Languages: Progression Guidance for German DRAFT

November 2026

Version 1.0

Contents

Introduction 2

Using this guidance 3

Level of Language – Descriptors 4

Progression in German 5

Understanding People, Places and Cultures in German 6

Using cultural contexts across the progression 7

Early Level 8

Language Progression 8

Grammar Progression 10

First Level 12

Language Progression 12

Grammar Progression 14

Second Level 16

Language Progression 16

Grammar Progression 18

Third Level 22

Language Progression 22

Grammar Progression 24

Fourth Level 28

Language Progression 28

Grammar Progression 30

Introduction

This guidance supports practitioners to interpret and apply the Languages Know-Do-Understand (KDU) Framework and sets out the progression in knowledge, skills and understanding from Early to Fourth Level in German.

Learning a language involves both understanding language and using it to communicate. The framework is organised around two complementary aspects of language learning:

- **Receptive language** – what learners **recognise** or **understand** through listening, reading and viewing.
- **Productive language** – what learners communicate through talking, writing and other forms of language **use**.

Learners will often understand more than they can use themselves. They may recognise vocabulary, patterns and structures in listening and reading before they are ready to use them when talking or writing. The guidance reflects this difference throughout the progression.

The examples show what expectations within the KDU Framework may look like in German. They illustrate the vocabulary, sentence patterns and grammatical features learners may encounter and use at different levels. They are not intended to prescribe particular topics, contexts or sequences of learning.

Progression in German is cumulative. Language encountered at an earlier level remains part of later learning and can be revisited, extended and used in new contexts. Learners will not necessarily demonstrate every feature described at a level at the same time. Practitioners should use professional judgement, drawing on evidence of learning over time and taking account of learners' prior experiences and starting points.

Using this guidance

This guidance is organised from Early to Fourth Level. At each level, it provides examples of the language learners may understand and use, followed by a grammar progression which shows how features of German may develop across the levels. This accompanying progression guidance complements the Languages KDU Framework by:

- illustrating the characteristics of language progression in German
- exemplifying possible grammar progression in German.

At each level, the guidance includes:

- an overview of the characteristics of language at that stage
- language exemplification showing the language resource that German learners are likely to recognise, understand and use
- exemplification of the types of grammatical knowledge in German that learners are likely to recognise, understand and use

The terms *Words and Short Phrases*, *Words and Phrases*, *Basic Language*, *Simple Language* and *Straightforward Language* reflect the language used in the KDU Framework. They describe progression in the language that learners understand and use rather than fixed measures of sentence length or grammatical complexity.

The grammar progression distinguishes between features learners may **recognise** or **understand** (receptive language) and those they may **use** (productive language). Learners may understand grammatical features before they are ready to use them themselves. A feature appearing in the *Understand* column does not mean that learners need to know its grammatical name or explain how it works.

The grammar tables are not intended as a syllabus or checklist to be taught in order. They help practitioners identify how familiar features of German can develop over time and support decisions about appropriate next steps. Language should be encountered and used for meaningful purposes, with grammatical understanding developing through engagement with German.

Level of Language – Descriptors

The level of language used in the KDU Framework develops from *Words and Short Phrases* at Early Level to *Straightforward Language* at Fourth Level. These descriptors apply across receptive and productive language and should be considered in relation to the context and purpose for which the language is being used. They are intended to support a shared understanding of progression, with the focus on increasing range, flexibility and accuracy, and not the length or grammatical complexity of learners' language.

Level	Descriptor	Definition
Early	Words and Short Phrases	*Words and Short Phrases* describes highly familiar individual words or groups of words associated with highly familiar contexts, routines and experiences.
First	Words and Phrases	*Words and Phrases* describes highly familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns which recur frequently. A single idea is usually expressed in highly familiar contexts, and communication follows predictable patterns with little variation.
Second	Basic Language	*Basic Language* describes familiar high-frequency vocabulary and sentence patterns to communicate information, preferences and ideas. Words, phrases and familiar patterns may be changed and combined in different contexts. Sentences usually express one main idea and may have some supporting detail.
Third	Simple Language	*Simple Language* describes familiar vocabulary and mainly simple sentence patterns to communicate meaning. Ideas may be linked and developed by adding information or detail using conjunctions. Structure remains predictable with one or two ideas expressed per sentence.
Fourth	Straightforward Language	*Straightforward Language* describes a wider range of familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns across familiar contexts. Ideas are linked and developed to include opinions, viewpoints and reasons. Sentences may vary in length and detail, but language often follows formulaic patterns.

Progression in German

Progression in German involves more than learning additional vocabulary or grammatical features. As learners progress, they draw on a growing repertoire of language and become increasingly able to select, combine and adapt what they know to communicate their own meaning.

Progression may be seen as learners being increasingly able to:

- understand a wider range of spoken and written German
- communicate developed and connected ideas
- draw on language encountered previously in new contexts
- make choices about the vocabulary and structures they use
- rely less on modelling and scaffolding for familiar language
- use familiar language with increasing flexibility and accuracy.

These aspects will not always develop at the same rate. A learner may, for example, understand language that is more developed than they can produce independently.

