GCSE / A Level German Grammar Transition Booklet



This booklet is designed to help you to consolidate key GCSE grammar so you are ready to tackle A level. It is **not** a complete guide to German grammar: we will cover more advanced aspects such as cases, adjective endings, relative clauses, compound tenses, passive and subjunctive fully in lessons in year 12, so they are not included here. If you would like to follow these exercises up with some independent work, you could continue to work through the exercises in your ‘789’ booklet and/or try the website [www.languagesonline.org.uk](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk) .

**Viel Spaß beim Grammatik lernen!**

Frau Arnold

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**1. Noun gender and plurals**

As you know, nouns in German are **masculine (der/ein), feminine (die /eine) ,** or **neuter (das/ein)**. You can check the gender of a noun in a dictionary, but sometimes the ending of a noun can help you to work out its gender:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Masculine** | **Feminine** | **Neuter** |
| * Nouns that end in -ant, -ast, -ich, -ismus, -ling, -or, -us
* Most nouns ending -er and -en (apart from nouns made from verb infinitives)
* Days, months, seasons
 | * Nouns ending in -schaft, -heit, -keit, -ung, -a, -ei, -enz, -ie, -ik, -sion, -tät, -tion, -ur
* The vast majority of nouns ending in -e
 | * Nouns made from verb infinitives
* Nouns ending in –chen, -lein, -ma, -ment, -sel, -tel, -tum, -um
* The vast majority of nouns *starting* Ge-
* Many of the words that come from other languages (Fremdwörter)
 |

The ‘Article Signals Song’ on Youtube (SmarterGerman) is helpful for memorising some of these! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heHgukjDq-U>

**There are exceptions** to these patterns (eg. das End**e**; die **Ge**fahr), but in most cases they are very likely to give you the right gender.

**Task 1a What gender are the following German nouns?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Arbeitslosigkeit | Freude | Hähnchen |
| Lehrer | Kapitalismus | Element |
| Bäckerei | Kuchen | Viertel |
| Herbst | Schwimmen | Freiheit |
| Getränk | Mannschaft | Palast |
| Baby | Januar | Realität |

**Reminder:** the last part of a compound noun gives you the gender, for example:

**Plan** is masculine (der), therefore **→ der** Stunden**plan, der** Busfahr**plan, der** Lehr**plan**

**Noun plurals**

**There are many different ways of making plural nouns in German** (just as there are in English - think about it!). There are a few ‘set’ patterns:

Nouns ending -schaft, -keit, -heit, -ung add -en in plural

Nouns ending -chen and -er *generally* stay the same in the plural

Nouns ending -e *often* add -n in plural

BUT there is often no clear pattern, so you will usually find you have to look up plurals in a dictionary. Different dictionaries do this in different ways:

**If you use online dictionaries** such as dict.cc (my first choice online dictionary for A level!), clicking on the German word will give you a box with word in singular and plural, eg if you click on ‘Hemd’ you are taken to a box with NOUN das Hemd |die Hemden .

**If you use paper dictionaries** (in which case I recommend Collins), the plural is usually given in brackets alongside the singular, for example ‘Hemd, (-en), *nnt*’.

**In larger dictionaries** you might find that there are TWO things in brackets, eg. for ‘shirt’ you would find: ‘Hemd ((-e)s; -en) *nnt;* : **the plural will be the SECOND thing in brackets** – the first thing is the genitive form.

Reminder: ‘the’ in the plural is **die**. This **doesn’t** mean the word has changed into a feminine noun – it keeps the same gender, for example:

der Hund – die Hunde (masculine sg and pl)

die Katze – die Katzen (feminine sg and pl)

das Buch – die Bücher (neuter sg and pl)

**Task 2a– Find the plurals of the following nouns:**

das Kaninchen der Computer

die Schule das Haus

das Gefühl die Freundschaft

der Freund der Teenager

**Task 2b – Here are some particularly useful nouns for the A level German course. Look up the German, and say what the gender of each noun is.**

problem decision disadvantage

problems environment consequences

government advantage population

**2. Subject pronouns**

A quick exercise to make sure you are clear about the meanings of the subject pronouns:

**Task 3: Fill in the meanings of the pronouns in English, using the checklist in the bubble if needed.**

ich = wir =

du = ihr =

er = Sie =

sie = sie =

es =

man =

they I we he

‘one’/you (=people in general)

she you (familiar sg)

you (formal sg & pl ) it

you (familiar pl)

**Task 4:**

Which word for ‘you’ would you use if you were talking to:

* Your brother
* Someone serving you in a shop
* several friends
1. **Direct Object Pronouns**

These are the words in bold below – they are pronouns for the person /people/thing the verb acts directly on.

