

Pass auf! Rules

1. Varsity teams and Novice teams compete in separate tournaments.
2. A **Varsity team** consists of up to 7 students who are in any level of German, with the exception of Advantaged Speakers and exchange students from German-speaking countries. A school may enter 1 Varsity team.
3. A **Novice team** consists of up to 7 German I and German II students who have never played in a regional or State *Pass auf!* competition (no Advantaged Speakers or exchange students from German-speaking countries). A school may enter 1 Novice team. **Novice teams do not advance to State** (except in rare instances in which the State director may invite one or more Novice teams to fill up the State Varsity bracket of 16 teams). **High schools may enter a Novice team only if they are also entering a Varsity team.** Middle schools may enter a Novice team, a Varsity team, or one of each (but with no duplication of players between the 2 teams).
4. **No more than 5 students per team may play at a time.** A team may begin playing with fewer than 5 players and players may be added after the game begins, if the team notifies the moderator before the game begins that certain players, who must be identified by name, will be coming late (but the number of players starting the game plus the number of players designated as potential late-comers may not exceed 5 players). Once a team starts playing, players may leave to go to other contests, but they may not be replaced. (If by coincidence a player leaves and another player arrives who was previously designated as someone who might arrive late, the arriving player can be admitted; they are not considered a "replacement" of the player who left.) Alternates will be considered as spectators and may not observe unless the game is open for spectators (see next rule).
5. **Spectators** are generally not allowed in any games at Houstonfest. At State, spectators may be allowed during the "semifinal" game (for 3rd/4th place) and the final game (for 1st/2nd place) but at no other games. In the unlikely event that spectators are ever allowed at Houstonfest, they may not communicate in any way with the teams that are playing.
6. **There will be no changes to times of *Pass auf!* games in a contest. If a team is more than 5 minutes late to a scheduled game, it may be eliminated.**
7. Each team must designate a **captain**. This is the only person from whom an answer may be accepted, unless for a particular question the captain designates one of the other team members to give the answer. This must be done verbally and it must be acknowledged by the moderator before the answer may be accepted. If someone other than the captain or an acknowledged designee gives an answer, the answer will not be acknowledged by the moderator. In this instance, the appropriate person on the team must begin to give the answer before the allotted time expires.
8. Each game consists of **25 questions**, 5 questions each from the following categories: History & Politics, Arts & Letters, Odds & Ends, *Erdkunde*, and Current Events & Special Topic. For each category, there will be 1 question each valued at 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50 points, based upon difficulty. The categories may include but are not limited to the following types of information:
 - History & Politics: early German history (beginnings through the Folk Migrations), the Middle Ages, the Reformation, the 17th and 18th centuries, the 19th century, the post-WWII period, German-American history, Texas-German history, government, the European Union, political parties, etc.
 - Arts & Letters: literature, fairy tales and folk tales, drama and cinema, philosophy and theology, music and composers, art, architecture, scientists, inventors, etc.
 - Odds & Ends: proverbs, holidays, food, games, sports, education, folk festivals, customs and traditions, travel vocabulary, communication, idioms, language functions, vocabulary, days/months/seasons, etc.
 - Erdkunde: geography; questions will be asked in German and must be answered in German.
 - Current Events & Special Topic: "Current Events" covers events from the prior calendar year through the date of contest. Each year a special topic is announced. Make sure to check the special topic for each year!!
9. The questions will be read by the moderator in order as printed. The category and point value for each question will be stated before the question is read.
10. After the question is read for the first time, the teams have up to 30 seconds in which to signal. They may confer during this time. If there is no signal within the 30-second period, the question is passed. To expedite the game, teams may elect to pass a question before the 30-second period expires.
11. If a team signals while a question is being read, the moderator will stop reading immediately and may not complete the question or give any additional information or answer any questions.
12. After signaling, the team has 30 seconds to begin giving an answer. It may confer during this time, but once the team starts giving an answer, it may not pause in order to gain more time. The first attempt by a team will be considered the answer - a team may not start over once it has begun to answer a question. In any case, the determination of whether to accept an answer lies with the moderator and not with the players, assistants, or spectators.
13. If the signaling team gives an incorrect answer or fails to answer the question in the time given, the moderator will repeat the question for the other team. The other team has 30 seconds to decide whether they want to try giving an answer or to pass. After deciding to attempt the question, the team has 30 seconds to begin giving an answer.
14. If a team gives a correct answer, it will receive the designated points, but no points will be deducted for failing to give a correct answer. For multi-part questions, there is no "partial credit" for partially-correct answers.
15. Appropriate behavior is expected of all players and spectators. No interruptions will be tolerated while a team is attempting to answer a question. Clarification of rules may be addressed to the moderator between questions, before the game, or after the game, but never while a question is in play.
16. Any **challenge** to a question or ruling by the moderator must be made immediately following the question or decision that is being challenged or before the game is declared finished. The judgment of the moderator is final.
17. Should the moderator misread a question, give the answer before the other team has a chance to answer, etc., a replacement question from the same category and the same point value will be read.
18. **If the score is tied** after the 25 questions are completed, the moderator will select a tiebreaker from the alternate set of questions. If neither team answers it correctly, the moderator will continue selecting tiebreakers from the alternate set until a team answers one correctly. However, no points are added to the team's final score for a successfully-answered tiebreaker (because points earned per game may be used later when ranking the lower places, and adding points for a tiebreaker question would skew the comparison).