

Aussprache (Pronunciation)

Final Devoicing (the buh-duh-guh rule)

Voiced consonants are pronounced unvoiced in word final position.

b → p d → t g → k

Example words (Be sure to pronounce the final consonant devoiced.)

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|----------|-----------|----------|------------|----------|
| 1. ab | 2. Zug | 3. Sand | 4. Sonntag | 5. Leid |
| 6. Tag | 7. Abend | 8. Pfad | 9. Jod | 10. gelb |
| 11. Bad | 12. Rind | 13. seid | 14. Grab | 15. Bug |
| 16. Wind | 17. Schub | 18. Sarg | 19. Lied | 20. Rad |

Final G

-ig at the end of a word is pronounced 'ich'.

-ng is always pronounced 'ng' as in 'ring, song, bang'.

Otherwise, final g is devoiced


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|------------|------------|------------|----------|--------------|
| 21. windig | 22. sonnig | 23. wolkig | 24. lang | 25. Frühling |
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Initial Palatalization

st- and sp- are pronounced 'sht' and 'shp' at the beginning of a word.

This occurs only in word initial position. st- and sp- are not palatalized in word medial position.

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|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 26. spät | 27. Stern | 28. Stift | 29. Speck | 30. Stelle |
| 31. spielen | 32. stehen | 33. Spinne | 34. Stunde | 35. Spur |

More pronunciation information on the reverse side 

Sibilants (hissing or 'snake' sounds)

The 'sh' sound in German is spelled 'sch'.

(It's easy to forget the 'c'.)

36. scheinen 37. schlecht 38. frisch 39. Kugelschreiber 40. Schnee

The 'ch' sound in German is spelled 'tsch'.

(It's easy to forget one or more of these letters.)

41. Deutsch 42. Tschüs 43. Quatsch 44. quietschen 45. rutschen

z (and c) are pronounced ts, even at the beginning of a word.

(as in: cats, Ritz, pots, let's, putz)

46. Zug 47. Zelt 48. Zahl 49. Zement 50. Celsius

s is pronounced as a 'z' sound except at the end of a word where it's devoiced.

(as in: zebra, lazy, zoo, pause, eyes)

51. sonnig 52. senden 53. sein 54. selten 55. so

The 's' sound in German is spelled ß in some words and ss in others.

(There are complex rules governing when to use ss rather than ß that will be discussed later.)

56. heißen 57. Straße 58. hassen 59. nass 60. außer