

How are you?

Do you want to find out how your German-speaking friends and colleagues are doing? This is an important thing to do in German culture. Not only is it always good to check up on our friends and family from time to time, but it's also a polite thing to do when we meet somebody new.

Here we'll introduce you to different ways to ask how someone is, how to answer these questions, and more. Have a look and start improving your German!

Essential Phrases

- › Ways to Ask How Somebody is
- › Responding to: How are you?
- › Saying Goodbye

Answers to the Most Common Questions

Ways to Ask How Somebody is

You can use a number of phrases to ask how somebody is in German. The situation you are in, as well as your own personal style, will help determine which one you use. Below you'll find the most common ways to ask how somebody is.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Hallo, wie geht es dir? | Hi, how are you? |
| Hey, wie geht's? | Hey, how's it going? |
| Was machst du so? | What are you up to? |
| Jo, was geht? | Yo, what's up? |
| Hallo, wie ist es dir ergangen? | Hey, how have you been? |
| Wie war dein Tag? | How's your day been? |
| Hey, was gibt's Neues? | Hey, what's new? |

Hallo, wie geht es dir? (*Hi, how are you?*)

This phrase is used in German both as a greeting and as a way to ask someone how they are. When somebody asks you this question, then they usually expect some sort of answer. It's okay to take the question very seriously and to reply in detail. Other common ways to ask this question are: **Wie geht's?** (*How's it going?*) and **Wie geht es?** (*How do you do?*). An example response to any of these questions is: **Nicht schlecht und dir?** (*Not too bad, and you?*).

Jo, was geht? (*Yo, what's up?*)

This is a very informal version of *Wie geht es dir?*. You could also use **Wie steht's?** (*How's it hanging?*). Because this phrase is very informal, you will only ever use it with friends and family. Like *Wie geht's?* it can also both function as a question and a greeting. Here is an example response: **Nicht viel** (*Not much*).

Responding to: How are you?

When talking to friends and relatives you will also need to be able to tell them how you are. Your response could vary greatly depending on how you are feeling. Check out the examples in the table below!

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Mir geht es ausgezeichnet. | I'm great. |
| Mir geht es ziemlich gut und dir? | I'm doing pretty well, and you? |
| Es läuft großartig! | Things are great! |
| Es könnte nicht besser sein. | I couldn't be better. |
| Ich kann mich nicht beschweren. | I can't complain. |
| Ich war beschäftigt. | I've been busy. |
| Wie immer. | Same as always. |
| Nicht schlecht und du? | Not bad, and you? |
| Es könnte besser sein. | Things could be better. |
| Es ging mir schon besser. | I've been better. |
| Ich fühle mich nicht ganz auf der Höhe. | I feel a little under the weather. |
| Beschäftigt mit Arbeit. | Busy with work. |

Mir geht es ausgezeichnet (*I'm great*)

The easiest way to respond to the question *Wie geht es dir?* is to use the sentence pattern **Mir geht es + GEFÜHL** (*I'm + FEELING*). Here is another example of this: **Mir geht es großartig!** (*I'm great!*). Lots of people will drop *Mir geht's* and just say the adjective, like in **Ausgezeichnet, danke** (*Great, thanks*). A typical response to a phrase like this is: **Das ist gut zu hören!** (*That's good to hear!*).

Ich kann mich nicht beschweren (*I can't complain*)

This is a phrase that uses the verb *können*. It simply means that you are doing just fine. A response that you might hear to this is: **Das freut mich zu hören** (*I'm happy to hear that*).

Ich war beschäftigt (*I've been busy*)

You can use the sentence pattern **Ich war + ZUSTAND** (*I've been + STATE*) to respond to the question *Wie ist es dir ergangen?*. Another example of this is: **Mir geht es gut** (*I've been good*). Someone could respond to sentences like these with: **Mir auch** (*Same with me*).

Ich fühle mich nicht ganz auf der Höhe (*I feel a little under the weather*)

Here is a German idiom that has a similar meaning to feeling under the weather. *Auf der Höhe* refers to the fact that when you are sick you are usually in a horizontal position and low to the ground, like on a bed. Whereas when you are healthy then you are able to stand upright with your head held high. Here is an example response to this idiom: **Ich hoffe, dass du dich bald besser fühlst** (*I hope that you feel better soon*).

Beschäftigt mit Arbeit (*Busy with work*)

Another common way to answer the question *Wie geht's?* is to tell someone what you have been up to lately. For example, you could say something like: **Ich habe viel für Prüfungen gelernt** (*I've been studying a lot for exams*). There's lots of different ways someone could respond to this, such as: **Ich hoffe, du hast bald etwas Freizeit!** (*I hope you get some free time soon!*).

