

**BEGINNING GERMAN: A  
SERIES OF  
LESSONS WITH AN  
ABSTRACT OF GRAMMAR**

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Beginning German: A Series of Lessons with an Abstract of Grammar by H. C. Bierwirth

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**H. C. BIERWIRTH**

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# BEGINNING GERMAN

A SERIES OF LESSONS

WITH AN

ABSTRACT OF GRAMMAR

BY

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## PREFACE

THIS book consists of a series of thirty lessons and an abstract of grammar.

On the lessons and the best way of using them, I have only a few suggestions to make, and these I will venture to put in a somewhat categorical form.

First, have your students recite as much as possible with their books closed. Secondly, dictate a few sentences or phrases to them at every lesson. Thirdly, postpone sentence writing and so-called composition until the ear is fairly well trained and the new language has become *alive* in the student's mind. And fourthly, before your scholars do an English exercise, let them carefully reread the preceding German sentences that should serve them as models.

I may add that these suggestions are neither original nor novel, and I dare say that if they had been followed more closely since the Committee of Twelve lent them the weight of their authority, fewer candidates for admission to college would be found deficient in the translation into German, and most would do better in the translation of German into English. The fact is that, notwithstanding all our conceits to the contrary, we are still too much under the sway of the traditional methods of teaching the *dead* languages.

In the second part of the book, the abstract of grammar, I have so far departed from the customary way of presenting

the subject of accidence that I must needs give my reason for doing so. It is this: if the initial difficulty for most English-speaking students of German lies in mastering the inflections, rather than in grasping the uses of the parts of speech, or what we call syntax, it ought to be more practical to group different parts of speech under the same type of inflection than to group different types of inflection under the same part of speech. The former is the method that I have followed. The latter is again a traditional method, that of logicians; but it is not necessarily the best, nor even the most rational method, even if it be the most logical.

The abstract of grammar, if it should prove useful for reviewing the essentials of accidence and syntax, especially in preparation for college, will soon be published separately.

I have adopted the new official orthography of 1902, hence the change of form in a few familiar words, as *tun, tat, getan, Thür, gibst* etc. instead of *thun, that, gethan, Thür, giebst* etc.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., JANUARY, 1903.



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# BEGINNING GERMAN

## PRONUNCIATION

### The Alphabet

German form	German name	Roman form	German form	German name	Roman form
A a	ah	A a	Ä ä	en	N n
B b	bay	B b	O o	oh	O o
C c	tsay	C c	P p	pay	P p
D d	day	D d	Q q	koo	Q q
E e	ay	E e	R r	er	R r
F f	eff	F f	S s	ess	S s
G g	gay	G g	T t	tay	T t
H h	hah	H h	U u	oo	U u
I i	ee	I i	V v	fow	V v
J j	yot	J j	W w	vay	W w
K k	kah	K k	X x	ix	X x
L l	el	L l	Y y	ipailon	Y y
M m	em	M m	Z z	tset	Z z

Of the two forms *ſ* and *ß*, the latter is used at the end of a word, at the end of a syllable in compounds, and before suffixes (except suffixes of inflection); elsewhere *ſ* is used: *Haus*, *Haus'tür*, *Haus'fen*, but *Hau'ſes*; *laß*, *Les'-art*, *les'bar*, but *le'ſen*, *lieft*.

Note the following combinations: *ch*, *ck*, *tz* and *ß* *sz*. The last, however, is as frequently represented by *ss* (and always sounded like *ss*). It is called *ess-tset'* and takes the place of *ſß* at the end of a word or syllable, and of *ff* before