

INTERMEDIATE GERMAN SHORT STORIES

*Learn German Vocabulary and
Phrases with Stories (B1/B2)*

 **VERBLIX**

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Intermediate German Short Stories – Learn German Vocabulary and Phrases with Stories (B1/ B2)

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations for buying “*Intermediate German Short Stories – Learn German Vocabulary and Phrases with Stories (B1/ B2)!*”

The humourist Mark Twain once said that if eternity existed for one thing, it would be to learn German. Joking aside, German is one of the most thought-provoking languages in the world, and truly a pleasure to immerse yourself in. And here you have a book filled with German short stories just waiting to be explored and enjoyed.

Short stories for German intermediate learners

Whether you are a high beginner or an intermediate learner of German, you will find the stories included in this book useful reading practice. At the end of each story there is a brief summary, as well as a glossary containing difficult words and a test to check your understanding. The

stories are fun to read and a great way to improve your German language skills.

A language in which a table is a “he”, but a girl is an “it”

German, like English, is a member of the West Germanic language family, but it retains some challenging grammatical features that no longer exist in English. It has four cases – nominative, accusative, genitive and dative – which are used to show how nouns and pronouns relate to each other. For instance, as the subject of a sentence, “the old man” is *der alte Mann* in German, but when it is the object, it becomes *den alten Mann*.

Also, German nouns have three genders – masculine, feminine and neuter. Sometimes there seems to be no logical basis for a gender – the word *Frau* (“woman”) is feminine, but *Mädchen* (“girl”) is neuter, while *Tisch* (table) is masculine! Another challenge is that German, like English, has plenty of irregular (“strong”) verbs.

A useful language, from multiple points of view

The ability to speak German is a valuable asset for anyone planning to travel or do business in a country where the language is used. It is an official language in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg and Liechtenstein. The large number of highly successful companies based in these countries means that German is a key language for international trade, and knowing it will facilitate communication with German-speaking businesspeople. Even if you are just a tourist, being able to converse with the locals in their own tongue can make for a more enjoyable travel experience.

Where is German spoken? How many German speakers are there?

Aside from the above-mentioned countries where German is an official language, some areas of France and Italy also have German-speaking populations. There are about 75 million German speakers in Germany alone, followed by 7 million in Austria and 3.4 million in Switzerland. In the Alsace region of France, 1.5 million people speak a

dialect of German, while Luxembourg has over 200.000 German speakers.

Variations and dialects

There are three national standard varieties of German – German, Austrian and Swiss – along with a broad spectrum of regional dialects. The regional spoken forms of German differ in terms of their grammar, vocabulary and sounds from the standard language. These dialects may be difficult to understand for someone who knows only standard German.

Standard German, or *Hochdeutsch*, is used in broadcast media and print. This book for learners was written in standard German by a native speaker from Germany.

Is it difficult for an English speaker to learn German?

As an English speaker, you might find German to be not as difficult as you imagined. This is because German and English have a common origin (both are Germanic languages), which explains why so much of German's vocabulary looks similar to English. For example, *Haus* is “house” and *Vater*

is “father”! You’ll also come across numerous familiar-sounding words that German has borrowed from Greek, Latin, French and even English itself. Learning to pronounce German is also fairly easy for English speakers. Clearly, knowing English puts you at an advantage when you start learning German.

Similarity to other languages

Despite being a sister language of German, English is not its closest relative. That honour goes to Dutch. Other languages closely related to German include Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. Having even a basic knowledge of any of these languages will make your life as a student of German much easier.

How to Learn a Foreign Language Fast

If you want to learn a foreign language fast, it's important that you put equal effort in developing the four skills of language learning. Developing these skills will help you develop your comprehension, and at the same time, set you up to become an effective communicator. Think about how you learned your first language. Usually, it's the listening skills that develop first, then speaking, then reading and writing. Here's a brief description of the 4 capabilities, or the LSRW skills.

Listening – the first skill that we learn in our native language. Known as a passive or receptive skill, listening involves receiving language through our ears, and allowing the brain to make sense of what was said. While listening is said to be the mother of all language skills, not many people put enough effort into developing their listening skills.

The best way to practice is to familiarize yourself with as much native sources of language as you can. Watch German movies (with or without the

subtitles) and listen to German podcasts and audiobooks. Try listening purely for the different sounds first before you start looking for the context of the material you're listening to.

Speaking – the second skill that we learn in our native language. Speaking is an active or productive skill that involves using our vocal tract to produce language that our brain has interpreted. Speaking is often the number one weakness for anyone acquiring a second language as it is common for us to start learning a language through reading.

One way to improve your speaking skill is to read text out loud. Practice reading along with a recording at first, then reread the text on your own, but this time, pay attention to the pronunciation and the inflections on the sentences.

Reading aloud activates your mouth and diaphragm's muscle memory and helps you get used to saying unfamiliar words out loud.

Reading – It may be the third skill that we learn from our native language, but reading is the first