An example of progression in German

Level	Expressing a view or preference
Early	Learners may join in with or use a familiar expression such as *gut!* within a modelled activity.
First	Learners may reuse familiar patterns such as *Ich mag Fußball. Ich mag Musik nicht.*
Second	Learners begin to change and combine familiar language: *Ich mag Tennis, aber ich mag Rugby nicht.*
Third	Learners add detail and link related ideas: *Ich mag Deutsch und Kunst, aber ich mag Mathe nicht besonders. Deutsch ist interessant.*
Fourth	Learners develop ideas and give reasons using a wider range of familiar language: *Ich lerne gern Deutsch, weil es interessant ist. Ich finde Sprachen wichtig, denn man kann mit anderen Leuten sprechen.*

This example illustrates one possible progression rather than a prescribed sequence. The language that learners use will depend on the context, their prior learning and the support available.

Understanding People, Places and Cultures in German

Learning about people, places and cultures is an important part of learning German. Cultural learning should be integrated naturally into language learning and provide contexts through which learners develop their understanding of *Identity and Belonging*, *Perspectives and Worldviews*, and *Cultures and Traditions*.

German is used across different countries, regions and communities. Cultural learning should reflect this diversity and avoid presenting a single or stereotypical view of German-speaking people or places. Learners should encounter contemporary experiences and perspectives alongside traditions and aspects of the past.

The contexts below are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Practitioners can select contexts that are appropriate for their learners and use them to develop cultural understanding alongside the German that learners understand and use. The same context can be revisited at different levels as learners develop their language and explore ideas in greater depth.

Context	Possible examples
Celebrations and traditions	• Advent, Christmas and winter traditions • St Nicholas' Day (*Nikolaustag*) and other seasonal traditions • Easter and spring traditions • regional carnival traditions, such as *Karneval*, *Fasching* and *Fastnacht* • local and regional festivals and traditions • celebrations and traditions from different cultural communities
Daily life	• family life • school life and the school day • daily routines • food and mealtimes • hobbies, sport and leisure • similarities and differences in everyday experiences across German-speaking communities
People and communities	• children and young people in German-speaking communities • multilingual people and communities • contemporary and historical figures where relevant • different identities, experiences and viewpoints within communities
Places	• Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein • other places and communities where German is used • regions, cities, towns, rural areas and landscapes • landmarks, architecture and places of interest • regional identities, linguistic diversity and minority languages

Using cultural contexts across the progression

The cultural context does not determine the level of language. A familiar context can be explored at more than one level while the German learners understand and use continues to develop.

For example, learners might first encounter a celebration through songs, images or stories. As their learning develops, they might describe what people do, compare experiences or explore how a tradition varies between places and communities. Later, the same context might provide opportunities to consider identity, different perspectives, diversity and change.

Cultural understanding should not be limited by the German learners can produce. Where appropriate, discussion in the language of instruction can support learners to explore ideas and perspectives that go beyond the German they can use.

The suggested contexts are not intended to become a checklist of cultural knowledge. Practitioners can make professional judgements about the people, places, communities and experiences that provide meaningful contexts for their learners. The focus should remain on developing learners' understanding of the diversity of German-speaking communities while continuing to develop their language knowledge and skills.

Early Level

Language Progression

The examples below illustrate the German that learners may recognise or understand and use at this level.

Early Level – Words and Short Phrases	
Words and Short Phrases describes highly familiar individual words or groups of words associated with highly familiar contexts, routines and experiences.	
Receptive	**Productive**
Learners may **recognise** or **understand** language such as: *Hallo!* *Guten Morgen!* *Tschüss!/Auf Wiedersehen!* *bitte* *danke* *ja/nein* *nein* *Komm!* *Schau mal!* *Hört zu!* *Setzt euch!* *Hund* *Ball* *rot* *eins, zwei, drei* *Wie geht's?* *Gut!* *Das ist...*	Learners may **use** language such as: *Hallo!* *Guten Morgen!* *Tschüss!* *ja/nein* *danke* *bitte* *Gut!* *Super!* *Ich heiße ...* *Hund* *rot* *eins, zwei, drei.*

Comments/Guidance

At this stage, regular opportunities to hear and take part in German are created through play, songs, stories, games, routines and interaction.. Learners develop familiarity with its sounds, rhythms and patterns through repeated experiences in familiar contexts. Experiences are mainly adult-initiated and modelled, with meaning supported through gesture, actions, objects, images and familiar contexts.

Understanding may be shown through an action, gesture, facial expression, selecting, matching or pointing. A spoken response is not always required.

At Early Level, progress may be seen in learners recognising familiar German more readily, responding appropriately and beginning to join in without always needing an immediate prompt. Talking develops from participation and imitation rather than from an expectation that learners construct language independently.

There is no expectation that learners know grammatical terminology or can explain the patterns they encounter. Grammar is experienced through the language itself.

Suggested contexts for learning

At Early Level, contexts should provide regular opportunities for learners to hear, recognise and join in with familiar German. A small number of contexts allows language to be revisited frequently through routines, songs, games, stories and interaction.