You don’t understand **me**! du verstehst **mich** nicht!

I like **you** (familiar, singular) ich mag **dich**

Anna tricked **him** Anna hat **ihn** ausgetrickst

The letter annoyed **her** der Brief hat **sie** genervt

I fixed **it**  ich habe **es**\* repariert

They’re meeting **us** in the park Sie treffen **uns** im Park

We’ll miss **you** (familiar, plural) Wir werden **euch** vermissen

I warned **you** (formal) yesterday Ich habe **Sie** gestern gewarnt

Markus finds **them** weird Markus findet **sie** seltsam

\*‘es’ is the commonest word for ‘it’ and it is used to refer to general /unspecified things, situations or experiences as well as neuter nouns – but if the thing being referred to is masculine you should use ‘ihn’ (eg. Wie war **der** Kuchen? Ich fand **ihn** lecker!) and if it’s feminine you should use ‚sie‘ (eg. **Die** Schule ist gut – ich besuche **sie** seit 3 Jahren.)

**Task 5: translate the following, using the correct direct object pronoun**

I find him quite funny

She saw them yesterday

He ate it quickly *(‘it’ = the food)*

I’ll meet you in the café *(talking to two friends)*

That surprises me!

**4. Word Order: the ‘Verb Second’ rule**

The most important rule of German word order is that the main clause verb must be the second ***element*** in the sentence:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| IchMeine MutterDie ganze Familie  | **gehe****mag****ist** | samstags oft in die Stadt italienisches Essenzur Party gegangen |

You need to be **very careful** about this when translating phrases where English uses subject + adverb + verb (so verb 3rd), for example:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| I | never | **go**  |  | Ich | **gehe** | nie |
| He  | often | **says …** |  | Er | **sagt** | oft … |
| The minister | unfortunately | **thinks …** |  | Der Minister | **denkt** | leider … |

You can see her that the verb doesn’t have to be the second ***word***! **The first ‘element’** can be quite long, for example:

**Die ganze Klasse, die Lehrerin und der Schulleiter** **haben** letzte Woche einen Kurzfilm gedreht.

The whole phrase in blue is the subject of the verb (the people that made the short film) so it counts as the first element.

As in English, you don’t have to start the sentence with the subject (the person/thing doing the verb) – you can use a time phrase or other adverbial phrase instead. The difference is that in German, **you still need to have the verb as the second element**, so you end up with the subject in third place. This is called inversion. Here are some examples:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1  | 2 verb | 3 subject  |
| Leider | **denkt**  | der Minister …. |
| Letzte Woche | **war**  | das Wetter …  |
| Manchmal  | **geht** | sie … |

In fact, German being nothing if not logical, you can even have **a whole subordinate clause as the ‘first element’**, which is then followed by the main clause **verb** (with a comma first), then **the subject:**

**Weil er wegen des Babys so schlecht geschlafen hatte, war er** furchtbar müde

**Obwohl ich meine Schwester oft so irritierend finde, ist sie** wirklich ganz nett.

**Task 6 – Translate:**

I often play tennis

They never drink tea

It was sometimes difficult

Sometimes it was difficult

Unfortunately the weather was terrible

To my surprise, my team won!

Although I don’t normally like hot food (=scharfes Essen), I found it delicious.

When it rains, the children wear wellies (=Gummistiefel).

**5. Word Order: Time, Manner, Place**

This is a straightforward rule: if you have expressions of time, manner and place in a sentence, that’s the order they go in. ‘Time’ includes expressions of frequency, and ‘Manner’ is to do with *how* something happens (eg slowly, surprisingly, reluctantly, unfortunately, with hesitation, by train, on foot, with my family …).

**Task 7 – classify the following expressions into time, manner, or place, and combine some of them with the verbs at the bottom (or your own preferred verbs) to make your own sentences with correct word order. You don’t have to use all three elements in every sentence, add you can add your own nouns etc to complete the sentences. As an extension, try starting the sentence with a time expression – don’t forget you will still need to have the verb second!**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| gestern | normalerweise | alleine |
| nach Oxford | mit dem Bus | nächste Woche |
| widerwillig | zu Hause | nach Italien |
| im Park | ab und zu | leider |
| langsam | im Hotel | vor drei Jahren |
| in Zukunft | mit Freunden | hier |

**Verb suggestions:**

Meine Familie ist ….. gefahren

Ich möchte ….. spielen

Lukas wird ….. gehen

Ich lese ….

