Guide to A level German

The Fallibroome Academy

Name: _____



French, German, Spanish

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

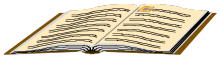
Fallibroome assumes that you will have attained at least a GCSE grade B and that you wish to develop your language skills as well as your knowledge and understanding of the culture and way of life of the target-language country.

What will I learn on this AS/A Level course?

The course will help you to develop your general study skills, but most of all you will learn to communicate at a higher level in the language that you have chosen. You will also learn much more about a wide range of aspects of the society or societies in which the language is spoken.
General Topic areas include Food, Diet, Health, Transport, Travel and tourism, Current Affairs, Media, Relationships, Social Issues, Leisure and the Arts, Education, The world of work, IT, The Environment, Politics, Customs, The EU, World-wide Problems.....



Listening
You will be able to listen to authentic recorded target-language material and retrieve and convey information from it, including producing a summary in English. You will learn about the contemporary society and the cultural heritage of the target-language country.



Reading
You will be able to read, understand and extract information from written passages in the target language that are taken from authentic sources, such as magazines and newspapers, reports or books.



Speaking
You will be able to deliver an oral presentation/discuss in depth in the target-language, express opinions and generally converse on a range of issues at a high level with a native or near native speaker.



Writing
You will learn how to write essays/letters or longer pieces in the target language. You will learn all the appropriate grammar, words and phrases that will help you to:

- present information in the target language.
- provide opinions.
- organise your arguments.
- analyse your ideas.
- translate short passages into the target language.

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

- further develop my knowledge of contemporary society and language skills by doing a degree course in languages.

- choose a language option to run alongside my intended degree.

- spend a year of my degree in a country where the language is spoken

My employment prospects - some interesting facts…..



- Speaking a foreign language is a sought after skill in business, with 75% of graduate employers seeing conversational skills as desirable (CBI survey April 08)

- 48% of graduate employers are actively seeking out graduates specifically for their language skills (CBI survey April 08)

- European languages such as French, German and Spanish are still today's most sought after languages in business. Employers want more than just a degree in business or finance (Languageswork.org.uk)

- One in every five companies loses business due to language and communication barriers (CILT – SOLViT International Communication Challenge)

- Don't just think that languages lead to translating, interpreting and teaching – business, finance, banking, journalism, marketing, technology sector, , Aid work, engineering etc. all value language skills, as well as tourism-based industries. With a language the world is your oyster!

Having a language at AS or A Level will certainly improve your employability and equip you to work in the wider world of today!

Fallibroome High School Modern Languages Department

AS and A-Level German

A Ten Point Guide

1. Equipment

You will need the following:

- A quality, large German-English, English-German dictionary
- A grammar book (Aktion Grammatik – Hodder Education)
- A verb book
- A vocabulary guide e.g. Wort für Wort
- A4 files
- An CD player / PC / MP3 player to listen to past papers for the listening exams

2. Attendance and Punctuality

- Aim for as near to 100% attendance as possible, *including lessons with the assistant*. Please be punctual!
- Your attendance and punctuality will be monitored through PiFs
- If you know in advance that you will miss a lesson, please say so
- If you are away:
    - hand in any work owing as soon as you get back
    - find out what you have missed and catch up.

3. Effective Use of Time

- Take an *active* part in lessons, especially in oral and listening work
- Do each homework to the best of your ability, by:
    - not leaving it to the last minute
    - avoiding distractions (television, radio, …)
    - aiming for *quality* rather than just *quantity*
- Reward yourself for using your time effectively by planning something enjoyable for the time you save.

4. Deadlines

- Meeting Deadlines …
  - enables you to make regular progress
  - gives your teacher time to mark your work
  - ensures work is marked consistently
  - is a vital skill for later life.
- You will be given a reasonable amount of time to complete homework.
- If you have a valid reason for needing extra time, see your teacher *in advance*. Do not just turn up for the next lesson with no work!
- If you miss a deadline through illness, you should hand your work in the first day you are back at school, even if you do not have a German lesson on that day.
- If you fail to meet any deadline without good reason, it will be followed up by your teacher and you may have to catch up after school. Being recommended for AP is also an option for persistent problems

5. Organisation of Your Work

- Keep your work organised, so you can find it for reference later
- Remember, 10 minutes filing a week may save hours spent hunting for lost work!
- See later for how to organise your files.

