

BEGINNING GERMAN

by

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PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION

The chief reason for a revised edition of *Beginning German* is to provide an up-to-date description of present-day Germany and Austria in the supplementary readings. This meets an urgent need, since many locales described in the original edition were destroyed by war-time bombing. Whereas the original supplementary readings described the major cities of all Germany, the new text confines itself to locales in West Germany on the ground that East Germany has not been accessible to the American visitor. On the other hand, the readings have been augmented by descriptions of several places in Austria, including Vienna. Large cities are no longer the exclusive objects of attention; the revised readings place equal stress upon the countryside, small towns and villages, and isolated spots of unusual interest. Completely new illustrations have been provided.

A second important innovation is the resetting of the book in Roman type throughout. This change is in conformity with post-war German printing practice and, moreover, is expected to facilitate the task of the student in mastering the fundamentals of the language.

The pedagogical aims of the original edition, as set forth in the author's preface, have been retained in entirety. The initial reading selections, the active vocabulary and the exercises remain unchanged. As far as the grammar is concerned, the only alteration has been a slight amplification, and it is hoped a clarification, of the treatment of prepositions.

The reviser wishes in particular to thank Professor Frederick Sell of Mount Holyoke College, whose collaboration in the writing of the new readings and whose constant advice and assistance have made this edition possible. Thanks are also due to Mr. Henry B. McCurdy and Mr. J. G. Case of The Macmillan Company. Their unflinching courtesy and cooperation have facilitated every aspect of the revision. In conclusion, grateful acknowledgment is made to the German Tourist Information Office and the Austrian State Tourist Department, both of New York City, for the photographs which they so generously made available for the purpose of illustrating this book.

B. S. T.

South Hadley

FROM THE PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The outstanding feature of this beginners' book in German is its differentiation between *active* and *passive* vocabulary and the limitation of the former to 500 words.

In recent years there has been an increasing tendency to reduce the vocabularies in elementary grammars and to bring them in line with approved word lists. Some of these books have vocabularies of 1000 to 1200 words, while others exceed this number. No one, it seems, has attempted to reduce the vocabulary below 1000 items. And good reasons have been advanced for not going below this minimum. It is claimed, and generally admitted, that a book with a vocabulary much below 1000 words would become so dry and stilted that it would entail a serious loss of interest on the part of students.

But what is the practical result? The majority of teachers treat these vocabularies as active and require students to memorize them to learn genders of nouns, declensions, conjugations, spelling, etc. As a consequence the beginning student is confronted with words such as the following, selected at random from a number of recent grammars: **sich auszeichnen, Bergbau, bestätigen, büßen, Eichelsaat, Heugabel, Kabinentür, Kachelofen, Kubikwurzel, Mannigfaltigkeit, Mäuseplage, Nachwelt, Schulzwang, Verfassung, Volksvertreter, Weizenfeld, Zentralheizung.** There would be no very serious objection to the introduction of words like the above if they remained limited in number and were clearly designated as passive words, merely to be recognized by the student in the given passages but not actually made part and parcel of his elementary vocabulary.

Competent authorities in the field of modern language teaching believe that 1000 *active* words constitute about the maximum number that students can reasonably be expected to master in two years of high school or two college semesters. It has been the author's own experience over a period of years that one of the chief difficulties encountered by students in elementary German has been the excessive number of words they were expected to memorize and

produce at will with all the grammatical variations involved. In view of the relatively large number of grammatical forms which the student must acquire and control, and in view of the further fact that some students are so deficient in a knowledge of general grammar that frequently they must first be taught the difference between an indirect and a direct object, transitive and intransitive verbs, personal and reflexive pronouns, active and passive voice, etc., it has seemed but reasonable to reduce the load by limiting the active vocabulary without, however, sacrificing the student's interest by curtailing the passive vocabulary. It is with this primary purpose that the preparation of the present book was undertaken.

As this book is planned to be completed in one college semester or one year of high school, the number of active words has been limited to 500. If the student really masters these words and can recognize a considerably large number of passive words, he should have no great difficulty in adding another 500 words to his active vocabulary and a proportionately larger number to his passive vocabulary in the second year of high school or the second college semester, especially as the essential grammatical forms have already been acquired.

These 500 active words were selected from the Schinnerer-Wendt list of 1000 suggested active words.¹ It is not contended that these words necessarily constitute the 500 most frequent or most common active words. While the author has constantly striven to include what seemed to him the most frequent or common words, the exigencies of telling a connected story occasionally required one set of words rather than another. However, even if there should be no general agreement as to the 500 most important active words, this does not constitute any grave difficulty. Practically all students take at least two years of high school German or two college semesters, and by the end of these terms all the other active words will have been introduced.