Anke und Ulli sind … geblieben

Die alte Dame sitzt …

*You will need to add your own nouns etc to make complete sentences – and feel free to use your own verbs instead if you prefer!*

**6. Word Order: Subordination**

You know how to use ‘weil’, ‘dass’ and several other subordinating conjunctions. As you move towards A level, you will find it useful to have a wider range of subordinating conjunctions at your fingertips. They still count as ‘complex structures’ at A level, and many of them are really useful for developing arguments, which carries a lot of marks.

All of these conjunctions work just like ‘weil’ - they send the verb to the end of the clause. In tenses with two parts, it’s the first bit of the verb (the finite verb) that gets sent – so the part of haben/sein in perfect tense, or the part of werden in future – look at no.s 1 & 5 below. Use as many different conjunctions as you can in your work.

You will already know:

da – because/since/as

ob – whether / if

wenn – if / whenever

question words such as was, wo, warum, wie, wer - these can also be used as subordinating conjunctions

obwohl – although

als – when + past tense

Try now to learn and start using these more sophisticated conjunctions:

damit – in order that, so that

nachdem – after (also good with pluperfect!)

so dass – with the result that

solange – as long as

während – while

wohingegen – whereas

bis - until

indem – by …ing

bevor – before (can be used with pluperfect)

egal was /wie (etc) – no matter what /how (etc)

**Task 8 - Translate the following sentences:**

1. Ich weiss nicht, ob ich am Montag nach London fahren werde.

2. Ich habe stundenlang im Garten gespielt, als ich Kind war.

3. Sie hat keine Idee, warum ihr Bruder so launisch ist.

4. Ich trage Gummistiefel, wenn es regnet, egal wie doof das aussieht!

5. Du musst arbeiten, bis du alles gemacht hast!

6. Meine Eltern arbeiten Überstunden, damit wir einen tollen Sommerurlaub haben können.

7. Man kann fit werden, indem man dreimal pro Woche trainiert.

8. I don’t know if I like the German school system. *Careful with ‘if’ – does it mean ‘whether’ (=ob), or ‘whenever’ (=wenn)?*

 9. I always lose if I play Monopoly with my sister. *(to lose = verlieren)*

10. Max loves basketball, whereas I prefer playing volleyball. *(to prefer playing = spielen + lieber).*

11. You can use my room as long as you tidy up afterwards. *(to tidy up = aufräumen; afterwards = hinterher).*

**7. Verbs: Present tense, regular**

The present tense is used to describe **what is happening now**, or **what usually happens**. There are two present tenses in English (‘I eat’ and ‘I am eating’), but only one in German, which expresses both of these. (In fact English has a third type of rarer, emphatic present tense, as in: ‘I’m a vegetarian but I do eat cheese because I’m not vegan’ – to do this in German you just add ‘doch’ or ‘schon’ to the usual present tense).

As you know, the vast majority of verbs in German end in -en in the infinitive, and regular verbs are conjugated as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| **spielen – to play** |
| ich | **spiele** | wir | **spielen** |
| du | **spielst** | ihr | **spielt** |
| Sie | **spielen** |
| er/sie/es/man | **spielt** | sie | **spielen** |

If you need a reminder of what the pronouns mean, have another look at section 2 of this booklet.

You can tell if a verb is regular if it says “**v reg**” in the dictionary after it.

**Good news: almost all German verbs are regular in the present tense even if they are irregular in other tenses!** Auxiliary verbs (haben, sein and werden), modal verbs, and ‘stem-changing’ verbs are all somewhat irregular in present tense, and these are discussed in the following sections.

NB also that verbs ending with -ten in the infinitive (eg arbeiten) add an extra ‘e’ in 3rd person sg form (er/sie/es/man) so you end up with (eg.) ‘er/sie arbeit**et’**, rather than ‘er/sie arbeit**t**‘, which just looks wrong!

