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GERMAN LESSON

Basic Conversation 2 · Chapter 2 · Hobbies & Free Time

German Basic Conversation 2

Chapter 2 · Hobbies & Free Time



Hobbies & Free Time — Freizeit und Hobbys

Say what you like doing in your free time, how often you do it, and what you prefer — and ask other people the same. Talking about hobbies is one of the easiest ways to keep a conversation going with someone new.



Six Short Conversations — Gespräche

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

① Free Time — Was machst du in deiner Freizeit?

A:

Was machst du in deiner Freizeit?

vahs makhst doo in DY-ner FRY-tsité

What do you do in your free time?

B:

Ich lese gern und ich höre Musik.

ikh LAY-zuh GAIRN oont ikh HUR-uh moo-ZEEK

I like reading and I listen to music.

A:

Ich auch! Ich lese viel.

ikh OWKH. ikh LAY-zuh FEEL

Me too! I read a lot.

② Sport — Machst du Sport?

A:

Machst du Sport?

makhst doo SHPORT

Do you do any sport?

B:

Ja, ich spiele gern Fußball. Und du?

yah, ikh SHPEE-luh gairn FOOS-bahl. oont DOO

Yes, I like playing football. And you?

A:

Ich schwimme und ich fahre gern Rad.

ikh SHVIM-uh oont ikh FAH-ruh gairn RAHT

I swim and I like cycling.

③ How Often? — Wie oft?

A:

Wie oft gehst du schwimmen?

④ Preferences — Ich höre lieber Rock

A:

Hörst du gern Musik?

vee OFT gayst doo SHVIM-en
How often do you go swimming?

B:

Zweimal pro Woche. Und du?
TSVY-mahl proh VOKH-uh. oont DOO
Twice a week. And you?

A:

Nur am Wochenende. Ich habe
wenig Zeit.

NOOR ahm VOKH-en-en-duh. ikh HAH-buh
VAY-nikh TSITE
Only at the weekend. I have little time.

hurst doo GAIRN moo-ZEEK
Do you like listening to music?

B:

Ja, sehr gern. Ich höre lieber Rock
als Pop.

yah, zair GAIRN. ikh HUR-uh LEE-ber ROK
ahls POP
Yes, very much. I prefer listening to rock
rather than pop.

A:

Und am liebsten?

oont ahm LEEP-sten
And what do you like best of all?

B:

Am liebsten höre ich Jazz.

ahm LEEP-sten HUR-uh ikh JAHTS
Best of all I like listening to jazz.

⑤ Do You Have a Hobby? — Hast du ein Hobby?

A:

Hast du ein Hobby?
hahst doo ine HOB-ee
Do you have a hobby?

B:

Ja, ich spiele Gitarre und ich
fotografiere gern.
yah, ikh SHPEE-luh gi-TAH-ruh oont ikh foh-
toh-grah-FEE-ruh gairn
Yes, I play guitar and I like taking photos.

A:

Das klingt gut! Ich lerne gern
Deutsch.
dahs KLINGT GOOT. ikh LAIR-nuh gairn
DOYTSH

⑥ Formal: Hiking — Gehen Sie oft wandern?

A:

Was machen Sie gern in Ihrer
Freizeit?
vahs MAKH-en zee gairn in EE-rer FRY-tsite
What do you like doing in your free time?

B:

Ich gehe gern wandern. Und Sie?
ikh GAY-uh gairn VAHN-dern. oont ZEE
I like going hiking. And you?

A:

Ich gehe gern ins Kino. Gehen Sie
oft wandern?
ikh GAY-uh gairn ins KEE-noh. GAY-en zee
OFT VAHN-dern

That sounds good! I like learning German.

I like going to the cinema. Do you often go hiking?

B:

Fast jedes Wochenende.

FAHST YAY-des VOKH-en-en-duh

Almost every weekend.

