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Modern German Grammar: A Practical Guide (Modern Grammars)



Synopsis

Modern German Grammar: A Practical Guide, Third Edition is an innovative reference guide to German, combining traditional and function-based grammar in a single volume. The Grammar is divided into two parts. Part A covers grammatical categories such as word order, nouns, verbs and adjectives. Part B is organised according to language functions and notions such as: making introductions, asking for something to be done, delivering a speech, possibility, satisfaction. The book addresses learners'™ practical needs and presents grammar in both a traditional and a communicative setting. New to this edition, and building on feedback from the previous edition: The rules of the latest (and so far final) spelling reform have been implemented throughout. Examples of usage have been updated and consideration given to Swiss and Austrian variants. The chapter on register has been expanded and now includes youth language and frequently used Anglicisms in German. The Index now has even more key words; it has also been redesigned to differentiate between German words, grammar terms, and functions, thus making it more user-friendly. The Grammar assumes no previous grammatical training and is intended for all those who have a basic knowledge of German, from intermediate learners in schools and adult education to undergraduates taking German as a major or minor part of their studies. The Grammar is accompanied by a third edition of Modern German Grammar Workbook (ISBN 978-0-415-56725-1) which features exercises and activities directly linked to the Grammar. Ruth Whittle is Lecturer, John Klapper is Professor of Foreign Language Pedagogy, Katharina Gläsel is the Austrian Lektorin and Bill Dodd is Professor of Modern German Studies – all at the University of Birmingham. Christine Eckhard-Black is Tutor and Advisor in German at the Oxford University Language Centre.

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Customer Reviews

This book is good, with usual merits of the series. I want to mention one frustrating element, which is Chapter 2, Letters and Sounds. Some might view a pronunciation section unimportant in a Grammar, but personally I appreciate a clear, concise guide to sounds and orthography in dictionaries and grammars alike. In any case, they've decided to go for one here. A first question might be: do they follow IPA? Well, they have square brackets after words. But... no, it appears to be some kind of rewrite system. And what's worse, no guide to the system is given. Upon brief inspection, it appears to be modeled on the spelling system of... German! Let me illustrate: from page 4, we get the following forms: Milch [milch], Locher [lɔːcher], Bäcker [bɛːcher], Bäcke [beche]. Take a moment to appreciate the supreme unhelpfulness of these bracketed representations for a German learner. To spell out just a couple of the issues: the digraph 'ch,' a notoriously difficult aspect of German for English speakers to learn, and quite handily represented by IPA [ç] for these cases, has been converted in the pronunciation guide to the very same digraph! Splendid, if you already speak German. Should we talk about the pronunciation of the vowels written 'ɔː' and 'ɛː'? Just pronounce 'em the way they're written, English speaker! But we'll make sure to convert 'ɛː' to 'e,' 'cause we can't leave you stranded or anything. Only... did you catch how the two instances of [e] in [beche] should be pronounced differently? Hope you did without us telling you in any way! So much for 1-to-1 relations in the pronunciation key. Apologies for the snarkiness... I do it only to entertain. These are certainly the quibbles of a geek. But can I tell you about the 'Stress' sub-section?

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