**Task 9 – Translate these verbs in the Present Tense**

I am listening He drinks

They begin We are meeting

She loses You (formal) know

We believe You (sg familiar) are playing

The Present Tense is also used in German with “seit” to say how long you **have been doing** something.

e.g. **Ich wohne** seit drei Jahren hier = **I’ve been living** here for three years

(what you are saying in German, literally, is ‘I live here since three years’)

**Task 10 – How would you say…?**

He’s been waiting in the park for two hours.

They’ve been learning German for six months.

**8. Verbs: Present tense, stem-changing**

Some verbs in German don’t quite follow the regular pattern for present tense: they have a small change in the stem **for 2nd and 3rd person singular only**. The verb endings are regular. There are three groups of stem-changing verbs:

**Task 11 – complete the sentences with the stem-changing verb in brackets. Remember that the stem ONLY changes in 2nd and 3rd person singular!**

Martha \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Deutsch (sprechen)

Ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gerne Tomaten, aber mein Bruder \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ lieber Käse (essen x2)

Wir \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ das Auto am Wochenende (waschen)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ du ein neues Kleid zur Party? Wir \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ alle Jeans (tragen x 2)

Der Mann \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ jeden Tag nach London (fahren)

Die Lehrerin \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ den Schülern, das Fach besser zu verstehen (helfen)

Ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gern Science-Fiction (lesen)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. a to ä, e.g. fahren** |  | **2. e to i, e.g. helfen** |  | **3. e to ie, e.g. sehen** |
| ich fahre | wir fahren |  | ich helfe | wir helfen |  | ich sehe | wir sehen |
| du f**ä**hrst | ihr fahrtSie fahren |  | du h**i**lfst | ihr helftSie helfen |  | du s**ie**hst | ihr sehtSie sehen |
| er, sie, es, man f**ä**hrt | sie fahren |  | er, sie, es, man h**i**lft | sie helfen |  | er, sie, es, man s**ie**ht | sie sehen |

**9. Reflexive verbs**

Reflexive verbs are conjugated in the same way as other verbs in all the tenses, but they have an additional reflexive pronoun. Many of these verbs have the sense of doing something to yourself, or to each other – you can think of it as the verb ‘reflecting back’ onto the person doing it! Here’s an example:

**Sich rasieren – to shave** (literally ‘to shave oneself’)

ich rasiere **mich** wir rasieren **uns**

du rasierst **dich** ihr rasiert **euch**

 Sie rasieren **sich**

er/sie/es/man rasiert **sich** sie rasieren **sich**

Infinitives of reflexive verbs in the dictionary begin with **sich** and have a “**vr**” next to them to help you identify them. Providing you remember to add the reflexive pronoun they are very straightforward to use. 

1. 

Other examples of reflexive verbs: sich waschen (stem-changing, like waschen), sich duschen (to shower), sich baden (to bathe), sich amüsieren (to have fun), sich langweilen (to be bored), sich ändern (to change (oneself)), sich irren (to be mistaken), sich freuen auf (to look forward to), sich interessieren für (to be interested in), sich verstehen mit (to get on with), sich benehmen (to behave), sich streiten (to argue)

**Task 12: Fill in the gaps in the sentences with a suitable reflexive verb from the list. Check that you have the appropriate verb ending and reflexive pronoun!**

Morgens nach dem Frühstück \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ er\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ gut mit meiner Tante.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ du\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ auf die Schulferien?

Glaubst du, Menschen können \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

Heute habe ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ nicht \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, weil wir kein heisses Wasser hatten!

Ich hoffe, die Kinder werden \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ bei der Party gut \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mein Bruder und ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ immer, wenn wir zu Hause sind.

Ich denke, meine Schlüssel sind in meiner Tasche – oder \_\_\_\_\_\_ ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ?

**10. Separable verbs**

These verbs have a prefix which sometimes separates from the main verb. Common prefixes are zu-, mit-, nach-, vor-, auf-, ein-, aus-, an-, ab-, zusammen- etc., but there are many others. Separable verbs are usually marked ‘*v.sep’* in dictionaries. Many of the separable prefixes are prepositions, as you can see. The main verb is conjugated as normal, including any irregular parts. Here is how separable verbs behave in different tenses, with **main verb** and **prefix** highlighted:

* **Present tense: prefix to the end of the clause**

Der Zug **fährt** in 5 Minuten **ab** (abfahren = to depart)

Ich **stimme** einfach nicht **zu**! (zustimmen = to agree)

* **In subordinate clauses** where the main verb is sent to the end, the two parts of the verb ‘click’ back together:

Ich habe keine Zeit dafür, **weil** der Zug in 5 Minuten **abfährt**!