Key Phrases — Wichtige Sätze

YOU WANT TO...	FORMAL (SIE)	INFORMAL (DU)
Ask about free time	Was machen Sie in Ihrer Freizeit?	Was machst du in deiner Freizeit?
Ask about a hobby	Haben Sie ein Hobby?	Hast du ein Hobby?
Ask what someone likes doing	Was machen Sie gern?	Was machst du gern?
Ask how often	Wie oft gehen Sie schwimmen?	Wie oft gehst du schwimmen?
Say what you like doing	Ich lese gern. / Ich spiele gern Fußball.	
Say what you don't like doing	Ich koche nicht gern.	
Say what you prefer	Ich wandere lieber.	
Say what you like best	Am liebsten spiele ich Gitarre.	
React to what someone says	Das klingt gut! / Ich auch! / Wirklich?	

Three verbs — drei Verben

Spielen is regular. Lesen and treffen change their vowel with du and er: du liest, du triffst — the same kind of change as essen and fahren in Chapter 1.

WHO	SPIELEN (TO PLAY)	LESEN (TO READ)	TREFFEN (TO MEET)
ich	ich spiele <i>ikh SHPEE-luh</i>	ich lese <i>ikh LAY-zuh</i>	ich treffe <i>ikh TREF-uh</i>
du	du spielst <i>doo shpeelst</i>	du liest <i>doo leest</i>	du triffst <i>doo trift</i>
er / sie	er spielt <i>air shpeelt</i>	er liest <i>air leest</i>	er trifft <i>air trift</i>
Sie	Sie spielen <i>zee SHPEE-len</i>	Sie lesen <i>zee LAY-zen</i>	Sie treffen <i>zee TREF-en</i>

♥ Gern, Lieber, Am Liebsten — Likes and Preferences

Three little words do most of the work when you talk about what you like. They go straight after the verb and its object.

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE	SAY IT
gern	like doing	Ich schwimme gern .	<i>ikh SHVIM-uh gairn</i>
nicht gern	don't like doing	Ich koche nicht gern .	<i>ikh KOKH-uh nikht gairn</i>
lieber	prefer doing	Ich wandere lieber .	<i>ikh VAHN-deh-ruh LEE-ber</i>
am liebsten	like doing best of all	Am liebsten spiele ich Gitarre.	<i>ahm LEEP-sten SHPEE-luh ikh gi-TAH-ruh</i>

"Gern" Is Not a Verb

English says "I like swimming", with the verb *like*. German usually says "I swim *gladly*": *Ich schwimme gern*. So you don't need a verb for "like" at all — you just add *gern* after the activity. *Lieber* means "more gladly" (I'd rather) and *am liebsten* means "most gladly" (my favourite). When *am liebsten* starts the sentence, the verb comes straight after it: *Am liebsten spiele ich...*, just like after *dann* in Chapter 1.



Things to Do — Aktivitäten

Most activities are a short phrase with a verb you already know. Notice the ones with *gehen*: you say *Ich gehe schwimmen* — literally "I go swimming".

ENGLISH	GERMAN	SAY IT
to read	lesen	LAY-zen
to listen to music	Musik hören	moo-ZEEK HUR-en
to play football	Fußball spielen	FOOS-bahl SHPEE-len
to play guitar	Gitarre spielen	gi-TAH-ruh SHPEE-len
to go swimming	schwimmen gehen	SHVIM-en GAY-en
to go hiking	wandern gehen	VAHN-dern GAY-en
to go cycling	Rad fahren	RAHT FAH-ren
to go to the cinema	ins Kino gehen	ins KEE-noh GAY-en
to meet friends	Freunde treffen	FROYN-duh TREF-en
to take photos	fotografieren	foh-toh-grah-FEE-ren
to dance	tanzen	TAHN-tsen
to watch TV	fernsehen	FERN-zay-en

Infinitive Goes to the End

In *Ich gehe gern wandern* the second verb stays in its basic form (*wandern*) and goes to the end, while *gehe* does the changing. Another separable verb: *fernsehen* splits like *aufstehen* in Chapter 1 — *Ich sehe abends fern* (I watch TV in the evenings).



How Often — Wie oft?

GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH
oft	<i>oft</i>	often
selten	<i>ZEL-ten</i>	rarely
einmal pro Woche	<i>INE-mahl proh VOKH-uh</i>	once a week
zweimal pro Woche	<i>TSVY-mahl proh VOKH-uh</i>	twice a week
am Wochenende	<i>ahm VOKH-en-en-duh</i>	at the weekend
jeden Samstag	<i>YAY-den ZAHMS-tahk</i>	every Saturday
fast jedes Wochenende	<i>FAHST YAY-des VOKH-en-en-duh</i>	almost every weekend

You already know immer, meistens, manchmal and nie from Chapter 1, and they fit here too: Ich lese immer abends.

