

## How to continue practicing

**There are different ways you can prepare for the “Reading” section of the ÖSD Zertifikat A2 exam outside of your German class. The Learn German team at DW has put together a few tips for you. And don’t forget to check out the exam providers’ websites, too! You’ll also find more tips and practice exams there.**

## 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. You won’t have much time for this part of the test, so be sure to time yourself while you practice and assess how long you needed to complete this section.
5. It’s fine if at first you concentrate on one part of the “Lesen” section while preparing for the exam, but make sure to also plan in time to go back and review both sections in order. You shouldn’t need more than 30 minutes for the “Lesen” section.
6. Which part of this section of the exam is particularly difficult for you? Make sure to practice that section even more.
7. Prepare for the “Reading” section of the exam by paying close attention to how it’s structured.

## Match short articles with the appropriate headline

1. In the “Reading” section of the exam, you will have to select a suitable headline for five short texts from the media. Read as many articles as you can. This will help you get a feel for commonly used phrases. If you live in a German-speaking country, you can use brochures or city magazines to practice, for example. You can also find these types of texts online.
2. To practice, use headlines from different types of articles that you find online, for example. You can also use AI to create 10 headlines. Here’s an example of a prompt: „Gib mir zehn Überschriften für Meldungen, die in einem Stadtmagazin stehen könnten. Die Überschriften sollen kurz, alltagsnah und thematisch vielfältig sein (z.B. Verkehr, Gesundheit, Freizeit, Veranstaltungen, Werbung, öffentliche Hinweise). Die Sprache soll

einfach und verständlich sein.“ (Give me 10 headlines for articles that could appear in a city magazine. The headlines should be short, related to everyday life and cover a variety of topics (ex. traffic, health, free time, events, advertising, public notices. The language should be simple and understandable.) Read through the headlines and take notes on the topics you would expect to find in the text that matches each headline. If the headline were “Straßensperrung in Wien”, those keywords could be “Verkehr”, “Auto”, “Umleitung” or “Stau”. Use vocabulary you’ve already learned. If necessary, take another look at the vocabulary list in your German textbook.

3. Search online for five short notices – for example, about events. You can use websites for digital newspapers, cities or events. Think of a new headline for each text.
4. If you have a study partner, you can use your texts and the headlines you’ve written to test each other. Search for texts one topic and print them out. Write your headlines on a separate sheet of paper and add five unsuitable headlines. These could be your own headlines, for example, or from other notices.
5. During the exam, it’s helpful to think about the purpose of public notices or ads. For example, are the texts supposed to inform, warn about or recommend something? The headline often matches the intention of the text. Do you recognize the intention? You can start by using AI-generated texts, for example. Here’s an example of a prompt: „Erstell mir fünf kurze Werbetexte oder Meldungen auf Deutsch. Jeder Text soll ca. 40-60 Wörter lang sein und eine klare Information enthalten. Das Sprachniveau soll A2 sein. Überschriften sollten nicht dabei sein.“ (Create five short marketing texts or public notices in German. Each text should be 40-60 words long and contain clear information. The language level should be A2. Do not include headlines.) Read the texts and write categories for them (such as report, ad, warning or invitation) that make the text's intention clear. Then get AI to create headlines for the individual texts by prompting: "Erstell mir nun jeweils eine Überschrift zu jedem Text." (Create a headline for me for each of the texts.) Can you recognize the intention of the text from the headline? And can you think of even better headlines? Write them down. If you don't want to use AI, you can also use texts from the internet or your textbook.
6. If you have difficulty recognizing the purpose of the text, you can use AI. Enter the text and give it a prompt: „Hier ist ein kurzer Text. Bitte markiere Wörter oder Formulierungen, die zeigen, welchen Zweck der Text hat (z. B. informieren, werben, warnen, einladen, helfen). Erkläre mir danach auf dem Niveau A2, warum diese Wörter auf diesen Zweck hinweisen.“ (Here is a short text. Mark the words or phrases that show the text’s objective (ex. to inform, to advertise, to warn, to invite, to help). Then, explain to me in A2-level German why these words point to that purpose.)

7. Are you preparing in a study group? Write your own short texts and create questions for each other like what will be on the exam. Then, talk about how you found out whether the headlines match or not. Talk about your approach and give feedback. What do you think is a good way to do this and what isn't?
8. Are you preparing in a group? Collect texts or write your own. Then, discuss which headlines would be suitable and find a consensus on what fits best.
9. Use German-language (digital) newspapers to help you prepare. Choose different headlines from the newspaper and write your own texts to match. In doing so, you actively engage with the necessary vocabulary. While writing, you also have to consider what the central message of the text is and which information is relevant. Changing perspectives can help you find the core message of the text during the exam faster.

## Reading and understanding a newspaper or online article

1. You won't have much time during the exam, so it's important you avoid trying to understand every single word. Instead, search for specific information in the text. First read the tasks and then try to find the answers in the text. The order of information asked for in the exercises matches the order of information in the text.
2. Do you have trouble ignoring new vocabulary in the text? One way to deal with this is to cross out all of the words you don't know so you can no longer read them. You can also do this for digital texts by deleting unknown words. Are you still able to understand the gist of the text?
3. Read as many articles as you can, even if they aren't written especially for your learning level. It's unlikely that the text you'll be given in the exam will be about something difficult like politics. Topics such as "Freizeit," "Familie," "Beruf und Ausbildung," or "Wohnen" are more likely. You can also find shorter texts using AI by entering: "Ich suche einen einfachen Online-Artikel zum Thema Wohnen in Deutschland." Remember: AI won't always choose a suitable article.
4. You can also practice reading articles written for children. For example, you can search for "Nachrichten für Kinder." In addition to videos and audio, you will also find websites with articles.
5. You can practice reading comprehension for A2 level by using the PASCH website in the section "[Lernmaterial](#)." Try to read texts that aren't exactly at your level. Are you still able to understand them?
6. You can also use articles on the DW website in the section [Top-Thema mit Vokabeln](#). These are for B1 level.

7. Have you been using a German textbook? Read all of the newspaper articles in your textbook. If you live in Germany, you can borrow other textbooks and also read the articles they use.
8. Do you have a study partner? Search for short, interesting articles that you can read and discuss together. Once you're finished reading, write down w-words "wer?", "was?", "wo?", and "wann?" on a separate sheet of paper. Answer these questions and compare your answers.
9. Start a "reading journal": Every day, read a short article and note down the headlines. Also note down how difficult you found the text and any problems you had while reading. After a while you might notice you are experiencing less difficulty reading.
10. Do you have a conversation partner? Ask them to search for a simple article for you. Read it and write a sentence for each paragraph with key information. Then talk about it with your partner.
11. Read a text and paraphrase it in your own words, written or orally.
12. Other A2 exams also include newspaper and online articles in their reading comprehension sections. It's a good idea to look at exercises from other exam providers. You can find an overview of other exams at [DW Learn German](https://www.dw.com/en/learn-german/a-2-exams).