Ich muss sagen, **dass** ich einfach nicht **zustimme**

* **After modal verbs**, the separable prefix verb is used in the infinitive at the end of the clause, as you would expect:

Ich kann einfach nicht **zustimmen**

Ich muss morgen früh **aufstehen** (aufstehen = to get up)

* **Perfect tense: the ‘ge’ of the past participle is sandwiched between the prefix and the main verb**

Ich hoffe, du **hast** die Karte **mitgebracht**!(mitbringen = to bring along).

Er **hat** mich gestern dreimal **angerufen** (anrufen = to phone)

* **Future tense: just use the infinitive of the separable prefix verb at the end of the clause**, as you would expect**:**

Ich **werde** nächstes Jahr Alkohol **aufgeben** (aufgeben = to give up)

* **Conditional: again, use the infinitive of the separable prefix verb at the end of the clause:**

Ich dachte, meine Eltern **würden** länger darüber **nachdenken** (nachdenken = to think about /reflect on)

**Task 13 – Fill in the gaps with the separable verb indicated in the correct form**

Ich \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ immer um 7 Uhr \_\_\_\_\_\_, aber meine Oma sagt, ich sollte früher \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (aufstehen x 2)

Er \_\_\_\_ letzte Woche unglaublich viel online \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (einkaufen)

Sie ist so stur! Sie \_\_\_\_\_\_ nie \_\_\_, dass sie unrecht hat (zugeben = to admit)

Die Kinder \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ meisten Musikvideos \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (herunterladen)

Ich kann leider nicht \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (mitkommen)

Ich würde gerne an einem Musikfestival \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (teilnehmen)

Mein Freund \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ letzten Sommer bei Glastonbury Festival \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (teilnehmen)

Warum \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ du mich nicht \_\_\_ ? (zuhören)

Wenn du mit dem Klarinettenspielen mitten in der Nacht nicht \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ich die Polizei \_\_\_\_! (aufhören = to stop; anrufen = to call/phone)

Franz ist sauer, weil Oliver ihn gestern \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (austricksen = to trick)

**11. Modal Verbs**

Reminder: these verbs are used with infinitive at the end of the clause to say what someone wants/is able/has to/is supposed to/is allowed to/likes to do. **You do NOT use ‘zu’ before the infinitive**, because the infinitive includes the idea of ‘to’:

 I **want** **to visit** my aunt = ich **will** meine Tante **besuchen**

**Task 14 – Test your recall of the meaning of German modal verbs, and see how far you can get with conjugating them in present tense before checking your answers using the table below:**

müssen =

dürfen =

können =

sollen =

mögen =

wollen =

**Present tense:** *what do you notice about where the umlauts are used?*

 *which verbs have a vowel change in present tense, and where?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***meaning*** | ***I*****ich** | ***You (fam. sg)*****du** | ***he/she/it/ ‘one’ (=you)*****er/sie/es/man** | ***we*****wir** | ***you (fam. pl)******ihr*** | ***you (formal)*****Sie** | ***they*****sie** |
| ***must / have to*** | muss | musst | muss | müssen | müsst | müssen | müssen |
| ***can/ be able to*** | kann | kannst | kann | können | könnt | können | können |
| ***want to*** | will | willst | will | wollen | wollt | wollen | wollen |
| ***be allowed to*** | darf | darfst | darf | dürfen | dürft | dürfen | dürfen |
| ***should/ought to\**** | soll | sollst | soll | sollen | sollt | sollen | sollen |
| ***like to*** | mag | magst | mag | mögen | mögt | mögen | mögen |

\*instead of present tense, the **imperfect** tense of sollen is often used to mean ‘to be supposed to /should /ought to’: ich sollte, du solltest, er/sie/es/man sollte, wir sollten, ihr solltet, Sie sollten, sie sollten

**Vorsicht! ‘must not’ is not ‘muss nicht’!** Here’s why:

* ‘müssen’ in German basically means ‘to have to’
* therefore ‘muss nicht’ means ‘don’t have to’
* this is not the same as ‘mustn’t’ in English! (compare ‘you mustn’t swear at the teacher’ with ‘you don’t have to swear at the teacher’ – not the same rules at all!)
* In German you say ‘you aren’t allowed to’ where English uses ‘you mustn’t’
* So **for ‘must not’ in English, use ‘darf nicht’ in German**

Man **darf** hier **nicht** rauchen = You’re **not allowed to** smoke here / you **mustn’t** smoke here

Du **musst nicht** bleiben, wenn du müde bist – you **don’t have to** stay if you’re tired

**Task 15: Translate the following using present tense modal verbs:**

I have to do my homework

I want to do my homework!

