

GERMAN WORD ORDER CHEAT SHEET

Key Rules & Principles

7 PRINCIPLES FOR MASTERING GERMAN WORD ORDER

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THE GOLDEN RULE FOR MAIN CLAUSES

- Verb is in second position (V2)
- 2nd position doesn't mean 2nd word!
- Whole phrases can occupy positions

WORD ORDER FOR ADVERBS: "ZAP"

- 1. Adverbs of Time (Zeit)
- 2. Adverbs of Manner (Art)
- 3. Adverbs of Place (Platz)

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3

MULTI-PART VERBS OPEN "SENTENCE BRACKET"

- Conjugated part of verb stays in V2 position
- Infinitive part of the verb moves to the end
- Affects modals and other multi-part verbs

SEPARABLE VERBS ALSO OPEN BRACKET

- conjugated part stays in 2nd position
- prefix moves to end of sentence
- in infinitive form they don't split

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5

QUESTIONS

- W-Questions keep V2 position with question word in first position
- Yes-No questions put verb in 1 position

PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS

- Same structure as active
- Subject and object change places

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7

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

- analyze subclauses separately
- in subclauses verb moves to the end
- subclauses can occupy first position