

German:

# Accusative Prepositions

– made simple –

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## THE GOLDEN RULE

These prepositions **always** demand the accusative case for the noun or pronoun that follows – no matter the context. They describe direction, purpose, time, or relationships.

## REMEMBER THE CREW

**D · F · G · O · U**

*duh – eff – geh – oh – oo*

**D**

*durch*  
through

**F**

*für*  
for

**G**

*gegen*  
against

**O**

*ohne*  
without

**U**

*um*  
around / at

# The Core Five

The D-F-G-O-U crew, one card at a time. Each takes the accusative – every time, without exception.

## durch

NO. 01

*through · by way of*

**Sie geht durch den Park.**

*She walks through the park.*

**Wir laufen durch den Wald.**

*We run through the forest.*

### TIP

Think “passing through” a physical space. **D as in door** – to pass through.

## für

NO. 02

*for · intended for*

**Das ist für dich.**

*That is for you.*

**Ein Geschenk für meinen Bruder.**

*A gift for my brother.*

### TIP

Think “for the benefit of” or “intended for.” **F as in for** – easy.

## gegen

NO. 03

*against · toward (a time)*

**Wir schwimmen gegen den Strom.**

*We swim against the current.*

**Ich komme gegen acht Uhr.**

*I'm coming around eight.*

### TIP

Pushing back against something – or “**around**” a time.

## ohne

NO. 04

*without*

**Sie geht ohne mich.**

*She goes without me.*

**Er ist ohne Geld.**

*He is without money.*

### TIP

“Oh, no – I forgot it!” Used for something **missing or lacking**.

## um

*around · at (a time) · about*

**Wir gehen um den See.**

*We walk around the lake.*

**Der Film beginnt um 20 Uhr.**

*The film begins at 8 p.m.*

### TIP

**U as in “around”** – and the workhorse for clock times. With clock times the number itself is the accusative form; no article needed.

NO. 05

# The Plus-Two & The Pronouns

Two extras worth knowing – and the only set of forms that actually changes when the case shifts.

## bis – until, up to

Standing alone with a time or distance, **bis** takes the accusative. More often it pairs with another preposition (*bis zu*, *bis nach*) – and then the second preposition decides the case.

**Die Bibliothek ist bis 18 Uhr geöffnet.**  
The library is open until 6 p.m.

## entlang – along

The quiet rebel: **entlang** sits *after* its noun (a postposition), but it still triggers the accusative case.

**Wir gehen den Fluss entlang.**  
We walk along the river.

## – PRONOUNS & ARTICLES –

Here's the kind part: only the **masculine singular** changes shape from nominative to accusative. Feminine, neuter, and plural forms stay exactly the same.

CASE	MASCULINE	FEMININE	NEUTER	PLURAL
Nominative	der · er	die · sie	das · es	die · sie
<b>Accusative</b>	<b>den · ihn</b>	<b>die · sie</b>	<b>das · es</b>	<b>die · sie</b>
Nominative	ein · mein	eine · meine	ein · mein	– · meine
<b>Accusative</b>	<b>einen · meinen</b>	<b>eine · meine</b>	<b>ein · mein</b>	<b>– · meine</b>
You (informal)	du → <b>dich</b>		ihr → <b>euch</b>	
You (formal)	Sie → <b>Sie</b> (unchanged)			

## fürs

CONTRACTION

**Common contraction:** *für das* often shortens to *fürs* in everyday speech and writing – though the full form is still perfectly correct. Accusative contractions are rarer than dative ones; this is the main one to know.

*Ich mache das fürs Kind.* – I'm doing that for the child.

# Two-Way Prepositions

A separate group that switches between accusative and dative. The trick is asking the right question.

## ACCUSATIVE

### Wohin?

– *Where to?* · Movement

If the verb describes **motion or direction** toward a place, the two-way preposition takes the accusative.

Ich lege das Buch auf den Tisch.  
I put the book onto the table. (movement)

## DATIVE

### Wo?

– *Where?* · Location

If the verb describes a **fixed location or no movement**, the same preposition takes the dative.

Das Buch liegt auf dem Tisch.  
The book lies on the table. (resting)

## THE NINE TWO-WAY PREPOSITIONS

*an · auf · hinter · in · neben · über · unter · vor · zwischen*



### THE TEST

**Ask the question.** If you can answer it with “Wohin?” (where to) – there’s motion, so it’s accusative. If you can answer with “Wo?” (where, simply) – there’s location, so it’s dative. This single trick handles every two-way preposition you’ll meet.

## – A FINAL CHANT –

**Durch, für, gegen, ohne, um –  
always accusative, every time.**

*Say it. Write it. Whisper it on the train. It’ll stick.*

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