

9 Free Bilingual German-English Books To Boost Your Reading Comprehension

André Klein · Tuesday, October 17th, 2017

Reading German [short stories](#) or [novels](#) can be a great way to quickly expand your vocabulary and see all the fiddly bits of grammar in action. But if you just started out, reading long chunks of German can be daunting at first. *Aber keine Sorge!* Don't worry! You can still start reading German books.

Parallel text or bilingual book editions will show you the original and the translated version side by side, so that you can work yourself through a text word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, without losing the thread. This way, you can skip back and forth between the German and the English version and constantly check your understanding.

Below, I've collected a handful of titles from various sources that specialize on these kinds of dual language editions, and best of all: they're free, so you can dive in right away!

Note: Many of these titles are literary classics from the public domain (that's why they're free), so if that's not your thing and you're looking for more contemporary German stories designed specifically for learners, also check out our [Learn German With Stories](#) series.

Alice im Wunderland



This beautiful parallel text edition provided by *bilinguis.com* lets you enjoy the adventures of Alice in German (translated by Antonie Zimmerman) and English right in your browser, side by side, including the 42 original illustrations by John Tenniel. And as if that wasn't enough, it also comes with a free integrated Librivox audiobook!

[start reading](#)

Die Verwandlung



This bilingual edition of Kafka's famous novel about Gregor Samsa's mysterious transformation is provided by *Doppeltext*, a publisher dedicated to creating unabridged versions of famous novels with professional translations. This book comes as a beautifully designed web-app where you can get the English translation by clicking on each paragraph. (This title is free but they also offer other works at reasonable prices.)

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20.000 Meilen unter dem Meer



This is another bilinguis edition of the French classic “Vingt mille lieues sous les mers”. As with other bilinguis editions there are multiple language pairs to choose from, so you could read the book in German-English, German-French, German-Chinese, etc. Unfortunately the German translation used here is from 1874 and uses quite a bit of archaic spelling (Capitel vs, Kapitel, Thatsache vs. Tatsache, etc.) which may be a distraction for some readers.

[start reading](#)

German English Visual Bilingual Dictionary



If you don’t feel like reading a classic novel, here’s something completely different: a German-English visual dictionary with over 6000 words and phrases, in full color. This is a great tool for studying basic vocabulary, especially for visual learners. It covers a wide array of subjects such as sports, traffic, food, shopping, people, etc.

Available formats: PDF, MOBI, EPUB

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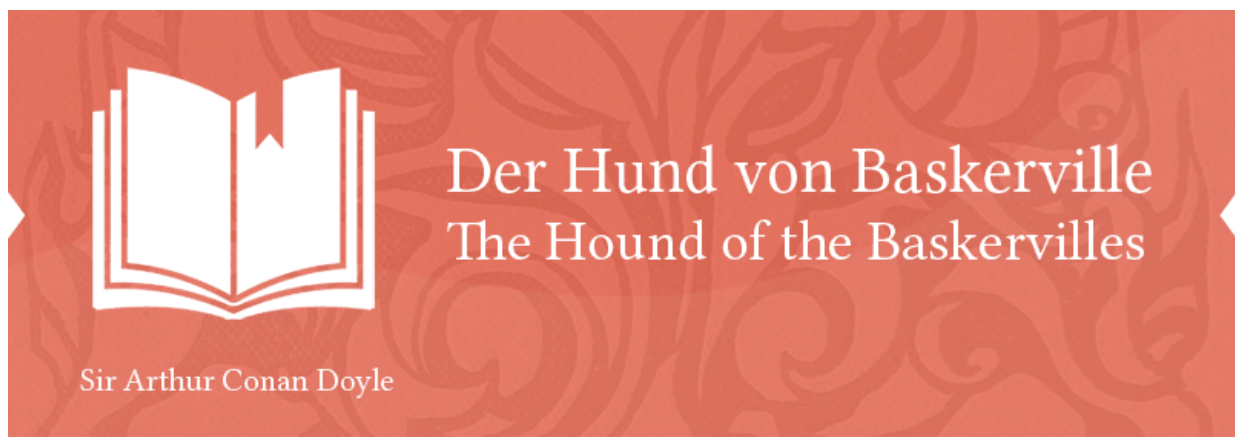
Jane Eyre. Eine Autobiographie



This bilingual version of the timeless literary classic is provided by András Farkas, a Hungarian freelance translator. He painstakingly aligned (and reviewed) many different translations of classic texts side by side, so that you can read these works in two, three, four or more different languages at the same time! Check out his [full library](#) as well.

[start reading](#)

Der Hund von Baskerville



This is the *bilinguis* edition of the famous third crime novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle which is still considered one of his best works by many. For some reason the German audio edition is not embedded on the page but you can stream the free [Librivox audiobook](#).

[start reading](#)

Der Untergang des Hauses Usher



Another parallel text provided by András Farkas, this one features one of Poe's most beloved short stories in English, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian, French, German and Esperanto. A German audio version is available via [Librivox](#) or [Vorleser](#).

[start reading](#)

Der selbstsüchtige Riese



On [linguabooster.com](#) you can find a couple of free dual language German English books, among them this Oscar Wilde fairytale about a giant that tries to keep children out of his garden by erecting an impenetrable wall which leads to an eternal winter. There's also a free [audiobook](#) to accompany the story.

[start reading](#)

EVEN MORE

Bilingual German-English children's books

Lingolibros is a small publisher providing parallel text editions for children in a variety of languages. Their book “[Life of Basil – Das Leben von Basilikum](#)” tells the story of a basil plant that suddenly finds itself in a brand-new pot, and is available as a free download.

~~Alternatively, at [childrenslibrary.org](#) you can find many free German children's books and some of them come in multiple languages, for example “[Du schaffst das schon, Josephine!](#)”. (the childrenslibrary project has been discontinued unfortunately).~~

Bilingual Browser

In addition to all of that, if you find any other book (and its translation) online and would like to read it side by side in German and English (or any other language for that matter), [this neat little browser extension](#) lets you split your browser window into two panes, so you can see both versions side by side, or if you don't feel like installing a browser extension, you can just use the Windows [snap](#) function.

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