



learning target

Aim of this section is to learn how to speak about past events.

German	English
Ich habe heute viel gearbeitet .	I worked a lot today.
Ich bin bei meiner Freundin gewesen .	I have been at my girlfriend.
Hast du sie gesehen ?	Did you see her?

rules

There are 3 tenses to speak about the past:

- das Perfekt (Perfect)
- das Präteritum (Preterite)
- das Plusquamperfekt (Pluperfect)

We will concentrate at first on the "Perfekt" because it's almost always used and so the most important way to speak about the past.

Don't confuse the "Perfekt" in German with the "Present Perfect" in English. It doesn't have the same purpose.

How do you form the "Perfekt" tense ?



Hilfsverben (auxiliary verbs = "helping verbs")

There are two "Hilfsverben" in German:

- haben (have)
- sein (be)

When do you have to use "haben" and when "sein"?

- You use "sein" when the verb shows a change of position or condition e.g. gehen (go), kommen (come), wandern (hiking)
- You use "sein" when the verb shows a crossing of a "boundary" e.g. sterben (die), einschlafen (fall asleep)
- You use "sein" when the verb is an intransitive verb (=verb without direct object)



For all other cases use "haben" as "Hilfsverb".

Another useful rule is that almost all weak verbs (see below) take "haben" as their "Hilfsverb".
 The only exception are the verbs "reisen" (travel) and "passieren" (happen).

examples:

- Ich **bin** gestern gekommen. (I arrived yesterday.)
- Er **ist** gerade gegangen. (He has just gone.)
- **Bist** du schon eingeschlafen? (Did you fall asleep already?)

The "Hilfsverb" is conjugated as usual. The main verb is transformed into the "Partizip II".

What is the "Partizip II"?

Like in English there are three "Stammformen" (principal forms) for every verb.

The "Partizip II" is the same as the "past participle" in English.

Deutsch		
1. Stammform (Infinitiv)	2. Stammform (Präteritum)	3. Stammform (Partizip II)
machen	machte	gemacht
haben	hatte	gehabt
gehen	ging	gegangen

Englisch		
1. principal form (infinitiv)	2. princ. form (simple past)	3. princ. form (past participle)
do	did	done
have	had	had
go	went	gone

How do you form the "Partizip II"?

As you already heard from Mr Wolf there are three groups of verbs:

- weak verbs (regular)
- strong verbs (irregular)
- mixed verbs (irregular)

weak verbs

Weak verbs are easy to handle. They are regular and follow a rule.

To form the "Partizip II" of weak verbs:

- take the stem (=verb without the ending "en")
- add "ge" in front of the stem
- add "t" after the stem



examples:

- machen (Infinitiv) -> **gemacht** (Partizip II)
- fragen (Infinitiv) -> **gefragt** (Partizip II)
- arbeiten (Infinitiv) -> **gearbeitet** (Partizip II)

A few weeks ago we dealt with separable verbs. They consists of prefix+stem+en. Here you follow the same rule.

Put the "ge" in front of the stem.

examples:

- einkaufen (Infinitiv) -> **eingekauft** (Partizip II)
- vorstellen (Infinitiv) -> **vorgestellt** (Partizip II)
- zuhören (Infinitiv) -> **zugehört** (Partizip II)

Of course there are some little exceptions to this easy rule:

exception 1: weak verbs which end with "ieren" don't get the prefix "ge" but only the suffix "t"

examples:

- studieren (Infinitiv) -> **studiert** (Partizip II)
- fotografieren (Infinitiv) -> **fotografiert** (Partizip II)
- diskutieren (Infinitiv) -> **diskutiert** (Partizip II)

exception 2: inseparable weak verbs don't get the prefix "ge" but only the suffix "t"

examples:

- besuchen (Infinitiv) -> **besucht** (Partizip II)
- zerstören (Infinitiv) -> **zerstört** (Partizip II)
- erholen (Infinitiv) -> **erholt** (Partizip II)

strong verbs

The second group are the strong verbs. They follow almost the same rules like the weak verbs but unfortunately, some of them change the stem vowel and some of them change the whole stem.

To form the "Partizip II" of strong verbs:

- take the stem (=verb without the ending "en")
- add "ge" in front of the stem
- add "en" after the stem
- change the stem vowel or the whole stem for some strong verbs



examples:

verbs with stem vowel change

- schreiben (Infinitiv) -> **geschrieben** (Partizip II)
- singen (Infinitiv) -> **gesungen** (Partizip II)
- fliegen (Infinitiv) -> **geflogen** (Partizip II)

verbs with change of the whole stem

- sein (Infinitiv) -> **gewesen** (Partizip II)
- gehen (Infinitiv) -> **gegangen** (Partizip II)
- essen (Infinitiv) -> **gegessen** (Partizip II)

Separable strong verbs behave similar to separable weak verbs.
They also get the "ge" between the separable prefix and the stem.