He is supposed to do his (=seine) homework

We like to eat fast food at the weekend

I am not allowed to smoke

You mustn’t interrupt me! (interrupt = unterbrechen)

You don’t have to order (bestellen) dessert if you’re not hungry!

I think that we are supposed to meet at 8pm.

Lola is stressed because she has to find 100, 000 DM

**Past (imperfect) tense:** *where are the umlauts here? And the vowel changes?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***meaning*** | ***I*****ich** | ***You (fam. sg)*****du** | ***he/she/it/‘one’ (=you)*****er/sie/es/man** | ***we*****wir** | ***you (fam. pl)******ihr*** | ***you (formal)*****Sie** | ***they*****sie** |
| ***had to*** | musste | musstest | musste | mussten | musstet | mussten | mussten |
| ***could (=was able to)*** | konnte | konntest | konnte | konnten | konntet | konnten | konnten |
| ***wanted to*** | wollte | wolltest | wollte | wollten | wolltet | wollten | wollten |
| ***was allowed to*** | durfte | durftest | durfte | durften | durftet | durften | durften |
| ***was supposed to\**** | sollte | solltest | sollte | sollten | solltet | sollten | sollten |
| ***liked to*** | mochte | mochtest | mochte | mochten | mochtet | mochen | mochen |

\*See note about this after present tense table – this form of sollen can also be used to mean ought to/should etc. The context where it is used will make it clear whether you are talking about the past or the present.

**Conditional modals:** *where are the umlauts here? And the vowel changes?*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***meaning*** | ***I*****ich** | ***You (fam. sg)*****du** | ***he/she/it/ ‘one’ (=you)*****er/sie/es/****man** | ***we*****wir** | ***you (fam. pl)******ihr*** | ***you (formal)*****Sie** | ***they*****sie** |
| ***would have to*** | müsste | müsstest | müsste | müssten | müsstet | müssten | müssten |
| ***could (=would be able to)*** | könnte | könntest | könnte | könnten | könntet | könnten | könnten |
| ***would like to*** | möchte | möchtest | möchte | möchten | möchtet | möchten | möchten |

**Task 16 - How would you say:**

They wanted to go to Berlin

Ella couldn’t understand why he was sad

As a child I was not allowed to watch TV in my bedroom

I had to go to bed at 9pm

You were supposed to buy bananas

Herr BauerI would like to buy a villa in Spain

She would have to train hard for the marathon

I would not be able to run faster than Usain Bolt

**Future tense of modal verbs:**

This is used for example if you want to say you **are going to** **be able** **to do** something, or you **are going to** **be allowed** **to do** something: you can see how this combines **future tense**, **infinitive of modal verb**, and **another infinitive**. In German you use the same elements but in a different order, because the ‘werden’ (future tense) sends the modal verb to the end:

Er **wird** eine neue Tapete **kaufen** **müssen**! He’s **going to have to buy** a new carpet!

**Task 17 Use the example above to translate the following – you might find it helpful to colour-code the sentences in English beforehand:**

At 18 (=Mit achtzehn) I’m going to be allowed to have a car.

She is going to want to live in London.

I’m going to have to work at the weekend.

**12. Auxiliary verbs: haben, sein, werden**

As you know, these are **extremely** important verbs, so it’s crucial to be able to use them accurately! They also happen to be fairly irregular.

**Task 18 - Fill in the table with the present tense conjugation of haben, sein and werden:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **haben** |  | **sein** |  | **werden** |
| ich  | wir  |  | ich  | wir  |  | ich  | wir  |
| du  | ihr Sie  |  | du  | ihr Sie  |  | du  | ihr Sie  |
| er, sie, es, man  | sie  |  | er, sie, es, man  | sie  |  | er, sie, es, man  | sie  |

By the time you start A level, you should know these really well. Consider making them into a quizlet or poster, finding a tune to sing them to (look on Youtube), or just simply reciting them until they become second nature.

