action. English adds 'to' to make this clear.

- ich schrieb ihm → I wrote to him
- sie schreibt ihrer Mutter → she writes to her mother
- wir schrieben dem Lehrer → we wrote to the teacher

Simple Past Strong Verbs (Related words: **bat, verließ**)

German strong verbs change their stem in simple past: 'bitten' becomes 'bat' (asked), 'verlassen' becomes 'verließ' (left). English irregular verbs work similarly but with different patterns.

- ich bat → I asked
- er verließ → he left
- sie schrieb → she wrote

Contracted Prepositions - aufs (Related words: **aufs offene Meer**)

German contracts 'auf das' into 'aufs' (onto the). This contraction is common with neuter nouns. English keeps the words separate: 'onto the'.

- aufs Dach → onto the roof
- ins Haus → into the house
- ans Fenster → to the window

German

21. Sofort **begann** der Wind **zu blasen**. Die Wellen wurden **größer und größer**. Ich war noch nie auf einem Schiff gewesen. **Mir wurde** schrecklich **schlecht**. Mein Magen **drehte sich**. Mein Kopf **drehte sich**. Aber schlimmer als die Übelkeit war die Angst.

English

21. Immediately the wind began to blow. The waves became bigger and bigger. I had never been on a ship before. I became terribly sick. My stomach turned. My head spun. But worse than the nausea was the fear.

German	English	German	English	German	English
sofort	immediately	ich war	i had	schlecht	sick
begann	began	noch nie	never	mein magen	my stomach
der wind	the wind	auf	on	drehte sich	spun
blasen	blow	einem schiff	a ship	mein kopf	my head
die wellen	the waves	gewesen	been before	schlimmer	worse
wurden	became	mir wurde	i became	die übelkeit	the nausea



größer und größer

bigger and bigger

schrecklich

terribly

die angst

the fear



Language tips

Infinitive with zu - begann zu blasen (Related words: **begann, zu, blasen**)

German uses 'zu' with infinitives after certain verbs like 'beginnen': 'begann zu blasen' (began to blow). This is similar to English 'to' in 'began to blow'.

- er beginnt zu arbeiten → he begins to work
- sie fängt an zu lesen → she starts to read
- ich höre auf zu reden → I stop talking

Comparative Repetition - größer und größer (Related words: **größer und größer**)

German expresses continuous increase by repeating the comparative: 'größer und größer' (bigger and bigger). This pattern works the same in both languages.

- schneller und schneller → faster and faster
- lauter und lauter → louder and louder
- kleiner und kleiner → smaller and smaller

Impersonal Expression - mir wurde schlecht (Related words: **Mir wurde, schlecht**)

German uses 'mir wurde schlecht' (literally: to me it became bad) for 'I became sick'. The dative 'mir' shows who experiences the feeling. English uses the subject 'I' instead.

- mir wird kalt → I'm getting cold
- ihm wurde übel → he felt sick
- uns wird warm → we're getting warm

Reflexive Verbs - drehte sich (Related words: **drehte sich**)

The verb 'sich drehen' (to turn/spin) is reflexive, meaning the action reflects back on the subject. 'Mein Magen drehte sich' means 'My stomach turned (itself)'.

- es dreht sich → it turns
- ich drehe mich → I turn myself
- der Kopf dreht sich → the head spins

German

22. **Der Sturm** **wurde** stärker. **Das Schiff** **kletterte** riesige Wellen hinauf. Dann **stürzte** es in tiefe Täler aus Wasser hinab. Jedes Mal, wenn wir **hinuntergingen**, dachte ich, **wir würden** nie wieder hochkommen. Ich war sicher, **wir würden** alle sterben. **Die Wellen** **würden** mein Grab sein.

English

22. The storm became stronger. The ship climbed up huge waves. Then it plunged down into deep valleys of water. Every time we went down, I thought we would never come up again. I was sure we would all die. The waves would be my grave.

German	English
der sturm	the storm
stärker	stronger

German	English
tiefe	deep
täler	valleys

German	English
hinuntergingen	went down
dachte	thought



kletterte	climbed	aus wasser	of water	wir würden	we would
riesige	huge	hinab	down	hochkommen	come up
wellen	waves	jedes mal	every time	sicher	sure
hinauf	up	wenn	when	würden	would
stürzte	plunged	wir	we	mein grab	my grave



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Präteritum (Related words: **wurde, kletterte, stürzte**)

German uses Präteritum (simple past) in written narratives. Notice how 'wurde' (became) and 'kletterte' (climbed) show past actions. In English, we also use simple past for storytelling.

- er wurde → he became
- sie kletterte → she climbed
- es stürzte → it plunged

Articles with Nouns - Der/Die/Das (Related words: **Der Sturm, Das Schiff, Die Wellen**)

German nouns always need articles showing gender. 'Der Sturm' (masculine), 'das Schiff' (neuter), and 'die Wellen' (plural) must include their articles. English uses 'the' for all.

- der Sturm → the storm
- das Schiff → the ship
- die Wellen → the waves

Would/Could - Konjunktiv II (Related words: **wir würden, würden**)

German 'würden' expresses hypothetical situations, like English 'would'. Here it shows the narrator's fears about what might happen. This mood is called Konjunktiv II.

- ich würde sterben → I would die
- wir würden hochkommen → we would come up
- sie würden → they would

Separable Verbs - Hinuntergehen (Related words: **hinuntergingen**)

The verb 'hinuntergingen' combines 'hinunter' (down) + 'gehen' (go). In past tense, it stays together. English simply says 'went down' with the direction following the verb.

- wir gingen hinunter → we went down
- ich ging hinunter → I went down
- hinuntergehen → to go down

German

23. Oh Gott! **betete** ich. Rette mich! **Wenn** du mich leben **lässt**, gehe ich nach Hause. **Ich werde** auf **meinen Vater** **hören**. **Ich werde** nie wieder zur See fahren. Ich verspreche es! Ich sehe jetzt, dass er recht hatte. Das Leben in der Mitte ist das beste!

English

23. "Oh God!" I prayed. "Save me! If you let me live, I will go home. I will listen to my father. I will never go to sea again. I promise it! I see now that he was right. The life in the middle is the best!"

German	English	German	English	German	English
oh gott	oh god	gehe	will go	hatte	was



betete	prayed	hören	listen	das leben	the life
rette	save	ich sehe	i see		
lässt	let	recht	right		



Language tips

Past Tense - Betete (Related words: **betete**)

The German 'betete' is the simple past tense of 'beten' (to pray). In German stories, the simple past is often used, while English commonly uses the same tense.

- ich betete → I prayed
- du betetest → you prayed
- er betete → he prayed

Future with 'werden' - Ich werde (Related words: **Ich werde, hören**)

German uses 'werden' plus infinitive to express future, like 'Ich werde hören' (I will listen). English uses 'will' plus the base form of the verb.

- ich werde gehen → I will go
- du wirst kommen → you will come
- wir werden sehen → we will see

Word Order in Subordinate Clauses - Wenn (Related words: **Wenn, lässt**)

After 'wenn' (if), German moves the verb to the end: 'Wenn du mich leben lässt'. In English, the word order stays the same: 'If you let me live'.

- wenn ich komme → if I come
- wenn er geht → if he goes
- wenn sie singt → if she sings

Possessive with Noun - Meinen Vater (Related words: **meinen Vater**)

In German, possessives change their ending based on case and gender. 'Meinen Vater' shows accusative case. In English, 'my' never changes.

- mein Vater → my father (nominative)
- meinen Vater → my father (accusative)
- meinem Vater → to my father (dative)

German

24. Ich dachte an die Tränen **meines Vaters**. **Ich erinnerte mich** an die Warnungen meiner Mutter. Mein Gewissen **tat** mir **weh**. Ich war ein schlechter Sohn **gewesen**. Ich war ohne Erlaubnis gegangen. Ich hatte ihre Herzen gebrochen. Und jetzt bestrafte mich Gott.

English

24. I thought about my father's tears. I remembered my mother's warnings. My conscience hurt me. I had been a bad son. I had gone without permission. I had broken their hearts. And now God was punishing me.

German	English	German	English	German	English
die tränen	the tears	tat	hurt	gegangen	gone
ich erinnerte mich	i remembered	ein schlechter sohn	a bad son	ihre herzen	their hearts



die warnungen	the warnings	gewesen	been	gebrochen	broken
meiner mutter	of my mother	ohne	without	bestrafte	was punishing
mein gewissen	my conscience	erlaubnis	permission	gott	god



Language tips

Genitive Case - Meines Vaters (Related words: **meines Vaters**)

The German 'meines Vaters' shows possession using the genitive case. In English, we use 'of' or the possessive 's' form: 'my father's'.

- das Haus meines Vaters → my father's house
- die Tasche meiner Mutter → my mother's bag
- das Auto meines Bruders → my brother's car

Reflexive Verbs - Ich erinnerte mich (Related words: **Ich erinnerte mich**)

German uses reflexive pronouns like 'mich' with certain verbs. 'Sich erinnern' (to remember) literally means 'to remind oneself'. English often doesn't use reflexive forms.

- ich erinnere mich → I remember
- du erinnerst dich → you remember
- er erinnert sich → he remembers

Past Perfect - War gewesen (Related words: **war, gewesen**)

German forms the past perfect with 'war' (was) or 'hatte' (had) plus a past participle like 'gewesen' (been). English uses 'had' plus the past participle.

- ich war gewesen → I had been
- ich hatte gesehen → I had seen
- sie war gekommen → she had come

Expression - Weh tun (Related words: **tat, weh**)

The German expression 'weh tun' means 'to hurt'. It uses the dative case: 'mir' (me). The word 'weh' separates from 'tun' like a separable prefix.

- es tut mir weh → it hurts me
- es tut ihm weh → it hurts him
- das tat weh → that hurt

German

25. Die ganze Nacht ging der Sturm weiter. Ich machte Gott **Versprechen** nach **Versprechen**. **Ich würde** gut sein. **Ich würde** immer meinen Eltern gehorchen. Bitte, bitte, **lass** mich leben! Jede Welle schien bereit, uns **zu töten**.

English

25. The whole night the storm went on. I made God promise after promise. I would be good. I would always obey my parents. Please, please, let me live! Every wave seemed ready to kill us.

German	English	German	English	German	English
die ganze nacht	the whole night	immer	always	schien	seemed
weiter	on	meinen eltern	my parents	bereit	ready
ich machte	i made	gehorschen	obey	uns	us



versprechen	promise	lass	let	zu töten	to kill
gut	good	jede welle	every wave		



Language tips

Expression - Nach Nach (Related words: **Versprechen, nach, Versprechen**)

The phrase 'Versprechen nach Versprechen' means 'promise after promise'. German uses repetition with 'nach' (after) to show continuous action.

- Tag nach Tag → day after day
- Schritt nach Schritt → step by step
- Jahr nach Jahr → year after year

Subjunctive Mood - Ich würde (Related words: **Ich würde**)

German uses 'würde' to express hypothetical situations or promises about the future. It's similar to English 'would'.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- ich würde helfen → I would help
- ich würde lernen → I would learn

Imperative Form - Lass (Related words: **lass**)

The word 'lass' is the imperative (command) form of 'lassen' (to let). German drops the subject pronoun in commands, while English keeps 'you' understood.

- lass mich gehen → let me go
- lass uns spielen → let's play
- lass ihn kommen → let him come

Infinitive with 'zu' - Zu töten (Related words: **zu töten**)

German uses 'zu' before infinitives in certain constructions, like 'bereit zu töten' (ready to kill). English uses 'to' similarly.

- bereit zu gehen → ready to go
- Zeit zu essen → time to eat
- glücklich zu sehen → happy to see

German

26. Aber am nächsten Morgen **änderte sich** etwas. Der Wind **wurde** ruhiger. Die Wellen **wurden** kleiner. Die Sonne kam heraus. Und plötzlich sah das Meer **nicht mehr** so schrecklich aus. Es war sogar ziemlich schön. **Meine Übelkeit** war weg. **Meine Angst** verschwand auch.

English

26. But the next morning something changed. The wind became calmer. The waves became smaller. The sun came out. And suddenly the sea didn't look so terrible anymore. It was even quite beautiful. My nausea was gone. My fear disappeared too.

German	English	German	English	German	English
am nächsten morgen	the next morning	plötzlich	suddenly	ziemlich	quite
änderte sich	changed	sah	looked	schön	beautiful
ruhiger	calmer	nicht mehr	not anymore	meine übelkeit	my nausea
kleiner	smaller	so	so	weg	gone



die sonne	the sun	schrecklich	terrible	meine angst	my fear
heraus	out	aus	out	verschwand	disappeared



Language tips

Simple Past - wurde (Related words: **wurde, wurden**)

The verb 'wurde' (became) is the simple past form of 'werden'. German uses simple past frequently in stories, while English uses it for completed actions.

- er wurde → he became
- sie wurden → they became
- ich wurde müde → I became tired

Reflexive Verbs - änderte sich (Related words: **änderte sich**)

The German 'sich ändern' (to change) is reflexive, using 'sich' (itself). In English, 'changed' doesn't need a reflexive pronoun for this meaning.

- es änderte sich → it changed
- nichts ändert sich → nothing changes
- alles ändert sich → everything changes

Word Order - nicht mehr (Related words: **nicht mehr**)

German uses 'nicht mehr' (not anymore) to express negation with time. The word order is fixed in German, while English says 'not...anymore' or 'no longer'.