6. <u>Learning (more tips later)</u>

- Unless you have a photographic memory, you will have to actively learn grammar and vocabulary. This is *vital* if you are to reach your potential.
- You will be given vocabulary tests (mostly with advance warning!), but must also have the motivation to learn when no test is planned.
- If you learn five words a day throughout the Sixth Form, you will know over 3,000 extra words by the time of your Advanced Level examination.
- Ways of learning
  - listening to revision tapes
  - pairwork/group testing
  - reading your notes
  - writing out vocabulary/grammar tables
- Swotting at the last minute is ineffective. Learn and use new language *regularly*.

7. <u>Asking for Help</u>

- Please do not suffer in silence!
- If you do not understand something, then follow this order:
  a. try to find out from your notes and reference materials
  b. ask at an appropriate time in class, especially if it is a new point, or one which is causing difficulty to others.
  c. arrange a tutorial or lunchtime meeting to discuss it

8. <u>"That Bit Extra</u>:

- Many of you will have enjoyed great success at GCSE German and may even have found some of the topics quite easy
- Advanced Level topics, however, challenge everybody as:
  - there is a much wider variety
  - topics are covered in greater depth
  - there is no set list of topics or vocabulary
- Therefore, the more work you do, the better your chances of success!
- Aim to do more than the bare minimum. Make time for that *bit* extra by:
  - using the extra oral lessons on offer and making every opportunity to go abroad during the Sixth Form
  - listening to German music
  - watching German television, films and videos / reading around the subject (literature, magazines, history)
  - writing to a German penfriend, or doing a practice essay
  - reading an English broadsheet newspaper at least once a week
  - watching TV news and considering your own position on the issues of public concern which arise, e.g. the banning of handguns, selection in schools.

9) <u>Target Setting</u>

- Every half term, set yourself up to three targets for German and write them down in this booklet
- Your targets should be:
  - short term

- measurable
- realistic

e.g. i. To write down and learn five words a day
ii. To watch fifteen minutes German television per week
iv. To regularly use Authentik

- Discuss your targets with your teacher in tutorial time, then write them down in your planner and by your desk at home
- Plan a reward for yourself if you meet your targets. Maybe your parents can help here
- Review your targets at the end of the half term. Did you meet them?

If yes:

- give yourself the reward
- discuss new, and perhaps slightly more challenging, targets

If not:

- discuss why not, and …
- what you are going to do about it.

10. <u>And Finally</u> …

- Review! Review! Review!
- Spend <u>two minutes</u> every evening reviewing what you have done in your lessons that day. (This does not only apply to German lessons!)
- Have you understood any new concepts?
- Have you learned any new terms, new vocabulary, etc?
- Consider how you learn – you will receive advice on this in your tutorial programme and develop strategies that work for you.

Study Skills

Organising your notes
If you have found some way of organising your German notes so that you can go back and revise vocabulary, grammar, useful expressions etc. and you are happy with the system you have invented for yourself, skip the section below. If not, or if you wish to refine your system, read on...

Think about what you are like as a learner - use the results from the QuickScan analysis you did and consider the use of colour, mind-maps, grids etc.

Taking notes in class - first buy yourself a loose-leaf file and dividers. You will have your own personal preferences when it comes to deciding how you wish to classify different items but the suggestions below may be helpful. Write on the side of each of the dividers the following titles:

Functions / Grammar / Essays / Vocabulary

Now, add some loose-leaves for each section. Each section may be organised as follows:

Functions - see also the relevant sections later in this handbook
These usually take the form of phrases which you use when you want to *do* a particular thing in the language, e.g. apologise, express hopes for the future, agree or disagree. You will need approximately half a side for each function. Leave a few lines after each entry so that you can add any other phrases you come across which could be used to express the same thing. When preparing for your speaking test it is a useful revision exercise to go through your notes and reclassify them by function using the headings from the section further on in the handbook.

Grammar
Verbs: Within the grammar section, you will want several subsections to deal with verbs. You will need one subsection called *tenses* with a page or so for each of the tenses, their uses and formation. You will also need a section for *irregular verbs*. Another section might be devoted to *verb constructions*. You will want a section for the *subjunctive mood* and for the *passive voice.*

Conjunctions:
Conjunctions are words which join two sentences like ***which, that, however*** or, more simply, ***but*** and ***because***. You will want to list these, together with a sentence to illustrate their meaning and use and whether they are followed by the subjunctive or nor. You will want to add other subsections depending on what grammatical point is being covered.

