

How to continue practicing

When it comes to getting ready for the “Hören” section of the Start Deutsch 2 exam, there are different ways you can prepare outside of your German class. The Learn German team at DW has come up with a few tips just for you. Don’t forget to check out the exam providers’ websites for more tips and practice exams.

General tips

1. Give yourself enough time to prepare for the exam. It makes more sense to study regularly than to cram for hours at the last minute.
2. How do you personally study best? Alone or with friends? In the morning or in the evening? On the couch or at a desk? Figure out what works best for you.
3. Look for a conversation partner - ideally a native German speaker learning your native language. That way you both practice both languages together. This is also something you can do online.
4. In this part of the exam, you will often need to understand numbers, prices, the time of day and the days of the week. Practice different ways of saying these things. For example, “halb acht” and “7 Uhr 30.”
5. In each section of the test, focus on what you understand, not on what you don’t know.
6. You can also use A2-level listening exercises from other test providers, even if they differ from the used for the Start Deutsch A2. It’s important to listen to as many examples at your level as possible. You can find an overview of other A2 exams at [DW Learn German](#).
7. Prepare for the “Hören” section of the exam by paying close attention to how it’s structured.

Listening to and understanding messages on the phone

1. In this section of the exam, you will hear different messages on the phone. Think about what information you would typically hear if you called, for example, a doctor’s office or a language school outside of normal working hours. You can also find additional examples online.
2. In the exam, you will also hear words you don’t understand. You can still answer the questions as long as you’ve practiced your A2-level vocabulary. If you’ve been learning German with a textbook, then you can try taking another look at the A1 and A2-level vocabulary.

3. By yourself or with a study partner, try to think of situations where you would leave a voicemail, for example if you needed to reschedule an appointment. Write out what you want to say. This will help you practice typical phrases.
4. Do you live in a German-speaking country? Try calling a doctor's office outside of working hours. Do you understand the most important information from the answering machine?
5. Leave a message on someone's voicemail. Your message should contain a question and ask the recipient to call you back. When the person returns your call, let it go to voicemail so the person will also have to leave a message. Are you able to understand the most important information? Take notes.
6. Do you have a conversation partner? Ask your partner to leave you a voice message. Are you able to understand the most important information? Take notes and discuss them later with your conversation partner.
7. Are you studying with someone else? Create tasks for each other. You can use AI if you want. First, each of you should think of a scenario, such as: The kindergarten is closing early tomorrow and you need to pick up your child at 2 o'clock. An example prompt would be, "Kindergarten schließt morgen um zwei, Mailbox-Nachricht, A2." Then read your messages aloud twice and take notes when it's your partner's turn.
8. In this section of the test, you will need to write your answers on the answer sheet. That means it's important your handwriting is legible. Have a friend let you know if your handwriting is easy to read. Are there letters that your friend can't make out or that could be confused for something else?

Listening to and understanding information on the radio

1. In this section of the exam, you must listen to and understand information on the radio. First, consider what type of short announcements you normally hear on the radio. What does a listener need to be informed about? Tip: This can either relate to the current situation or the general programming. If you're unsure, you can use AI by prompting, "Welche Informationen hört man im Radio?" If the results are too difficult for you, you can add the word "einfacher." This will produce a simpler text. Make a list of the information and write down different words that could be used on the radio. For example, "Information über den Verkehr: Auto, Unfall, Baustelle, ..." You can use A2 vocabulary lists from textbooks to help.
2. Write your own radio announcements, for example for traffic information, weather forecasts or the programming. Use A2-level vocabulary.

3. Are you studying with someone else? First, write a short announcement or use AI to create one. You could prompt it, for example, with: “Unfall, Information, Radio, A2.” Remember, AI texts don’t always match the language level entered in the prompt. Still, read all of the sentences and phrases and think about which vocabulary words you’d like to review. Don’t choose too many words. Look in your textbook to see what words you need to know at the A2 level. Think of questions for your partner and vice versa.
4. Listen to German radio broadcasts regularly, for example using a live stream online. It’s a good idea to look for a channel with a variety of programming. It should offer more than commentary on current affairs or interviews, but a station that only plays music isn’t suitable either. Depending on what kind of music you like, you can choose one of Germany’s public radio stations, for example SWR 3, WDR 2, NDR 1 or Bayern 1. Announcements are often read quickly. Don’t let that intimidate you.
5. On some websites, it’s also possible to read, for example, the traffic announcements. The latest ones tend to include audio. For example, you can enter “Verkehrsmeldungen” or “Wetter” and the name of the radio broadcaster into a search engine. If there’s no audio available, you can read the online text. What are you able to understand? Remember, these texts are written for native speakers. If audio is available, you can first listen to it several times. If you feel more confident, you can stop after two times, just like in the exam. Weather reports are also included in this section of the exam. To prepare, first collect typical vocabulary and phrases. Your textbook is one example of where you could find this, and other topics like weather and weather reports.
6. Find a map of Germany, for example, online. Write down sentences that could be used in the weather report. For example, “Heute ist es in Berlin sonnig. Die Temperatur liegt bei 22 Grad.” Then, listen to an example of a weather report and check your sentences to see if they are similar to what the weather forecaster said. One place to find this is on the website of a German radio broadcaster. Weather reports can usually be heard at the end of the news bulletin at the top or the bottom of the hour. You can also find current weather reports on YouTube, which, of course, always include video.
7. Are you having difficulty understanding certain types of information on the radio? Make a point of practicing these frequently occurring vocabulary words. f

Listening to and understanding a conversation

1. Try to listen to as much German in your daily life as possible. For example, you can look for podcasts or watch films and series (for example, children’s shows). You don’t need to understand everything. Focus on what you understand and try not to get stuck on the words that are unfamiliar to you. This is also important during the exam.
2. Listen to the clips several times. You’ll understand more each time.

3. Did you use a textbook? Go back and listen to all the conversations in your textbook. Before you begin, write down questions words like “wer?”, “wann?” and “wo?” on a separate sheet of paper. Complete this information as you listen. Do you know someone else who used a different German textbook? Use those audio clips to prepare for the exam, too.
4. Do you live in a German-speaking country? Try to listen in on conversations when you're out and about, for example, while waiting on the subway, bus or train. Are you able to understand what people are saying?
5. Watch videos by DW Learn German like “[Nicos Weg A1](#)” and “[Nicos Weg A2](#).” You can also do the exercises that go along with these videos to see how well you understood the conversations.