

## GRAMMAR B1 EINHEIT 6

The main point of grammar introduced in this unit is the past perfect tense (*Plusquamperfekt*). Once again, we are fortunate because German and English form the past perfect tense in the exact same way. The past perfect tense is the same as the present perfect except the helping verb is in the past tense. That part is easy. The difficult part is knowing when to use it. The past perfect tense is used to describe an event in the past which took place prior to another past tense event. *„Mary didn't eat any cookies because I had eaten them all before she arrived.“* The tendency is to use *„ate“* instead of *„had eaten“*. This is, of course, incorrect. It is obvious that the eating of the cookies took place before Mary's arrival. The past perfect tense is used to convey that fact. *Mary konnte keine Kekse probieren, weil ich sie alle aufgegessen hatte, bevor sie angekommen ist.*

The past perfect tense is often used in conjunction with the subordinating conjunction, *nachdem*. *Nachdem* means *„after“*, but unlike *nach*, it is not a preposition. Even the example at the end of the previous paragraph can be restated using *nachdem*. *Mary konnte keine Kekse probieren, weil sie erst angekommen ist, nachdem ich sie alle aufgegessen hatte.* Here is another example, *Nachdem ich gegangen war, fingen die Kinder an, sich zu zanken.* (After I had gone, the children started to argue).

The remainder of the grammar introduced in this unit focuses on a few specific conjunctions and prepositions ó their use and meaning.

*Während* is a preposition which means *„during“* and is followed by the genitive case. *Während des Krieges mussten viele Menschen hungern.*

It is also a subordinating conjunction that translates as *„while“* or *„during the time that“*. *Während mein Vater bei VW arbeitete, wohnten wir in Dresden. Meine Mutter arbeitete in einem Büro, während mein Vater arbeitslos war.*

There are several conjunctions meaning *„when“*. *Als* is the one you choose when the verb is in the past tense. *Als der Krieg vorbei war, wurde Deutschland geteilt.*

Another genitive preposition is *wegen*. It means *„because of“*. Don't confuse it with the conjunction *weil*.

*Wegen eines Arzttermins kann ich nicht zum Kurs kommen.*

Remember, feel free to translate sentences in any way that correctly conveys the meaning and sounds best in English. You can translate *wegen eines Arzttermins* literally as *„because of a doctor appointment“* or you can say *„because I have a doctor appointment“*.

The final word discussed in this unit is *deshalb*. It means *„that's why“*, *„therefore“*, or *„for that reason“*. It does not affect word order.

*Das Wetter ist schön heute. Deshalb machen wir einen Ausflug.*