Suggested contexts can include:

- greetings
- self: name and age
- classroom instructions
- colours
- numbers to 10
- days of the week.

These contexts are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Progression should be seen in the German learners understand and use, rather than in moving through a fixed sequence of topics.

Grammar Progression

At Early Level, learners encounter grammatical patterns through familiar words and short phrases rather than through explicit grammar teaching. They begin to recognise recurring features of German through repeated exposure and may reproduce some familiar language through modelling. **There is no expectation that learners understand or apply grammatical rules at this stage**.

Grammatical feature	EARLY Words and short phrases	
	Understand	**Use**
Nouns and articles	Familiar nouns, e.g. *Hund, Katze, Apfel, Wasser*.	Familiar nouns when modelled. No concept of grammatical gender is expected.
Adjectives	Familiar descriptive words supported by context, e.g. *groß, klein, rot, blau.*	Repeat familiar descriptive words.
Possessive adjectives	Some highly familiar phrases containing *mein/meine* through context.	May repeat a familiar possessive phrase.
Personal pronouns	*ich* and *du* in highly familiar language, e.g. *Ich bin… Wie heißt du?*	*ich* in learned phrases, e.g. *Ich bin Robbie.*
Verbs	Familiar actions through songs, routines, stories and gesture, e.g. *spielen, essen, trinken*. Highly familiar *ich bin*… expressions through context. Familiar instructions supported by gesture and routine, e.g. *Hör zu! Schau!*	Join in with or repeat familiar action language. May use learned expressions such as *ich bin…*
Negation	Familiar negative responses such as *nein* through context.	*nein* as a familiar response.

Interrogatives	A small number of routine questions through context, e.g. *Wie heißt du? Wie geht's?*	A word or learned response or show understanding with a gesture.
Prepositions	Some familiar location language through context, e.g. *hier*	

First Level

Language Progression

The examples below illustrate the German that learners may recognise or understand and use at this level.

First Level – Words, Characters and Phrases	
Words and Phrases describes highly familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns which recur frequently. A single idea is usually expressed in highly familiar contexts, and communication follows predictable patterns with little variation.	
Receptive	**Productive**
Learners may **recognise** or **understand** language such as: *Hallo! Ich heiße Mia. Das ist mein Hund. Er heißt Max. Meine Lieblingsfarbe ist rot. Ich mag Tennis und ich spiele Tennis mit meinem Freund. Tschüss!*	Learners may **use** language such as: *Hallo!* *Ich heiße Ben.* *Ich habe eine Katze.* *Das ist gelb.* *Tschüss!*
Comments/Guidance	
At First Level, learners build on the familiar German they have already encountered through regular opportunities to listen, read, respond and interact. Modelling and repetition continue to support learning as learners begin to communicate using familiar language. Experiences of spoken and written German come through adult-initiated activities such as songs, stories, games, conversations, routines and texts. Learners demonstrate progression by recognising and responding to a growing range of familiar language. They begin to reuse familiar patterns and make small changes to learned phrases, for example by substituting familiar vocabulary to communicate an idea.	

Learners begin to use familiar language with increasing independence and confidence where there are opportunities to participate, respond and interact with others. Learners also begin to recognise familiar written words and short phrases as their literacy skills develop.

The emphasis is on successful communication. Learners are not expected to apply grammatical rules independently at this stage.

Suggested contexts for learning

At First Level, familiar contexts provide opportunities for learners to extend the German they understand and begin to use words and phrases themselves. Contexts can be revisited regularly so that learners can reuse familiar patterns and make small changes using known vocabulary.

Suggested contexts can include:

- numbers to 50
- months and dates
- classroom language
- family and pets
- where you live
- feelings
- body parts
- weather

These contexts are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Practitioners can revisit contexts from Early Level and introduce others that allow learners to extend the range of familiar German they understand and use.

Grammar Progression

At First Level, learners continue to encounter grammar mainly through familiar words, phrases and learned patterns. They begin to notice some recurring features of German and reproduce familiar structures but are not expected to apply grammatical rules independently. Receptive understanding will often be broader than the language learners can use themselves.

Grammatical feature	FIRST Words, characters and phrases	
	Understand	**Use**
Nouns and articles	Recognise that German nouns begin with a capital letter in familiar written language, e.g. *Hund, Schule, Freund*. Recognise familiar *der/die/das + noun* combinations, e.g. *der Hund, die Katze, das Buch*. Recognise familiar *ein/eine* phrases as whole units, e.g. *ein Hund, eine Katze*. Recognise familiar accusative phrases such as *Ich habe einen Bruder* as whole language.	Familiar nouns in learned phrases and begin to reproduce capital letters in writing. Some familiar article + noun combinations as learned language. Accurate selection of gender is not expected independently. Reproduce some learned *ein/eine* combinations. Reproduce familiar accusative expressions without case awareness.
Adjectives	Familiar descriptions, e.g. *Das ist groß. Der Hund ist klein.*	Familiar adjectives in learned patterns, e.g. *Es ist rot. Ich bin müde.*
Possessive adjectives	Familiar *mein/meine* phrases, e.g. *meine Mutter, mein Hund.*	Familiar *mein/meine* combinations as learned language.
Personal pronouns	*ich*, *du*, *er*, *sie* in familiar language.	*ich* and some other familiar pronouns within learned and modelled phrases, e.g. *Ich mag… Er ist… Sie ist…*
Verbs	Familiar whole phrases such as *Ich spiele… Ich mag… Ich wohne…*	A small repertoire of learned verb phrases, e.g. *Ich spiele Fußball. Ich mag Musik.*