The author firmly believes in the reading objective, but he also believes that this can best be attained by a reasonable amount of oral and aural practice in the initial stages of modern language teaching. He has attempted to restrict all the exercises (questions, grammatical exercises, and translation exercises) to the limited list of 500 active words. On the other hand, he has felt that because of this very limitation the student should experience no difficulty in

¹ Cf. *The German Quarterly*, VI, 2 (March, 1933), pp. 77-90.

acquiring a passive knowledge of the additional words employed in the reading selections proper and in the supplementary reading selections.

The question has been raised why it should be necessary to produce another textbook with the emphasis on active vocabulary when any teacher could designate a limited number of active words in any of the existing texts. The answer is that even if teachers would take the trouble to do so, many obviously passive words are used indiscriminately in the various exercises supplied, and that students would therefore be required to have active control over them.

Idioms

Eighty idioms, an average of three and one-third per lesson, are introduced in the reading selections and designated as active in the vocabulary. These were selected from Hauch's Idiom List.¹ Here too an attempt was made to select only those idioms which might properly be regarded as active.

Reading Selections

The reading selections are connected prose passages, mostly of the anecdotal type. In the author's experience this type has always seemed superior to *realia* for purposes of oral drill. Anecdotes in a foreign language arouse the student's interest as he looks forward to the point of the story. They present a concrete situation which the student easily remembers. They lend themselves readily to the introduction of the common everyday words which the student is to learn. Finally, they can be more easily reproduced in German.

No effort was made to present original stories not hitherto used, although all of them were rewritten and modified. Suitability for the specific purpose was the only criterion. Many of these anecdotes have repeatedly proved their worth in previous textbooks.

Grammar

In each reading selection the new grammatical elements to be introduced are inductively developed and printed in blackface type. Only so much grammar as is essential for a full comprehension of the reading selections is presented as precisely and concisely as possible. Numerous points that many other grammars include for the

¹ *German Idiom List*. Compiled by Edward F. Hauch. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1929.

sake of completeness have been omitted, as such supplementary grammatical information can be more profitably supplied in the succeeding stage of the study of German.

Questions

Most teachers prefer to formulate their own questions. Those supplied here are intended as an aid to the student in preparing his lesson. By writing out the answers or formulating oral responses, the student will be better prepared for the oral drill in class. In a few rare cases the questions themselves contain passive words which the student need merely recognize, but all words required to supply the answers are limited to active words.

Grammatical Exercises

These exercises on the whole follow the conventional patterns. Here again all the words to be supplied by the student are active.

Translation Exercises

Some teachers believe strongly in translation exercises, while others abhor them. They are presented here for the benefit of those who approve. Since these sentences are restricted to the active words, they should not cause insurmountable obstacles.

Vocabulary Building

Each lesson contains a section on vocabulary building. Most of these point out the relationship between German and English and some show the formation of derivatives and compounds. These exercises are intended as an aid to the student's memory, once this relationship or derivation has been established. For this reason English equivalents for the German words are given, as the author does not wish to encourage the dangerous habit of indiscriminately jumping at conclusions of etymological affinity. There was no intention of exhausting the subject. It is believed that the meanings of inseparable prefixes, of suffixes such as **heit, keit, ei, nis, sal, schaft, tum**, etc., can be more profitably introduced at a later stage.

The words employed in these sections as illustrations are not listed in the vocabularies unless they were actually introduced in the reading selections.

Supplementary Reading

These readings deal with German geography and a trip through Germany touching upon the more important cities.

They have a twofold purpose. First, they are to provide facilities for practice in rapid reading without the close analysis of the text required in the regular reading selections at the beginning of each lesson. Secondly, they are to familiarize the student with some of the elementary facts about Germany.

As there seems to be no special virtue in thumbing the vocabulary at the end of the book, the new words used are listed after each selection in order to facilitate more rapid reading.

Teachers who may desire to postpone or omit these readings may do so without inconvenience. All the words employed here are listed again in the vocabulary when first introduced in the regular reading selections.

Poems

Many teachers follow the commendable practice of having students even in the elementary stage memorize a few poems. It is hoped that those supplied as a supplement will offer sufficient range and variety.

