

WIE TRINKT MAN BIER? / GERMAN BEER CUSTOMS

OVERWHELMED BY THE BEER MENU? HOW TO MAKE
THE PERFECT BEER ORDER IN GERMAN

4. Drinking Like a German

You made it through the wilderness! You can now pick a *Bier*, order it in a grammatical fashion and tip properly. Now the fun part—actually drinking.

Don't just toss it back until everyone has been served. Once everyone has their order, raise your glass and say either "*Prost!*" or "*Zum Wohl!*" Both are ways to say "cheers" in German.

Not every occasion will call for this next part, but at an informal gathering around a small enough table, you'll want to clink your glass with each one of your companions. Each time you do this, look the other person in the eye. Legend has it, if you don't look the other person in the eye, you'll be cursed with something naughty. We'll keep it family-friendly here, but you can always ask your German tandem partner about it on your own time.

Prost!

Anyone who has shared a beer with a German understands when knocking glasses, one says "Prost!"—but the origin of the phrase is less well known. The ubiquitous drinking-cry comes from the Latin "Prosit", meaning "may it be useful", and is thought to come from the 18th century student slang "Cheers!"

And there you have it! You can now order a German beer (and drink it!) like a native. May you never again be reduced to "*Bier, bitte!*" miming hopelessly or worse—ordering in English.

Speaking of bartenders and coins: **do tip!** The full American 20 percent isn't expected, but at the very least, you should round up to the nearest Euro. Confirm this in a verbal exchange—don't just silently leave money on the counter. If your bartender tells you a drink is "*vier euro fünfzig*" (€4.50), hand her a fiver and say "*fünf*" (€5). She'll know immediately that the extra 50 cents is hers and you'll hear a quick "*danke*" (thanks).