

The preposition durch

— DIE PRÄPOSITION DURCH

durch is a German preposition that always takes the accusative: durch den Park, durch Zufall.

The preposition **durch** always takes the **accusative**. The most common mistake is using the dative or the nominative instead.

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01 00:00

durch always takes the accusative

durch takes the accusative without exception. The article or pronoun after it has to be in the accusative: **der Park** → **durch den Park**.

Few German prepositions are this strict — most of them switch case depending on the situation. **durch** never does. Learn the rule once and it is always true.

NOMINATIVE	AFTER DURCH (ACCUSATIVE)
der Mann	den Mann
die Frau	die Frau
das Kind	das Kind
die Leute	die Leute

Watch out: the only thing that changes is the **masculine** article — **der** → **den**. Feminine, neuter and plural stay as they are.

02 01:10

Main meaning: passing through something

The basic meaning of **durch** is spatial: **going in one side and coming out the other**. The movement passes through the inside of the space.

It is used most often with places you can **pass through**: a park, a street, a tunnel, a forest.

EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
durch den Park	through the park
durch den Tunnel	through the tunnel
durch die Stadt	through the city

In all three examples the noun is in the accusative: **den, den, die**.

03 02:20

Second meaning: thanks to / by means of

durch does not only show place: it also shows **the way or the means** by which something happens.

In this sense it corresponds to English “through”, “by means of”, “thanks to”.

EXAMPLE	ENGLISH
durch das Internet	through / thanks to the internet
durch Zufall	by chance
durch seine Hilfe	with his help

The meaning changes, but the case does not: here too the noun is in the accusative (**das, den, seine**).

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04 03:30

durch vs. über, and von / durch in the passive

durch means going **through the inside** of an area (tunnel, forest, crowd); **über** means going **over the top** (bridge, roof, hill). English keeps “through” and “over” apart too, but as soon as you think “cross” or “get across” the two blur — so this is the pair people mix up most.

In a passive sentence the **person** who does the action is introduced with **von**; the **means or cause** is introduced with **durch**.

SITUATION	PREPOSITION	EXAMPLE
Going through the inside	durch	Wir gehen durch den Wald .
Going over the top	über	Wir fahren über die Brücke .
Passive — the person doing it	von	Das Buch wurde von dem Autor geschrieben .
Passive — means / cause	durch	Das Fenster wurde durch einen Stein zerbrochen .

Keep this in mind: **von** = **who?** (a person) · **durch** = **by what?** (a means).

05 06:00

Traps



TRAP 01

Using the dative after durch

After **durch** comes the accusative, not the dative. This is the most common mistake learners make — because in English “through the park” shows no case at all, so nothing warns you.

✗ Ich gehe durch dem Park.

dem is dative; **durch** takes the accusative → **den**.

✓ Ich gehe durch den Park.

den is the accusative article of masculine nouns — this is correct.



TRAP 02

Using **durch** for a bridge

When you think “cross the bridge”, the difference between inside and top disappears. German keeps the **inside** and the **top** apart.

✗ **Wir fahren durch die Brücke.**

would mean driving through the inside of the bridge

✓ **Wir fahren über die Brücke.**

We're driving over the bridge.



TRAP 03

Saying **durch** instead of **von** in the passive

In a passive sentence **von** marks the **person** who does the action, and **durch** marks the **means**. A stone is not a person.

✗ **Das Fenster wurde von einem Stein zerbrochen.**

A stone is not a person but a means — so it needs **durch**, not **von**.

✓ **Das Fenster wurde durch einen Stein zerbrochen.**

durch einen Stein shows the **means** that broke the glass — this is correct.

06 07:00

The other accusative prepositions

07 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

07 07:30

Test yourself

Tap an answer — we will look at why together.

+7

Take the full test

13 questions · timed · rule breakdown at the end



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