In conclusion, the author takes pleasure in expressing his great indebtedness to his colleagues Mr. H. G. Wendt, who not only collaborated with the author in drawing up the list of active words but who also discussed with him in detail the general plan of the book, to Professor Henry H. L. Schulze, who went over the manuscript with meticulous care and made innumerable valuable suggestions, and to Professor F. W. J. Heuser, who generously gave his assistance in reading the proof. It goes without saying that the author has also derived incalculable benefit from his numerous predecessors in the field.

The task of seeing the book through publication was rendered exceedingly pleasant by the invariable courtesy of all the members of The Macmillan Company with whom the author came in contact. He is especially grateful to Mr. Joseph C. Palamountain, whose persuasive powers induced the author to undertake the preparation of this book, to Mr. Henry B. McCurdy, and to Mr. F. T. Sutphen for their sincere cooperation in meeting the author's wishes.

O. P. S.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The German Alphabet	1
Pronunciation	2
Capital and Small Letters	6
Division into Syllables	6
Punctuation	6

LESSON I

Die Familie	9
Gender of Nouns. Pronouns.	
Present Tense of Verbs	
Geographie	16

LESSON II

Die Schule	18
Present Tense of Verbs	
Mehr Geographie	24

LESSON III

Das Schulzimmer	26
Singular Declension of Nouns. Use of Cases.	
Prepositions	
Berlin und Hamburg	31

LESSON IV

Ein Spaziergang	33
Strong and Weak Verbs. Past Tense	
Deutsche Flüsse	39

LESSON V

Eine Reise nach Deutschland	41
Possessive Adjectives. Word Order.	
Use of Tenses and Articles	
Deutsche Gebirge	47

LESSON VI

In der Schule. Eine Anekdote	49
Past Tense of haben and sein .	
Strong and Weak Verbs	
Die Staaten des Deutschen Reiches	54

LESSON VII

Der Hund und der Bauer	57
Present Perfect and Past Perfect Tenses	
Die Reise nach Deutschland	64

LESSON VIII

Allerlei. Eine Anekdote	66
Plural of Strong Nouns	
In Hamburg	71

LESSON IX

Allerlei	74
Plural of Weak, Mixed, and Irregular Nouns	
Die Reise nach Berlin	80

LESSON X

Der Regenschirm	82
Der -words and ein -words.	
Present Tense of Strong Verbs	
In Berlin	88

LESSON XI

Der Wirt und der Student	91
Conjugation of werden . The Future Tenses.	
The Imperative. Prepositions	
Die Reise von Berlin nach München	99

LESSON XII

Der Professor und die Medizin	101
Word Order. Conjunctions. Time Expressions	
München. Eine Anekdote von Richard Wagner	108

LESSON XIII

Der Bauer und das Streichholz	111
Separable and Inseparable Prefixes	
Zwei Anekdoten von Friedrich dem Großen	116

LESSON XIV	
Die Frau und der Schneider	118
Personal Pronouns	
Salzburg	123
LESSON XV	
Zwei Anekdoten	126
Declension of Adjectives	
Eine Anekdote von Mozart	133
LESSON XVI	
Zwei Anekdoten	136
Declensional Details	
Ein Brief	141
LESSON XVII	
Drei Anekdoten	144
Interrogative and Relative Pronouns	
In Tirol	151
LESSON XVIII	
Eine schwere Frage	153
Reflexive Pronouns and Verbs	
Oberammergau	159
LESSON XIX	
Eine Anekdote von Beethoven	161
Comparison of Adjectives and Adverbs	
Bodensee und Schwarzwald	167
LESSON XX	
Das Zählen. Die Zeit	170
Numerals. Time Expressions. Prepositions	
Rothenburg ob der Tauber	180
LESSON XXI	
Der fleißige Student	182
Modal Auxiliaries	
Maulbronn	190

LESSON XXII	
Der Brief und das Paket. Sprichwörter	193
The Passive Voice	
Heidelberg	200
LESSON XXIII	
Der unhöfliche Bauer. Sprichwörter	203
The Subjunctive. The Conditional.	
Unreal Conditions	
Frankfurt	211
LESSON XXIV	
Der König und der Bauer	213
The Subjunctive. Indirect Discourse	
Die Rheinreise	219
POEMS	223
APPENDIX	235
IDIOMS	265
GERMAN-ENGLISH VOCABULARY	267
ENGLISH-GERMAN VOCABULARY	295
GRAMMATICAL INDEX	303

Beginning German

In printing and writing German, either German type and script or Roman type and script may be used. German script is now almost wholly obsolete. In print German type predominated until the end of World War II, but today nearly all German publishers are employing Roman type. Therefore Roman type exclusively is used in this book. The student who wishes to familiarize himself with German type will find the German equivalents of Roman letters on pages 260-261 of the appendix.

