

The Family

Not sure how to describe your family in German? Then you've come to the right place! It's a common topic of conversation, and talking about family is a great way to get to know others more.

Here we've collected essential phrases that you can use to find out about someone's family and to talk about your own. Take a look at the tables below and start improving your German!

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Asking About the Family

Find out more about someone's family by using the questions we've gathered for you in the table below. Have a look and improve your German!

German

Wie geht's deiner Familie?
Hast du Brüder oder Schwestern?
Hast du Geschwister?
Wer ist das älteste Kind in deiner Familie?
Hast du eine große Familie?
Wie sind deine Eltern so?
Was machen deine Eltern?
Bist du verheiratet?
Hast du Kinder?
Steht deine Familie sich nahe?

English

How is your family?
Do you have any brothers or sisters?
Do you have any siblings?
Who's the oldest sibling in your family?
Do you have a big family?
What are your parents like?
What do your parents do?
Are you married?
Do you have any children?
Is your family close?

Hast du Brüder oder Schwestern? (*Do you have any brothers or sisters?*)

Another way to say this sentence is Hast du Geschwister? (*Do you have any siblings?*). If you want to find out what family members somebody has, you can use the sentence pattern Hast du + FAMILIENMITGLIEDER? (*Do you have any + FAMILY MEMBERS?*). Another example of how to use this pattern is Hast du Cousins oder Cousinen? (*Do you have any cousins?*). Here is one way somebody could respond to these question Ich habe zwei Cousins, die am anderen Ende des Landes leben (*I have two cousins that live on the other side of the country*).

Steht deine Familie sich nahe? (*Is your family close?*)

No, this question is not asking if your family is standing close to you. Sich nahe stehen is used to describe a family that is close to each other in the sense that they spend lots of time together and are very supportive of each other. One way someone could respond to this questions is: Ja, wir stehen uns sehr nahe (*Yes, we are very close with each other*).

Talking About Your Family

Below we've collected some useful phrases that you can use to talk about your own family in German. Many of them can help you form answers to the questions from the first table above.



German

Ich habe zwei Schwestern.

Ich bin das mittlere Kind.

Sie hat drei Geschwister.

Ich bin ein Einzelkind.

Mein Bruder arbeitet als Ingenieur.

Meine Eltern sind ziemlich abenteuerlustig.

Meiner Familie geht es gut! Wie geht es deiner?

Wir haben keine Kinder.

Ich bin ein Zwilling.



English

I have two sisters.

I'm the middle child.

She has three siblings.

I'm an only child.

My brother works as an engineer.

My parents are pretty adventurous.

My family is doing great! How is yours?

We don't have any children.

I'm a twin.

 **German**

Meine Schwester studiert an der Universität
Französisch.

Meine Großeltern leben im Westen.

Meine Schwester ist so ein Papakind.

Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.

 **English**

My sister is going to college and is studying French.

My grandparents live out west.

My sister is such a daddy's girl.

The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

Meine Schwester ist so ein Papakind (*My sister is such a daddy's girl*)

A Papakind is an individual who is very attached to or spoiled by their father. Of course, if the individuals are particularly attached to or spoiled by their mother you would describe them as a Mamakind.

Somebody might respond to a sentence using one of these descriptions by asking: Sind sie sich schon immer so nahe gestanden? (*Were they always that close?*).

Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm (*The apple doesn't fall far from the tree*)

This idiom can be used to describe a child with the same habits and talents as their parents. You could use it for example when a daughter and father are natural cooks, or when a mother and her son play guitar well. Somebody might respond to this idiom with something like this: Ja, sie sind einander sehr ähnlich! (*Yeah, they sure are similar to each other!*).

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the most important German phrases for talking about family?

Wie geht's deiner Familie?	How is your family?
Hast du Brüder oder Schwestern?	Do you have any brothers or sisters?
Wer ist das älteste Kind in deiner Familie?	Who's the oldest sibling in your family?
Wie sind deine Eltern so?	What are your parents like?
Ich habe zwei Schwestern.	I have two sisters.
Ich bin das mittlere Kind.	I'm the middle child.
Meiner Familie geht es gut! Wie geht es deiner?	My family is doing great! How is yours?
Ich bin ein Zwilling.	I'm a twin.

How do I ask what family members somebody has?

You can ask questions to find out what family members somebody has by using the sentence pattern

Hast du + FAMILIENMITGLIEDER? (*Do you have any + FAMILY MEMBERS?*).

Hast du Brüder oder Schwestern? (*Do you have any brothers or sisters?*)

Hast du Tanten und Onkel? (*Do you have any aunts and uncles?*)

Hast du Cousins oder Cousinen? (*Do you have any cousins?*)

What are the different abbreviations for family members?

Like in many languages, German has shorter, more common versions of words for family members. A Vater can also be called Papa, Papi, or Vati. A Mutter is often called Mama, Mami, or Mutti. And grandparents are usually referred to as Opa or Opi (for Großvater) and Oma or Omi (for Großmutter).



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