	Familiar *bin, ist, habe, hat* within known phrases. Familiar expressions such as *Ich möchte…* as whole meaningful phrases. May recognise familiar references to past events in stories or conversations without analysing their form. Familiar future time words such as *morgen* through context. An increasing repertoire of familiar classroom instructions, e.g. *Lies! Schreib! Öffne dein Buch!*	Familiar *ich* bin… / *ich* habe… phrases, e.g. *Ich bin müde. Ich habe einen Hund.* *Ich möchte…* in predictable contexts, e.g. *Ich möchte Wasser*. No understanding of modal grammar is expected. May use familiar time words with learned language. May repeat or use some familiar instructions during activities.
Negation	Familiar negative phrases containing *nicht* or *kein* as whole expressions.	Some learned negative phrases, e.g. *Ich mag das nicht.*
Interrogatives	Familiar questions containing words such as *wie, was, wo*.	Ask or repeat familiar questions, e.g. *Wie heißt du? Wo wohnst du?*
Prepositions	Familiar phrases such as *in der Schule*, *zu Hause* as whole units.	Some learned location phrases.
Connectives	Familiar items joined with *und*.	Join familiar words and phrases using *und*, e.g. rot *und* blau.
Sentence structure	Recognise recurring familiar sentence patterns such as *Ich bin…, Ich habe…, Ich spiele…, Ich mag….*	Reuse familiar sentence patterns and substitute familiar vocabulary.

Second Level

Language Progression

The examples below illustrate the German that learners may recognise or understand and use at this level.

Second Level – Basic Language	
Basic Language describes familiar high-frequency vocabulary and sentence patterns to communicate information, preferences and ideas. Words, phrases and familiar patterns may be changed and combined in different contexts. Sentences usually express one main idea and may have some supporting detail.	
Receptive	**Productive**
Learners may understand language such as: *Hallo! Ich heiße Mia und ich wohne in Dundee. Ich habe einen Bruder und einen Hund. Am Wochenende spiele ich Fußball und sehe fern. Gestern war ich im Park. Morgen gehe ich schwimmen. Deutsch macht Spaß.*	Learners may use language such as: *Hallo! Ich heiße Ben.* *Ich wohne in Glasgow.* *Ich habe eine Schwester und einen Hund.* *Ich mag Tennis, aber ich mag Rugby nicht.* *Ich gehe am Samstag ins Kino. Deutsch ist interessant.*
Comments/Guidance	
At Second Level, learners build on familiar German and begin to make more choices about the language they use. They draw on language they already know to communicate information, preferences and ideas across familiar contexts. They begin to change and combine familiar language, rather than relying only on fixed or memorised phrases. Learners should experience German through listening, talking, reading and writing across a range of familiar contexts. They should have frequent opportunities to interact with others, ask and answer questions, exchange information, describe experiences and express preferences	

using familiar basic language. Regular opportunities for learners to make choices, adapt familiar basic language and communicate for a range of purposes help to develop independence and confidence. Models, sentence starters and other supports remain useful, particularly when new language is introduced.

At Second Level, learners demonstrate progression by beginning to change and combine familiar German. They may use prior learning of sentence patterns with different vocabulary, link familiar ideas and draw on language learned previously when responding to questions or sharing information.

Learners may communicate successfully while accuracy in pronunciation and grammar will vary. The emphasis remains on successful communication, while encouraging increasing accuracy and confidence in the use of German.

Suggested contexts for learning

At Second Level, contexts should provide opportunities for learners to use basic German for a wider range of purposes. Learners can draw on familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns to give information, express preferences and simple ideas, ask and answer questions, and begin to change and combine language they already know.

Suggested contexts can include:

- numbers to 100
- calendar and birthdays
- telling the time
- food and drink
- sports and hobbies
- physical description, for example hair and eyes
- clothes
- illness and body parts
- seasons
- countries and compass points

These contexts are illustrative rather than exhaustive. Contexts encountered at earlier levels can continue to be used where they allow learners to develop their language further. Progression should be seen in the German learners understand and use, rather than in moving through a fixed sequence of topics.

Grammar Progression

At Second Level, learners begin to recognise recurring grammatical patterns within basic language and use some familiar patterns with developing accuracy. Grammatical features may still be learned and used as whole phrases before learners understand how they work. The emphasis remains on using familiar language successfully rather than applying grammatical rules systematically.

