

WIE TRINKT MAN BIER? / GERMAN BEER CUSTOMS

OVERWHELMED BY THE BEER MENU? HOW TO MAKE
THE PERFECT BEER ORDER IN GERMANProst! How to Order a Beer in
German Like a Native

1. Saying “I’d like...” in German

It’s entirely *possible* to order a beer just by saying “*Bier!*” to your bartender or server, but you’d come off like a barbarian. You’ll want to build a real sentence out of your request.

Just like in English, there’s more than one way you could do this. Here are three of them.

Ich möchte... (I’d like...)

This is the first way many German textbooks will teach you how to express a wish or place an order. It’s short, it’s easy to remember and it’s a good way to introduce German modal verbs early in the learning process.

The only thing that might trip you up is the pronunciation of *ö* and *ch*, but the good news is that we’ve got an in-depth pronunciation guide that can help you with that.

Für mich ein/eine/einen... (For me, a...)

This is less frequently used, but equally valid.

It’s also a good opportunity to remind you that you should always pay attention to the gender of the German words you learn. This determines which article (*ein/eine/einen*) to use when placing your order. Since it’s neuter, *ein Bier* (a beer) would be the most generic option. We’ll get into specifics in a minute.

Ich hätte gerne... (I’d like to have...)

This one’s a wee bit longer, but it’s easier to pronounce.

For many learners, this is also a typical first encounter with the subjunctive form of *haben* (to have), which is a very common way that German speakers express desires or wishes.

For maximum street cred, feel free to drop either or both of those *Es*, which would result in *Ich hätt’ gern...*

Remember: no matter which version you go with, it’s always nice to throw in a *bitte* (please). We’ll have you going from “*Bier, bitte*” to “*Ich hätt’ gern einen halben Liter Hefeweizen, bitte*” (I’d like a half liter of Hefeweizen, please) by the end of this post, but you’ll want to add a *bitte* no matter where you fall between those two.