

*Making Everything Easier!™*

# German

ALL-IN-ONE

FOR  
**DUMMIES®**  
A Wiley Brand

**5** BOOKS  
IN **1**

- German For Dummies
- German Audio Set For Dummies
- German Phrases For Dummies
- Intermediate German For Dummies
- German Essentials For Dummies





**by Wendy Foster with  
Paulina Christensen, PhD, and  
Anne Fox**

FOR  
**DUMMIES**  
A Wiley Brand

## **German All-in-One For Dummies®**

Published by

**John Wiley & Sons, Inc.**

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

[www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)

Copyright © 2013 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken,  
New Jersey

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the Publisher. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at <http://www.wiley.com/go/permissions>.

**Trademarks:** Wiley, the Wiley logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, A Reference for the Rest of Us!, The Dummies Way, Dummies Daily, The Fun and Easy Way, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc., and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

Limit of Liability/Disclaimer of Warranty: The publisher and the author make no representations or warranties
---

with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. No warranty may be created or extended by sales or promotional materials. The advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every situation. This work is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. If professional assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought. Neither the publisher nor the author shall be liable for damages arising herefrom. The fact that an organization or Website is referred to in this work as a citation and/or a potential source of further information does not mean that the author or the publisher endorses the information the organization or Website may provide or recommendations it may make. Further, readers should be aware that Internet Websites listed in this work may have changed or disappeared between when this work was written and when it is read.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit [www.wiley.com/techsupport](http://www.wiley.com/techsupport).

Wiley publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that was not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at [booksupport.wiley.com](http://booksupport.wiley.com) For

more information about Wiley products, visit  
[www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com).

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013935672

ISBN 978-1-118-49140-9 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-118-61260-6  
(ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-61270-5 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-  
61271-2 (ebk)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# About the Authors

**Wendy Foster** was born in Connecticut and grew up in Scituate, Massachusetts. While studying in France, she traveled around Europe and became curious about the German language and culture. After graduating with a teaching certificate and a degree in French, she decided to return to Europe to study German. Her love of the Alps inspired her to live in Munich, where she spent 30 years. During that time, she completed her German studies at the Sprachen-und-Dolmetscher-Institut in Munich and later her MA in French at Middlebury College in Paris. Her professional experience includes teaching Business English, German, French, and intercultural communication skills. She also does editing for online German education programs. A few years ago, she returned to her New England roots. When she's not teaching ESL or German at the Boston Language Institute, she works from her home overlooking a spectacular salt marsh that constantly beckons her to go kayaking, exploring, and swimming.

**Paulina Christensen** has been working as a writer, editor, and translator for almost ten years. She holds a degree in English and German literature and has developed, written, and edited numerous German-language textbooks and teachers' handbooks for Berlitz International. Her work as a translator ranges from new media art to science fiction (*Starlog magazine*). She occasionally works as a court interpreter and does consulting and interpreting at educational conferences, as well as voice-overs for educational videos and CDs. Dr. Christensen received her MA and PhD from Düsseldorf University, Germany, and has taught at Berlitz Language Schools, New York University, and Fordham University.

**Anne Fox** has been working as a translator, editor, and writer for the past 12 years. She studied at Interpreters' School, Zurich, Switzerland, and holds a degree in translation. Her various assignments have taken her to outer space, hyperspace, and around the world. She has also taught at Berlitz Language Schools and worked as a legal and technical proofreader in the editorial departments of several law firms. Most recently she has been developing, writing, and editing student textbooks and teacher handbooks for Berlitz.

# Dedication

This book is dedicated to all those who enjoy speaking German and appreciate the rich cultural heritage of German-speaking people. I also dedicate this work to Phil Kehoe, whose unflagging support of my endeavors serves as a constant inspiration to me. — Wendy Foster

# Author's Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the editorial staff at Wiley for their insight, patience, and expertise, especially my project editor Vicki Adang, copy editor Amanda Langferman, acquisitions editor Michael Lewis, and technical editors Candis Carey and Susan Reinhardt. The careful guidance provided by these professionals has greatly enhanced the quality of this book. My sincere thanks to all of you. — Wendy Foster