Saying Goodbye

After finding out how someone is and maybe having a quick conversation with them, then it's time to say goodbye. In the table below, we've gathered lots of ways to do this. Take a look and expand your vocabulary!

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Auf Wiedersehen. | Goodbye. |
| Es war schön, mit dir zu sprechen! | It was nice talking to you! |
| Tschüss! | Bye! |
| Wir sehen uns! | See you! |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mach's gut. | Take care. |
| Wir sprechen uns später. | Talk to you later. |
| Schönen Tag noch. | Have a good one. |
| Ich hoffe, dir geht es bald besser. | Hope you feel better soon. |

Mach's gut (Take care)

This phrase is commonly said as a goodbye to friends or family. You could also say: **Pass auf dich auf** (*Look after yourself*), which is used more frequently to express a mild form of worry about someone. Maybe they just told you that their health isn't so good or that they have been working too much. A typical response to these is: **Danke, du aber auch** (*Thanks, you do the same*).

Schönen Tag noch (Have a good one)

This is a polite way of saying goodbye to acquaintances and people you don't really know well, like store employees, waiters, taxi drivers, etc. A typical response to this is: **Danke, du auch** (*Thanks, you too*).

Ich hoffe, dir geht es bald besser (Hope you feel better soon)

This phrase can be used to wish somebody well who maybe feels sick or bad in some other way. They might respond with something like: **Danke, ich weiß das zu schätzen** (*Thank you, I appreciate that*).

Answers to the Most Common Questions

What are the most essential German phrases to know when asking someone how they are?

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Hallo, wie geht es dir? | Hi, how are you? |
| Hey, wie geht's? | Hey, how's it going? |
| Mir geht es ziemlich gut und dir? | I'm doing pretty well, and you? |
| Wir sehen uns! | See you! |
| Hallo, wie ist es dir ergangen? | Hey, how have you been? |
| Mir geht es ausgezeichnet. | I'm great. |
| Es war schön, mit dir zu sprechen! | It was nice talking to you! |
| Mach's gut. | Take care. |

How do I answer the question Hallo, wie geht es dir?

The easiest way to respond to the question Wie geht es dir? is to use the sentence pattern **Mir geht es + GEFÜHL** (*I'm + FEELING*).

Mir geht es ausgezeichnet. (I'm great.)

Mir geht es ganz in Ordnung. (I'm alright.)

Mir geht es gut. (I'm good.)

When do you ask somebody how they are?

It is most common in German to ask someone how they are doing when you already know them and want to genuinely find out how they are doing. Germans normally want a more in depth response to Wie geht es dir? Therefore, it is less commonly used as a simple greeting when you first see someone.

How do you ask someone how they are in a formal way?

The most noticeable feature of formal German is the use of the pronoun Sie and it's various forms instead of du. Therefore, Wie geht es dir? will become **Wie geht es Ihnen?** (*How are you?*). Abbreviations and phrases like Wie steht's or Wie läuft's are also avoided. When you respond to Wie geht es Ihnen it's also important to keep your answer short and not too in depth.

How do I ask someone how they are in an informal way?

Informal German uses the pronoun du and it's different forms. That means you'll use the phrase **Wie geht es dir?** (*How are you?*) when asking someone how they are informally. You could also use the more casual forms **Wie geht's?** (*How's it going?*), **Wie läuft es?** (*What's up?*), **Was gibt's Neues?** (*What's new?*), or **Wie steht's?** (*How's it hanging?*). You'd mainly use these four phrases with close friends and family members.

How do I say goodbye to someone that I won't see for a while?

Mach's gut. (*Take care.*)

This phrase is commonly said as a goodbye to friends or family. You could also say: **Pass auf dich auf** (*Look after yourself*), which is used more frequently to express a mild form of worry about someone. Maybe they just told you that their health isn't so good or that they have been working too much. A typical response to these is: **Danke, du aber auch** (*Thanks, you do the same*).

How can I say goodbye to store employees and other people I don't really know well?

Schönen Tag noch. (*Have a good one.*)

This is a polite way of saying goodbye to acquaintances and people you don't really know well, like store employees, waiters, taxi drivers, etc. A typical response to this is: **Danke, du auch** (*Thanks, you too*).

How do I wish somebody well?

Ich hoffe, dir geht es bald besser. (*Hope you feel better soon.*)

This phrase can be used to wish somebody well who maybe feels sick or bad in some other way. They might respond with something like: **Danke, ich weiß das zu schätzen** (*Thank you, I appreciate that*).



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