

NOVICE *Pass auf!* Study List for 2027
for Houstonfest, Sprachfest, and Winterfest
published in August 2026 by State *Pass auf!* coordinator Rustin Buck

The information covered in *Pass auf!* is vast and overwhelming. To make it more manageable for Novice contestants, this annual publication tells you the things that will actually be asked about in this year's Novice matches.

Please note: **1)** This document applies only to the Novice level, not the Varsity level. Varsity contestants should refer to the complete updated study guide published in fall 2026. **2)** This document is specifically for the 2027 contest; new study lists will be published in future years. As I write this, I have just finished putting together the question sets that will be used at the 2027 regional Novice tournaments (except for the topic Current Events & Special Topic), and this list reflects the exact material that is covered, plus a light sprinkling of decoys. **3)** The questions below are not the actual questions in the games. Rather, they indicate topics that you should research and study.

Arts & Letters

- Which play is considered **Goethe's masterpiece**, and what is (roughly) its plot?
- What are the major accomplishments of the authors P. **Bichsel**, H. **Böll**, W. **Busch**, and F. **Dürrenmatt**?
- Which major works did philosopher Immanuel **Kant** write?
- What are the artists Caspar David **Friedrich** and Joseph **Beuys** known for?
- What are some famous pieces composed by J.S. **Bach** and **Mozart**?
- With which two cities is **Beethoven** primarily associated?
- Which **Wagner** opera has a lot to do with a certain **ship**?
- Which cities had some of the **earliest opera houses** in D?
- Which German-language **movies/directors** have won the **Oscar for Best International Feature Film**?
- What is Marlene **Dietrich** known for in the **latter part of her career**?
- What are the highlights of the careers of actress Luise **Rainer** and director Fatih **Akin**?
- Who were the director and the star of the 1931 film **M**?
- What were the major contributions of these people: R. **Bunsen**, R. **Diesel**, P. **Ehrlich**, and F. **Fröbel**?
- What are these things: **Aufklärung**, **Codex Manesse**, **Die Brücke**, **Fachwerk**, **Goethe-Institut**?

Current Events & Special Topic

- You're (somewhat) on your own for this category. For current events, keep up with the news. For this year's special topic, **Ferien-Straßen**, there is a specific [study guide](#) this year (unlike in most years).

Erdkunde (asked and answered in German)

- Don't forget the vocabulary list of geography terms on p. 2 of the main study guide.
- Always know the **capitals** of the German-speaking countries (D-A-CH-FL) and of the *Bundesländer* of A and D! I won't say which ones will be asked this year.
- What are the **largest/smallest Bundesländer of D** by area?
- Which *Bundesländer* have the **northern-/southern-/eastern-/westernmost points of D**?
- Which *Bundesländer* of D **border Poland and the Netherlands**?
- Which **countries border A**?
- What are the **3 most populous cities of A** (in order)?
- In which part of **Italy** is German widely spoken and an official language?
- Which path do the **Danube** and **Rhine Rivers** take as they flow through the German-speaking countries and beyond?
- Where do these rivers flow into the Rhine: **Main, Mosel, Neckar**?
- What are the **main cities** of Baden-Württemberg and the Saarland?
- What are the **main sights** of Berlin, Bern, Linz, and Vienna?
- What are some cities of D that start with the unusual letters **Q** and **X** and in which *Bundesländer* are they?
- In which cities were **Goethe** and **Händel** born?
- Which cities of D have an official designation as **Lutherstadt**?
- **Which religious denominations predominate** in northern D, in southern D, and in FL?

- What is a **Wappentier** and which one(s) do A and D have?
- Where could you visit the **Cannstatter Wasen** (city) and **Castle Neuschwanstein** (*Bundesland*)?
- What are some **cities in/near the Black Forest** and the **Harz**?

History & Politics

- What are the **term lengths/term limits** of the **presidents of A and D**?
- What are the **populations of D-A-CH** to the nearest million?
- In which years was/were: the **Holy Roman Empire dissolved**? D-A-CH-FL admitted to the **United Nations**? East/West Germany **reunified**?
- **World War I**: Who was **emperor of A** when it **began**? On which exact date did it **end**?
- Which **former chancellors of D**: are **still living**? **served the longest** in office?
- **Liechtenstein**: Who is the current **regent**? Where did/does the princely family get most of its (huge) current **fortune**? Which countries provided FL with a **currency** and **diplomatic representation pre- and post-1918**?
- What was/were: the **Black Death**? the **name Napoleon gave to CH**? the **Nuremberg Laws**? the German **city devastated by Allied bombing in February 1945**? the **last canton of CH** to be formed?
- Where was: Archduke **Franz Ferdinand assassinated** (city)? the post-WWII **Potsdam Conference** held (palace)?
- **German-Texan/German-American history**: When is **German-American Day**? Who was John Jacob **Astor**? Which **Houston-area community settled by German immigrants** has been home to Lyle Lovett, Jim Parsons, Matt Bomer, and Simone Biles? What is the founding story of **New Braunfels**? Which German-Texan rose to “**Fleet Admiral**” in the U.S. Navy?
- Why is **November 9** known as the “Day of Fate” in modern German history?

Odds & Ends

- See pp. 3-4 of the main study guide for the list of **proverbs** that can come up in the Novice contest. I’m not going to reveal which ones will be asked this year.
- How many times has **D** won the **men’s** or the **women’s soccer World Cup**?
- In which years and which cities have **A** and **CH** hosted the **Summer or Winter Olympics**?
- How do German-speakers say the **time using the 24-hour system**?
- What are the **two dots over certain German vowels** called, and on which vowels can they appear?
- What are the basic **metric units** of length, weight, and volume?
- What are the **two-digit country codes** for dialing phone numbers in A, CH, and D from abroad?
- What are the **main airlines** of A, CH, and D?
- Which cities in D have these **1-letter license-plate codes**: E, C, G, J, P, Z?
- What is the public **radio/television broadcaster in A**?
- Which *Bundesländer* of D have which **animals** on their **coats of arms**?
- **Food**: What is **Müsli**? How do German-speakers say “**dumplings**”? How do they say “**French fries**” (with two words and with one word)? What is a typical **main course (meat) served at Christmas** dinner in D?
- **Vocabulary**: What are the German words for **bathing suit, cable car, chimney sweep, traffic jam**?
- Which **schools** in D serve students with **severe disabilities**?
- What are these **Zodiac signs** in German: Aquarius, Pisces, Sagittarius?
- Who is Wolfgang **Joop**?
- What is **Der Meistertrunk** and which town is it associated with?
- What is **Wacken Open Air**?
- What are the major **chocolate-makers of CH**?