Grammatical feature	SECOND Basic Language	
	Understand	**Use**
Nouns and articles	Recognise an increasing range of nouns and notice recurring ways of forming familiar plurals, e.g. *Hund/Hunde, Buch/Bücher*. German nouns belong to three grammatical groups, usually described as masculine, feminine and neuter, and recognise *der, die, das* with familiar nouns. Recognise *ein/eine* with familiar nouns and associate the forms with familiar noun gender. Recognise familiar accusative changes such as *der/den* and *ein/einen* in basic language and recognise common accusative expressions. Recognise common dative forms within highly familiar chunks, e.g. *mit meiner Familie, in der Schule*, without needing to identify the case.	Familiar singular and some common plural nouns in basic language. Familiar nouns with their articles in basic language, e.g. *der Hund, die Schule, das Handy*, with developing accuracy. Familiar *ein/eine + noun* combinations; for example, *Ich habe einen Bruder* may initially be learned as a whole phrase. Some familiar accusative patterns, particularly with high-frequency verbs, e.g. *Ich habe einen Bruder. Ich esse einen Apfel*, with support and variable accuracy. Some familiar dative expressions as whole chunks.

Adjectives	An increasing range of adjectives used after familiar verbs, e.g. *Mein Hund ist klein und freundlich.*	Combine familiar adjectives to describe people, places and things, e.g. *Meine Schule ist groß und modern.*
Possessive adjectives	Recognise familiar possessive adjectives such as *mein*, *dein*, *sein*, *ihr* and understand who something belongs to.	*mein/meine* and some familiar *dein*/deine patterns to communicate about familiar people and possessions.
Personal pronouns	Recognise common personal pronouns, including familiar plural forms such as *wir* and *sie*.	*ich*, *du*, *er*, *sie* and some familiar *wir* patterns to communicate about themselves and others.
Verbs	Recognise recurring present-tense patterns with high-frequency verbs and understand familiar forms referring to different people. Recognise common forms of *sein* and *haben* in basic language and understand who or what is being described. Familiar *möchte, kann*, *muss* expressions in basic language. Recognise some familiar separable verbs in basic language, e.g. *Ich stehe um sieben Uhr auf, and understand the overall meaning.* Some highly familiar references to completed past events when supported by context and time expressions. Frequent forms such as *war*, *hatte*, *es gab* may be understood as whole expressions. There	Familiar first- and second-person singular forms and a growing repertoire of high-frequency *ich* phrases, e.g. Ich *wohne*…, *ich spiele*…, *ich lerne*…; *Was machst du?* Learners are not expected to conjugate complete verb paradigms. Familiar forms, particularly *bin, ist, habe, hat,* within basic language. Adapt familiar chunks such as *Ich möchte*… and some familiar *Ich kann*… patterns, e.g. *Ich kann gut schwimmen.* Communicate some past meaning through familiar learned expressions, e.g. Es *war gut. Ich war in Deutschland.* Forms such as *war*, *hatte* and *es gab* may be used as familiar expressions without an expectation that learners can form or apply the imperfect tense independently.

	is no expectation that learners recognise or understand these as forms of the imperfect tense. Familiar future meaning through time expressions and known present-tense language, e.g. Morgen spiele *ich* Fußball. Recognise some familiar reflexive expressions as whole chunks where relevant. Recognise familiar commands and instructions across known contexts.	Communicate simple future plans using familiar present-tense patterns with time expressions, e.g. *Am Samstag gehe ich ins Kino.* Give some familiar instructions using learned or modelled forms, e.g. *Komm hier.*
Negation	Recognise common *nicht* and *kein* patterns in basic language.	Make familiar statements negative using known patterns, e.g. *Ich spiele heute nicht Fußball. Ich habe kein Haustier.*
Interrogatives	Common question words such as *wer, was, wo, wann, wie* and familiar yes/no questions.	Adapt familiar question patterns, e.g. *Was machst du? Hast du Geschwister? Wo wohnst du?*
Prepositions	Recognise common prepositions and combined forms in basic language, e.g. *in, mit, auf, nach; im, am, zum*.	Familiar prepositional phrases and common learned combined forms, e.g. *im Park, am Wochenende, zum Sport*.
Adverbs	A small number of familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions of time, frequency and place in basic language, e.g. *heute*, *morgen*, *oft*, *hier*.	A small number of familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions within known patterns, e.g. Heute spiele *ich* Fußball. Morgen bin *ich zu Hause*.
Comparison	Some familiar comparisons where meaning is clear, e.g. *größer, kleiner, besser.*	A small number of learned comparative expressions where relevant.
Connectives	Two or three familiar ideas linked using common connectives such as *und*, *aber*.	Link basic ideas using *und* and *aber*, e.g. *Meine Schule ist groß, aber sie ist alt.*

Sentence structure	Familiar subject-verb patterns and understand basic sentences beginning with familiar time expressions, e.g. *Am Samstag spiele ich Fußball*. Notice recurring ways in which basic German sentences are organised. May recognise familiar subordinate clauses in stories, songs and other familiar language without needing to analyse the word order.	Build basic sentences primarily from familiar subject-first models. Some time-first expressions may be reproduced as learned patterns. Select and adapt known patterns to produce basic sentences and link two or three familiar ideas. There is no productive expectation for subordinate clauses.

