

# Participle constructions to express [ausdrücken] reason and time

Participle constructions can replace relative clauses (mostly in written English). But they can also be used in place [anstelle von] of other sub-clauses [Nebensätze], for example instead of adverbial clauses of reason [Grund] or of time. In German these clauses are called „Kausalsätze“ (reason) and „Temporalsätze“ (time).

## Participle construction to express a reason



Compare the two constructions on the left and right

#	Adverbial clause construction	Participle construction
1	He didn't hear the phone <b>because he was listening</b> to loud music.	<b>Listening</b> to loud music he didn't hear the phone
2	Peter heard everything Anne said <b>because he was standing</b> next to her.	<b>Standing</b> next to Anne Peter heard everything she said.
3	<b>As [= because] she was given</b> only a small portion of food, Sarah was hungry for the rest of the evening.	<b>Given</b> only a small portion of food, Sarah was hungry for the rest of the evening.
4	Jack doesn't have time to answer all e-mails <b>because he is contacted</b> by many people every day.	<b>Contacted</b> by many people every day, <b>Jack</b> doesn't have time to answer all e-mails.



- The participle construction on the right replaces [ersetzen] the adverbial clause construction on the left (this is similar [ähnlich] to the **participle construction instead or a relative clause**). The meaning of both constructions is the same. Participle constructions are especially common in written English. They sound more formal [förmlich] than relative clauses.
- As you can see, the participle construction usually comes at the beginning of the sentence.
- The **present participle** has an **active** meaning (walking) and the **past participle** has a **passive** meaning (mentioned).
- In German, you usually translate a participle construction with an adverbial clause because the German language doesn't have such a construction (e.g. „Weil ...“, „Da ...“)

## Participle construction to express time



Compare the two constructions on the left and right

#	Adverbial clause construction	Participle construction
1	<b>When Susan came</b> home she realised that she didn't have her keys.	<b>Coming</b> home <b>Susan</b> realised that she didn't have her keys.
2	<b>While she was watching</b> TV she fell asleep.	<b>Watching</b> TV she fell asleep
3	<b>When he was offered</b> a job at the IT department he called his brother right away [sofort].	<b>Offered</b> a job at the IT department he called his brother right away.
4	<b>When Sam was told</b> to be quiet he left the room.	<b>Told</b> to be quiet he left the room.



- Again, the participle construction on the right replaces [ersetzen] the adverbial clause construction on the left.
- The **present participle** has an **active** meaning (walking) and the **past participle** has a **passive** meaning (mentioned).
- In German, you usually translate a participle construction with an adverbial clause because the German language doesn't have such a construction (e.g. „Als...“)