

Beneficiary (indirect object)

To discover whether a sentence contains a beneficiary, follow these steps.

- 1) Look for a verb that has a meaning of *giving, telling* or *showing*.
- 2) Look for a *direct object* (something being given, told, or shown).
- 3) Look for a *recipient*, a person who is receiving something, being given, told, or shown something.

The *person* who receives something being given or told is the *beneficiary*.

The traditional grammar term for *beneficiary* is *indirect object*.

The subject acts on the direct object through the verb. The beneficiary receives the direct object.

The beneficiary is typically a person. (It makes no difference whether the beneficiary is a noun or a pronoun.)

The beneficiary in German is expressed in dative case with *NO preposition*:

In *English* the beneficiary is often expressed with the preposition *to* or *for*.

The beneficiary in English can also be expressed without a preposition, but only if it appears before the direct object.

The idea of *to* or *for* is included in the German dative. (Hence there is no need for a preposition in German, only the dative case.)

In German, the word *mir* can then mean *to me* or *for me*. (Please see the German examples below.)

Example: The words *der Frau* can mean *to the woman* or *for the woman*. (Please refer to the German examples below.)

Here are some examples of *beneficiary* in English (the beneficiary is marked in *red italic boldface*):

Follow the three steps listed above, that is, look for the verb, direct object and person receiving the direct object.

She gave *me* a rose for my birthday.

She gave a rose *to me* for my birthday.

- 1) verb of giving or telling *gave*
- 2) dir obj - something being given or told *a rose*
- 3) person receiving the direct object *me* = beneficiary

They told *her* the news about her brother.

They told the news about her brother *to her*.

- 1) verb of giving or telling *told*
- 2) dir obj - something being given or told *the news*
- 3) person receiving the direct object *her* = beneficiary

I'm sending *you* a package of cigars for New Year's.

I'm sending a package of cigars *to you* for New Year's.

Will you explain the results *to me*, please?

He'd like to prepare a gourmet dinner *for us*.

He'd like to prepare *us* a gourmet dinner.

The children delivered the toys *to the director*.

He'll cook a lovely dinner *for his wife* on their anniversary.

He'll cook *his wife* a lovely dinner on their anniversary.

Lucy recited a poem *to her class*.

Will you show *me* your work?

Will you show your work *to me*?

She is demonstrating the machine *to her customers*.

The children pointed out the artwork *to their parents*.

Should I order *you* a ticket to the concert?

Here are some German verbs typically appearing with a beneficiary.

geben give
schicken send

zeigen show
erzählen tell

vorlesen read aloud
erklären explain

In German, the beneficiary is always expressed in the dative case and without a preposition.

Read the examples below and look for the beneficiary in each.

Er gibt *mir* ein Buch. / Er gibt es *mir*.

Ich werde *der Frau* ihr Gepäck bringen. / Ich werde es *ihr* bringen.

Die Frau erzählt *ihrem Sohn* eine Geschichte.

Tante Anna schreibt *uns* oft einen Brief.

Der Mann bäckt *seiner Frau* einen Kuchen.

Ich möchte *euch* eine Erzählung vorlesen.

Sie erklärt *uns* das Problem. / Sie erklärt es *uns*.

Er muss *seinen Schülern* eine neue Methode zeigen.

Der Briefträger liefert *mir* ein Paket bald.

Der Chef wird *mir* einen Platz im Zug reservieren.

He is giving *me* a book. / He is giving it *to me*.

I will bring *the woman* her bag. / I will bring it *to her*.

The woman is telling *her son* a story. (*to her son*)

Aunt Anna often writes *us* a letter. (*to us*)

The man is baking *his wife* a cake. (*for his wife*)

I would like to read *you guys* a story. (*to you guys*)

She is explaining the problem *to us*. / She's explaining it *to us*.

He needs to show *his pupils* a new method. (*to his pupils*)

The letter carrier is delivering a package *to me* soon.

The boss will reserve a seat *for me* on the train.