Third Level

Language Progression

The examples below illustrate the German that learners may recognise or understand and use at this level.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Third Level – Simple Language</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Simple Language describes familiar vocabulary and mainly simple sentence patterns to communicate meaning. Ideas may be linked and developed by adding information or detail using conjunctions. Structure remains predictable with one or two ideas expressed per sentence.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Receptive</th><th>Productive</th></tr>
<tr><td>Learners may recognise or understand language such as:

Am Freitag gibt es ein Schulfest. Viele Schülerinnen und Schüler helfen bei den Aktivitäten. Man kann Musik hören, Spiele spielen und Kuchen kaufen. Ich freue mich auf den Tag, weil ich mit meinen Freunden zusammen sein kann.</td><td>Learners may use language such as:

Meine Schule ist nicht sehr groß. Ich mag Deutsch und Kunst, aber ich mag Mathe nicht besonders. In der Pause spreche ich mit meinen Freunden und wir spielen draußen.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">Comments/Guidance</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">At Third Level, learners understand and use a broader range of German across familiar contexts. They draw on language learned previously to give more detailed responses, link ideas and express themselves in different ways.

Learners should have regular opportunities to communicate in German across a range of familiar contexts and for different purposes. Learners may still use sentence starters, model texts and other supports when encountering new language. As familiar language becomes established, they should have opportunities to choose vocabulary, change familiar sentence patterns and combine what they know to express their own ideas. They should engage in a range of listening, talking, reading and writing activities that encourage them to explain ideas, express and justify opinions, describe experiences and respond to the views of others.</td></tr>
</table>

At Third Level, learners demonstrate progression by revisiting and extending previously encountered vocabulary, sentence patterns and grammatical features. They draw on prior learning to understand new language, make connections between language they already know and adapt familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns to communicate their own ideas.

The emphasis should remain on developing confidence, fluency and successful communication. Accuracy may continue to vary, but learners begin to develop awareness, independence and self-regulation in this aspect. Learners may, for example, communicate successfully while making errors with verb forms, articles or word order.

Grammar Progression

At Third Level, learners recognise an increasing range of grammatical patterns in simple language and begin to select and adapt familiar forms with greater independence. Some structures may be understood before they become productive expectations, and accuracy will continue to develop. **Learners are not expected to demonstrate systematic control of all the grammatical features they encounter.**

Grammatical feature	THIRD Simple Language	
	Understand	**Use**
Nouns and articles	Recognise singular and plural forms across an increasing range of familiar vocabulary. Recognise gender and article patterns across an increasing range of familiar language and notice that articles can change according to their function in a sentence. Recognise common changes to indefinite articles in familiar language, including *einen*. Recognise the accusative across an increasing range of familiar articles, pronouns and prepositions. Recognise common dative forms and familiar prepositional phrases, e.g. *mit meinen Freunden, bei meiner Oma, in der Stadt*.	Familiar singular and plural nouns independently, e.g. *Meine Freunde spielen Fußball. In der Stadt gibt es viele Geschäfte*. Select articles with familiar nouns with developing accuracy. *ein/eine/einen* in familiar sentence patterns with developing accuracy. Familiar accusative patterns with increasing independence, although article endings may remain inconsistent, e.g. *Es gibt einen Bahnhof*. Use and adapt some familiar dative phrases, particularly after high-frequency prepositions such as *mit* and *bei*, e.g. *mit meinen Freunden*.
Adjectives	Recognise familiar adjectives before nouns and notice that their endings can change, e.g. ein großer *Hund*, eine kleine Stadt.	Adjectives confidently after *sein* and other familiar verbs. Some familiar adjective + noun combinations may be reproduced as learned patterns.

Possessive adjectives	An increasing range of possessive adjectives and recognise familiar changes according to the noun.	Familiar possessive adjectives such as *mein*, *dein*, *sein*, *ihr* with developing accuracy.
Personal pronouns	Common singular and plural personal pronouns, including *wir*, *ihr*, *sie*.	An increasing range of familiar personal pronouns when communicating about themselves and others.
Verbs	Common present-tense forms across familiar persons. Common present forms of *sein*/haben and recognise frequent past forms *war/hatte*. Common modal verbs such as können, müssen, wollen, dürfen in simple language and recognise the infinitive pattern. Recognise the recurring split pattern of familiar separable verbs. Recognise the perfect tense as a common way of communicating past events and understand familiar forms such as *Ich habe Fußball gespielt. Wir sind nach Berlin gefahren.* Future meaning expressed through present tense and recognise familiar *werden + infinitive* forms. Some frequently Recogniseed reflexive expressions in simple language, e.g. *Ich interessiere mich für…* Recurring imperative patterns in familiar verbs, e.g. *Gehen Sie…*	Adapt an increasing range of familiar present-tense verbs according to who is being referred to, with developing accuracy. Familiar present forms independently. Familiar *war, hatte* and *es gab* expressions may be used to communicate past meaning. Some familiar modal patterns independently, e.g. *Ich kann gut Deutsch sprechen. Ich muss Hausaufgaben machen.* Familiar separable verbs, e.g. *Ich stehe um sieben Uhr auf. Ich sehe am Abend fern,* with developing word-order accuracy. Some familiar perfect-tense patterns to communicate past experiences, with developing control of auxiliary and participle. For example, *Ich habe Fußball gespielt. Ich bin nach Berlin gefahren.* Communicate future plans mainly through familiar present-tense structures and time expressions. A small number of familiar reflexive expressions as learned or adapted patterns.

