

Present tense

Regular verbs

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In German there are only two infinitive verb ending forms. The first one is –en (like in „gehen“) and the second one is –n (like in „feiern“). Most verbs will have the –en-ending.

Side note: In Spanish there are three different infinitive verb ending forms: -ar (like in “hablar”), -er (like in “comer”) and –ir (like in “vivir”).

We start with a definition.

Definition. Verb’s stem.

The verb’s stem (raíz) is obtained by dropping the infinitive ending of the verb (-en or –n).

Example:

1. Gehen -> verb’s stem: geh
2. Feiern -> verb’s stem: feier

In Spanish the conjugation for each infinitive ending group is different.

In German the conjugation for both groups of infinitive endings are the same.

Conjugation of regular verbs.

The following table displays how to conjugate the verb for each person accordingly.

Person	Personal prnoun	Conjugation
1 st person singular	ich	stem + e
2 nd person singular	du	stem + st
3 rd person singular	er/sie/es	stem + t
1 st person plural	wir	infinitive form
2 nd person plural	ihr	stem + t
3 rd person plural	sie/Sie	infinitive form

Example.

We conjugate the word “gehen”. The stem is **geh**.

Person	Conjugation
ich	gehe (stem + e)
du	gehst (stem + st)
er/sie/es	geht (stem + t)
wir	gehen (infinitive form)
ihr	geht (stem + t)
sie/Sie	gehen (infinitive form)

We conjugate the word “feiern”. The stem is **feier**.

Person	Conjugation
ich	feiere (stem + e)
du	feierst (stem + st)
er/sie/es	feiert (stem + t)
wir	feiern (stem + n)
ihr	feiert (stem + t)
sie/Sie	feiern (stem + n)

There are two exceptions for this group which only influence the conjugation endings.

1st Exception.

If the stem ends with a d, t, m, n, then for the 2nd and 3rd person singular and 2nd person plural add an –e before the conjugation end.

Excluded from this rule are:

1. l before n or m,
2. r before n or m,
3. and vocal *sound* before n or m.

Example

We conjugate verb “antworten”. Its stem “antwort” ends with –t; thus the 1st exception applies.

Person	Conjugation
ich	antworte
du	antwortest
er/sie/es	antwortet
wir	antworten
ihr	antwortet
sie/Sie	antworten

More words:

antworten; arbeiten; atmen; begegnen; beobachten; bilden; bitten; finden; gründen; heiraten;
mieten; öffnen; rechnen; reden; retten; trocknen; warten; zeichnen

Example for the exclusions.

1. We conjugate the verb “lernen”. The stem is “lern” and ends with –rn; thus the exception should not apply and we can easily use the regular conjugation as for “gehen”.

Person	Conjugation
ich	lerne
du	lernst
er/sie/es	lernt
wir	lernen
ihr	lernt
sie/Sie	lernen

2. We conjugate the verb “wohnen”. The stem “wohn” ends with a vocal sound (-o) and a -n. Note that we did not say a vocal letter before -n, because obviously the letter before m is an -h. But if you pronounce the word, you hear a -o-sound before the -n and the -h-sound is silent.

Person	Conjugation
ich	wohne
du	wohnst
er/sie/es	wohnt
wir	wohnen
ihr	wohnt
sie/Sie	wohnen

2nd Exception.

If the stem ends with a ß, s, z, x then for the 2nd person singular drop the -s at the conjugation end.

Example:

We conjugate “heißen”. Its stem ends with -ß; thus the 2nd exception applies.

Person	Conjugation
ich	heiße
du	heißt
er/sie/es	heißt
wir	heißen
ihr	heißt
sie/Sie	heißen

More words: beweisen; heizen; mixen; reisen; reißen; reizen; sitzen

Exception.

If the stem ends in -el , then for the 1st person singular drop the -e before the l in the stem.

Example:

We conjugate the word “sammeln”. The stem “sammel” ends with an -el; thus the exception applies.

Person	Conjugation ending
ich	sammle
du	sammelst
er/sie/es	sammelt
wir	sammeln
ihr	sammelt
sie/Sie	sammeln

More words: googeln; lächeln; klingeln; sammeln;