I. THE GERMAN ALPHABET

ROMAN LETTER	GERMAN NAME	ROMAN LETTER	GERMAN NAME
A a	ah	N n	enn
B b	bay	O o	oh
C c	tsay	P p	pay
D d	day	Q q	koo
E e	ay	R r	err
F f	eff	S s	ess
G g	gay	T t	tay
H h	hah	U u	oo
I i	ee	V v	fow
J j	yut	W w	vay
K k	kah	X x	iks
L l	ell	Y y	ipsilon
M m	emm	Z z	tset

Double s has the symbol ß at the end of words and syllables, after long vowels and diphthongs, and before consonants.

II. PRONUNCIATION

German is pronounced with more energy, more precision, and greater distinctness than English.

The only silent letters in German are **h** to indicate length of the preceding vowel, and **e** in **ie** to render long **i** (*ee*).

The representations of German sounds given below are only approximate. The most satisfactory way of acquiring a good pronunciation is to imitate a good living model.

1. Vowels

German vowels may be long or short. A vowel is long

- (a) when doubled: **Paar, See, Boot**
- (b) when followed by silent **h**: **Bahn, geht, ihn**
- (c) generally when followed by a single consonant:
Glas, los, Hut
- (d) at the end of an accented syllable: **Na'me, le'ben, Blu'me**
- (e) a long stem vowel remains long in inflected forms before two or more consonants: **sagen, sag-st, sag-t.**

A vowel is always short before a double consonant and generally before two or more consonants: **denn, offen, finden, singen.**

Before **ch** and **ß** a vowel may be long or short.

German vowels differ from English vowels in that they are pure, not diphthongs, i.e., they preserve the same sound from beginning to end.

ā	Long as in <i>father</i> : Bahn, Glas, Name, Paar.
ä	Short as in <i>what</i> : arm, dann, fallen, Mann.
ē	Long as in <i>gate</i> : geht, leben, nehmen, See.
ē	Short as in <i>set</i> : Bett, Ende, es, messen.
ī, ie	Long as in <i>thief</i> : die, ihn, Kino, liegen.
ī	Short as in <i>in</i> : bin, finden, immer, Tinte.
ō	Long as in <i>no</i> : Boot, holen, los, wo.
ō	Short as in <i>son</i> : Gott, offen, Onkel, Sommer.
ū	Long as in <i>rule</i> : Blume, du, Hut, tun.
ū	Short as in <i>full</i> : Butter, dumm, Mutter, unser.
y	Like long or short ü (see below).

2. Umlaut (Modified Vowels)

The vowels **a**, **o**, **u**, and the diphthong **au** may undergo a change of sound and are then written **ä**, **ö**, **ü**, **äu**. This is called Umlaut or modification of the vowel. A few similar changes are preserved in English.

foot—feet; goose—geese; man—men; mouse—mice.

- ä** Long as in *air*: **sähe, spät, Väter, wäre.**
- ä** Short as in *let*: **Bänke, Gäste, hängen, Männer.**
- ö** Long as in French long *eu*. To produce this sound prepare to pronounce German **ē** and then round your lips while making the sound: **mögen, schön, Söhne, Töne.**
- ö** Prepare to pronounce **ε** as in *let* and round your lips while making the sound: **Dörfer, Göttin, können, öffnen.**
- ü** Long as in French long *u*. Prepare to pronounce German **ie (ee)** and round your lips while making the sound: **für, müde, Süden, Tür.**
- ü** Prepare to pronounce short **i** as in *pin* and round your lips while making the sound: **füllen, fünf, Hütte, Mütter.**

3. Diphthongs

- ei, ai** Pronounced like *i* in *mine*: **ein, kein, Mai, Kaiser.**
- au** Pronounced like *ou* in *mouse*: **Baum, braun, Haus, Maus.**
- eu, äu** Pronounced like *oi* in *toil*: **heute, Leute, Bäume, Mäuse.**

4. Consonants

- b** At the beginning of a word or syllable as in English: **Ball, bis, blau, Butter.**
At the end of a word or syllable and before consonants like English *p*: **ab, gab, liebt, ob.**
- c** Occurs only in words of foreign origin, or in proper names
Before **a, o, u, au, ou**, and consonants, like English *k*: **Café, Cato, Cranach, Crusoe.**
Elsewhere like *ts* in *cats*: **Cäsar, Celsius, Cent, Cicero.**
- ch** Has four different sounds, for two of which there are no English equivalents. Front **ch** or **ich**-sound occurs after the front vowels **e, i, ei (ai), eu (äu), ö, ü**, and con-

sonants. The air is made to escape between the tongue and the roof of the mouth. Practice by whispering the *y* of *yes*: **ich, dich, Licht, mich.**

