

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 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!

Essential Phrases

- › Asking about the Family
- › Talking About Your Family

Answers to the Most Common Questions

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!

Wie geht's deiner Familie?	How is your family?
Hast du Brüder oder Schwestern?	Do you have any brothers or sisters?
Hast du Geschwister?	Do you have any siblings?
Wer ist das älteste Kind in deiner Familie?	Who's the oldest sibling in your family?
Hast du eine große Familie?	Do you have a big family?
Wie sind deine Eltern so?	What are your parents like?
Was machen deine Eltern?	What do your parents do?
Bist du verheiratet?	Are you married?
Hast du Kinder?	Do you have any children?
Steht deine Familie sich nahe?	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 this 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.

Ich habe zwei Schwestern.	I have two sisters.
Ich bin das mittlere Kind.	I'm the middle child.
Sie hat drei Geschwister.	She has three siblings.
Ich bin ein Einzelkind.	I'm an only child.
Mein Bruder arbeitet als Ingenieur.	My brother works as an engineer.
Meine Eltern sind ziemlich abenteuerlustig.	My parents are pretty adventurous.
Meiner Familie geht es gut! Wie geht es deiner?	My family is doing great! How is yours?
Wir haben keine Kinder.	We don't have any children.
Ich bin ein Zwilling.	I'm a twin.
Meine Schwester ist auf der Universität und studiert Französisch.	My sister is going to college and is studying French.
Meine Großeltern leben im Westen.	My grandparents live out west.
Meine Schwester ist so ein Papakind.	My sister is such a daddy's girl.
Der Apfel fällt nicht weit vom Stamm.	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!*).

Answers to the Most Common 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?
Ich habe zwei Schwestern.	I have two sisters.
Ich bin das mittlere Kind.	I'm the middle child.
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?
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. Other words for Bruder and Schwester are Brudi and Schwesti. And grandparents are usually referred to as Opa or Opi (for Großvater) and Oma or Omi (for Großmutter).



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