- nicht mehr da → not there anymore
- ich will nicht mehr → I don't want anymore
- es regnet nicht mehr → it's not raining anymore

Articles with Body Sensations - Meine Übelkeit (Related words: **Meine Übelkeit, Meine Angst**)

German uses possessive articles with body feelings ('Meine Übelkeit' = my nausea). English often drops the possessive when it's understood.

- meine Übelkeit → my nausea
- mein Kopfschmerz → my headache
- seine Angst → his fear

German

27. Mein Freund fand mich an Deck. Er lachte und klopfte **mir** auf die Schulter. Du hattest gestern Nacht Angst, nicht wahr? Dachtest du, dieser kleine Wind **würde** uns töten? **Ich konnte** seine Worte nicht glauben. Kleiner Wind? sagte ich. Es war ein schrecklicher Sturm!

English

27. My friend found me on deck. He laughed and patted me on the shoulder. "You were afraid last night, weren't you? Did you think that little wind would kill us?" I couldn't believe his words. "Little wind?" I said. "It was a terrible storm!"

German	English
fand	found
an deck	on deck
er lachte	he laughed

German	English
gestern nacht	last night
angst	afraid
nicht wahr	weren't you

German	English
ich konnte	i couldn't
seine worte	his words
glauben	believe



klopfte	patted	dachtest du	did you think	kleiner wind	little wind
die schulter	the shoulder	dieser kleine wind	that little wind	ein schrecklicher sturm	a terrible storm
du hattest	you had	töten	kill		



Language tips

Tag Questions - nicht wahr? (Related words: **nicht wahr?**)

German uses 'nicht wahr?' (literally 'not true?') as a tag question, similar to English 'isn't it?', 'aren't you?', or 'don't you?'. The English tag changes based on the verb.

- Du kommst, nicht wahr? → You're coming, aren't you?
- Es ist schön, nicht wahr? → It's beautiful, isn't it?
- Sie waren da, nicht wahr? → They were there, weren't they?

Dative Pronouns - mir (Related words: **mir**)

The word 'mir' is the dative form of 'ich' (I), meaning 'to me' or 'for me'. Here 'klopfte mir auf die Schulter' means 'patted me on the shoulder'.

- er gibt mir → he gives me
- sie hilft mir → she helps me
- sag mir → tell me

Modal Verb Past - konnte (Related words: **Ich konnte**)

The verb 'konnte' is the simple past of the modal verb 'können' (can/to be able). Modal verbs in German change their stem in the past tense.

- ich konnte nicht → I couldn't
- er konnte schwimmen → he could swim
- wir konnten sehen → we could see

Would-Conditional - würde (Related words: **würde**)

'Würde' expresses 'would' in German, forming the conditional mood. It's often used with an infinitive to express hypothetical situations.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- würde es helfen? → would it help?
- das würde ich nie tun → I would never do that

German

28. Er lachte noch mehr. Das war nichts! Warte, bis du einen echten Sturm siehst. Du bist nur ein neuer Seemann. **Du wirst** lernen. Komm, **lass uns** Punsch trinken. **Lass uns** deine erste Zeit auf See feiern! Wir gingen unter Deck, **um zu** trinken.

English

28. He laughed even more. "That was nothing! Wait until you see a real storm. You're just a new sailor. You will learn. Come, let's drink punch. Let's celebrate your first time at sea!" We went below deck to drink.

German	English	German	English	German	English
noch mehr	even more	ein neuer seemann	a new sailor	auf see	at sea
das war	that was	lernen	learn	feiern	celebrate



warte	wait	lass uns	let's	wir gingen	we went
bis	until	punsch	punch	unter deck	below deck
einen echten sturm	a real storm	trinken	drink	um zu	to
siehst	see	deine erste zeit	your first time		



Language tips

Imperative Forms - Warte, Komm (Related words: **Warte,, Komm,**)

German imperatives (commands) drop the pronoun 'du'. 'Warte!' means 'Wait!' and 'Komm!' means 'Come!' The verb form changes for formal (Sie) and plural (ihr) commands.

- Warte hier! → Wait here!
- Komm mit! → Come with!
- Hör zu! → Listen!

Let's Construction - lass uns (Related words: **lass uns, Lass uns**)

German uses 'lass uns' (let us) to make suggestions, similar to English 'let's'. It's followed by an infinitive verb at the end of the clause.

- lass uns gehen → let's go
- lass uns essen → let's eat
- lass uns anfangen → let's start

Future Tense - Du wirst (Related words: **Du wirst**)

The future tense in German uses 'werden' + infinitive. 'Du wirst lernen' means 'You will learn'. The infinitive goes to the end of the clause.

- du wirst sehen → you will see
- ich werde kommen → I will come
- es wird besser → it will get better

Purpose Clause - um zu (Related words: **um zu**)

'Um zu' + infinitive expresses purpose ('in order to'). In English, we often just use 'to' + verb. The infinitive comes at the end in German.

- um zu lernen → to learn
- um zu helfen → to help
- ich kam, um zu sehen → I came to see

German

29. Wir tranken. Wir lachten. Und in einer Nacht vergaß ich alle meine Versprechen an Gott. Ich vergaß meine Angst. Ich vergaß die Weisheit meines Vaters. Das Meer **war** ruhig. Mein Gewissen auch. Ich schob alle ernsten Gedanken **weg**. **Wenn** sie zurückkommen **wollten**, **trank ich** mehr Punsch.

English

29. We drank. We laughed. And in one night I forgot all my promises to God. I forgot my fear. I forgot the wisdom of my father. The sea was calm. My conscience too. I pushed all serious thoughts away. When they wanted to come back, I drank more punch.



German	English	German	English	German	English
wir tranken	we drank	ich vergaß	i forgot	weg	away
wir lachten	we laughed	die weisheit	the wisdom	zurückkommen	come back
einer nacht	one night	ruhig	calm	trank ich	i drank
vergaß ich	i forgot	ich schob	i pushed	mehr	more
meine versprechen	my promises	ernsten	serious		
an gott	to god	gedanken	thoughts		



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Präteritum (Related words: **tranken, vergaß, war**)

German uses the simple past (Präteritum) for storytelling, especially with verbs like 'tranken' (drank) and 'vergaß' (forgot). English also uses simple past for completed actions in stories.

- wir tranken → we drank
- ich vergaß → I forgot
- es war → it was

Separable Verbs - Schob...weg (Related words: **schob, weg**)

The verb 'wegschieben' (to push away) splits in German with 'schob' at the beginning and 'weg' at the end of the phrase. In English, this becomes the phrasal verb 'pushed away'.

- ich schob weg → I pushed away
- er schiebt weg → he pushes away
- wegschieben → to push away

Possessive Pronouns - Meine/Meines (Related words: **meine, meines**)

German possessives like 'meine' (my) must agree with the noun's gender and case. 'Meines Vaters' shows genitive case (of my father). English 'my' never changes form.

- meine Angst → my fear
- meines Vaters → of my father
- mein Buch → my book

Word Order in Conditional Sentences (Related words: **Wenn, wollten, trank ich**)

After 'Wenn' (when/if), German puts the verb at the end of that clause ('zurückkommen wollten'). In the main clause, the verb comes first ('trank ich'). English keeps standard word order throughout.

- Wenn sie kommen → When they come
- trank ich → I drank
- Wenn es regnet → When it rains

German

30. In fünf oder sechs Tagen **fühlte ich mich** wie ein echter Seemann. **Ich war** stolz auf mich. Ich hatte meinen ersten Sturm überlebt. **Ich war** kein Feigling. **Ich würde** Abenteuer **haben**. **Ich würde** die Welt sehen. Was wusste mein Vater **vom Leben?**

English

30. In five or six days I felt like a real sailor. I was proud of myself. I had survived my first storm. I was no coward. I would have adventures. I would see the world. What did my father know about life?



German	English	German	English	German	English
fünf	five	ein echter seemann	a real sailor	kein feigling	no coward
oder	or	stolz	proud	die welt	the world
sechs	six	auf	of	sehen	see
tagen	days	mich	myself	wusste	did know
fühlte ich mich	i felt	meinen ersten sturm	my first storm	vom leben	about life
wie	like	überlebt	survived		



Language tips

Reflexive Verbs - Fühlte mich (Related words: **fühlte ich mich**)

In German, 'sich fühlen' (to feel) is reflexive, requiring 'mich' (myself). English simply uses 'I felt' without the reflexive pronoun.

- ich fühlte mich → I felt
- du fühltest dich → you felt
- er fühlte sich → he felt

Simple Past Tense - War (Related words: **Ich war**)

German 'war' (was) is the simple past of 'sein'. Notice German doesn't add -ed like English regular verbs, but changes the whole word.

- ich war → I was
- du warst → you were
- wir waren → we were

Would + Infinitive - Würde haben (Related words: **Ich würde, haben**)

German uses 'würde' + infinitive for 'would'. The infinitive goes at the end. English keeps 'would' + verb together.

- ich würde haben → I would have
- ich würde sehen → I would see
- du würdest gehen → you would go

Preposition + Article - Vom (Related words: **vom Leben**)

German 'vom' contracts 'von dem' (from the). English doesn't contract prepositions with articles, so it becomes 'about' or 'from the'.

- vom Leben → about life
- vom Haus → from the house
- vom Vater → from the father

German

31. Aber ich war ein Narr. Gott **hatte** **mir** eine Warnung **gegeben**. Der Sturm war eine Chance umzukehren. **Ich hätte** zuhören **sollen**. Der nächste Sturm würde **viel, viel** schlimmer sein. Er würde mich fast töten.

English

31. But I was a fool. God had given me a warning. The storm was a chance to turn back. I should have listened. The next storm would be much, much worse. It would almost kill me.



German	English	German	English	German	English
ein narr	a fool	eine chance	a chance	sollen	should
eine warnung	a warning	umzukehren	to turn back	der nächste sturm	the next storm
gegeben	given	zuhören	listened	er würde	it would



Language tips

Past Perfect - Hatte gegeben (Related words: **hatte, gegeben**)

German past perfect uses 'hatte' + past participle at the end. English uses 'had' + past participle together: 'had given'.

- hatte gegeben → had given
- hatte gesehen → had seen
- hatte gemacht → had done

Dative Pronoun - Mir (Related words: **mir**)

German 'mir' is the dative form of 'ich', used for indirect objects. English simply uses 'me' for both direct and indirect objects.

- Er gab mir → He gave me
- Sie hilft mir → She helps me
- Gott zeigte mir → God showed me

Should Have - Hätte sollen (Related words: **Ich hätte, sollen**)

German expresses 'should have' with 'hätte' + infinitive + 'sollen'. English uses 'should have' + past participle.

- ich hätte sollen → I should have
- du hättest sollen → you should have
- wir hätten sollen → we should have

Emphasis Repetition - Viel, viel (Related words: **viel,, viel**)

German repeats 'viel' for emphasis (much, much). English does the same, showing that some patterns are similar in both languages.

- viel, viel besser → much, much better
- sehr, sehr gut → very, very good
- ganz, ganz klein → very, very small

German

32. Sechs Tage **nach dem Verlassen** von Hull **erreichten** wir Yarmouth Roads. Das war ein Ort, wo Schiffe auf guten Wind warteten. Der Wind **war** gegen uns **gewesen**. Unsere Reise **war** langsam. Viele Schiffe aus Newcastle waren **auch dort**. Wir warfen unseren Anker und warteten. Wir blieben **dort** sieben oder acht Tage.

English

32. Six days after leaving Hull, we reached Yarmouth Roads. That was a place where ships waited for good wind. The wind had been against us. Our journey was slow. Many ships from Newcastle were also there. We dropped our anchor and waited. We stayed there seven or eight days.

German	English	German	English	German	English
sechs tage	six days	guten wind	good wind	waren	were
dem verlassen	leaving	warteten	waited	wir warfen	we dropped



von hull	hull	war	had been	unseren anker	our anchor
erreichten	reached	gegen uns	against us	wir blieben	we stayed
yarmouth roads	yarmouth roads	unsere reise	our journey	sieben	seven
ein ort	a place	langsam	slow	acht tage	eight days
wo	where	viele schiffe	many ships		
auf	for	aus newcastle	from newcastle		



Language tips

Nach + Dative - Nach dem Verlassen (Related words: **nach, dem Verlassen**)

After 'nach' (after), German uses the dative case. 'Dem Verlassen' is dative. English doesn't change word forms after prepositions.

- nach dem Essen → after eating
- nach der Reise → after the journey
- nach dem Sturm → after the storm

Past Perfect - War gewesen (Related words: **war, gewesen**)

German 'war gewesen' (had been) shows completed past action. It uses 'war' (was) + 'gewesen' (been) for the past perfect.

- ich war gewesen → I had been
- er war gekommen → he had come
- wir waren gegangen → we had gone

Verb Conjugation - Erreichten (Related words: **erreichten**)

The -ten ending on 'erreichten' shows it's 'we' or 'they' in past tense. English doesn't change the verb ending for different persons in past tense.

- wir erreichten → we reached
- sie erreichten → they reached
- ich erreichte → I reached

Word Order - Auch (Related words: **auch, dort**)

German 'auch' (also) can appear in different positions. Here it comes before 'dort' (there). English 'also' is more flexible too.

- waren auch dort → were also there
- auch ich → I also
- er kam auch → he also came

German

33. Der Wind **war** immer noch schlecht. Er blies aus Südwesten. Wir **konnten** nicht den Fluss **hinaufsegeln**. Nach vier Tagen wurde der Wind stärker. Viel stärker. Aber unsere Seeleute **machten sich keine Sorgen**. Sie **sagten**, Yarmouth Roads **sei** sicher.

