

Recommended grammatical terminology (German)

Utilising a standard set of terminology across Key Stage 2 and 3 will equip children with a clearly defined set of terms and definitions, which they can use to talk about their knowledge and learning. Being able to understand and apply such terminology in their learning can boost students' confidence and help them to make links between the languages they are learning, including English.

This list has been compiled based on a) the core terminology needed in language teaching at Key Stage 3 and b) the terminology taught and tested at Key Stage 2. Use of this terminology will enable teachers to build on students' existing knowledge and apply these concepts to their future language learning.

The National Curriculum KS2 Programme of study for English contains the [full glossary](#) of grammatical terminology. The terms listed below include those that students are expected to know by the end of KS2, along with any additional grammatical concepts that arise in the KS3 SoW.

Key:

* indicates a term that is not included in the KS2 English programme of study. However, students may have met these terms in their KS2 foreign language teaching.

[] indicates (non-cognate) target language terms that are not explicitly taught in the KS3 SoW.

Rows highlighted in **grey** indicate grammatical concepts that are not explicitly taught in the KS3 SoW.

Core terminology:

English term	German term	Definition (with relevance to German)	Examples
Noun	[das Substantiv] / [das Nomen]	A noun is a word, which can be used after a determiner. They are words for a person, place, thing or idea. In German they are classified as masculine, feminine, or neuter, and singular or plural.	der Fußball – the football die Flasche – the bottle das Buch – the book
Noun phrase	[die Nominalphrase]	A noun phrase is a phrase with a noun as its head and which performs the function of a noun (e.g. subject or object of the verb)	Der großer Mann spielt Gitarre. (the big man plays guitar) Ärzte sind wichtig. (doctors are important)
Pronoun	das Pronomen	A pronoun is a word that can be used instead of a noun. It is used like a noun.	Ich (I) / ihn (him) / es (it)
Possessive adjective	das Possesivadjektiv	A possessive adjective is a type of determiner and shows ownership.	Das ist mein Buch. (that is my book)
Possessive pronoun	das Possesivpronomen	A possessive pronoun replaces a noun or noun phrase and shows ownership.	Das ist meins . (that's mine)
Reflexive pronoun*	das Reflexivpronomen	A reflexive pronoun shows when the subject and object of a verb are the same.	Ich wasche mich . (I'm washing myself) Er sieht sich im Spiegel. (he sees himself in the mirror)
Subject	das Subjekt	The subject of a verb is the person or thing that is doing (or being) the verb. The form of the verb depends on its subject.	Das Haus ist blau. (the house is blue) Er mag essen. (He likes to eat)

Object <i>Direct</i> <i>Indirect</i>	das Objekt	An object is used with a verb, and shows what the verb is acting on.	Sie liest das Buch . (she is reading the book). Der Mann versteht ihn . (the man understands him)
Singular	der Singular / die Singularform	Singular means one.	der Tisch (the table) die Frau (the woman) das Haus (the house)
Plural	der Plural / die Pluralform	Plural means 'more than one'.	die Tische (the tables) die Frauen (the women) die Häuser (the houses)
Determiner	das Determinativ / das Artikelwort	A determiner is a word that modifies a noun and provides more information about the noun. In German, determiners are classified as masculine, feminine, or neuter, and singular or plural.	(see examples below)
Article <i>Definite</i> <i>Indefinite</i>	der Artikel	Definite and indefinite articles are types of determiners. Definite articles modify nouns that are known to both the person who is listening/reading and the person who is speaking/writing. Indefinite articles modify nouns that are unknown.	der Tisch (the table) die Frau (the woman) das Haus (the house) ein Tisch (a table) eine Frau (a woman) ein Haus (a house)
Demonstrative	das Demonstrativ	Demonstratives are types of determiners. Demonstratives identify the noun that is referred to.	Dieser Mann ist Lehrer (this man is a teacher) Dieses Haus ist alt. (this house is old)
Quantifier	[das Zahlwort] / [der Quantor]	Quantifiers are a type of determiner. Quantifiers give an indication of quantity.	Die Mannschaft hat viele Spieler. (the team has many players) Der Junge sieht einige Hunde. (the boy sees some dogs)
Gender* <i>Masculine*</i> <i>Feminine*</i> <i>Neuter*</i>	[das Geschlecht] / [der Genus]	Gender refers to the grammatical gender of the noun (either masculine, feminine, or neuter in German). Gender determines the form of other words (e.g. determiners, adjectives) which appear with the noun.	<i>Masculine:</i> der Tisch (the table) <i>Feminine:</i> die Frau (the woman) <i>Neuter:</i> das Haus (the house)
Case* Row 1 (Nominative) Row 2 (Accusative) Row 3 (Dative) Row 4 (Genitive)	[der Fall]	Case shows a noun or pronoun's relationship with the other words in a sentence. Case determines the form of the noun or pronoun as well as the form of the article and/or adjective. The nominative case is used for a noun or pronoun that is the subject of the verb. The accusative case is used for a noun or pronoun that is the direct object of the verb. It is also used with certain prepositions. The dative case is used for a noun or pronoun that is the indirect object of the verb. It is also used with certain prepositions. The genitive case is used to show possession.	<i>Nominative:</i> Der Junge kauft den Hund. (the boy buys the dog) <i>Accusative:</i> Der Junge kauft den Hund. (the boy buys the dog) für den Mann (for the man) <i>Dative:</i> Er kauft ihm das Geschenk. (he buys him the present / he buys the present <i>for</i> him) mit dem Geld (with the money) <i>Genitive:</i> der Hund des Lehrers (the teacher's dog)
Adjective	das Adjektiv	An adjective is used to describe a noun, or after verbs like "be/become".	Die Katze ist schön . (the cat is beautiful) Das blaue Auto fährt schnell. (the blue car drives fast)

