



# Learn German by Podcast

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Beginner Level I

## Lesson 03

# Introducing oneself

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# Lesson 03

## Introducing oneself

Level: **Beginner**

Topics: **saying 'My name is...'; asking a person's name**

Topics: **heißen**



### Dialogue *(in the accompanying audio file)*

In today's dialogue, Herr Meier bumps into Frau Schmidt, his new neighbour, for the first time. Their very brief introduction contains some important expressions. Let's listen. Then we'll come back and take it piece by piece...

**Herr Meier** **Hallo. Ich heiße<sup>1</sup> Meier. Peter Meier. Und wie heißen Sie<sup>2</sup>?**

Frau Schmidt Ich heiße Melanie Schmidt. Guten Tag<sup>3</sup>, Herr<sup>4</sup> Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Guten Tag, Frau Schmidt... (a car horn sounds)**  
**Ich muss gehen... bis zum nächsten Mal!**

Frau Schmidt Auf Wiedersehen, Herr Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Auf Wiedersehen, Frau Schmidt.**

And now one more time...

**Herr Meier** **Hallo. Ich heiße Meier. Peter Meier. Und wie heißen Sie?**

Frau Schmidt Ich heiße Melanie Schmidt. Guten Tag, Herr Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Guten Tag, Frau Schmidt... (a car horn sounds)**  
**Ich muss gehen... bis zum nächsten Mal!**

Frau Schmidt Auf Wiedersehen, Herr Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Auf Wiedersehen, Frau Schmidt.**

Let's stop here for a moment. Herr Meier first said: 'My name is Peter Meier.' That's...

Ich heiße Peter Meier. ....

Ich heiße Peter Meier.

**Ich heiße...** literally this means 'I am called...'. It's an example of the verb **heißen**, which means 'to be called'. To take another couple of examples, how would we say 'His name is Peter Meier'?

Er heißt Peter Meier. ....

Er heißt Peter Meier.

...and 'Her name is Melanie'?

Sie heißt Melanie. ....

Sie heißt Melanie.

And 'Their names are Peter and Melanie'?

Sie heißen Peter und Melanie. ....

Sie heißen Peter und Melanie.

Now, we heard **Sie heißt Melanie** and **Sie heißen Peter und Melanie**. Note that **sie** can mean either 'she' or 'they', and will depend on the context.

Like all verbs, **heißen** has a set of different endings which comprise that verb's **conjugation**. You can find the complete conjugation of **heißen** in the accompanying PDF Lesson Guide, available from our website at [www.learngermanbypodcast.com](http://www.learngermanbypodcast.com).

Let's talk a little more about the question 'What is your name?' In German...

Wie heißen Sie? ....

Wie heißen Sie?

...and the answer was...

Ich heiße Melanie Schmidt. ....

Ich heiße Melanie Schmidt.

### Notes

#### 1 Ich heiße Meier.

= My name is Meier.

➔ **Wie heißen Sie?** – What is your name?

**heißen** [= to be called]

ich <b>heiße</b>	I <b>am called</b>
du <b>heißt</b>	you <b>are called</b>
er <b>heißt</b>	he <b>is called</b>
sie <b>heißt</b>	she <b>is called</b>
es <b>heißt</b>	it <b>is called</b>
wir <b>heißen</b>	we <b>are called</b>
ihr <b>heißt</b>	you <b>are called</b>
sie <b>heißen</b>	they <b>are called</b>
<b>Sie heißen</b> (polite)*	you (singular or plural) <b>are called</b>

#### 2 Und wie heißen Sie?

= And what's your name?  
(Literally, 'What are **you** called?')

The pronoun **Sie** – with a capital **S** – is the formal (or polite) form of 'you' (which you would use when addressing someone you do not know well, for example).

And watch it! The pronoun **sie** – with a small **s** – means either 'she' or 'they', depending on the context.

#### 3 capitalisation

Note that, even *within* sentences, nouns are capitalised in German. For example:

➔ **Guten Morgen Herr Meier.**  
➔ **Bis zum nächsten Mal.**

The nouns in the two example sentences above – **Morgen** (morning), **Mal** (time, occasion) are both capitalised.

#### 4 Herr, Frau

**Herr** means 'Mr' and **Frau** can mean 'woman' or 'Ms/Mrs', depending on the context.

Just like the English 'Miss', the German **Fräulein** is considered politically incorrect and should not be used when addressing a young woman. As there is no equivalent to the English 'Ms', a woman should always be addressed as **Frau**.

Anywhere you find the following symbol in the text...

→ ....

... there's a pause in the audio to allow you to repeat the key word or expression.

# Dialogue

(in the accompanying audio file)

So, **Sie** can actually mean 'you' as well, right?

Das ist richtig.

And how would you say 'What is his name?'

Wie heißt er? ....

