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GERMAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 1 · Chapter 2 · Introducing Yourself

German Basic Conversation 1

Chapter 2 · Introducing Yourself



Introducing Yourself — Sich vorstellen

Last chapter you learned to greet people. Now you'll say who you are, ask who someone else is, say "nice to meet you", introduce a third person, and — very useful with German names — spell a name out loud.



Six Short Conversations — Gespräche

Read each one aloud, using the pronunciation line. CAPITALS show the stressed part of a word.

① A Formal Introduction — Guten Tag, ich heiße ...

A:

Guten Tag. Ich heiße Anna Weber.
Und Sie?

*GOO-ten TAHK, ikh HY-suh AH-nah VAY-ber.
oont ZEE*

Good day. My name is Anna Weber. And you?

B:

Guten Tag, Frau Weber. Mein
Name ist Peter Braun.

*GOO-ten TAHK, frow VAY-ber, mine NAH-
muh ist PAY-ter BROWN*

Good day, Mrs Weber. My name is Peter
Braun.

A:

Freut mich.

FROYT mikh

Nice to meet you.

B:

Freut mich auch.

② Among Friends — Wie heißt du?

A:

Hallo, ich bin Tom. Wie heißt du?

HAH-lo, ikh BIN TOM. vee HYST DOO

Hello, I'm Tom. What's your name?

B:

Ich heiße Lisa.

ikh HY-suh LEE-zah

My name is Lisa.

A:

Freut mich, Lisa!

FROYT mikh, LEE-zah

Nice to meet you, Lisa!

B:

Freut mich auch, Tom!

FROYT mikh OWKH, TOM

Nice to meet you too, Tom!

FROYT mikh OWKH

Nice to meet you too.

③ Asking a Stranger — Wie heißen Sie?

A:

Entschuldigung, wie heißen Sie?

ent-SHUL-dee-goong, vee HY-sen zee

Excuse me, what is your name?

B:

Ich heiße Schmidt.

ikh HY-suh SHMIT

My name is Schmidt.

A:

Wie bitte? Noch einmal, bitte.

vee BIT-tuh? nokh INE-mahl, BIT-tuh

Pardon? Once more, please.

B:

Schmidt. S-C-H-M-I-D-T.

SHMIT. ess-tsay-hah-emm-ee-day-tay

Schmidt. S-C-H-M-I-D-T.

④ Introducing a Friend — Das ist ...

A:

Anna, das ist Max.

AH-nah, dahs ist MAKS

Anna, this is Max.

B:

Hallo, Max! Freut mich.

HAH-lo, MAKS! FROYT mikh

Hello, Max! Nice to meet you.

C:

Hallo, Anna! Freut mich auch.

HAH-lo, AH-nah! FROYT mikh OWKH

Hello, Anna! Nice to meet you too.

⑤ First Name & Surname — Vorname und Nachname

A:

Wie ist Ihr Name, bitte?

vee ist EER NAH-muh, BIT-tuh

What is your name, please?

B:

Mein Vorname ist Julia und mein
Nachname ist Keller.

mine FOR-nah-muh ist YOO-lee-ah oont mine

NAKH-nah-muh ist KEL-ler

⑥ Introducing a Colleague (formal) — Angenehm

A:

Frau Roth, das ist Herr Klein.

frow ROAT, dahs ist hair KLINE

Mrs Roth, this is Mr Klein.

B:

Guten Tag, Herr Klein. Angenehm.

GOO-ten TAHK, hair KLINE. AHN-geh-naym

Good day, Mr Klein. Pleased to meet you.

C:

My first name is Julia and my surname is Keller.

A:

Wie schreibt man Keller?

vee SHRYBT mahn KEL-ler

How do you spell Keller?

B:

K-E-L-L-E-R.

kah-ay-ell-ell-ay-err

K-E-L-L-E-R.

Sehr erfreut, Frau Roth.

zair er-FROYT, frow ROAT

Delighted, Mrs Roth.

Key Phrases at a Glance — Wichtige Sätze

Two ways to say your name, two ways to ask for someone else's, and a set of ways to say "nice to meet you".

YOU WANT TO...	FORMAL (SIE)	INFORMAL (DU)
Ask a name	Wie heißen Sie?	Wie heißt du?
Say your name	Ich heiße ... / Mein Name ist ...	Ich heiße ... / Ich bin ...
Nice to meet you	Angenehm. / Sehr erfreut. / Freut mich.	Freut mich.
Introduce someone	Das ist Herr / Frau ...	Das ist ...
Ask for a name in an official setting	Wie ist Ihr Name?	—

Two verbs you just used — zwei Verben

You don't need grammar to speak yet — just learn these forms as they are.

WHO	HEISSEN (TO BE CALLED)	SAY IT	SEIN (TO BE)	SAY IT
ich (I)	ich heiße	<i>ikh HY-suh</i>	ich bin	<i>ikh BIN</i>
du (you, informal)	du heißt	<i>doo HYST</i>	du bist	<i>doo BIST</i>
Sie (you, formal)	Sie heißen	<i>zee HY-sen</i>	Sie sind	<i>zee ZINT</i>

"Ich heiße" vs. "Ich bin" vs. "Mein Name ist"

All three tell someone your name. *Ich heiße Anna* literally means "I am called Anna" and is the standard choice everywhere. *Ich bin Anna* ("I am Anna") is a little more casual. *Mein Name ist Anna* ("My name is Anna") is slightly more formal. Any of them will be understood — pick one and use it confidently. Also notice that a German name answer is often just the surname when formal: *Ich heiße Schmidt*, or *Herr Schmidt*.

abc Spelling a Name — Buchstabieren

German names can be tricky to catch, so Germans spell them out often — on the phone, at a hotel, at the doctor. Learn the letter names below and you can spell your own name. Say the letter, not the sound: "S-C-H" is *ess-tsay-hah*.