Developing written and spoken work
In this section you will be able to collect general phrases which are useful when writing essays and in structuring a piece of writing whether it is narrative, descriptive or argumentative. You can keep here for reference essays which have been written and marked and also keep tabs on vocabulary which you think will be useful for a particular essay topic. It would also be a good place to have a plastic wallet where you can file newspaper or magazine cuttings of any articles/cartoons/adverts, which you have come across and found interesting and which might form the basis for some written work.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the most difficult thing to deal with because, whereas grammar is finite, vocabulary is infinite. By this, it means that you could theoretically envisage learning all the grammar of the language (perhaps not in an evening but it is possible) and you would then be able to combine the elements of the grammar in an infinite number of different ways. Vocabulary is far more difficult to categorise, these is a great deal more of it and new words are being coined daily. The only solution is to list vocabulary items as they come along and then, when you have three of four pages, to group words together into word families in a sort of patterned note.

The fact that you have had to decide actively which category to put the words into will help you remember better than passively going down a list of words. To draw a patterned note, you should take a general word, e.g. **clothes** and then add the specific words as they come up. You can also make sub-divisions - such as clothes which you wear on the feet or words which cover the different sorts of outdoor wear - here classified under **coat**.

		Scarf	jeans		
		Hat	shorts		
		gloves	trousers		
Shirt					
Tee-shirt		**CLOTHES**		Coat	Jacket
					Top
					Waterproof
	Shoes	trainers			overcoat
		Slippers			
		Boots	socks		

Tips on learning vocabulary

Again, consider how you learn best and then use as many of the tips below as seem appropriate:

- Read the list of words, close your book and try to write out the ones you can remember, mark your answers and repeat
- Get someone to test you - they read out the German and you say the English and then the other way round
- Make up a song or rhyme to remember the words
- Put post-it notes with phrases on around your room
- Put the words on to tape and listen to it
- Say the word as it is spelt
- Link the words to pictures in your mind
- Make connections with the words and make use of cognates
- Listen to the rhythm of the word or phrase and remember that rather then individual words
- Visualise where on the page / list the word is
- For sentences focus on a key word and then try to fill in the words on either side
- Give yourself a reward, e.g. a Smartie if you can remember each word / phrase. Save your favourite sweet for the hardest
- Do a few at a time and keep coming back to them. When you go back to the words start by writing down the ones you can remember from last time

Developing Skills

Using a dictionary

Always treat dictionaries with wary respect. They are essential to every language user but they can lead you into making mistakes if you are not careful.

German to English

1. What to do if you do not find the work in the dictionary at all: *either* assume it is the plural form of a noun or adjective and look for the singular form *or* assume it is a verb and look for an infinitive which has at least the first three letters in common with the word whose meaning you are seeking. If you are still unsuccessful, look through the irregular verb list.

2. How to choose the right word from the alternatives the dictionary gives you:

If you know your word is a noun; adjective, verb, etc., check all the entries marked for that part of speech. These are marked with a single letter which can easily be overlooked:

a - *adjective*
adv *adverb*
v tr *transitive verb*
vi *intransitive verb*
n *noun*
s - *substantive* = another word for *noun*; dictionaries use one or the other.
f. *feminine*
m. *masculine*
pl. *plural*

If you don't know what part of speech your word is then you will have to look through the whole entry and decide what is the most likely meaning. It is most important to look through the whole entry and not to be satisfied with the first likely meaning.

English to German

Composing German from English with the help of a dictionary is very hazardous.

1. Before using the dictionary think if you can express the idea already using language that you know to be correct even if it means changing your original sentence slightly
2. All the relevant points mentioned in the previous section should be followed.
3. When adding words together check as far as possible that the German words can in fact fit together, otherwise there is the danger of producing gobbledigook.

Look at the examples in the dictionary to find German words closest in meaning to what you need and then check the German words back into English in the other section of the dictionary to see if you arrive at the original English again.

The best way to prepare for translation from English into German is to read and listen to a lot of German. In this way you notice how German writers and speakers themselves use words in particular ways to express particular meanings. For translation into German the bigger and more complete the dictionary the better.

Listening Skills

One of the most important (and difficult!) things you have to do when you arrive in a foreign country is to learn to listen. Listening is the key to speaking good colloquial language yourself and will help you have an idea of what is going on around you as well! The first few days in the country, when you are getting your ear in, can be very tiring. This is because when we are very familiar with the language, when we listen to people talking we don't actually hear half of what is being said. This is sometimes because the radio is on, a car goes past or the person talking is busy doing something else at the same time. In our own language we make up for the words we can't quite hear by guessing what they are from the words we *do* hear. This is quite natural and automatic but is more difficult in a foreign language because:

a. We're not so familiar with the words so find it more difficult to guess what the missing ones are.

b. We simply have not met some of the words before and therefore have difficulty in 'processing' them.

