**Talking about doing chores in German**

There are 2 ways to consider putting chores into sentences – simply putting that verb in spot #2, conjugating it, and finishing off the rest, or with a modal verb like “müßen.” Don’t forget anything getting acted upon by a verb is a direct object!

You can see on the Kapitel 8 Vokabelliste on section 8-6 that there are a bunch of verbs that relate to chores. This document here will now show you the typical nouns that go along with those verbs to create our chore phrases:

(Keep in mind that anything in parentheses is just one of many options. For instance, there are many more pets you could feed than just dogs/cats)

den Tisch abräumen = to clear off the table

(mein Zimmer) aufräumen = to clean up/straighten up my room

den Tisch decken = to set the table

(den Hund/die Katze) füttern = to feed the dog/cat

(die Blumen) gießen = to water the flowers

das Bett machen = to make the bed

den Rasen mähen = to mow the lawn

die Fenster putzen = to clean the windows

das Badezimmer putzen = to clean the bathroom

den Müll sortieren = to sort the garbage

das Geschirr spülen = to wash the dishes

(das Zimmer) staubsaugen = to vacuum

(die Wäsche) waschen = to wash the laundry

den Müll wegtragen = to take out the trash

Don’t forget, all of the phrases you just looked at are in their “infinitive” form. That’s why the verbs are unconjugated and at the end of the phrase. We cannot just put an “ich” in front of an infinitive and call it a sentence!

We not only have to conjugate the verb(s), but we also have to make sure everything is in the right place.   
For instance, just using the chore verb:

“Ich spüle das Geschirr.” 🡨 the verb is conjugated and in spot #2

or using a modal verb (most often “müßen”)

“Ich muss das Geschirr spülen.” 🡨 the modal verb is in spot #2, and does the two things of sending the other verb to the end and making it infinitive.

Take a look at examples with one of the separable verbs:

“Ich räume mein Zimmer auf.” 🡨 the verb is conjugated and in spot #2, the separable prefix was moved to the end where it should be.

“Ich muss mein Zimmer aufräumen.” 🡨 the modal verb is in spot #2, and does the two things of sending the other verb to the end and making it infinitive. Notice how the separable verb is NOT separated when it’s in infinitive form.

If you haven’t noticed yet, there are multiple words in German to describe cleaning something. They are listed next to help show not only what they are, but what each of them is used for. Make sure you use the right one when it comes to your German!

**putzen** = to clean (as in scrub), used for things like windows and surfaces in a kitchen/bathroom

**waschen** = to wash, used for laundry, cars, and animals. Notice how 8-6 shows you that it is an irregular verb and how it is irregular.

**aufräumen** = to clean up/straighten out, used for general straightening out of rooms. NOT for things that involve scrubbing, cleaning chemicals, or water. Note how 8-6 shows the verb is separable.

**spülen** = to wash dishes (specifically), that’s it – just dishwashing

You can of course talk about anyone doing chores! Talking about chores siblings need to do or saying what “we” do are common ones. Don’t forget about the verb endings

ich e wir en

du st ihr t

er/sie/es t sie en

Sie en

Also don’t forget what the modal verbs do when using those! Always 2 things:

1. They send the other verb to the end of the sentence
2. They make that verb infinitive (unconjugated)

**More examples to examine**:

(left side just with chore verb, right side with modal verb)

Ich räume den Tisch ab. / Ich muss den Tisch abräumen.

Meine Schwester mäht den Rasen. / Meine Schwester muss den Rasen mähen.

Wir waschen die Wäsche. / Wir müßen die Wäsche waschen.

Mein Bruder fütter den Hund. / Mein Bruder muss den Hund füttern.

Ich staubsauge das Wohnzimmer. / Ich muss das Wohnzimmer staubsaugen.

Meine Schwester trägt den Müll weg. / Meine Schwester muss den Müll wegtragen.