A ah	B bay	C tsay	D day	E ay
F eff	G gay	H hah	I ee	J yot
K kah	L ell	M emm	N enn	O oh
P pay	Q koo	R err	S ess	T tay
U oo	V fow	W vay	X iks	Y ÜP-si-lon
Z tset	ä A-Umlaut	ö O-Umlaut	ü U-Umlaut	ß ess-tset

Useful questions and replies for spelling:

GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
Wie schreibt man das?	<i>vee SHRYBT mahn DAHS</i>	How do you write / spell that?
Können Sie das buchstabieren?	<i>KUR-nen zee dahs bookh-shtah-BEE-ren</i>	Can you spell that?
Wie bitte?	<i>vee BIT-tuh</i>	Pardon? / Sorry, what?

Vocabulary — Wortschatz

20 key words and phrases from this chapter. Nouns have a capital letter and an article: *der* (masculine), *die* (feminine), *das* (neuter). Learn them together.

#	GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
1	heißen	<i>HY-sen</i>	to be called	verb	<i>ich heiße, du heißt, Sie heißen</i>
2	sein	<i>zine</i>	to be	verb	<i>ich bin, du bist, Sie sind</i>
3	schreiben	<i>SHRY-ben</i>	to write	verb	"Wie schreibt man das?"
4	buchstabieren	<i>bookh-shtah-BEE-ren</i>	to spell	verb	<i>Buchstabe = letter</i>
5	ich	<i>ikh</i>	I	word	<i>not capitalised unless it starts a sentence</i>
6	du	<i>doo</i>	you (informal)	word	<i>friends, family, children</i>
7	Sie	<i>zee</i>	you (formal)	word	<i>always capital S; also means "she"/"they" (sie) in lowercase</i>
8	wie	<i>vee</i>	how / what (in "what's your name")	word	<i>Wie heißen Sie?</i>
9	auch	<i>owkh</i>	also / too	word	<i>Freut mich auch.</i>

#	GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
10	mein	<i>mine</i>	my	word	<i>mein Name; before feminine words it's meine</i>
11	der Name	<i>NAH-muh</i>	name	noun	
12	der Vorname	<i>FOR-nah-muh</i>	first name	noun	<i>vor = before</i>
13	der Nachname	<i>NAKH-nah-muh</i>	surname	noun	<i>nach = after</i>
14	der Freund	<i>froynt</i>	friend (male) / boyfriend	noun	<i>see tip below</i>
15	die Freundin	<i>FROYN-din</i>	friend (female) / girlfriend	noun	<i>-in = feminine ending</i>
16	das ist ...	<i>dahs ist</i>	this is ...	phrase	<i>Das ist Max.</i>
17	Freut mich.	<i>froyt mikh</i>	Nice to meet you.	phrase	<i>works both formal and informal</i>
18	Angenehm.	<i>AHN-geh-naym</i>	Pleased to meet you.	phrase	<i>formal</i>
19	Sehr erfreut.	<i>zair er-FROYT</i>	Delighted.	phrase	<i>very formal</i>
20	Wie bitte?	<i>vee BIT-tuh</i>	Pardon?	phrase	<i>politely asking someone to repeat</i>

Real German Tip — "Mein Freund" Can Mean Boyfriend

Freund and *Freundin* are the words for "friend", but *mein Freund* / *meine Freundin* ("my friend") is very often understood as "my boyfriend / my girlfriend". To be clear about a platonic friend you can say *ein Freund von mir* ("a friend of mine") — we'll use it in Chapter 5. For now, introduce people simply with their name: *Das ist Max*.

Real German Tip — Titles & Surnames

In formal situations Germans use *Herr* or *Frau* plus the surname, and they rarely use first names with people they've just met. Watch for the moment someone says *Sagen wir du?* ("shall we say du?") — that's the offer to switch to first names and the informal *du*.

Try It Yourself — Übungen

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check. Use your own name where you see [Name].

1. Introduce yourself to a new colleague, formally, and say it's nice to meet them.

▼ Show answer

Guten Tag. Ich heiße [Name]. Freut mich. (or: Mein Name ist [Name]. Angenehm.)

2. At a party, ask a person your own age for their name.

▼ Show answer

Hallo! Wie heißt du? (You can add: Ich bin [Name].)

3. You ask an older stranger for their name and don't catch it. What do you say next?

▼ Show answer

Wie bitte? Noch einmal, bitte. (Then: Können Sie das buchstabieren?)

4. Spell your first name aloud in German. For example, "Tom".

▼ Show answer

T-O-M = tay-oh-emm. Try it with your own name — and your surname too.

5. Introduce your friend Anna to your colleague Herr Klein, formally.

▼ Show answer

Herr Klein, das ist Anna. (Herr Klein might reply: Angenehm. — and Anna: Freut mich.)

Coming Up in Chapter 3

You can now introduce yourself and spell your name. Next: **numbers, your age and contact details** — counting, and giving a phone number or email address.