

# German For Gringos Lesson 3 Numbers 120 2026 10 04

Morning Update • German for Gringos • Sun, 04 Oct 2026 17:10:47 GMT • 3:30

**Maya:** Welcome to German for Gringos, lesson three. I'm Maya.

**Devon:** And I'm Devon. Today, numbers one to twenty. You need these for prices, times, platforms, everything. And we will warn you about the trap that gets every English speaker.

**Maya:** Let's count. One is "ines". Pronunciation tip: it rhymes with "minus" without the m. Say "ines".

**Devon:** Two is "tsvy". That Z sounds like TS, so it comes out "tsvy". Remember this one, it is half the trap.

**Maya:** Three is "dry". Just like dry laundry. And here is the trap: "tsvy" and "dry" sound similar over a crackly phone or in a noisy market, and mixing them up has caused real confusion.

**Devon:** The pro tip from actual Germans: on the phone, say "TSVO" for two. It is a made-up word, everyone understands it, and it can never be confused with three. Use it.

**Maya:** Four is "feer". Five is "foonf". That umlaut makes it rounder than "funf", so "foonf" with pursed lips.

**Devon:** Six is "zeks". Seven is "ZEE-ben". Eight is "ahkt". Nine is "noyn". Ten is "tsayn".

**Maya:** Pronunciation trap number two: six, "zeks", and sixteen both start with that TS sound, and ten, "tsayn", can blur into "zeks" for English ears. Say them slowly, exaggerate the endings.

**Devon:** Eleven is "elf". Yes, like the fantasy creature. Twelve is "tsvurlf". The OE umlaut there is the trickiest sound in this lesson. Round your lips like you are saying "oo" but say "er". "tsvurlf".

**Maya:** Thirteen is "dry-TSAYN". Fourteen "feer-TSAYN". Fifteen "foonf-TSAYN". Sixteen "zeh-TSAYN". Seventeen "zeep-TSAYN".

**Devon:** Eighteen is "ahkt-TSAYN". Nineteen is "noyn-TSAYN". See the pattern? It is just the number plus "TSAYN", like English teen. Easy.

**Maya:** Twenty is "TSVAHN-tsik". Pronunciation tip: "TSVAHN" with that TS start, then "tsik" like "sick" with a t in front. Say "TSVAHN-tsik".

**Devon:** Let's hear them in action. Demo time. Maya's buying two pretzels at a market stall. I'm the vendor.

**Maya:** GOO-ten TAHK. "tsvy" pretzels, "BIT-tuh".

**Devon:** Two pretzels. That is "feer" euros, "BIT-tuh".

**Maya:** "feer"? Here is "foonf". Keep the change? No wait, "foonf" minus "feer" is "ines". Right, one euro back.

**Devon:** "DAHN-kuh shurn!"

**Maya:** I counted real money in German. Cultural note: Germans love exact change and cash.

**Maya:** "foonf-TSAYN". Number three: how do you say twenty?

**Devon:** "TSVAHN-tsik". Lesson three complete. Tomorrow, twenty to one hundred, where German numbers go backwards and it is somehow delightful. CHOOss!