Adverb	das Adverb	An adverb is used to modify (add detail to) a verb, an adjective or another adverb.	Das blaue Auto fährt sehr schnell. (the blue car drives really fast) Das Essen ist ziemlich lecker. (the food is fairly tasty)
Word	das Wort	A word is a unit of language. The main function of a word is to convey meaning.	
Word family	die Wortfamilie	The words in a word family are related to each other by grammar and/or meaning.	arbeiten (to work, working) – die Arbeit (the work) – der Arbeiter (the worker)
Compound (word/noun)	[das zusammengesetzte Wort / Substantiv]	A compound word is a word made up of at least two root words.	das Kinderbuch (the children's book) das Polizeiauto (the police car)
Verb	das Verb	A verb has a subject, which is the noun that carries out (or is) the verb. Verbs have a non-finite form (infinitive) – the base form found in dictionaries. Verbs can also express tense (present/past/future). Verbs can express a wide range of meanings, like being, becoming, imagining, doing.	lesen (to read) Ich lese ein Buch (I read a book)
Infinitive*	der Infinitiv	The 'dictionary form' of the verb, equivalent to "to ..." in English (and sometimes "...ing"). The infinitive does not express tense, aspect, person or number.	lesen (to read / reading) zeigen (to show / showing)
Auxiliary verb*	[das Hilfsverb]	A 'helping' verb that appears with certain forms of another verb (infinitive or participle). It can indicate tense and aspect (ongoing or completed) of the verb.	haben (to have) sein (to be) werden (will)
Modal verb	das Modalverb	A modal verb is used to change the meaning of other verbs. They can express certainty, ability, or obligation.	mögen (to like) können (to be able to) sollen (should) müssen (must)
Conjugation*	die Konjugation	Changing an infinitive verb into an inflected form to specify tense, person, and/or number.	spielen (to play) → ich spiele (I play) spielen (to play) → ich habe gespielt (I played)
Verb inflection*	[die Flexion]	Verb inflection (often at the end of a verb) refers to letter(s) added to the base form of the verb and which specify information like the tense, person (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd), and number (singular, plural) of the verb.	Ich brauche e eine Flasche. (I need a bottle) Sie braucht t eine Flasche. (she needs a bottle)
Tense Future* Past Present - Continuous* - Simple*	[die Zeiten] / [die Zeitformen] das Futur [die Vergangenheit / Vergangenheitsform] das Präsens	Tense tells us when an event occurred (e.g. in the past, present, or future). It is often signalled by inflections on the verb.	[future tense example] Ich werde tanzen . (I will dance) Du wirst kochen . (you will cook) [perfect tense example] Der Junge hat ein Spiel gespielt . (the boy played a game) Hast du etwas gesagt ? (did you say something?) [present tense example] Der Mann kocht oft. (The man cooks often) Das Kind läuft jeden Morgen. (the child runs every morning)
Active	das Aktiv	In an active construction, the subject of the sentence is the subject (doer) of the verb.	Das Mädchen schreibt ein Buch. (the girl is writing a book)

Passive	das Passiv	In a passive construction, the subject of the sentence is the object (receiver) of the verb. It is used to place emphasis on the action rather than the subject (doer) of the verb.	Das Buch wird von dem Mädchen geschrieben. (The book was written by the girl)
Prefix	das Präfix	A prefix is added at the beginning of a word to turn it into another word.	Lieblingsfarbe (favourite colour) Lieblingstier (favourite animal) aufmachen (to open) zumachen (to close)
Suffix	das Suffix	A suffix is added to the end of one word to turn it into another word. Suffixes cannot stand on their own as a complete word.	Die Frauen en (the women) Die Sterne en (the stars)
Preposition	die Präposition	A preposition links a following noun or pronoun to some other word in the sentence.	mit (with) zu (to)
Sentence	der Satz	A sentence is a group of words, which are grammatically connected to each other, but not to any words outside the sentence. A sentence may consist of one or more clauses, connected by subordination or co-ordination.	Die Band spielt das Lied. (the band is playing the song)
Main clause	[der Hauptsatz]	A main clause can stand-alone as a complete sentence. It contains at least a subject and a verb.	Er lächelt. (He is laughing) Der junger Mann fährt ein Fahrrad. (the young man rides a bicycle)
Subordinate clause	[der Nebensatz]	A subordinate clause cannot stand-alone and does not form a simple sentence by itself. It is connected to the main clause of the sentence, by modifying the main clause or some part of it.	Der Lehrer ist spät dran, weil er den Zug verpasst hat. (the teacher is late, because he missed the train)
Relative clause	[der Relativsatz]	A relative clause is a type of subordinate clause, which modifies a noun.	Ich sehe der Mann, der mir geholfen hat. (I see the man who helped me)
Relative pronoun	das Relativpronomen	A relative pronoun is used in a relative clause, to refer back to the noun that is being modified.	Ich sehe der Mann, der mir geholfen hat. (I see the man who helped me)
Conjunction	die Konjunktion	A conjunction links two words or phrases together.	Ich habe ein Auto und ein Fahrrad. (I have a car and a bike) Der Lehrer mag arbeiten, aber der Arzt nicht. (the teacher likes working, but the doctor doesn't)

Definitions adapted from those provided in Appendix 2 of the Key Stage 2 Programme of Study for English (DfE, 2013)