Back **ch** or **ach**-sound occurs after the back vowels **a, o, u,** and **au**: **auch, Buch, Dach, Loch.**

Before **a, o,** or a consonant, in words derived from Greek or Latin, like English *k*: **Charak'ter, Chor, Christ, Chronik.**

Before other vowels it has the **ich**-sound: **Chemie', China.**
In words derived from the French like *sh*: **Champa'gner, Chef, Chauffeur'.**

chs When the **s** is not an inflectional ending, or the beginning of a suffix, like English *x*: **Achse, Ochs, sechs, Wachs.**

ck Like English *ck*: **Acker, backen, stecken, Stück.**

d At the beginning of a word or before vowels like English *d*:
da, dumm, finden, reden.

At the end of a word or syllable and before consonants like English *t*: **Band, Hand, Land, Lied.**

dt Like English *t*: **sandte, Stadt, Städte, wandte.**

f Like English *f*: **fallen, Feder, Fenster, folgen.**

g At the beginning of a word or syllable like English *g* in *get*:
Garten, gut, legen, sagen.

At the end of a word or syllable and before consonants like *k*: **Berg, lag, sagt, Tag.** This is the official stage pronunciation, but many Germans pronounce final **g** like **ch.**

The ending **-ig** is always pronounced like **ich**: **König, wenig.**

gn Both letters are pronounced: **Gnade, Gnom, Vergnü'gen.**

h At the beginning of a word or syllable like English *h*: **haben, halten, hart, Haus.**

After a consonant (except **c** or **s**) and after a vowel it is silent, but indicates that the vowel is long: **geht, ihn, Lehrer, nehmen.**

j Like English *y*: **ja, Jahr, jeder, Ju'li.**

k Like English *k*: **kalt, Karte, Katze, Kind.**

kn Both letters are pronounced: **Knabe, kneten, Knie, Knopf.**

l Pronounced farther forward than in English. The tip of the tongue touches the back of the upper teeth: **laut, lernen, liegen, sollen.**

- m** Like English *m*: **Mann, mehr, mein, morgen; Dame, Dom, Heim, um.**
- n** Like English *n*: **Name, neben, nein, Nummer; Bahn, Ende, in, tun.**
- ng** Always like English *ng* in *singer* (not as in *finger*): **Finger, lang, sang, singen.**
- nk** Like English *nk*: **Bank, Funke, sinken, trinken.**
- p** Like English *p*: **Paar, Park, Post, Preis; Lippe, Oper, Papst, Suppe.**
- pf** Both letters are pronounced: **Pfeife, Pferd, Pflanze, Pfund; Apfel, Kupfer, Opfer, stampfen.**
- ph** Like English *ph*: **Phantasie', Phili'ster, Philosoph', Phrase.**
- ps** Both letters are pronounced: **Psalm, Psychologie'.**
- qu** Like English *kv*: **Qual, Quelle, quer, Quinta.**
- r** Either is trilled by vibrating the tip of the tongue against the upper gum, or it is guttural, i.e., the uvula is vibrated. American students generally find the trilled *r* easier: **reden, reisen, Ring, rund; fahren, Erde, Ohr, Uhr.**
- s** At the end of a word or syllable, when doubled, or before a consonant and not at the beginning of a word, like English *s* in *see*: **das, Haus, ist, Post.**
At the beginning of a word or syllable, before a vowel, like English *z* in *zeal*: **lesen, Rose, sehen, sein.**
Before *p* or *t*, but only at the beginning of a word, like English *sh*: **spät, spielen, Stein, still.**
- ss, ß** Like English *s* in *see*: **Fluß, lassen, messen, Straße.**
- sch** Like English *sh*: **schade, scheinen, Schiff, Schule; Busch, frisch, Tasche, waschen.**
- t** Like English *t*: **Tafel, Tee, tief, Tisch; Hut, rot, Luft, weit.**
Before the endings *-ian, -ion, -ient* in words of Latin origin like English *ts* in *cats*: **Nation', Patient', Portion', Station'.**
- th** Now found only in words of foreign origin and in proper nouns. Pronounced like English *t*. The English *th* sound does not exist in German: **Thea'ter, Theodor, Theorie', Thron.**
- tz** Like English *ts* in *cats*: **jetzt, Netz, Platz, sitzen.**
- v** Like English *f*: **Vater, viel, Vogel, von.**