English

33. The wind was still bad. It blew from the southwest. We could not sail up the river. After four days the wind became stronger. Much stronger. But our sailors didn't worry. They said Yarmouth Roads was safe.



German	English	German	English	German	English
immer noch	still	südwesten	the southwest	unsere seeleute	our sailors
schlecht	bad	konnten	could	machten sich	made themselves
er	it	den fluss	the river	keine sorgen	no worries
blies	blew	hinaufsegeln	sail up	sei	was
aus	from	vier tagen	four days	sicher	safe



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - War (Related words: **war**)

German uses 'war' (was) and 'waren' (were) for the past of 'sein' (to be). English also changes 'is/are' to 'was/were' in the past.

- Der Wind war → The wind was
- Die Winde waren → The winds were
- Ich war → I was

Modal Verbs in Past - Konnten (Related words: **konnten, hinaufsegeln**)

The modal verb 'können' (can) becomes 'konnten' (could) in the past. Notice it's followed directly by an infinitive 'hinaufsegeln' without 'zu'.

- Wir konnten segeln → We could sail
- Ich konnte nicht → I could not
- Sie konnten gehen → They could go

Reflexive Expressions - Sich Sorgen machen (Related words: **machten sich, keine Sorgen**)

The phrase 'sich Sorgen machen' means 'to worry'. In German, the reflexive pronoun changes with the subject, but the English translation is simply 'worry'.

- sich Sorgen machen → to worry
- Ich mache mir Sorgen → I worry
- Sie machten sich keine Sorgen → They didn't worry

Reported Speech - Sei (Related words: **sagten, sei**)

German uses Konjunktiv I (sei) to report what someone said. English typically just uses the past tense 'was' for indirect speech.

- Er sagte, es sei gut → He said it was good
- Sie sagten, er sei hier → They said he was here
- Ich sagte, das sei richtig → I said that was right

German

34. **Unser Anker** war stark. **Unser Schiff** war gut. Also tranken und **lachten** die Männer. Sie **erzählten** Geschichten. Sie **spielten** Karten. Ich **versuchte**, wie sie **zu sein**. Ich **wollte** ein echter Seemann **sein**. Alles schien gut.

English

34. Our anchor was strong. Our ship was good. So the men drank and laughed. They told stories. They played cards. I tried to be like them. I wanted to be a real sailor. Everything seemed good.

German	English	German	English	German	English
--------	---------	--------	---------	--------	---------



unser anker	our anchor	lachten	laughed	karten	cards
stark	strong	die männer	the men	versuchte	tried
unser schiff	our ship	erzählten	told	sie	them
also	so	geschichten	stories	zu sein	to be
tranken	drank	spielten	played		



Language tips

Possessive Pronouns - Unser (Related words: **Unser Anker, Unser Schiff**)

The word 'unser' means 'our' in English. Unlike English, German possessives must agree with the noun's gender and case. Here 'unser' matches the masculine nouns 'Anker' and 'Schiff'.

- Unser Haus → Our house
- Unsere Stadt → Our city
- Unser Auto → Our car

Regular Past Tense - Spielten (Related words: **spielten, lachten, erzählten**)

Regular German verbs form the past by adding -te/-ten. 'Spielen' (to play) becomes 'spielten' (played). This is similar to English adding -ed for regular past tense.

- spielten → played
- lachten → laughed
- machten → made

Infinitive with Zu - Zu sein (Related words: **versuchte, zu sein**)

After 'versuchte' (tried), German uses 'zu' + infinitive. This is like English 'to' + verb. The construction means 'tried to be'.

- versuchte zu lesen → tried to read
- begann zu arbeiten → began to work
- hoffte zu gewinnen → hoped to win

Modal Verb Wollte - Past Tense (Related words: **wollte, sein**)

The modal verb 'wollen' (want) becomes 'wollte' in the past. Unlike English which uses 'wanted to', German doesn't need 'zu' after modal verbs.

- Ich wollte gehen → I wanted to go
- Er wollte essen → He wanted to eat
- Wir wollten spielen → We wanted to play

German

35. Aber am achten Morgen **änderte sich** alles. Der Wind wurde wild. Der Kapitän befahl allen Männern zu arbeiten. **Nimmt** die Topmaste herunter! rief er. **Bindet** alles fest! **Bereitet euch** auf einen Sturm **vor!** Die Seeleute sprangen, um zu gehorchen. Sie **wussten**, das war ernst.

English

35. But on the eighth morning everything changed. The wind became wild. The captain ordered all men to work. "Take down the topmasts!" he called. "Tie everything down! Prepare for a storm!" The sailors jumped to obey. They knew this was serious.

German	English	German	English	German	English
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am achten morgen	on the eighth morning	nehmt	take	einen sturm	a storm
wild	wild	die topmaste	the topmasts	die seeleute	the sailors
der kapitän	the captain	herunter	down	sprangen	jumped
befehl	ordered	bindet	tie	zu gehorchen	obey
allen männern	all men	fest	down	das	this
zu arbeiten	to work	bereitet euch	prepare yourselves		



Language tips

Reflexive Verbs - Änderte sich (Related words: **änderte sich**)

The verb 'sich ändern' means 'to change'. The reflexive pronoun 'sich' shows the action affects the subject itself. In English, we often just say 'changed' without a reflexive pronoun.

- Es änderte sich → It changed
- Ich änderte mich → I changed
- Die Zeiten ändern sich → Times change

Imperative Commands - Nehmt, Bindet (Related words: **Nehmt, Bindet, Bereitet euch**)

German imperatives give direct commands. The '-t' ending on 'Nehmt' and 'Bindet' shows it's a plural command (to multiple people). English uses the base verb form for all imperatives.

- Nehmt! → Take!
- Kommt! → Come!
- Hört! → Listen!

Separable Verb Prefix - Vorbereiten (Related words: **Bereitet euch, vor**)

In the command 'Bereitet euch... vor!', the prefix 'vor' is separated from 'bereiten' and moves to the end. This is typical of German separable verbs in commands.

- Bereitet vor → Prepare
- Macht auf → Open
- Kommt mit → Come along

Irregular Past Tense - Wussten (Related words: **wussten**)

The verb 'wissen' (to know) has an irregular past form 'wussten'. Notice the stem change from 'wiss-' to 'wusst-'. This is similar to English 'know/knew'.

- Ich wusste → I knew
- Sie wussten → They knew
- Wir wussten nicht → We didn't know



36. **Mittags** **waren** die Wellen wie Berge. Unser Schiff **ging** hoch und runter, hoch und runter. Wasser krachte über das Deck. Einmal, zweimal dachten wir, unser Anker **hätte sich gelöst**. Der Kapitän befahl, einen weiteren Anker zu werfen. Jetzt hielten uns zwei Anker.

36. At noon the waves were like mountains. Our ship went up and down, up and down. Water crashed over the deck. Once, twice we thought our anchor had come loose. The captain ordered to drop another anchor. Now two anchors held us.

German	English	German	English	German	English
mittags	at noon	über	over	sich gelöst	come loose
berge	mountains	das deck	the deck	einen weiteren anker	another anchor
hoch	up	einmal	once	werfen	drop
runter	down	zweimal	twice	hielten	held
wasser	water	dachten	thought	anker	anchors
krachte	crashed	hätte	had		



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - waren (Related words: **waren**)

German uses Präteritum (simple past) for storytelling. 'Waren' (were) is the past tense of 'sein' (to be). English also uses simple past for narration.

- ich war → I was
- sie waren → they were
- du warst → you were

Time Expressions - Mittags (Related words: **Mittags**)

In German, time expressions like 'Mittags' (at noon) often come first in the sentence. English is more flexible with time placement.

- Mittags esse ich → At noon I eat / I eat at noon
- Morgens trinke ich Kaffee → In the morning I drink coffee
- Abends lese ich → In the evening I read

Subjunctive Mood - hätte gelöst (Related words: **hätte, sich gelöst**)

German 'hätte... gelöst' expresses what we thought had happened (but hadn't). English uses 'had come loose' for this hypothetical past.

- ich hätte gedacht → I would have thought
- es hätte funktioniert → it would have worked
- wir hätten gewusst → we would have known

Motion Verbs - ging (Related words: **ging**)

The German verb 'gehen' (to go) becomes 'ging' in simple past. It describes the ship's movement up and down in the storm.

- ich ging → I went
- das Schiff ging → the ship went
- sie gingen → they went



German

37. Dann **traf** der echte Sturm. Ich habe **keine Worte** dafür, wie schrecklich er war. Sogar die alten Seeleute hatten Angst. Ich sah Angst in ihren Augen. Der Kapitän **ging** oft an meiner Kabine **vorbei**. Ich hörte ihn flüstern: Herr, **hab** Erbarmen mit uns!

English

37. Then the real storm hit. I have no words for how terrible it was. Even the old sailors were afraid. I saw fear in their eyes. The captain often went past my cabin. I heard him whisper: "Lord, have mercy on us!"

German	English	German	English	German	English
traf	hit	hatten	were	ich hörte	i heard
der echte sturm	the real storm	ich sah	i saw	flüstern	whisper
ich habe	i have	angst	fear	herr	lord
keine worte	no words	ihren augen	their eyes	hab	have
dafür	for	oft	often	erbarmen	mercy
er war	it was	an	past	mit uns	on us
die alten seeleute	the old sailors	meiner kabine	my cabin		



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - traf (Related words: **traf**)

German uses the Präteritum (simple past) for storytelling. 'Traf' (hit) is the past form of 'treffen'. English similarly uses simple past for narration.

- ich traf → I hit/met
- der Sturm traf → the storm hit
- wir trafen → we hit/met

Negation with 'kein' - keine Worte (Related words: **keine Worte**)

German uses 'kein/keine' to negate nouns (no/not any). 'Keine Worte' means 'no words'. This changes based on the noun's gender and number.

- keine Worte → no words
- kein Geld → no money
- keine Zeit → no time

Separable Verb - vorbei (Related words: **ging, vorbei**)

In 'ging...vorbei' (went past), the verb 'vorbeigehen' is separated. The prefix 'vorbei' moves to the end of the sentence in simple past.

- er ging vorbei → he went past
- ich gehe vorbei → I go past
- vorbeigehen → to go past

Imperative Mood - hab (Related words: **hab**)

German imperatives are commands. 'Hab Erbarmen' (have mercy) drops the -en ending. This is a prayer formula using the informal imperative to address God.

- hab Erbarmen → have mercy
- gib mir → give me
- hilf uns → help us



German

38. **Wir sind** alle verloren! flüsterte der Kapitän weiter. **Wir sind** alle tote Männer! Als der Kapitän diese Worte sagte, starb mein Mut. Dieser Mann war **dreiig Jahre** zur See gefahren. **Wenn** er Angst hatte, waren wir verloren. Ich blieb in meiner Kabine. Ich war vor Angst **erstarrt**.

English

38. "We are all lost!" the captain continued to whisper. "We are all dead men!" When the captain said these words, my courage died. This man had sailed the seas for thirty years. If he was afraid, we were lost. I stayed in my cabin. I was frozen with fear.

German	English	German	English	German	English
wir sind	we are	mein mut	my courage	er angst hatte	he was afraid
verloren	lost	dieser mann	this man	wir verloren	we lost
flsterte	whispered	war	had	ich blieb	i stayed
weiter	further	dreiig jahre	thirty years	vor angst	with fear
tote mnner	dead men	zur see	the seas	erstarrt	frozen
diese worte	these words	gefahren	sailed		



Language tips

Present in Direct Speech - **Wir sind** (Related words: **Wir sind**)

Even in past narration, direct speech uses the present tense. 'Wir sind verloren' (We are lost) stays in present tense because it's a quote.

- wir sind verloren → we are lost
- ich bin mde → I am tired
- sie sind da → they are there

Time Expressions - **dreiig Jahre** (Related words: **dreiig Jahre**)

German time expressions don't need 'for' like English. 'Dreiig Jahre zur See gefahren' becomes 'sailed the seas for thirty years' in English.

- zwei Tage → for two days
- eine Woche → for a week
- viele Jahre → for many years

Conditional Sentences - **Wenn** (Related words: **Wenn**)

'Wenn' means 'if' or 'when'. Here it introduces a condition: 'Wenn er Angst hatte' (If he was afraid). The verb goes to the end in the wenn-clause.

- wenn er kommt → if/when he comes
- wenn ich Zeit habe → if I have time
- wenn es regnet → if it rains

Past Participle as Adjective - **erstarrt** (Related words: **erstarrt**)

'Erstarrt' (frozen) is a past participle used as an adjective with 'sein'. 'Ich war erstarrt' means 'I was frozen', describing a state.

- vor Angst erstarrt → frozen with fear
- geschlossen → closed
- verloren → lost



German

39. Ich konnte mich **nicht** bewegen. Ich konnte **nicht** denken. Ich hatte über den ersten Sturm **gelacht**. Ich hatte Punsch getrunken und meine Versprechen an Gott vergessen. Jetzt war Gott wirklich wütend. Dieser Sturm **würde** uns alle töten. Diesmal **gab es** kein Entkommen.

English

39. I couldn't move. I couldn't think. I had laughed about the first storm. I had drunk punch and forgotten my promises to God. Now God was really angry. This storm would kill us all. This time there was no escape.

