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Language

How do I find the right language course?

Advice and referrals

When you live in Germany, it is important that you learn to speak German. If you speak German, this will help you in everyday life and in your contact with other people. Also, if you want [to start working](#), start a [training course](#) or [study](#) for a degree at university, it is very important to know the language.

There are different language levels that build upon one another. The [levels](#) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) are used in language and integration courses.

The range of German course programmes and different types of course is huge. They are aimed at different groups of people. The following advice centres are available to help you in your search for the right course:

Adult migrants from the age of 27 upwards:

The [Migrationsberatung für Erwachsene](#) will support you to sign up to an integration course (IK) and to find a suitable course provider.

Advice for migrants up to the age of 27:

The [Youth Migration Service](#) will help you register for an integration course (IK) and find a suitable course provider

For further advice on the subject of language (admission requirements, registration procedures, special courses, etc.):

Language advice at MigraDO (♀ address: [Friedensplatz 7](#))

You want to learn German and are looking for a suitable German course?

We would be happy to advise you!

As part of a free consultation, we will try to find a suitable language course for you, taking into account your previous language skills and personal circumstances.

Target group:

- Anyone with language support needs, irrespective of residence status and benefit provider
- People with and without access to mainstream language support
- People looking for specific language courses (courses for parents, courses for women, language cafés, language exchange groups, etc.)

Services:

- Independent referral advice on various language support services offered by all language course providers in Dortmund



- Advice on basic education and courses designed to develop literacy skills
- Information on access requirements for both subsidised and non-subsidised language courses
- Advice on understanding your language level
- Information on costs or exemption from costs for language support
- Information on required application forms (BAMF, Jobcenter, Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit))
- Information on local advisory centres which recognise professional qualifications obtained abroad

Links

- [Übersicht der Sprachbildungsangebote DaZ DaF Dortmund 042025 .pdf](#) (.pdf)

Interpreters

Interpreters

If you don't yet have the language skills in German and have to go to authorities such as the Ausländerbehörde (Immigration Office), Sozialamt (Social Welfare Office) or Schulamt (School Authorities), you will need an interpreter. And an interpreter can also be very helpful for visits to the doctor or during parents' evenings at schools and nurseries.

Some authorities and institutions have their own language mediators and you can use them during appointments. When you make an appointment, please always ask if an interpreter will be provided free of charge.

Often, you can also ask a friend to support you. Please do not pay money for strangers to accompany you. It is better to contact the local offices of the integration network ["lokal willkommen" in good time](#).

Communication aids

Communication aids

It may be difficult to communicate with others if you do not speak German yet. There are free communication aids that you can use:

[Refugee Phrasebook](#): multilingual free dictionary on different topics

You can also use free apps to translate things for you: [Google Translate](#) (→ [Android](#) and [iOS](#))

[DeepL](#) (uses artificial intelligence; available in English, Spanish, Polish, Dutch, French and Italian)

[Voice Translator \(Android\)](#), [Voice Translator Pro Speech \(iOS\)](#)

[Oroboo Angel](#) (placements for language partners, free video/audio translations for problem situations, 5-minute chat with the possibility to extend time, many languages combinations!)



If you need to go to the doctor, this [picture dictionary](#) or this free app (German, English, Arabic and Dari) may be of help: [AOK Health Navigator](#) (Android)

Learn German by yourself (online)

You can learn German on your smartphone or on your computer. Take advantage of the many, often free offers to learn German quickly and make the best use of the time you have to wait before your language course begins. The online trainer can also be useful during your language course.

- The [onSET-online language placement test](#) enables refugees, full-time staff and volunteers to understand their language level.
- In addition to providing information on life in Germany and the topics of asylum, vocational training and work, the ["Ankommen App" \(Arrival App\)](#) contains a self-study course (starting at level A1) for your first few weeks in Germany.
- The [Language Guide](#) for German makes it possible to learn basic vocabulary without needing to register for a service.
- The [Goethe Institute](#) offers various free exercises and apps for learning German: The ["Deutschtrainer A1" \(German Trainer A1\)](#) contains practice materials with vocabulary and structures for beginners at A1 level. There are also [exercises for German in the world of work](#). The exercises are specially adapted to certain job categories. The ["Die Stadt der Wörter" \("City of Words"\)](#) app is an app where people with no previous knowledge can learn vocabulary in a fun way – in German, English, French and other languages.
- The [VHS-Lernportal \(VHS Learning Portal\)](#) offers German courses from levels A1 to B1. You can also improve your German knowledge for work.
- German for levels A1 to B2, as well as practical information about living in Germany, can be found via the page [German info](#).
- ["Mein Deutschbuch" \(My German Book\)](#) is an extensive resource for learning the German language. The website is designed for learners and teachers, for levels A1-B2.
- [Deutsch-Uni Online \(DUO\) \(German University Online\)](#) runs a range language learning programmes, from A1 to C2.
- The radio station ["Deutsche Welle"](#) offers online language exercises that use video clips and video series. They are matched to the language levels A1 to C and are a fun addition to any other German course you might be studying.
- [DaFür – German as a foreign language](#) contains online modules and apps for learners with and without a basic knowledge of the language.
- The app ["MeinVokabular" \(My Vocabulary\)](#) ([iOS](#) & [Android](#)) from the "Handwerkskammer für Mittelfranken" (Chamber of Crafts for Middle Franconia) lets you create your own dictionary and vocabulary flash cards using photos.
- You will find a great of important expressions or activities for individual jobs at ["Meine Berufserfahrung" \(My Job Experience\)](#).
- ["AsylPlus Deutsch lernen"](#) gives you an overview of different offers for learning German.