Wie heißt er?

...and 'What is her name?' would be...

Wie heißt sie? ....

Wie heißt sie?

...and talking about Peter and Melanie... 'What are their names?'

Wie heißen sie? ....

Wie heißen sie?

Now, let's get back to the dialogue. As a greeting, Melanie says...

Guten Tag. ....

Guten Tag.

...which literally means 'good day', or simply 'hello'. **Gut** means 'good' and in the expression **Guten Tag** there is a special ending – **Guten**;

let's not worry too much about this for now and simply remember the expression **Guten Tag**. How about 'Good morning?'

Guten Morgen. ....

Guten Morgen.

... and what would you say in the evening?

Guten Abend. ....

Guten Abend.

And when going to bed, we would say...

Gute Nacht<sup>5</sup>. ....

Gute Nacht.

... which means 'good night'.

Let's hear these expressions one more time. 'Good morning'...

Guten Morgen.

'Good day' or rather 'hello' is...

Guten Tag.

'Good evening' is...

Guten Abend.

...and finally 'good night'...

Gute Nacht.

Just as Herr Meier and Frau Schmidt are going to engage in conversation, Herr Meier is interrupted by someone who's going to offer him a lift. He excuses himself, saying...

Ich muss gehen<sup>6</sup>... ....

Ich muss gehen...

... which means, 'I must go...!' It's a combination of **Ich muss...** and the verb **gehen**, 'to go'. It's a pattern we'll come back to in later lessons. So Herr Meier says bye...

Auf Wiedersehen<sup>7</sup> ....

Auf Wiedersehen.

... literally this is 'until seeing again', right?

Das ist richtig.

## Notes

### 5 gender

Why do we have **Guten Morgen** but **Gute Nacht**?

The ending of the adjective **gut** depends on the **gender\*** of the noun it accompanies (**Morgen**, **Abend**, **Nacht**), in other words, whether the noun is **masculine**, **feminine** or **neuter**.

Consequently, we have:

- ➡ **Gute Nacht** (feminine)
- ➡ **Guten Morgen** (masculine)

### 6 Ich muss gehen.

= I must go.

Note the pronunciation of the verb **gehen**, 'to go'. The **h** is silent. This word is pronounced rather like **gay-en**.

- ➡ **Gehen wir!** – Let's go!

### 7 Auf Wiedersehen

Watch the pronunciation! The **W** is pronounced like the English **V**.

#### \*Grammar focus

##### Gender

We already mentioned (in Lesson 1) the fact that a German noun is of a certain **gender**, that is, **masculine**, **feminine** or **neuter**.

**Gender** is one of the factors which determine word 'endings'.

It is essential, therefore, to learn the gender of all new nouns when studying German.

SAMPLE

Dialogue  
(in the accompanying  
audio file)

Joachim and Conny, so we can consolidate all the words and expressions, let's hear that exchange one final time and, to our listeners, don't forget to log on to [www.learngermanbypodcast.com](http://www.learngermanbypodcast.com) for the detailed and comprehensive PDF Lesson Guide. Here's that exchange one final time...

**Herr Meier** **Hallo. Ich heiÙe Meier. Peter Meier. Und wie heiÙen Sie?**

Frau Schmidt Ich heiÙe Melanie Schmidt. Guten Tag, Herr Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Guten Tag, Frau Schmidt... (a car horn sounds)  
Ich muss gehen... bis zum nÙchsten<sup>8</sup> Mal!**

Frau Schmidt Auf Wiedersehen, Herr Meier.

**Herr Meier** **Auf Wiedersehen, Frau Schmidt.**

Joachim and Conny, that's it for this lesson. Until next time...

Bis zum nÙchsten Mal.

Bis zum nÙchsten Mal.

Now it's your turn...

If you understood our lesson, then you should be ready for the following:

1. What is his name?
2. Their names are Peter and Melanie.
3. Hello.
4. Goodbye.

(Visit our site at [www.learngermanbypodcast.com](http://www.learngermanbypodcast.com) for the answers!)

Notes

8 Bis zum nÙchsten Mal!

Watch the pronunciation! The **a-umlaut** results in a pronunciation similar to that found in the English words *next, pet, left*.

➡ ... zum nÙchsten Mal.

Vokabeln

<i>Auf Wiedersehen</i>	Goodbye
<i>du</i>	you ( <i>singular</i> )
<i>er</i>	he
<i>es</i>	it
<i>Gute Nacht</i>	Goodnight
<i>Guten Abend</i>	Good evening
<i>Guten Morgen</i>	Good morning
<i>Guten Tag</i>	Hello
<i>ihr</i>	you ( <i>plural</i> )
<i>sie</i>	she
<i>Sie</i>	you ( <i>the polite form, can be singular or plural</i> )
<i>wir</i>	we

