

## **GERMAN CALL-&-RESPONSE,** **REJOINDERS and PASSWORDS**

*Thanks to Christine Walker of McMinnville, OR, as well as  
Eric Richards and Cathleen Weigelt-Ferguson of Saint Louis, MO, and David Carr of Atlanta, GA*

*Calls-&-responses, rejoinders and passwords are often interchangeable. These ideas will prompt you to think of others to add to the mix.*

### GERMAN CALL-AND-RESPONSE

**-Haribo macht Kinder froh,  
(und Erwachsener ebenson).** *Haribo makes children happy,  
And adults as well.*  
*(This is a jingle from a commercial product, but everyone in Germany knows it.)*

**-Apfel fällt nicht,  
(weit vom Baum).** *Apple doesn't fall,  
Far from the tree.*

#### **Mach's gut! / Mach's besser!**

(They sometimes say bye with "Mach's gut!" which means "Do it good." / Many times, the response then is "Mach's besser!" - "Do it better")

#### **Hi! / Hai, wo?**

("Hai" means shark in German, so when they greet you with "Hi", you will sometimes get that response. They sound the same.)

#### **Wie geht's? / Wie steht's?**

(Asking how things are going is sometimes met with the same question but phrased a bit differently. This is a common phrase.)

#### **Hätte / Hätte, hätte, Fahrradkette**

(hätte is a conditional phrase - would have. So, when someone expresses something using hätte in it, sometimes a response from the other person is "hätte, hätte, Fahrradkette". It rhymes. Kind of like our "would've, could've, should've")

This is not necessarily a direct call and response, but when someone says something about that they are worried or something is going to plan, the other person may say "**Keine Panik auf der Titanic.**"

You can make a call and response out of many idiomatic expressions.  
Here are some legitimately important idioms that Germans really do use:

<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/german/common-german-idioms/>

## GERMAN REJOINDERS

<b>Tja</b>	<i>Oh well</i>
<b>Echt? / Wirklich?</b>	<i>Really?</i>
<b>Eben / Genau</b>	<i>Exactly</i>
<b>Toll</b>	<i>Cool</i>
<b>(super) geil</b>	<i>Really cool</i>
<b>Schade!</b>	<i>Too bad!</i>
<b>Langweilig</b>	<i>Boring</i>
<b>Du lügst!</b>	<i>You're lying!</i>
<b>Was?</b>	<i>What?</i>
<b>Vielleicht</b>	<i>Maybe</i>
<b>Oooo, Woha</b>	<i>Whoa</i>
<b>Ach!</b>	<i>Ah!</i>
<b>Quatsch!</b>	<i>Nonsense!</i>
<b>So ein mist</b>	<i>That's crap</i>
<b>Fantastisch</b>	<i>Fantastic</i>
<b>Wunderbar</b>	<i>Wonderful</i>
<b>Klasse</b>	<i>Classy/Classic</i>
<b>Spitze</b>	<i>That's the tops</i>
<b>Na klar!</b>	<i>Of course!</i>
<b>Es tut mir leid.</b>	<i>I'm sorry.</i>
<b>Ich weiß nicht.</b>	<i>I don't know.</i>
<b>Das ist aber süß!</b>	<i>That is sweet (nice).</i>
<b>Wie komisch!</b>	<i>How strange / weird!</i>
<b>Ekelig!</b>	<i>Gross! Disgusting!</i>
<b>Pass auf!</b>	<i>Pay attention!</i>
<b>Was auch immer!</b>	<i>Whatever!</i>
<b>Das ist ja interessant!</b>	<i>That's interesting!</i>
<b>Stell dir mal das vor!</b>	<i>Imagine that!</i>
<b>Ich auch!</b>	<i>Me too!</i>
<b>Der / Die Arme!</b>	<i>The poor guy / gal!</i>
<b>Ich verstehe es nicht!</b>	<i>I don't understand (it)!</i>

## Das Kennwort / Das Passwort

**Ich habe ein Geheimniss.**

*I have a secret*

<b>Passwort bitte?</b>	<i>Password please?</i>
<b>Ich habe es in der Tasche.</b>	<i>I have it in the bag.</i>
<b>Ich glaube es nicht!</b>	<i>I don't believe it!</i>
<b>Erst die Arbeit, dann das Vergnügen.</b>	<i>First the work, then the fun.</i>
<b>Es kommt darauf an.</b>	<i>It depends.</i>
<b>Ich habe viel um die Ohren.</b>	<i>I have a lot going on right now.</i>
<b>Ich halte es nicht mehr aus!</b>	<i>I can't take it anymore!</i>
<b>Ich wünsche dir einen schönen Tag. (Danke, gleichfalls.)</b>	<i>I wish you a good (nice) day. (Thanks, you too.)</i>
<b>Alles hat seine Grenzen.</b>	<i>Everything has its limits.</i>
<b>Ich drücke dir die Daumen.</b>	<i>I wish you luck.</i>
<b>Es ist nicht alles Gold, was glänzt.</b>	<i>Looks can be deceiving. (All that glitters is not gold.)</i>
<b>Lügen haben kurze Beine.</b>	<i>Lies have short legs.</i>
<b>Ohne Fleiß, keinen Preis.</b>	<i>No pain, no gain. (Success never comes easily. / Without hard work, no prize.)</i>
<b>Aller Anfang ist schwer.</b>	<i>All beginnings are hard. (Every beginning is difficult.)</i>
<b>Es ist das Ende des Semesters. Ich muss <u>in den sauren Apfel beißen</u> und viel lernen.</b>	<i>It is the end of the semester. I must bite in the sour apple and learn a lot. (I must suck it up / swallow the bitter pill up and study)</i>
<b>Es geht. Es wird gehen. Es wird auch vorübergehen.</b>	<i>It goes. It shall continue to go. This too shall pass.</i>

*From German teacher Herb ? of Cleveland, OH, whose Oma lived through two world wars and a labor camp. It is both a play on conjugation and some earthy wisdom.*