Recommendations from language course attendees:



- At ["Deutsch mit Marija"](#), the YouTuber covers the many peculiarities of the German language in her videos and gives helpful tips and tricks for learning German from A1-C2.
- The Youtube channel [Hallo Deutschschule](#) teaches languages levels from A1 to B2 in cartoon films with many dialogues.
- The YouTuber [Deiaa Abdullah](#) from Syria gives German lessons in Arabic, as well as many tips for your first days and months in Germany and explains German everyday life and the German mentality in an entertaining way.
- [Duolingo](#) offers extensive material for practising spelling and listening comprehension. Content is taught in a game-like manner from level to level.

Do I need a certificate?

In the situations explained below, you either need a certificate confirming your German language level or it is very much recommended.

Application for an apprenticeship or job

A certificate confirming your German language level improves your chances of getting an apprenticeship or job. You will stand out better compared to other applicants if you have a certificate.

Vocational further education or qualification

You often need a specific German language level to take part in vocational qualification courses. Often you need to prove this with a certificate.

Access to studying at higher-education colleges and universities

You can prove sufficient German language proficiency to undertake a course at a higher-education college or a university with one of these certificates:

- German Language Diploma from the [Conference of Ministers for the Arts and Culture](#) (Second ability level)
- [DSH2](#)
- [TestDaf, ability level 4](#) in all 4 subsections.
- Assessment test (= attendance of the Studienkolleg / preparatory college. No further tests necessary)
- Certificates that are recognised by bilateral agreement or other agreements recognised by the Kultusministerkonferenz (Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, KMK) or the Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (German Rectors' Conference, HRK)
- [Goethe Institute](#) examinations at level C1 or C2
- ["telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule"](#)
- Completed German language and literature studies (not education studies)
- Leaving certificate at Gymnasium, Studienkolleg, Fachhochschule or Hochschule level

For an unlimited residence permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis / settlement permit)



For a Niederlassungserlaubnis (settlement permit) you have to prove sufficient knowledge of German. This is possible with the certificate after you have participated in the »» integration course "German test for migrants" (DTZ). A German school-leaving qualification can also serve as a certificate of German competency.

If you need help in finding the right integration course, you can access this [here](#).

For naturalisation (getting German citizenship)

In addition to a certificate proving sufficient German language knowledge, you have to prove knowledge about the legal & societal rules and living conditions in Germany. This could be the 'Life in Germany' test, for example. This test is the final qualification of the orientation course (which forms part of the »» integration course).

If you need help in finding the right integration course, you can access this [here](#).

Offers


"Language connects"

In this project, pupils and students help children from immigrant families to learn German. The special thing about it is that the children are supported in their families in a playful way. The language scouts (from year 9), who are trained by experienced teachers, visit the children, who are usually aged between 4 and 10, at home. They bring along games, picture and reading books and spend an hour with the child. Learning the German language happens almost incidentally and is a lot of fun!

The contact person for this programme is

Gabriele Krieling

Office for the Affairs of the Lord Mayor and the Council
MIA-DO Municipal Integration Centre Dortmund

 [Betenstraße 19](#)
44135 Dortmund



[0231/5026490](tel:0231/5026490)



gkrieling@stadtdo.de



www.miadoki.dortmund.de

"Griffbereit"




This is a programme for families whose one to three-year-old child does not yet have a place at a daycare centre. In the Griffbereit group, families play, do crafts and sing in German and in their other family languages. This promotes multilingualism. It is also a parent education programme: parents learn how they can strengthen their children's general and linguistic development. The group is accompanied by two trained parent counsellors. The programme is free of charge and takes place once a week for 90 minutes in an educational institution, such as a day care centre.

The contact person for this group is

Philipp Tilmann

Office for the Affairs of the Lord Mayor and the Council
MIA-DO Municipal Integration Centre Dortmund

 [Bettenstraße 19](#)
44137 Dortmund



[0231/5027603](tel:0231/5027603)



ptilmann@stadtdo.de




www.miadoki.dortmund.de

"Language school with a parrot"

The "Sprachschule mit Papagei" offers free language support for children aged 4 - 6 without a place in a daycare centre.

Here the children learn German in a playful way. The children are supported by two teachers.


The language support programme takes place at  Mallinckrodtstr. 64, 44145 Dortmund.


 Mondays to Fridays

1st group: 08:45 am to 11:45 am

2nd group: 13:15 to 16:15

Please register by phone or via our homepage:

 01573 3802018

 0231 13747457

 [language-school-with-plapagei](#)

 [Flyer Arabic/German](#)



 [Flyer Romanian/German](#)

 [Flyer Turkish/German](#)