## **Publisher's Acknowledgments**

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

### ***Acquisitions, Editorial, and Vertical Websites***

**Senior Project Editor:** Victoria M. Adang

**Acquisitions Editor:** Michael Lewis

**Copy Editor:** Amanda M. Langferman

**Assistant Editor:** David Lutton

**Editorial Program Coordinator:** Joe Niesen

**Technical Editors:** Candis Carey, Susan Reinhardt

**Vertical Websites:** Melanie Orr, Josh Frank, Doug Kuhn

**Editorial Manager:** Michelle Hacker

**Editorial Assistants:** Rachelle Amick, Alexa Koschier

**Cover Photo:** © iStockphoto.com / Nikada

### ***Composition Services***

**Project Coordinator:** Patrick Redmond

**Layout and Graphics:** Carrie A. Cesavice, Jennifer Creasey

**Proofreaders:** John Greenough, Tricia Liebig

**Indexer:** Potomac Indexing, LLC

**Publishing and Editorial for Consumer Dummies**

**Kathleen Nebenhaus**, Vice President and Executive Publisher

**David Palmer**, Associate Publisher

**Kristin Ferguson-Wagstaffe**, Product Development Director

**Publishing for Technology Dummies**

**Andy Cummings**, Vice President and Publisher

**Composition Services**

**Debbie Stailey**, Director of Composition Services

# German All-in-One For Dummies®

*Visit [www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/germanaio](http://www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/germanaio) to view this book's cheat sheet.*

## Table of Contents

### Introduction

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Book I: Getting Started with German](#)

[Book II: Speaking German on the Go](#)

[Book III: Assembling the Grammatical Foundations for Communication](#)

[Book IV: Building Detail and Precision in Your Communication](#)

[Book V: The Appendixes](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

## Book I: Getting Started with German

### Chapter 1: Warming Up to German Basics

## Starting with What You Already Know

Friendly allies: Kindergarten and more (perfect cognates)

Kissing cousins (near cognates)

False friends

Lenders and borrowers

## Using Popular Expressions

## Handling Basic Pronunciation

Understanding stress in German

Constructing the alphabet blocks

Pronouncing vowels

Pronouncing ä, ö, and ü

Pronouncing diphthongs

Pronouncing consonants

Pronouncing consonant combinations

# Chapter 2: Handling Numbers, Times, Dates, and Measurements

## Doing the Numbers

Counting off with cardinal numbers

Getting in line with ordinal numbers

## Telling Time

Using the 12-hour clock

Using the 24-hour system

Describing times of the day

## Expressing Dates

Recounting the days

Knowing the names of the months and seasons

Writing dates the European way

Referring to specific dates

Naming specific times in the months

Celebrating holidays

Measurements, Quantities, and Weights

## Chapter 3: Meeting and Greeting: Guten Tag!

Getting Formal or Informal

Saying “Hello,” “Goodbye,” and “How Are You?”

Saying “Guten Tag” and “Auf Wiedersehen”

Asking “Wie geht es Ihnen?”

Giving a response to “Wie geht es Ihnen?”

Introducing Yourself and Your Friends

Introducing your friends

Making introductions for special occasions

Introducing yourself

Talking about Yourself

Describing your work

Providing names and numbers

Discussing Cities, Countries, and Nationalities

Saying where you come from

Asking people where they come from

Discovering nationalities

Chatting about languages you speak

Making Small Talk about the Weather

Noting what it’s like out there

Discussing the temperature

Describing the day's weather

## Chapter 4: Talking about Home, Family, Friends, and Daily Life

Describing Where You Live

Looking at your living quarters: Mein Haus

Naming furnishings and appliances

Talking about Family

Naming your relatives

Family pets

Discussing Friends, Acquaintances, and Neighbors

Spending Time at Your Home or Someone Else's

Daily routine

Das Wochenende: The weekend

Doing and saying the right thing

Playing Sports

Playing around with the verb "spielen"

Verbalizing sports you enjoy

Inviting someone to play

## Chapter 5: Talking Telecommunications, Business, and Current Events

Making a Phone Call

Asking for your party

Making the connection

Making appointments

[Leaving messages](#)

### [Writing Your Message](#)

[Beginning and ending a letter](#)

[Sending mail the old-fashioned way](#)

[E-mailing and faxing](#)

### [Settling In at the Office](#)

[Organizing your desk and supplies](#)

[Interacting with coworkers](#)

[Doing business in German](#)

### [Tuning In to Current Events](#)

[Newspapers and magazines](#)

[Television, radio, and the web](#)