Two skills which are well worth cultivating, therefore, are to fill in the blanks in your knowledge from what you do hear and try to guess the meanings of words from their context. Gradually, as your knowledge of the language grows, the words you understand will increase and life will become easier. Remember to guess any word you do not know from the context of the passage.

Tips for Understanding

You do not need to understand every word to get a gist of the message of the passage you are listening to. You can pick up clues from the context as to meaning and you should practise developing this skill. Focus on the questions you are being asked to answer and then think about possible vocabulary that might form the answer. By anticipating in this way you are allowing your brain to get ready to access stored vocabulary

Reading Skills - Tackling a longish text - Skimming and Scanning

Before launching into a longish text it is useful to have an overview:

a. To check that it contains something of interest to you and is therefore worth reading.
b. To see what the general argument is
c. To isolate specific points

The techniques required to do this are sometimes called *skimming and scanning.* the Skimming covers points (a) and (b) above and scanning point (c). Usually both techniques are used simultaneously. Skimming is used when first reading an article and scanning when one goes back to it later to check up on a point of detail, that vital statistic or date which you need to know.

In order to skim, you should:

a. Look at the title of the passage carefully and think about what the article might be about.
b. Look at any sub-titles or paragraph headings and see if they give any indication of the contents of the article, its structure or the way an argument is developed.
c. Read the first and last paragraphs - they often give an indication of the general aims of the writer.
d. If you have discovered during steps (a) to (c) that the article - or parts of it - are interesting, go back and read those parts in detail.

In order to scan, you should let your eye travel across the text quickly until it is caught by the piece of information you require. If you have difficulty with this, try running your finger quickly under every third line of text and let your eye follow your finger - you won't be able to read every word but you'll find the place you want quickly.

Another approach to this is S T I G S – see enclosed sheets

<u>Strategies for understanding</u>

(a) **Ignoring words which are not needed for a successful completion of the task set**. Many texts contain words which are not essential for an understanding of the main points of the text. Furthermore, what is important in the text is often presented more than once, in different ways: the learner may not understand a point in one form or words and understand it fully in another. Learners should train themselves to read and listen in positive ways, seeking out in the text only the information they need to answer questions and to complete communication tasks and ignoring the rest.

(b) clues and **Using the visual and verbal context**. The skilled reader can find many about the purpose and content of a text from a study of the layout, the title the length.

When reading and listening, pupils can learn to infer the meaning of new words from the verbal context. So, for example, someone who did not know the word "mancienne" could, after some appropriate practice, be expected to understand from the following context that it is some sort of tree: "II s'est assis sous une mancienne: dans ses branches, un oiseau chantait".

(c) **Making the use of grammatical markers and categories**. Learners will help to master all these strategies if, when reading and listening, they learn to use such clues as the plural forms of nouns or verbs, the ways verbs change to form tenses, word order and other such features which will help them to recognise to which category (verb, noun, adjective, etc.) an unknown word belongs. This can be a considerable help in making intelligent guesses about the meaning of the word.

(d) **Making use of the social and cultural context** Another aid to correct inferencing is for the pupils to bear in mind that there are regularities in the real world which make it possible to anticipate what people may say or write about it. The ability to predict occurrences in the real world makes it possible sometimes to predict the words, that represent these occurrences.

Speaking Work and the Speaking Test

The Build Up

Talk to German people
Teachers
Classmates
Assistants
Penfriends

Listen to German Radio
News
Interviews
Discussions
Songs
Poems and plays on CD/cassette

Watch German films
Satellite TV
Schools TV (some GCSE- type programmes)

Do Voice overs

"Students who regularly talk to themselves in German make more progress!" MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

Tips for talking to yourself!

In your head
- at the end of the day
- waiting for a friend
- waiting for a bus
- queuing at traffic lights
- queuing at the supermarket

Talk about
- what you've done today
- what you did yesterday, last year
- things you're good/bad at
- stories
- something you've read in the paper
- funny incident
- film you've seen
- holiday

Imagine
- persuading a friend to go to a film
- persuading a parent to let you out
- telling someone what you must be allowed to stay out late etc

Describe
- scenery to a blind person
- objects
- an adventure
- how to do something e.g./ cooking, driving, playing tennis.