German	English	German	English	German	English
bewegen	move	vergessen	forgotten	diesmal	this time
den ersten sturm	the first storm	wirklich	really	gab	was
gelacht	laughed	dieser sturm	this storm	es	there
getrunken	drunk	uns alle	us all	kein entkommen	no escape



Language tips

Modal Verb with Negation - konnte nicht (Related words: **konnte, nicht**)

German modal verbs like 'können' (can/could) are negated with 'nicht'. 'Ich konnte nicht bewegen' means 'I couldn't move'.

- ich konnte nicht → I couldn't
- er kann nicht → he can't
- wir konnten nicht → we couldn't

Past Perfect - hatte...gelacht (Related words: **hatte, gelacht**)

The Plusquamperfekt shows an action completed before another past action. 'Ich hatte gelacht' (I had laughed) happened before the current storm.

- ich hatte getrunken → I had drunk
- er hatte vergessen → he had forgotten
- wir hatten gesehen → we had seen

Would-Construction - würde (Related words: **würde**)

'Würde' expresses what would happen (subjunctive). 'Dieser Sturm würde uns töten' means 'This storm would kill us', showing the speaker's fear.

- er würde kommen → he would come
- es würde helfen → it would help
- sie würden gehen → they would go

Es gibt Expression - gab es (Related words: **gab, es**)

'Es gibt' means 'there is/are'. In past tense: 'es gab' (there was/were). With negation: 'es gab kein' means 'there was no'.

- es gab → there was
- es gibt → there is
- es gab kein → there was no

German

English



40. Schließlich **zwang** ich mich, an Deck zu gehen. Was ich dort **sah**, gibt mir immer noch Albträume. Das Meer **war** schwarz und weiß vor Schaum. Wellen so hoch wie Kirchen krachten über uns. Der Wind schrie wie tausend Dämonen. Ich hielt **mich fest**, oder ich wäre weggespült worden.

40. Finally I forced myself to go on deck. What I saw there still gives me nightmares. The sea was black and white with foam. Waves as high as churches crashed over us. The wind screamed like a thousand demons. I held on tight, or I would have been swept away.

German	English
schließlich	finally
zwang	forced
ich mich	myself
zu gehen	to go
sah	saw
gibt	gives
alpträume	nightmares
schwarz	black

German	English
weiß	white
vor	with
schaum	foam
so hoch	as high
wie	as
kirchen	churches
krachten	crashed
schrie	screamed

German	English
tausend	a thousand
dämonen	demons
ich hielt	i held
fest	tight
ich wäre	i would have been
weggespült	swept away
worden	been



Language tips

Reflexive Verbs - Zwingen mich (Related words: **zwang, mich**)

In German, 'zwingen' (to force) uses the reflexive pronoun 'mich' (myself) when you force yourself. English uses 'myself' similarly: 'I forced myself'.

- ich zwang mich → I forced myself
- du zwingst dich → you force yourself
- er zwingt sich → he forces himself

Simple Past - Präteritum (Related words: **sah, war**)

German uses Präteritum (simple past) for storytelling. Notice how 'sah' (saw) and 'war' (was) are single words, unlike the present perfect which uses two words.

- ich sah → I saw
- es war → it was
- sie schrie → she screamed

Subjunctive II - Wäre (Related words: **wäre**)

The word 'wäre' is subjunctive, showing something that would happen under certain conditions. 'Ich wäre weggespült worden' means 'I would have been swept away'.

- ich wäre → I would be
- das wäre schön → that would be nice
- wir wären dort → we would be there

Separable Verb - Festhalten (Related words: **hielt, fest**)

The verb 'festhalten' (to hold tight) separates in past tense. 'Ich hielt mich fest' literally means 'I held myself tight', with 'fest' moving to the end.

- ich halte fest → I hold tight
- ich hielt fest → I held tight



• festhalten → to hold tight

German

41. Ich schaute **mich um**. Zwei Schiffe in unserer Nähe **hatten** ihre Maste **abgeschnitten**. Ein anderes Schiff etwa eine Meile entfernt sank. Ich sah es unter den Wellen verschwinden. All diese Männer ertranken **im kalten schwarzen** Wasser. Zwei weitere Schiffe **hatten sich** von ihren Ankern **losgerissen**.

English

41. I looked around. Two ships near us had cut off their masts. Another ship about a mile away was sinking. I saw it disappear under the waves. All those men drowned in the cold black water. Two more ships had torn free from their anchors.

German	English	German	English	German	English
ich schaute	i looked	eine meile	a mile	ertranken	drowned
um	around	entfernt	away	im kalten	in the cold
unserer nähe	our vicinity	sank	was sinking	schwarzen	black
hatten	had	unter	under	weitere	more
ihre maste	their masts	den wellen	the waves	hatten sich	had
abgeschnitten	cut off	verschwinden	disappear	ihren ankern	their anchors
ein anderes schiff	another ship	all	all	losgerissen	torn free
etwa	about	diese männer	those men		



Language tips

Reflexive Separable Verb - Sich umschauen (Related words: **schaute, mich, um**)

The phrase 'ich schaute mich um' uses the reflexive 'mich' (myself) with the separable verb 'umschauen'. The prefix 'um' moves to the end, meaning 'I looked around'.

- ich schaue mich um → I look around
- er schaut sich um → he looks around
- umschauen → to look around

Past Participle - Abgeschnitten (Related words: **hatten, abgeschnitten**)

The word 'abgeschnitten' is a past participle meaning 'cut off'. It combines with 'hatten' (had) to form the past perfect tense: 'had cut off'.

- hatten abgeschnitten → had cut off
- haben gesehen → have seen
- hatten verloren → had lost

Articles with Adjectives - Im kalten (Related words: **im kalten, schwarzen**)

When adjectives come between articles and nouns in German, they get special endings. 'Im kalten schwarzen Wasser' means 'in the cold black water'.

- im kalten Wasser → in the cold water
- das schwarze Meer → the black sea
- die hohen Wellen → the high waves

Reflexive with Past Participle - Hatten sich losgerissen (Related words: **hatten sich, losgerissen**)



The phrase 'hatten sich losgerissen' combines reflexive 'sich' with the past participle. It means 'had torn themselves free' or simply 'had torn free'.

- sich losreißen → to tear free
- sie hatten sich losgerissen → they had torn free
- er riss sich los → he tore himself free

German

42. An diesem Abend **flehte** unsere Crew den Kapitän **an**, unsere Maste abzuschneiden. Er wollte es nicht **tun**. Ein Schiff ohne Maste ist hilflos. Aber der Bootsmann sagte: Wenn wir sie nicht abschneiden, **wird** das Schiff **sinken!** Der Kapitän **stimmte** schließlich **zu**. Sie mussten das Schiff retten.

English

42. That evening our crew begged the captain to cut off our masts. He didn't want to do it. A ship without masts is helpless. But the bosun said: "If we don't cut them off, the ship will sink!" The captain finally agreed. They had to save the ship.

German	English	German	English	German	English
an diesem abend	that evening	abzuschneiden	cut off	sinken	sink
flehte	begged	tun	to do	stimmte	agreed
unsere crew	our crew	maste	masts	sie mussten	they had to
den kapitän	the captain	hilflos	helpless	retten	save
an	to	der bootsmann	the bosun		
unsere maste	our masts	abschneiden	cut off		



Language tips

Separable Verb with Infinitive - Anflehen (Related words: **flehte, an**)

The verb 'anflehen' (to beg) splits in past tense. 'Flehte...an' has the main verb at position 2 and the prefix 'an' at the end of the clause.

- ich flehe an → I beg
- sie flehte an → she begged
- anflehen → to beg

Modal Verb Past Tense - Wollte (Related words: **wollte, tun**)

Modal verbs like 'wollen' (to want) change in past tense. 'Er wollte es nicht tun' means 'He didn't want to do it', with the infinitive 'tun' at the end.

- ich wollte → I wanted
- er wollte nicht → he didn't want
- wir wollten gehen → we wanted to go

Future with Werden - Wird sinken (Related words: **wird, sinken**)

German forms future tense with 'werden' plus infinitive. 'Das Schiff wird sinken' means 'The ship will sink', with the infinitive at the end.

- es wird regnen → it will rain
- ich werde kommen → I will come
- sie werden helfen → they will help



Separable Verb Zustimmen - Stimmte zu (Related words: stimmte, zu)

The verb 'zustimmen' (to agree) separates in the past tense. 'Der Kapitän stimmte zu' has 'stimmte' in position 2 and 'zu' at the end.

- ich stimme zu → I agree
- er stimmte zu → he agreed
- zustimmen → to agree

German

43. Also **schnitten** sie den vorderen Mast **ab**. KRACH! Er **fiel** **ins Meer**. Aber jetzt wackelte der Hauptmast schrecklich. Er würde das Schiff auseinanderbrechen. Sie **mussten** auch diesen **abschneiden**. Jetzt hatten wir überhaupt keine Maste mehr. Wir waren wie ein Korken im Wasser.

English

43. So they cut down the front mast. CRASH! It fell into the sea. But now the main mast wobbled terribly. It would break the ship apart. They had to cut this one down too. Now we had no masts at all anymore. We were like a cork in the water.

German	English	German	English	German	English
schnitten	cut	wackelte	wobbled	überhaupt	at all
den vorderen mast	the front mast	der hauptmast	the main mast	keine maste	no masts
ab	down	auseinanderbrechen	break apart	ein korken	a cork
krach	crash	mussten	had to	im wasser	in the water
fiel	fell	diesen	this one		
ins meer	into the sea	abschneiden	cut down		



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Schnitten, fiel (Related words: schnitten, fiel)

German uses Präteritum (simple past) for storytelling. In German 'schnitten' means 'cut' and 'fiel' means 'fell'. English also uses simple past for narration.

- sie schnitten → they cut
- er fiel → it fell
- wir hatten → we had

Separable Verbs - Abschneiden (Related words: schnitten, ab, abschneiden)

The verb 'abschneiden' (to cut down) splits in German. The prefix 'ab' moves to the end of the clause. In English, this becomes 'cut down' where both parts stay together.

- sie schnitten ab → they cut down
- abschneiden → to cut down
- ich schneide ab → I cut down

Modal Verbs in Past - Mussten (Related words: mussten)

The modal verb 'müssen' (must) becomes 'mussten' in past tense. In English, this translates to 'had to' because English doesn't have a past form of 'must'.



- sie mussten → they had to
- ich musste → I had to
- wir mussten gehen → we had to go

Contracted Forms - Ins (Related words: **ins Meer**)

German combines 'in' + 'das' to make 'ins'. This contraction is very common in German. In English, we simply say 'into the'.

- ins Meer → into the sea
- ins Haus → into the house
- ins Auto → into the car

German

44. Ich kann meinen Schrecken nicht **beschreiben**.
Ich war jung. Ich hatte den Tod noch nie so nah
gesehen. Aber schlimmer als die Angst vor dem Tod
war meine Schuld. Ich hatte meine Versprechen an Gott
gebrochen. Ich hatte über Seine erste Warnung gelacht.
Jetzt **würde** Er mich töten.

English

44. I cannot describe my horror. I was young. I had
never seen death so close. But worse than the fear of
death was my guilt. I had broken my promises to God. I
had laughed at His first warning. Now He would kill me.

German	English
meinen schrecken	my horror
beschreiben	describe
jung	young
den tod	death
nah	close

German	English
gesehen	seen
vor	of
dem tod	death
meine schuld	my guilt
über	at

German	English
seine	his
erste	first
warnung	warning



Language tips

Modal Verbs - Kann (Related words: **kann, beschreiben**)

The German modal verb 'kann' (can) is followed directly by an infinitive 'beschreiben'. In English, we also use 'can' + infinitive without 'to'.

- ich kann sehen → I can see
- du kannst gehen → you can go
- sie kann lesen → she can read

Past Perfect - Hatte gesehen (Related words: **hatte, gesehen**)

German forms the past perfect with 'haben' in simple past + past participle. 'Ich hatte gesehen' means 'I had seen', showing an action completed before another past event.

- ich hatte gesehen → I had seen
- er hatte gebrochen → he had broken
- wir hatten gelacht → we had laughed

Possessive Pronouns - Meine/Meinen (Related words: **meinen, meine**)

German possessives change their endings based on case and gender. 'Meinen' (accusative) and 'meine' (nominative/accusative) both translate to 'my' in English.



- mein Haus → my house
- meine Schuld → my guilt
- meinen Schrecken → my horror

Subjunctive II - Würde (Related words: würde)

The German 'würde' expresses conditional or hypothetical situations. It's similar to English 'would' for describing what might happen.

- er würde kommen → he would come
- ich würde helfen → I would help
- sie würde singen → she would sing

German

45. Die Worte **meines Vaters** **kamen** zu mir **zurück**. Er hatte recht. Ich war verflucht. Der Sturm wurde schlimmer. Sogar die alten Seeleute sagten, **sie hätten** noch nie so etwas gesehen. Unser Schiff war schwer mit Ladung. Es rollte schrecklich. Alle paar Minuten rief ein Seemann: **Sie wird** sinken!

English

45. My father's words came back to me. He was right. I was cursed. The storm became worse. Even the old sailors said they had never seen anything like this. Our ship was heavy with cargo. It rolled terribly. Every few minutes a sailor shouted: "She will sink!"

German	English	German	English	German	English
die worte	the words	so	such	paar	few
kamen	came	etwas	anything	minuten	minutes
zurück	back	schwer	heavy	rief	shouted
er hatte	he had	ladung	cargo	ein seemann	a sailor
verflucht	cursed	es rollte	it rolled	sie wird	she will
sie hätten	they had	alle	every		



Language tips

Genitive Case - Meines Vaters (Related words: meines Vaters)

The German genitive case shows possession. 'Meines Vaters' means 'of my father' or 'my father's'. In English, we use 'of' or the possessive 's.