- take the stem (=verb without the ending "en")
- add "ge" in front of the stem
- add "en" after the stem
- change the stem vowel for some strong separable verbs

examples:

- einschlafen (Infinitiv) -> eingeschlafen (Partizip II)
- mitnehmen (Infinitiv) -> mitgenommen (Partizip II)
- ausgehen (Infinitiv) -> ausgegangen (Partizip II)

Inseparable strong verbs behave similar to inseparable weak verbs.
They also don't get the "ge" in front of the stem.

- take the stem (=verb without the ending "en")
- DON'T put the "ge" in front of the stem
- add "en" after the stem
- change the stem vowel for some strong inseparable verbs

examples:

- verstehen (Infinitiv) -> verstanden (Partizip II)
- erfinden (Infinitiv) -> erfunden (Partizip II)
- bekommen (Infinitiv) -> bekommen (Partizip II)

mixed verbs

The third group are the mixed verbs. They behave like strong and weak verbs. They've got the prefix "ge" and the suffix "t" like weak verbs but also change the stem vowel like strong verbs. Fortunately, there are just 8 of them.



examples:

- denken (Infinitiv) -> gedacht (Partizip II)
- kennen (Infinitiv) -> gekant (Partizip II)
- bringen (Infinitiv) -> gebracht (Partizip II)

word order

There is an easy rule where you have to put the "Hilfsverb" and the "Partizip II" in a statement.

- put the "Hilfsverb" after the subject
- put the "Partizip II" at the end of the sentence

examples:

- Ich habe sie gesehen. (I saw her.)
- Ich bin in Cagayan gewesen. (I've been in Cagayan.)
- Er hat ihr das Buch gebracht. (He brought the book to her.)

There is an easy rule where you have to put the "Hilfsverb" and the "Partizip II" in a question.

- put the "Hilfsverb" at the beginning of the sentence
- put the "Partizip II" at the end of the sentence

examples:

- Hast du sie gesehen? (Did you see her?)
- Bist du in Cagayan gewesen? (Have you been in Cagayan?)
- Hat er ihr das Buch gebracht? (Did he bring the book to her?)



separable strong verbs

Infinitiv	Präteritum	Partizip II	Englisch
anfangen	fing an	angefangen (h)	begin
ankommen	kam an	angekommen (s)	arrive
anrufen	rief an	angerufen (h)	call, phone
ausgehen	ging aus	ausgegangen (s)	go out
aussehen	sah aus	ausgesehen (h)	look like
einschlafen	schief ein	eingeschlafen (s)	fall asleep
fernsehen	sah fern	ferngesehen (h)	watch tv
fortgehen	ging fort	fortgegangen (s)	go away
herkommen	kam her	hergekommen (s)	come from
loswerden	wurde los	los geworden (s)	get rid of
mitnehmen	nahm mit	mitgenommen (h)	take along
stattfinden	fand statt	stattgefunden (h)	take place
umziehen	zog um	umgezogen (h)	change clothes
wiedersehen	sah wieder	wiedergesehen (h)	see again
vorschlagen	schlug vor	vorgeschlagen (h)	suggest
zugeben	gab zu	zugegeben (h)	admit
zurückkommen	kam zurück	zurückgekommen (s)	come back

inseparable strong verbs

Infinitiv	Präteritum	Partizip II	Englisch
bekommen	bekam	bekommen (h)	get
betrügen	betrog	betrogen (h)	cheat
bewerben	bewarb	beworben (h)	apply
entscheiden	entschied	entschieden (h)	decide
erfinden	erfand	erfunden (h)	invent / make up
gefallen	gefiel	gefallen (h)	like
unterbrechen	unterbrach	unterbrochen (h)	interrupt
verstehen	verstand	verstanden (h)	understand



"normal" mixed verbs

Infinitiv	Präteritum	Partizip II	Englisch
dürfen	durfte	gedurft (h)	may
können	konnte	gekonnt (h)	can
mögen	mochte	gemocht (h)	like
müssen	musste	gemusst (h)	must
sollen	sollte	gesollt (h)	should
wollen	wollte	gewollt (h)	want
brennen	brannte	gebrannt (h)	burn
bringen	brachte	gebracht (h)	bring
denken	dachte	gedacht (h)	think
kennen	kannte	gekant (h)	know
nennen	nannte	genannt (h)	call
rennen	rannte	gerannt (s)	run
senden	sandte	gesandt (h)	send
wissen	wusste	gewusst (h)	know

separable mixed verbs

Infinitiv	Präteritum	Partizip II	Englisch
beibringen	brachte bei	beigebracht (h)	teach
kennenlernen	lernte kennen	kennengelernt (h)	meet
mitbringen	brachte mit	mitgebracht (h)	bring along
nachdenken	dachte nach	nachgedacht (h)	think about

inseparable mixed verbs

Infinitiv	Präteritum	Partizip II	Englisch
erkennen	erkannte	erkannt (h)	recognize