Techniques to improve your performance

Plan in opportunities to show off what you know - it is not enough just to be able to communicate. Think of the speaking test as being like your driving tests - there are certain things which you have to show you can do:

- Tenses - as many as possible
- Different persons of the verb
- Subjunctive
- Passive
- Use of pronouns
- Use of the infinitive
- Linking words

Draw up and learn lists of phrases for agreeing/disagreeing

- offering alternatives
- expressing your opinion
- asking for more information
- asking questions
- protesting/persuading
- explaining/summing up
- hesitating
- connecting

Language Functions - see also Organising Vocabulary

Language Functions can be defined as what we do with the language e.g. use language to question, persuade, apologise.

During your A -level course try to build up language which will help you cope with the following functions.

(a) Giving and seeking factual information;
(b) Expressing and finding out about intellectual attitudes;
(c) Judgement and evaluation;
(d) Getting things done;
(e) Socialising

There are obviously many ways of carrying out most functions and there is no direct link between functions and structures.

1 **Giving and Seeking Factual Information**
(a) Identifying people, places and things;
(b) Reporting, including describing and narrating;
(c) Correcting;
(d) Asking for information

2 **Expressing and Finding out about Intellectual Attitudes**
(a) Expressing agreement and disagreement;
(b) Inquiring about agreement and disagreement;
(c) Stating whether or not you know something or someone;
(d) Finding out whether or not someone knows something or someone;
(e) Stating whether or not you remember or have forgotten something or someone;
(f) Finding out whether or not someone remembers or has forgotten someone;
(g) Sating that something is possible or impossible;
(h) Finding out whether something is considered possible or impossible;
(i) Stating whether or not something is considered a logical conclusion;
(j) Finding out whether or not something is considered a logical conclusion.
(k) Expressing lack of comprehension and requesting clarification;
(l) Stating how certain or uncertain one is of something;
(m) Finding out how certain or uncertain others are of something.

3 **Judgement and Evaluation**
(a) Expressing pleasure with, or liking of, something or someone;
(b) Expressing displeasure with, or dislike of, something or someone;
(c) Inquiring about pleasure, liking, displeasure, dislike;
(e) Inquiring about interest or lack or interest;
(f) Expressing suprise;
(g) Expressing hope;
(h) Expressing satisfaction;
(i) Expressing dissatisfaction;
(j) Inquiring about satisfaction or dissatisfaction;
(k) Expressing disappointment;
(l) Expressing fear or worry;
(m) Inquiring about fear or worry;
(n) Expressing preference;

(o) Inquiring about preference;
(p) Expressing gratitude;
(q) Expressing sympathy;
(r) Expressing happiness and unhappiness;
(s) Apologising;
(t) Expressing approval
(u) Expressing disapproval
(v) Inquiring about approval or disapproval
(w) Expressing appreciation
(x) Expressing regret
(y) Expressing indifference;
(z) Accusing;
(A) Expressing capability and incapability;
(b) Finding out whether or not others can do something.

4 **Getting Things Done**

(a) Suggesting a course of action (including the speaker);
(b) Offering to do something;
(c) Requesting others to do something;
(d) Inviting others to do something;
(e) Asking for advice;
(f) Advising others (not) to do something;
(g) Warning others;
(h) Instructing or directing others to do something;
(i) Instructing or directing others not to do something;
(j) Requesting assistance;
(k) Stating whether or not one is obliged to do something;
(l) Finding out whether or not something is compulsory;
(m) Giving and seeking permission to do something;
(n) Finding out whether others have permission to do something;
(o) Refusing permission;
(p) Expressing, and finding out about need;
(q) Expressing intention;
(r) Inquiring about intention;
(s) Expressing want or desire;

5 **Socialising**

(a) Greeting people;
(b) Introducing someone and being introduced;
(c) Taking leave;
(d) Attracting attention;
(e) Congratulating;
(f) Making good wishes.

THE OLD FASHIONED RULES OF GRAMMAR

A **Noun** is the name of anything
As school, garden, hoop or swing

Adjectives describe the kind of noun
As great, small, pretty, white or brown

Instead of Nouns the **Pronouns** fit
As he, you, they and it

Verbs tell of something being done
To read, write, count, sing, jump or run

How, when and where the **Adverbs** tell,
As slowly, near, now or well

Conjunctions join words together,
As men and women, wind or weather

The **Preposition** stands before
A Noun, as *in* or *through* a door

The i**nterjection** shows suprise,
As *Oh*, how pretty, *Ah*, how wise

Three little words you often see,
Are **Articles** *a, an* and *the*

The whole are called Nine Parts of Speech,
Which reading, writing, speaking teach.