- des Mannes → of the man
- meiner Mutter → of my mother
- des Kindes → of the child

Separable Verbs - Zurückkommen (Related words: kamen, zurück)

In German, the prefix 'zurück' (back) separates from 'kamen' (came). The prefix moves to the end of the clause, similar to English phrasal verbs.

- ich komme zurück → I come back
- er ging weg → he went away
- sie steht auf → she gets up

Reported Speech - Sie hätten (Related words: sie hätten)



German uses subjunctive II 'hätten' in reported speech to show what someone said. This is like English 'they had' in indirect speech.

- er sagte, er hätte → he said he had
- sie meinte, sie wäre → she thought she was
- wir sagten, wir könnten → we said we could

Ships as Feminine - Sie (Related words: **Sie wird**)

In German, ships are feminine and referred to as 'sie' (she), just like in English nautical tradition where ships are called 'she'.

- das Schiff, sie sinkt → the ship, she sinks
- die Titanic, sie war groß → the Titanic, she was big
- unser Boot, sie fährt → our boat, she sails

German 🇩🇪

46. Ich wusste nicht, was sinken bedeutete, bis es mir jemand erklärte. Wenn ein Schiff sinkt oder untergeht, **füllt** es **sich** mit Wasser und geht auf den Grund **des Meeres**. Alle ertrinken. Jetzt verstand ich. Wir würden alle in diesem kalten, dunklen Wasser sterben. Unsere Körper **würden** nie **gefunden** **werden**.

English 🇬🇧

46. I didn't know what "sink" meant until someone explained it to me. When a ship "sinks" or "goes under", it fills with water and goes to the bottom of the sea. Everyone drowns. Now I understood. We would all die in this cold, dark water. Our bodies would never be found.

German	English
bedeutete	meant
jemand	someone
erklärte	explained
sinkt	sinks
untergeht	goes under
füllt	fills

German	English
sich	itself
geht	goes
den grund	the bottom
des meeres	of the sea
alle	everyone
ertrinken	drowns

German	English
verstand	understood
diesem kalten	this cold
dunklen	dark
unsere körper	our bodies
gefunden	found
werden	be



Language tips

Past Tense - Wusste (Related words: **wusste**)

The German verb 'wissen' (to know) has an irregular past tense. 'Ich wusste' means 'I knew'. Notice how English also has an irregular past for 'know' → 'knew'.

- ich wusste → I knew
- du wusstest → you knew
- er wusste nicht → he didn't know

Reflexive Verbs - Sich füllen (Related words: **füllt, sich**)

German uses 'sich' for reflexive actions. 'Es füllt sich' means 'it fills itself' or simply 'it fills' in English. The reflexive pronoun shows the action happens to the subject.

- es öffnet sich → it opens
- sie dreht sich → it turns
- das Boot bewegt sich → the boat moves



Passive Voice - Werden gefunden (Related words: würden, gefunden, werden)

German forms passive with 'werden' + past participle. 'Würden gefunden werden' means 'would be found'. English uses 'be' + past participle for passive.

- es wird gemacht → it is done
- sie werden gesehen → they are seen
- ich werde gefragt → I am asked

Genitive with Des - Des Meeres (Related words: des Meeres)

The genitive case 'des Meeres' shows possession meaning 'of the sea'. German adds -es to many neuter nouns in genitive, while English just uses 'of'.

- des Hauses → of the house
- des Tages → of the day
- des Schiffes → of the ship

German

47. Dann **sah** ich etwas, **das** mein Blut **gefrieren** **ließ**. Der Kapitän **betete**. Der Bootsmann **betete**. Diese harten Männer, **die** nichts fürchteten, waren **auf den Knien** und bettelten Gott um Gnade. Wenn sie beteten, waren wir wirklich verloren. Ich **fiel** auch **auf die Knie**.

English

47. Then I saw something that made my blood freeze. The captain prayed. The bosun prayed. These hard men, who feared nothing, were on their knees and begged God for mercy. If they prayed, we were really lost. I also fell to my knees.

German	English	German	English	German	English
mein blut	my blood	harten	hard	bettelten	begged
gefrieren	freeze	die	who	gnade	mercy
ließ	made	fürchteten	feared	beteten	prayed
diese	these	den knien	their knees	die knie	my knees



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Narrative Style (Related words: sah, betete, fiel)

German stories often use the simple past (Präteritum) like 'sah' (saw) and 'betete' (prayed). English also uses simple past for storytelling.

- ich sah → I saw
- er betete → he prayed
- ich fiel → I fell

Causative Construction - Lassen (Related words: ließ, gefrieren)

The phrase 'ließ mein Blut gefrieren' uses 'lassen' (to let/make) to express causing something to happen. In English, we say 'made my blood freeze'.

- es ließ mich denken → it made me think
- sie ließ ihn warten → she made him wait
- das ließ mich lachen → that made me laugh

Relative Clauses - Die/Das (Related words: das, die)



German uses 'die' or 'das' to introduce relative clauses, like 'die nichts fürchteten' (who feared nothing). These correspond to 'who', 'which', or 'that' in English.

- das Buch, das ich lese → the book that I read
- die Männer, die arbeiten → the men who work
- etwas, das wichtig ist → something that is important

Prepositions with Body Parts (Related words: **auf, den Knien, die Knie**)

German often uses 'auf' with body positions like 'auf den Knien' (on the knees). Note the dative case ending '-en' on 'Knien'.

- auf den Knien → on the knees
- auf dem Rücken → on the back
- auf den Füßen → on the feet

German

48. Mitten in der Nacht wurde es schlimmer. Ein Seemann **kam** von unten **gerannt**. **Wir haben** ein Leck! schrie er. Vier Fuß Wasser im Laderaum! Der Kapitän **sprang auf**. **Alle Mann** an die Pumpen! rief er. Das war unsere letzte Chance.

English

48. In the middle of the night it got worse. A sailor came running from below. "We have a leak!" he screamed. "Four feet of water in the hold!" The captain jumped up. "All hands to the pumps!" he called. That was our last chance.

German	English	German	English	German	English
mitten	in the middle	wir haben	we have	sprang	jumped
in	of	ein leck	a leak	mann	hands
der nacht	the night	vier	four	die pumpen	the pumps
wurde	got	fuß	feet	unsere	our
unten	below	wasser	of water	letzte	last
gerannt	running	im laderaum	in the hold	chance	chance



Language tips

Movement Verbs with Past Participle (Related words: **kam, gerannt**)

The phrase 'kam gerannt' combines a movement verb 'kam' (came) with the past participle 'gerannt' (running) to show manner of motion.

- er kam gelaufen → he came running
- sie kam geflogen → she came flying
- wir kamen gerannt → we came running

Separable Verbs - Aufspringen (Related words: **sprang, auf**)

The verb 'aufspringen' (to jump up) separates in the past tense: 'sprang auf'. The prefix 'auf' moves to the end of the clause.

- ich springe auf → I jump up
- er sprang auf → he jumped up
- aufspringen → to jump up

Direct Speech in German (Related words: **Wir haben, ein Leck!**)



German uses quotation marks and simple word order in direct speech, like 'Wir haben ein Leck!' English follows the same pattern.

- "Komm her!" → "Come here!"
- "Ich bin müde." → "I am tired."
- "Was ist das?" → "What is that?"

Nautical Commands (Related words: **Alle, Mann**)

The phrase 'Alle Mann an die Pumpen!' is a nautical command. 'Mann' here means 'hands' (crew members), not just 'man'.

- Alle Mann an Deck! → All hands on deck!
- Alle Mann von Bord! → All hands abandon ship!
- Mann über Bord! → Man overboard!

German

49. Mein Herz **blieb stehen**. Ich fiel auf mein Bett zurück. Ich **konnte** mich nicht **bewegen**. Wasser **kam herein**. Wir **würden** sinken. Ich **würde** hier im kalten dunklen Meer sterben. Aber die Seeleute **zogen** mich **hoch**. Du auch! sagten sie. Alle müssen pumpen oder wir sterben alle!

English

49. My heart stopped. I fell back onto my bed. I couldn't move. Water came in. We would sink. I would die here in the cold dark sea. But the sailors pulled me up. "You too!" they said. "Everyone must pump or we all die!"

German	English
mein herz	my heart
blieb	stopped
auf	onto

German	English
mein bett	my bed
herein	in
meer	sea

German	English
zogen	pulled
müssen	must
pumpen	pump



Language tips

Idiomatic Expressions - Stehen bleiben (Related words: **blieb, stehen**)

The phrase 'blieb stehen' literally means 'stayed standing' but idiomatically means 'stopped'. German often uses two verbs together for specific meanings.

- das Herz blieb stehen → the heart stopped
- er blieb stehen → he stopped
- die Uhr blieb stehen → the clock stopped

Modal Verbs in Past - Konnte (Related words: **konnte, bewegen**)

The modal verb 'konnte' (could) is the past form of 'können'. Unlike English, German doesn't need 'to' after modals.

- ich konnte nicht schlafen → I couldn't sleep
- sie konnte schwimmen → she could swim
- wir konnten helfen → we could help

Subjunctive II - Würde (Related words: **würden, würde**)

German uses 'würde' + infinitive to express hypothetical situations ('would' in English). This shows something that might happen.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- wir würden sinken → we would sink
- er würde helfen → he would help



Separable Verbs - Direction (Related words: **kam, herein, zogen, hoch**)

Verbs like 'hereinkommen' (kam herein) and 'hochziehen' (zogen hoch) split to show direction of movement. The prefix goes to the end.

- ich ziehe hoch → I pull up
- das Wasser kam herein → the water came in
- er geht hinaus → he goes out

German

50. Also **ging ich** zu den Pumpen. Ich arbeitete härter als je zuvor in meinem Leben. Wir alle **taten** es. **Unsere Hände** bluteten. **Unsere Rücken** brachen. Aber wir pumpeten **weiter**. **Das Wasser** kam **weiter** herein. Wir verloren **den Kampf**. **Das Schiff** starb.

English

50. So I went to the pumps. I worked harder than ever before in my life. We all did it. Our hands bled. Our backs broke. But we pumped on. The water kept coming in. We lost the fight. The ship died.

German	English	German	English	German	English
ging ich	i went	wir alle	we all	brachen	broke
den pumpen	the pumps	taten	did	wir pumpeten	we pumped
ich arbeitete	i worked	unsere hände	our hands	das wasser	the water
je zuvor	ever before	bluteten	bled	kam	kept coming
meinem leben	my life	unsere rücken	our backs	den kampf	the fight



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Präteritum (Related words: **ging ich, arbeitete, taten**)

German uses Präteritum for storytelling. Regular verbs like 'arbeitete' add -te endings, while irregular verbs like 'ging' change their stem. English also uses simple past for narratives.

- ich ging → I went
- ich arbeitete → I worked
- wir taten → we did

Articles with Nouns - Gender (Related words: **Das Wasser, den Kampf, Das Schiff**)

German articles (der, die, das) show gender and must agree with their nouns. 'Das Schiff' (neuter) and 'den Kampf' (masculine accusative) become simply 'the' in English.

- das Wasser → the water
- der Kampf → the fight
- das Schiff → the ship

Possessive Pronouns - Unsere (Related words: **Unsere Hände, Unsere Rücken**)

The German 'unsere' changes its ending based on the noun it modifies. In English, 'our' never changes form, making it simpler for English speakers.

- unsere Hände → our hands
- unser Haus → our house
- unsere Kinder → our children



Word 'weiter' - Continuing Action (Related words: **weiter, weiter**)

The German word 'weiter' expresses continuation. With 'pumpten weiter' it means 'pumped on', and with 'kam weiter herein' it means 'kept coming in'.

- weiter arbeiten → to keep working
- weiter gehen → to go on
- weiter machen → to continue

German

51. Der Kapitän **feuerte** Kanonen **ab**, um Hilfe zu signalisieren. BUMM! BUMM! Ich **hatte** noch nie Schiffskanonen **gehört**. Ich dachte, wir **würden** auseinanderbrechen. Ich wurde vor Angst ohnmächtig. Ich **fiel** auf das Deck. Ein anderer Seemann trat mich zur Seite und nahm meinen Platz an der Pumpe.

English

51. The captain fired cannons to signal for help. BOOM! BOOM! I had never heard ship cannons. I thought we would break apart. I became unconscious from fear. I fell onto the deck. Another sailor kicked me aside and took my place at the pump.

German	English	German	English	German	English
feuerte	fired	gehört	heard	zur seite	aside
kanonen	cannons	vor	from	nahm	took
ab	off	ohnmächtig	unconscious	meinen platz	my place
hilfe	help	ein	a	an	at
signalisieren	signal	anderer	different	der pumpe	the pump
bumm	boom	seemann	sailor		
schiffskanonen	ship cannons	trat	kicked		



Language tips

Separable Verbs - Abfeuern (Related words: **feuerte, ab**)

The verb 'abfeuern' (to fire off) separates in the past tense. The prefix 'ab' moves to the end of the clause. In English, we simply say 'fired.'

- feuerte ab → fired
- ich feuere ab → I fire
- abfeuern → to fire

Past Perfect - Hatte gehört (Related words: **hatte, gehört**)

The German past perfect uses 'hatte' (had) + past participle 'gehört' (heard). This works similarly to English 'had heard' to show an earlier past action.

