

Information Sheet on Proof of Knowledge of Basic German Language Skills for Spousal Reunification or Marriage with Subsequent Permanent Residency in Germany

- ✓ Are you planning to rejoin your spouse or registered life partner in Germany?
- ✓ Or do you intend to move to Germany together with your spouse or registered life partner?
- ✓ Or are you considering coming to Germany to get married and reside together with your spouse?

In these cases you must prove that you have a basic command of German language skills. This is to ensure effective communication in simple German right from the beginning.

1. What are Basic German Language Skills:

Ensure effective communication in Germany by demonstrating basic German language skills. This requires knowledge at the "A1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages." This includes the ability to comprehend and utilise common, everyday expressions in addition to formulating very basic sentences (e.g. asking for directions, shopping, etc.). You should be capable of introducing yourself and others, as well as responding to questions about yourself, for instance your residence or acquaintances.

Additionally, you should be able to write basic information in German, such as filling out forms from authorities with details such as your name, address and nationality.

2. How can you prove basic German language skills?

As a standard procedure, you must provide evidence of your language proficiency when applying for a visa for family reunion or marriage with subsequent permanent residence. To meet this requirement, submit a language certificate from an examination provider certified according to the standards of ALTE to your application documents.

Recognized language certificates include:

- "Start Deutsch 1" from the Goethe-Institut e.V.
- "Start Deutsch 1" from Telc GmbH (The European Language Certificate, a subsidiary of the German Adult Education Association)
- "ÖSD Zertifikat A1" (the Austrian Language Diploma)
- "TestDaF" from the TestDaF-Institut e.V. (proficiency starting from level "B2" GER).
- ECL Examination Centers (proficiency starting from level "A2" GER, e.g., AFU Private Educational Institute GmbH)

Please note: Certificates from other issuers or institutions are not recognized!

If, during your visa application appointment, it becomes clear that your German skills significantly exceed the required A1 level, no additional proof is necessary.

Note: Generally, only certificates with an examination date not exceeding one year ago are accepted.

3. Are There Exceptions?

The determination of exceptional cases occurs during the visa process in consultation with the foreign mission and immigration office.

Exceptions are only considered if one of the following situations:

- ✓ Your German skills are obvious, i.e., evident immediately during the application conversation at the counter. If there are any doubts regarding your knowledge in the German language, a language certificate will be required.
- ✓ You are moving as a custodial parent to your minor German child or are pregnant with a child who will acquire German citizenship at birth.
- ✓ You or your spouse/fiancé(e) is a citizen of a European Union member state (except Germany!).
- ✓ You cannot prove basic knowledge of the German language due to a physical, mental, or psychological illness or disability. Please provide corresponding evidence with the application. Factors such as illiteracy, old age, pregnancy, the need for organized childcare, and a certain distance to a language school do not inherently justify the impossibility of language acquisition. The acquisition of basic knowledge at the A1 level does not necessarily have to take place in a language school.
- ✓ Your spouse holds or will soon receive a residence permit
 - as the holder of a Blue Card EU (§ 18b (2) AufenthG),
 - as the holder of an ICT Card (§ 19 AufenthG)
 - as the holder of a Mobile ICT Card (§ 19b AufenthG),
 - as a skilled worker with vocational training (§ 18a AufenthG),
 - as a skilled worker with academic training (§ 18b (1) AufenthG),
 - as a highly qualified skilled worker (§ 18c (3) AufenthG),
 - as a researcher (§ 18d AufenthG),
 - as a mobile researcher (§ 18f AufenthG),
 - to be employed (§ 19c (1) AufenthG) in the following occupations: senior executive, executive, company specialist, scientists, guest scientist, engineer or technician in the

- research team of a guest scientist, or teacher in accordance with the Employment Regulation,
 - as a person with pronounced practical professional knowledge (§ 19c (2) AufenthG),
 - as a civil servant (§ 19c (4) sentence 1 AufenthG),
 - as a self-employed person (§ 21 AufenthG),
 - as a permanent resident of other EU states (§ 38a AufenthG)
- ✓ Your spouse is in possession of a settlement permit or a permit for permanent residence EU and was immediately prior in possession of a residence permit
 - as the holder of a Blue Card EU (§ 18b (2) AufenthG),
 - as a skilled worker with vocational training (§ 18a AufenthG),
 - as a skilled worker with academic training (§ 18b (1) AufenthG)
 - as a researcher (§ 18d AufenthG),
 - to be employed in the following occupations (§ 19c para. 1 AufenthG): senior executives, executives, company specialists, scientists, guest scientists, engineers or technicians in the research team of a guest scientist, or teachers in accordance with the Employment Regulation,
 - as a person with pronounced practical professional knowledge (§ 19c (2) AufenthG),
 - as a civil servant (§ 19c (4) sentence 1 AufenthG),
 - as a self-employed person (§ 21 AufenthG),
- ✓ You were already married before your spouse's departure, and your spouse possesses or will soon receive a residence permit according to § 23 (4), § 25 paragraph 1(1) or (2),
- ✓ § 26 (3) AufenthG (asylum entitlement, recognized refugees and asylum seekers) or after issuing a residence permit according to § 25 (2) sentence 1 second alternative AufenthG a settlement permit according to § 26 (4) AufenthG
- ✓ Your spouse is a citizen of Australia, Great Britain, Israel, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, or the United States of America.
- ✓ Clearly lower integration needs

This is assumed when you hold a university degree or professional qualification. You should be able to commence employment in Germany within a reasonable timeframe of job hunting and integrate into Germany's economic, social, and cultural life without requiring state assistance. All three conditions (qualification, positive employment outlook, positive integration outlook) must be met. Merely presenting a higher education degree without meeting the other requirements is usually insufficient to establish a clearly lower integration need.
- ✓ You and your spouse do not intend to reside permanently in Germany but only temporarily. This could apply, for example, to spouses of businesspeople or employees of internationally active companies who are only temporarily working and living in Germany.
- ✓ Hardship provision: The language proficiency requirement may be waived if, due to special circumstances in an individual case, it is not possible or reasonable for you to make efforts to acquire basic knowledge of the German language before entry. For instance, the requirement



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may be waived if, despite exerting efforts over a one-year duration, you were unable to obtain the necessary language certificate. It is crucial to demonstrate credible learning efforts in such cases (e.g., participation in courses, attempts at examinations). The required language skills must then be acquired after entry into Germany to obtain a residence permit as a spouse.

- ✓ Another example of an exception would generally be if language courses are not permanently available, and there are no other viable alternatives (e.g., through books or online platforms) for language acquisition and proof.