

Wo, Wohin, Woher

Hallo, Deutschlerner! Welcome to another lesson about question words. Today you will learn how to use the three “where” question words in German “wo”, “woher” and “wohin”.

Each of the words on our list for today mean “where”. Their use all comes down to location, destination and origin. If you are asking about the location of something without a reference to a destination or origin, you need “wo”. Here are a few examples of it in action.

Wo ist die Bibliothek? - Where is the library?

Wo hast du deine Brille gelassen? - Where did you leave your glasses?

Wo wohnst du? - Where do you live?

Wo befindet sich der Bahnhof? - Where is the train station?

Wo kann ich hier parken? - Where can I park here?

By contrast “wohin” and “woher” imply a direction. “Woher” implies that there was a prior location. In English, it is best translated along with the preposition “from”.

Woher kommst du? - Where are you from?

Woher hast du dieses Buch? - Where did you get this book from?

Woher weißt du das? - How do you know that? (Where do you know that from?)

Woher kommt das Geräusch? - Where is the sound coming from?

Woher stammt dieser Wein? - Where does this wine come from?

One problem that comes up is that English speakers have a tendency to put “from” at the end of the sentence. This can also be done in German, but technically it is because “her” can also be a separable prefix for verbs. For example: herkommen and herhaben.

Wo kommst du her? - Where are you from?

Wo hast du das Rezept her? - From where did you get the recipe?

For more examples of “her” as a separable prefix, you can check out my video about separable prefixes linked in the description.

The question word “wohin” is the polar opposite of “woher”. It inquires about the direction in which someone or something is headed. It is best translated as “where to”. Here are a few examples of that:

Wohin gehst du? - Where are you going?

Wohin fliegt das Flugzeug? - Where is the plane flying to?

Wohin führt diese Straße? - Where does this road lead to?

Wohin legst du deine Jacke? - Where are you putting your jacket?

Wohin reist du diesen Sommer? - Where are you traveling this summer?

Just like “woher”, you can split “wohin” sometimes. This is, of course, reserved for verbs that have the prefix “hin”. For example: hinführen and hinfahren

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Wo führt dieser Weg hin? - To where does this path lead?

Wo fährst du in den Sommerferien hin? - Where are you driving on summer vacation?

To summarize, "wo" is used to ask about a location, "woher" is used to ask about the origin, and "wohin" is used to ask about the destination or direction.

If you want to practice what you learned in this lesson along with every lesson I upload to this channel, you can get access to worksheets, mp3 downloads, flashcards and a whole lot more by becoming a member of my Deutschlerner Club. Click the link in the description to get started today! Das ist alles für heute. Danke fürs Zuschauen. Bis zum nächsten Mal. Tschüss.

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