- ich hatte gehört → I had heard
- du hattest gesehen → you had seen
- wir hatten gemacht → we had done

Would-Form - Würden (Related words: **würden**)

German 'würden' expresses what would happen, similar to English 'would.' It's used for hypothetical situations or polite requests.



- wir würden gehen → we would go
- ich würde helfen → I would help
- sie würden kommen → they would come

Simple Past - Fiel (Related words: **fiel**)

German uses simple past tense 'fiel' (fell) in narrative texts. Notice the vowel change from 'fallen' to 'fiel' - common in German strong verbs.

- ich fiel → I fell
- er fiel → he fell
- sie fielen → they fell

German

52. **Als** ich aufwachte, **waren** die Dinge schlimmer. Das Wasser gewann. Wir **konnten** nicht schnell genug **pumpen**. Das Schiff würde sinken. Nichts konnte uns retten. Aber dann - ein Wunder! Ein **kleines Schiff** in unserer Nähe schickte ein Boot.

English

52. When I woke up, things were worse. The water was winning. We couldn't pump quickly enough. The ship would sink. Nothing could save us. But then - a miracle! A small ship in our vicinity sent a boat.

German	English
aufwachte	woke up
die dinge	the things
gewann	was winning

German	English
schnell	quickly
ein wunder	a miracle
kleines	small

German	English
schiff	ship
schickte	sent
ein boot	a boat



Language tips

Time Clauses - Als (Related words: **Als**)

'Als' means 'when' for single past events. It's different from 'wenn' which is used for repeated events or present/future. English uses 'when' for both.

- Als ich kam → When I came
- Als es regnete → When it rained
- Als wir jung waren → When we were young

Past of Sein - Waren (Related words: **waren**)

The past tense of 'sein' (to be) is irregular: ich war, du warst, er war, wir waren. It corresponds to English 'was/were.'

- wir waren → we were
- ich war → I was
- sie waren → they were

Modal Verb Past - Konnten (Related words: **konnten, pumpen**)

Modal verbs like 'können' (can) change to 'konnte/konnten' in past tense. Notice there's no umlaut in the past form. The infinitive after the modal stays unchanged.

- wir konnten pumpen → we could pump
- ich konnte sehen → I could see
- sie konnten helfen → they could help

Adjective Without Ending - Kleines (Related words: **kleines, Schiff**)



After 'ein' (a/an) with neuter nouns, adjectives take '-es' ending. 'Ein kleines Schiff' means 'a small ship.' English adjectives never change form.

- ein kleines Boot → a small boat
- ein großes Haus → a big house
- ein neues Auto → a new car

German

53. Diese mutigen Männer riskierten ihr Leben, **um** uns **zu erreichen**. Die Wellen **warfen** **ihr** kleines Boot herum wie ein Spielzeug. Aber sie kamen weiter. Unsere Seeleute **warfen** ihnen ein Seil. Nach viel Gefahr fingen sie es. Sie zogen ihr Boot nah an unser Schiff. Springt! riefen sie.

English

53. These brave men risked their life to reach us. The waves threw their small boat around like a toy. But they came on. Our sailors threw them a rope. After much danger they caught it. They pulled their boat close to our ship. "Jump!" they shouted.

German	English	German	English	German	English
mutigen	brave	boot	boat	fangen	caught
riskierten	risked	herum	around	ihr boot	their boat
ihr leben	their life	ein spielzeug	a toy	springt	jump
erreichen	reach	ihnen	them	riefen	shouted
warfen	threw	ein seil	a rope		
ihr	their	gefahr	danger		



Language tips

Possessive Pronoun - Ihr (Related words: **ihr, Leben**)

'Ihr' can mean 'their' (as here) or 'her' depending on context. It agrees with the noun it modifies. English 'their' never changes form.

- ihr Leben → their life
- ihr Haus → their house
- ihre Katze → their cat

Um...zu + Infinitive (Related words: **um, zu, erreichen**)

The German 'um...zu' structure means 'in order to.' The 'zu' goes before the infinitive at the end. In English, we often just use 'to.'

- um zu helfen → to help
- um zu verstehen → to understand
- um zu leben → to live

Strong Verb Past - Werfen (Related words: **warfen**)

Strong verbs like 'werfen' (throw) change their stem vowel in past tense: werfen → warf/warfen. This is similar to English 'throw → threw.'

- sie warfen → they threw
- ich warf → I threw
- werfen → to throw



Direct Commands - Springt! (Related words: **Springt!**)

German imperatives (commands) change based on who you're addressing. 'Springt!' is the informal plural form. The exclamation mark is common in German commands.

- Spring! → Jump! (singular)
- Springt! → Jump! (plural)
- Springen Sie! → Jump! (formal)

German

54. Einer nach dem anderen **sprangen wir** in ihr Boot. Ich hatte so viel Angst, **dass ich mich** kaum **bewegen konnte**. Die Seeleute mussten **mich** wie einen Sack Kartoffeln hineinwerfen. Ich landete hart und lag dort zitternd. Das kleine Boot war voller Männer. Wasser kam über die Seiten.

English

54. One after the other we jumped into their boat. I was so afraid that I could hardly move. The sailors had to throw me in like a sack of potatoes. I landed hard and lay there trembling. The small boat was full of men. Water came over the sides.

German	English	German	English	German	English
einer nach dem anderen	one after the other	hineinwerfen	throw in	das kleine boot	the small boat
so viel	so much	ich landete	i landed	voller	full of
kaum	hardly	lag	lay	die seiten	the sides
einen sack kartoffeln	a sack of potatoes	zitternd	trembling		



Language tips

Past Tense - sprangen (Related words: **sprangen, wir**)

The word 'sprangen' is the simple past tense (Präteritum) of 'springen' (to jump). German often uses this tense in written narratives, while English uses simple past for both spoken and written stories.

- wir sprangen → we jumped
- ich sprang → I jumped
- sie sprangen → they jumped

Modal Verbs in Past - konnte (Related words: **konnte, bewegen**)

Modal verbs like 'konnte' (could) change their stem in the past tense. The ending -te shows past tense, and they always connect with an infinitive verb like 'bewegen' (to move).

- ich konnte bewegen → I could move
- er konnte nicht → he couldn't
- wir konnten gehen → we could go

Reflexive Pronoun - mich (Related words: **ich, mich**)

The word 'mich' means 'myself' and is a reflexive pronoun. In 'ich konnte mich kaum bewegen', it shows the action affects the subject themselves.

- ich bewege mich → I move myself
- er bewegt sich → he moves himself
- wir bewegen uns → we move ourselves



Word Order with dass (Related words: **dass, konnte**)

After 'dass' (that), German puts the verb at the end of the clause. Notice 'konnte' comes after 'bewegen' in 'dass ich mich kaum bewegen konnte'.

- dass ich konnte → that I could
- dass er kam → that he came
- dass wir haben → that we have

German

55. Fünfzehn Minuten später **schaute ich** zurück. Unser Schiff **ging unter** die Wellen. Das Meer verschluckte es ganz. Jetzt verstand **ich,** was "sinken" bedeutete. All unsere Ladung, all unser Besitz, alles - auf den Grund **des Meeres** gegangen. Wir hatten Glück, am Leben **zu sein.**

English

55. Fifteen minutes later I looked back. Our ship went under the waves. The sea swallowed it completely. Now I understood what "sinking" meant. All our cargo, all our belongings, everything - gone to the bottom of the sea. We were lucky to be alive.

German	English	German	English	German	English
fünfzehn minuten später	fifteen minutes later	sinken	sinking	glück	luck
schaute	looked	unsere ladung	our cargo	am leben	alive
verschluckte	swallowed	unser besitz	our belongings		
ganz	completely	wir hatten	we had		



Language tips

Regular Past Tense - schaute (Related words: **schaute, ich**)

Regular verbs in German add -te to form the past tense. 'Schaute' comes from 'schauen' (to look) plus -te. This is similar to English adding -ed for regular past verbs.

- ich schaute → I looked
- er schaute zurück → he looked back
- wir schauten → we looked

Irregular Past - ging (Related words: **ging, unter**)

The verb 'ging' is the past tense of 'gehen' (to go). Unlike regular verbs, it changes its stem completely. Many common German verbs are irregular in the past tense.

- es ging → it went
- ich ging → I went
- sie gingen → they went

Genitive Case - des Meeres (Related words: **des Meeres**)

The phrase 'des Meeres' shows possession using the genitive case. 'Des' is the genitive form of 'das', and 'Meeres' adds -es. In English, we use 'of the' instead.

- des Meeres → of the sea
- des Hauses → of the house
- des Mannes → of the man



Infinitive with zu (Related words: zu sein)

German uses 'zu' before infinitives in many constructions, like 'am Leben zu sein' (to be alive). This is similar to English 'to' before infinitives.

- zu sein → to be
- zu haben → to have
- zu gehen → to go

German

56. Wir konnten das Rettungsschiff **nicht erreichen**. Der Sturm war zu stark. Also ruderten wir **zum Ufer**. Es dauerte Stunden. Jede Welle versuchte, unser Boot umzukippen. Jeder Windstoß versuchte, **uns** zu ertränken. Menschen am Strand **sahen uns** kommen. Sie rannten, **um zu helfen**.

English

56. We couldn't reach the rescue ship. The storm was too strong. So we rowed to the shore. It took hours. Every wave tried to overturn our boat. Every gust of wind tried to drown us. People on the beach saw us coming. They ran to help.

German	English	German	English	German	English
wir konnten	we could	stunden	hours	am strand	on the beach
das rettungsschiff	the rescue ship	unser boot	our boat	sahen	saw
ruderten	rowed	umzukippen	to overturn	kommen	coming
zum ufer	to the shore	jeder windstoß	every gust of wind	sie rannten	they ran
es dauerte	it took	zu ertränken	to drown	zu helfen	help



Language tips

Negation with nicht (Related words: nicht, erreichen)

In German, 'nicht' (not) is placed before what it negates. Here 'nicht erreichen' means 'not reach'. This is different from English where we often use 'couldn't' as one word.

- nicht erreichen → not reach
- nicht sehen → not see
- nicht kommen → not come

Contracted Forms - zum (Related words: zum Ufer)

The word 'zum' is a contraction of 'zu dem' (to the). German often combines prepositions with articles to make shorter forms.

- zum Ufer → to the shore
- zum Haus → to the house
- zur Schule → to the school

Infinitive Purpose - um zu (Related words: um, zu helfen)

German uses 'um zu' plus infinitive to express purpose (in order to). In 'Sie rannten, um zu helfen' it means 'They ran (in order) to help'.

- um zu helfen → to help
- um zu sehen → to see
- um zu lernen → to learn



Irregular Past - sahen (Related words: **sahen, uns**)

The verb 'sahen' (saw) is the past tense of 'sehen' (to see). Notice how the stem changes from 'seh' to 'sah' in the past tense.

- sie sahen → they saw
- ich sah → I saw
- wir sahen uns → we saw ourselves

German

57. Endlich, endlich **erreichten wir** das Ufer. Männer **zogen** unser Boot auf den Sand. Wir waren sicher. Am Leben. Ich fiel auf den Strand und **konnte** nicht **aufstehen**. Ich war am Leben, aber **ich fühlte mich** innerlich tot. Gott **hatte** mich **gerettet**, aber warum? Ich verdiente es nicht.

English

57. Finally, finally we reached the shore. Men pulled our boat onto the sand. We were safe. Alive. I fell on the beach and couldn't get up. I was alive, but I felt dead inside. God had saved me, but why? I didn't deserve it.

German	English	German	English	German	English
endlich	finally	wir waren	we were	ich fühlte mich	i felt
erreichten wir	we reached	ich fiel	i fell	innerlich	inside
das ufer	the shore	den strand	the beach	gerettet	saved
den sand	the sand	aufstehen	get up	ich verdiente	i deserved



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Präteritum (Related words: **erreichten wir, fiel, zogen**)

German often uses the Präteritum (simple past) in written stories. Notice 'erreichten wir' (we reached) and 'fiel' (fell). English also uses simple past for storytelling.

- ich fiel → I fell
- wir erreichten → we reached
- sie zogen → they pulled

Modal Verb + Infinitive - konnte aufstehen (Related words: **konnte, aufstehen**)

The modal verb 'konnte' (could) combines with 'aufstehen' (get up). In German, the infinitive goes at the end. English keeps them together: 'couldn't get up'.

- ich konnte nicht aufstehen → I couldn't get up
- er konnte schwimmen → he could swim
- wir konnten sehen → we could see

Reflexive Verbs - fühlte mich (Related words: **ich fühlte mich**)

The reflexive 'sich fühlen' (to feel) uses 'mich' for 'myself'. German requires the reflexive pronoun, while English often drops it or uses different phrasing.

- ich fühlte mich tot → I felt dead
- er fühlte sich krank → he felt sick
- wir fühlten uns müde → we felt tired



Past Perfect Hint - hatte...gerettet (Related words: hatte, gerettet)

German 'hatte...gerettet' (had saved) shows completed past action. This combines 'hatte' (had) with the past participle 'gerettet' (saved), similar to English past perfect.

- Gott hatte mich gerettet → God had saved me
- ich hatte gegessen → I had eaten
- sie hatte gesehen → she had seen

German

58. Die Menschen von Yarmouth **waren** sehr freundlich. Sie gaben uns Essen und warme Kleidung. Sie gaben uns Plätze zum Schlafen. Die Stadtbeamten **gaben** uns Geld. Wir konnten nach London oder zurück nach Hull **gehen**. Sie behandelten uns wie Helden, aber ich fühlte **mich** wie ein Narr.