## [Chapter 6: Shopping Simplified](#)

### [Getting Familiar with the German Shopping Experience](#)

[Identifying types of shops](#)

[Determining a store's hours](#)

[Finding your way around a department store](#)

[Browsing and responding to "Kann ich Ihnen helfen?"](#)

[Getting assistance](#)

### [Shopping for Clothes](#)

[Characterizing various clothing items](#)

[Knowing your size](#)

[Trying on clothes](#)

### [Making Your Purchase](#)

[Preparing to pay for your items](#)

Getting a tax refund on your purchases

## Chapter 7: Dining Out and Buying Food: Guten Appetit!

Talking about Eating and Drinking

Saying you're hungry and thirsty: Hast du Hunger? Hast du Durst?

Talking about meals: Guten Appetit!

Setting the table

Going to a Restaurant: Das Restaurant

Deciding where to eat

Making reservations

Arriving and being seated

Checking Out the Menu: Die Speisekarte

Looking at breakfast, lunch, and dinner items

Understanding cooking terms

Quenching your thirst

Placing Your Order

Ordering politely

Asking for assistance

Ordering something special

Finishing Your Meal and Getting the Check

Replying to "How did you like the food?" "Hat es Ihnen geschmeckt?"

Asking for the check

Shopping for Food

Knowing where to shop

Finding what you need

# Book II: Speaking German on the Go

## Chapter 1: Locating Places

### Getting Yourself Oriented

Finding out where something is

Asking how far something is: Ist es weit von hier?

Getting more specific directions

### Asking How to Get from One Place to Another

Asking how to get to a location

Asking how to get to a city or country

Asking how to get to a specific building

### Describing Where Something Is Located

Locating one place in relation to another

Going left, right, straight ahead: Links, rechts, geradeaus

Using compass points

### Understanding Where to Go

Pointing out the first, second, or third street

Following directions: Take this street

### Traveling by Car — das Auto — or Other Vehicle

## Chapter 2: Going Out on the Town

### Taking in the Sights

Deciding what to see

Taking a sightseeing tour

Making plans

### Heading to the Movies

Going to the show

Buying tickets

Going to the Museum

Discovering different types of museums

Talking about museums

Attending Cultural Performances

Deciding where to go

Going to a concert

How Was It? Talking about Entertainment

Asking about the entertainment

Telling people what you think

Going to a Party

Getting an invitation

Talking about the party

## Chapter 3: Planning a Pleasure Trip: Gute Reise!

Getting Ready for Your Trip

Finding travel information online

Getting help from a travel agent

Packing your bags

Exploring the Outdoors

Getting out and going

Things to see along the way

Going to the mountains

Going to the country

Going to the sea

## Dealing with Passports and Visas

Keeping tabs on your passport

Inquiring about visas

## Handling Money

Changing currency: Geldwechsel

Understanding the euro and other currencies

Heading to the ATM

# Chapter 4: Finding a Place to Stay: Gute Nacht!

## Finding Accommodations

### Making a Reservation

Saying when and how long you want to stay

Specifying the kind of room you want

Asking about the price

Finalizing the reservation

### Checking In

Stating how long you're staying

Filling out the registration form

Getting keyed in

Asking about amenities and essentials

### Making the Most of Your Stay

Making special requests

Pointing out problems

### Checking Out and Paying the Bill

Asking for the bill

Asking small favors

## Chapter 5: Getting Around

### Going through the Airport

Getting your ticket and checking in

Going through passport control

Going through customs

### Traveling by Car

Renting a car

Making sense of road maps

Understanding and observing road signs

Identifying parts of a car

### Taking the Train

Interpreting train schedules

Getting more information

Buying train tickets

### Navigating Buses, Subways, Streetcars, and Taxis

Purchasing a ticket

Boarding the bus, subway, or streetcar

Getting a taxi

## Chapter 6: Handling Emergencies: Hilfe!

### Requesting Help

Shouting for help

Reporting a problem

Asking for English-speaking help

### Handling Health Issues

Describing what ails you

[Talking about any special conditions](#)

[Getting an examination](#)

[Specifying parts of the body](#)

[Understanding the diagnosis](#)

[Getting treatment](#)

[Going to a pharmacy](#)

[Handling Police Matters](#)

[Describing what was stolen](#)

[Giving a description of the thief](#)

[Getting legal help](#)

