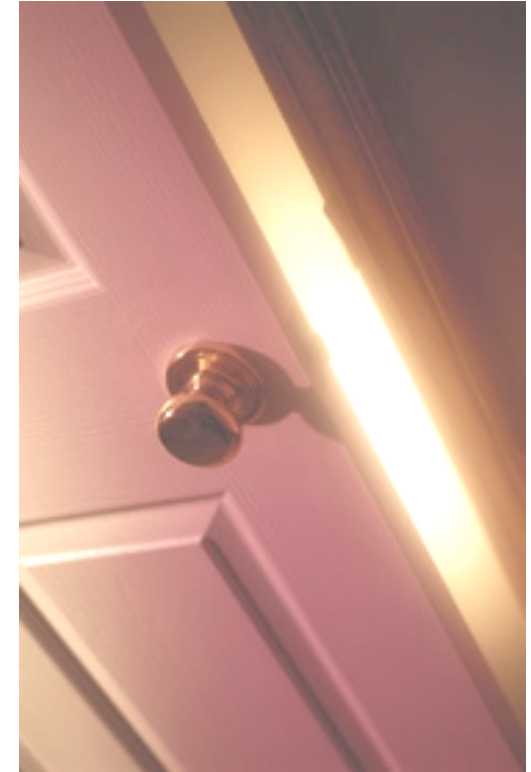


## Facts about German

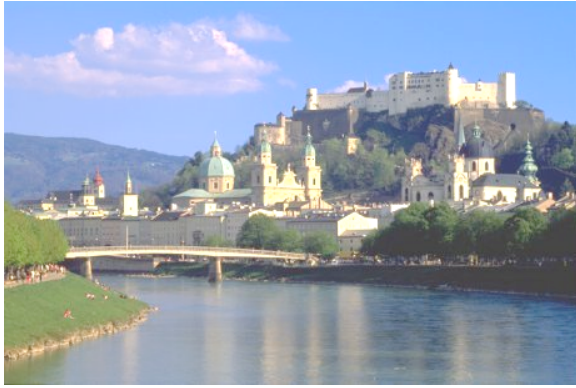
- **Official language** in the Federal Republic, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Poland, and Switzerland.
- **Germanic languages:** German and English are related to Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, Afrikaans, Dutch, and Yiddish.
- **Minority language** in the U.S., Canada, South Africa, Brazil, Chile, Venezuela and other Latin American countries.
- **Language of Science and Business:** Widely used in Europe, Russia and Asia.
- **Germany is the largest economy in Europe**, the third largest in the world.
- **Language of international business**, second only to English. In a global economy, speaking the language of your competition means significant business and career advantages.
- **US-European trade relations:** More than 1000 companies from German-speaking countries do business in the U.S. and more than 900 American firms have offices in German-speaking countries.
- **Graduate School:** German is most often required for graduate studies at U.S. universities.
- **Western Cultural Traditions:** The German-speaking countries of Central Europe have a rich 1200 year old history.
- **Arts and Sciences:** German is the language of science, medicine, technology, the arts, music, literature and philosophy.
- **95 Nobel Prizes** have gone to German speakers: Peace Prize (7), Literature (11), Physics (23), Chemistry (27), Medicine (26), and Economics (1).
- **42 million Americans report German ancestry:** At 15% Germans form the largest single heritage group in the U.S.

# LEARN GERMAN



*Open the Door  
to  
Opportunity!*

American Association of Teachers of German  
Maine Chapter



## Connect with Speakers of German worldwide!

- **Innovations:** Gutenberg's printing press, Hertz' discovery of electromagnetic waves, Ehrlich's development of chemotherapy, Einstein's theory of relativity and Brandenburg's creation of the MP3 digital music format are just a few examples.
- **Germany funds the most internships and research grants** for students, teachers and scientists who speak German: over 60,000 annually.
- **Tourism:** Over 25% of all tourists visiting the U.S. annually are German speakers.
- **World Wide Web:** Germany has 8,000,000 Internet domains. Globally, only 30% of all websites are in English.
- **Publishing:** 1 in 10 books in the world is published in German, eclipsed only by books published English and Chinese. Only 5% are translated into English.

### How long does it take?

Becoming fluent takes time, just like learning math, training to dance or to play a musical instrument does. The Foreign Service Institute divides the world's languages into **four groups**. Group 1 languages are most closely related to English in structure. To attain near-native fluency, it takes speakers of English for a minimum of

1. 600 hours in French or Spanish
2. 750 hours in German
3. 1100 hours in Russian
4. 2200 hours in Arabic or Chinese

### German is a global language

Despite making up just 2% of the world's population, **German ranks among the top 12 languages** spoken by non-native speakers **worldwide**.

It is estimated that

- over 800 Million people speak Chinese
  - over 370 Million speak English
  - over 350 Million speak Spanish
  - over 250 Million speak Arabic
  - over 185 Million speak Russian
  - over 130 Million speak French
  - over 125 Million speak Japanese
  - over 110 Million speak German
  - over 60 Million speak Italian
- as their first language.

### Language learning tips

- Set realistic goals and accept that you will not understand everything!
- Study frequently, for shorter periods of time and review, review, review.
- Practice actively: Speak aloud, write it out and form study groups. Language is about communication, learn together!
- Maximize your language exposure: practice with classmates, friends and native speakers, watch German movies and remember you won't understand everything!
- Study or travel abroad to use the language!

### Discover yourself and the World!

Learning a second language affords you an insider's view of another culture and a new perspective on your own. It develops your intellect while your enhanced ability to communicate with others beyond the world of English allows you to understand diversity at home and abroad. Linguistic and cultural proficiency enables you contribute to your own community and to the achievement of national goals such as economic development and national security.