

Troublesome Translations



For native German speakers, finding the right translation, from German to English or vice versa, can sometimes be a challenge. Here are some examples to help you figure out how to say certain words. And to make sure you keep yourself out of trouble.

Borrow or lend?

'Neither a *borrower*, nor a *lender* be,' Shakespeare famously wrote in his play *Hamlet*.

So, what's the difference between *borrow* and *lend*?

Borrow means to take something from another person, knowing you'll give it back to them.

Lend means to give something to another person, expecting to get it back.

1. I'd like to _____ your umbrella. In return I'll _____ you my raincoat. (Ich möchte Ihren Regenschirm ausleihen. Im Gegenzug leihe ich Ihnen meinen Regenschirm.)
2. Laura used to _____ money from me all the time. I hated _____ her so much money. (Laura hat sich die ganze Zeit Geld von mir geliehen. Ich hasste es, ihr so viel Geld zu leihen.)
3. You may _____ my bike, but please be careful with it. (Sie können mein Fahrrad ausleihen, aber seien Sie bitte vorsichtig damit.)
4. Will you _____ me your car until Sunday? (Leihst du mir dein Auto bis Sonntag?)

Card, map, ticket or menu?

When do you use *card*, *map*, *ticket* and *menu*? Well, a *card* is a piece of paper or plastic – such as a credit card.

A *map* is a drawing of an area or town.

A *ticket* is an official document, while a *menu* is a list of the food in a restaurant or a list of choices on a computer screen.

1. The restaurant has an extensive _____ and wine list. (Das Restaurant verfügt über eine umfangreiche Speise- und Weinkarte.)
2. Make sure to study the _____ before we leave. (Lesen Sie unbedingt die Karte, bevor Sie losfahren.)
3. I used my credit _____ to pay for the box of Christmas _____. (Ich habe meine Kreditkarte benutzt, um die Schachtel Weihnachtskarten zu bezahlen.)
4. Alex paid for his _____ to the show and tucked his wallet inside his suit jacket. (Alex bezahlte seine Eintrittskarte zur Show und steckte seine Brieftasche in seine Anzugsjacke.)

The solutions are on page 35.