

# Extended participle attributes

## — DAS ERWEITERTE PARTIZIPIALATTRIBUT

The extended Partizipialattribut turns the information of a relative clause into a long adjective phrase placed before the noun, using Partizip I or Partizip II.

Instead of a Relativsatz (relative clause), you pack all the extra information into a Partizip I or Partizip II and place it before the noun as one giant adjective phrase.

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01 00:15

### Right now: turning a clause into an adjective

 **SHORTCUT** In academic German and in newspapers, a long Relativsatz that would follow the noun moves in front of it and becomes one enormous adjective.

- ✓ **Das Buch, das von dem Professor geschrieben wurde...**

The book that was written by the professor... (Relativsatz)

- ✓ **Das **von dem Professor geschriebene** Buch...**

The book written by the professor... (Partizipialattribut)

The meaning is exactly the same, but the second version is much denser (compact) and more formal.

02 01:30

### English does half of this already

English puts short participles in front of the noun too: “the *rapidly rising* prices”, “a *much-discussed* reform”. The difference is what happens when the phrase gets long. English moves it *behind* the noun (“the car repaired yesterday”, “the book written by the professor”); German keeps everything **in front**, however long it gets.

| GERMAN RELATIVSATZ (LONG)              | GERMAN PARTIZIPIALATTRIBUT (COMPACT) | ENGLISH                    |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Die Preise , die schnell steigen       | die <b>schnell steigenden</b> Preise | the rapidly rising prices  |
| Das Auto , das gestern repariert wurde | das <b>gestern reparierte</b> Auto   | the car repaired yesterday |
| Die Aufgabe , die gelöst werden muss   | die <b>zu lösende</b> Aufgabe        | the task to be solved      |

Look at how the English column keeps changing shape: the participle sits before the noun in the first row and after it in the other two. German always builds it the same way (middle column): everything in front of the noun.

✓ **Der im Garten spielende Hund...**

The dog playing in the garden...

03 02:45

### Table: which participle do you choose?

The participle you pick depends on whether the action is **active or passive**:

| SITUATION                               | STRUCTURE TO USE                           | EXAMPLE                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Active (it does it itself)              | Partizip I (verb + d + ending)             | das <b>weinende</b> Kind (the crying child)              |
| Passive / completed (it was done to it) | Partizip II (ge- + stem + -t/-en + ending) | das <b>gekaufte</b> Auto (the purchased car)             |
| Obligation (it has to be done)          | zu + Partizip I                            | das <b>zu lösende</b> Problem (the problem to be solved) |

They all take adjective endings. Depending on the article and the gender of the noun, **-e, -en, -er** and so on are added.

✓ **Der auf dem Tisch liegende Stift...**

The pen lying on the table... (active → Partizip I)

✓ **Das von mir gelesene Buch...**

The book read by me... (passive → Partizip II)

### ADVERTISEMENT

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04 03:45

## The word-order trap

- ✓ Das **im Jahr 2020 erbaute** Haus...

The house built in 2020...



### TRAP

#### Putting the participle first

In an extended participle phrase the **inflected participle always sits right next to the noun** (on its left). All the other information (time, place, by whom) comes **before** it.

- ✗ Das ~~erbaute~~ im Jahr 2020 Haus...

Wrong. The participle is not next to the noun.

- ✓ Das im Jahr 2020 **erbaute** Haus...

Right. Article → extra information → participle → noun.

Remember this formula: **Article + everything else + participle + noun.**

05 04:30

## The part nobody tells you: how to breathe while reading

This structure is the reason for those giant sentences you cannot understand in B2/C1 texts (TestDaF, for example). Ten words can sit between the article and the noun. **The tactic: skip the words after the article and look at the noun first.**

- ✓ Die **von der aktuellen Regierung in den letzten Jahren heftig kritisierte** Reform...

Article (Die) → noun (Reform) → read the middle only after you have found the reform.

In your own writing (Schreiben), don't make this structure too long. Germans like it in print, but a Partizipialattribut that runs for two lines makes a sentence unreadable. Keep it short and sharp.

06 BUILD

## Build the sentence yourself

Tap the words and put them in order. This is the hardest part of German — and there are no options to pick from, **you** build it.

TAP THE WORDS

TAP THE WORDS

TAP THE WORDS

## TIPS

### Know this before the test

The core of the topic in three lines, then the mistakes people make most often.

01

**Active → Partizip I (ends in -d)**

If something does the action itself (a crying child, rising prices), you use Partizip I.

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die steigenden Preise

02

**Passive → Partizip II (ge...t/en)**

If something was done by someone else (a building that was built, a book that was written), you use Partizip II.

---

das gebaute Haus

03

**Order: article + everything else + participle + noun**

The participle must always stick to the noun (directly on its left).

---

das gestern in Berlin  
gekaufte Auto

✗ ~~die schnell gestiegenen Preise~~ →  
meaning “still rising”

✓ die schnell steigenden Preise

---

Both are correct German with different meanings: gestiegen = have risen (finished), steigend = rising (ongoing). If the prices are still rising, use Partizip I.

✗ ~~das von mir Buch gelesene~~

✓ das von mir gelesene Buch

---

The adjective does not come after the noun. The participle (gelesene) has to stand directly in front of the noun (Buch).

06 05:00

### Test yourself

Tap an answer — we will look at why together.

+4

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