

Making Everything Easier!™

German Essentials

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn:

- The basics of German grammar and sentence construction
- How to conjugate verbs
- To express ideas about past, present, and future

Wendy Foster

*Author of Intermediate German
For Dummies*

Paulina Christensen, PhD

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German Essentials For Dummies®

**by Wendy Foster, Pauline
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WILEY

John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

German Essentials For Dummies®

Published by
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
111 River St.
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2012936850

ISBN 978-1-118-18422-6 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-118-22751-0 (ebk); ISBN
978-1-118-24038-0 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-26510-9 (ebk)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Authors

Wendy Foster has been working as a teacher, writer, editor, and translator for longer than she can remember. She holds a German language diploma from the Language and Interpreting Institute, Munich, Germany, an MA in French from Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont, and a public school teaching certificate for German and French. She studied in France for two years before settling in Munich, Germany, where she worked in various teaching and writing capacities at several institutions, including Siemens, HypoVereinsbank, Munich Chamber of Commerce, and a number of publishers. She recently returned to her New England roots, where she works from her home overlooking a spectacular salt marsh that constantly beckons her to go kayaking, swimming, walking, and bird-watching.

Pauline Christensen has been working as a writer, editor, and translator for almost ten years. She holds a degree in English and German literature and has developed, written, and edited numerous German-language textbooks and teachers' handbooks for Berlitz International. Her work as a translator ranges from new media art to science fiction (*Starlog* magazine). She occasionally works as a court interpreter and does consulting and interpreting at educational conferences, as well as voice-overs for educational videos and CD-ROMs. Dr. Christensen received her MA and PhD from Düsseldorf University, Germany, and has taught at Berlitz Language Schools, New York University, and Fordham University.

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and around the world. She has also taught at Berlitz Language Schools and worked as a legal and technical proofreader in the editorial departments of several law firms. Most recently she has been developing, writing, and editing student textbooks and teachers' handbooks for Berlitz.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

Some of the people who helped bring this book to market include the following:

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Cover Photo: © iStockphoto.com/Francesco Carucci

Cartoons: Rich Tennant (www.the5thwave.com)

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Proofreaders: Bryan Coyle, John Greenough

Indexer: Potomac Indexing, LLC

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Introduction

You may be taking a German course in high school or college, or perhaps you're interested in refreshing your German because you're planning to spend some time in German-speaking Europe. Using this practical reference book to help you advance your German is a great means of making measurable progress — fast. How? Well, this book offers you straight talk as it leads you through a review of the key material you need to understand the basic level of German.

German Essentials For Dummies provides you easy access to practical information that helps you communicate successfully in German. You find the basic grammar that you encounter in introductory German courses. You see clearly what you need to know in order to express yourself in spoken and written German. This book guides you down the path to conversing with confidence in the kinds of situations you encounter on a daily basis when interacting with German speakers. So get a head start and be ready to speak, write, and travel **in Deutschland** (*in Germany*).

About This Book

German Essentials For Dummies gives you straight talk, the nitty-gritty, and just enough detail to see you successfully through any major roadblocks to communicating in German. You find a good balance between important grammar points and useful, communicative language. Without even realizing it, your German vocabulary expands as you cruise through the book.

Each chapter is self-contained, making this a very user-friendly reference. You can go through it in any order you choose,

zeroing in on your priorities. This book is practical and accessible, whether you're looking for a clear overview of what you've covered in coursework or to reactivate the German you acquired a while back.

Conventions Used in This Book

I use a couple conventions in this book to help you spot essential elements in the text:

- ✓ I **boldface** German words and example sentences. I also **boldface** word endings to make them easier to recognize.
- ✓ I *italicize* English equivalents that accompany German words and sentences.

Foolish Assumptions

In writing *German Essentials For Dummies*, I made the following assumptions about who you are and what you aim to achieve from this book:

- ✓ You've acquired at least a smattering of spoken and written German in high school or at the college level.
- ✓ You want to do some review so you can pass a test or get to the next level of German by taking a placement exam.
- ✓ You want to expand your knowledge of German so you feel comfortable in both speaking and writing the language. (Alternatively, you want to dream in German.)