English

58. The people of Yarmouth were very friendly. They gave us food and warm clothing. They gave us places to sleep. The city officials gave us money. We could go to London or back to Hull. They treated us like heroes, but I felt like a fool.

German	English	German	English	German	English
die menschen	the people	kleidung	clothing	gehen	go
von yarmouth	of yarmouth	plätze	places	sie behandelten	they treated
freundlich	friendly	zum schlafen	to sleep	helden	heroes
sie gaben	they gave	die stadtbeamten	the city officials	ich fühlte	i felt
warme	warm	gaben	gave		



Language tips

Simple Past - waren (Related words: waren)

German simple past (Präteritum) is commonly used in written narratives. 'Waren' means 'were' - the past tense of 'sein' (to be).

- sie waren → they were
- wir waren → we were
- ich war → I was

Repeated Verbs - gaben (Related words: gaben)

Notice how 'gaben' (gave) appears multiple times to describe different acts of giving. This repetition emphasizes the generosity of the townspeople.

- sie gaben → they gave
- ich gab → I gave
- wir gaben → we gave

Modal Verb Past - konnten (Related words: konnten, gehen)

Modal verbs like 'können' (can) also have past forms. 'Konnten' means 'could'. Note that the infinitive 'gehen' follows without 'zu'.

- wir konnten gehen → we could go
- ich konnte sehen → I could see
- sie konnten helfen → they could help



Reflexive Pronoun - mich (Related words: **fühlte, mich**)

The word 'mich' is a reflexive pronoun meaning 'myself'. With 'fühlen' (to feel), it shows the feeling is about oneself: 'ich fühlte mich' (I felt).

- ich fühlte mich gut → I felt good
- ich sehe mich → I see myself
- ich wasche mich → I wash myself

German

59. Jetzt war meine Chance. Ich sollte nach Hause gehen. Ich sollte zu den Füßen meines Vaters fallen und um Vergebung bitten. Er würde mich willkommen heißen. Wie der verlorene Sohn in der Bibel **würde er** das gemästete Kalb für mich schlachten. Er dachte, **ich sei** tot. Welche Freude, mich lebendig **zu sehen!**

English

59. Now was my chance. I should go home. I should fall at my father's feet and beg for forgiveness. He would welcome me. Like the prodigal son in the Bible, he would slaughter the fattened calf for me. He thought I was dead. What joy to see me alive!

German	English	German	English	German	English
meine chance	my chance	er würde	he would	schlachten	slaughter
ich sollte	i should	willkommen	welcome	er dachte	he thought
zu	at	der verlorene sohn	the prodigal son	ich sei	i was
den füßen	the feet	der bibel	the bible	welche	what
fallen	fall	würde er	he would	freude	joy
um vergabung	for forgiveness	das gemästete kalb	the fattened calf	lebendig	alive
bitten	beg	für mich	for me	zu sehen	to see



Language tips

Modal Verb 'sollte' - Should (Related words: **sollte**)

The verb 'sollte' is the past form of 'sollen' but translates as 'should' in English. It expresses obligation or advice about what one ought to do.

- ich sollte gehen → I should go
- du solltest fragen → you should ask
- wir sollten helfen → we should help

Conditional 'würde' - Would (Related words: **würde, würde er**)

German uses 'würde' to express conditional actions (what would happen). It's like English 'would' and appears with an infinitive at the end of the sentence.

- er würde kommen → he would come
- ich würde sagen → I would say
- sie würden helfen → they would help

Reported Speech - 'ich sei' (Related words: **dachte, ich sei**)

German uses Subjunctive I (Konjunktiv I) for reported speech. 'Ich sei' means 'I was' in reported thoughts - showing what someone else thinks or said.



- er dachte, ich sei tot → he thought I was dead
- sie sagte, er sei krank → she said he was sick
- man glaubt, es sei wahr → they believe it's true

Infinitive with 'zu' - to see (Related words: **zu sehen**)

German infinitives often use 'zu' (to) before them, like 'zu sehen' (to see). This is similar to English 'to' with infinitives.

- schön zu sehen → nice to see
- Zeit zu gehen → time to go
- schwer zu verstehen → hard to understand

German

60. Aber ich ging **nicht** nach Hause. Warum? Ich kann es **nicht erklären**. Etwas Dunkles trieb mich vorwärts. Mein Verstand sagte **Geh** nach Hause! Aber meine Füße gehorchten **nicht**. War es Schicksal? War es der Teufel? War ich verflucht? Ich weiß es **nicht**. Ich weiß nur, dass ich **nicht** nach Hause **ging**.

English

60. But I didn't go home. Why? I can't explain it. Something dark drove me forward. My mind said "Go home!" But my feet didn't obey. Was it fate? Was it the devil? Was I cursed? I don't know. I only know that I didn't go home.

German	English
ich ging	i went
erklären	explain
dunkles	dark
trieb	drove
vorwärts	forward

German	English
mein verstand	my mind
geh	go
meine füße	my feet
gehorchten	obeyed
war es	was it

German	English
schicksal	fate
der teufel	the devil
war ich	was i
ich weiß	i know



Language tips

Negation with 'nicht' (Related words: **ging, nicht**)

German uses 'nicht' (not) to negate verbs. It often comes after the verb and objects, but before prepositional phrases like 'nach Hause'.

- ich ging nicht → I didn't go
- er kommt nicht → he doesn't come
- sie weiß es nicht → she doesn't know it

Modal + Negation - kann nicht (Related words: **kann, nicht, erklären**)

When negating modal verbs, 'nicht' typically comes after the object but before the infinitive. 'Ich kann es nicht erklären' means 'I can't explain it'.

- ich kann nicht schlafen → I can't sleep
- sie will nicht gehen → she doesn't want to go
- wir müssen nicht warten → we don't have to wait

Imperative - Geh! (Related words: **Geh**)

The imperative mood gives commands. 'Geh!' is the informal singular command form of 'gehen' (to go). Note there's no subject pronoun with imperatives.



- Geh nach Hause! → Go home!
- Komm her! → Come here!
- Warte! → Wait!

The verb 'wissen' - to know (Related words: **weiß**)

The verb 'wissen' (to know facts) is irregular in present tense. 'Ich weiß' means 'I know'. It's different from 'kennen' which means to know people or places.

- ich weiß es → I know it
- ich weiß nicht → I don't know
- weißt du? → do you know?

German

61. Mein Freund **fand** mich nach drei Tagen. Er sah schrecklich **aus**. Er hatte **sich** verändert. Der Sturm hatte etwas in ihm gebrochen. Wie geht es dir? fragte er leise. Seine Stimme **war** anders. Der lachende Junge **war** weg. Jetzt **sah** er **aus** wie ein alter Mann.

English

61. My friend found me after three days. He looked terrible. He had changed. The storm had broken something in him. "How are you?" he asked quietly. His voice was different. The laughing boy was gone. Now he looked like an old man.

German	English	German	English	German	English
drei tagen	three days	geht es dir	are you	junge	boy
er sah	he looked	leise	quietly	ein	an
sich	himself	anders	different	alter	old
verändert	changed	der	the	mann	man
ihm	him	lachende	laughing		



Language tips

Simple Past Tense - Präteritum (Related words: **fand, war**)

German uses Präteritum (simple past) for storytelling. Notice how 'fand' (found) and 'war' (was) show completed past actions. In English, we use the simple past similarly.

- ich fand → I found
- er war → he was
- sie hatte → she had

Separable Verbs - Aussehen (Related words: **sah, aus**)

The verb 'aussehen' (to look/appear) splits in German. 'Er sah...aus' becomes 'He looked' in English, where the verb stays together.

- er sah aus → he looked
- aussehen → to look
- du siehst aus → you look

Fixed Expression - Wie geht es dir? (Related words: **geht es dir?**)

This German greeting literally means 'How goes it to you?' but translates to 'How are you?' in English. It's a fixed expression every learner should memorize.



- Wie geht es dir? → How are you?
- Mir geht es gut → I am well
- Wie geht's? → How's it going?

Reflexive Pronouns - Sich (Related words: **sich**)

German uses 'sich' (himself/herself) with reflexive verbs. 'Er hatte sich verändert' means 'He had changed (himself)'.

English often drops the reflexive pronoun.

- er hatte sich verändert → he had changed
- ich fühle mich → I feel
- sie setzt sich → she sits down

German

62. Sein Vater war bei ihm. **Als** er erfuhr, wer ich war, wurde der alte Kapitän sehr ernst. Junger Mann, sagte er, du darfst nie wieder zur See fahren. Dieser Sturm ist **Gottes Warnung** an dich. Du bist nicht dazu bestimmt, Seemann zu sein. **Geh** nach Hause, solange du kannst.

English

62. His father was with him. When he learned who I was, the old captain became very serious. "Young man," he said, "you must never go to sea again. This storm is God's warning to you. You are not destined to be a sailor. Go home while you can."

German	English	German	English	German	English
bei	with	kapitän	captain	dazu	to it
erfuhr	learned	junger mann	young man	bestimmt	destined
wer	who	du darfst	you may	solange	while
alte	old	gottes warnung	god's warning		



Language tips

Modal Verbs - Dürfen (Related words: **darfst, fahren.**)

The modal verb 'dürfen' (may/to be allowed) is followed by an infinitive. 'Du darfst nie wieder...fahren' means 'You may never...go again'. English uses 'may' or 'must' similarly.

- du darfst fahren → you may go
- ich darf nicht → I may not
- dürfen wir? → may we?

Genitive Case - Gottes (Related words: **Gottes Warnung**)

German shows possession with the genitive case. 'Gottes Warnung' means 'God's warning'. The 's' ending on 'Gottes' shows possession, similar to English 's'.

- Gottes Warnung → God's warning
- des Vaters → of the father
- Marias Buch → Maria's book

Imperative Mood - Geh (Related words: **Geh**)

German commands drop the pronoun. 'Geh!' means 'Go!' The verb form changes for commands. In English, we also use the base verb form for commands.



- Geh! → Go!
- Komm her! → Come here!
- Hör zu! → Listen!

Subordinate Clauses - Als (Related words: **Als, war,**)

German uses 'als' (when) for past events. Notice how the verb 'war' goes to the end in the subordinate clause. English keeps normal word order after 'when'.

- Als er erfuhr → When he learned
- Als ich kam → When I came
- Als es regnete → When it rained

German

63. **Wird** dein Sohn **aufhören** zu segeln? fragte ich. Der Kapitän schüttelte den Kopf. Das ist anders. Es ist sein Beruf. Es ist sein Leben. Aber du? Du kamst für Abenteuer. Und sieh, was passiert ist! Vielleicht bist du verflucht. Vielleicht bist du wie Jona in der Bibel.

English

63. "Will your son stop sailing?" I asked. The captain shook his head. "That is different. It is his profession. It is his life. But you? You came for adventure. And look what happened! Perhaps you are cursed. Perhaps you are like Jonah in the Bible."

German	English
dein sohn	your son
segeln	sail
schüttelte	shook
den kopf	his head
sein beruf	his profession

German	English
sein leben	his life
du kamst	you came
abenteuer	adventure
sieh	look
passiert ist	happened

German	English
vielleicht	perhaps
bist	are
jona	jonah



Language tips

Future Tense - Werden (Related words: **Wird, aufhören**)

German forms future with 'werden' + infinitive. 'Wird...aufhören' means 'Will...stop'. English uses 'will' + base verb similarly.

- wird aufhören → will stop
- werde gehen → will go
- wirst sehen → you will see

Accusative Case - Den Kopf (Related words: **den Kopf.**)

German uses 'den' (accusative) for direct objects. 'Den Kopf schütteln' means 'to shake the head'. English doesn't change 'the' for objects.

- den Kopf → the head (as object)
- den Mann → the man (as object)
- der Kopf → the head (as subject)

Present Perfect - Passiert ist (Related words: **passiert ist!**)

German perfect tense uses 'sein' or 'haben' + past participle. 'Was passiert ist' means 'what has happened'. The verb goes to the end in subordinate clauses.



- was passiert ist → what happened
- ist gekommen → has come
- hat gemacht → has made

Possessive Pronouns - Sein (Related words: **sein Beruf., sein Leben.**)

German 'sein' means 'his' and agrees with the possessed noun. 'Sein Beruf' (his profession), 'sein Leben' (his life). English 'his' never changes.

- sein Beruf → his profession
- seine Frau → his wife
- sein Kind → his child

German

64. Dann **wurde er** wütend. Sein Sohn **hatte** ihm meine Geschichte **erzählt**. Was für ein Narr **läuft** von einem guten Vater **weg**? Was für ein Narr wirft ein bequemes Leben **weg**? **Ich würde** nicht wieder mit dir segeln für tausend Pfund! Du bringst Unglück! Du verursachst Tod!

English

64. Then he became angry. His son had told him my story. "What kind of fool runs away from a good father? What kind of fool throws away a comfortable life? I wouldn't sail with you again for a thousand pounds! You bring misfortune! You cause death!"

German	English
wurde er	he became
sein sohn	his son
meine geschichte	my story
erzählt	told
was für	what kind of
läuft	runs

German	English
einem	a
guten	good
vater	father
wirft	throws
bequemes	comfortable
leben	life

German	English
tausend pfund	a thousand pounds
du bringst	you bring
unglück	misfortune
du verursachst	you cause
tod	death



Language tips

Simple Past - Wurde (Related words: **wurde er**)

The German 'wurde' is the simple past of 'werden' (to become). English uses 'became' for this past tense form. German often uses simple past in written narratives.

