

## A2 EINHEIT 4 GRAMMAR

There are two points of grammar in this unit ó the comparative form of adjectives and adverbs and the simple past tense of modal verbs (*das Imperfekt*).

Fortunately for us, the comparative form in German is formed essentially the same way as in English ó the addition of *er* to the positive form. Just like English there are exceptions. However, there aren't many and the German is even easier than English because there is no form equivalent to *õmore beautifulõ*, or *õmore expensiveõ*.

There is a little more to the rule in German than simply adding *er* to the adjective or adverb ó but not much. Most monosyllabic adjectives with a stem vowel of *a*, *o*, or *u* add an umlaut over the stem vowel in addition to the *er*; e.g., *alt – älter*; *lang – länger*; *jung – jünger*; etc. There are exceptions to this, but not many. The only adjective you have learned thus far that is an exception to this rule is *toll – toller*.

If an adjective ends in *e*, just add an *r* – *leise – leiser*.

If an adjective ends in *el*, drop the *e* before the *l* – *dunkel – dunkler*.

If an adjective ends in *en* or *er* the *e* is often dropped but it is not mandatory.

There are a few exceptions for which you are responsible ó *gern – lieber*; *gut – besser*; *viel – mehr*; *hoch – höher*.

When comparing two elements, you are either saying they are equal or unequal. To compare unequals, you use the comparative form plus *als* (than), e.g., *Computer sind heute billiger als früher*. ó Computers are cheaper today than earlier. *Musikkassetten sind billiger als CDs*. ó Cassettes are cheaper than cds.

When comparing equals you use *so* or *genauso* + positive form of the adjective or adverb + *wie*.

*Meine Schwester ist so groß wie mein Bruder.*                      My sister is as big as my brother.

*Ich singe genauso schlecht wie du.*                                      I sing exactly as bad as you.

You have learned that the past tense of *sein* is *war* and the past tense of *haben* is *hatte*. You've learned these forms because the past tense forms of these words are often used instead of the present perfect tense. As you learned last unit, you are more likely to say *Ich war krank* than *Ich bin krank gewesen*. The simple past tense of modal verbs is also a lot simpler and more frequently used than the present perfect tense. Just like in the present tense, it's the modal verb second element and the infinitive at the end of the sentence. The forms are as follows:

	<u>können</u>	<u>wollen</u>	<u>dürfen</u>	<u>müssen</u>	<u>mögen</u>	<u>sollen</u>
<i>ich</i>	<i>konnte</i>	<i>wollte</i>	<i>durfte</i>	<i>musste</i>	<i>mochte</i>	<i>sollte</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>konntest</i>	<i>wolltest</i>	<i>durftest</i>	<i>musstest</i>	<i>mochtest</i>	<i>solltest</i>
<i>er, sie, es</i>	<i>konnte</i>	<i>wollte</i>	<i>durfte</i>	<i>musste</i>	<i>mochte</i>	<i>sollte</i>
<i>wir</i>	<i>konnten</i>	<i>wollten</i>	<i>durften</i>	<i>mussten</i>	<i>mochten</i>	<i>sollten</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>konntet</i>	<i>wolltet</i>	<i>durftet</i>	<i>musstet</i>	<i>mochtet</i>	<i>solltet</i>
<i>sie, Sie</i>	<i>konnten</i>	<i>wollten</i>	<i>durften</i>	<i>mussten</i>	<i>mochte</i>	<i>sollten</i>

*Ich musste gestern Abend Hausaufgaben machen.*

I had to do homework yesterday evening.

*Wir wollten nicht im Restaurant essen.*

We didn't want to eat in the restaurant.

On the test you must employ the rules governing the comparative and fill in blanks with the correct past tense of the first four modals above. Therefore you must know the meanings as well as the endings.