Vocabulary — Wortschatz

20 key words and phrases from this chapter (more activities are in the table above).

#	GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
1	die Freizeit	<i>FRY-tsité</i>	free time	noun	<i>frei = free, Zeit = time</i>
2	das Hobby	<i>HOB-ee</i>	hobby	noun	<i>plural: die Hobbys</i>
3	der Sport	<i>shport</i>	sport	noun	<i>Sport machen = do sport</i>
4	das Wochenende	<i>VOKH-en-en-duh</i>	weekend	noun	<i>am Wochenende</i>
5	der Freund / die Freundin	<i>froynt / FROYN-din</i>	friend	noun	<i>man / woman; plural: die Freunde</i>
6	die Musik	<i>moo-ZEEK</i>	music	noun	<i>Musik hören</i>
7	spielen	<i>SHPEE-len</i>	to play	verb	<i>ich spiele</i>

#	GERMAN	SAY IT	ENGLISH	TYPE	NOTE
8	lesen	LAY-zen	to read	verb	du liest
9	hören	HUR-en	to hear / listen	verb	ö: lips as for "oh", say "eh"
10	schwimmen	SHVIM-en	to swim	verb	ich schwimme
11	wandern	VAHN-dern	to hike	verb	ich wandere
12	treffen	TREF-en	to meet	verb	du triffst
13	tanzen	TAHN-tsen	to dance	verb	z = "ts"
14	gern	gairn	gladly / like doing	adv	after the verb
15	lieber	LEE-ber	rather / prefer	adv	"ie" = "ee"
16	am liebsten	ahm LEEP-sten	best of all	phrase	"b" sounds like "p" here
17	oft	oft	often	adv	Wie oft? = How often?
18	selten	ZEL-ten	rarely	adv	
19	einmal pro Woche	INE-mahl proh VOKH-uh	once a week	phrase	zweimal = twice
20	Das klingt gut!	dahs KLINGT goot	That sounds good!	phrase	a friendly reaction

Real German Tip — "Spaß machen"

A very common way to say something is fun is *Das macht Spaß* (dahs MAKHT SHPAHS) — "That's fun". *Spaß* means "fun", and you'll hear it everywhere: *Viel Spaß!* (FEEL shpahs) = "Have fun!" — the natural thing to say to someone who is heading off to do something enjoyable.

Real German Tip — Clubs

Many people in German-speaking countries belong to a *Verein* (fair-INE), a club, for a sport or hobby — football, choirs, hiking and many others. If you want to meet people and practise German,

joining one is a popular way to do it, and *Hast du ein Hobby?* is a good way to start the conversation.

Try It Yourself — Übungen

Say each answer out loud first, then click to check. Use your own hobbies where you like.

1. Ask a friend (informal) what they do in their free time.

▼ Show answer

Was machst du in deiner Freizeit?

2. Say you like reading and you like playing the guitar.

▼ Show answer

Ich lese gern und ich spiele gern Gitarre. (*Gern* comes after the verb, and after the object if there is one.)

3. Say you don't like cooking, and that you would rather go out to eat (*essen gehen*).

▼ Show answer

Ich koche nicht gern. Ich gehe lieber essen. (*Lieber* after *gehe*; the second verb *essen* goes to the end.)

4. Politely ask someone (formal) how often they go hiking.

▼ Show answer

Wie oft gehen Sie wandern?

5. Say you go swimming twice a week, and that you rarely go to the cinema.

▼ Show answer

Ich gehe zweimal pro Woche schwimmen. Ich gehe selten ins Kino.

6. Say that best of all you like meeting friends at the weekend.

▼ Show answer

Am liebsten treffe ich am Wochenende Freunde. (Verb straight after *am liebsten*.)

Coming Up in Chapter 3

You can now talk about your interests. Next: **making plans and invitations** — suggesting something to do, accepting or turning down an invitation politely, and arranging when and where to meet.