

How to continue practicing

When it comes to getting ready for the “Hören” section of the Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer (DTZ), 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 each section of the test, focus on what you understand and not on what you don’t know.
5. You can also use A2 or B1 listening exercises from other test providers, even if they differ from the ones used for the DTZ. It’s important to listen to as many examples at your level as possible. You can find an overview of other exams at [DW Learn German](#).
6. The DTZ exam tests two language levels, which is why you will complete sections that are a little too easy or a little too hard for you. Don’t let this throw you off.
7. Prepare for the “Hören” section of the exam by paying close attention to how it’s structured.

Listening to and understanding short messages

1. In this section of the exam, you will hear different types of information. For example, an announcement. Think about different types of announcements and where you hear them. Note down in German what information and which words you would expect to hear. In the exam, you will also hear words you don’t understand. Don’t let this throw you off. If you studied with a textbook, you can review the vocabulary again.
2. Do you live in a German-speaking country? Then the train station is a good place to practice listening to announcements. Don’t be frustrated if you don’t understand everything – the sound quality in the actual test will be easier to understand than it is in real life.

3. Do you have a study partner? Write your own announcements and true or false statements about them. First write down different locations where announcements can often be heard. For example, “Festival,” “Bahnhof,” or “Supermarkt.” Note down different topics for the announcements like, “Festival” – “Ein Schlüssel wurde gefunden“ / “Ein Auto parkt falsch.“ / “Ein Konzert findet später statt.“ If the AI-generated suggestion is too difficult, add the word “einfacher” to your prompt. Write three statements about the announcement – only one of them is true. Read your announcements aloud and test each other.
4. This section of the exam might also include voice messages. Think about the types of situations when you would leave a voice message on someone’s phone or answering machine, for example, when rescheduling an appointment. Write out your text and practice typical phrases. You can do this alone or with a study partner.
5. 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?
6. Leave a message on someone’s voice mail or answering machine. In your message, ask a question and request the recipient to call you back. When the person returns your call, let it go to voice mail so the person will also leave a message for you. Are you able to understand the most important information? Take notes.
7. Do you have a conversation partner? Ask your partner to leave you a voice message. Do you understand the most important information? Take notes and discuss them afterward with your partner.
8. Do you have a study partner? Come up with tasks for each other by using AI, for example. First think of a scenario, such as “Der Kindergarten schließt morgen früher. Dein Kind muss schon um zwei Uhr nach Hause gehen.” You can write your prompt with phrases like, “Kindergarten schließt morgen um zwei, Mailbox-Nachricht, A2.” Read your texts aloud to each other and take notes of what your partner says.

Listening to and understanding information from the media

1. In this section of the exam, you will have to listen to and understand information from the media. 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?” 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 vocabulary lists from textbooks to help.
2. Write your own radio announcements, for example for traffic information, weather forecasts or the programming. Use vocabulary words you’ve learned so far.

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. 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 listen to it once, just like in the exam.
6. Weather forecasts are also covered in this section of the exam. To prepare, first make a list of typical vocabulary words and phrases. You can use a textbook to help you. They also cover the topics “Wetter” and “Wettervorhersagen.”
7. 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.
8. Are you having difficulty understanding certain types of information on the radio? Make a point of practicing these frequently occurring vocabulary words.

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 with 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. If you do live in a German-speaking country, you can also try to talk more often with others – for example, with your neighbors.
6. Do you have a study partner? Write your own dialogues and exercises, just like in the exam. First, write a topic on a separate piece of paper. For example, “Sommerurlaub,” “Wetter,” “Stadtfest,” ... Then, write out dialogues and exercises, and test each other.
7. Watch videos by DW Learn German like [“Nicos Weg A1”](#), [“Nicos Weg A2”](#) and [“Nicos Weg B1.”](#) You can also do the exercises that go along with these videos to see how well you understood the conversations.

Listening to and understanding opinions

1. In this section of the exam, you must recognize a person's opinion about a particular topic. Review the words and phrases used to contradict or agree with someone else's opinion. You can use your German textbook to do this. You can also use AI, for example, by using the following prompt: “Diskussion Meinung sagen Redemittel.”
2. If you know several other people preparing for the exam, you can also take on different roles. Write your debate topics on a separate sheet of paper and each person's role. For example, “Thema: Schule am Samstag?” / “Person 1: Samstag ist ein Tag der Familie.” / “Person 2: Es fällt immer viel Unterricht aus, deshalb ist Samstag als Schultag in Ordnung.” / “Person 3: Wochenende ist langweilig, deshalb ist Schulunterricht in Ordnung.” / “Person 4: Man braucht mehr Zeit als einen Tag, um sich zu erholen.” “Moderatorin/Moderator: ...” Each person assumes a role and debates the topic. Once you're finished, you can discuss each group member's personal opinion about the topic.
3. Do you have a study partner? Think of a topic, such as “Schulunterricht am Samstag.” Each person writes down three different opinions about the topic. One example of how to phrase opinions can be found under “Teil 4: Meinungen” on pages 9 and 10 in the following pdf: “Deine Deutschprüfung A2/B1: Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer Listening – Download transcripts of audio from our test (PDF).” You can find this in the menu under “Other tools.” You can also use AI. Here's an example of a prompt: “Schulunterricht am Samstag: eine Meinung dafür, eine dagegen, eine teilweise dagegen, je 90 Wörter.”

Summarize each opinion in one sentence. Then, write two more sentences that don't match any of the opinions given. You can find an example for sentences that refer to opinions in a pdf in the menu under "Other tools": "Deine Deutschprüfung A2/B1: Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer Listening – our test: Download questions and exercises (PDF) ." Read "Teil 4: Meinungen" on page 4. Once you've both written five sentences, have your partner think about which opinions and sentences match.