

LESSON NOTES

Newbie S1 #1

Guten Tag!

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DIALOGUE - FORMAL GERMAN

MAIN

1. Frau Höhne : Guten Tag, Herr Jäger!
2. Herr Jäger : Guten Tag, Frau Höhne!
3. Frau Höhne : Wie geht es Ihnen?
4. Herr Jäger : Gut, danke, und Ihnen?
5. Frau Höhne : Auch gut, danke.
6. Herr Jäger : Auf Wiedersehen!
7. Frau Höhne : Auf Wiedersehen!

ENGLISH

1. Ms Höhne : Hello, Mr Jäger!
2. Mr Jäger : Hello, Ms Höhne!
3. Ms Höhne : How are you?
4. Mr Jäger : Good, thanks, and you?
5. Ms Höhne : Also good, thanks.
6. Mr Jäger : Goodbye!
7. Ms Höhne : Goodbye!

DIALOGUE - INFORMAL GERMAN

MAIN

1. Lisa : Hallo Thomas!
2. Thomas : Hallo Lisa!
3. Lisa : Wie geht es dir?
4. Thomas : Gut, danke, und dir?
5. Lisa : Auch gut, danke.
6. Thomas : Tschüss!
7. Lisa : Tschüss!

ENGLISH

1. Lisa : Hey Thomas!
2. Thomas : Hey Lisa!
3. Lisa : How are you?
4. Thomas : Good, thanks, and you?
5. Lisa : Also good, thanks.
6. Thomas : Bye!
7. Lisa : Bye!

VOCABULARY

German	English	Class	Gender
gut	good	adjective	
Tag	day	noun	masculine
Herr	Mister	noun	masculine (der)
Frau	Ms., woman	noun	feminine (die)
Wie geht es dir?	How are you? (informal)		
danke	thanks	expression	
und	and	conjunction	
Ihnen	to you (formal)	pronoun; dative	
auch	also, too	adverb	
Auf Wiedersehen!	Goodbye! See you!	expression	

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Heute bin ich gut drauf. Today I am in a good mood.	Ich fühle mich gut. I feel good.
Die Stunde war wirklich gut, und ich kann die Nächste kaum erwarten. The class was really good, and I can't wait for the next one.	Das klingt gut. Sounds good.
Heute ist ein guter Tag. Today is a good day.	Mein Tag hat heute sehr früh angefangen. My day started very early today.

Welcher Tag ist es heute?	Dieser Tag ist ein Feiertag.
What day is it today?	This day is a public holiday.
Heute ist ein guter Tag.	Herr Smith
Today is a good day.	Mr Smith
Die Frau arbeitet im Büro.	Frau Smith
The woman is working at the office.	Ms. Smith.
Wie geht es Ihnen, Herr Müller?	Danke für die schönen Blumen.
How are you, Mr Müller?	Thanks for the beautiful flowers.
Der Hund und die Katze spielen miteinander.	Thomas und Lisa.
The dog and the cat are playing together.	Thomas and Lisa.
Ich danke Ihnen.	Thomas kommt auch.
I thank you.	Thomas is coming, too.
Auf Wiedersehen! Bis zum nächsten Mal.	Auf Wiedersehen, Professor Martins!
Goodbye! See you next time.	Goodbye, professor Martins!

GRAMMAR

PRONUNCIATION

Unlike English, German is spelled almost phonetically. This will be a huge advantage in your studies. First, however, you will need to get accustomed to the German pronunciation. Throughout this course, listen carefully to the dialogue and imagine yourself saying the phrases, maybe even play dialogues repeatedly and whisper along. If at all possible, get at least a basic membership in order to have access to the PDF transcript – this will immensely help you as you will then be able to read the dialogue while listening to it, matching letters and words to their sounds. You will notice that German uses one extra character (*ß*) and has unique markers which look like two dots appearing over some vowels (*ä, ö, ü*).

VOWELS

Pay particular attention to vowels. One thing to note is that **German vowels are pronounced much more clearly than English**. There are also more vowel sounds than English, so that's why it's very important that you pronounce them clearly. Unlike English, try to maintain a **constant pitch** from start to finish without tapering off.

Some vowels, such as A, O, and U, can have two dots over them. We call these dots **umlaute**. They indicate **a change in the original pronunciation of the vowel**. Compare the following pairs of vowels:

- **a, ä**
a + e = ä (*Äpfel* = "apples") – it is pronounced like the "e" in "melon"
- **o, ö**
o + e = ö (*Öl* = "oil") – it is pronounced like the "I" in "girl"

- **u, ü**
u + e = ü (*Hürde* = "hurdle") – there's no direct equivalent

The vowels with the two dots over them are essentially a combination between the given vowel, and an E sound. Sometimes they're represented as AE, OE, or UE.

CONSONANTS

Now, let's take a look at German **consonants**. Like vowels, German consonants are predominantly similar to English. Other consonant sounds, however, may be a little more challenging.

Some consonants in German aren't actually pronounced as they look to an English speaker. Let's take a look at some of these letters.

The **German V**, isn't pronounced like an English V, but as an F sound. So both V and F in German, are pronounced as an F sound.

Vogel "bird", *Fett* "fat"

The **German W**, on the other hand, is pronounced like a V sound.

Wasser "water", *Wagen* "car"

POLITENESS

Just like French, and Italian, German distinguishes between a formal and an informal way of addressing people, depending on how familiar you are with them. Here are the main differences between formal and informal language:

Situation	Formal language	Informal language
Saying names	Use the last name	Use the first name
Saying "you"	Sie (and derived forms like <i>Ihnen</i>)	du (and derived forms like <i>dir</i>)
Greeting when meeting	Guten Tag "good day" Guten Morgen "good morning" Guten Abend "good evening"	Hallo "Hey", "Hi" Tach "day" n'Abend "d'evening"
Greeting when leaving	Auf Wiedersehen "till seeing-again"	Tschüss "Bye"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Germans are very peculiar about wishing to show respect and to be shown respect when talking to others. That is why sometimes even people who have known each other for a long time use 'formal' language with each other – it is a sign of mutual respect, not of coldness.

Even kids were supposed to address their parents formally until about 100 years ago. While this is no longer the case, you should still watch out who you address how.

Generally, you should only use informal language with a new acquaintance if:

- you are talking to somebody under 18
- you and the person you're talking with are both around student age
- you and the person you're talking with are relatives

In all other cases, you should wait till you are asked to switch to informal language – it's up to the older person or the one higher in rank to decide this. Your boss or teacher will certainly never ask you, as that would diminish his authority in the eyes of everybody. However, even regular acquaintances don't switch to using first names nearly as quickly as they do in the USA. If you just start by addressing a stranger informally, he may feel offended as you seem to treat him like a child. That being said, as a foreigner you certainly have some leeway in case you should forget.