

The preposition von

— DIE PRÄPOSITION VON

von is a preposition that always takes the Dativ: von mir, vom Arzt, von Montag bis Freitag.

von is one of the hardest-working prepositions in German: it means “from”, “of” and, in the passive, “by”. It has five jobs, and in every one of them it takes the Dativ.

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01 00:10

One rule: von always takes the Dativ · the vom contraction

⚡ **SHORTCUT** von dem always becomes **vom**. von der does not contract; you write it out in full.

von has many meanings but only one piece of grammar: **the Dativ, without exception**. So the difficulty is not the case, it is **when to use von and when to use aus** — we sort that out in a section of its own below.

- von mir · von dir · von ihm · von ihr
- von uns · von euch · von ihnen · von Ihnen
- Das ist ein Geschenk **von mir**. — This is a gift from me.

02 01:10

The five jobs of von

JOB	IN ENGLISH	EXAMPLE
1 - Coming from a person or institution	from	Ich komme vom Arzt . I'M COMING FROM THE DOCTOR'S .
2 - The giver	from (gift , message)	Das ist von meiner Mutter . THIS IS FROM MY MOTHER .
3 - Starting point	from ... to	von Berlin nach Hamburg FROM BERLIN TO HAMBURG
4 - Possession	of - 's	das Auto von meinem Vater MY FATHER'S CAR · THE CAR OF MY FATHER
5 - The doer in a passive sentence	by	Der Brief wurde von Anna geschrieben . THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN BY ANNA .

03 03:00

von or aus — English “from” splits in two



SHORTCUT

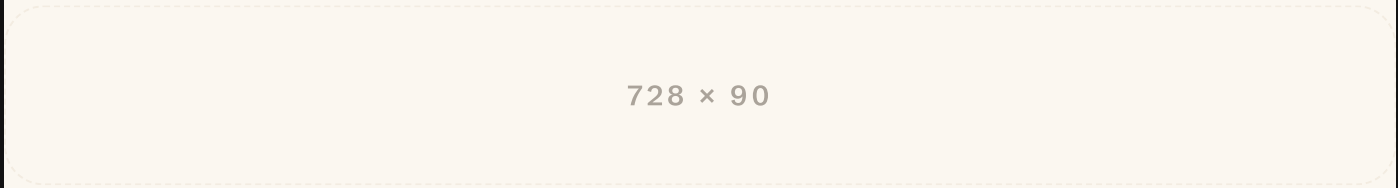
If you come out of the inside of something, use **aus**; if you come from someone's side, use **von**. Enclosed space → **aus** · person, institution, point → **von**.

English uses “from” for both, so you cannot see the difference. German has a three-way system, and the table below is the most useful part of this page.

WITH	GOING →	BEING ·	COMING ←
Person / institution DOCTOR, WORK, BARBER	zum Arzt	beim Arzt	vom Arzt
Enclosed space CINEMA, KITCHEN	ins Kino	im Kino	aus dem Kino
City / country BERLIN, GERMANY	nach Berlin	in Berlin	aus Berlin

Where you are *from* is always **aus**: **Ich komme aus Izmir**. But if you are coming from work, class or the doctor's, it is **von**: **Ich komme von der Arbeit**. One is your identity, the other is today's route.

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04 04:40

Possession with von — the spoken stand-in for the Genitiv

German says “my father’s car” in two ways. Written German uses the Genitiv; everyday speech uses **von** + Dativ, just like English “the car *of* my father”. **Both are correct**; which one you pick depends on where the sentence lives.

	FORM	WHERE
Genitiv	das Auto meines Vaters	Writing, formal texts, exams
von + Dativ	das Auto von meinem Vater	Speech, everyday language

Using the Genitiv in conversation is not wrong, but it sounds rather formal. At A1-A2 use the **von** form; give the Genitiv its own time on [its own page](#).

- ① With names, both get shorter: **Annas Auto** = **das Auto von Anna**. Unlike English, German has **no apostrophe** here — **Anna’s** is wrong.

Traps



TRAP 01

von der Türkei

You do not use von to say where you are from. Origin is always **aus**, even though English says “from”.

✗ Ich komme **von der Türkei**.

origin → aus

✓ Ich komme **aus der Türkei**.

I’m from Turkey.



TRAP 02

Contracting von der into “vor”

von contracts only with **dem**. **vor** is a completely different preposition and means “in front of” or “before” — mix them up and the whole sentence changes.

✗ Ich komme **vor der Arbeit**.

this means “before work”

✓ Ich komme **von der Arbeit**.

I’m coming from work.



TRAP 03

von mich

von has no Akkusativ form.

✗ Das ist ein Geschenk **von mich**.

von → Dativ

✓ Das ist ein Geschenk **von mir**.

This is a gift from me.

06 06:50

The other Dativ 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 07:10

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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GENAU — NOT RULES, THE MOMENT IT CLICKS.