**13. Perfect tense**

This is the past tense you used a lot at GCSE. It is still very important at A level.

Reminder:

Here are some examples of verbs in perfect tense showing that you need **three** things in order to form it correctly in German:

**1 2 3**

**Subject** **Auxiliary Verb** **Past Participle**

**(at the end of the clause)**

ich habe gegessen I have eaten / I ate

sie hat gesehen she has seen/she saw

sie haben gespielt they have played / they played

wir sind gegangen we have gone / we went

ich bin geblieben I have stayed / I stayed

**The auxiliary verb** is the present tense of either haben or sein.

**How do I know whether to use ‘haben’ or ‘sein’ in perfect tense?**

* **you should be memorising common verbs in different tenses for A level so you will often already know the right auxiliary!**
* **most verbs take haben**, but
* **verbs to do with movement or change** (go, arrive, travel, move house, fall, run, rise, etc) tend to take **sein**

A good rule of thumb is to remember that **transitive verbs** generally take **haben**, and **intransitive verbs** take **sein:**

**Transitive verbs** **can have a direct object**, for example you can: eat a cake, see a film, read a book, buy a scarf, drink a coffee, criticise the government, understand the rules, analyse a situation and hit a ball - these are transitive verbs and **they take ‘haben’ in German in the perfect tense.**

**Intransitive verbs can’t have a direct object,** for example you can’t: go a theatre, fall a stairs, arrive a station or stay a hotel – these need the inclusion of prepositions such as to, down, at, in to make sense. They are intransitive verbs and **they take ‘sein’ in German in the perfect tense.**

**Task 19 - Do you think these verbs would take haben or sein in the perfect tense? (Are they transitive or intransitive verbs?)**

to travel to fold

to win to die

to creep to happen

to write to cook

**The regular past participle** is formed by taking the -en from the infinitive of the verb, and adding ge- to the beginning and -t to the end:

kaufen → gekauft e.g. ich habe gekauft

spielen →gespielt e.g. wir haben gespielt

lernen → gelernt e.g. sie haben gelernt

**However:**

* **LOTS** of the commonest verbs in German **have irregular past participles** (see table below) which you just have to learn
* Separable verbs have the -ge- between the prefix and the main verb (e.g. ich bin aus**ge**gangen, ich habe an**ge**fangen, wir haben zusammen**ge**stellt)
* Verbs ending -ieren or starting ent-, be-, ver-, zer-, er- or ge- don’t have a ‘ge-‘ in the past participle (and they may be irregular in other ways too)

(e.g. interess**ieren** → das hat mich **interessiert**

 **ent**decken → NASA hat einen neuen Planeten **entdeckt**

 **be**suchen → ich habe meine Oma **besucht**

 **ver**suchen→ wir haben **versucht**, Italienisch zu lernen

 **zer**stören → das Erdbeben hat die Stadt **zerstört**

 **er**fahren→ ich habe vom Dokumentar so viel **erfahren**

**ge**schehen → was ist **geschehen**?)

(and these verbs would just look and sound wrong with a ‘ge-‘: geinteressiert, geerfahren, gegeschehen etc …)

**Task 20 – use the information above to work out the past participles of these regular verbs:**

protestieren (to protest) aufmachen (to open)

verkürzen (to shorten) belehren (to teach)

zusammenfassen (to summarise) entsorgen (to dispose of)

**Task 21 – Irregular perfect tense verbs. Fill in the table with perfect tense (ich) form of these common verbs, including habe/bin. Use a dictionary if needed.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **infinitive** | **meaning** | **Perfect tense (ich)** |
| beginnen  | to begin | ich habe begonnen |
| bleiben |  |  |
| bringen |  |  |
| denken |  |  |
| essen |  |  |
| fahren |  |  |
| fallen |  |  |
| finden |  |  |
| fliegen |  |  |
| geben |  |  |
| gehen |  |  |
| genießen |  |  |
| gewinnen |  |  |
| haben |  |  |
| helfen |  |  |
| kennen |  |  |
| kommen |  |  |
| lesen |  |  |
| nehmen |  |  |
| rennen |  |  |
| schlafen |  |  |
| schreiben |  |  |
| schwimmen |  |  |
| sehen |  |  |
| sprechen |  |  |
| steigen |  |  |
| tragen |  |  |
| treffen |  |  |
| trinken |  |  |
| vergessen |  |  |
| verlieren |  |  |