		Familiar commands and instructions independently where communicatively relevant.
Negation	*nicht* and forms of *kein* across a growing range of simple language.	Select familiar negative patterns increasingly independently, with developing accuracy in the form and position of *nicht*/*kein*.
Interrogatives	A wider range of questions, including *warum* and questions about familiar experiences.	Ask familiar questions increasingly independently and use follow-up questions, e.g. *Was machst du am Wochenende? Warum? Mit wem?*
Prepositions	Common prepositions across a growing range of simple language and recognise some relationships with case.	Select familiar prepositions independently and use common combined forms with developing accuracy, e.g. *mit meinen Freunden, mit dem Bus, bei meiner Oma*.
Adverbs	An increasing range of familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions, including *gern*, e.g. *Ich spiele gern Fußball. Am Wochenende spiele ich oft Fußball. Normalerweise fahre ich mit dem Bus.*	Familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions of time, frequency, place and preference, including *gern*, to add detail, e.g. *Ich spiele gern Tennis. Ich gehe oft ins Kino. Normalerweise fahre ich mit dem Bus.*
Comparison	Recognise common comparative forms and familiar als comparisons.	Make simple comparisons using familiar adjectives, e.g. *Deutsch ist einfacher als…*
Connectives	Connected simple language using *und*, *aber*, *denn*, *oder*.	Link sentences independently using familiar coordinating connectives, e.g. *Ich lerne Deutsch, denn es ist interessant.*
Sentence structure	Recognise when familiar language begins with time or another familiar element. Familiar clauses introduced by *weil, dass, wenn* and notice that the verb occurs in a different position, e.g. *…, weil ich Fußball mag*.	Begin to vary sentence openings using familiar patterns, e.g. *Am Wochenende spiele ich Fußball*, with developing word-order accuracy. Combine familiar sentence types to create simple linked language, primarily using coordination and some familiar variation in word order.

	Simple language containing linked sentences, varied sentence openings and some	There is no broad productive expectation for subordinate clauses. Familiar *weil* expressions may begin to be used where heavily modelled.
Register	Recognise that familiar language can vary according to who is being addressed and recognise common informal and formal forms where the context makes the distinction clear, e.g. *Wie heißt du? / Wie heißen Sie?*	Familiar informal forms appropriately and some formal or polite expressions where relevant, e.g. *Entschuldigung, können Sie mir helfen?*

Fourth Level

Language Progression

The examples below illustrate the German that learners may recognise or understand and use at this level.

Fourth Level – Straightforward Language	
Straightforward Language describes a wider range of familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns across familiar contexts. Ideas are linked and developed to include opinions, viewpoints and reasons. Sentences may vary in length and detail, but language often follows formulaic patterns.	
Receptive	**Productive**
Learners may **recognise** or **understand** language such as: *Nächsten Monat fährt unsere Klasse nach Köln. Wir wohnen bei Gastfamilien und besuchen eine Schule. Ich freue mich besonders auf den Austausch, weil ich mein Deutsch verbessern und neue Leute kennen lernen möchte. Ich glaube, dass diese Erfahrung sehr interessant wird.*	Learners may **use** language such as: *In den Sommerferien fahre ich mit meiner Familie nach Spanien. Wir wohnen in einem Hotel am Strand. Jeden Tag schwimme ich im Meer und spiele Volleyball. Abends gehen wir oft in ein Restaurant.* *Ich mag Urlaub am Meer, weil ich gern schwimme und das Wetter schön ist. Ich kaufe auch gern Souvenirs für meine Familie und meine Freunde.*
Comments/Guidance	
At Fourth Level, learners understand and use a wider range of German across familiar contexts. They draw on language learned previously to communicate in greater detail and express viewpoints and reasons. Learners may still use model texts, sentence starters and other supports when encountering new language. They should also have regular opportunities to decide what they want to communicate and choose from familiar vocabulary and sentence patterns to do this. They should	

engage in listening, talking, reading and writing activities across a range of familiar contexts and for different purposes that encourage them to explain ideas, express and justify opinions, describe experiences and respond to the views of others.

Progress is demonstrated as learners increasingly select, combine and adapt familiar vocabulary, sentence patterns and grammatical features to communicate their own ideas.

Learners take greater responsibility for ensuring accuracy, by checking language to maintain successful communication, using support appropriate to the level where required. Errors with verb forms, nouns and articles, and adjectives may still occur as learners use a wider range of German.

Grammar Progression

At Fourth Level, learners recognise grammatical patterns across a wider range of straightforward language and use familiar forms with increasing independence and flexibility. They begin to make more independent grammatical choices, while accuracy in areas such as case, adjective endings and word order continues to develop. Receptive understanding may continue to extend beyond productive control.

