

Prätero-Präsens Verb Forms

There are seven verbs in German that follow the präterio-präsens conjugational pattern.

This class is comprised of the verb *wissen* along with the six modal verbs: *müssen*, *dürfen*, *mögen*, *können*, *sollen* & *wollen*.

Definition of the term *Ablaut*: Any change of sound from the base form of the word that creates a new or variant form.

Examples of *Ablaut* in English:

Base Form	Ablauted Form	sound of Ablaut	purpose of Ablaut
think	thought	ink → ott	verb → noun
work	wrought	erk → ott	verb → adjective (workerd iron)
draw	draught (draft)	aw → aft	verb → adjective (drawn from a tap)
see	saw	ee → aw	present → past
light	lit	eye → it	present → past
drive	drove	eye → oh	present → past
sweep	swept	ee → epp	present → past
do	does	ooh → uzz	infintive → 3sg conjugation
say	says	ay → ezz	infintive → 3sg conjugation

Conjugations of Prätero-Präsens Verbs

Preterit-Present verbs in German have the special feature that they take a zero ending in first and third person singular. All of these verbs except *sollen* take Ablaut in the singular present.

	basic pattern		example verb		example verb	
	generic conjugational pattern					
	singular	plural	sg	pl	sg	pl
1st	(Ablaut) + _ [Ø]	normal (-n)	mag _	mögen	weiß _	wissen
2nd	(Ablaut) + st	normal (-t)	magst	mögt	weißt	wisst
3rd	(Ablaut) + _ [Ø]	normal (-n)	mag _	mögen	weiß _	wissen

Ablaut patterns for the seven preterit-present verbs

wollen → will
 sollen → soll (*no Ablaut*)
 können → kann
 mögen → mag

dürfen → darf
 müssen → muss
 wissen → weiß