**Task 22 – Now translate these sentences:**

I slept well

He spoke to the (=mit dem) headteacher

We went to France

They wrote a list

My cousin lost his phone

I swam slowly

She took two biscuits and an apple

They stayed in Cornwall

Have you read the book? (du)

The boy drank thirstily

Karina and I flew to Greece

They brought three suitcases

**14. The Imperfect tense**

This is another past tense. It is sometimes called the ‘simple past tense’. You know some forms of it from GCSE: ich war, er hatte, es gab, ich fand es, sie dachte … You will start to encounter it more frequently at A level

The imperfect tense is used in German mostly in written reports, essays, newspaper articles and literature. It is the past tense most commonly used in formal writing. It also tends to be used to talk about things that are not particularly connected with the present, that happened a while ago, and/or repeatedly (‘I used to…’). The difference between perfect and imperfect tense in German depends largely on style and context.

**Regular imperfect tense**

To form the imperfect tense of regular verbs, take the stem, and add the following endings:

e.g. lachen – to laugh→ stem = lach

ich lach**te** wir lach**ten**

du lach**test** ihr lach**tet**

 Sie lach**ten**

er/sie/es/man lach**te** sie lach**ten**

**Irregular imperfect tense**

Verbs that are irregular in the imperfect tense often have a vowel change in the stem, which has to be learnt, eg laufen → lief, beginnen → begann, or schreiben → schrieb

The endings for *these* verbs (using schreiben as an example) are:

ich schrieb wir schrieb**en**

du schrieb**st** ihr schrieb**t**

 Sie schrieb**en**

er/sie/es/man schrieb sie schrieb**en**

**Task 23 – Here are some regular and irregular verbs in the imperfect tense. Use the information above about forming the imperfect tense to translate the short paragraph below.**

**Remember you can use ‚gern’ to say you like(d) doing something, and that imperfect tense can also mean ‘used to do’**

**Regular imperfect tense:** bestellen, studieren, lernen, spielen, tanzen, hören, wohnen

**Irregular imperfect tense**: gehen (ich ging),geben (ich gab), trinken (ich trank), sehen (ich sah), lesen (ich las), sein (ich war), haben (ich hatte)

In 2005 I lived in Berlin. I was happy there: I was a student at the university and I read a lot of books, played tennis, watched films and listened to music in my free time. My friend Stephanie used to study with me (=mit mir). She liked dancing, and we used to order pizza, drink beer and go to the clubs at the weekend. It was wonderful.

**15. The future tense**

German only has one future tense, which covers ‘shall’, ‘will’ and ‘am/is/are going to’ in English. Increasingly, German uses the present tense where English uses the future – watch out for this when you watch films with subtitles.

This is the easiest tense in German, but people sometimes do slip up with using the correct form of ‘werden’ for er/sie/es/man, so it is highlighted below:

Here’s a reminder - for future tense you need:

**Task 24 – please translate:**

I am going to analyse the text

The government is going to introduce strict controls

The environment will be on the agenda (-an der Tagesordnung)

We will have to act quickly

It is certainly going to be challenging.

They will travel by coach.

Although the weather will be warm, I’m bringing a pullover

I am sure that the president will be happy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Present tense werden
 | 1. Infinitive at the end of the clause, e.g.
 |
| ich werdedu wirst**er/sie/es/man wird**wir werdenihr werdetSie werdensie werden | gehenglaubendiskutierenanalysierenbeschreibenlesenfragen ….. (or any other infinitive!) |

1. **The Conditional**

This is not (very strictly speaking) a tense, but it is used to say what someone *would* do. Like the future tense, it is very straightforward to use. Here’s a reminder:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. würd- + correct ending:
 | 1. Infinitive at the end of the clause, e.g.
 |
| ich würdedu würdester/sie/es/man würdewir würdenihr würdetSie würdensie würden | sagenglaubenbehauptenerwartenfindenverstehenfragen ….. (or any other infinitive!) |

Don’t forget the ‘shortcut’ verbs here:

wäre(n) = would be hätte(n) = would have es gäbe = there would be

*(This is part of a grammar point you will learn more about in year 12…)*

**Task 25 – please translate:**

I would expect more

It would be surprising

The future would be uncertain

The government would hesitate

The environment would suffer

There would be less inequality

Although the weather will be warm, I’m bringing a pullover

I am sure that the president will be happy.

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 