## [Book III: Assembling the Grammatical Foundations for Communication](#)

### [Chapter 1: Laying Out the Basics to Build Sentences](#)

[Identifying the Parts of Speech](#)

[Nouns](#)

[Pronouns](#)

[Articles](#)

[Adjectives](#)

[Verbs](#)

[Adverbs](#)

[Conjunctions](#)

[Prepositions](#)

[Understanding Grammar Terms](#)

[Conjugating verbs and understanding tenses](#)

Familiarizing yourself with gender, number, and case

Grammar terms that describe words, parts of words, and word groupings

Understanding Word Order

Arranging words in the right order

Putting the verb in second place

Pushing the verb to the end

Forming questions

Checking Out the Tenses: Present, Past, and Future

Looking at the present

Talking about the past

Writing about the past

Talking about the future

Finding Meaning through Context

Using a Bilingual Dictionary

Making the right choice

Performing a word search

## Chapter 2: Sorting Out Word Gender and Case

Classifying Nouns and Pronouns with Gender

Identifying German genders and figuring out which one to use

Eyeing nouns with more than one gender and meaning

Pinning Down Plurals

Knowing the five plural forms

Taking note of nouns that are only singular or plural

Mastering the Art of Articles

Identifying singular nouns with indefinite articles

Knowing when not to use articles

Calling All Cases: The Roles Nouns and Pronouns Play

Identifying the four cases

Eyeing the similarities and differences

Understanding nouns with case endings

Putting Pronouns in Place

Getting personal with personal pronouns

Relating to relative pronouns

Demonstrating demonstrative pronouns

Discovering Dative Verbs

Considering How Case Affects Adjectives

How possessives change

How adjective endings change

## Chapter 3: Dealing with the Here and Now: The Present Tense

Grasping the Specifics of Subject Pronouns

Assigning person and number to subject pronouns

Distinguishing among the three forms of “you”

Distinguishing among “she,” “they,” and the formal “you”

Getting Your Verbs in Shape

Agreeing with the regulars

Conjugating verbs with spelling changes

Conjugating the irregulars haben and sein: To have and to be

Using the Very Versatile Present Tense

Stating Information with the Passive

Forming the passive

[Using the passive](#)

[Recognizing the impersonal passive](#)

## [Chapter 4: Asking and Answering Questions](#)

[Knowing How to Formulate Questions](#)

[Inverting word order for yes/no questions](#)

[Gathering information with question words: Who, what, why, and more](#)

[Forming indirect questions](#)

[Checking information: Tag! You're it, aren't you?](#)

[Making choices: Asking what kind of. . . ?](#)

[Answering with Yes](#)

[Variations on yes](#)

[Emphasizing yes](#)

[Responding with No: The Difference between Kein and Nicht](#)

[Negating with nicht](#)

[Negating with kein](#)

[Avoiding blunt negative replies](#)

[Asking and Answering Questions with Wo- and Da- Compound Words](#)

[Combining question words: Compounds with wo-](#)

[Explaining yes and no answers by using da- compounds](#)

[Sounding Diplomatic: Using Maybe, Suggesting, and Refusing Politely](#)

## [Chapter 5: Describing and Comparing with Adjectives and Adverbs](#)

[Organizing Adjectives: Opposites, Cognates, and Collocations](#)

[Letting opposites attract](#)

[A family resemblance: Describing with cognates](#)

[Putting collocations and word partnerships into action](#)

[Helping Adjectives Meet a Satisfying End](#)

[Forming endings on adjectives not preceded by der- or ein- words](#)

[Adding endings for preceded adjectives](#)

[Using the right endings with possessive adjectives](#)

[Understanding Types of Adverbs](#)

[Describing time with adverbs](#)

[Using adverbs to indicate place](#)

[Looking at adverbs of manner and degree](#)

[Eyeing adverbs that describe cause](#)

[Putting Adverbs and Adverbial Expressions in Their Proper Place](#)

[Comparing with Regular Adjectives and Adverbs: Fast, Faster, Fastest](#)

[Comparing two things](#)

[Absolutely the most! Discussing superlatives](#)

[Considering common comparisons](#)

[Adding the umlaut in regular comparisons](#)

[Using Irregular Comparison Forms](#)

[Comparing Equals and Nonequals](#)

[Identifying Unique Adjective and Adverb Groups](#)

[Adjectives that act as nouns](#)