- ich wurde → I became
- er wurde wütend → he became angry
- sie wurde müde → she became tired

Past Perfect - Hatte erzählt (Related words: **hatte, erzählt**)

German forms the past perfect with 'hatte' (had) + past participle. The auxiliary and participle are often separated in sentences. English keeps them closer together.

- hatte erzählt → had told
- hatte gesehen → had seen
- hatte gemacht → had done

Subjunctive II - Würde (Related words: **Ich würde**)



The German 'würde' expresses hypothetical situations (would). It's used here to show what the speaker wouldn't do. English uses 'would' + verb for the same meaning.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- würde nicht → would not
- er würde sagen → he would say

Separable Verbs - Weg (Related words: läuft, weg)

In 'läuft...weg' and 'wirft...weg', the prefix 'weg' (away) separates from the verb. This creates the meaning 'run away' and 'throw away'. English keeps these parts together.

- läuft weg → runs away
- wirft weg → throws away
- weglaufen → to run away

German

65. Seine Worte **taten** mir weh. Aber ich sagte nichts. Ich hatte zu viel Stolz, um zuzugeben, dass er recht hatte. Er redete weiter. "Merk **dir** meine Worte. Wenn du nicht nach Hause gehst, **wirst** du Katastrophe nach Katastrophe erleben. Der Fluch **deines Vaters** **wird dir** folgen. Du wirst leiden, bis du **dir** wünschst, du wärst tot."

English

65. His words hurt me. But I said nothing. I had too much pride to admit that he was right. He talked on. "Remember my words. If you don't go home, you will experience catastrophe after catastrophe. The curse of your father will follow you. You will suffer until you wish you were dead."

German	English
taten	hurt
ich sagte	i said
zu viel	too much
stolz	pride
zuzugeben	admit
er redete	he talked

German	English
merk	remember
meine worte	my words
gehst	go
wirst	will
katastrophe	catastrophe
erleben	experience

German	English
der fluch	the curse
deines vaters	of your father
folgen	follow
dir	yourself
wünschst	wish
du wärst	you were



Language tips

Past Tense Verbs - taten, sagte (Related words: taten, sagte)

German uses different past tense forms than English. 'Taten' (did/hurt) and 'sagte' (said) are simple past forms. In English, we often use just one past form.

- ich sagte → I said
- er tat → he did
- sie sagten → they said

Reflexive Pronouns - dir (Related words: dir)

German uses reflexive pronouns like 'dir' (yourself/to you) more often than English. 'Merk dir' means 'remember' but literally is 'mark to yourself'.

- merk dir → remember
- ich wünsche mir → I wish for
- stell dir vor → imagine



Future Tense - wirst, wird (Related words: **wirst, wird**)

German forms the future with 'werden' + infinitive. 'Wirst' and 'wird' are forms of 'werden' (will). English uses 'will' + verb base form.

- du wirst sehen → you will see
- er wird kommen → he will come
- wir werden gehen → we will go

Genitive Case - deines Vaters (Related words: **deines Vaters**)

German uses the genitive case to show possession. 'Deines Vaters' means 'of your father' or 'your father's'. English uses 'of' or apostrophe-s.

- des Kindes → of the child
- meiner Mutter → of my mother
- des Hauses → of the house

German

66. Wir trennten **uns**. Ich sah sie nie wieder. Ich hatte Geld in meiner Tasche **von** den freundlichen Menschen **von** Yarmouth. Ich konnte nach Hause **nach** York **gehen**. Oder ich konnte **nach** London **gehen** und ein anderes Schiff finden. Die Wahl **war** meine. Aber Scham traf meine Entscheidung für mich.

English

66. We parted. I never saw them again. I had money in my pocket from the kind people of Yarmouth. I could go home to York. Or I could go to London and find another ship. The choice was mine. But shame made my decision for me.

German	English	German	English	German	English
wir trennten	we parted	nach	to	scham	shame
meiner tasche	my pocket	york	york	traf	made
den freundlichen menschen	the kind people	die wahl	the choice		
yarmouth	yarmouth	meine	mine		



Language tips

Reflexive Verbs - trennten uns (Related words: **trennten, uns**)

German uses reflexive pronouns with many verbs. 'Sich trennen' means 'to part' or 'to separate'. The 'uns' (ourselves) shows the action affects the subject.

- wir trennten uns → we parted
- ich wasche mich → I wash myself
- sie freut sich → she is happy

Modal Verbs - konnte (Related words: **konnte, gehen**)

Modal verbs like 'konnte' (could) express ability or possibility. German modals take an infinitive at the end, while English uses the base verb form.

- ich konnte gehen → I could go
- du kannst sprechen → you can speak
- er muss arbeiten → he must work



Irregular Past Forms - sah, war (Related words: **sah, war**)

Many common German verbs have irregular past forms. 'Sah' (saw) and 'war' (was) change their stem completely, unlike regular verbs that add -te.

- ich sah → I saw
- er war → he was
- wir kamen → we came

Prepositions - von, nach (Related words: **von, nach**)

German prepositions can have different meanings. 'Von' means 'from' or 'of', while 'nach' can mean 'to' (for cities) or 'after'. Context determines the translation.

- von Berlin → from Berlin
- nach London → to London
- von mir → from me

German

67. Wie konnte ich nach Hause gehen? Alle **würden** über mich **lachen**. "Da ist der Junge, **der** zur See **weglieft!**" **würden** sie sagen. "Ein Sturm und er kam weinend nach Hause!" Ich konnte diese Schande nicht ertragen. Mein Stolz war **stärker als** mein gesunder Menschenverstand. Das ist der Wahnsinn der Jugend.

English

67. How could I go home? Everyone would laugh at me. "There is the boy who ran away to sea!" they would say. "A storm and he came home crying!" I could not bear this disgrace. My pride was stronger than my common sense. That is the madness of youth.

German	English	German	English	German	English
lachen	laugh	ein sturm	a storm	mein stolz	my pride
da	there	er kam	he came	mein gesunder menschenverstand	my common sense
der junge	the boy	weinend	crying	der wahnsinn	the madness
weglieft	ran away	diese schande	this disgrace	der jugend	of youth
sagen	say	ertragen	bear		



Language tips

Conditional Mood - würden (Related words: **würden, lachen**)

German uses 'würden' + infinitive to express what would happen. This is the conditional mood. English uses 'would' + base verb form.

- sie würden lachen → they would laugh
- ich würde gehen → I would go
- er würde sagen → he would say

Relative Pronouns - der (Related words: **der Junge,, der**)

The word 'der' can mean 'the' or 'who/which/that' as a relative pronoun. Here it connects 'the boy' with 'ran away to sea'.

- der Mann, der → the man who
- das Haus, das → the house that
- die Frau, die → the woman who



Separable Verb Past - weglief (Related words: **weglief**)

In the past tense, separable verbs like 'weglaufen' (run away) join together. 'Lief weg' becomes 'weglief' in a subordinate clause.

- er lief weg → he ran away
- der weglief → who ran away
- ich stand auf → I got up

Comparison - stärker als (Related words: **stärker, als**)

German comparisons use the ending -er plus 'als' (than). 'Stärker als' means 'stronger than'. English uses -er + than or more + than.

- größer als → bigger than
- besser als → better than
- schneller als → faster than

German

68. Wir **schämen uns** nicht, Unrecht **zu tun**. Aber wir **schämen uns**, es richtig **zu** machen. Wir **schämen uns** nicht, Narren **zu** sein. Aber wir **schämen uns**, weise **zu** werden. Also **ging** ich nach London. Auf der Straße kämpfte ich mit mir selbst. Aber **der Stolz** gewann jedes Argument.

English

68. We are not ashamed to do wrong. But we are ashamed to do it right. We are not ashamed to be fools. But we are ashamed to become wise. So I went to London. On the street I fought with myself. But pride won every argument.

German	English	German	English	German	English
schämen uns	are ashamed	narren	fools	mir selbst	myself
unrecht	wrong	weise	wise	der stolz	pride
tun	do	werden	become	gewann	won
richtig	right	der straße	the street	jedes argument	every argument
machen	do	kämpfte	fought		



Language tips

Reflexive Verbs - schämen uns (Related words: **schämen uns**)

German reflexive verbs like 'sich schämen' (to be ashamed) require a reflexive pronoun. In English, we say 'are ashamed' without the reflexive 'ourselves'.

- wir schämen uns → we are ashamed
- ich schäme mich → I am ashamed
- er schämt sich → he is ashamed

Infinitive with zu (Related words: **zu, tun**)

German uses 'zu' before infinitives in many constructions. In English, we use 'to' before the infinitive verb.

- Unrecht zu tun → to do wrong
- richtig zu machen → to do right
- weise zu werden → to become wise



Simple Past Tense - ging (Related words: **ging**)

German simple past (Präteritum) is commonly used in written narratives. 'Ging' (went) is the past form of 'gehen' (to go).

- ich ging → I went
- er ging → he went
- wir gingen → we went

Articles with Nouns - der Stolz (Related words: **der Stolz**)

German nouns always need an article. 'Der Stolz' (pride) uses the masculine article. In English, abstract nouns like 'pride' often don't need an article.

- der Stolz → pride
- die Angst → fear
- das Abenteuer → adventure

German

69. In London blieb ich eine Zeit lang. Die Erinnerung **an** den Sturm begann zu verblassen. **Meine Angst** wurde schwächer. **Mein Wunsch** nach Abenteuer wurde stärker. Ich dachte weniger **an** zu Hause. Ich dachte weniger **an** die Tränen **meines Vaters**. Ich dachte weniger **an** Gottes Warnungen.

English

69. In London I stayed for a while. The memory of the storm began to fade. My fear became weaker. My desire for adventure became stronger. I thought less about home. I thought less about my father's tears. I thought less about God's warnings.

German	English	German	English	German	English
in london	in london	an	of	mein wunsch	my desire
blieb	stayed	den sturm	the storm	nach abenteuer	for adventure
eine zeit lang	for a while	verblassen	fade	weniger	less
die erinnerung	the memory	schwächer	weaker	gottes warnungen	god's warnings



Language tips

Possessive Pronouns - Meine, Mein (Related words: **Meine Angst, Mein Wunsch**)

German possessives change based on the gender of the noun. 'Meine Angst' (feminine) vs 'Mein Wunsch' (masculine). English 'my' stays the same.

- meine Angst → my fear
- mein Wunsch → my desire
- meine Träume → my dreams

Preposition 'an' - Thinking About (Related words: **dachte, an**)

German uses 'denken an' (literally 'think at') where English uses 'think about'. This is a fixed expression to memorize.

- ich denke an dich → I think about you
- an zu Hause denken → to think about home
- an die Zukunft denken → to think about the future

Genitive Case - meines Vaters (Related words: **meines Vaters**)

German genitive case shows possession. 'Meines Vaters' means 'of my father'. English uses 'of' or the possessive 's.



- die Tränen meines Vaters → my father's tears
- das Haus meiner Mutter → my mother's house
- der Hund des Mannes → the man's dog

Verb 'werden' - Becoming (Related words: **wurde**)

The verb 'werden' means 'to become' and shows a change of state. 'Wurde schwächer' means 'became weaker'.

- es wurde kalt → it became cold
- ich wurde müde → I became tired
- sie wurden Freunde → they became friends

German

70. Schließlich traf ich meine Wahl. **Ich würde** ein anderes Schiff **finden**. **Ich würde** es wieder versuchen. **Ich würde** beweisen, **dass** ich **kein Feigling** **war**. **Ich würde** allen zeigen, **dass** ich ein Seemann sein **konnte**. Ich war der größte Narr, **der je gelebt** hat. Und **ich würde** teuer für meine Dummheit bezahlen.

English

70. Finally I made my choice. I would find another ship. I would try again. I would prove that I was not a coward. I would show everyone that I could be a sailor. I was the biggest fool who ever lived. And I would pay dearly for my stupidity.

German	English
meine wahl	my choice
versuchen	try
beweisen	prove
kein feigling	not a coward

German	English
allen	everyone
zeigen	show
der größte narr	the biggest fool
je	ever

German	English
gelebt	lived
teuer	dearly
meine dummheit	my stupidity
bezahlen	pay



Language tips

Modal Verb 'würde' - Conditional (Related words: **Ich würde, finden**)

German 'würde' expresses the conditional mood (would). It's often followed by an infinitive at the end of the sentence.

- ich würde gehen → I would go
- er würde helfen → he would help
- wir würden kommen → we would come

Conjunction 'dass' - That (Related words: **dass, war, konnte**)

The conjunction 'dass' (that) introduces subordinate clauses in German. Note the verb moves to the end in the subordinate clause.

- dass ich müde war → that I was tired
- dass er kommen kann → that he can come
- dass sie es weiß → that she knows it

Negation 'kein' - No/Not a (Related words: **kein Feigling**)

German uses 'kein' to negate nouns (no/not a). 'Kein Feigling' means 'not a coward' or 'no coward'.

- kein Geld → no money
- keine Zeit → no time
- kein Problem → no problem



Relative Pronoun 'der' - Who/Which (Related words: **der, je, gelebt**)

The word 'der' can be a relative pronoun meaning 'who' or 'which'. Here 'der je gelebt hat' means 'who ever lived'.

- der Mann, der kommt → the man who comes
- das Buch, das ich lese → the book which I read
- die Frau, die singt → the woman who sings