Grammatical feature	FOURTH Straightforward Language	
	Understand	**Use**
Nouns and articles	A wider range of noun forms in straightforward language. Familiar article changes across a wider range of straightforward language. Common indefinite-article forms across familiar nominative and accusative contexts. Common accusative forms across straightforward language. An increasing range of familiar dative forms and recognise recurring patterns.	Select familiar singular and plural forms with increasing independence. Irregular plurals may remain inconsistent. Apply familiar article patterns with increasing independence while errors in gender and case remain expected. Select familiar indefinite-article forms increasingly independently. Systematic case accuracy is still developing. Select familiar accusative forms increasingly independently in known contexts, e.g. *Ich kaufe einen Pullover*. Systematic case accuracy is not expected. Select familiar dative forms in frequently Recogniseed contexts with developing accuracy, e.g. *Ich fahre mit dem Bus. Ich gehe mit meinen Freunden ins Kino*. Broad case control is not expected.
Adjectives	Recognise recurring adjective-ending patterns in straightforward language.	Begin to use familiar adjectives before nouns when appropriate, with developing and variable accuracy.

		Systematic control of adjective endings is not expected.
Possessive adjectives	Possessive-adjective forms across a wider range of straightforward language.	Select familiar possessive-adjective forms with increasing independence while endings may remain inconsistent.
Personal pronouns	Follow pronoun reference across straightforward connected language.	Personal pronouns with increasing flexibility to communicate about different people and avoid unnecessary repetition.
Verbs	A wide range of familiar present-tense irregular verb forms in straightforward language. *sein* and *haben* across familiar present and past contexts. An increasing range of modal meanings and familiar forms. A wider range of familiar separable verbs across different contexts. The perfect tense across an increasing range of familiar verbs and recognise *haben/sein* patterns. Familiar *werden + infinitive* constructions as well as present-tense future meaning. Recognise recurring reflexive patterns across a wider range of familiar language. A wider range of familiar instructions, e.g. *Nimm…*	Familiar present-tense verbs flexibly across different persons. Irregular forms may remain inconsistent. Common forms of *sein*/*haben*, including familiar *war/hatte* patterns, with increasing independence. Common modal verbs to express ability, obligation, intention and permission, adapting word order with developing accuracy. Adapt familiar separable-verb patterns increasingly independently. The perfect tense to recount familiar experiences and events, adapting familiar patterns with increasing independence. For example, *Am Samstag habe ich meine Freunde getroffen.* Begin to use familiar *werden + infinitive* patterns where appropriate, while present tense + time expression remains a valid productive resource.

		Use and adapt some familiar reflexive expressions with developing accuracy. Adapt familiar imperative patterns to give straightforward instructions with developing accuracy.
Negation	Negation across straightforward language, including more varied placement of *nicht*.	*nicht* and *kein* flexibly in familiar contexts. Position and endings may remain inconsistent.
Interrogatives	Questions across familiar topics and different time references.	Adapt a growing range of question patterns to seek information, opinions and reasons and sustain short interactions. For example, *Was hast du am Wochenende gemacht? Wie war es?*
Prepositions	A wider range of familiar prepositional relationships and associated article forms.	Combine familiar prepositional phrases naturally within straightforward language.
Adverbs	A wider range of familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions in straightforward language, including expressions of time, frequency, place, manner and degree, e.g. *normalerweise*, *manchmal*, *ziemlich*, *besonders*.	Familiar adverbs and adverbial expressions with increasing flexibility to add and qualify detail, e.g. *Normalerweise spiele ich zweimal pro Woche Fußball. Der Film war ziemlich interessant.*
Comparison	Common comparative and superlative forms in straightforward language.	Make familiar comparisons and use some common superlative expressions with developing accuracy.
Connectives	A range of coordinating relationships across straightforward language.	*und*, *aber*, *denn*, *oder* flexibly to connect and develop familiar ideas.
Sentence structure	Varied familiar sentence openings in straightforward language. Familiar subordinate clauses with *weil, dass, wenn* and recognise verb-final word order. Straightforward language containing a wider range of sentence patterns and subordination.	Inversion after familiar time expressions and other common sentence openings with increasing independence, e.g. *Letztes Wochenende bin ich ins Kino gegangen*. *weil* to give familiar reasons, e.g. *Ich lerne Deutsch, weil es interessant ist*, with developing word-order

		control. *Dass* remains principally receptive at this stage. Select, combine and adapt familiar sentence patterns to describe, recount, explain and express viewpoints with increasing independence.
Register	Pronouns, verb forms and polite expressions can vary according to relationship, audience and context.	Make some familiar choices between informal and formal language in predictable situations, e.g. *Wie geht es dir? / Wie geht es Ihnen?*

Education Scotland
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330
E enquiries@educationscotland.gov.scot

www.education.gov.scot

© Crown Copyright, 2026

You may re-use this information (excluding images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence providing that it is reproduced accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Education Scotland copyright and the document title specified.

To view this licence, visit http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third-party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Education Scotland
Foghlam Alba