[Participles that function as adjectives or adverbs](#)

[Adverbs that modify adjectives](#)

## [Chapter 6: Modifying Verbs with Helpers: The Modal Auxiliaries](#)

[Grasping the Basics of Modal Verbs](#)

[Identifying modals: Assistants with attitude](#)

## Understanding word order and modals

### May I? Dürfen, the Permission Verb

Forming dürfen

Using dürfen

### You Can Do It! Können, the Ability Verb

Forming können

Using können

### I Like That: Mögen, the Likeable Verb

Forming mögen

Using mögen

### What Would You Like? Möchten, the Preference Verb

Forming möchten

Using möchten

### Do I Have To? Müssen, the Verb of Necessity

Forming müssen

Using müssen

### Should I or Shouldn't I? Sollen, the Duty Verb

Forming sollen

Using sollen

### I Want to Be Famous: Wollen, the Intention Verb

Forming wollen

Using wollen

## Chapter 7: Instructing and Commanding: The Imperative Mood

### Getting into the Imperative Mood

Grasping the three imperative forms

[Punctuating commands](#)

[Commanding with regular verbs](#)

[Commanding with irregular verbs](#)

[Grasping Formal Commands](#)

[Using the formal “you” form: Sie](#)

[Obedying orders](#)

[Understanding signs](#)

[Reading instructions](#)

[Giving Informal Directives](#)

[Using the singular “you” form: du](#)

[Using the plural informal “you” form: ihr](#)

[Giving Directives Politely and Making Suggestions](#)

## [Chapter 8: Sorting Out Separable- and Inseparable-Prefix Verbs](#)

[Looking at the Prefix](#)

[Parting Ways: Simplifying Separable-Prefix Verbs](#)

[Getting the hang of separable prefixes](#)

[Using separable-prefix verbs in the present tense](#)

[Together Forever: Investigating Inseparable-Prefix Verbs](#)

[Understanding inseparable-prefix combinations](#)

[Putting inseparable-prefix verbs into the present tense](#)

[Double-Crossers: Dealing with Dual-Prefix Verbs](#)

[Grasping dual-prefix verb distinctions](#)

[Looking at dual-prefix verbs in the present tense](#)

# Book IV: Building Detail and Precision in Your Communication

## Chapter 1: Tying Ideas Together with Conjunctions and Relative Pronouns

Conjunctions and Clauses: Reviewing the Terminology

Connecting with Coordinating Conjunctions

Using coordinating conjunctions

Working on word order

Getting Support from Subordinating Conjunctions

Using subordinating conjunctions

Putting words in the proper order

Joining with Relative Pronouns

Knowing how to make the connection with relative pronouns

Forming sentences with relative clauses

## Chapter 2: Specifying Relationships with Prepositions

Prepping for Prepositions with a Few Basic Guidelines

Grasping the importance of case

Understanding where meaning fits in

Accusative, Dative, and Genitive Cases: How the Rest of the Phrase Shapes Up

No finger pointing: Accusative prepositions

Dative prepositions

Genitive prepositions

Tackling Two-Way Prepositions: Accusative/Dative

[Understanding Quirky Combinations](#)

## [Chapter 3: Using Reflexives and Other Verb Combinations](#)

[Identifying Types of Idiomatic Verb Expressions](#)

[In the Looking Glass: Reflecting on Reflexive Verbs](#)

[Self-ish concerns: Meeting the reflexive pronouns](#)

[Identifying which verbs need to be reflexive](#)

[Combining Verbs with Prepositions](#)

[Seeing how prepositions transform verbs](#)

[Knowing common combos in the accusative case](#)

[Eyeing common combos in the dative case](#)

## [Chapter 4: Conversing about the Past: The Present Perfect and Past Perfect](#)

[Forming the Present Perfect with Haben](#)

[Forming the present perfect with regular weak verbs](#)

[Forming the present perfect with irregular weak verbs](#)

[Forming the present perfect with strong verbs](#)

[Forming the present perfect with verbs ending in -ieren](#)

[Forming the Present Perfect with Sein](#)

[Eyeing the Present Perfect: German versus English](#)

[One for all: Representing three English tenses](#)

[Opting for the German present](#)

[Using Modal Auxiliary Verbs in Present Perfect](#)

[Forming modal verbs in present perfect](#)

[Understanding word order with modal verbs](#)