

— GERMAN PHRASES

30 phrases Germans say every day

A2-B1

The little phrases you hear all day in Germany,
with what they really mean, when to use them
and how people answer.

casual

everyday

very casual

at work

regional · north

regional · south



1

Na?

casual

Hey, what's up?

A one-word hello. Or: "So...?"

Na? Wie war der Urlaub?*So? How was your vacation?***REPLY Super, danke!** Great, thanks!

2

Alles klar!

casual

Got it! All good!

"Understood", or as a question: "All good?"

Wir treffen uns um acht.*We're meeting at eight.***REPLY Alles klar, bis dann!** Got it, see you then!

3

Genau.

everyday

Exactly. Yep.

Germans say it all the time to agree.

Also links und dann geradeaus?*So left, then straight ahead?***REPLY Genau!** Exactly!

4

Ach so!

everyday

Oh, I see!

When something finally makes sense.

Der Laden ist zu. Es ist Sonntag.*The store's closed. It's Sunday.***REPLY Ach so!** Oh, I see!

5

Doch!

everyday

Yes, I am!

"Yes" that says: you're wrong.

Du hast keinen Hunger, oder?*You're not hungry, are you?***REPLY Doch!** Yes, I am!

6

Keine Ahnung.

casual

No idea.

The everyday "I don't know".

Wann fährt der Bus?*When does the bus leave?***REPLY Keine Ahnung!** No idea!

7 **Stimmt.**

everyday

True. That's right.

Agree that something is correct.

Heute ist es echt kalt.*It's really cold today.***REPLY Stimmt.** True.8 **..., oder?**

everyday

..., right?

Stick it on the end of a sentence.

Das ist dein Hund, oder?*That's your dog, right?***REPLY Ja, das ist Bello.** Yep, that's Bello.9 **Egal.**

casual

Whatever. Doesn't matter.

"Ist mir egal" = I don't care.

Pizza oder Pasta?*Pizza or pasta?***REPLY Egal, ich hab Hunger!** Whatever, I'm starving!10 **Passt schon.**

casual

It's fine. No worries.

After a small mistake or a "sorry".

Oh, Entschuldigung!*Oh, sorry!***REPLY Passt schon.** No worries.11 **Echt jetzt?**

casual

Seriously? For real?

When you can't believe it.

Der Zug hat schon wieder Verspätung.*The train is late again.***REPLY Echt jetzt?** Seriously?12 **Krass!**

very casual

Whoa! That's insane!

Anything extreme, good or bad.

Ich hab im Lotto gewonnen!*I won the lottery!***REPLY Krass!** Whoa, that's insane!

13 **Quatsch!**

casual

Nonsense! Don't be silly!

Wave off something silly, or cheer someone up.

Ich bin so schlecht in Deutsch.*I'm so bad at German.***REPLY Quatsch! Du bist super.** Nonsense! You're great.14 **Hä?**

very casual

Huh? What?

Blunt. With strangers: "Wie bitte?"

Der Kühlschrank ist im Keller.*The fridge is in the basement.***REPLY Hä? Warum?** Huh? Why?15 **Na ja.**

casual

Well... Meh.

A polite "not great".

Wie war der Film?*How was the movie?***REPLY Na ja, geht so.** Meh, it was okay.16 **Schade!**

everyday

Aw, too bad!

When plans fall through.

Ich kann heute leider nicht kommen.*Sorry, I can't make it today.***REPLY Schade!** Aw, too bad!17 **Mist!**

casual

Shoot! Darn!

Mild. "Scheiße" is the rude version.

Mist! Ich hab meinen Schlüssel vergessen.*Shoot! I forgot my key.***REPLY Oh nein!** Oh no!18 **Na und?**

casual

So what?

Shrugs it off. Can sound cheeky.

Du isst Pizza zum Frühstück?*You're eating pizza for breakfast?***REPLY Na und?** So what?

19 **Alter!**

very casual

Dude!

Friends only. Also: "Whoa, man!"

Alter, hast du das gesehen?*Dude, did you see that?***REPLY** Ja, krass! Yeah, crazy!20 **Läuft bei dir!**

very casual

Look at you, killing it!

Praise. Often teasing when it's NOT going well.

Ich hab den Job bekommen!*I got the job!***REPLY** Läuft bei dir! Look at you, killing it!21 **Keinen Bock.**

very casual

Not feeling it.

"Bock haben" = be up for it. Not at work!

Kommst du mit ins Fitnessstudio?*You coming to the gym?***REPLY** Nee, keinen Bock. Nah, not feeling it.22 **Kein Ding!**

casual

No problem! Sure thing!

The easy answer to "thanks".

Danke fürs Helfen!*Thanks for helping!***REPLY** Kein Ding! No problem!23 **Lass mal.**

casual

Nah, I got this.

Stops someone nicely, e.g. from paying.

Ich zahle.*I'll pay.***REPLY** Lass mal, ich lade dich ein. Nah, I got this. My treat.24 **Sag Bescheid!**

everyday

Let me know!

"Bescheid sagen" = give a heads-up.

Ich weiß noch nicht, ob ich komme.*I don't know yet if I'm coming.***REPLY** Okay, sag Bescheid! Okay, let me know!

25 **Feierabend!**

everyday

Done for the day!

End of the workday. Sacred in Germany.

Endlich Feierabend!*Finally, done for the day!***REPLY** **Schönen Feierabend!** Enjoy your evening!26 **Mahlzeit!**

at work

Hi! (at lunchtime)

Office hello around lunch. Answer: "Mahlzeit!"

Mahlzeit!*Hi!***REPLY** **Mahlzeit! Gehst du auch in die Kantine?** Hi! Heading to the cafeteria too?27 **Moin!**

regional · north

Hi!

Northern Germany, any time of day.

Moin!*Hi!***REPLY** **Moin! Alles klar?** Hi! All good?28 **Servus!**

regional · south

Hi! / Bye!

Bavaria and Austria. Hello AND goodbye.

Servus! Wie geht's?*Hi! How's it going?***REPLY** **Servus! Gut, und dir?** Hi! Good, you?29 **Stimmt so.**

everyday

Keep the change.

Tip by saying the total, or just "Stimmt so."

Das macht achtzehn Euro.*That's 18 euros.***REPLY** **Hier sind zwanzig. Stimmt so!** Here's 20. Keep the change!30 **Mach's gut!**

casual

Take care!

A warm goodbye.

Ich muss los. Mach's gut!*I gotta go. Take care!***REPLY** **Du auch! Bis bald!** You too! See you soon!

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